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BEING JACQUES VILLENEUVE: FORMULA ONE, 'AGENCY' AND THE FAN

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I analyse my fandom for the Formula One driver, Jacques Villeneuve. Despite its rampant commercialism, innovative mediation, prestige and popular status within global sport, Formula One is surprisingly an under-researched topic in academia. Moreover, ‘intense’ fandom has often been stigmatised; at worst associating such individuals with pathological and obsessive behaviours or refuting their affections as merely symptomatic of the socio-economic forces that transform fans into duped consumers. This thesis argues against such simplistic disqualifications and reconceptualises fandom in light of how the structure/agency binary has itself been reconceptualised within media and cultural studies. Rather than privileging either the *determining* social, mediated and commercial structures, or championing the ‘active agential’ capacities of social individuals, Grossberg’s notions of ‘affect’ and ‘structured mobility’ are drawn upon to underpin a more flexible explanation of contemporary fandom. In particular, affect offers theoretical purchase for how fans form attachments with selective media objects and why these come to ‘matter’ for specific individuals. Furthermore, by marrying affect with ‘structured mobility’, affective investments are recognised for their capacity to ‘anchor’ individuals in specific and concrete spatial/temporal ‘moments’ of social reality as they navigate both the mediated apparatus of the sport and the structured social, cultural and economic terrain that shapes their mediated fandom. Such insights are developed through a ‘funneling’ approach in this thesis which moves from an examination of collective Formula One fandom to my own, exploring the affective traces of a friction that Villeneuve’s maverick status provided within the broader machinery of the sport and to which this fan has responded.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
LIST OF DVD EXAMPLES	vi
PROLOGUE	1
Transforming a Passion into Research	
CHAPTER ONE	4
A Joker in the Pack?: Jacques Villeneuve, the Homoerotic and 'Maverick' Individualism	
CHAPTER TWO	53
Structured Mobility, the Slippery Subject and Formula One	
CHAPTER THREE.....	127
The Other's Double: Formula One Machinery and Driver Agency	
CHAPTER FOUR.....	181
From the Grandstand to the Cockpit: Framing the Televised Formula One Image, Viewer Positioning and the Significance of Emerging Televisual Technologies for the Televised Sport Audience	
CHAPTER FIVE.....	237
Through the Eyes of Jacques Villeneuve: Point-of-View Representations and the Embodied and Immersed Viewer/Fan	
CHAPTER SIX	296
JV and Me: The Affective Practices and Performances of Formula One Fandom in Everyday Life	
CHAPTER SEVEN.....	365
Reassembling Fandom: Structured Mobility, Reflexivity and the Strategy- Intensity Field	
APPENDIX ONE.....	425
Jacques Villeneuve's Formula One Career (1996-2006)	
REFERENCES.....	434

LIST OF FIGURES

- FIGURE 1: (Overhead view): Branigan's POV diagram of alternate sites for the location of shot B (Point/Object) following shot A (Point/Glance).p. 244
- FIGURE 2: Overhead Representation of Formula One and Champ Car POV Perspectives:..... p. 266
- FIGURE 3: Side-On View of Formula One and Champ Car POV Perspectives:..... p. 267
- FIGURE 4: The Strategy-Intensity Field:..... p. 383

LIST OF DVD EXAMPLES

DVD Example 1:

Champ Car (Long Beach) 2003 – Helmet Cam.

DVD Example 2:

Australia Live 2003 – Jacques Villeneuve qualifying.

DVD Example 3:

Montreal Live 2005 – Jacques Villeneuve qualifying.

DVD Example 4:

Montreal Live 2005 – Drivers' Parade.

DVD Example 5:

Montreal Live 2005 – Pre and early laps of the Canadian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 6:

Australia Live 2006 – Jacques Villeneuve autograph signing.

DVD Example 7:

Formula One Televisual Technologies – Fernando Alonso at 2006 San Marino Grand Prix.

DVD Example 8:

Formula One Televisual Technologies – Michael Schumacher and Mika Hakkinen at 2000 Belgian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 9:

Formula One Televisual Technologies – Jacques Villeneuve qualifying at 2006 Canadian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 10:

Formula One Televisual Technologies (Editing) – Kimi Raikkonen at 2005 French Grand Prix.

DVD Example 11:

Formula One Televisual Technologies – Giancarlo Fisichella at 2006 Australian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 12:

Formula One Televisual Technologies – Takuma Sato at 2005 Bahrain Grand Prix.

DVD Example 13:

Point-of-View Shot (Classical) – *Lady in the Lake*.

DVD Example 14:

Point-of-View Shot (Post-Classical) – *Being John Malkovich*.

DVD Example 15:

Point-of-View Shot (Post-Classical) – *Strange Days*.

DVD Example 16:

Formula One On-Board Camera – Jacques Villeneuve at 2000 Canadian Grand Prix (Wet Race).

DVD Example 17:

Formula One On-Board Camera – Jarno Trulli at 2002 Hungarian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 18:

Formula One On-Board Camera – Michael Schumacher and Juan Pablo Montoya at 2003 Canadian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 19:

Formula One On-Board Camera/Rev Counter – Jacques Villeneuve at 2006 Spanish Grand Prix.

DVD Example 20:

Formula One On-Board Camera/Rev Counter – Kimi Raikkonen at 2006 Australian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 21:

Formula One On-Board Camera – Rubens Barrichello at 2000 United States Grand Prix.

DVD Example 22:

‘Naive Fandom’ – Jacques Villeneuve at 1998 Italian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 23:

‘Big Crash’ – Jacques Villeneuve at 2001 Australian Grand Prix.

DVD Example 24:

My Formula One PlayStation 2 Grand Prix – 2005 Hungarian Grand Prix (1 hour and 40 minutes – Qualifying and Full Race).

DVD Example 25:

My Formula One PlayStation 2 Grand Prix – 2005 Australian Grand Prix (first 10 minutes – 6 laps).

PROLOGUE

Transforming a Passion into Research

“Trulli is pointing towards Alonso. When the red lights go out we will be racing at Magny-Cours... The French Grand Prix is ‘GO!!!!!!!’ James Allen’s voice booms as twenty cars sprint off the line. It is midnight on a Sunday and I am transfixed by these televised images. Looking beyond the front rows of Renaults, Toyotas and Ferraris my focus locks on to the fifth row of the grid. I am analysing the start of the French-Canadian, Jacques Villeneuve. He seems to have got off the line well; he might even gain a place if he can get past his teammate. “Go Jacques! Push buddy, push” I mentally spur him on. With Villeneuve pervading my thoughts, I am impervious to any distractions for the next hour and a half, avidly following his blue Sauber and consuming the spectacle of Formula One racing unfolding on both my television and via live timing on the internet.

Racing action and its mediated coverage have been an important aspect of my life for over ten years (1998-2008). I tune in to the fast-paced spectacle of Formula One every fortnight, often overwhelmed by a sense of awe as these men control their machines through complex chicanes and sweeping curves with finesse, skill and bravado at high velocity. During this time I have watched a total of 181 Formula One races televised live¹ which, considering that most Formula One races are staged in Europe (translating to a midnight start time on Sunday nights in New Zealand), not to mention the 5am or 6am starts for races in Brazil, Canada and America, has been logistically no small feat. Additionally, I also experienced ‘live’ Formula One, attending the Australian Grand Prix (2002-2004; 2006) and the Canadian Grand Prix in 2005. What has compelled me to tune in late at night

or in the early hours of the morning is, at least on the surface, my admiration for Formula One's spectacle of speed and skill, as well as the exhilaration and immense pleasure I derive from watching these drivers push their cars and themselves to the limit. Most pervasive, however, and harder to explain, has been my fandom for the French-Canadian driver, Jacques Villeneuve (during the period 1996-2006). An enigmatic figure in Formula One, Villeneuve's combination of a fearless driving style, previous success and his maverick personality somehow resonated for me. Villeneuve's participation in Formula One ensured I viewed every race live, predominantly to dissect and assess his Grand Prix performances, as well as stay up-to-date reading and consuming the plethora of media texts on Formula One and Villeneuve in particular. Indeed, it is no understatement to suggest that my fandom for Formula One was deeply entwined with and understood through Jacques Villeneuve, to the point where it became an empty viewing experience without his presence for most of the 2004 season and for the final six races of 2006. In fact, post-2006, my current 'fandom' is marked by a hollow and less passionate viewing experience since his departure. In short, my fandom for Formula One was essentially a fandom of Jacques Villeneuve and this thesis sets out to explore this relationship for what it may reveal about fandom generally.

Miller (2008) is critical of academics providing such 'personal' dimensions in their scholarly accounts of sport, intimating that these emphases "encourage an entirely misleading valuation of the personal as a sign of knowledge and legitimacy", while asserting that "it buys into an affect-laden system of legitimacy that underpins sporting practice" (p. 542). Mindful of Miller's (2008) jibe against autoethnographic 'confessions' and his advocacy for a 'supple blend' of critical theory, this thesis seeks to deploy its own blend of the autoethnographic and the

critical. It is, therefore, in its current form, a reply to Miller. Autoethnographic vignettes are sparingly inserted within the thesis to evoke concrete practices of fandom while, more broadly, affect is reconceptualised, via the work of Grossberg (1992b), as a significant socio-cultural process that shapes and anchors individuals within specific moments of social reality. The thesis maps the resulting trajectories, in the end, through a strategy-intensity field model. Without privileging the personal over theory, this thesis repudiates Miller's castigation of autoethnography as seemingly vacuous and, instead, argues for its blending with critical theories for analysing affective socio-cultural relationships that can be enriched through the inclusion of one's own academic-fan voice.

¹ Races in Japan and Malaysia pre-2006 were often repeated later and hence not strictly 'live' telecasts. The only race missed during this period was the 1999 Australian Grand Prix, as it was not televised in New Zealand.

CHAPTER ONE

A Joker in the Pack?: Jacques Villeneuve, the Homoerotic and 'Maverick' Individualism

In this chapter, it is Jacques Villeneuve's circulation and exchange as a mediated and commodified Formula One sport star that is broached, not theories of fandom per se, which are returned to later in the thesis. To accommodate this orientation, the chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, an 'inevitable' question needs to be flagged, and so we begin with a discussion of the homoerotic male-on-male gaze in order to ask whether this dimension informs my attachment as a fan. The second section looks at other possible explanatory frameworks for categorising Villeneuve's stardom (and, implicitly, his appeal for fans); considering the applicability of the terms 'rebel' and the 'bad boy', before settling on Whannel's (1999, 2002) notion of 'maverick individualism'. Two traces of Villeneuve's 'maverick individualism' are then provided in section three, underscoring the friction that permeated his relationship with the corporate culture of Formula One. First, however, we begin this chapter with an overview of who Villeneuve is and some key career moments.

Introducing Jacques Villeneuve

Jacques Villeneuve was one of the biggest names in Formula One during his racing career (1996-2006), commanding the huge media attention characteristic of the stardom attributed to other contemporary drivers such as Michael Schumacher, Fernando Alonso, Kimi Raikkonen and Lewis Hamilton.¹

Villeneuve has had an illustrious motor-racing career, having been the Formula One World Champion in 1997, second in the championship in his first season

(1996), and the IndyCar Champion and then-youngest winner of the Indianapolis 500 race in 1995 (see discussion of Villeneuve's career up to 1997 in Collings, 1998; Hilton, 1997; Villeneuve & Donaldson, 1997). In achieving such success, Villeneuve became only the fourth driver in history to have won three of the 'big four' prizes in elite motor-racing (Formula One, IndyCar and Indianapolis 500; the other is the Le Mans 24 hour race in which he now competes since leaving Formula One). Villeneuve was also one of the sport's biggest ever earners, with career earnings worth a reputed US\$114 million in 2003, making him the second highest valued driver at the time (Beresford, 2003). Ultimately, however, Villeneuve needed to reduce his salary to prolong racing in Formula One, earning 'only' approximately US\$2 million in 2005 and \$3 million in 2006 in contrast to his escalating salary with BAR which peaked at approximately US\$20 million a season (Appendix One).

Jacques is also the son of a famous racing father, Gilles Villeneuve, who is reputed to have thrilled fans with a driving style that Rendall (2000) labels, "fearless to the brink of destruction, committed to winning at all costs" (p. 148), or as Allen (2000) observes, "he was the bravest and wildest driver around, and it was totally clear from his first Grand Prix that here was a man who would either be World Champion or kill himself" (p. 51). This parentage resonates strongly. Gilles won six races during his Formula One career (1977-1982), and is considered to be a national hero to an earlier generation of fans in Canada (especially Québec), as well as a favourite of many fans worldwide for his fearless performances for the revered Ferrari team (Balfe, 2006; Collings, 1998; Vergeer, 2004). Gilles died participating in Formula One during qualifying in Belgium in 1982, yet he is still fondly remembered, especially in Montreal, with the Grand Prix circuit named after him, and at Imola, where a corner bears his name.

Jacques is represented as having inherited aspects of Gilles' racing bravado, and as embracing a fearless approach to the risks and danger of Formula One despite his father's death (Donaldson, 2001; Hilton, 1997; Shirley, 2000). While he may be his famous father's son, Jacques had a longer and more successful career than Gilles, scoring 235 points (including 11 wins, 13 poles and 9 fastest laps) from 163 Grand Prix starts over ten seasons in Formula One. During this time he raced for five Formula One teams: Williams (1996–1998), BAR (1999–2003), Renault (2004 – three races), Sauber (2005) and BMW-Sauber in 2006. However, his has not been a seamless career. In fact, Villeneuve's Formula One career can be best understood as a rise-and-fall sporting narrative (Whannel, 1999, 2001, 2002) of instant success confounded by failure and disappointing results (see Villeneuve's career sketch in Appendix One). Despite his turbulent career and languishing further down the grid in his latter years, Villeneuve still managed to be successful and have longevity within the elitist and corporate sport of Formula One, as well as maintaining a strong fan following. For example, on the sport's governing body, the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile's (FIA - see Chapter Three) Formula One fan survey for 2006, Villeneuve received a 4% vote (or a placing of 7th out of the 16 drivers that received votes) in the category of driver support; beaten only by (Michael) Schumacher 28%, Raikkonen 17%, Button 8%, Alonso 7%, David Coulthard 6% and Montoya 5% ("FIA/AMD", 2006).

The condensed overview of 'career highlights' is being presented here to make a case for Villeneuve's potential in exposing far more of how Formula One works as a cultural phenomenon than some of his peers. In fact, as I will argue over the course of this thesis, Villeneuve provides an interesting study of a maverick and dissenting sport star who struggled to reconcile fleeting, 'slippery' individualised displays of what we might think of as agency within the

determining constraints of the Formula One machine. That is, his ‘maverick personality’ (comprising appearance, dissent and risk-taking), proffered ‘traces of grit’ within the sport’s apparatuses (e.g., commerce, media, technology and the FIA) and, more broadly, his professional life seems to have been underpinned by a reluctance to accede to the seemingly sanitised and systematic world of Formula One. While these ‘maverick traces’ are developed later in the chapter (and further re-thought in relation to my own fandom in Chapter Seven), our attention first turns towards addressing a rather ‘obvious’ question.

Villeneuve as Homoerotic Spectacle?

As a male fan of a male sport star, my mediated relationship with Villeneuve is inevitably confronted and even challenged by the assumption that a homosexual desire or a homoerotic component must underpin my investment. A considerable body of work needs to be summarised before this can be addressed directly. Revealingly, much research on the audience/screen star interrelationship and, particularly, between male practices of identification and spectatorship centred around the screened male star image (Dyer, 1992; Gibson, 2004; Jeffords, 1993; Lehman, 1993; Neale, 1992, Tasker, 1993) tends to draw initially on Mulvey’s (1975) landmark study of ‘visual pleasure’ in the cinema. Written from a cine-psychoanalytical perspective, Mulvey’s (1975) now familiar argument suggests that the visual pleasure in viewing a film is derived through scopophilia (the pleasure of looking at the screen), voyeurism (the unreciprocated nature of this look and pleasure in looking at another person as an object) and narcissism (fascination and identification with the on-screen image). However, rather than a neutral visual pleasure, Mulvey (1975, 1988) argues that dominant narrative film is framed through the male gaze as a masculine spectatorial point-of-view.

Through cinematic framing, males are positioned as the active and principal protagonists in order to facilitate identification with the male characters, while women are objectified as spectacle through their framing as passive objects of desire (requiring the female spectator to negotiate an always problematic viewing position). Although a highly influential work for various accounts of film, television, sport, video games, gender and audiences (e.g., Dragunoiu, 2001; Duncan & Brummett, 1989; Morse, 1983; Rehak, 2003; Williamson, 1996), Mulvey's initial theory was quickly challenged for only conceiving of the (heterosexual) male spectator. Although Mulvey's later work and theorists influenced by it have explained same sex audience relations with screened males and females (e.g., see Mulvey, 1988; Stacey, 1991, 1994 on the female audience/star interrelationship), the possibility of the male figure as spectacle or object of erotic desire remained largely unacknowledged in Mulvey's work.

Addressing the absence of a conceptualisation of a 'male-on-male' gaze, film scholars such as Dyer (1992), Gibson (2004), Lehman (1993), Neale (1992) and Tasker (1993) suggest that the male body is in fact often visible and tends to be offered as spectacle in many kinds of cinema. Jeffords (1993) notes that,

US masculinity in Hollywood films of the 1980s was largely transcribed through spectacle and bodies, with the male body itself becoming often the most fulfilling form of spectacle. Throughout this period, the male body – principally the white male body – became increasingly a vehicle of display – of musculature, of beauty, of physical feats, and of a gritty toughness. (p. 245)

These scholars emphasise that activeness and performativity are central to screening masculinity, especially in 'heroic' action-genre roles where the male

body is displayed as an 'active' rather than passive spectacle. A similar occurrence of display informs musicals, with the male body consistently operating as spectacle (Cohan, 1993; Neale, 1992), although the actual body on display is often clothed, concealed and imagined in distinction to the more visible physicality of male action-genre stars. These observations reinforce Mulvey's (1975) notion that the cinema 'classically' presents active men and passive women while at the same time recognising that the male body can be offered as spectacle. Nonetheless, the distinctly 'masculine' framing devices of cinema continue to make the explicit objectification of the male body problematic. Neale (1992) suggests that, while cinematic framing offers the male as spectacle, "the male body cannot be marked explicitly as the erotic object of another male look" (p. 281) leading to the male body being *disqualified* as "an object of erotic contemplation and desire" (p. 281). Often this disqualification of the male body is explicated through a physically 'tortured' or suffering male body in action films (e.g., Colin Farrell in *Hart's War*, Daniel Craig in *Casino Royale*, or Sylvester Stallone and Bruce Willis in the *Rambo* and *Die Hard* films respectively), coupled with comical elements which to some degree mock the (sometimes dysfunctional) protagonist while he is performing his heroic deeds (Tasker, 1993). Furthermore, this disqualification is usually accompanied by an extraordinariness to the male representation in terms of his (hyper)muscular body and/or the excessive violence, weaponry and scenarios through which a larger than life heroic male, and bloodied and bruised body, must prevail (Lehman, 1993; Neale, 1992). The 'unreality' of musical interludes also functions generically as a form of coded disqualification. An additional noteworthy form of disqualification of the eroticised male body is the rise of male 'stars-as-performers' (e.g., Robert De Niro and more recently, Christian Bale) who, through the explicit diversity of

acting roles taken on and, particularly, by deliberately displaying post-Method acting techniques, make the male body a site upon which performance is explicitly inscribed as *the* meaning (Geraghty, 2001). Clearly, there are exceptions to these broad observations. For example, although Brad Pitt is arguably convincing in his diversity of filmic performances, and provides a bloodied and battered ‘heroic’ body (often offset by comic elements) in films such as *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), *Snatch* (Ritchie, 2000) and *Troy* (Petersen, 2004), it can be argued that the ‘disqualification’ is loose, weak or slippery in this case; that Pitt’s body does become a site for objectification and desire for both female *and* male audiences. Gibson (2004) notes in relation to Pitt’s ‘perfectly-muscled torso’ in *Fight Club*, “our gaze is drawn inexorably towards him. As in so many films, Pitt’s body is fetishised, offered up, commodified” (p. 185). Nevertheless, as has become apparent in the preceding discussion, this is a case of exceptions proving the rule and *disqualification* becomes a key concept for grasping the disavowal of the male body as (erotic) spectacle. The term has broader potential for explaining the homoerotic in sport and will be returned to shortly.

The ambiguous eroticisation of the male body in contemporary film (i.e., Brad Pitt, Christian Bale and Daniel Craig as still recognisably erotic objects of desire within the mechanisms of disqualification that limit the erotic) has been accompanied by the increasing commodification and objectification of men across other media forms in recent years, especially in television, magazines and advertising. Reinforcing and reifying Baudrillard’s (1998) evocation of the body as capital, as fetish and as the ‘finest consumer object’, emerging notions of the ‘new man’ in the 1980s and ‘new lads’ in the 1990s further commercialised masculinity and led to a greater diversity in the (commodified) visual representations of male bodies (Beynon, 2004; Gibson, 2004; Mort, 1996; Nixon,

1996; Whannel, 2002). However, Whannel (1993) suggests that the term the ‘new man’ is “notoriously awkward to define” (p. 209), especially as this ‘newness’ has undergone continual reinvention since the 1980s, most notably through the prominence of the related term ‘metrosexual’ in the late 1990s (Beynon, 2004; Coad, 2008). These emerging categories can be seen as ‘softening’ or ‘feminising’ traditional images of men, particularly in relation to the increasing emotional and nurturing roles men occupy but, also, due to ‘metrosexual’ male roles being linked to “vanity, narcissism, exhibitionism” (Coad, 2008, p. 34). At the same time, ‘new lads’ provided a reactionary model of masculinity, espousing a hedonistic and reflexively aware working-class ‘lad’ culture (see Beynon, 2004; Whannel, 2002). New lads aside, though, a greater emphasis on male grooming and appearance undoubtedly accompanied the emergence of the so-called new man, with a concurrent rise in the numbers of men’s clothing outlets and style magazines and the increased objectification and eroticization of the male body in commercialised visual representations (Nixon, 1996). Beynon (2004) notes that “the 1980s witnessed a change in the politics of looking as the ‘male-on-male’ gaze joined the ‘male-on-female’ (along with the female-on-male and even female-on-female) as socially acceptable” (p. 203).

A subsidiary circulation of this ‘male-on-male’ gaze is the male pin-up. Dyer (1992) notes that while male pin-ups offer images of men as sexual spectacle for both females and males, particular attributes are embellished and emphasised, and they are not always what we might expect. Evoking Mulvey’s (1975) earlier cinematic analysis, Dyer argues that the ‘activeness’ of men is significant, with men often framed as preoccupied (e.g., looking away from the camera) and posed as ‘doing something’ to avoid giving the image an implicit passivity.

Furthermore, there is the specific focus on and promotion of muscularity for the

male body within pin-ups. Muscular men have been prominent in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century popular representations, stemming from the posed ‘strongmen’ images of pioneering body-builders such as Eugen Sandow and Charles Atlas, Olympic swimmer Johnny Weissmuller (who played the role of Tarzan in twelve films between 1932-1948), through to the body-building physiques of actors such as Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger (a seven times Mr Olympia) and even the contemporary hypermuscular appearance of professional wrestlers (e.g., Terry Bollea, better known as ‘Hulk Hogan’, and Dwayne ‘the Rock’ Johnson). Dyer (1992) notes that, “muscularity is a key term in appraising men’s bodies...Muscularity is the *sign* of power – natural, achieved, phallic” (p. 273). Therefore, muscles are viewed as a sign of physical strength and a naturalised biological condition for men although, as Dyer reminds us, muscles are not natural but achieved. For Dyer this offers an interesting paradox: the masculine body is framed through muscularity as a sign of phallic strength, but the penis cannot meet these expectations of power (especially in any depiction of a flaccid organ) and hence remains concealed, while nude male images conflate this power with the awkwardness of either the limp or erect penis appearing in juxtaposition to the (hyper)muscular body.²

Eschewing the distractions of a Freudian or post-Freudian (e.g., Lacanian) theorisation of the phallus and the unconscious, similar interest in the significance of muscularity and symbolic frameworks of male power, especially through notions of hegemonic masculinity, have been pursued in the field of sport studies. In particular, sport has been predominantly represented as an often problematic and contested male bastion, as well as a site for male identity construction (e.g., Connell, 1990, 1995; McKay, Messner & Sabo, 2000; Messner, 1992; Messner & Sabo, 1990; Messner, Dunbar & Hunt, 2000; Pringle, 2001, 2003; Whannel, 1999,

2002). The body is central to many analyses, with Duncan (1994) noting the obvious, that “the body is the ground for any investigation of sport or physical activity” (p. 48). So the sport-body connection has been extensively dealt with in the sport sociology literature and need not be reviewed here (see Cole’s [2000] exhaustive overview of ‘body studies’ in sport). What does need to be noted, despite Dyer’s (1992) assertion that “sport is the area of life that is the most common contemporary source of male imagery” (p. 271), is the fact that the notion of the homoerotic and the male body as sexualised spectacle has received limited attention in the literature.³

The opposite is true for women’s sport, with scholars readily recognising that female athletes are often assessed in relation to their glamour, the beauty ‘ideal’ or as the locus of an erotic spectacle, while media coverage frequently tends to focus on the appearance rather than performance of female sport stars (e.g., Caudwell, 2003; Creedon, 1994; Daddario, 1998; Davis, 1997; Giardina, 2001; Hargreaves, 2000; Harris & Clayton, 2002; Jones et al., 1999; Smith, 2006; Wensing & Bruce, 2003). Indeed, women’s sport has undergone a ‘sexing up’ process through attire (e.g., beach volleyball regulations and women’s tennis outfits as ‘fashion’), while the athletic female body has an increased subsidiary circulation as an eroticised commodity for sport, in endorsements and within male-saturated consumer markets (e.g., at its most blatant, Anna Kournikova, Maria Sharapova and Danica Patrick posed in bikinis for the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit edition). Of course, male athletes also circulate as non-sporting pin-ups, offering their bodies as erotic spectacle (e.g., in some women’s magazines) and, through fashion endorsements, are often simultaneously commodifying the male body. But Coad (2008) insightfully explains this as the “ubiquitous publicity of sportsmen standing or lying in their boxers or briefs [which] invites all men to enjoy sartorial erotics, to

learn seductiveness, and to take pleasure in attracting the gaze” (p. 116).

‘Learning seductiveness’ fits the self-conscious desirability of ‘metrosexual’ males, whose exhibitionist and narcissistic displays playfully confound Mulvey’s (1975) ‘passive’ or disavowed male. For example, male stars such as Michael Jordan (Hanes), David Beckham (Armani) and New Zealand Rugby player Daniel Carter (Jockey) have been photographed only in the branded underwear of their respective companies. Such advertisements offer a commodified, ‘metrosexually’ erotic spectacle (to a self-consciously limited degree) which is, in turn, *re-masculinised* through the muscular body’s promise of strength and action (see also Dyer, 1992).

Going rather more deeply into the interrelationship between sport and sex, Guttman (1996) argues that the erotic is inherent to sport (especially within spectator responses since ancient times) yet, perversely, has been repressed in contemporary sport scholarship. Tracing various elements of the erotic across historical periods, he notes that the sexual attractiveness of physically trained bodies in motion or rest was acknowledged and celebrated in ancient times. That is, there was not only a homoerotic element clearly present for spectators but sport provided an important site for men to forge the homosexual relations that were valued as a higher form of friendship, in Classical Greece for instance, than male-female relations. Civilizing processes attempted to repress sport’s erotic elements throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, while Victorian prudery sealed its fate through, for example, controlling the appropriateness of female sporting participation and attire. Moreover, even contemporary neo-Marxist and feminist scholars, concerned about the commodified sexualisation of sport in capitalism and patriarchy have, perhaps inadvertently, further marginalised the erotic as an explanatory concept in this particular social domain. Nevertheless, across this

broad timeframe, Guttman identifies numerous examples of how sport has aroused and stimulated sexual desire for both players and spectators through both the bodies on display in competitions and also the literary accounts and visual representations generated by sport. Thus, although not every sport or athlete necessarily affords an erotic element, according to Guttman there remains a fundamentally erotic pleasure in sport. This is most pronounced through an often idealised body on display for both sexes which is marked as sexually attractive, desirable and a site for emulation for both female and male audiences (e.g., the muscular Greek athlete as an idealised and timeless representation of the masculine body, while being ‘fit’ or ‘in shape’ are often euphemisms for being sexually attractive). So, Guttman implies that a homoerotic element *is* in operation when male spectators watch male sports, noting, (1996)

There is no reason to doubt in these post-Freudian days that there is a homosexual component in the heterosexual’s responses to athletes of his or her own sex. The frenzy of the mostly male spectators at a boxing match must be more than the excitement occasioned by the demonstration of the manly art of self-defence. (p. 146)

However, Guttman does not pursue this homoerotic element in significant depth, acknowledging that narcissism and exhibitionism are clearly part of the erotic dimension for same sex viewers (e.g., male and female bodybuilding, as well as both sexes taking up sport to ‘perfect’ the body) while, within male sport, team bonding tends to be a solidarity in hostility towards the opposition rather than a homoerotic bond. So we need to look a little deeper still.

For Pronger (1990, 1998, 1999) sport maintains and produces gendered boundaries, with sport providing the “aura of explicit heterosexuality and the

opportunity for implicit homosexuality” (Pronger, 1998, p. 283). These gendered boundaries are based on a gender myth which is articulated and circulates as natural yet are underpinned by power relations which emphasise and reinforce the strength of men: women are marked as weak and subordinate through difference. Such gender relations are strained when homosexuality is considered. Pronger (1990) reminds us that although gay images and interpretations of sport are readily available, homosexuality in both sport and broader society is still marginalised through a range of discursive practices (e.g., linguistic, legal, medical, etc.) which sustain a monolithic vision of masculine ‘normality’. In particular, while homosocial behaviour and bonding is encouraged, homosexuality is still often condemned through homophobic practices (see also Coad, 2008). This can be extrapolated to incorporate Sedgwick’s (1992) idea of the double-bind that recognises a “potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual” (p. 1). Thus, according to Sedgwick, the ‘homosocial’ is an oxymoron, shaped through patterns of male friendship and bonding, but primarily by means that distinguish such bonding from the homosexual (e.g., homophobia). Moreover, male-male-female erotic triangles are often forged which deflect or negate homoeroticism by using women as symbolic and exchangeable property within patriarchal heterosexuality to solidify male kinships and their homosocial relationships (while, more broadly, maintaining and transmitting patriarchal power).

Pronger asks, (1990) “what is the gay fascination with athletes and their muscles? To begin with, this homoerotic appeal is the eroticization of masculinity. A masculine body is a hard, muscular, athletic body” (p. 128). The erotic interest in other athletically *masculine* men provides what Pronger (1990) argues is “at once a reverence for and a violation of masculinity” (p. 135) as the

traditional gender myth of opposite power (male domination and female subordination) is undermined by gay men desiring other physically strong men. The appropriation of bodybuilding by gay subcultures is a notable example, as the cosmetic focus on building a hypermuscular male body is then displayed in competitions as a “homoerotic burlesque” (Pronger, 1990, p. 170) while, paradoxically, *disqualifying* the erotic ‘posing’ as ‘athletic’ and an interest in physiques. While insightful, Pronger’s (1990) exploration of the homoerotic produces for gay audiences implicit or explicit erotic readings of the relationship between sport, male athletes, desire and sex. This leads to problematic assumptions for heterosexual male athletes/spectators that sport is a “covert world of homoeroticism” (Pronger, 1990, p. 178), equating sporting competition itself with homosexual sex while reducing male sport spectators to ‘couch potato’ stereotypes (e.g., lethargic, overweight and sexually sedentary). Most troublesome is his summation that “the interest male sports fans have in their athletic heroes probably involves the deeply submerged pleasures of homoerotic sniffing” (Pronger, 1990, p. 187).

Drawing back from such ‘submerged’ impulses, Morse (1983) returns us to the notion of an overarching disavowal or disqualification through the discourses of sport and its televisual representation. Morse (1983) notes that,

If athletic bodies are the commodities of sport, the look at the image of male bodies in motion is what television has to offer the viewer. Because this image of masculine power and perfection is the commodity upon which television bases its exchange between sponsor and viewer, it is clearly in the interest of the medium to maximise spectacle while

maintaining mechanisms of disavowal which maintain the sanctity of sport. (p. 59)

Thus, according to Morse (1983), sport maintains a “careful balance of ‘play and display’” (p. 45), framing active men performing their athletic feats on the field but disavowing the elements of erotic pleasure such representations may proffer. In particular, she notes that while sport commentators instruct viewers to pay attention to these displays of athleticism and, specifically, to the male body demonstrating this prowess, such instructions are coded and contained within sporting discourses focused on evaluating performance rather than eroticising the male body. Any covert, deeply buried homoerotic ‘sniffing’ of males by males is less interesting than the carefully organised mechanisms of disavowal and disqualification of such impulses, if they exist at all. The *disqualification* of the erotic is underpinned by a range of specific televisual techniques such as close-ups and especially slow motion replays which, while paradoxically providing the viewer with a sense of the grace and beauty of a body in (slow) motion, are imbued with the *scientific* function of displaying this (often fragmented) body for analysis. Therefore, while televisual techniques such as slow motion offer an aesthetic and potentially erotic spectacle of the male body, Morse (1983) argues that instead such techniques operate as “a very effective mechanism for disavowal; every look of a ‘man at his exhibitionist like’ is transformed into a scientific inquiry into the limits of human performance” (p. 45). Hence, although the athletic male body is clearly on display and presented as spectacle in sport, the potential homoerotic male-on-male gaze is *disqualified* by discourses of sporting performance and the male body reinscribed as a site for supposedly scientific or technical analysis.

So I would first contend that, despite my intense affective investment in Jacques Villeneuve, his role as a Formula One driver by definition *disqualifies* any uncontradictory homoerotic reading. This claim rests further on the interweaving of two adjacent sets of relationships. The first is Formula One's presence-absence style of televisual representation which, through this framing convention, accords a further level of anonymity to the already obscured racing driver. Second, embodiment operates in a contradictory manner in Formula One; providing an 'absent' sporting body which foregrounds technology and the de-eroticised reliance viewers place in inanimate objects (e.g., cars, corporate logos and helmets) as identificatory mechanisms due to the 'disappearance' of the sporting body during the majority of the telecast. Additionally, during point-of-view (POV) representations (Chapter Five), the corporeal driver becomes a temporal and spatial surrogate body which is both drawn upon and supplanted by the viewer in these specific instances. Collectively these overlapping features of presence-absence, de-eroticisation and supplanted embodiment further disqualify the homoerotic as the body *disappears* at the most specific moments of intensity during Formula One race coverage.

The first disqualifying mechanism, of televised Formula One providing a presence-absence, is a reversal of the concept of absence-presence in film. Derived from Barthes (1981), Ellis (1992) posits that cinema offers a paradox of signification. For Ellis (1992), "the cinematic image (and the film performance) rests on the photo effect, the paradox that the photograph presents an absence that is present" (p. 93). For example, unlike the immediate and direct domestic address of television, film provides the paradox for audiences of experiencing a filmic event, narrative or image that has already been (the absence) yet, paradoxically, is experienced first-hand in the present (as a presence). Moreover,

stars are 'present' and available for desire cinematically but are ultimately absent and unattainable outside of celluloid (e.g., see Dyer, 1979, 1986, 1998; Ellis, 1992, Geraghty, 2000).⁴ However, cinema's absence-presence is less pervasive in sport since its mediation is predominantly televisual but, more importantly in the case of live sport, because it is contemporaneous; being shown in real time, often globally, to signify a simultaneous presence. The live image, which is experienced contemporaneously by audiences, diminishes the cinematic photo-effect, with its dependence on the disjuncture of real and recorded time as well as space (see Cubitt, 1991).

Most pertinent for our discussion here is Formula One's televised framing. With the cameras focusing on cars, action shots (e.g., on-track battles, crashes, etc.) and primarily following the race or championship leaders, not all drivers can be seen regularly, nor is an individual driver followed continuously during a race.⁵ Due to this framing, I would suggest that film's absence-presence (Ellis, 1992) is replaced by a presence-absence in live Formula One coverage. Like other forms of live televised sport, this viewing experience is contemporaneous (a presence that is simultaneously the present) yet while viewers know 20 (or 22) drivers are circulating in the race, many are absent and/or unseen despite clearly also being present and actively competing in the race. Obviously, such a phenomenon is not restricted to Formula One but, rather, a regular occurrence across a broad array of sports when it is not possible to frame all of the competitors at once (ranging from larger scale events, such as golf, running marathons and cycling events, to the inability to always see all field sport competitors in say, rugby, league or football). However, while Formula One is geographically and spatially challenging to televise, it is surprising that particular drivers can be rarely seen during an entire race given the numerous, sophisticated media technologies deployed in the sport

(discussed in more depth in Chapter Four). Moreover, with its elite and global status, exorbitant costs, corporate interests and relatively small number of active competitors, the fact that drivers finishing in the points are not always televised is more astonishing (e.g., Villeneuve's sixth place at the 2003 Italian Grand Prix, largely unseen by the cameras, except during the opening and closing lap sequences). While this may be read as a not disinterested observation, it should be noted that, economically, points finishes are potentially worth millions of dollars to the teams. For example, in 2002, Villeneuve and then team-mate, Oliver Panis, finished fourth and fifth respectively to collect British American Racing's (BAR) first points for the season at the British Grand Prix. This not only ensured the team and drivers substantial television coverage during the race but, additionally, was reputedly worth "\$15 million in television money" ("Paddock confidential", 2002, p. 14) for the BAR team. Underlying the distribution of Formula One's 'television money' is the assumption that points scorers will receive television coverage on these occasions and hence their teams are entitled to a specific sum of money at the end of the season, based upon the points accumulated (hence BAR would earn a *minimum* of \$15 million at the end of 2002). Thus, with television coverage often literally equating to money for the teams, such a financial arrangement underscores why the concept of presence-absence is more than a theoretical one in Formula One's televisual representation, specifically when money-earning point scorers are not framed as 'present'.

More significantly for our homoerotic focus, due to this process of presence-absence and the relative anonymity of drivers while racing (including visual signifiers which will be discussed shortly), the driver's name takes on greater significance as a referent. In particular, it is through the use of on-screen text and race commentary that the name-as-referent functions to ascertain identity.

Therefore, one needs to follow the name-as-referent through on-screen text to know the position of drivers when they are not being visually represented. These observations are salient for internet coverage, as live-timing of all sessions (see Chapter Three) is solely text-based and lists the names and times of each driver according to position. As a result, positing viewership of the Formula One driver as homoerotic is triply vexed; especially when one considers that the mediated Formula One star image and particularly, the body, seem to operate largely outside of the Grand Prix sphere or through the televised dichotomy of a presence-absence and the star name as a textual referent. This seems to work differently from most other sports where the star image/body is accessible and available during the live telecast (e.g., the tennis player, the footballer); Formula One conceals rather than displays the athletic male body, reducing the star to a name-as-referent and an adjoining set of technically organised visual signifiers during a Grand Prix.⁶ Put simply, Formula One provides so many challenges to realising even a subliminal homoerotic ‘sniffing’ that one has to ask, why go to the trouble when there are more accessible objects of such interest?

This introduces us to the second key means for disqualifying the homoerotic as an adequate explanatory framework for my fandom: the absence of a sporting body. In fact, as will be noted at various points within the thesis, Formula One drivers are paradoxically anonymous when they perform in a Grand Prix. This anonymity stems from not only the presence-absence style of televisual framing but also the racing garb they wear, which conceals their face and body. The sense of anonymity and concealment is captured by Kennedy (2000), who likens the Formula One driver to a knight going into battle, asserting that the “symbolic armour and vehicle for the warrior hero is provided by the helmet, protective clothing and racing car, which so engulfs the driver as to completely obscure him”

(Kennedy, 2000, p. 65). Televised Formula One coverage exacerbates the conditions of anonymity. In New Zealand, televisual coverage only crosses live five minutes prior to the start of the race when the drivers are usually already in their racing gear and strapped into their cars. Moreover, during the live telecasts, drivers remain concealed and immersed within their cars while racing, with only a helmet and their upper torsos visible for viewers (the car and helmet as de-eroticised identificatory mechanisms will be developed in due course). So, presence-absence, anonymity and concealment produce an absence of the sporting body in Formula One.

These observations are buttressed by the role of the car and technology in the sport, as technology and the machine determine, to a large extent, the performance of drivers based on the quality of the car (as will be explored in Chapter Three). More importantly, the body does not only meld simply with the machine, but literally ‘disappears’ by being cocooned within the cockpit. This diverges from ‘cyborg theory’ which argues for a dehumanising condition through the breaching of technology and nature, the increasing symbiosis of humans with machines and a literal reading of the human body as a machine (Haraway, 1991, 1994; Shilling, 2005; Springer, 1996). Despite the often ‘robotic’ characteristics of many contemporary drivers (again, outlined in Chapter Three), I posit that, conversely, Formula One’s man-machine interrelationship does not operate in the same manner as Haraway’s (1994) ‘machine-organism hybrid’ theorised through the cyborg. Rather, the driver remains a human agent (though ‘agency’ will be put through considerable revision as a term within this thesis); although, of course, he relinquishes much of his performance (and bodily) capabilities to the machine. These factors also have profound implications for interpretively *disqualifying* the homoerotic. Transposing the dehumanised process of cyborg theory, the Formula

One driver's body becomes *de-eroticised* through its absence and literal disappearance within the machine: the body is rendered obsolete as a source for (homo)erotic spectacle, display, investment or even 'sniffing'. This argument is supported by the role the car clearly plays as the primary means for viewer identification. Through the absent driver's body predominantly concealed during live telecasts, viewers and fans are required to forge de-eroticised identificatory relations with inanimate objects and the car operates as the first layering for such an identificatory process. While I will return to the role of the car in relation to driver performance in Chapter Three, I now want to emphasise the de-eroticised identificatory role of the car and other inanimate objects and how these further *disqualify* a homoerotic reading of the male on male gaze.

Windsor (2005b) has noted the obvious, that televised Formula One coverage tends to focus on the cars and generally these become more identifiable than the drivers controlling them through their decals, colour schemes and corporate branding. Clearly this is not always the case, as similar shades of red, grey and black meant that the McLaren and MidlandF1 cars bore a close resemblance in 2006. Nevertheless, car/team colour schemes become the first means to distinguish between teams and to identify specific drivers. Thus, viewers need to construct a de-eroticised identification with the car in the first instance.

Eschewing a Freudian over-simplification of the car-as-phallic, such a process is not vicissitudinous in terms of transposing the (homo)eroticism of the absent male body onto the machine; the car remains inanimate and de-eroticised as it is devoid of (or significantly reduces) the human component of engagement and functions solely as an identificatory mechanism for viewers. For example, during Villeneuve's years at BAR (1999-2003), my identificatory process as a fan was simplified by looking for the two white-coloured cars to distinguish the BAR team

from the remaining cars on the grid (although BAR ran a multi-coloured car for the 1999 season). Therefore, the car/team colour scheme constructed many de-eroticised moments of simple recognition and identification with the inanimate machine, clearly devoid of a (homo)erotic component at those moments.

Other inanimate objects are also drawn upon by the viewer and/or fan for identificatory purposes. The second mechanism resides in the branding of the cars (and drivers) and, again as a fan, I was reliant on recognising the corporate logos of Lucky Strike cigarettes to further distinguish the white BAR cars from other teams (e.g., the white and blue Williams' cars between 2000 and 2002). As inanimate symbols and decals, these corporate logos are both a ubiquitous and banal means for differentiating cars and teams, rather than proffering any eroticised opportunity in their own right. However, on occasions, the logos *are* reinscribed with an explicit erotic function by branding the scantily-clad 'pit-babes' or 'grid-girls' for promotional purposes, as will also be discussed in relation to 'glamour' and gender in Chapter Three. Although the drivers are also bedecked with corporate logos, I would suggest that these function as commodified rather than eroticised displays as, contrarily, the drivers' bodies are not available as spectacle. Indeed, by covering, concealing and brand-saturating the clothed male body, these logos have a further de-eroticising effect. Moreover, not surprisingly, drivers are often photographed beside the submissively-posed promotional females in an 'active' manner and resplendent in their racing garb to potentially both *legitimise* and re-assert their heterosexuality, while offering a stereotypical means for disavowing any latent homoerotic reading.

As the driver's name and/or racing number are not usually provided on the car (this would take up valuable sponsorship space),⁷ three other inanimate objects are also drawn upon for identificatory purposes and are most significant for

recognising the specific individual driver within a team/car. The first of these has already been discussed - the driver's name which often reduces the driver to a text or sign. For the culturally literate viewer/fan (we will return to Bourdieu's notions of literacy and capital in Chapter Six), two other inanimate objects are also provided as the fourth and fifth (driver-specific) identificatory mechanisms in Formula One. The fourth is the colouring of the on-board-camera (OBC) above the air box which, since 2004, has been painted red for the lead driver and black for the second driver (yellow has subsequently been substituted for black since 2008). Clearly this signifier relies upon the viewer/fan already knowing the designation of driver status within each specific team in any given season. Taken together, name-as-referent and OBC-as-signifier remain as inanimate objects that serve the purpose of providing identificatory mechanisms in the sport which, it would seem, are impossible to invest with any (homo)erotic dimension.

The fifth and arguably more significant identificatory mechanism for discerning specific drivers is one of the few fragments of a driver's body visible above the cockpit - the driver's helmet. Outside of the car/team colour distinctions traced thus far, the driver's helmet becomes the primary means for differentiating between teammates in any given season. In fact, despite being an inanimate object, the helmet affords a degree of fan (not viewer) identification and investment, not through an erotic orientation, but due to its signification as one of the few traces of implied driver agency within the sport. Rather than the team colours and corporate branding of the car and driver overalls, the helmet design is of the driver's own choosing and is one of the few visible signs of the 'individual' driver in Formula One (although, simultaneously, the helmet becomes territorialised and commodified through team and sponsor logos). For example, many of the drivers provide colour schemes on their helmets which reflect their

nationality (e.g., Brazilian Felipe Massa, Englishman Jenson Button and Scottish driver David Coulthard) while Villeneuve has drawn on his famous father's helmet design but infused this with multiple colours. In fact, Villeneuve has had one of the most distinctive helmet designs during his career, providing a vivid colour scheme composed of blue, pink, yellow, green and red which makes him stand out as a driver and is instantly identifiable for his fans (and to the culturally literate non-Villeneuve fans knowledgeable in Formula One), as are most other driver helmets for knowledgeable viewers or fans. Therefore, to a fan, Villeneuve's bright helmet design contrasted significantly with the team/car colours across his career (most notably with his white BAR 2000-2003 and for BMW in 2006) and became a crucial site for fan investment of interest.

Although Freudian readings of the helmet (and, as noted, the car) as phallic provide the possible terrain for a homoerotic theorisation of fan investments, this perspective will be repudiated here in favour of the less reductive affective investments fans construct with their objects of fandom. When watching Formula One either televisually or at the track, the car is often not accompanied with a televisual signifier (e.g., the on screen textual display of the driver name) and is extremely difficult to discern at velocity track-side. Therefore, while the car colour and corporate logos have a primary function, it is the visible helmet that is drawn upon by the culturally literate viewer/fan to confirm and differentiate individual driver identity. More importantly for the fan, it is the temporal and spatial intensity of that moment of recognition that (re)invigorates the affective investment (e.g., knowing that Villeneuve is on-screen or on the track in front of me and not his teammate). The helmet operates as not only an identificatory mechanism but affords a temporal and spatial intensity of affective investment (Grossberg, 1992b) for culturally literate fans (these notions of affect, intensity

and literacy are developed further in Chapters Six and Seven). Reconnecting the role of the helmet, as a trigger of affective investment, to the broader range of inanimate objects detailed thus far, we see that, collectively, the car, corporate logos, name-as-referent, painted OBC and the driver's helmet primarily function as entirely de-eroticised identificatory mechanisms for viewers and fans.

The preceding discussion has argued, at the very least, that embodiment and identification work in contradictory ways in Formula One, with the driver relatively anonymous and providing an absent body due to Formula One's style of televisual representation, while embodiment is also seemingly irrelevant at times with the literal disappearance of the body within the machine and behind the corporate logos. This final point can be further developed to consider how the contradictory duality of concealment and commodification itself works to further disqualify the homoerotic reading. The primary evasion of the anonymous and absent driver/body representation is post-race, when a more sustained focus is provided for the top three finishers at any Grand Prix, while other drivers are occasionally and briefly framed post-race (e.g., exiting their cars, being weighed at scrutineering, etc.). Given Villeneuve's lack of success during my period of fandom (1998-2006), I have only seen Villeneuve on the podium and in the top-three post-race television interviews on four occasions (twice in 1998 and 2001) meaning that he has had limited coverage on New Zealand broadcasts.

The other predominant visible display is driver retirements during the race. If detected by the cameras, the driver is usually televised in a fleeting manner walking back to the pits. Villeneuve's numerous retirements provided higher visibility outside of the car, framing him trudging back to the pits due to car failure (with regularity during 1999, 2002 and 2003), walking after a crash (e.g., Italy, 1998; Canada, 2000 and Germany, 2006) or, most spectacularly, leaping

from a car which was on fire (e.g., Austria 2002; Bahrain, 2006). The representation of Villeneuve outside of the car due to retirements provides a paradox by offering higher visibility (albeit fleeting) for television viewers yet still confounds any theorising of the male as spectacle. Problematically, although Villeneuve is now observable outside of the car, there is not an athletic body on display as he remains covered and concealed in his racing overalls. In fact, as posited earlier, the spectacle provided is not eroticised but commodified, as the overalls are emblazoned with sponsored logos and corporate branding and symbolically transform the driver into a walking billboard. Thus, for example, during Villeneuve's years (and numerous retirements) with the BAR team, his overalls had resplendent Lucky Strike logos on both his legs, mid-section, at throat level and on either his helmet or team cap. Corporate logos literally commodified Villeneuve's entire body while the body itself remained concealed and de-eroticised, unavailable for objectification or display. Villeneuve as a specific example especially problematises the concealed body in any case, as his predilection for baggy and loose fitting overalls (and team gear more broadly) made the recognition of his specific physique less overt than for the majority of the other drivers who, through their preference for tight-fitting apparel, arguably made the shape and form of the male body easier to discern.

The eyes become a key identificatory mechanism on the racing grid when cameras zoom-in on the driver's open visor and the eyes operate as another individualised layering to the representation (see also Kennedy, 2000). Nevertheless, as the driver's face and eyes are predominantly shielded by helmets during the telecast, as well as drivers often utilising tinted visors (further contributing to a sense of anonymity), these displays are an irregular occurrence. At best, the eyes afford only a fleeting identificatory mechanism, potentially to

pry audience attention and anticipation at the start of a race (e.g., the representation of ‘focused’ driver’s eyes) and are difficult if not impossible to interpret in terms of (homo)erotic attention.

As will be evident through the detailed discussion in Chapter Five, the point-of-view (POV) representations provided by the OBC do become significant for viewer identification. While the body is generally absent during a Formula One telecast, the OBC presents a temporal and spatial driver’s body for display. Thus, the OBC seemingly reverses the absence and disappearance of the body. However, rather than eroticising, it will be argued that the *re-appearance* and *re-presentation* of the body serve a specific temporal and spatial identificatory function. On the one hand, the driver’s body stabilises the coherence of the racing image and Grand Prix narrative by providing a ‘real’ driver to make viewers aware of the contemporaneous, ‘real’ racing action being screened before them. On the other hand, with only fragments of the driver’s body framed, such as moving arms operating the steering wheel (and still concealed by racing overalls, gloves and helmets), this is operating outside of the eroticisation of fragmented body parts typically utilised in other media (e.g., the emphasis on women’s legs or cleavage as erotic spectacle, or on isolated forms of muscularity for men discussed earlier). In fact, these fragmented bodies afford the spatial identificatory mechanism of ‘placing’ viewers within the cockpit and facilitate a seemingly ‘shared’ visual Grand Prix driving perspective during these OBC shots. We will discuss this process (and the use of POV in cinema more broadly) as the construction of ‘mutual embodiment’ in Chapter Five, as this allows viewers of either media to simultaneously share and occupy the first-person, embodied perspective and space of the POV protagonist. Nevertheless, this also functions as a de-eroticised form of *supplanted* embodiment. Through the processes of both a

mutual and supplanted embodiment, the OBC, paradoxically, re-contributes to the disappearance of the body while rendering it visible in a fragmented form. As the viewer can share the screen space and fragmented body of the driver, they conceivably also supplant and replace the actual driver being framed. This also displaces the homoerotic potential of the represented driver, if it exists, as his body and subjectivity are also jettisoned during such perspectives. In this respect, as a temporal and spatial identificatory mechanism, as well as a mediated form of embodied occupation, supplanted embodiment arguably makes the fragmented body 'disappear' once more, emptying it of any eroticised effect.

In conclusion, it is apparent that the male body is theorised as fundamental to (homo)erotic notions of the spectacle in films, advertising and sport. In particular, the potential erotic dimension within a male on male gaze resides in the framing, representation and visible display of a male body for objectification. Formula One problematises and ultimately *disqualifies* homoerotic readings of the male on male gaze for, unlike most visual representations of masculinity, Formula One reduces the visibility and role of the body during a Grand Prix. Through the sport's specific conditions of anonymity, the athletic male body is concealed by layers of protective gear, is framed as an absence through a presence-absence televisual representational style and literally 'disappears' within the machine. Conversely, Formula One proffers a set of inanimate objects for identification due to the absence and/or disappearance of the male body. Thus, the car, corporate logos, the driver's name-as-referent, painted OBC and the driver's helmet function as identificatory mechanisms for viewers and fans. With this reliance on inanimate objects, such forms of identification and display become de-eroticised and serve to disqualify homoerotic conceptualisations of desire, spectacle, identification or investment in Formula One. Of course, the key point about

disqualification mechanisms (both within Formula One's construction and my reading of the sport) is that they recognise the existence, at some level, of the thing that they seek to disqualify (even if only at the level of male-on-male sniffing). By denying that I spent years as a couch potato, homoerotic 'sniffer' of Jacques Villeneuve, I am not denying the reality of homoerotic impulses; rather, I have been arguing that the disqualification is the greater truth here, that it points us towards a more informative reading of Formula One.

Villeneuve's Sport Stardom: The 'Rebel' and the 'Maverick'

The Rebel

By disqualifying the homoerotic, a second 'obvious' explanatory framework for Villeneuve's appeal to fans looms large instead and also needs to be addressed; his allegedly subversive functioning as the Formula One 'rebel'. Dyer's (1979) landmark study of film stars considers how they 'function', circulate (e.g., as images, texts and personas) and, more broadly, why stars are significant in a socio-cultural, economic and semiotic sense. For our present purposes, Dyer's analysis of stars as social types provides the fertile ground for investigating a rebel analogy. According to Dyer (1979), a crucial attribute for film stars is "their typicality or representativeness. Stars, in other words, relate to the social types of a society" (p. 53). Drawing on Klapp (1962), Dyer traces the idealized and collective representations that, it is proposed, offer "a typology of prevalent social types in America" (Dyer, 1979, p. 53), ranging across the 'good Joe', the 'tough guy', the 'pin-up' and so on. The 'Rebel Hero', it is contended, provides an alternative or subversive type by suggesting either the rejection of, or an alternative vision for, the 'dominant' values that most of these other types embody. He also notes that a sub-categorical distinction is made between anomie

and alienation within the rebel typology. To further elaborate, Dyer (1979) suggests that,

To put the difference between the concepts crudely, we may say that people are said to feel ‘anomic’ because they do not fit in with prevailing norms and/or because they see the latter’s pointless, whereas people are said to feel ‘alienated’ because the goals of society and the norms which carry them are the goals and norms of groups other than those to which the people in question belong. (p. 59)

Dyer (1979) finds this distinction to be essentially reductive, arguing that “the *type* itself is problematic because, firstly, most of the heroes are either actually anomic or largely so., so that in the case of those that are not, the alienated/materialistic elements are liable to be subsumed under anomie” (p. 60, italics in original). As an example, he turns to the stars, John Garfield, Albert Finney and Jane Fonda, to suggest that it is not through their positioning as immigrant, worker or woman respectively that they are rebelling, but because they did not fit within those particular, collective positionings. In many respects, albeit as a perfunctory observation, we can suggest that Villeneuve also demonstrates these ‘anomic’ elements; seemingly rebelling against the prevailing norms and structures of Formula One while finding the associated corporate ethos, expectations and broader complicity of his fellow drivers contestable, banal or ‘pointless’ (see discussion of Villeneuve as reluctant commodity later in this chapter).

Other broader criteria for the ‘rebel hero’ are also traced, with Dyer (1979) noting that “most of the heroes are male in very traditional ways” (p. 61) and that “inarticulacy (a symptom of anomie) is the defining characteristic of the type”

(p. 61).⁸ While, on the one hand, an argument can be made for Villeneuve signifying traditional masculinity through the bravado and risk-taking associated with race-car driving (itself steeped in a long history of being a predominantly male domain), on the other hand, the notion of inarticulacy does not seem to ‘fit’. That is, the brooding, mumbled and often incoherent filmic depictions that we associate with James Dean, as the archetypal rebel figure in Dyer’s sense, are not as readily transposed onto Villeneuve. In fact, one of Villeneuve’s central ‘rebellious’ traits has been his representation as a vocal dissenter. For example, many of the Formula One drivers reproduce and recycle clichéd PR statements in their interviews and press conferences with Pat Symonds, executive director of engineering for the Renault team, quoted in *F1 Racing* magazine as bemoaning, “press conferences can be as dull as ditch water – contrived questions, corporate answers, no real thought, no antagonism, no fighting, no one saying what they really mean, no bloody spark. Dreadful” (“The future of f1”, 2006, p. 94). By contrast, Villeneuve’s reputation as a forthright, brash and, at times, controversial speaker was valued by some within the press, whereby he was lauded for being “so fabulously quotable” (Bishop, 2005, p. 85) and for providing “a welcome bite to the bubbles of cliché which clog the paddock” (McRae, 2005, para. 2).

While this apparent quality of articulate outspokenness seemingly problematises an easy transference of the ‘rebel-hero’ tag onto Villeneuve, Dyer (1979) also raises the point that, “the *narratives* of the films in which these stars appeared tend to recuperate rather than promote the rebellion they embody” (p. 61, italics in original). In the case of Villeneuve, his ‘rebellion’ is characterised as ‘free-spirited’, ‘his own man’, ‘standing apart’, a ‘rebel’, ‘eccentric’ and so forth (e.g., Baldwin, 2005; Bishop, 2000; Donaldson, 2001; Samson, 2001, 2002; Vergeer, 2004; Windsor, 2006) but in a manner that does

not support an explicit critique of the corporate orientation or broader structure of Formula One that he seems to be ‘rebellious’ against. Thus, ‘rebellious’ acts are dismissed as petulant displays (e.g., “The fall of”, 2002) rather than carrying significant weight as sport-specific critiques. While not privileging his own explanation, it is interesting to note that Villeneuve has previously rejected the ‘rebel’ label, reportedly retorting in an interview when it was suggested that he was a rebel,

I disagree with that. Being a rebel means going against the establishment purely for the fact of being against the establishment and not because of having your own ideas. Sometimes I disagreed with the establishment, but this is because I have my own ideas, which is different to being a rebel. Normally a rebel is without a cause. (“Q&A: Jacques”, 2006, para. 1)

Clearly, Villeneuve is evoking the James Dean archetypal filmic depiction and, implicitly, is refuting both the popular image of the rebel rebelling for the sake of rebelling,⁹ and the broader assumptions of inarticulacy noted by Dyer.

Moreover, although not discussed by Dyer, the ‘rebel’ often also has a commercial dimension in contemporary popular culture which is discernible, for example, through the co-opting and commodification of rebellion in music. As such, Frank (2001) is scathing of 1990s ‘alternative’ music and grunge culture, asserting that it was merely an image of rebellion and of a counterculture but, in fact, was subsumed, repackaged and resold via corporate cultures (see also Seiler, 2000). Of course, similar arguments along similar lines have been forwarded for ‘rebellious’ sport stars, such as Andre Agassi, Charles Barkley and Dennis Rodman, and their complicit relationships with large corporations, most notably

Nike, in the 1990s (e.g., Boyd, 1997; Brookes, 2002; Dunbar, 2000; Kusz, 2001, 2007; Lafrance & Rail, 2000, 2001). Pursuing this line of thought does not seem to take us very far as, categorically, Villeneuve is *always already* a commodity given the corporate structure of Formula One and hence is co-opted, exchanged and so forth (whether codified as the ‘rebel’ or not). None the less, while he does not ‘fit’ the rebel typology, Villeneuve affords residual elements which, traced through his appearance, dissent, reluctant commodification and risk-taking across the thesis, may still provide a degree of friction within the smooth corporate machinery of Formula One.

‘Bad Boys’, Marketable Difference and Maverick Individualism

Another explanatory means for understanding the behaviour of some male sport stars has been offered under the label ‘bad boys’. Whannel (1999, 2002) associates the ‘bad boy’ phenomenon with morality and the work ethic, suggesting that the public discourse of a ‘crisis in masculinity’ has been linked to numerous causes, including the ‘new laddism’ culture discussed earlier in this chapter. In relation to sport stardom, Whannel (1999, 2002) notes that the ‘bad boy’ transgresses the surveillance and discipline prominent in elite, contemporary sport through an array of behaviours that range from hedonism, off- and on-field indiscretions, self-centredness and an undisciplined private lifestyle and approach to sport. Whannel (1999) lists ‘bad boy’ sportsmen as “self-centred, petulant, hedonistic and undisciplined” in contrast to the “team-orientated, focused, abstinent and disciplined” ‘good’ sportsmen (p. 262). Case studies focused on English footballer Paul Gascoigne reflect this bad boy conceptualisation, with Gascoigne’s career sketched in relation to a hedonistic lifestyle and undisciplined on- and off-field behaviour involving a range of alleged weight problems, poor

fitness, reckless tackles, alcohol abuse, brawls and domestic violence. In theorising Gascoigne, Giulianotti and Gerrard (2001) suggest that he epitomises an obtuse Barthesian myth of the postmodern English footballer and provides a seductive absurdity for the masses while, according to Whannel (2002), Gascoigne is symptomatic of an emerging bad boy sport star narrative of rise, fall and redemption based upon the increasing scrutiny and punishment involved in media surveillance and the professional discipline of elite sports.

In addition to the bad boy, other authors, primarily from North America, have conceived of an oppositional binary relationship between notions of the 'good' versus 'bad' star. This binary is most succinctly explained through Kellner's (1996) notion of "marketable difference" (p. 459) which, he suggests, is cultivated through a distinct set of values, primarily in relation to race and morality, around which the star's commodification and circulation is based (see also Boyd, 1997; Brookes, 2002; Dunbar, 2000; Jackson, 1998a, 1998b; Jackson & Meier, 1999; Lafrance & Rail, 2000, 2001; Sloop, 1997; Spencer, 2001; Wilson, 1997). Often this 'marketable difference' is articulated by contrasting the representation and on- and off-field antics of 'good' stars (e.g., Michael Jordan or Tiger Woods) with 'bad' stars (e.g., Dennis Rodman or Mike Tyson). Therefore, despite Jordan's polysemic and, at times, ambiguous representation in relation to his corporate connections and endorsements, Kellner (1996) suggests that,

On the whole, I believe that Jordan is positioned in media culture as the 'good Black,' especially against the aggressiveness and visual transgressions of teammate Dennis Rodman, who with his bleached and undisciplined hair, earring, fancy clothes, and regularly rebellious behaviour represents the 'bad' Black figure. (p. 462)

However, neither the bad boy label nor notions of the good versus bad star seem readily attributable to Jacques Villeneuve's star image. While Villeneuve arguably courts controversy, this is seldom to do with any off-field indiscretions, hedonism or an undisciplined lifestyle, although his work ethic has been questioned when he performs poorly (Bishop, 2005; Pitpass expose, 2005b). On the track, Villeneuve has received penalties for common driving infringements that the other drivers also receive; for example, not slowing for yellow flags in 1997 or speeding in the pit-lane (e.g., Austria 2002). Nevertheless, Villeneuve has never been accused of or punished for cheating or serious misconduct which contrasts with Michael Schumacher, whose successful yet controversial career is punctuated by accusations of deliberately ramming title rivals off the track (Allen, 2000) and punishments for intentionally impeding other cars, such as during qualifying at the 2006 Monaco Grand Prix (Bishop, 2006a). Of course, while Schumacher's indiscretions are debated within Formula One circles (Bishop, 2006a) they do not appear to be widely recognised in the broader public consciousness (e.g., Schumacher is not publicly perceived to be the bad boy of Formula One). Additionally, as Villeneuve operated in the elitist, rich and white sport of Formula One between 1996 and 2006, the good versus bad concept does not particularly map onto questions of race (although the first black driver, Lewis Hamilton, debuted in 2007) while, in relation to ethics, Villeneuve is not contrasted with Schumacher, although he is sought after by the press as one of the few drivers willing to publicly condemn Schumacher's driving indiscretions (Bishop, 2006a, 2006c).

Having challenged the conceptual terms discussed thus far (e.g., the rebel, bad boy or marketable difference as convincing explanations), Whannel's (1999)

notion of the maverick may be found to be more appropriate for explaining Villeneuve's stardom. In defining the maverick, Whannel (1999) notes that,

Maverick masculine individualism is something that coaches, and governing bodies are concerned to root out. In a world that is constrained, maverick sport stars appear to offer the power to live a life of masculine individualism – defying constraints, rebelling against regulation, whilst still performing. (p. 262)

Whannel links the constraints on maverick individualism to the three spheres of authority, the domestic and the feminine. With the exception of authority, these constraints appear less characteristic of Villeneuve's circumstances, as he is represented as fiercely protective of his private life and any domestic or sexual indiscretions have not been widely publicised. However, Whannel (1999) also acknowledges the emergence of corporate influences for sport stardom, arguing that, "maverick masculine individualism also increasingly conflicts with the new corporate paternalism, whereby institutions become the moral guardians of their employees, supervising the way they live" (Whannel, 1999, p. 262). Therefore, in relation to the emerging pattern of corporate paternalism, Whannel (1999) suggests that, "the constraining of maverick masculinity is not being done in the interests of gender relations but of the success and profit of large corporations" (p. 262). Villeneuve's version of maverick individualism has been most pronounced in relation to the constraints imposed by multinational corporations as, although his private life still appears unrestricted by corporate influences, Villeneuve's public and professional life as a Formula One driver is shrouded in an uneasy tension and an apparent reluctance to embrace the corporate expectations and ethos of the sport.

Villeneuve's strained commercial and commodified relationship can be traced through the various sources of public friction and ambivalence that he provided; for example, by adopting a 'maverick' appearance that was distinctive from his peers and by having contracts in place that limited the number of public relations days he would do (points that we will return to). Villeneuve also acted as a public dissenter, in terms of being a forthright speaker who frequently avoided the predictable 'corporate-speak' of his peers while dissenting on rules, regulations or other aspects of Formula One (Balfe, 2006; Bishop, 2005, 2006c; McRae, 2005). In broader terms, these instances do lend themselves to Whannel's (1999, 2002) notion of the 'maverick' and, accordingly, examples of Villeneuve's apparently maverick style are both dispersed throughout the remainder of the thesis and re-assembled as part of an explanatory framework for my own fandom in Chapter Seven. For our present purposes, two preliminary sketches of Villeneuve's uneasy relationship with corporate culture will suffice. First, his alleged 'maverick' appearance within Formula One is described, while the second example considers Villeneuve's seemingly reluctant commodification. It should also be noted that the career overview in Appendix One supplements and contextualises these examples by providing greater specificity to the details discussed, in terms of concurrent team, performance, press and monetary relationships.

Villeneuve's 'Maverick' Image and Appearance

Villeneuve caused some friction within the machinery of Formula One by contrasting with the corporate appearance of most of the other drivers. As Whannel (2002) observes, "audiences want entertainment and charismatic stars provide a break from the mundane" (p. 195). Whannel (2002) elaborates further

by noting that, in contemporary sport, “promoters want characters who will attract the crowd and satisfy the television. However, often such characters are also difficult to handle – disputing line calls, or abusing codes of dress or behaviour” (p. 197). While there is no official dress code in Formula One, the drivers are emblazoned in their team and sponsor clothing (which presumably operates as an imposed and mandatory dress code) and are immaculate in their dress and grooming (e.g., clean-shaven and short styled hair). However, due to this uniformity, the drivers often become bland and staid, especially as generally indistinguishable, corporately-clothed, drones. Villeneuve resisted such expectations, often appearing more rugged and scruffy than his peers, favouring stubble, messy (often bleached) hair, spectacles and baggy (rather than tight-fitting) apparel. Although other drivers also periodically displayed a degree of ‘individuality’ to contrast with their otherwise ‘uniform’ attire and appearances (e.g., Eddie Irvine’s dyed blond hair with Jaguar in 2000 and 2001, Jarno Trulli’s long hair with Toyota 2005-2007, or drivers sporting facial hair, such as Barrichello, Button or Alonso), only Villeneuve remained consistent in adopting a non-conformist style across his career.

For example, during his three years at Williams, especially from 1997 onwards, Villeneuve differentiated himself from the pack by dying his hair blond, as well as an assortment of other colours at different times, including blue. Vergeer (2004) suggests that key sponsors had become infuriated by the “eccentric, variable colour of his hair” (p. 198), while in Brazil in 1998, Donaldson (2001) notes that FIA officials had told Villeneuve,

Wearing his habitual ‘high grunge’ clothing, sporting a scraggly beard and with his hair dyed a bizarre shade of blonde, that he should clean up his act and pay more

attention to his appearance because he was bringing the sport into disrepute. (p. 56)

Between 1999-2003 as the BAR lead driver, Villeneuve continued to sport various hair colours and seldom was without stubble, even on occasions growing a full beard, leading Clarkson (1999) to suggest, “Sink or swim. Brown, blond, purple or auburn – JV is motor-racing’s answer to rock’n’roll” (p. 84). Moreover, Bishop (2000) noted that, “Jacques Villeneuve remains a rebel, remains his own man, and F1 is better for it. Michael Schumacher aside, no one has a stronger, more defined image” (p. 46). Of course, it is fair to assert that Villeneuve’s non-conformist appearance was also being further encouraged and capitalised upon by BAR and its key sponsors as a marketing ploy; for example, to promote Villeneuve as their ‘rebel’ star. Nevertheless, while the hair dyes declined post-2003 as his hair receded, Villeneuve continued to maintain a scruffy appearance with his baggy clothing and permanent stubble still prominent with Sauber in 2005 and BMW-Sauber in 2006. For example, Windsor (2006) observed that, “Jacques is by contrast much more of a free spirit. He drives his way, behaves his way...Blue hair. Pink hair. No hair. Contacts. Glasses. No free appearances. Catch him if you can. That was – is – his persona” (p. 59). Thus, across his Formula One career, while Villeneuve also wore team and sponsor branded clothing, he resisted the broader Formula One machinery of conformist appearance: inflecting a ‘personalised’ display on to the corporately imposed clothing while providing an ‘individualised’ style often bereft of corporate grooming practices.

To further demonstrate this point, the German driver Nick Heidfeld offers an informative contrast. Heidfeld has been in Formula One since 2000 yet, associated with generally limited results prior to joining Williams in 2005 and

then BMW-Sauber in 2006, he did not seem to possess ‘charisma’ (Dyer, 1979; Whannel, 2002) or ‘personality’ to distinguish himself from the other drivers or the familiar machinery of Formula One (e.g., he literally *embodied* the robotic and bland corporate-driving-machine to be further discussed in Chapter Three). For example, *F1 Racing* magazine identified Heidfeld as lacking a marketable personality, with Cooper (2006) suggesting the need for drivers to “avoid the ‘Heidfeld Syndrome’ – a facelessness that borders on invisibility to F1 talent spotters – by cultivating a larger, more potent profile” (p. 78). Additionally, Bishop (2006b) indirectly contrasts Heidfeld’s dull mediated public personality with Villeneuve after his departure from BMW, suggesting that, “for many reasons – yes, including reasons connected with marketing and PR as well as outright pace...*F1 Racing* reckons Jacques would have been a better bet in ’07 than the quick-ish, but un-PR-able and un-marketable, Nick” (p. 6). While teammates at BMW-Sauber in 2006, Villeneuve’s ‘personality’ and ‘rebel’ appearance remained apparent in contrast to the clean-cut, bland and ‘faceless’ Heidfeld (the contrast is observable at BMW publicity events, such as the team launch). Interestingly, with Villeneuve’s departure, Heidfeld re-appeared in 2007 (and 2008) sporting a beard which smacked of an attempt by Heidfeld, BMW or their efforts combined to revamp Heidfeld and give him more ‘personality’. Indeed, given the timing of this transformation, as well as Bishop’s (2006b) opinion above, Heidfeld’s beard can also be read as a possible attempt to make him more ‘PR-able’, more ‘marketable’ and, potentially, to reinvest Heidfeld and BMW with some trace of the ‘maverick’ image lacking since Villeneuve’s departure.

F1 Racing magazine discusses the ‘rebel’ potential of drivers’ beards, with Roberts (2007) noting, “then there’s the political beard – Fernando Alonso’s, for

instance – which excites thoughts of rebellion. His gesture of defiance in Turkey, thrown at clean-cut, corporate McLaren, was eloquently pointed” (p. 63).

Although Alonso did not sport a ‘beard’ as alleged (merely light stubble compared with many of Villeneuve’s more extravagant growths),¹⁰ Roberts’ comment indicates how driver stubble and facial hair, far from being as trivial as they seem, offer a symbolic challenge to the machinery of Formula One by resisting expectations of clean-cut, corporate grooming (akin to the ‘expressions of individuality’ that Whannel [2002] equates with the hair styles of sport stars).

This symbolic gesture (whether codified as rebellion or not), punctuates Villeneuve’s career (1996-2006), Jacques being the only driver in contemporary corporate Formula One to regularly display excessive stubble or a beard. For example, Villeneuve’s scraggly beard was prominent on the podium at Spain in 2001, even leading *F1 Racing* magazine to observe later in the season that “JV smartens up” for his new girlfriend and that “it must be love – he’s brought his razor out of retirement and started shaving” (Pitpass, 2001a, p. 28). Additionally, the permanent stubble with Sauber in 2005 led Todd (2005) to remark on Villeneuve’s return to Montreal, “The beard is regulation length, making you wonder if the guy owns a razor that shaves so that it always looks like a four-day growth” (p. A1). Ironically, Roberts’ (2007) article on Heidfeld seems corporately complicit in attempting to project a ‘personality’ onto him, and even naively suggests that Heidfeld was the first driver to make beards fashionable in Formula One. In fact, Heidfeld appears to be cloning aspects of Villeneuve’s ‘maverick’ appearance, apparently with BMW’s (and their sponsors’) connivance (e.g., teams such as McLaren do not permit facial hair – hence Alonso’s ‘rebellion’; so BMW must be complicit in allowing this to occur or possibly even requested/recommended it). Whatever the imitators or corporate appropriations,

Villeneuve's appearance retains a claim to originality in providing traces of grit within the polished or 'clean-cut' corporate machinery of Formula One.

Villeneuve as Reluctant Commodity

Our next example considers Villeneuve's apparent resistance to the corporate pressures from sponsors and the associated expectations for publicity and marketing as a star Formula One driver. This is not to overstate his resistance or reluctance however as, clearly, Formula One is a transnational, corporate sport which, through its associated practices and processes of commercialism and commodification, positions Villeneuve as *always already* a commodity.

Therefore Villeneuve cannot simply 'opt out' of wearing the branded garb, attending to media and/or public relations duties or being paraded before his various teams' transnational sponsors; it is both an expectation and contractual obligation for a Formula One driver. Nevertheless, in his discussion of maverick individuals, masculinity and commercial morality, Whannel (2002) observes that,

Major sport stars take on the character of floating signifiers, whose connotations cannot be neatly contained by the needs of either sport institutions or moral entrepreneurs. The corporate world will always yearn for a Pete Sampras or a Tiger Woods, but the public are always likely to be more intrigued by an Andre Agassi or a Dennis Rodman. (p. 213)

Allegedly protective of his image, Jacques Villeneuve's relationship with sponsors and corporations was also widely represented as abrasive. For example, even in his first Formula One season in 1996, Donaldson (2001) recalls Villeneuve being rushed into a publicity event by a new energy drink sponsor but being unwilling to endorse the drink as he had not tried it. Donaldson (2001)

notes, “the hopeful master of ceremonies suggested ‘we assume you believe in this sort of product?’ ‘Not really,’ the reluctant pawn replied” (p. 59). Such an unexpected stance exemplifies his reluctance to pander to corporate and sponsor expectations (even upon first entering the sport), with Villeneuve being quoted by Donaldson (2001) as saying,

PR is an obligatory thing that comes with racing, so I will do what I have to do. I race to drive a car, not to be in the spotlight. I’m willing to do a bit of it – just to get people off my back. But I will only do things I believe in. Anything else I am uncomfortable with. (p. 59)

Although mindful of the degree of obligation that underpins the commercial, corporate and commodified practices for a Formula One star, Villeneuve presents himself as a reluctant commodity by resisting overt attempts to manufacture his star image in compliance with sponsor expectations or excessive forms of branding.

Moreover, Villeneuve refused to perform extensive public relations duties despite its obligatory contractual status for the drivers. For example, most teams require a set number of PR days from their drivers, estimated to equate to 20-30 days per year for “promotional or other sponsor-schmoozing duties” (Bishop, 2001b, p. 68) which, of course, Villeneuve had to attend throughout his career. However, after leaving Williams in 1998, Villeneuve redefined the exact conditions for his involvement and obligations. His initial contract with BAR is reported to have contained the important clause “no promotional commitments for sponsors outside of GP weekends” (Clarkson, 1999, p. 79), while Villeneuve also limited his number of press commitments per race weekend. Based upon my reading of Formula One practices derived from the sources outlined in Chapter

Three, such a clause is extremely rare, if not unprecedented. Villeneuve's 2000 contract with BAR also limited his PR duties, with Clarkson (2000) alleging that his new contract only permitted four PR days a year for team owners British American Tobacco (BAT) and included numerous sub-clauses, such as less than five hours work a day and a 10am start. Furthermore, Villeneuve was reputedly knocking back attempts from BAT to buy more PR appearances at \$125,000 a day (Clarkson, 2000). Commenting on these PR contractual arrangements, Bishop (2000) suggested that Villeneuve,

Enjoys his down time, but his professional life is focused on racing. He's often criticised for his reluctance to carry out more than a few days of sponsorship work per year, or for imposing a strict limit on the number of press interviews he holds over a race weekend. Truth be told, others envy him: he minimises extraneous commitments to keep his approach to racing – the details of his job in the cockpit – uncluttered.

(p. 45)

When re-signing with BAR in 2001, Villeneuve was reported to have still limited the number of PR days he was required to do over the next three seasons, although he now obliged sponsors with a 'handful' of PR days. Nevertheless, Windsor (2005a) surmised that during Villeneuve's BAR years (1999-2003), "never had an F1 driver been paid so much to do so little out of the car ... for the sponsors" (p. 59). However, Villeneuve's attitude is a double-edged sword within Formula One; having implications both for his commodification and his star status by equally attracting or repelling potential sponsors and contract offers. For example, Samson (2002) notes that, "one of the top teams would have happily flung open the door for Villeneuve if only he'd toned things down a bit, worked

on his image, played the F1 game” (p. 73). McLaren was one such team, although McLaren imposed a pre-requisite of 80-90 promotional days annually (Bishop, 2001b), while the irreconcilability of the corporate style of McLaren and Villeneuve’s ‘rebel’ image were also frequently cited as preventing such an arrangement (Peagam, 2002; Rowlinson, 2003).

More broadly, Villeneuve’s frequent dissenting public outbursts were critical of the commercialised and commodified orientation of the sport, with Villeneuve quoted in *Formula 1 Magazine* as stating, “F1 has become a corporate sport and corporations don’t want human beings driving, they want robots. Nobody sees the difference” (“Other comments”, 2003, p. 146). Therefore, at various stages of his career, media coverage highlighted Villeneuve taking aim at the corporate structure of Formula One, the focus on young, cheap and corporately groomed drivers (“Villeneuve sympathises”, 2006), the lack of character among his fellow drivers (“Other comments”, 2003) and, Buxton (2003) suggests, his attacking “the young stars of the sport for being corporate mouthpieces without the guts to speak their minds” (p. 71). Villeneuve was represented as being particularly scathing of the manufacturing of driver images, asserting to the *Guardian* newspaper that, “all these corporations don’t want their drivers to ruin their image so you can’t say what you think. You’re basically not allowed to have a personality. How can you have any heroes if you don’t allow personalities?” (Villeneuve in McRae, 2005, para. 1). Villeneuve reportedly singled out McLaren’s Finnish driver, Kimi Raikkonen, noting that, “It’s sad that you don’t see drivers being real people. Kimi’s image is so obviously fabricated because he’s not the Ice Man. It goes back to the corporations. You end up fabricating this image because that’s what they want” (Villeneuve in McRae, 2005, para. 5). Therefore, in this second example we again have an exposition of the ‘maverick’ individual in operation

within the sport. Through his reluctant commodification and dissent, Villeneuve again provides friction and traces of grit by rescinding, albeit in a limited capacity, the commercial and corporate machinery of Formula One (e.g., in this case, PR and sponsor expectations) despite his own inescapable situatedness, commodification and exchange within its corporate structures.

More broadly, embedded within these accounts of Villeneuve seems to be an allure, a curiosity and an enigmatic figure for fans, in varying degrees, to ‘engage’ with. Whannel (2002) notes that, “the persistent fascination with the errant, the maverick and the erratic suggests at some broader unwillingness simply to embrace the routinised professionalism of work-ethic-driven sport stars” (p. 142). By using Villeneuve as an exceptional but fragmentary and contradictory example, we will work our way through the broader mechanisms (or routines) of collectivism that Formula One provides, before returning once more to Villeneuve’s maverick status in order to consider why this served as the locus for my own fandom.

Looking Forward

This thesis seeks to achieve a ‘funneling’ of fandom from collective audience ‘experiences’, in terms of the structures, processes and practices afforded by Formula One, towards the distillation of a personal, atomised and affective investment in the sport (which coalesces around Villeneuve in my own fandom). Therefore, the early chapters present some of the *determining*, collective socio-cultural, mediated and commercial Formula One-specific ‘structures’ as the initial framework for the thesis. In particular, Chapter Two provides a preliminary theoretical exploration of the structure/agency binary, introducing Grossberg’s (1992b) concepts of ‘structured mobility’ and ‘affect’ to articulate a more fluid

(but not merely ‘active’ or free-floating) subject position within structural formations. ‘Structured mobility’ also becomes a key theoretical concept for implementing the smooth transitional shift from interrogating the collectivity of Formula One’s *determining* structures towards an increasingly atomised account of audience and intense fan engagements with the sport and its star drivers. Thus, the mediated public and popular ‘narratives’ of Formula One are first discussed in Chapter Three, leading to an examination of the framing of Formula One’s televised global representation and its implications for generalised audience positionings and viewer engagements (Chapter Four). This thread is continued in Chapter Five via a refined focus on Formula One’s innovative and ‘participatory’ first-person representations. Such technologies, on both televisual and gaming formats, construct new mobile and affective (e.g., *first-person* and *embodied*) forms of viewer placement, identification and engagement both for collective and increasingly atomised, ‘subjective’ audiences. This gradual movement towards potential ‘individual’ viewer experiences traces an increasingly atomised, yet socio-culturally situated and context-specific, experience of fandom. Therefore, in Chapter Six, it is my own ‘affective’ fandom that is analysed, evoking a structured mobility to investigate some of the specific *determined* positions that I occupy in relation to Formula One’s apparatuses, as well as the mobile spaces and contradictory practices that my affective attachment to Villeneuve facilitates. A central premise of this thesis is that, by shifting towards an interrogation of my own affective investment and relationship with Jacques Villeneuve, the structured mobility of an individual can be traced and is made concrete in the specific spatial/temporal trajectories and ‘moments’ of affective fandom. These points are then mapped in Chapter Seven, via a strategy-intensity field model, both supporting a reassembling of my fandom and as an explanatory framework for the

significance of Villeneuve's maverick traces of grit which, in a sense, will also be reassembled there. The present chapter has cleared the way for this work by dealing with the two most 'obvious', but ultimately limiting, explanatory frameworks.

¹ As an example, using the 'Google' advanced internet search engine yielded 2,800,000 hits for sites "with all of the words" 'Jacques Villeneuve'. Retrieved November 9, 2006, from http://www.google.co.nz/search?as_q=jacques+villeneuve&num=10&hl=en&btnG=Google+Search&as_epq=&as_oq=&as_eq=&lr=&as_ft=i&as_filetype=&as_qdr=all&as_occt=any&as_dt=i&as_sitesearch=&as_rights=&safe=images.

² Lehman (1993) suggests Dyer's findings can be applied to the naked male in film. The naked body (and occasionally visible penis) are presented as an object yet the naked male retains his subject position through the 'preoccupied' framing conventions of the male pin-up. Additionally, far from a role reversal of the male gaze, Lehman suggests a women's point of view is often denied by rendering any female character present as visible and looking on admiringly as the male oscillates between both object (the male body) and subject (chief protagonist).

³ The male sports body has been analysed through a range of concepts and themes: such as; as a weapon (Trujillo, 1995), as a racial signifier (e.g., Andrews, 1993, 1996a, 1996b, 1998; Boyd, 1997; Jackson, 1998a; Kellner, 1996, 2003; Sloop, 1997) in relation to national identity (e.g., Carrington, 2001; Cole & Andrews, 2000, 2001; Jackson, 1998b; Jackson & Meier, 1999); or as problematic due to violence (e.g., Messner, 1992; Messner & Sabo, 1994; Pringle, 2001, 2003), injury (e.g., Pringle & Markula, 2005; Young, 2004; Young & White, 2000; Young, White & McTeer, 1994) or gendered 'ambiguities' (e.g., Dunbar, 2000; La France & Rail, 2000, 2001; Whannel, 2001, 2002).

⁴ Of course, one could argue that contemporary versions of film stardom possibly reduce the significance of the absence-presence paradox. That is, films are more frequently produced and publicly displayed than the 'classical' period that Dyer and Ellis analysed, films are no longer only viewed in cinemas and, most pervasively, there is more subsidiary information available on both the public and private lives of stars-as-celebrities globally and instantaneously via the internet and other publications.

⁵ The only occasion when a driver was followed continuously was in the single flying lap qualifying format (2003-2005), although qualifying was not broadcast in New Zealand between 1999 and 2005. This is not to say a viewer can not invest in, or identify with a particular driver and follow their progress throughout the race. However, this process will be not assisted by the sustained televisual coverage of any one driver. At the circuit such a process is also elusive as the driver is seen hurtling past the spectating point but then disappears from view for the rest of lap (and hence the spectator, like the television viewer, is also reliant on footage via the big screen).

⁶ Of course, there are moments when the star image is more accessible, such as at the specific race track through both mediation on the big screens and during the drivers' parade for 'live' attendees, such as at Canada in 2005 (DVD Example 4). In fact, through my own attendance at the Australian Grand Prix (2002-2004), I personally observed their preparation for the drivers' photo, parade and during the 30 minute grid formation prior to the race start from my seat in the Fangio Grandstand while, at the 2006 event, I also attended an autograph signing session where Jenson Button, Anthony Davidson, Nick Heidfeld and Jacques Villeneuve were present (DVD Example 6). Moreover, there are clearly the images of drivers outside of Grands Prix; such as in magazines, posters and on the internet. Nevertheless, in each of these realms the driver is still primarily represented in his commodified racing overalls or associated attire which, collectively, predominantly conceals rather than displays his body.

⁷ If provided, the racing number and driver's name is a relatively small decal, such as placing the driver's name on the side of the airbox (which becomes indiscernible during televised coverage). The most significant and overt disruption to the absence of a driver's name was used on occasion by McLaren when races, such as at France, Canada or Britain, banned tobacco logos. Hence, the 'West' cigarette livery was replaced by branding the cars with either 'Mika' (Hakkinen) or 'David' (Coulthard) between 1998 and 2001, or post-2001 with 'David', 'Kimi' (Raikkonen) or 'Juan'

(Pablo Montoya) dependent on who was driving the car in a given year, while clearly offering an identificatory mechanism for the particular drivers on these exceptional occasions.

⁸ Of course, Dyer is aware that this problematises the role of rebel women, suggesting that Jane Fonda, for example, oscillates in terms of the extent and the assuredness of her rebellion.

Furthermore, he acknowledges that it remains inconclusive whether to simply exclude females from the rebel category; there is, for example, a separate ‘independent woman’ typology.

⁹ For example, the famous lines from *The Wild One* - “what are you rebelling against, Johnny?” to which Marlon Brando responds, “Whaddya got?”

¹⁰ Roberts (2007) also appears to have mistaken Turkey for the 2007 European Grand Prix at the Nurburgring in Germany, where Alonso’s stubble was more prominent.

CHAPTER TWO

Structured Mobility, the Slippery Subject and Formula One

This chapter will introduce what will be a core concept for the thesis as a whole – that of *structured mobility*. Further, it will be suggested that ‘structured mobility’ needs to be understood as ‘layered’ and that three layers, the territorial, the textual and the autoethnographically evoked subjective layer, need to be examined in relation to each other. The separation of text, audience and meaning in many theoretical and methodological approaches will be critiqued in order to suggest that a reassemblage of these layers is needed in the end. In this chapter, Grossberg’s (1992b) concept of ‘structured mobility’ is introduced to explore the broader structure/agency debate concerning the role of either structural formations or subjects as ‘agents’ in shaping, influencing and *determining* our contemporary social reality. The conditions of social reality are also examined in the context of the contemporary global media, and we will map how ‘structured mobility’ can inform ‘our’ understanding and experience of social reality and can explain Villeneuve’s construction as a point of tension between structure and agency (e.g., his alleged ‘maverick’ status evoked in the previous chapter). These explanations of ‘structured mobility’ and contemporary social reality will also inform the remainder of the thesis in relation to the mediation of Formula One (Chapters Three, Four and Five), Formula One fandom (Chapter Six) and through reassembling my experiences of fandom in light of the traces of Villeneuve’s maverick status that permeate the thesis more broadly (Chapter Seven). In the final section of this chapter we will outline the ‘bricolage’ of mixed methods utilised to construct this research project. As a context for that, we begin this

chapter with a discussion of ‘structured mobility’ and the broader structure/agency debate. The following material will be heavily dependent on Grossberg’s work.

Structure and Agency

Grossberg (1992b) argues that “there is no single structure which stitches every relationship, every practice and every identity into place; there is no pattern indelibly etched into the fabric of history” (p. 99). Conversely, evoking Marx, Grossberg (1992b) also notes that “people are never simply free to produce any articulation imaginable...for if human beings make history, it is always under conditions that they do not control” (p. 114). These perspectives capture the essence of what is commonly known as the structure/agency debate concerning, on the one hand, the role of structures (i.e., social, cultural, political, economic and historical formations) and, on the other hand, the role of human subjects as actors or agents in defining and shaping their reality within the given circumstances of contemporary life in the social world. Grossberg views structuralist approaches as too ‘determining’ in relation to the assumed certainty and universality of structures and their effects on social reality, as well as often not acknowledging the complexity and contradictions either ingrained within such structures or in terms of how they implicate, integrate or impose themselves on human subjects/agents within such formations. However, alternately, human agency is often unrealistically celebrated as a site of resistance (especially within accounts of everyday life), in which human actors actively take control of ‘their’ lives and, allegedly, operate unrestrained and seemingly oblivious to any ‘imposing’ structural formations. Grossberg champions neither perspective, instead advocating a cultural theory of ‘structured mobility’ which merges broader concepts of politics and power (e.g., structural theories) with an awareness of

passion (the notion of affect rather than simply agency) in contemporary life. For Grossberg (1992b), this requires an analysis of “particular configurations of practices” (p. 45), and relies on contextuality and a “materialist theory of effectivity” (p. 46) to explore the complexities and contradictions embedded within structural/subjectivist interrelationships, especially within popular culture. It is from this theoretical perspective that we will map how ‘structured mobility’ and “particular configurations of practices” (Grossberg, 1992b, p. 45) play out in general terms, before further developing the notion of ‘structured mobility’ through practices specific to Formula One mediation, stardom and fandom (as well as other instances of contemporary mediated sport) in the remainder of the thesis.

Structures

We have loosely located social, cultural, political, economic and historical formations within structural theories of social reality. Together, these formations shape and influence our contemporary social reality. Grossberg (1992b) cautions, however, against assuming the intrinsic relationship between a structure and its presupposed effects. As Grossberg (1992b) argues, “one must also question a more basic assumption: a principle of interiority or essentialism which locates any practice in a structure of necessity and guarantees its effects even before it has been enacted” (p. 52). For example, although in contemporary societies capitalism pervades and shapes familiar processes of commercialism, commodification and consumption, the actual set of experiences associated with these practices is not preset and is not as universal as might first be assumed. Therefore, while useful for analysing a range of socio-economic practices and relations, the determining effects of commodities described by Marx (1976) are

not universal; having particular historical, temporal and spatial flexibilities which are also impacted on by other social, cultural and political formations. So labelling Villeneuve a 'commodity' does not actually take us very far in itself. Moreover, these varied practices and effects variably impact on subjects, ranging from the hailing of 'individuals' and interpellating (Althusser, 1977) them into specific relationships as subjects (e.g., 'determined' by capitalist ideologies and socio-economic positions, such as the 'exploited' labourer, 'duped' consumer, etc.) to, potentially, reinscribing them with levels of agency through the resources, capital or commodities available to them (e.g., the clichéd consumer 'empowered' by the use and/or pleasure derived from consumer goods). Hence, while Grossberg (1992b) recognises that "economics (in a narrow sense) must always be addressed in the first instance" (p. 100) due to the material conditions (e.g., capitalist, commercial and consumptive) of most contemporary societies, he also counters (1992b) "we cannot assume that, somehow, economic relations have already defined the outcome, nor that they will somehow resolve all the contradictions in the end" (p. 55). Significantly, Grossberg (1992b) extends this approach to all totalising and universalising structuralist theories, noting that power cannot be "reduced to one single system of social difference" (p. 100) in order to reject a conceptualisation of social reality derived solely through an explanatory framework of, for example, desire (Freud, 1986), capitalism (Marx, 1976), ideology (Althusser, 1977) or socio-cultural identity and difference (e.g., theories of race, class or gender).

Grossberg's (1992b) repudiation of grand theories or 'metanarratives' of social reality reflects part of a broader 'postmodern' epistemological challenge to previously dominant modes of theorising. As we know, postmodernism (articulated here as both a cultural theory and attitude) critiques the modernist

perspective of foundationalism, and the notions of rationalism, progress and universalism dominant during the Enlightenment (Lyon, 1994; Owen, 1997). Enlightenment foundationalism believed in progress and, through the application of scientific knowledge, asserted that the world was able to be captured, known and explained due to its givenness and the ability of rational thought to know and interpret it (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Giddens, 1974, 1979b; Popper, 1968). Conversely, Lyotard (1984) defined the postmodern as “incredulity towards metanarratives” (p. xxiv), by which he meant scepticism towards the principles of reason, teleology and universalism inherent in foundationalism. Lyotard (1984) advocated that we “wage a war on totality” (p. 82) to recognise the loss of ‘certainty’ within meaning construction, to allow for a plurality of language and to avoid the (re)production of metanarratives, discourses and universalistic claims in research and knowledge production.¹ More pertinently for our purposes here, Lemert (1997) notes that “postmodernity is that culture in which those metanarratives are no longer considered completely legitimate and, thus, are not universally held to be completely credible” (p. 39), while Pringle (2003) observes, “postmodern social theory can, therefore, be thought of as a rejection of the search for universal ‘social’ truth” (p. 23). Of course, postmodernism has also been challenged and critiqued as a social/cultural theory in the form of accusations of overdone pessimism, a loss of ‘values’ and a perceived undermining of knowledge, coherence and rigour in ‘proper’ academic research (e.g., Habermas, 1987; Jarvie & Maguire, 1994; Nixon, 1994; Schroeder, 1997; Simons & Billig, 1994; Strinati, 2004); accusations that postmodern research can not always defend itself against (e.g., see Kohn & Sydnor’s (1998) banal, relativist and unstructured ‘postmodern’ ramble about their daily encounters with ‘the hegemony of sport’).

Grossberg's work shares a postmodern stance of an 'anti-essentialist' approach to grand theories, but importantly for the present project, also extends beyond epistemological critique to analyse the contextual and effectual structures, articulations and relations of specific (social) practices. Thus, while asserting that analyses of politics and passion (and more broadly, articulations of structure/agency) within popular culture cannot be "guaranteed in advance" (Grossberg, 1992b, p. 53), 'structured mobility' as a concept simultaneously recognises the continuing utility of structuralist modes of social theory.

Grossberg (1992b) suggests that,

Structures have to be located within concrete contexts, both in terms of their own social and historical determination, and in terms of the ways their effects are articulated. They are real, but their reality is defined by their articulations at specific levels of abstraction or concreteness. (p. 58)

This is an important conceptual signpost for the present project. Grossberg's 'challenge' is not a rejection of 'totalising' theories; rather that grand- or 'meta'-theories of social reality need to be located in 'concrete contexts' to understand how these various social, cultural, political, economic and historical formations impact upon, influence, limit or facilitate degrees of human subjectivity and/or agency. For example, the historical specificity of structures, practices and effects needs to be acknowledged on both a broader abstract level (e.g., language, relations of power, social identity, visual cues and codes, etc., all antedate and need to be 'learnt' by the individual/subject – see Bird, 2003; Butler, 1990, 1993; Foucault, 1977, 1980, 2000; Hall, 1996; Heidegger, 1962; Lacan, 1977; McLuhan, 1964; Muller & Richardson, 1982), while also being interrogated within their specific, concrete contexts. 'Gender', for example, universally

‘functions’ as a categorisation for social identity and/or difference, yet it clearly operates in disproportionate ways within various social, economic, political, cultural and historical climates and contexts which require specific articulation. This will become more evident through the discussion of the problematic gendered roles and divisions in contemporary Formula One (Chapter Three), which are clearly not ‘generic’ or ‘inherent’ to all contemporary sport.

Agency

In a pendulum swing in the other direction, as it were, rediscoveries of the subject as agent can become celebratory in assigning an ‘empowering’ status to agency that locates individuals in curious bubbles seemingly independent of the surrounding structural formations (e.g., as momentarily ahistorical, asocial and/or apolitical beings). Evident for example in Sartre’s (1991a, 1991b) late-career attempt to reconcile Marxism and existentialism, individuals tend to be framed in a voluntaristic manner, conceived as living in bubbles where they can adopt practices through ‘free will’ or of their own volition. Problematically, what is jettisoned is any consideration of how power infiltrates every aspect of contemporary life and circulates in every context, practice and relationship. The term ‘subject’ becomes crucial to relocating individuals more subtly and usefully within the structure/agency debate. Mansfield (2000) defines the concept of the subject as,

An abstract or general principle that defies our separation into distinct selves and that encourages us to imagine that...[we are] sharers of common experience. In this way, the subject is always linked to something outside of it – an idea or principle or the society of other subjects...One is

always subject *to* or *of* something. The word subject, therefore, proposes that the self is not a separate and isolated entity. (p. 3, italics in original)

Such a relationship is clear in the cultural practices which ‘produce’ the subject, as with Althusser’s (1977) notion of interpellation, in which an ‘individual’ is hailed to take up a particular subject position and/or cultural identity. For example, I am hailed to recognise ‘my’ cultural identity as a New Zealander in relation to ‘my’ nation-state, while being interpellated into a range of social practices and relationships through this cultural identity, a perspective I develop later in this chapter in relation to globalisation. Furthermore, Foucault (1977, 1980, 2000) observes that ‘individuals’ have ‘subject’ positions constructed for them via discourses. Discourses not only construct, circulate and legitimise knowledge (and, by extension, power) but, also, produce specific discursive practices for the ‘subject’ (e.g., Foucault’s bio-power, which categorises, disciplines and regulates the ‘subject’ via specific discourses, such as medical, legal, scientific, etc.). Nevertheless, Foucault (1988) also recognises a degree of agency or autonomy for the ‘subject’ (a position not clearly articulated by Althusser, 1977), with Foucault (1988) suggesting that ‘technologies of the self’ allow the subject to negotiate various positions in relation to discursive practices and power relations which construct and constrain subjectivity (see also Markula & Pringle, 2006). Foucault’s recognition of both the forces external to the individual (i.e., the structural formations and discourses which the individual is ‘subject’ to) and the possibility for a limited but none the less real sense of human agency, continues to be influential on notions of the subject, power and agency. For example, ‘postmodern’ theorists point to fragmentation, destabilisation, discontinuity and fluidity as characteristics of a ‘postmodern’ subjectivity (see

Jameson, 1991; Lemert, 1997; Lyon, 1994; McRobbie, 1994; Rail, 1998; Rodaway, 1995; Walkerdine, 1995). Therefore, the 'subject' becomes an 'agent' of a restricted or scavenged bricolage or, as Eagleton (1996) surmises, "if the postmodern subject is determined, however, it is also strangely free-floating...if this subject is slippery, it is because it acts as the friction between clashing cultural forces (pp. 90-91).

Villeneuve's approach to racing provides, on a fairly straightforward and literal level at least, an example of the 'slippery subject' (codified here as maverick). Widely regarded as a risk-taker, 'daredevil' or 'macho racer' in Formula One circles (Benson, 2000; Donaldson, 2001), danger and the possibility of death were emphasised as part of Villeneuve's attraction to racing. For example, early in his Formula One career Villeneuve is quoted as saying, "I also need the danger. I need to be in that situation where I know one mistake could kill me" (Villeneuve in Shirley, 2000, p. 130). Villeneuve's pleasure in risk-taking and his regular dissent on proposed safety and technological regulations positioned him, albeit somewhat literally, as a 'slippery subject' within the structural formations of Formula One. Dismissive of the encroachment of proposed or imposed safety measures by the sport's governing body, the FIA, as well as the acquiescence of his fellow drivers to such changes, Villeneuve is quoted as observing that, "the risks drivers take now are 10 times less than they were a few years back and we make 10 times more money" (Donaldson, 2001, p. 55). In particular, Villeneuve acted "as the friction between clashing cultural forces" (Eagleton, 1996, p. 91) in relation to, on the one hand, the safety discourses being promulgated and imposed by the FIA, as well as on the other, the socio-cultural expectations and behaviour of the other drivers in relation to his attitude and conduct (e.g., as the 'maverick', 'risk-taker' or 'dissenter'). Thus, his

views were reportedly considered as a ‘death-wish’ by fellow driver Damon Hill in 1997 (Collings, 1998; Vergeer, 2004) and marked him as different within the sport, with Shirley (2000) suggesting that he was derided by the FIA, some fellow drivers and sections of the press as “an arrogant adrenaline junkie, a space cadet, a shock jock, a suicide case” (p. 142) due to his distinctive stance and attitudes. Nevertheless, Villeneuve persistently remained as a slippery subject within the Formula One infrastructure. He continued to act as an off-track dissenter, in spite of an early-career official reprimand from the FIA in 1997 for his use of bad language after being quoted in the German magazine, *Der Spiegel*, describing the proposed grooved tyre regulations for 1998 as ‘shit’ (Collings, 1998; Donaldson, 2001). Furthermore, Villeneuve provided an on-track display of bravado through his fearlessness, ‘hard-charging’ driving style (Hughes, 2004) and self-imposed annual challenge of taking the notorious Eau Rouge section at the Spa-Francorchamps circuit in Belgium ‘flat’ (i.e., without lifting off the accelerator),² despite ‘spectacular’ crashes at over 180mph in both 1998 and 1999 (Donaldson, 2001; Shirley, 2000). However, as I have noted elsewhere, new electronic systems and ‘driver-aids’ (e.g., traction-control) post-2001 allowed every driver to take Eau Rouge ‘flat’, with these technological impositions “forcing Villeneuve to adapt his driving style and relinquish elements of his risk-taking until his retirement in 2006” (Sturm, 2007, p. 206), reinforcing the literal notion of Villeneuve as a ‘slippery subject’ that had to be contained within the structural formation of Formula One (points that are expanded upon in Chapter Three). This is still, however, something of an overly literal reading of the phrase ‘slippery subject’.

Structuration, Morphogenetic Cycles, 'Mobilities' and Reflexivity

It is necessary to move beyond Eagleton's evocation of the 'slippery subject' if we are to find theoretical and methodological means for detailing the specifics at work around Villeneuve as a revealing instance in the domain of sport.

Grossberg's (1992b) notion of 'structured mobility' affords a more fluid and dynamic reconceptualisation of the structure/agency binary than has been traced thus far. In particular, 'structured mobility' facilitates the recognition of social individuals navigating the structured terrain of daily life but conflates the inherent structure/agency binary by privileging neither the *determining* power of structures on the one hand, nor the *autonomous* individual *actively* creating his/her social world on the other. While Grossberg arguably offers a compelling theorisation of the overlap, co-existence and co-dependency of these often apparently oppositional explanatory terms, his contribution should not be read as providing a possible resolution to the binary. Indeed, that is not an intended objective of this thesis, as attempts at reconciliation will remain arbitrary and problematic in any academic exercise concerned with social power relations. Nevertheless, Grossberg's (1992b) central premise seemingly provides us with fertile ground for conceiving of a post structure/agency divide. First, however, other key approaches that complement and advance social theories of daily life beyond reductive structure/agency binaries are now traced, before returning to Grossberg's recognition of mobility within the structure.

Giddens (1979a) offered a significant attempt to marry the two opposing terms through his structuration model. Conceived as a 'duality of structure', Giddens sought to theorise a role for both structures and human 'agents' while being seemingly intent on privileging neither by implying that action and structure presuppose each other. Thus, Giddens' duality approach collapsed structure into

agency and vice versa, analysing both the historical features that reproduce social structures and how agents exist within these structured conditions (e.g., agents instantiating ‘power’ through action, albeit within a social structure). Despite his admirable work, ultimately Giddens’ favours the structure within structuration theory; defining structures as a continuous process which also provide the conditions for society. Conversely, human agents are secondary despite his efforts to grant them a degree of agency (e.g., he suggests that there is a mutual constitution of action and structure and, ontologically, these presuppose each other). Most problematic in Giddens’ structuration theory is the absence of a spatial *and* temporal dimension. While Grossberg (1992b) recognises a fluid mobility that is anchored within specific temporal and spatial moments of the structure, Giddens’ champions social continuity, identifying continuity in how structures operate and are enacted. Therefore, his model offers fluidity but in a reductive manner, conceiving continuity to be both static and remaining constant over time. Clearly, this renders social/individual mobility and navigation within structuration theory problematic too.

Most significantly, Giddens’ fails to admit the specificity of practices and concrete contexts by neither acknowledging nor integrating the temporal within his approach. Both Archer (1985, 1988) and Carlsnaes (1992) are highly critical of this absence in structuration theory. For example, Archer (1985) notes in relation to Giddens,

What he misses is time as an actual variable in theory. In consequence Giddens asserts that ‘social systems only exist through their continuous structuration in the course of time,’ but is unable to provide any theoretical purchase on their *structuring over time*. (p. 72, italics in original)

Instead, Archer and Carlsnaes advance a *morphogenetic* model in which the temporal *is* the locus for understanding what Carlsnaes (1992) refers to as the ‘*dynamic interplay* between agents and structures” (p. 255, italics in original). Focusing on morphogenetic cycles, both authors reconfigure structures in relation to intervals and the specificity of systematic properties, rather than the assumed continuity of Giddens’ structuration. Archer (1985) suggests that, “the morphogenetic perspective is not only dualistic but sequential, dealing in endless cycles of structural conditioning/social interaction/structural elaboration – thus unravelling the dialectical interplay between structure and action” (p. 61). Essentially, morphogenetic cycles seek to account for the variables in structures (and in a pluralistic, not universal or unilateral sense), by considering the interplay of structures and the structuring of agents over time through analyses of specific temporal structure and action relationships (e.g., Carlsnaes’ considers Sweden’s contemporary conceptualisation[s] of ‘neutrality’ through past and present Swedish foreign policies). Thus, morphogenetic cycles recognise that such relationships are interactive and dynamic, while affording the analysis of what Carlsnaes (1992) terms “a series of complex, reciprocal agent-structure interactions” (p. 266).

As will be evident, the morphogenetic cyclic approach espoused by Archer (1985, 1988) and Carlsnaes (1992) shares Grossberg’s (1992b) orientation to temporal and context specific analyses, while clearly advancing beyond previously static (and often binary) models. While morphogenetic cycles provide purchase for interrogating these ‘dynamic interplays’, the actual application of this model seems more abstract than Grossberg’s structured mobility. For example, Grossberg explicates the navigation and anchoring in specific moments in daily life through the concept of affect (and the accompanying set of theoretical

terms, such as investment, intensity and excess, through which affect is enabled, enacted and circulates – see later discussion here and Chapters Six and Seven). Archer's and Carlsnaes' theorisations are less clear in practice (although Carlsnaes tries to transpose this interrelationship to foreign policy analysis as a means to elaborate on the array of situational-structural factors that intervene in foreign policy and hence why temporal and context-specific factors need to be taken into account). Nevertheless, while the temporal dimension and specificity of morphogenetic cycles affords fluidity to the traditionally statically conceived interrelationship, isolating the temporal in such analyses is also fraught with problems. For example, Urry (2000) is critical of the explicit temporal focus of morphogenetic cycles. In particular, Urry argues that morphogenetic temporal analyses actually problematise time for it is always conceived as linear (e.g., the pre- and post- date focus) and undercuts the oscillating nature of this 'dynamic interplay'. Furthermore, he suggests that the distinction between time and the 'power' that these different time formations can exert is not accounted for in morphogenetic cycles. That is, Urry (2000) conceives of distinctions between various forms of 'time'; noting, for example, the temporal regularity of 'clock-time' which tends to standardise, timetable and potentially constrain activities, or 'instantaneous time', and the compression of time (and space) via the instantaneous speed of emerging information and communication technologies, a point we will return to later in this chapter. Finally, Urry is flummoxed by the eventual downplaying of space and spatial relations in these temporal-driven cycles. In fact, he offers an important theoretical readjustment that complements Grossberg's (1992b) work.

For Urry (2000) mobility (and its plural, mobilities) is today reconstituting the social world and moving us away from inert models of stability and

understanding (e.g., class, nation-based, economic and broader social structures - these still exist but in a less certain and *deterministic* way). In fact, Urry (2000) argues that the hybrid flows (in both a spatial and temporal sense) of individuals, as well as images, technologies, ideas and other 'objects' (e.g., monies, corporations, wastes, etc.) are "materially reconstructing the 'social as society' into the 'social as mobility'" (p. 2). Because these flows operate across and through numerous scapes and networks, he suggests that notions of power become vexed; it is dense, complex and often contradictory organisations of temporal/spatial relations that 'govern' or organise these mobilities. As such, Urry proffers a discontinuous process of 'roaming' within the domains of civil society, the state, nature and the global, as constitutive of the twenty-first century. Hence, rather than a stable, reproducible social realm, he likens contemporary mobility to a distinction between 'gardening and game-keeping'. Urry (2000) notes that,

The new global order involves a return to the gamekeeper state and away from that of the gardener. The gamekeeper was concerned with regulating mobilities, with ensuring that there was sufficient stock for hunting in a particular site but not with the detailed cultivation of each animal in each particular place. Animals roamed around and beyond the estate, like the roaming hybrids that currently roam in and across national borders. (p. 189)

Thus, in what he labels a "post-societal, post-gardening epoch" (Urry, 2000, p. 189), the state and its 'society' are no longer carefully tended to through explicit ordering, regulation and legislation (the gardening analogy) and, although some of these aspects clearly persist, the production and control of corporeal

mobility is less overt. In contrast, social individuals are less inhibited to ‘roam’ local and global territories, such as through the process of *automobility*, in which private vehicles allow individuals to traverse public spaces in a less deterministic fashion (e.g., public roads govern ‘where’ you may go but not necessarily when, how or what your final destination will be). Additionally, information and communication flows further contribute to this sense of mobilities.

Re-grounding us in the broader collapse of the old structure/agency debate, Urry (2000) observes that,

In sociological thought the millions of individual iterative actions are largely subsumed under the notion of ‘structure’ (such as that of class structure, or the structure of gender relations or social structure). Such a structure does not then have to be further examined; it is ‘ordered’ and will be reproduced through continuous iteration. (p. 206)

However, Urry (2000) counters that iteration over time may “generate unexpected, unpredictable and chaotic outcomes” (p. 207) and, therefore, it is “a variety of human and non-human actants that constitute the typical mobile, roaming hybrids” (p. 207). While Grossberg (1992b) does not jettison the social as relatively fixed structures so readily as Urry, there is considerable overlap in their work in terms of social forms of mobility, the salience of temporal and spatial factors, and how these forms of mobility disrupt and deterritorialise relationships, engagements and daily lives (all of which will be picked up in relation to Grossberg in due course).

Additionally, Archer (2007) shares Urry’s orientation towards the increasing mobility of social individuals (although he is not directly acknowledged in her work). In particular, Archer’s emphasis is both on the decline of routine and the

role that reflexivity plays in guiding and shaping individuals in contemporary times. Archer (2007) suggests that, “reflexivity is the means by which we make our way through the world. This applies to the social world in particular, which can no longer be approached through embodied knowledge, tacit routines, or traditional custom and practice alone” (p. 5). In essence, she is arguing for an increased awareness of reflexivity as a personalised process that, while couched in broader socio-cultural structures and contexts, also allows individuals to have a deliberative and ‘active’ role in ruminating on their specific cluster of concerns. Hence, Archer (2007) posits that social individuals have the “reflexive ability to design (and redesign) many of the projects they pursue” (p. 7) through their internal conversations and the deliberative elements that reflexivity contains and proffers (again, embedded in specific socio-cultural moments). The deliberative properties of reflexivity and internal conversations, which share ‘moments’ with Grossberg’s (1992b) core concept of affect, will be revisited later in the thesis to illuminate both the intensities and strategies that underpin fandom as a social process and to further break down the structure/agency binary (Chapter Seven). In fact, a mapping of my fandom’s trajectories at that point will ‘apply’ all the theoretical insights derived from the present discussion. For our present purposes, though, Archer’s emphasis on a decline of routinisation has a significant bearing on our approach.

Archer (2007) provides the succinct proposition, “no reflexivity; no society” (p. 25), espousing a need to reconceptualise sociological reflexivity not as a concept of self but as pertaining to a ‘sense of self’. Nevertheless, she is equivocal in her alignment with other sociological accounts of a contemporary society marked by rapid change and transformations (e.g., Bauman, 1998; Beck, 1992; Beck, Giddens & Lash, 1994); some of which are traced later in this

chapter. In fact, despite not referring to Urry (2000), Archer implicitly supports his assertion of a nomadic or ‘roaming’ existence by emphasising the decrease in routine action or routinisation in contemporary times. That is, she alludes to the ‘traditional’ structures that once governed societies now being marked by discontinuity, destabilisation and ongoing restructuring (e.g., in terms of kinship, family, communities; or theoretical classifications such as class, status, gender, race, etc.). Moreover, Archer (2007) asserts that,

Reflexivity depends upon a subject who has sufficient personal identity to know what he or she cares about and to design the ‘projects’ that they hope (fallibly) will realise their concerns within society...Deliberation consists in people evaluating their situations in the light of their concerns and evaluating their projects in light of their circumstances. (p. 34)

However, many of the other contemporary evocations of the ‘reflexive’ tend to under-examine agential deliberations. That is, these ‘conflationists’ predominantly privilege structural powers over agential properties. For example, Archer takes issue with Beck’s (1992) and Beck et al’s (1994) notions of reflexivity and ‘reflexive modernization’ respectively. In both accounts, individuals are characterised as having an anxious or ambivalent personhood, framed as subjects of social constraints, circumstances and consequences, and seemingly have no resources or *responsibility* to navigate their social terrain. Moreover, Archer suggests that Bourdieu’s (1977, 1984, 1990, 1992, 1993) notion of habitus and individual dispositions fails to adequately address reflexivity in contemporary society by being contingent on routinised practices and embodied

processes that prolong contextual continuity. If we are to employ any of Archer's critique, we must first consider Bourdieu's position carefully.

Bourdieu (1977, 1990, 1992) theorises a relationship based on 'individual' selfhood, in terms of the set of (durable and transposable) dispositions, practices and knowledge which form an individual's habitus. However, Bourdieu is not assuming that habitus is derived via volition or free will; rather structural formations and the cultural trajectories of an individual/subject (e.g., inclusive of but not limited to class, race, gender, geography, history, etc.) construct the habitus. Additionally, "the habitus is always constituted in moments of practice" (Webb, Schirato & Danaher, 2002; p. 38), being called upon and 'enacted' in various guises in relation to broader social contexts, structures and practices. Hence people with a particular cultural identity, such as a New Zealanders, may have similar dispositions towards certain sports rather than others (e.g., a knowledge of and preference for rugby in comparison to, say, handball), although clearly not all 'individual' dispositions will be the same. For Bourdieu, the broader societal context is also significant to understand how habitus and the interrelationship with humans as potential 'agents' play out. Bourdieu notes that the social world is divided into specific cultural fields, each of a kind which Schirato and Webb (2004) refer to as "a discrete area of social practice" (p. 195), and each with particular structural formations and laws of functioning (e.g., the cultural 'fields' of business, media and sport are distinctive, with specific formations, institutions, knowledge and rules in operation). Cultural fields are also fluid and dynamic, interacting with and impacting upon other cultural fields (e.g., despite its 'distinctiveness', the 'field' of sport has become increasingly influenced by the fields of business and media in contemporary times, points developed further in relation to Formula One in Chapters Three and Six).

Furthermore, Bourdieu also theorises the role of various forms of ‘capital’ and ‘literacy’ that assume significance within specific cultural fields, but we will hold off on exploring this particular line of thought until the fandom chapters (Chapters Six and Seven).

In contradistinction to these concepts, Archer (2007) asserts that “the new array of shifting, temporary and precarious positions is too fluid to be consolidated into correlated dispositions, which are inherited and shared by those similarly positioned” (p. 38). Thus, even though Bourdieu conceives of the transferable and transposable nature of individual dispositions in the habitus, Archer questions how readily this strategically can be achieved due to rapid changes that both exceed acquired forms of knowledge and capital, and move beyond acquired habitual practices and routines. Moreover, while Bourdieu is insistent on containing human action within societal structures (i.e., the habitus as representative of human subjectivity), Archer counters that this external orientation seemingly leaves people with no distance at all from their own habitat for reflexive deliberations on their circumstances. Such reflexivity may not be easily achieved but neither, says Archer, should it be theorised out of existence at the outset. More broadly, both Archer and Urry seem to agree on discontinuous and oscillating forms of social mobility or mobilities that do not simply ‘fix’ individuals to specific, universalised and continuous forms of socialisation. There is both a concession and a resistance to Bourdieu here. Both authors concede that forms of social containment are real but argue that they do not close down all mobility today. Thus, while the adaptable quality of habitus is acknowledged, its total orientation towards contextual continuities and routinisation is disputed by both authors, who suggest that human ‘subjects’ are not absolutely pinned to historically-static and culturally-determined social positions and have an agential

capacity to mobilise themselves in their social terrain more flexibly than Bourdieu's habitus and dispositions allow. But it is Grossberg who provides us with the better evidence for such positions.

'Structured Mobility' and Affective Relations

Grossberg's (1992b) 'structured mobility' shares Archer's (2007) and Urry's (2000) theoretical remobilization of *determined* subjects while, through his concept of affect, he also queries the assumptions about collective subjectivities that some scholars, such as Bourdieu (1984) with his notion of taste, evoke. In particular, Grossberg, (1992b) advances the term 'structured mobility' to explain this structure/agency interrelationship, suggesting that the concept "defines the spaces and places, the stabilities and mobilities within which people live" (p. 107). Thus, he finds trajectories (Bourdieu, 1992), apparatuses (Foucault, 1977) or vectors/planes (Deleuze & Guattari, 1977) useful for mapping social reality and the 'configurations of practices' of individual subjects/agents. Such layered maps facilitate the analysis of cultural fields in a multidirectional and multidimensional capacity, especially the mechanisms which construct social difference within and outside specific fields (e.g., 'differentiating machines' which construct binaries of self/other, normal/abnormal, etc.) and locate the individual (e.g., 'territorializing machines' to explore the significance of time, places and spaces in people's lives). In this vein, Grossberg (1992b) argues that 'structured mobility' incorporates the role of differentiation and territorialisation for "these produce daily life as the way in which people live the always limited freedom to stop in and move through the various realities within which their identifications, identities and investments are mutually constructed" (p. 106).

Focusing on popular culture and daily life, Grossberg observes that ‘social individuals’ occupy diverse positions and roles in their engagement with popular culture (primarily through texts), as well as in the practices and routines of ‘their’ daily lives. Rather than being reduced to a binary of either ‘empowered’ agents or ‘disempowered’ subjects, however, Grossberg suggests that ‘structured mobility’ merges these structure/agency distinctions and recognises that power is more fluid and dynamic in its circulation, as too are the very concepts of ‘subjectivity’ or ‘agency’. Grossberg (1992b) argues that,

A different conception of power would acknowledge that it operates at every level and in every domain of human life. It is neither an abstract universal logic nor a subjective experience. It is both limiting and productive: producing differences, shaping relations, structuring identities and hierarchies, delimiting complexity, drawing boundaries, reducing contradictions, but also enabling practices and identifications and empowering social individuals. (p. 96)

These observations broadly reproduce the central theses of both Foucault and Bourdieu. For example, Foucault conceived power to be neither static nor imposed from top-down (e.g., channelled by structural formations) but, rather, as circulating within and around the social world; with discourses and associated discursive practices constructing, constraining (as well as potentially rescinding) knowledge, power and ‘subject’ positions for the individual. Similarly, Bourdieu’s work reveals how ‘individual’ dispositions can also be ‘shared’ through habitus and cultural trajectories, while power relations are never guaranteed nor fixed within the social world due to the disproportionate means

through which forms of capital operate, fluctuate and enhance/decrease value within diverse cultural fields.

Significantly, however, Grossberg offers a point of departure from both Foucault and Bourdieu by seeking to ‘reinvest’ pleasure and passion into analyses of the social, the individual and structural formations. This offers a key point of orientation for the thesis. Grossberg (1992b) suggests that,

The questions I want to pose involve the relationship between popular culture - the popular culture people are offered, the popular culture they care about and the popular culture they reject – and politics. How does each inform and shape the other?...These questions go to the very heart of the significance of culture and of that part of people’s lives which seem most personal: tastes, pleasures, commitments. But such domains are not outside of the social and political arenas. Nor are their meanings and relationships transparently available to critics. (p. 37)

Focusing on popular culture and daily life, Grossberg observes that a focus on *meaning* has been a dominant critical mode for analysing human reality and, consequently, that culture has often been reduced to texts and lived reality has been reduced to constructions of meanings. Grossberg reminds us that this is far too simplistic, as meaning is never innate but, rather, complex, constructed, contradictory and multiple in its variations. In particular, he points to the construction of ‘the audience’ as a shared taste or shared identity, a construction which occurs often both prior to and/or outside of any particular interaction with a text. Problematically, Grossberg notes, this creates a unified audience either in

relation to the text (taste) or independently of the text (identity), while forgoing an analysis of how texts also construct their audiences.

For Bourdieu (1984) and Bourdieu-inspired scholars, taste is a significant marker for distinction, contributing to an individual's capital (and broader habitus) within a cultural field through his/her acquired 'tastes' (e.g., high-culture musical 'tastes' would probably include classical and operatic forms in contrast to 'middle-class' tastes in rock, pop and possibly jazz, or even supposedly 'working-class' tastes for punk, metal and/or rap). Furthermore, Bourdieu-influenced analyses also tend to provide an external reading of 'individual' identity (e.g., in relation to their social or class position) as an explanatory framework with, in this instance, the above musical genres being linked, albeit arbitrarily, to a specific social identity within class. Although not attacking Bourdieu directly (and clearly Bourdieu is not the only theorist or theoretical approach providing these classifications), Grossberg critiques the use of either shared taste or identity in analyses of the audience. As he (1992b) argues,

Taste reveals nothing about how people connect into the texts, and the fact that a group of people share a taste for some texts does not in fact guarantee that their common taste describes a common relationship. Taste merely describes people's different abilities to find pleasure in a particular body of texts rather than others... On the other hand, if an audience fraction is defined externally, by a common set of interests and experiences related in some way to its social position, how can such simple identifications deal with the complexity of an individual's social identity? Since any individual occupies a number of different social

positions....how can one possibly know which social position is most relevant in constructing a specific audience and in understanding their relation to a specific text? (p. 42)

Therefore, Grossberg proposes mapping how *affective* relationships operate within daily life. Affect encompasses the pleasures and passions of an individual while recognising that pleasure, like meaning, is also polysemic and cannot easily be delimited within a particular set of values or actions. For example, Grossberg notes that 'pleasure' may be conceived in relation to or response to the 'text', which itself is experienced through different degrees of intensity or investment (e.g., inclusive of happiness, enthrallment, but may also involve lack of interest, boredom, etc.), or can be from the activity surrounding the 'text', such as exertion or its lack.

While the concept of affect is examined in more detail later in the thesis as a means for analysing fandom (Chapters Six and Seven), a preliminary definition is required here. Grossberg (1992b) argues that, "affect identifies the strength of the investment which anchors people in particular experiences, practices, identities, meanings and pleasures but it also determines how invigorated people feel at any moment of their lives, their level of energy or passion." (p. 82). The 'anchoring of experience' is also crucial for Grossberg who suggests that affective relationships are an investment in reality, with affect locating the 'individual' in a particular set of social practices and relations (e.g., territorialization), while rendering social differentiation through the multiple affective relationships (e.g., formed, engaged in, rejected, etc.). Fandom is clearly a strong example of this process. For example, Formula One fandom brings diverse 'individuals' together which provides social differentiation in multiple ways. Therefore, on a macro-level, a social distinction operates between Formula One fans and non-fans (and

possibly extends to sport versus non-sport fans). Additionally, on a micro-level, more refined distinctions also exist, such as fan allegiances with specific Formula One teams and/or drivers, as well as fan access to and/or the visible display of Formula One merchandise. Formula One fandom also has numerous implications for territorialization through the array of communal practices and relations available to and engaged in by fans around the world. Therefore, time, space and place become significant for Formula One fandom in relation to whether fans can actually attend the 'live' Grand Prix location, what mediated form(s) Formula One is consumed through (e.g., live or delayed telecasts, the internet, radio, etc.), as well as the degrees of communality accorded and taken up (e.g., live telecasts at midnight on Sunday evenings in New Zealand are less conducive to social gatherings than a Sunday afternoon screening in Europe; nevertheless, a communal' aspect still underpins live telecasts due to the assumed global mediated community also tuning in simultaneously). Affect clearly inflects these social relationships also, in terms of the differing intensities and investments taken up, engaged in and/or demonstrated at specific moments by 'fans' (and even these 'moments' can differ, e.g., within a race, season or on other non-race specific occasions – see further discussion in Chapter Six).

Therefore, rather than a 'shared' taste or identity, Grossberg (1992b) notes that "affect has a real power over difference, a power to invest difference and to make certain differences matter in different ways" (p. 105). Grossberg's concept of 'structured mobility' and his use of 'affect' as a means to situate pleasure within a broader socio-cultural analysis of popular culture are key ideas that will shape the remainder of the thesis. In particular, the concept of affect will be drawn upon to analyse 'my' relationship with Villeneuve (the fan-star relationship) while examining the sense of 'structured mobility' which underpins

both Villeneuve's 'maverick' star status within Formula One and 'my' (social, communal, commodified, etc.) experience of fandom in Chapters Six and Seven.

Contemporary Social Reality: Images and Audiences

In the opening lines to his essay entitled 'postmodern virtualities', Poster (2001) identifies two significant developments in contemporary social reality. As Poster (2001) notes, "on the eve of the twenty-first century there have been two innovative discussions about the general conditions of life: one concerns a possible 'postmodern' culture and even society; the other concerns broad, massive changes in communications systems" (p. 71). In the following section of this chapter, I will develop notions of the 'postmodern', before then tracing some of these 'massive changes' in communication, in order to explore how the structure/agency debate and the notion of structured mobility play out in contemporary culture. The intention here is to locate the specific phenomenon of Formula One within this broader context.

The Postmodern and Postmodernity

It is now commonplace to note that our social world is in a state of flux, punctuated by rapid technological and social change (Archer, 2007; Lyon, 1994; McGuigan, 2006; Owen, 1997; Rail, 1998, 2002; Turner, 1990b; Urry, 2000). Indeed, many of these changes appear as rapid transformations rather than rational progressions, a conundrum aptly captured in Markula, Grant and Denison's (2001) articulation of contemporary 'postmodern' culture as "an ongoing ordered disorder, a continuous discontinuity" (p. 258). Moreover, aspects of bricolage, pastiche and ironic playfulness underpin the (re)combining of diverse elements into new social and cultural formations, with a blurring of styles and genres apparent in contemporary cultural forms (from hybrid architectures and eclectic

fashion to intertextual television shows) and even in signifying the nation, with Whannel (2008) noting an emerging ‘parodic playfulness’ in popular articulations of national identity in relation to sport (e.g., cricket fandom for international men’s teams, such as the English ‘Barmy Army’ supporters or the New Zealand ‘Beige Brigade’). Collectively, many of the authors cited above consider these social characteristics to be ‘postmodern’ while, as noted earlier, others deem the postmodern conceptualisation to be a redundant, reductive, clichéd or depthless approach either to analysing specific social conditions or as a general cultural theory. Featherstone (1988) suggests that,

Any reference to the term ‘postmodernism’ immediately exposes one to the risk of being accused of jumping on a bandwagon, of perpetuating a rather shallow and meaningless intellectual fad. One of the problems is that the term is at once fashionable yet irritatingly elusive to define.

(p. 195)

Furthermore, as Lyon (1994) asks, “is postmodernity an idea, a cultural experience, a social condition or perhaps a combination of all three?” (p. 4). The distinction between the terms postmodernity and postmodernism lies in their focus on social changes and culture respectively, with postmodernity referring to a new set of social conditions, while postmodernism is the cultural theory about, or cultural stance towards, these social changes (Lemert, 1997; Lyon, 1994).

Nevertheless, the ‘postmodern’ remains difficult to define or to reach a critical consensus upon (Bauman, 1988; Hebdige, 1988; Smart, 1993).

We have employed the notion of postmodernism earlier in this chapter, noting the epistemological ‘challenge’ to the certainty and universality of Enlightenment-derived grand knowledge-carrying narratives, expressed most influentially in

Lyotard's (1984) repudiation of totalising accounts or 'metanarratives' of social reality. Turning to the related concept of postmodernity, Featherstone (1988) and Smart (1990) suggest that it is useful to consider society in three distinct phases as a means for conceptualising postmodernity as periodisation and to distinguish postmodernity from what preceded it.³ The first phase is termed pre-modern, traditional or antiquity, identifying periods that were predominantly nomadic, agrarian, imperial or feudal in their organisation. Modernity is the transition from this social world to industrialisation, with the growth and development of urban centres, the rise of capitalism, surveillance, the military, bureaucracy, rationalisation and alienation (Lyon, 1994). Smart (1990) notes modernity ushered in the development of "science, morality and law, and art in accordance with their respective inner logics" (p. 17) to rationalise everyday life. Turner (1990a) is even more explicit in describing this social transformation, suggesting that "modernity was about conquest – the imperial regulation of land, the discipline of the soul, and the creation of truth" (p. 4). Postmodernity is most widely represented as a break, separation or move away from modernity and the modernist intellectual thought and culture which predominated (Featherstone, 1988). The implication of such a break for our understanding of structured mobility will be a key concern as this chapter progresses.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the concept of postmodernity as a significant societal transformation has remained divisive for scholars engaged in understanding our contemporary social situation. Not all theorists are convinced that we have either firstly, moved beyond modernity or, secondly, that contemporary society remains or ever was 'postmodern'. Indeed, the sociology of postmodernity is divided as to when postmodernity originated (if it did) and whether our contemporary social condition is postindustrial (Bell, 1973, 1976),

postmodern (Lyotard, 1984), represents the cultural logic of late capitalism (Jameson, 1991), or is a version of a second, high, radicalised, reflexive or critical modernity (Beck, 1992; Beck et al., 1994; Bernstein, 1985; Giddens, 1991; Habermas, 1987; Jencks, 2007). An additional problem with conceptualising postmodernity is the use of the prefix 'post'. The literature is divided as to whether 'post' indicates a deep continuity with modernity or if the changes to social reality outlined above suggest a clear (albeit contested) demarcation from modernity.⁴ Therefore, the periodisation debate and concept of postmodernity as a period of significant social change is problematic and contested. Due to this contestation, we will eschew using references to postmodernity favouring, instead, merely the 'contemporary' to label our current social reality in the period under consideration. The debates around postmodernism and postmodernity deliver to the present argument an interest in new forms of representation, regulation and subject positioning that will cluster around the question of structured mobility and its relevance to understanding Formula One. Technology will be the core theme.

Technology, Images and Audiences

Lemert (1997) suggests that,

The media, notably television, are literally media (or, more simply, tools) through which we gain a 'sense of the world'. That sense may be expanded, displaced, distorted, perverted, intensified, and more. It may be, in our view, good or bad. But the important fact is that when we live in a culture where culture is mediated our sense of reality is, to some important degree, mediated. (p. 28)

Since the 1980s the exponential growth of an array of new media and communication technologies has not only further contributed to a more intensely mediated existence but is the specific context in which we can see new regimes of representation, regulation and subject positioning taking shape. For example, the ‘traditional’ media have diversified and sport-only newspapers, with their long history, such as *La Gazzetta dello Sport* in Italy since 1896 and *L’Equipe* in France since 1946 (previously published as *L’Auto* from 1900-1940), have been joined by a multiplicity of sport-only formats in print (e.g., most popular sports have a specialist magazine, such as *F1 Racing* or *Rugby League Weekly*), televisual, digital and online media. For example, video games construct sophisticated ‘virtual’ worlds for player engagement across an array of popular sports, while mobile mediated technologies like i-pods, cell phones and personal computers allow users to (de)territorialize spaces in both public and private realms, easily receiving, storing and potentially sharing sporting images and information in diverse temporal spaces and places (e.g., Formula One results and images ‘streamed’ to and/or stored on cell phones). Whether or not we label any of this ‘postmodern’, it clearly characterises a contemporary social reality deeply defined by new mediated relations. Furthermore, access to the worldwide web through many of these technologies exacerbates this sense of deterritorialization, as users can access a plethora of information in diverse spaces, as well as these technologies often facilitating a sense of global connectedness for an ‘audience’, a point developed in relation to globalisation later in this chapter. With the media colonising and dominating “virtually every aspect of the social, cultural and political fields in the contemporary West” (Schirato & Webb, 2004, p. 174), audiences are constantly called upon to allocate their attention to particular media forms in a saturated and highly competitive media-marketplace (we also develop

theories of audience attention and the media-audience interrelationship later in this chapter). In a sense, in contemporary developed societies, tuning out from or escaping mediation is futile, with Whannel (2008) noting that “it is not a matter of choosing to consume media images, but of the virtual impossibility, at least in urban landscapes, of avoiding them” (p. 187). Such unavoidability is a basic condition for the structured mobility that will be described more precisely in relation to Formula One in due course.

Media Images

Given the unavoidability of media images, some theorists argue that life is increasingly defined by these fragments of information that condense representations of social life into a disconnected series of signs and symbols and often these images are treated as more important than the reality they are supposed to signify (Baudrillard, 1983b; Debord, 1994; Denzin, 1991; Eco, 1986). This is especially the case with electronic media, such as television, where life is dissolved into and then (re)articulated through televised images of the world (Lyon, 1994; Lemert, 1997); hence, for example, we primarily know about contemporary world events, including sport, through television coverage. So too with video games, which transform ‘real’ sport into a representation of televised sport to be played on a video game console (Poole, 2000). Such a process arguably blurs distinctions between the ‘real’ sport and its intertwined levels of representation via ever more sophisticated game formats (an aspect we revisit in Chapter Five).

Simulation and Hyperreality

Baudrillard (1983a, 1983b, 1987, 1988a, 1990a, 1990b, 1993, 1994b)⁵ has been especially influential in articulating the relationship between media images, signs

and reality. Baudrillard (1983a, 1983b, 1994b) theorised that, rather than merely being influential in representing or shaping social reality, the media and images have replaced social reality through simulations and hyperreality. Baudrillard emphasises the importance of the sign in mass culture although he repudiates Marxist theory (Baudrillard, 1975, 1981) in order to conceive of signs outside notions of use and exchange value; rather, signs are concerned primarily with appearances. As a result, with the profusion of signs and images, and their constant (re)production and circulation through media and communication technologies, reality is difficult to ascertain behind the image or sign. Fundamentally, as defined in his genealogy of simulation, Baudrillard conceptualises four key distinctions between image, representation and reality. Detailing these will take us a step further in grasping the new forms of representation available to be accessed by a structured mobility. For Baudrillard (1983b), the successive phases of the image are: “1) it is the reflection of a basic reality; 2) it masks and perverts a basic reality; 3) it masks the *absence* of a basic reality; 4) it bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum” (p. 11, italics in original; numbers added). Essentially, this first phase is what Baudrillard (1983b) refers to as “*good appearance*” (pp. 11-12, italics in original), as the image is an exact representation of reality and not associated with simulation. Baudrillard considers exact representation with reference to the role of icons in the Byzantine era, suggesting that these icons were understood as both representations of, and exchangeable for, divine identities. Villeneuve is no Byzantine icon (!). The second phase is the first-order of simulation which Baudrillard links to a counterfeit order of appearance prominent since the Renaissance period and which can best be understood as a recognisably false, re-produced image distinct from the real image. As an

example, Baudrillard discusses the proliferation of stucco since the Renaissance as a synthetic re-production and blending of other materials such as wood, velvet and concrete. While stucco mirrors these other materials, it remains distinctly counterfeit or a recognisably false re-production of these other materials.

Television images of Villeneuve in action are anything but counterfeit in what they implicitly claim to represent. The third phase of the image (second-order simulation) is associated with the industrial era, in which appearance is mass produced and increasingly blurs distinctions between image and reality (e.g., the mechanical and serial production of art). It is tempting to stop here with our understanding of what Villeneuve's image means; to note simply the ambiguity involved in posing the question 'is he real or just an image?' (a point indirectly addressed in Chapter Seven).

But, according to Baudrillard (1983b) we have moved into a third-order simulation which stems "*from the radical negation of the sign as value*" (p. 11, italics in original). The endless cycle and circulation of an abundance of signs and images distorts reality to the point where Baudrillard asserts that everything has become simulation or the simulacra (Baudrillard, 1983a, 1983b, 1994b). In this third-order simulation, the process of reproducibility constructs a world without origin, absorbing and replacing reality through its own constant reproduction; "the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (Baudrillard, 1983b, p. 2). Baudrillard's simulation theory offers an insight into the relationship between images and reality, as played out in many contemporary mundane examples. Suntans have moved from simply exposure to natural sunlight, to being a third-order simulation of a suntan produced by lamps, to pills and sprays which change skin pigmentation to give the appearance (or a simulation) of a suntan (Horrocks & Jevtic, 1999). Arguably, each of these third-

order techniques not only changes the skin colour but produces a suntan that is more real than the real, i.e., a more 'authentic' suntan more free of blemishes, imperfections or dangers (e.g., skin cancer) than can be achieved naturally. The exchange of money no longer requires either real money or a real exchange but, rather, is based on an electronic (or virtual) transaction between machines and banks. And so on.

Butler (1999) and Merrin (2005) argue that Baudrillard's simulation theory must not be read as a denial or loss of reality and point to the futility or depthlessness of only defining Baudrillard's simulation theory in relation to "a copy without an original" (Merrin, 2005, p. 29). Both authors argue for an awareness of the historical dimensions to simulation (which Baudrillard traces through anthropological, theological and philosophical conceptions of the image), especially in relation to the power of the image and how images have been historically cast as a threat to reality, with copies needing to be clearly distinguished from originals to banish their 'demonic' qualities (see also Baudrillard, 1988b). The question of the potential power of the audience (e.g., as argued for in Hall's (1996) 'culturalist' approach) is something to which we will have to return. Rather than merely a vacuously 'postmodern' or nihilistic rendering of the image/reality relation, Butler (1999) and Merrin (2005) argue that Baudrillard is drawing upon established theories of the image to advance a new understanding of contemporary social reality. Rather than opposing the real, therefore, Merrin (2005) suggests that "Baudrillard appeals to the real as a critical force against the simulacrum" (p. 30) privileging the symbolic as a lived reality to critique the "'real' as a semiotic category" (Merrin, 2005, p. 31), while "demonstrating how our experiential reality has become a modelled, precessionary, semiotic production" (Merrin, 2005, p. 32) which filters and

processes the world around us (Merrin, 2005; see also Baudrillard, 1981, 1993, 1998). Merrin's (2005) description of how events implode into precessionary models for media transmission and for consumption at a distance and in comfort, affords some key insights. As Merrin (2005) notes, Baudrillard's argument,

Demonstrates how individual use and choices are irrelevant in considering the media's operation, while his claims regarding their precessionary, semiotically processed output alerts us to how many of our responses are produced and coded in advance. Active audience theories, therefore, valorize behaviour that is of limited significance in comparison to the effects of the form and structure and operation of the media. Indeed, Baudrillard's work reveals that much of this behaviour – our individual reception and pleasurable use of the media – forms part of that process of 'personalization' that he sees as operating within contemporary consumption and, as such, as representing not an expression of individuality and freedom but only of our precoded production and integration into a system of social control. Thus we can reverse the common assumption in the discipline that Baudrillard is a postmodernist, uninterested in questions of media power, to see instead that the Marxist-Culturalist project of Hall ends in the postmodernism of active audience theories, whose naïve individualism is exposed by Baudrillard's critical emphasis on form, effects and power. (pp. 24-25)

Merrin (2005) then goes on to note that, for instance, “if digital sports channels now offer a more individually tailored, attractive and leisurely experience than actual attendance, with a choice of views making more reality available in the home than those in the stands” (p. 25) this pseudo-personalisation only serves to tighten the grip of the coded system on the experience. The notion of the ‘precessionary’ nature of this grip is crucial though. The ‘modelled, precessionary, semiotic production’ always *precedes* anything else but the notion of preceding presupposes the possibility of something ‘after’. As Merrin (2005) argues, “if, however, Baudrillard’s media theory pushes us towards a pessimism regarding the processes of contemporary media, it is a pessimism that is never complete” (p. 26). This incompleteness of the precessionary modelling of reality by media affords a tantalising glimpse of the ‘mobility’ in structured mobility, without slipping back into the naïve individualism of more simplistic notions of the active audience.

To summarise, Merrin is identifying Baudrillard’s conceptualisation of the reduction of reality to not only signs, but to the absence of an external reality through an internalising process (the precessionary model) where signs reflect and reproduce other signs in an internal and self-contained, precessionary manner. For Baudrillard, the media have a salient role in this process, as the media produce an ‘experiential reality’ which is modelled on to the media’s own previous images of reality. Thus, the ‘precessionary model’ constructed by the media evacuates or eclipses reality and ‘real’ subjective experiences, while remaining contained within the media’s pre-existing, precessionary semiotic production of such experiences. This also leads to an ‘implosive’ effect in the media, whereby media neutralise and replace ‘lived reality’ through what Baudrillard (1998) refers to as

“a multiple universe of media which, as such, are homogenous one with another, signifying each other reciprocally and referring back and forth to each other” (p. 123). Thus, rather than an explosion or richness of meanings drawn towards an external reality, the media fold into themselves via implosive and internal models that constantly reproduce their own precessionary reality and suck ‘raw material’ into a vortex of simulation (e.g., stripped of external ‘experiences’ as media content implosively reproduces and sustains itself). Two examples demonstrate this process. First, Baudrillard’s (2000) often critiqued assertion that *the Gulf War did not take place* (e.g., see Norris, 1992) recognises the precessionary modelling within the ‘event’, in this case war as a mediated event. Baudrillard (2000) was not literally asserting that a conflict did not occur but, rather, that the Gulf War became a virtual war of information, electronics and images which shaped the ‘real’ war. Such a view is supported by Horrocks and Jevtic’s (1999) and Patton’s (2000) contention that even many at the ‘front’ were being informed about what was happening through CNN coverage. Furthermore, Baudrillard sees the Gulf War as in one sense merely a simulation of war derived from its own precessionary model; as both a media model (war as technology which both abolishes and simulates ‘real’ communication), as well as a contemporary war model in which deterrence and the simulation of war are the most effective strategies (rather than a ‘real’ conflict). Baudrillard’s (2000) supplementary idea that the ‘real’ event of war was already simulated by the military through their own precessionary models of meticulous simulated scenarios is also useful for my second example.

Although I will avoid pursuing a ‘Grands Prix do not take place’ overstatement, Formula One clearly replicates many of Baudrillard’s points. In particular, Formula One offers an ‘implosive’ effect, with media coverage

converging to reflect Formula One back onto itself through its own 'modelled, precessionary, semiotic production' seemingly devoid of an external reality. Thus, for the spectator or fan not in attendance, television coverage is the 'event', while attendees are also informed that they are privy to an 'event' in front of them through the trackside presence of visual mediation (e.g., large public screens) which they in turn are reliant upon to follow and understand the race, as well as demonstrating that they constitute a 'crowd' through their mediated performances (literally seeing themselves) as a live audience (see also Schirato, 2007b). The implosiveness of the Formula One telecast also insists on the precessionary model for the 'event' being screened: diverse technologies, camera angles and commentary combine to reproduce and perfect their own representation (and potentially eclipse any notion of an external, 'real' event that is personally 'experienced' through and beyond the media's own effective simulation of it). Furthermore, the internal and reproductive dynamic of the precessionary model inscribes a self-contained significance onto the event for viewers to discern and form an appreciation that transcends the reality of cars repetitively lapping a given circuit. This modelling at the level of the media effectively counterbalances Formula One's own precessionary models of meticulous planning, simulated strategies and scenarios which often risk the event becoming something of a non-event in relation to the actual racing or 'competition' on offer; for example, only the top two or three teams and a handful of drivers are likely to win races during a given season.

The 'real' Grand Prix has already been modelled or simulated numerous times before the teams even arrive for the race weekend (supporting Butler [1999] and Merrin's [2005] contention that, nevertheless, Formula One presents a 'real' to critically counter these versions of the simulacra). For example, teams

regularly test at various tracks to (im)prove new car parts, often re-configuring test tracks to replicate the layout or dynamics of another circuit on the Grand Prix calendar while ‘simulating’ the Grand Prix experience through race strategy and car set-ups for an event different from the actual locality where they are present. Other notable ‘Grand Prix experiences’ further demonstrate the level of third-order simulation prevalent in Formula One. Teams use computer, machine and wind tunnel simulations of Grand Prix conditions for stationary cars (or even computer simulations of their wind tunnel simulations, see Hings, 2007), as well as computer simulations of particular race and track dynamics to predict wear rates and optimum fuel and race strategies. Additionally, some of the drivers actually prepare for races on either team car-computer simulations or ‘compete’ on Formula One video games to familiarise themselves with circuits (‘Playstation helps Ant’, 2007; see also Chapter Five). These forms of event modelling, deeply embedded in Formula One’s own practices, underpin the layer of mediated images that then make these practices accessible.

For Baudrillard (1988a), the ‘ecstasy of communication’ has had an implosive effect in the media, creating a self-perpetuating web of interconnected meanings and mediations through the speed, intensity and extensiveness of media technologies. The challenge that Baudrillard sets us is how to maintain some notion of the ‘mobility’ in structured mobility that does not slip back into simplistic ideas about the ‘active’ audience somehow operating in a bubble that deflects the determining structures surrounding it. To think about this requires some sense of how debates about the audience have evolved (see next section), but we should note Baudrillard’s own solution first, as well as its limitations for the present purpose. As Baudrillard (1988a) suggests, “everywhere one seeks to produce meaning, to make the world signify, to render it visible. We are not,

however, in danger of lacking meaning; quite to the contrary, we are gorged with meaning and it is killing us” (p. 63). Therefore, Baudrillard confounds one version of the structure/agency debate by suggesting that audiences are being overloaded with meaning, rather than being producers of excess meanings themselves. Clearly, Baudrillard allocates ‘power’ to media signs in this relationship, rendering the social (and by implication audiences/subjects/agents) redundant. But Baudrillard (1983a, 1990a) also conceives of ‘fatal strategies’ as a symbolic means for subjects/agents to simulate their own conformity to social/structural formations. This is the only ‘mobility’ that Baudrillard himself allows and will be further elaborated in relation to media subjectivities and the audience in the next section.

Baudrillard’s views on meaning-saturation have become even more relevant since the time of writing, especially given the breadth of new media technologies and the largely unregulated flows and exchanges of ‘information superhighways’ (Poster, 2001) such as the internet. Additionally, Cubitt (2001) notes that the media increasingly manufacture their own ‘events’ that have no reality outside the media (e.g., television news ‘reporting’ on an ‘event’, such as the latest *Dancing with the Stars* television series winner, which is often screened on the same television network) and encourage communicators (e.g., Bernie Ecclestone) to prepare events, such as Formula One races, *for* the media. Furthermore, media networks often converge on a particular story/event (e.g., the death of Princess Diana), producing an intense focus or ‘vortextuality’ effect which sucks in and absorbs diverse media forms within the coverage of such an event (Whannel, 2002, 2008). The representation of Formula One reflects many of these elements of meaning saturation, manufacture and vortextuality. For example, the array of global Formula One mediations and information disseminated via these diverse

forms (televisual, magazine, internet, etc) make it impossible to read and/or access *all* Formula One coverage while ‘gorging’ audiences with information in the process. Formula One representations are also self-perpetuating in relation to the role and reliance upon mediations within the sport (e.g., viewers often ‘need’ to complement live televisual images with internet coverage; physical attendance at races with large trackside screens, etc.). Finally, occasionally the media get sucked into processes of vortextuality in coverage of star drivers, such as the regular and intensive focus on the public and private life of Lewis Hamilton since his debut in 2007 by the British media, although the media vortex surrounding footballer David Beckham is still perhaps a stronger example of this process (see Whannel, 2001, 2002, 2008).

Crucially, structured mobility can be read into such practices, as *determining* external information is taken up, invested in, rejected and/or re-used in multiple ways through the access by Formula One ‘subjects’ to the plethora of information that is not a structured whole so much as a terrain of image-based saturation, manufacture and vortextuality. But to understand this more precisely requires a better theorisation of the audience. In particular, we will need to map such ideas about re-use, rejection, etcetera onto the various debates about the audience, but clearly they run the risk of sliding back toward the very forms of simplistically conceived ‘activity’ by audiences that Baudrillard’s theoretical insights have challenged. On the one hand, Baudrillard’s own conception of fatal strategies as the best that audiences can do operates at an abstractly philosophical level where it is very difficult to see actual practices in actual situations, such as those of interest here. The mimicry of their own conformity by audiences (e.g., in the Formula One fan’s obsessive displays of the paraphernalia of fandom) can only be

our starting point for the further elaboration of theoretical underpinnings for the ‘mobility’ in structured mobility as realised in the context of Formula One.

*Media Subjectivities: The Debates about the Media Text/Audience
Relationship*

As noted earlier, Grossberg (1992b) has critiqued many constructions of the ‘audience’, as problematically these often occur both prior to and/or outside the text, while audiences are often also categorised as ‘sharing’ an assumed ‘taste’ or ‘identity’ (in addition to often being *determined* by the text). The structure/agency debate thematically underpins conceptualisations of the media text/audience relationship, with some theorists articulating a structural framework for media texts which have a *determining* effect on the audience, while other theorists categorise ‘individual’ audience members as either ‘subjects’ or ‘agents’ dependent on the autonomy accorded to audiences within this mediated relationship. Understanding what is at issue here requires an overview of the relevant debates.

*The ‘Determined’ Audience: Media ‘Effects’, Formalist Film Studies, Political
Economy and Baudrillard*

Much of the early audience research in the 1960s and 1970s was derived from a mass communication, psychological perspective which essentially set up a dichotomy of the audience as either ‘passive’ or ‘active’ (Seiter, 2004). Notions of the ‘active’ audience, savagely critiqued by Baudrillard, will be discussed later in this section, while the audience as passive recipients of mediated texts was characterised early on by ‘effects’ research. ‘Effects’ research suggested that the media was a hypodermic needle which has ‘effects’ on its audiences. In fact, according to Morley (1989), the primary focus of the ‘effects’ research was on the

power of the media to “‘inject’ their audiences with particular messages which will cause them to behave in a particular way” (p. 16). These ‘behaviourist’ studies primarily emphasised the negative ‘effect’ that the media had in relation to violence and other graphic content (e.g., offensive language and sexual content) through, for example, the infamous ‘Bobo doll’ study in which children ‘acted out’ the mediated violence they had seen by hitting a Bobo doll (Bandura, Ross & Ross, 1963; see discussion of ‘effects’ debate in Barker & Petley, 2001; Seiter et al., 1989). Hence, through ‘effects’ research the media is presented as providing a *determining* structure over ‘subject’ audiences, emphasising that power resides solely with the media text to have an ‘effect’ on the passive audience.

The formalist and structuralist film studies of the 1970s, though unconcerned with effects per se, evoked a similar *determining* structure for films and their relationship with audiences. Such formalist and structuralist approaches attempted both to understand how films ‘worked’ and, also, how the techniques, structures and screened image positioned the cinematic audience (J. Smith, 2004). Bordwell (1988) suggests that the film theory of this period can be characterised as ‘SLAB theory’, by which he means “Saussurean semiotics, Lacanian psychoanalysis, Althusserian Marxism and Barthesian textual theory” (p. 385; see also Nichols, 2000). Semiotics and psychoanalysis were particularly influential on theories of the film audience, as both focused on the structures or ‘apparatus’ of the film to elaborate how particular techniques and structures governed both the film and, more importantly, *determined* the audience through viewer positioning (Metz, 1973, 1974, 1982; Mulvey, 1975, 1988). Such analyses also drew on theories of ideology and the text to further ‘reveal’ how audiences were both influenced and determined by the filmic image, structure and its ‘ideological effects’ (Baudry, 1970). Collectively, these studies tended to universalise the

cinematic audience and all cinema viewers were conceived to be *determined* in similar ways by the filmic structures which, Kothari (2004) asserts, “tended to reduce the audience to a set of textually inscribed subject positions” (p. 50). In particular, the theorisation of ‘individual’ film experiences, distinctions, or concepts of the ‘active’ film audience were notably absent during this period (but see the discussion of phenomenology later in this chapter).

Most televisual and filmic studies of the audience have moved away from a strictly semiotic or psychoanalytical approach since the 1980s, with many embracing a cultural studies perspective (particularly Hall’s [1996] encoding/decoding model evoked by Merrin and which I discuss shortly). Nevertheless, the focus on the ideological ‘effect’ of the media remains salient. Frankfurt School-inspired perspectives on media, such as the political economy perspective which focuses on media ownership and ideology (Strinati, 2004), tends to privilege the production of the media text over the audience. While these political economy approaches avoid ascribing the psychologically-derived ‘effects’ of the media onto audiences, they produce a similar yet subtly different account. In particular, political economy is an example of what Grossberg (1992b) refers to as the audience existing “outside of a particular interaction with the media” (p. 41). Thus, political economy approaches often overlook audience reception or consumption, tending to conceptualise audiences as a collective spongy or passive mass ‘duped’ by media owners, networks, messages or ideologies (Grossberg, 1998). In many respects, despite his radical departure from Marxist theory, Baudrillard (1983a, 1990a) arrives at a similar conceptualisation of the audience, albeit while leaving open the possibility that audiences will mimic their own conformity.

Thus, for Baudrillard (1983a, 1990a), the masses are either duped or simulate their existence as an apathetic and passive mass who employ fatal strategies to acknowledge their own passivity and inertia (Giulianotti, 2004; Rodaway, 1995). Baudrillard's first position of a 'duped' audience which, as Merrin (2005) suggests, positions "'the masses' as passive, stupefied consumers of media 'spectacle'" (p. 151), seems to replicate 'effects' based research to a degree by ignoring any 'active' engagement or polysemic renderings of the audience/media interrelationship: all power is centred on the media. However, Baudrillard's (1983a, 1990a) fatal strategies manipulate the structure/agency debate by ascribing a degree of 'agency' to the masses in an unconventional manner; the masses' symbolic acknowledgement of the nature of their own existence remains important. Baudrillard suggests that by simulating their existence as an audience, the masses also simulate their own 'hyperconformity' and seemingly participate in the mediated, commercial and commodified practices of contemporary life as a silent and inert 'consuming' mass. In actuality, Baudrillard (1983a, 1990a) argues, the masses are deploying apathy and their hyperconformity as a fatal strategy to play games with and deceive those that seek to know them, reduce them to media subjects and have them consume. Thus, the masses seduce those who seek them (e.g., including sociologists, opinion-pollsters, advertisers, etc.) but, ultimately, are apathetic to such advances and engage in playful games, ruse and artifice to remain unknown. The possibility of remaining unknown at the very heart of perceived conformity is Baudrillard's highly abstract allowance for 'mobility' within the structured. We will revisit this fatal strategy when reassembling the processes of fandom and the maverick traces of Villeneuve in Chapter Seven.

The 'Active' Audience: 'Uses and Gratifications', Cultural Studies and Phenomenology

Other audience approaches have theorised a more 'active' role for audiences. These approaches often ascribe an enhanced degree of 'agency' to audience members although problematically either conceive of the audience outside of the text or as having 'shared' attributes of identity (independent of the text) or taste (in relation to the text). For example, 'uses and gratifications' audience research was a reaction to the 'effects' research of the 1960s and 1970s, shifting emphasis from the power of the media to the power of individual audience members who, it was claimed, used the media to 'satisfy their needs' (Seiter, 2004). Hence, 'uses and gratifications' research ascribed 'agency' to the audience although often ignored the actual media content or what the text offered. Rather, influenced by psychologically-based analyses of goal-orientated behaviour, 'uses and gratifications' primarily attributed different audience responses and uses to the variations in an individual's personality or psychological make-up (Morley, 1989). Therefore, such an approach overstated the notion that 'individual' psychological traits allow audiences to 'actively' use the media for their own purposes, often devoid of any analysis of the mediated content.

Hall's (1996) encoding/decoding model, developed during the 1970s, moved away from a psychologically-based assessment to a theorisation grounded in cultural studies. Focusing primarily on television, Hall posited that the media do not constitute the simple sender-message-receiver loop of mass communication theory but, rather, require a range of technical and knowledge-based processes to both encode a message at one end and decode its meaning structure at the other. Thus, Hall rejected the mass communication assumption that power resides solely with either the text or the individual and, instead, recognised that there were dual

processes at play in both ‘producing’ a mediated message (which he suggests is encoded with a preferred reading by its producer), as well as audiences needing to make sense of this message. Most importantly for audience research, Hall realised that these audience decodings of the text were not the same (c.f., the universalistic assumptions of ‘effects’, political economy and formalist film research), with Hall theorising that audiences have three possible decoding positions in relation to the mediations they receive. The first of Hall’s audience responses is hegemonic, where the audience accepts/agrees with the preferred reading of the producer/message; the second is a negotiated reading which essentially means the audience accepts parts of the preferred meaning but rejects others; while, finally, in the third decoding position of oppositional reading, the audience goes against or rejects the preferred meaning of the producer and/or message.

While re-theorising the balance between media texts and audience reception, Hall notes that a power dynamic still exists by ascribing an ideological basis to this mediated relationship. Seiter (2004) notes that, “the encoding-decoding model insists on the struggle involved in gaining people’s agreement with ideology” (p. 465), as Hall asserts that socially determined ‘producers’ encode their own preferred and ideologically coloured meanings within the text which then positions audiences in one of three ways through their decoding responses to this ideologically encoded message. Hall’s argument has been critiqued by Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) for the binary positions it creates for audiences, in terms of an either incorporation/resistance relationship to the text, while others have questioned the forms that the ‘preferred reading’ actually takes (e.g., is it a property within the text?) and whether it is applicable across various mediations (Morley, 1989). Furthermore, I agree with O’Sullivan, Dutton and

Rayner (2003) that there may be more than three audience positions for decoding a message as, for example, a fourth possible position is misunderstanding or failing to comprehend/decode the message (e.g., not an intentional, ideological reworking of the preferred meaning as an oppositional reading, but failing to grasp the meaning entirely or being culturally ‘illiterate’ in Bourdieu’s [1984] terms in reading a text within a specific cultural field).⁶

For other researchers, cultural studies signalled a move away from the *determining* analyses of media texts, such as the (neo)Marxist emphasis on production (e.g., the political economy approach), Hall’s (1996) ideological encoding/decoding of messages which audiences incorporate or resist, or an emphasis on the formal structures of the text (e.g., psychoanalytic or semiotic film theories). Cultural studies research has certainly emphasised aspects of media production but, more significantly, keeps returning to the ‘active’ consumption of the media by audiences. In particular, cultural studies has stressed the notion of ‘active’ audiences who are neither *determined* or ‘effected’ by the text in a universalistic sense but, rather, are culturally situated and actively make sense of the media in multiple ways through their engagement with the text and its encoded content (Morley, 1989, 1992; Seiter et al, 1989; Seiter, 2004). The acknowledged significance of the reciprocal and negotiated exchange between the media text and audience engagement also distinguishes the cultural studies notion of an ‘active audience’ from the earlier ‘uses and gratifications’ active audience research based on individualised psychological traits.

Four key research directions for studying the audience have emerged from within the cultural studies ‘active audience’ paradigm. The first has already been discussed in relation to the encoding of a ‘preferred meaning’ and the ideological positions through which audiences decode this message/preferred meaning (Hall,

1996). The second key theory is based on approaches to textual analysis that consider both what the text offers to the audience and how audiences respond to this text (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005; Jutel, 2004; McKee, 2001). In relation to what the text offers audiences, textual analysis of this sort primarily focuses on the technical attributes of the text (Hartley, 2002) by connecting broader social theory to a particular text (e.g., using feminist theory to examine soap operas) or by analysing a particular editing, framing or other technique to reveal its function (e.g., to produce an ideological or gendered 'text', etc.). The 'audience response' textual analysis research tends to investigate the social production of meaning, in terms of how audiences engage with, respond to and construct multiple meanings through their 'reading' of the text (McKee, 2001). Clearly both textual analysis approaches are reliant on a binary distinction between text and audience, as well as a potential binary that separates the 'determining' role of the text from an 'autonomous' audience response. Morley (1989) suggests there are limitations to such an approach, as textual analysis tends to produce speculative assumptions as to what the audience does with the text based on the implications of spectator positionings and the assumptions of the academic researcher.

Finally, for our summary purposes here, there are two strands of cultural studies which collectively examine the audience under the rubric of reception studies. The first of these has primarily been influenced by the work of Fiske (1987, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c, 1993) who eschews the structure/agency debate by dismissing the emphasis on the media text and, instead, promotes audience autonomy. Fiske prefers to focus on what the audience brings to the text, which he suggests allows audiences to create their 'own' meanings and pleasures and 'empowers' audiences to dismiss ideological or preferred readings, such as the various seemingly 'free' readings of Madonna made by teenage girls (see also

Jenkins, 2000). Not surprisingly, many critics view Fiske's work as grossly overestimating the autonomy of the audience (Morley, 1989), while parading an ignorance of structural formations and how human 'agency' is always bound to specific socio-cultural contexts.

The second strand of reception studies has turned to ethnography as a methodological means to explore audience 'uses' of media texts across a range of socio-economic and cultural settings (e.g., Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Morley, 1980, 1986, 1989, 1992). Rather than abstractly theorising the audience, these approaches incorporate the audience experience through qualitative methods such as interviews and participant-observation to reveal the complexity of actual audience-text relationships. Still, the ethnographic audience reception research often reduces audience 'experiences' to collective group responses, simplifies audience diversity and, simplistically, politicises audiences (e.g., Jhally & Lewis' [1992] account of 'enlightened' racism for audiences viewing *The Cosby Show*). Furthermore, despite Hall's (1996) insistence that the media message is "a structure produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments – production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction" (p. 51), critics have noted that this process has not always been conceived of in its entirety when studying media audiences (Kellner, 1997). Often, only one element of Hall's (1996) 'distinctive moments' is privileged, with many of the cultural studies analyses (including the textual analyses and reception studies strands) accounting for the text as a site of reception yet often failing to consider the other 'moments', such as production (Stoddart, 1994) or distribution (Cubitt, 2005b).

Although a neglected tradition in film studies, phenomenology attempts to describe the "perceptual, imaginative, and aesthetic experience" (Andrew, 1985, p. 628) for cinematic audiences. With its focus on the audience experience,

phenomenology has been perceived as filling a void in the universalistic and deterministic theories of film spectatorship derived from psychoanalysis, Marxist analysis and semiotics. Sobchack (1995) notes,

In a search for rules and principles governing cinematic expression, most of the descriptions and reflections of classical and contemporary film theory have not fully addressed the cinema as life expressing life, as experience expressing experience. Nor...*viewers viewing*, engaged as participants in dynamically and directionally reversible acts that reflexively and reflectively constitute the *perception of expression* and the *expression of perception*. (p. 38, italics in original)

The filmic phenomenological perspective, therefore, focuses on the sensory and haptic aspects of the film experience for viewers (Marks, 2000, 2002), outlining how *embodiment* is literally involved in the dynamics of film as an apparatus (but distinct from the ‘apparatus theory’ of a determined and ideological viewing position) and as an embodied experience that the viewer experientially engages with through their own bodily responses to the cinematic representation (Sobchack, 1992, 2004). For Marks (2000, 2002), film provides a haptic skin which viewers touch and engage with through their senses, making film viewing and the pleasures on offer a profoundly sensory and mutually embodied experience. Through this embodied process, viewers engage with the skin of the film as a living thing while simultaneously recognising their own embodied experience of the film through haptic feedback, sensory stimulation and the activation of memory. Sobchack (1992, 2004) suggests it is the relationship between vision, embodiment and viewer identification which shapes the audience

experience. Sobchack notes the interrelationship of the cinematic eye, the viewer's physical visibility (eye) and subjective position (I), emphasising an embodied linkage between vision (cinematic and physical) and subjectivity. Accordingly, viewers rely on their carnal knowledge, as it were, of memory and physical experiences to subsume and engage with the filmic image, while experiencing these pleasures and emotions through their embodied reactions to, and sensory perceptions of, the on-screen image (Sobchack, 1992, 2004). Phenomenology offers a compelling complement to the ideologically determined or gendered cinematic viewer positioning of earlier film theory (Baudry, 1970; Metz, 1973, 1974, 1982; Mulvey, 1975, 1988), some of which (e.g., postfeminist psychoanalytic approaches) did focus on the body but only as the site of inscribed meanings, not the means for embodied engagements with media. The embodied linkage between vision and subjectivity is something to which we can usefully return in due course (Chapter Five).

Grossberg (1992b) is critical, one way or another, of all of these approaches.⁷ While often avoiding singular accounts of texts, audiences and meaning, Grossberg suggests that, collectively, cultural studies (and post-structuralist notions of difference) create and rely upon a structural gap between the text and audience as separate and distinct. And meaning operates in an equally distinct way between the other two. He argues, (1992b)

With that assumption – that every instance (e.g., of text) has a unified identity which corresponds or relates in necessary ways to another equally unified term (e.g., of meaning or audience) – the whole game (especially the outcome) is guaranteed in advance. Here is a text, unique and complete unto itself. Here is the meaning that corresponds to that text,

that is necessarily produced by it. Here is an audience which also has its own proper identity guaranteed to it in advance. And here is the experience of that audience, necessarily resulting from its particular social position or its unique cultural history. (p. 39)

In light of the foregoing discussion of the conceptual underpinnings for the present research, it becomes clear that such assumptions need to be challenged and that a methodological framework is needed that will achieve this. More specifically, this chapter has brought us to the point where we can recognize six key methodological requirements for the present research: First, that embodiment (the phenomenological insight in a sense) is crucial to avoiding the separations of text, meaning and audience on which many of the previous approaches have relied. Second, that 'intense' fandom is an instance par excellence of a fatal strategy in Baudrillard's sense, as the fan experiences his/her own mimicking of coercion in so many acts of fandom, from the buying of 'too much' fan paraphernalia to glimpsing one's own 'obsessions' through others' eyes, and that fandom presents, therefore, a more rigorously demanding challenge to theories of the active audience than perhaps any other way of describing an audience. Third, that fandom is a highly determined form of 'active' audience engagement and that, with Baudrillard's rigorous suspicion of loose evocations of audience 'freedoms' always in mind, a focus on fandom in this sense will help the research to avoid sliding back toward any such loose evocations. Fourth, that there are contradictions within the 'system of social control' which Baudrillard also evokes, as the 'media' are not uniformly consistent in either their forms or 'effects' on audiences, and an analysis of fandom would need to encompass the multiple forms of media both available to and utilised by fans, as well as providing an

understanding of the use and ‘effects’ of specific media in specific ‘concrete’ contexts (Grossberg, 1992b). Fifth, such findings would need to recognise the contradictory and ‘slippery subject’ positions and roles occupied by fans and/or audiences at any one time. Thus, an acknowledgement of emerging audience and fan research is required. In particular, Abercrombie and Longhurst’s (1998) notion of the ‘diffuse’ audience (where we are always members of multiple audiences at one time); Jenkins’ (2006b) ‘interactive’ audiences (that audiences are ‘interactive’ and perform a range of roles as an audience – for example, critic, consumer, producer, etc), and Hills’ (2002) ‘performative-consumption’, which recognises that fans are *determined* by socio-economic structures as mediated consumers yet, nevertheless, redeploy the processes and products of mediated consumption to sustain their performances as fans. Finally, sixth, Grossberg’s (1992b) concept of affect becomes crucial to understanding why social individuals ‘choose’ to engage with specific media texts and form affective relationships only with selected aspects of popular culture. Using Formula One and my ‘own’ fan practices as a case study, affective relationships are significant for understanding and exploring the specific investments taken up by the fan and the varying intensities of affect that shape and ‘colour’ the socio-cultural ‘experiences’ of fandom (Chapters Six and Seven).

These six methodological characteristics need to be focused around the question of structured mobility; the question of whether Baudrillard’s stark but incomplete picture of subjection to the precessionary systems of simulation and coercion allows some room for manoeuvre without slipping towards any of the loose conceptions of the ‘active’ audience. As the thesis’ subsequent argument will be that this structured mobility is best conceived as a layered phenomenon, the present chapter might usefully finish by describing a ‘base layer’ as it were.

This derives from some of Formula One's most distinctive 'territorial' characteristics as a global sport.

A Globalised Sport: The Nation-State and 'Mobile' Subjectivities

Formula One is a global phenomenon and one that articulates a complex sense of the national through team and driver 'nationalities' that are often recognisable without mapping onto the idea of the national team that characterises so many other sports at this level. The global media environment in which Formula One operates has been extensively discussed in general terms (see McLuhan, 1964; Poster, 2001; Virilio, 1986, 1995). The 'compression' of time and space through the interconnectedness of this global media environment raises two major implications. First, the role of nation-states in contemporary times, and particularly notions of national identity under the sway of globalisation become problematic. Second, the significance of global commercialisation, commodification and consumption become especially salient to understanding and articulating our contemporary social lives, a point we shall return to shortly.

Globalisation reflects the altering relationship between the local and global, an interrelationship that exposes contradictions between a perhaps *mythical* shared sense of national identity, on the one hand, and a more fluid notion of global citizenship and connectedness, on the other (Bauman, 1998; Maguire, 1999).

Although the origins and specific nature of globalisation are contested (e.g., global trade or travel is not a new or 'postmodern' phenomenon), the sense of new forms of global connectedness is primarily facilitated through the media, other communication technologies and a late capitalist marketplace (e.g., free trade agreements, transnational companies, franchises and products). Whannel (2008) suggests that "four significant developments have contributed to the identification

of globalisation as a process” (p. 198) in contemporary times. These four developments are: first, “major corporations have moved from being multinational to transnational”; second, “deregulation has fostered a much greater international division of labour”; third, the role of branded goods in a consumer culture has intensified and, finally, there is the “unprecedented global mobility of people during the twentieth century” (Whannel, 2008, p. 198). Collectively, these developments point to new processes operating both through but also externally to the nation-state (e.g., transnational corporations and/or production processes independent of nation-state regulations), in addition to the movement of people that is reconstructing markets, impacting on local economies, and potentially transforming some national subjects into global citizens through the ease of (primarily) air travel.

Clearly, the concept of the nation-state still has some currency in globalisation, whether it be geographical, symbolic or imagined. For example, part of my identity is articulated through being a ‘New Zealander’, with connections to a particular geographical location (the south Pacific), symbolic imagery (New Zealand as a ‘green’, ecological ‘utopia’- the land of the ‘long white cloud’ cliché), while there are imagined ‘shared’ national traits to ‘being a kiwi’ (e.g., embracing aspects of Maori culture, such as the haka, while traditionally white New Zealand males have been stereotyped through an interest in ‘rugby, racing and beer consumption’ – see Phillips, 1996). The media and technologies have a significant role in these processes, constructing what Anderson (1991) refers to as ‘imagined communities’ based upon myths, images and discourses/narratives of some ‘shared’ sense of national identity and unity (e.g., some of my examples above point to an imagined New Zealand community). Moreover, based on the social construction of my identity in

relation to New Zealand as a nation-state, Althusser (1977) would argue that as a 'New Zealander' I am both hailed as a subject and interpellated into a wider set of existing social relations. What, then, does it mean for me to be a Formula One fan, with neither a race in 'my' country nor 'national' team and/or driver?

Sport and Formula One in particular offer useful insights into how the interrelationship between the local and the global play out in relation to this kind of question. Despite assertions about weakened nation-states (e.g., see Bauman, 1998), sport remains one of the primary sites for staging contests between nation-states (especially global competitions such as the Olympics or football World Cups), for symbolic displays of the nation (New Zealand teams tend to use national symbols of either native fauna or wildlife, such as the 'silver fern' and/or the 'kiwi' on predominantly black uniforms) and for articulations of the nation as an 'imagined community'; for example, strong performances are often linked to some perceived national identity, prosperity or character; such as notions of overcoming 'odds' (financial, geographical or resource-based constraints) or 'punching above their weight' when New Zealand athletes participate in global events (Billig, 1995). As a 'New Zealander' I am being 'hailed' to recognise my particular national identity when a New Zealand team or individual compete, as well as being interpellated into a range of relations and practices derived from this subject position (e.g., expected to watch New Zealand play, 'care' about the result and read/view the contest through a nationalistic lens which often expresses a binary sense of communal solidarity as well as difference from the opposition). This nationalistic ideology operates in a contradictory manner, affording some structured mobility within such practices. For example, I support certain New Zealand teams (e.g., men's cricket or rugby league) which can be understood and recognised as a display of nationalism through such acts and tied to broader,

potentially *determining* structural formations of the nation (e.g., despite the affective relationship I have with these particular teams, the intensity of affect is most likely constructed through this nationalistic association). But, conversely, I reject other New Zealand teams, shunning the All Blacks and men's rugby due to its media and cultural saturation as 'our national game'; I affectively reject this nationalist discourse and its ideology of expectation. However, structural formations clearly underpin such practices and, by re-mobilising my hailed subject position as a New Zealander, I am interpellated into another set of processes, such as my (often unwanted) exclusion from communal opportunities to socialise through viewing games or discussions of the All Blacks.

My engagement with Formula One has also brought this notion of the nation and interpellation into stark contrast, as one specific example will demonstrate. In 2004, Jacques Villeneuve was without a race seat for much of the season. At the same time, New Zealand driver, Scott Dixon, was competing in the rival American series, the Indy Racing League (IRL). An article, derived from Reuters international newswire but reproduced for a local (and national) audience in *The Waikato Times* (Hamilton city's regional newspaper), purported that both drivers were in contention for a Williams Formula One seat in 2005 ("Williams owner ducks question over Dixon", 2004). However, the story was geared towards a nationalistic reading through its heading (referring only to Dixon), layout (two columns; one and half columns dedicated to Dixon), content (the 'story' focused on whether Dixon had a future with Williams or not; Villeneuve was presented as secondary) and accompanying images/captions presenting Dixon first ("Scott Dixon: not distracted; Villeneuve: a possibility"). Indeed, the 'story' itself was Frank Williams declining to comment on whether Dixon had a possible future with Williams, before providing Dixon's reactions as he prepared for the Indy500.

In contrast, although receiving less coverage, the Villeneuve section seemingly had more substance, providing confirmation that Williams had been in discussions with him. Such a representation was hailing the assumed New Zealand reader by clearly identifying Dixon as a New Zealander while interpellating the significance of his possible drive (as an IRL champion moving to Formula One) and presenting the Villeneuve link for ‘balance’, as secondary and in a more condensed format (e.g., mentioned as former Formula One champion, former Williams driver and as Canadian). Despite the nationalistic overtures which clearly engaged my national identity through these textual and visual arrangements, these processes of interpellation were re-mobilised and jettisoned due to my ‘affective’ fandom centred on Villeneuve and in spite of his articulation here as the ‘other’ (e.g., Canadian) and the ‘competition’. Therefore my reading of this article (and its associated nationalistic discourse) was both negotiated⁸ and ultimately oppositional (Hall, 1996). While seeing a New Zealander competing in Formula One again would be a significant achievement (i.e., here I am being hailed to articulate nationalistic sentiments and interpellate displays of patriotism for a ‘fellow’ New Zealander), I rejected the nationalistic speculation surrounding Dixon, wanting Villeneuve to get the race-seat ahead of *any* other driver, regardless of their nationality.

As a ‘global’ sport, Formula One seems to both draw upon the nation-state and nationalistic sentiments, while paradoxically also favouring a sense of structured mobility through deterritorialization. As will be elaborated in Chapter Three, Formula One annually comprises of approximately 20 drivers who are identified primarily in relation to their nationality (e.g., Michael Schumacher is German; Jacques Villeneuve is Canadian, although often specifically identified as French-Canadian), while most teams also have a distinctive nationality (e.g.,

Ferrari is Italian; McLaren and Williams are British). As a primary reading, it is fair to assume that for spectators or fans of Formula One, levels of support probably follow nationalistic allegiances (e.g., the British fans follow the British drivers and/or teams, Italians follow Ferrari and the Italian drivers). Clearly, the process can be more complex than this though, in terms of team/driver combinations (e.g., the Italian tifosi supporting the ‘national’ Ferrari team yet also, paradoxically, a *German* driver; Michael Schumacher between 1996-2006), while allegiances can cross geographical or ‘imagined’ borders (my own fandom for a French-Canadian driver has no obvious national or social connection).

Formula One seems to embrace this form of mobile or ‘deterritorialised’ fandom, constructing the sport as a global phenomenon which not only stages races at diverse localities around the world but conducts these in an ephemeral manner. For example, the Formula One community is in constant transit around the globe, with only three days of track action in any Grand Prix locality before ‘jet-setting’ back to the factory, to a scheduled test (often at a European track) or on to the next Grand Prix within a fortnight (and repeating this trend throughout the season). Furthermore, not only is the annual presence of Formula One in a locality ephemeral in terms of the on-track action and short stay, but host nations are regularly culled or replaced, and many of the emerging host-nations (e.g., Bahrain, China and Turkey) have a limited or non-existent motorsport tradition. Hence, Formula One fandom is globally dispersed and loosely linked to place, with many countries not having a national team or driver representative (e.g., New Zealand and the emerging host-nations listed above), requiring from fans what we might term mobile, transnational allegiances (while teams and/or drivers are also given national identities while simultaneously being depicted as ‘global’). Villeneuve is identified as French-Canadian yet primarily has resided in either

Monaco or Switzerland during his Formula One career, as well as in Japan, Italy and America prior to entering Formula One, speaks four languages and of course is regularly in transit to the next Grand Prix or test location which makes any ongoing assertion of his 'French-Canadianness' problematic.

Clearly, Formula One's ephemeral nature leaves the sport to be constructed primarily as a media event, with most spectators and/or fans primarily experiencing Formula One, remaining up-to-date and constructing/facilitating their mobile (trans)national allegiances through the global telecasts. This reflects in specific ways Grossberg's (1992b) broader notion of structured mobility, with fandom being constructed through specific mediated structural formations, while fans inflect and mobilise 'their' fandom with varying degrees and intensities of investment and affect. Furthermore, as few spectators or fans have the means to physically attend all the events (in a financial, social and temporal sense), there is a sense of global connectedness and a transnational community at play within Formula One. Thus, although I may be alone in my Hamilton flat watching the live telecast on a Sunday night, I am also part of an imagined and mediated Formula One community (and, I assume, not the only Villeneuve fan outside of Canada). Given Formula One's diverse localities, ephemeral nature and reliance on global mediation, spectators and/or fans also experience a temporal dislocation which allows for both national allegiance (e.g., British fans cheering for a British team and/or driver regardless of whether the actual race is at Silverstone in Britain, Suzuka in Japan or Albert Park in Australia) and transnational allegiance based on the 'placelessness' of Formula One. Cynically, one could also point to the absence of the nation in telecasts that deliberately blur the actual locality. For example, with the most notable exception of Monaco, many of the circuits are not readily identifiable with their host nation, although some circuits are permitted to

‘locate’ themselves (e.g., the ‘Melbourne’ billboards at the Australian Grand Prix).

Additionally, most teams/drivers lack national signifiers and are instead branded by transnational corporate logos. In fact, like other sports where global teams replace national teams (e.g., the *Tour de France* and America’s Cup, although the America’s Cup comprises of corporate-sponsored ‘national’ syndicates, such as ‘Emirates’ Team New Zealand, alongside corporate syndicates, such as ‘BMW Oracle Racing’), one could argue that Formula One pits transnational companies, especially car manufacturers post-2005, against one another, rather than being a competition between nation-states. Therefore, it would be easy to read the competition between McLaren and Ferrari as not a constructor’s contest, nor in terms of the nation (Britain versus Italy respectively) but in terms of a transnational competition between either the car manufacturers (DaimlerChrysler Mercedes versus Fiat respectively) or the tobacco corporations of Reemtsma and Philip Morris (e.g., the liveries of West versus Marlboro cigarettes between 1996-2005). Therefore, Formula One offers a densely layered realisation of globalisation. But at the same time, it affords examples of what look like structured mobility in action. Reflecting discrepancies between the local and the global, Formula One hails ‘subjects’, interpellates the nation-state through teams and drivers, and inscribes nationality with apparent meaning yet, paradoxically, such meaning is ultimately meaningless on closer inspection and coexists with the deterritorialization of fandom and the placelessness of specific localities. Moreover, as a global, mediated sport, Formula One emphasises the salience of mediation in facilitating a sense of global connectedness and constructing an imagined, global Formula One community (Chapters Three, Four and Five). Thus, Formula One provides a broader *determining* structural

formation through the nation-state, globalisation and mediation which spectators and/or fans fluidly navigate to anchor and mobilise ‘their’ affective relationships in specific practices and intensities of investment. The fact that transnational corporations also have a significant role to play in these global media representations and constructions of identity (imagined, national or global) requires further consideration, which it will receive in relation to fandom in Chapter Six.

Methodology

The six requirements that this research must meet methodologically, in light of the theoretical underpinnings furnished by this chapter, lead to the following methods for dealing with texts and audience. By deploying structured mobility as a central theme within this thesis, a recognition of structured mobility as a layered phenomenon requires a method for identifying, describing and re-assembling these layers. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) observe that,

The qualitative researcher as *bricoleur*, or maker of quilts, uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, and empirical materials are at hand. If the researcher needs to invent, or piece together, new tools or techniques, he or she will do so. Choices regarding which interpretive practices to employ are not necessarily made in advance. (p. 4)

There is a sense of the *bricoleur* at work in my research as structured mobility provides for the occupation of multi-layered positions within the research process, as both a researcher assembling the fragmented objects of inquiry into a coherent narrative and as a subject or object of the research in relation to ‘my’ own

Formula One fandom. Therefore, I employ mixed methods to distinguish and then re-assemble the layers of a structured mobility within the specific context of Formula One.

In my examination of the *determining* Formula One ‘texts’, which are rooted in its ‘popular narratives’ (Chapter Three), televised coverage (Chapter Four) and the implications of the first-person point-of-view (POV) representations derived from the On-Board-Cameras (Chapter Five), I turn to a combination of textual analysis (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005; Jutel, 2004; McKee, 2001) and compositional/image analysis (Lacey, 1998; Rose, 2001). More broadly conceived as semiological analysis by Whannel (2000), I am combining these methods not only to ‘interpret’ the public dissemination of its popular narratives but, more significantly, to theorise the collective audience viewing experience afforded by these televised Formula One ‘image’ and ‘text’ based structures, which provides a funnelling transition from the collective (global audience) to more atomised (fan) experiences mapped across the thesis. Therefore, this semiological analysis details how televised Formula One is framed and produced through its particular compositional dimensions (i.e., camera work, editing, sound and the use of graphics), as well as the significance of these dimensions for the global spectacle of (and audience for) Formula One racing. By recognising the technological, aesthetic and production basis for the televised Formula One image, my research counters sport studies’ critiques of textual analysis for focusing solely upon the text and its supposed reception which, as Stoddart (1994) suggests, is “read ‘off the screen’, with little reference to the complexities of the delivery system” (p. 77; see also Gruneau, Whitson & Cantelon, 1988), while also providing analysis that goes beyond mere description of specific framing techniques. Moreover, film phenomenology (Marks, 2000, 2002; Sobchack,

1992, 2004) is also used in these ‘textual’ analyses. Phenomenology provides the complementary acknowledgement of embodiment in the framing and viewing processes for audiences, as well as offering a ‘mobile’ account of spectator positioning and engagement which avoids the reproduction of a universalistic view of the audience as entirely *determined* by Formula One’s textual and framing structures (e.g., in relation to the POV perspectives).

The deployment of phenomenology and the concept of embodiment also have increased importance for the transition to a more atomised, socio-cultural examination of fandom and feed into this analysis (Chapter Six). As noted earlier, this research seeks to avoid pursuing either an over-determined structural approach or, conversely (and mindful of Baudrillard) a loose evocation of the ‘activity’ of audiences. Therefore, while textual analysis is utilised to examine ‘fandom’ (Chapter Six) and the fan-star relationship (Chapter Seven) in relation to the phenomenon of both media audiences and media stardom as ‘textual’, these are supplemented by broader cultural theory and analysis. Hence, to explore fandom and subjectivity, I turn to the cultural theories of Baudrillard (1983a, 1983b, 1990a, 1994b, 1998) and Bourdieu (1984, 1990, 1992, 1993), as well as specific emerging research on the audience as diffused (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998) and ‘interactive’ (Jenkins, 2006b), in addition to the performative, fluid and contradictory dynamics of specific fan practices (Crawford, 2004; Hills, 2002). These perspectives take us towards an articulation of the ‘slippery subject’ positions of fandom that can be taken up or rejected at any one time, as well as providing a broader cultural and socio-economic analysis of fandom and Formula One.

Finally, to locate fandom within the specific context of Formula One (Chapter Six), as well as to afford a broader reading of what Villeneuve *means* as a fan

(Chapter Seven), I combine Grossberg's (1992b) notion of affect with the method of autoethnography. Grossberg's notion of affect provides a conceptual means for exploring the specific investments, relationships and intensities of affect that are constructed inside specific, 'concrete' examples of popular culture and the specific forms of media text that involve Jacques Villeneuve and Formula One. As many of these specific practices are my 'own', I turn to the method of autoethnography as a means to articulate these specific practices through an impressionist, first-person writing style, which is explained below.

Methods: Autoethnography

Autoethnography is a writing strategy which blends the personal with the cultural, placing the self within a social context (Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005; Humphreys, 2005; Markula, 1998, 2003; Richardson, 1994, 2000b; Sparkes, 2000, 2002). In defining autoethnography, Ellis and Bochner (2000) suggest that,

Autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth autoethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations. (p. 739)

Moreover, autoethnography is also conceived both to be a method and a mode of textual production (Reed-Danahay, 1997), with Spry (2001) asserting that 'in autoethnographic methods, the researcher is the epistemological and ontological

nexus upon which the research process turns” (p. 711). Thus, autoethnography produces an autobiographical account of the self as both the *researcher* and, often, as the *researched*. Such accounts are personalised and seek to reveal lived realities while being couched in self-reflection and an awareness of the socio-cultural contexts that situate and shape these experiences. As a research approach, autoethnography is commonly associated with the ‘narrative turn’ in the social sciences (Bochner, 1997, 2001; Daly, 1997; Denzin, 1997; Krieger, 1991; Richardson, 1994, 1997) which, as Sparkes (2003) suggests, recognised that “writing is a method of inquiry, a way of knowing, a method of discovery and analysis” (p. 60). Given the often storied accounts of lives, experiences and their connection to the cultural in autoethnographic works, autoethnography is upheld by its proponents as introducing an ‘alternative’, personalised voice to knowledge construction (Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Reed-Danahay, 1997; Richardson, 2000b, 2000c; Sparkes, 1995).

An autoethnographic account will usually be underpinned by a connection of the personal with the cultural, provided in a first-person voice and represented through an evocative and self-reflexive style (Ellis, 2004). However, articulating what does and does not constitute autoethnography is less clear, as these accounts can be presented through diverse forms including poetry, fiction, short stories, photographic essays and dance or theatrical performances (Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Denison & Markula, 2005; Ellis, 2004; Markula, 2003; Sparkes 2000, 2002; Spry, 2001). Thus, autoethnography is often considered to be a blurred genre (Holman Jones, 2005), with Ellis and Bochner (2000) listing sixty research variations which fall “under the broad rubric of autoethnography” (p. 739). Furthermore, even its subject matter is contested. For example, Ellis (2004) advocates an emphasis on vulnerability, pain, suffering and ‘breaking hearts’ for

autoethnography to be effective, while other authors prefer to explore the self through tensions and/or contradictions in relation to the socio-cultural constructions and experiences of identity, power relationships and the body (e.g., Holman Jones, 2005; Jhally, 1998; Lessem, 1991; Markula, 1997; 1998, 2003; Sparkes, 1996, 2000, 2003; Spry, 2001; Tsang, 2000). The second perspective is privileged in this thesis, moving away from the ‘emotional’ evocations that are espoused by Ellis (2004) to the broader use of autoethnography as a means for contextualising specific, concrete practices of fandom via vignettes which are then critically and theoretically analysed, culminating in the final chapter’s resituating of a vulnerable self.

Given the blurred genre and difficulty of either defining or determining what constitutes autoethnographic work, establishing criteria for conducting and evaluating such work has also, not surprisingly, remained somewhat elusive. One discernible trend is that many autoethnographic pieces are often simultaneously labelled as personal narratives, personal experience narratives or ‘narratives of self’, with these labels fluid and interchanged regularly (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2004; Reed-Danahay, 1997; Richardson, 2000b, 2000c; Sparkes, 1995, 2000, 2002, 2003). For example, Denison and Markula (2005) suggest that personal experience narratives in sport (e.g., Markula, 2003; Pringle, 2001, 2003; Sparkes, 1996; Tsang, 2000) often use,

personal recollections as the basis of their research narratives...the researcher usually begins by thinking of moments that have in one way or another been influential in his or her choice of a research topic and the formation of specific research questions...they become the raw data for

one's personal experience narrative, not the final results. (p. 170)

In a similar vein, Ellis and Bochner (2000) note that, "in personal narratives, social scientists take on the dual identities of academic and personal selves to tell autobiographical stories about some aspect of their experience in daily life" (p. 740). These two works offer an insight into how to conduct autoethnography, in terms of identifying a particular moment or experience from one's life which, through recollection and introspection, can be made sense of and developed through a personalised narrative (Ellis, 2004). Nevertheless, there remains no one appropriate method for constructing, making sense of or producing the 'correct type' of autoethnography.

The evaluation of an autoethnographic account reflects the dual crises of representation and legitimation in qualitative research (Denison, 1996; Denzin, 1997; Sparkes, 1995). Given the often storied accounts of lives and experiences, proponents assert that literary values must be considered when evaluating such work. Various authors have compiled criteria or a list of 'literary aesthetics' in terms of what distinguishes "'good' research writing from 'bad' research writing" (Denison & Markula, 2005, p. 180; see also Bochner, 2000; Bruce, 1998b; Clough, 2000; Denzin, 1997; Ellis, 2000). For example, Richardson (2000a) lists five specific criteria for evaluating ethnography: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impact and lived experience. Moreover Sparkes (2000) asserts that, "accuracy is not the issue, since autoethnography and narratives of the self seek to meet literary criteria of coherence, verisimilitude, and interest" (p. 29). Therefore, the merit of an account is often judged on whether the story is plausible, has the appearance of truth (verisimilitude) and/or resonates for the reader (Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Denison & Markula, 2003a, 2003b, 2005;

Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Holman Jones, 2005; Sparkes, 1996, 2000, 2002, 2003). These broader 'literary aesthetics' arguably provide a loose set of 'criteria' for evaluating many autoethnographic accounts. Additionally, Ellis (2004), Markula (2003) and Richardson (2000b) place an emphasis on telling 'true stories' of the self based upon the author's actual events and experiences rather than purely fictional accounts or creating imaginary events and characters which are considered as either novels (Ellis, 2004), fiction (Richardson, 2000b) or ethnographic fiction (Denison & Markula, 2003a, 2003b, 2005; Markula, 2003). Nevertheless, many autoethnographic researchers reject imposing a universalised criterion which all works must adhere to and be judged against due to the diverse research practices and writing styles that have emerged as broadly acceptable (Bochner, 2000; Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Clough, 2000; Holman Jones, 2005; Reed-Danahay, 1997; Spry, 2001).

Within autoethnography, the reader and his/her sense-making processes are also viewed as central to assessing the usefulness, meaningfulness and validity of any individual work (Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005; Sparkes, 1996, 2000, 2002, 2003; Spry, 2001). For example, Ellis and Bochner (2000) note that,

The usefulness of these stories is their capacity to inspire conversation from the point of view of the readers, who enter from the perspective of their own lives. The narrative rises or falls on its capacity to provoke readers to broaden their horizons, reflect critically on their own experience, enter empathically into worlds of experience different from their own, and actively engage in dialogue...Invited to take the story and use it for themselves, readers become co-

performers, examining themselves through the evocative power of the narrative text”. (p. 748)

Thus, although autoethnography is most often a personalised account of a particular event or life experience crafted by the individual author, the relevance of such work is deemed to be in its generalisability to a broader audience. Autoethnographic researchers stress that their own personalised experiences are often also applicable to, ‘typical’ for or resonate with a wider socio-cultural experience identifiable by their readers (Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Denison & Markula, 2005; Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Markula, 2003). Therefore, rather than being a self-indulgent approach to research (Sparkes, 2000, 2002, 2003), such works are crafted either to evoke an emotive response among their readers, or to promote a broader recognition of the social context of self through ‘shared’ meanings and experiences, or both (Denison & Markula, 2005; Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

In this thesis (and primarily in Chapter Six), I sparingly use autoethnography as a means to represent the concrete contexts, particular processes and the specific affective moments embedded in my practices as a Formula One fan. However, rather than strictly adhering to a first-person narrative throughout, these autoethnographic moments are inserted into the research text as a series of vignettes. Moreover, these moments channel an overall ‘funneling’ effect, as has been explained already. Denison and Markula (2005) note that “many personal experience narratives are comprised of several, separate ‘vignettes’: personal experiences or memories that highlight meaningful events or developments that explain the social construction of a person’s life experiences” (p. 171). I have drawn upon such vignettes to highlight these meaningful events and situate them within the broader socio-cultural context and in relation to the key theoretical

concepts under discussion. As such, by drawing upon these vignettes, I reveal specific spatial/temporal moments of my fandom throughout this thesis while, primarily, the vignettes are deployed as a form of empirical evidence to reveal the concrete realisation of Grossberg's (1992b) theory of structured mobility in action. That is, autoethnography as a method and writing tool is utilised to demonstrate the actualisation of my anchoring in social reality via the specific temporal and spatial moments of affect. These are the kinds of moments that, typically, have inflected and characterised my Formula One fandom over the past ten years.

More broadly, the vignettes provide a means for contextualising specific, concrete moments and affective investments that encapsulate the 'slippery', contradictory and mobilising practices of fandom, both anchored within and navigating through structured social spaces and forms. In due course, the autoethnographic stance adopted at key junctures by this thesis will be re-worked in terms of Archer's (2007) 'reflexivity' and that reflexivity will be theorised in terms of a broader 'field' of terms that will recognise both the inevitable collapse of the structure/agency binary and the socio-cultural constraints on the 'agential' trajectory that the thesis as a whole will be tracing (Chapter Seven). The scare quotes applied to the terms reflexivity, field and agential will be removed as we move towards a proper elaboration of each term.

¹ Lyotard's central thesis and assertion of incredulity towards metanarratives has been viewed as contradictory by critics such as Kellner (1988) and Strinati (2004), who suggest that Lyotard actually produces his own metanarrative within his work. However, Lyotard's 'metanarrative' may be understood as a function of the extension of incredulity to all possible explanatory concepts, a process which leaves the postmodernist without the option of proposing alternative positive conceptual totalities. Thus, the appearance of contradiction arises from the denial that *any* concept can offer a totalising explanation of human activity.

² Eau Rouge is an up-hill, left-right-left configuration, with gradient shifts, concealed exits and exerts up to 4.6 lateral g-forces on the driver (Peagam, 2005).

³ It should be noted that, although the distinct phases are discussed in the literature, they are relatively arbitrary, with the characteristics and definitions of each time period (as well as

additional periods not mentioned) contested by scholars engaged in the periodisation debate (see Featherstone, 1988; Smart, 1990).

⁴ Furthermore, is the term 'post' fixed or have we already moved beyond postmodernity to a new cultural and social reality (e.g., post-postmodernity)?

⁵ The publication dates provided are slightly confusing as these allude to when Baudrillard's works were translated into English. Butler (1999) notes that Baudrillard gained prominence both in France and English-speaking countries between 1976-1983, which encapsulates the original publication in French of the works *Symbolic Exchange and Death* in 1976 through to *Fatal Strategies* in 1983, collectively known as his period of fatal theory (see Gane, 1991a, 1991b). Nevertheless, Baudrillard had first published in French in 1968, while many of Baudrillard's texts have been translated into English well after the original release date in French – see references for clarification.

⁶ It is not difficult to imagine different degrees of 'illiteracy' in relation to Formula One's complexities as both a sport and a media format.

⁷ Grossberg does not specifically identify film phenomenology but the basis of his critique would incorporate the unified and shared assumptions of film phenomenology.

⁸ For example, allied with a broader awareness of Formula One orientated websites where coverage of Dixon had been less favourable for a Williams' seat.

CHAPTER THREE

The Other's Double: Formula One Machinery and Driver Agency

The Formula One driver has a dual status: he is both an automatic terminal of the most refined technical machinery, a technical operator, and he is the symbolic operator of crowd passions and the risk of death. (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 169)

Baudrillard's statement offers an eloquent contrast between the determining machinery and the lived experience, a contrast of course that transcends the particular confines of Formula One. Baudrillard (2002) goes on to evoke our attachment to "exceptional beings who are permitted to do absolutely anything" (p. 170) and yet, paradoxically, we know that Baudrillard, the theorist of contemporary culture, has also been in the vanguard of those who see only determining forces at work where others hope to see human agency. As we saw in the previous chapter, debates about media and audiences have seen pendulum swings between the media's 'determining' grip and audiences' capacity to be 'active'. To permit a close examination of instances where this binary may break down in the media/audience relationship, we now turn our attention to Formula One as an assemblage of media texts. Across the following three chapters detailed textual analyses of increasingly complex and refined Formula One mediations are provided which recognise that these texts are both the *determining* structure for audiences and the potential terrain for more specialised audience (and fan) usage, navigation and anchorage through their affective engagements (Grossberg, 1992b). By way of introduction, this chapter compares Baudrillard's

essay on Formula One with the public representation and mediated dissemination of a set of ‘popular narratives’ about the sport.

Contemporary Formula One

Baudrillard (2002) notes that,

Formula One is a rather good example of the era of performance, in which the heights achieved are the work of man and machine simultaneously, each propelling the other to extremes without it being really clear which is the engine of this meteoric advance and which merely the other’s double. If man is haunted by the evil genius of technology, which pushes him to the limits – and even beyond his capabilities – then technology is haunted by man, who identifies with it and projects all his passions into it. The alliance between the two, the pact between them, can be brought about only through an excessive expenditure, a spectacular sacrifice. In Formula One, the two are reconciled by speed – the phantasm, the spectre, the ecstasy of speed – which has become an unstoppable, undeniable collective passion. (p. 166)

Technology and speed are fundamental contemporary conditions within the machinery of Formula One which, allied with its own globalised, mediated and commodified spectacle, as well as the ‘slippery’ performative role of the driver, combine to construct a space for the ‘collective passion’ of Formula One audiences, whether conceived here as viewers, spectators or fans. To better understand this collective passion, we can begin by suggesting that there are six

popular narratives used to describe Formula One and frame its representation for a global, mediated audience. These narratives were derived from a close textual analysis of the contemporary Formula One media sources (Formula One books, magazines, internet sites, live telecasts and general newspapers), with a methodological approach that will become apparent as we proceed. From the outset, it should be noted that there is an underlying complexity to the assumed 'reality' underpinning these six narratives, as this chapter will increasingly suggest, even though the narratives themselves are simple.

Popular Narrative Number One: Formula One is the Pinnacle of Open-Wheel Motor-Racing

Specialist Formula One sources and most motor-sport publications represent Formula One as the pinnacle of open-wheel car-racing. Noble and Hughes (2004) assert that,

Formula One stands at the technological pinnacle of all motorsport. It's also the richest, most intense, most difficult, most political, and most international racing championship in the world. Most of the world's best drivers are either there or aspire to be there. (p. 20)

The name Formula One is derived from the formula of rules and regulations for competing in terms of the size, weight and power of the cars, while 'one' signifies its classification as the pinnacle of the sport. This offers a distinction from the lower divisions, such as Formula Three, Formula 3000 and Formula Ford, each with its own restrictions and regulations (Noble & Hughes, 2004). Thus far, these ways of thinking about the sport lend themselves to Baudrillard's perspective, as technology and performance are key elements in defining and distinguishing

Formula One's status as elite, while recognising the centrality of the star driver in the sport (a point I return to in due course). However, Baudrillard's (2002) associated concept of an 'ecstasy of speed' is slightly more problematic, with the organisational machinery of Formula One imposing tight technical regulations to curb the pursuit of 'pure speed' (e.g., a concept more applicable to land speed record holders) while its formula of rules increasingly reduces the risks involved in the sport (see later discussion of drivers and risk-taking). Moreover, and eschewing Baudrillard for the moment, whether Formula One is the pinnacle of *all* motor-racing is debatable, as a range of motorsport formats also exist, with motorbikes staging their own elite series, the MotoGP, while other formats differ fundamentally, such as the World Rally Championship (WRC) which races on all surfaces, not just tarmac. Additionally, specialist media sources for these (and other) motor-racing events are likely to elevate the significance of their own sport to sustain their audiences and may be reluctant to buy into the pinnacle status for Formula One (e.g., MotoGP as a fundamentally different series and the pinnacle for motorbikes), and not wish to actively promote a rival series.¹

Interestingly, while being broadly represented as the pinnacle of motor-racing, Formula One operates within the dichotomy of being a global and public sport which is also shrouded in secrecy and privately guards its specific details in areas such as ownership, governance or financial status. Baudrillard (2002) does not pursue this public-private dichotomy, nor the politics or governance of the sport but, I suggest, the dichotomy's existence may partially explain the persistent interest in intrigue, rumour and scandal within the Formula One media, as full knowledge and access to all aspects of the sport are not available.

Formula One is governed by the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), which determines the rules and adjudicates on any matters pertaining to the

sport. Formula One rules are accessible to the public although understanding the highly technical jargon and precise meanings is often more difficult. The teams and FIA are bound by the Concorde Agreement, a classified document not available to the public, which outlines how the sport shall be governed, as well as the commercial rights of the sport and how money will be divided amongst the teams. The Concorde Agreement is revised every ten years and was last due for renewal in 2007. This document was the source of a fierce off-track political battle in 2005 which escalated between a rebel alliance of teams, known as the Grand Prix Manufacturers' Association (GPMA), and the FIA. The GPMA called for greater transparency of the details within the Concorde Agreement and the role of the FIA, as well as a more equitable distribution of funds for all of the teams, and threatened to create a separate racing series outside FIA jurisdiction post-2007 if their demands were not met ("Meanwhile in", 2005; "Nothing nice", 2005; Pitpass expose, 2005a; Pitpass news, 2005a; Saward, 2005; "The manufacturers", 2005). However, conciliatory talks between both sides during the course of the 2006 season eventually provided a peaceful resolution and six of the eleven teams signed up for the 2007 Concorde Agreement late in 2006. Nevertheless, no current Concorde Agreement is in place as not all of the teams have agreed to the latest set of terms and conditions. In fact, in 2009, eight of the ten existing teams again threatened to create a rival series to be run outside of FIA jurisdiction (this time the dispute centred primarily on proposed budget caps for 2010). At the time of writing, the threat appears to have been resolved with all ten teams agreeing both to gradually reduce costs and to adhere to upgraded governance provisions from the 1998 Concorde Agreement ("FOTA teams call off", 2009).

So this ‘narrative’ is a complex construction, sustained by often contested organisational processes behind the scenes.

Popular Narrative Number Two: Formula One is One of the Most Expensive Sports in the World

Baudrillard (2002) suggests that the pinnacle status of Formula One, while promoting its elite brand of competitive racing, actually has a more explicit symbolic value. He notes, (2002) “only in appearance is the circuit the site of the competition. The competition takes place elsewhere – on the world car market, in the drivers’ popularity charts, in advertising and the star system” (p. 167). While the significance of the drivers and the star system will be discussed in due course, the commercial elements and value of Formula One warrant early consideration here. With its prestige comes an enormous expense to fund a Formula One team which, as noted above, is derived from a combination of its perceived elite status, the symbolic value associated with Formula One for subsidiary companies, and due to the competitive challenge to constantly develop and improve the cars in relation to the sport’s performance and technological demands. The operating budgets of Formula One teams are staggering, with *F1 Racing* magazine estimating that the sport as a whole (inclusive of testing, salaries, engine budgets, etc.) costs the teams involved a combined total of between US\$2.1 and US\$2.5 billion annually.² Of the teams, Ferrari has consistently been the biggest spender, with an operating budget of over US\$400 million per season, while Toyota, McLaren, Williams and British American Racing (BAR) spent approximately US\$350 million or more annually during the 2002-2004 seasons.³ However, Phillips (2006) reports that, in 2006, Ferrari had scaled back their spending to \$329 million, the fifth biggest spender behind McLaren (\$400m), Toyota

(\$393m), Honda (\$382m) and BMW-Sauber (\$378m). Nevertheless, even the smaller and struggling teams (in both a financial and a competitive sense), like Jordan and Minardi, operated at around US\$40-\$70 million a year to compete in Formula One between 2002-2004 before being sold during or post-2005.⁴ Such high operating costs are viewed as justified to ensure teams have a competitive racing package and can attract the right combination of drivers, engineers, designers and mechanics to make them successful. In recent times, the FIA has annually devised 'cost-cutting' measures to curb excessive spending, although Henry (2005) suggests that the implementation of these measures actually increased spending in the short term. Nevertheless, late in 2008, due to the economic recession that affected global markets, as well as Honda's not unrelated shock departure from the sport in December, the FIA pushed through drastic cost-cutting measures to reduce team budgets by at least an estimated 30% for the 2009 season ("The future of Honda", 2008; "The new world", 2008).

Given the huge costs of Formula One, maintaining the obligatory minimum of ten teams can be difficult. This has also meant that either the ownership of a team or its ability to remain in Formula One is in constant flux. Some recent examples demonstrate this. The Stewart Grand Prix racing team emerged in 1997; in 2000 the team had been bought out by Ford and re-named Jaguar Racing. The same team was then sold at the end of 2004 to become Red Bull Racing from 2005. Other teams have disappeared from Formula One altogether, such as Prost in 2002 and Arrows in 2003, as they could no longer afford to compete. The high cost and difficulty of remaining in the sport was still evident in 2005, with Midland buying Jordan (but still racing as Jordan in 2005), Red Bull's acquisition of Jaguar (and later Minardi as a second team) and BMW's purchase of Sauber for the 2006 season. In 2006 new patterns of team ownership had also emerged, with

BMW-Sauber, Toro Rosso (Red Bull's second team, formerly Minardi), Honda Racing (formerly BAR, now owned solely by Honda), Spyker MF1 (which operated as Midland-F1 until being purchased by a Dutch consortium in September 2006) and newly created Super Aguri on the grid. In further developments post-2006, Spyker was sold and re-named as Force India for the 2008 season, Super Aguri (April) and Honda (December) ceased operations in 2008 and Honda re-emerged (and was rebranded) as the Brawn GP team in 2009. Baudrillard's (2002) essay, written in March 1995, precedes many of the specific examples identified, although clearly Formula One team ownership changes were in effect when he was writing: for example, Benetton, one of the dominant teams in 1994 and 1995, had emerged in 1985 after buying the Toleman team; Benetton was then sold to Renault in 2000 (and operated as Renault post-2000).

So this narrative is another complex construction and Baudrillard is clearly aware of the symbolic business of Formula One, to which the third narrative also refers.

Popular Narrative Number Three: It's a Business, Not a Sport; Formula One and Sponsorship

Baudrillard (2002) observes that,

The paradox is the same for the motor companies, caught as they are between investment and potlatch. Is all this a calculated – and hence rational – investment (marketing and advertising)? Have we here a mighty commercial operation, or is the company spending inordinate sums, far beyond what is commercially viable, to assuage a passion for

prestige and charisma (there is also a manufacturers' world
championship)? (p. 169)

Baudrillard is confusing two key points. First, he incorrectly applies the terms manufacturer (usually global car companies) and constructor (Formula One specific teams, which can be either an 'independent' team, such as Williams, or a car manufacturer who also owns and operates a Formula One team, such as Toyota). Hence the Formula One teams are competing in the Constructors' Championship (not manufacturers' championship), although he is right to observe an assumed prestige associated with being a manufacturer who owns a Formula One team and wins a constructors' title (e.g., Nissan through the Renault team). Second, it is important to note that sponsorship is not necessarily confined only to the motor companies Baudrillard identifies, as an array of transnational companies sponsor teams that have no apparent link to motorsport (e.g., Becks beer or Emirates airlines, see below). Furthermore, since Baudrillard's time of writing, the presence, role and investment of the world's major car manufacturers has actually accelerated, especially over the last few seasons. For example, in 2006, many of the manufacturers either owned their own teams (such as Toyota, Honda and BMW, in addition to Nissan and Fiat, who race as Renault and Ferrari respectively), had a significant shareholding within a team (DaimlerChrysler Mercedes with McLaren) or were a chief engine supplier to a team (Ford, in addition to Ferrari, Toyota and Honda supplying second teams).

Therefore, Baudrillard's (2002) assertion that "the average TV viewer has doubtless never been aware that McLaren is a flagship for Honda" (p. 169) is not only clearly dated in relation to the team-manufacturer relationship described (and always undergoing regular transformation) but has now been supplanted by what often is a more explicit connection that is globally recognisable: the

manufacturers Toyota and Honda are clearly intertwined with their own Formula One teams. Conversely, though, their supply of engines to Williams and Super Aguri respectively in 2007 arguably reproduces Baudrillard's idea of a blurred linkage between these Formula One teams and the specific car manufacturer. Nevertheless, it is useful to apply the essence of Baudrillard's argument solely to the manufacturers in the first instance, using the Toyota team as a specific example. Paraphrasing Baudrillard, for the manufacturers, the association with the 'pinnacle of motor-racing' is deemed to be good publicity, albeit an expensive PR exercise if the team is not successful. The Toyota team has been singled out by some commentators as a case in point, with Phillips (2006) suggesting that Toyota is "flush with cash but not results" (para. 1) having not won a Grand Prix since their "\$1-billion launch" (Phillips, 2006, para. 1) in 2002. Hence, Toyota offers an example of a car manufacturer who, as a Formula One constructor, is spending inordinate sums that may not be economically viable or 'a calculated and rational investment' given poor on-track results that have not translated into the crowning of a Constructors' Championship (let alone a race victory). Moreover, Toyota's investment and the team's lack of success have not lead to a "passion for prestige and charisma" (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 169) either for the team or among Formula One audiences, as is reflected in the negative effect on their publicity and support. For example, Toyota only received a 1% vote (or a placing of 9th out of the 11 teams) in the category of team support from the approximately 91,000 Formula One fans who participated in the FIA's Formula One survey for 2006 ("FIA/AMD", 2006).

In addition to the major car manufacturers involved in Formula One, the sheer cost of running a team and the reliance on sponsorship from transnational companies makes Formula One as much a business as a sport. In almost

Baudrillardian terms, team owner, Sir Frank Williams, is famous for saying, “between the hours of two o’clock and four o’clock most Sunday afternoons at Grand Prix races, it is a sport... The rest of the time it is a business” (B. Turner, 2004, p. 102). Many of Baudrillard’s points relating to the expense and implied prestige for motor companies are reproduced in the practices of the transnational corporations that flock to the sport. Not surprisingly, in addition to the car manufacturers, other key players in the automobile industry have also been involved in Formula One; such as fuel and lubricant producers like Shell, Elf, Esso and Mobil, as well as tyre manufacturers, with rivals Michelin and Bridgestone supplying the teams since 2001, although Bridgestone became the sole supplier post-2006. Aside from the automobile industry, numerous transnational companies have also been involved in Formula One in recent years, including Becks, Budweiser, Credit Suisse, DHL, Emirates, Hewlett-Packard, HSBC Bank, Hugo Boss, Intel, Panasonic, Puma, Red Bull, Siemens, TAG-Heuer, Tommy Hilfiger and Vodafone. Figures from the July 2005 edition of *F1 Racing* magazine provide an indication of what the ‘business’ of Formula One costs sponsors, with an estimation of each team’s most lucrative sponsorship deal for 2005. Listed in American dollars, *F1 Racing* suggested that Marlboro was worth \$80 million to Ferrari in 2005, Mild Seven \$50 million for Renault, Hewlett-Packard \$45 million for Williams, West \$40 million for McLaren, Panasonic \$30 million for Toyota and Petronas \$28 million for Sauber. It was acknowledged that sponsors with full or partial equity-holding were excluded from the list as they were impossible to assess, such as Red Bull, British American Tobacco, Honda and Credit Suisse (Pitpass business, 2005). Given that Renault were crowned the Constructors’ Champions in 2005 and 2006, they (and their sponsors) were bestowed with the status needed, in Baudrillard’s (2002)

terms, to “assuage a passion for prestige and charisma” (p. 169). However, many of the other companies and costs quoted reflect Baudrillard’s questioning of inordinate corporate spending, channelling vast sums into ‘lesser’ teams failing to contest race victories, let alone Constructor’s Championships, during this period (e.g., Red Bull, Sauber, Toyota and BAR/Honda). For example, Honda Racing never won a race between 2000-2005 while supplying engines to or operating as BAR, although secured its maiden (and only) victory in 2006 at the Hungarian Grand Prix. Honda Racing never won a Grand Prix again post-Hungary 2006 while, somewhat ironically, Honda’s successor for 2009, Brawn GP has had instant success, winning six of the opening eight races.

Additionally, as these figures reflect, sponsorship derived from the tobacco industry has been a significant source of revenue for Formula One, dating back to 1968 when Team Lotus ran Imperial Tobacco’s Gold Leaf livery at the Spanish Grand Prix (Pitpass expose, 2005c). Surprisingly, Baudrillard (2002) neglects to either acknowledge or critique the potency of such a relationship. It is not an understatement to say that, financially, tobacco sustained Formula One teams and Grand Prix racing for nearly 40 years. As an example, it was reported that British American Tobacco deployed a budget of US\$375 million over five years to establish its new team, BAR, in 1998, eventually spending around \$500 million over this period (“The fall of”, 2002). However, new anti-tobacco legislation came into effect on 31 July 2005 in Europe, affecting the role and future of tobacco firms in Formula One. In 2005 nearly half the teams ran without tobacco branding, with some teams, such as Jordan and Williams, turning their back on former tobacco sponsorship to do so. Williams even took the radical step of running the GlaxoSmithKline’s NiQuitin stop-smoking brand in 2003. McLaren ditched their Reemtsma (West livery) tobacco sponsorship at the end of 2005,

replacing tobacco with Johnnie Walker and Emirates in 2006, followed by Vodafone in 2007. In 2006 three major tobacco firms were still involved in Formula One; Philip Morris (Marlboro sponsorship for Ferrari), British American Tobacco (Lucky Strike for Honda), and Japan Tobacco (Mild Seven for Renault), although these last two scaled back their investments to exit Formula One at the end of the season. With legislation limiting the global display of tobacco sponsorship, only Philip Morris remained in Formula One post-2006, asserting that the colour scheme and subliminal branding would still facilitate brand recognition (Taylor, 2005) while, controversially, occasionally providing visible Marlboro regalia at races in 2007 (e.g., Bahrain and China – see “Marlboro explains”, 2007).

So a third narrative and yet another complex construction underpinning it, with far from uncontradictory definitions at work of what the ‘business’ actually is.

Popular Narrative Number Four: Formula One is Glamorous; ‘Glamour’ and Gender in Formula One

While Baudrillard questions the inordinate spending in Formula One, he also locates another layering of passion that emerges through the competition between the Formula One constructors (and, presumably, the practices of their sponsors) and contributes to the sport’s status as an ‘exceptional event’. He notes, (2002)

In this confrontation between manufacturers, isn’t there an excessive upping of the stakes, a dizzying passion, a delirium? This is certainly the aspect which appeals, in the first instance, to the millions of viewers... The impact of Formula One lies, then, in the exceptional and mythic

character of the event of the race and the figure of the driver,
and not in the technical or commercial spin-offs. (p. 169)

I am not entirely convinced of the certainty that Baudrillard sees in the competing constructors' capacity for invoking passion among viewers. For example, the corporately branded competition that accompanies the Constructors' Championship is neither the 'first instance' nor an immediate site for my own affective relationship with the sport (nor do I have a team-based Formula One fandom per se: whichever team Jacques Villeneuve drove for I supported). Conversely, Baudrillard appears uninformed in discounting either the technical or commercial spin-offs as, although these may be more symbolic than 'real' (e.g., much of Formula One's technology is too advanced to be redeployed within road car production by the manufacturers), its technological sophistication and exorbitant expense underpin the machinery of Formula One and its narrative construction as the pinnacle within motorsport. Furthermore, this positioning arguably offers a more likely 'first instance' for crowd passions in relation to Formula One's perceived elitism (while seemingly also attracting transnational corporate sponsorship as outlined above). In fact, Baudrillard's evocation of the 'exceptional and mythic character' of Formula One potentially hints at another salient contemporary feature of (and potential source of passion for) the sport: the notion and representation of glamour.

Noble and Hughes (2004) link glamour to "impossibly fast cars driven by brave and handsome young men of all nationalities in a variety of exotic backdrops throughout the world, with beautiful women looking on adoringly" (p. 25). From an analysis of the Formula One media sources (detailed later), there appears to be a few possible explanations for this concept of glamour; whether it applies to the cars as a source of glamour (due to their expense and technical

sophistication), the array of global locations which the sport visits, or even the jet-setting lifestyle Formula One promotes. Collectively, these ‘glamorous’ elements combine to (re)present Formula One as an ‘exceptional and mythic’ event. The staging of a Grand Prix in Monaco certainly underpins notions of glamour, the exceptional and the mythic. First, by linking Formula One glamour to wealth, luxury and its associated commercial spin-offs, Monaco is commercially the most valuable race on the calendar, with many of the team’s most significant client ‘schmoozing’, PR exercises and business deals being conducted over this race weekend. Monaco also offers an ‘exceptional’ event and ‘glamorous’ spectacle with cars racing around the principality against a stunning background of historic buildings, an expensive array of yachts and boats in the harbour (often with ‘glamorous’, bikini-clad women being picked out by the camera in television coverage) and the rich and celebrated in attendance. Finally, the ‘mythic’ is evoked through the ‘heroic’ representation of the victorious driver who ‘vanquishes’ his opponents and ‘conquers’ Monaco’s narrow streets through an ‘exceptional’ display of driving, replete with a royal reception from Monaco’s monarchy as he collects his trophy (and often beautiful women are, symbolically at least, included in the ‘spoils of victory’ – see Kennedy, 2000).

While these may be sources of glamour, even this brief description of the ‘mythic’ elements at Monaco (and Noble and Hughes’ [2004] statement above) hint at the problematic role of women and gender relations in underpinning concepts of glamour within Formula One. Although Baudrillard (2002) eschews a discussion of gender in his essay, gender roles within Formula One are clearly defined, and the sport is almost exclusively a male preserve. All teams are run by male owners or technical directors, with men occupying most of the roles either within teams or within the press covering races. Not surprisingly, all the drivers

are currently also men, with only five women having ever competed in Formula One; the last in 1992. In the foreseeable future, Formula One will also continue to consist of only male drivers while gendered stereotypes, phrased as concerns over fitness, skill and safety, remain pervasive in the sport, and sponsors seem unwilling to invest in a female driver (B. Turner, 2004). The male drivers could be conceived of as an embodiment of the sport's glamour, as they get to race in high-powered machines all across the globe and are paid enormous sums of money to do so, while potentially providing a display of masculine bravado through their alleged risk-taking (points I expand on later in this chapter).

With men as risk takers or team leaders, the relatively few women in Formula One are overwhelmingly cast in a supporting role. Primarily, and problematically, they function as adornments or trophies for the men and their cars (see also Messner, Dunbar & Hunt, 2000); dressed in revealing lycra suits, mini-skirts or bikinis adorned with sponsors' logos, which further underlines the significance of corporate branding and commercial spin-offs in the sport (and may afford an, albeit problematic, additional layering of passion for fans). Known as 'grid girls' or 'pit babes' (e.g., both *itv-fl.com* and *fl-live.com* have a 'pit babes' gallery link on their home pages), these young and conventionally 'beautiful' women are photographed either sprawled over the cars for publicity, on the pre-race formation grid beside the cars and drivers, or posing for 'sexy' photos with the drivers (and sometimes with attendees, such as at the Australian Grand Prix). Kennedy (2000) notes in her narrative analysis of the 1996 Monaco Grand Prix,

The role of 'beautiful women' in providing that glamour is evident, and the plentiful camera shots of (mainly blonde haired) women among the spectators at balconies or employees of the racing teams (holding placards with the

driver's name inscribed) testify to their importance in creating the atmosphere. The narrative function of closure provided by the 'beautiful women' is clear...they are part of the prize for the victorious hero driver. (p. 65)

Some women also work in the public relations sector for teams, such as media-, sponsor- or driver-liaison, although, again, 'feminine' qualities seem to be a prerequisite within the male world of Formula One. After interviewing Michael Schumacher's media manager, Sabine Kehm, B. Turner (2004) says "she admits that feminine 'charm' can be a powerful negotiating tool in Formula One. Sabine is slim and blonde. She fits the F1 criteria perfectly" (p. 159). Therefore, while a range of elements contribute to glamour within Formula One, the presence of stereotypically beautiful women, in the form of PR managers, pit babes and grid girls are seemingly a vital component; providing a gendered construction of women as facilitators, sexy props or adornments for the bravado, jet-setting lifestyle and essentially masculine world of Formula One. B. Turner (2004) suggests, "it is the ultimate male fantasist's sport: fast cars, expensive kit, global jet-setting and beautiful women with spray-on smiles" (p. 205). Again, a popular narrative is constructed out of a complex set of factors.

Popular Narrative Number Five: Formula One is a Television Sport

Baudrillard's (2002) evocation of "the exceptional and mythic character of the event" (p. 169) also affords recognition of Formula One as a *media* event which, through its own mediation, contributes to these exceptional and mythic elements (see discussion of mediation, simulation and Formula One's precessionary models in the previous chapter). Baudrillard (2002) suggests that Formula One relies on television to both redirect and project the refined technical dimensions of the

sport, the slippery status of the driver and commercial elements externally back out to its large viewing audience. Thus, according to Baudrillard (2002), “the race takes place on a screen, the screen of speed” (p. 167). This ‘screen of speed’ is one of the significant research ‘problems’ that I will address over the course of this thesis; particularly in relation to its ‘structural formations’ – in terms of the specific production, technical and aesthetic practices - that the televised Formula One coverage provides for its global audience (Chapter Four). The structured ‘screen of speed’ then moves to an increasingly ‘agential’ interrogation of how audiences potentially engage with these visual representations, especially in relation to Formula One’s innovative televisual technologies and video games (Chapter Five). For our introductory purposes here, it will suffice to note that Baudrillard is correct in his observation that Formula One is primarily a screened event and that television becomes the predominant site for audience engagement. In fact, the claimed viewing figures for the sport are phenomenal, with Formula One telecasts building a cumulative global audience estimated to be in excess of 50 billion annually over the entire season (Hotten, 1999). For example, *Formula 1 Magazine* reported that 54 billion viewers had watched televised Formula One in 2001, with an average of 3,590 million individuals viewing each of the 17 races in the 2001 championship (“F1 fever grips”, 2002). But such figures are overstated and unreliable, as is indicated by Hotten’s (1999) querying of them:

How big is Formula One’s television audience? If you believe the FIA, it is ten times the world’s population! According to official figures, the cumulative audience for the 1997 championship was 50.7 billion people...The statistic includes every time an item on Formula One appears on television, no matter how short. (p. 200)

Moreover, Rowe (2004) notes that gaining an accurate or exact television viewing figure is problematic as “global audience figures for mega-media sports events have tended to be based on ‘guesstimates’ and marketing” (p. 102) and, therefore, such viewing figures, and the means by which they are measured, should be treated with caution. Despite inflated viewing figures, Rendall (2000) asserts that excluding news and features content, the actual race coverage still “reaches some 5.5 billion viewers a year” (p. 8). Formula One rates only behind men’s football (soccer), the football World Cup and the Olympics in highest viewing numbers for televised sport (Hotten, 1999); all the more impressive considering that Formula One is a single series run annually, while football is contested across a range of national and international competitions and the World Cup and Olympics are staged every four years.

Formula One is not just a television sport, however, and has embraced a range of media forms not mentioned by Baudrillard. The combination of prestige, glamour, expense and motoring/technical innovations means that it attracts significant attention across global television, print and internet media throughout the Formula One season.⁵ Although more specific details on the Formula One media sources are provided later in this chapter, it is worth noting that sources such as monthly magazines (e.g., *F1 Racing*) and daily internet sites (e.g., *grandprix.com*, *planetf1.com*, *f1racing.net* and *pitpass.com*) provide regular updates on all aspects of Formula One. Bernie Ecclestone has been a significant figure in the mediation of Formula One (as discussed in the next section), not only negotiating the global television rights but also buying *Formula 1 Magazine* late in 2002 and launching *formula1.com* in 2003. *Formula 1 Magazine* ceased publishing in 2004, with B. Turner (2004) criticising the magazine for its advertising-driven and ‘press-release’ style of reporting as it “began to resemble

an in-flight brochure in which many articles contained a barely concealed business agenda” (B. Turner, 2004, pp. 204-205). However, the *formula1.com* website has been an invaluable source for following races, offering the public live timing of all Grand Prix sessions (e.g., practice, qualifying and the race). This emerging technology both disrupts and amplifies Baudrillard’s (2002) ‘screen of speed’ as live timing provides a numeric, *screened* representation of all driver times (e.g., lap times, sector times) in real time during each session but does not stream any visual images of racing. Hence, live timing complements rather than replaces televised Formula One coverage as an emerging, secondary ‘screen of speed’ for the global audience. In fact, with drivers shielded in their cars and protective gear, in addition to particular drivers being rarely seen on televised race footage (Chapter One), live timing on *formula1.com* affords a better understanding of each driver’s performance and overcomes some of those conditions of anonymity (see further discussion of anonymity in relation to the point-of-view shot in Chapter Five). Furthermore, a third ‘screen of speed’ has emerged since Baudrillard’s essay, with the previously inaccessible Formula One driving experience recreated through video game simulations (especially the official Formula One games developed by Studio Liverpool on the PlayStation 2 format). These video games provide an immersive, embodied and engaging third ‘screen of speed’ for Formula One audiences, allowing gamers the opportunity to race as any of the current drivers and to replicate elements of the driving experience, especially through innovative first-person positionings and driving perspectives. The fact that Formula One drivers also use video game simulations and that teams study the point-of-view representations offered on televised on-board camera footage suggests the high level of realism and sophistication that

these technologies and ‘*screens of speed*’ have reached in Formula One and, therefore, this warrants further investigation in the thesis (Chapter Five).

Popular Narrative Number Six: Formula One is a Global Sport

Unlike many American sports, whose ‘World Championships’ are contested between American cities, states and teams, Formula One is certainly a global series, comprising a range of team and driver nationalities, and raced at various locations around the world. While Baudrillard (2002) alludes to the large *virtual* audience that tunes in to Formula One from around the world, the global aspects of the sport remain unacknowledged and underdeveloped in his essay. Therefore, as a coda to the six narratives, I briefly sketch below some of Formula One’s global dynamics, mapping its origins and, especially, the influential role Bernie Ecclestone has had in reconfiguring Formula One to become a contemporary global and mass mediated sport spectacle. The global narrative is in a sense, though, the extension of the other five narrative constructions from the national to the international level, something that makes more sense from a historical perspective.

A brief history of Formula One

In the typical books on Formula One history (e.g., Hughes, 2004; Rendall, 2000; Vergeer, 2004), motor-racing is reported to have originated in European countries. The first-ever road race was conducted in France, although the date for this first race is disputed by the sources, with Vergeer (2004) and Rendall (2000) suggesting the first race occurred in 1894, while Hughes (2004) asserts that this was merely a reliability trial for the 1895 race. Nevertheless, the sources agree that the first Grand Prix was staged at Le Mans in 1906 (see also Noble & Hughes, 2004), with additional irregular races at various venues throughout

Europe during the early 20th century before the first fully sanctioned and official Formula One World Championship race at Silverstone, England in 1950 (Rendall, 2000). During these formative years the grid consisted primarily of individuals, known as privateers and enthusiasts, who raced in their national colours (e.g., British Racing Green, or Italian red) and manufactured their own cars (e.g., Englishmen John and Charles Cooper and, in the 1960s, New Zealander Bruce McLaren and Australian Jack Brabham). The complexion of the sport changed in the late 1960s with the advent of tobacco and other sponsor liveries (e.g., corporate colours and logos) adorning the cars, as well as the increased involvement of car manufacturers. Costs rose as teams pursued technical and performance advantages and, increasingly, these escalating production costs required sponsor and manufacturer backing, literally driving many privateers out of the sport. In addition, Formula One had been run haphazardly from 1950 until the early 1980s (Henry, 1998a; Rendall, 2000). Even in the 1970s each race was independent and required negotiation between teams and circuit owners for fees and the ascertaining of race entrants (both of which fluctuated from race to race), (Hotten, 1999).

Enter Bernie Ecclestone – The Ecclestone effect

Initially a used car salesman and part-time racer, Bernie Ecclestone turned his interests to Formula One, managing drivers before purchasing the Brabham team in 1971. Ecclestone sensed the commercial possibilities for the sport and, through his position as head of the Formula One Constructors' Association (FOCA), took on the role of organising and negotiating for all the British teams to streamline the sport into a single world championship series. Hotten (1999) suggests "Ecclestone's masterstroke was to promise circuit owners a full grid of teams;

teams had to commit themselves to a full season of racing. This pleased the crowds, it pleased the sponsors, and it pleased the television stations” (p. 29). However, infighting still dogged the sport, with the British teams (FOCA) and the Federation Internationale du Sport Automobile (FISA, the sports arm of the governing body, the FIA) squabbling over control of the sport. Ecclestone’s decisive moment was at the 1981 South African Grand Prix when he obtained television coverage and several million viewers for the race in which only FOCA teams competed. This prompted many of the FISA-aligned teams to side with Ecclestone and he was made vice-president of the FIA in 1981. Most importantly, however, Ecclestone was made responsible for negotiating worldwide television rights. In an interview with Henry (1998a), Ecclestone commented,

It was only when I began to get fully involved in the whole scene that I appreciated just how fragmented the television coverage had been. Some people covered a few races, some none at all. My initial motivation was to get the whole business together in an effort to get some decent overall coverage. (p. 16)

By the end of the 1980s, Ecclestone was no longer a team owner, and took on the role of Formula One’s commercial rights holder (leasing these rights for 100 years) through his company Formula One Management (FOM), while his long-time associate, Max Mosley, became FIA president in 1991.

Ecclestone and FOM have continued to develop Formula One as a commercial and global brand through a variety of ventures which entice large companies to finance the sport, such as track-side or title sponsorships for races which are arranged through an associate company, Allsport Management, which allegedly pays FOM an annual fee of \$50 million (Pitpass expose, 2006a).

Additionally, countries (via national organisations with or without government involvement) pay large sums of money to build race-tracks and become a host-nation for a Grand Prix event. For example, *F1 Racing* magazine reports that to be a host-nation, most of the European locations pay FOM around \$15 million a season on an escalating deal (usually in increments of ten percent), while “China is rumoured to pay over \$33 million per year” (Pitpass expose, 2006b, p. 18).

Arguably more significant for the sport’s commercial and global success has been Ecclestone’s handling of broadcasting rights and production standards for Formula One, with Ecclestone ensuring a television feed that is strong on production values and highly sought after by an array of global networks. Broadcasting rights are profitable for FOM, as is evident in Ecclestone’s transference of the exclusive television rights in Britain from the BBC to ITV in 1997 for an estimated £60 million (Hotten, 1999; Lovell, 2003; B. Turner, 2004), although Collings (2001) suggested that the deal actually “increased the five-year revenue from British television rights from £7 million to £70 million” (p. 130).⁶

Of course being Formula One’s commercial rights holder has also made Ecclestone extremely rich; he was reputedly worth an estimated US\$5.96 billion in 2003 (Beresford, 2003). Even though officially the FIA is the governing body, Ecclestone (and FOM) still exert a major influence within Formula One at all levels, safeguarding the sport through licenses and other arrangements to ensure a positive image and global brand (Hotten, 1999; B. Turner, 2004).

Returning to our discussion of the sport as global, Formula One, nevertheless, still reflects its European origins, with most of the teams based either in Britain (McLaren, Williams, Renault, Red Bull, Super Aguri and Midland-F1/Spyker-MF1/Force India) or other European localities (Ferrari and Toro Rosso in Italy and BMW-Sauber in Switzerland and Germany). Toyota and Honda are the

exceptions, having headquarters in Japan, as well as in Germany (Toyota) and Britain (Honda). Most of the drivers are also from European countries such as Austria, Britain, Finland, Germany, Italy and Spain; although other nation-states have also been represented in recent years, such as America, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, India, Japan and Malaysia. Formula One offers an interesting paradox in this respect, drawing on articulations of the nation-state in relation to teams and/or drivers, while positioning itself as a global sport through its mediated, commercial and geographical spread (see discussion of globalisation and the nation-state in Chapter Two). For example, the 'home' location of Force India in Britain seems to be a pointed example of such a paradoxical interrelationship, blurring articulations of the local and the global within Formula One (e.g., despite the team's nationalistic name, many of the technical staff are British, the drivers are Italian and German respectively, and there are few Indian nationals in the team). Formula One's contradictory juxtaposition of the local and the global clearly also has implications for the sport's diverse audience which will be further refined across the remainder of the thesis through interrogating the media/audience relationship of televised coverage and technologies (Chapters Four and Five) and Formula One fandom (Chapters Six and Seven).

The Formula One season generally consists of between 16 and 18 races, although a record 19 races were run in 2005 and, perhaps not surprisingly, 10 of these 19 races were staged in Europe. Nevertheless, the sport is also spreading, staging three races in the American continent (Canada, United States and Brazil), as well as races in Australia, Malaysia and Japan. In 2004, Formula One held Grands Prix in Bahrain and China for the first time, followed by the inaugural Turkish Grand Prix in 2005. These emerging races highlight the global spread of the sport, with Formula One tapping into both the lucrative Asian markets and 'oil

money' of the Middle East (Jones, 2004; Rendall, 2000; B. Turner, 2004).

Nevertheless, rather than being viewed as solely an attempt to make the series truly global, one must also acknowledge that the 2005 European anti-tobacco legislation saw races shift pragmatically from Europe to nations that allowed tobacco advertising. Hence, the new races in Bahrain, China and Turkey were not initially affected by tobacco legislation, while races in Europe have either been replaced or are under threat, as were other localities opposed to tobacco sponsorship prior to 2007. Belgium and Canada, for example, have twice been dropped from the Formula One calendar in recent years. In 2003, Belgium was dismissed for banning tobacco sponsorship before returning the following year when it overturned this ban while, in 2006, Belgium could not afford FOM's race fee (Pitpass expose, 2006b). The Canadian Grand Prix was also initially excluded in 2004 for banning tobacco sponsorship before offering the compensation of "a \$23 million deal to keep the Montreal race" (B. Turner, 2004, p. 197), although again has been dropped from the 2009 calendar, allegedly due to a financial dispute with Bernie Ecclestone ("Canada GP organizers", 2008; "Montreal government", 2008). Post-2006, although the visibility of tobacco sponsorship has been minimal (with the notable exceptions of Bahrain and China in 2007), the global spread of Formula One continues. Two European races at the Imola (San Marino) and Hockenheim (Germany) circuits were dropped for 2007, in addition to the French Grand Prix in 2009 due to escalating costs ("2009 French GP", 2008). Moreover, with Canada's exclusion for 2009 and the axing of the United States Grand Prix post-2007, Formula One is currently (and surprisingly) left without a presence in North America, a key market for many of the transnational corporations and car manufacturers sponsoring teams. In contrast, new races were staged in Singapore and at a second track in Spain (Valencia) in 2008, while a

new Grand Prix is scheduled for Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates in 2009. So the 'global sport' narrative in fact reflects a complicated history.

Collectively, these six popular narratives afford a broader understanding of contemporary Formula One and particularly, recognition of the apparatuses (e.g., technical, elitist, glamorous, commercial, mediated and global) that combine to produce and sustain the machinery of Formula One. Baudrillard (2002) offers his own (albeit abstract and symbolic) summation of the sport, noting that,

In a word, Formula One is a monster. Such a concentration of technology, money, ambition and prestige is a monster...Now, monsters are doomed to disappear, and we are afraid they might be disappearing. But we are not keen, either, to see them survive in a domesticated, routinized form. In an era of daily insignificance – including the insignificance of the car and all its constraints – we want at least to save the passion of a pure event, and exceptional beings who are permitted to do absolutely anything. (p. 170)

Clearly, Baudrillard's conception of Formula One as a 'pure event' is paradoxical, given the sport's complete reliance on mediation (as well as the other apparatuses, such as commerce and technology) to allow it to transcend geographical boundaries and garner a large global following through multiple media forms (points, of course, that Baudrillard does indirectly acknowledge in his essay). However, his articulation of Formula One as a concentrated monster is useful for recognising the condensation of the specific narrativised apparatuses (outlined above) which, collectively, merge, mould and *determine* the machinery, operational systems and broader structural formations of contemporary Formula

One. On the other hand, Baudrillard still ascribes significance to the driver, seemingly affording him a degree of human ‘agency’ to negotiate and navigate the narratives and the machinery of the sport on behalf of the audience. Such a perspective seems antithetical in light of Baudrillard’s (1983a, 1983b, 1988a, 1990a) fatal vision of determined masses discussed in the previous chapter (see also Chapter Seven). Thus, our attention turns to Baudrillard’s (2002) notion of the drivers as “exceptional beings who are permitted to do absolutely anything” (p. 170).

Machines or Agents?: The Formula One Driver

By identifying the driver as both a “technical operator” and the “symbolic operator of crowd passions” (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 169), Baudrillard’s essay seems most interested in the central, albeit paradoxical, dual roles the drivers occupy and perform in the sport. Thinking of the drivers as technical operators provides for a dense reading of the complex interrelationship between human ‘agency’ and the Formula One machine (although we will come in the end to question the implied structure/agency divide).

Performance, Agency and Technology

Within Formula One, Baudrillard sees both a collective fascination of a general sort among its diverse audience and a more concentrated focus projected onto the driver. As he notes, the complex constructions we have evoked above condense into a single point:

Viewed in machine terms, Formula One looks like a pyramid: a pyramidal synthesis of the efforts of thousands of people which culminate in a single car, a single man, a single brief, dazzling moment. The condensation is extreme,

and the mirror of the race refracts all the energies deployed – energies all working towards one goal – into the performance of a single man...The collective fascination with the race certainly owes much to this transformation of all into one. (Baudrillard, 2002, pp. 166-167)

While the collective fascination of audiences will be considered in due course, the condensing ‘performance’ of the driver warrants some exploration now. With Formula One represented as the pinnacle of motor-racing, there is an assumption that the drivers are also the best in the world. Certainly they are among the best, having advanced from and usually winning junior categories to get to Formula One; for example, various Karting titles (e.g., Fernando Alonso, Jarno Trulli), Formula BMW (e.g., Nico Rosberg), British Formula Three (e.g., Rubens Barrichello), Formula 3000 (e.g., Nick Heidfeld) or the rival American IndyCar series (e.g., Jacques Villeneuve, Juan Pablo Montoya). However, gauging how good the drivers are is difficult due to distinctions between other motor-racing categories (e.g., MotoGP or the WRC) and, more significantly, the technical nature of both the sport and performance. Hilton (2003) suggests that the Formula One driver is “unusual among sports people because for him technology plays such a decisive role. Good drivers do not win in bad cars” (p. 25). Baudrillard (2002) reaches similar conclusions, noting that the “car and driver are merely a living projectile” (p. 167), as well as observing that “in McLuhan’s sense: the car becomes a tactile, tactical extension of the human body” (p. 168). Thus, these ideas and Baudrillard’s (2002) opening lines, which question whether man or machine is the basis of the technological performance and “which merely the other’s double” (p. 166), offer a problematic reading of the driver’s role in Formula One.

On a primary level, it is fair to assert that driver ‘performance’ is so intertwined with the technological apparatuses and other machinery of Formula One that there is little room for the ‘autonomy’ of the driver to manipulate and influence ‘his’ performance and results. Therefore, despite the proven driving skill and race craft of previous race winners Jacques Villeneuve and Rubens Barrichello, both drivers initially struggled to adapt to their new teams’ cars (Villeneuve with Sauber in 2005, Barrichello with Honda in 2006), with doubts cast over their ability and whether the teams would persist with either driver due to ‘their’ poor performances (Pitpass expose, 2005b; Pitpass news, 2006). For both men, a friction between the role of the driver and the role of the machine, as it were, became apparent, affording not a seamless transition for new driver-team-machine relationships but, rather, a struggle to overcome the technological imposition of electronic driver systems which constrained rather than assisted or enhanced ‘their’ driving performances. Therefore, with technological apparatuses curtailing the driver’s role within the machinery (primarily revolving around braking systems for Villeneuve and traction control for Barrichello), both drivers were forced to adapt their own styles to suit the machine, as well as demand refinements to these systems to accommodate their performative roles. Reflective of the way that McLuhan’s (1964) concept of the extension of man underpins the driver-machine relationship, Villeneuve was quoted in *F1 Racing* magazine in 2006 as saying,

Last year we didn’t really do any testing, and the car and I didn’t really gel. I was never comfortable. I was always concentrating on having to *drive* the car rather than just being a *part* of the car. This year that wasn’t the case.

(Bishop, 2006c, p. 38; italics in original)

Given the drivers' reliance on their machinery, in Formula One the performance of the driver is compared to other drivers rather than the machinery directly. However, teams employ 'objective' apparatuses to assess such performances, with banks of team computers providing visual systems of measurement, such as sector and lap times, as well as driver telemetry, which traces exactly *how* the driver *drives* (and should drive) the machine by recording and mapping the application of throttle, brakes, corner entry and exit speeds, etcetera. Through these systems of measurement a driver's performance is compared to his team-mate's, as there is an assumption that both drivers are using the same machinery and operating under the same conditions. The team-mate comparison is fundamental to Formula One stardom as strong performances (e.g., points, podiums, race wins or championships in ascending order) elevate a driver's perceived monetary value, his appeal to other teams and the possibility of a top drive; conversely poor performances quickly affect driver reputation, value and are potentially career-ending (Noble & Hughes, 2004).

Furthermore, the drivers are themselves measured and disciplined through elaborate fitness programmes which, in a sense, attempt to transform the man into a machine. Reid (2002b) notes,

Most teams now see the driver in similar terms to the car, as a machine that must be kept in perfect condition to work to the best of its ability. There is no point in spending millions of pounds on the car, only for the driver to fail to get the best out of the package because he tires easily. (p. 71)

Renault, for example, invested £2.5 million in their Human Performance Centre to ensure that their drivers train rigorously to achieve high levels of fitness, endurance and strength and can function seamlessly as a cog within the machine.

Therefore, despite driver performances being aligned to their respective cars, broader public misconceptions about the required athleticism are unfounded. Noble and Hughes (2004) assert that “driving a racing car is certainly something only the fittest athletes can do” (p. 103), while drivers also need to withstand G-forces exerting between 1 and 5 G on their bodies while driving. How their athleticism correlates to required levels in other sports is less certain, with B. Turner (2004) refuting the clichéd descriptions of Formula One drivers as ‘super-fit’ or ‘Olympic standard’ athletes. Nevertheless, what becomes apparent through these various practices is that two levels of performance are simultaneously in operation. On the one hand, the private, inner workings of Formula One systematically scrutinise and assess driver performance in relation to the machinery of the car and reconceptualise the driver/man as an integrated machine. On the other hand, public mediations (and the popular narratives they sustain) tend to promote the human dimension of performance via its global mediation and emphasis on the star system, culminating in the Drivers’ Championship (this human element and the individual as ‘agent’ are returned to in due course).

Baudrillard (2002) suggests that pleasure is consequently eroded for the drivers themselves, who become instrumentalised and machine-like in their pursuit of victory. As he notes, (2002)

There is no passion in this – except the passion for winning, of course, though that is not personal, but an operational passion. It shows up in the driver’s brain the way the technical data show on the dashboard. It is in-built in the technical object itself, which is made to win, and which incorporates the driver’s will as one of the technical

elements required for victory. This seems inhuman, but to be honest about it, it is the mental logic of the race. (p. 168)

Therefore, in the pursuit of Formula One victory, there is an expectation for the seamless integration of the driver (himself also prepared like a machine) within the machine. Such an expectation clearly blurs any consideration of the potential for human ‘agency’ within the machinery of Formula One. For example, while Michael Schumacher was revered for his work ethic, high levels of fitness and supreme car control through which he accumulated seven world titles (Bishop, 2001a, 2006d), his integration within the Formula One machinery (in terms also of team, car, sponsors and the broader apparatuses charted earlier) seemed too perfect, too polished, *too seamless*. In fact, such characterisations tended to reduce Schumacher to an uncharismatic and emotionless figure, with Allen (2000) noting that “Schumacher is often accused of being more like a robot than a human being” (p. 78). It is no surprise, therefore, that drastic rule changes were implemented in 2003 to ‘open up’ the competition due to the dominance of the Ferrari/Schumacher ‘machine’ since 2000 (and especially in 2002).⁷ Moreover, this dominance, coupled with his ‘ruthless ambition’ to win at all costs, seems to reflect the robotic, human-machine fulfilling an ‘operational passion’ for winning devoid of ‘human’ emotion and unmoved by accusations of unsportsmanlike conduct across his career (Allen, 2000; Bishop, 2006a; Vergeer, 2004).

In many respects, the notions of performance, technology, operational passion and the robotic driver mapped thus far are further moulded and redirected by the commercial practices of the sport. Most Formula One drivers are well-paid athletes, earning base salaries ranging from US\$1 to 10 million a season, while a few earn over US\$20 million a season (Pitpass expose, 2005d). Therefore, if we pursue the Schumacher-as-robotic-machine analogy, it comes as no surprise that

he has not only won seven world championships (e.g., the performative man-machine) but, also, amassed phenomenal wealth, with Schumacher estimated to be worth AUS\$436 million in 2003 (Beresford, 2003). Post-2004 Schumacher was rumoured to be earning between approximately US\$70-80 million annually, over half of which was derived from endorsements (Pitpass expose, 2005d). Hence, the performing man-machine has clear commercial value for attracting sponsorship and becomes, as Allen (2000) notes, “a streamlined product of sponsors and PR men” (p. 84) offering the polished and seamless integration of robotic-man-machine with technological performance, corporate endorsements and financial rewards.

The practices of sponsors demonstrate the way that commerce acts as another apparatus within Formula One, further underscoring Baudrillard’s (2002) notion of ‘operational passion’ by constraining driver ‘agency’ and literally turning these men into corporate-driving-machines. In relation to driver selection and expectations, transnational corporations and car manufacturers purchase a degree of influence through sponsorship, often favouring a particular driver’s presence in the team. Obviously high profile drivers are preferred, yet sponsors also consider other marketing imperatives; for example, seeking drivers from two different nationalities (and key or untapped markets) to broaden their appeal. In their discussion of the Red Bull Junior Programme (which funds emerging drivers from around the world as a possible path to Formula One), *F1 Racing* magazine observes that,

Red Bull aren’t a racing team, they’re a soft drinks company, and are in F1 only to increase sales through brand awareness. As a result, the nationality of drivers on the Junior Programme is important. “If two drivers are of the

same ability”, says Marko, “and one is from Estonia and the other from the USA, we’d prefer to place the American on the programme because we sell more than a billion cans in the US”. (Pitpass expose, 2007, p. 29)

In a similar, Formula One-specific scenario, Sauber’s decision to have the two German drivers Heinz-Harald Frentzen and Nick Heidfeld in 2003 was considered not to be “ideal for marketing reasons” (Mansell, 2003, p. 51). Team owners do have the right to veto sponsor selections, as Peter Sauber did in 2001, opting for rookie Kimi Raikkonen (who would later become the 2007 World Champion) over then-sponsor Red Bull’s preferred driver, Enrique Bernoldi; nevertheless, sponsor demands can often result in preferred drivers getting a seat at the expense of others. Indeed, in 1998 Ken Tyrrell, team boss of Tyrrell, resigned after British American Tobacco bought the team and ordered that he replace Jos Verstappen with Ricardo Rosset, who *Formula 1 Magazine* described as “a no-hoper South American driver who would reputedly pay \$5 million for the drive” (“The fall of”, 2002, p. 25). This practice of paying for a drive is not uncommon, with some drivers providing either cash or major sponsors to secure a drive with one of the lesser teams in Formula One. Minardi (and Jordan between the years 2002-2005) previously only ‘employed’ drivers who could pay for their seats; a trend continued in 2006 by Midland-F1 (and Spyker MF1 in 2007), while Toro Rosso was established as a second team to run Red Bull-sponsored drivers. The presence of these drivers (commonly referred to as ‘pay drivers’) dispels the myth that all Formula One drivers are the best in the world, as well as limiting driver ‘agency’ through the practice of sponsors often intervening and imposing their will (or pay drivers) on the smaller teams. B. Turner (2004) asserts, “Don’t be fooled into thinking Formula One showcases the twenty best drivers in the world

– it doesn't. It offers a stage to those lucky enough to carry the logos of ambitious multinational corporations" (p. 201). Certainly the skilled star drivers in Formula One are talented and world-class (and usually hired by the top teams), yet many of these pay drivers in the lesser teams are simply out of their depth, as three recent examples demonstrate.

Argentinean Gaston Mazzacane was a pay driver who, Peagam (2001) suggests, brought "more money than talent to the Grand Prix melting pot" (p. 101). Despite poor performances for Minardi in 2000, Mazzacane was signed by Prost the following year, bringing an estimated US\$41 million of sponsorship with him. Peagam (2001) explains, "it all comes down to sponsorship and cash. PanAmerican Sports Network (PSN) hold the rights to F1 in Argentina. They have around \$41 million to spend in F1. They also sponsor Mazzacane" (p. 103). Prost needed the money but dumped Mazzacane after a handful of races, appeasing the sponsors by replacing him with another South American, Brazilian Luciano Burti. Similarly, Minardi ran Malaysian driver Alex Yoong due to funding promises of US\$194 million over four years from the Malaysian Government, "so long as Yoong drives" (Pitpass, 2001b, p. 25). This arrangement only lasted for two seasons (2001-2002) due to Yoong's dire performances, as he often trailed the field and could not always qualify for races. Finally, there is the Japanese driver, Takuma Sato, who has been in Formula One largely due to his nationality and Honda supplying engines to the teams for which he has driven. Described as "wild, often looking like an accident waiting to happen" in his debut season with Jordan in 2002 (Jones, 2004, p. 29), Sato was dropped at the end of 2005 after two error-ridden and crash-filled seasons with BAR. With no teams expressing an interest in Sato and a public outcry in Japan, Honda actually created a new team in 2006, Super Aguri, installing him as team

leader. Here is a prime example of sponsors and national interests determining the presence of a pay driver on the grid. *F1 Racing* observed,

By our count, in 51 GP starts, Sato has made at least 28 major errors in qualifying, practice or the race – more than one in every two starts. Is this guy worth the estimated \$200 million investment needed to start a Honda-B team? We think not. (Pitpass, 2005, p. 13)

It seems fair to assert that, rather than driving talent, Sato remained in Formula One primarily through nationality and sponsorship, even initially gaining his seat with BAR in 2004 at the expense of ex-world champion Jacques Villeneuve.

Therefore, Formula One's systematic layers and apparatuses persuasively refute Baudrillard's (2002) somewhat idealised representation of drivers as "exceptional beings who are permitted to do absolutely anything" (p. 170). Clearly, the drivers are located within a broader corporate-man-machine framework, with the Formula One structures, apparatuses and machinery tailored towards the seamless integration of the driver as a cog within the machine, rather than offering a potential site for individual expressions of agency. Nevertheless, the driver as a machine cannot fully account for the collective passion of audiences engaging with Formula One. Baudrillard's (2002) secondary notion of the driver as the "symbolic operator of crowd passions and the risk of death" (p. 169), as well as Villeneuve's salient role as the 'maverick risk-taker', may offer more precise articulations of the actual nature of driver 'agency' within the Formula One machinery.

Risk, Passion and the 'Individual'

With his conception of Formula One as a pyramid (positioning the driver as the focal point for 'collective passion'), Baudrillard (2002) notes,

But this pyramid, of which the driver is simply the tip, is projected in its turn through the media and television on to millions of people – a gigantic redirection, a spectacular superstructure (even leaving out of account the commercial and promotional aspects of the operation). High concentration, then high dilution. In this way, Formula One encapsulates a whole – collective, technical and imaginary – cycle. (p. 167)

This 'gigantic redirection' requires further attention. Why do such large audiences tune in to Formula One? What is the nature of this 'dilution', or dispersed projection outwards from the driver/apex? While some preliminary explanations have already been forwarded here in relation to Formula One's spectacle as a 'screen of speed', its elitism, 'glamour' and global and commercial layers, Baudrillard suggests that the answer also lies in the spectacle of death. He notes, (2002)

And here might be said to lie the other passion – alongside the passion for winning – a passion both more spectacular and murkier. Connected, admittedly, with the dramatization of the danger by the media, but also, more profoundly, with the symbolic rule of the challenge and the duel: the passion for accidents and death. (p. 168)

This perspective is supported by many of the Formula One media sources who, collectively, promote the view that danger and the possibility of death are among

the motivating factors for audience engagement with the sport (e.g., Hilton, 2003; Shirley, 2000; B. Turner, 2004; Vergeer, 2004). Given that these ‘living projectiles’ reach speeds in excess of 200mph on many circuits, risk-taking, accidents and the possibility of death clearly underpin the spectacle of Formula One racing. Paradoxically though, despite the obvious dangers, Formula One has become a relatively safe sport through a raft of safety measures which have increasingly developed since the 1960s (Sturm, 2007). Thus, there have been no driver fatalities since the deaths of Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger in 1994 and, prior to this, Gilles Villeneuve (Jacques’ father) in 1982. Baudrillard (2002) is aware of this paradox, noting,

There was a time when not just the drivers, but the spectators too, risked their lives on the circuits. Those sacrificial days are gone. As the personal pleasure in driving is gradually disappearing from the circuits, so too is the personal risk of death. Death is no longer anything but a virtual imaginary element. Only the cars die, only the engines are driven to destruction. Only the technical ‘double’ dies...but the spectacle of death, shown ‘live’, is unacceptable today. However, the definitive elimination of accidents is unthinkable...Even if the real risk is tiny in relation to the imaginary risk, it is there. And this dimension is absolutely vital. Without any random factor, without incident, expurgated of all its unpredictable elements, motor racing would lose all interest. (pp. 168-169)

Baudrillard’s (2002) statement encapsulates many salient ideas which may afford us an insight into drivers as particular kinds of ‘agents’ within the contemporary

machinery of Formula One. Despite death being unacceptable for either the corporate sponsors or the global media audiences of Formula One, the sport's safety measures may 'eliminate' death but cannot contain all the risks inherent to the sport. Hence, big crashes every year destroy the machinery but preserve the driver as, for example, in the horrific crashes in 2001 of Jacques Villeneuve at Australia and Luciano Burti at Belgium, as well as Robert Kubica at Canada in 2007. In these three cases, I recall watching live televised images of these cars literally disintegrating as they bounced or skimmed off safety barriers and catch-fencing before smashing to a halt (or in Burti's case, ploughing unimpeded at full throttle into a tyre wall). What was all the more remarkable was that, although Burti and Kubica needed to be extracted from their cars and given medical attention (shielded from the cameras since the possible spectacle of death screened live is unacceptable), all three drivers emerged with minor injuries in contrast to the shattered (and scattered) remains of their cars. In fact, despite the violent and fragmented images of Villeneuve's car airborne and skimming backwards along the catch-fencing, his calm demeanour and nonchalant "Yeah, I'm okay" response to ITV interviewer, Louise Goodman, moments after the incident, seemed almost as surreal as the crash itself (DVD Example 23). Rather than the driver's death, therefore, only the car is permitted to 'die' in contemporary Formula One and, outside of the exceptional 'big accident', it is uncommon to view a contemporary race on television without seeing a plume of smoke erupt from the back of at least one car as its engine dies while the driver, nonplussed, frustrated but uninjured, makes his way back to the pits.

As 'symbolic operators of crowd passions', these factors potentially signify an importance for the drivers which Baudrillard both implicitly and explicitly alludes to in his essay: the driver 'matters' in Formula One. Although thus far we

have seen that the driver has a problematic and almost secondary relationship with the machinery of Formula One in relation to technology and performance, he is present nonetheless and pilots these projectiles in a limited capacity rather than the teams literally using machines to control the machinery (setting aside earlier evocations of the driver as a machine). Additionally, as the centre of the sport's attention (or 'tip of the pyramid'), it is the driver not the machine that is preserved and conversely (and perhaps, perversely), many tune into the sport to watch the drivers 'cheat' their own deaths (or survive the death of their double, the car), negotiate the risks and drive their machines to the brink of mechanical destruction. Most significantly, Baudrillard (2002) observes that it is the unpredictable elements that are vital to maintaining audience interest. The unpredictability is where the drama occurs in surviving the death of the mechanical double. This provides an intriguing paradox for Formula One as its systems and apparatuses primarily operate in ways that seek to predict, control and *determine* the seamless functioning of the sport, while the 'human' qualities of unpredictability, flaws and 'slippery' degrees of agency provide the friction and uncertainty within the machinery. Therefore, audiences are tuning in to also watch the 'individual' drivers compete against one another (not just the machines, teams, companies, etc), replete with moments of 'human' error, folly and masterful displays achieved through (but also over and above) the machine. In this respect, audiences are also permitted a small window through which to discern the nuances in driver styles and ability that the Formula One technology strives so hard to 'perfect' and eradicate. Hence, in addition to the teams, the team-mate comparison also 'matters' for Formula One audiences as now the focus is on the 'individuality' of two different drivers who operate identical machinery (e.g., the comparatively smooth/fluent versus aggressive/forceful driving styles of

Michael Schumacher and Felipe Massa for Ferrari in 2006, and Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso for McLaren in 2007), demonstrate contrasting abilities (e.g., Mark Webber and Alex Yoong for Minardi in 2002; Jenson Button and Takuma Sato for BAR in 2004 and 2005), while varying degrees of driver-machine integration are also recognisable along the grid (e.g., the initial struggles of Barrichello and Villeneuve to adapt to new teams/machinery discussed earlier). This aspect of the audience/fan relationship with Formula One (and the drivers) provides another significant research ‘problem’ to be developed by the thesis. While Baudrillard (2002) has offered the ‘symbolic operator’ as an explanation for ‘collective’ crowd passions, these findings tend to be both abstract and at times symbolically conceived and all-encompassing theories. Therefore, an examination of specific contexts and concrete practices for fan-star relationships will be mapped in this thesis; moving from the ‘collective’ audience experience proffered by Formula One mediations (Chapters Four and Five), to an exploration of the specificity of my own fan engagements and processes (Chapter Six), and conceptualising why Villeneuve’s ‘maverick’ status appeals (Chapter Seven).

The specific notion posited here, of the endlessly repeated spectacle of surviving the death of the mechanical other, needs further examination. This notion can, perhaps, be mapped onto specific details of the television coverage for instance. But first, the theme of Villeneuve as ‘risk-taker’ is revisited. The contention that Villeneuve provides a ‘maverick’ form of individualism has already been traced in Chapter One. This section redeploys the ‘traces of grit’ that Villeneuve’s ‘risk-taker’ status affords, as briefly discussed in Chapter Two, arguing that his proclivity for danger acts as both a source of ‘friction’ within the machinery of Formula One and seeks to represent such friction as a form of agency.

Unlike the smooth and ‘seamless’ integration of drivers such as Michael Schumacher or Jenson Button, Villeneuve’s apparent bravado and aggressive driving style appear to present us with an, albeit fragmented, vision of the ‘individual’ as very much present within the machine. Although we have already established that the driver generally has a secondary performative role in Formula One, Villeneuve tried to compensate for his often under-powered and under-performing race cars with his ‘hard-charging’ (Hughes, 2004) or attacking driving style. For example, in whichever machine he was operating, Villeneuve was readily identifiable through driving which, although metronomic like his peers, exceeded their often uniform tight-driving lines (which were also championed by team mechanisms, such as telemetry), using every inch of the track and then some to gain any performative advantage (DVD Examples 2, 3, 9, 16, 19 and 22). Thus, Villeneuve could often be viewed ferociously bouncing over the kerbing (e.g., at Monza, Italy) or with his wheels far over the kerbs kicking up dust and dirt from his unconventional, off-track driving lines (e.g., through the fast first corners at both Hockenheim in Germany and at the A1 Ring in Austria), while stories on Villeneuve were often accompanied by similar ‘aggressive’ accounts and/or ‘off-track’ pictures of his driving style (e.g., Bishop, 2000; Hughes, 2004; Samson, 2001; Vergeer, 2004). Donaldson (2001) observed,

On the track he is mesmerising to watch, an obvious daredevil whose lust for speed and passion for pure racing is a throwback to a different age of motorsport. When it comes to fighting spirit and attempted overtaking manoeuvres he is in a league of his own. (p. 55)

In this respect, Villeneuve does seem to encapsulate Baudrillard’s (2002) notion of the driver as a “symbolic operator of crowd passions and the risk of death”

(p. 169), potentially exciting crowds with his aggressive style while his penchant for risk-taking allowed audiences to glimpse the possibility of death.

Through a combination of his reported bravado, risk-taking, big crashes and struggles to adapt to the evolving technological machinery of Formula One, Villeneuve seemed to be a driver still clinging to his own pursuit of some form of ‘personal pleasure’ in driving, despite Baudrillard (2002) noting that such pleasure, as well as the personal risk of death, was disappearing from the contemporary circuits. For example, in response to questions from *F1 Racing* magazine readers in 2008, he was asked about his ‘fondness for crashing’. Villeneuve allegedly retorted,

First of all, let me say I’ve got no fondness for crashing. It’s never fun, and it always hurts. But, well, if you do have a shunt, then make sure it’s a good one at least! I had a couple of big ones at Eau Rouge but I’m not sure which one I’d say was the best. It really depends on why you crash. In those cases, I had the accident because I was trying to take the corner flat. Talking with the drivers afterwards, they said, “You’re mad, why are you trying to take it flat?” and there was a macho element that was quite good. But if it’s just a stupid crash, then there’s no pride in it. (Lord, 2008, p. 45)

Moreover, Villeneuve was evidently setting himself ‘personal’ challenges within the impersonal machinery of Formula One, which were not elements of a systematic ‘operational passion’ or merely about performance goals (e.g., eschewing the robotic-driver-machine focused solely on winning). For example, describing his crash at Belgium in 1997, Villeneuve is quoted in Shirley (2000) as saying,

I like to drive on the edge and I was definitely on the edge in that one. I was over 290 kph at the apex of Eau Rouge and I was trying to do it all flat. I just lost it. Plain and simple. It was a little scary but I would do it again. (p. 131)

Commenting on this particular crash, Shirley (2000) noted that for Villeneuve, Thoughts of slowing came late. The deep black scars of rubber from his belated braking demonstrated this, before his car plunged across a short gravel trap and spun backwards into the tyres which protected the steel barriers...Villeneuve climbed out of the wreckage and smiled but beneath the cool, rather nonchalant exterior, there was anger. Anger because he had lost control; beaten by the twisting speed of Raidillon. (p. 131)

This became a ‘personal’ annual challenge for Villeneuve and he continued to ‘do it again’, crashing out at Eau Rouge in both 1998 and 1999. Thus, Villeneuve repetitively displayed a personal pleasure in risk-taking, while using this particular section of the Belgium circuit to test his ‘individual’ mastery over fear, race-track and the machine.

Audiences with any trace of a “passion for accidents and death” (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 168) had a readily identifiable figure to focus on, waiting to see what consequences might emerge from Villeneuve’s bravado and risk-taking.

Although I do not share this potential audience ‘passion’, I do recall personally experiencing the empty feeling that Villeneuve would be pronounced dead having seen his crash at the 2001 Australian Grand Prix ‘live’ on television (DVD Example 23). More broadly, watching Villeneuve offered moments of human error, folly and mastery within and over the machine. Hence, his spectacular

driving style would bear witness to an ‘individual’ at times making basic driving errors (e.g., his ‘simple’ crashes at the 1997 and 1999 Canadian Grand Prix), providing demonstrations of folly (e.g., ruining both his team-mate’s [Felipe Massa] and his own chances of points by colliding with him at the 2005 Monaco Grand Prix), ‘mixed’ results (e.g., his frenetic, low-fuel assisted ‘charge’ from seventeenth to third at one stage, captured by the television cameras, before retiring with a blown engine at the 2002 Austrian Grand Prix) and mastery over the machine (e.g., ‘burying’ the throttle to execute a 900° spin and stay on the race track [not crash] after being clipped from behind, before then re-performing a 180° spin to continue forward momentum at the 2000 German Grand Prix). Furthermore, through Villeneuve, audiences could witness the increasing encroachment of technology ‘replacing’ the driver and his thwarted responses to these impositions. For example, describing traction control at Turn One of the Silverstone circuit in England in 2006, Villeneuve is reported in *F1 Racing* magazine as saying,

Even though on the one hand you had to admit it’s amazing that a car can go through it so fast, you didn’t have to worry about it. You didn’t have to worry about running a fraction wide or touching a kerb where you hadn’t intended to, because the cars are now so good that you knew you’d probably get through anyway. If you got a bit sideways, for instance, you knew the traction control would probably sort it out. (Bishop, 2006c, p. 41)

Further, Villeneuve’s ‘individual’ brilliance at race starts in 2000 was replaced by the automated process of launch control in 2001, his ‘individual’ challenge versus fear, race-track and machine at Eau Rouge was nullified by the machine (through

traction control) in 2001 and, more broadly, these electronic driver systems rendered many of his ‘pleasurable’ risk-taking pursuits and ‘spectacular’ driving displays obsolete as the machine increasingly reduced the performative role of the man.

Sketching Villeneuve’s risk-taking as a form of friction within the machinery of Formula One intimates his usefulness for unravelling the usually abstract and potentially only symbolic renderings of the media audience/text relationship provided by Baudrillard and earlier identified as a significant research ‘problem’ for this thesis. With this chapter mapping the machinery of Formula One and the duplicity of the driver as both a technical and symbolic operator, it becomes apparent that an, albeit fragmented and constrained, ‘individual’ driver ‘matters’ in some capacity to the viewing audience. The remaining chapters will continue to probe both the media/audience relationship and the role of the ‘individual’ driver.

Analysing Formula One Sources:

The Production of ‘Popular’ Knowledge

An underlying reason for focusing so far on the more ‘popular’ accounts of Formula One is the lack of significant academic research on the sport within either the media studies or sport sociology fields. There are a plethora of works written by journalists and ex-members of the Formula One fraternity, as well as numerous Formula One magazines and websites but little in academia (motorsport as a whole has received limited attention). Setting aside Baudrillard’s essay (2002) which has informed this chapter, the other four academic works on Formula One/motorsport will now be briefly reviewed. In the first, Kennedy (2000) compares the gendered narratives of televised Formula One with snooker.

Her narrative analysis reveals that snooker offers more intimacy with the stars through its televisual framing and discourses, while Formula One drivers are comparatively anonymous and obscured by their cars and protective gear during the race. Additionally, Kennedy suggests that a narrative of success underpins the staging of a Grand Prix, complete with a cast of active men, passive women, a focus on action and the hero (winning driver) all played out in the public sphere. Kennedy's (2000) notion of driver anonymity assists with an examination of Formula One's visual representations and will be developed through a broader conceptualisation of the sport's televisual technologies and '*screens of speed*' in Chapters Four and Five.

In a sociological account of Formula One, Lowes (2004) focuses on the Victorian State Government's acquisition of the Australian Grand Prix in 1993. Utilising a political economy perspective, Lowes argues that the government's approach was autocratic and outlines the numerous transgressions of citizens' rights and public concerns involved in the acquisition of the Grand Prix. As Lowes' chief concern is to critique the neoliberal policies of the Victorian Government rather than analyse the sport of Formula One, his work offers little to my research. Finally, two other works provide a sociological examination of the American NASCAR series. Shackleford (1999) examines the masculine rituals and the role of technology in the American NASCAR series which, while informative, has little connection to my own research given the distinction between both the 'Southern' masculinity embodied in NASCAR and the comparatively limited technological impetus of the oval-based, American stock-car series in relation to Formula One. In the second NASCAR-orientated research article, Crawford (2006) considers the problematic representation of driver, Jeff Gordon, as an ambivalent masculine sex symbol. Crawford (2006) notes that

Gordon's clean-cut image seemed out of place in the macho world of NASCAR, a finding which echoes but reverses my interest in Jacques Villeneuve. Given the limited scope of these four articles, it should be acknowledged that Formula One is currently under-examined in academia, so this thesis and a survey of the dangers inherent within Formula One as an 'extreme' sport (Sturm, 2007) seek to make a contribution to this underdeveloped literature.

As a result, five types of more 'popular', non-academic accounts become significant sources for discussing and analysing the publicly-known narratives of the sport, and Jacques Villeneuve specifically. The first source is the burgeoning collection of Formula One books, with 23 specific books being drawn upon in this thesis.⁸ Three of the Formula One books have been particularly influential for my research, with B. Turner (2004) providing a critical rather than celebratory account of contemporary Formula One from her perspective as a Formula One television presenter, Vergeer (2004) considering Formula One through his own fandom and Noble and Hughes' (2004) providing an informative and detailed (albeit celebratory) contemporary overview of the sport. The second source is the monthly magazine format (*F1 Racing* and *Formula 1 Magazine*), with 123 Formula One magazines collected and analysed.⁹ Generally, the magazines are useful and thorough 'current' sources for Formula One (see below), barring B. Turner's (2004) critique of *Formula 1 Magazine's* lack of independence as noted earlier, as well as *F1 Racing's* thinly veiled favouritism of certain drivers (e.g., Michael Schumacher, or Giancarlo Fisichella between 2002-2004) or blatant and at times unwarranted castigation of others (e.g., Eddie Irvine in 2000-2001; Villeneuve 2002-2005, or Ralf Schumacher in 2007); though these of course may have been marketing ploys to generate pseudo-debate.

The third source is Formula One coverage on the internet, with seven prime Formula One internet sites drawn upon since 2003.¹⁰ The content and quality of the websites is marked; ranging from industry-based, insider knowledge to gossip and, most disappointingly, either the celebratory or outdated 'official' sites.¹¹ The fourth (and arguably most prominent) source for public and popular narratives of Formula One is the race telecasts which I have viewed live on 181 occasions between 1998-2008. Since September 1998 until the end of the 2006 season, 111 full Grands Prix have been videotaped, forming the basis for the televisual textual analysis in Chapters Four and Five.¹² During my period of viewing, these live telecasts from British broadcaster ITV were supplemented with commentary, most notably from ex-Formula One driver, Martin Brundle, as well as presenters Murray Walker (1998-2001) and James Allen (2002-2008). These commentators enlivened the racing action but, more importantly for their audience, constructed a globally-disseminated form of Formula One 'knowledge', with their popular narratives available across 28 countries (including Britain).¹³ On occasion, on-line or print newspapers provide a fifth type of source for Formula One through their accounts of the sport. My collecting and use of these materials has been most pronounced during attendance at the live Grands Prix in Australia (2002-2004; 2006) and Canada (2005), 'scavenging' (Jenkins, 1992) through the daily newspapers and only keeping items on Formula One for their supplementary and localised coverage of the event.¹⁴

These five types of Formula One source are fundamental for discussing the popular narratives surrounding Formula One and Jacques Villeneuve. Of course, as popular texts, each source has to be treated with caution in relation to its rigour, selection and presentation of Formula One knowledge or 'facts'. Clearly, each source has limitations as, for example, Formula One books are already outdated

upon publication, as too is the monthly Formula One magazine *F1 Racing*, distributed in New Zealand up to six weeks after the events discussed. The daily internet sites fluctuate in the quality and reliability of their content, while newspapers tend to provide results-orientated reporting and, in New Zealand, the coverage is both minimal and generic, derived from international press affiliates. Finally, the live telecasts are predominantly focused on the images they present for the duration of the telecast, primarily commenting on racing action with often only fleeting or arbitrary references to other Formula One ‘news’, ‘anecdotes’ or developments outside of the live event.

Collectively, these Formula One texts tend to provide five types of ‘news’ which could be categorised as: 1) results-orientated reporting, 2) the reproduction of official press releases (teams, sponsors and FIA) or driver statements (e.g., their post-race report) and, 3) reported news stories, which provide brief, ‘factual’, descriptive stories which extend beyond simply recording results. The fourth type is feature articles, which are usually lengthier pieces on a Formula One related topic (e.g., an internet editorial; or the driver interviews, profiles or analysis found in *F1 Racing* magazine). Finally, the fifth type of Formula One news is intrigue, rumour and speculation about drivers, teams or Formula One developments which are often loosely-based on gossip rather than the idealised expectation of ‘objective’ coverage integral to most forms of sports journalism (Rowe, 2005). The fifth type of coverage is arguably the most salient in Formula One in terms of its volume, active circulation and readership (e.g., there are often audience responses to these rumours in emails sent to internet sites, such as *Planetf1.com*), as well as its relevance for this research. As noted earlier, despite the sport being conducted in the public arena, the inner workings of Formula One are very secretive. With some dull racing seasons and especially dull official press

releases, the off-track or non-racing activities get increased press coverage. Therefore, intrigue, rumour and speculation envelop Formula One coverage concerning drivers and their fluctuating star status and performances (e.g., movements between teams, motivation, future prospects), teams (e.g., personnel changes, possible sponsors), as well as other aspects of the sport (e.g., regulation changes, new venues) often divulged by ‘insiders’ or members of the Formula One community. Even coverage which may conform to one of the first four categories identified above is often spliced with this fifth element, as is evident in the additional reporting of rumour and speculation surrounding Villeneuve’s performances in 2005 (Appendix One).

Between Construction and Myth

This chapter has suggested, in some detail, the nature of the complex constructions that underpin the simple public narratives of Formula One – its myths in a sense (as Barthes [1993] used that term). What has emerged in the space between construction and myth is the key research question of how someone like Villeneuve functions as an orchestrator of collective passion. What is this orchestration in concrete terms? Is it textual? Is it about fandom? And how does it relate to the intriguing matter of Formula One as an arena for repetitively watching the driver escape the destruction of his double, the car? Does Villeneuve expose more of what is going on here because he never quite *fitted*? And what does this tell us about Formula One and its sustaining media as contemporary practices of popular culture? The remaining chapters will tease out these questions through a funnelling approach to notions of the audience; moving from collective experiences to more atomised engagements with Formula One’s mediated coverage (Chapters Four and Five), articulating the concrete contexts

and particular practices embedded within fandom (Chapter Six) and reconsidering the significance that Villeneuve's traces of grit as a 'maverick individual' provide in specific star/fan relationships (Chapter Seven). Collective passion will in the end be regrounded in the personal passion that it assembles and organises.

¹ I suspect that this perception would not be as evident in American publications, as American sport is insular in its coverage and tends to embellish the status of its own sports (e.g., 'World Championships' played out only between American teams). America also has its own popular stock-car racing series (NASCAR), as well as two open-wheeled championships the Indy Racing League (IRL) and Championship Auto Racing Teams (CART – rebranded as the Champ Car World Series [CCWS] since 2002) which, despite being lower categories, compete with and could be perceived as the American open-wheel equivalent of Formula One (Sturm, 2007). Early in 2008 these two open-wheeled series re-unified and now compete solely as the IRL.

² *F1 Racing* has provided estimates for the seasons 2002-2004. The exact figures provided are \$2,141,100,000 for 2002 (Henry, 2003), \$2,493,100,000 for 2003 (Henry, 2004), and \$2,537,010,000 for 2004 (Henry, 2005).

³ *F1 Racing* reports that these teams spent the following in 2002; Ferrari \$443.8m, Williams \$353.3m, McLaren \$304.6m, Toyota \$290.4m and BAR \$225.1m (Henry, 2003). For 2003, Ferrari spent \$418.23m, Toyota \$368.51m, McLaren \$359.22m, Williams \$359.04m and BAR \$309.87m (Henry, 2004). In 2004, Ferrari spent \$426.24m, Toyota \$397.21m, McLaren \$359.33m, Williams \$355.59m and BAR \$343.59m (Henry, 2005).

⁴ Jordan operated at around \$79m in 2002 and 2003, although in 2004 they were down to \$67.78m, while Minardi remained on \$39m in 2002 and 2004, with a high of \$46.58m in 2003 (see Henry, 2003; Henry, 2004; Henry, 2005).

⁵ As an example, using the 'Google' advanced internet search engine yielded 76,900,000 hits for sites "with all of the words" 'Formula One'. Retrieved November 9, 2006, from http://www.google.co.nz/search?as_q=formula+one&num=10&hl=en&btnG=Google+Search&as_epq=&as_oq=&as_eq=&lr=&as_ft=i&as_filetype=&as_qdr=all&as_occt=any&as_dt=i&as_sitesearch=&as_rights=&safe=images.

⁶ The BBC has since reacquired the television rights for Formula One on a five-year deal which commenced in 2009 ("BBC lands", 2008).

⁷ Michael Schumacher finished on the podium in every race of the 2002 season (11x 1st; 5 x 2nd; 1 x 3rd). He had won the Drivers' Championship by round 11, accumulating a season total of 144 points while his nearest 'rival', Ferrari team-mate Rubens Barrichello, finished a distant second with 77 points.

⁸ These 23 books comprised: four driver autobiographies (Button & Tremayne, 2002; Hill, 1996; Irvine & Nottage, 2000; Villeneuve & Donaldson, 1997), one commentator autobiography (Walker, 2002), three driver profiles (Allen, 2000; Collings, 1998; Hilton, 1997), two team profiles (Donaldson, 1999; Henry, 1998b), two historical accounts (Hughes, 2004; Rendall, 2000), three accounts on the business of Formula One (Collings, 2001; Hotten, 1999; Lovell, 2003), two books on the dangers of the sport (Hilton, 2003; Shirley, 2000), one fan account (Vergeer, 2004), one paddock insider text (Allsop, 1998), and four general, contemporary Formula One readers which overview the sport (Henry, 1998a; Hill 1998; Noble & Hughes, 2004; B. Turner, 2004).

⁹ The specific breakdown of these magazines is 101 copies of the monthly *F1 Racing* magazine: 1998 – 4 (September – December); 1999 – 2003 – 60 (all inclusive); 2004 – 9 (March – October; December); 2005 – 12; 2006 – 11 (January – October; December); 2007 – 4 (February; March; September; October) and 2008 – 1 (November). Although not as readily available in New Zealand, 19 copies of the monthly *Formula 1 Magazine* were also consulted: 2002 – 11 (all inclusive, including a combined November/December issue); 2003 – 6 (January – March; May – July); 2004 – 1 (February), in addition to three *Autosport* magazine 'Grand Prix Reviews' (2000–2002).

¹⁰ The seven internet sites are: four daily updated and Formula One-only news sites (*f1-live.com*; *grandprix.com*; *itv-f1.com*; *planetf1.com*), *pitpass.com*, which incorporates other motorsport; the official Formula One site (*formula1.com*); and the official Villeneuve site (*jv-world.com*).

¹¹ Of the daily sites, *grandprix.com* is the most useful for informed, accurate and insider, industry-based news; *planetfl.com* and *itv-fl.com* provide regular and entertaining editorials (or guest columns on *itv-fl.com*) and publish letters from readers/fans in addition to reporting news, while *fl-live.com* tends to be gossip-based which is salient for following rumoured driver movements, even if their speculation proves to be unfounded and often incorrect. For the other sites, *pitpass.com* primarily reports publicly announced stories rather than rumours and shares the insider-industry focus of *grandprix.com* while, as the official site for the sport, *formula1.com* tends to be ‘celebratory’ of the sport and offers little of news ‘value’ that could not be obtained from the other sites (although live timing is an invaluable tool). Arguably, the most disappointing of the websites is Villeneuve’s official site (*fv-world.com*). The Villeneuve site is not updated regularly so, despite occasional ‘exclusive’ interviews or post-race comments, often apparently penned by Villeneuve, generally most of the ‘news’ is outdated information already available on one of the other Formula One sites.

¹² The specific break down of taped races per season is as follows (in order of occurrence): 1998 – 1 (Italian); 1999 – 6 (Brazilian, French, German, Italian, European, Japanese); 2000 – 7 (Monaco, Canadian, French, German, Belgian, United States, Malaysian); 2001 – 11 (Australian, Malaysian, Brazilian, Spanish, Monaco, Canadian, British, German, Belgian, Italian, United States). For the period 2002 -2005 the full race season was taped, barring Belgium 2002 (lost) and San Marino 2004 (accidentally taped over). Thus, for 2002 there are 16 (of 17) races; 2003 – 16; 2004 – 17 (of 18); 2005 – 19. For the 2006 season, all 18 races were taped, inclusive of qualifying, which had not been broadcast in New Zealand since 1998. It should also be noted that during my period of viewing (1998-2008), Formula One had been broadcast free-to-air on TV1 (Television New Zealand) without qualifying between 1999-2005; while the digital television network, Sky Television, held the broadcasting rights in 1998 and re-acquired them as of 2006, inclusive of qualifying.

¹³ The exact number of countries receiving the ITV telecast is difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, Murray Walker notes that while providing live commentaries for the BBC in 1996 and ITV from 1997-2001, that the Formula One coverage and commentaries were also broadcast in “Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Pakistan and 19 Middle East and African countries” (Walker, 2002, p. 376).

¹⁴ In Melbourne, a total of 45 newspapers were acquired during four trips to the Australian Grand Prix, the two daily papers, *The Herald-Sun* and *The Age*, were purchased as often as they could be obtained, as well as free copies of the MX paper, distributed in the Melbourne CBD during weekdays, when accessible. The specific breakdown of these Melbourne newspapers is: 2002 – 9 (Friday 1st March – Tuesday 5th March); 2003 – 15 (Tuesday 5th – Wednesday 11th March); 2004 – 10 (Thursday 4th – Tuesday 9th March); 2006 – 11 (Wednesday 29th March – Tuesday 4th April). During the Canadian Grand Prix in 2005, only the *Montreal Gazette* was purchased (as it is published in English), obtaining only 5 newspapers as these sold out quickly in the Montreal CBD (Tuesday 7th June – Saturday 11th June). Because of the extensive coverage Villeneuve received in Montreal during 2005, the *Montreal Gazette* was accessed online during the 2006 Canadian Grand Prix (Monday 19th June – Monday 26th June) to monitor his press coverage.

CHAPTER FOUR

From the Grandstand to the Cockpit: Framing the Televised Formula One Image, Viewer Positioning and the Significance of Emerging Televisual Technologies for the Televised Sport Audience.

As noted in the previous Chapters, Formula One is widely perceived to be a ‘television’ sport and, for most viewers, is primarily experienced through its live telecast. As the prime site for the global circulation and consumption of Formula One, how the televisual “screen of speed” (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 167) constructs and re-presents the sport is critical to understanding Formula One’s transformation into a specific media text. Interestingly, cinema had a pivotal role in developing the screened image of Formula One racing. Hotten (1999) suggests that the origins of the comprehensive and stylish televised coverage of Formula One (and the on-board camera technology in particular) owe much to Hollywood and the John Frankenheimer film *Grand Prix* (1966). A visually stunning representation of the European Formula One races of 1966, *Grand Prix* used the latest camera technology to innovatively film and recreate the racing action. This included mounting cameras on the cars for the first time. As a result of *Grand Prix*, the sense of speed and danger was now graphically represented and available for the cinema audience.

Despite this cinematic origin, Formula One’s primary ‘screen of speed’ (Baudrillard, 2002), its television coverage, was slower to evolve. Indeed, televised coverage of Formula One continued to be sporadic at best even after the release of *Grand Prix*. For example, in Britain, a key nation in the development and continuation of the sport, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) had begun televising limited coverage of Formula One in the 1950s yet the broadcasts

were a mixture of some live races, delayed coverage or highlight packages. These BBC telecasts were also inconsistent in their production values or the quality of the screened footage (Walker, 2002). As noted in Chapter Three, Bernie Ecclestone's efforts as president of the Formula One Constructors' Association had improved the organisation of Formula One, as well as the quality and potential for the sport as a global televisual spectacle during the early 1980s. Nevertheless, in Britain, it was not until 1996 that the BBC first provided live, comprehensive televised coverage of a complete Formula One season, a trend continued by Independent Television (ITV) since they acquired the British broadcasting rights for Formula One in 1997 (Hotten, 1999; Walker, 2002); although these rights have since been transferred back to the BBC on a five year deal commencing in 2009.

In a further refinement of the media text and audience relationship developed in the preceding chapter, a broader analysis of the televised construction of the Formula One audience (e.g., viewer positioning) is essential to assist us in moving away from some of the universalising theories of the audience mapped and critiqued in Chapter Two. Therefore, this chapter proceeds from generalised theories of the visual representations provided for viewers and how they are positioned by generic televised sport and Formula One coverage, to the implications of innovative and emerging technologies which are re-placing and re-positioning viewers in non-traditional ways (and, more broadly, afford potential for reconsideration of traditional theories of the audience). Guttman (1986) offers an initial account for those who attend or watch sport, asserting that, "the sports spectator is anyone who views a sports event, either *in situ* or through visual media such as film or television" (Guttman, 1986, p. 5, italics in original). While highly problematic, these 'spectators' are then distinguished from fans

whom, according to him, follow sport through other means (he cites newspapers, magazines and radio, while implying consumption sustains and underpins fandom). Guttman (1986) notes that,

A conceptual line has to be drawn *somewhere* between those who experience a sports event ‘fully’ and those whose experience is partial. I draw my admittedly arbitrary line between those who can see an action taking place and those who cannot. The term *fan* refers here to the emotionally committed ‘consumer’ of sports events. The terms overlap but are obviously not identical. In practice most fans are spectators and most spectators are fans, but it is logically possible to be one and not the other. Some fans have never actually attended a sports event or watched one on television; some spectators stare absent-mindedly at televised sports without a flicker of interest, some allow themselves to be dragged to games that they then observe without any of the emotional involvement characteristic of the fan. (p. 6, italics in original).

Such definitions and distinctions are clearly riddled with problematic assumptions. For example, I cannot comprehend contemporary sports *fandom* as not comprising either attendance or televised viewing of the event, nor being solely based on consumption. In addition, his distinction between a ‘full’ and ‘partial’ experience derived from whether or not one ‘views’ the game through attendance and/or television is vexed (i.e., *all* media texts require visualisation, decoding processes and forms of cultural literacy, while being ‘shaped’ by an affective set of relations – see also Schirato, 2007b). However, Guttman (1986)

does offer us a starting point, the universalising term spectators, to account for those watching Formula One telecasts, while the “ideal spectator” (Whannel, 1992, p. 96) is a key explanatory term for understanding televised viewer positioning. Nevertheless, as much of this chapter deals with television and not ‘live’ forms of spectatorship, I primarily use the terms ‘audience’ or ‘viewer’ to account for those watching or able to watch the global Formula One telecasts (and to avoid mapping conceptual and ‘experiential’ vagaries in televised Formula One viewership, ‘live’ spectatorship and fandom in this chapter). I will revisit the suggested concerns and critiques, as well as the ‘degrees’ of intensity, investment and affect that underpin such viewings and the practices of fandom in Chapter Six.

Televised Sport

Whannel (1992) notes, “for most of us, for most of the time, sport is television sport” (p. 3). Televised sport operates within an interesting dynamic of being an actual event “independent of the institutions of television” (Whannel, 1992, p. 92); that is, sport is not a manufactured product created by or for television and, in most cases, has an existence separate to television. However, sport also becomes circumscribed by its reinscription for the televisual format. Television sport does not simply ‘occur’, nor present the ‘reality’ of sport (Buscombe, 1975; Whannel, 1992) as a range of constructed and selective processes (e.g., framing, editing, narrativisation, etc.) contribute to the re-presentation of sport for the televisual format (see Barnett, 1990; Brookes, 2002; Clarke & Clarke, 1982; Goldlust, 1987; Gruneau, Whitson & Cantelon, 1988; MacNeill, 1996; Messner, Dunbar & Hunt, 2000; Morse, 1983; Rowe, 1999, 2004; Silk, 1999; Stoddart, 1994; Tunstall, 1993; Wenner, 1989, 1998; Williams, 1977). Gruneau (1989)

observes that, televised sport involves “a wide range of processes of visual and narrative representation – choices regarding the images, language, camera positioning, and story line required to translate ‘what happened’ into a program that makes ‘good television’” (p. 135). The dilemma that televised sport faces is presenting sport within an often contradictory climate of seeking to entertain as well as inform viewers, in addition to providing a sense of viewer omnipotence through actuality, immediacy or the liveness of the event (Boyle & Haynes, 2000; Rose & Friedman, 1997; Whannel, 1992).

While producers of televised sport do not attempt to manufacture the results or disrupt the uncertainty of sport, these producers seek to retain their viewing audiences through a range of techniques which create and enhance the spectacle for viewers. The role of entertainment within televised sport is one such aspect. Whannel (1992) observes that, “entertainment values organise visual images according to the need to highlight pleasure points – action, stars, drama – attempting to construct an entertaining assemblage capable of winning and holding an audience” (p. 94). The convention of entertainment is also underpinned by actuality and realism. Sport productions aim for a “transparency effect” (Whannel, 1992, p. 37), representing sport as a real event happening in actuality; that is, not as the product of (overt) construction or manipulation. Presenters and commentators assist in this process through their dual role of entertaining and informing viewers. Presenters effectively position the audience (Whannel, 1992), informing viewers through direct address about what the show contains, as well as establishing and highlighting pleasure points. During the telecast, commentators provide anchorage for the visual action, describing and assessing the on-field events, as well as informing and entertaining the viewer with relevant background information, elements of intrigue and further anecdotal

information to assist viewer knowledge (Bruce, 2004, 2005; Bryant, Comisky & Zillman 1977; Comisky, Bryant & Zillman, 1977; MacNeill, 1996; Morse, 1983; Whannel, 1992).

The rise of a variety of subsidiary sport shows, in addition to televisual sport journalism, supplements this orientation towards sport as a combination of entertainment, actuality and newsworthy information. Various shows circulate to buttress the live event, such as the creation of pre- and post-match shows facilitating a discussion of the events that either will or have transpired (e.g., *Monday Night Countdown* and *NFL Primetime* or, in New Zealand, *Friday Night Football* and *Reunion*). Additionally, there are a diverse array of magazine-style shows which provide an informative take on particular sports, usually as either a serious insider perspective (e.g., *Inside Grand Prix*; *WRC Rally Magazine*), or as a less serious, entertaining and light-hearted show (e.g., *WRC: Shakedown*, *NRL Footy Show*). Through the processes of reporting and recording, these subsidiary shows and especially forms of televisual sport journalism accentuate the realism and actuality of sport for audiences. Often this information is supported by an array of non-televisual sport texts (e.g., newspapers, print magazines or internet websites) which provide accessible information for sport followers and fans (Brookes, 2002; Crawford, 2004; Real, 1998; Rowe, 1999, 2004). However, within sports reporting (televisual and print), the criteria for determining the newsworthiness of items is becoming increasingly blurred (Rowe, 2005). Rather than the traditional recording of on-field events, tabloid journalistic styles continue to breach the public/private divide to report on items of scandal and intrigue within sport, sport organisations and particularly in relation to individual sport stars (Andrews & Jackson, 2001; Cashmore, 2002; Giulianotti & Gerrard, 2001; Lines, 2001; Vande Berg, 1998; Whannel, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2008).

The liveness of the event is another important facet for televised sport, providing viewers with the knowledge that they are receiving coverage in real time, live and direct from whichever global locality the event is being staged. Rose and Friedman (1997) suggest that, “in order to attract and hold its viewers, television discourses interpellate spectators through direct address, a sense of immediacy and liveness, and the illusion that those images seem to be made just for us” (p. 3). Certainly this sense of liveness is prevalent in televised Formula One coverage as it transcends geographical boundaries in real time, on a planetary scale, to be simultaneously received by over 50 billion viewers (allegedly) across more than 140 countries worldwide (“F1 fever grips”, 2002; Hotten, 1999; see also critique of Formula One audience figures in Chapter Three). These processes of construction, selectivity and framing within the production of sport, in addition to the desire to both inform and entertain through actuality, realism, anchorage, immediacy or liveness are all essential elements of *re-presenting* television sport. These elements also contribute to the production of the televised sport spectacle.

The Televised Sport Spectacle

To attract and retain viewers, televised images need to be engaging as well as enticing for viewers, creating what is perhaps better understood as the televised sport spectacle. The effort to enhance the aesthetic pleasures for audiences is shared by sport administrators and the producers of televised sport alike, permeating all televised sport coverage whether it is packaged as live broadcasts, delayed coverage or the magazine-style shows. Television directly influences the way sport is reconfigured and *re-presented* as a televisual spectacle. Whannel (1992) suggests the interrelationship between a sport event and a television portrayal needs to be understood as a transformation due to “the constraints set by

the nature of the sport, and the determining effects of television's own code of representation and technological ability to recompose its images" (p. 94). To enhance the televised sport spectacle, the medium of television has manipulated and created direct changes to some sports (Goldlust, 1987), while Parente (1977) notes that many sports have also "molded, adapted, and changed their rules to meet the desires and needs of television" (p. 128). A prime example is the creation of 'television timeouts' in basketball and American football which cut to commercial breaks for high-paying advertisers at key stages of the game (Himmelstein, 1994).

Additionally, hybrid versions of sport or entirely new formats are created to meet the desires and needs of television, as well as to increase the potential audience for an existing sport. The creation of one-day cricket in 1977 by Australian media mogul, Kerry Packer, is a prime example of devising a new format for televisual purposes (Cashmore, 2000; Goldlust, 1987; Harriss, 1990). Although variations of shorter formats for cricket already existed, one-day cricket was introduced as an entertaining option to the apparent staleness of test cricket which was played in all-white attire, over five days and usually without a result. Packer's *World Series Cricket* was packaged as entertainment, played under lights, with coloured uniforms and a white ball (rather than the traditional red), and encouraged a more attacking or aggressive style of play to achieve a result in the limited number of overs. The shorter duration also made this brand of cricket appealing to television networks for scheduling, as well as enticing a broader audience with more action and the likelihood of a result. In 2003, Twenty20 cricket was introduced in English County Cricket (the first men's international was between New Zealand and Australia in 2005), providing a new format which effectively halved the duration of a one-day game and promoted quick-fire run-

scoring by the batting team. Having staged the inaugural men's Twenty20 World Cup in South Africa in 2007, Twenty20 has become a permanent international fixture and, one could assert, the latest format for packaging televised cricket as entertainment.

Alternatively, some sports are deemed simply to be incompatible with the codes and conventions of television, with Whannel (1992) observing that "sports with high participation rates (squash, angling, badminton) have been adversely affected by their apparent unsuitability for television" (p. 3; see also Schirato, 2007b). Therefore, not all forms of televised sport are guaranteed to succeed, while even specifically 'made-for-TV' sports can fail, as can be demonstrated by the XFL in 2001. The XFL was launched by the World Wrestling Federation and broadcast on NBC, providing a hybrid version of American football spliced with what Rowe (2004) describes as the "hyped, parodic presentational techniques of the 'pseudo sport' of wrestling" (p. 101). The XFL lasted only one season and Brookes (2002) notes that the sport "lost XFL and NBC \$35 million (US) each" (p. 14). Nevertheless, locked out of other major leagues due to broadcasting rights, NBC began televising another hybrid version of American football, arena football, in 2003 (Rowe, 2004).

While the televised sport spectacle may have an aesthetic connection (i.e., enhancing the spectacle to attract and entertain a larger viewing audience), the spectacle also has obvious commercial benefits for the television networks, sport administrators and advertisers involved (Schirato, 2007a, 2007b). Described as a 'dream match' by Cashmore (1994, 1996, 2000) and offering what Jhally (1984) labels 'spectacles of accumulation', televised sport is enticing for advertisers as it is assumed that it delivers the elusive male audience as predictable and guaranteed (Andrews, 2004; Goldlust, 1987; Jhally, 1984; Parente, 1977). Additionally, sport

is capable of drawing large and diverse television audiences. Whannel (1992) suggests that, “at times of major events like the Olympic Games, it has a unique ability to win and hold large audiences even well outside normal peak viewing hours” (p. 3). Buttressed by Andrews’ (2004) observation that televised sport “is practically the only live television genre involving uncertain outcomes” (p. 8), the scale and uncertainty of televised sport guarantees the audience as a commodity to entice sponsors (Jhally, 1984). Furthermore, ‘live’ sport is relatively cheap to produce, which usually makes televised sport a stable, profitable and lucrative source of income for all concerned (Andrews, 2004; Cashmore, 1994, 2000; Parente, 1977; Tunstall, 1993).

The economic significance of televised sport has been discussed by a range of authors (Boyle & Haines, 2000; Himmelstein, 1994; Rowe, 1999, 2004), who suggest that telecasts of major sporting events offer not only significant fiscal returns but, additionally, are bought and sold as an expensive commodity. This is discernible when discussing broadcasting rights, as the costs for major events, such as the Olympics, the football World Cup and even domestic competitions (e.g., the American National Football League [NFL] or American National Basketball Association [NBA]) have skyrocketed as rival networks compete for exclusivity. For example, Silk (2004) reveals that the NFL cost Fox, CBS, ESPN and ABC a combined US\$17.6 billion between 1998 and 2005, while NBC paid US\$2.3 billion for exclusive Olympic Games coverage (summer and winter) for 2004, 2006 and 2008. The fierce competition in place for broadcasting rights has had a positive spin-off for the televised sport spectacle, with a concurrent escalation in the production values, quality and use of innovative technologies as networks seek to make a profitable return on their investment and guarantee a larger viewing audience (Brookes, 2002; Jhally, 1984; Silk, 2004; Tunstall, 1993;

Whannel, 1983, 2008). In this respect, *all* televised sport is underpinned by efforts to enhance the televisual spectacle; whether it is for aesthetic, technological and/or commercial reasons. Televised sport does not merely present a specific sport on television, it is *re-presented* through many of the processes and ideas discussed earlier. Additionally, the selectivity of images and elements of framing, such as multiple camera set-ups, choice of angles and use of commentary, assist in the transformation of sport as an event to sport as a televisual event (Whannel, 1992). Therefore, even an arguably dull sport such as test cricket, which Cashmore (2000) describes as “television-hostile (played over five days, often at a ponderous pace)” (p. 289) is *re-presented* as a televised sport spectacle. Elements of actuality, immediacy and liveness abound, while through multiple camera angles, shot types and especially innovative televisual technologies such as ‘stump-cam’ and ‘virtual spectator’, these techniques frame, select and assemble an entertaining and *re-presented* televised sport spectacle for cricket (A. Brown, 1998).

Traditional Framing and the ‘Ideal Spectator’

Whannel (1992) notes that when attempting to visually re-present sport on television, most televised sport seeks to provide “maximum action in minimum space” (p. 95). Although the relationship between action and space varies from sport to sport, it is often translated visually through camera work and cutting. Most televised sport draws on a prime camera or position to visually frame sport, with this prime camera or position providing an all-seeing perspective of events which also have implications for both the conceptualisation and placement of the television viewer. According to Whannel (1992), the prime camera or position would “correspond to the position of an ideal spectator, with a perfect view”

(p. 96). This prime camera or position dominates televised coverage for the ideal spectator, although this ‘perfect view’ is supplemented and enhanced through a variety of additional camera locations and angles which frame the sporting action from ‘all-seeing’ perspectives that are unavailable to the naked eye of any individual in attendance at the event, with the possible exception of telecasts on large-screens at major events (Siegel, 2002).

Motor sport in general disrupts this notion of an ideal spectator, as it requires continuous transitions between multiple cameras and viewing positions to frame vehicles racing at high velocity around a large, geographically-diverse track. Formula One is also raced across a spatially diverse track, with current circuits ranging from between 3.3 to 6.9 kilometres long, which means that even spectators at the event cannot see the track in its entirety as my own footage shot from grandstands at the 2003 Australian Grand Prix and 2005 Canadian Grand Prix demonstrate (DVD Examples 2, 3 and 5). Furthermore, the cars also travel at immense speeds (i.e., Formula One cars reach a top speed of between 180 and 215 mph on all of the current circuits) which combine to make its televisualisation challenging. However, for sport conducted over more spacious terrain, such as golf or motor sport, Whannel (1992) conceives of a “highly mobile ideal spectator” (p. 98), with a range of cameras placed around the course to follow the action and present this in a coherent manner for the viewer. In this case, there is not one prime camera or position. Whannel is also the only author to have specifically considered the televisual framing of circuit-based motor sport, observing that, (1992)

Motor racing tends to be covered almost entirely by panned long shots, with cameras placed on the outside of bends and at the end of straights, broken only by MS (medium shots) of

crashed cars and pit activity. Despite the dispersal of cameras it still seems quite possible to accept both a visual view that offers a highly mobile ideal spectator position and a verbal commentary that is obviously emanating from a fixed position. (pp. 97-98)

While Whannel (1992) offers a useful starting point for considering televised Formula One, it is not clear whether his analysis is based on Formula One coverage during the 1990s or which particular form of motor sport he is discussing. Formula One adheres to many of these stylistic and framing conventions outlined by Whannel (1992), as well as his notion of the “highly mobile ideal spectator” (p. 98); however, during my period of analysis (1998-2006), Formula One coverage has continued to evolve. In fact, due to transformations within the sport’s visual representation and its related technological innovations, Formula One also extends beyond Whannel’s conceptualisation of the framing and spectatorship of televised sport.

Methods: Textual Analysis and Compositional/Image Analysis

Before discussing these ‘findings’, I need to briefly outline *what* I analysed and *how* my research was conducted. As noted in Chapter Three, derived from ITV’s global feed, I have watched 181 ‘live’ Formula One races between 1998 and 2008, taping 111 Grands Prix over this period (up to 2006). Commencing my Ph.D. research in 2002, the taped races post-2001 were the prime telecasts utilised and examined through a combination of textual analysis and compositional/image analysis (explained shortly), although footage from earlier seasons has also been drawn upon to offer a comparative dimension for analysis (e.g., each of my 111 taped races has been re-watched on at least two occasions and, realistically, three

times or more). For example, I kept a record of my (re)viewing practices between November 2005 to March 2006, re-watching all 19 races from the 2005 season and compiling a ‘Grand Prix report’ on each of Villeneuve’s races in terms of placings, any significant incidents, my assessment of his performances and any notable footage to return to for further analysis (these ‘reports’ primarily inform my analysis of fandom and stardom in Chapters Six and Seven). Similar viewing and analytical processes were undertaken for other seasons, such as Villeneuve’s 12 races in 2006 (conducted between October 2006 to January 2007), his 15 races in 2003 (March to August 2004), 3 races in 2004 (January 2005) and a ‘handful’ of races in which Villeneuve had performed well in 2002 (e.g., Australia, Austria, Britain, United States, conducted in February 2005).

Additionally, this re-viewing process was also part of my textual and compositional/image analysis. Outside of recording Villeneuve’s performances and my own experiences as a fan/viewer, I engaged in a systematic examination of particular framing techniques, such as the use of the on-board camera (OBC), innovative camera placements and editing. Drawing on the approximately 50 Grand Prix races analysed between 2002 and 2006, I engaged in a ‘close reading’ of the Formula One telecast and particular incidents I had either noted earlier or observed during my close reading. Jutel (2004) asserts that textual analysis “relies on a disciplinary terminology to describe forms, styles and techniques. Repeated viewings and the use of the freeze-frame function of VCR or DVD players are, for instance, necessary tools” (p. 33). To conduct my systematic analysis, I paused and replayed segments or particular footage repetitively to analyse the visual framing, shot sequences, camera placements or editing techniques, took extensive written notes, copied quotes derived from the audio commentary, and timed specific shots or segments with a stop-watch to articulate

its significance for the viewing audience. Therefore, between 2002 and 2006, approximately 50 Grand Prix races have been the basis for my systematic analysis and assessment of televised Formula One. Given my extensive re-watching of races, as well as the duration of a Formula One race being approximately 1 hour 20 minutes to a maximum of two hours long, my analysis of televised Formula One is based on over 500 hours of footage. Additionally, my extensive viewing of contemporary televised coverage of major sports from Australia (NRL rugby league, international cricket), America (NFL football, NASCAR racing), the United Kingdom (premier league football) and New Zealand (international cricket, international rugby union) in multiple roles as a viewer, fan and academic-researcher are the basis for my discussion and comparative assessment of various innovative televisual technologies from a range of contemporary sports.

Jutel (2004) notes that “textual analysis implies the concerted and meticulous study of a defined object in order to analyse the ways in which it generates meanings and, by extension, viewer’s responses” (p. 33). The semiotic textual analysis strand reveals how a combination of language and image cater to both the representation and audience reception of Formula One mediations but moves beyond a mere formalist or descriptive account of the compositional elements, as well as avoiding the universalistic assessment of the *determined* audience critiqued in Chapter Two. Nevertheless, semiotic textual analysis can become too ‘rule-governed’ (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005) in terms of locating pre-existing meanings through a focus on the structures of the text. Alternatively, a post-structuralist textual analysis interrogates what the text presents to the audience in terms of its content, context and intertextual elements (McKee, 2001). The post-structuralist approach offers a polysemic version of the text and audience responses by acknowledging that “viewers do not decode a pre-existing meaning,

but that they actively construct meaning in the process of reading” (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005, p. 192). However, as a method, textual analysis is problematic due to its narrow focus on how audiences make sense of their world and particular media through an analysis of the text and its message (e.g., McKee, 2001).

Therefore, rather than merely ‘interpreting’ the televisual ‘text’ or message, I also draw upon compositional/image analysis to uncover how televised Formula One coverage is framed and produced through its particular compositional dimensions, as well as the significance of this framing for viewers. This has especial relevance for analysing audiences in this and forthcoming chapters, as it is these compositional elements that allow audiences (including fans) to view, interpret and, ultimately, engage with the Formula One text in some capacity.

Compositional (Rose, 2001) or image analysis (Lacey, 1998) assumes that “the formal arrangement of the elements of a picture will dictate how an image is seen by its audiences” (Rose, 2001, p. 25). Thus, compositional/image analysis examines the form and content of the visual image that is made available for audience reception. For Lacey (1998), “form refers to how an image was created, including the position of the camera...content is simply what is in the image” (p. 14). The framing of an image is fundamental to compositional/image analysis, with a specific focus on elements within the *framed* image, for example, the frame as a boundary or an edge for what is seen or, conversely, not seen within an image. Framing examines the spatial and temporal organisation of the mediated, moving image (that is made visible) through, primarily, a focus on camera movement, angles and shot types, editing and sound to analyse *how* an image was created (Lacey, 1998; Rose, 2001). Nevertheless, as Lacey (1998) suggests, “we use appropriate terminology to describe the image, but description is not analysis. Analysis describes the features of an image and shows what these features mean”

(p. 20). Therefore, my analysis examines the compositional elements of camera work, editing, sound and the use of graphics in framing the televised Formula One coverage, as well as the implications of these framing and compositional dimensions for both the spectacle of Formula One racing and the viewing audience. These elements are important for, as Clarke and Clarke (1982) note, televised sport provides an “invisible apparatus of media presentation” (p. 73), comprising of the selection of camera angles, shot types, editing, graphics and commentators’ interpretations that are drawn upon to re-present the sport for television (Silk, 1999). However, many examinations fail to acknowledge either the processes or implications of selectivity, assemblage, editing or the specific techniques deployed in relation to the production, circulation and consumption of televised sport (Barnett, 1990; Morse, 1983; Whannel, 1992; Williams, 1977). My focus on form and structure through compositional/image analysis recognises the technological, aesthetic and production basis for the televised Formula One image. Nevertheless, while acknowledging that technologies are central to constructing, receiving and understanding the visually represented image (Caldwell, 1995), my examination avoids cinematic ‘apparatus’ theory, which asserts that viewers are *determined* and *positioned* by this technology and delimits the audience construction of meaning (Baudry, 1970; Metz, 1973, 1974, 1982; Mulvey, 1975, 1988).

Therefore, my examination of the televisual Formula One merges textual analysis with compositional/image analysis to examine Formula One’s televisual ‘technique categories’ (Gruneau et al., 1988) and to account for the circuit of ‘cultural production and circulation’ (Gruneau et al., 1988) within a specific televised sport. Equally, however, I am aware that my approach does not interrogate the cultural conditions of production (Silk, 1999), nor the ‘contexts of

production' (Gruneau, 1989), in terms of the processes and divisions of labour, nor the cultural and national specificity of production 'values' and choices which determine how individual sports and networks transform their sport into a televised national or global event (Gruneau, 1989; MacNeill, 1996; Silk, 1999; Stoddart, 1994). But, it is important to recognise the *transformation, re-presentation* and "transparency effect" (Whannel, 1992, p. 37) in operation which converts Formula One from a sport into a televised sport spectacle. Analysing the specific compositional dimensions or 'technique categories' (Gruneau et al., 1988) of framing through camera work, editing, sound and the use of graphics reveals *what* televised, moving images of Formula One are provided. Furthermore, with an awareness of *what* Formula One visual images are available, the possible audience responses to, and reception of, these images can then be theorised, in terms of how the specific Formula One televisual image permits and shapes various viewer positions, engagements and experiences (with particular implications for televised viewers and the OBC technology discussed in Chapter Five, and for Formula One fandom analysed in Chapters Six and Seven).

*Framing Televised Formula One (1998-2006): Cameras, Editing, Sound
and Graphics*

Since 1998, Formula One has used numerous cameras and technical resources to ensure most sections of the track (and the racing action) can be covered at every race. For example, Houston (2003) reports that 28 cameras were utilised to televise the 2003 Canadian Grand Prix while, based on my systematic analysis of Formula One, generally between 20-30 cameras are used at most circuits, excluding cameras mounted on the cars. The 2006 San Marino Grand Prix provides a specific insight into the number of trackside cameras being utilised

(DVD Example 7). On lap 22 the cameras followed Renault driver, Fernando Alonso, for a complete lap of the circuit, shot entirely through exterior (trackside) cameras with no transitions to other cars or his on-board camera (OBC): that is, for lap 22, only Alonso is framed as he visibly negotiates each part of the Imola track in his Renault. Such a sustained, trackside framing of only one car is rare as, on every lap of a Grand Prix, coverage usually provides cuts to either other cars, other parts of the circuit, reaction shots of the pit-crew/pit-wall or draws on the OBC. Analysis of Alonso's lap reveals that the visual footage cut between a total of 17 cameras placed at various positions around the circuit; therefore, 17 exterior cameras were used at the Imola circuit to frame a complete lap of the San Marino Grand Prix. Nevertheless, apart from car-mounted cameras, other cameras also frame the action at Imola, as on the very next lap Kimi Raikkonen pits for fuel and is framed from four different (exterior) camera positions within the pit-lane for the duration of his pit-stop, providing a minimum total of 21 exterior cameras (DVD Example 7).

Two other similar examples of a sustained trackside framing of either one car or racing action demonstrate the more common disruptions and transitions employed in Formula One. At the 2000 Belgium Grand Prix, only Michael Schumacher and Mika Hakkinen are predominantly followed by the cameras between laps 37-42 as they battle closely for the lead. On lap 41, 16 different trackside cameras follow the two competitors for almost the entirety of the lap through a mixture of long and medium shots. However, three significant transitions occur; two separate reaction shots of the McLaren pits and Hakkinen's wife are provided immediately after Hakkinen passes Schumacher, in addition to a slow motion replay of the pass provided further into the lap (DVD Example 8). The second example occurs at the 2006 Canadian Grand Prix. Two minutes into

the second qualifying session, Jacques Villeneuve is filmed for the duration of his qualifying lap and primarily framed through long shots from seven trackside cameras. Nevertheless, these trackside cameras are disrupted by two different OBC perspectives, including a sustained OBC shot, as viewers 'ride' with Villeneuve for approximately 19 seconds between turns 3 and 8 (DVD Example 9). These two examples are significant as they provide sustained footage of specific racing action or of only one car while, simultaneously, demonstrating that even this 'rare' footage is commonly disrupted by transitions in Formula One coverage.

As a televisual spectacle, Boyle and Haynes (2000) note that Formula One is "a difficult sport to cover – the cars on the television screen never appear to be travelling at their actual speed and it can become difficult to distinguish one from another" (pp. 74-75). Generically, excluding the OBC, the televised Formula One image is framed through a mixture of long and medium camera shots which employ telescopic lenses and/or wide angle framing from cameras mounted on cranes, helicopters or generally at a distance to the track. The difficulties with televised Formula One speed and car distinction are a result of coverage being primarily shot at a distance for, as Morse (1983) observes, "the constant use of extremely long lenses both narrows the angle of view and flattens space" (p. 48). Other camera placements are also drawn on, such as the more traditional cameras on bends and at the end of straights (Whannel, 1992), with these various camera positions combining to replicate the findings of Boyle and Haynes (2000), while also tending to obscure the drivers and make them appear immobile within their cockpits. However, camera placement is not limited to only the outside of bends, as they also can be positioned on the inside of corners. Whether located on the inside or outside, camera operators often employ close-ups or extreme close-ups

of the cars and drivers in any slow corners and, occasionally, these are also framed in slow motion; for example, on entry to the bus stop chicane at the Belgium Grand Prix.

As a specific example of the camera positions, angles and shot types deployed in televised Formula One coverage, the 2006 San Marino footage of lap 22, framing only Alonso's Renault from exterior cameras, is drawn upon once more (DVD Example 7). As a preliminary overview, much of the exterior footage is shot from cameras either on the outside of the corner and/or at the end of a straight, with five cameras in an elevated position to provide a high-angle shot looking down on the track. There are two cameras placed on the inside of corners (both from a high-angle, crane shot) and only 2 of the 17 camera shots are framed as close-ups (one in the slow chicane entering the pit straight and the second on the pit straight which provides a close-up by zooming in): all other shots are medium and/or long shots. Finally, at four parts of the circuit, the exact positioning of cameras framing from a distance on the outside of the track are strategically placed mid-corner (one is a crane shot) to allow these specific cameras to film and follow the car prior to or upon entry through to exiting the corner via zooming and panning camera movements; the two inside corner high-angle, crane shots also offer a similar sustained shot of the car going through a corner. Alternatively, some Formula One camera positions do reveal the speed of the cars, such as when cars run over cameras that are housed within kerbs and offer a low-angle perspective (e.g., Brazil), when cars race past the fixed position of a wall-mounted (e.g., Canada) or barrier-mounted camera (e.g., Monaco), or from the multiple cameras (and their various perspectives) located on the cars themselves.

A sense of speed is also achieved through the editing of Formula One visual footage. As Formula One coverage is live, most of the obvious editing is through the transitions or 'cuts' between various cameras filming the event. Televised Formula One footage generally utilises quick transitions between shots, often as a straight cut and a match-on-action to provide a seamless representation. For example, Alonso's lap of the 2006 San Marino Grand Prix cuts from camera to camera sequentially as he is filmed on each part of the Imola circuit, affording coherency for viewers following his lap (i.e., viewers expect to see Alonso go from turn 3 to turn 4, etc.). However, as the sustained focus on one car completing an entire lap is rare, other techniques break what is traditionally known as continuity editing. Lacey (1998) suggests that "one objective of continuity editing is to create a coherent cinematic space in which the action can take place' (p. 47). Televised Formula One coverage disrupts a fluid visual experience of time and space through four key transitional devices. The first two disruptions relate to how the cuts are executed. First, televised Formula One often deploys a cross-cut, which visually cuts across space by framing another car or event on a different part of the circuit (e.g., following the race leaders but then cross-cutting to a pit-stop or a crash elsewhere on the circuit). These cross-cuts are often deployed as a means to 'update' viewers on the progress of other drivers or to reveal an on-track battle outside of the front-runners. Second, the use of a jump-cut also provides discontinuity, as the cut "leaps over time or creates an odd transition" (Kawin, 1992, p. 231): in Formula One the jump-cut occurs when a driver is initially presented on one part of the circuit, then the footage is disrupted by a transitional device before returning to the driver further along the circuit. As an example, on lap 3 of the 2005 French Grand Prix, viewers are provided with the OBC perspective from Kimi Raikkonen's McLaren as he speeds along the

short straight out of Turn 10 (DVD Example 10). The footage then jump-cuts to a slow motion replay from an exterior trackside camera of Raikkonen passing Villeneuve for tenth place prior to Turn 6. The footage then returns to the OBC of Raikkonen negotiating Turn 13. Clearly, this footage provides a jump-cut across time and space by disrupting the temporal (and spatial) flow of the action presented. The action is not sequential and shifts between 'real' time and a slow motion replay, while the space is disjointed through a segmented representation of the track (and the different camera perspectives provided for the viewer) which, collectively, the viewer must piece together to make sense of the visual action. Arguably, the most obvious occurrence of a jump-cut is the 'jump' over time and space when the coverage cuts to a commercial break. When the coverage returns, viewers are expected to recommence their viewing and accept the new presentation as continuous despite the footage 'leaping' over the unseen laps that have passed during the break. Other 'real' time transitions, such as perspectives from a pursuing car, an overhead helicopter, a kerb or a disorienting OBC can also provide a 'jump' across time and space.

A third way the coverage breaks the continuity of cinematic space is by failing to adhere to the 180° rule through its multiple transitions and perspectives. The filmic 180° rule advocates filming from one side of the 180° 'line' to allow continuity, screen positioning and directions to remain consistent. Bordwell and Thompson (1997) note that "the continuity approach to editing dictates that the camera should stay on one side of the action to ensure consistent left-right spatial relations between objects from shot to shot" (p. 480). Most field sports deploy this filmic convention through the use of a dominant camera from one side of the field, establishing that teams always go in one direction in the first half before 'swapping' sides for the second half (Whannel, 1992) or provide an on-screen

notification, 'reverse angle', when this convention has been broken (Morse, 1983). Nevertheless, due to the multiple camera positions on both the inside and outside of corners (and the quick transitions between the various camera positions and perspectives), Formula One never provides a consistent spatial relationship on the screen. Cars appear from either side of the screen (e.g., they enter from the left on one shot and then enter from the right on another) while, directionally, they are also inconsistent (e.g., cars are not always moving from left to right across the screen, and can also enter the screen from either the background or foreground) due to the multiplicity of camera positions, shot types and camera angles. Collectively, these three transitional devices (breaking the 180° rule, and cross- and jump-cuts) are common to Formula One and disrupt the continuity of a seamless presentation often seen in other televised sport (or films) while, simultaneously, evoking a sense of speed across a geographically diverse space through the rapid interchanging of transitions and perspectives.

Finally, one other obvious disruption to a fluid visual experience of time and space is the use of replays, common in most televised sport. On every televised Grand Prix since 1998, the race start has always been replayed a few minutes into the race. Noble and Hughes (2004) note that,

The standing-start acceleration burst down to the first corner will usually represent the best opportunity offered a driver all day of making up places. Aside from being one of the most exciting parts of the race it also has serious implications on strategy. (p. 128)

While the start often has a bearing on where some drivers can expect to finish the race, it also offers one of the few occasions to frame all or most of the cars in one shot, coupled with the likelihood of an accident as they all negotiate the first

corner. Race start replays are usually accompanied by multiple camera perspectives which the commentators dissect and analyse (primarily in relation to the front-runners), while viewers can see how particular drivers fared, re-view any incidents, etcetera. Common to other forms of televised sport, Formula One also draws on replays for significant or 'dramatic' (Morris & Nydahl, 1985; Whannel, 1992) events in the race; for example, crashes, retirements, passes, errors (driver mistakes or a lengthy pit-stop) or other assorted incidents that contribute to the 'narrative' and viewer understanding of the Grand Prix. Televised Formula One replays draw on the already screened image or, alternatively, inter-cut to a previously unseen incident for the television audience (e.g., a car retiring or a pass, such as Raikkonen's move on Villeneuve at the 2005 French Grand Prix discussed earlier).

Most Formula One replays are also framed in slow motion. Scholars of televised sport suggest that instant replays and the use of slow motion usually either embellish the dramatic experience of the sport spectacle (Morris & Nydahl, 1985; Whannel, 1992) or, simultaneously, offer both a scientific assessment of performance and/or the body as spectacle through a combination of slow motion framing and the close-up (Morse, 1983), a point developed in relation to the homoerotic and Formula One in Chapter One. These aspects may partially explain the slow motion replay in Formula One; the replay providing, for example, an easier means for commentators and viewers to analyse the 'dramatic' and often high-speed incidents (although, predominantly, there is no body on display during the race). But I would argue that this technique is more functional. The slow motion replay offers a visual language for viewers (and commentators) to evoke awareness that they are watching an event that has already occurred. This visual language works in two prime ways. First, the use of slow motion

distinguishes the replay from what otherwise replicates the footage viewers have been watching throughout the race (e.g., racing action framed through medium and/or long shots at a distance), although the transition and replay are not always obvious for viewers. Second, as the replay jumps across time and space, slow motion is utilised as a visual language to explain this temporal/spatial disruption to the viewer in a simple manner. Therefore, the deployment of slow motion is the visual cue that the footage is no longer live and contemporaneous but, rather, an earlier incident being replayed affording viewers coherency for understanding the Grand Prix race narrative.

Sound also plays a significant role in the televisualisation of Formula One. Indeed, for the live event itself, the screaming engine noise constitutes a significant aspect of the racing spectacle and atmosphere. Based upon my experiences as an attendee at five races, you often hear the cars approaching prior to seeing them, while earplugs are recommended due to the noise, which Noble and Hughes (2004) liken to a fighter jet taking off (DVD Examples 2, 3 and 5). Clearly, televised representations reduce the timbre and pitch of the engines to make Formula One's audio elements bearable for viewers. Nevertheless, this ever-present sound of engines and gear changes complements the sense of speed already available to the audience through camera work and editing techniques. Another constant aspect of the televised Formula One soundscape is the ITV commentary team's reporting of the racing events. With televised sport commentary discussed by some authors as either underpinning the dramatic impact of a televised sporting contest (Bryant, Comisky & Zillman, 1977), invaluable for attracting and retaining viewers (Barnett, 1990; Morris & Nydahl, 1985; Whannel, 1992), influential on audience interpretations (Bruce, 2004) and, potentially, more important than the televised images themselves (Comisky,

Bryant & Zillman, 1977), commentary is a significant aspect of the televised Formula One spectacle.

Providing a mixture of encyclopaedic knowledge, banalities, over-excitement and error-ridden comments, Murray Walker's role as the 'voice of Formula One' was influential for the sport's televised commentary between 1949 and 2001 (Bruce, 2005; Rowe, 2004). Indeed, during my 'naïve', initial phase of Formula One fandom (1998-2001), Walker's commentary had the ability to equally excite and repel me as a viewer. Often his enthusiastic reporting, vast anecdotes and/or superfluous use of hyperbolic statements made even the most mundane parts of a race exciting. In particular, Walker's frequent evocation of 'supermen' to describe the drivers and their abilities was gripping as a new viewer learning the sport and initially embracing his clichéd descriptions of these 'heroic men'. However, he increasingly frustrated me as a viewer too, missing significant on-screen action through his off-topic rambles or frequently identifying drivers incorrectly at key moments of a race. His errors have been the subject for ridicule (Rowe, 2004) but, reflecting on his incorrect references to (crashed) drivers, Walker (2002) notes,

Rather than wait for positive identification, all too often I took an instant flyer at it in my excitement and was frequently wrong. No excuses. I would rather have been wrong and have to correct myself than lose the impetus and drama of the commentary. (p. 228)

Fortunately, Walkers' mistakes were often instantly corrected by Martin Brundle.

Brundle is a former Formula One driver (1984 – 1996) and provides knowledgeable commentary on the racing action directly, anchoring the visual image with his insightful comments (Whannel, 1992). Brundle's expertise lies in

his ability to often identify crucial changes in lap times for key drivers, notice driver anomalies or off-screen incidents, as well as being able to vividly translate the feeling of driving a Formula One car to the viewer, especially in adverse conditions or through OBC shots (DVD Examples 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21). With James Allen having replaced Murray Walker since 2002, the encyclopaedic, anecdotal and occasionally over-enthusiastic commentary has remained (DVD Example 17), anchored by Brundle's expert knowledge and authoritative relaying of crucial information not always available to the viewer. Indeed, it is due to this lack of vital race information that the ITV commentary team have a significant role to play for viewers of the sport. The ITV telecasts use a range of on-screen graphics which regularly update positions, lap times or gaps between the drivers but, in general, this on-screen information focuses primarily on the top eight drivers at any given race (or lead drivers, such as Alonso or Schumacher, who are out of position) and the information is selectively used (e.g., not always present, nor continuously provided for the duration of a race). For this reason, Formula One audiences often also need to access live timing via *Formula1.com* (the sport's second 'screen of speed') to supplement ITV's visual images. Live timing allows audiences to access all the timing variations for each driver in the Grand Prix, although Brundle and Allen are adept at frequently spotting significant time-related discrepancies for the benefit of their viewing audience when these graphics are not provided.

The various framing devices identified are used in televised Formula One to re-present the spatial and temporal dimensions of the sport for the television audience: that is, a live, global and contemporaneously experienced event raced across a large geographical space at high-speeds. Formula One's multiple camera positionings and viewpoints would correspond to Whannel's (1992) idea of the

“highly mobile ideal spectator” (p. 98), as this framing facilitates viewer knowledge and engagement with the array of action taking place around the track. Such framing conventions allow viewers to see most of the on-track action in real time, supplemented with replays of incidents missed or on other parts of the circuit, although not all drivers can be framed continuously. In addition to the rapid cuts between cameras and track positions, there is also a reliance on the unfolding narrative of the Grand Prix to be anchored and explained through broadcast commentary, as well as regular and updated on-screen textual information for the lead drivers. However, five emerging televisual technologies (one audio and four visual) seem to move beyond Whannel’s (1992) concepts of the ‘ideal spectator’ and ‘highly mobile ideal spectator’.

*Emerging Televisual Technologies: Formula One and Technological
Innovations in Contemporary Sport*

Within contemporary televised sport coverage, emerging technology has had an increasing role which is too often overlooked or unaccounted for in the sport and media literature. These technologies seek to place the viewer closer to the action, enhancing the spectacle and viewing experience by having almost every aspect of the on-field action available for scrutiny, aided by replays, various camera angles and miniature cameras and microphones (Barnett, 1990; A. Brown, 1998).

Formula One has been at the forefront of some of these innovative televisual technologies. Through the audio construction of viewers as *privileged recipients*, and the visual technologies of *virtual* representations, *impossible views*, *synchronised movement* and a *participatory* perspective, these technologies re-present the appearance of Formula One, offer newer forms of viewer positioning

and have profound implications for both the representation of televised sport and the viewing audience in general.

Before I consider these technologies, it is worth noting that televised sport is not merely viewed in a domestic setting but also within public spaces, often with a large viewing audience. Even at many live sport contests, large television screens are often available for ‘live’ spectators. Such screens permit the duality of ‘live’ and televised spectatorship at the event, as spectators follow the on-field action but also draw on the televised footage to assist and complement the viewing process through the enhanced viewpoints and perspectives reproduced on the large screen. Additionally, Siegel (2002) suggests that their use “facilitates and encourages, perhaps even demands, a new mode of spectating practice, a new type of experiential enthrallment” (p. 66) in which the spectator’s viewpoint shifts between the field and large screen to follow and understand the sporting event in progress. Similar ideas may also be pertinent for other public spaces and collective forms of viewing (e.g., the bar or large screens in public spaces, such as at Federation Square in Melbourne during the 2006 football World Cup). However, this chapter does not explore this viewer-spectator dynamic in large public spaces primarily because the ‘live’ Formula One images available trackside on large screens are similar to, if not the same as, the images broadcast globally by ITV (although local companies often produce the trackside footage for spectators in attendance – e.g., Channel Ten in Australia), as are the particular televisual technologies deployed both locally and globally, to which our attention now turns.

Audio Technologies

While the role of commentary in Formula One has already been discussed, in recent years the sport has also introduced an audio televisual technology which places viewers as privileged recipients of significant on-track information. Formula One 'team radio' communication was first introduced at the 2004 Chinese Grand Prix, allowing television viewers 'insider' access to team and driver comments during most races. Through team radio communication, the team radios are open to the public, albeit delayed in their public broadcast (to censor any expletives). Television use of the radios is not mandatory for the teams; for example, Ferrari and McLaren tend only to provide team radio communication at the conclusion of the race if they have won (e.g., self-congratulatory communication rather than revealing strategy or tactics during the race). Often the radio broadcasts are providing standard team-driver communication, such as relaying where a driver is losing time on the circuit (e.g., Villeneuve at the 2004 Chinese Grand Prix), clarifying the race order (e.g., Christian Klein at Monaco 2006) or encouraging the driver (e.g., Rubens Barrichello at the 2006 British Grand Prix). Nevertheless, the radio has also revealed intriguing elements pertaining to driver performance for the viewers, as two specific examples demonstrate.

First, at the 2006 Australian Grand Prix on lap 32, viewers can hear Giancarlo Fisichella being berated for being 'too slow' (DVD Example 11), with his race engineer, Alan Permane, imploring "Giancarlo, you're still two seconds a lap slower than Fernando. This cannot be possible. You've got the same fuel load, I know you have got some understeer but you cannot be two seconds slower! C'mon!" (Permane, 2006). ITV commentator, Martin Brundle, explains the significance of this radio communication to the viewing audience, suggesting that,

“That’s going to hurt to hear that over the radio but what he is saying is that, ‘you’ve got the same tyres, the same car, mate, but your team-mate is doing 27’s, you’re doing 29’s, get your finger out!’” (Brundle, 2006). Such a ‘public’ criticism of a driver’s performance is rare in Formula One yet has been facilitated by team radio which disseminates this communication to a broad viewing audience (including the trackside crowd as my own attendance at the 2006 Australian Grand Prix can confirm). The second team radio example, from the 2005 Bahrain Grand Prix, reveals to viewers how much assistance Takuma Sato receives at a race start (DVD Example 12). Framed through an OBC perspective, viewers see a replay of Sato racing to the first corner of the opening lap while hearing Sato’s race engineer, Jock Clear, instructing, “right, right, right, right, right, close on your right, it’s a Sauber, it’s Massa, you’re on your right, okay, you’re still on the right, and on your left, Jacques on your left, Jacques on your left, you got him?” (Clear, 2005). The footage leads Martin Brundle to comment, “I’ve never heard of that in Formula One. I’ve seen it in American style racing on the ovals but he was being talked down to the first corner by his engineer. That’s extraordinary!” (Brundle, 2005).

Other forms of motorsport also use a similar version of team radio between drivers and the team as, for example, is the case in the Australasian V8 Supercars series and NASCAR. NASCAR also provides the team spotter’s communication, as the spotter views the racing action from his high vantage point overlooking the oval and advises the driver of gaps in the field, strategic moves, etcetera (i.e., the role alluded to by Brundle’s [2005] comments on Sato’s verbal assistance at Bahrain). Increasingly, many contemporary televised sports have developed the prominence and significance of sound to add to the ‘atmosphere’ and reveal the aural, on-field dynamics of an event. For example, in most of the prominent field

sports, referees have microphones which provide clarification for on-field rulings (e.g., American football, rugby union, football) and even allow television viewers to be *privileged recipients* of players being cautioned for playing indiscretions (e.g., Australian rugby league allows viewers to hear the exchange between the referee and players). Many sports also provide microphones which capture not only the vocal communication of players participating but also the broader ‘soundscapes’ of a sport. For example, motorsport records the pitch and whining of engines and gear shifts to aurally complement the visual representation of speed, field sports amplify the collision of bodies in contact sports through audio techniques, while sports such as tennis, cricket, golf and baseball capture the distinctive sound of a racquet/bat/club on ball (cricket’s ‘snickometer’ even acts as an ‘unofficial’ officiating tool for the television audience to determine whether bat and ball have made contact). The 2007 America’s Cup exemplified the use of sound as a means for allowing television viewers to be *privileged recipients* by placing a range of microphones on-board competing boats. With microphones capturing live communication between key team personnel, the intensity of equipment and crews being deployed to tack or jibe, and foregrounding the ever-present blustering of wind and splashing of water against the yacht(s), the soundscape of yacht racing was aurally represented for the televisual audience.

Visual Technologies

With visual technologies in Formula One and contemporary sport providing more variations than the audio, these technologies are examined through the following categorisations: 1) *virtual* (i.e., superimposed information, Virtual Spectator); 2) *impossible views* (i.e., helicopter views, kerb cameras, stump-cam); 3) *synchronised movement* (i.e., tracking shots); 4) *spatially diverse* – up-close yet

free floating perspectives (i.e., Steadicam, sky-cam, ref cam), and 5) *participatory*, framed from POV perspectives (i.e., the Formula One OBC and primarily other motorsport footage). The fourth visual category, *spatially diverse*, is not evident in Formula One but its increasing salience within contemporary televised sport is significant for contextualising and conceptualising its representation and implications for the viewing audience.

1) *Virtual representations*. In the first category, *virtual*, representations of ‘real sport’ are suspended, moving into the virtual world of computer modelling and video gaming to reproduce the sporting environment. Through its graphic representation, the ‘simulated’ sports environment makes aspects of the sport more accessible to the viewer, facilitates insider knowledge and, arguably, makes the sport more compelling for viewers. There are two types of *virtual* representation.

a) *Superimposing information*. In televised Formula One coverage, the prime superimposing of information is the innovative rev-counter which was first seen by viewers at the 2002 United States Grand Prix. At this race, ITV commentator, Martin Brundle, revealed on lap 39 how the revs were measured, noting that “those numbers on the left of the screen are the revs, the rpms of the engine of Coulthard’s Mercedes Benz. That’s recorded on a microphone and then translated numerically as we can see” (Brundle, 2002). The superimposed rev-counter used at the United States Grand Prix was a one-off technology and not seen again until 2004, when an upgraded version re-appeared at, and has remained since, the 2004 Chinese Grand Prix. The superimposed rev-counter is primarily drawn on during an OBC shot and gives a sense of the enormous strain the car is going through, the impressive power of the car (e.g., operating at 18,000 to 19,000 rpm which is approximately double the rpms of the highest revving roadcars; Noble & Hughes,

2004) and literally how drivers ‘drive’ these vehicles (i.e., by representing the application of brakes, throttle and gear-changes around the circuit), (DVD Examples 19 and 20). Since the 2005 Australian Grand Prix, a g-force meter has also occasionally been superimposed, often during an OBC shot, which reveals the physical forces the driver’s body undergoes while racing. Nevertheless, despite these innovations, Pat Symonds, executive director of engineering for the Renault team, is quoted in *F1 Racing* magazine as saying,

The technology being used for F1 TV is archaic, so 20th century. There’s much more that could be done with real-time computer graphics...the current acceleration and braking thing is pretty damn’ crude. I’d like to see virtual cars, super imposition, recognition of driving lines, split screens. All these things can be done. Most teams have data acquisition systems that are way in advance of what’s being broadcast. (“The future of F1”, 2006, pp. 93-94)

Therefore, the *virtual* televisual technology appears to still be in its infancy within Formula One, with additional developments and refinements likely to occur.

In other contemporary sports, innovative *virtual* technologies and representations have extended beyond Formula One’s current use of them. Thus, broadcasters are providing various forms of superimposed information on top of either the televised footage or the existing field of play for televised sport viewers. For example, the superimposed world record pace line for swimming was first introduced at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games for global audiences by the Australian Nine network (“Nine network”, 2001). Within the United States, the company *Sportvision* has been instrumental in designing and providing a number of virtual displays for both American and international sports, such as baseball,

basketball, NASCAR, golf and Olympic coverage (“Case study: Sportvision”, 2003; “Sportvision”, n.d.). One of *Sportvision*’s pioneering developments was the ‘*first and ten line*’ introduced in 1998 which superimposes a 10-yard line marker in American football onto the television screen to identify the point to which the attacking team needs to advance the ball in order to gain another set of downs. This 10-yard line is not present on the actual field or available to the stadium audience but, rather, is employed to assist the television audience. *Sportvision* has also used superimposed technology to create virtual advertising in baseball, football and horse-racing, superimposing sponsors’ logos either on or adjacent to the field of play without impeding the players or the actual playing surface (“Sportvision”, n.d.). Commercially, virtual advertising is beneficial for a number of sports and television networks by facilitating product placement without usually disrupting the surface, players or sport directly (Elliot, 1999), although the use and placement of these ads can at times appear intrusive with, for example, players appearing to run around giant deodorant cans in Greek football (“FIFA yellow-cards”, 1999).

b) Virtual recreations. The second type of *virtual* technology moves beyond superimposed information to provide a virtual re-creation of the sport as a significant televisual and innovative technological development. Although it is not currently utilised in Formula One telecasts, Formula One video games present a visually impressive, virtual re-creation of the sport (see Chapter Five). An example of this televised virtual re-creation technology in contemporary sport is *Hawk-Eye* which provides a 3-D representation of the trajectory of the ball in both cricket and tennis (“Hawk-Eye”, n.d.; “Hawk-Eye enters”, 2003). *Hawk-Eye* has been used in international cricket since 2001 to show leg-before-wicket decisions for the televised audience (but is not currently utilised by umpires), often

replacing the televised footage with either an animated or computer-generated ‘virtual’ recreation of the sporting moment for analysis. In 2002, *Hawk-Eye* was incorporated into tennis, assisting televised viewers with line calls as to whether the ball was in through virtual re-creations and, as part of IBM’s tennis simulation technology ‘shot tracker’, was used for the first time as an officiating tool at the 2006 US Open (“Instant replay”, 2006). Computer modelling and the video gaming industry have also added to the spectacle of televised sport through ‘Virtual Spectator’ models and recreations. In 1992, two New Zealand companies, Terabyte Interactive Ltd. and Animation Research Limited, created ‘Virtual Spectator’ for televised America’s Cup yachting, before introducing more sophisticated 3-D animations for live internet coverage (Bociurkiw, 2000; St. John, 2003). In 2003, New Zealand television audiences were privy to free-to-air ‘Virtual Spectator’ America’s Cup yachting coverage from Auckland, with computer modelling and 3-D animations illustrating, explaining and enhancing the racing on the water for viewers of this complex and technical sport. Animation Research Limited has also employed ‘Sky Virtual Spectator’ within New Zealand men’s cricket coverage since 2001, providing 3-D representations of the game (Channana, 2003) and allowing viewers to see from the viewpoint of the batsman scanning his surroundings to illustrate fielding placements. This technology is similar to the virtual sporting worlds created in sport video games; an aspect revisited through Formula One video games and the player-driver experience of first-person POV representations in Chapter Five.

2) *Impossible view perspective*. Through this technology, the television audience are accorded an *impossible view*, seeing from a perspective that would not be available to them at a game, whether they were a participant or a ‘live’ spectator. Some obvious impossible viewpoints employed in Formula One and

many other televised sports are shots from an aerial perspective (e.g., helicopters, blimps and cranes) which would not be available to either 'live' spectators or the actual participants. Through the impossible view from these aerial perspectives, viewers occupy non-human positions (e.g., a god-like shot looking down on stadium and events), although the zoom-in perspective from a crane perhaps caters to an ideal spectator viewpoint. Formula One has also experimented with an elevated, high-angle shot at the United States Grand Prix. At Indianapolis, a high vertical 'tower' situated on the pit-straight displays the race positions. A camera has been attached to this tower which has multiple functions as, for example, it can zoom in and pan on cars (such as on the formation grid at the 2002 United States Grand Prix). More significantly, this camera also offers an impossible view as it can rotate approximately 150° on its axis; hence this camera is drawn upon to frame the cars entering the pit-straight from a high-angle shot, adjusting to a bird's eye view as the cars pass directly underneath the camera's position, before then rotating rapidly through to 150° to provide an upside-down, high-angle perspective of the cars racing away from the camera towards Turn One. Clearly, this perspective offers an impossible (and disorientating) viewpoint not replicable by paying spectators while framing cars travelling at approximately 200 mph. In contrast, housing a camera within a kerb offers an impossible viewpoint from the opposite perspective; a low-angle or even the cinematic 'worm's eye view' (Kawin, 1992) as the car literally races over the camera in a position viewers could neither occupy nor survive at the live event. Some of the OBC camera positions also provide an impossible viewpoint from the nose, front wing or mirror of the car during races which is discussed in the following chapter.

Finally, outside of Formula One, cricket provides two impossible viewpoints for its television audiences. The first essentially uses an existing 'ideal spectator'

perspective but provides a slow motion replay in high definition (Hi-Motion). Although this generally reproduces ‘standard’ televisual techniques and viewing perspectives, albeit through a crisper image, one specific instance highlighted its slight yet significant advancement on existing technology. At the second test in Manchester in 2008, New Zealand batsman, Daniel Flynn was hit on the metal grill of his helmet by a short-pitched ball from Englishman James Anderson. Already a nasty delivery to watch ‘live’, the Hi-Motion replay, framed through a medium to close-up shot, allowed viewers to see not only Flynn’s grill compress into his face but provided the vivid and rather unsettling sight of his dislodged tooth readily identifiable as it flew through the air. Therefore, Hi-Motion resembles but advances on existing technology by providing a new type of *impossible viewpoint* which, in this specific instance, rendered the minutiae of cricket more visible. The second televisual technology, ‘stump-cam’, offers a more pointed example of a closer perspective (and impossible view) of the action. Stump-cam emerged in Australia in the early 1980s as one of the many innovative technologies Kerry Packer introduced for televising cricket (Barrington, 2006; Cahill, 2002) and is now employed in all men’s international cricket fixtures. Stump-cam houses a small camera in the middle wicket and gives viewers a unique (and impossible) spatial viewpoint of the pitch, bowler running in and a sense of the action from a perspective similar to, but not the same as, the batsman. Hence, ‘stump-cam’ is an impossible viewpoint that even the players do not share, located in a stump at a different position to the closest participants (i.e., lower than the viewpoint of a batsman and remaining fixed, as opposed to the shifting viewpoint of a wicket-keeper). In recent times, stump-cam has also placed a camera at the base of the stumps which, through its low-angle perspective and

wide-angle lens, provides a behind the stump view and often frames the wicket-keeper in an extreme close-up.

3) *Synchronised movement perspective*. The third variation, *synchronised movement*, provides a perceived ‘shared’ sense of movement with cars and/or athletes in motion. Rather than multiple camera positions and set-ups, the viewer is fixed to this perspective from one camera, although the footage is inter-cut with exterior shots from other camera positions. Most commonly, the *synchronised movement* perspective draws on tracking shots, which replicate the tracking shots deployed in cinema. In a tracking shot, the camera is often mounted on a set of two rails (i.e., literally like a mini-railway track), allowing a combination of stability and movement to the shot as the camera glides along these rails.

Televised Formula One coverage has used the cinematic tracking shot by running a camera on a set of rails adjacent to the track, although the rails (or singular rail) are set up both at a distance to the track for obvious safety reasons, as well as in slow corners to be able to frame the cars (e.g., on the inside of Turn Nine at the 2002 United States Grand Prix, or for a full 13 seconds through the Cotovelo corner at Brazil in 2006). More experimental tracking shots have also been provided through the use of cameras mounted on aerial fly-by-wires. The fly-by-wire technology is employed in most forms of elite motor-racing (e.g., the American NASCAR series, DTM in Europe and V8 Supercars in Australasia), by mounting a camera on aerial wires that run the length of the pit-lane; the camera literally ‘races’ along these wires to move (and shoot from a high-angle) in synchronisation with cars as they make their pit-stops. The same technology has been used in Formula One, although with significant variations, such as the pit-lane fly-by-wire camera facing out on to the main straight (rather than towards the pit-lane) and being drawn on to frame the race start at the 2005 and 2006

Brazilian Grand Prix through a replay. Additionally, aerial fly-by wires have been placed at other locations around some tracks. For example, at the 2006 Spanish Grand Prix, an aerial fly-by wire ran between Turns 10 and 11 framing the cars for a full 12 seconds as they negotiated these turns, while an aerial fly-by-wire at the Hockenheim track provided an exhilarating perspective which literally raced above and beside the cars for up to 10 seconds as they accelerated out of the hairpin during the German Grand Prix in 2003 and 2004.

In addition to Formula One, other contemporary sports draw on various tracking shots to provide a shared sense of *synchronised movement* between viewers and the framed athletes. In Olympic Games coverage since 1996, cameras have been mounted on a small, singular rail which runs adjacent to the running track in athletic events (Gallagher, 2002). The viewpoint draws on the athletic body as a frame of reference, shot from a low-angle and often at torso-level, to enhance the shared sense of speed as the camera keeps pace with and alongside the athlete(s) in-synchronisation. A similar set-up and tracking technique is used for swimming events. One camera runs on tracks beside the pool replicating the athletic tracking shot, although the swimmer is submerged in the pool and hence not always visible or at torso-level. A second camera, ‘MobyCam’, is placed on tracks on the bottom of the pool to provide a low-angle and often worm’s eye (impossible) underwater view of the swimmers moving in real time. MobyCam was first created for the 1992 Olympics by Garrett Brown, the inventor of Steadicam, Sky-cam and DiveCam (“MobyCam”, n.d.), although this technology is also used in Britain by the BBC and entitled ‘halibut-cam’ (“Commonwealth services”, 2002). Rather than the aforementioned horizontal tracking shots, an innovative vertical tracking shot has been used since the 1996 Olympic Games for ‘live’ diving coverage (“DiveCam”, n.d.). Entitled

‘DiveCam’ (or ‘plunge-cam’ in Britain), the camera descends in real time at a torso-level with the diver but also ‘plunges’ into the pool, with the camera visibly breaking the water and continuing to film the competitors as they complete their dives and ascend back to the surface. This provides an impossible view for the television audience but seems to replicate the visual ‘experience’ of diving and was used to great effect at the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games. Of course, these examples of synchronised movement can overlap with other categories, as the vertical diving tracking shot, underwater track for swimming and fly-by-wire technology are also *impossible viewpoints*. Additionally, elements of the *spatially diverse* (i.e., ref-cam and sky-cam) and *participatory* POV shots all ‘share’ aspects of synchronised movement.

4) *Spatially diverse perspectives*. The fourth variation is *spatially diverse* technologies which offer up-close yet free-floating perspectives. As noted earlier, while not currently deployed in Formula One, these technologies are significant for contextualising contemporary televised sport and offer a similar yet distinctive category in relation to the fifth variation (*participatory* POV perspectives). Sky-cam is an exemplar of *spatially diverse* technologies, providing a bird’s eye view of games and “exhilarating images that are otherwise impossible” (Monaco, 2000, p. 99) by suspending a lightweight camera on wires above the action. Although not at ground level, nor equivalent to the on-field perspective, Sky-cam creates a free-floating effect by manipulating the camera to continuously follow the action and provide graphic overhead shots. By ‘floating’ only metres above the players, Sky-cam also offers a new spatial viewing dynamic for the televised audience. Originating from cinema, Sky-cam was first employed in the failed 2001 XFL season (see earlier discussion of the XFL), before being used in American National Football League (NFL) coverage on a consistent basis since 2002

(“Skycam”, n.d.). Post-2004, the Sky-cam perspective from above and behind the line of scrimmage is commonly drawn upon prior to the snap of the ball in NFL coverage. Sky-cam was also introduced to Australian sport in 2004, being utilised to great effect during the State of Origin rugby league series and in four Australian rules (AFL) games (McClure, 2004; B. Smith, 2004). American football’s ‘ref-cam’ also offered a unique spatial orientation. Used sparingly in the NFL for a short period in the early 2000’s,¹ ‘ref-cam’ placed a camera in the referee’s hat, presenting viewers with an ‘on-field’ representation of the play as the ball was snapped. The referee observed from behind the defensive line of scrimmage while players set off in rapid motion all around, rushing by the referee (and television audience’s viewing point) to make a play. This viewing perspective may share elements of the *participatory* POV variation (although it is from a referee not a competitor) yet disrupts the traditional spatial orientation for viewers as sideline observers by providing an on-field and up-close perspective of the competitors. Additionally, rather than the free-floating effect of Sky-cam (or the fluid filming of Steadicam discussed below), ref-cam was also disorientating due both to the intensity of bodies in motion and the referee rapidly scanning his surroundings in a similar fashion to the effect produced by using whip pans and tilts in cinema.

From cinematic origins, Steadicam is another *spatially diverse* technology recently employed in televised sport coverage. Steadicam are cameras worn on a stabilising harness by the operator which allows greater movement and flexibility for filming. Geuens (1993) suggests that,

Visually, the steadicam duplicates many benefits of handheld shooting without the lack of stability inherent in the latter practice: indeed, to the crew, it can provide speed,

flexibility, mobility, and responsiveness. And, of course, it can also energize the film with visual dynamism. (p. 12)

Steadicam offers a practical application within sport representations as, unlike most sport camera techniques which are fixed, bulky or require additional equipment for assembly or use (e.g., the rails for a tracking shot), Steadicam offers a flexible camera that is highly mobile, less restrictive and can be deployed in numerous sport settings. Steadicam also permits closer access to athletes for the viewer, with the camera operator able to navigate through space, frame athletes at close range and, overall, provide a greater fluidity to shooting the event. Steadicam is employed in athletic coverage at major events (e.g., the Olympics), as well as on the sidelines at field sports (e.g., at the football World Cup, NFL and New Zealand international rugby in 2006), although the representations from these field sports replicates rather than transforms the traditional sideline, fixed-camera framing by being drawn on sparingly, shooting at a distance and seldom encroaching on to the field of play.

Nevertheless, Australian rugby league has utilised Steadicam in two innovative ways since 2006. First, when a try is scored, the Steadicam operator often enters the field, shooting the try-scorer at close-range as he walks back for the re-start. Often this framing is conducted along a 360° axis, as well as from multiple angles. Thus, the try-scorer is filmed from various angles (e.g., torso level, a low-angle tilt, eye level), with the camera position continually manipulated, in addition to the operator usually completing a 360° circle around the try-scorer during this process. From this Steadicam perspective, viewers are provided with an on-field, up close and fluid framing of the try-scorer as he continues to walk in one direction back to his own goal-line. The second innovation was first employed during the 2006 State of Origin rugby league

series. For the opening two games, the operator emerged from the tunnel directly behind the captain leading the team out on to the field. The operator was second in the player line-up, proceeding to jog out onto the field with the players as if he, too, was one of the players, providing a viewpoint that resembled a player's perspective for the viewing audience. By bringing cameras onto the field and into the competitive space of the athletes, Steadicam offers an up-close perspective and access to athletes while they are in the process of competing. This is distinct from notions of the 'ideal spectator' as an on-field viewpoint is not available for the 'live' spectator. Additionally, Steadicam, ref-cam and sky-cam afford movement and the navigation through space that are not permitted by exterior or stadium cameras. Hence, these technologies allow cameras and, by implication, viewers, to not only enter the field of play but, also, to navigate around the spaces and competitors of particular sports in a fluid and free-floating manner (or in a disorientating fashion with ref-cam) while continuously following the action.

5) *Participatory perspective*. Although similar ideas have been forwarded within variations three and four (synchronised movement and spatial diversity), the *participatory perspective* offers a distinction by locating cameras on or close to the athletes. These, therefore, provide a viewpoint for audiences that is similar to that of the actual athlete. Major road-cycling events, such as the *Tour de France*, achieve this by transporting cameramen on motorbikes who ride beside and among the competitors to film them at close proximity during race stages, providing a sense of what it is like being among the cyclists. Cricket has also provided, on occasion, 'umpire-cam', which allows viewers to look down the wicket from the viewpoint of an umpire officiating on the game. These two examples share aspects with ref-cam in variation four, although the spatial dynamics are less pronounced (i.e., the umpire generally remains static while, in

Tour de France filming, the camera is fixed in its representation, less intense and is not fluidly navigating space despite the obvious movement on bikes). Nevertheless, while the motorbike cameramen, ‘umpire-cam’ and ‘ref-cam’ provide POV representations of sport, these are not strictly *participatory perspectives*. The viewpoint is derived from officials adjudicating on the on-field action or a cameraman transported on a bike which is distinct from the perspective of an actual athlete competing in a sporting event.

Motorsport transports the viewer closer to a participatory athletic perspective, with various forms of vehicular racing including Rally, jet sprint boats, dragsters, stock-cars and motorbikes employing cameras mounted on or fitted within the vehicles to provide a vicarious sense of the action, often from a viewpoint similar to the participant. These cameras offer a POV perspective which facilitates a connection between viewer and driver in terms of a sense of participation and possible identification. Viewers are restricted to a viewpoint that is similar to the racer and, therefore, in a visual, temporal and spatial sense, share the racer’s experience and see only what the racer sees. The Formula One OBC is at the forefront of this type of technology as it provides a viewpoint devoid of superfluous or obtrusive materials (e.g., car interiors, windscreens, bonnets); only fragmentary elements of the driver’s body, the steering wheel and nose of the car are visible for the viewer as the car hurtles along the track (DVD Examples 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21). The American Champ Car racing series takes this perspective even further, placing a camera inside the driver’s helmet (Helmet-Cam) with viewers usually ‘sharing’ a male driver’s viewpoint as he/we stare out through the dirty perspex of his visor. Given the added realism, as well as the visual, visceral, spatial and, at times, embodied racing experience permitted by

these technologies, the POV perspectives accorded by the Formula One OBC (and Helmet-Cam) are the object of analysis in Chapter Five.

Finally, this research needs to acknowledge some limitations, as some overseas sports are experimenting with emerging televisual technologies and additional POV perspectives unaccounted for in this thesis. For example, New Zealand digital television (Sky Television) draws on the show EuroSport as overnight filler, providing cyclic and repetitive sports headlines from Europe and around the globe. Before repeating these sport headlines (four times each hour), eclectic clips are presented as a transitional device and, in the process, reveal a range of innovative camera positions and angles for framing sport. Based on a systematic analysis of EuroSport's footage over a two week period in May 2006, I observed that cameras were located on participants competing in various types of skiing, on the front of a luge, on base jumpers and even from multiple locations on a mountain bike (e.g., the rider's helmet, the bike's frame, the handlebars, and high-angle tilts looking down on the gear shifter, brake callipers and/or back tyre when the brakes are deployed). These examples suggest that additional multiple camera set-ups, positions, perspectives and techniques are being employed (though differing by locality) that are not common to either New Zealand coverage or the dominant global sporting feeds that New Zealand receives through Sky Television. As such, my analysis has its limitations, while these additional technologies and techniques warrant further examination in the wider sport media literature.

The Implications of Televisual Technologies: The

Audience/Technology/Athlete Nexus in Contemporary Televised Sport

The emerging televisual technologies identified have not been examined within the sport media literature yet, clearly, advance Whannel's (1992) conceptualisation of the 'ideal spectator' in terms of their implications for both (re)presenting televised sport and the viewer positionings they seem to offer. Some scholars of televised sport suggest that the shifts in framing techniques, deployment of various technologies and convergence of a range of sport media texts can be accounted for through the notion of de-differentiation. De-differentiation refers to the 'breaking down' of categorical boundaries (Giulianotti, 2005) or, in relation to television, "the collapse of boundaries between functions and genres" (Rowe, 2004, p. 189). De-differentiation also leads to a 'pastiche style' (Real, 1998) for televised sport, with an eclectic collection of fragmented genres (e.g., the use of animation, such as the cartoon duck in televised cricket) and increasing commodification (e.g., the use of superimposed or virtual advertising) characterising televised sport. Real (1998) suggests that underlying contemporary televised sport is "the commercial incentive to maximize viewing audiences by promotion and titillation,...by giving the audience something even fancier than it hoped for" (p. 23). This 'titillation' or 'fancier' role is evident within the emerging televisual technologies as the spatial relationship between sport audiences, technology and athletes is being both challenged and transformed through these innovations. Not only are the boundaries between the audience and athlete being dismantled but, as Giulianotti (2005) asserts, "sport's mediation collapses these differences further: the on-car camera in motor racing, or cricket's stump-camera, place viewers visually inside the action" (p. 176). Thus, the audience/technology/athlete nexus has an aesthetic

significance for the viewer who is transported into the mediated sport world via these technologies and its non-coherent and fragmented televisualisation. Viewers 'share' not only a collective version and 'vision' of televised sport (Bale, 1998; Sandvoss, 2003) but, through these emerging technologies, are re-positioned and enmeshed in the (athletic) performance via multiple perspectives.

Nevertheless, there is a contradiction inherent to viewing sporting performances on television. Rowe (2004) notes,

Paradoxically, the new media technology is artificially trying to produce the 'feel' of 'having been there' as participant or spectator long after television first lured sports players and fans away from stadia towards the armchair. Of course, only a tiny proportion of potential athletes and fans can ever be 'actors' in the unique space and time of actual sports events.
(p. 205)

However, given the increasing proximity or, conversely, decreasing distance between audiences, athletes and the 'real' event, the 'unique space and time' of sport is being compressed through innovative audio and visual technologies. Thus, audiences share viewpoints and the mediated 'experiences' of the athletes and attending spectators simultaneously, while being granted privileged (mediated) perspectives and access to the spatial realm of the sporting world itself. Therefore, Rowe's (2004) assertion that through new digital media technologies "the passive sports media consumer may become both all-powerful media *auteur* and athlete 'replicant'" (p. 204, italics in original) is salient for understanding the audience relationship with emerging televisual technologies. Although Rowe is primarily considering internet usage, emerging televisual technologies are, potentially, making the audience capable of being both a

consumer and producer (auteur) of sport mediations through the diversity of viewer uses, roles and positionings (see further discussion of fan practices in Chapter Six). Audiences are being transported closer to the action, entering and exploring the space of the sporting world, and ‘sharing’ the movement and/or viewpoint of actual athletes competing in live and contemporaneous ‘real’ sporting contests. Therefore, in an aesthetic sense, the emerging televisual technologies not only cater to an audience fascination with replicating the athletic experience but, aurally and visually, permit this through innovative mediations.

As most of the emerging televised technologies draw upon cinematic conventions and techniques, post-classical film theory offers an insight into the stylistic transformations that these technologies are providing within contemporary televised sport. Within film theory, there is a contested debate over distinctions between a classical and post-classical form of cinema. Some film theorists suggest that the ‘style’ of classical Hollywood cinematic representations (approximately 1930-1960) has remained consistent (Bordwell, Staiger & Thompson, 1985) and, in fact, still permeates contemporary film (Bordwell, 1988, 2006). Conversely, other scholars argue that there has been a discernible shift from these classical representations to a contemporary post-classical cinema, distinctive in its use of time, space, narrativisation, characterisation and identification (Cubitt, 2004; Jenkins, 1995; Tasker, 1996). In his discussion of the ‘Hollywood baroque’ (i.e., post-classical Hollywood cinema), Cubitt (2004) succinctly traces the essential differences between these two cinematic styles,

Both narrative and stylistics have been subordinated to the exploration of the world of the film. If classical cinema operates in time, as a linear construct whose narration and stylistics focus on the exposure of the story, the baroque

takes time as its raw material. In the Hollywood baroque, film is no longer a time-based medium (a function now occupied by television) but the medium of movement. Spatialization takes over from narrative the job of managing the film's dynamics. Movement here is sculptural, architectural, or geographical rather than temporal, and space itself is malleable. Classical decoupage – establishing shot, two shot, shot-reverse shot – no longer governs because, with one swooping sequence-shot, we can establish the diegetic space without stabilising it according to the 180° rule. (p. 224)

Within televised sport, the newer televisual technologies seem to duplicate many of the aspects that Cubitt (2004) describes. In particular, rather than reproducing a 'narrative-flow' to the sporting event (a classical Hollywood cinematic convention), these camera positions and perspectives move beyond the narrative-based recording of the events to also navigate and explore the spatial dimensions on offer. Clearly, narrative has an important function within the televised sport representation (as it still does in cinema, see Bordwell, 2006), as viewers need to know what is happening, set against the constraints of time and the awareness of a circumscribed duration for the event. However, the new televisual technologies also open up and extend the spatial elements inherent within sport. Through the use of impossible views, synchronised movement, up-close yet free-floating perspectives and POV representations, viewers are permitted to recognise and explore the spatial dimensions of the sport, the setting and, perhaps, even the participant(s) directly. The application of post-classical film theory seems appropriate to this stylistic shift in the televisualisation of contemporary sport for,

as Kramer (2000) suggests, it is the “increased speed and intensity of stylistic change which the concept of post-classicism is meant to describe” (p. 178).

Spatial elements are also disrupted through these new technologies breaking the classical convention of decoupage. Decoupage offers a ‘continuity system’ (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997) in classical cinema, stabilising the filmic world through techniques such as establishing shots, shot-reverse-shot and the 180° rule which combine to maintain a ‘smooth flow’ to the use of space and spatial relations in classical cinema (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997). In contrast, these newer televisual technologies often break classical conventions. As noted earlier, Formula One’s televised framing disrupts the filmic 180° rule by never providing a consistent spatial relationship on the screen; for example, placing cameras on both the inside and outside of corners, while the screen space that cars occupy oscillates and is multi-directional (e.g., car movement is framed in multiple directions on both a horizontal and vertical plane). As exemplars of the emerging televisual technologies, Sky-cam and especially Steadicam facilitate movement around a 360° axis for framing multiple viewpoints of the players, space and action within the sporting contest. Cubitt (2004) identifies Steadicam as a central technological innovation for the new spatial orientation within post-classical cinema, a finding which seems equally applicable to the framing and representation of contemporary televised sport. Due to its flexibility, mobility and fluidity, Steadicam affords close proximity to athletes and the ability to navigate the spatial dimensions of sport. Additionally, Formula One is at the forefront of pseudo-participatory televisual technologies, providing a driving/driver’s perspective for the viewing audience by initially mounting cameras on the cars in the film *Grand Prix* (Frankenheimer, 1966) which was then incorporated as a

device into the sport via the OBC (Hotten, 1999). Through this cinematic-televisual migration, Formula One adapted the POV for its own purposes.

Emerging Televisual Technologies and Emerging Viewing Positions: The Ideal Omniscient Observer and the Idealised Participant

Collectively, the emerging televisual technologies emphasise enhanced realism, intimacy and a more 'active' role for contemporary sport audiences. Thus, there is an aesthetic shift towards the televisual replication of athletic experiences and performances, as well as a stylistic (post-classical) orientation to the exploration of and navigation through space. In some respects, due to these televisual transformations, viewers are being offered a contemporary 'hyperreal' spectacle. That is, viewers may be indulging a fascination, not only with the sporting event as a spectacle, but with the actual mediation as its own spectacle. Therefore, viewers may be intrigued by the visible presence of technology within the sport itself (e.g., seeing Sky-cam hovering overhead in the background or seeing the Steadicam operator externally before cutting to his/her on-field perspective), how the shots are achieved (e.g., Sky-cam or fly-by-wires) and the effects accorded by these technologies (i.e., free-floating or synchronised movement), in addition to the actual re-presentation of the sporting event itself.

The first two visual televisual technological variations, *virtual representations* and *impossible viewpoints*, move away from Whannel's (1992) ideal or highly mobile ideal spectator by facilitating a non-human (e.g., god-like, worm's eye or digitalised) perspective and a viewer positioning not available to either a spectator or player. In one sense this is disembodiment for the viewer, who is positioned and presented with an *impossible* viewpoint. *Virtual representations* also create a distance between the viewer and the 'real' event by either

superimposing or recreating elements of the televised sport. While both variations may disrupt aspects of the immediacy, realism and actuality of the event (Whannel, 1992), these variations also enhance the role of information and entertainment within televised sport. The *virtual representations* and *impossible viewpoints* seemingly position the viewer not as an ideal spectator but, rather, as an *idealised omniscient observer* with the analytical tools to see the game from all angles and with privileged access to virtual tools onscreen, arguably allowing the viewer to operate simultaneously as a perfect referee. In fact, in many respects, it is the combination of omniscience and the disembodied *impossible* or *virtual* perspectives that facilitate the analytical knowledge of the *idealised omniscient observer*.

Conversely, rather than the virtual or at a distance *idealised omniscient observer*, the final three visual variations (*synchronised movement*, *spatially diverse* and *participatory perspectives*), as well as the use of sound technologies, disrupt Whannel's (1992) ideal spectator by transporting the viewer closer to the athletic realm and experience. Within these final four technological variations, the viewer is visually positioned as an *idealised participant*, evoking a sense of embodiment and intimacy through the close proximity framing, navigation of space, sense of 'shared' *synchronised movement* and, particularly, through the *participatory* POV perspectives. Furthermore, through the role of sound technologies, viewers also become *privileged recipients* of the aural dimensions comprising the sporting soundscape. By facilitating close audio and visual proximity to the event and/or athletes, a shared perspective of either athletic movement and/or athletes' viewpoints, and by having cameras entering the field and navigating diverse spaces, such technologies bring the viewer closer to an *idealised participant* viewpoint than has been articulated through the concept of

the ideal spectator. Nevertheless, while these techniques potentially entwine the audience/technology/athlete, the perspective remains *idealised*. As the viewer is placed or enmeshed in the action through mediation, it remains an *idealised* audio/visual replication of experience and participation, with viewers reliant upon these televisual technologies and, particularly, how the technology facilitates and frames the navigation, synchronicity and proximity of an athletic space, body and experience.

In many respects, then, the framing of Formula One through camera work, editing, sound and graphics adheres to Whannel's (1992) conceptualisation of the ideal spectator or highly mobile ideal spectator for televised sport audiences. Nevertheless, the emerging televisual technologies both specific to Formula One and utilised in other forms of contemporary sport, also extend beyond Whannel's (1992) 'traditional' categorisation of viewer positioning. In particular, these technologies collapse the mediated boundaries between viewers and athletes by re-placing viewers within the sporting event, allowing viewers to re-navigate or re-negotiate the spatial dimensions of sport and/or the participants and by providing visual replications of the athletic experience. This final visual dynamic is paramount for Formula One telecasts and its global audience as, through the OBC, the television viewer is transported away from a position of ideal spectator into the realm and POV of the racing driver. By implication, viewers are not 'all seeing' as the ideal spectator concept suggests but, rather, are drawn solely into the experience and viewpoint of one athlete: the driver in motorsport. The suggestion that viewers, at some level, are also contemporaneously 'experiencing' sport through the POV or first-person representation of actual athletes has profound implications for *re-presenting* televised sport, its reception by audiences and the sport spectacle. Hence, having initially traced a generic to more

specialised conceptualisation of televised Formula One spectatorship in this chapter, this approach affords a gradual conceptual shift for audiences across the remaining chapters. Therefore, specific audience-text relationships and engagements are interrogated in the next chapter, considering television (and film) audiences, the OBC and the increasingly embodied, first-person POV perspectives in Chapter Five, leading to contextualised and concrete examples of specific audience practices and ‘experiences’ derived from their engagements with texts (‘my’ Formula One fandom for Jacques Villeneuve in Chapters Six and Seven).

¹ Internet searches for ‘ref-cam’ have failed to uncover any substantial information on its use in the NFL. From personal observations I recall seeing this technology in 2002, while it is also discussed on an AFL forum in 2000 (“AFL to trial”, 2000; Quindt, 2002). Ref-cam has not been deployed over the past five seasons (2004-2008).

CHAPTER FIVE

Through the Eyes of Jacques Villeneuve: Point-of-View

Representations and the Embodied and Immersed Viewer/Fan.

As an extension of the discussion of televised sport and emerging televisual technologies in the previous chapter, this chapter examines the use of the Formula One on-board camera (OBC). In particular, film theories concerned with the point-of-view (POV) shot, as well as emerging video games research are also incorporated as the OBC offers a perspective which has not been accounted for in the sport media literature. Collectively, these visual theories and examples are essential for developing a conceptual shift for audiences in relation to the viewer positioning and identification that such techniques potentially ascribe. As I will argue, although classical cinematic POV representations were traditionally gaze-based and limited notions of viewer identification, the emerging POV techniques in post-classical cinema and within both Formula One's OBC and video games, draw upon embodied and immersive perspectives to afford a particular form of viewer engagement and distinctive levels of identification.

Point-of-View in the Cinema

As a basic premise, the notion of a 'point-of-view' in cinema is a misnomer: any filmic perspective is shot from a *point-of-view*; for example, from the point-of-view of the director, cinematographer or, essentially, the all-seeing camera. Most commonly, point-of-view (POV) in the cinema refers to a particular shot type (also known as a subjective camera/shot) which is employed to evoke the sense of a subjective link between viewers and the filmic action, seemingly 'placing' viewers in the position of (or a position similar to) a character within a film.

Describing the POV shot, Kawin (1992) notes that “the camera adopts the position of the character’s physical eye, so that the audience sees more or less what the character sees” (p. 73). For Bordwell and Thompson (1997), “sometimes the camera, through its positioning and movements, invites us to see events ‘through the eyes’ of a character” (p. 267), suggesting that the POV shot offers a ‘first-person camera’ or the ‘camera as character’. In a similar vein, Branigan (1984) suggests that for films/directors to create subjective perception and for viewers to derive a sense of focused subjectivity,

The archetypal device of this sort in film is the point-of-view (POV) shot, where the camera assumes the spatial position of a character in order to show us what the character sees; the camera lens, so to speak, becomes the eye of the character...with the result that our sensory perception is restricted to that of the character. (p. 6)

Most often this viewpoint is used sparingly or as a brief intrusion in films. *Lady in the Lake* (Montgomery, 1946), a private detective film noir, is one of the few attempts to present a film almost in its entirety from a POV perspective. More recently, POV representation has been experimented with in the comedy/fantasy, *Being John Malkovich* (Jonze, 1999), and the science fiction film, *Strange Days* (Bigelow, 1995), providing vicarious, sustained POV representations that draw on a shared sense of embodiment. My discussion of point-of-view in the cinema will draw on these three films in particular.¹

Two additional film genres need to be acknowledged for their use of POV techniques. The first genre, collectively labelled the horror/slasher/serial killer genre, commonly employs POV shots to resemble the viewpoint of the killer. This subjective use of the camera adds to the suspense of these films, concealing

the killer's identity as she/he 'acts out' these atrocities in films such as *Friday the 13th* (Cunningham, 1980), *Halloween* (Carpenter, 1978) or as the Zodiac killer in *The Limbic Region* (Pattinson, 1996). Through their use of POV, these films problematise the dynamic of viewer identification which, arguably, can oscillate between both victim and killer (Clover, 1987, 1992).² The second genre is pornography, with POV becoming an increasingly popular way to both represent and enhance explicit sexual scenes (e.g., Christopher, 2003). Viewers can view oral or penetrative sex from the POV of the participants (primarily the male participants, with obvious gendered implications for viewers), while newer first-person versions provide an interactive dimension which allows viewers to choose which actresses, camera angles or sexual positions they want to see (e.g., Lauren, 2004). These genres require further examination in the film literature but will not be considered in this chapter as, although they evoke emotional and embodied responses through their POV perspectives, I suggest that the visual (and physical) enthrallment of either fear (horror films) or pleasure (pornography) is distinct from the fear and/or pleasure derived from the first-person, embodied visual representation of Formula One racing. Additionally, the specific films referred to for the general argument have been selected to draw attention to the distinctive use of POV in classical (*Lady in the Lake*) and post-classical cinema (*Being John Malkovich* and *Strange Days*), (see Cubitt, 2004; and Chapter Four for the distinction between classical and post-classical cinema). Contextualising these two periods of film-making affords a theoretical shift in the use and implications of POV, as well as the conceptualisation of a new post-classical POV shot which is also applicable to the contemporary Formula One on-board camera (OBC) and video game first-person representations. Before turning to this broader

contextualisation of the cinematic POV, a brief outline of methods will be appropriate.

Methods: Neoformalistic Film Analysis

Compositional/image analysis (detailed in Chapter Three) and the approach known as neoformalist film analysis have been drawn upon to analyse the POV techniques of 16 specific films (see Filmography), as well as their implications for the viewing audience. As a constantly modified approach, neoformalist film analysis reflexively deals with films individually to provide a theoretical and critical analysis of their form and hypothetical audience responses. Thompson (1988) notes that,

It is *not*, as I have already suggested, a method as such.

Neoformalism as an approach does offer a series of broad assumptions about how artworks are constructed and how they operate in cueing audience responses. But neoformalism does not prescribe *how* these assumptions are embodied in individual films. Rather, the basic assumptions can be used to construct a method specific to the problems raised by each film. (p. 6, italics in original)

Working from this conceptual basis, and steeped in the ‘orientation towards form’ of Russian Formalist literary theory (Thompson, 1988; Nichols, 2000), neoformalism emphasises the active relationship between the viewer and a film, analysing the various cinematic devices and techniques which constitute the film’s structure (e.g., camera movements/positions, audio cues, editing, etc.), and a hypothetical viewer’s response to them. Through neo-formalism and compositional/image analysis, I have engaged in a systematic analysis of the 15

films, examining the visual framing and implied viewer positionings and identificatory mechanisms provided in the POV sequences through a combination of pausing/freeze-framing, re-viewing of scenes and note-taking. Thompson (1988) suggests that “a neoformalist critic works out a method in response to a problem posed by a specific film” (p. 169). In this chapter, rather than a specific film, it is the filmic technique of POV which is analysed. The POV shot raises interesting questions in relation to the representation of viewpoints, space and the body across diverse mediated forms, as well as having implications for the viewing experience in terms of placement, identification and engagement which are now developed through examinations of cinematic POV, the Formula One OBC and video game representations.

Point-of-View in Classical Cinema

For such a common camera technique, there has been surprisingly little attention or research on the POV shot (for rare examples, see Brinton, 1947; Kawin, 1992; Metz, 1973; Moreno, 1953; Neale, 2005; Potts, 2005; Smith, 1995). Much of the POV research has centred on classical Hollywood cinema (approximately 1930-1960), with limited conceptualising of the POV in post-classical cinema; for example, Rascaroli (1997), Shaviro (2003) and Smith (2003) discuss POV in relation to the films of Kathryn Bigelow but do not articulate a post-classical POV technique. Branigan (1975, 1984, 1985, 1992) has been the most prolific writer on the use of POV in classical cinema, observing that the cinematic POV technique merges the elements of subjectivity, narration, character and first-person visual representation. Branigan (1984) suggests that,

Subjectivity in film depends on linking the framing of space at a given moment to a *character* as origin. The link may be

direct or indirect. In the POV structure it is direct, because the character is shown and then the camera occupies his or her (approximate!) position, thus framing a spatial field derived from him or her as origin. (p. 73, italics in original)

However, he cautions that the POV shot is not a ‘naturally’ subjective technique (either as a visual representation or for constructing viewer identification) and, instead, relies on what viewers bring to the perspective, assisted through the conventions of framing, characterisation and narration.

One of Branigan’s key research findings has been his methodical taxonomy of the POV shot. Initially comprising five key elements (Branigan, 1975), he has refined it in later works to “six elements usually distributed in *two* shots” (Branigan, 1985, p. 673). Branigan’s (1985) taxonomy outlines the six elements of POV as:

Shot A: Point/Glance

1. *Point*: establishment of a point in space.
2. *Glance*: establishment of an object, usually off-camera, by glance from the point.

Between Shots A and B:

3. *Transition*: temporal continuity or simultaneity.

Shot B: Point/Object

4. *From Point*: the camera locates at the point, or very close to the point, in space defined by element one above
5. *Object*: the object of element two above is revealed.

Shots A and B:

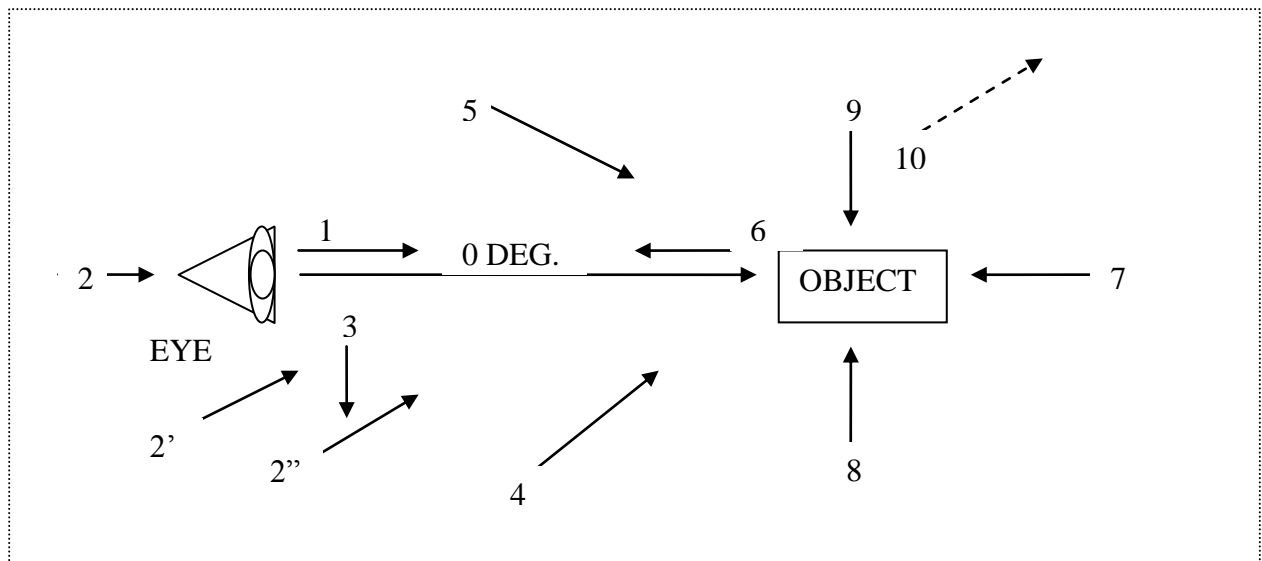
6. *Character*: the space and time of elements one through five are justified by – referred to – the presence and normal awareness of a subject. (pp. 673-674, italics in original)

Essentially, the POV shot comprises three fundamental components: the point/glance, which establishes from whence the viewer is looking (with POV often linking the viewer to a character); the point/object – that which we (camera, character and viewer) are looking at and, thirdly, the presence of a character from whence this POV is derived (so the audience knows it is from the point-of-view of a character and not an objective shot). Branigan's taxonomy considers all the possibilities, transitions and variations on these points and objects, with the six elements being "specific instances, respectively, of the six general units of classical representation: origin, vision, time, frame, object, and mind" (Branigan, 1985, p. 674).

Branigan sketches the relationship between shots A and B in an overhead diagram (Figure 1). He notes, (1985):

Since the initial angle of shot A (point/glance) may be any angle, we choose shot B (point/object) as a reference and take the line running from the subject's eyes to the object as a reference line. The POV structure is then classified according to the placement of shot B with respect to this line. Figure 1 represents alternative sites for the location of shot B. It displays a range of possibilities for the framing (element four) of the POV structure. (p. 680)

Figure 1 (overhead view): Branigan's POV diagram of alternate sites for the location of shot B (Point/Object) following shot A (Point/Glance).



Set-up 1: Classic POV shot – from the subject's eyes.

Set-up 2: reverse angle, from behind the subject, usually over one shoulder.

Set-up 2': just to one-side of the subject whom we do not see.

Set-up 2'': angular difference increases toward 30 degrees, becoming less subjective and more voyeuristic.

Set-up 3: deviant POV, "where the camera reveals an object which we believe a subject to be looking at but which, in fact, he is not" (Branigan, 1985, p. 680).

Set-up 4: eyeline match, "it shows what a character sees and when, but not from where the character looks" (p. 680).

Set-up 5: mirror image of set-up 4, crosses 180 degree line.

Set-up 6: POV of the object.

Set-up 7: reverse angle of the object. Set-up 6 and 7 usually occur when object is a person.

Set –up 8 and 9: de-stabilizing shots, imply a false space for the subject through resemblance to set-up 1.

Set –up 10: de-stabilizing shot, represents a jump into a new space or scene. (Branigan, 1985, pp. 680–681)

Set-up 1, the *classic POV*, is the most commonly employed POV shot in film (both classical and post-classical). While Branigan is one of the few scholars to theorise this shot, he significantly overstates its location. The *classic POV* is not *from* the subject's eyes as Branigan (1985) states but, rather, *in front* of the subject's eyes, with the camera occupying the space immediately in front of the character. In fact, it is only the post-classical POV shots in *Being John Malkovich* and *Strange Days* and, particularly, emerging technologies such as Helmet-Cam, as well as both Formula One and First-Person Shooter (FPS) video games which are framed *from* the subject's eyes (see Figures 2 and 3 later in this chapter). Nevertheless, Branigan's (1984, 1985) various set-ups offer an insight into the multiple POV positions and perspectives available in classical cinema, many of which still apply to contemporary, post-classical cinema. Branigan also provides an extended discussion of each of these elements to explain their significance and usage in relation to specific cinematic examples, as well as developing a range of variations on these elements, which he discusses as closed, delayed, open, continuing, cheated, multiple, embedded or reciprocal structures (Branigan, 1985).

Point-of-View in Classical Cinema: Lady in the Lake

The classical period of cinema has numerous examples which have drawn upon the POV shot in diverse ways; most notably many Alfred Hitchcock films, such as *Rear Window* (1954), *Vertigo* (1958) and *Psycho* (1960), in addition to the

sustained POV representations for the first third of *Dark Passage* (Daves, 1947) or even an optical POV of a dead man in *Vampyr* (Dreyer, 1932). Nevertheless, no consideration of cinematic POV can avoid a discussion of Robert Montgomery's *Lady in the Lake* (1946) due to its sustained POV technique (as opposed to the brief POV segments in most of the other classical cinematic examples) and its significance for the viewing audience. Shot extensively from the point-of-view of private detective Philip Marlowe (Robert Montgomery), the viewer is only able to view the film (and unravel the mystery) by seeing what Marlowe sees. Branigan (1985) observes that,

Almost the entire Montgomery film is shot from the private eye of a detective. At various times we see the detective's arms, feet, his shadow, his image in mirrors, the smoke from his cigarette, as well as extreme close-ups of a telephone receiver, lips approaching for a kiss, and a slap in the face which shakes the camera. Characters also speak directly into the camera. It has even been suggested that there should have been an intermittent blacking out of the screen to indicate occasional blinking of the hero's eyes. (p. 677)

There are other elements that viewers 'share' with Marlowe which include driving a car, crawling through dirt, being punched, having alcohol poured on his face, blacking out and his distracted lustful gazing at the secretary during meetings with Adrienne Fromsett (DVD Example 13). These effects, as well as a sway to the camera when 'he' is walking, were created by Montgomery wearing a camera strapped to his chest during most of the filming (Metz, 1973).

Employing Branigan's taxonomy, *Lady in the Lake* adheres to the *classic* POV shot (set-up 1), and would also be labelled a *continuing POV*, as it restricts

the viewpoint to one character for a sustained period. Branigan (1985) describes the *continuing* POV shot as one in which “one character looks at several objects or one object a number of times. The objects are typically rendered by cutting from object to object or by camera movement – the subjective traveling shot” (p. 684, italics in original). The use of a sustained POV for almost the duration of *Lady in the Lake* leads Branigan (1984) to suggest that “the entire film – with several important exceptions – is ostensibly a single traveling POV shot” (p. 7). Nevertheless, on four distinct occasions Marlowe is framed from a non-POV perspective as he speaks directly to the camera from his office to explain aspects of the case. These exceptions to the *continuing* POV are underdeveloped by Branigan. Marlowe’s four direct addresses to the camera not only separate Marlowe’s and the viewer’s ‘shared’ viewpoint temporarily but, also, make the viewer aware that the continuous narrative presumed to be ‘shared’ with Marlowe is, in fact, historical and a series of flashbacks. Therefore, these scenes are significant as they disrupt the sense of continuity implied by the extended use of a *continuing* POV shot (Branigan, 1985).

Additionally, not all the representations adhere to an accurate (*classic*) POV shot in *Lady in the Lake*. This occurs when mirrors are deployed to show Marlowe’s reflection, as well as other examples, such as smoke rising from the lower half of the screen to suggest that Marlowe is smoking a cigarette. The smoking scenes create a mismatch, as the smoke is in a position lower than where an arm would be expected to be and viewers never see any hand holding this cigarette. Moreno (1953) suggests in relation to this gimmick that,

There is no possible way to connect (those arms) to our shoulders. So also, it is impossible to make the smoke

which surges up into the lower part of the screen convince me that I, the hero, have a cigarette in my mouth. (p. 353)

Of course, Moreno's statement also hints that some consideration needs to be given to the limits of film technology and creating an accurate and sustained POV representation in the 1940s, which also applies to the reflected mirror scenes. More importantly, these scenes break from the strict, *classic* POV that is implied through the use of a *continuing* POV shot in *Lady in the Lake*.

POV in Post-Classical Cinema: Being John Malkovich

Being John Malkovich (Jonze, 1999) is a contemporary, post-classical cinematic example that advances the POV techniques deployed in *Lady in the Lake*. *Being John Malkovich* posits that a mysterious portal exists within the diegetic world of the film that allows occupants to 'be' John Malkovich for fifteen minutes and see what he sees (DVD Example 14). To provide this viewpoint, *Being John Malkovich* employs a *continuing* POV which creates a sense of subjectivity and, as character Craig Schwartz (John Cusack) suggests, produces the "thrill of seeing through the eyes of someone else" (Dragunoiu, 2001, p. 9). This POV shot is framed differently to *Lady in the Lake*, however, and, arguably, facilitates a stronger connection between the viewer and character. Galloway (2006) suggests that the "subjective shots are denoted by a binocular-like black oval mask that obfuscates the corners of the frame. Additionally the frequent use of a wide-angle lens adds a sense of vertigo to the shot" (p. 48). Therefore, distinct from the large square camera frame provided in *Lady in the Lake*, the POV in *Being John Malkovich* is shot through a narrow iris or circular matte that masks other areas and reduces vision to perceivably Malkovich's (or characters inhabiting Malkovich) viewpoint.

This restricted view, combined with wide-angle framing counters the awkwardness and unnatural attempts at embodiment experimented with in *Lady in the Lake* (e.g., the smoke from cigarettes). Rather, embodiment is visually represented more convincingly, with parts of Malkovich's body, such as moving arms or a glance down at legs in the shower, protruding into the visual frame (and the audience's viewpoint) from a seemingly 'experiential' angle of vision (i.e., corresponding with an eyeline viewpoint). In fact, the majority of the POV shots seem to use the body as a frame of reference. Malkovich actually 'wears' a camera strapped on to his shoulder which allows viewers to look down on his body as he showers, eats at a restaurant or reads lines from a script (see Dragunoiu, 2001; and especially the cover image for this edition of *Film Criticism*). Such techniques seem to answer Brinton's (1947) call for "a film in which the camera does not simply represent a character, but becomes in itself a character" (p. 366), (see also Bazin's [1973] discussion of the camera becoming a character in *The Rules of the Game* [Renoir, 1939]). Additionally, diegetic sound is also muffled when viewers share Malkovich's perspective, intentionally weakening the audible quality of voices and other film-derived sounds to heighten the sense that viewers are 'sharing' his (POV) perspective. Conversely, when Malkovich eats his breakfast during a POV scene, his 'slurping' of coffee and 'crunching' of toast dominates the soundscape to evoke an embodied and internalised 'shared' perspective for the viewer (DVD Example 14).

POV in Post-Classical Cinema: Strange Days

A similar embodied POV shot is also utilised in *Strange Days* (Bigelow, 1995). Set in a futuristic Los Angeles at the turn of the millennium, *Strange Days* proposes the existence of SQUID technology, which, like a virtual reality

machine, allows the recording and playback of people's experience from a POV perspective (DVD Example 15). Chief protagonist Lenny (Ralph Fiennes) suggests to a prospective client, "This is 'not like TV, only better'. This is life. It's a piece of somebody's life. It's pure and uncut, straight from the cerebral cortex. You're there. You're doing it. You're seeing it. You're hearing it. You're feeling it" (Bigelow, 1995). Each time someone is 'jacked in' or 'wired' to the SQUID equipment, viewers are provided with a continuous POV sequence as characters playback the 'experiences' of others. Like *Being John Malkovich*, these POV representations provide eyeline matches and a shared sense of embodiment. The POV sequences incorporate moving body parts which protrude from realistic angles within the viewer's field of vision as if 'we' have become the character. Other characters, the object of the glance in Branigan's terminology, enhance this first-person perspective by returning the gaze at an eyeline match and engaging with the (our) character's visible body parts; for example, the playback experience of roller-skating with and then making love to Faith (Juliette Lewis). Unlike *Being John Malkovich*, the POV sequences are not framed through mattes or an iris to reduce the viewpoint. Director Kathryn Bigelow uses a 'visual language' so viewers know that they are in the subjective POV: through, for example, continuous and unbroken sequences, muffled sound and by 'tearing the image' with computer-generated pixels to signify the beginning and end of the sequence (see Bigelow, 1995, 'Director's Commentary'). Although *Strange Days* also uses other POV shots (Branigan's *classic* POV structure), these sequence scenes are different for, as Rascaroli (1997) points out, they "start as a canonical POV, but then include the character's body in her/his own act of viewing" (p. 234).

Post-Classical POV: The First-Person, Embodied POV Shot

The POV representations in both *Being John Malkovich* and *Strange Days* advance Branigan's (1975, 1985) POV diagram, particularly in terms of their overall construction and the positioning of the camera. On the one hand, the representations are Branigan's (1984, 1985) *continuing* POV shots or traveling subjective shots although, unlike the sustained, almost continuous POV representation of *Lady in the Lake*, the duration of these shots is limited (although *Strange Days*' POV sequences are long takes). Additionally, the sequences do not conform to a *classic* POV shot, where the camera stands in for the subject's eyes (i.e., in front of the character or occupying their space). Rather, both films are creating a new POV shot-type, which I label a *first-person, embodied POV*, as the camera is located on the character. This new *first-person, embodied POV* shot provides a powerful visual sense of embodiment by both being approximate to an eyeline level and attached to the character's body. Of the two post-classical films analysed, I would argue that *Being John Malkovich* is more effective at enacting embodiment, as its restrictive viewpoint forces the viewer to recognise and engage with their filmic body. In fact, rather than making a link with other cinematic examples, I suggest that the POV technique in *Being John Malkovich* is closer to the American CART racing series 'Helmet Cam', which places a camera within the driver's helmet, or the first-person POV representations available in video games, both of which facilitate the engaging first-person, embodied perspectives discussed later in this chapter.

In comparison, the *first-person, embodied POV* sequences in *Strange Days* are effective due to the use of innovative technology and protruding parts of the character's body. The frantic opening scene is a useful example, as the viewer seemingly 'becomes' one of the bandits in the robbery of a restaurant, before

subsequently falling to his/our death when two arms extended out before him/us fail to cling on to the building he/we have just leapt to attempting to escape (DVD Example 15). Bigelow's use of rapid camera movements and a seamless, long take (providing the illusion of being uncut, despite splicing in editing) vividly heightens the subjective experience, employing whip pans and tilts to represent the frantic activity and scanning of the scene by the protagonist. Bigelow actually had to build a camera capable of replicating "the flexibility of the (human) eye" (Smith, 2003, p. 23) for her POV sequences, finding Steadicam to be both too big and also too "graceful and floating", while handheld's were too disorientating: "if we simply did it handheld you'd be throwing up in the audience watching it" (Bigelow, 1995, 'Director's Commentary'). A helmet-cam was also devised to replicate the first-person, embodied perspective of ascending stairs with protruding arms and to allow the cameraman to leap across buildings while filming. The flexibility of these custom-made cameras, in addition to the frenetic camera movement, intensifies the fast-paced subjective, first-person POV experience created in *Strange Days*' opening scene.

Viewer Identification and POV Representations

Conceptualising the relationship between POV representations and assumptions about viewer identification is often problematic in film theory. Bordwell and Thompson (1997) note that,

The history of the (POV) technique has teased film theorists into speculating about whether the subjective shot evokes identification from the audience. Do we think we *are* Phillip Marlowe? The problem of audience 'identification' with a

point-of-view shot remains a difficult one in film theory.

(p. 267, italics in original)

For some authors, the apparatus itself is the most significant feature in this interrelationship, as the camera is the fundamental object which permits and shapes any form of identification with a screened image (Baudry, 1970; Metz, 1982). Other theorists, such as Smith (1995), see both identification and POV as flawed concepts. Smith (1995) suggests that identification presupposes and delimits a static relationship between viewer and character (the viewer as subjected), while the POV shot is only an optical representation of the character (i.e., a viewpoint) which does not fundamentally make the viewer identify with this viewpoint. A third perspective is raised by Metz (1973), who argues that the POV is only ever a semi-subjective shot since it relies on an association with a character still present. These three divergent approaches reveal the contested theorisation of viewer identification during POV representations and will be considered further in relation to the three selected films. First, however, it should be noted that, in classical cinema, viewer identification has been primarily conceptualised in relation to notions of the gaze. Conversely, post-classical viewer identification remains under-examined primarily, I suggest, because a coherent theory of post-classical POV has not yet been developed. Therefore, my discussion examines the gaze in classical cinema before articulating a new theory of viewer identification centred on mutual embodiment and multiple identification in the post-classical *first-person, embodied POV* shot.

Viewer Identification in Lady in the Lake – The Gaze in Classical Hollywood Cinema

Montgomery's POV representation in *Lady in the Lake* seemingly invites viewer identification due to its sustained use rather than occasional or brief POV sequences. In accordance with Branigan's (1985) contention that, "the sustained viewpoint of the continuing POV tends to implicate the viewer in the experience or fate of the character" (p. 685), viewers are implicated through Montgomery's POV technique. In *Lady in the Lake*, viewers see only what Marlowe sees and encounter the range of experiences and characters solely from Marlowe's viewpoint. The film enacts what appears to be a first-person visual experience for the viewer and, as Moreno (1953) asserts, "seeks to put the spectator in the position of a participant, involved in the world of the narrative, living as his [sic] own the experiences of the story" (p. 342). However, Branigan (1992) notes that the POV is also paradoxical for viewer identification as such a representation can, conversely, be restrictive. Thus, in *Lady in the Lake*, viewers only view and know the diegetic world of the film through Marlowe as they are tied exclusively to his (sustained) perspective. This extension of restricted narration to restricted perception characterises the POV shot, restricting narrative knowledge to not only what the character knows but, as Branigan (1992) suggests, "actually *limits* what the spectator can easily know about the character" (p. 157, italics in original).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, most critics have been dismissive of *Lady in the Lake* as a failed attempt at subjectivity and too reliant on this sustained viewpoint. For Brinton (1947), "the effect was that the spectator was standing beside the hero rather than existing within him" (p. 360) as the spectator lacks any subjective connection with the character. Moreno (1953) supports this contention, suggesting that "the spectator must *infer him* continually from the conduct of the

other characters” (p. 352, italics in original) and concludes that “the protagonist is now no more than a viewpoint, merely a look” (p. 357). Metz (1973) produces similar findings, citing the lack of familiarity with the character as the reason for the failed attempt to provide “total identification” (p. 47), for, as he notes, “in order to be able to interiorise a person’s *look*, one has to know the person” (p. 47, italics in original). For Williamson (1996) the representation disrupts the voyeuristic pleasure of viewing at a distance while offering no alternatives to an essentially masculine gaze so that “we are not merely invited but forced to ‘identify’ with Marlowe’s point of view” (p. 21). Finally, Branigan (1984, 1992) suggests that the film’s effectiveness is negated by the lack of objective narration to assist viewer comprehension and an absence of identity creation due to the continuous POV shot.³

Collectively, these criticisms of *Lady in the Lake* encapsulate the way POV and identification operated within the primarily narrative-driven cinema of classical Hollywood (approximately 1930-1960; see Cubitt, 2004). In classical cinema, the POV shot is an optical device which assumes that since viewers/we see from the perspective of the character (the point/glance) and what they see (the point/object) (Branigan, 1975, 1985), then viewers/we identify with this gaze. However, as Smith (1995) cautions, “but the mind is not always consumed by what the eyes see, and what the eyes see does not itself tell us what the mind thinks” (p. 157). Additionally, the sustained, classical POV shot is also restrictive; tying viewers to one character for the duration of the POV representation and only allowing viewers to ‘know’ as much as this/these central character(s). This use of POV can often disrupt the narrative flow or deceive audience construction of either character or narrative relations in classical Hollywood cinema: for example, Potts (2005) discusses the use of POV in *Vertigo*

(Hitchcock, 1958) which, on occasions, conveys the protagonist's (Scottie's) emotional desires rather than an accurate visual representation of filmic events (Branigan, 1985, 1992; Neale, 2005). In *Lady in the Lake*, the centrality of an optic relationship between viewer identification and the gaze is amplified by the sustained use of a POV perspective which, for almost the entire film, restricts the narrative and viewpoint solely to Marlowe. Therefore, as an exemplar of classical cinematic POV, assertions of viewer identification are problematic in *Lady in the Lake* as the audience only 'know' characters and the diegetic world through Marlowe's viewpoint; a protagonist, paradoxically, who remains largely unknown to the viewer.

Viewer Identification in Being John Malkovich and Strange Days – Embodiment and Multiple Identification in Post-Classical Cinema

Being John Malkovich and *Strange Days* move beyond the restricted narration of classical Hollywood cinema. Comparatively, viewers are provided with a more voyeuristic, all-seeing perspective of both the diegetic film world and the narrative as it unfolds, spliced with only eight POV sequences in each film. In *Being John Malkovich* the *first-person, embodied POV* shot is primarily employed when someone has entered Malkovich's portal and gets to 'be' John Malkovich (in addition to two brief moments when Craig reflects on whether he should continue to control Malkovich) while, in *Strange Days*, POV sequences are provided when someone has 'jacked in' to the SQUID equipment. Additionally, these films employ objective shots to establish or re-establish the scene, reverse angles to step outside this restrictive viewpoint and witness the exchange between characters, or utilise reaction shots to the POV representations the characters are viewing (this is most pronounced in *Strange Days*). Through objective framing,

viewers are able to 'know' the characters and diegetic film world more explicitly compared to the sustained (and restrictive) POV representation of *Lady in the Lake*.

These two post-classical films also create two new dynamics for viewer identification through their framing and use of POV representations which have not been accounted for in the (classical) cinematic POV literature. First, the body is drawn on as a frame of reference throughout these POV scenes. The *first-person, embodied POV* shot provides viewers with a realistic visual sense of shared embodiment and, hypothetically, both films enable viewers to recognise and engage with a filmic body. Second, this visual sense of embodiment constructs a process of multiple identification. Both films provide a surrogate character (and body) who occupies the identificatory position on the viewer's/our behalf so, in this sense, viewers/we identify with Lenny (a known character) who identifies with the POV experience (and body) of the protagonist played back on the SQUID equipment. In this way, viewers engage in a process of multiple identification with the surrogate character, POV protagonist and their filmic bodies. Multiple identification and embodiment operate in similar yet distinctive ways in the two films.

In *Being John Malkovich*, viewer knowledge (as a key element for viewer identification) has already been established prior to the POV scenes with viewers 'knowing' the characters, such as Craig or Lotte (Cameron Diaz), before they enter the portal to 'be' or 'become' John Malkovich. In this sense, viewers can plausibly engage in a form of multiple identification; identifying with the surrogate character Craig inhabiting Malkovich, as well as identifying with Malkovich himself. This identification with the surrogate character is further enacted by hearing the surrogate character's thoughts as they enter the portal to

'become' Malkovich. For example, on each occasion when Lotte is Malkovich, viewers/we hear her reflecting on her experiences as Malkovich; whether it be admiring the masculine body she occupies while showering, his strong voice as he reads lines or her ecstatic pleasure in making love to Maxine as Malkovich. This creates a sense of multiple identification for, as viewers, we are linked to the thoughts and experiences of those characters who are being Malkovich, all the while being provided with a visual POV from Malkovich's perspective. The assumption is that this is his viewpoint, although he is also being inhabited by another who is simultaneously sharing his POV. As a viewer we provide a third layer to this process, bringing our own subjectivities to this experience while simultaneously sharing the POV perspective of both the surrogate character and Malkovich. That the POV shots are framed with reference to Malkovich's body strengthens the primacy of viewer identification, as the viewer is bound to and, like the surrogate characters, 'inhabits' his filmic body during these scenes.

These aspects also have profound implications for the actual 'being' John Malkovich proposed in the film. Malkovich's own subjectivity fades in importance to become merely the vessel for these surrogate characters' (and our own) subjectivities while they reside in his portal. The 'real' Malkovich becomes an absent-presence, used as a vessel or filmic body with no (or a limited) subjectivity of his own for most of this occupation. The fading of John Malkovich provides another intriguing question for viewer identification: to what extent do viewers erase the subjectivity of the person they have identified with (a question I return to in relation to Formula One drivers, anonymity and the OBC later in this chapter)? Paradoxically, the very use of Malkovich actually plays a salient role in establishing viewer identification despite his reduced subjectivity. Unlike an anonymous or fictional character (e.g., Being John Smith), viewers

come to the film already knowing or believing that they ‘know’ who John Malkovich is. Given the prominence, desirability of and, perhaps, obsession with stars and celebrities in contemporary culture (Cashmore, 2006; Dyer, 1979; Marshall, 1997, 2006; Redmond & Holmes, 2007; Rojek, 2001; G. Turner, 2004), the use of Malkovich as a character/portal to inhabit or ‘become’ further evokes viewer identification, as the audience is invited to contemporaneously share a star’s (Malkovich’s) viewpoint during these POV representations.

Conversely, this well-known figure does not exist in *Strange Days*. Like *Being John Malkovich*, viewers are provided with a known surrogate character (Lenny in six of the eight POV sequences) who views the POV experience simultaneously with the audience. However, problematically, only three of the first-person ‘experiences’ are from known characters – Lenny’s rollerskating and sex scene with Faith; and two scenes with Iris (Brigitte Bako). The majority of these ‘experiences’ are from unknown characters: the restaurant ‘bandit’, the man jogging, and three scenes with the killer, who is later revealed as Max (Tom Sizemore). Shaviro (2003) comments in relation to the frantic opening scene,

On one hand, the first-person perspective of the POV shot evidently ties us to the action. But at the same time, this perspective is oddly impersonal. For, as we watch the sequence at the start of the film, we do not know who the protagonist is; we have no idea whose point of view we are sharing... It thrusts us into the action so viscerally, that it affords us no security whatsoever. (pp. 162-163)

I would suggest that, rather than countering viewer identification as argued by Shaviro (2003), the combined persuasive power of the POV sequences and the anonymity of the POV protagonist (especially in the fast-paced opening sequence)

draws the viewer into this perspective as a contemporaneous experience (a concept more applicable to ‘live’ sport rather than pre-recorded films, as I discuss later). Through the use of graphic scenes and framing bodies in motion, the POV sequences embellish experiential and identificatory processes for the audience. Viewers draw on carnal knowledge (Sobchack, 1992, 2004) and memories (Marks, 2000, 2002) of their own bodies, emotions and first-hand experiences of similar scenarios to those conveyed within the POV sequences. As Sobchack (2004) suggests, “our experience is not only always mediated by the lived bodies that we are, but our lived bodies (and our experience of them) is always mediated and qualified by our engagement with other bodies and things” (p. 4). With the exception of the *Strange Days* opening scene, the other POV sequences are intercut with reaction shots of Lenny (or others) reacting to the first-person experience they are viewing. This draws on the carnal knowledge and memories of viewers, implicating them in the POV sequences as viewers witness Lenny sickened as he plays back the rape and murder of Iris, or shuddering at the death of the restaurant ‘bandit’. For viewers this evokes either the experiential (i.e., the recollection of a ‘real’ robbery or murder), or, most likely, the carnal knowledge and memory of running and adrenalin (or, conversely, fear and abhorrence) in response to the first-person representation of these experiences.

The Implications of the First-Person, Embodied POV

Through their POV representation, both *Strange Days* and *Being John Malkovich* provide a newer kind of POV than the *classic* POV shot type used in most films (both classical and post-classical). As this technique is not accounted for in Branigan’s POV taxonomy, I have labelled the representation a *first-person, embodied POV* shot. In this new kind of shot, the viewer is implicated by

recognising the presence and shared occupation of the character's filmic body. In addition, viewers are provided with, and bound to, a vicarious representation of experience restricted to the character's POV. Cubitt (2004) suggests that post-classical cinema moved away from an emphasis on narrative to spatial orientations and the navigation of space. This new *first-person, embodied POV* should also be considered a post-classical cinematic technique due to its implications for viewer placement, subjectivity and experience. Although the POV technique is not concerned with the exploration of space, the *first-person, embodied POV* orientates the audience towards a particular space; seemingly sharing the space, viewpoint and body of the character concurrently. This is a new POV orientation, moving away from identification solely aligned to the gaze (classical cinema), to identification with the body (post-classical cinema). Attaching viewers to the space and body of the character also permits the navigation of space through shared POV representations of a body in motion exploring its surroundings. Both films also produce multiple levels of identification with known surrogate characters, as viewers are privy to their thoughts and viewpoints when they enter or share the POV perspective of other characters. For viewers, this facilitates multiple levels of identification with the surrogate characters, their reactions and the protagonist's experiential first-person viewpoint simultaneously, as well as the exploration of both internal and external spaces. As viewers, our experience adds a third layer to the identificatory process, evoking our own subjectivities to make sense of this viewpoint and visual experience. Therefore, this post-classical POV style compels viewers to engage in multiple forms of identification, recognise their own (and filmic) bodies, and draw on embodied knowledge, memories and emotions to make sense of this POV

structure. These examples of the use and implications of cinematic POV will now inform my investigation of the Formula One OBC.

The Formula One On-Board Camera

Although variations of on-board cameras have been utilised intermittently during the history of Formula One, the contemporary on-board camera (OBC) became more prominent during the 1980s. Currently, the OBC is regulated, with all cars required to carry two of these compact cameras, housed in aerodynamic pods, at every race (“FIA rules”, 2006). Additionally, teams are required to have a total of six camera mounting points, although only two are predominantly used. Teams are required to place one camera in the chief OBC position (on top of the air box), and the FIA determines the second camera position in consultation with the team and driver (“FIA rules”, 2006). Alternatively, teams place dummies of the same weight in these pods, a rule designed to negate aerodynamic deficiencies or weight penalties for cars using these cameras (“FIA rules”, 2006; “Nowhere to hide”, 1998). The regulations are vague on the use of extra cameras. For example, the Renault of Fernando Alonso provided shots from three separate on-board cameras (the OBC, side mirror and rear wing view) during races in Spain and Monaco in 2005, which suggests the use of two cameras (or dummies) is most likely a minimum requirement. The cameras work via a helicopter overhead bouncing signals transmitted from the car back to the Formula One Association’s (FOA) own TV studio on the ground, which then distributes this feed to host broadcasters. As this car-helicopter signal can be interrupted by the landscape (e.g., buildings and bridges) or bad weather, the FOA has also experimented with trackside receiving points which allow a continuous feed from around the circuit.

For example, in 2001, the FOA succeeded in providing OBC images from cars in the tunnel at Monaco for the first time (“A camera in”, 2002).

Although the cars are required to have six mounted camera points, there are currently seven types of on-board camera shots employed in televised Formula One coverage, each with contrasting POV perspectives (see Figure 2). The first two cameras are located on either, 1) the front wing endplate or 2) the nose of the car. These offer an impossible view, placing the viewer at ground level and only inches above the track as the car skims along at speed yet, clearly, are far removed from any realistic sense of a driving perspective (suggesting the viewer was actually on the front wing or nose of the car). A third shot provides the reverse effect, 3) looking back through the rear wing to the action immediately behind the car, albeit from a higher, centered position. Another two cameras are mounted in positions that draw on the driver as an object. 4) The first of these places a camera at the front of the cockpit, again providing a POV viewpoint looking backwards. In this shot, the driver’s helmet fills the majority of the frame and only the jarring and constant movements of his helmet and the turning steering wheel can be seen. 5) The other shot is provided from a camera mounted on the side mirror, presenting a side-on and again slightly backwards view of the driver. More of the driver is in the frame in this shot as viewers see his head, upper body and hands in action while he controls his car and gets jolted by bumps, with scenery flashing by in the background. Finally, there are the two camera placements that provide subjective POV’s for viewers. 6) The first of these is mounted onto the lefthand side of the large air box that is directly behind the driver. The camera is attached at a point that appears similar to the driver’s eyeline/level, although it is to the left and so does not strictly adhere to a driver’s POV (this is similar to, but not exactly the same as, a cinematic over the shoulder

shot; e.g., between set-up 2 and 2' of Branigan's [1985] POV diagram). This perspective provides exhilarating shots of the racing action from a near eyeline match with the driver, although the particular placement is conspicuous as the driver is seen slightly in front, lower and to one side of the camera. Despite its prominent use in 1998 and 1999, it was not visible on ITV's 'live' global televised coverage between 2000 and 2004 (although can be seen on Formula One season reviews). Red Bull Racing became the only team to use this camera position in 2005 and 2006 until Toyota's Ralf Schumacher also deployed it for the final three races of 2006; post-2006 the perspective became increasingly prominent once more. 7) The final camera location is commonly referred to as the on-board camera (OBC). The POV perspective from the OBC is effective at locating and placing the viewer within what at first glance resembles the driver's own point-of-view. The dimensions and implications of the OBC are now considered in more detail.

Technical Description of the OBC

As suggested, the OBC seems to provide the driver's viewpoint and perspective when drawn on in racing coverage (DVD Examples 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21). The camera is, in fact, above and slightly behind the driver, mounted in a fixed position on top of the air box, resembling a small capital 'T'. The OBC also utilises a high-angle tilt to look down into the cockpit. This camera position and angle falls outside Branigan's (1975, 1985) POV diagram, as instead of either replacing the character's (driver's) space, or being in front of the character (*classic* POV), the camera is placed above the driver and draws on a high-angle tilt to replicate his POV. In fact, through the multiple cameras and references to the driver, Formula One may offer a new POV variation of the driver as both

subject/object in POV representations.⁴ Additionally, the Formula One OBC may provide what Branigan labels a *cheated* variation of the POV shot, as the camera positioning is not in the actual character's position (the driver in this case), but provides a better POV perspective than he would be accorded from his driving position. Branigan (1985) describes the *cheated* POV as,

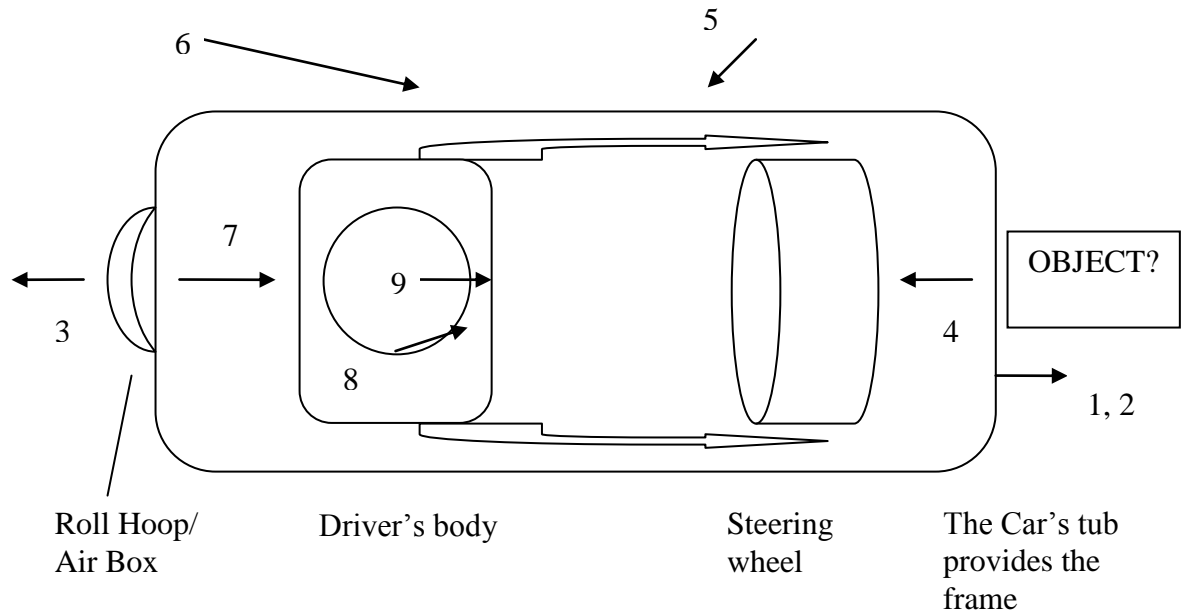
A common variant (that) allows the framing of the object ...to be somewhat closer to the object than the character's actual position – though the angle typically is still from that position. This compromise gives the *audience* a better view of the object. (p. 686, italics in original)

The OBC is positioned higher than the driver and appears to use a wide-angle lens which, Monaco (2000) suggests, “has the added effect of greatly emphasizing our perception of depth and often distorting linear perception” (p. 7). This *cheated* POV permits the viewer to see, with some emulation of peripheral vision, more than the driver can see from this elevated position and high-angle tilt.

Nevertheless, the viewpoint is still quite restrictive so does not appear to be the 180 degree perspective provided by a fish-eye lens. As all Formula One races prior to Round 15, 2008 were staged during the day, the cameras operate under natural lighting and there appear to be no additional lighting or filters.⁵ Finally, not all OBC viewpoints are identical due to the different design philosophies and exact positioning and angle of the cameras on each Formula One car.

Figure 2: Overhead Representation of Formula One and Champ Car POV Perspectives

Perspectives



1 and 2. Front nose or front wing perspective (impossible view, at ground level).

3. Rear view looking back from car.

4. Cockpit view looking back at driver.

5. Side mirror perspective.

6. Red Bull Racing OBC – located to one side of driver at near eyeline match, drawing on driver's body in framing of POV shot.

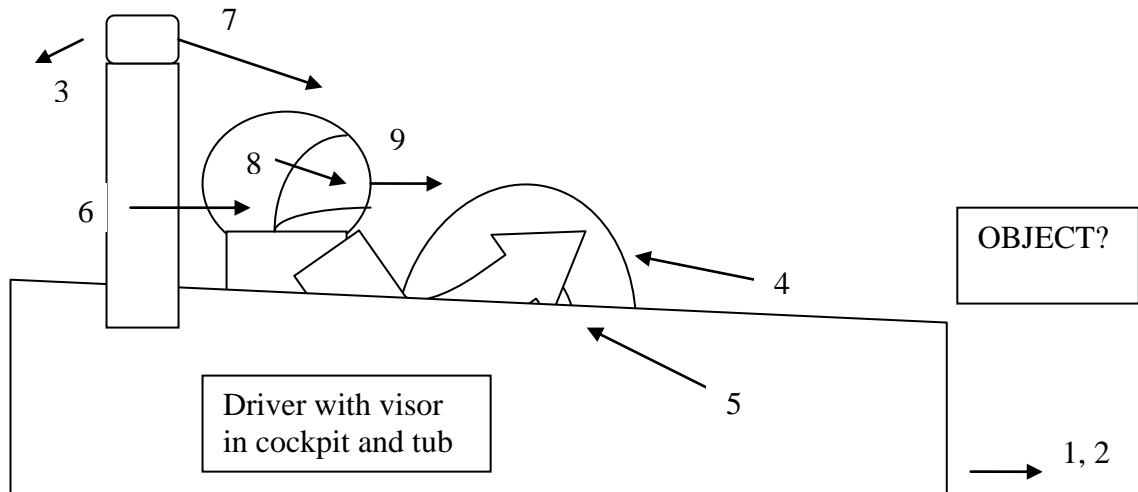
7. OBC providing high angle tilt POV, looking down over driver.

8. Helmet Cam (from Champ Car) located inside visor at eyeline match with driver's right eye, although at a 30 degree angle, predominantly focusing on a point between middle of the steering wheel and the left side mirror.

9. Formula One video game subjective camera-car (resembles first-person shooter) with camera and car becoming entwined at a zero degree angle (see discussion of Helmet-Cam and Formula One video games later in this chapter).

Figure 3: Side-On View of Formula One and Champ Car POV

Perspective



1 and 2. Front nose or front wing perspective (impossible view, at ground level).

3. Rear view looking back from car.

4. Cockpit view looking back at driver.

5. Side mirror perspective.

6. Red Bull Racing OBC – located to one side of driver at eyeline match, drawing on driver's body in framing of POV shot.

7. OBC providing high angle tilt POV, looking down over driver.

8. Helmet Cam (from Champ Car) located inside visor at eyeline match with driver's right eye, although at a 30 degree angle, predominantly focusing on a point between middle of the steering wheel and the left side mirror.

9. Formula One video game subjective camera-car (resembles first-person shooter) at zero degree angle.

Use of the OBC in Formula One Coverage

The OBC shot is not deployed in a generic way within Formula One coverage.

The dominant method would adhere to Branigan's (1985) model of establishing a point/glance before providing a POV shot, in addition to its distribution in two

shots. Through the dominant OBC technique, the specific Formula One car is established as a point through exterior establishing shots from trackside cameras, before the transition to a POV shot from the OBC of this car. This is usually followed by a re-establishing shot of the car through an objective camera to re-emphasise the privileged POV viewers have just 'shared'. Therefore, in these cases as viewers we 'know' this was the POV of this specific car through the establishment (and re-establishment) of a point, the two shot structure and transitional devices. However, the OBC of a specific car is not always established through such means. A variety of other framing conventions can occur which disrupt this dominant OBC technique, such as; cross-cuts to different cars or parts of the circuit, cuts from one OBC to another car's OBC without transitions, deviant establishing shots (objectively framing one car as a possible point/glance but cutting to the OBC of another, often without establishing this car) and even temporal disruptions, with replays framed through an OBC representation.

These occurrences disrupt Branigan's six elements for a POV shot. However, the OBC is used selectively, primarily to splice the objective framing established by exterior shots and trackside cameras. In this sense, the OBC operates like the cinematic POV employed in the films *Lady in the Lake*, *Being John Malkovich* and *Strange Days*, to provide a *continuing* or traveling POV shot. However, the duration of the OBC shot is not consistent. Based on a systematic analysis of televised coverage between 1998 and 2006 (and still applicable until at least the end of the 2008 season), an individual OBC viewpoint usually has a minimum duration of three-to-five seconds and does not exceed two minutes without cuts or transitions. The longer duration OBC shot is usually the sustained POV of one car for an entire lap which is often discussed as "a lap with" Rubens Barrichello (United States Grand Prix, 2000) or David Coulthard (British Grand Prix, 2000)

by ITV commentator Martin Brundle. As televised Formula One coverage requires a range of camera positions, quick cuts between these and, even regular cross or jump cuts to other parts of the circuit, the OBC is not operating in a distinctive or deviant way compared to other aspects of the televised coverage. Rather, the OBC complements the coverage by allowing an inside view of the action: the POV perspective from the car/driver.

Viewer Uses of and Identification with the OBC

With its restrictive viewpoint, the OBC tends to implicate viewers in terms of audience positioning and notions of viewer identification. In fact, I suggest that the OBC works in a similar manner to the POV sequences in *Being John Malkovich* and *Strange Days*; implicating viewers through embodiment, evoking viewer subjectivities and permitting multiple levels of identification.

Identity, Anonymity and Experiential Formula One

The concept of identity is problematic in Formula One, with drivers to a certain extent becoming anonymous during the race coverage. Baudrillard (2002) notes, “the driver, for his part, is alone. In his cockpit he no longer is anyone. He merges with his double, the car, and so no longer has an identity of his own” (p. 167). Driver identity is obstructed from all angles and viewpoints, with drivers immersed in their racing cars, bodies concealed in overalls and faces shielded behind helmets with tinted visors. Kennedy (2000) suggests that,

Intimacy with the drivers is approached via the machines they inhabit, which could be considered to vitiate such attempts. The drivers themselves speak very little and are most in view when only their eyes can be seen behind their protective gear. (p. 66)

Due to this anonymity, viewers (most likely the more informed viewers or fans) use the signifiers of car colour, team branding and helmet design to recognise and 'know' which driver they are viewing (especially 'live' spectators at the Grand Prix event). Television broadcasts offer some assistance to this viewing process through the use of text to establish the identity of the driver and car on-screen, in addition to the well established role of commentators in sport providing anchorage for the visual action and assisting viewer knowledge. Nevertheless, a degree of anonymity permeates Formula One racing.

The problematic role of identity is compounded by the experiential aspect of Formula One racing which is, largely, an inaccessible 'real' experience for viewers. Essentially, Formula One is an elitist and non-participatory sport as far as the mass audience is concerned. The actual driving experience is limited to only the current 20 or 22 drivers at any one time (and reserve or test drivers), and they race in technologically-advanced, hybrid cars that are simply incomparable to road cars in terms of power and performance. Noble and Hughes (2004) observe that,

A Formula One car... is a very different beast to anything else you see on the road. It is the ultimate prototype machine, featuring design ideas, technology, and materials that many people associate more with a modern day fighter jet than with an automobile...their design has been centred on the quest for speed rather than comfort, and they are almost literally rockets on wheels. (p. 13)

These two elements of driver anonymity and Formula One as an inaccessible driving experience make notions of viewer identification problematic. Like *Lady in the Lake*, the character (driver) is often unknown, while we have no carnal

knowledge (Sobchack, 1992, 2004) or tactile memory (Marks, 2002) of the 'real' experience; that is, of driving at these speeds or in any comparable form of car although, of course, most of us have, or have been, driven in a car.

The POV perspective from the OBC overcomes aspects of this inaccessible experience by permitting a visual replication and representation of driving a Formula One car. In this sense, viewers are visually (and literally) invited to 'ride with' real Formula One drivers and placed in what appears to be the driver's position in the cockpit. Through this POV representation, the OBC seems to fulfil Moreno's (1953) notion that "the subjective camera serves the purpose of bringing this world closer to the spectator, of placing it within the reach of his [sic] hand" (p. 346). Furthermore, the ITV race commentary of ex-Formula One racer Martin Brundle works to make the POV perspective a more experiential (and less anonymous) visual representation for the viewers. During OBC shots, Brundle frequently slips between modes of first, second and third-person address, inviting viewers to ride on-board and suggesting 'we' or 'you' are negotiating the course concurrently with the driver. An example of this first-person mode of address occurred during the 2003 Canadian Grand Prix (DVD Example 18). On lap 58, Martin Brundle places viewers as occupants of two different cars, inferring that, as viewers, 'we' were temporarily the drivers in each circumstance racing for the lead of the Canadian Grand Prix. In the first instance, an OBC shot is provided for the Ferrari of Michael Schumacher. Brundle says, "You're leading the Grand Prix. On the edge of your seat, you're heading down towards turn eight" (Brundle, 2003). The action cuts to a long shot of Schumacher approaching turn eight and Brundle now advises the audience of the difficulties of this particular turn. Seconds later the footage cross-cuts to an OBC from the Williams driver Juan Pablo Montoya. "Now you're P3. And you're looking at

the two leaders, the two Schumacher brothers, and that's all you've got to do is get past those two little dots to win this Grand Prix this afternoon" (Brundle, 2003).

Obviously Brundle does not assume the viewer actually replaces the driver through the OBC shots. Nevertheless, having an ex-Formula One driver providing these comments reiterates the sense of realism in OBC coverage and has ramifications for viewer identification. Brundle's comments are reinforced by the POV representation that the OBC provides, for, as Branigan (1975) says, "the POV structure is a mechanism whereby we experience contemporaneously with a character" (p. 64). Much like the first-person POV sequences in *Strange Days*, these OBC representations are compelling for the viewer, providing a visual first-person experience which to some extent overcomes the problem of driver anonymity (or character anonymity in *Strange Days*). Although anonymous figures, the POV sequences in both formats are persuasive and engage the viewer's sensory perceptions as a contemporaneous experience. This is more pronounced with the Formula One OBC as the footage is actually contemporaneous; being transmitted 'live', in real time and through a global feed simultaneously as the event transpires. Therefore, despite being either unfamiliar or unknown to the viewer, the OBC, POV representation provides a 'real' sense of experience and a 'real' driver for viewer engagement. The combination of graphic visual images, a live global feed and Brundle's comments invite viewers to contemporaneously experience and identify with (or indeed replace) an often unknown driver and unfamiliar experience during the OBC footage.

The use of POV in live sport, and especially through the OBC, is significant for theories of stardom and identification. For stardom, the photo-effect of an absence-presence for stars in cinema (Ellis, 1992) is nullified by the liveness of

televised sport as a presentation in real time, while the close-up as a conventional framing technique for providing imaginary spatial proximity with stars is substituted by the OBC, POV perspective. Rather than conventional 'star-gazing' (Mayne, 1993) framing, therefore, the POV shot seems to allow viewers to see *as* the actual 'star' athletes, transforming the imaginary proximity to an embodied and contemporaneous POV spatial proximity with the star broadcast live and in real time. The live and contemporaneous broadcast thus facilitates a temporal synchronicity with the driver who, although he has a name, is visually represented as an anonymous, fragmented body without a subjectivity. Arguably, this creates a shift for viewer identification from either the imaginary psychological subjectivity of fictional characters of cinema or the 'real' subjectivity of the driver towards an embodied articulation of identification with the driver's body due to the temporal synchronicity of the live broadcast. Whether timeshifting (the recording and/or re-watching of the POV sport telecast) alters or has implications for viewer identification as a non-live experience is less certain (Cubitt, 1991).

Mutual Embodiment

Like the POV sequences in *Being John Malkovich* and *Strange Days*, there is an implication of space and viewer placement, in addition to a screen body to occupy, when viewing the OBC. In a certain sense, viewers first identify with the car, as the tub of the car provides an important frame of reference for the OBC perspective. With the car as an exterior frame of reference, the OBC, POV shot implies that viewers occupy the remaining central screen space and have been placed in the cockpit of a Formula One car. A second level of identification is provided through the presence of a human body. Two arms extend forward from the bottom of the frame (usually with elements of the driver's helmet also visible)

to operate the steering wheel. This evinces a sense of mediated embodiment although, as parts of the driver's body are obscured, viewers are provided with an incomplete body for identification. The absence of a complete body assists the visual representation and viewer positioning during the OBC, suggesting that it is not only the viewpoint viewers are sharing with the driver (i.e., notions of the gaze in classical cinema), but also an embodied identificatory process (post-classical POV identification). The vividly compelling POV representation also offers the possibility that these visible screen bodies can be inhabited by the viewer. For example, during the Ferrari OBC, it is primarily two arms extended that viewers get to see, with only a faint trace of the driver's helmet. With large gloved hands turning the steering wheel, this framing lends itself to the assumption that the viewer is simultaneously occupying the space and body of the driver (see discussion of video games later in this chapter). The presence of a 'real' driver is also important for creating a realistic visual POV representation of the Formula One driving experience. Viewers need to know a 'real' driver exists and that they (the viewers) are sharing the space, body and viewpoint of an actual Formula One driver racing a real Formula One car in a real Grand Prix.

Multiple forms of Identification

Thus far, I have suggested that the Formula One OBC facilitates viewer identification through the concept (and viewer positioning) of mutual embodiment. Additionally, the OBC's contemporaneous and graphic representation overcomes the inaccessible driving experience for viewers, with the anonymity of a 'real' driver potentially becoming a gateway to identification. However, it should be noted that the OBC facilitates multiple forms of identification; be it with the apparatus (the camera), the car as a mobile

technology or with the driver. In the first two instances, a viewer may identify solely with the camera as the source of the screen image, although through its POV representation and clarity of vision, the OBC seems to be catering to the physical emulation of a physical experience (the driving experience of a driver) rather than purely a representation of speed or a navigation of space. One could argue that this physical emulation is tied to the car, facilitating identification with the car as a highly mobile object which is probably more pronounced for cameras mounted on the front wing or nose – i.e., the POV of the car. In OBC footage, the car acts as a mobile tripod on which the camera is mounted and, through its shaking and other evidence, provides a guarantee of the authenticity of the footage and thence of the experience. As noted earlier, Branigan (1984) suggests that the POV is not a naturally subjective technique and relies partly on what viewers bring to the representation. The OBC seems to present complex ‘layers’ for identification as viewers engage with the camera-car-driver- and, finally, their own subjectivities. These identificatory ‘layers’ do not operate in a universal or generic way and, in relation to driver identification, oscillate between notions of objectivity and subjectivity.

Objective Identification

As an objective function for identification, the OBC allows viewers to recognise and performatively judge the driver (whether they are an anonymous or ‘known’ driver). The OBC permits an objective admiration for driver skill, control and ability by revealing,

The driver’s own ability in all kinds of situations, the stresses and strains that he is subjected to, the amount that he can see, particularly in terms of spray on a wet track. They

can show the speed of his reactions when the car gets out of shape. (“Nowhere to hide”, 1998, para. 7)

Such admiration does not necessarily connote any sense of subjective identification and, like its global audience, Formula One teams can also indulge in an objective admiration for the ability of certain drivers. For example, former Jaguar team boss, Neil Ressler, suggests that “you can see a lot from the on-board camera...I love watching Michael (Schumacher) doing extraordinary things, 10 laps in a row” (Windsor, 2000, p. 45). Additionally, teams also use this OBC technology for objective assessments; permitting teams to gauge and adapt race strategies, as well as understand both the car control and technical functions that rival drivers employ when racing (“Nowhere to hide”, 1998). For example, disclosing his use of the OBC footage from the McLaren drivers in 1998, Ferrari technical director, Ross Brawn, reveals that,

You can quite clearly see them pressing certain buttons before they enter certain corners and they repeat that every lap, so there’s obviously some function of the chassis, engine or gearbox that they are changing. Those things are quite interesting. (“Nowhere to hide”, 1998, para. 9)

For viewers, the OBC is also a useful source for replays or live coverage of on-track battles, passing moves or crashes. The OBC permits viewers to make an objective assessment of how well a particular driver performed, how a driver made a pass, or who was to blame for a crash through this POV representation. Indeed, like the use of television referees in sport (e.g., third umpires in cricket – see A. Brown, 1998), Formula One officials draw upon OBC coverage to make decisions on racing incidents. For example, two controversial incidents between the two main contenders for the World Championship in 1994 and 1997 were

scrutinised by Formula One stewards using OBC footage. In 1994, the race stewards cleared Michael Schumacher of deliberately running into Damon Hill at Adelaide to claim the title, repeating this judgment at the title deciding race at Jerez in 1997, when Schumacher appeared to ram rival Jacques Villeneuve. The 1997 decision caused a backlash from within the press and public who had viewed the race and OBC footage. Allen (2000) noted that,

In the Piazza Liberta in Ferrari's home town of Maranello, 7,000 people turned away at once. A giant diamond-vision screen, which had been erected for the townsfolk, repeated the incident from several different angles: the head-on shot, the side shot, on-board with Villeneuve and then, worst of all, on-board with Schumacher. From this angle there was no doubt what had happened, and the more they showed it, the harder the verdict became. (p. 31)

It is fair to suggest that the OBC implicated Schumacher and was influential in the Formula One governing body later overturning the stewards' original decision, as well as excluding Schumacher from the 1997 championship standings.

Subjective Identification

Of course, subjective identification is also afforded by the OBC as, overlaid on the notion of anonymous driver identification, is identification with a known driver. This subjective identification is articulated through extra-televisual knowledge, the advanced level of cultural literacy of specific Formula One viewers and, arguably, is most profoundly experienced when the viewer is also a fan of the driver being framed (see Chapter Six). For example, as a fan of Jacques Villeneuve, I am permitted the opportunity to vicariously experience and

seemingly ‘stare through his eyes’ when presented with his OBC, POV racing perspective (DVD Examples 16 and 19). Multiple identification underpins this/‘my’ experience of the OBC. Not only do I ‘share’ the perspective with Villeneuve, I also replace his subjectivity with my own: bringing my feelings of excitement, nervousness and apprehension to the viewpoint (Marks, 2000, 2002; Sobchack, 1992, 2004); feelings which I assume Villeneuve does not ‘share’ as an experienced racer. Moreover, I am also aware that Villeneuve exists outside myself as a subject and separate entity; therefore, while I both share and replace him, Villeneuve clearly remains intact and separate to me during the OBC footage.

In some ways, the POV provided from OBC shots potentially offers the televisual version of a ‘portal’ that exists in the film *Being John Malkovich*. The OBC footage from Villeneuve’s car is my ‘Jacques Villeneuve portal’ that facilitates my ‘being’ Jacques Villeneuve in a temporal, visual, spatial and experiential sense. This shot restricts *my* experience of the race to *his* visual and embodied perspective and only permits his view/version of the racing action. This overcomes the problem of character identification highlighted in criticisms of *Lady in the Lake* for, as a fan of Villeneuve, I already ‘know’ my protagonist and actively seek access to his viewpoint and racing experience. In this respect, the restrictive viewpoint of the OBC does not carry negative connotations but, rather, grants fans access to the generally inaccessible experience of Formula One stars.

Champ Car–‘Helmet-Cam’

The opportunity for access to a driver’s viewpoint and racing experience is taken a step further in video games, which replicate this visual representation of the OBC but now allow the player to control the racing car. However, before discussing

Formula One video games, recent camera technology from the Champ Car World Series warrants consideration. Champ Cars, an American open-wheel series, uses camera technology that operates on the boundary between the 'real' racing world and game representations, even blurring such distinctions. Champ Cars run with an OBC similar to Formula One, but also employ a camera entitled 'Helmet-Cam' (also known as 'Visor-Cam' post-2003), which offers an even more vivid representation, vicarious experience and sense of participation for viewers. Helmet-Cam 'places' the viewer directly inside the driver's helmet, offering an almost identical view as the driver (although the camera's focal point is slightly off-centre), presented at an eyeline match.⁶ In fact, with the miniature camera attached to the inside of the helmet, only millimeters from the driver's eye, it is hard to envisage placing the camera any closer to a driver's eye POV without replacing his own retina with the camera. Utilising Branigan's terms, Helmet-Cam is, again, a *continuing* POV shot, although like *Being John Malkovich*, the camera location has not been accounted for in Branigan's (1975, 1985) POV diagram, being worn inside the helmet of the driver (character) at eye level and approximately a 30 degree angle.

Helmet-Cam's representation is visually groundbreaking, permitting viewers to feel as if they are the driver and participating in the action entrenched inside the helmet and from this (his) restrictive viewpoint. From this perspective, motion and the moving body are far more vivid than the OBC, with the footage providing a vicarious, often blurry, bumpy ride as the car races around the track at speed (DVD Example 1). Indeed, the helmet is repeatedly jolted by bumps in the track, under braking and buffeted by winds which the viewers experience contemporaneously from their distorted viewpoint. Viewers stare out through the visor of the driver's helmet and see an image seemingly identical to what he sees

– that is, for example, the dirty Perspex screen of the visor, bottom portion of helmet, large steering wheel and hands in motion dominating their viewpoint, large side mirrors and front tyres, flashing lights on the steering wheel (reflecting gear shifts and rev limits), and a fragmented vision of only the immediate track in front that the driver sees as he negotiates the course. A sense of mediated embodiment is also implied through the large hands constantly turning the wheel in front of the viewer, while there is the faint outline of the driver’s nose discernable in the middle-left of the frame, much like the largely unnoticed presence of our own nose when we view objects. The sound of the engine pitch as the car accelerates and decelerates also accompanies the viewpoint, although engine noise is muffled to allow audible televised commentary to dominate the soundscape. Through these visual and audible techniques, Champ Car’s Helmet-Cam blurs the viewer-driver divide and has major implications for demarcating real racing experiences from their visual representation. This technology is certainly far removed from Whannel’s (1992) “highly mobile ideal spectator” (p. 98) and not yet accounted for in sport or media research. In fact, rather than other televisual sport or cinematic representations, Helmet-Cam seems to have more in common with video game representations and experiences.

Video Games

The images of Formula One racing on consoles such as PlayStation (2 and 3) and X-Box are becoming increasingly life-like, replicating many elements of the televised representation and appearance of Formula One, inclusive of similar views of the track, drivers and even advertising logos. In general, sport video games are commonly made to look like their televisual equivalent for, as Poole (2000) notes, “the modern sports game is no longer a recreation of an actual sport

so much as it is a re-creation of viewing that sport on television” (p. 39). Of course, at times the reverse is also true, with televised sport seemingly replicating a video game, as ITV commentator Martin Brundle occasionally intimates when discussing OBC perspectives (e.g., ‘riding with’ Barrichello at the 2000 United States Grand Prix – DVD Example 21). Moreover, Whannel (2008) observes,

It is notable that, with technological advances, computer football games mimic television’s framing, angles, styles of cutting and modes of commentary. The rising crane shot looking through the goal net now used in both live action and on video games has come to look eerily unreal on television as it makes the live coverage look like a video game. (p. 190)

The blurring of technologies and representations of sport seems to reflect efforts both to enhance the ‘perfect view’ for the traditional, televisual “ideal spectator” (Whannel, 1992, p. 96), and underscores the increasing distortion of spatial and experiential elements within the audience/technology/athlete nexus in contemporary sport (e.g., the emerging *ideal omniscient observer* and the *idealised participant* viewer perspectives) developed in the previous chapter.

Within sport video games, the replication of sport (both ‘real’ and televisual), its appearance and a sense of realism are also being applied to other aspects of the gaming experience. For example, real team and player names are provided, various sport-specific options are accorded, such as managerial (e.g., squad selection, training and monetary based) and tiered levels (e.g., domestic and/or international competitions within a sport), while the star system is reinforced by clearly demarcating ‘stars’ from other athletes within games (e.g., through skills, attributes, salary, etc.) and through branding (e.g., ‘Jonah Lomu’ rugby; ‘Ricky

Ponting' cricket; 'Tony Hawk' skateboarding; 'Colin MacRae' rally, etc.). Attention has also been paid to player appearance and attributes (including facial features, skin colour, body proportions, etc), with some games modelling movements and frames on 'real' players so that, according to Crawford (2004), "the game player can control the movement of players as they would actually move and react" (p. 147). In Formula One games, the driver gets less attention than the cars (or his mechanical double in Baudrillard's [2002] terms) in relation to the modelling of appearance or attributes. Early Formula One games on PlayStation 2 (e.g., 2001-2003) provided 3D representations that had been modelled on the drivers and, in some respects, resembled their appearance. However, the later games of 2005 and 2006 moved away from such perspectives, providing only a photographic head shot of the driver. Both representation styles, nevertheless, were insignificant as his image or avatar generally only appeared in the selection menu when choosing a team and driver. Therefore, much like the televised and 'real' Formula One racing experience, the driver's avatar becomes cocooned in the cockpit and is an absent-presence during the driving/gaming experience.

Instead, the primacy of appearance and movement modelling has been accorded to the representation, handling and performance of the cars. Thus, in Formula One video games, the cars are resplendent with their colours and sponsor liveries modelled on their 'real' appearance. Moreover, reflective of their 'real' performative distinctions, there are noticeable differences in the driving experience of a top car (e.g., a Ferrari) as opposed to a lesser car (e.g., a Minardi) for gamers. Of course, Formula One video games offer not only another visual representation of the sport for viewers but, also, the opportunity to 'participate' in the racing by controlling the simulated car during game play. Poole (2000)

observes that such games are “a more serious kind of racer, usually modeled on Formula One cars and real Grand Prix circuits, and in spirit more of a simulation than a pure videogame” (p. 26), suggesting this promotes “in certain genres (driving, flight games) the primacy of supposed ‘realism’ over instant fun” (p. 27). As Formula One’s third “screen of speed” (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 168), these ideas are salient for considering Formula One games. Realism is implied through the options available for players, ranging from arcade-style races to full ‘simulations’, in which gamers can either compete over a race weekend or in all races towards the championship. Within the simulation option the race weekend is replicated in full, complete with accurate track configurations, timing sectors and all practice and qualifying sessions (including the option of doing full race distances with pit stops – roughly 50-78 laps).

Although discussing PC or computer game versions of Formula One, Newman (2002) suggests that such games provide a reproduction of tracks as “a representation almost indistinguishable from its referent” (p. 413). Therefore, any serious gamer needs to spend considerable time experimenting with car set-ups (which are very responsive to changes), participate in practice sessions and know every section of the track by memory to be competitive. When played on the highest levels with all options on (i.e., damage, tyre wear, failures, fuel usage), maintaining control of the car and avoiding damage, failures or wear requires intense concentration, precision and skill. Interestingly, many current Formula One drivers actually use these game simulations to learn tracks or practice, particularly rookie drivers. For example, prior to the 2004 season, *PlanetF1.com* reported that Christian Klien was,

Busy learning the layout of the 18 circuits that he will race at
in 2004 and preparing for his debut season in the modern

way - playing PlayStation. The Jaguar driver is using PlayStation's F1 games to learn the various circuits that he has yet to race at. ("Klien hopes", 2004, para.1).

Although clearly also a marketing ploy, the use of PlayStation games by 'real' Formula One drivers hints at the precision and visual accuracy that such game 'simulations' are reproducing, in addition to further blurring boundaries between game versions and the 'real' (and televisual) sport.

Methods

Before turning to an examination of Formula One video games and the driving viewpoints they provide, I need to briefly outline my methods. For this analysis, I have drawn upon the official Formula One video games released annually on the PlayStation 2 console by Studio Liverpool (2001-2003; 2005-2006) since 2001.⁷ These Studio Liverpool games were selected as they are, arguably, the most graphic and realistic Formula One games currently available on the PlayStation 2 format and are readily available in New Zealand. In a similar manner to the examination of live and taped televised Formula One races, the video games footage has been approached through a combination of textual analysis and compositional/image analysis (detailed in Chapter Four). In particular, the full season of the *F1 2005* game (which replicates the 19 races of the 2005 season) was completed, taping each full race for ease of re-viewing and analysis. This taped video game footage provided approximately 28 hours of material which was analysed in two ways. First, I conducted a systematic analysis of the visual framing, exploring the first-person representation and implications for screened and embodied space through pausing/freeze-framing images, replays and prolonged viewing of the visual image while taking notes.

My second form of systematic analysis drew on viewing the taped footage and my own experiences of the game through game-play, as well as taking notes on the gaming experience and producing my own Grand Prix narratives of competing in a PlayStation 2 Grand Prix season. I estimate that, through the frequency of my game playing, I accumulated over 1,200 hours as an experiential basis for analysis between 1998 and 2008. My initial playing was confined to PlayStation One as a naïve fan 1998-2001, as well as *Formula One 2001* on the PlayStation 2 console. However, post-2001, through the purchase of a PlayStation 2 and the *Formula One 2002* game, as well as the subsequent annual versions released on PlayStation 2 (excluding *F1 2004* which I did not play or purchase as Jacques Villeneuve was not a driver option), both my game-playing and analytical engagement increased. In fact, as my video gaming was often on a daily basis between 2002 and 2006, my estimation of 1,200 game-playing hours is a conservative approximation.

Formula One Video Games: First-Person Positioning and the Subjective-Camera-Car

The Studio Liverpool games provide between three and five driving positions across their different game versions. One viewing/driving option replicates the televisual Formula One OBC, facilitating for players a driving experience similar to the coverage provided on televised broadcasts. However, since the 2002 edition, the games have also incorporated a more genuinely first-person POV, with players assuming the driver's position and having only two hands and a steering wheel as their main frame of reference. This viewpoint is more akin to the Helmet-Cam of Champ Car, although the very real presence of a helmet is removed in the PlayStation game and, through an in-focus, 0 degree perspective,

the player *becomes* the driver. Based upon my taped PlayStation 2 season, Studio Liverpool's *F1 2005* version is used here as a case study for analysis. Within the *F1 2005* first-person driver viewpoint, the tub is a frame of reference and replicates the OBC, POV shot (DVD Examples 24 and 25). However, the (implied) camera is lower, with the viewing position replicating the driver's viewpoint, presented as an eyeline match and level to the driver's seated viewing position. From this perspective the driver is absent, with the player's view framed through the tub of the car (and front tyres) which fill most of the bottom half of the screen. Fixed mirrors and the presence of large moving arms and a steering wheel occupy the bottom centre of the screen. Filling the remaining space in the frame are the track, kerbs and other cars immediately in front which the player must negotiate when racing around the circuit. Additionally, flashing rev lights and a digital speed read-out on the steering wheel further evoke the driving experience, as does the use of a 'blurred vision' of the foreground to denote racing at high speeds and to visually represent the slipstreaming effect of closely following another car. Finally, information is also constantly updated on-screen, such as sector and lap times, track position and gaps to other drivers (reinforced by audio updates from the team and commentators).

Such a viewpoint clearly differs from the OBC televised footage, providing the appearance of being *in-car* rather than looking down over the driver in OBC shots. In fact, the car, and particularly the moving arms and steering wheel, operate in a similar fashion to the gun in first-person shooters (FPS). These position the player to occupy the character's space (as either shooter or driver) as an active participant in the game world (Darley, 2000; Klevjer, 2003; Lahti, 2003; McMahan, 2003; Rehak, 2003). Conceptualising player involvement is an emerging theme in game studies, with a range of authors attempting to account for

and define this through a diverse set of terms such as immersion, presence, interactivity, embodiment, first-person representation, engagement or simulation (see Atkins, 2003; Darley, 2000; Grodal, 2003; Klevjer, 2003; Lahti, 2003; McMahan, 2003; Newman, 2002; Nitsche, 2003; Rehak, 2003). Still in its infancy, such conceptualising has been problematic, with no consensus on definitions and variations in terminology and the application of these concepts.

Much of the games research on player involvement has drawn on FPS games which utilise a first-person visual representation to 'place' the player as the avatar or on-screen character. Klevjer's (2003) term the 'subjective camera-gun', which he describes as "a weapon fixed to the frame, as if mounted to the subjective camera" (p. 8) provides the primary reference point within a FPS, POV and is especially relevant to the Formula One video game first-person perspective. Unfortunately, Klevjer does not develop his concept in more detail; nevertheless the term 'subjective camera-gun' evokes the perceptual thrill of bodily movement and disorientation through the first-person technique in these games. As the Formula One first-person driving viewpoint has not been considered in the games literature, Klevjer's concept can be adapted to the Formula One videogame, which operates as a *subjective camera-car*. The camera in this sense has replaced the driver and occupies his space, with all engagement facilitated through the movements (and POV) of the car. Car movement is manufactured in terms of obvious propulsion forward, yet a sense of subjectivity is also created by the feel of roll through corners as, visually, the steering wheel, front tyres and arms are always in motion and the car 'feels' unbalanced (often at acute angles) when negotiating corners. In addition, the car lurches and slides under braking, providing players with a subjective visual sense of instability while operating a racing car (DVD Examples 24 and 25).

Through this perspective and ‘in-car’ positioning, the concept of immersion is also a useful way of understanding the Formula One viewpoint and playing experience. The term presence is favoured by authors such as McMahan (2003) and Rehak (2003) to explain the relationship between player and avatar, particularly in relation to the FPS. However, although the driver is absent like the central shooter in these games, the visual framing differs significantly: players occupy a distinct screen space that is visually present and not an absent-presence implied through a visual gun. This is also a significant distinction from Formula One’s first “screen of speed” (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 168), television coverage, as the (albeit fragmented) driver-avatar is always visually present in video games for occupation, unlike the televisual absence-presence of the often unseen driver, who becomes only intermittently available for ‘occupation’ if he is framed through OBC shots. In this sense, Formula One video games offer an immersive first-person driving POV and position that visually immerses or places the player within the cockpit for the duration of this viewpoint. Of course, the representation also implies a sense of embodiment through arms extending out to control the steering-wheel. The player assumes that these disconnected arms stem from a body, which can be conceived to be either the avatar-driver’s arms or possibly as extensions of the player’s own arms while driving the car. The terms immersion and embodiment appear to be salient for this visual POV, immersing the player in the cockpit *where* the gamer would expect the driver’s body to be but also *as* occupier of that body.

Other non-visual aspects of the game also make the concept of immersion appropriate. Sound enhances this immersive element on *F1 2005*, with the realistic pitch of Formula One V-10 engines screaming and whining at high speeds, supported by variations in pitch and timbre denoting the engine at

different stages of idle, acceleration or under duress at full throttle. In this way, sound complements the visual representation and, as a source, seems to be housed just behind the cockpit, providing an incessant din to further evoke the immersive element to this driving POV. Additionally, the fact that players are actively controlling these cars immerses them as participants in the experience. The role of controls and player manipulation has commonly been conceived as interaction or interactivity in games research (Darley, 2000; Grodal, 2003; McMahan, 2003). However, interaction is a generic term for any human/interface contact and perhaps superfluous for all games: indeed, this chapter constitutes a form of interaction with a screen and keyboard which, clearly, is far removed from the Formula One gaming experience.⁸

The manipulation of controls evokes a sense of immersion for players as they 'drive' these Formula One cars. Often mastery of the controls takes considerable practice and effort (Darley, 2000). Newman (2003) observes that to compete in the popular car-racing game *Gran Turismo*, players must "understand the vagaries of the relationship between the controls, the track model, the physics engine and so on" (p. 138). In this sense, players rely on immersing themselves within the game to understand its dimensions and, in the case of Formula One, learn the tracks and how to both set-up and drive their cars by 'feel'. A stronger sense of immersion is provided through the additional functions that controllers provide and, in the case of Formula One games on PlayStation, the vibration of haptic devices such as the dual-shock controller or steering wheel. The controller or steering wheel vibrating in player's hands when running over kerbing and especially for any off-track excursions serves to "augment and reinforce the audio-visual stimuli" (Newman, 2002, p. 416), providing a sense of experiential feedback and further immersing the player in the game. Additionally, involuntary

movements by the player outside of the game world (Lahti, 2003; Newman, 2002) enhances the immersive and embodied aspects of Formula One video games, as players lean into corners and or crane their heads unconsciously while being immersed in the racing action from their own viewing position in front of the screen.

Nevertheless, while players may feel immersed in these games, there is a sense of unreality to the experience. Physically, of course, players are not being transported at 200mph on race tracks nor feeling the bodily sensations of G-forces, heads buffeted by winds or the discomfort of these various forces being exacted on their bodies while racing. In this sense, gamers does not have their eyes “squished” (Corby, 2006, p. 60) or internal organs “shaken around” (“Coulthard would not”, 2004, para. 2) as they immerse themselves in the game. Most importantly, the possibility of injury or death is clearly not an aspect of the game version. Big crashes are often replayed for enjoyment, players can easily restart or skip sessions, and there is the possibility for indulging in other ‘non-sanctioned’ activities (e.g., doing ‘wheelies’, racing the wrong way around the track, or intentionally taking other competitors out with few consequences). Therefore, players can experience the thrill (and viewpoint) of racing and driving fast that are reproduced on the sport’s third ‘screen of speed’ but not necessarily the ‘realities’ of Formula One in terms of ‘real’ sanctions, danger, injury or death.

One final aspect that contributes to immersion and embodiment in Formula One games is the role of identification, with multiple identificatory positions a fundamental aspect of video games. On the one hand, players can have no prior knowledge of particular teams or drivers but merely want to play which is permitted by Formula One games (especially in arcade modes). This may even suggest that in some cases that player identification is redundant. Characters and

characterisation in video games are problematic anyway for, as Newman (2003) suggests, ultimately they become “equipment for play; a vehicle through which the player gains access to the gameworld” (p. 143). Underscoring the multiple identificatory positions in video games, the Studio Liverpool games post-2003 have also catered to a ‘career’ mode in which gamers can create their own driver/profile and work their way up from test driver to a leading driver with a top team. So, potentially, gamers do not need to be culturally literate in Formula One and can merely play as themselves or another self-selected alias/avatar. Alternatively, subjective identification is enhanced for gamers who have that cultural literacy and already ‘know’ who these drivers are. Hence, through subjective identification, the dilemma of character identification in POV representations is overcome for gamers in a similar way as it is for knowledgeable viewers of the Formula One OBC. In the case of fans, this rare driver viewpoint provides not only welcome access to their stars but blurs the distinction between fan and star in the game environment. For example, I have access to Jacques Villeneuve by choosing to be him in the video game yet, as I alone have control of his racing experience and outcome, I potentially also replace Villeneuve through choosing to race as/in place of him. Finally, subjective identification can also be a motivating reason to not play as, in my own case, without Villeneuve as a driver option I could not bring myself to ‘be’ or identify with another driver in the 2004 game. As the sport’s third screen of speed, Formula One video games make the sport more accessible to its global audience, affording multiple forms of identification, embodiment and player immersion in the Grand Prix experience.

In this chapter I have discussed the POV shot and its implications for understanding the structures of representation and identification in relation to selected films, televised coverage of Formula One, and recent Formula One video

games. In particular, a shift in theories of viewer positioning and identification has been outlined, noting that the restrictive POV of classical cinema (e.g., *Lady in the Lake*) limits rather than enhances notions of viewer identification by aligning viewers solely to the gaze of the central character. In contrast, post-classical cinematic POV (e.g., *Being John Malkovich* and *Strange Days*) moves towards an embodied identification, drawing on the constructed presence of the character's body to evoke a sense of mutual embodiment, as well as providing both a surrogate character and protagonist to permit multiple levels of identification during the POV sequences. Therefore, through this *first-person, embodied POV*, viewer identification is more compelling, permitting viewers to share the space, viewpoint and body of multiple characters during the POV sequences. The Formula One OBC has similarities with these films and the post-classical POV technique; providing a visual *first-person, embodied POV* which also draws on and shares the driver's space, body and viewpoint, while affording multiple levels of identification.

Most significantly, the *first-person, embodied POV* of the OBC (paralleling, to an extent, techniques of post-classical cinema) moves away from the psychologically-grounded basis for identification with the protagonist in classical cinema. In its place is an embodied articulation of identification between star and fan through the self-conscious mediation of cameras (especially live broadcast cameras), the cars and driver anonymity. Real-time synchronicity replaces the classical POV technique of spatial proximity, while identification with the skilled athletic body replaces identification with the imaginary psychological subjectivity of fictional characters. Helmet-Cam and the Formula One video game representations blur the distinction between viewer, driver and the 'real' experience even further. In a sense viewer identification is almost complete in

Formula One video games, as now the player *is* the driver, immersed in a first-person, embodied driver POV controlling the performance and outcome of the Formula One driving experience. Therefore, through the OBC (and especially within video games), such technologies and participatory perspectives advance the traditional ‘ideal spectator’ in televised sport, granting the subjective possibility of contemporaneously experiencing with or becoming the driver (*‘being’* Jacques Villeneuve in a temporal, visual, spatial and experiential sense). The implications of such identificatory frameworks and how they inform, shape and contribute to the specific practices and experiences of Formula One fandom are traced in the remaining chapters.

Thus far, this and the preceding chapters have emphasised the more structural components of Grossberg’s (1992b) ‘structured mobility’ in relation to Formula One. In particular, Chapters Three and Four have provided, at a first-level, a structural layering of the media text/audience relationship. Therefore, Formula One’s primary screen of speed, its televised coverage, has been considered through the compositional elements that construct and constitute televised Formula One as a ‘text’ and ‘structured’ site for engagement. Furthermore, a conceptual shift in audience interrelationships with the text has also been traced, moving from ‘traditional’ notions of the televised sport viewer (e.g., the ‘ideal spectator’) to more fluid audience positions and engagements afforded through emerging televisual technologies and the participatory perspectives of Formula One (e.g., the OBC and video games). In particular, the *first-person, embodied POV* shot seemingly implicates the viewing audience through a visual first-person perspective, immersive and embodied positionings and engagements, and multiple (and at times, oscillating) identificatory processes. Therefore, these kinds of layerings for/of audience ‘mobility’ within the textual structure require further

consideration. Our focus now turns to fandom as a specific site of audience and textual interaction; locating and examining the ‘mobility’ of fans within and in relation to the structured text of Formula One through the affective investments, intensities, engagements and experiences that are embedded in the concrete practices of being a fan.

¹ Two additional POV films warrant mentioning. The first is *Russian Ark* (Sokurov, 2002), which claims to be a film shot in a single take from the POV of an unknown protagonist viewing 300 years of Russian history. While experimental, viewers hear but never see the protagonist whose POV viewers are purported to be ‘sharing’. Additionally, the protagonist is unseen to all but one ‘guide’ character who engages in direct address with the camera as a talking subject. Despite the intended effect, without the physical presence of a protagonist, the POV is disembodied (i.e., not connected to a particular character or body) and seems to operate more as the POV of the all-seeing camera navigating the film’s diegetic space. The second is a cinematic representation of the video game, *Doom* (Bartkowiak, 2006). Shot primarily through ‘objective’ cameras, the film provides a brief POV sequence near the end which replicates the first-person shooter (FPS) video game perspective. As the brief filmic POV sequence equates to Klevjer’s (2003) notion of the ‘subjective camera-gun’, discussed in relation to POV and FPS video games later in this chapter, the cinematic version of *Doom* (as well as *Russian Ark*) are not examined in this chapter.

² Clover (1987, 1992) suggests that identification in slasher films oscillates between both the ‘killer’ male and female ‘victim’, often reinforced by a representational shift in POV as the camera increasingly reveals the victim’s perspective during the course of the film. Although not generic, I suggest that POV representations in horror and slasher films tend to make the viewer identify (or empathise) with the victim, as the killer/monster is often unknown and its identity is often concealed through the POV shot (Kawin, 1992; Shaviro, 2003). Through narrative and filmic establishing conventions, the victims are already known to us. Alternatively, serial killer films tend to focus on the killer as protagonist and, in the case of ‘true’ accounts of famous killers, retell their crimes through filmic representation, with the POV representations offering us an insight into how (and perhaps why) they conducted their brutal acts. With the victims often unknown, they usually also become meaningless; thus, as viewers we ‘identify’ with the killer, although I assume many viewers find this troubling and still empathise with the victims. Suggestive of the levels of multiple identification in operation, I find myself ‘identifying’ with the killer in both horror and serial killer films and relish the POV perspectives for macabre scenes. These paradoxical findings suggest more research is needed on POV representations and the implications for viewer identification in these genres.

³ These findings by film theorists were oppositional to my ‘reading’ of *Lady in the Lake*. Rather than lacking identification, I found its sustained use of POV both compelling and engrossing. As a viewer, I too had an ‘active’ role in the film, being thrust directly into the narrative and seemingly participating in these events as they unfolded. Perhaps this reflects my historical and cultural situatedness in a video games generation in which sharing viewpoints with characters is a common and personally alluring experience. While permitted to ‘share’ Marlowe’s viewpoint for almost the entirety of the film, one clear distinction was a lack of control over what course of action Marlowe decides, which is a crucial component to the video games experience.

⁴ With the multiple cameras and viewpoints in Formula One, there may be no single object as represented in Branigan’s diagram. Object is placed at the front of the car with a question mark in Figures 2 and 3 because, although this may be the object for the forward facing cameras, these other camera positions and viewpoints (4 and 5) draw on the driver as an object, position 3 frames behind the car, while other positions (6, 7, 8, and 9) seem to utilise the driver as both a subject and object.

⁵ My OBC analysis covers the period 1998 – 2006 and excludes Formula One’s first night race, the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix.

⁶ Helmet-Cam technology does exist in Formula One, it simply has not been drawn upon in the ITV global coverage. For example, promotional footage can be viewed on youtube.com for Renault and BMW post-2005 which provide Helmet-Cam perspectives. Additionally, for the final

Formula One race of his career, David Coulthard utilised a Helmet-Cam variation at Brazil in 2008. Unfortunately, Coulthard was involved in a crash at turn one of the opening lap so global viewers had one fleeting replay through which to view this technology. Fan forums implied that Coulthard's perspective had been available in Britain for the practice sessions, although many complained about the view; intimating that this was from chin/mouth level rather than an eyeline match. I suspect Helmet-Cam variations will become increasingly prominent in future global Formula One coverage.

⁷ The Studio Liverpool Formula One games were released as *Formula One* and the relevant year 2001-2003 (e.g., *Formula One 2002*); the games from 2004-2006 have used the abbreviation F1; for example, *F1 2005*. It should also be noted that no Studio Liverpool Formula One games were released post-2006, allegedly due to a financial dispute with Bernie Ecclestone, although the rival company, Codemasters, have signed up to release Formula One games on multiple platforms from 2009.

⁸ Cynically, one could assert that interaction is always in operation for the drivers who are constantly engaged in button-pushing due to the reliance on technology and driver aids in modern Formula One: for example, Brawn's comments on the McLaren drivers ("Nowhere to hide", 1998); see also Chapter Three.

CHAPTER SIX

JV and Me: The Affective Practices and Performances of Formula

One Fandom in Everyday Life

The previous chapters have examined the mediated apparatus of Formula One, as well as traced a ‘funneling’ approach to the collective viewing experience it affords its global audience, orientating us towards a recognition of the increasingly atomised possibilities that these telecasts and technologies may generate for individual viewers. By accounting for the socially constructed affective investments of fandom in this chapter, the ‘funnelled’ distillation to an individual’s experiences of Formula One (e.g., to the intensity of actual fandom) is now investigated, with my fandom becoming the central object of enquiry for the remainder of the thesis. To afford such an analysis, the ‘layers’ to my Formula One fandom (see the first section of Chapter Two above for a discussion of layers in this sense) are mapped in relation to the diverse mediated, consumptive and affective practices undertaken by a fan; interrelated processes that, as has been argued, are under-examined in sport and media research. In particular, this chapter establishes how fandom is shaped through mediation; *determined* by consumption and, finally, how affect permeates the performances, practices and lived moments as a fan in daily life. First, however, the three ‘moments’ or ‘waves’ of studies of fandom and fan cultures (Hills, 2006; Jenkins, 2006b; Sandvoss, 2005) are acknowledged and detailed.

Early Theories of the Fan: Pathology, ‘Active’ Audiences and Resistance

Literature on fandom was ‘relatively sparse’ during the period 1960-1990 (Jenson, 1992) and, reflecting a deterministic structure of ‘effected’ audiences versus

simplified notions of audience ‘agency’, not surprisingly the psychologically-derived studies of media ‘effects’ or ‘uses and gratifications’ were influential in early studies of fandom. Deviance or fandom as pathology was the initial and prime framework from which *all* fandom was understood, with Jenson (1992) noting that, essentially, fans were categorised as either the obsessed (loner) individual or as part of a hysterical mob often through their positioning and responses to the mediated representation of celebrities. So, obsessive fans that stalk or even kill celebrities, as well as ‘frenzied’ and ‘hysterical’ mobs (e.g., music crowds or football hooligans) were (and often still are) cited in academic and popular texts (e.g., Cashmore, 2006; Drucker & Cathcart, 1994; Hornby, 1992; Rojek, 2001; Schickel, 1985; Vermorel, 1985). Thus, drawing on ‘effects’-based research produced reductive categorisations of the fan which not only overlooked the multiplicity and diversity of fandom (e.g., in terms of people, practices and sites for engagement) but also had dangerous consequences by marking *all* fans as disturbed and deviating from some supposed norm (Jenson, 1992). Not surprisingly, assertions of ‘active’ audiences (e.g., Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Morley, 1980, 1986, 1989, 1992) and fandom as a subversive or resistant practice (e.g., Fiske, 1987, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c, 1993) shaped the first ‘wave’ of fan studies’ reaction to these stigmatised and pathological representations of the fan. Thus, Jenkins (2006b) notes that the ‘ethnographic’ turn and notions of the audience as ‘active’ were salient to constituting and shaping the field from a cultural studies perspective.

The second wave of fan studies drew on these approaches, revealing greater complexity to fandom than mere pathological traits by investigating fan identities and providing a voice for this marginalised group. As Jenkins (2006b) notes retrospectively,

We're trying to find a way to alter that perception based on insider knowledge of what it is to be a fan, and struggling to find a language to articulate a different perspective that comes out of lived experience and situated knowledge.

(p. 12)

Hence, seminal fan studies works by Bacon-Smith (1992), Jenkins (1992) and Lewis (1992) were both politically motivated in terms of a politics of representation and were “concerned with issues of cultural power” (Hills, 2006, p. 100), (e.g., by theorising fandom through an incorporation/resistance framework such as Hall’s [1996] encoding/decoding model). While subversion or resistance were often over-emphasised in these first and second ‘wave’ fan accounts (especially Fiske – see critiques in Chapter Two), the second wave introduced the key concept of fandom as a *performance* which would not only shape emerging concepts of the audience (e.g., Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Alasuutari, 1999; Jenkins, 2006a), but would underpin the contemporary third ‘wave’ of fan studies in cultural studies. These emerging concepts of performance, the audience and contemporary fan studies will be developed shortly. First, however, the various conceptualisations of sport fandom will be traced as the relevant works generally provide overlapping findings, although they were often grounded in mainstream sociological analysis and produced independently of the emerging media studies/cultural studies academic canon.

Sport Fandom: ‘Uses and Gratifications’, Typologies and ‘Active’ Audiences

In relation to sport, analyses of fandom generally eschewed the early pathological links although still provide problematic renderings of ‘fans’. Many early authors turned to ‘uses and gratifications’ research to understand fandom, focusing on the

spectating practices, viewing habits and/or behaviours of fans in relation to their uses of television. While these studies provided a sociological rather than psychological framework for analysis, such studies only locate 'fandom' in relation to one medium, fail to examine the 'delivery system' of television in any depth and still share the behaviourist perspective of fandom through their application of a 'uses and gratifications' model. Therefore, reflecting Grossberg's (1992b) critique of an audience studies which creates unified audiences and reduces lived reality to constructions of meaning (discussed in Chapter Two), such accounts establish the routines and behaviours which fans engage in and apply these to particular societal functions and viewer motivations (a critique equally applicable to the cultural studies second 'wave' of fan studies). In accordance with these studies, researchers assert that television sport spectatorship becomes a 'ritual' for fans (Eastman & Riggs, 1994) which draws on viewing behaviours and routines (both personal and collective) to shape or alter their sport viewing experiences. Television sport spectatorship also offers a supposedly 'mythic' identification and ritual for the 'deep fan' (Real & Mechikoff, 1992), while providing a temporary community for fans when viewed, for example, in sport bars (Eastman & Land, 1997). Viewer motivation is also a salient theme for these studies, noting the appeal of a favourite team or player, as well as the unpredictability of the contest (Wenner & Gantz, 1989), the greater investment and involvement of fans over non-fans (Gantz & Wenner, 1995) and the gendered viewing hours, patterns or appeal of specific sports (Sargent, Zillman & Weaver, 1998; Wenner & Gantz, 1998).

Other research attempted to characterise, measure and determine who is and what makes a sport fan through psychologically-based accounts. Fandom and its functions are measured through various devices purported to account for a fan's

motivation, as well as the impact and effect of specific mediations, sports, teams and stars. For some studies, this facilitates the production of set psychological typologies and circumscribed functions to be determined for fans and spectators (e.g., Jones, 2000), as well as having specific implications related to the selection of certain 'heroic' types. As an example, Wann, Melnick, Russell and Pease's (2001) research mentions Jacques Villeneuve (who, incidentally, is bracketed with 'daredevil' stuntman, Evil Kenevil), suggesting that fans of either of these two are most likely to be 'sensation seeking'. The authors do not define what 'sensation seeking' means yet have based their analysis around emulation and "the interplay between personality traits and hero selection" (Wann et al., 2001, p. 86). Thus, through a reductive and therefore problematic typology, the fandom of Villeneuve or Kenevil is reduced to an inferred 'risk-taker' or 'daredevil' mentality and psychological make-up which, as a primary explanation, seems contestable, contradictory and too simplistic for theorising my affective fan relationship with Villeneuve (e.g., see broader discussion of why Villeneuve 'matters' in Chapter Seven). Other empirical works provide similar, deductive findings, with sport fan motivation deemed to operate within the binary of being either a team or individual orientated fan (Wann, Schrader & Wilson, 1999), while Jones (2000) assigns football fans to specific behavioural types in relation to their levels of social identification as fans. Although less positivistic in orientation than the works cited, other authors have linked fandom to consumption (e.g., Crawford, 2004; Giulianotti, 2002; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Guttman, 1986; Sandvoss, 2005) which will be returned to in due course here, through a consideration of consumption as a significant layer within contemporary fandom and fan practices.

Influenced by the ethnographic turn in the social sciences, as well as notions of 'active' audiences, many sport researchers turned to qualitative methods and

cultural studies to counter the previously psychologically-derived or universalistic accounts of sport fandom. Thus Trujillo and Krizek (1994) explore fan identification through the fan's emotional attachment to community as expressed through ballparks in baseball, while works on football fandom consider the shifting sense of self-identity among fans (A. Brown [Ed.], 1998; Redhead, 1997; Sandvoss, 2003), the broader dynamics of identification, machoism and surveillance culture embedded in football hooliganism (Armstrong, 1998; Armstrong & Harris, 1991; Giulianotti, 1995; Giulianotti, Bonney & Hepworth, 1994) and the increasing fan ambivalence towards changes taking place in contemporary football competitions (Williams, 2007). Additionally, the gendered nature of fandom is explored in sport, with Bruce (1998a) and Duncan and Brummett (1993) emphasising sources of empowerment and socio-cultural identity formation for female fans shaped through their negotiation with and reconstruction of televised sport representations, while Gmelch and San Antonio (1998) draw on similar themes to analyse female participation in the stigmatised practice of being baseball 'groupies'.

For some researchers, the ethnographic turn also facilitated a self analysis of one's own fandom. Therefore, Jhally (1998) explores the tensions and contradictions at play in fandom through his own temporal discomfort in supporting the English football club Chelsea during the period that they were sponsored by Coors, the American beer company then associated in their organisational practices with racial intolerance and bigotry. For Lessem (1991), becoming an adult sport fan exposes contradictions he was less aware of as a child and, as a sports reporter, his childhood obsession with athletes has been transformed to disillusionment through his encounters with many high profile athletes. Rowe (2000, 2003) turns to ethnographic fiction to unravel the

pathological stigma behind individual fandom, providing an imaginative and hyperbolic account of the over-identification and excessive consumption required by an obsessed football fan. Finally, Farred (2002) considers mediation, identity and emotional affiliation through his own long distance fandom of the Liverpool Football Club. Farred reveals that his fandom has been profoundly mediated, residing in South Africa yet supporting Liverpool for 30 years without ever having seen them play live in-person. Nevertheless, despite this geographical distance and reliance on mediation, Farred (2002) suggests that, since childhood, “I learnt the pain and pleasure of living and dying with every Liverpool result” (p. 13). Farred’s work in particular has clear implications for my own research on the territorialization of fandom, as well as mediation as both a facilitator of fandom and for identity construction, which will be returned to in discussions of mediation and mediated engagement as a significant first layer(ing) for fandom.

The Contemporary ‘Third-Wave’ of Fan Studies: Consumption, Performance and Affect

As noted earlier, the second ‘wave’ of fan studies signposted a significant theoretical orientation for understanding fandom; the role of performance. Thus, these earlier scholars (e.g., Bacon-Smith, 1992; Brooker, 2002; Fiske, 1987, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c, 1993; Harrington & Bielby, 1995; Jenkins, 1992; Lancaster, 2001; Tulloch & Jenkins, 1995) conceptualised both an ‘active’ and productive role for fans, suggesting that rather than being merely duped by or simply consumers of media, fans reintegrate these texts with productive elements. Therefore, fans scavenge, poach, (re)appropriate and reconfigure media texts through their close engagements, encyclopaedic knowledge and diverse uses of them. Additionally, fans often produce their own texts related to but separate

from an existing ‘official’ or original media text producing, for example, fan art, fiction, slash/fiction and fan zines. Focusing on these ‘active’, performative and productive roles, the second wave scholars argued that fan media were significant for constructing new meanings and pleasures previously overlooked in the fan literature (e.g., Bacon-Smith, 1992; Fiske, 1987, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c, 1993; Jenkins, 1992; Lancaster, 2001).

Sandvoss (2005) notes that,

More than a decade later, the need for such a partisan representation has disappeared...with the proliferation of multi-channel television and the arrival of new information technologies such as the internet, fandom seems to have become a common and ordinary aspect of everyday life in the industrialized world that is actively fostered and utilized in industry marketing strategies. (p. 3)

Therefore, the third wave of contemporary fan studies comes to an already established academic field, as well as a seemingly ‘self-evident’ phenomenon (see further definitions of fandom shortly), inclusive of emerging socio-cultural theories of the ‘performativity’ of sport fans (see Crawford, 2004; Sandvoss, 2003, 2005). In this third wave, notions of ‘active’ audiences and multiplicity are assumed and ground the analyses, as often does an openness about one’s own fandom without what Jenkins (2006b) labels the “obligation of defensiveness” (p. 12) around asserting one’s own position. In this respect, the interplay among fan performance, identity, consumption, media texts, technology and everyday life provides the terrain for third wave scholars to navigate, negotiate and theorise contemporary fandom. However, rather than a uniform set of criteria or definitional terms, many authors favour conceptualising a more fluid and dynamic

fandom which fluctuates and undergoes continuous change. As Hills (2002) cautions, “fandom is not simply a ‘thing’ that can be picked over analytically. It is also always performative; by which I mean that it is an identity which is (dis-)claimed, and which performs cultural work” (p. xi). Therefore, these approaches allow scholars not only to foreground the consumptive practices of fans (Crawford, 2004; Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 2006a, 2006b; Sandvoss, 2005), but also to understand fandom as performative (Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 1992, 2006a, 2006b; Lancaster, 2001; Sandvoss, 2005), as operating through sensibility and affect (Gray, 2003; Grossberg, 1992a, 1992b) and fan culture as a social career (Crawford, 2004). Moreover, recent fan studies recognise even more the importance of fandom in everyday life, revealing mundane and ‘ordinary’ aspects of fandom, as well as the significance of their everyday practices (Crawford, 2004; Crawford & Rutter, 2006, 2007; Gray, Sandvoss & Harrington, 2007; Hills, 2005; 2006; Jenkins, 2006b; Sandvoss, 2003, 2005) rather than just the ‘exceptional’ or ‘dedicated’ fans documented primarily in the second wave of fan studies (e.g., Bacon-Smith, 1992; Brooker, 2002; Jancovich, 2002; Jenkins, 1992; Tulloch & Jenkins, 1995).

Emerging Concepts of the Audience - The ‘Diffused’ and ‘Interactive’ Audience

Alongside the seminal works of the second wave of fan studies, Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) have been influential in shaping the contemporary orientation towards performance in fan studies. In particular, Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) suggest that a new paradigm for audience research has emerged based on the centrality of the spectacle in society and notions of audience performativity. This differs to Goffman’s (1959) ahistorical notion of performance as a universal human condition (Sandvoss, 2005) by identifying performativity as a specific

contemporary and mediated condition linked to the concept of the spectacle. Coining the term the *diffused* audience, these authors note the pervasiveness of multiple, overlapping forms of mediation (mediascapes), suggesting that “the media and everyday life have become so closely interwoven that they are almost inseparable” (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998, p. 69). As I noted in Chapter Two, mediascapes construct and shape social reality, with Sandvoss (2005) arguing that there is a tendency for “spectacle to replace any direct experience of the world with mediated representation” (p. 52; see also Debord, 1994; Kellner, 2003). Therefore, not only are we simultaneously consumers and members of an audience through processes of commodification in (late) capitalist societies but, in addition, we are always already members of an audience reliant on performativity (e.g., adopting various ‘active’ forms of participation to ‘perform’ as an audience member) to facilitate our engagement with these multiple media spectacles. Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) observe that, “in contemporary society, everyone becomes an audience all the time. Being a member of an audience is no longer an exceptional event, nor even an everyday event. Rather it is constitutive of everyday life” (pp. 68-69).

By reorientating the conceptualisation of audiences to notions of spectacle, performativity and everyday life, Abercrombie and Longhurst’s *diffused* audience moves away from previous models focussed either on the addressing of the message (a specific focus on the ‘dominant’ text) or an incorporation/resistance relationship to the text (a specific focus on the ‘dominant’ audience). In fact, the *diffused* audience concept often collapses the apparent distance between audiences and performers suggesting that, for example, at ‘live’ music concerts and sporting events not only do the ‘stars’ provide a performance but audiences simultaneously perform their role as audience members for others to observe (e.g., these

‘audiences’ watch and are being watched concurrently). Furthermore, the *diffused* audience also provides a broader recognition of audience multiplicity through an awareness that we are not only audiences all the time but comprise multiple audiences at any one time. Such a perspective is supported by other theorists, with Alasuutari (1999) suggesting that being an audience member relies on a cultural performance of identity. Moreover, Abercrombie and Longhurst’s shift from the ‘exceptional’ to quotidian performances of audiences is discernible in other ‘postmodern’ audience texts, which focus on the ‘everyday’ experiences of the audience (Bird, 2003), as well as the often contradictory and shifting media subjectivities of audiences engaged with various media texts (Ang, 1996). Finally, Abercrombie and Longhurst’s *diffused* audience accommodates the diversity and geographical spread for audiences, as well as explaining the paradox of being fragmented yet also collectively part of multiple, overlapping audiences (e.g., spatially as local and global, or public and private audiences).

Through a more explicit investigation of the interactive relationship audiences have with the media, Jenkins’ (2006a, 2006b, 2007) concept of *interactive* audiences complements the *diffused* audience paradigm. In particular, Jenkins (2006a, 2006b) advocates recognising the interactive, participatory and knowledge cultures that are forged around the convergence of media texts, technologies and socio-cultural groupings in contemporary society. As Jenkins (2006a) notes,

I will argue against the idea that convergence should be understood primarily as a technological process bringing together multiple media functions within the same devices. Instead, convergence represents a cultural shift as consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make

connections among dispersed media content...Convergence occurs within the brains of individual consumers and through their social interactions with others. (p. 3)

Paramount to Jenkins' theorising is reorientating the producer/consumer binary to an interactive and potentially overlapping (although clearly not always equitable) relationship which can flow among media consumers, between media consumers and media texts, and between media consumers and producers. Thus, in contemporary society, audiences (or consumers) can simultaneously be producers through not only do-it-yourself technologies (e.g., digital cameras, photoshop software/programmes, etc.), but can also "archive, annotate, appropriate, and recirculate media content" (Jenkins, 2006b, p. 135), while being encouraged by media conglomerates to access content across multiple media formats. However, he shuns ascribing complete autonomy or agency to the audience given the unlevel media playing field in which most interaction takes place, especially in terms of the ownership, distribution and control of most mainstream media by corporations or specific individuals. Nevertheless, Jenkins (2006b) views audiences as more critically aware and discriminating in their use of the media and, as members of an audience, he suggests that they can potentially occupy the diverse roles of media consumer, fan, producer, distributor, publicist and critic simultaneously. Additionally, through their interactivity with texts, producers and each other, audiences are more socially connected in their consumption (or production), use and exchange of media texts and technologies, while forging both unified and diverse groupings around these practices. Underpinning Jenkins' argument is not only a shift from 'passive' audiences but also a critique of assumptions about either their unity or audiences as mere receivers of media content.

Moreover, Jenkins (2006a, 2006b) recognises the participatory cultures that arise out of these interactive relationships, particularly noting the formation of knowledge cultures that allow for voluntary, temporary and tactical affiliations among their members. According to Jenkins, through such knowledge cultures, interactive audiences can contribute to many communities at once (often on a global scale) and can determine and define the scale of their own membership (based primarily on affinity and emotional investment), while these communities become sites for ‘collective intelligence’ which pools and shares the collective interest and mutual production of knowledge for a specific phenomenon (e.g., fan communities for specific media texts). Therefore, such knowledge cultures offer audiences of specific media content/texts broader networks of ‘expertise’, forums for debates, channels for lobbying producers and “multiple and unstable forms of recontextualisation” (Jenkins, 2006b, p. 140). Additionally, the creation of numerous on-line communities has afforded a greater fluidity for audience interactivity in terms of circumventing many of the previous temporal and spatial limitations through the immediacy and the deterritorialising characteristics of the internet. Finally, while Jenkins (2006a, 2006b) cautions against celebrating or overstating the ‘power’ that these interactive audiences wield in relation to ‘traditional’ media producers, he points out that, collectively, these interactive, participatory and knowledge cultures produce and circulate dispersed forms of knowledge that media outlets cannot completely control.

Defining Fandom

Having traced the three ‘waves’ of fan studies, as well as two key emerging conceptualisations of the audience, defining the field of study more exactly is also required here. Despite the widespread use of ‘fan’ or ‘fandom’ in both popular

culture and academic texts, fandom remains elusive to definition or categorisation, especially in relation to what constitutes an ‘authentic’ fan or articulating distinctions between levels of fandom (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Crawford, 2004; Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 1992, 2007; Sandvoss, 2005). This is reflected in both sport and television, where some authors have tried to articulate a distinction between ‘live’ attendance and television spectatorship (e.g., Guttman, 1986; Wann et al., 2001), sport spectatorship and fandom (e.g., see discussion of Schirato [2007b] later in this chapter), sport ‘fans’ versus ‘consumers’ (e.g., Giulianotti, 2002; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993) or distinctions between ‘viewers’ and ‘fans’ through their uses of television (e.g., Bacon-Smith, 1992; Gray, 2003; Jenkins, 1992). Others, such as Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) have attempted to map fan distinctions along a continuum related to media use, connectivity and the object of focus. While useful for explaining distinctions between the intensities of engagement and investment, Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) ultimately (and simplistically) equate fandom with low investment and high consumption (see also Giulianotti, 2002; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993), while they use the term ‘cultist’ to describe what for many appears broadly to mean fandom (e.g., defined through explicit attachments to stars or particular media). For example, Sandvoss (2005) suggests ‘cultist’ does not seem applicable for many genres, observing that his research participants refer to themselves as football fans which can be broadly transposed across other forms of sport fandom (e.g., ‘cultists’ seems nonsensical as a definitional term in sport). This perspective is reinforced by Hills (2002), who observes that “it seems faintly unhelpful to produce a taxonomy in which the definition of ‘fan’ is at odds with the use of this term in almost all other literature in the field” (p. ix). Most likely, the term cultist has been adapted from the large body of work which originated in

and generally focused on fandom and cult media (e.g., Bacon-Smith, 1992; Brooker, 2002; Hills, 2004; Jancovich, 2002; Jenkins, 1992; Lancaster, 2001; Tulloch & Jenkins, 1995). Problematically, however, these scholars have often only located and conceptualised fandom in relation to cult media while overlooking how fandom operates in other forms of popular culture, such as sport and music (see Crawford, 2004; Ehrenreich et al, 1992; Hinerman, 1992; Nightingale, 1994; Sandvoss, 2003, 2005).

For others, fandom is ‘common knowledge’ and does not necessarily require specific definition. Indeed, Hills observes that most authors ‘assume’ that readers already know what fandom is, providing his own useful definition when he surmises that, (2002)

Everybody knows what a ‘fan’ is. It’s somebody who is obsessed with a particular star, celebrity, film, TV programme, band; somebody who can produce reams of information on their object of fandom, and can quote their favoured lines or lyrics, chapter and verse. (p. ix)

Thus, given the ‘commonality’ of fandom, some authors have noted that fan self-identification may also be applicable (e.g., Crawford, 2004; Hills, 2006; Jenkins, 2006b; Sandvoss, 2005) since drawing conceptual and definitional boundaries around fandom and fan practices on others’ behalf is vexed (e.g., limiting fandom to only cult media, or avoiding the previous pathological links). Moreover, as Jenkins (2007) argues, to some extent ‘we’ all have become fans through engaging in contemporary society’s interactive, participatory and knowledge cultures. Clearly, however, not all people are ‘fans’ or are comfortable with being labelled ‘fans’. I would suggest that six distinct influences appear to underpin and shape contemporary fandom. These influences are: 1) fandom operates largely in

popular culture, 2) fandom is reliant on mass mediation (texts and technologies), as well as 3) popular identities (celebrities and stars), and fandom is increasingly influenced by 4) commercialisation, 5) commodification, and 6) the socio-cultural performances and practices of fans (with their temporal/spatial implications). Hills (2006) correctly observes the “‘*intense*’ relationship” (p. 100, italics in original) that fans have with the media, shaped through their engagement with texts, famous individuals and their array of consumptive and/or performative practices. This is supported by Sandvoss’ (2005) useful definition of fandom, which he suggests is “*the regular, emotionally involved consumption of a given popular narrative or text*” (p. 8, italics in original), whether the ‘narrative’ or ‘text’ is either a specific media text (e.g. book, television show, film, etc.) or more broadly applied to other popular ‘texts’ such as specific sport teams or stars/celebrities (who, of course, operate primarily as star images or texts anyway – e.g., see Dyer, 1979, 1986; McDonald, 2000; G. Turner, 2004; Whannel, 2002).

While it is difficult to adequately capture and theorise ‘emotional involvement’, or audience pleasures as a closely related notion (see Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 2006a; Ruddock, 2007; Staiger, 2005; Whannel, 1998), I would suggest that the notion of fan ‘intensity’ can most usefully be understood through Grossberg’s (1992a, 1992b) concept of *affect*. In particular, affect offers a vocabulary for articulating the emotional attachment to and investment in media objects/texts by fans, the affective relationships and practices fans engage in, and the temporal, spatial and embodied dynamics which underpin the intensities of such investments. Therefore, although fandom is an “*essentially contradictory process*” (Hills, 2002, p. 182, italics in original), I will draw upon Grossberg’s concept of affect to articulate fandom as a shifting project of the social self which draws upon an embodied, emotive and affective relationship with a media

object/text. In the process, the ‘fan-self’ undergoes constant reinvention through his/her intensities of experience, fluctuating levels of energies and engagement, performative and consumptive (re)affiliation(s) with the media object and wider communal interactions within a broader cultural, economic and mediated social structure, all of which are embedded within the specificity of spatial and temporal ‘moments’.

Mediated Fandom and Formula One

As my previous chapters have argued, Formula One is a profoundly mediated sport and, for most of its global audience, is ‘experienced’ primarily through its televised coverage. Therefore, although both Chapters Four and Five theorised how televised Formula One is constructed through its compositional elements, as well as some of the implications these have for viewers (especially through innovative televisual technologies and the ‘participatory’ point-of-view perspectives from the on-board cameras), specific and concrete instances of viewer engagement with these televised images were absent from my prior analysis. To ‘flesh out’ an analysis of mediated fandom, such examples are now required to demonstrate my own ‘engagement’ with the Formula One text as a fan, conceived within the theoretical framework I have just elaborated. Therefore, in this section on mediated fandom, two ‘generic’ examples of my televised Formula One viewing are provided to reveal some of the more specific practices and engagements that underpin my televised viewing as a fan.

It’s nearly midnight. The last few hours have seemed endless but now the evening is about to start. Bolting upright from my reclining position on the couch, I reach for the remote controls. As ‘we’ cross live to the Grand Prix I press record on my VCR and turn the volume up on the television. I hope my

neighbours are asleep or at least accustomed to the excess noise I generate on Sunday nights. While the commentators highlight key things to watch for, I leap across to my computer and ensure the website is running. The live timing screen pops up with all the names listed on the starting grid. I glance back at the television as the cars embark on their formation lap. I see Jacques' BMW for the first time. "He's so cool," I exclaim to myself, staring at his distinctive helmet; the bright blue, pink, yellow, green and red colours resplendent against the white backdrop of his car. Pride and expectation wells up inside me. "Let's go Jacques," I whisper, hopeful he can produce something today. I can't sit down, pacing back and forward between couch and computer, anticipating Jacques' start....

Returning to the edge of the couch I watch the light sequence begin. My focus is on Villeneuve's start from 10th. The lights fade. Springing to life, 22 cars explode off the grid. "Go JV!" Unsure if that was an internal thought, I catch myself yelling, "Yes. Go Jacques go!" as Jacques negotiates the first corner and battles with Trulli and Schumacher for position. The camera cuts to the front runners. Perched on the edge of my couch I am eager to know whether he is ahead of these two competitors. Leaping over to the computer I await the first sector times, while rapidly rechecking the on-screen televisual action. There is a BMW in the background but the focal point is the race leaders and I can't make out the helmet from this shot. Like a slot-machine spitting out coins, the computer instantly updates positions with a flurry of names and numbers leaping on the screen. P8. "Thataboy!!! C'mon Jacques!!" JV has jumped Heidfeld and Trulli. He is just behind Schumacher, but not by much...

Although a ‘generic’ account of a ‘typical’ viewing experience for myself, such an autoethnographic narrative offers an insight into both mediated fandom more broadly, and Formula One fandom specifically. One of the first insights this vignette provides is the solitary nature of my Formula One viewing practices. As I noted in Chapter Two, locality and place clearly impact on viewing televised Formula One in New Zealand, with a midnight start on Sunday nights for most European races not affording many opportunities for socialising or viewing in a communal setting. Such an occurrence goes against the significance of communal settings for fandom established both in the sport literature (e.g., Crawford, 2004; Eastman & Land, 1997; Sandvoss, 2003, 2005; Trujillo & Krizek, 1994; Wenner & Gantz, 1998) and increasingly being emphasised in more recent research on fan communities (e.g., Gray, Sandvoss & Harrington, 2007; Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 2006a, 2006b). Of course, that is not to say that all races have been viewed in solitude as, on occasion, I have met up friends (or they have joined me) to watch Grands Prix but the majority of my viewings have been alone (friends like to remind me that they have ‘real jobs’ to go to Monday mornings too). Of course, on a broader theoretical level, despite the absence of other people within the confines of the specific locality for the majority of my viewings, Formula One’s mediation through live screened images and the role of commentators work to transform the telecast into an event that I ‘share’ simultaneously with a large global audience. Thus, these processes hail, interpellate and position me as part of a collective and ‘imagined’ Formula One community (Althusser, 1977; Anderson, 1991) while facilitating my ‘shared’ reception and use of the dominant (televisual) Formula One text. This also provides, at a macro socio-cultural level, both a ‘structure’ and a communal element to my supposedly ‘isolated’ or ‘solitary’ viewing: the ITV global Formula One telecast. For example, through social

encounters with either other people in my locality (or through accessing Formula One internet sites) after the race, there is a single, dominant televised and global Formula One text that, collectively, as viewers (or internet users) ‘we’ understand, reflect on and can comment upon even if ‘our’ experience, memories, meanings and even uses or pleasures of that text differed.

However, on a micro-level, ‘my’ narrative reveals some discrepancies and specificity to my patterns of viewership. For example, while I am reliant upon, and both use and ‘share’ the dominant global televisual text, the attention I devote to this one text is often of a more diffused, dispersed or interactive form. This reflects but also differs from theories of the distracted *glance* when viewing television (e.g., Caldwell, 1995; Cubitt, 1984; Ellis, 1992; Gray, 2003), as my viewing is not distracted by either the specifics of my domestic setting (e.g., attending to domestic ‘chores’ or other family/household members while viewing), nor due to ‘channel surfing’ through other programming options, although I am clearly engaging in other activities while viewing. Rather, the diffused or dispersed attention is derived from the “‘*intense*’ relationship” (Hills, 2006, p. 100, italics in original) that I have with Jacques Villeneuve. As he is the explicit object of my attention during a Grand Prix, my attention is piqued as part of the televisual audience when either Villeneuve’s image or name is on offer (e.g., through screened images, commentary or graphics). However, the dominant global telecast also needs to continually hail, evoke and ‘work for’ my attention as an audience member (Cubitt, 2005a) due to my fragmented viewing practice of drawing on contemporaneous live timing from the internet. In fact, due to Villeneuve’s absent-present representation on televised coverage (elaborated in Chapter One), the primacy of my attention is devoted to the live timing screens on which Villeneuve is always present and, through my ‘cultural literacy’ in the

sport, I can garner a greater understanding of how he is performing in a given race than the televised coverage often permits (of course if Villeneuve retires from a race, live timing is no longer relevant and the televised coverage becomes my prime ‘screen of speed’ [Baudrillard, 2002] again).

It would be easy to overstate a degree of fan ‘agency’ here (as clearly live timing also becomes a ‘dominant’ text that I do not ‘control’) yet, through these diffused and distracted viewing processes, I am navigating specific media texts with the intensity of my attention orientated towards Villeneuve, often either reinforced by or in spite of whether the global telecast is actively facilitating such an engagement with him. Unfortunately, at this juncture, it is easy to fall into a celebratory trap for fandom as either an example of the ‘active’ audience or fan practices as resistant which the third wave of fan studies has sought to move on from. Nevertheless, assumptions about fan ‘agency’ will continually be examined in this chapter, specifically in relation to both the affective relationships and fan practices mapped through Grossberg’s (1992b) theory of affect. For now, a second vignette both reinforces the ideas traced thus far and offers further insights into my mediated fandom.

Lap 17. The cars are spreading out, although Schumacher is merely half a second ahead of Jacques. Playing amateur strategist, I am feverishly dissecting each sector time and the gaps to surrounding drivers in an attempt to deduce what fuel loads each driver is running in the race. The director has obviously noted their duel, cutting to a shot of Schumacher being pursued by Villeneuve. My focus switches to the television as I listen to the commentators and see JV attacking for position. Returning to the live timing, I see he is consistently improving his sector times. Hearing the commentators mention JV, my head swivels back towards the television. I feel a chill travel up the back of my spine as they refer to his strong

performances so far this season. They remind the viewers that ‘we’ are witnessing a tussle between two former world champions. With a broad smile I leap to my feet and clap as JV pulls out of Schumacher’s slipstream and lines up a pass. The images show JV deftly overtaking Schumacher in the second corner. “Yes,” I cheer, punching my clenched fist in the air. “He’s done it!” JV has got the place. I am ecstatic. JV is returning to form and the commentators have noticed, praising his efforts. I intently examine the times as the camera cuts to other race action. This duel is going to be close....

Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) suggest that fans are “those people who become particularly attached to certain programmes or stars within the context of relatively heavy mass media use” (p. 138; see also Drucker & Cathcart, 1994).

Clearly, with my complete reliance on mediation to ‘consume’ and follow Formula One, as well as my explicit focus on Villeneuve, this definition of fandom is applicable to my own practices. Moreover, the nature of my ‘attachment’ to a media star is reinforced through the work of numerous scholars who articulate the central role that stardom plays in attracting sport media audiences (Lines, 2001; Whannel, 1999, 2008), how mediation constructs and represents sport stardom (e.g., Andrews & Jackson, 2001; Boyle & Haynes, 2000; Brookes, 2002; Drucker, 1994; Rowe, 1995, 1999; Vande Berg, 1998; Whannel, 1992, 2002) and the broader ‘intimate’ (and economic) connections derived from mediated stardom and celebrity culture in contemporary society (e.g., Dyer, 1979, 1986; Holmes & Redmond, 2006; Hopkins, 2002; McDonald, 2000; Rojek, 2001; Sconce, 2007; Sturm, 2008; G. Turner, 2004). Unfortunately, however, often the research links such star/audience connections to commodification and the exploitation of stars (and of course, by implication, audiences too) for commercial

purposes, leaving the pleasures and levels of intimacy for audiences relatively unacknowledged (for a rare exception see Redmond, 2006). While I turn to a discussion of fandom and consumption shortly, the intimate connection facilitated through mediation requires further attention at this point.

Farred's (2002) account of his long distance love (LDL) for the Liverpool Football Club seems to encapsulate the 'intense' attachment to a particular media text/object that I have evoked in my second narrative. Seeking to explain his position, Farred (2002) argues that, "fandom will not do as a description of my relationship to Liverpool. LDL is what happens when you overidentify" (p. 9), before going on to suggest that his version of LDL is of "enduring love, blind, rock-solid faith, and abiding passion" (p. 10). Farred evokes a sense of verisimilitude with 'my' experiences by revealing a long distance love which has been fostered through mediation, conducted in 'solitude' (see earlier critique) while being experienced as an intensely passionate and emotional investment for over 30 years. Despite the duration of my fandom having been shorter, aided by attendance at a sprinkling of live Grand Prix events and constructed through an attachment to a specific star rather than a team, his passionate and emotional attachment resonates for me. Indeed, one could arguably read into my two narratives aspects of Farred's own experiences of televised fandom, especially when he cautions that "it is best not to watch Liverpool games with me, not unless you are as pathologically invested or exceedingly generous with the mentally unbalanced" (Farred, 2002, p. 13). While his 'disclaimer' is clearly also intended as humorous, the pathological link Farred makes has negative associations with earlier assumptions of 'deviant' fans and continues to be reproduced in accounts of 'obsessive' football fans in both popular (e.g., Hornby, 1992) and academic texts (e.g., Rowe, 2000, 2003); assumptions which require redress.

Nevertheless, on a primary level, notions of ‘overidentification’ or the ‘obsessed’ fan can be read into my own practices and the ‘excessive’ orientation I have towards Villeneuve both inside and outside of mediated Grand Prix coverage. Arguably, my girlfriend of six years, referred to here as Tina, experienced the ‘intensities’ of my fandom first-hand and most profoundly during our relationship. Images and narratives of Villeneuve were an everyday part of ‘our’ relationship; with news, updates and personalised ‘Grand Prix’ reports regularly discussed, while even (often mocking) future plans incorporating home-built go-kart tracks and potential baby names of ‘little Jacques’ were mooted but dismissed by her outright. This is not to overstate my ‘obsession’ though; rather, it is reflective of the gendered politics and gentle teasing that play out in relationships. That is, Tina took an interest in Formula One and accommodated my ‘Villeneuve focus’ despite not being a fan, while Villeneuve and Formula One became subjects or objects for both of us to invest in to varying degrees through discussions, jokes and other activities.¹ To further develop the ‘obsessed’ fan layering being traced here, I often wondered whether Tina avoided watching Formula One with me. While race viewing was often not practical for Tina due to her early start on Mondays for work, I am sure the few viewing experiences we had together were blighted by my inability to sit still or remain calm during a race (as is demonstrated in my vignettes). With Formula One coverage, Tina saw the full range of emotions I went through as I interacted with the television (and Jacques); cheering loudly and bounding around the room during a good performance, castigating Jacques when he made a mistake, lashing out by kicking or punching furniture during misfortune, or needing consoling as I sulked in the corner due to a poor performance or another blown engine robbing him of points. No doubt she was accustomed to the intensity of my passion for Jacques, although

she often reminded me, “He can’t hear you!” Indeed, reflective of the allegedly ‘obsessed’ fan, I have a nagging suspicion that my viewing practices were an emotional roller coaster she preferred not to ride.

However, linking the excesses of my own fandom to notions of ‘overidentification’, ‘obsessiveness’ and the pathological as sketched above does not seem to take us very far. What is apparent in my second narrative (and implied in the relationship with Tina) are emotive and passionate dimensions that, while clearly ‘intense’, are not usefully explained in terms of deviance or pathology (i.e., are not symptomatic of asocial, antisocial or potentially dangerous or harmful behaviours more generally). Underpinning my fan vignettes are the mediated relationship and, particularly, the mediated engagement with diverse media texts (television and the internet) and media objects (Villeneuve and Formula One). While I will develop and map Grossberg’s (1992a, 1992b) concept of affect in due course as a means for exploring ‘pleasure’ and emotional investment in popular cultural forms, a framework for theorising the mediated engagement with texts and objects is offered through the concept of embodiment.

At a basic level, the media can be conceived as ‘extensions of self’ (McLuhan, 1964) which expand our perceptory senses through the amplified functions particular media offer our embodied selves (e.g., our eyes, cameras and the resultant enhanced perception of vision through visual images; or our ears, audio technologies and their implications for hearing and sound). Unfortunately, however, despite conceptualising the media as an extended nervous system, McLuhan (1964) rejects an all encompassing theory of embodiment; suggesting, rather, that the physical stresses endured through these extensions of self require ‘self-amputation’ to block out such a physical overloading. For example, in our contemporary mediated environment, we regularly rely on ‘self-amputation’ to

‘switch off’ or ‘tune out’ from the visual and audio ‘barrage’ confronting our senses in spaces such as shopping centres or malls (see also Sandvoss, 2005). Clearly, within my own fandom, an array of media forms (metatexts) afford my entry into and experience of Formula One and/or Villeneuve. Thus, although both of my vignettes have centred on television as the prime Formula One media text (as well as the overlapping salience of the internet), my fandom is more broadly reliant on an array of metatexts; such as magazines, newspapers, video games, posters, images, models/toys and even text messages or emails (e.g., the often abbreviated Formula One conversations with Tina via those last two technologies). This process of ‘transmediality’ (i.e., drawing on a diverse range of media) is recognised as commonplace in contemporary fan practices (see Hills, 2002, 2006; Jenkins, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Sandvoss, 2005), while other authors have suggested that new media technologies, such as the internet and video games, offer important contributions to the representation and experiential reception of mediated sport for viewers and, especially, sport fans (e.g., see Crawford, 2004; Crawford & Rutter, 2006, 2007; Rowe, 2004). Thus, at a basic level, I suggest that my processes of transmediality are experienced not only across but also *through* these media in terms of the embodied, sensory and perceptual functions they contain and enhance (McLuhan, 1964).

Film phenomenologists offer a more advanced conceptualisation of mediated engagement and embodiment, suggesting that film evokes and involves our carnal senses (Sobchack, 2004) through processes which reproduce modalities of embodied experience and sensory perception. Thus, for Marks (2000, 2002), film has a skin which, through its materiality and circulation, we also inhabit, feel and touch; while Sobchack (1992) considers film to possess a body and accords “the signifying activity of embodied vision” (p. xvii) with the power to invoke our

carnal thoughts (Sobchack, 2004). These experiential, sensory and embodied elements afford an explanation for the sense of engagement I have when drawing on different Formula One metatexts, especially the live televised coverage or when playing Formula One video games. In particular, both authors suggest that the relationship between the viewer and image is based on a concept of mutual embodiment (Marks, 2000, 2002; Sobchack, 1992, 2004) which, as I noted in Chapter Five, is a fundamental aspect of the televised and gaming point-of-view perspectives and the viewer/player positionings these provide. Additionally, a sense of mutual embodiment underpins my watching of live telecasts. For example, in my narrative accounts of ‘viewing’ the screened image, I am also ‘engaging’ with the representation of Formula One and Jacques by evoking an embodied response. Hence, the celebratory gestures, constant motion and other bodily sensations (e.g., the chill up the back of my spine) are embodied responses to the images and mediations, while constituting part of my engagement with the materiality or ‘skin’ of the Formula One media text. Moreover, these embodied practices are not only drawn upon as a response to the screened image, but are evoked due to the specific intensity of my engagement with the mediation.

Arguably, such carnal senses, ‘intensities’ and mediated/embodied engagements can be located in and theorised through Grossberg’s (1992b) concept of affect. That is, Villeneuve is invested in and made to ‘matter’ through a broader set of affective relations which require my navigation of socio-cultural and economic structures, popular culture, a plethora of media texts and other temporal and spatial dynamics and dimensions which will be traced in due course. Significantly, here, we have mapped a first layer for fandom: exploring the intensities of mediated engagement that influence, shape and constitute a key aspect of contemporary fan practices. Furthermore, we have intimated that the

body and mutual embodiment 'occupy' a central role in processes of mediated engagement while becoming a prime site for fan intensities and investments through notions of affect. While affect will be more fully conceptualised later in this chapter, our attention now turns to a second layering for fandom; the role of consumption in contemporary fan practices.

Commercialisation, Commodification and Fans as Consumers

As a primary reading, it would be easy to suggest that, through my fandom, I have become a 'duped' consumer. Indeed, most days on campus I can be seen in Formula One or Jacques Villeneuve merchandise which, often branded with transnational corporate logos, potentially reduces my display of fandom to a marketing ploy for these companies (e.g., I literally and 'voluntarily' become a walking billboard on their behalf). Listing this merchandise reveals the extent of my consumption; purchasing (over a ten year period) over 33 items of clothing, plus model cars, helmets, flags, bags, calendars and posters since 1999. In addition, there is the burgeoning collection of other Formula One materials, such as books, magazines, video games, video tapes and DVDs which, of course, I have also tried to 'legitimise' as sources for my research and essential for my role as an academic-fan (see discussion of sources in Chapter Two).

Consumer Society

On a macro-social level, many scholars have explored the nature of contemporary consumer society (Bocock, 1993, 1994; Clarke, 2003; Cohen & Rustky, 2005; Featherstone, 1991, 2007; Horne, 2006; Slack, 2004; Whannel, 2008). Thus, dominated by capitalism and its associated practices of both commercialisation (e.g., the socio-economic processes that turn a sport, such as Formula One, into a business) and commodification (e.g., transforming Formula One into a set of

commodities, such as t-shirts, caps and other assorted merchandise and paraphernalia, for exchange and profit), the explanatory notion of a consumer society assumes that a society previously orientated around production is now reliant upon and dominated more by the model of consumption (Baudrillard, 1998). Therefore, the capitalist processes of commercialisation and commodification have combined to make consumption, not production, the new model in contemporary culture (Baudrillard, 1975). Furthermore, for social individuals, the work ethic is no longer geared towards production but, rather, towards having the necessary means (and compulsion) to consume, especially in one's leisure time and activities. Not surprisingly, numerous authors suggest that, collectively, human 'agents' become mere consumers, as we are driven by the need to consume (Bocock, 1993, 1994; Gabriel & Lang, 1995; Gottdiener, 2000), seduced by the possession of material goods and their commercially derived meanings (Baudrillard, 1990b; Featherstone, 1991) and, in the process, that we become empty receptacles of desire (Eagleton, 1996). For example, Giddens (1991), notes that in contemporary times, "to a greater or lesser degree, the project of self becomes translated into one of the possession of desired goods and the pursuit of artificially framed styles of life" (p. 198), while Lyon (1994) suggests that, "the postmodern is rightly associated with a society where consumer lifestyles and mass consumption dominate the waking lives of its members" (p. 56).

However, Baudrillard views consumption as a much more complex and varied phenomenon than many of these other scholars. For example, in relation to the profusion and packaging of household appliances, he notes that, (1998)

The shop-window, the advertisement, the manufacturer and the *brand name*, which here plays a crucial role, impose a

coherent, collective vision, as though they were an almost indissociable totality, a series. This is, then, no longer a sequence of mere objects, but a chain of *signifiers*, in so far as all of these signify one another reciprocally as part of a more complex super-object, drawing the consumer into a series of more complex motivations. (p. 27, italics in original)

In particular, Baudrillard (1998) observes that contemporary consumption operates both as a process of signification and communication and as a process of classification and social differentiation. Therefore, integral to Baudrillard's thinking is the recognition that consumption is not merely about the payment for and acquisition of consumer goods but that these practices are implicated in a broader structure and range of processes that shape consumption as a determining cultural force in contemporary times. Thus, in this consumer culture, fashion and tastes are eclectic, opportunities seemingly endless and new market niches constantly emerge, each with underpinning and overlapping consumptive structures, processes and signifying practices. Moreover, transnational corporations reflect these multi-variable structures; organising and deploying their pool of labour through networked configurations (Castells, 1996), forming influential strategic alliances and mergers, while ownership is often confined to a relatively few major companies that wield immense power in their specific industries/fields (e.g., Time-Warner and News Corporation in the global media industry; Nike and Adidas in the global sport-apparel industry).

With the rise of global conglomerates and networks of communication and information, advertising in the twentieth-century became a dominant new language through which we, the supposed masses, have been compelled to

consume (e.g., Jackson & Andrews, 2005; Odih, 2007; Poster, 1990; Pountain & Robins, 2000; Savan, 1993; Slade, 2002; Williams, 1993). Baudrillard (1998) notes more subtly that ‘mega-corporations’ attempt to forge links with ‘micro-consumers’ through the use of personalisation within advertising and that ultimately such attempts at individuation are used to construct difference (social, semiotic, communicative, etc; see also Schirato & Webb, 2004). He argues that, (1998)

Advertising as a whole has no *meaning*. It merely conveys significations. Its significations (and the behaviours they call forth) are never *personal*: they are differential; they are all marginal and combinatorial. In other words, they are of the order of *the industrial production of differences* - and this might, I believe, serve as the most cogent definition of the *system of consumption*. (p. 88, italics in original)

In this way, the specific consumable commodities are judged according to appearance and design, not their use or exchange values. Hence, the practice of consumption takes on a symbolic or sign value, with Baudrillard (1998) conceptualising a shift from economic to social and cultural definitions of class through this “social logic of differentiation” (p. 91). Other authors have also recognised the significant role symbolic consumption plays in displaying social status and imparting levels of distinction and difference (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984, 1990, 1993; Weber, 1968). For example, Veblen’s (1926) notion of *conspicuous consumption* is indicative of how consumption practices are strategically considered and used as markers for displaying one’s social status and worth. Veblen critiqued the practices of *les nouveaux riches* (new rich) in the United States during the late nineteenth-century, noting how they consumed to gain

prestige and social acceptance. Thus, consumption was being used as a conspicuous act, as *les nouveaux riches* were both being seen and wanting to be seen procuring symbolic and status-laden products of value, as well as seeking recognition for the distinctions and differences that obtaining these goods suggest (see also Wearing and Wearing [2000] on the use of smoking by adolescent women to impart status and identity).²

However, Baudrillard (1998) rejects Veblen's central thesis, arguing that, "it is important to grasp that this personalization, this pursuit of status and social standing, are all based on signs. That is to say, they are all based not on objects or goods as such, but on *differences*" (p. 90, italics in original). Thus, according to Baudrillard, Veblen overstates the 'ostentatious display' of actual consumer goods, while differentiation provides a broader awareness of how specific practices of consumption also have a symbolic value (e.g., through specific processes Baudrillard identifies, such as 'underconsumption', 'anti-consumption', 'metaconsumption' and 'inconspicuous consumption'). We will return to notions of differentiation and conspicuous consumption shortly through a discussion of Formula One's expensive merchandise which, I will argue, becomes a symbolic marker for financial, social and 'Formula One insider' status through the practices of differentiation and the acts of conspicuous consumption deployed by fans; but with Baudrillard's cautionary observations also very much in mind.

Sport Fans as Consumers

Not surprisingly, with assertions of a contemporary consumer society, many scholars have suggested that fans are often 'duped' and/or primarily operate as consumers (e.g., see Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Crawford, 2004; Guttman, 1986; Hills, 2002; Sandvoss, 2005; Schirato, 2007b). For example,

Giulianotti's (2002) taxonomy of spectator identities in football suggests that 'fans' are consumers, market-centred and develop brand loyalty. In particular, Giulianotti (2002) notes that while "the fan is hot in terms of identification; the sense of intimacy is strong and is a key element of the individual's self" (p. 36), this identification is "authenticated most readily through the consumption of related products" (p. 36). Gruneau and Whitson (1993) provide a similar viewpoint on fans, suggesting that they are addressed as 'free-floating consumers rather than customers with assumed loyalties' (p. 243). Thus, despite acknowledging the intimate or emotional investment of fans, many authors render (sport) fans as primarily reliant upon economic investments to display their levels of support. Such practices are often also paradoxical for, although fans develop 'brand loyalties' to particular teams and/or stars (Giulianotti, 2002; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993), their market-orientation makes such 'loyalty' fickle, ephemeral and often dependent on either the particular consumer items that they can procure or that are fashionable at a given time (e.g., Michael Jordan and Chicago Bulls merchandise in the 1990s, or David Beckham football apparel in the 2000s).

Other authors provide a framework for locating and understanding the significance of consumption in fan practices. For example, Crawford (2004) notes that fans and, in a broader socio-cultural sense, audiences, at some level all *consume* sport. Crawford (2004) suggests that this consumption occurs in a myriad of ways (through media, technologies, attendance, consumer goods and everyday life) which do not necessarily determine, dupe, subsume or transform fans into 'powerless' consumers. Moreover, he observes that consumption plays an important role in how we define and make sense of our 'self', as well as distinguish our 'self' from others. Crawford (2004) is also explicit about the connection that sport-related goods have for fans, noting that these goods allow

sport supporters to “display their identity and membership to a particular supporter community” (p. 114). Through a layered analysis, such displays potentially can be explained through the three theoretical concepts of narcissism, conspicuous consumption and cultural literacy (such ‘literacy’ will be explained in due course). Rather than pursuing a strictly psychoanalytical approach that links fans and their objects of fandom to ‘transitional’ phases or internalised theories of projection or introjection, understanding narcissism as a process of self reflection in a broader socio-cultural and mediated context has proven to be more useful (e.g., see Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Hills, 2002; Sandvoss, 2005). In particular, Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) suggest that narcissism underpins and shapes our ongoing performance of media consumption given ‘our’ everyday performances as an always *diffused* audience engaging with media spectacles. Therefore, narcissism constitutes the public display of performance as *diffused* audiences in quotidian settings, with the visual signifiers of fan consumption (i.e., the items procured and displayed) essential to such performative (and narcissistic) displays. This performative display of consumer goods has clear links with Veblen’s (1926) concept of conspicuous consumption outlined earlier, as he asserts that people strategically use consumption as a conspicuous and symbolic act to display their social status and worth (see also Baudrillard, 1998; Rojek, 2000; Wearing & Wearing, 2000).

Thus, at this stage, we have identified and briefly sketched the social, cultural and economic ‘functions’ and implications underpinning the consumption practices and use and display of consumer goods by fans. However, rather than rendering this as an abstract and underdeveloped explanation, the application of these concepts within a specific Formula One context is needed. Recalling my own first experience of ‘live’ Formula One provides a useful starting point.

Consumer Goods as Cultural Capital: 'Authentic' Team Gear and 'Insider' Status within the Formula One Fan Community

Friday, Practice Day, 2002 Australian Grand Prix.

I rush through the gates and make my way towards the Fangio stand. Wearing my 1999 Villeneuve cap and JV t-shirt, I'm feeling pretty good, making it clear who I've come to support. I confrontationally return the stare of any rival team or driver fan. 'Why are some of these dickheads wearing V8 Supercars clothing?' I ponder. 'Who cares about the Holden/Ford battle? This ain't about the V8 races, all their cars are shit! I can't wait for the Formula One cars to come out on track and show them what real speed is'. As I press on I begin to feel slightly underdressed. Scything through the vast crowds, I observe the number of people in team shirts and gear. Just like the teams themselves wear. A guy in a Benetton F1 shirt walks past. 'Man he looks so cool. They all look like authentic F1 people'. An easy decision is made: 'I've got to get myself a team shirt!'

After the first thrilling day of seeing live Formula One cars in person, I join the masses on the tram back to the city. A nondescript shop near Spencer Street Station seems to have attracted a throng of F1 attendees. Pressing through the sweaty sea of bodies, I strike gold. Inside the shop they have a rack of team shirts, although I quickly become agitated. 'What's with all this Ferrari gear, is there any BAR stuff? Aha, here's one. This looks like last year's shirt. Shit! Is that how much it costs? I guess I won't be getting any other gear'. I know I can only afford one but I've got to have it. Bubbling inside, I take the shirt up to the counter. Since I'm parting with (Aust)\$300, the guy inquires if I want to see other 'exclusive' team gear not on display before purchasing. I don't hesitate to say yes and am ushered into a cramped back room. Like a child in a candy store, my eyes

devour the items in front of me. Unfortunately, most of the items are Ferrari but I look at what BAR gear there is. I see a signed JV cap, but the asking price is nearly equivalent to the shirt. I contemplate buying this but politely decline, purchasing the BAR shirt instead. I can't wait to wear this at the track tomorrow.

Reflecting on my first 'live' experience of Formula One, the symbolic role and value of 'authentic' team gear is evident within this narrative. As a first layering, my purchase of the BAR shirt is consistent with Veblen's (1926) concept of conspicuous consumption. Procuring and displaying this team shirt operates as a symbolic marker; signifying an economic status (the expense of the item), in addition to a social distinction based on perceived social status and worth, especially when related to Baudrillard's (1998) notion of the symbolic value of consumptive practices and goods as a means for social differentiation. There is clearly also a second, self-reflective display of self to others through the BAR shirt, reinforcing the performative and narcissistic dimensions of consumer goods used to associate the fan-self with his/her particular object(s) of fandom. More significantly, these two theoretical concepts facilitate the recognition of a 'hierarchical' layering of fandom within the Formula One community, as the ownership and display of 'authentic' Formula One gear seems to bestow a 'status' on these fans/consumers. Those who can afford to (or chose to) invest in this practice create an elite subsection within the Formula One fandom community, which I label 'Formula One insider' status.

Crawford's (2004) thoughts on the use of consumer goods at live sport events endorse how I perceive the 'Formula One insider' status to operate. He suggests that, (2004)

It is through consumer goods that the ‘fan’ can increase their knowledge, and more importantly, display their commitment through conversation and the consumer goods they own and display, which allows them to progress along their individual career path and feel increasingly integrated within their chosen supporter community. (p. 81)

For ‘real’ fans of Formula One, the ability to locate (there are limited outlets for Formula One merchandise in both Australia and especially New Zealand), afford financially (the exorbitant costs already noted) and socially display this ‘authentic’ gear in public (and primarily Formula One-specific) spaces accords a sense of belonging to or integration within a ‘Formula One insider’ community. One key way that members of the ‘insider’ community display their fandom, knowledge and interest in the sport is through their purchases. Semiotic and cultural relations also come into force, with logos and symbols used to buttress this display and permeate the encoded knowledge (Hall, 1996) inscribed in ‘Formula One insider’s’ merchandise. In this manner, logos and symbols become a form of ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986) for fans, allowing them to recognise and/or reveal the team and/or driver that the ‘insider’ is supporting through adornments such as team, sponsor or driver symbols: for example, for driver-specific fans, the racing number, national flag, helmet design and/or signature on merchandise and paraphernalia. Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital is significant for theorising this ‘Formula One insider’ status and fandom more broadly in terms of cultural literacy.

Recalling the overview of Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, dispositions and distinctive cultural fields traced in Chapter Two, we are reminded that it is within these diverse fields that an individual’s habitus takes on either an enhanced or

lessened value, based primarily on an individual's social relations, position and exchange within a specific cultural field. In particular, an individual's symbolic capital (prestige, status, authority), cultural capital (culturally-valued attributes, skills, tastes) and his/her ability to read and engage with the rules, discourses and knowledge of the field (cultural literacy) influence the 'subject' position of the individual, as well as his/her level of power within a specific cultural field (see Harker, Mahar & Wilkes, 1990; Jenkins, 2002; Schirato & Yell, 1996; Webb, Schirato & Danaher, 2002). This notion of cultural literacy is significant for the forthcoming argument, for as Schirato and Webb (2004) note, it implies "not just familiarity with a body of knowledge; it also presupposes an understanding of how to think and see in a manner that is appropriate to the imperatives and contexts of the moment" (p. 18). Collectively, these ideas are evident in Formula One fan practices. For example, the 'Formula One insider' status ascribes a degree of prestige and authority (symbolic capital) to those fans who procure and display 'authentic' team gear inscribed with the 'correct' team and/or driver logos (a form of cultural capital), and who are culturally literate in their readings, discussions and demonstrations of Formula One's forms of cultural capital (e.g., through 'authentic' merchandise and being highly knowledgeable in race strategies, driver statistics, team information, etc.).

These forms of capital and literacy also reflect the hierarchies that operate more broadly within fan communities. Although primarily focusing on sport, media and regimes of subjectivity, Schirato (2007b) identifies two key means for distinguishing sports fans from sports spectators which have links with the ideas traced thus far. Schirato (2007b) suggests that "sports fans become literate with regard to the field precisely because they consider that the 'game' of watching and seeing with a knowledgeable and cultivated eye is worth playing" (p. 96), while

also noting that particular spectators (which presumably can be labelled as fans) “were ‘emotionally committed consumers of sports’ whose (visual) experience of the game was filtered through or at least inflected by that emotional attachment” (p. 96). Thus, using these distinctions, we can argue that the ‘spectator’ may not only be less emotionally invested in the sport before them but also less able to ‘read’ this than the literate and attached ‘fan’. Drawing on Bourdieu (1991), Schirato (2007b) offers the binary of casuals (or ‘laymen’ in Bourdieu’s terms) and connoisseurs in contemporary sport spectatorship (either televisual or in attendance), which seems to reinforce the distinctions noted. That is, the connoisseur operates akin to what we have labelled a fan by finding something significant within a specific sport (and its viewership), forming an emotional attachment and being able to comprehend its subtle nuances compared to the casual spectator whose interest and identification is more ephemeral. As a Formula One-specific example, the ‘casual spectator’ may find the repetitive lapping of a circuit by indistinguishable driver/team combinations banal and pointless compared to the emotionally invested ‘fan’ (or connoisseur) revelling in this trackside/televised viewership and his/her recognition of specific drivers and/or teams, as well as the minutiae of Formula One (e.g., how specific lap times relate to the overall performance). In a more simplistic manner, Schirato (2007b) correctly observes that fans place a value and/or worth in sport as a cultural field which is demonstrable through their practices (e.g., as spectators, consumers, etc.) while, clearly, the traced distinctions relate predominantly to the varying degrees of cultural capital and literacy that fans (or connoisseurs) and (casual) spectators possess.

Returning to the concept of ‘Formula One insider’ status, self-evidently this is a version of what we would label fandom more generally, while the ‘insider’

status operates as a form of symbolic capital in relation to the vagaries of both cultural capital and cultural literacy that Formula One attendees possess. Derived from personal observations, a brief sketch of distinctions between Formula One attendees at the Australian Grand Prix (2002-2004; 2006) will afford a specific site for analysis of the 'Formula One insider' in operation. First, there is the 'casual' attendee relatively illiterate in Formula One who can be overheard in the grandstands completely 'lost' in deciphering the race order, strategies, or what is actually 'happening' in a given session (e.g., flummoxed by the fuel-burning phase of a third qualifying session in 2006 in which cars continually lap to reduce their fuel loads rather than set competitive times). Similarly, these 'casual' attendees are observable in shops 'being illiterate' in what or who particular merchandise refers to and are often misinformed in order to make a sale (e.g., I observed a man purchase a supposed 'Fernando Alonso/Renault' t-shirt in Melbourne in 2006 when the logos and symbols - racing number and helmet design - clearly referenced his teammate, Giancarlo Fisichella). Second, there are also the V8 Supercars fans in Australia who attend the event primarily to follow the V8 support races, wearing this team gear and enthusiastically supporting those races with little knowledge or interest in the Formula One sessions themselves (the 'fans' derided in my earlier narrative). Finally, there are the 'corporate' attendees who, although resplendent in particular team regalia, often demonstrate low cultural literacy (or uninterest) in the sporting side of Formula One (e.g., rules, drivers, teams, etc.) and, arguably, are often only present for the 'free' hospitality and entertainment as corporate guests. These three observable 'types' of Formula One attendees reflect variations of the 'casual' spectator identified and discussed by Bourdieu (1991) and Schirato (2007b).

Conversely, my argument is that the 'Formula One insider' operates as a culturally literate, emotionally attached fan who acquires symbolic capital through his/her cultural capital and literacy. Hence, 'Formula One insiders' utilise conspicuous consumption through their purchases and (narcissistic) displays as they are highly literate in recognising and articulating markers of social differentiation and distinction. Of course these symbolic displays and practices are easily understood or 'read' by other, culturally literate, 'Formula One insiders' when ascertaining the value of such forms of cultural and symbolic capital. Thus, in my own consumption practices, I am offering a strategic demonstration of literacy by procuring only Villeneuve-specific merchandise which, although I know may be undiscernible when displayed for the majority of attendees (although perhaps a team association will be made – e.g., BAR in 2002), can be read, interpreted and understood by the culturally literate 'Formula One insider' (even if the object of fandom differs). Clearly, time and place also have a role in this process too, for Crawford's (2004) observations, quoted earlier, emphasise the role of the sporting venue in constructing the sense of community and belonging associated with consumer goods. Therefore, my wearing of Villeneuve clothing is likely to confer limited recognition or levels of cultural literacy when worn on the University of Waikato campus or around Hamilton city (except, perhaps, at a basic dismissive level of being a 'duped' consumer or 'co-opted' commodity). However, with the exception of the majority of the 'illiterate' attendees outlined, when worn and 'displayed' at either Albert Park or within the Melbourne CBD over the Australian Grand Prix weekend, there is an expectation that 'Formula One insiders' will read and recognise the explicit link to Villeneuve in my merchandise. Thus, value is also ascribed to the 'authenticity' of these goods and I perceive 'authentic' team gear to be socially, culturally, economically

and, of course, symbolically important within the Formula One sport fandom community³ and a means to acquiring ‘insider’ status, albeit given some contextual variations.

Thus far, we have examined the role of consumer goods in Formula One fan consumption, noting the significance of the ‘authentic’ team gear for structuring a hierarchal ‘insider’ status within the Formula One fan community. To offer an additional theoretical ‘layering’ to consumption in relation to specific Formula One fan practices, we can turn to the Grand Prix venue as a specific site and context for Formula One fan consumption.

The Grand Prix as a Public Site for Fan Consumption and Commodification

Crawford (2004) and Rinehart (1998) have suggested that with the excessive commercialisation of live sporting events (through entertainment, merchandise and enhancing the spectacle) live sport becomes a commodified ‘experience’ with events intended to “make the ‘consumer’ feel like a ‘fan’” (Crawford, 2004, p. 81). Thus, Crawford (2004) suggests, “sport venues become increasingly geared towards creating an ‘experience’ for the paying public to consume” (p. 79). Grands Prix are marketed as an ‘experience’, with many of the sport’s popular narratives traced in Chapter Three, most notably the spectacle of risk, racing, stardom and gendered notions of ‘glamour’, drawn upon to sell attendance to consumers and/or fans. Of course, given the ephemeral nature of races around global localities, the ‘event’ is also evident in marketing and press coverage that emphasises the significance of the transitory Formula One ‘circus’ through parochial, nationalistic and global discourses (e.g., with local press coverage often repeating the elitist and ‘pinnacle’ popular narratives discussed in Chapter Three, usually also underpinned by a degree of parochial pride in staging the race).

Furthermore, Rinehart (1998) suggests that the commodification of the 'experience' is central to sport tourism, observing that for those who travel to and attend live sport, "it is as if, for many, the collection of the experience, not the experience itself, has become paramount" (Rinehart, 1998, p. 16). Such a process has also been described by Grossberg (1992a) as the 'hyperconsumerist' sensibilities of fans, in which consumer pleasure is ingrained in the "compulsive consumption of the mass media" (p. 56). This, according to Grossberg (1992a), makes the *act* of consumption, rather than *what* is being consumed, most significant for consumers (e.g., a collector who enjoys the process of collecting far more than the objects collected). Within Formula One, attendees and/or fans are obviously interpellated as consumers, while being afforded the opportunity to operate as hyperconsumerist collectors. The Grand Prix (both as 'experience' and 'event') is commodified through an array of official merchandising that allows attendees to 'collect the experience' and confirm that 'they were there' long after the event (e.g., I still have Australian Grand Prix t-shirts for 2002 and 2003, even if the materiality of 'memory' has faded more quickly than the fabric of cotton). This also underscores Rinehart's (1998) notion that often the "markers of the experience serve to replace the actual experience" (p. 16) and my own 'collecting' of experiences (e.g., procuring merchandise, filming events and keeping souvenirs, such as Grand Prix and airline tickets) can serve to displace the 'real' experience itself. Additionally, my own practices both at the track and within the Melbourne CBD (as well as Montreal in 2005) during Grand Prix weekends demonstrate 'my' hyperconsumerist pleasure in 'collecting' Villeneuve-specific merchandise. In particular, the Grand Prix venue provided a specific temporal moment and spatial site for Formula One consumption that, otherwise, was generally unavailable for myself (e.g., there are no Formula One outlets in New

Zealand) and less fettered in terms of a variety of merchandise, sizes and prices (when compared to internet sites). In many respects, some of the hyperconsumerist pleasure was in locating and procuring these items (as my earlier narrative pertaining to buying a BAR shirt intimated). However, despite actively seeking such merchandise, my 'pleasure' and emotional investment in the consumed item(s) is as symbolic and cultural capital aligned to the object of my fandom; that is, the pleasure resides in acquiring 'symbolic' Villeneuve items, not solely in the act of consumption itself.

On a macro-social level, Schirato (2007b) suggests that the mediated and commercialised dynamics of contemporary sport have also constructed spectators/fans as commodities. He notes that, (2007b)

Whereas at the beginning of modern professional sport the value of the game as commodity is largely attested to by the crowd it draws, by the end of the twentieth century this is reversed – the value of the spectators as commodity (television viewers, passionate spectators/fans that create noise and atmosphere) is to some extent predicated on the game (hence the idea of television delivering up Super Bowl or World Cup final audiences to advertisers). (p. 90)

Schirato is making an important link to mediation here, noting the often-guaranteed televised audience being sold to advertisers associated with specific sports (e.g., Formula One's assumed large, global audience discussed in preceding chapters). More salient for our present purposes is his second notion of the performative role of spectators/fans in attendance at the game. As media consumers of sport we primarily see, experience and understand what constitutes 'live' or attending spectators/fans through their mediated representation.

Therefore, it is through mediated images of sport (particularly the televisual) that we, in turn, learn patterns of behaviour for our own performances as fans (or spectators) at live events (Crawford, 2004; Rinehart, 1998; Schirato, 2007a, 2007b; Siegel, 2002). For example, when we watch a televised game of football, rugby or cricket, we are provided with images of ‘real’ fans; that is, live attendees dressed in various regalia, reacting to on-field action yet also creating their own performances through crowd activities (e.g., Mexican waves), engagements with mediated aspects (music, large screen displays, etc.) and attempts to be seen on television. When we attend live events we reproduce similar performances through our display and participation which is derived from these preceding images of fandom (and will be recycled by future attendees).⁴ Through its constant reproduction and seeming lack of a specific origin, fandom becomes hyperreal in a Baudrillardian sense, as “the real is not only what can be reproduced, but *that which is always already reproduced*, the hyperreal” (Baudrillard, 1983b, p. 146, italics in original).

Formula One offers two points of distinction due to the fan being less prominent than on many other major televised sports. First and foremost, the fan contribution to the ‘atmosphere’ identified by Schirato (2007b) is less obvious in Formula One given the incessant pitch and timbre of the cars drowning out crowd noises (e.g., chants, reactions, celebrations, etc.). Thus, the simultaneous ‘eruption’ and response of crowds to significant moments of play in other sports is seldomly audible in Formula One (e.g., only occasionally crowd cheers are heard for a significant change of position and, given the largest grandstands and crowd numbers are often on the pit-straight, these are most notable when it occurs during a pit-stop). Second, while most televised sport coverage focuses on the on-field action, the use of sweeping crowd shots and, especially, reaction shots in many

sports often draws on crowd reactions to specific on-field action; for example, the recycled image of fans cheering for a boundary hit in cricket, the rugby try or the netball goal. In contrast, Formula One telecasts tend to remain focused on the track action for the entire race which is, on average, approximately one hour and 30 minutes in duration. During this race coverage, Formula One telecasts seldom incorporate crowd reaction shots, only providing extensive crowd shots pre- and post-race (e.g., the anticipation and finale shots) while, additionally, Formula One usually contains only fleeting images of crowds during the race through framing which foregrounds the cars from cameras at a distance to the track (see also Whannel, 1992).⁵ Thus, the image of Formula One fandom and its model for reproduction as an attendee is less pronounced than for other sports, due both to the absence-presence of the attending Formula One fan and the duration of a sustained on-track televisual framing of the cars, as explored in detail in the previous chapters.

Hyperfandom – Fandom as Inauthentic Consumption?

If television is less effective in constructing a hyperreal model for Formula One fandom, the ideas (and ‘my’ narrative) pertaining to authentic’ team gear as forms of cultural and symbolic capital through conspicuous consumptive practices and narcissistic displays must have a broader significance for Formula One fandom. Giulianotti (2002) has conceptualised the ‘hypercommodification’ of contemporary football, in which global processes, flows and the exchange of mediation and commercialisation have intensified the commodification of world football (see also Sandvoss, 2003). Applying hypercommodification to the domain of sport merchandising reveals the increasing range of commodified items available that have little connection to the actual object or subject of

commodification. For example, there is a proliferation of Manchester United or New York Yankees consumer items that increasingly seem detached from the actual club, sport or a sense of fandom but, rather, seem to circulate in either a fashion and/or collector's realm (Crawford, 2004; Grossberg, 1992a). Formula One seems to merge the three themes of hyperreality, hypercommodification and hyperconsumerist sensibilities into a new theoretical conceptualisation, here defined as *hyperfandom*. In *hyperfandom*, the fandom for an object, individual or team is expedited by these commercialised, commodified and mediated opportunities, extending fandom to an act of hyperconsumption that locates fandom in the realm of hypercommodification. In this sense, fandom also becomes hyperreal, as the fan concurrently reinterprets his/her affection as a fan within a process of continually recognising and reproducing this fandom to the point where the act of reproduction supersedes the origin of affection. Supported by the processes of hypercommodification and hyperconsumption, which increasingly permit, extend and, to an extent, *define* contemporary fandom, hyperfandom becomes a continual construction of the fan enacting his/her own fandom. As with the Elvis impersonator who both impersonates and re-enacts his own fandom concurrently (or the collector who collects and revels in the process of collecting), the hyperfan not only experiences fandom for an object or subject but, also, continually experiences pleasure through the (re)enactment or performance of this fandom (we will return to notions of fan performativity in due course).

Moreover, hyperfandom also reveals how Formula One fandom operates as both a paradox and simulation: *authentic Formula One fandom is inauthentic fandom represented as authentic*. Reflecting the corporate nature of the sport, 'authentic' fandom is simulated through the conspicuous consumptive practices

and narcissistic displays of ‘authentic’ team gear. As forms of cultural capital, these commodities *define* what constitutes symbolic capital and ‘real’ fandom within the Formula One fan community. Therefore, the reproduction and circulation of these items by the Formula One corporate and transnational community seeks to replace an ‘authentic’ experiential sense of fandom (e.g., affect and investment) with an inauthentic hyperconsumerist version. While the act of buying fandom is antithetical to most concepts of fandom (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Crawford, 2004; Grossberg, 1992a; Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 1992, 2006a, 2006b; Lancaster, 2001), Formula One reconfigures passions and pleasures experienced through and for the sport into ‘brand loyalties’ (Giulianotti, 2002; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993) to simulate and commodify fandom, with obvious financial benefits for the teams and corporate sponsors. These ideas are reinforced by the absence of a ‘real’ referent for the Formula One fan; that is, the absence of mediated or ‘live’ versions of the Formula One fan which are widely available in other sports. With no recycled referent to model fandom on, Formula One fans are instead offered a commercially-derived variation; the constantly reproduced and hypercommodified team gear. As forms of cultural capital, these items simulate authentic fandom to actually *become* the ‘real’ or ‘authentic’ version which the culturally literate ‘Formula One insider’ must ‘buy’ into (economically and figuratively) to articulate and demonstrate their level of symbolic capital within the Formula One fan community.

The ideas traced in this section reveal the uneasy tension that exists between fandom and consumption. Clearly, at a basic level, consumption is fundamental to most (if not all) forms of media fandom. However, as my examples of Formula One merchandise, the Grand Prix location and ‘insider’ status demonstrate, there are multifaceted dynamics and dimensions to how consumption inflects fan

practices, constructs hierarchies and social relations, and to the salient role that consumer goods, place and consumptive displays play in fan communities. As should be clear from the foregoing argument, we fail to understand fandom if we simply dismiss fans as mere commodities or ‘duped’ consumers. So, despite the fatalistic overtones of inauthenticity that underpin the ‘Formula One insider’ fan community, this is arguably (and more broadly on a macro-social level), a reflection of its operation as a corporate sport. Fundamentally, such ‘duped’ fans also clearly see something of worth and/or value in the sport and forge their emotional attachments accordingly. Thus, to further investigate Formula One fandom, our focus turns now to the role of performance and performativity, as well as the affective investments and intensities within specific public and private displays (primarily on a micro-social level) as a third theoretical layering for examining contemporary fandom. Another Grand Prix autoethnographic narrative facilitates reader entry into fan performances.

Performativity, Narcissism and Affect

Saturday, Australian Grand Prix 2002

Back at the track, I am feeling really good! With my hair spiked up, 4-day stubble, yellow tinted sunglasses and the resplendent BAR team shirt, I am feeling like and, in my mind, looking like Jacques. I’ve also made sure that no one needs to guess which driver I’ve come to support, as I’m carrying a large Canadian flag with the name Villeneuve emblazoned on it. Now I’m feeling authentic. I am, in a figurative sense, submerged in a sea of red, being heavily outnumbered by the Ferrari-clad fans. Unperturbed, I feel unique in my display of driver and team allegiance, as very few are dressed in BAR regalia, and I only see one other replica shirt like mine with the large Lucky Strike logo. I also imagine there is a

sense of individuality with my hairstyle, glasses, stubble and comportment, although of course I am trying to replicate Jacques and lack any real sense of displaying my own individuality. Walking back through the food court crowd after my own 'pit-stop', I can feel a lot of eyes on me. I try to remain detached and outwardly 'cool', playing out in my mind how real I look, like an F1 insider and, hopefully, like Jacques too. Some guys take a second look, while the pretty girls smiling at me certainly boost my confidence. Perhaps I'm having the effect that the Benetton F1 guy had on me yesterday.

Through my public display at Albert Park, I am providing a symbolic connection to Villeneuve as the object of my fandom, while ingrained in my performances is also an assumption that, to some degree, Villeneuve has become an 'extension' of my fan-self (McLuhan, 1964). That is, the performative dimensions that I evoke within my narrative contain an assumed link to Villeneuve through reproducing and resembling his appearance for which, as a fan-performer, I am seeking broader audience awareness (see also Stacey [1991, 1994] on female fans, film stars and resemblance). Underscoring these points is the primacy for display of the site and temporal moment, with Albert Park, as the venue for the Australian Grand Prix, conducive to such performances (see earlier discussion of [hyper]consumption and locality). In fact, my narrative reveals that I am revelling in the specificity of this temporal moment and spatial site as it provides an audience for my performances, facilitates levels of recognition for the apparent merging of fan and object and, conjecturally, provides positive reinforcement for my performative display of fandom. For example, the merged *fan-self-star* public image is performed for (and potentially can be read by) both the culturally literate 'Formula One insider' fans and the casual attendees, while

even the ‘gendered’ appraisals and their purported degree of ‘admiration’ reinvest a sense of self-value into my own performances (and, arguably, inspite of whether any Villeneuve link is being explicitly made or not by these ‘pretty girls’; the mere fact that they noticed me ‘mattered’ for sustaining, reinforcing and providing impetus to the performance).

Narcissism, in a socio-cultural rather than psychoanalytical context, can be read into such a display. Returning to Sandvoss’ conceptualisation of narcissism, he suggests that, (2005)

The theoretical challenge here is to account for the dual function of the object of fandom as experienced not in relation to the self, but as part of the self, despite constituting an external object. The basic premiss of my argument, then, is that the object of fandom, whether it is a sports team, television programme, a film or a pop star, is intrinsically interwoven with our sense of self, with who we are, would like to be, and think we are. (p. 96)

Within my narrative and performative display are Villeneuve as the ‘external object’ separate to my self but also Villeneuve as the sought after ‘part of the self’ through this performative act (e.g., I aspire to [re]present or resemble Villeneuve). The consumptive practices and narcissistic displays traced earlier reflect the interwoven nature of the self and the object of fandom. That is, my acts of consumerism (through selectivity, procurement and display) were all orientated towards Villeneuve and a broader public awareness of this *fan-self-star* relationship (again, with a recognition that cultural literacy affords varying degrees of ‘readership’ for such embedded practices). However, Villeneuve also becomes interwoven into my sense of self through the location and manifestation

of a performance that draws on my body as a specific site of and for articulating fandom. As Sandvoss (2005) suggests, the objects of fandom act as extensions of self and are enacted in ways that reveal both their centrality and the assumed highly personal relationship being entered into. So, in this respect, Villeneuve is not reflective of self-identity but constitutes a part of self through the embodied articulation of performance (e.g., interweaving the ‘object’ into self with embodiment manifesting this extension of self). Moreover, given that narcissism is also associated with processes of self-reflection, Sandvoss (2005) notes that, “the first and foremost audience for the performance of fans is the fan him- or herself” (p. 98). This is applicable to my public display, as the above narrative reveals an embodied performance that is modelled on the physical and external Villeneuve, yet the centrality of appearance is carefully groomed and coiffured to ensure a presentation that satisfies ‘my’ self in the first instance. The ‘authenticity’ strived for in the above narrative requires representing and performing a *fan-self-star* public image that, while intended to replicate or reproduce Villeneuve in a specific social environment, first must meet my own ‘private’ level of expectations (e.g., my narrative eschews the private moments of manipulating and approving of this image, literally through self-reflection in mirrors, for public display). Of course, thus far, I have also privileged the public sites for display, while the private and micro-social performances and enactments of the *fan-self-star* clearly feed back into the ‘intensity’ of the affective relationships and investments which we will return to shortly.

Taking for granted the recognition that my role as a fan is *performative* rather than ‘passive’ as a recipient of and for my object of fandom (e.g., Crawford, 2004; Jenkins, 1992, 2006b; Lancaster, 2001; Sandvoss, 2003, 2005), Hills’ (2002) concept of ‘performative consumption’ offers an insight into the performativity at

play in my public and private displays. For Hills (2002), performative consumption “characterises media fandom – i.e. media fandoms presuppose consumption and are expressed through consumption” (p. 159). Clearly, my narrative emphasises the Villeneuve-specific consumer goods drawn upon to publicly display my fandom, and can be linked to the notions and interrelationship of conspicuous consumption, narcissism and cultural literacy detailed in the previous section on consumption. The salience of consumption is also reinforced by Hills, who acknowledges that fan performances are always enmeshed in consumption rather than trying to reconcile or distinguish these two terms (e.g., privilege performance over consumption). Nevertheless, rather than commodified or duped assumptions of the fan interrelationship with objects, Hills (2002) also recognises an “iterable space of fan cultural identity” (pp. 159-160) which enables the performer to express a degree of fan identity through his/her performance(s). For example, although Nightingale (1994) offers a distinction between impersonation as slavish citation and improvisation as individual expression, Hills finds a space for cultural identity within the performances of Elvis impersonators. Refuting Nightingale’s binaries, therefore, Hills (2002) suggests that these concepts often co-exist; hence an Elvis impersonator is a project, impersonating the archival record yet also improvises “the fan’s lived experience *as a fan*” (Hills, 2002, p. 165, italics in original). Thus, the impersonator *consumes* the Elvis image and material goods, *performs* as Elvis while, simultaneously, *performing* his or her own lived experience as an Elvis fan.

These ideas resonate for my Villeneuve-specific performance contained in the above narrative. In particular, performative consumption recognises and reveals the intersecting and simultaneous layerings of consumption (e.g., the consumer goods), performance (as Villeneuve-specific replication and resemblance) and

performativity in being a fan (in terms of the various guises, processes and practices that are enacted to be ‘a [Villeneuve] fan’). Of course, on a broader theoretical level, this specific instance of my performative consumption also reinforces the notion of hyperfandom detailed earlier, as through my reproduction of acts of fandom, fandom itself is continually constructed as a pleasurable site for renewal, (re)investment and (re)enactment. For example, within the above narrative, one could potentially locate narcissistic traces in the self-reflective display as a fan (e.g., a self-pride in appearance) rather than being solely embedded in or orientated towards Villeneuve as an external object of fandom (e.g., only striving to replicate Villeneuve) through my performances.

Crawford has adapted Hills’ (2002) concept in relation to consumption, identity and sport fandom, observing that, (2004)

Hills’ (2002) discussion of ‘performative consumption’ offers an understanding of how consumer (and other material) goods and resources are frequently drawn on by fans, along with their own lived experiences and other influences, in the construction of identity. Identity then is not something simply bought off the shelf...but rather needs to be understood as a ‘project’, where consumer goods and mass media resources may be drawn on by fans to fuel their performances and the construction of their identities.

(p. 123)

Therefore, while both authors contextualise fandom within a model of consumption, they recognise a degree of ‘agency’ within the performative practices of fans. Such a perspective is articulated more broadly within the works of the ‘third wave’ of fan studies scholars who, collectively, emphasis that fandom

should be conceived as fluid, performative and productive, or even as a project or ‘career’ subject to change given the adaptative, diverse and often contradictory ways fans enact, perform and sustain their fandom (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Crawford, 2004; Hills, 2002, 2005; Jenkins, 1992, 2006a, 2006b; Sandvoss, 2003). Sandvoss (2005) notes that, “the object of fandom in this sense is not so much a textual possession; nor does it only define the self. It is part of the fan’s (sense of) self” (p. 101) which reflects the performative dynamics that shape, construct and *determine* (or can undermine) the practices and processes of fandom. This viewpoint also dismisses simplistic assumptions that fans either ‘actively’ engage with specific media texts or that the object of fandom ‘reflects’ one’s identity (e.g., in psychology-orientated typologies, such as the ‘sensation-seeking’ Villeneuve fan, critiqued earlier); rather, performance, performativity and performative consumption reveal the multifaceted dimensions to the enactment and actualisation of fandom that are often overlooked or misunderstood.

A further layering to these performative processes also recognises and locates the fan in an overlapping set of relations pertaining to why such practices actually ‘matter’ to the fan, and explain the emotive and embodied investments that constitute the spatial and temporal terrain of everyday life. Revisiting Grossberg’s (1992b) concept of affect, introduced in Chapter Two, we can recall that within his account of structured mobility are the affective relationships which anchor social individuals in both ‘reality’ at a macro-social level, and within specific contexts and particular practices within ‘their’ daily life at a micro-social level. Rather than advancing a ‘subjective’ sense of ‘experience’, however, Grossberg’s evocation of ‘daily life’ at the micro-social level is significant for, as he notes, (1992b) “‘daily life’ refers to the socially organized material pattern and events of people’s existence. I use it, rather than ‘experience’, to avoid assuming

the centrality of the experiencing subject” (p. 401). Moreover, Grossberg (1992b) suggests that, conceptually, affect is not ‘conscious’ nor ‘subjective’ but, “is itself articulated in the relation between practices” (p. 83), operates on a “plane of effects” (p. 80) and that this ‘affective plane’ is “organized according to maps which direct people’s investments in and into the world” (p. 82). Thus, affect offers a dynamic theoretical account of ‘pleasure’ and ‘meaning’ that, previously, has been conceived of in a manner that often either failed to recognise the macro-social world (e.g., the focus on individuals via ‘uses and gratifications’) or could not always adequately ‘anchor’ or articulate the pleasure (whether subjective or collective, private or public) of micro-social ‘moments’ through abstract terms such as *jouissance*, *the carnivalesque*, *the liminal*, *scopophilia* or ‘media erotics’ (e.g., see Bakhtin, 1968; Barthes, 1975; Bataille, 1986; Duncan & Brummett, 1989; Kuhn, 1982; Mulvey, 1975; Ott, 2008; Whannel, 2008).

By defining affect as an investment and plane of effects that temporarily anchor social individuals in specific moments and practices, Grossberg is recognising both the structured social world already in existence and the varying degrees of ‘mobility’ human agents have in navigating this socio-cultural terrain and the vagaries of their affective relationships. Turning to an explanation of affect, Grossberg (1992b) suggests that,

Affect is closely tied to what we often describe as the ‘feeling’ of life. One can understand another person’s life, share the same meanings and pleasures, but still not know how it feels. Such ‘feeling’ is a socially constructed domain of cultural effects. Some things feel different from others, some matter more or in different ways than others. The same experience will change drastically as its affective

investment or state changes. The same object, with the same meaning, giving the same pleasure, is very different in different affective contexts. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that different affective contexts inflect meanings and pleasures in very different ways. Affect operates across all of our sense and experiences, across all of the domains of effects which construct daily life. Affect is what gives ‘color’, ‘tone’ or ‘texture’ to the lived. (pp. 80-81)

Grossberg is offering a notion of pleasure which, although clearly socially orientated, also recognises the individual ‘feelings’ that are evoked or experienced without assuming that these remain consistent or constant. Nor is it assumed that they are collective or commonplace via ‘shared’ associations, such as through specific text or audience groupings (e.g., taste or identity) as critiqued in Chapter Two. To understand these ‘feelings’ and how affect provides ‘colour’ to daily life, Grossberg employs an intersecting set of terms that construct and shape both the activation of affect and how it operates on a micro-social level for social individuals. Central to notions of affect are investments (the caring or passion for something), mattering maps (how social individuals chart their investments and make particular things ‘matter’), intensity (literally the energy or intensity of the investment) and excess (the often ideologically linked explanation for why certain things matter more than others). To further clarify each of these points, the terms are now developed within the context of ‘my’ practices and processes in daily life as a Villeneuve-specific fan.

Clearly, as my thesis has revealed, it is evident that Villeneuve is the subject/object for my investment. Although I am part of a collective (imagined) community that both follows Formula One and Villeneuve more specifically,

there is something ‘personal’, as Grossberg’s (1992b) quote above indicates, about this affective investment. That is, while others may ‘share’ Villeneuve (e.g., in terms of both the communal mediated images and through the explanatory framework of taste), and while the ‘experiential’ investment and affect (in terms of caring, passion, emotion, etc.) in Villeneuve seemingly replicates the meanings and pleasures of others, the ‘feeling’ is itself inscribed differently for social individuals. That is, ‘my’ ‘feeling’ for Jacques differs to other Villeneuve-specific fans and, of course, also always differs for ‘myself’ within varying affective contexts. For example, the Grand Prix as a temporal and spatial site is more significant for enacting my affective engagement compared to ‘my’ national, regional or domestic settings which, comparatively, foster often reduced but also paradoxically, very specific affective moments and performative roles (e.g., these settings are ‘my’ prime spatial location for accessing Formula One and activate specific affective [temporal] moments through, for example, televised viewing, accessing the internet, etc.). These degrees of ‘feeling’ are shaped through investment but socially are ‘felt’ through intensity (e.g., my accounts of mediated fandom discussed earlier may resonate for readers, in terms of shared orientations or pleasures, but the ‘feelings’ will differ). Unfortunately, although he recognises the varying levels of energy that are associated with and activated by specific investments, Grossberg does not adequately develop ‘intensity’ as a term. However, I would suggest that *intensities*, the plural, appear fundamental to how affective investments operate, a point I will return to shortly.

Constructing these broader affective investments are the ‘mattering maps’ that provide some coherency to those aspects of popular culture that are made to matter in daily life. Grossberg (1992b) notes,

Mattering maps also involve the lines that connect the different sites of investment; they define the possibilities for moving from one investment to another, of linking the various fragments of identity together. They define not only what sites (practices, effects, structures) matter but how they matter. And they construct a lived coherence for those enclosed within their spaces. (p. 84)

This sense of multiple investments that need to be (re)assembled and (re)organised is useful for understanding how fandom operates in daily life. Although my thesis has privileged a concentrated focus on Formula One (and Villeneuve) fandom specifically, clearly fandom does not operate in such a simplistic manner. Indeed, many scholars (e.g., see Crawford, 2004; Gray, Sandvoss & Harrington, 2007; Hills, 2002, 2006; Jenkins, 2006a, 2006b; Sandvoss, 2005) have emphasised the multiplicity to fandom(s) and avoid a 'one-dimensional' representation of fan practices which arguably characterised the earlier waves of fan studies and their almost exclusive orientation towards cult media. Thus, there are numerous moments of 'colour' that I invest in (with varying degrees of energy and intensity) which provide affective 'moments' across a given day, week, month, year, etcetera within my daily life. Hence, my fandom for other sports (e.g., rugby league and cricket), forms of music (death, speed and thrash metal), as well as regular viewing of specific television shows or films (e.g., *Beavis and Butthead*, *Clerks 2*, *Extras*, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, *South Park*, *The Young Ones*) require maps that articulate a coherence to lived reality and make sense of why these cultural forms 'matter' in some capacity. In this regard, Grossberg's (1992b) notion of excess offers the explanatory framework and/or justification for these investments and their

differential ordering on 'my' mattering maps (and, arguably, why other cultural formations, such as 'pop' music - do not matter and are not invested in). He notes, (1992b)

The affective investment in certain sites demands a very specific ideological response, for affect can never define, by itself, why things should matter...Because something matters, it must have an excess which explains the investment in it, an excess which ex post facto not only legitimates but demands the investment. (p. 86)

Clearly, articulating this excess is not always a simple process. As a basic explanatory framework, I would suggest that Formula One's elite, global status operates as the ideological excess for justifying my investment in the sport (e.g., this is the pinnacle of motorsport and is worthy of the investment) while also serving to make most other forms of motorsport not 'matter' (e.g., they are less worthy of attention given their lower status, weaker economic/global position and/or significance, such as the V8 Supercars). With Villeneuve, the excess is difficult to articulate but he appears to 'matter' through the maverick, rogue and rebel traces that seemingly distinguish Villeneuve from the other drivers and the broader machinery of Formula One (see Chapters One, Three and Seven).

Although these points offer, to a degree, the theoretical maps and means for articulating why Villeneuve (and other popular cultural forms) are invested in, made to 'matter' and how they are justified or legitimised, thus far, these points have rendered an 'abstract' account of fandom. Returning to the concept of intensities affords us a means for locating and examining the specificity of concrete contexts and practices in which the affective relationship and investment are 'felt' by the social individual: in this instance, through my fandom. Grossberg

(1992b) notes that, “popular culture often inscribes its effects directly upon the body: tears, laughter, hair-tingling, spine-chilling, eye-closing, erections, etc.” (p. 79). This evocation of embodiment clearly not only links the body to affective relationships but, also, makes the specificity of intensities crucial to how these investments operate on the body both as a specific site and in various guises dependent on the intensities of affect; hence the On-Board Camera (OBC) in Formula One footage does not necessarily operate with the same intensities for all viewers despite its construction of a participatory perspective as discussed in Chapters Four and Five. Moreover, while intensities clearly operate within and through our bodies, in all likelihood, Grossberg’s list of bodily reactions may overlap but, arguably, they would not all be enacted simultaneously (e.g., at the same, specific instance). Therefore, the intensities and levels of energy drawn upon and/or exerted clearly fluctuate at specific temporal and spatial moments (which, as outlined in Chapter Two, Grossberg [1992b] refers to as territorializing machines and regimes of jurisdiction). Thus, the embodied reactions I noted earlier in this chapter pertained to a specific temporal and spatial instance of live televised Formula One viewership that would not necessarily be enacted at other ‘moments’, such as the temporal and spatial implications of the presence of other people while viewing television or as a ‘live’ spectator at the track where (self) surveillance often curtails excessive public displays. Conversely (and leaving aside the possible presence of other viewers), an OBC perspective from Villeneuve’s car yields an abundance of energies and embodied intensities that are difficult to articulate but are ‘felt’ through my body and in an affective sense due to the (apparent) accessibility to my subject/object of investment at that specific spatial and temporal moment (i.e., being visually intertwined with Jacques).

These territorializing machines also impact on the broader intensities of fandom in daily life. Clearly there are moments when the intensity of affect is piqued as a Formula One fan, and other moments where the intensity expends less energy on or through the body within daily life. With the Formula One season operating between approximately March – October most years, there are peaks and troughs in the intensity of affect for a fan (although clearly the affective relationships and investments will differ for social individuals anyway). One can assume that the off-season is experientially less intense than within the racing season, with the intensities becoming more prevalent over the Grand Prix weekend (and for the immediate days both preceding and following), leading towards a crescendo of intensity on the day of the event. Nevertheless, it would be simplistic to suggest that this is solely how intensity operates (e.g., the day of the event), as not every race accords the same level of intensity or affect: I have found myself falling asleep or losing interest during the more procession races on the calendar (e.g., Grands Prix at Spain, Monaco and Hungary) despite the affective investment in Villeneuve. In fact, it is often the fleeting moments and traces of recognising Villeneuve's performances within a Grand Prix that provide the intensities of 'feeling', energy and embodied reactions (e.g., seeing him on television, noting a good lap time on the internet, getting an OBC perspective, etc.). For example, one of my favourite races is his non-finish at Austria 2002; despite the lack of a result, this Grand Prix provides energised and embodied moments of intensities when (re)viewed due to his regular 'presence' on the televised coverage (comparative to most races), while he is framed overtaking opponents and generally out-performing his car (even his hasty exit from the stricken, smokey car add to the sense of his mastery over the machine).

Fundamentally, the interrelationship between territorializing machines, intensities (of energy and ‘feelings’) and embodiment cater to a broader recognition of the contradictions or paradoxes in fan practices and processes. In particular, interweaving these terms facilitates an understanding of fandom being enacted, activated or *mobilised* at specific moments, rather than always being ‘on’. Three separate examples explain how intensities mobilise fandom. First, there is the almost daily public display of fandom by wearing Formula One or Villeneuve apparel. While these displays are conceivably read by others as demonstrating an always ‘active’ fandom, this overstates Formula One’s domination or territorialization of my daily life. In particular, as an aspiring academic, there is an expectation to ‘perform’ the role of an ‘aca-fan’ (Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 1992, 2006b) and to demonstrate my possession of cultural and symbolic capital through the attire and posters adorning my office walls, while, as a more simplistic ‘functional’ explanation, the vast majority of clothing I own is Formula One orientated (and there is clearly a social expectation to be clothed!). On a ‘deeper’ theoretical level, rather than an always ‘active’ fandom, wearing the Formula One or Villeneuve apparel may itself constitute a *banal* act which lacks in specific intensity. Billig (1995) demonstrates that flag waving operates as a nationalistic or patriotic act in specific instances (e.g., the territorializing moments of intensity, such as celebratory ‘national’ days or public holidays) but, for the majority of the time, these flags are flaccid and generally unnoticed in our daily life (e.g., national flags fluttering in the breeze on university campuses). Therefore, Billig suggests that these public displays of the flag constitute a form of ‘banal nationalism’ which arguably can be transposed on to my own practices in daily life. That is, there are clearly intensities in operation when and where the Villeneuve attire is intentionally worn after a strong result and is both inflected

with and mobilised through the intensities of energy and ‘feeling’ to explicitly articulate fandom. However, traces of a ‘banal fandom’ also reside in the attire being adorned despite a crash, non-finish and especially since his departure from the sport post-2006. Therefore, the act of wearing attire does not necessarily relate to the degrees of intensity (as ‘feelings’, energy and embodied practices) that operate at different, specific moments as the following examples reveal in more detail.

The second example pertains to my ‘fandom’ as multidimensional and incorporating more than just Formula One as something that ‘matters’ or my only source of investment. So, for example, due to my fandom for rugby league (and particularly, the Sydney-based Wests Tigers), I not only make sure I view every Tigers game live during a National Rugby League (NRL) season but I am clearly invested in my Tigers fandom at these specific territorializing moments. Hence, the intensities of ‘feeling’ are evident through the energy I exert and my embodied reactions both during the live telecast but, also, more broadly over the weekend where (and when) I try to replicate the moves of their star player, Benji Marshall, by incorporating ‘his’ side-steps or no-look passes within my weekly games of touch with friends. At these specific spatial sites and temporal moments, my Formula One fandom is less intense and arguably dormant; it does not ‘matter’ within this specific instance of my daily life and certainly not to the same degree (as an intensity, ‘feeling’ or embodied investment) during the NRL telecast (or game of touch) compared to a Formula One telecast. Moreover, there are the specific moments when my Formula One fandom is concealed. As a third example, due to my fandom for the much maligned metal music, Formula One fandom and corporate branding are jettisoned as either a public display or topic of conversation given metal’s anti-corporate and anti-commercial stance (albeit with

its own set of contradictions, in terms of the branded equipment and band merchandise that serve as cultural and symbolic capital within this musical field).⁶ Thus, the intensity of either playing or attending a performance is located (and literally embodied as a drummer) in this specific ‘metal’ instance before the Formula One fandom is re-mobilised outside of these territorializing regimes of jurisdiction.

In an interrelated manner, although accessing Formula One internet sites operates through specific intensities (and certainly is piqued when there is positive coverage of Villeneuve), the notion of concealment is also evident. In particular, although this chapter has mapped my implication in mediation, consumption, performative public practices and the affective investments and intensities pertaining to Villeneuve, within my daily life there is also a non-communal dimension to fandom. That is, although I have acknowledged that I am always implicated in an imagined Formula One community through mediations, I am not ‘participating’ in these specific communities in either the conventional (e.g., publicly disseminated fan-art, fiction, etc.) or innovative (e.g., DIY multi-media production) ways that characterise contemporary fandom. Thus, for example, the productive processes and interactive dynamics that Jenkins’ (1992, 2006a, 2006b) identifies for fans are less obvious in my practices. This is not to overstate or render an ‘exceptional’ dimension to my fandom, nor to consign its operation as an asocial or acultural process; rather, it is a recognition that there are less communal aspects than Jenkins’ interactive audiences implies in daily life. Specifically, while I watch televised coverage, read the magazines and access Formula One sites, and clearly “archive, annotate and appropriate” (Jenkins, 2006b, p. 135) specific Villeneuve content, the crucial ‘interactive’ productivity, contributory and recirculatory contexts do not exist (aside from obviously

producing a Ph.D. thesis, complete with an attached DVD, taping races and gameplay, and the public performance as a fan, specifically at a Grand Prix venue). Thus, throughout my fandom, I have not contributed in any capacity to the Formula One media sources outlined in Chapter Two (e.g., via blogs, letters, subscriptions, etc.), have not joined any fan clubs and have intentionally avoided engaging with Formula One on-line communities; I read the content rather than contribute to these interactive, participatory and knowledge communities (Jenkins, 2006b). This is also evident in the more 'isolated' context for my often 'solo' Formula One viewership which, equally, applies to playing Formula One video games 'alone' (e.g., competing against the console not 'real' or 'on-line' opponents).

Baudrillard's (1983a, 1990a) evocation of 'fatal strategies' may partially explain the deployment of a lessened interactive, participatory or productive dimension to my fandom. Baudrillard (1983a) notes that just because "the silent majority (or the masses) is an imaginary referent does not mean they don't exist. It means that *their representation is no longer possible*" (p. 20, italics in original). Nevertheless, Baudrillard (1983a) advocates that 'hyperconformity' is actually a cunning ploy adopted by the masses to remain "an imaginary referent" (p. 20). The strength of the masses, Baudrillard (1983a) asserts, "consists in their silence, in their capacity to absorb and neutralise" (p. 3). Hence, within my mediated, consumptive and performative practices there is a simulation of conformity (i.e., hyperconformity) but, ultimately, also the opportunity (or 'strategy') to remain silent, unknown and left relatively unfettered by either the corporate machinery of Formula One or the supposed 'knowledge' of on-line fan communities. So, in the first instance, via the procurement of merchandise and magazines, I can operate as a 'duped' or 'fatigued' consumer (Giulianotti, 2004) while being afforded the

opportunity to (re)appropriate and (re)define my affective investment and intensities in and through these items. That is, I can simulate conformity to the branded display of corporate culture yet use the authentic team gear as (re)articulations of my fandom for Villeneuve, even if these displays fluctuate between ‘excessive’ and ‘banal’ performances. Additionally, the continued purchases of *F1 Racing* magazine maintains my hyperconformity to the authority of this publication despite, post-2001, rejecting much of its coverage of Villeneuve and drawing on this source to compile an assemblage of textual information and images, to scavenge for Villeneuve-specific quotes and to furnish my ‘private’ affective investment in him (e.g., over and above the often unfavourable reporting of the magazine). Finally, the readership but non-participation in Formula One websites (and associated on-line fan communities) facilitates an anchoring within, and broader awareness and understanding of Formula One but also grants a degree of mobility to my fandom. Hence, I can navigate this terrain without having to engage either in the often trivial and banal diatribes, nor establish or relinquish any form of ‘expertise’ within this field (e.g., the combination of uninsightful comments and the petty ‘flaming’ of ‘experts’ and other members repelled me from participating on-line).

Being ‘isolated’, ‘alone’ or outside of either the corporate machinery of the sport (through hyperconformist practices), or the ‘authority’ of the on-line communities (through non-participation), lends not only to the playfulness or ruse of fatal strategies within fan practices but affords a private dynamic to daily life as a fan. That is, these moments and practices are generally operating outside of the public performances, evocations and activations of fandom detailed throughout this chapter. Potentially, this reveals another layering to intensities too; for as specific territorializing moments, the private and less communal dimensions

clearly play a role in further intensifying, reinforcing and solidifying the affective investment and relationship a social individual constructs, enacts and engages with through the object of fandom. For example, the non-communal playing of Formula One games provides specific temporal and spatial moments of hyperfandom (e.g., the pleasure in performing as a fan while both being a fan and actively [re]creating Jacques' stardom) unfettered by communal relations or other overt social influences. Hence, PlayStation allows me to simulate my fandom while simulating driving as a simulation of Villeneuve in a simulated Grand Prix within a simulated Formula One season. In broader theoretical terms, PlayStation reconciles the affective investments and intensities by reducing and redefining the 'textual' and 'lived' gap between fan and object. That is, as a specific site for investment, PlayStation allows me to *become* Jacques Villeneuve and actively (re)play, (re)create and favourably manipulate Villeneuve's Formula One performances in a manner that is more than 'authentically' possible given the actual performances of most of his teams post-1997. Clearly, this also feeds into the simultaneous (re)invigoration of my performances, intensities and investments as an affective fan.

In this respect, this chapter has identified two key points. First, that the autoethnographic vignettes reveal and anchor the specific 'lived' moments within structured mobility by detailing the affective investments and relationships of an individual. Thus, as a method and writing strategy, autoethnography has both evoked and articulated the 'slippery' and affective moments of being a Jacques Villeneuve fan embedded in the specific and concrete practices of daily life (e.g., via mediation, consumption and performance). Second, that *intensities*, through a combination of varying energised and embodied processes, *mobilise* fandom at specific temporal and spatial moments which enact, navigate and anchor affect

within these diverse practices and spaces (both public and private). Taken together, these ideas also suggest that, within certain contexts and particular practices, intensities may replace communities conceptually as a theoretical framework for understanding the operation of affect (and fandom) in specific instances. This possibility, combined with other concepts developed in the thesis, will now be addressed in the final chapter in order to complete the thesis' mapping of the layered trajectories of a fan.

¹ Although the focus here is on Formula One, such points should not be read as implying that Formula One was the basis of our relationship or the chief 'shared' activity. Often, in fact, Tina expressed or showed disinterest in Formula One or Villeneuve. Clearly, in relationships, many 'couple-based' activities are reliant on a degree of compromise. Thus, although Formula One was one such activity, so too was 'our' viewing of romantic-comedy films or television shows, such as *Desperate Housewives*, as a shared experience despite these often holding little interest for me; conversely, Tina refused to watch telecasts of either cricket or rugby league as a 'shared' or 'couple-based' activity. On a broader, theoretical level these trends reflect and support the 'gendered' assumptions that identify sport as predominantly a bastion of masculinity (e.g., Connell, 1995; Messner, 1992; Messner & Sabo, 1990, 1994; Whannel, 1999, 2002) and television soaps or romantic-comedies as primarily feminine (e.g., Ang, 1985, 1996; Glaessner, 1990; Harrington & Bielby, 1995; Stacey, 1991).

² Veblen was not strictly referring to a society of consumption as I may be implying. In fact, it should be acknowledged that Veblen was a champion of the work ethic and production (and perhaps blind to consumption being an integral part of the mode of production). Nevertheless, he identifies the emerging practice of visible and strategic consumption for social gains in status and value.

³ I use the term Formula One sport fandom community as a distinction to suggest this applies to fans of the sport. As I have noted, owning and displaying Formula One merchandise is not limited only to culturally literate, 'insider' fans but can also be obtained by casual attendees, corporate guests (and even V8 Supercars fans in Australia if they are so inclined). The position that I am arguing for is that the 'Formula One insider' status is only applicable to the culturally literate, knowledgeable (and assumably emotionally invested) Formula One *sport fandom* community.

⁴ The exception may be for sports which have little mediated exposure, especially televisual. Thus, for New Zealand sports that receive minimal media coverage, such as Badminton, Gymnastics and Touch, the lack of a constantly reproduced image or model for performing fandom, as well as an arguably smaller fan base, means that these less mediated sports do not necessarily lend themselves to an easily replicated, hyperreal model of fandom. Nevertheless, 'generic' models of display (e.g., dressing in particular colours, face painting, etc.) are arguably deployed, especially if inscribed with a nationalistic significance (e.g., 'hyperreal' New Zealand supporters primarily using nationalistic colours and symbols, such as the kiwi, silver fern and/or black clothing) which are visible at other New Zealand sports and within most New Zealand sport fan communities.

⁵ Of course, on occasions, a section of the viewing crowd will be made visible due to the camera's positioning or the proximity of a spectator grandstand to the track yet the cameras primarily foreground the cars and racing action.

⁶ This 'anti' stance arguably has connections to the notion of 'anti-fandom' (Gray, 2003; Theodoropoulou, 2007) in which 'anti-fans' have a particular dislike of a popular cultural form or text yet operate in an identical manner to fans due to the intensity of their affective 'dislike' and through the energy they expend to demonstrate this (e.g., see Sconce's [2007] discussion of the 'stop Ashlee [Simpson] petition' and movement).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Reassembling Fandom: Structured Mobility, Reflexivity and the Strategy-Intensity Field

In the previous chapter, Grossberg's (1992b) concept of structured mobility was drawn upon to articulate how affective relationships anchor social individuals, in this case fans, in specific concrete contexts of lived reality. In particular, by conceiving fandom as a highly mobilised process, Grossberg's (essentially morphogenetic)¹ notion of intensity was extended to the plural form, intensities, to trace the varying degrees and levels of energy fans activate and utilise in their practices and performances at specific spatial and temporal 'moments'. As such, by using my own fandom as a case study for analysis, the previous chapter recognised that fandom is not always 'on' but, rather, is multifaceted, temporally differentiated and multi-dimensional in its actualisation. Thus, it is at various spatial and/or temporal moments that fandom is enacted and activated (e.g., the Grand Prix site, live televisual broadcast or the PlayStation video game for Formula One), while these moments are defined by a fluidity in the degrees of energy and emotional investment deployed by individual fans (e.g., the resultant piquing[s] of attention and variations in the intensity of affect in their daily lives). Additionally, the previous chapter also suggested that such intensities are strategically deployed in terms of how social individuals construct, activate and demonstrate their fandom. This strategic dimension, which ranges from the banal to the fatal, will be returned to later in this chapter. Moreover, as a means to map the trajectories and anchorings of fandom, the facets of intensity and strategy will be further refined within this chapter, culminating in their transposition onto what I term the strategy-intensity field (presented in due course). Finally, this chapter

will conclude by reassembling and tying together the key themes developed over this thesis. First, however, the notion of intensities requires further elaboration in order to advance our understanding of contemporary Formula One fandom in the context of forms of popular cultural fandom more broadly.

Intensity

Dyer (1981) provides an early and compelling evocation of intensities in popular entertainment which is worth revisiting for our present purposes. Focusing on musicals, he examines how popular entertainment ‘works’ but eschews privileging either a structured (e.g., entertainment as patriarchal-capitalist ideology) or agential (e.g., entertainment gives people what they want) binary presentation. Rather, according to Dyer, popular entertainment is underpinned by a utopian impulse, reacting to specific ‘real’ societal values while, simultaneously, often defining and reinforcing those values. Dyer (1981) observes, “entertainment offers the image of ‘something better’ to escape into, or something we want deeply that our day-to-day lives don’t provide” (p. 177) but that such a utopian vision is “contained in the feelings it embodies. It presents, head-on as it were, what utopia would feel like rather than how it would be organised” (p. 177). Hence, the utopian impulse of much entertainment is organised according to emotional significance, signification and sensibilities which, according to his analysis, tend to deny the validity of class, race and sex as necessarily accompanying ‘problems’. There is a displacement into the realm of affect.

By charting the socio-cultural contexts, complexities and broader spatial-temporal dimensions that envelop both the construction and reception of ‘utopia’ in musicals (e.g., the ‘learnt’ responses to encoded, embodied and representational regimes of sensibilities), Dyer identifies five key categories of affective

displacement for utopian sensibilities in entertainment: energy, abundance, intensity, transparency and community respectively. Dyer's (1981) description of a 'one-dimensional' capitalist ideology² provides a succinct summation of these displacements:

The ideals of entertainment imply wants that capitalism itself promises to meet. Thus abundance becomes consumerism, energy and intensity personal freedom and individualism, and transparency freedom of speech...At our worse sense of it, entertainment provides alternatives *to* capitalism which will be provided *by* capitalism. (Dyer, 1981, pp. 184-185, italics in original)

It should be noted that community is absent from this particular quotation, although Dyer (1981) loosely defines community elsewhere as "togetherness" and a "sense of belonging" (p. 180). Additionally, while Dyer is clearly presenting an interesting conundrum (and turn of phrase) in relation to capitalism as structure and its imposition of limited degrees of human agency, we have already examined how 'Villeneuve' implies a want (as a contestable 'rebel' image) that Villeneuve simultaneously promises to meet (both as commodity image-system and via fan consumerist practices) in Chapters One and Six. So, our attention turns now towards a deeper understanding of Dyer's notion of intensity.

In his initial categorisation of intensity, Dyer (1981) uses the term to mean the "experiencing of emotion directly, fully, unambiguously, 'authentically', without holding back" (p. 180). However, he is also aware that such a conceptualisation remains unfinished, noting, (1981)

The categories are, I hope, clear enough, but a little more needs to be said about 'intensity'. It is hard to find a word

that quite gets what I mean. What I have in mind is the capacity of entertainment to present either complex or unpleasant feelings (e.g. involvement in personal or political events; jealousy, loss of love, defeat) in a way that makes them seem uncomplicated, direct and vivid, not ‘qualified’ or ‘ambiguous’ as day-to-day life makes them, and without those intimidations of self-deception and pretence. (p.182)

Grossberg’s (1992b) concept of affect, with its subset of accompanying terms which explain how affective relationships are forged, invested in and made to ‘matter’ (e.g., investment, mattering maps, intensity and excess), seems in effect to ‘finish’ the central premise behind Dyer’s notion of intensity. That is, affect incorporates the complexity of feelings experienced by social individuals and recognises that ‘pleasure’ can oscillate on continuums ranging from immense satisfaction to forms of displeasure (as well as the fluctuating levels of energy expended) in spite of the seemingly unproblematic way popular entertainment represents such feelings. Grossberg’s notion of affect giving ‘colour’ to the otherwise drab and ‘grey’ existence of daily life is also indebted Dyer: the direct or vivid ‘moments’ that particular forms of popular entertainment provide are energising and immense in their potential for being emotionally experienced (whether this is ‘pleasurable’, complex or unpleasant of course). However, it should be noted that Dyer (1981) discriminates energy as a separate category, suggesting that energy is the “capacity to act vigorously; human power, activity, potential” (p. 180). For the moment, eschewing Dyer’s precise definition of energy (and its allusion to broader theories of human agency), by reinvesting the centrality of energy within Grossberg’s notion of intensity and affective relationships (e.g., the varying levels of energy drawn upon and/or expended by a

social individual in his/her affective investments), we have the preliminary theoretical tools for understanding how popular entertainment can be both direct and vivid while, equally, being ambiguous and neither qualified by nor reliant on forms of self-deception and pretence (Dyer, 1981).

While he does not provide the plural term, intensities, Dyer (1981) demonstrates that the 'experiencing of emotion' (i.e., intensity) is indeed multiple and fluctuates across various entertainment forms. In fact, rather than a static diagram, Dyer's five categorical sensibilities (energy, abundance, intensity, transparency and community) need to be continually reconceptualised depending on the popular entertainment form under examination. Thus, Dyer presents three musicals showing differing relationships with the sensibilities listed, before adding a further comparative dimension in relation to how these sensibilities are (re)enacted and/or disrupted by other entertainment forms; in this instance, westerns and the news. Most significantly for the present project, we can extrapolate that each category also has its own trajectory; thus, as some categories decline, other categories can increase in importance (although this remains underdeveloped in Dyer's own work). While Dyer's diagram is an abstract and 'generalised' application of the specific sensibilities enacted for collective viewership of a given popular entertainment form (rather than atomised accounts of the experiential), it does afford a further layering for both fandom and the notion of intensity. For example, in my practices of Formula One fandom documented in the previous chapter, the category of intensity (as a direct experience of emotion) arguably has an increased significance within my daily life while, consequently, the sense of community (i.e., togetherness and sense of belonging), especially in a 'physical' or nationalistic capacity, has a lessened significance, points I will return to later in this chapter. Moreover, the concept of

intensities (i.e., emotional experiences as fluid) complements the territorializing machines and regimes of jurisdiction that Grossberg (1992b) evokes in relation to the spatial and temporal moments of intensity that underpin and inflect the emotional investments, affective relationships and broader anchoring of social individuals within concrete contexts and specific practices in their daily lives.

Thus far, intensity has been presented in a relatively straightforward manner; that is, when linked to emotional experience (Dyer, 1981) or investment (Grossberg, 1992b), the ‘intensity’ has been conceptualised in accordance with its notional amount or whether it is of a high or low level (inclusive of varying degrees of energy, experience, investment, affect and so on). However, a further theoretical layering to intensity is possible through a subtle shift in emphasis from the *amount* towards the *quality* of the intensity which, potentially, is furnished by Archer’s (2007) conceptualisation of reflexivity. As will be argued, reflexivity exposes both the quality of the intensity and, implicitly, the strategic imperatives social individuals deliberately deploy to negotiate and navigate the terrain of daily life. In fact, a specific aim of this chapter is to devise and map some of the reflexive processes, practices, intensities and strategies of fandom onto what will be labelled the strategy-intensity field. First, however, a broader sketch of the concept of reflexivity is required.

Reflexivity and Internal Deliberation

According to Archer (2007), reflexivity and its various processes of ‘ruminations’, ‘self-talk’ or ‘mulling things over’ are significant for how we, as social individuals, make our way through the world. As has been noted in Chapter Two, Archer repudiates traditional sociological theories of ‘routine actions’ as no longer carrying sufficient weight to explain the contemporary social mobility of

individuals. Rather, she counters, it is the “underexplored, undertheorised and, above all, undervalued” (Archer, 2007, p. 1) concept of reflexivity which provides some explanatory purchase for how social individuals are able to negotiate and navigate their quotidian existence. In defining reflexivity, Archer (2007) notes that “reflexivity itself is held to depend upon conscious deliberations that take place through ‘internal conversation’” (p. 3), while expanding this definition further to assert that, “*‘reflexivity’ is the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa*” (p. 4, italics in original). Thus, rather than being ascribed to a merely subjective, asocial or self-indulgent practice, she views reflexivity as both pertaining to and inflecting broader social practices and functions. Archer’s work is again anchoring us in the structure/agency debate through her attempts to articulate a satisfactory account of the problematic nature of agential ‘powers’, as well as degrees of agential mobility, highlighted throughout this thesis (e.g., Grossberg’s [1992b] ‘structured mobility’ or Urry’s [2000] pluralistic concept of mobilities). However, at this point, structure/agency as a meaningful binary does indeed start to collapse in theoretically productive ways. In particular, Archer seeks to refine the concept of ‘routine actions’, theorised as central to traditional accounts of society, structures, practices and ‘subjectivities’, by accommodating reflexivity as a potential explanatory framework for both the emerging, contradictory conditions and the diverse mobility of individuals in our contemporary social world.

Within Archer’s conceptualisation of reflexivity, socio-cultural factors are not jettisoned but readily acknowledged as constraints and enablements for social individuals which they must face and can, potentially, negotiate and navigate

(e.g., the various structural and/or cultural properties that shape, define and, to an extent, *determine* the social world). Archer (2007) notes,

In contradistinction, the account given here of the different kinds of internal conversation, prevailing at any given time, are *always* held to depend on various combinations of ‘contexts and concerns’, neither of which can be reduced to individual terms. The ‘context’ confronted by any subject at any time – be it their natal context or subsequent contexts they encounter – is never of their making or of their choosing. The ‘concerns’ they can adopt as value-commitments are similarly dependent upon the contents lodged in the cultural system – which are not of their making or choosing either. (p. 315, italics in original)

Equally, Archer is attempting to reinvest degrees of ‘governance’ with social individuals, rather than ascribing ‘subjectivity’ as merely a delimited and routinised response to such impositions (e.g., as imposed by habit or class). Thus, she conceives of the agential capacity of individuals to discern (reflectively, retrospectively and prospectively) their desiderata of concerns, to deliberate on these clusters of concerns (e.g., what is desirable and what some likely demands, merits and consequences may be) and to act on these concerns through dedication (e.g., prioritising, relegating or eliminating courses of action). Of course, as has been noted, all such concerns and courses of action are context bound, are structurally and culturally-laden and are not ‘free’ in their orientation, design or ultimate outcome. That is, no matter what reflexive deliberations we engage in and the specific courses of action these may enable for us, ultimately we are still

constrained by, for example, the socio-economic imposition, forces and associated by-products of a capitalist society.

Nevertheless, a simplistic deployment of the structure/agency binary misses a good deal that matters. As Archer (2007) notes, “in particular, it omits the part reflexivity plays in enabling subjects to design and determine their responses to the structured circumstances in which they find themselves, in the light of what they personally care about” (p. 11). In contradistinction to the reductive and impugnable structured orientation towards individuals as passive ‘subjects’ (e.g., who are allegedly construed, impinged and imposed upon as social constructs), she advances an acknowledgement of the ‘responsiveness’ of individuals through their reflexive actions. Therefore, internal conversations are fundamental for individuals to consciously develop their concerns, define ‘projects’ and formulate resultant courses of action in response to both the socio-cultural contexts and aspects (or objects) of social life that they care about. But such reflexive deliberations, concerns and courses of action are personalised, not collective, in orientation (see Archer’s critique of Bourdieu and habitus in Chapter Two). So each of us deliberates and accordingly responds in atomised and contextually-distinctive ways (with varying degrees of planning, activation and/or ‘success’ it might be added) to the impositions of capitalist, commercialised and commodified forces in our experiencing of the contemporary social world.

While Archer herself then dips into problematic evocations of ‘personal power’ in relation to reflexivity, a vexed conceptual move in light of the broader structure/agency debate (and hence not a vocabulary adopted in this thesis), her ideas do have two significant contributions to what we have derived from other scholars thus far. First, through her conceptualisation of the salient role that reflexive deliberations and internal conversations have for social individuals in

their daily lives, she provides an important correction to Dyer's (1981) ultimately impersonal theorisation of utopian sensibilities. In so doing, Archer implicitly confronts Dyer's assertion that the intensity of popular entertainment forms is not experientially 'qualified'; in contrast, Archer is embellishing the significance of what social individuals actually care about. We can extrapolate her likely argument that, as audiences, social individuals are reliant on forms of inner dialogue to 'make sense' of the mediated representation, content and context, as well as to further clarify their atomised responses (e.g., the direct and vivid experiences of jealousy, defeat, loss of love and so forth that Dyer evokes). Alternatively, such internal conversations may potentially facilitate temporal/spatial moments of self-deception and pretence as a reflexive strategy. For example, the self-reflexive individual who 'knows' that the soap-opera he/she is watching is not real, that these are merely actors, etcetera, yet allows him/herself to be engrossed in the specific scenes and evocatively respond in kind, be it sorrow, joy or anger, as one would over real friends or family members. Is this a designed response, not self-delusion? These notions of reflexive and non-reflexive intensities, and their accompanying strategies, will be returned to shortly.

Second, Archer's conceptualisation does appear to dovetail with Grossberg's (1992b) theory of affect. In particular, reflexive deliberations and internal conversations appear to describe what Grossberg referred to as 'excess' and the means by which individuals justify and legitimise their own affective concerns (investments) and the hierarchical layering or mapping (mattering maps) for such affective relationships in their daily lives. However, one significant point of departure is that Grossberg, possibly through a need to reorientate his notion of excess and 'legitimacy' to the socio-cultural, renders the articulation of such

excesses as for the most part ideologically determined. Conversely, Archer finds what she calls ideational clustering (through theories of discourse, ideology and so forth) arbitrary and difficult to attribute neatly or categorically to all the internal conversations of social individuals. Archer (2007) notes, “there are indeed structural properties, such as vested interests, and cultural properties, such as ideology, which can motivate by encouraging and discouraging people from particular courses of action without their personal awareness” (p. 17) yet, ultimately, “ideologies, however hegemonic, are not in themselves influences, but rather attempts to influence” (p. 16). Hence, she conceives the reflexive deliberations of social individuals to be multifaceted. In Grossberg’s terms, the excess overflows the influence. Contained within these internal conversations are both the influences of structured, epistemological and knowledge-carrying external formations (e.g., discourses and ideologies), as well as more distinctive and contextually-bound first-person articulations (e.g., personalised meanings, understandings, designs and abbreviated formations which often do not require further elaboration or forms of self-monitoring and/or censoring compared to an external conversation).³ Thus, the social individual uses his/her reflexive deliberations to assemble, sort and clarify in varying degrees (but seldom in a commensurate or resolute fashion) these combined dimensions as a means to proceed with a designed (but not necessarily appropriate or effective) course of action or set of choices and interests.

Again, this is not to overstate degrees of ‘personal power’, nor to reproduce passive models of inchoate human subjects, as the old structure/agency binary encouraged. Archer (2007) suggests instead that, “it is agential reflexivity which actively mediates between our structurally shaped circumstances and what we deliberately make of them” (p. 16). Moreover, both authors stress that these

processes and practices of either affect (Grossberg, 1992b) or reflexivity (Archer, 2007) are seriously atomised in their temporal and spatial occurrences for social individuals in their daily life. As Archer (2007) elaborates,

What reflexivity does do is to mediate by activating structural and cultural powers, and in so doing there is no single and predictable outcome. This is because subjects can exercise their reflexive powers in different ways, according to their very different concerns and considerations. (p. 16)

Thus, while elements of a shared or collective dimension may occur (e.g., the ‘shared’ affective investment in a media star, such as Villeneuve), reflexivity and affect are bound in the contextual specificities of a social individual’s circumstances and his/her particular practices and equivocal experiences, thoughts, ‘feelings’ and sensibilities within any given temporal and spatial moment. So there is an atomistic containment of the ‘shared’ at the moment of its impact. Much of this thesis has documented the strength of that atomisation in the context of this writer’s life.

This returns us to the contribution that Archer offers to refining intensity with a reflexive element. As noted earlier, the works of both Dyer (1981) and Grossberg (1992b) respectively enable us to trace the nominal level of emotion or energy that particular activities or responses to mediation entail (e.g., both can be deployed to map the intensities and practices fans engage in with their subject/object of attention). Thus, such accounts cater to quantifying the emotional dimension of intensity in terms of elaborating what sensibilities are enacted via mediations and, more particularly, to extrapolate the degrees of intensity evoked on a continuum of low to high (inclusive of the emotional investment and levels of energy these experientially involve). Reflexivity now

seemingly furnishes a further theoretical layering for intensities as, potentially, the *quality* of such intensities can be mapped through integrating the reflexive deliberations, ruminations and the designs of social individuals. The dual composition of both the socio-cultural and atomised dimensions which ‘construct’ reflexivity has already been suggested here. However, Archer also points to the mobilising effects these internal conversations have in allowing individuals to select courses of action within the options offered by the social world, with clear links to Grossberg’s central premise of the structured mobility of social individuals who use their affective relationships to anchor themselves in an ongoing way within specific temporal and spatial circumstances. Such reflexive practices are therefore infused with both fluctuations in intensity and strategic dynamics as individuals devise projects that matter to them. My attachment to Villeneuve is one such project, forensically examined in these pages as themselves a further extension of that project.

As such, understanding intensity only in relation to its emotional content (or degrees of energy) does not take us far enough since individuals will be further qualifying their ‘intensities’ through variations of reflexivity (i.e., via degrees of reflexivity). Thus, the quality of the intensity will be marked by the degrees of reflexive deliberation, as are the carefully considered courses of action undertaken which assign significance to a particular socio-cultural object (e.g., Formula One as worthy of affective investment by a fan), and which distinguish this object from others (e.g., why Villeneuve is more worthy of investment than other drivers – with clear links therein to Grossberg’s notions of excess and mattering maps); and which further construct particular projects and/or practices (e.g., the expense of Grand Prix attendance, regular late night televised viewing of races, or committing to a Ph.D. project). Again, such designs may themselves be

ineffective, either directly for the social individual or are deemed as such by external sources (thus, to others, the vast sums of money ‘wasted’ on Formula One merchandise or hours ‘lost’ playing PlayStation games). However, by (re)investing intensity with a qualitative rather than merely quantitative property we come closer to understanding both the prominence of reflexivity as part of the process and, more significantly for the present project, how the quality of the intensity is underscored by the reflexive element of those designs that shape the concerns, actions and mobilities of social individuals in their daily lives. These theoretical perspectives will be re-grounded in particular concrete, context-specific examples of fandom shortly.

However, for further clarification, we should note that these variations in the intensity of reflexive deliberations will oscillate from the perfunctory to the profound in our quotidian existence. So, these comprise examples ranging from self-reminders to buy milk on the way home or self-evaluations of whether we ‘look good’ in a particular piece of clothing (the perfunctory), to the lengthier, complex and layered internal conversations we have as researchers when trying to convey ideas through writing or external conversations (the profound). My preference here is to marry conceptualisations of intensity with the strategic and then to plot these as constitutive of a particular field – herein offered as the strategy-intensity field. Aligning these two terms acknowledges that internal conversations are simultaneously always inflected both by strategic imperatives and by variations in the intensity of the reflexive deliberation. Thus, the terms strategy and intensity operate as vectors within the strategy-intensity field onto which the specific reflexive and strategic dimensions of particular practices can be traced. The composition of this strategy-intensity field, as well as a theoretical

mapping of my fandom onto this field, will be an intended culmination of this thesis. First, however, an elaboration of the notion of strategy is required.

Fatal and Banal Strategies

Baudrillard's (1983a, 1990a) notion of fatal strategies was introduced earlier in this thesis and can now be returned to. Initially, fatal strategies were presented as a strategic tool utilised by the masses to simulate their existence and their conformity to the prevailing hyperreal culture and social reality that they were 'subject' to. However, it was also suggested that these fatal strategies bestow a degree of 'agential' power, with the masses deploying such strategies as forms of ruse and artifice to simulate their passivity and inertia as a means to escape attempts at detection or social classification in the face of immensely determining forces. We can extrapolate these points to incorporate further distinctions within these strategies. In his summation of fatal strategies, Baudrillard (1990a) says,

There is perhaps but one fatal strategy and only one: theory. And doubtless the only difference between a banal theory and a fatal theory is that in one strategy the subject still believes himself to be more cunning than the object, whereas in the other the object is considered more cunning, cynical, talented than the subject, for which it lies in wait. The metamorphoses, the ruses, the strategies of the object surpass the subject's understanding. The object is neither the double nor the repressed of the subject...it has its own strategy and holds the key to the rules of a game, impenetrable to the subject, not because they are deeply mysterious, but because they are infinitely ironic. (p. 181)

Therefore, on the one hand we can argue that the subject is actually implementing a banal strategy as a member of the ‘masses’ which, in fact, is not a passive, simulated act but, in itself is simulating indifference through the pretext and pretence of conforming (Baudrillard, 1983a, 1988a, 1990a). Therefore, the subject’s acts of supposed evasion and guile retain an assumed superiority to the object and constitute a banal strategy. On the other hand, we can assert that the subject’s integration into the masses (in a symbolic and simulated capacity) becomes a fatal strategy, as it is the masses’ spongy collectivity that becomes the object in such relations and they, the masses, are the object being sought for investigation, analysis, opinion and so forth. In this respect, the masses as object can be deemed supreme in such relations, with their collectivity and assumed passivity, inertia and conformity comprising cunning fatal strategies that are being deployed to escape detection. Through our discussion and mapping of fandom onto the strategy-intensity field, we will see how these subject/object relations, banal/fatal strategies and their associated assumptions of supremacy play out in the social domain of fandom.

More broadly, Baudrillard is suggesting that simulation and hyperreality are creating a fatal (but not apocalyptic) destiny which transgresses the traditional limits of, for example, meaning, knowledge and information. Indeed, in its fatality, such definitional terms are themselves mocked and surpassed in what he labels ‘objective irony’. Baudrillard (1988a) advocates that, “for critical theory one must therefore substitute a fatal theory, to bring this objective irony of the world to completion” (p. 83), while also suggesting that, “this is no longer the irony of the subject faced with an objective order, but the objective irony of things caught in their own devices” (p. 83). Thus, this returns to us to the notion of strategies and, particularly, the primacy of supremacy first bestowed on objects in

the hyperreal (they are fatalistic in design, in their destiny, in their centrality and through the deployment of their own fatal strategies). For the subject also to participate in the 'objective irony of the world', the banal strategies they construct and implement must also be, to some degree, fatalistic in design. So Baudrillard (1988a) asserts that,

Against the banal vision (conventional and religious) of the fatal, one must set up a fatal vision of the banal. It is at the extremities of this monotony, this insignificance, this indifference of our systems, that the sequences, unfolding, and processes...appear. (pp. 84-85)

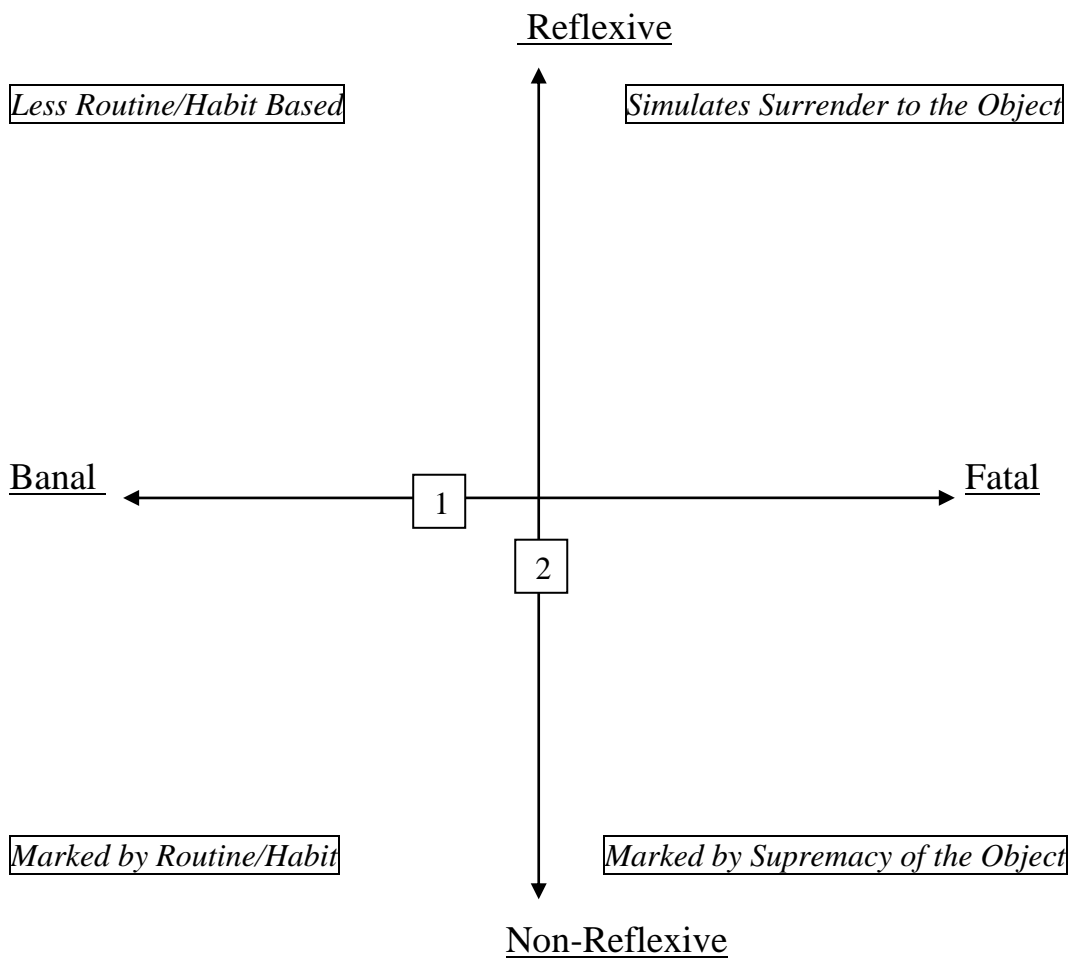
Hence, the mundane, monotonous, insignificant and so forth serve as strategies in the daily lives of subjects and, although arguably arbitrary in design, fatalistically bestow some kind of supremacy to the subject through their deployment (there is an unexpected converging of ideas here from Archer and Baudrillard who, otherwise, make strange bedfellows).⁴ Often these banal strategies also become inhuman (where Baudrillard departs again from Archer), deploying guises such as obedience, silence and inertia as a means to accede to the fatalistic and broader social (and symbolic) orders, while, ultimately, conferring a supremacy to the subject. Baudrillard's fatalistic visions and abstract theories of the social will be returned to in due course. For our present purposes, Archer's (2007) concept of reflexivity and Baudrillard's (1983a, 1988a, 1990a) theory of strategies are combined and transposed onto the strategy-intensity field as a means to explore the socio-cultural phenomenon of fandom.

The Strategy-Intensity Field

Comprising the intensity vector are the distinguishing terms reflexive and non-reflexive intensity which consider, obviously, the quality of the intensity underpinning the reflexive design and its concrete realisation in specific fan practices. As such, the previous analogy of the perfunctory and the profound does not adequately articulate the diverse intensities of reflexive deliberations for fans; that is, while fandom is imbued all the time with the perfunctory (e.g., remember to pack your Grand Prix ticket), such terms in themselves do not provide sufficient explanatory purchase. Hence, the intensity vector maps the non-reflexive as being orientated towards affect (and its associated emotional dimensions) while, conversely, the reflexive is characterised as being guided more by 'intellect'. Such findings will be supported by embedding Archer's (2007) three modes of reflexivity (the communicative, autonomous and meta-reflexive) within the broader theorisation of these non-reflexive and reflexive intensities. The strategy vector comprises Baudrillard's (1990a) notions of the banal and the fatal, to recognise that the activation of specific social practices (here fandom) and their preceding reflexive designs are marked by the differing dimensions, meaning and 'depth' to the strategies social individuals deploy. Nevertheless, rather than constituting a static set of distinctive binaries, the field should be recognised as fluid and dynamic. By doing so, the fluctuating degrees of mobility that the intensity of reflexive deliberations, strategic imperatives and the resultant actions (e.g., the overlap between strategies and intensities) accord can also be plotted onto this field. In fact, as Figure Four reveals, within each distinctive quadrant the overlapping intensities and strategies are inflected with broader social dimensions and/or implications (see boxed labels). It is onto this field that my Formula One fandom is now transposed as a means finally for revealing and

refining how such strategies and intensities are embedded and actualised in particular, concrete practices. Most pointedly, such an approach also makes cognisable Grossberg's (1992b) notion of structured mobility by mapping the routes, trajectories and temporal/spatial anchoring of a social individual, through the processes of fandom, within and across this dynamic field (where in my earlier discussion this mobility remained ultimately undefined).

Figure 4: The Strategy-Intensity Field



1. Dimension of Strategy
2. Dimension of Intensity

Fandom and the Strategy-Intensity Field

Banal/Non-Reflexive

As our first plotted trajectory on the strategy-intensity field, a banal/non-reflexive strategic-intensity can be characterised as both being obedient strategically and less critically-informed reflexively. While the banal/non-reflexive nexus can be emotionally-driven or dependent (though conversely, it may not be, as my oscillating examples will demonstrate) most significantly, it tends to privilege routine and to be activated by habit. Archer (2007) suggests that for social individuals surrounded by their ‘similar’ (e.g., a network of close family and friends) and ‘familiar’ (e.g., contextual continuity in terms of location, vocation, existing socio-cultural structures, etc.) the intensity of reflexive deliberations is weakened. Classified by the ‘communicative’ mode of reflexivity, such individuals often have reduced internal conversations as they turn to their interlocutors (e.g., ‘similar’) to check, clarify and/or confirm any such ruminations externally. According to Archer (2007), a by-product of this communicative mode of reflexivity is social immobility, as these social individuals (often guided by their interlocutors) privilege contextual continuity by falling back on existing habits and routines. Such an observation has clear links with Bourdieu’s theories of individual dispositions and the habitus. Nevertheless, Archer (2007) refutes any overly explicit connection between the socio-economic and modes of reflexivity, asserting that the reflexivity of her own interviewees, for instance, was deliberative (not a mere reflection of circumstances) and used by design as a means to maintain and/or retain a close proximity to these ‘similar’ and ‘familiar’.

We can argue, however, that such routines and habits must shape the banal/non-reflexive nexus for fandom as, strategically, social individuals are obedient to these external factors to some considerable extent despite their own deliberative capacities. Hence, as a prime example, an individual's habitus shapes the particular formation and mode of his/her fandom. Nationality and nationalism are a clear example of this, hailing social individuals to recognise their cultural identity and interpellating them into associated practices and processes (Chapter Two). Therefore, for example, sport fandom through nationality is often a banal/non-reflective process as fans are drawing on habitual routines to evoke their support and to reinforce social immobility (e.g., maintaining a link to 'similar' and 'familiar'). Hence, as a New Zealander, during my childhood and early adulthood rugby was the locus for my sport fandom. Such fandom was clearly inflected with nationalistic sentiments and characterised by the habitual, routinised processes, practices and formations that accompany nationalistic fandom (and shaped my grassroots participation in the sport). Thus, for example, the communal gathering and viewing of rugby by 'similar', the evocation of the familiar through imagined communities and the habitual reinforcement of this social context (e.g., articulations of national pride and unity) were the routinised and habitual components of 'my' New Zealand rugby fandom. Furthermore, through the repetition of such communal activities, such fandom can also constitute a form of banal nationalism (Billig, 1995) which potentially becomes mundane and drab through the recycling of these habitual routines (e.g., regular and regulated viewing of test matches, displaying and/or wearing nationalistic symbols, singing national anthems and so forth). These characteristics can be transposed, with socio-cultural and contextual refinements, onto other nationalistic forms of fandom (e.g., cricket in India, football in England, ice

hockey in Canada and, in a more vexed but interesting manner, onto Formula One given its layered and at times contradictory evocation of nationalism – see Chapter Two).⁵

Strategically banal and reflexively uncritical through its obviousness, its level of expectation and its obedience to the socio-cultural status quo, the banal/non-reflexive nexus may be affective in its emotional investment and intensity but, seemingly, privileges an awareness and activation of habitual routines in the realisation of specific concrete practices of fandom. Indirectly, Archer (2007) captures this perspective by surmising,

What the practice of communicative reflexivity does is to privilege the public over the private, shared experience over lone experiences, third-person knowledge over first-person knowledge...In short, the speculative realm is severely truncated in favour of common sense, common experience and common knowledge. In the process, ‘similar and familiars’ become still more similar to one another as well as familiar with each other. (p. 273)

Of course, at this juncture I have viewed the banal/non-reflexive nexus only through a nationalistic lens. Such a lens in Formula One is either blurred, through the amalgamation of diverse team, driver and staffing nationalities (and localities), or less transparent than in other sports; there is no New Zealand driver, team or race catering to nationalistic identification for myself.⁶ However, the banal/non-reflexive nexus has applicability to the initial stages of fandom, which I herein consider my ‘naive’ phase of Formula One fandom. My argument is that as naive fans new to a particular sport, these social individuals also fall back on habitual practices and routinised processes to develop what we might term their cultural

literacy (and, in time, their cultural and symbolic capital). Such practices may be marked by the initial ‘compulsive’ forms of consumption which people engage in to seemingly (and symbolically at least) quickly acquire forms of capital to demonstrate and display to others. Thus, for example, we are reminded of the commercialised and commodified processes embedded in sport (and traced in the previous chapter) which, collectively, treat fans as consumers, transform events into commodified ‘experiences’ and imbue consumer goods with broader socio-cultural significance within specific fan communities (e.g., Crawford, 2004; Giulianotti, 2002; Grossberg, 1992a; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Rinehart, 1998; Sandvoss, 2005; Schirato, 2007b). As such, collectively, these commercialised and commodified processes are catering to the ephemeral ‘casual’ viewer/spectator and the more culturally literate fan and facilitate entry into the cultural field (or subculture) of specific sports for the naive fan. That is, due to his/her cultural illiteracy, the naive fan adopts a banal/non-reflexive approach to sport by falling back on routinised and habitual practices of consumption to ‘become’ a fan by purchasing the t-shirt, cap and so forth. Still refining their cultural literacy, such naive fans deploy a banal strategy by obeying the expected consumerist rules and are non-reflexive in their designs (e.g., as they collect merchandise they are generally unaware of the more subtle distinctions embedded in consumer goods as cultural capital, nor their possible conformist practices as ‘duped’ consumers).

The initial selection of particular sporting individuals to support arguably follows similar routinised and habitual lines. As has been discussed in this thesis, star athletes are both central to the televised sport spectacle and to forms of media fandom (Chapters Four and Six; see also Whannel, 1992, 1999, 2002). Hence, these sport stars are elevated, given prominence and marked as exceptional in

sport mediations. Both casuals and naive fans may be culturally illiterate in certain sports but soon perceive who the star athletes are through their continual coverage, circulation and exchange which usually is founded upon some degree of success.⁷ So, in contemporary men's sports the leading, winning and 'champion' athletes are renowned; most obviously for example, Roger Federer in tennis, Tiger Woods in golf, Lance Armstrong in road cycling and, prior to 2007, Michael Schumacher in Formula One. Unless another avenue is constructed for identification, such as the nationalistic one noted above (or, for example, other 'traditional' social classifications such as race, gender or class), it is fair to generalise and extrapolate that most casual and naive fans will gravitate towards the star athletes in their respective sports.⁸ Such a process is orientated by the banal/non-reflexive nexus through lacking in an intensity of deliberation and being strategically obedient to the predominant mediated images and coverage that certain sports garner by privileging their star athletes. As a naive fan to Formula One in 1998, it is fair to say that Villeneuve's status as reigning World Champion was alluring and provided the aura of the current 'star' driver in the sport. Naive and culturally illiterate in how central the car was to driver performance in Formula One, my deliberations lacked in intensity of engagement with the sport's subtleties. Hence, I equated his status as commensurate with ability although, of course, I was also becoming increasingly aware through my viewing of races that Villeneuve would not be a prime contender for the championship. Nevertheless, he was regularly scoring points and had his status sufficiently evoked in the global telecasts (and on the Formula One 1998 PlayStation One game) to initially reaffirm my naive phase of fandom. This was not the only reason for selecting Villeneuve and such strategies and intensities of reflexivity would be refined over time, especially as my cultural literacy in the

sport and affective relationship with Villeneuve subsequently increased (these refinements will be tracked across the remaining trajectories of the strategy-intensity field). Tracing my experience of naive fandom reveals that, although the obvious habitual process of selection based upon nationality was not afforded by Formula One in 1998, another routinised practice of affinity towards the prominent (through mediation) and pre-eminent (through previous achievement) sport star Jacques Villeneuve was being formulated and provided a pivotal first anchoring on my long-term trajectory as a Formula One fan.

Fatal/Non-Reflexive

The banal/non-reflexive nexus revealed a process of fandom often steeped in routine and habit which, potentially, can reduce at that point the strategic and reflexive dimensions (and possibly the salience of affect too). In contrast, while the fatal/non-reflexive may also become a habitual and routinised process to some degree, it tends to privilege both the supremacy of the object and the intensity of affect for social individuals. As was noted earlier, Baudrillard's fatal strategies impart supremacy to the object which becomes both seductive to and surpasses the subject's understanding. Baudrillard (1990a) notes, "the object is always the fetish, the false, the *feiticho*, the factitious, the lure" (p. 184, italics in original) which, strategically, fascinate but always confound the subject through the object's deployment of its own fatalistic strategies of cunning, ruse and artifice. Aligned with these dual fatal strategies of object and subject, social individuals lack in what we might term more 'rational', 'objective' or 'intellectual' internal conversations by privileging the supremacy of such objects. Archer (2007) notes, "the internal conversation is not an area where instrumental rationality has hegemony; it is just as much an arena for reviewing the emotional commentaries

on our concerns, which are registered internally as we contemplate doing this rather than that” (p. 285). While these deliberations may still be inflected with some degree of reflexive intensity, the assertion being made here is that within the fatal/non-reflexive nexus, such deliberations tend to be less critical and are characterised more by an intensity of affect. That is, by elevating and conferring supremacy to the object, the relationship and nature of such deliberations is also predisposed to a higher affective intensity towards the object and a truncated critical reflexive deliberation on the rationale for bestowing such a status.

Archer’s (2007) second mode of reflexivity, ‘autonomous’, demonstrates some of these tendencies while conflating others. For example, although the ‘autonomous’ are highly reflexive individuals (which will be returned to for the remaining trajectories), their orientation towards acquiring procedural knowledge and a proficiency of skills in subject/object relations seems to marry with the fatal/non-reflexive nexus. Through this subject knowledge and proficiency, the object retains its primacy as the locus for the subject’s associated affective fascination. Indeed, Archer (2007) notes,

What the subject knows, and only he [sic] can know it, is the intimate satisfaction that he derives from *using his skills*, in the ultimate privacy of the subject/object relationship...these sources of satisfaction are matters of first-person knowledge. Ontologically, they exist only by virtue of the person experiencing them and constitute a deeply intrinsic source of satisfaction experienced by the proficient. (p. 288, italics in original)

While this may also show traces of a banal strategy, in terms of the subject assuming they have mastery over the object, ultimately it remains fatal as,

strategically, the object retains its pre-eminence in the courses of action undertaken by the individual. Moreover, in a reflexive capacity, the affective clearly shapes and moulds the deliberation and orientation of the person towards his/her specific object. These constitutive components of the fatal/non-reflexive nexus can certainly be transposed onto fandom. Due to its prominent layers of affect traced in the previous chapter, my own trajectory as a Formula One fan affords some genuine insights here as a case study.

Remaining in the initial phase of naive fandom, the sport of Formula One and Villeneuve in particular are the focal (and fatal) objects into which my fandom coalesces. We will return to a consideration of Villeneuve shortly but, as an object, Formula One deploys its own fatal strategies to fascinate and seduce subjects. Many of its strategies, rules and ruses have been documented throughout this thesis; such as the sport's public and popular narratives (Chapter Three) and its seductive mediated constructions (Chapters Four and Five). As a naive fan lacking in cultural literacy of the field, these rules and ruses were fatalistic in their capacity to draw me in initially and corral my support in 1998 and 1999. So, for example, the publicly disseminated evocations of Formula One's elite status, endorsed by its extravagant costs and technological sophistication, and further supplemented by the commentaries of Murray Walker (glowing and hyperbolic) and Martin Brundle (technical expertise; see Chapters Four and Five), were important aspects for initially acceding supremacy to the sport. What is also discernible in this initial phase of fandom is that such deliberations were essentially non-reflexive in scope (e.g., internal conversations lacking in complexity) and strategically fatal through my marvelling at and conferring a supremacy to the object. Although a generalised assertion, we can assume similar patterns emerge in other forms of sport fandom for naive and

culturally less 'literate' fans who are lured or 'seduced', in varying degrees, by the public narratives, role of commentators and the broader structures and fatal strategies deployed by specific sports.⁹

With the commencement of this doctoral thesis post-2001, arguably my fandom became more critically informed through my enhanced levels of cultural capital and literacy (as well as symbolic capital) and the resultant 'academic depth' to my reflexive deliberations. However, in spite of the increased awareness of, for example, some of the sport's paradoxes and contradictions traced in Chapter Three, I would suggest that such fandom was still strategically fatal by retaining the primacy of Formula One. That is, the continuation of my Villeneuve fandom for a nine year period (1998-2006) was underscored by the fan's sustained acceptance of Formula One as a supreme object. Moreover, while the reflexive deliberations may have developed in intensity to match the accumulated academic knowledge and sport-specific cultural literacy, simultaneously such intensities were affective in terms of the emotive investment and orientation towards Villeneuve as the supreme fatal object and locus for fandom (i.e., over and above Formula One itself).

As has been documented throughout this thesis, my Formula One fandom has essentially been a fandom for the French-Canadian driver, Jacques Villeneuve. While his status as reigning World Champion in 1998 was an important entry point for my initial fandom, there was also an increasingly affective intensity being forged in my reflexive deliberations and deference to Villeneuve as the supreme object; supreme, that is, in the emotional life of the fan. To demonstrate how the fatal/non-reflexive nexus inflected my trajectory as a naive fan, I have reproduced my affective internal ruminations on watching televised coverage of Villeneuve from 1998 via an autoethnographic vignette (DVD Example 22).

Lap 37, finally the cameras cut to Villeneuve. "About time!" I remind the television screen. I have hardly seen Jacques all race, although he is running in a strong fourth place. A wave of nervous excitement washes over me as I view Jacques negotiating the Lesmo turns. He appears to be quite close to Eddie Irvine too. "Come on Jacques" I urge, "push, get another podium". Jacques runs very wide on the exit of the first Lesmo, exciting me with his ragged style of driving. Split-seconds later the coverage cuts to another camera as Jacques goes flying off the track in the background. "No!!!!" I scream. Replays and Brundle's commentary reveal Villeneuve running wide before getting sideways through the corner, careening into the gravel run-off area. I leap to my feet, kicking the table in front of me while searching for something to throw. I want to see Villeneuve win or at least get podiums, not crashing! The replays cut to an on-board shot of Villeneuve getting sideways and bouncing through the gravel. "That was pretty cool", I surmise, watching Villeneuve's helmet frantically bobbing from side-to-side as his car jolts across the uneven surface before coming to a gentle stop. Back 'live', Villeneuve is televised out of the car, flanked by track marshals as he removes his helmet. My anger at the missed opportunity quickly evaporates. "He's so cool!" I say to myself. Anger has turned to fascination as I now stare in awe at him. I've hardly ever seen Villeneuve filmed out of the car during my first year of watching Formula One. But here he is clearly visible for the global audience: the baggy red overalls, bleached blond hair, nose strip, stubble and focused look of his piercing blue eyes searching for an escape from the crash scene. His face betrays his self-annoyance. Villeneuve rips off his nose strip and throws it to the ground. He looks over to the crowd, giving them an appreciate but shrift wave, seemingly acknowledging their support

but recognising his own fallibility before turning to walk away in shame. And with that, Jacques was gone, replaced by the televised images of cars still in the race. Nevertheless, despite the driving error, despite the wasted points, it was Villeneuve's appearance that remained etched in my memory. The intensity of my fandom for Jacques increased that day knowing that I was supporting the 'cool guy'; the blond-haired, unshaven, baggy clothed 'maverick' World Champion...

Turning to an analysis of this spatial and temporal 'moment' of my naive fandom, we can see that there are banal and perfunctory dimensions embedded in the narrative, such as the depthless use of 'cool' as an adjective (possibly also shaped by Vergeer's [2004] reference to Villeneuve as 'Mr. Cool' in my own rewriting of the vignette) and the seemingly inane enthrallment with Villeneuve's appearance in 1998. Equally, however, the narrative reveals how internal ruminations are processed and activated during such moments, with the intensity of deliberation inflected more by affect than reflexivity. Hence, while I still equated performance with achievement and, as a naive and culturally illiterate fan, was frustrated at his crash, the allegedly vacuous fascination with his image was cementing an affective relationship and investment in Villeneuve. Dual processes were at play in this particular naive 'moment' (and would be sustained for the duration of my fandom). First, as has been intimated, Villeneuve's mediated image was operating in the realm of a fatal strategy. Eschewing any consideration of self-conscious intent or 'agency' on Villeneuve's behalf, as a media object, his mediated image and appearance (and we could extrapolate this to his media stardom more broadly) was seductive; deploying the 'rogue', 'rebel' and 'maverick' traces (image/appearance, risk-taking and dissent) as ruses, guises, lures and strategies to captivate and corral Formula One subjects (i.e., my

attention as a fan). Moreover, as a fan, all seductive ‘power’ resided with Villeneuve as the supreme object that infiltrated my quotidian existence. Such a process, while affective, is not about desire or the homoerotic (see the argued disqualifications of this interpretation in Chapter One) and, strategically, Villeneuve the media object always evaded attempts at finding a ‘real’ Villeneuve to care about (he is *always already* a media star) or be possessed (Villeneuve ‘disappears’ at that very moment he circulates as a media object, a point developed later in this chapter). Baudrillard (1990a) asserts, “possession is the preoccupation and pride of the subject, but not of the object, which is totally indifferent to it, as to its liberation. The object wants only to seduce...the object always wins” (p. 124).

My affective investment was grounded in its own fatal strategy of fascination and intrigue with an object that, while seductive, was incoherent, indifferent and unobtainable in its supremacy. Thus, despite my ‘active’ and ‘interactive’ fan processes of poaching, scavenging, re-appropriating and re-producing traces of Villeneuve across my fan career (1998-2006; see also Crawford, 2004; Hills, 2002; Jenkins, 1992, 2006a, 2006b), Villeneuve’s fatal strategy as an object produced its own subterfuge and fragmentation and subverted any subjective attempts (real or veiled) at possession or desire. These points will be refined through a further discussion of seduction in the final section of this chapter.

The second notable process is that the affective intensity of my reflexivity persisted in terms of the emotional investment and attachment to Villeneuve over my fan career (although as the previous chapter noted, the intensities of affective energy and ‘emotion’ always fluctuate in any form of fandom, such as the perhaps inevitable decrease in affective intensity due to his absence from Formula One for much of 2004). Thus, although my reflexive designs on Villeneuve can be

assumed to have become more critically informed as a result of both the intellectual rigour of a doctoral thesis and my enhanced cultural capital and literacy, the affective dimension remained intact and crystallised around Villeneuve. So, Villeneuve's mediated star image continued to fascinate and 'seduce' me despite the transition from a naive to 'Formula One insider' fan and my gravitation towards a more 'serious' academic vocation. In contradistinction to the first autoethnographic vignette, a second vignette from 2006 anchors my fandom in the 'Formula One insider' phase. The efficacy of this second narrative lies in its affordance of insight into the increasing reflexivity of such deliberations, imparted via an external conversation which, nevertheless, demonstrates that such deliberations remain embedded in affect.

BMW Team Launch, January 2006

"Here he is honey, come look" I call across to Tina. "Do I have to?" she responds, reclining on the couch and seemingly engrossed in the film she is viewing. "Go on, come see him for just a minute" I plead and stretch my arms out for an imaginary hug. Tina relents, pushing the pause button and moves in to return my embrace. "Look there he is, he's so cool" I enthuse, motioning towards the computer as she goes in for a closer look. "Yes, very good" she proffers, patting my head and gesturing back towards her film. "And look, he didn't even shave...so cool" I continue. Tina is not so impressed and often grumbles at me when I can't be bothered to shave. I can sense that Tina will bite back as she scrutinises Villeneuve's appearance further. "Yeah, well he looks a bit of mess – you shouldn't be proud Mister! And where's his hair gone, looking a bit old now!" she teases, mocking Villeneuve's partially spiked but receding hairline. Tina is enjoying winding me up and I'm beginning to wonder why I did

call for her after all. “Couldn’t he have at least shaved?” she asks, raising her eyebrows in sarcastic disapproval. I pull Tina closer and kiss her on the forehead. “Exactly honey, how cool is this guy?” I ask rhetorically. Before Tina can disagree I press on, “that’s the thing, this is the team launch, the big promotional day for BMW and its sponsors in front of Formula One and other global media. Add to that, here is Jacques, the guy apparently lucky to still have a drive in Formula One, not wanted by the team and all that. You would think that he would be happy just to have a drive and be bending over backwards for the team. But here he is, ever the maverick, doing his own thing, not performing to the corporate script” I gush proudly. “Yeah well, that’s your thing but I still think that he should tidy himself up” Tina responds. “You know with his salary” she continues, “I’m sure he could afford a razor and comb”. We both laugh but Tina is on a roll, “And what’s with his glasses?” she asks cheekily, “they look more geek than chic”. I can’t help laughing at her comments as I focus on Villeneuve’s thick black frames. “Yeah, I agree” I answer reflectively, “but that’s what’s so cool about this guy, he always stands out. I mean look at him; the stubble, the thick glasses, the overalls that look two sizes too big for him. See, even in 2006, Jacques is still not conforming to the corporate cookie-cutter for F1 drivers”. “You and your warped idea of style” Tina grins in a disapproving yet friendly manner, “let’s hope he actually finishes some races this year, buddy!” she mutters and heads back over to the couch to resume her film, leaving me to pour over Villeneuve’s first public appearance with BMW in 2006...

It is these ‘traces of grit’ within Villeneuve’s media image (e.g., the stubble, glasses, baggy overalls) that persistently resonate in an affective, reflexive manner for me. The narrative from 2006 reveals a more critical component to my

reflexive deliberations evinced through the specificity of details discussed with Tina in defence of Villeneuve's appearance (obtained through a growing cultural literacy about the sport and symbolic capital as now something of a 'Formula One insider') and how these are coloured with evident maverick traces that seemingly run counter to the corporate expectations that underpin Formula One. Of course, we should remind ourselves of Dyer's insight into the system's production of dissatisfactions that the system then itself satisfies. Moreover, while the narrative also provides a concrete example of the 'gentle teasing' that plays out in the daily lives of fans, their partners and more broadly how fandom is integrated into such relationships (see also Chapter Six), it is clearly grounded in affect. Thus, while the reflexivity is critically aware, it privileges a fatal strategy which recognises the supremacy of the object, while the critical faculty of reflexivity is subsumed by the intensity of affect in a non-reflexive manner (e.g., how the notion of 'cool' persists in an emotive capacity to undermine any rational self-doubt occasioned by a partner's teasing). As such, Villeneuve the media object is still pre-eminent and lures through his appearance, while affording a non-reflexive pleasure in both the recognition and appropriation of these traces of grit, such as his ragged driving style, stubble, dyed hair or the baggy overalls noted in both autoethnographic vignettes, as something 'exceptional' and more profound than they might be permitted to be in any critical reflexive perspective. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that the strategy-intensity field is fluid and dynamic in its overall orientation, with reflexive deliberations seeping into parts of this 'non-reflexive' nexus through the academic and culturally literate acquired forms of knowledge (e.g., knowing the marketing significance of such traces of supposed grit within a smoothly corporate sport). We will also see that affect can be married with these

critical reflexive forms (and the strategically fatal with the banal) in the remaining trajectories, as the banal-reflexive nexus demonstrates.

Banal/Reflexive

Thus far, the vectors plotted onto the strategy-intensity field have been characterised by a strategically obedient, less critically-informed reflexivity often steeped in routine (the banal/non-reflexive nexus) or the strategic supremacy of the object, again less critically-informed but principally derived via intensities of affect rather than routinised practices (the fatal/non-reflexive nexus). Our attention now turns to the third location on the strategy-intensity field, the banal/reflexive nexus. This nexus, while strategically obedient, primarily moves away from habit, routine or affect (although they may still have a degree of saliency) to more intense ways of traversing the concrete realities of one's quotidian existence. We can usefully return to Archer (2007) and suggest that, within this nexus, social individuals might have fewer of the 'similar and familiars' in their social contexts or they may feel less straightforwardly assimilated into those alliances and, hence, may rely on more intense reflexive deliberations to 'mull over' their interests and to design (in)appropriate courses of action. This mode of reflexivity was introduced in the previous section as 'autonomous'. For these people, there will be a tendency to operate in a manner less dependent on interlocutors, relying instead on internal conversations that according to Archer (2007) are "going on 'all the time'" and that can be "prolonged and ubiquitous" (p. 284). She suggests that these reflexive deliberations act as a mental resource and as a form of strategic mobility which parallels an upward social mobility (primarily in a vocational capacity), although Archer acknowledges that these practices never guarantee such upward mobility.

Nevertheless, the autonomous reflexive mode is underpinned by the social individual's ongoing evaluations and appraisals of his/her own designs in light of such deliberations. We can simply summarise this mode for our present purposes as being high in reflexive intensity.

Strategically, the banal/reflexive nexus appears to remain in a largely banal locus, with the subject assuming continuing supremacy over the object while providing some of what Baudrillard (1990a) refers to as "fatal disobedience to the symbolic order" (p. 182). Hence, strategically, the banal is inflected by a knowing (reflexive) subject who now assumes there is depth, cunning and a degree of Archer's autonomy to his/her own banal strategies. In fact, given the high intensity of reflexivity bestowed on the subject in this nexus, they may also be producing what Baudrillard (1990a) refers to as inhuman strategies. As an example of an inhuman strategy, Baudrillard suggests that people use their vacations as a means to seek a higher degree of boredom than they can achieve in their daily lives, while having the foreknowledge that elements, such as happiness and distraction, will confer legitimacy to this boredom. Baudrillard (1990a) argues, "I'm not joking: people are not looking for amusement; instead they want to find a fatal distraction. Boredom is not the problem – the essential point is the increase of boredom; increase is salvation and ecstasy" (p. 184), which he also suggests is a hyper-banal strategy through the ruse of the subject and its resultant fatalistic overtones. In fact boredom and Formula One seem, if anything, to offer a more persuasive case for Baudrillard here than vacations! So, we will return to Baudrillard's evocation of the hyper-banal in due course. First, however, fan practices and processes (or more precisely, reflexivities and strategies) need to be transposed onto the banal/reflexive nexus.

Many of the central features of the banal/reflexive nexus in relation to fandom have in fact been traced in the previous chapter. Thus, considering consumption as a first, prime example which arguably underpins most, if not all, forms of media fandom, the proposition of the ‘duped’ consumer was discussed and, to some extent, dismissed as an explanatory absolute in the processes of fandom analysed in Chapter Six. But by now transposing the banal/reflexive nexus onto these consumerist and consumptive practices, we see that while fans are certainly operating within the given socio-economic context, many fans are also critically aware of their own supposedly *determined* and duped position. Thus, the more highly reflexive social individual recognises his/her own socio-economically *determined* position but, equally, sees a value or worth nonetheless in his/her sustained cultural fandom (e.g., Bourdieu, 1991; Schirato, 2007b). Hence, through some degree of reflexive deliberation, these fans recognise their associated consumptive practices as constitutive of contemporary fandom and enact them anyway. Clearly, we need to recognise that this intensity of reflexivity is not applicable to all fans; acknowledging the caveat of distinctions mapped in the previous chapter between fans and consumers, their casual or connoisseur status and their varying degrees of symbolic and cultural capital and literacy as still important explanatory factors (see also Bourdieu, 1984, 1986, 1991; Crawford, 2004; Giulianotti, 2002; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Guttman, 1986; Schirato, 2007b).

Recalling (without repeating) my own fandom examples and vignettes from Chapter Six, I argued that while these practices and processes were clearly shaped by socio-economic forces, there were still traces of the culturally literate ‘Formula One insider’ fan finding affective satisfaction and a cultural worth or legitimacy in ‘playing the game’. That is, while being commercialised and consumerist

practices, the procurement and display of merchandise was inflected with symbolic value, capital and imparted status through the knowledgeable pursuit of Formula One-specific forms of cultural capital. These goods and displays would also be fundamental to my performativity as a fan; a process that acknowledges and activates an affective pleasure in the game, matched by the intensity of reflexive self-awareness. Collectively, these observations coalesce around the intensity of reflexive deliberations and designs. Clearly, the reflexive capabilities vary for social individuals (i.e., it is not an equally 'shared' or distributed trait) and, additionally, can also be inflected with and/or influenced by diverse intensities of affect (e.g., my own fandom is clearly also anchored in an affective emotional investment). Nevertheless, there is a critical, highly reflexive deliberative process at play for the fan to be perceived as and operate as a duped consumer while, simultaneously, being critically aware of this stigmatised perception but still pursuing this course of action unflinchingly and often even with alternative outcomes in mind (e.g., the symbolic and cultural capital being assembled by the 'Formula One insider fan' described earlier).

Strategically, consumption and performance remain banal by privileging the supposed supremacy of the subject in such relations although, arguably, these can often also become fatalistic in their design and implementation. For example, my continual consumption of Villeneuve-specific merchandise is seemingly conferring supremacy to the object (i.e., fatalistically elevating Villeneuve as object). Alternatively, though, this supremacy may be blurred in fan performativity, as the subject is deploying their own assemblage of banal/fatal strategies; for example, manipulating subject/object relations through the fluidity of dynamic and endlessly reconstructed, recycled and reproduced displays of the fan performing as a fan while recognising his/her own fandom (defined as

hyperfandom in Chapter Six). Hyperfandom also oscillates as a banal and fatal strategy as the supremacy of the subject and/or object is never fixed; so, for example, in my own practices there is the concurrent fandom for Villeneuve as the media object, my (re)enactments as the fan subject and the blurring of both through my performances constructing and constituting the fan simultaneously as subject and object. We can extrapolate these points to incorporate Baudrillard's (1990a) theory of inhuman strategies and, especially, the hyperbanal. Re-evoking his assertion that subjects knowingly and strategically seek out boredom, Baudrillard (1990a) notes that for subjects,

On the contrary, they'll make a destiny out of it: intensify it while seeming to do the opposite, plunge into it to the point of ecstasy, seal the monotony of it with an even greater monotony. This hyper-banalit  is the equivalent of fatality.
(p. 184)

The hyperbanal can be transposed onto fan practices through the regular, routinised repetition of fandom whereby the affective intensity most likely fluctuates across a continuum ranging from pleasure to monotony. While the mundane and drab aspects of fandom were generally glossed over as insignificant in Chapter Six, if we pursue Baudrillard's line of thought then, in its most hyperbanal form, it may be the simultaneous escalation and assuaging of monotony through perfunctory practices that fans 'plunge into' to actualise their affective intensities. Problematically, however, such an assertion is also subject to the simplistic misinterpretation of fans 'escaping' daily life when, as Grossberg (1992b) counters, it is these very affective investments and intensities that anchor individuals *in* social reality.

My own trajectory as a fan also reworks the application of banal strategies found in the first nexus, the banal/non-reflexive. In our current nexus, the banal/reflexive, there is a shift away from routine and habit as my Formula One fandom is forged along a different path (although the habitual and routinised process of supporting star athletes was still acknowledged via Villeneuve as reigning World Champion in 1998). In contradistinction, as a New Zealander, the gravitation towards the global sport of Formula One disrupts the ‘similar and familiar’ of nationalism and the purported significance of certain sports in accordance with a more broadly defined habitus – be it location or class-bound (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1991). In fact, the selection of Formula One reveals an intensity of reflexive design by rejecting the previously espoused socio-cultural elevation of rugby (e.g., the hailing and interpellation of nationalism through rugby as ‘our national game’ in New Zealand) to a sport that is globally dispersed and, as noted earlier, problematises links to the ‘the nation’ for a New Zealander. With no apparent or intrinsic national link, the selection of the French-Canadian, Jacques Villeneuve appears arbitrary.

My general shift to Formula One and Villeneuve in particular were marked by not only a break from habit or routine but by an increased intensity to such deliberations (an internal conversation with increased reflexivity). Therefore, my internal ruminations required reflexive negotiations to justify, legitimise and solidify a concurrent emerging affective engagement for a global sport and a transnational sport star. These reflexive deliberations recognised that embedded within Formula One’s broader global appeal was the subsidiary, atomised temporal/spatial construction of a solitary (non-communal) and isolated form of fandom in a broader New Zealand socio-cultural context (married with a reflexive awareness of the mediated and global imagined community being forged through

Formula One – as explored in Chapter Two). Moreover, such deliberations facilitated the banal strategy of obedience to a new set of imperatives (e.g., Formula One’s fatal strategies) which purportedly allow the navigation towards, anchoring in and licensing of isolation as its own cunning strategy that, symbolically or real, seemingly produces an exclusive yet not entirely asocial domain for oneself as subject. However, this particular evocation of isolation is not in strict adherence to Baudrillard’s (1994a) theory of the non-event (e.g., the implosion of meaning and medium, reality and image and so forth) in which he argues that individuals are isolated through technological and mediated experiences anyway (i.e., in contrast to ‘shared experiences’ or theories of global or imagined communities – see also Merrin, 2005). Rather, my assertion of the licensing of isolation is supported by Archer (2007), who observes that the ‘autonomous’ reflexive individual tends to carve out “the space for the lone pursuit of his leisure pursuits” (p. 297). Hence, the reflexive and strategic aura of isolation is inflected by an affective ‘personalised’ payoff as Formula One affords an intense space for reflexivity through my internal conversations and affective anchoring in temporal and spatial moments (while, of course, remaining broadly aware of the sport’s public construction, structures and fatal strategies).

The traces of grit that Villeneuve provides contribute to these reflexive deliberations and banal strategies as he is codified as the ‘maverick’, the ‘rebel’, the ‘dissenter’, the ‘risk-taker’ and so forth and, thus, seemingly offers an example of the maverick individual within the literal and corporate machinery (or grit within the cog) of Formula One. Hence, the public site and social domain of Formula One, filtered through Villeneuve the alleged ‘maverick’ individual driver also provides a ‘private’ space to license isolated and individualised reflexive temporal/spatial moments. Thus, for example, isolation in the predominantly

casual crowd at a Grand Prix through my ‘insider’ knowledge and non-communally based support for Villeneuve;¹⁰ isolation with the driver through point-of-view shots via the limited and rare occurrences of on-board camera coverage from Villeneuve’s car (or more sustained and interactively ‘controlled’ through video game play); and (re)isolation as a television viewer through solitary viewing practices (e.g., generally not shared with Tina or others, despite the sport’s mediated imagined community). This inflects my broader social relations in everyday life by my being perceived as the ‘Formula One guy’ by colleagues, associates and friends (imparting, in turn, fluctuating forms of symbolic capital or, conversely, suspicion of the duped consumer through my displays of cultural capital) and re-isolates me in specific spatial-temporal moments (e.g., the exclusion from or uninterest in rugby-related conversations and screenings in my New Zealand setting).¹¹ These observations bring us inexorably to the final trajectory on the strategy-intensity field.

Fatal/Reflexive

In the fatal/reflexive nexus, there is a continuation of the intense reflexivity characterising the previous nexus, as well as an oscillating intensity to how individuals strategically navigate and anchor themselves in social reality. More broadly, the fatal/reflexive nexus encompasses social individuals who, through the activation of their own fatal strategies, are simulating their surrender to the supremacy of the object (e.g., the fatal strategy of the object). These individuals deploy a diverse array of strategic imperatives, such as the banal, hyperbanal and inhuman discussed in the previous section, to facilitate this illusory and simulated occurrence in their daily lives. As Baudrillard (1990a) notes, “when I speak of the object and its fatal strategies, I’m also speaking of people and their inhuman

strategies” (p. 184). Thus, in specific contexts and practices, the subject is accorded some space for responding to and navigating the social and symbolic terrain of the fatalistic supremacy of the object (i.e., such as the aura of fan isolation ‘embedded’ within and constructed through both Formula One and Villeneuve as discussed in terms of the previous nexus). We have already noted Baudrillard’s (1990a) link between boredom and leisure activities but, in broader subject/object relations, it is within the “ecstatic deepening of anything” (Baudrillard, 1990a, p. 184) that the subject can reclaim a symbolic, simulated and ultimately fatalistic role. Baudrillard (1990a) argues that,

“There is no liberation but this one: in the deepening of negative conditions. All forms that tend to project a dazzling and miraculous liberty are only revolutionary homilies. Liberating logic is basically understood only by a few; essentially it is a fatal logic that wins out”. (pp. 184-185)

In the fatal/reflexive nexus it is the fatal logic and inhuman strategy of plunging into the object through excess that reconstructs such relationships. I recognise a significant aspect of my own fandom in this. In particular, this ‘ecstatic deepening’ seemingly privileges the object as supreme while being infused with both the banal (through the cunning and ruse of the subject) and the fatal (facilitating a simulated subservience) in its strategic deployment and blurring of subject/object relations. We will return to some final concrete examples of the actualisation of this fatal strategy in fandom shortly.

Underscoring this simulated, fatalistic strategy is the high intensity of reflexivity that people utilise to frame such relationships. Like the banal/reflexive nexus, social individuals draw on reflexive deliberations as a mediating process,

relying on regular internal conversations to discern their assumed matters of importance and design responding (in)appropriate courses of action. We always have to leave undecided whether any design is appropriate or not to the actual circumstances and best interests of the person concerned. Such value judgements are beyond the remit of this thesis. Such individuals correspond to Archer's (2007) 'autonomous' reflexives, discussed in the previous section, who tend to privilege their ruminations over external conversations as a resource for devising forms of strategic and social mobility. Archer's (2007) third mode of reflexivity, the 'meta-reflexive', may well also be pertinent to the fatal/reflexive nexus. Meta-reflexives, like the autonomous, are characterised by a high intensity to their deliberations which are also frequently privileged and deployed over external conversations. Nevertheless, 'meta-reflexives' are considered to be more value-orientated than the task-orientated 'autonomous' individuals. Archer (2007) suggests that, "by not sharing many of their (most important) inner deliberations with others, the meta-reflexive is insulated from the running commentaries of those surrounding her and their pressures to conformity" (p. 301), while also noting for such individuals that "it is these values, rather than the opinions of others, which are their sounding boards" (p. 301). In particular, meta-reflexives use 'moral considerations' to shape their concerns and courses of actions to acquire lateral, rather than necessary upward, social mobility. As a result, the meta-reflexive individual is often seeking transcendence from his/her existing structural limitations and context to achieve lateral social mobility yet, also, engages in an ongoing critical reflexive deliberation as to whether he/she is actually constructing or implementing the appropriate means to do so. For our present purposes, these 'moral considerations' will be eschewed due to their loaded assumptions and vexed implications for a thesis unconcerned with moral

judgements. Nevertheless, in combination, the intensive reflexivity of both modes permeates the fatal/reflexive nexus; as the implementation of a fatal strategy and simulated adherence to the object requires intensive reflexive deliberation to achieve its actualisation in specific social contexts. Once more, fandom is our case study for illuminating the fatal/reflexive nexus, but now a reflexive move is needed in relation to the thesis itself.

Arguably, a doctoral thesis exploring one's own fandom provides a salient example of the fatal/reflexive nexus enacted and realised as a specific concrete practice. Undertaking such a project requires the activation of a layered and dense fatal strategy on my own behalf. That is, during the doctoral process, I am deploying a fatal strategy that recognises the supremacy of the object (Formula One and Villeneuve), engages with the rules, ruses and strategies of these specific objects (e.g., how these aspects constitute both objects' fatal strategies), produces a banal strategy (the cunning subject) by assuming that I am knowingly 'playing the game' of submission through the simulated bestowing of such status while, simultaneously, folding the object's fatal strategies back onto themselves as a means to interrogate the object for academic scrutiny. Hence, throughout the thesis, Formula One and Villeneuve are marked as supreme, used as objects for analysis and assumptions are made that I am in a privileged position to simulate my immersion within this fatality through affective investments as a fan coupled with the banal strategy of an emerging critical scholar. Moreover, outside of the thesis, these fatal/banal strategies are then re-deployed in my academic daily life. So, for example, the various thesis topics (e.g., fandom, stardom, cultural theory) or its fatal objects (Formula One and/or Villeneuve) are drawn upon to teach and/or illustrate academic concepts and courses in media studies. Such a process accords its own oscillating fatal/banal strategy through elevating, deconstructing

or re-assembling these fatal objects and the assumed symbolic capital of my academic-fandom.

This multilayered strategy is also underpinned by a new-found intensive reflexivity to my internal conversations. Specifically, these ruminations discern what aspects are significant for shaping a doctoral thesis (e.g., theories, subject matter) and require intense internal deliberations on how to actualise the project as a concrete reality in terms of my own cluster of concerns and appropriate courses of action (e.g., how to legitimise an examination of Villeneuve and Formula One, what is appropriate to ‘reveal’ about myself for an academic audience and how to ensure the successful completion of a Ph.D.). Although not according a ‘moral consideration’ to my thesis, these deliberations have some definite overlap with Archer’s (2007) meta-reflexive mode. That is, there is a constant critical reflexive process at play which scrutinises the depth and clarity of my own deliberations, as well as how they are actualised in terms of the written versions. One final point of note on this is how such reflexive processes also vary in their quality and intensity, in terms of the constant self-reflection and introspection operating on the planes of fandom, stardom and a concurrent academic ‘voice’ attempting to carry the thesis ‘in my head’ and make sense of the project as a theoretically coherent whole.¹²

Through the combination of an oscillating fatal/banal strategy and the intensive reflexive processes, the affective investment in Villeneuve undergoes its own fluctuations. Therefore, at times, there is an increased affective intensity through my revelling in the pleasure derived from recognising his elevated status for me as the supreme object of fandom (e.g., the fatal strategy of Villeneuve the media object) while, conversely, the affective dimension/intensity can be diminished by the academic requirements of continually pouring over, analysing

and needing to make sense of Villeneuve in relation to my fan-self - a process which also contributes to both the variations in reflexive intensities and the strategies deployed. Therefore, within the fatal/reflexive nexus, affect is still a salient feature, albeit as always via varying degrees of intensity embedded in specific temporal/spatial moments. For example, the affective intensity can be diminished when Villeneuve the media object is also reduced through critical theorisation and cultural analysis; alternatively, affect may be enhanced by recalling, researching and conceptualising my affective investments in relation to his 'maverick' traces of grit, to which I remain attached. However, the role of routine and the habitual seems to be less of a residual feature, with intensive deliberations and the fatalistic (or banal) strategic imperatives consigning routinisation to a seemingly outgrown non-reflexive place in my Formula One fandom (although it still seems to infect my 'fan' practices post-2006, a point I return to shortly).

Reassembling Villeneuve and Fandom: Towards a Conclusion

By transposing a doctoral thesis on fandom onto the strategy-intensity field, it would seem that the deployment of my own fatal strategy, aligned with the intensive deliberations characteristic of the trajectory of the fatal/reflexive nexus, requires that I also reassemble the fragmented spatial/temporal moments into a coherent narrative of the social-cultural significance of fandom, with myself merely as an example. Indeed, the seemingly 'obvious' means for wrapping up this thesis is to conclude with a tidy summation that repudiates the supremacy of the object (Formula One and Villeneuve), rejects the fan practices as ultimately consumerist (e.g., the 'duped' fan) and recognises the folly of the associated affective investments, intensities and sensibilities that have shaped my broader

processes of fandom. In other words, the fatal/reflexive position ultimately extricates the subject from the entire field. However, this symbolic bonfire onto which all vestiges of a once foolhardy fandom are thrown will not be lit. Equally, the effigy of Villeneuve, the apparent fallen 'idol' will not be burnt; nor will I discard Damion Sturm, the beguiled fan-self, who allegedly transcends to enlightened 'scholar-self' by fanning the flames. Such an approach itself merely becomes a vector within the banal/non-reflexive nexus. That is, such an extricated 'theorisation' lacks in an intensive and critically-informed reflexivity by falling back on the habitual and the routines of 'good' scholarship (e.g., as could be enshrined via a 'proper' post-structuralist, deconstructionist, neo-Marxist or political economy perspective and a disembodied scholarly voice expressing it) and leaves the 'messy' personal fragments within the thesis unresolved. This strategically banal assumption of my ultimate supremacy, and disavowal of fandom as a spatial/temporal moment that simply fades or passes, betrays both the intensity and the career of fandom (Crawford, 2004; Hills, 2002, 2006; Jenkins, 1992, 2006a, 2006b) as well as the affective investments that won't stop anchoring people in concrete, social realities (Grossberg, 1992b).

More significantly, such an approach (shifting 'outside' the field, if such a place exists) glosses over and fails to admit the thesis questions that still remain: for example, despite his absence from the sport since 2006, why does Villeneuve still 'matter', why do his traces of grit still resonate and why is Villeneuve merchandise still prominently worn and displayed by myself and others in 2009? More broadly, can we extend these simple but irritatingly persistent questions to ask what is the 'pay-off' for fans investing in specific individuals, sports and the associated consumer items (e.g., consumer goods, merchandise and live attendance), mediated formats (e.g., internet, live telecasts, video games and the

new gravitation towards ‘participatory’ first-person perspectives) and through their forging of affective relationships? The answer is that there is no ‘outside’ to the strategy-intensity field. Many of these questions have been addressed in relation to the identificatory mechanisms, functions and roles that mediations universally and collectively have for viewers, in addition to their salience for the construction and continuation of fandom. That is, mediations and consumer goods facilitate forms of fan identification, performativity and, potentially, afford a closer proximity within subject/object relations (e.g., mediated ‘participatory’ perspectives for subjective identification and proximation with the star athlete in Formula One; this also applies to fan merchandise and performativity). Additionally, the concept of affect clearly imparts an emotive value, in terms of affective intensities and investments, while giving people ‘colour’ to their lives. More broadly, affect also permits forms of structured mobility by anchoring social individuals in temporal/spatial moments of a lived, contextual reality (Grossberg, 1992b). And the theorisation of this mobility has been extended through its representation as trajectories on a field. Nevertheless, most poignantly, one prime question seems to both underpin the thesis as whole and remain unanswered: *why Jacques Villeneuve?*

What might be expected is a coherent narrative that ties these fragmented moments and pieces together but, as I will suggest, such coherence is ultimately illusory. The strategies and intensities mapped in this chapter have broader retrospective application to the thesis as a whole, as well as being the results derived from the preceding material. In fact, by mapping my various trajectories across the strategy-intensity field, the current chapter has indirectly revealed three stages to my fandom that provide some preliminary explanatory purchase for the amalgamation of fandom, affect and structured mobility – with implicit links to

the unresolved Villeneuve question. In summary, the first is the 'naive fan' (approximately 1998-2001) which, transposed onto the banal/non-reflexive nexus, illustrated how naive fans often draw on routinised and habitual processes of initial, 'impulsive' consumption and the lure of the predominant and pre-eminent star athletes to increase their cultural literacy and capital, as well as their affective investments, relationships and anchoring within specific sports. Most often, naive fandom also moves along an adjacent transitional trajectory towards the fatal/non-reflexive nexus, whereby routinised patterns bestow an affective anchoring in the fatal object in a less intensely deliberated, non-reflexive manner (i.e., elevating and marvelling at the imaginary supremacy of an object such as Villeneuve and Formula One).

The second phase is the insider (i.e., the 'Formula One insider' defined in Chapter Six) which accompanies the increased capital (cultural and symbolic) and cultural literacy that a knowing fan-subject acquires through his/her immersion in the sport and its various mediations and commodified forms. My 'Formula One insider' status (approximately 2002-2006) was highest in its affective intensity during Villeneuve's presence but, arguably, can be transposed onto all four of the strategy-intensity quadrants. The banal/non-reflexive nexus is the weakest trajectory for the Formula One insider yet there is clearly a routinised repetition to the process of sport fandom (e.g., continual viewing and accessing of mediated and commodified materials). As was noted, this process is also shaped by both the fatal/non-reflexive and banal/reflexive dimensions. In the fatal/non-reflexive nexus, the intensity of reflexive deliberations is also weak and often subsumed by the intensities of affect, whereby the supremacy of the object is allowed and pleasurable moments are derived from this affective relationship and the fatal strategies of the object. For insider fans, the fatal/non-reflexive also provides a

vector leading towards the banal/reflexive nexus, as such fans increase their cultural literacy and reflexive deliberations to know the workings of the sport, its structured dynamics and their delimited 'subject' relationship (e.g., reliance on material goods as an allegedly duped consumer). Nevertheless, reflexively and affectively, insider fans still find pleasure in 'playing the game' and in their performativity as culturally literate fans. Clearly, the insider status remains pre-eminent within the fatal/reflexive nexus, deploying 'my' capital (symbolic and cultural), as well as a cultural literacy to provide the empirical detail and depth even to a doctoral thesis. However, the affective intensity and investment potentially diminishes when the object on which the affective relationship is based disappears – symbolically (Baudrillard's [1988a, 1990a, 1990b] notion of seduction, developed shortly), literally (Villeneuve's absence from Formula One since 2006) and theoretically (transforming Villeneuve into an abstracted concept for study).

So, the final phase is what we can term the 'academic-fan' (approximately 2007-2009). With the notable absence of Villeneuve from Formula One post-2006, the affective intensity that marked the first two phases of my fandom wanes; there is no longer the fatal object for affective investments and, conversely, he becomes the object of intense scrutiny, theorising and analysis (despite or perhaps made easier by his actual disappearance). Operating within the fatal/reflexive nexus, academic fandom (which Jenkins [1992, 2006a, 2006b] has more loosely celebrated, while Hills [2002] is more circumspect) constitutes a sophisticated balancing of intensive reflexivity and oscillating degrees of strategic manipulation; deploying a blend of (simulated) fatal and banal strategies to interrogate the object of fandom, the fan-subject and to allow an intense reflexivity to enter into these overlapping and simulated strategies. In the

‘insider’ phase of fandom, capital (cultural and symbolic) and cultural literacy are primarily registered in the domain of affect (e.g., such acquired knowledge or capital reveals that the insider is ‘passionate’ or ‘cares about’ his/her sport immensely). However, in the academic phase, these forms of capital and literacy are an example of Archer’s (2007) ‘enablements’ that are reflexively conceived and pursued, while being actualised in the social arenas of fandom and academia more broadly. As such, these forms of capital and literacy facilitate (or are intended to facilitate) advancement in the academic field, while further legitimising the object/topic as an academic subject for future research and analysis. Hence, as an early-career scholar, fandom grants my entrance into and, to an extent, defines my initial route and trajectory across the academic field as an area of ‘expertise’ for future teaching and publications. Additionally, this early-career phase as an academic addresses one of the questions posed earlier in this section as, in 2009, the remaining displays of fandom (e.g., wearing the merchandise or having the Villeneuve images on my office wall) attempt to re-appropriate them for a new symbolic status, new acquired knowledge and are re-legitimised as ‘academic’ artefacts (i.e., forms of newly self-aware cultural capital).

Clearly, the academic phase temporarily locates itself in the other nexuses plotted on the strategy-intensity field: through the routinised, albeit detached, following of Formula One mediations (banal/non-reflexive); the supremacy of the object (fatal/non-reflexive); and the knowing subject ‘playing the game’ (banal/reflexive) although, as has been suggested, ultimately all form part of the fatal strategy of simulating these combined processes as an academic enterprise for intense deliberation and further analysis. The banal/non-reflexive nexus within the academic phase of fandom is worth briefly developing further. The

‘intense’ emotional attachment to a media object/subject that was established as a key definitional criterion for fandom in the previous chapter (see also Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998; Hills, 2002, 2006; Sandvoss, 2005) is seemingly dormant in my current practices. Without Villeneuve as the object of my attention, post-2006, I still watch every race live despite Villeneuve’s absence yet the affective dimension is reduced to the point of almost being redundant. That is, the race results no longer affectively ‘matter’ (I have not supplemented my televised viewing with the live timing internet function since Villeneuve’s absence) and I do not emotionally identify with, ‘care’ about or invest anything in any of the contemporary drivers (other than in an ephemeral fashion, such as for the duration of a given race, for the fun of it as it were). Nevertheless, despite the diminished affective component, I still find myself tuning in every race weekend and flicking through the Formula One internet coverage most weeks which indicates that the processes of habit and routine forged over the preceding nine years seemingly persist and sustain my continuing of superficial viewership. Moreover, the contextual continuity to my academic Formula One fandom is now invested with a reflexive intensity and oscillating fatal/banal strategy of cultural currency; ensuring the fan insider status and its associated literacy and forms of capital remain accessible, pertinent and deployable as transferable knowledge and forms of empirical evidence (i.e., the symbolic capital and cultural literacy in the field of Formula One as ‘my’ area of expertise). In short, although the intensity of the affective investment in Villeneuve has to a large extent dissipated without his presence in Formula One (or regular mediated presence in other forms of motorsport), the fandom for Villeneuve has afforded the potential beginnings of an academic career that sustains the strategically fatal and reflexively intensive investment in Formula One.¹³

Underpinning the three phases of my fandom (the naive, insider and academic), and shaping this doctoral thesis more broadly, is the constant of Villeneuve (present or absent). What has also been traced in the academic phase of fandom above is an acknowledgement that much of the affective intensity and investment was specifically anchored in Villeneuve directly, and less orientated towards Formula One. Of course, clearly, Formula One provided the platform and the structure upon which Villeneuve's stardom was constructed and exchanged. Arguably, his construction has broader origins and was more widely dispersed: through a famous father, a prior successful IndyCar career and within Formula One – the latter merely being the prime mediated construction of Villeneuve that I engaged with. While the contemporary structure and fatal strategies of Formula One remain and are accessible via ongoing mediation (and commodification); Villeneuve, the media object, has been largely absent since leaving the sport. Nevertheless, what this thesis has also documented is that my affective relationship as a fan resides with Villeneuve and not the sport; via the fleeting instances of recognition (e.g., the moments of 'presence' within the broader televised presence-absence of Formula One – as explored in detail in Chapters One and Three) and the traces of grit he provided within the sport during his career, as well as his sparse reappearances in the media post-Formula One. These were and are the unshakeable temporal and spatial moments of affective investment and intensity. For example, even in 2009, two separate media stories intimated a possible return to active racing which piqued my affective fan attention and investment temporarily once again (Appendix One). So, the question still remains – why Jacques Villeneuve?

Baudrillard's (1988a, 1990a, 1990b) theory of seduction, to some degree, proffers the means for framing a final response. According to Baudrillard (1983a,

1983b, 1988a, 1994b), the combination of the pervasiveness of the media, their images and the fatal strategies deployed by ‘the masses’ to simulate their existence (and facilitate their indifference), contribute to the construction, circulation and exchange of a simulated social reality (see Chapter Two). As such, rituals of transparency (proving our existence) are significant in an obscene (depthless or nothing-to-be-seen) and media-saturated (pornographic in his terms) image-based, hyperreal culture. While seduction is elusive to a simplistic definition, in this context, Baudrillard (1988a) for once succinctly observes, “surface and appearance, that is the space of seduction” (p. 62). Thus, he is proposing that seduction may offer the space for rituals of transparency and, particularly, the ‘ecstatic deepening’ and excessive plunging into objects developed in relation to the fatal/banal inhuman strategies traced in the fatal/reflexive nexus (Baudrillard, 1990a). However, Baudrillard (1988a) also cautions that “challenge, and not desire, lies at the heart of seduction. Challenge is that to which one cannot avoid responding, while one can choose not to respond to desire” (p. 57). Therefore, seduction operates on the superficial level of appearance although, ultimately, it is upon and through the surfaces, objects and images that social reality and our fatalistic, inhuman strategies of existing converge. As such, Baudrillard (1988a) argues that “obscenity and transparency progress ineluctably, because they no longer partake in the order of desire but in the order of the frenzy of the image” (p. 35).

Clearly, my thesis has acknowledged that the Jacques Villeneuve I have affectively invested in as a fan and analysed as an academic is always already an image-based construct. That is, Villeneuve’s stardom – comprising of a star image, persona and texts (e.g., the narratives surrounding his stardom) – is a mediation (or, more precisely, a collection of mediations; see also Dyer, 1979,

1986, 1998; McDonald, 2000; Smart, 2005; Whannel, 2002). Through Baudrillard's (1998a, 1990b) notion of seduction, it is on this plane of surfaces, appearances and the superficial spaces of Villeneuve's mediated stardom that the affective fan investment has been forged and the academic analyses derived. In fact, for Baudrillard, appearances and disappearances are a crucial aspect of seduction, as the disappearance of the object provides the seductive 'moment'. Baudrillard (1990a) suggests that "*all that has been produced must be seduced* (initiated into disappearance after having been initiated into existence)" (p. 133, italics in original). We can extrapolate to propose that the 'real' Villeneuve disappears at that very moment when the mediated object of Villeneuve appears and is publicly disseminated. I know that there is no 'real' Villeneuve that I can access or know beyond this seduction while, additionally, I remain implicated in the frenzy of and voraciousness for his 'image'. Moreover, as a media object there is not even a coherent whole available for fans to access, exacerbated by the specific, fragmented dynamics of Formula One mediations traced throughout the thesis (see especially Chapters One, Four and Five). That is, drivers are framed as a presence-absence and are largely anonymous during live Grand Prix telecasts, are often reduced to textual references (televisual and internet based – occasionally these are supplemented with person-revealing images), or offered as an incoherent and fragmented body for identificatory purposes through the point-of-view perspectives from on-board cameras in either televised coverage or video game formats. Therefore, while there is no 'real' Villeneuve to access outside of mediation, even the media object that circulates within the sport is also a self-evident assemblage of fragmented, depthless and superficial surfaces. There is not even a pretence of an accessible real to desire.¹⁴

Baudrillard (1990a) suggests that,

In our philosophy of desire, the subject retains an absolute privilege, since it is the subject that desires. But everything is inverted if one passes on to the thought of seduction.

There, it's no longer the subject which desires, it's the object which seduces. Everything comes from the object and everything returns to it, just as everything started with seduction, not with desire...the object seduces through the absence of desire. (pp. 111-112)

By merging Villeneuve as object with this process of seduction, his mediated forms can be read as seductive on two fronts. First, Villeneuve the media object seduces through its fragmentation; there is not a coherent whole to desire but, rather, the depthless, superficial surfaces that remain. Second, as an object, it is through the deployment of Villeneuve's fatal strategies that I bestow supremacy on the lure, the ruse and artifice of his seductive, 'maverick' mediated constructions (tracked along the varying intensity of my trajectory as a naive, insider and/or academic fan). As such, without a coherent wholeness to the Villeneuve image for engagement, this thesis has privileged its own fatal strategy of adhering to Baudrillard's (1984) suggestion that "all that remains to be done is to play with the pieces" (p. 24). Thus, aside from the career sketch in Appendix One and a brief, fragmented introductory narrative in Chapter One, there is no Villeneuve-specific chapter in this thesis.

The lack of coherency to his image also elevates the significance of the traces of grit that he provides. These traces become prominent points of analysis, affording temporal and spatial moments for anchoring my affective relationship in the combined fatal strategies and seductive appearances of Villeneuve. With Villeneuve's broader shift from World Champion to a mid-field runner post-1998

(see Appendix One), the accompanying Villeneuve fandom became less results orientated: the affective pleasure resided in recognising strong race performances and, particularly, revelling in the traces of grit he proffered at specific temporal and spatial moments. Hence, an answer to the Villeneuve question emerges. My fandom operated (and still operates on occasions) through a fascination with the fragmented surfaces, appearances and fatal strategies that Villeneuve the media object provided (and, less frequently, still provides), anchored by an affective relationship as emotional investment and intensity which is not explained through desire or the homoerotic as a specific form of desire (Chapter One).

The deliberate dispersal of Villeneuve's traces of grit in the machinery and some 'personalised' fan accounts throughout the thesis, often framed through autoethnographic vignettes, offer concrete moments of Grossberg's (1992b) structured mobility in practice. That is, the combined traces, fan processes and autoethnographic presentations are privileged as temporal and spatial sites for revealing the specificity of fandom and the anchoring of a social individual within particular, concrete contexts of social reality. Moreover, these affective 'moments' are mapped across various trajectories, differing temporal/spatial localities, and through diverse affective, reflexive and strategic forms of intensity and investment to reveal the 'moments', mobilities and enactments of structured mobility as a social process. Arguably, by including the academic study of my own fandom as its own object for analysis, the actualisation of structured mobility becomes an accessible concrete (rather than abstract) process embedded within the empirical evidence that the lived reality of a fan provides.

¹ As explained in previous discussion of Archer (2007) and Urry (2000), 'morphogenetic' means mobility over time within a given structure. In this chapter a morphogenetic field is taken more specifically to be a layered, organised terrain on which an 'agent', in this case a fan, is able to respond to given conditions but in a highly 'contained' way.

² Dyer (1981) argues that ideological readings of entertainment are one-dimensional as they fail to interrogate the broader complexities and contradictions of these 'utopian' sensibilities, as well as the diversity of entertainment forms.

³ A central thrust of Archer's (2007) thesis is that internal conversations or reflexive deliberations (with the self) are distinctive from external conversations (with others) as you already 'know' your own audience in an internal conversation, in addition to meanings often being derived from one's personal history. Hence, these personalised, abbreviated and contextualised internal conversations do not warrant further explanation (or forms of either monitoring or censorship – although, of course, we may engage in these processes too, dependent on the subject matter); conversely, if the conversations we carry in our head were to be reproduced for an external audience they often would need expansion, clarification and a more coherent articulation. For example, I often deploy the words 'big geek' or 'stay brutal' in internal conversations with myself. These are personalised, abbreviated and context dependent phrases that would need elaboration if utilised in an external conversation; so, to clarify their usage for the reader, these phrases are not negative, despite such connotations but, rather, are currently used as motivational terms for remaining focused on completing the thesis. It could be asserted that those familiar with me (e.g., close family and friends) may get my usage of these terms if utilised in an external conversation but most likely would also require some elaboration to grasp its usage and/or meaning fully as this is still context dependent (e.g., 'brutal' clearly oscillates in its usage and intended meaning if I apply it to forms of music, sport, filmic depictions or a real life encounter). As a second separate example, Archer (2007) reveals that when students discuss their housing arrangements with her she often internalises the words 'light bulbs' during their external conversations, invoking her own previous situation as a student and the particular experience of a landlord who insisted that residents inserted their own light bulb when using the bathroom.

⁴ The apparent irreconcilability of Archer's critical realism and the European Continental theorists' post-structuralist and postmodernist cynicism about any possibility of actually knowing the real world, never mind responding to it in agential fashion, does need a footnote here if we are to deploy Archer's notion of reflexivity alongside theoretical convictions unsympathetic to her overall critical realist stance. The first point that needs to be made is that Archer's critical realism is an early career characterisation and that reflexivity belongs more with her recent work, where the critical realist hostility to the Continental theorists, whether Bourdieu or Baudrillard, is tempered by an increasingly subtle use of the 'morphogenetic' picture of mobility within constraints that in itself is less incompatible with those who in the past have seen only constraints. But it can also be suggested that critical realism has developed beyond, for example, Bhaskar's seminal formulations, not least because of the way that the agency/structure binary is now seen as having determined in advance the supposed 'irreconcilability' that kept Bhaskar or the early Archer and Bourdieu or Baudrillard on separate sides of a now somewhat dated debate. It is not, in any case, critical realism per se but the morphogenetic picture of constrained mobilities that this thesis takes up and develops in terms of fandom, culminating in the morphogenetic 'field' model presented later in this chapter. But finally, it could be noted, Bourdieu in his late work was at pains to distance himself from those post-structuralist and postmodernist readings of his theorisation of agential socialisation in a 'field' that emphasised the field more than the agential.

⁵ Of course, not all social individuals are hailed and interpellated in the same manner, so the hailing of nationality through particular sports may interpellate certain individuals to respond through indifference, atomisation or even disdain, as much as through collectivism and communality.

⁶ As an aside, I have an uncle who 'supports' McLaren as a 'New Zealand' team, given its foundation by New Zealander, Bruce McLaren in 1963. Thus, as a 'causal' spectator (rather than the more culturally literate 'Formula One insider' fan), he is regressing towards the familiarity of routine (nationalism) and its banal/non-reflexive inflection to shape his support. In reality, the contemporary link to New Zealand outside of McLaren's origins is non-existent; McLaren has a transnational, corporately-structured system of ownership, as well as an English base.

⁷ Clearly success is not always fundamental to the circulation and exchange of star athletes. For example, Anna Kournikova disrupts such an assertion with her previous 'sporting' fame arguably based more on appearance than any achievements in tennis while other stars, such as David Beckham, Dennis Rodman and Maria Sharapova, arguably can be just as famous for their endorsements and/or private lives as they are for their particular sporting talent (e.g., see Coad, 2008; Dunbar, 2000; Harris & Clayton, 2002; Lafrance & Rail, 2000, 2001; Smart, 2005; Whannel, 2001, 2002, 2008).

⁸ Of course, the appeal of the ‘underdog’ or perennial under-achiever cannot be disqualified, such as the ground-swell of support for former British ski-jumper, Eddie ‘the Eagle’ Edwards, who finished last at the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary. He subsequently failed to qualify for any more Olympic events.

⁹ The pseudo-sport of professional wrestling arguably illuminates these processes. As a teenager in the late 1980s, I recall my own fascination with the ‘hype’ of the then, World Wrestling Federation (WWF): the hypermuscular physiques, hyperbolic claims of commentators and the hyperreal mediated spectacle of a ‘sporting’ event and ‘world’ championship (see also Barthes, 1993). Other sports provide similar examples, such as the purported ‘test’ of character, skill, patience, concentration and so forth for test match cricket (see also Schirato, 2007b) or the ‘hard’ masculinity that contact sports, such as rugby league, rugby and American Football construct and circulate (see also Messner, 1992; Pringle, 2003, Trujillo, 1995; Whannel, 1993).

¹⁰ The 2005 Canadian Grand Prix disrupted this assertion as a symbolic and ironic ‘home’ Grand Prix for myself among ‘fellow’ fans. However, our shared ‘commonality’ was located in the object for affective investment but, I suspect, was devoid of similar lines of deliberation for constructing such support. That is, I assume that Villeneuve’s large support base in Montreal is most likely attributable to his Canadian and/or Quebecois identity and, hence, draws on routines and the habitual (e.g., primarily through a parochial, regional or nationalistic lens) to forge such support; it is less likely to be shaped by a reflexive (or possibly affective) intensity. In contrast, at the Australian Grand Prix between 2002-2004 and 2006, identifiable Villeneuve fans were few and far between – although a handful are discernible through their displays of cultural capital at the driver autograph session in 2006 (DVD Example 6).

¹¹ Arguably my sustained fandom since 1989 for the Sydney-based rugby league team, Wests Tigers (formerly the Balmain Tigers), also reproduces the licensing of isolation within my quotidian existence. Despite my affective investment in the Tigers, my viewing practices are again often solidarity and not readily the subject for external conversations in social settings. Admittedly, there has been a slight shift in interest due to their current star player, Benji Marshall also being a New Zealander (and the current national captain in 2009). However, the limited league interest in New Zealand tends to revolve around the ‘New Zealand’ Warriors, an Auckland-based franchise. As a rugby league fan, I am routinely hailed and interpellated to display my allegiance to the Warriors by the New Zealand media (and occasionally by friends), a contradiction in terms I reflexively recognise (and draw upon as a defence mechanism) given their pseudo-national status. The nationally-selected New Zealand team is the Kiwis (who I do support through an affective nationalistic lens), while the ‘New Zealand’ Warriors (replete with an Australian captain no less) compete in the Australian National Rugby League competition against the Tigers.

¹² My intention is to reveal these processes (and the intensities to reflexivity), rather than bestow any ‘exceptional’ or especial status to my own deliberations. Conversely, I suggest that many of the readers have themselves engaged in far ‘deeper’ processes of internal rumination than I have throughout their academic careers (e.g., the self-editing of publications) and arguably lost far more sleeping hours to that ‘inner voice’ that won’t switch off in moments of intensive deliberation.

¹³ As such, my contemporary viewership maintains the familiar (of the locus of Formula One in a globalised and imagined manner) and provides contextual continuity to my quotidian existence despite its inherent strategic banality (obedience to the increasingly monotonous, predictable and clichéd racing spectacle) and the lack of intensity to my (non) reflexive deliberations (e.g., aside from an academic exercise which may, at times, be reflexively intense, the internal ruminations are severely curtailed and border on the perfunctory in the absence of an affective investment). These points reaffirm that the specific temporal and spatial ‘moments’ must be contextualised in such analyses of socio-cultural phenomenon. That is, my affectively experienced ‘naive’ (1998-2001) and ‘insider’ (2002-2006) phases of fandom have shifted to an academic endeavour and early-career (2007-2009) phase initially founded upon the academic analysis of fandom.

¹⁴ Arguably, even the ‘real’, embodied Villeneuve visible during the 2005 Canadian Grand Prix Driver’s Parade (DVD Example 4) and at the Driver’s Autograph signing session at the 2006 Australian Grand Prix (DVD Example 6) remains a media object; in terms of his incoherent and fleeting appearance, his performative role as a sport star in a mediated (and public) space and, of course, due to the fact that he has been recorded and reproduced as a media artefact. In these realms, Villeneuve remains seductive as a superficial surface and media object.

APPENDIX ONE

Jacques Villeneuve's Formula One Career (1996-2006)

This Appendix traces Villeneuve's turbulent career to highlight its 'rise-and-fall' trajectory. While such information can be read in various guises elsewhere, I have provided here 'my' short fan-researcher account in order to reveal, from that perspective, the particular trajectories of Villeneuve's career, as well as specific concrete moments of the 'slippery subject' position and traces of grit that Villeneuve occupied in relation to the 'machinery' of Formula One (e.g., teams, cars, personnel, sponsors, etcetera). This career sketch is purely descriptive, rather than theoretical, serving to furnish relevant background information for the analysis of Villeneuve's star image which more broadly informs this thesis.

'Rise': Villeneuve as Second Generation Champion

The rise narrative commences on the back of Villeneuve winning the Indy 500 and IndyCar title in 1995, and with his impressive Williams tests securing a drive with the team in 1996. Formula One 'ringmaster' Bernie Ecclestone had allegedly been instrumental in the deal, realising the potency of this famous surname returning to the sport (Collings, 1998; Hotten, 1999; Rendall, 2000).

Vergeer (2004) suggests,

While he was going from success to success in America, some guy called Ecclestone called from Europe, asking whether Villeneuve would like to try a Formula One car, a Williams. Straight into the best car in the paddock...With Senna dead, Schumacher was threatening to gobble up all of Formula One. Ecclestone needed someone who could stand up to him. Villeneuve was the man. (p. 193)

Paired with another son of a famous father, Damon Hill, Villeneuve competed strongly in the Williams package which was the class of the field, winning the Constructors' Championship with 175 points, over 100 points clear of second-placed Ferrari. Indeed, in his first Grand Prix, Villeneuve got pole position, set the fastest lap and narrowly missed out on victory, finishing second after letting team-mate Damon Hill take the lead four laps from the end due to the loss of oil pressure. Villeneuve went on to claim four victories in 1996 (with five second-place and two third-place finishes), achieving an overall second in the championship behind Hill.

In 1997, with the departure of Hill to Arrows, Villeneuve was elevated to team leader and expected to take the title. Williams maintained its performance advantage in the early races, with Villeneuve qualifying an astonishing 1.7 seconds ahead of his new team-mate Heinz-Harald Frentzen for pole position at the season-opener in Australia. By mid-season Villeneuve had three wins, spliced with some patchy form and rival teams improving their performances, although his controversial views on safety and proposed regulations were generating negative headlines in the press. With four more victories in 1997, Villeneuve went into the final race one point behind championship leader, Michael Schumacher. With previous titles decided by leaders ramming their rivals off the track, most recently Schumacher's collision with Hill in 1994, Formula One officials clarified their expectations. However, despite FIA president Max Mosley insisting "this time we want the fight to be clean and fair" (Vergeer, 2004, p. 201), the race at Jerez was to be another controversial moment in Formula One history. Battling for the lead, Villeneuve audaciously out-braked Schumacher on lap 48. The pair collided, although Schumacher had turned into Villeneuve, attempting to ram him off the circuit. With Schumacher beached in the gravel, Villeneuve

continued, slowing to finish third and claim the Formula One World Drivers' Championship for 1997. Villeneuve had become champion with his seven victories and total of 81 points, while having the impressive career statistics of 11 wins from only 33 races.

Nevertheless, while Villeneuve celebrated his victory, he allegedly was not impressed with Schumacher's tactics and sportsmanship, commenting in his post-race interviews that,

Either Michael had his eyes closed, or somehow his hands slipped on the wheel or something. I don't need to explain what happened, he turned in on me. But he didn't do it well enough because he went off and I didn't. (Vergeer, 2004, p. 203)

Much of the off-season was dominated by press and Formula One reactions to Schumacher's tactics, discussions of a suitable punishment for his move and Schumacher's attempts to repair his tarnished reputation (Allen, 2000).

Schumacher's punishment was only to lose his official second place ranking (but still keep the points he scored) in the Drivers' Championship for 1997. Vergeer (2004) suggests, "the penalty is a joke, of course, but how else can you treat your main attraction?" (p. 204). The press would emphasise a frosty relationship between Villeneuve and Schumacher for the rest of their careers. Villeneuve could not defend his title in 1998 with a Williams team in decline. Through a combination of losing key personnel, engine-supplier Renault's withdrawal from the sport and new tyre regulations, Williams finished a distant third in the Constructors' Championship. With only two third places and an overall fifth in 1998, Villeneuve left for the new British American Racing (BAR) team in 1999,

having amassed a total of 180 points over his three seasons (49 races) with Williams.

'Fall': The BAR Years

Villeneuve's move to BAR accommodates the fall narrative within his career, as he could no longer push for race wins or championships. In fact, Villeneuve only accrued a total of 39 points over five seasons with BAR (1999-2003), including two podiums in 2001. Villeneuve's manager and friend Craig Pollock had been instrumental in his move to BAR. Pollock was rumoured to have approached tobacco giants, British American Tobacco (BAT), in 1997 to establish a team revolving around Villeneuve ("The fall of", 2002). BAT bought out but operated as the Tyrrell team in 1998, before branding their new team British American Racing (BAR) for the 1999 season. With the estimated \$375 million BAT made available over five years, and Pollock acting as both team principal and Villeneuve's manager, Villeneuve was offered a two year contract worth \$12 million a season, double his Williams salary ("The fall of", 2002). Armed with BAT's millions and Villeneuve as their champion driver, BAR proclaimed that they would win their first race in 1999. The season proved to be a disaster, with the team failing to score a single point and Villeneuve only completing four races in an unreliable car.

Nevertheless, during the first three BAR seasons Villeneuve was still discussed as a champion driver who, through no lack of effort, was blighted by a car inferior to his talents (e.g., Bishop, 2000; Clarkson, 1999). The 2000 season was a case in point. Villeneuve finished only 7th in the Drivers' Championship with 17 points, yet was rated as the fifth best driver in *Autosport* magazine's review of the season (Benson & Noble, 2000), described by *F1 Racing* magazine

as “single-handedly carrying the team” (“Mid-season report”, 2000, p. 62), as well as earning the Best Starter and runner-up for Driver of the Year in *F1 Racing*’s inaugural Man of the Year awards judged by the readers (“Man of the”, 2000). In the *Autosport* review, former team owner Ken Tyrrell also named BAR as the fifth best team, stating,

BAR’s trump card in the 2000 season – and last year, too – has been Jacques Villeneuve. If I was starting a Formula One team next year I would find a lot of money and pay him £20 million to drive for me. If you take away Michael Schumacher and Mika Hakkinen, he is THE guy – by a long way. (cited in Benson & Noble, 2000, p. 37)

Villeneuve was singled out as the key to the 2001 driver market movements (Pitpass, 2000; Bishop, 2000) yet, despite this sought-after status, two podium finishes (and a strong fourth at Monaco) crowned what was otherwise a disappointing 2001 car and season. Villeneuve revealed in an interview with Samson (2001),

I’m not going to say we’ve had a great year just for the sake of saying the right thing. OK, I could be happy about the podiums at Barcelona and Hockenheim, the first two the team has ever had. But I’m not going to lie to myself. Those results were lucky. They didn’t happen because we were quick but because a whole load of people retired. This year’s results are not the ones I’d been promised. (p. 73)

With few points on offer, Villeneuve’s only reward for strong performances was the substantial pay packet he was receiving, having signed a new three-year

escalating contract in 2001, which started at around \$18 million and would increase to over \$20 million a season (“The fall of”, 2002).

Villeneuve’s difficult BAR years between 2002 and 2003, and his eventual sacking, reflect the fall narrative for Villeneuve’s career. Post-2001, a shift in the discourses surrounding Villeneuve was discernible, with his reputation and career shrouded in generally negative publicity, especially from the British media. Plagued by poor machinery and inconsistent performances, Villeneuve was the subject of constant speculation and rumours surrounding his wages, performances and future in Formula One (see *Grandprix.com*’s coverage of Villeneuve’s options in August 2002 and between July - October 2003; e.g., “Villeneuve’s catch 22”, 2002; “The future of”, 2003; “Why did Villeneuve”, 2003).

Villeneuve’s 2002 season began with his mentor Craig Pollock being replaced by David Richards. This was done without Villeneuve’s knowledge (Reid, 2002a) and through his “petulant display” (“The fall of”, 2002, p. 34) at the BAR launch, a visibly angry Villeneuve did little to hide his resentment. The results were also disappointing in 2002, with Villeneuve gaining only two points-scoring finishes in a fragile and slow car. Speculation mounted that new boss Richards was keen to send Villeneuve on a one-year sabbatical racing in the United States to avoid paying his large salary (Samson, 2002), although Villeneuve later refuted that any offer was made (Bishop, 2003). Another dismal year followed for Villeneuve in 2003, as he was beaten by new team-mate Jenson Button and dogged by poor reliability in an improved car, which included eight mechanical retirements in 16 races, as well as an electronic fault curtailing a points finish in Austria (Noble & Hughes, 2004). Off-track, the British press and Richards fuelled the hype that Button would be a future (British) world champion; statements which appeared to anger Villeneuve, who suggested that Button “brings to the sport what the boy

band brings to music” (Buxton, 2003, p. 71). The two drivers publicly settled their differences but the Villeneuve and Richards relationship deteriorated. Villeneuve’s fall narrative seemed complete when his contract was not renewed for 2004 and, with few vacancies left, Villeneuve was without a drive for the 2004 season, his Formula One career seemingly over.

‘Redemption’: JV’s Lacklustre Return

Persistent rumours of Villeneuve’s return circulated in 2004 and late in the season his career had been publicly redeemed. Villeneuve signed two contracts in one day; firstly, to drive the final three races of 2004 for Renault and, secondly, a two year contract with Sauber for 2005 and 2006. Much was made of his return to Formula One with the competitive Renault team, although disappointing performances failed to yield any points or move Renault into second in the Constructors’ Championship. His unexceptional initial performances for Sauber in 2005 started the negative rumour mill again. His first race in Australia, where he finished 13th (from fourth on the grid) and was beaten by team-mate Felipe Massa who had started 18th, prompted team boss Peter Sauber to comment, "I really can't explain the difference, which is a big one at that. It's actually bigger than it seems" (“The mystery of”, 2005, para. 3). With retirements at the next two races, Malaysia (spin, driver error) and Bahrain (accident, hit by Coulthard), Villeneuve faced intense media scrutiny between March and April regarding his motivation and talent. Formula One websites questioned if and when he would be sacked, linking various drivers to his seat, while *F1 Racing* magazine ran a two page analysis of his abysmal early season, pondering “will Sauber lose its Villeneuve?” (Pitpass expose, 2005b, pp. 18-19). Villeneuve seemed to have safeguarded his 2005 drive with a strong sixth place at Imola (later promoted to

fourth after the BAR team was disqualified) and generally improved performances. The negative rumours re-surfaced mid-season, with Villeneuve still often trailing Massa (even colliding with him at Monaco), while tensions between Peter Sauber and Villeneuve dominated the headlines at the Canadian Grand Prix (see Phillips, 2005a, 2005b). However, Villeneuve survived the 2005 season, gaining two further point-scoring finishes, and began to match Massa for pace.

Despite a year to run on his contract, Villeneuve's 2006 season was allegedly not assured, with doubts expressed within Formula One media as to whether new team-owners BMW would retain him (e.g., Bishop, 2005). After two months of media speculation and rumoured attempts to recruit other drivers or possibly buy out his contract (e.g., Pitpass news, 2005b; "Who will be", 2005), Villeneuve was confirmed for 2006. Fortunately for Villeneuve, his performances improved in the 2006 season. Villeneuve fared well against his new team-mate, Nick Heidfeld, scoring six points after five races. By mid-season, a more consistent Heidfeld had almost doubled Villeneuve's points (13-7), while Villeneuve's driver error in Montreal and two engine failures in Bahrain and Indianapolis had curtailed finishes from points-scoring positions. Under pressure from the team's test driver, Robert Kubica, for a race-seat in 2007, an alleged injury from his crash at Hockenheim forced Villeneuve to miss the following weekend's Hungarian Grand Prix. Villeneuve and BMW parted ways with immediate effect after it was reported that BMW would not guarantee his seat for the remaining races (Bishop, 2006b). Despite his strong performances in 2006 few rival teams had vacancies or even expressed an interest in Villeneuve.

The 'rise-and-fall' narrative of his turbulent Formula One career appears now to be complete. Villeneuve left Formula One and turned his attention to both the

Le Mans 24 hour race and the American NASCAR series (“Villeneuve and NASCAR”, 2006). In 2007 and 2008, he secured a drive with Peugeot for Le Mans (“Villeneuve for Le Mans!”, 2007), retiring on his first attempt, claiming second place in 2008 and vowing to return annually until he wins (Lord, 2008), although he was notably absent in 2009. Villeneuve also initially gained a seat in NASCAR with Bill Davis Racing late in 2007 (“Davis reveals”, 2007; “Villeneuve makes it”, 2007), competing in two races as preparation for the 2008 season. Unfortunately, Villeneuve failed to qualify for the first major race in 2008, the Daytona 500 and, after initially being dropped post-Daytona (“Villeneuve out of”, 2008), parted ways with Bill Davis Racing having failed to secure sponsorship for the team. Villeneuve has indicated that he still wishes to return to NASCAR (Lord, 2008), although competed in the final two races of the inaugural Speedcars Series (a saloon car support category for the GP2 Asia competition) early in 2008 and in the second season in 2009 (“Villeneuve signs with”, 2008; “Seven F1 men”, 2008). Additionally, Villeneuve was allegedly targeted for an Australasian V8 Supercars drive in 2009 by the Super Cheap Racing team (“Villeneuve targeted”, 2009) although this never came to fruition. As of July 2009, Villeneuve has reportedly intimated that he would like to return to Formula One, with its removal of electronic driver systems and inclusion of three new teams, for the 2010 season (“Villeneuve eyes”, 2009; “Villeneuve keen”, 2009; “Villeneuve looking”, 2009). Time will tell if there is a new section to be written in the Villeneuve Formula One career biography.

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