

Cross media promotion: entertainment industries and the trailer

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Abstract

The turn of the millennium bore witness to a phenomenon: the use of promotion trailers for a variety of products. Both stage theatre and the publishing industries came under the media spotlight for using trailers to promote their wares throwing into sharp contrast the normativity of film trailers. Despite increased academic study of the film trailer, few have considered the trailer outside the industrial context of the film industry. Coupled with this trend in focus, is the tendency within the literature to suggest that the trailer exists as a unique form because they exist in the same medium as the product that promote. Added to this is the tendency to rely on an *a priori* definition that is not explored fully.

By way of intervention with these key issues, this thesis considers the aesthetics and emergence of the trailer in entertainment industries other than film and serves as a counterpoint to the cinema centric imbalance within the study of the trailer. Using a corpus of audiovisual texts identified as trailers through UK press websites, this thesis draws from the popular understanding of the trailer in order to explore the historical and industrial trajectory of these other forms of trailer. Taking the form of case studies organised by the industry in which the trailer's product operates this thesis explores the historical context in which the trailer emerged and the aesthetic trends at work in the current trailer therein. In exploring both the history and the aesthetic representation of the trailer in the industry this thesis moves the study of trailers away from repetitive debates surrounding the film industry and opens up the possibility of trailers as a cultural phenomenon and simultaneous marketing trend. Through providing a grounded understanding of the trailer's use within contemporary entertainment industries, the thesis argues that the term 'trailer' has moved beyond advertising for films. It suggests the trailer has come to typify promotion for any product that is at its core, is an experience. In doing so thesis presents a much needed counterpoint and challenge to cinema-centric analysis of the trailer.

Introduction: Trailers, Trailers everywhere...

Around the first decade of the new millennium newspaper headlines began to illustrate an important phenomenon. Newspapers scream the often negative rhetoric, 'Are social media videos spoiling theatre' (Shaw 2014), 'Is theatre going down the YouTube?' (Haydon 2008), 'Coming soon to a shelf near you: The publishing industry has gone mad for film-style trailers' (Walker 2012); much has been made of industries other than film using texts identified as trailers. Currently texts identified as 'trailers' exist for numerous industries, as online videos, as popups on websites, or pre-roll clips shown before online videos. They have been used to promote cinema, television, live action theatre, recorded theatre, the Olympics, books, theatre and a whole host of assorted and interrelated products that compete for an individual's leisure time, and in many instances; money. In addition to this, is the recent trend of re-mix, or mash-up trailers; trailers that promote hypothetical products and deliberately subvert the codes of promotional trailers for comedic rather than economic effect. Almost exclusively residing online this wider phenomenon poses numerous questions; what industries are using the trailers? When did these trailers emerge? How do these trailers appear? Tied up within these questions is the genuine need to understand the use of trailers within other industries.

This thesis aims to explore the phenomenon of other industries using trailers. As a study, it is centred on a group of trailers that exist outside the film and television industries and as they've been little considered this study draws upon the existing body of literature that discusses the film trailer. As this phenomenon is emerging, and as this phenomenon is largely contained within the internet the manner in which these trailers are collated for this study forms a central underpinning for the entire thesis. In part this is because this phenomenon spans multiple industries, but also such an approach that overtly shows the methods of trailer collection forms its own contribution to studying the contemporary trailer. This thesis has distinct sections. The first of these is the introduction that outlines the existing literature, methodological process and the rationale therein that allows the selection and use of case studies. The case studies form the core body of this work with three case study-chapters exploring the statistically dominant trailers found: a study of videogame trailers, stage theatre trailers, and book trailers, forming the central body of work, with a fourth chapter that explores the remaining trailers found through the methodology and reflects on the mode of corpus generation.

Each case study draws on a background of industry context where appropriate to explore specifically when the trailer was used, placing this within a historical trajectory. While each case study contributes towards a historical study largely case studies contextualise along a historical trajectory before discussing the aesthetics of the trailers identified as part of this phenomenon. Though each study stands alone, they form part of a wider understanding of this trailer phenomenon is included within the final chapter. This final chapter cannot be considered a case study of a single industry but instead a chapter that works towards theorising the events of this industrial spread through using examples from within, and outside the methodology. This final chapter offers the opportunity to reflect upon the methods used to form this study and as such works towards concluding the study. This is not to suggest however that the phenomenon of trailer spread, as it could be called is finished, in particular the final chapter identifies further areas of study and works towards including them within a wider theoretical framework.

Before launching into a case study, it is import to understand why these other forms of trailer are not just worthy of study, but need to be. Exploration of these other forms of trailer is needed because despite their value, ubiquity, their varied reception, their use in numerous industries, and an increasing academic interest in trailers, academia has little considered the trailer and of that has largely only considered the *film* trailer. Resultantly the entire field of study is skewed to prioritise film trailers and excludes through neglect any considerations of the trailer in any industry other than film (and of this, often only of Hollywood). Despite the ubiquity of the trailer as an industrial tool there are only few studies that consider the trailer as the sole focus of research, and fewer still that question what the trailer is or could be outside of a very specific context of cinema promotion. Still fewer studies have considered the trailer as an entity that may change and develop, and indeed have any place outside the film industry. Any of these trailers may be broadcast to an audience group indiscriminately, or they may be more targeted as narrowcast videos. Audiences may dismiss individual trailers or recommend them to others, trust, distrust, like or dislike them the potential responses of the trailer are endless. In both case trailers exist spatially and temporally separate from the product promoted, and work to towards their various goals by highlighting and of omitting attributes of this separate entity. Regardless of the effectiveness of these individual trailers for fiscal gain, trailers, like all forms of product promotion offer a unique insight into how an industry, through the creative decisions of content producers, wish its products and indeed itself to be seen. In doing so the trailer forms a unique resource, a site of convergence where

products and industries are aesthetically represented on screen. This aesthetic representation offers a form of visual commentary upon the possibilities of the industrial output being promoted, colloquially this could be expressed as; “look at our product(s), this is what it is, what it can do and what you can expect from it”. As a result of this representation, exploring the various trailers at work in contemporary media, and thus contemporary culture better facilitates an understanding of trailers as both individual representations of industry products, and as a collective form of industry communication, representation and memory.

By way of overview, this thesis considers the trailer as it resides on the internet, and when we consider that the majority of trailers are posted here with and only a small amount making it to any one cinema or television broadcast, this makes the internet a remarkably underused resource and site of industry communication. As a form of intervention and engagement with the current status of the trailer in academia, and to understand the shift in marketing practices that has led to other industries using trailers, this thesis considers the use of trailers for industries other than film and television. It treats the trailer as a short film that promotes, rather than sells, and uses a corpus of trailers generated from video sharing sites online. It does this in order to explore precisely how other industries use the trailer, and what form these other trailers take, how these may be encountered by audiences and the kinds of text that is considered the trailer.

But before this intervention can be explored fully, it is important to contextualise this outline, in relation to the relevant literature that has excluded 'other' kinds of trailers in relation to the study of the film trailer. Understanding the existing literature allows us to explore what is already known about the trailer, and why there should be a study of 'other' kinds of trailers. Specifically such a review offers the opportunity to expand upon the outlined approaches used to consider the trailer as an object of study and a discussion of the rationale behind this. A discussion of trailer theory draws upon the known studies of the trailer that illustrate the dominant working understanding within academia; providing the guiding rationale and intellectual antecedents for this study. This gives way to discussion of terminology, before proceeding to outline the current trends in marketing practices that provides an overview to the emergence of promotional video culture and further outlines the imperative for study. Following from this is a discussion and an overview of corpus generation, outlining how the trailers will be identified and organised for purposes of study. So what follows then, is discussion of trailer studies from three perspectives; a consideration of pertinent research on trailers, of promotion from a contemporary marketing perspective

and a methodological discussion outlining the methods of corpus generation. The introduction concludes outlining the remaining chapters and their organisational structure of this thesis.

The film trailer

The trailer came to be an identifiable aesthetic form over time; initially emerging during the instability in industrial practices that occurred with the establishment of the film industry. The emergence of trailer during this period has been charted by film historians, through the various references to it in writing as well as through trailers remaining on film reels. Based on such evidence film historians have been able to track the changing forms of the film trailer from its beginnings as projected still images promoting forthcoming attractions (Hediger 2005). In the first instance, in a functional capacity, as work by Hamel observes, the term 'trailer' existed to distinguish between ends of film reel (2012: 269-270). Later, the term came to apply to short films found on the shorts reel irrespective of aesthetic form, then largely the term came to apply to a specific kind of advertising for films in the years around 1915 (Staiger 1990: 25)¹. Despite not being intended as such, Staiger's observation has come to define the academic understanding of the trailer. It is this understanding in academia that has come to define the trailer implicitly; largely overlooking the changes in contemporary media society, and in critical thinking. In engagement with this, developing Staiger's work, Hamel identifies two trends that inform the development of the trailer, the use of 'the propaganda film' that sold images of the studios to the public and the 'commercial film' that sold 'products such as soap, concrete, clothing, chocolate, and firearms' (2012: 270). Though Hamel claims that propaganda films 'sold the image of the studio to the public, but since they did not focus on a particular film, they cannot be defined as trailers' (Ibid).² Hamel's interpretation demonstrates the persistent, retrospective understanding that the trailer is defined by its relationship to a product; and that product is invariably a single film. Under Hamel's interpretation, the current trend for Blu-Ray promotion on DVDs in

¹ Staiger notes that the term stabilised in the 'late teens' (1990:25). 1915 is therefore used as a temporal marker for the purposes of a clear chronology. There are several one known exceptions to this claim, however. John. L Perentesis discussion of Motion Picture trailer's as election propaganda (1948) would suggest that the issues of propaganda trailers remained, and indeed recent work by Greene (2013) suggests this as another avenue of exploration. This exception in the application of the term 'trailer' in 1948 serves to prove Staiger's claim that the term *largely* pertained to the film trailer after the late teens and without the primary source of Perentesis' audiovisual material no empirical conclusions can be drawn about the aesthetic construction of this trailer in relation to other forms of propaganda film.

² Presumably of course this also applies to the trailers for the products previously noted rendering his overall claim of antecedent practices of trailers moot.

which a collection of latest releases to the format are promoted, would not constitute a trailer, presumably owing to the absence of a single narrative product. So Hamel here overlooks that at one time this kind of text *was* referred to as a trailer simply through its inclusion in a reel, but largely this understanding reflects the wider and more problematic understanding that 1. trailers may be aesthetically different from other forms of advertising and 2. that there is a universal or agreed upon form of the trailer.³ This policing of the boundary between trailers and advertising is often done without any reference to a definition of the trailer, and reflects a trend that could be called 'persuasive trailer' studies.⁴ Embedded within the consideration of trailers as a form of persuasion, there is the concept that trailers differ from adverts at an aesthetic level and that it is the aesthetics of a trailer's narrative organisation that causes it to function in a unique capacity (cf Kernan 2004, Maier 2006). Much of the existing literature has been focused around exploring the persuasive elements of trailers and does so in relation to the (often implied) continuous narrative structure of a single film.⁵ The understanding of trailers as persuasive centres on the role of the trailer's narrative and specifically views the trailer as a manipulation of a larger, dominant narrative. Such a comprehension, whilst central to understanding the trajectory within the field of study, frequently undermines its own methodological standpoint through analysing (and thus comprehending the trailer) in relation to a film. Thus it is that persuasive studies, through speaking from a position of omniscience tend to consider not the trailer as audience members may see it for the first time, but the retrospective comparison of the trailer to the film. Indeed, no persuasive trailer studies have really considered the role of the audience as anything but passive.

The persuasive trailer

In 1981/2, Haralovich & Klapat, in analysing the structure of two trailers in relation to their respective films suggested that trailers 'present in 90 seconds the material a film will take 90 minutes to work over' (1981/2: 66). Comparing the narrative contained within the trailer with that of the film, the pair claim specific editing choices in the trailer create a form of *persuasive* argument in the form of a narrative enigma within the trailer; posing a question

³ Cf Austin (1981: 47), Faber & O'Guinn (1984) and Biltreyst et al (2008:49), for examples of such implied division between the two forms, the latter partially supports the concept of a split existing at a level of public perception.

⁴ As will be seen, this is one element of study that has been countered with the conceptualisation of a trailer primarily as a short film (Johnston 2009).

⁵ There is however growing interest on trailers as a promotional practice but this has at its heart the role of fiscal generation. (Finsterwalder 2012).

that can only be solved by watching the film. The wider, determinist, implication of this is that trailers can be reduced to a collection of narrative conventions; that each trailer must only be successful based on its ability to posit a question that the audience must want to answer. This understanding foregrounds the role of the trailer to that of manipulator and that of fiscal tool valued, and valuable only if the film does well financially. It is true however, that the trailers discussed throughout thesis are dominated, but not wholly comprising of editing techniques typified by fast montage and the juxtaposition of shots akin to that which Lisa Kernan later terms a narrative of discontinuity (2004: 10).⁶ The suggestion of a standardised structure found within every trailer, aside from issues of textual determinism, suggest an optimum trailer format that many academics have sought largely unsuccessfully to replicate empirically.⁷

The persuasive understanding, exemplified within Haralovich & Klaprat but furthered in greater detail by Kernan (2004), is the dominant consideration of the trailer, and is one that sees trailers as a text that persuades people to see a product, and thus implicitly only worthy of study based on fiscal responses of consumers. This understanding emerges out of discussions of the trailer existing in the same medium as the product it promotes; yet this only considers the trailer in a very narrow context.⁸ In a 1984 study, Faber & O'Guinn surveyed audiences' attitudes to different promotional formats, concluding that film and television promotion in the form of trailers 'were [potentially] considered so useful because they provide the viewer with some indication of what the movie will really be like through short excerpts.' (1984: 376). Again, Faber & O'Guinn suggest, like Haralovich & Klaprat, that trailers reflect the narrative of a film, but this understanding is that the organisation of the trailer will reflect the narrative of the film due to its use of excerpts: *excerpts* that can only exist when the trailer and the product share the same medium. The implicit logic follows then, that the trailer is perceived of as different to other forms of advertising because of its close relationship to the product, because of its ability to perceptually approximate the product or to persuade through the shared medium of the product with the trailer. The

⁶ See also Maier (2011, 2009, 2006), and Zanger (1998) for a discussion of the structural workings of trailer. In both cases there is the assumption that all trailers function aesthetically in the same manner.

⁷ cf work by the Bremen school, and the associated computer science studies that consider automatic selection processes for creating (implicitly) successful movie trailers: Brachmann et al (2007), Hermes & Schultz (2006), Smeaton et al (2006).

⁸ Indeed, the legal understanding of the trailer under Canadian law in Ontario the Film Classification Act states, a "trailer" means a film that is used for advertising purposes in connection with the distribution or exhibition of another film; ("bande-annonce") (Reg. 452/05). While there is no evidence of such a legal definition being used in the UK, this demonstrates the widespread understanding at an institutional level.

approximation to which Faber & O'Guinn refer occurs as the trailer belongs in the same (or a markedly similar) medium to the product it promotes, yet their study considers audience responses rather than the trailer's aesthetic construction and so there is no consideration of aesthetic form. Studies do however, exist considering responses to campaigns but these tend to focus only on a single campaign, and of that a campaign with which the study participants are already fans (cf Barker 2008, Davis 2014). At a level of mediation, the trailer and television advertising may be perceived by audiences to be useful in decision making, but this research plays directly into the existing understanding of the trailer's relationship with the product almost empirically negating the possibility of a trailer promoting products outside the film industry.

Although advertising within the same medium is empirically perceived to have a higher rate of influence and usage, the concept of the trailer working as a free sample is too readily adopted, particularly when we consider the numerous issues of 'misleading' trailers that occur within film and television trailers. Indeed several incidents have been widely documented of trailers being perceived to mislead; *A year with the Queen* (2007), *The Duchess* (2008), *Drive* (2011) *Jack Reacher* (2012) all of which have marketing campaigns for films or television products associated with an infidelity of the trailer to the product.⁹ Indeed this issue of infidelity has followed the trailer since its inception, with Howard T Lewis writing in 1933 that a trailer was generally considered to be more effective when written and created entirely separately from the product it promotes, as opposed to being comprised of sequences that are not 'fairly sampled' (1933: 249). Despite a long running public commentary that demonstrates a prima facie resistance to considering trailers as a free sample the understanding persists in academia. Indeed in 2004, Lisa Kernan opened her study by paradoxically citing this resistance, yet implicitly supporting the concept of trailers as a free sample by exploring 'trailer logic' suggesting that through use of sequences from a film, the trailer reflects key elements of the film itself. (ibid: 10). As Kernan notes of popular criticism;

⁹ The BBC's Investigation into *A year with the Queen* noted that 'A fuse was inexcusably lit when RDF edited footage of the Queen in a cavalier fashion for a promotional tape which the company intended showing to co-investors at a sales convention in Cannes earlier in the year. The edit made it appear that the Queen walked out of photo shoot, when she did not. (Wyatt. 2007: 3) Similarly, see Deming V CH NOVI LLC (2011) for a lawsuit surrounding amongst other issues, a misleading trailer for *Drive*, and New Zealand's Advertising Standards Authority case number 13/025 for details of a 'misleading' *Jack Reacher* trailer, and numerous press commentary surrounding the inclusion of Princess Diana in the trailer for *The Duchess* (Hellicar, 2008).

“They give away too much of the movie.” “They're better than the films.” “They only show the spectacular parts.” “All the best jokes are in the trailer.” “They lie.” “They're the best part of going to the movies.” “They're too loud.” At the same time, they are used by both groups precisely as they're meant to be used, as free samples to aid in moviegoing decision making. (Ibid: 1)

This discourse sits at odds with the academic understanding of a 'captive and willing audience' (ibid: 9). Specifically however, this is connected with Kernan's definition of the trailer as persuasive short films shown in cinemas in advance of a product (Ibid: 1). Indeed, Kernan's more recent contribution to persuasive trailer studies, echoes Haralovich & Klaprat's (1981/2) contribution; positing trailers as free samples that automatically reflect the film's narrative in a way that generates desire in the audience because of the use of re-organised excerpts. The concept of a trailer being a free sample remains problematic when we consider that according to the very that justifies this approach, the trailer has been manipulated, to re-organise elements of the films narrative in order to serve its economic role, this is itself a creative action as demonstrated by the limited studies of the industry (Johnston 2009, 2013a-c). Indeed, Kernan acknowledges this noting that 'persuasive strategies of concealment, selective positioning, emotional appeal and even dishonesty are clearly indicated' (2004: 164), yet implicit throughout Kernan's work is the relationship with the product it promotes. When we consider that for Kernan, trailers promote within distinct temporal and spatial boundaries, the methodology employed to analyse trailers relies on an understanding of the narrative of the film being promoted. As such information, is often contained within the experience of the product itself, persuasive trailer studies undermine their own position by relying on the film rather than the trailer's narrative in order to understand the trailer. Further, when we consider that trailers are creatively framed interpretations of a film created to appeal to specific groups (Hediger 2011), the concept of the free sample has a different interpretation not as a faithful sample, but as a framing device that operates within the same audio-visual medium as the product it promotes. Further, this persuasive sample understanding fails to account for other kinds of trailers, working only when both the trailer and the product exist in the same medium; which to use Gottlieb's terms can be referred to as an isosemiotic relationship (2005: 3).

The mobile (film) trailer vs The persuasive (film) trailer

Until roughly 2008, and the publication of Keith M Johnston's *The Coolest way to Watch movies in the world*, followed by the expansion and clarification of the key points with *Coming Soon* (2008, 2009 respectively), the study of the film trailer had focused almost exclusively on persuasion and selling and risked marginalising the trailer to a role of salesman as one article in *Sight and Sound* noted trailers are 'pumped up bullies, yelling out torrents of absolutes' (Medhurst, 1998: 24). By way of engagement with this Johnston observes the negative stance the study of trailer persuasion, and press commentary, is taking and by way of intervention notes that:

reducing trailers to a purely theatrical concept limits our perception of what trailers are, what they can mean, who they target, and why we should be interested in them. The trailer grew beyond the borders of the cinema screen over 50 years ago, when 1950s television trailers for new film releases demonstrated the ability of the trailer format to move between visual media. Since then, the trailer has been transferred onto the various iterations of home video - from VHS to Laserdisc and DVD - and in the last decade has moved onto the technological screens of the internet, games consoles, mobile videophones and iPods. (2008: 145-6).

Johnston notes that with each transfer to a new medium, the trailer undergoes the possibility for subtle changes in comparison to the film trailer as it exists on screen; observing that with time the trailer came to be downloaded, 'to be played (replayed, paused, fast-forwarded) whenever the viewer wants, rather than at a pre-set time and place' (ibid: 157). From the interactivity of transferable home media (VHS, Laserdisc, DVD etc) audiences had the ability to pause a trailer mid-way through, to control repeated viewing, to share a trailer with friends in a different context. The use of smaller screens necessitated a different kind of engagement, bigger images used for clarity and an absence of industry audio/visual screening equipment has resulted in different possibilities for viewing and thus a different understanding in how trailers are constructed.

Treating the trailer as a short film, Johnston reduces the emphasis on the product, allowing for the audience experience (2009). This counterpoint is useful when we consider that audiences pay for the opportunity to be entertained but largely, can only guess at the qualities of a product based on the framing devices (often in the form of promotional

materials) that surround the experience itself.¹⁰ However, Johnston's treatment of the trailer as a short film removes the boundaries previously used to differentiate it from other short films in circulation. This in turn raises the question of definition, but allows for the possibility of varying engagement contexts on the part of the audience. This issue of the short film lies at lurking at the heart of the earlier engagement in which the issue of mobility is central (2008). Indeed, Johnston suggests that considering the trailer as mobile accounts not only for its movement between media forms, but allows for a variability of the spatial and temporal boundaries that are intrinsic to the studies of the persuasive trailer. Consider that with DVD the trailer (and sometimes multiple trailers) for the product purchased is often included alongside other extra materials. This has afforded viewers the opportunity to watch a film followed by the trailer for that film. The implications of the determinist persuasive trailer are such that it reduces the possibility of trailers being used for entertainment or as a form of retrospective for the film. So it is that this mobility in time and space sits at odds with persuasive studies not only because of the challenges it raises towards previous studies, but because of the implications it has for the consideration of the trailer overall. Johnston deliberately avoids any reliance upon specific creative producer intentions or audience actions that are central to previous considerations of trailers as a form of persuasion.

In terms of analysis, Johnston's offers a way of considering the composition of the trailer as an indication of the conditions of production Johnston proposes an industrial framework of analysis that merges aesthetic analysis with the context of its creation, that allows the trailer text to be placed within the context of the industry and therein any analysis can be rooted within the industry, rather than the perceived purpose of the trailer itself. Such an approach is clearly useful in the kind of intervention being made by this thesis, not only because it follows an approach that opens up the possibility of trailers existing in multiple scenarios but because this counterpoint as a whole, challenges the very definition of what a trailer a can be, can look like, and where it can exist. However, in considering the trailer as a short film, Johnston removes the boundaries previously used to distinguish between types of short form texts and that in turn raises issues of definition. So Johnston's understanding alone is of little use when attempting to *define* the trailer as an object of study, and so despite recent contributions that further the discourse that reconceptualise the trailer, there remains an absence of a working definition. Certainly many studies use trailers from which to formulate an argument, but little attention is paid to the collection of these trailers that subsequently

¹⁰ cf Austin. (1999: 42), Barker & Mathjis (2008) and Davis *et al* (2013, 2014).

form the basis for study. For both Kernan and Johnston, trailers are taken in part from film archives, and it is often unclear why those trailers, or those archives are being used, and indeed who has chosen to call them 'trailers'. Similarly, work on the trailer not organised by chronology but through specific examples, exemplified by Haralovich & Klaprat (1981/2), or Maier (2009, 2011) uses a selection of trailers from an unknown source in order to explore the structure of all (film) trailers. In each of these cases it is unclear how the trailers discussed have been identified as 'trailers', from other short form texts, and there is an implicit understanding that those trailers chosen exemplify all kinds of trailers, even if the term itself is not defined (cf Maier, 2011: 141). It is in this manner then, that the trailer is often considered without being explicitly defined. Given the absence of a definition in the majority of studies, though Kernan (2004) and Johnston (2009) do take steps to define the trailer within their studies taking the oppositional stances previously outlined. The trailers that have previously been considered in other known studies are defined purely by the application of the term 'trailer' and an implicit understanding that the trailer needs no definition.

Owing to the emphasis on persuasion when considering the trailer, work by Haralovich & Klaprat (1981), and Maier (2011) implicitly define the trailer as a form of advertising. Although Johnston rejects the temporal and spatial restrictions that are used when considering the trailer as persuasive, both the persuasive considerations of the trailer and considerations of the trailer as a short film in its own right can be united. In order to unite these two approaches, it helps to consider the trailer not as persuasive but as promotion; as a framing device that encourages a particular viewpoint irrespective of issues of fidelity. As Sut Jhally observes, both art and advertising function in the same way: through presenting an 'interpretation of reality with the aim of influencing an audience to think in a particular way' (1990: 5). We can see this at work in posters, in trailers in different countries.¹¹ Indeed often within the same geographic location a film has its materials tailored for specific demographics (Hediger in Greene 2011). Though it is noted that this is implicitly acknowledged by Kernan who suggests that they select sequences to display the spectacular or desirable elements of a film (2004: 18). With the introduction of the internet, audiences often have access to trailers for forthcoming features from across geographic boundaries. This difference in potential content available, when the film itself may be subjected to different regulation further supports the logic behind considering trailers as framing. In supporting the reduction an emphasis on persuasion, this mode of understanding keeps the

¹¹cf Anonymous (1998) 'Coming Attractions: Sight and Sound sees how trailers are tailored for the UK'.

potential for trailers to function as adverts or as entertainment or both, or neither. It is here that it makes sense, to continue exploring this unification of two key approaches through a discussion of an underlying theoretical framework behind this. This framework allows for a discussion of terminology as well as further contextualising the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis.

The trailers' terminology

Interest in what has previously been considered ancillary, or adjunct materials is growing, in part motivated by the early work of Klinger (1989) and Heath (1977) and by changes to the industrial landscape. As a result a plethora of academic contributions exist and through discussion of various elements expand the available terminology, though in places this becomes problematic and clarification is needed. As work by Chin and Gray (2002) has shown, subsequently supported by the work of Barker *et al* (2008), Davis *et al* (2014) audiences make both positive and negative judgements on a film they have yet to see, based on the information available to them. Chin & Gray dub this the 'pre-viewing' of 'pre-texts' but this terminology suggests the promotional materials are not texts in their own right (2002). What this points to then is that trailers through their potential existence in advance of the product may frame and shape the consumer experience. In 1977 Stephen Heath, much like Chin & Gray, observed that any single film is surrounded by other materials and that;

film depends on this too, recognized in a whole host of epiphenomena from trailers to remakes, from weekly reviews to star magazines, from publicity stills to mementoes (rubber sharks, tee-shirts). (1977: 28). But here Heath uses a phrase, 'epiphenomena', a borrowed from a much larger project by Gérard Genette. Paratexts, according to Genette are those things that bring a text into being, that exist outside and inside a text that help to denote the text as a text (1997). Focused entirely on literature and the literary industries, under the hypernym 'paratext' Genette identifies *epitexts* existing distinctly separately from the text; production notes, covers etc, and *peritexts* that exist within the (book) text: such as titles, subtitles, forewords etc. (1997: xviii). Again, the terminology used to discuss the boundaries of paratextuality, suggest there is a fixed spatial if not temporal boundary between the text and its supporting paratext. Consider that if a trailer exists in advance of a promoted product some aspect of the product has, until the point of product engagement stood metonymically for the product; echoing Heath. Thus the paratext is at once part of, and for some consumers all of, the experience itself. For this reason, when appropriate, I will discuss paratexts rather

than epitexts. Indeed, the very term 'paratext' suggests something that is not fully a text, something that has at best a dependent relationship with a central (implicitly dominant) text¹². This understanding, in part, supports the rationale behind the persuasive text but similarly assumes that a paratext will always have a function in relation to a central, dominant (and thus more important) text. Genette suggests that in many cases the paratext allows audience members to continue forward into the text, or turn back from a text, as an air lock that helps a textual consumer to acclimatise (1997, 15). Extending this into a study of digital paratexts, Gray notes;

In other words, paratexts condition our entrance to texts, telling us what to expect, and setting the terms of our “faith” in subsequent transubstantiation. Hence, for instance, an ad telling us of a film's success at Cannes and Sundance would prepare us for a markedly different film than would, say, an ad that boasts endorsement from Britney Spears (even if both ads refer to the same film) (2010: 26).

Both Genette, and Gray however see the paratext as separate from the text with which it is connected, but just as an airlock is its own environment albeit one that is used as a conduit for another. Returning to Heath's work, as paratexts provide audiences with the introduction to a text the audience member has already begun to engage (or actively disengage, which is itself engagement) with a text and so because of the numerous paratexts that support a text, bringing it into being, and helping the audience understand its commercial availability (or unavailability) the film has already begun to be experienced. It is experienced in the very awareness of its existence, as Heath notes, as a result of the supporting paratexts. Similarly as Ernest Mathijs suggests, the public presence (of a film) can be considered the reason for a central texts existence and the 'lens beneath which its meanings are consummated [...] mirroring in very crude philosophical terms a well-known metaphor ('if a tree falls in the woods and no one is around, does it makes a sound?')' (2006, 6). Mathijs' statement can be applied to almost textual network. It is in this way that desire for a specific experience (be it a new shoes, book, film, festival etc), can only come into being when it is announced as being available. This notion is apt when we consider the contemporary mediascape of say Hollywood that includes fast food tie ins, posters, toys, and other merchandise but this logic

¹² It is worth noting here that Barker calls this an issue of 'relative ontological priority'; that the promotional materials exist only because there is a product to promote. Yet the inverse is true. As marketing materials propose frameworks by which an audience engage with a product (or become aware of a product), promotional materials justify the existence of a product as a product itself, and without some form of paratext an audience cannot be made aware of a products existence and thus no product or centralised text can exists without an audience. (Barker 2010)

works both ways. If a formerly central or dominant text exists outside the boundaries of a film's opening sequence and closing credits, it presents a huge problem for academics wanting to explore this because if cinema (or books, or any other central text) exists outside its forms so too must the boundaries of the paratexts. So there is a need to carefully negotiate the boundaries between text and paratext when attempting to discuss the trailer that can be both simultaneously depending upon the degree of audience involvement. Nick Couldry successfully throws the onus of navigating this textual network onto the audience. Couldry acknowledges that 'many texts function through the mediation of (texts in) other media. [That the] "textual event" is inherently multitextual and involves multiple media' (2000: 86, citing Born 1991:158). The reading of any text as one component within a possible aggregation of experiences that comprise awareness and response, is best summarised as 'a complex of interrelated meanings which its readers tend to interpret as a discrete, unified whole' (ibid: 7-71). This understanding allows for a relative separation from issues of 'relative ontological priority' (Barker 2010), persuasion, or art instead this understanding allows the object of study, in this case the trailer to exist in isolation from a product, but also simultaneously in relation to a product in accordance with a strong rationale that accompanies any given study. So the trailer can be understood as a short film that simultaneously exists separately from and connected with a product (that may or may not actually exist). To this end, this study will consider the aesthetics of trailers in relation to the type of product promoted but not to the individual product itself. Considering the trailer (or indeed any text) this way facilitates discussion of a text that simultaneously may or may not sell, persuade, or exist in isolation, as a fluid entity depending upon the specific network any individual audience member may encounter.

Whilst at its core element a trailer has a history of being used to promote, a product for gain this necessitates a referencing of a promoted product. However, just as all offers and promotions may not be available in all territories, a trailer may frame the promise of a product, the potential opportunity to be entertained rather than an absolute guarantor of such entertainment. Indeed advertising need not always generate revenue. As Cook illustrates, advertisements exist that reject the notion of financial gain, or presenting products that are unavailable (2001). Citing firstly examples of charity adverts and public service announcements Cook suggests these advertise without presenting a product, poems and songs also become adverts through specific uses. Cook further suggests that if an advert is defined by a selling function alone, 'then one might wonder what it becomes when the product is no

longer available, or when the receiver is someone who cannot or will not buy the product' (ibid: 10). Logically however, these generic features of referencing are not confined to a single given medium, (though may be found more readily in some than in others) thus the term 'trailer' can be applied to different texts within different media, with different purposes. While Kernan (2004) argues for a study of trailers as a genre, citing similarities in the intentions and aesthetics of a trailer, but this argument is expanded to the entire industrial form only because of this persuasive intent is, for Kernan, obviously at work in every trailer. While trailers may be unified in the perception of similarities, treating all trailers as one of a larger genre threatens to marginalise the emergence of newer forms of the trailer, subsumed under the historically and academically dominant film trailer. Further this necessitates an understanding of the kinds of texts that are operating as a trailer. To this end, it is useful to think of all the trailers considered in this study as sharing the same broadcast space and nomenclature, but with a variety of different aesthetic histories and traditions that a genre study could not do justice to.

Kernan's understanding of trailers a genre of persuasion, excludes the possibility of trailers that do not seek to persuade but rather to frame and distort meanings and expectations. Re-cut trailers, for example are typically made by audience members as a way of subverting already known materials, not designed primarily to promote, but to entertain. As Kathleen Williams states:

The "recutting" refers to the act of splicing together materials, which may alter the music for the original trailer, directly engage with the audience through new text or voiceover, or by choosing elements of the source texts to amplify or omit. The recut trailer intends to be humorous in its playfulness with the form and meaning of the trailer. Notably, the recut trailer also responds to the methods with which a commercial trailer seeks to appeal and sell to an audience'. (2010)

Whilst not 'selling' in a conventional sense re-cut trailers are still paratextual trailers, simply trailers with a different primary function. Consider as an example the 'Scary Mary' Trailer.¹³ A viral video circulating on the Internet that presents Disney's universal rated *Mary Poppins* (1964) as a horror film manipulating sequences from the film to present it in this new frame of reference. Whilst not necessarily sanctioned by copyright holders, such trailers that subvert existing works do in fact promote them through referencing them. Trailers and adverts both reference what has been variously called here the central text or the product, but rather

¹³ 'Scary Mary' http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T5_0AGdFic [Accessed 22/1/12]

trailers posit an interpretation of a product that may or may not be faithful, and it is this ephemeral product that represents the possibilities of an actual product. This understanding allows this project to sidestep many of the issues associated the previous study of the trailer and to engage with a more fundamental question of defining the trailer as it exists in contemporary society. Using this expanded understanding of the trailer as a mobile text, that *references* the possibilities of a product that may or may not exist. So with this understanding of the object of study in mind, it remains to explore the kind of texts that are being called 'trailers'. Just as Staiger's charting of the use of the term 'trailer' through the references in the press allows an overview of the organisation of the industry; charting the kinds of text operating under the label 'trailer' gives an indication of what a trailer is, without the need for further definitions. While to suggest that the labelling of any text has a bearing on its being, or its reception would amount to nomenclative determinism, using the application of a label accounts for variations in the definition 'trailer' that could be inadvertently ignored with an apriori theoretical definition. Whilst historically the trailer has moved across different media forms, taking different aesthetic forms and industrial purpose, the unifying features of these texts is indicated by their reception. So it is that looking at what other people are calling trailers, better allows for an assessment of the public understanding of what a trailer is, can be, could and should, do. As trailers do not always appear to be labelled as trailers at the point of broadcast on screen media¹⁴, it falls to explore the trailer through sites where the trailer is labelled. Interrogating individual audience members' understanding of the trailer would potentially lead to individual instances of trailers being identified through discourse but this method exists just beyond the scope of this research. Using the internet as a site of convergence between audience members and texts labelled as trailers themselves also allows for the rapid collection of data, and thus allows for a larger corpus of texts identified as 'trailers' to be generated through bypassing individual discussions whilst generating the same research results. The internet has become a major site for convergence of contemporary promotional videos in part thanks to a shift in consumer culture and connectivity, but this trend towards promotion is far from a natural extension of advertising practices, and is linked with a significant shift in what has been termed YouTube culture. Indeed, the introduction of

¹⁴ Indeed, the remix trailer for *In Bruges* (2008) contains a featurette *F**king Bruges* a remix of all the swear words used during the film it follows the same aesthetic format of promotional trailers. This is an example of DVD architecture playing with traditional nomenclature of film, trailers, interviews etc. Indeed, online this is referred to as a remix or spoof trailer. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDyEbUUpiLc> [accessed 25/09/13]

theatre 'trailers' led critic Lyn Gardner to suggest that theatre itself was going 'down the YouTube'(Gardner 2008).

Promotional Videos and the internet

Adverts have always sought to be memorable, but in an age where consumers can seek out favoured experiences this becomes more relevant than ever, with each advert competing to be the most talked about, the most shared and the most seen. Consider YouTube.com: there exists perhaps no bigger library of short form texts than the world's largest video sharing website. A platform for distribution, but not a producer of content, YouTube is an example of a 'meta business', a business that 'enhances the value of information developed elsewhere and thus benefits the original creators of that information' (Burgess & Green, 2009: 4, citing Weinberger 2007: 224). Owing to the website's success at generating frequent visitors, partnerships have emerged between YouTube and numerous content producing industries, resulting in several revenue sharing deals. Such partnerships often capitalise upon previously existing media, such as Warner and Universal Music Groups making available their back catalogue (Ibid 2009: 5). Utilising previously existing materials in this way, and adding to them, the dissemination platform of YouTube is now a significant tool for professional and amateur content producers with over 1 billion unique users each month and 100 hours of footage being uploaded every minute (youtube.com). As Christina Spurgeon notes:

'How, and whether, the Internet should develop as a platform for commerce and advertising has itself been the focus of ongoing contention. The Internet has been curiously resistant to certain types of commercialisation but very open to others' (2008: 11).

As early as 2006 YouTube was launching participatory adverts. In 2007 'InVideo' adverts were launched, followed in 2008 with Pre-roll ads that generate revenue attached to readily dispersed, or mobile, content (youtube.com). Yet such advertising techniques show little deviation from conventional advertising, 'forcing' people to watch adverts as they seek other content. An amateur video of the chemical reaction between a bottle of Coca-Cola and Mentos mints however, demonstrated new possibilities for advertising: adverts as entertainment and the viral video. As Spurgeon notes, this video was not authorised by either company but spawned numerous remakes and ultimately generated product (and thus company) awareness that was worth and estimated USD \$10 Million in market exposure.

Being able to hyperlink, direct users to the 'original site', download, re-edit, re-make and embed videos on other websites means entertaining or talk-worthy videos can be shared with friends, or almost anyone with internet access demonstrating a truly mobile form of promotion and the birth of entertainment as experiential marketing. This viral video demonstrated to both content producers both professional and amateur the financial and social possibilities afforded to creators of popular content. In creating entertaining videos in this manner this promotion combines the social aspect of word of mouth/mouse promotion, as well as allowing smaller industries the same amount of media exposure as larger ones. This concept has been utilised by a whole host of non-profit and traditionally subsidised cultural organisations. As early as 1998, Ruth Rentschler observed that '[m]arketing in museums and performing arts organisations is in a period of major reassessment', such reassessment was according to Rentschler, driven by issues of funding and accountability thereof (1998: 83). As part of a wider review of arts marketing literature (between 1995-2000) Rentschler identifies what she terms 'the Discovery Period'. Within this period of literature a distinct focus of marketing aims has emerged within the arts and creative industries industries. A heavy emphasis on 'marketing as an experience' develops alongside a focus on the aesthetics of such marketing. This coincides with changes in governmental policies that Hayes and Roodhouse, suggest re-conceptualised the arts policy, and justified a reassessment of the funding therein, noting that as a result of recent changes there has been a trend towards reducing grant-in-aid funding to deliver against specific objectives, open to a wider range of organisations and collaborations spanning the public and private sectors (2010: 47).

This reduction in arts funding has resulted in increased innovation in the creative and cultural industries there were previously subsidised. It is no surprise then that non-profit groups have changed their promotional practices to embrace viral video. Similarly with the rise of digital books and increased opportunities to publish, such as Amazon group's direct to Kindle publishing authors and publishers alike are resorting to video-marketing as way of engaging new audiences in a comparatively cheap way. So sites such as YouTube are becoming the focus for a number of scholars with different objectives. As an online community and archive it allows unobtrusive observance of individual and group interaction with specific video materials, and indeed thanks to digital television and the ease with which media can be disseminated, it has become an invaluable resource for short form texts that were they not able to be reviewed and rewatched, stored and shared may be otherwise lost or derided as ephemera, whose temporal and spatial relationships to a product have long since

passed. So YouTube forms a kind of publically shared and managed archive of favourite (or hated) texts. Indeed, the content organisation of YouTube supports Johnston's (2008, 2009) notion that trailers are not, and should not be considered within this temporal and spatial boundary. In addition to this, YouTube allows videos to emerge as distinct categories, allowing a cycle of public understanding of what a trailer is, to filter through the YouTube archive, in the form of the texts being applied a label such as 'trailer'. In this respect trailers used for the purposes of study can be seen as being part of a vernacular genre, a group collective of text that operate under the term 'trailer'. What reviewing trailers in this manner shows, is a shift in the application of the term is found; trailers are no longer being understood to be texts entirely within the film industry but rather in the process of being applied to any text that frames an experience good; movies, theatre, videogames, stories, food, etc. This indicates a larger change in the public understanding of the trailer. Which in turn push into crisis the current regulatory definitions. Currently defined as advertising for short films, this legal definition aptly demonstrates the disconnection between existing definitions of the (film) trailer, and the forms that 'trailers' take in contemporary society. In the UK, the only trailers acknowledged by any authoritative body are Film trailers broadcast in the cinema. These are regulated differently than advertising in the same space; the latter being regulated by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA.org.uk).¹⁵ So reviewing the kinds of texts referred to in this manner takes a step towards exploring trailers as a collective entity, and the popular application, if not understanding of the term 'trailer'.

Contemporary 'Trailer' and the Internet

Language is important, and ever changing on the internet. As David Crystal (2004) has observed, the impact of technology particularly the internet, on language cannot be underestimated. As language changes at different speeds in different contexts, charting any changes in linguistic use benefits from a retrospective understanding. Yet because the internet is being accessed constantly, it provides a continuously updated reflection of language. Language usage can be used to track public perceptions by identifying texts that are operating

¹⁵ Personal correspondence Matt Wilson, ASA (Nov. 2009)

[...] the ASA's remit would extend to cover film trailers that appear on UK Television. We could look into complaints about trailers on TV if people found them misleading, harmful or offensive. However, the Advertising Code does not extend to cover film trailers in cinemas. Film trailers in cinemas are the responsibility of the cinema and/or the distributor of the main feature film - it is their decision where to place a trailer after the BBFC has classified it. To my knowledge, local councils have the authoritative power to look into complaints about film trailers in cinemas.

as trailers and using these publicly identified texts to explore the 'trailer' as a practice. The focus here is on the term 'trailer', rather than other similar, often synonymous terms such as; preview, promo, TV spot, advert, etc. Partly this limitation is due to the need for working research boundaries but this also allows for the linear integration with the work of scholars of the trailer (rather than scholars of the advert, or preview). Further to this, industry professionals have a tendency to use the term trailer, preview, and promo interchangeably depending upon the context of discussion.¹⁶

As the focus of this study is on audio-visual texts it follows logically that a methodology for corpus collection should allow for the downloading of 'trailers' in order to avoid issues of link rot, and shifts in website architecture. Trailers, like many forms of promotional ephemera can be found across the internet, primarily on video sharing websites such as Youtube.com and Vimeo.com. As upload process for such websites involves posting a video with the application of a title, it makes video sharing sites an ideal public-domain database for data collection of texts, and texts referred to as trailers. Preliminary searches of YouTube.com for 'trailer' indicate numerous categories and titles;

Book Trailers, Videogame Trailers, Theatre trailers, Teaser trailers, Launch trailers, Game- play trailers, Demo trailers, Live Action trailers, App trailers, Mashup trailers, Remix trailers, Spoof trailers.

Subject to change at an individual level but demonstrating a series of subdivision by industry and purpose, the titles of these 'trailers' often comprise a noun and adjective combination, qualifying the characteristics of each trailer. The anonymity of the upload process means that distinguishing between professional and amateur content is impractical, and it must be noted that each 'trailer' is only labelled by the party uploading the content, even if that person is acting on behalf of a company or group. It is partly this context that accounts for the diversity of trailer titles found and this unknown blend of amateur and professional content makes it ideal to reflect the trailer in the public domain without the need for a-priori definitions. In many cases these trailers promote products other than film/TV, and thus have a different ontology to that of the film/TV trailer. Others don't promote a purchasable product; instead constructing an ultimately hypothetical product, yet there are still too many results to explore, and noting titles alone does not indicate public acceptance of the application of such a term.

¹⁶ Evidentiary support of this can be found in the BFI archives from audio recordings of industry professionals during 'The Contemporary Art of TV Promotion and Digital Design,' and 'Pioneers of TV promotion and Ident Design' at the British Film Institute November 28th 2012. Further research is needed into the industrial applications of these various terms and exist outside the scopes of this project.

Indeed, as a site for promotion, Youtube.com offers an excellent example of how media labels shift. Just as news reports cluster around specific debates and are in competition with other news sites for audiences interested in further information on specific stories, videos on YouTube implicitly compete with each other for attention. As a result of this, texts on YouTube form a feedback loop in which terminology can be borrowed or avoided in order to be distinguished from others. This kind of passive boundary enforcement and development is seen in the examples of research set out by Staiger (1990), Hamel (2012) in which a noun becomes adopted in a different context over time. This is sped up as Youtube.com becomes a global site for sharing videos and their associated labels, as a result of the number of texts with 'trailer' in the title being identified a further filter is needed.¹⁷ A further filter allows not only for fewer results but an increase in context, as not every 'trailer' is identified as a trailer, sometimes only by the name of the product promoted such as *Hunger Games*. Third party mediation is frequently carried out by news agencies as they skim other sites for sources and stories of interest as well as competing with each other forming a secondary feedback loop of engagement and referencing (Burgess & Green 2009: 15). As such using third party mediation in this way, is not designed to directly correlate with popular culture, any more than using the internet as an indicator of public acceptance of the term 'trailer' is, rather this forms a starting point upon which to build further research.

To collect data that forms a corpus of 'trailers', three UK newspaper websites were used: The Independent.co.uk, The Guardian.co.uk, and The Telegraph.co.uk, each being free to access in the years 2011-12. Though as McCarthy notes since 2003 every UK newspaper has been charging for some form of online content; specifically the Independent.co.uk's archive. Throughout the research process however, no paywall was encountered in any manner: with all 'trailer' references being free to access via the sites' internal archives, highlighting the changing nature of the site's economic and aesthetic organisation. While accessible though, each archive has limitations; The Telegraph site runs from 1999 to the present, while The Independent runs 2010 to the present, and The Guardian at the time of data collection had a database that spanned 1999-2010. Since the point of data collection the Guardian site has been re-developed, and now draws on work from The Observer as well, dating back to 1991. Such a development highlights the limitation of this methodology, self-censorship, vested ownership of the archive itself on the part of the newspaper company and

¹⁷ YouTube.com internal searches generates 55,900,000 results from 'trailer' (02/10/13)

the issue of website development means consistent replication of this initial data is not always possible.

Each website used offers links to videos on popular videosharing websites such as Vimeo.com, and YouTube and in doing so rather than hosting videos on internal servers, forms a more stable place of trailer confluence. This method serves to reduce the amount of trailer references found in comparison to wider searches, while providing stability at the point of data collection: when the videos are no longer available, the story often remains regardless of the validity of the video link and information can be gathered when a trailer is absent. Data collection across the three websites involved the use of the in-built search function for the term 'trailer' with no date limitations specified. For all sites, such a search resulted in a list of results with links to the pages hosted on the server. Such pages were then assessed by the researcher, and each trailer linked, or present within the page was entered into a database, with access information and a note of the industry promoted (which forms the appendix). Each trailer was then downloaded where possible for the purposes of further stabilising the corpus.

During the process of corpus compilation it must be noted that the choice of newspaper websites may have a substantial impact on the corpus composition. While it is not within the scope of this thesis to fully explore the agenda of each newspaper site used, nor to assess which trailers within the corpus may be a result of specific newspaper policies, for the purposes of critical methodological reflection several points need to be made. For each website there are a network of factors influencing the kind of content and the manner in which it is conveyed; this may extend to overall article topics as well as the use of specific terminology. Issues such as reader demographics and editorial policies, brand identities and the constituent groups of writers and editors will all shape the newspaper's content online and offline. Indeed, as Herbert and Thurman note, UK newspaper websites have a specific agenda in promoting the brand identity of the print newspaper, while simultaneously either offering paid-for content or more often, complementing the sales of, and information contained within such print editions (2007). While the economic organisation of the sites has therefore a demonstrable capacity to change, the wider fiscal organisation may impact upon the editorial choices on each website. Indeed, An & Bergen note the repeated conflict between journalistic oriented goals, and fiscally oriented goals as being factor influencing content and this remains true of the websites used. Such an influence may extend to altering stories to 'avoid offending an advertiser' or the development of stories in order 'to please an advertiser' (2007: 112). The

UK sites used herein all generated money from advertising at the time of data collection and while an exploration of the influence of financial concerns of each paper is beyond the scope of this thesis it must be acknowledged that the feedback loop of the press as used here, is not solely one of popular culture, free from specific economic objectives. Because of the impact of advertising and of the complementary/standalone dichotomy of online newspaper sites the research method used vulnerable to newspaper practices of; positioning stories specifically designed to either; supplement and support print editions (Chyi & Lasorsa, 1999), use content specifically to increase traffic to the site (Wolk & Theysohn 2010), alter layout to accommodate ease of access (Chakraborty et al, 2002), and/or be susceptible to the influence of advertisers (An & Bergen, 2007).

This initial corpus is additionally not without researcher bias, the focus on the term ‘trailer’ rather than ‘TV spots’, or ‘preview’ may excludes similar or overlapping aesthetics operating under a different name, such a bias towards specific terminology is used here as a guiding point from which subsequent studies may explore different terminology. As part of such a keyword search each result has to be assessed for inclusion within the corpus. This assessment takes the form of reading through the context of the reference; ascertaining the kind of industry product promoted by a trailer on the basis of the press article is therefore liable to some margin of researcher error. Such an error may exist particularly when the product itself is ambiguously placed within the press article; any such error in categorisation however is addressed when viewing the trailer itself and retroactively placed in the correct industry category. The results therefore, do not represent the wider internet or contemporaneous culture, partly owing to the agenda of each newspaper website itself, but provides a starting point upon which build further study: to this end, the three websites here form a guiding corpus for this thesis. Such a guiding corpus reflects broadly elements of the trailer that have been overlooked by previous study, and though a limited methodology shifts the onus of defining the object of study onto the mechanism of popular press culture.

By way of supplementing the study this thesis draws on the Lexis Nexis English language worldwide press archive in order to frame historical and industrial discussions of the emergence of specific terms within the publications hosted in the database. For each industry case study the combining terms ‘trailer’ and its industrial signifier based on the guiding corpus were used to source supplementary evidence for the case study e.g. ‘stage’, ‘theatre’, ‘videogame’, ‘computer game’, ‘book’, ‘literature’ with no date or proximity relevance used. When additional terms were encountered, for instance ‘book talk’, or ‘vid lit’

these became subject to their own inquiry through the method previously outlined. In many cases the results generated were greater in frequency than Lexis Nexis search results frame would allow, and so broad dates were used to break down the corpus to generate usable results e.g.: 'Book trailer' between 1/1/1990-1/1/2000, then 1/1/1980-1/1/1990 as far back as 1900 as a point at which the film industry, and arguably the film trailer emerged. The researcher was then obliged to review each article listed for relevance and thus this supplementary approach is open to a similar researcher bias that affects the review of the guiding corpus. This approach is not intended as a systematic review of the Nexis press archives, but rather a flexible tool from which to focus areas of study as the study developed; its role is to help triangulate the emergence of specific terms but suffers the same archival restrictions and possible researcher bias that affects the initial guiding corpus. This method too risks prioritising English language terminology, and marginalising unknown or lesser known terminology. Each case study however, explores other nomenclature where it becomes known to the research using the same archives and archival method by way of complicating and addressing such bias. So, using search functions across three newspaper websites that forms the guiding corpus, for 'trailers', taking note of the kinds of trailers being discussed and deliberately excluding references to the established Film and TV trailer it becomes apparent that Videogame, Stage Theatre, and the Publishing Industries dominate the types of trailers listed on these websites and thus can be said to be established practice by the industry if not universally recognised (Table 1).

	Videogame	Books	Theatre	Misc.
Guardian.co.uk	183	16	6	9
Independent.co.uk	261	3	23	15
Telegraph.co.uk	2	6	11	0
	446	25	40	24

Table 1 Newspaper Website results by Industry and Newspaper

Of the three sites survey for the term 'trailer', two have dedicated pages for industry specific videos suggesting a wide range of trailers are available or anticipated by journalists in order to justify the website architecture (Table 2). It also accounts for dominance of these three industries within the corpus reinforcing this 'established' status. These three 'dominant' trailers within the corpus form the focus of three of the chapters, with a fourth chapter that discusses the less frequent results.

Guardian	'Theatre Video'	'Trailer Blazers' (book)	'Game Trailers'
Independent	Dedicated internal player uses links to remote server: No dedicated pages		
Telegraph	'Theatre Trailers'	'Book Video'	'Game Trailers'

Table 2 Website Architecture Titular Breakdown

The pages labelled 'videos' tend to host trailers in addition to other audio-visual content; primarily interviews though some excerpts are also found, there is therefore evidence of an implicit agreement on the kind of content that should be included under the heading 'trailer'. The webpage labels serve as a guide to website architecture rather than definitive indications of hosted materials. Of the miscellaneous trailers identified four were initially identified in error*; two television trailers, a making-of documentary, and trailer for a Pornographic film based on the animated TV show *The Simpsons*.

Apps	6
Parody (Remix/Mashup/Spoof)	5
Absolut Vodka	1
Comic Book	1
Dining Experience	1
Yoga Conference	1
Classical Season	1
Identified in Error:	
Film Trailer	2
Unidentified Film/Game	2
TV Trailers	1
'Making of Video'	1
Total	22

Table 3 Miscellaneous results

Of the remaining 'trailers' there is a tendency to promote software Applications for handheld digital devices, this is possibly an extension of the videogame marketing strategies, indeed Apps arguably have the same construction if not interface as many videogames. Included in this corpus are spoof trailers-Brokeback Mountain parodies, a marriage proposal in the form of a film trailer, an 'April fools' trailer, as well as trailers for conferences and cultural events, because of the number of these trailers found, they are considered together on an individual basis. Of the purchasable products promoted by miscellaneous trailers these are largely confined within specific temporal and spatial boundaries and pertain to an intangible product: such as a restaurant, or conferences. Whilst there is a contrast between the types of products promoted, exploring each of these in turn is beyond reasonable scope owing to the amount of trailers identified. This method can be altered to target specific press sites that emphasis a

different trailers. The underlying flaw in accepting press mediated results is the potential for historic inaccuracy by the retroactive labelling of content and the limitations of a public archive such as YouTube. Any attempt to pinpoint the exact moment a particular type of trailer emerged must also then, attempt wider contextual exploration, so attention turns to include wider press materials where necessary. Indeed this helps to consider the organisation of the trailer in relation to the medium in which the promoted product lies. Consider for instance the emergence of the videogame 'trailer'. Screen promotion for videogames has existed since games first moved into the home, yet, the term 'trailer' is largely absent videogame promotion until the 1990s. Prior to this only implied references to videogame trailers exist and it is likely such texts were referred to as commercials. The earliest known reference to videogame trailers appears in a 1993 press release and discusses the use of 'rock-video style trailers' in cinemas (Gruson, 1993). It is only when the videogame promotion moved into a new medium that the term 'trailer' came into being. The phrasing and context points towards the trailer being used as a form of product differentiation and innovation as well as reinforcing suggestions that a nomenclative (and perceptual) split exists between texts identified commercials and trailers. Shortly after this came a flurry of texts using 'movie-trailer' as a reference to place and orient consumers around the product and the form of promotion itself (Jebens 1996). What this suggests is that allusions to cinema and existing forms of promotion were used to negotiate a paradigm shift in advertising and to frame promotional videos. Whilst further research is needed these reports, coupled with prior dearth of references to videogame trailers, as well as Staiger's retrospective, in 1990s supports the claim that the trailer moved away from the film industry in the mid-1990s. Similar press releases serve to indicate an industry's adoption of a particular type of promotion. This press commentary helps to frame the understanding of new promotion. As with the Videogame trailer, when the first book trailer emerged, movie trailers were the frame of reference (Walker 2000). Press releases frequently orient perceived if not actual new forms of promotion, framing the (promotional) framing device of the trailer. Reports from Business Wire (2000, 2000a) and Internet Wire (2001) echo specific phrasing from within a press release demonstrating that emergence of specific terms such as 'book trailer' can be part of the promotional rhetoric from a single campaign. Similarly prior to this point no references to book trailers can be found. Largely coinciding with the book trailer, the new millennium also sees the emergence of the theatre trailer, similarly ranging in aesthetic style and for both live broadcast, and live narrowcast productions. Despite a history of broadcasting via Television,

the earliest known references to theatre trailers emerge in 2007, when the Metropolitan Opera started a series of 'High Definition Broadcasts', pairing up live stage productions with cinema screens (Ruhe, 2007). At the same time it was reported The UK's National Theatre's created YouTube Channel hosted trailers for three live stage productions (Clancy 2007). This was followed in 2008 by the Met launching a YouTube Channel of their own. Unlike the videogame and book trailer this term entered the public domain almost immediately, with little negotiation or framing found. Taken overall, the proliferation of 'trailers' for book and theatre products is much faster than that of the Videogame that seemed to have a period of negotiation that existed in advance of the internet and YouTube culture. The trailer is thus becoming not a finite text, characterised by aesthetic structure, but is definitely a label applied to a specific form of marketing: usually for the arts, for narrative based products, usually in the form of an online video. Although the changes in the application of the term 'trailer' may well only exist in the vernacular, such vernacular applications of the term trailer are so intrinsic to academic study of it, that it is only through greater engagement with reception and audience studies that we can advance the study of the trailer.

So by engaging with Videogames, Theatre, and Book trailers in respective chapters this forms a navigable chronology that picks up where Staiger's (1990) work left off. In addition to this but it also provides a movement from the hyposemiotc relationships of videogame trailers with their products, to the (arguably) hypersemiotic relationship of books being represented with sound and moving images. Each chapter is structured to provide historical context, exploring the moment the term 'trailer' came to be applied in that industry, and moves to a discussion of the trailer and the issues of accurate medium representation in order to frame the discussion of one industry's representation in another.

Chapter 1: Trailers and the Videogame Industry

Introduction

In 1971 the first mass-produced arcade videogame was developed and distributed. Coin operated, and running on electricity, unlike previous electromechanical arcade games *Computer Space* represented a new development in arcade entertainment that would ultimately change into a home entertainment industry and continue through to the new millennium and the present day. *Computer Space* was followed almost immediately by game releases such as *Pong* (1972) and *Astro Race* (1973) both of which immediately capitalised upon, and thus continued to expand, the arcade industry. These new forms of arcade games almost entirely supplanted electromechanical games by 1979 (Wolf 2008: 64). The availability of arcade games, their popularity, and the revenue generated by them increased, leading to what has been broadly identified as the 'Golden Age' of arcade videogames, that lasted until the mid 1980s (Whittaker 2004: 122). This same time frame, in which arcade games achieve the height of their popularity, also saw the development of *console based* videogame systems onto which many arcade games were transferred for enjoyment in the home. The release of the world's first home videogame system, *Magnavox Odyssey* (1972), followed by the *Fairchild VES* (1976, later named *Fairchild Channel F*) and later the various immensely popular *Atari* systems (1977 onwards), demonstrated further development in what was later to become known as the videogame industry; and it is these initial developments that constituted and pioneered, the shift in promoting a new form of entertainment (Wolf, 2008: XVII-XXI). The videogame industry became identifiable as we know it today, when it moved into the home from the fixed spaces of cabinet sized games in public arcades that also housed mechanical and electromechanical games. Such a movement from the public space of the largely commercial buyer to the incorporation of a domestic setting for a domestic consumer opened up new market demographics; new buyers with disposable income, rather than longer term industrial investments. It is this transition from public to private space that resulted in the shift in the organisation and placing of promotional materials: in order to sell a product that fitted within a domestic space it was to be marketed as a domestic product alongside promotion for other domestic products.

Initial promotion on television 'adverts' framed the new videogame technology as bringing people, specifically family members, together for game play in a communal space, capitalising on the already communal space of the television and its established role in domestic life (Flynn, 2003). The television was itself a domestic media within a

domestic setting, and as games consoles in the home relied upon television screens, the television became a widely used medium both for game play, and for promotional materials. The shift of spatial context for the games console, ultimately becoming that which Bernadette Flynn calls 'the digital hearth' (2003), the central focus in the shared familial space, leading to a new media object being marketed, distributed, and thus introduced to the public. This new media object initially consisted of a console with integrated games, the content of which were relayed to a television's screen; later games were held on separate media: now downloadable content, discs, and/or cartridges are standard industry practice. As a result of this interdependency between software and hardware, the games *console* and any associated games when purchased have an interdependent relationship; the product is dyadic given that a game without a console is little more than computer code on a storage medium and a console without a the software, game, or program cannot fulfil its primary function of gaming. In addition to the dyadic nature of the console itself, this shift in spatial and social relocation into the home in the first instance was a socio-technological innovation capitalising upon the existing television screen within the home.

As the television screen was already in a communal space and promotion served the primary purpose of educating and developing an identity within the domestic market, the promotion of the games console literally demonstrated this new technology, even showing the public how to plug it into the wall.¹ This educational demonstration manifest as promotion served both to demonstrate where this new media device (ideally) belonged spatially, while simultaneously reducing the installation process to a series of easy actions, potentially mitigating fears of a new technology alienating family members within the home. Later however, as multiple television screens became available within the home, the games console moved from the social space to the private space of the bedroom. The perception of the gamer-family in communal space became one of an antisocial misfit; the stereotype of a lone teenager playing games disconnected from forms of social interaction, played up to various fears of the media and the negative impact therein (Chambers 2012: 71). As will be shown, this perception was perhaps inadvertently reinforced through a style of promotion that emphasised individual game narrative through the use of metanarrative promotion identical to movie trailers, rather than the extra-diegetic pleasures

¹ See the Uncle Frank Atari Space invaders Advert, referred to later in this chapter.

of the medium as a form of social interaction.² This perception of gaming persisted through the late 1990s, and was reframed by post-millennial consoles through promotion which reintroduces the development of what Deborah Chambers calls 'family centred gaming' typified, for Chambers, by the promotion for the games platform *Nintendo Wii* that incorporate an on-screen family playing the games in a familial setting (2012: 78). In providing game-play context the *Wii* promotion frames gaming as a positive (often family) group activity, and does so through a focus on the surrounding space, and the player's spatial interaction with the games console. This interaction has been largely excluded from discussions of videogame promotional trailers that has implicitly and increasingly been drawing comparisons between the organisation of videogame trailers and those of film trailers (cf. Brookey 2010: 38; Cassidy 2011; Moore 2008; Mou & Peng 2008). Whilst the limited literature referring to promotion as 'trailers' draws quick and often over simplistic comparisons between the metanarrative of trailers (implicitly considered as emulating film trailers rather than a distinct promotional practice in a different industry), the guiding corpus includes 'trailers' that have been discussed in the literature as 'advertising', often owing to the inclusion of a diegetic player and a diegetic screen, discernible from the real-world screen on which the trailer is being viewed. Such a dichotomy, between 'adverts' and 'trailers' stems in part from popular discourse that surrounds the idealised (film) trailer as a promotional construct derived wholly or exclusively from the product promoted. Given the limited literature that considers videogame promotion however, this dichotomy cannot be taken as indicative of wider audience attitudes. Yet a similar dichotomy exists within the theory of advertising. In 1997 Dan Padgett and Douglas Allen note of communicating experience in promotion, that much existing theory that distinguishes between the marketing of a service and the marketing of a good (1997: 54). As experiential products, the games themselves are marketed as a service in the form of an experience, whilst the consoles themselves are tangible and marketing in the same manner as similar tangible goods. The discussions of the games console promotion by Young, and Chambers, referred to as an 'advert' rather than a 'trailer', centres around the construction of narrative setting associated with the tangible goods promoted. Padgett and Allen suggest that such narrative construction be termed 'described story stimuli' in which a

² A full history of videogames promotion from the 1970s to the 2010s would unpack much of this discourse but exists outside the boundaries of this research project; however Chambers indirectly acknowledges the trend of metanarrative 'trailers' through exploring the concept of the family-centred game, but without systematic overview, and access to all the audio-visual promotion used in this 40 year period. This suggestion remains grounded within the emergence of the term 'trailer' (see page 11 of this chapter) and that interface elements during this time have largely been wired controllers with buttons connecting to a console.

causal, chronological narrative is at work, enacted by characters regardless of the aesthetics of story organisation. 'Typically such stimuli involve[s] actors with motives, an event sequence, and a setting that has physical, social, and temporal components' (1997: 53). This conception of advertising narrative organisation differs from the film trailer (as an idealised trailer template by which other texts are measured) in which the actors are a component of the product itself, and in which the narrative as an experience is the product itself. Essentially then, discussions of the trailer and advert differ at both a nomenclative, and narrative level, when the product promoted is identified within a narrative world, rather than *being* a narrative world. The very limited academic discussions of the videogame trailer (rather than advertisements) have almost exclusively discussed trailers in the same manner as discussions of the persuasive trailer.³ Indeed, as Padgett & Allen, observe, 'narrative ads present a causal/chronological series of events acted out by a character, whereas argumentative ads present associational or logically connected ideas not enacted by a character' (1997: 56).⁴ This differentiation implies a structural differentiation, in which argumentative advertising emphasises the products' physical attributes rather than bracketing a display of the product in use within a mediating narrative world.⁵ As Cassidy puts it, within the idealised videogame trailer:

the product is presented not as a game that enthusiastic teens enjoy playing, but rather like a digital movie [unlike the 'advertisements' that depict the act of playing]. Storyline is emphasized and characters speak lines of dialogue.

Television commercials for videogames abandon the old aesthetic for a much more cinematic style. In short, videogame advertisements start looking just like movie trailers. (2011: 298).

Here Cassidy describes not only conventions of the videogame trailer in comparison to the film trailer, but emphasises the lack of causal narrative world as a frame of mediation in which the product (in this instance a narrative experience) is demonstrated or contained. Cassidy's comparison between the film and the videogame is done in passing, and this, like much of the literature concerning videogame trailers, overlooks the chance to explore

³ Cf Chien 2007, Cassidy 2010, and Zimmerman 2004, as the only known discussions of 'videogame trailers' as a whole, while Hesford 2013 has discussed videogame trailers this is in passing, as part of a discussion of film trailers,

⁴ Padgett & Allen suggest that 'that narrative ads present a causal/chronological series of events acted out by a character, whereas argumentative ads present associational or logically connected ideas not enacted by a character. (1997: 56)

⁵ Game industry promotion, as discussed in the literature overall suggests an inadvertent distinction between 'trailers' that are arranged at a metanarrative level and 'adverts' that incorporate a real-world scenario (even a hypothetical one).

divergent trailer practices. Similarly, Irene Chien claims that Videogame trailers function by 'directly poaching the voiceover narration, montage, special-effects spectacle, and genre conventions of film trailers' (2007:26). For Eric Zimmerman however such poaching is a case of industrial emulation; 'the commercial game industry is suffering from a peculiar case of cinema envy at the moment, trying to recreate the pleasures of another media' (2004: 157). By way of engagement with this, criticisms such as these fundamentally overlook the sheer amount of representational diversity at work with the videogame industry, and that such presentation may be confined by the medium if not the conventions of mass-broadcast media. Writing about the performative qualities of trailers, Daniel Hesford observes that the metanarrative of trailers for 'Video-games, with their implicit valuing of audio/visual technology, frequently deliver cinematic performance in promotional contexts' (2013). Yet in all of these discussions there is an implicit (and explicit only within the work of Hesford), reference to metanarrative trailers, rather than the whole host of promotional materials that promotes gaming, as well as individual narratives. Hesford continues to highlight the use of 'cinematic effects' as an aspect of performance within the videogame trailer. While trailers are performing the cinematic on screen they do so as a result of the constraints of the screen medium, they are not necessarily seeking to present itself as an extension of the film industry but by operating in the same promotional space (and format) as an alternative to the film industry. Many metanarrative trailers include cut scenes, short cinematic sequences that play without relying on the feedback loop of gamer input, and this itself. Thus the game itself has sections that are cinematic, but often only as a break in ludic gaming and indeed these sections may only be viewed by playing levels. Hesford is too quick to imply that the trailer is delivering the cinematic in an attempt to perform 'the cinematic', rather than performing elements of a game's diegesis via a cinematic medium that best promotes the product to those who already own the platform on which the game is played. Indeed similar comparisons have been raised by Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska who suggest the 'cinematic' is adopted in this manner as it is elevated to a higher status within cultural hierarchy than the televisual, upon which many qualities of video gaming are based (2004). This interpretation however suggests that the cinematic is sought, or solicited, rather than a limitation of the medium in which the product is promoted and existing

within the performative space of the trailer.⁶ Further they suggest that this linking between two industries is:

'far from arbitrary in an environment in which some of the key producers and distributors of both forms of entertainment are located within the same media corporations and in which game spin-offs [and vice versa] offer substantial additional revenues to the Hollywood studio' (2004: 7).

There are many game spin-offs: the sharing of intellectual property, creative staff, promotional techniques, and a clear synergy and co-ordination between the screen industries (the manner in which aspects of the videogame, as a game, rather than as a narrative event, is promoted) remain substantially different. While King and Krzywinska, Hesford, Chien, and Zimmerman draw attention to the cinematic elements of the videogame, significant divergent practices at the point of promotion operating under the term 'trailer' remain as a challenge to such generalisations. Their observations may be true of the reception of trailers employing a metanarrative as the construction of metanarrative varies with the perceived source content; but does not account for the variation of texts referred to as 'trailers'. As such, this is a simplistic understanding of how all trailers for videogames may function, and is entirely dependent upon the absence of an onscreen viewer that would complicate the construction of a metanarrative as understood by Kernan's interpretation of trailer construction (2004). The representation of the spatial organisation of the games console with relation to the player, or groups of players, around a single focal point is the central focus on this chapter because it challenges and expands the current discourse surrounding the videogame trailer. In doing so, this discussion parallels the wider debates within game studies. As Cassidy summarises:

Videogames have been around for well over thirty years, yet media scholars are still engaged in discourses on how best to conceptualize the medium. A variety of positions exist, but two primary modes of thought have emerged as the dominant models, one from those scholars who conceptualize videogames as primarily a medium of narrative and the other from those that focus on game mechanics—known respectively as narratologists and ludologists.⁷ (2011)

⁶ Research is thus needed into the reception of videogame trailers, as well as further research that documents the creative practices of videogame trailer, and promotional text production.

⁷ 'In fact, game genres offering [discursive,] ergodic challenges within a fictional universe known from other media make up a large portion of the games that people actually buy and play today (sport and driving games being the other major commercial category). The marketing of these genres addresses the buyer primarily as a reader, packing their games with heavy intertextual references, most often based on expensive licences from the film industry. Already a standard convention, narration of events within this fictional

Research surrounding the promotion of trailers has largely discussed the videogame trailers' lack of ludicity in comparison to the product promoted, and in doing so reinforced the concept that trailers should naturally reflect the product promoted; a fundamental impossibility when we consider the hyposemiotic relationship between the trailer and the game itself (as discussed in Gottlieb, 2005). Representations of this play out visually within the trailers found within the corpus; with trailers that promote the narrative of games for established platforms through metanarrative; but also promotion that demonstrates or emphasises ludic interface used during game play. Such representations of game play requires the presence of the gamer, demonstrating the feedback loop⁸ of game stimuli, and so gamer response necessitates the representation of the gamer absent in metanarrative trailers in order to illustrate this. The act of playing, inherent to the definition of the videogame in comparison to other forms of entertainment media, is shaped by the mechanics of game design, and this in turn shapes the experience and the game itself. There is a substantial difference in the cognitive and tangible experience of watching a character respond automatically, watching a character respond to a button command, and watching a character respond to a gesture. Thus play is interlinked and entwined within the experience of the narrative of any given game. As trailers narrate the possibilities of a separate narrative experience it becomes evident that the manner in which the game is played: the ludology of it becomes fundamental to game play and thus the product promoted. As Jesper Juul extrapolates:

Since we use narratives to make sense of our lives, to process information, and since we can tell stories about a game we have played, no genre or form can be outside the narrative. The problem is that this really is an a priori argument. Narratives may be fundamental to human thought, but this does not mean that everything should be described in narrative terms. And that something can be presented in narrative form does not mean that it is narrative. (2001).

This concept lies at the very crux of the research herein, as the screen medium of the trailer positions and remediates the experience of the product, the game; it must describe it through narrative, which is a fundamentally different experience to that of play. Trailers exist without such a feedback loop, and the trailer has to actively re-create elements of

universe is typically conveyed through cut scenes – cinematic sequences addressing the reader, putting the player on hold.' (Klevjer 2002).

⁸ As James Newman notes game play can be conceptualised as 'interface' seen as 'a continuous feedback loop where the player must be seen as both implied by, and implicated in, the construction and composition of the experience. Locked into this feedback loop at the level of interface or controls (hence the significance of the feel of the game)[is the ludic element of play.]' (2002).

game play in lieu of this interface, often done through a metonymic diegetic gamer. Much has been written on the narrative of videogames, and debates surrounding this often draw directly upon discussions of 'the cinematic', through the use of film theory (examples of this include Klevjer 2002, and Gazzard 2004). However, this question is commuted somewhat in the translation between media channels for the trailer. Trailers by definition as a broadcast text are 'cinematic' in their communicative structure, yet this does not necessitate an emulation of cinema.⁹

The methodological process used to collate 'trailers' has been implemented at a time when new platforms of interaction are being promoted via 'trailers', and as such the role of the player in relation to a new platform is one of the key aspects of contemporary trailers, and an underdeveloped component of differentiation between the videogame trailer and the film trailer. Whilst film trailers, particularly those for horror films regularly show audiences watching (and thus interacting with) events onscreen, such depictions of audience interaction challenge the notion of the (film) trailer as existing entirely as a metanarrative composed of images that potentially may be taken from the product. In both videogame and film trailers depiction of the audience either playing or watching, there exists an onscreen spatial dimension between the metonymic gamer/viewer and the onscreen screen. This issue of gamer-game spatial organisation is particularly relevant to the videogame trailer chapter when we consider the corpus of videogame trailers generated display - the diegetic, promotional space of the home. This spatial dimension, that locates a game console within a narrative, rather than presenting a metanarrative comprised of game footage, is an aspect of videogame trailers largely ignored, and under-considered as an aspect of trailer construction, seen with the work of Chambers (2012), Flynn (2003) and Young (2007) as belonging to advertisements rather than trailers.¹⁰ Through the consideration of space and the gamer within the videogame trailer, as identified through third party mediation, this chapter uses case studies to explore the representation of both gamespace, gamer, and gaming, within promotional materials. Starting with a discussion of the consoles being promoted at the time of corpus generation, this chapter ultimately uses space to illustrate that the term 'trailer' now encompasses certain kinds of promotional styles associated with advertisements, rather than solely

⁹ By 'Cinematic' I mean that they follow the constraints of the cinematographic: dominantly a unilaterally communicative audio-visual broadcast media, examples include forms such as television, cinema, and disseminated videos on the Internet such as those on Youtube.com.

¹⁰ Whilst these authors are not concerned with trailers, the absence of the term 'trailer' from their studies implicitly reinforces the conceptual distinction between 'advertising' and 'trailers' (See the introduction for an explication of this dichotomy).

applying to the metanarrative of extract-composed trailers; it identifies the promotional construction of the act of gaming that is tied to the kind of console being promoted. It is argued that although videogame 'trailers' may be constructed using the metanarrative organisation akin to film and television trailers, there is a blurring of the boundaries between 'trailers' and 'advertising' depending upon the nature of the established interface of the console. This suggests a fluidity in the application of the term 'trailer' that challenges the implicit distinction between trailers and advertising, and thus concept of videogame trailers as being film trailers, comprised of a different kind of footage.

As a form of innovation, much like the early days of the videogame industry, the promotional materials form a place of information dissemination in relation to new technological interfaces: new consoles are often literally demonstrated to the public within the promotional materials. Within the corpus, there is a strong tendency to see trailers that are composed in the metanarrative style; but there remains a significant number that offer little to no in-game footage in this manner, challenging the implied notion within persuasive (film) trailer studies that a trailer may only be comprised of clips or sequences from the product it promotes. It is these trailers that form the centre of this chapter as they fundamentally problematize the consideration of trailers as being metanarrative-based; offering a chance to explore the boundaries between the trailer and the advertisement.

The trailer in the corpus, the advert in the trailer

The methods of third party mediation used to gather promotional videos identified as 'trailers' only date back as far as 2004¹¹ owing to the websites' own archives. This period beginning in 2004, is only two years before the release of the Nintendo *Wii* console (2006), the interface of which incorporated arm gestures as well as buttons controls, for certain games. Capitalising on the success of this gesture-based form of interface such as the *Wii*, other platforms within the corpus adopted similar ludic elements within their respective and competing platforms, such as *PlayStation Move*, and the *XBox Kinect* (launched 2010 and 2012 respectively); indeed, in October 2013 Nintendo announced that the *Wii* would be discontinued in Europe (Metro 24/10/2013). So the corpus contains enough trailer promotion to observe the decline in popularity (as measured by promotion)

¹¹ See the trailer breakdown within the Appendix.

of sixth generation¹² consoles such as the *PlayStation 2*, *Nintendo Game Cube*, and the rise, but not entirely the decline, of some seven generation consoles that emerged in 2004, such as the *PlayStation 3* (and associated *PlayStation Move*), *Wii*, *XBox 360* (2005), *Nintendo DS* (and *DS Lite*) (2004, and 2006 respectively) and the Sony *PSP* (2004) to name but a few included within the corpus.¹³ As the corpus covers the time of a new ludic interface being released and the decline of other interfaces across platforms owned by the same companies, there is a breadth of trailers for products at different stages of their promotional cycle; that incorporates both the introduction of a new form of interface, and of promotion for games being released for use with already established series of consoles.¹⁴ What this corpus demonstrates considerably is the inclusion of one kind of ludic console involving body gestures, and the previously established button-interface console of the older generation of consoles that emphasis narrative differentiation rather than console innovation. Such promotion of new consoles emphasises the location of the console in a shared social space of living room (or similar communal place) and it is clear from this that any new console to the markets needs to announce the kind of interface it uses especially in the case of new technology. So the product being marketed gains an additional spatial dimension of locating the game within a diegetic world of promotion, and in relation to the diegetic world of the game itself. In addition to a dyadic product, there is the potential a dyadic audience, incorporating two broadly distinct roles: the primary role of a player(s) whose input is needed in order to control elements of the game, and the role of the observer: this explicit interaction as Zimmerman suggests is a central aspect of videogames (Zimmerman 2004: 158). The second role functions in a similar manner to the film and television audience and is an inherent part of playing: that which can be called 'cognitive interactivity, or interpretive interactivity', the act of engaging through watching (Ibid). Much literature has focused on the role of the player in the videogame although often in relation to perceived psychological harm to the player. It's important to note, that whilst all players are also observers, not all observers may be

¹² It is unclear where the categorisation of console 'generations' comes from, though this is widely held within historical studies of games consoles (cf. J.P Wolf, *From Pong To PlayStation* (2008) and ABI report: *Next Generation Games Consoles Continue Migration to Digital Home's Media Nucleus* (2012).

¹³ The release dates here serve as a guide, as it is beyond the scope of this study to match up each trailer with a geographical location to identify which market is being targeted, particularly in light of the international network afforded by webhosting, video hosting, and the internet in general.

¹⁴ The corpus from which the majority of trailers for this study are used, emphasise this platform as well as the games facilitated by such, and this is a 'snapshot' of the various trends in promotion from a window almost a decade wide. The corpus incorporates not only the hand-held devices of Nintendo DS (which incorporates a screen), The Wii, Xbox Kinect, PlayStation Move, but also the older generation of games consoles: PlayStation, Xbox amongst others.

players, constrained by technology or game design, personal interest or myriad other factors; and this results in their being two kinds of audiences potentially included in the representation of gamespace itself. In considering the audience, then there is a need to consider the different roles that audiences take within the diegetic world of the trailer, and the real world of the trailer audience. While metanarrative trailers are used to present videogames, after the consoles have been introduced to the public, these use audio-visual sequences to comprise a metanarrative, as opposed to a continuous narrative of conventional advertising that depicts metonymic users (often for a specific demographic) engaging with a product in diegetic world narrative: such as the mother-figure who calms the difficult children with the latest promotional takeaway. In a discussion of historical and contemporary representations of the gamer in audio-visual advertising Bryan-Mitchell Young similarly differentiates between television *advertisements* of videogames in the 1980s and contemporary promotion that publicise games in a similar style to film trailers (2007, see also Chambers 2012, and Flynn 2003). This differentiation between audio-visual promotional types of advertising and trailers is based upon the promotional context that positions a product as being desirable; the inclusion of a real-world diegetic narrative, rather than a metanarrative of the montage of clips that represent the fictional world being 'promoted'. This former style of promotion is often overlooked as being a trailer precisely as it emulates advertising that has predated the application of the term, 'trailer' and does not conform to popular discourse surrounding the film trailer.¹⁵ Rather than accepting these advert-trailers at face value, this chapter deliberately uses them to challenge the traditional understanding of the montage-based metanarrative trailer, acknowledging the potential disconnection between audience understanding of 'trailers' single instances of third party application of the term.

The corpus includes trailers that show a diegetic player, presumably metonymic for a wider range of players within a demographic; but forming a focal point that demonstrates interaction and thus adds this spatial dimension to trailers that places a player in relation to a narrative, and in some cases in relation to the console within the home. So it stands that this spatial triadic organisation and representation of the gamer-console-game interface forms a key point of differentiation between the promotion for other screen industry products. There can be no (game) players of a trailer, as the

¹⁵ Videogaming remains the only identifiable industry in which the advertisement format is operating under the term trailer. It is possible that the third party mediation has incorrectly identified a trailer; however owing to the number of trailers that conform to this within the corpus this is unlikely and further audience research into the concept of what a trailer is, is needed.

promotional materials that are broadcast on television, at the cinema, online, or via any other similar media are short films that do not have the capacity for game play. Although the framing of gamers, observers and the media itself may not reflect actual usage, it does show an attempt to frame a product in a light that addresses negative stereotypes¹⁶ and demonstrates the additional dimension of the player in a spatial relation to the game itself within many trailers. What this suggests, is that the promotion within the videogames industry is multifaceted, and may include any combination of the gamer-audience, the console itself, and the game. It seems logical therefore, to relate this to the context of the videogame trailers within the corpus and to consider these terms, how players are represented (if at all), how is ludic interface represented, and what are the similarities and differences to film and television, given the comparatively overwhelming research conducted on the film trailer. These areas of focus organise the subsequent discussion of the aesthetics of the videogame trailer, in close connection with the theory of the videogame, in order to understand the differences between the representation of the act of game play, the metonymic gamer themselves, and the role of the game within the domestic market. The remainder of this chapter discusses first the corpus of videogame trailers itself in order to contextualise the kinds of trailers found, and to provide an industrial context for the games, and their platforms before prior discussion of trailers as case studies takes place.

Despite only ranging as far back as 2004, the texts identified as trailers' included within the guiding corpus still represents a significant portion of those texts identified as 'trailers'; the Lexis Newspaper archives suggest that the term 'trailer' emerged in the public domain, only twelve years earlier around 1992 to promote videogames being promoted in conjunction with the cinema.¹⁷ After this point, the term 'trailer' may be said to have

¹⁶ As Chambers notes 'despite the advertising hype promoting family gaming, solitary play remains the most popular mode of video game play by young people' (ibid).

¹⁶ References to Videogames trailers in the printed press first emerged in the early 1990s. Between 1/1/1990 and 1/1/2000 the Lexis database lists 137 references to 'trailers' and 'videogames', of these only nine were found to refer to videogame trailers. No references were found to videogame trailers before this. Sega's use of 'branded trailers' for the 1992 ITV broadcast of the *European Football Championship* is thought to be one of the earlier instances of the press acknowledging videogame industry's use of promotional trailers: though without the source text being made available this claim is unclear. (Silverman 1994) Press reports imply that the Sega logo appeared superimposed upon promotional videos for Television programmes. One press report notes that '[r]esearch on viewer reaction to sponsorship branding on trailers will be presented next week to ITV programme heads. It is expected to counter concerns that branding on trailers confuses viewers or detracts from the primary aim of trailers to promote a *programme*.' (Emphasis added: Syedain, 1992). What is thought to be the first explicit mention of the videogame trailer phenomenon in the print press appears in 1993:

become established enough to diversify and incorporate other modes of address in as part of the industry's subsequent development.¹⁸ Further, the varied nature of videogame trailers indicates the application of the term 'trailer' as a way of focusing audience attention upon an element of the content rather than a finite classification of the audio-visual text itself. The varied aesthetic construction of videogame trailers (rather than trailers incorporated within YouTube videos of wider promotional events) in part is a result of the establishment of videogame trailer as an identifiable text in its own right.

Through a series of promotional campaigns including those on television, the concept of the videogame-console was introduced to the public but these were not always referred to as 'trailers'. While Bolter & Grusin note that emerging forms of media such as the videogame, 'borrow avidly from each other as well as from their analog predecessors such as film, television, and photography' (1999:9), the use of the videogame 'trailer' was not a direct emulation of the film and television industry and it was only in 1992 that the term 'trailer' became associated with the videogame itself. Indeed while many promotional texts found for videogames may take a form readily identified as being that of a film trailer, using game excerpts to promote a single game, the history of the videogame market has resulted in a wide range of 'trailer' formats this is reflected within the corpus. In order to discuss these efficiently the trailers under consideration from within the corpus can be organised within this spatial organisation previously outlined, starting with the role of the diegetic gamer on-screen as a key aspect of differentiation between videogame and other industry promotional forms.

the \$10 million blitz [for the Home videogame release of *Mortal Kombat* (1993)] features rock-video-style trailers in 1,600 theaters, prime-time television commercials, print ads, promotional giveaways, and a national sweepstakes (Gruson, 1993).

Gruson differentiates between television commercials and rock-video-style trailers, and in doing so suggests not only that a difference exists between the promotion based on the medium through which it is disseminated but that the term requires qualifying with the kind of trailer style posits this application of the term as being out of the ordinary, a differentiation from previous types of promotion. This coupled with the absence of the term 'trailer' prior to this point in the press suggests the phrase is being used to frame promotional texts in a different manner to those previously used: as part the media event of the 'Mortal Monday' release event. The period 1/1/2000-1/1/2010 sees over 1032 references to 'videogame' and 'trailer'. Given the emergent trajectory laid out in the 1990-2000 search it is logical to extrapolate an increased number of videogame trailer references without researcher verification of all 1032 articles.

¹⁸ As emphasised by the language shift between Gruson in 1993, and the Consumer Electronics press article (1995), reporting that 'Sony Theaters will promote PlayStation videogame with 30-sec. trailer on screen as well as interactive console displays in lobbies -- both plugging "Holiday Sweepstakes," which will award one PlayStation console for each of 75 theaters.' The language here, devoid of any qualification of the trailer (such as 'rock-video-style') suggests that by this point the trailer is in the process of becoming a recognisable media form in its own right, cf Hettrick (1995) referring to a \$5 rebate for videogame trailers disseminated via 'trailers on [...] videocassette'. By contrast however a reference in 1996 noted that *Wing Commander IV* was receiving a 'movie style' trailer (Jebens 1996) suggesting a turning point in vernacular. With the videogame trailer arguably becoming an established entity in its own right, come the development of unique aesthetics that can be traced through to contemporary videogame trailer.

The narration of play: the on-screen gamer

Home videogames and videogames systems were once advertised in a manner quite similar to staple items such as clothing, food, or activities. Commercials for these products, like those for early videogames, focused on showing how much pleasure individuals derived from consuming the product and *typically showed the consumer actually enjoying the product*. (Young, 2007: 235 emphasis added)

This implied (but prevalent) dichotomy between videogame advertising and video trailers, centres on the representation of the profilmic player as a mediator of the experience. As Young notes, echoing Johnston (2009), advertising can serve as a way to educate the public on the use of a new technology, as well as illustrating the intended target consumer. Young suggests that as public awareness grows the purpose of videogames advertising changes from technological education, found in advertising, to promotion of distinct experiences in a form similar to film trailers (2007: 235). Within the corpus of 'trailers' under consideration, the profilmic player is significantly absent: being depicted in part and in whole, only when linked with the selling of technology. Profilmic players are most common when promoting games on hand-held consoles (such as Sony *PSP* or *Nintendo DS*) or when the player can be considered as an extension of the controller (as with Motion platform systems such as the *Nintendo Wii*, *PlayStation Move*, or *XBox Kinect*). When the player is depicted playing on the former, this role is often reduced to (metonymic) hands grasping the console itself with game action framed by the profilmic console's screen. As such any metanarrative akin to those of the film and television industry is shown only on a screen within a screen adding an additional narrative layer that allows metonymic narration in the form of demonstration (in some respects this can be seen as similar to the voiceover in film promotion). The profilmic player is almost exclusively linked with technological formats. Unlike button based control pads such as those of *XBox 360*, *PlayStation 1 & 2*, and earlier games consoles, *Nintendo Wii* uses accelerometers and infrared to convert movements, as well as minimal button controls to action on screens. As the corpus overall charts a time in which gesture-based platforms are being promoted for the first time with 'trailers', exploring the manner in which the onscreen player is constructed (or absent), is the logical starting point for an in depth interrogation of the aesthetics of the trailers found within the corpus, opening with *Just Dance 3*. *Just Dance 3* (2011) is the third instalment in the *Just Dance* (2009) franchise.

In the game, players must mimic the game's avatars movement to songs, as each song is completed successfully the song changes and the difficulty; each song represents a set difficulty level and is announced to much fanfare in other promotional contexts outside the focus of this study.

Just Dance 3: Case Study

The 2011 *Just Dance 3* trailer is composed almost entirely of footage of onscreen gamers playing with the unseen game. Opening with the development company Ubisoft's logo, the trailer is comprised of a montage of filmed, indexical footage.¹⁹ Within these sequences, profilmic gamers introduce themselves to the camera from within what appears to be their own homes, and proceed to 'play' the game. It is unclear if this 'player' footage is the result of a competition for users to submit videos prior to the game's launch or constructed to look in this manner. The former appears to be the case given the overall sales message of 'community', but no evidence has been found for this. The comparatively lower quality of the 'player' footage, and the hand-held camera movements clearly suggest that this is intended to represent the potential and profilmic consumers' experience. Through the use of disconnected footage, united in a narrative of discontinuity editing (Kernan 2004: 10) the game suggests a wider community of people otherwise disconnected from each other. Through these video sequences, the name of the game is introduced, as well the three platforms for the game, *Wii*, *XBox*, *Kinect*, and *PlayStation Move*.¹⁸ As the onscreen gamers form a verbal narrative stating “We're just about to play *Just Dance 3* on the *XBox Kinect*” (cut to new sequence) “on the *Wii*” (cut to new sequence) “on the *PlayStation Move*”. The dislocated space is given continuity by the use of dialogue to create a unified message, whilst all the locations are interior, residential spaces. This ties in with the rise of not just *family*-centred gaming, that typifies the launch of the *Wii* platform, but rather gaming as a social communal space, both inside the home, and across domestic (and geographical boundaries). Game play within *Just Dance 3*, itself revolves around performing in time with preselected songs, and at the mention of the game's title, the popular song *Dynamite* by Taio Cruz forms a narrative bridge taking over from the collective gamer originating monologue and allows the creation of a discontinuous narrative of indexical footage of people dancing intercut with iconic images

¹⁹ It is assumed that this is not supposed to reflect gameplay in any way, given the later construction that differentiates between the two forms of footage. Each of these platforms operate using interface that incorporates full body gestures, and it is suggested that the use of the established *Just Dance* franchise capitalises upon this in ways that other games may not

of game-play figures. Whilst the trailer itself is promoting a game launched on multiple platforms there is a clear emphasis on the game's positive impact as a tool for socialising. Images of the console are absent; as the footage gives a webcam-like view from the perspective of the game's screen various controllers can be seen being held by dancers for the *Wii* and *PlayStation Move*. This YouTube-like footage is broken up with in-game footage of iconic characters dancing. There is a clear distinction between the two kinds of footage. In addition to this, is text that visually comments upon the game, breaking up the sequences to narrate throughout the trailer as the music continues similarly throughout the trailer:

'The World's Hottest Dance Game'

'Coming to all Motion Platforms'

'Just Dance 3'

'Over 30 Million Players World Wide'

The song is the dominant audio, with footage of gamers playing along to the associated audio in the background, the implication is that this song is part of the game itself which it is; but this forms a primary narrative bridge across the trailer. That the song features both in the game's list of songs to dance to, and within the trailer, reinforces the concept of a textual network of promotion for multiple products: consoles, games, brand identities of franchises, songs and stars, challenging issues of textual boundaries. The lyrics of the song itself featuring frequent references to dancing, and to dance moves emphasises the title and the objective of the game repeatedly filling the role of the traditional film trailer voiceover and narrating a game that has spilled out of the screen in which it is contained technologically to become a social and domestic phenomenon of game-play. This song serves as being not only both a contemporaneous frame of reference, but also acts as form of audio narration to the profilmic gamer-dancers. Yet the profilmic players are not shown to directly engage with the product within the same screen-space: that is, the footage excludes images of screens over the shoulder of gamers, (as is typical of promotion for handheld devices) focusing only on gamer-dancers, though several are shown holding identifiable controllers (Fig.1a, 1b). The profilmic gamers almost exclusively dance facing the camera as if it were fixed audience position. The significant profilmic emphasis on this consumer experience engaging in the act of game play and social interaction is, in many senses, an alteration on the manner in which game play is represented; as a social event that echoes the earliest advertising for videogames, though no evidence has been found for earlier games being transferred across multiple home console simultaneously. In many

respects this act of onscreen game play is to the movement platforms similar to the point of view shot in trailers composed entirely of iconic (game-based) footage.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 1a

Figure 1b

Figure 1c

Just Dance 3 Trailer c.2011

The emphasis throughout the trailer is on groups of 'real', or at least indexical people, from the amateur-style footage of gamers playing to the subsequent collage of videos that merge together to form a mosaic of moving images that subsequently give way to the *Just Dance 3* logo (Fig.1c), reinforcing the emphasis of game-play as a communal activity within a domestic space. Taking place on screen, in the 'real' world with songs that exist outside of the profilmic, in popular culture, these techniques smooth a transition between iconic footage into a profilmic promotional scenario akin to the narratives of consumer good promotion found within many advertisements. Through a clear distinction between game footage, and the act of game-play the *Just Dance 3* trailer provides a spatial focal point from which to introduce the game and the domestic space needed to play it. This sits in contrast to the metanarrative of a trailer for any product composed entirely of diegetic world footage.

The emphasis on communal experience in the space of the home emphasises the technological changes of the platform interface for this game when compared to its predecessors; the multiplayer function is unique to this third instalment of the game franchise. While the various platforms mentioned had only been released one year earlier (the *Wii Family* console, a variant of the *Wii*, was released in 2011 and this possibly accounts for the continued emphasis on groups of people within the domestic setting), the game itself is being used to demonstrate the possibilities and delights of a new form of ludic of interaction within the known relationship of console-television screen. There are not for instance, images of the various components of the console, nor a demonstration of its setup as with the earliest advertisements.²⁰ This is perhaps because the very notion of

²⁰ The study of the console, and its visibility onscreen throughout the course of its promotional history would expand upon this point, and potentially indicate at what point the console became accepted into the

the games console is no longer innovative and new after so long in domestic space, but an established domestic appliance regardless of the individual brand or components; the emphasis has shifted onto the types of interface at work within a known entity.

Whilst footage of gamers 'playing' in the form of dancing comprises most of the trailer, there are four instances of in-game footage being shown. In each case, such footage is integrated with indexical through editing. The integration of the game within the montage of players is done entirely through the juxtaposition of the in-game avatar with sequences of gamers dancing: actively associating the screen-based actions with the player's performance space. Though this juxtaposition takes place, there is little continuity between the actions of the players and those of the avatar. Indeed the very number of avatars differs from the juxtaposed images of gamers. Whilst this is clearly indicative of the relationship between gamer and avatar, demonstrating the feedback loop of gameplay at a ludic level, no attempt is made to sync the avatar movement with those of the gamer, suggesting that the gameplay here is not a 'free sample' but rather a demonstration of the interaction unlike. This not only challenges the public discourse that trailers are a free sample, which is readily negated by the introduction of metonymic gamers, but taking this further challenges any suggestion that may follow this that trailers may be an accurate *demonstration* of gaming, and game play.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 1d

Figure 1e

Figure 1f

Intertitles are used to emphasise a gaming community 'Over 30 Million Players Worldwide' appear on a white background, followed by 'and room for more' as the soundtrack repeats the chorus 'it goes on and on, and on'. The intertitles and audio here actively reinforcing one another to combine, forming a metanarrative placed within a continuous narrative of game usage. The implication of this is one of a cultural event, similar to any blockbuster release. As if to emphasise the YouTube aesthetic running

home, and presented as a known entity. This is depended upon the construction of a different corpus and sits outside the framework of this thesis.

throughout, the background of the intertitles (Fig.1c) becomes a collage of similar gamer footage invoking the layout of youtube.com and of wider online video culture.²¹ The trailer ends shortly after the song finishes, with footage of gamers squabbling over their scores. Such a sequence reinforces the notions of community and familiarity within gaming groups while simultaneously reiterating that of a YouTube culture of 'reality' video sharing. Within the Just Dance 3 promotion, interactivity is implicitly shown through an equation of the game's diegetic discourse with the profilmic 'real' diegesis: a montage that represents but does not depict, the feedback loop of gameplay. The game footage dominates the trailer significantly less than the indexical footage of gamers' interaction, this potentially stems from the game's premise being the same as preceding games within the franchise whilst the available platforms, and implicitly the songs, have altered. This trailer lacks the kind of continuous narrative of product placement that is found in advertising tangible consumer goods, there is an absence of narrative display of the physical product, emphasising the experiential aspects of consumption; game play. Yet, within this there are breaks from the metanarrative format of film trailer's montage, and whilst not all film trailers operate using such a narrative organisation, the Just Dance 3 trailer can be seen as incorporating montage to create a sense of gameplay in a similar manner to the metanarrative construction of the film trailer. That the trailer uses a song, albeit an abbreviated one, to open and end the trailer itself while guiding and reinforcing the narrative suggests a sense of experiential participation: the trailer as depicting the experiences of playing a level in a game. Far from being an aping of 'the cinematic' however, many of the devices employed here can be seen within some of the earliest advertising for games consoles that emphasised the ludic, technological, and social prowess of a new media. As both Johnston (2009) and Young (2007) have suggested, advertising, and specifically for Young, the profilmic demonstration of gamers interacting with the game, serves to educate consumers on new technology: as typified by early games promotions such as the 1980s Uncle Frank promotion for Space Invaders on the Atari 2600 games console.

²¹ See Burgess & Green (2009) for full extrapolation of such videosharing culture on YouTube.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 2a-e, left to right: Uncle Frank, Atari 2600 Advert c.1980

Unlike *Just Dance 3* here, the television advert presents a continuous diegetic world, a narrative of cause and effect; the small child announces there are 'Space Invaders', to which the alarmed Uncle Frank responds 'Where?' with a wry smile the child holds up a games cartridge and the two proceed to play as a voice over narrator offers commentary on the joys of the new technology. This simple layered narrative, albeit scripted for comedic effect to aid memory recall, provides a platform through which to demonstrate the console's physical and social attributes. Elements of (pre) game play such as plugging it in to a power source, serve to demonstrate both the simplicity with which the product may be installed (presumably by an adult, unfamiliar with such technology), and the appeal of the game itself: both opposing age groups represented by the characters' interaction with each other. In this manner, game play is performed as a social interaction, rather than one of interaction with a constructed narrative world in both *Just Dance 3* and *Uncle Frank*. However, the *Atari* promotion was broadcast at a time when consoles as a whole, were a relatively new product to the domestic market and it is perhaps unsurprising that the components are displayed (Figs. 2b, 2c, & 2e). Yet no such representation is present within *Just Dance 3* despite several of the consoles being launched in close proximity to the game. This absence of technological education in postmillennial promotion is perhaps a result of the educational role of promotion such as the Uncle Frank advert, in the decades up until this point. Such educational elements of promotion reduce the complexities of the various components to a series of actions: the

plug goes in the wall, the game goes in the console, the cables go in the back, the controllers plug in the front, and in doing so establish norms and awareness within society at large. Aside from the technological elements, largely absent in the console (opposed to hand-held devices) promotion within the corpus, the *Just Dance 3* promotion functions in a very similar manner to *Uncle Frank*. Both present a discourse of players engaging with the dyadic product on offer, and emphasise social interaction. Yet the postmillennial trailer still employs many of the same techniques associated with film trailers; discontinuous narration, metanarrative. The use of dislocated space, united by a metanarrative of dancing (which comprises of the song, and the profilmic 'players') is a typical attribute of discontinuity editing, identified by both Kernan (2004) and Haralovich & Klaprat (1981) as a key characteristic of the film trailer; but is by no means a device used exclusively in this context.²² Yet the *Just Dance 3* montage of indexical and iconic footage is bracketed within a wider profilmic narrative of gamers engaging with game footage in the act of playing, even if this is not directly shown; from the announcement that the gamers are going to play the game, to the squabbling at the end of the 'level'. In this manner, both *Uncle Frank*, and *Just Dance 3* demonstrate the physical domestic space in which the console belongs, and demonstrates a combination of idealised uses, and gratifications that result from its use therein. This type of narrative organisation mediates the (in)direct experience of presentation of game play through providing a 'real' context of consumption that has largely been ignored as a working component of videogame trailers. Many broadcast promotions for tangible products often position them within a promotional diegesis: one that stands as metonymic for the consumers' world, and the customer experience in lieu of a primary experience that cannot exist in a broadcast medium. Within the *Uncle Frank* promotion the diegesis provided by the game itself is demonstrably secondary to the symbolic attributes imbued within that the act of play as a shared experience. Whilst this is akin to the promotional video for *Just Dance 3*, this weighting of the 'real world' diegesis with the diegetic world of the product promoted shifts in response to a variety of socio-cultural factors and this is the principal differentiating element within discussions of 'trailers' and the discussion of 'advertising' within the existing literature. This potentially accounts for the absence of film trailers that are introduced by actors, in the relevant literature, and certainly is supported by the dichotomy of trailers and adverts.

²² Though the rationale behind the use of ellipsis differs within both publications, both converge on the notion that ellipsis in time and space are present as a convention of the trailer.

The profilmic players aesthetically, and thus narratively, mediate the majority of the representation of the game's premise and game play. Whilst *Just Dance 3* mediates much of the game through profilmic players, it does directly present sequences from the game itself to the audience, mediated only by the context of viewing: much like the conventions of film or television trailers (and first person shooters as will be shown). Such in game footage as exists with the *Uncle Frank* advert is shown via an over the shoulder shot, an adjunct of a unified, family experience (Fig. 2c). In the thirty second *Uncle Frank* advertisement, special emphasis is placed on the technology of the gaming system as well as the family unity provided as a result of playing a game. The *Just Dance 3* trailer emphasises this same concept of social unity, but in a different manner, as it reflects a shift in the social and cultural attitudes surrounding the Television itself and the introduction of technology.

The emphasis on a community, connected through a shared experience as depicted by sequences of gamers for *Just Dance 3*, reinforces the social aspects of gaming within a wider community. Yet the inclusion of the gamer may not be solely down to shifts in attitudes surrounding the television. *Just Dance 3* ingrains into the promotional narrative the concept of play as a performance as a direct result of its interface. This differs from film trailers significantly, for instance there is an obvious difference between the game images (Fig. 1e) and those entirely used for the purposes of promotion (Fig. 1f): a popular criticism of film trailers is the inclusion of sequences or images not found in the final cut (Hruska 1993) yet within the narrative construction of *Just Dance 3*, the causal narrative of gameplay is superseded by one of overall gaming experience. The disconnected manner reflecting for instance consumer memories of game play after the event: the trailer, through adopting a bracketed montage of gameplay. The *Just Dance 3* trailer demonstrates the promotion of new motion interfaces within the wider context of game play, simultaneously emphasising the (idealised) use of at least, two separate products as a single unit. In this manner this trailer demonstrates the promotion of tangible products, the console and the intangible, the game experience itself combined within a narrative of game play and simultaneous social interaction. Found the within traditional real-world narrative of television advertising, such a positioning of dyadic console and game experience challenges the 'persuasive trailer' literature, that draws comparisons directly with the film trailer, inadvertently policing the boundaries that surround the understanding of a trailer using the conventions established within the film trailer. *The Just Dance 3* promotion typifies the presentation of the new technology of Motion Platform Consoles,

bordering between trailers and advertising modes of product presentation: in some respects this can be seen as residing between these two modes of product representation within a narrative. This movement between modes of representation has comparisons with the process of the formulation of new or hybrid genres (Altman 1999 123-143).

²³Altman suggests genres may emerge as a result of variation within a marketplace, sometimes from perceptually oppositional genres. In this instance it emerges not only from the way in which trailers are categorised and labelled, but as a result of the shift in product differentiation a new framing device is needed that allows the product, which in the case of videogames is dyadic, to be introduced and promoted accordingly.

Trailers have been often equated as being a direct sample of the product, and indeed, as Faber & O'Guinn noted in the 1980s, audience responses to trailers were more favourable than television adverts as they potentially provided 'the view with some indication of what the movie will really be like through short excerpts' (1984: 376). Within *Just Dance 3* there exists a profilmic mediation of the product by profilmic characters that distance the viewer's relationship to the game footage, but potentially draws closer the experience of game play through the use of metonymic characters. In this example however, the narrative sets up an experience by proxy, unlike the conventional metanarrative of a game-play footage trailer.

This added mediation potentially posits *Just Dance 3* and certainly *Uncle Frank*, as being further towards secondary sources of information than primary sources of the film trailer, according to Arndt & May's hierarchy of information sources. As Arndt & May suggested in the 1980s, there are experiences in which the audience has interaction with the product itself, such as watching albeit reconfigured images from a forthcoming game/film. Within their ranking of sources of information available to consumer, their hypothesis of secondary and tertiary sources of information is defined as 'symbolic communications in the sense that signals representing the product (rather than the product itself) are involved.' (1981: 339). In this sense the idealised trailer is a primary source, and the mediated experience of game play a secondary source of information. Simply put, because the product experience is profilmically mediated within the advertising discourse as well as the reduction of available ludic interaction it is even more of an indirect experience. Whilst this is largely true of all cross-media trailers, the emphasis of the playing

²³ Of course, neither advertising nor trailer promotions are finite forms, as they exist in a constant state of flux; but for the purposes of the conceptualisation of a spectrum of re-mediation with typical symbolic advertising and the product itself at opposing ends direct-presentation trailers such as those for film trailer

experience as opposed to the visual one, as with film trailers, suggests an increased level of mediated narrative: play by proxy. Indeed, of film trailers, Kernan notes that profilmic representations of the audience, now largely absent from Hollywood film trailers, represent 'the assumption that if audiences see other audiences enjoying something they're watching, they will want to see it too.' (2004: 94). Kernan repeatedly suggests that profilmic audiences are there for the purposes of identification, and this supports the notion of profilmic players acting as an avatar for potential consumers through which the game is interacted. The inclusion of mediating characters then helps to construct the concept of an interface; needed in the absence of ludic interaction to demonstrate the game consoles interface and ease of use, but also potentially standing in for interpersonal recommendations from other users (in the case of products yet to be released). It would appear that the popular distinction between 'advertising' and 'trailer' centres upon the level of narrative mediation observed within game promotion.

Case Study 2 *ModNation*

Whilst the profilmic audience remains largely absent in depictions of interaction from videogame trailers overall being confined to newly emerging interface formats, the trailers for games on the *PS Vita* demonstrate a different kind of profilmic player, and thus a different kind of playing space. Unlike the *Just Dance 3* trailer the established gaming format of the *PS Vita* as a hand-held device, has less emphasis on the construction of a narrative of causality; such as that which brackets the montage within the *Just Dance 3* promotion. Whilst the *Just Dance 3* trailer incorporates the role of a physical playing space, and indeed demonstrates gameplay through a narrative of experiential identification, hand-held devices represent the act of gameplay on a different level, often outside of a specific domestic setting. Instead these hand-held devices use mediation through metonymic hand gestures, gameplay footage to construct a 'direct experience' within the confines of demonstrating gameplay. The *PS Vita* was released in 2012, it superseded the Sony *PSP (PlayStation Portable)* but functions in much the same way as conventional hand-held games consoles, with the inclusion of a touch screen. Though the *ModNation Racers* for *PS Vita* trailer was released in 2011, the game itself was available on *PlayStation 3* and *PlayStation Portable (PSP)* from 2010. The narrative organisation of the trailer is entirely motivated by the game: taking the form of a discontinuous race, interspersed with metonymic hands illustrating interaction, and a physical framing of game footage within a discontinuous narrative typical of film trailers. There is no audio

voiceover narrative with the exception of the 'PEGI 7' announcement of the trailer's suitability for specific age ranges, the only audio consists of a music repeating 'ModNation, yeah, yeah, yeah' interspersed with sound effects from the game footage itself.

Unlike the gamer-controller of movement platform consoles, the *PS Vita* promotion illustrates both the game, and the integrated controller-console that frames the gameplay action. Within the Sony *PS Vita* games promotions, representation of these gamers are reduced to a pair of hands either side of their hand-held console (as with Fig. 3). With the case of such metonymic representation, character identification indicated by Kernan seems unlikely owing to the utilitarian nature of the images; the profilmic gamer has no face upon which to express happiness or satisfaction with the product and as such represents a different kind of identification through physical positioning rather than social, racial, or other such character interaction of the *Just Dance 3* trailer. Certainly the absence of anything human below the wrists draws attention to the fingers as a point of interaction and when viewed on computer screen, could be said to seem as an extension of a real-world viewer's hands resting on a laptop keyboard, for instance. It is clear that these hands are intended to be metonymic, standing for the viewer's hands, whilst simultaneously providing a frame of reference for the size of the console actively illustrating its portability and demonstrating types of interaction with the game.

[Image Redacted]

Figure 3a, *PS Vita ModNation*, c.2011

These profilmic demonstrations of the game and console-controller's use give some weight to Young and Johnston's 'technological education through promotion' claims (2007, 2009). Though it is important to note that conceptually this technology itself is not as new as the motion platform technology of the *Wii Family*, *Xbox*, *Kinect*, and

PlayStation Move, hand-held consoles have been around since 1976 (Wolf 2008: 143); so the *need* to educate the audience on how to use this product is somewhat reduced by public awareness of the technology. It is this established concept of hand-held consoles that results in the largely absent overarching real-world narrative being needed to locate a new technology socially or physically. Indeed, within Fig. 3a the game console is both illustrated and demonstrated, but not located within any identifiable physical space, the background image reflecting the image onscreen.

[Image Redacted]

Figure 3b, *Vita ModNation*, c.2010

After studio logos, the representations of game play starts with game footage filling the screen, as the avatars pull away from the screen to depict a race, the camera pulls back to reveal the *PS Vita* console (as in Fig. 3b). This is frequently repeated throughout the trailer resulting in a physical illustration of the technology, as well as gameplay footage simultaneous. When explicit interaction is shown, the gamers hands touch the front and back of the screen, demonstrating the new technological capabilities of a multisided interface. Inverse to *Just Dance 3* the representations of the gamer, always simultaneous to the game footage, are grouped together in the middle of a discontinuous race, rather than bracketing an experience. During this break, in which no profilmic racing occurs, brief montages of sequences depict players using the touch screen to modify the track, and the racing avatar (Figs. 3c-d).

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 3c

The framed profilmic console shows game footage in focus (Fig. 3d), this same footage is shown concurrently as an out of focus background image. In this manner the gameplay

is shown to be devoid of any single physical space. The console is aesthetically positioned as controlling a larger screen albeit out of focus, potentially this reflects a desire to emulate games on a larger screen, more likely however as the console is held up to the gameplay footage it uses the games discontinuous narrative to provide a physical framing for the console which in turn, frames game footage in focus. For *PS Vita* promotions taken over all, interaction takes two forms, the image of the mediated console experience through which game sequences are viewed and direct interaction with the screen image (as with Figs. 3c & 3d). The presence of the gamer here adds less symbolic meaning than those found within the *Just Dance 3* trailer but instead serves as a context against which to emphasise the technological ease of access. The profilmic gamer is not shown to control the racing avatar, and the hands are not shown to use any of the buttons during this metanarrative race, instead only using the touch screen: a key attribute in differentiating the *PlayStation Vita* from its predecessor, the Sony *PSP* series of consoles. It is interesting that both the representations of gamer shown in these contemporary trailers are linked with technology in some way, Motion Platforms are a comparatively new technology, as is the touch screen for the *PlayStation Vita*, yet the profilmic gamer is absent from the majority of videogame trailers in which there is no new technological innovation.

What both these case studies demonstrate is the significance of the player in the game, as a challenge to the understanding offered by Cassidy (2011) or Chien (2007), that the videogame industry has adopted trailers from the film industry wholesale. Here we can start to see that there is evidence towards degrees of gamer, gaming, and indeed game representation. This can be conceptualised as a scale by which new technology is introduced and platforms of interaction are established. With the new technology of movement platforms gaming is much more prominent, hand-held platforms, being more established, but still retaining ludic differentiation are divorced from a single domestic setting, and perhaps, as there is less need to demonstrate the act of gaming, as a result there is an increased element of what is popularly understood to be 'the cinematic' trailer. Such cinematic elements, can be used to best effect to promote a narrative world directly rather than through a mediating narrative of gameplay. Indeed, such trailers need to be considered in order to understand how and why 'cinematic' or 'film-style' trailers are being used. Such contrast is needed to understand how if not why, the metonymic gamer is presented in such a manner especially in light of the existing literature that prioritises these trailers as being implicitly *all* videogame trailers. This style of videogame trailer is normally for the popular first person shooter (FPS) games. They include titles such as the

Halo, *Call of Duty*, and *Battlefield* franchises (though significantly more exist outside of FPS genre), and these represent the most 'cinematic' videogame trailers: not only in part this is a reflection of their narrative design but also of their promotional materials and digital verisimilitude. As Haussmann and Thomas put it, an 'ongoing collusion of the optical camera and the videogame camera leads videogame designs to favor cinematic visual patterns' (2005). The established practices of first person shooter videogames became a staple of the industry since the release of *Wolfenstein 3D* in May 1993 (Wolf, 2008: 156), establishing a genre of game that would come to dominate the videogames industry for around 15 years. It is in this time, that the term 'trailer' first emerged, and it is noted that these trailers are often the ones referred to as 'trailers' in the contemporary literature.

Case Study 3: The 'Cinematic' Trailer

As has already been indicated there are significant overlaps between the film and videogame industries. Suggestions of 'the cinematic' in videogames often focus on an aesthetic element of verisimilitude. Indeed so increasingly realistic are the digital rendering of some of these games that cut-scenes (sequences of animated footage that is not game play but is used to further the narrative elements between levels of a game) have been mistaken for filmed footage (BBC.co.uk 2011). This aesthetic convergence brings into crisis the very regulation of the videogame, as King notes '[g]ames would lose their exemption [from the 1984 video recordings act] if they depicted "realistic scenes of gross violence or sexual activity".' (2004: 9). As will be demonstrated, the emphasis of the majority of games (but particularly FPS games) is on a 'real' experience, from graphic rendering as a technological advancement to narrative structure. Trailers for many FPS's are almost identical to those for cinema with minimal indication that these are games, not cinema. This stems from the absence of the gamer within the promotional text itself, and the absence of the mediating narrative seen within the previous case studies. The use of the 'cinematic' trailer for FPS games can be seen as an attempt to posit a narrative world, as many FPSs operate within a diegetic world and essentially take the form of an interactive story. In contrast it must be noted that *ModNation* and *Just Dance 3* are not games driven by a character working through a narrative, but discontinuous levels of gameplay rather than gameplay in which each level represents a linear progression within a wider storyline (see Bryce & Rutter 2002, Chien 2007, Klevjer 2002 for further explication of this). As Bryce & Rutter note:

Throughout the ten year history of this format the increasing sophistication of graphics, narrative, and game-play have created conditions that increasingly allow the gamer to feel part of the unfolding and increasingly spectacular narrative.

(2002: 69)

Within this broad style of promotion, *Ace Combat Assault Horizon* (c.2011) is a game within a flight simulator-first person combat franchise. The franchise features 12 games that all emphasise story and plot as a narrative motivator: individual characters and plot twists within each game forms an overarching narrative structure of these games.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 4b

Figure 4c

[Image Redacted]

Figure 4a, *Ace Combat Assault Horizon* c. October 2011

Unlike trailers for *Just Dance 3* and *ModNation*, the technological advances here in *Ace Combat*, are wholly ingrained within the profilmic discourse, fast editing, increased verisimilitude through digital rendering, and action sequences typify these trailers, much like the excess of special effects that have come to typify the blockbuster (Neale & Hall 2010). In a similar manner to the blockbuster this kind of promotion combines to provide a metanarrative of action that solicits a cathartic response. In doing so this trailer creates the concept of a direct product experience through the elimination of a mediating narrative. In this trailer the montage is not mediated by a narrative, and there is no mediating screen to contextualise gameplay.

Opening with its PEGI 12 classification, the trailer functions in an almost identical manner to Film trailers, an opening shot (Fig. 4a) is juxtaposed with the text denoting the Game's title, as nondescript heavy metal plays. A voice-over, presents the premise of the trailer 'Magic task force 108 proceed to engage remaining targets'. This is followed by acknowledgements from profilmic characters, each sub-titled to denote their profilmic

military vehicle, and the character's name (Fig. 4b). The rest of the trailer is a rapid montage of shots involving these military vehicles. There is no voice-over narration, except the excerpts of dialogue consistent with the terminology one would associate with an action film:

'We have a large formation of hostile fighters approaching banned airspace'
'Roger that', 'Target acquired', 'Alright Spooky you're cleared to fire', 'Copy that',
'Bombs away'.

The narrative premise here can be paraphrased as 'engage the enemy': little further narrative motivation for characters is offered and the montage of destructive images reinforces this narrative premise. Whilst this differs from the narrative construction of film trailers, in which an overarching narrative is present offering at least one key premise for diegetic character action, the narrative here could simply be phrased as 'engage the enemy'. This absence of a character, or voice-over narration suggests the positioning of an objective-based narrative organisation, rather than a character driven one. In terms of narrative framing, unlike *Just Dance 3* and *ModNation*, action takes place entirely in the full screen, with no concurrent profilmic mediation, much like blockbuster trailers. No explicit depictions or juxtapositional references are made to any form of player interface; though this is implied through the inclusion of onscreen images that signify the screen-based result of ludic interface (Fig. 4d). Here the red circle and green numbers denote information used in playing the game. The interface here is fixed, connected to the movements of the aircraft in the bottom left corner of the screen; however, this merely hints at 'interactivity' and could easily be said to depict the point of view of another military vehicle behind the profilmic, from which the camera is positioned.

[Image Redacted]

Figure 4d, *Ace Combat* onscreen interface

In several instances within the similarly 'cinematic' trailers of other First Person Shooters, the presence of gun sights and onscreen displays represents potential interactivity in a similar manner, excluding a promotional real-world narrative that frames the game footage, and depictions of the gamer or game space. Consider a more overt example from the FPS *BattleField 3: Caspian Border* trailer.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 5b

BattleField 3: Caspian Border Trailer

Figure 5a

In a metanarrative trailer, almost the entire trailer is composed of subjective shots, sequences that are framed with game statistics in an onscreen display. Such representations herein, are not the profilmic display of interaction associated with a profilmic gamer but instead, they form an aesthetic indication of game play that serves as an implied possible or hypothetical scenario of game play. However, the use of subjective point of view shots complete with onscreen display, to form the majority of the profilmic framing that can be said to add to this notion of representing game play. Indeed Murray Smith has suggested that point of view shots encourage 'central imagining' (1997: 417). It is noted that within the *BattleField* trailer and the *Ace Combat* trailer there are no reverse shots, which Murray typically sees as the second component of the point of view shot (Ibid). Here then, is a breakdown of established or classical notions of cinematic continuity and the introduction of a trailer logic, in which the gamer themselves are rarely referred to within the game play, indeed trailers overall rely on a different narrative construct in which continuity is neither causal nor logical, but rather constructed to maximise images relationship to each other and encourage a specific frame of orientation. The point of view shot in this context can be said to encourage the central imagining of the viewer as the gamer, as well as of the game scenario in the wider sense. The unseen characters in play rarely fumble to aim, miss a target, die, or otherwise fail to achieve their goal within the trailer; presenting an idealised, and aspirational concept of gameplay. Thus it is that, combined with the point of view shot the profilmic prowess and skill of the unseen avatar demonstrated by the trailer becomes, by extension, a symbolic attribute in the same manner as the profilmic gamer in other trailers. Whilst the game space, and profilmic gamer in *Just Dance 3* become attributes of a lifestyle this helps to promote

identification (the footage of gameplay would be different was it of gamers inside stately homes for instance): the symbolic attributes at work in gameplay trailers becomes the skill involved within an increasingly real-world diegesis.

Cognitive interaction here then results in the construction of implied interactivity closer to that of cinema, incorporating an implied ludic feedback loop. Within the representations of the profilmic and implied profilmic gamer considered there is a shift towards abstract representations of the gamer and simultaneously the rise of the cinematic trailer. Whilst each trailer seen here presents a concept of play through the use of videogame genre conventions, the representations of game play take these forms overall. Yet the trailer does not simply construct notions of interactivity, as Steven Jones has demonstrated the trailers can form an intrinsic part of narrative construction: a form of cut scene that exists outside of the main body of the videogame. As Jones notes, using the example of a trailer for the *Halo* franchise, such non-gaming experiences provides some narrative organisation to the *Halo* franchise as whole and provide a rationale for understanding individual games.

Only some portion of that story [from the trailer], probably only uncertain fragments of Cortana's role, can be gathered from the game play itself, and then only by an assiduous player who played both games through to the end and has stayed with the franchise for years. Even then, he or she would not be able to discern the complete story of Cortana and Master Chief from the sometimes ambiguously depicted situations of game play and cut scenes alone. (2008: 71-74)

In this manner trailers can be paused, re-watched, and they encourage a level of interactivity for fans attempting to unpack the trailer for narrative clues forming an experience in their own right, and one part of an act of textual aggregation (cf. Johnston 2008: 148-9). This notion can be extended to apply to any given narrative, that is spread across multiple textual objects and echoes Nick Couldry's notions that narrative itself is 'complex of interrelated meanings which its readers tend to interpret as a discrete, unified whole' (2000: 70-71). Narrative can be said to be the aggregation of differently constructed experiences, the feedback loop of the game play or the 'cinematic' of cut scenes. By this logic trailers, as the quintessential promotional cut scene, need not be excluded from the game-play experience and should be considered as a discrete text that may fit into a wider narrative of experiential aggregation. As Rune Klevjer writes:

In fact, game genres offering ergodic challenges within a fictional universe known from other media make up a large portion of the games that people actually

buy and play today (sport and driving games being the other major commercial category). *The marketing of these genres addresses the buyer primarily as a reader, packing their games with heavy intertextual references*, most often based on expensive licences from the film industry.

(Emphasis added, 2002: 193)

Yet what has been shown here are the nuanced ways in which trailers represent themselves through the varying levels of representation of gaming, the gamer, and game space. They are not merely adaptations of a form of promotion established within another industry, but instead are a textual extension of the videogame within a different medium. Considering the trailer as largely cinematic undermines the various ways in which narrative presentation of a product takes place. Yet 'cinematic' trailers for videogames do exist, often at the expense of the representation of the gamer. What transpires then is the existence of a tension between profilmic representations of the gamer, technology, and 'cinematic' construction. Where a gamer is shown within the act of gameplay, a promotional narrative based on real-world events is shown: this is particularly relevant for new or emergent technology at the point of interface. The *Just Dance 3* trailer operates a promotional construct that places a metanarrative of the experiential aspects of game play within a real-world setting thereby creating a narrative that blurs the lines between the format traditionally associated or understood to be that of an advert, and those of a trailer. The inclusion of the profilmic gamer justifies the distinction and indeed, narrative impetus for the representation of a gameplay that is not reliant upon characters from within the diegetic world of the game. Such gamers allow a point of reference both for comprehending the ludic interface, as well as indicating the objectives of the game itself. In addition to providing a narrative centre point around which the trailer is organised, their existence onscreen simultaneously provides a platform from which to imbue the game itself, and the various interfaces used, with symbolic capital. Such instruction and profilmic gameplay exists within the corpus in conjunction with technological interface that is comparatively recent. The role of the metonymic hands within the promotion for *ModNation* function in a similar manner, instructing through demonstration the technological interface, of the *PS Vita*. However, unlike the narrative based profilmic gamers, the metonymic nature of the hands excludes social, gender or racial identification that might occur, and indeed potentially allows for audience projection into the space the profilmic hands occupy, just in front of the real life screen. The ratio of triadic elements then can be said to result in a significant impact on the promotional materials. Within the

idealised trailer, often said to emulate the film trailer there are significant differences in the 'cinematic' shots used to construct the concept of game play, but this is largely done in relation to a cohesive diegetic world where objectives are set up as character goals. As the 'cinematic' element has increased in the trailers considered here when compared to other 'trailers', the representation of the profilmic gamer has decreased, and this is connected with the technological platform being represented. Yet the emergence of the trailer in the mid 1990s coincided broadly with the development of FPS games that incorporated an overarching narrative as justification of level-based objectives. As the cinematic trailer has become more frequent within the same promotional space as advertises for trailers it is possible that the term has spilled over in its application for other promotional forms. While the majority of trailers within the corpus conform to the marginalised trailers as 'cinematic emulation' by tracking the different kinds of gamer, game play, and game space elements it is possible to illustrate the kinds of decisions that have been made, and extrapolate upon those in order to unpack the potential other options for videogame representation.

Chapter 2: The Theatre Trailer

Introduction

'Coming soon to a theatre near you' (Clancy 2007), 'Is theatre going down the YouTube?' (Haydon 2008), 'Online theatre trailers - lost the plot?' (Bayes 2011).

At the end of the first decade of the new millennium, theatre critics like those above started acknowledging the presence of a new form of promotional material for stage theatre: the theatre trailer. Receiving mixed responses from theatre critics, these theatre trailers were treated with curiosity and restrained hostility by the press. At the time of writing, around a decade after this public surge of attention, theatre trailers have come to form a common part of audience engagement and product dissemination for many performing arts companies; but they are far from established practices across the industry. Found for all manner of performing arts events; notably, opera, ballet, stage and broadcast theatre¹, the contemporary theatre trailer functions within the same industrial and social framework as film trailers; taking the form of short films, promoting a product, and reinforcing a brand identity while serving as an indicator of a separate event or series of events.

As a result of the dearth of directly pertinent literature found, this chapter discusses the emergence and aesthetics traits of theatre trailers that can be used to inform debates around the organisation of these textual events within the medium of theatre. In using the term 'event' I deliberately reiterate Couldry's concept of the text as a network not contingent in one single text but rather a connection of texts and audience experience combining to form a text-network (2000), of which the trailer is one possible element². Yet, in keeping with the focus of this chapter on historical emergence and aesthetics in relation to the trailer only, the discussion of the trailer deliberately bypasses direct discussions of the theatre performance outside the trailer: liveness, immediacy and audience interaction; all of which have some influence on the existing discussions of theatre and screen technologies. The theatre trailer is still considered as a short film for the purposes of analysis, yet in order to generate the framework for analysis there is a need to take elements from different studies to provide detailed, grounded discussion of the

¹ Based on guiding corpus generated: it is conceivable that other forms of theatre trailer may exist.

² While the analysis herein does not consider the spectator's subjective experience it is noted that textual experiences must include an audience and that such an audience may be exposed to differing amounts of prefigurative media and media experiences.

theatre's self-representation. Tied into this is the need to understand why the theatre appeared so suddenly after the turn of the millennium, and what form these trailers take.

The theatre trailer is a little considered, and relatively new addition to the landscape of performing arts promotion, as such this chapter forms the first known extended study into trailers for performing arts events (that are being grouped under the term 'theatre'). It engages with various kinds of aesthetics used across a guiding corpus as well as the context in which the trailer emerged as an entity. Its primary goal however is to form the basis for further study by integrating historical context, aesthetic study and theoretical understanding of the theatre trailer, into the wider study of trailers and promotion. In providing a case study of the performing arts industry, it is claimed that the theatre trailer's lack of aesthetic standardisation at the point of corpus generation brings the trailer as an entity, closer to the possibility of being any promotional short that exists to promote a product. In providing an industry overview integrated within the study of film trailers and promotion, this chapter makes significant intervention into the theatre trailer, exploring its origins and its aesthetics; doing so within a framework that explores and prioritises the theatre trailer as a trailer, rather than as a form of filmed theatre or extension of the printed programme. This chapter first provides an overview to the corpus, then contextualises the trailer in terms of understanding its historical trajectory. Drawing upon discussions of theatre and film it broadly outlines the key debates pertaining to the theatre trailer. With the broad overview and framework for future discussion established this chapter outlines the emergence of the theatre trailer, using the National Theatre (NT) as a case study to explore the rationale behind their use of the trailer. While the NT is not the first theatre company to use the trailer, it is one of the first theatre companies to do so as part of a regular practice, and the first to have any such documentation outlining the use thereof.³ This case study acts as a guide to explore why the theatre trailer emerged in one instance. As it is unclear when exactly the very first trailer post-millennium emerged this case study offers a partial understanding of the context of the trailer's emergence that can be extrapolated with the use of other commentary. Many of the earliest theatre trailers have been lost, marked by only sporadic secondary references and there is no known primary source of information to provide a contextual understanding, making it

³ The context provided by the NT's annual reports is invaluable in understanding the posited rationale for this inclusion. However, it is acknowledged that these annual reports are a branded interpretation of events and the justification therein may belie an impartial interpretation of events.

impractical to speculate on their emergence, use and form.⁴ From the historical perspective comes the aesthetic, the core of this chapter, drawing upon the elements of the corpus to discuss and illustrate the varying and overlapping ways of theatre representation on-screen during the early period of theatre trailer dissemination and usage.

There is a significant limitation to this chapter however, that the methodology used to generate the corpus has been outdated by the dominance of the National Theatre (NT), the English National Opera (ENO), and the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), all of which at the time of writing have numerically significant trailer output via their respective YouTube channels, and websites while not dominating the corpus itself. This is owing to a limitation of the third party mediation used to guide this study. These channels individually contain more trailers at the time of writing than the corpus has in total and a separate follow up study is needed in order to ascertain if the dissemination and *prima facie* dominance of trailers for these three groups is impacting upon the overall aesthetic of the trailer. Indeed in a similar small-scale study of orchestra promotional trailers, Steven Preece noted the same methodological problems that occur within this chapter, namely that:

Making observations at a point in time within a context of rapid change makes obsolescence a distinct hazard. There is a strong likelihood that the use of video by any particular orchestra will have changed substantially by the time this paper goes to press, and it is likely the practice amongst these organizations will keep evolving over the coming months and years, particularly as they start to adopt ideas from one-another. (Preece 2011: 32)

This is overwhelmingly the case for the study of theatre trailers within this chapter, and remains a problem with large scale and studies of an ever changing media environment. As such there is the need to acknowledge the potential for discrepancies between the fixed corpus, and the ever-changing performing arts mediascape and the limitations of, the methodology outlined herein.

⁴ The Nexis search engine including linguistic variants of the word 'theatre'; results for a search 'theatre' and 'trailer' in 1970-1980 are 74, with 1374 in the period 1980-1990, and over 3000 results for any search 2002 year by year onwards (which prompts the database to withhold data until search parameters are altered). Between 1/1/2001-1/1/2002 there are 2169 results. To that end searching the database for references after 2000 is impractical. Given the confirmed references in 1980-1990 a search of the term 'theatre trailer' between 1/1/1990 and 1/1/2010 generates 290 results in total combined these results yield four confirmed references to theatre trailers (Barker 1988, Nemy 1990, Barber 1990, Cavendish 2000). After this articles from 'theatre trailers' was used to supplement research. Given the overlapping vernacular, and the significant issues in collating the data further, fuller exploration of the emergence of the first theatre trailer in the modern era is worthy of exploration from a historical perspective and would supplement this thesis. In this instance to do so wholly, would require significant resources that are currently unavailable.

In part any aesthetic standardisation that exists comes from allusions to film and videogame promotion tropes, though there is a notable aesthetic diversity across the corpus. Some performing arts groups have taken theatre trailers as standard practice, integrated within a specific company's online presence (primarily through YouTube.com channels); other companies less readily use these promotional shorts. This staggered use of the trailer is reflected within the significant variation in their form, use and reception across the industry as a whole.⁵ Indeed this is reflected across the corpus of 41 trailers: only one theatre company has multiple trailers, two trailers by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). The lack of single company dominance suggests an even spread within the press mediation and the corpus; but this does not necessarily translate into real-world industry representation. Indeed, since the time of data collection the use of theatre trailers has increased dramatically with well-funded theatre groups increasing their trailer output significantly, and it is expected based on increased frequency that these would dominant any future corpus generated in the same way. As each theatre group presents different work in a different way, considering the representation of theatre on-screen inevitably becomes an analysis of specific company's profilmic representation of a specific performance. Yet in doing so, the theatre trailer as an entity, can be explored, and its emergent history and aesthetics can be understood; paving the way for future research and developing the concept of the trailer as whole.

The trailers within the corpus promote a series of performance events, festivals and large-scale arena performances. Of these the corpus several productions stand out as being atypical of the corpus: trailers for the *Hyères festival* promotes a festival of theatrical events and as such is not a single narrative world; *Batman Live at the MEN area* is an arena production that stands apart owing to its elaborate performance space; while *Clybourne Park* consists of audience interviews apparently immediately post-performance and with no performance footage. While each of these trailers are within a minority within the corpus they are not when contextualised within the wider use of trailers for other products: (for example *The Conjuring* trailer; 2013, *The Exorcist*; 2013 on Blu Ray or the trailer for William Castle's 1961 film *Homicidal*). So it is clear that the methodology used to generate the corpus provides an overview of the myriad ways in which the theatre as an

⁵ As Alistair Smith writes in TheStage.co.uk, 'video trailers are still relatively rare in theatre' (2013) Smith may be referring to the use of trailers within the theatre venue, rather than online engagement but his comments are indicative of a wider lack of engagement with trailers, despite a wealth of them being available. References to theatre trailers are increasing but it is apparent from language used when discussing trailers that these are regarded as a new development by many despite a tradition of such audiovisual promotion that precedes the press commentary.

industry may manifest itself on-screen. This corpus however must be understood within the wider context of trailer use across other media industries that may shape and inform what is meant by the theatre industry's use of such promotional material. The case studies used in this chapter are chosen to represent a balanced understanding of theatre signification as indicated by the corpus.⁶

The corpus

Within the guiding corpus of trailers, there is a strong indication of emergent aesthetic features that emulate those found within film and videogame trailers; including elements of recorded performances edited together within a discontinuous narrative. Indeed, narrative bridges through sound, discontinuous editing, spatial and temporal ellipsis typify the editing techniques used within film trailers; though these vary across the corpus depending on the manner in which the product promoted is presented.

However, within the corpus many theatre trailers eschew the presentation of a holistic diegetic world, much like the various ranges found within the film trailer. Instead of two broad formats as within the videogame trailer (those of an advertising aesthetic, and of a narrative aesthetic), the aesthetic organisation of the theatre trailer is in flux with several competing modes of presentation. Indeed critic Honour Bayes notes that it is not always possible to discern the narrative product being promoted; but despite praising such high production sees this a big drawback to theatre:

In the face of such gloss it's easy to believe we have entered the next evolutionary stage of online theatrical teasers. But while some videos give a palpable and potent sense of what the show promises to be, others – for all their long camera shots and sweeping soundtracks – merely look like a cinema trailer's poor relation. What (I've wanted to scream at the screen) is the show actually about? (2011)

Overall the theatre trailers within the corpus do convey the narrative of a product but within this they emphasise the kinds of experience on offer, and within a small minority of trailers (specifically for this chapter the *Clybourne Park* trailer) there is a deliberate rejection of narrative conveyance. Unlike the film trailer, many theatre trailers display elements of the performance such as the stage, complete with the visible division between

⁶ Of the theatre trailers that have appeared since generation of the corpus, the RSC, the NT, and the ENO have adopted a regular and prima facie standardised aesthetic for their respective trailers. Retrospectively the RSC, NT, and ENO trailer output suggests the models of trailer aesthetics have little changed between the time of corpus generation, and the time of writing; though further research is required to verify this.

audience and performance space that overtly signifies the stage performance with which to engage, rather than excluding this to present a 'real' diegetic world with which to engage in which the trailer represents the diegetic world of the product on offer. Across the corpus three main aesthetics can be found, that merge into each other and overlap; but the elements remain clear ways of organising an understanding of the emergent theatre trailer on the basis of the kind of product presentation. The stage world: the presentation of theatre performance, is often from the point of an audience. The set is clearly visible as a theatre set (in that it is often metonymic for a wider signification), the audience are often included within the shot indicating the performance boundaries, and there is an emphasis on the use and creativity within the performance space: exemplified with the trailer for The RSC's *As You Like It*, but also present within The South Bank's *Chouf Ouchouf* trailer, NT's *War Horse*, and the ENO's production of *Faust*.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 1 *As You Like It*

Figure 2 *Chouf Ouchouf*

Within the stage world aesthetic the performance is often edited together with titles, and interstitials to denote positive reviews, title and location of the performance space. The audience does not feature prominently but no effort is made to exclude the audience from sight (seen on the far right, in Fig. 1, and across the bottom in Fig. 2). The audience in this respect acts as a boundary for the performance space while simultaneously denoting the kind of event being offered, positing a way of framing the performance as one of a particular kind of skill; i.e. a live performance. Even within the two examples given, there is little similarity, while *Chouf Ouchouf* has one angle, taken from different times of the performance, *As You Like It* offers several shots in which the audience is visible though not every shot does this (Fig 1a-1b). So even within one aesthetic there is significant variation that may depend on the resources available at the time of the performance.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 1a-b, *As You Like It*

The second kind of aesthetic, and less popular within the corpus could be called carthartic event: this largely consists of audience interviews with little to no footage of the performance itself, audience and creator address the camera and emphasise through dialogue the 'live experience'. This is typified with the trailer for *Clybourne Park* trailer that shows no footage instead purporting to interview audience members immediately after a performance.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 3a-e, left to right, *Clybourne Park*

Within the dialogue there is an emphasis on the kind of event on offer. We hear the words 'it was beautifully written, and slightly uncomfortable, which is always good in theatre', 'I've not seen many plays, this was my first major one, and I absolutely loved it'. Here the audience offers interpersonal recommendations as to the kinds of affective experience the play has to offer while keeping visual elements of the performance within the performance space (literally behind closed doors behind the audience). While *Clybourne Park* is an extreme example of this, similar aesthetics can be seen in *Enron* which combines a few seconds of footage, with audience interviews⁷ and images of the opening night, before including creator interviews.

⁷ It is worth noting here that with both *Enron* and *Clybourne* several audience members are known UK celebrities not affiliated with the performance, suggesting a level of star-driven interpersonal recommendation at work within this aesthetic as well as a reinforcing of a sense of national community.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 4a- g, left to right, Enron

In contrast to both stage and cathartic forms of aesthetic, is the short film aesthetic. Within such a format the performance space takes on a diegetic world in which there is no profilmic audience, the action is normally set within real world environment or an environment in which there is no discernible performance space and indications of the theatre event are often contained within written text at the end of the trailer. Examples of this aesthetic include *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, *House of Games*, and *La Bohème*. *House of Games* integrates direct character (as opposed to creator) address, in order to construct a narrative: there is little indication of a performance space, though the characters do appear contrasted against a black backdrop, talking heads; though there are several instances where hands and props are visible, and used as part of a conversation.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 5a-j, left to Right, House of Games

There is rapid cutting and the use of dissolves in order to progress the images within the narrative that emphasises the profilmic nature of the trailer rather than attempting an aesthetic more akin to theatre performances. The lack of overt theatre signification prior to the end title is the key indicator of this particular aesthetic. Similarly the *La Bohème* trailer eschews overt signification of theatre performance space in favour of a real-world setting. In both instances there is little to suggest the trailer space, is the same as the performance space, though this cannot be verified unless retrospectively. Taking place in a bar, *La Bohème* opens with the characters singing in English, and on-screen titles introducing the characters. The use of split-screen here is a profilmic technique that emphasises the differences between the theatrical and the cinematic much like the *House of Games* production.



Figures 6a-h, left to right, La Bohème

Here the diegetic world, is not the performance space, and is intercut with direct creator commentary shaping the interpretation of the profilmic performance itself. Audiences are informed the production is in English, and it has been made accessible for those unfamiliar with Opera. In respect of the interpersonal framing, within both the cathartic event and short film aesthetic both audiences, celebrity audiences and creative contributors provide an overwhelming frame of understanding for the performance itself.

Throughout the corpus the use of press recommendations features strongly demonstrating a tie with prior modes of advertising that precede the theatre trailer; but are not exclusive to the industry. The *As You Like it*, *Clybourne Park*, *Enron*, and *La Bohème*, all include strong references to reviews. Within the *As You Like It* trailer there are

integrated with brief sequences, not grounded within the performance space yet emphasising the actor or the theatricality of the set, that works within a grounded performance space.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 1c-d, As You Like It

Other trailers such as *Enron*, host all the critical reviews in one place resembling printed promotional material (Fig. 4e). In doing so, both practices echo those of film and videogame trailers and in doing so establish a wider trope of critical review within a discontinuous narrative of diegetic world, or narration surrounding the experience of a diegetic world (as represented by audience testimony). With such versatility within the presentation of theatre products it is premature to discuss wider trends, as are present within the videogame promotion, as each theatre trailer conforms to one of the three archetypes identified with its own unique variation. In order to understand how such variation occurred, and in order to present an accurate case study of the theatre industry, there must be a full understanding of the context in which the trailer emerged.

Overview, the theatre trailer: 1914-1990

The phenomenon of theatre trailer press discourse after the new millennium does not accurately reflect the emergence of a new form, but rather represents its increased use, and a press-response to it. The oldest conceivable theatre trailer, though there is little evidence to suggest it was called such, dates to the formulation of the film trailer and the film industry itself. In 1913 Nils Granlund set out to record the Broadway musical play *The Pleasure Seekers* (1913) with the aim of using:

“moving pictures of the rehearsals and other incidents” which would be sent to theaters in advance [and] take the place of much of the bill board advertising.

(Hoefling, 2010: 37-8)

Despite this initial experiment shortly prior to the widespread use of film trailers, there is no evidence that these of early trailers became standard practice for theatre; remaining a novelty with sporadic references only to emerge at the turn of the millennium as theatre trailers, across the internet and shortly thereafter integrated within industry promotional

practices.⁸ In terms of nomenclature, there have been only sporadic references to 'theatre trailers' found prior to post-millennial press commentary.⁹ Prior to this these theatre trailers could be considered as atypical experiments or promotional gimmicks rather than integrated practice, much like early cinema ballyhoo without the frequency of use. References to theatre trailers prior to the millennium are often shrouded in aspiration for a promotional form rather than actual evidence of such a form existing: consider this extract from the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

Manager [of independent Cinema, Academy Twin] Gerry Hilton says plans are under way to install a computerised system with buttons at every seat to enable the audience to play interactive games. Another idea is to have "live trailers", so that if, say, the Sydney Dance Company has a new show, its dancers come in to give a short extract. (Barber 1990)

Such allusions to possible events demonstrate recurrent notion that a trailer (whatever its form) should promote through extracts, while demonstrating an awareness of a desire to integrate different elements of the performing arts for the purposes of promotion and innovation. Yet at the same time, in another area of the globe, a short film referred to as a theatre trailer appear shrouded in the same kind of language that suggests an innovation, rather than a normal occurrence. In an article for *The New York Times* Enid Nemy offers an excellent example of the novelty value of theatre trailers in 1990s.

Moviegoers at about 250 theaters in the greater metropolitan area are having an unusual experience these days. They're watching a one-minute trailer for a Broadway show. The promotion for Rupert Holmes's "*Accomplice*" starts with "Not coming to this theater; not coming to any motion picture theater," and continues with a teaser and the location of the show: the Richard Rodgers Theater. The trailer is being shown in return for 600 "*Accomplice*" seats made available by the show's producers to the New York division of the Motion Picture Bookers Club for a charity benefit. Other novel marketing ploys for the show include a barter deal with Manhattan Cable television and the use of play money. Normand

⁸While the 1913 instance is arguably a theatre trailer, it exists in advance of the stabilisation of the term and is atypical of the trailers under discussion. This is perhaps owing to a significant absence of theatre trailers after the economic decline of vaudeville theatre and the establishment of the contemporary film industry. The theatre trailer in this instance appears to be atypical of a trend that sees trailers for theatre (re)emerging in the post-millennial era. However, due to the content of Television broadcasting it is assumed that theatre trailers also operated on Television, as 'promos'; but these fall outside the scope of study of texts identified as 'trailers' within the given methodology.

⁹ See footnote 4 of this chapter.

Kurtz, a co-producer of the show, said Manhattan Cable was given 300 seats to offer in drawings to viewers who sent in their names. (Nemy, 1990)

What is clear here is that the theatre trailer is considered a novelty in both press articles; tied explicitly with wider 'unusual' promotion in Nemy's article. Indeed this offers some consideration of the lengths gone through to get such a trailer aired, offering seats to exhibitors in return. Yet unlike Barber's, there is little explicit explanation of the conceptual form of the trailer, instead a description of an actual trailer; the opening of a short film for the purposes of promotion. Though by no means conclusive, it can be extrapolated from the two articles, coupled with early experimentation in the 1900s, that prior to turn of the millennium, the theatre trailer was an uncommon but not uniquely entirely absent phenomenon. Indeed, these articles suggest that the term 'trailer' in the 1990s started to become understood as a promotional tool irrespective of the event promoted, potentially trading upon the developments from within the film and videogame industries. There is the indication of a shared understanding of the theatre trailer within both articles, though articulating the concept of the trailer in different ways, demonstrating the speed with which different communities adopt different terms. As both articles appear in 1990, it suggests an awareness, and practice of atypical theatre promotion exemplified by Nils Granlund's work, that exists in advance of the post-millennial resurgence. Such a link is not a direct one, but rather supports the implicit suggestion that for decades theatre companies have sought to distinguish their products from others on the market and several have used or have considered using, theatre trailers in different ways, with limited effects at different times; without them becoming fully integrated in the practice of theatre promotion. Unlike the videogame trailer that was emphasised through press vernacular, there have been almost no press releases that announce theatre trailers in the same manner as videogame promotion. Instead, the widespread adoption of the term theatre trailer appears linked only with titles on video sharing websites, rather than as part of press releases. Given the lack of evidence that theatre trailers were announced by the press, there is little evidence to suggest the term 'theatre trailer' is a framing device for an unknown promotional text, as with those of videogame trailer or book trailers.¹⁰ This in turn suggests a social and/or industrial acceptance of new promotional shorts operating under the term 'trailer' at a company level, as each theatre company manages their own videos and can choose the titles of such videos. This possible shift in the application of the

¹⁰ See pages 38 and 122 for this discussion with respect to videogame and book promotion respectively.

term from specifically a device of the film industry to a more flexible device is reflected in the miscellaneous trailer results within the corpus and considered in the final chapter.

1990-contemporary era

Between 1990 and 2004 only one trailer reference to theatre trailers within the press have been found in the Nexis Database (Cavendish 2000), though more are sure to exist outside the confines of the corpus. In 2004 writing in *Arts Marketing* Ian Fraser briefly acknowledging changes to the promotion of theatre using trailers, and identifies two theatre trailers that potentially exist prior to 2004. Despite being an excellent overview to promoting the performing arts as a whole, Fraser's contribution on the topic is limited:

Perhaps the most dramatic flyers this writer has seen are those for dance companies – those for Northern Ballet Theatre are notable. Multimedia trailers have also been produced for *Wuthering Heights* and for Rambert Ballet at Sadler's Wells. (2004, 56)¹¹

A partially corroborating online forum post exists; alerting forum readers to the Sadler Wells trailer (Critical Dance Forum 2004). The link however has since been made redundant by website changes so there can be no exploration of these early 'multimedia trailers'.¹² Press references to theatre trailers emerged in 2007, shortly after the launch of the National Theatre's YouTube Channel in 2007¹³ (Clancy 2007). Despite their earlier existence, post-millennial references to trailers cannot be found in significant number within the press prior to 2007, yet as late as 2013 theatre trailers are still regarded as 'rare' by some cultural commentators (Smith 2013);¹⁴ so there is a clear issue with relying on press commentary alone as an indicator of the acceptance of the trailer. The contrast

¹¹ The flyers Fraser refers to are 'e-flyers': emails that facilitate interpersonal communication surrounding a specific event. This is similar kind of promotion to those that preceded the book trailer, see pages 121-3.

¹² Forum post on Critical Dance Forum references the Rambert trailer at http://www.sadlerswells.com/whats_on/2004_2005/rambert.asp; however this page results in a 'page not found' response from www.sadlerswells.com. [accessed 12/4/14]

¹³ The layout of YouTube.com has changed during the research process; as a result the channel itself is no longer listed with a start date. Retrospectively, the oldest trailer on the channel, *A Matter of Life and Death* was posted on the 17th May 2007 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9tTo5bMIcw> [14/05/14]). There is a discrepancy between Clancy's reports in the Guardian, and the NT channel suggesting that a trailer for *Rafta...Rafta...* has been removed from the channel following negative comments.

¹⁴ As Alistair Smith writes in TheStage.co.uk, 'video trailers are still relatively rare in theatre' (2013). Smith may be referring to the use of trailers within the theatre venue, rather than online engagement but his comments are indicative of a wider lack of engagement with trailers, despite a wealth of them being available. References to theatre trailers are increasing but it is apparent from language used when discussing trailers that these are regarded as a new development by many despite a tradition of such audiovisual promotion that precedes the press commentary.

between press outcry in 2007-11 and Smith's 2013 article however further highlights the staggered way in which the trailer has been integrated into the industry; company by company and theatre event by theatre event.

Early criticism of trailers referenced poor production values and a lack of overt theatre signification; with one critic commenting that 'if you stumbled across it [the trailer] you'd be forgiven for assuming it was promoting a film not a play' (Clancy 2007). This is an important issue within the theatre trailer corpus, one of signification; how to distinguish the kind of product experience on offer when that experience is linked to an absent medium. Yet this approach presupposes theatre needs to be signified within its own right. While Clancy's criticism is of the earlier theatre trailers, understanding how theatre is signified on-screen is not one of collective aesthetics but one of the context of production. As theatre trailers are separate from the production there is no need to invoke similar essentialism with respect to the definition of theatre, as Clancy's criticism suggests. Instead, the concept of the performing arts trailer as a short film that references an event, as a recorded indicator of that event; both a precursor to another, and a retrospective of two possible events (the 'live' and the indexical event that creates the subject of the trailer), it is one that must be addressed within this thesis.

The (re)emergence of the theatre trailer, between 2004 and the generation of the corpus in 2011-2 coincides with the widespread development of social video as a promotional tool, as well as the specific development of Youtube.com (2005- Present), upon which many of these trailers are hosted and disseminated. In part the theatre trailer's presence is largely contained to the internet, rather than television or cinema screens, and in this respect is one of the key industrial differences between the theatre's use of trailers and other industries' use. Theatre trailers are not regulated by any industrial body, unlike the BBFC that classifies videogame and film promotion¹⁵, and as such these may be considered the first of the vernacular trailers that this thesis considers: texts that operate under the term 'trailer' with little or no standardisation of aesthetics yet sharing a common title, and set of perceived values with other forms of trailer.

So, with such an aesthetic spread of trailers, theorising them as anything more than a viral video operating under the term 'trailer' is difficult. Discussions of theatre frequently invoke the concept of the performance event as being different from other forms of

¹⁵ While film trailers are arguably classified, rather than assessed for product representational this is itself a form of industry control, where no such control steps exist at an industry level for theatre trailers. The Advertising Standards Authority may treat theatre trailers as advertising and subject it to regulation but these are not explicitly included within their remit of materials covered.

entertainment. While theatre and indexical film are inextricably linked historically, the academic work on theatre and the screen has focused largely on the role of the screen within a theatre production, or role of theatre via screen technology: both approaches treat such intermediality from a theatrical perspective (cf Bay-Cheng et al 2010, Chapple & Kattenbelt 2006). The work in the area of intermediality discusses the role of the theatre on-screen from a philosophical or ontological approach and are often driven by discussions of media specificity that can be seen as 'a form of media essentialism' (Balme 2008: 82). Indeed the majority of the work on intermediality that considers theatre specifically, does so from an approach that prioritises the study of theatre rather than of film.¹⁶ Such essentialism demonstrates the bias in drawing on discussions of theatre and intermediality that surround what is ontologically, and methodologically for the purpose of this thesis; a short film. As such this chapter deviates from the current discourse that surrounds theatre and intermediality, yet it is necessary to draw upon work that reference these issues, reinforcing Balme's claims that;

any discussion of theatre's relationship to and integration of new media technologies [(in this instance specifically)] must engage with concepts such as 'liveness', immediacy, interaction, because they have for decades provided the defining and distinguishing concepts for our discipline (2008: 81).¹⁷

Indeed when discussing and defining theatre trailers the live elements of theatre are frequently invoked aesthetically and within the press discourse; the 'magic of live theatre' is often invoked as a defining attribute of theatre. There is work that touches upon this area: Philip Auslander's work on *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (2008). The work been significantly influential in discussing the role of live productions and the concept of the live event, but this only tangentially hits upon aesthetics and does so from a perspective of a universal viewer of a live event. Further compounding this, since its publication the author has sought to distance himself from majority elements of it acknowledging determinism. There is no suggestion that these trailers are in anyway 'live' at the point of screen broadcast; but it must be reiterated that within the corpus those events promoted by trailers are live and this is seen within the elements of the promotion:

¹⁶ It can however be argued that as elements of theatre studies such as discussions of acting, mise en scène, staging, and the audience have already been subsumed into the formation of film. Film studies can be said to be equally essentialist.

¹⁷ It is noted that Balme here is referencing theatre as a medium rather than as an industry, though with the latter interpretation of theatre the point remains a valid one.

specifically the direct and indirect audience response to the performance.¹⁸ There is a clear need to understand the theatre trailer as a text within its own right that, and to do so without being constrained by the existing work and terminology. For instance the theatre trailer is essentially two performances: the events that were recorded, and the recording itself, both of which reference a third - every incarnation of that production by that company within a given season or run of performances (that may or may not have been witnessed). By treating the theatre trailer as both film and theatre simultaneously, discussion inevitably moves beyond essentialist approaches of film or theatre; but draws on discussions from both areas in order to provide an adequate lexicon and foundations for discussion.

Indeed with respect to intermediality, theatre critics have taken exception at the very existence of theatre on-screen, either as illicit recordings, or the more authorised trailer itself. As Andrew Haydon notes:

[T]heatres are starting to make use of new technologies with varying degrees of success. Online trailers for plays are already becoming commonplace, with mixed results. At their best, these trailers are starting to emerge as an art form in their own right, condensing the aesthetics and sensibilities of a performance into something entirely cinematic. Theatre, unlike film, cannot cut all the “good bits” together, unless all the good bits are re-filmed as TV acting. (Haydon 2008)

Haydon perhaps unfairly equates this short film form to the product being promoted, demonstrating that criticisms such as this are as much about defining and policing boundaries between entertainment media as much as they are about asserting an opinion of the practice of theatre trailers. As the case studies illustrate, some of these trailers do cut disparate elements together, but through the editing process rather than as an indexical performance of the trailer's content. These theatre trailers retain and re-present a sense of theatre performance through the kinds of images and sequences used, in a similar manner to film trailer. This aesthetic is important and a comparatively recent development. The

¹⁸ It is worth noting here that overall a key aspect of signifying theatre is the concept of the live event often through the inclusion of a diegetic audience in the foreground of the performance itself. Philip Auslander's work on this conceptualises the concept of a live event as one of a feedback loop between specific signifiers and the audience (Auslander 2007). This understanding has since been rejected by Auslander as deterministic (Auslander 2011). Indeed, the concept of a feedback loop is inherent to cognitive processing and does not solely apply to liveness. I wish to avoid questioning the notion of liveness when referring to the signification of theatre (which may or may not be coded as a 'live' event and received as such). Given the problems with this term, and lack of alternatives when discussing the signification of a theatre production, the term 'live' is used to suggest the theatre event as one spatially and temporally tied to a single instance of performance.

sudden (comparative) increase in press coverage, indeed the inclusion of dedicated theatre video and trailer sections of the Guardian and the Telegraph websites suggests that at some point between 1990 and 2011 the theatre trailers came to be newsworthy, or more relevant than their predecessors. This is perhaps owing to one larger change in theatre promotion, the rise of livecasting. So in order to negotiate the goals of this thesis with literature that may help understand the construction of theatre trailers we come to Barker's work on livecasting: the broadcasting of theatre productions to cinema screens in real-time (2013). This offers a pre-existing lexicon to help understand the kinds of screen aesthetics adopted for live theatre, though this work focuses largely on the aesthetics of full scale productions and the audience's experience therein (2013). While useful when considering the aesthetics of profilmic theatre, the livecasting study focuses largely around the concept of immediacy following on from earlier research in the reception of live events (Barker 2003, Reason 2004, Waltz 2006). Collectively none of the research explores the theatre trailer as an emergent phenomenon, asking why they re-emerged shortly after the turn of the millennium. Instead the work leans towards theorising the trailer in isolation within the industry, but as an extension of both promotion and the film industry. While there is a dearth of studies relevant to theatre, using a historical case study as context to the emergence of theatre trailer allows a framework for understanding to be developed that shapes and informs the approach to theatre trailers herein. Tied up with Barker's work on livecasting, are theatre trailers coinciding with the same time frame, and in some cases being directly connected to them. It makes sense therefore, to explore that context using evidence and archives from one of the first proponents of the post-millennial trailers: The National Theatre.

The context of the industry

The post-millennial theatre trailer press coverage started shortly after the development of livecast theatre events. The livecast theatre consists of a narrow-cast performance within a theatre, in front of an audience, and in front of cameras that broadcast a screen version of the event to associated (often cinema) screens in different locations (Barker 2013;1-4). The parallels of both the aesthetics of livecasting and the economics behind it in relation to the theatre trailer are useful to understand the climate of the theatre industries, and the environment into which the theatre trailer was re-launched. The movement towards livecasting forms a way of increasing performance dissemination and economic generation as part of wider bids to engage with economic and cultural

changes. Specifically this is a period in which, only seven years prior, the *New York Metropolitan Opera*, experimented with Livecasting, and in 2006 subsequently embraced this as industry practice rather than experimentation (Barker 2013:3-5). Although without having the same temporal imperative, theatre trailers and livecasting have parallels in that both broadcast an interpretation of theatre to screens, allowing visual elements of a theatre production to exist outside the constraints of space and time¹⁹. The limited work surrounding the aesthetics of livecasting offers a point of analysis and understanding for the aesthetics theatre trailer. There is a need to look at this to contextualise the trailer, particularly as the existing literature outside of this does little more than acknowledging a wholesale change in promotional practices.

Despite the rise and popularity of livecasting, the earliest trailers promote that which could be called traditional or stage theatre, events: indeed no livecast events are found promoted within the corpus. More accurately they are promoting narrowcast theatre; a performance that is performed on stage to a limited number of audience members normally not exceeding the capacity of the theatre venue. Yet there is a blurring of these two forms of theatre. Just as game trailers appear on videogame products and film trailers for in the cinema and on DVDs, some theatre companies have started to integrate screen trailers within the same performance space, much like the current cinema theatre set up (Smith 2013, Baluch 2009). In 2013 it was announced that the Ambassador Theatre group would screen trailers for the DVD release of *Shrek the Musical* prior to pantomime performances (Smith 2013) epitomising the kind of interaction of promotion, and performance that is seen in contemporary entertainment industries.²⁰ So the contemporary industry is increasingly becoming synergised in the same way as other industries; but only time will tell if such developments are to remain and be further integrated within the industry and there is a need for separate retrospective studies of these developments in the future.

The contemporary theatre trailer emerged at a time of increased engagement with digital dissemination technology, while historically theatre and film were promoted in vaudeville events together this is arguably prior to the formulation of contemporary

¹⁹Though livecast productions are simultaneous with their narrowcast performance counterparts these performances can now be bought on DVD as a (somewhat paradoxical) livecast-recording.

²⁰ It is unclear from the available information if these are pantomime performances of *Shrek the Musical* or other stage performances that are (presumably) sponsored by 20th Century Fox, copyright holders of *Shrek*, in this instance.

trailers and promotional practices seen within the corpus.²¹ This increased engagement in digital dissemination has been linked to wider changes in the cultural sector and the academic work on this area supports this, but often goes no further than this understanding. In many respects the challenges faced by the performing arts in the contemporary era are similar to those faced by the film industry over a hundred years ago. The contemporary performing arts industries are under increasing financial pressure, and increasingly with competition from other entertainment industries, albeit in a distinctly different social and mediatised environment. Ruth Rentschler, in reviewing academic literature for the performing arts sector over twenty-five years prior to the new millennium, suggests that the cultural industries have undergone phases in attitudes to promotion, and by extension, so to have the consumers associated with their cultural product (1998, 2002). Rentschler (2002) identifies three distinct periods within the cultural sector, of which the Discovery Period, between the years 1995-2000 is the most recent and pertinent to the emergence of the theatre trailer. Rentschler notes of this Discovery Period that:

since 1995, there has been groundbreaking change in the number and type of strategic arts marketing articles, referring to sharp shifts in strategy, power, structure, and control. For arts organizations, this means a new leadership model controlled by professionals (such as marketers) with volunteer help. Further, it means that organizations have become more institutionalized and more dependent on stable funding sources (2002: 10).

Attributed to the need for increased financial stability the Discovery Period exists prior to the emergence of increased digital content across the arts; but broadly speaking offers a rationale for changes in arts marketing that precedes the theatre trailer. Between the start of the discovery period and the time of corpus generation, there is a documented increase in digital engagement on the part of arts organisations. Such changes have been documented by NESTA (2010), in a review of arts organisations including the NT's livecasting programme. As the National Theatre (NT) is one of the earliest companies to integrate theatre trailers into their promotional campaign around 2005-6 it is possible that the period of Discovery outlined by Rentschler has developed into an age of integration at

²¹ It is noted that theatre has a history of engagement with cinema long before the use of digital technology for product and promotion dissemination. However, there is need to distinguish between engagement with film, and with dissemination technologies for the purposes of this thesis. Saltz (2009) and Waltz (2006) provide an excellent starting point for exploring this wider area of theatre and film with the latter noting that: 'For much of the first decades after their invention, motion pictures shared the theatrical stage with living performers in a continuous (albeit erratic) multimedia relationship.' (548)

this point in which new forms of content are emerging. This suggests not an immediate adoption of theatre trailers but a gradual change in strategies company by company; simultaneously suggesting that Rentschler's period of discovery was still continuing to develop into an era of short form experimentation and adoption across the arts.²²

Supporting evidence for this on-going development is found within numerous academic and industry studies that specifically document the changing use of digital technology; Thomson, & Rainie (2013); *Audience 2.0: How Technology Influences Arts Participation* (National Endowment for the Arts [N.D]); *Museums and New Media Arts* (Morris 2001) all explore and encourage the use of digital technology to improve audience attendance and ticket sales. While changes in the use of social and new media are well-documented, theatre trailers specifically are rarely mentioned explicitly. The NESTA study specifically advocates movement into other media, as a form of engagement, on the basis of the commercial success of livecasting. Noting that research documents audience support for live elements of the theatre productions, demonstrating:

an appetite for cultural experiences that are live, going against the prevailing logic of 'consumption on demand', where individuals are free to choose the place and time where they access content, but do so detached from the unique circumstances where it was produced in the first place. (2010: 2)

The study suggests a decentralising but not a destabilising, of arts events that result from a movement from the theatre to other media. Indeed this was one of the attractions given within the study, with 59.8% of the survey participants going to see theatre in a new medium (Ibid; 9). Yet the NESTA study makes no mention of how these 'livecast' productions were promoted, merely noting that NT used trailers (2010:5, instead noting that subsidised arts groups have previously been cushioned from digital engagement (2010; 3). From the research however it is unclear how such livecast productions are marketed as being a live event, or if this is solely based upon the retrospective survey questions after the experience itself (2010:4). The study suggests that through using the cinema to promote and subsequently host, broadcast theatre it increased the awareness of the production and pro-rata the box office revenue (cf. Barker 2013, NESTA 2010). Largely however, the collective industry work in this area has little progressed beyond acknowledging the need for changes in marketing, and suggesting that marketing the arts

²² Rentschler's study is from a position of retrospective, and as such the publication of her research omits developments that illuminate her study further.

should become increasingly engaged with digital technologies to emphasise the kinds of experience(s) available for the consumers.

Academia and the trailer

In terms of understanding the specific use of trailers implicitly encouraged by industry led-reports, academia has little acknowledged the theatre trailer's existence, limited to two papers found to reference the trailer overall. Fraser merely notes their existence as a future trend (2004: 56), while Preece (2011) offers a case study of trailers in the Canadian non-profit performing arts sector for orchestras. Preece equates promotional shorts used in this area as paratexts; following Gerard Genette's interpretation of a book's associated texts as gatekeepers for a primary text, framing an audiences' subsequent engagement with the book (1997). Yet after equating theatre trailers to a literary device Preece goes little beyond equating such orchestral texts with film trailers. Preece overlooks the opportunity to expand his intervention beyond equating web content to the traditional printed theatre programme and then with film trailers. Following the implicit logic within Preece's work then, trailers are no different from printed materials that surround the text, irrespective of its ontology. In part the limitations within Preece's work stem from the use of similar studies into the aesthetics of theatre programmes, printed works to accompany a performance; namely Harbeck (1998), and Fodstad (2006).²³ Harbeck (1998) and Fodstad's (2006) work on theatre programmes, like Preece's understanding of elements (2011) provide insight into the framing of constituent aspect of the performing arts performances, and provide discussion points for a holistic analysis of trailers from the guiding corpus.²⁴ Preece's work limits itself from making wider interventions owing to an unwillingness to break away from work by Kernan (2004), and Zanger (1998): both of which consider film trailers in relation to promotion and narrative worlds rather than the arguably more abstracted diegesis of musical arrangements. Citing Zanger, Preece acknowledges the dual promotional and retrospective nature of the trailer; but the language used throughout the paper suggests a treatment of trailers in advance of

²³ Both Harbeck and Fodstad discuss paratexts of theatre without acknowledging the problems that exist within the originating theory, undermining the subsequent discussion of theatre programmes as paratexts. Such discussion is something the chapter on book trailers is able to address in significant detail (page ____).

²⁴ There are several studies of theatre programmes (Fodstad 2006, Harbeck 1998); but as programmes are primarily sold at the performance they can be said to reinforce an experience rather than promote it to an unknown audience. Their relevance and relationship to trailers have been discussed at length by Preece and this chapter deliberately focuses on the overlooked aspects of theatre signification on screen in relation to the context of the theatre trailer's emergence: recognising the status of trailers a promotional audio-visual text.

product engagement, at the expense of considering how the promotion frames it. Rather than using Zanger's approach with orchestra trailers to challenge the work of Kernan, Preece uses the determinist approach found within Kernan's framework to define the performing arts trailer:

Before considering the component parts of performing arts trailer content, it is important to address what would not necessarily be considered a trailer—i.e., a performing arts preview [... (Preece notes a grouping of five kinds of video)] all of which are drawn from organizationally-sanctioned video clips, as opposed to whatever video content might appear independent of the organization. While each has some merit in relation to the relevant orchestras, only one category will be considered as a true trailer (*vis-à-vis* movie trailers) (Preece 2011: 28).

Preece's consideration of only movie-style trailers, and those that are commissioned by the company promoted reduces the possible promotional content considered with an unjustified bias towards a particular aesthetic that emerges out of analysis of film trailers for audio-visual narrative worlds. Through exploring orchestral performances rather than diegetic worlds there is a bias towards integrating the types of promotional material gathered and the research used to discuss it, dismissing other kinds of promotional material such as, 'the conductor interview' as being 'one dimensional [...](i.e., imagine a movie director speaking the entire time about an upcoming film)' (ibid). The implicit assumption here is that there is a hierarchy of paratextual forms. More explicitly it is only those that appear most akin to a very specific aesthetic form of the film trailer that have value as a trailer for Preece, presumably because it fits in readily with the existing theoretical work on the trailer. Indeed of 95 promotional videos, Preece limits the corpus to three based on 'their kinship to longtime tradition with movie trailers' (2011: 29).²⁵ Of the elements within those trailers Preece identifies performers (the constituent human elements of a performance); works (the sounds the orchestra produce, the act of performance); and context, the 'broader organization', using these categories to extrapolate upon the manner in which a performance is promoted (ibid). Such a reduction however, seems to serve analysis of constituent elements rather than a holistic understanding of the interplay between such elements, particularly as the analysis that follows, prioritises the

²⁵ The actual number of trailers found and used within Preece's study may be higher by one or two examples. The study is unclear exactly how many 'trailers' and 'videos' are being used for his analysis with seemingly contradictory statements.

positive promotional interpretation, over a retrospective one or negative one. Despite the issue of methodology and intervention, Preece's approach takes steps to integrate orchestral trailers with the study of film trailers and comes close to treating trailers as promotional paratexts rather than simply of recordings theatre or performing arts.

Early Theatre Trailers: The National Theatre case study of context

For the NT the development of the theatre trailer and livecasting, are linked by the development in digital technology, changes in audience consumption, and a need to change dissemination models of both promotion, and product. The NT's Annual Report, of 2006-7 outlines a strategy for development:

As booking patterns have changed, developing the NT's on-line presence has become more important – partly for pragmatic reasons (up to 60% of bookings for some productions are taken in this way, supported by the introduction of a 'select your own seat' function on the new box office system); partly as a way of further amplifying the productions, as with the award-winning Stagework website. Podcasts, blogs, and production *e-trailers* have rounded this out, (NT Annual Report 2006-7: 11 [emphasis added])

Aware of the need for an increased online presence, and as a result of increased online ticket sales, the NT sought to engage audiences with theatre content in advance of the theatre event itself. As part of this engagement drive, in 2006 the NT launched the *NationalTheatre* YouTube channel, the first of three channels that exist at the time of writing.²⁶ The use of short forms; podcasts, blogs and trailers as part of this 'rounding out'endeavour, functions in the same manner as DVD extras providing framing devices that inform an interpretation of the company's output in the same manner as extra features on home release entertainment (cf. Brookey &Westerfelhaus, 2005).

This move to increase audience engagement is likely a response to public funding caveats, and increasing economic uncertainty surrounding such funding. As such, the development of a YouTube Channel and online content can be seen as a programme to achieve this, of which the introduction of trailers is merely one facet of online NT brand promotion that echoes engagement typical of other entertainment industries: though it is

²⁶ The NT operates three YouTube channels in keeping with various goals and objectives. National Theatre main channel has trailers, audience spots 'making of' featurettes and behind the scenes film. The '*NT Discover Theatre*' Channel, fulfils learning objectives and outreach to schools, it emphasises 'videos about making theatre' for use in teaching literature and theatre. The third channel '*NT Create Film*' disseminates the work of young film makers participating in film making projects with the NT. (NT.org)

unclear what practices were in place prior to this other than those mentioned in the Annual Reports. Expanding the existing lines of engagement, the NT synergised the various elements of its infrastructure together to form a cohesive online presence.

A year prior to *National Theatre's* launch, online engagement took the form of online packs that aided teaching (NT Report 2005-6: 14). The NT's programme of educational dissemination and engagement was re-branded in 2008 to become *NTDiscover*, with its own dedicated YouTube channel of the same name (NT Report 2009-10: 32). Both the *NTDiscover*, and *NationalTheatre* channels are linked with the development of the NT Filming Programme for the purposes of archiving theatre events and simultaneously creating promotion that manages the brand identity of the company. Since 1995 every show has been filmed with a locked-off camera (NT Archive). More recently the Cottesloe, Lyttelton, and Olivier theatres have seen developments to this practice, whereby the introduction of a third camera to the latter two 'allows [the NT] to capture both a fixed wide-angle shot and the three-camera edit version of all productions, thus satisfying both scholarly and general interest research' (NT Annual Report 2006-7).²⁷ However, this audio-visual archiving of theatre productions also offers the NT a ready pool of equipment, and skill from which to create online content and specific promotional shorts; reducing the need to outsource content to a third party to make trailers. It is possible that performances taking place at these theatres can be rehearsed within the space and simultaneously recorded for the purposes of promotion in advance of the performances opening. In conjunction with the NT's history of documentation and archiving are various outreach programmes that support filmmaking both for education purposes pertaining to theatre, and wider artistic endeavours. Each year's programme is opened with a festival that includes film screenings, and these events themselves are recorded (Ibid, NT Annual Report 2007-8: 28). The NT at least, has a history of using film as a way of preserving an otherwise ephemeral art, as a way of engaging audiences and, as part of celebration of the start of a new season. For the NT at least it becomes apparent that the use of theatre trailers emerged from complex backdrop of an in-house pool of resources and experience. The NT drew upon the existing infrastructure that was potentially funded separately to reduce costs of outsourcing and enable tighter control over the promotional output. So using the same systems that would enable livecasting the

²⁷ The absence of access to the National Theatre's annual reports prior to 2001 and the lack of press coverage of the initial redevelopment of the three theatres listed, obscures understanding the development of the camera system that precedes the 2006 development of a triadic system.

theatre trailer can be brought into being with minimal interference to routine and finances. Indeed in a separate survey of the US arts organisations,²⁸ the cost of implementing a digital strategy was considered the most important.

Half of the organizations in this survey (49%) have sought funding to support projects that expand their use of the internet or other technologies, such as apps and social media. But, many have found it difficult to secure funds for these projects through traditional means (Thomson, Purcell & Rainie 2013, 5).

The NT's use of previously existing infrastructure appears to limit the negative impact of expenditure on staff training, equipment use, etc. Though for many other arts organisations such infrastructure may not readily exist; it must be noted the NT is the exception in this instance. This infrastructure perhaps accounts for the significant number of trailers that exist on the *NationalTheatre* channel.

However, despite the NT going through the motions of digital engagement that reinforces Rentscheler's discovery age, the NT's broader movement towards digital engagement appears to pre-empt the possibility of financial deficits. This issue of funding cuts and online engagement is not a direct relationship of cause and effect for the NT though this may be the case of other theatre groups. While much of the literature links the use of digital technology and the need for stable funding sources, reviewing the NT suggests this was not entirely the case; for the NT the use of a digital engagement campaign anticipates funding cuts rather than being a direct necessity of such. Reviewing the budget for the NT from the overall period 2005-2011 demonstrates a slightly above inflation increase in ACE funding until cuts from this source occur in 2009-10, years after the emergence of the first trailer.²⁹ What this suggests then, is that the trailer is not a direct response to cuts in the budget, as has been suggested of the rise of livecasting. Instead this suggests an anticipatory move prior to budget cuts aimed at reducing in advance the impact of ACE funding reductions. So unlike the development of livecasting with the

²⁸ The Survey involved 1,115 participants from arts organisations over a period May-June 2012 and covers a range of organisations that this chapter does not consider.

²⁹ In the years preceding the emergence of the e-trailer, and the theatre trailer for the NT, the budget saw an repeated increase of around 2.7 % year on year between 2005 and 2010 (NT Annual Reports for the periods: 2005-6, 2006-7, 2007-8, 2008-9, 2009-10). This 2.7% is in keeping with inflation (which was below 2.7% except 2008, and 2010 where annual inflation exceeded 3% (Trading Economics.com (1989-2014 and the ONS 2014). In the period 2011-12 the ACE budget dropped by 7%, (£1.4m) to 18.3m (NT Annual Report 2011-12: 43). Over this period the ACE funding was £17.25m in 2006-7 (NT Annual Report 2005-6). This accounted for 38% of the overall income, and was the largest single source of income (NT Annual Report 2007-8). Despite increasing, the ratio of ACE funding to other sources shifted, dropping to 35% in 2008-9, and in 2010-11 the funding was reported at 23% in 2011-12, with a reduction in the funding of approximately 7% down by £1.4m to £18.3m (NT Annual Report 2011-12: 43).

performing arts in the US (specifically the Metropolitan Opera) the emergence of the trailer for the NT is one that precedes and possibly anticipates deficits to its revenue. This perhaps is a result of learning from the US economy, in which arts groups at the time were increasingly reliant upon wealthy Patrons to support them financially that ultimately resulted in the rise of livecasting, (Barker 2013: 3). While there is no economic evidence that increased financial gain is *needed* for the NT, this is the rationale given within the annual reports and caution must be used when extrapolating this rise of digital engagement across arts institutions at a whole.

The National Theatre channel

As a case study for the emergence of some of the first theatre trailers it is worth noting that there is little to no period of instability with the term 'trailer'. Initially trailer videos on the *National Theatre* were referred to as an 'E-trailer' (NT Annual Report 2006-7).³⁰ This prefix was almost excluded within press coverage in favour of the term 'trailer'.³¹ On the YouTube channel itself, this term was largely contained to the video description spatially and semantically underneath the video's title that includes the term 'trailer'. This prefix disappears from the descriptions on the channel about seven months after the first posting.³² This seemingly insignificant change however, suggests the impact of a wider vernacular, and change in the content producers (or at least the channel manager's) attitude to theatre trailers. This is in contrast to book trailers that have competing terms for a number of years, and videogame promotion that mitigate negative responses to their own existence by qualifying themselves as other-industry-style trailers for books and videogames, before using the term in its own right.³³ The theatre trailer for the NT, was adopted as a term with few titular caveats almost from the outset. There appears to be no competing vernacular terms for this form of promotion at the time of writing, nor during the early period of trailer formation. This suggests an acceptance of, and confidence with, the theatre trailer as a titular entity: that the industry itself is comfortable using 'trailers' without seeking to radically distinguish between the various trailers for theatre and other trailers circulating at this time. In the first year,

³⁰ Prior to this the term it is noted that the term 'multimedia trailer' was circulating (cf. Fraser 2004; Critical Dance forum 2004)

³¹ There is one notable exception, Clancy, (2007) represents some of the earliest press commentary on this subject.

³² *Women of Troy* uploaded to the channel November 2007 is the last trailer to be described as an E-trailer (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffMN78A19z4> [accessed 14/5/14])

³³ See page 38 for further discussion of this with respect to *Mortal Kombat* and movie-style trailers.

approximately 59 videos were posted to the channel, largely 'trailers' but also audience interviews and 'how to find us' videos depicting a walking route from central transport locations to the National Theatre itself. Indeed, the walking route was posted to the *National Theatre* at the same time as the first trailers, suggesting the two kinds of short form work in tandem in depicting theatre as an event composed of the act of going to the theatre, and the act of going to the theatre to see a specific theatrical event. As the channel exists within the context of a programme for engagement, the kinds of content can be seen as a cohesive, consumable identity for the NT's brand identity as well as creative output.

From the outset then, the theatre trailer, at least for the NT is part of a move towards mobile content aimed at literally and figuratively bringing audiences into the theatre. While not referred to as 'trailers' that additional short videos exist at the same time on the same channel as trailers directing audiences to the theatre demonstrates the emphasis on theatre as a spatially specific experience: that the act of attending the theatre, in addition to engaging with the performed narrative is central to the theatre event. This concept of space and place is a recurring one within the aesthetics of the theatre trailer, and studies of the theatre itself. For Bennett, theatre is 'signalled to its audience by the idea of the event' (1997), yet this is true of any experiential product that has spatial and temporal restriction. Bennett's rather unwieldy understanding can be directed by considering the kind of event being signified; theatre on-screen needs to be distinguished from other indexical media events forms such as narrative film or television that ontologically are identical to theatre on-screen. Within theatre represented on-screen, there is often the emphasis on space and place in order to identify the content as theatre rather than film. However, this kind of emphasis is nearly always present within the promotion of goods; but particularly experiential goods in which there is a spatial or temporal limit to the product being promoted. 'Coming soon to a theatre near you', indications of platform specificity, 'in bookstores and on Kindle': these inclusions of tag lines, or platform specific logos circulate around other experiential goods and frequently invoke this discussion of space and place through denoting a medium, or place of purchase. For videogames promotion there exists a period of spatial placing in which the console appears within a narrative separate from the narrative of the game that parallels theatre promotion's organisation of space and place. Within theatre, space and place is often but not always signified by the inclusion of a diegetic audience. The inclusion of this audience serves to suggest both the concept of a specific narrowcast event as well as to denote the physical performance space and thus set a boundary for the diegetic action: the stage itself.

Although by no means unique to theatre, the inclusion of diegetic audiences are largely absent from contemporary movie promotion except when promoting Horror movies: examples of this include trailers for the *Paranormal Activity* franchise (from 2007 onwards). As such the inclusion of an on-screen audience suggests a shared experience of attending an event not yet present; unlike the movie trailer in which the absence of the audience on-screen during promotion suggests an immediacy in which the trailer-screen takes the metonymic or occasional actual place of the cinema screen. Much like the videogame trailer, where an advertising aesthetic emphasising the technology, and a trailer aesthetic, emphasising the games diegesis exist there is a similar aesthetic split between representations of the theatre on-screen. Within the presentation of theatre, there are two distinct aesthetics, those that emphasise the place of the theatre in relation to the space of the performance, often through depicting the stage (often a proscenium arch) denoted often by the architecture of the set and the performance space itself; and those that eschew theatre signification. In the former the kind of theatre signification forms a key aspect of the aesthetics of reinforcing the construct of the theatre event on-screen, while denoting itself as being a separate event from film trailers. This signification is by no means universal, and many theatre companies eschew such aesthetics in favour of an aesthetic typically associated with the film trailer. What follows then are case studies of the construction of stage theatre on-screen. These are not intended as universal templates into which every theatre trailer may fit, to do so would lead to suggestions of determinism. Instead, like the previous chapter these demonstrate the creative diversity at work within promotion for the arts and the various challenges that exist in theorising the trailer as one single kind of promotional object with a fixed aesthetics. The in-dept. analysis of trailers within the guiding corpus starts with exploration of the narrowcast productions for the production *War Horse* (2009).

War Horse

At just over one minute the trailer for the National Theatre's production of *War Horse*, based on the novel by Michael Morpurgo promotes a West End production that came to be noted for its use of animated props to create horses. The trailer's narrative is moved forward by a combination of images, music and dialogue in a similar manner to those of film trailers, in which images, dialogue and music provide a narrative for the production itself. The trailer however conforms to a stage aesthetic: while no audience members are visible, there is an overwhelming emphasis upon the theatricality of the

performance, and there is space within the shots for the audience, though this space is simply not illuminated (Fig. 7a). The trailer's plot could be expressed as a man gives up his horse as part of the war effort, contained within the dialogue that runs through the trailer as dialogue and extra-diegetic music:

Man in army uniform: 'He's quite a horse, Albert. But for now, his place is with the army'.

Albert to horse: 'I Albert Narracott, do solemnly swear that we shall be together again'

Choral Music: 'a feeling arise, a gleam in her eyes [gun fire, cries of 'charge' (Fig. 7b)] and the year turns round again, and like barley corn who rose from the grave, a new year will rise up again'.

Throughout this trailer each visual segment, the establishment of Albert's bond with his young horse, Albert riding an adult horse, giving up his horse, the horse going into battle, and finally Albert with his horse; is separated by black sequences. These black sequences become space for written critical acclaim as the trailer progresses. Following from editing traits long associated with the film trailer. Despite such cinematic allusions, to the trailer as an entity, there remain clear signifiers of theatre. Such signifiers emphasise the space of the performance taking place within a theatre. Fig.7 illustrates the opening image to the trailer, in which the stage space is distinguished from absent audience space through light. The lights themselves are visible indicators of the performance space: round bright circles providing long beams of light fence the performance off from the audience space. As with many trailers for narrowcast theatre productions the audience themselves are absent from the images yet there is clear profilmic space for the audience that suggests at audience placement. This likely is a result of the indexical theatre event (at the point of filming) taking place in controlled conditions where the audience is absent. By contrast, in Livecast trailers there are several instances the audience is clearly visible in the background; echoing the aesthetic construction of livecast events.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 7a The opening of the *War Horse* trailer

Figure 7b Gunfire and 'Charge' intersect music

The National Theatre trailer for *War Horse* uses camera movements that provide close ups, tracking shots and similar movement that cannot logically exist from a seated position within the theatre. Seen in *Livecasting*, Barker terms these camera movements 'bravura' moments, that privilege a broadcast screen audience over a narrowcast one (2013:12). Such a privilege only exists in comparison to a static audience, and in this context they are similar to cinematography found in film and television. However, Barker's bravura moments exist only in comparison to static shots, long takes, with camera movements being limited so as to be unobtrusive. Such unobtrusive shots described by Barker in *Livecast* performance are absent from the *War Horse* trailer in which the camera is moving frequently; often tracking character's action within the frame. In one sequence only the camera is not actively moving, three shots that comprise the sequence. These are short, juxtaposed sequences of dialogue and reaction between two characters that create the sense of movement by presenting the action from different angles with each cut:

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 7c-e left to Right

While the camera moves extensively the action on stage appears to be presented from an axis of 180 degrees. While the absence of any fixed point in relation to the stage performance provides no empirical evidence of this, the camera's movement in relation to the action on stage never appears to break the fourth wall. In part this is a result of the use of sequences separated by profilmic darkness, and part as a result of any fixed markers from which to orient close analysis. This may be representative of the performance space which could take the form of a thrust stage indicated by the camera angles; but it is

reinforced by the 'movement' of the various sequences that prioritise action to the right of the frame (Figs. 7a and 7b). Across the trailer, the horse arrives on the left side of the frame, is taken away by an army officer on the right, and charges with that officer to the right, before the final sequence in which Albert and the horse are reunited with Albert on the right, and the horse on the left (Fig.7f).

[Image Redacted]

Figure 7f Albert is 'reunited' with the horse.

There is then a clear narrative arc, and a spatial dimension reinforcing this action on the stage space. The signification of the performance space however, is reliant upon the proximity of the camera to the action, reinforced by the lighting of the stage space, and the stage itself (particularly prominent in Figs. 7a and 7f). The act of moving closer to the characters on stage and in multiple directions emphasises face and hand gestures during dialogue and reduces the distance, by occupying the performance space alongside actors. There are no extreme close-ups however, and the shots used throughout the production are mid-shots taken from the same level as the actors. The images also include prop horses (seen in Figs. 7a-7f) that stand for horses within the diegesis, but their nature as theatrical props, much like the (absent) set, demonstrate the performance area implying through their theatricality the concept of theatre performance. The horses are handled by puppeteers and as we see in Fig. 7a, while attention is not drawn to the handlers (situated behind the horse in relation to the camera), no attempt is made to hide their role as puppeteers: as Fig. 7c clearly shows, the far left can be seen a puppeteer with a controlling rod. So this trailer contains a narrative event, recorded almost exclusively in mid-shot with the exception of an establishing shot (Fig. 7a), it has disruption to a narrative world and the possibility of restoration, set to music that suggests re-birth resolution within the lyrics. Of its theatricality, the set design and props used within the production signify the nature of the performance reinforced by the critical acclaim and the end title (Figs. 7g-k).

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 7g-k, left to right, critical acclaim and company branding In War Horse

Figs. 7g-h appear towards the end of the trailer separating sequences of action. The first image (Fig. 7) coincides with the opening lyrics in the music, with the second immediately after the diegetic cry of 'charge' and the third with the word 'grave' in music. We see here, an emphasis not on liveness, but rather towards an experience, the subjective acclaim from the *Sunday Times*, *Time Out* and *The Times* respectively reinforce the concept that the audience may feel specific emotions as a result of this performance. In part this can be linked back to the immediacy of the event, specifically the emphasis on subjective feelings as a result of drama, or narrative; but these would seem entirely at home within the context of a cinema or videogame promotion. It is only the acclaim from *Time Out* that references theatre explicitly. As with a convention of film or videogame promotion the final image (Figs. 7g-k) is of the title, and in the case of *War Horse* details of the theatre company, the sponsors, and the website are listed. The only overt National Theatre branding comes from the shared colour of the title; a yellow that has since become synonymous with the NT, and NT Live productions (Fig. 8). While not existing within the corpus the NT live trailer here maintains a significantly higher level of brand identity than earlier trailers for narrowcast performances.

[Image Redacted]

Figure 8 Title card for the Livecast production of War Horse (2014)

***End of the Rainbow* Trafalgar Studios, West End**

End of the Rainbow is a musical drama centring on actress Judy Garland in the months prior to her death. The production is comparatively new: opening in 2005 in Sydney, the trailer for the London production starring Tracie Bennett was hosted by The Telegraph on December 3rd 2010, weeks after the production opened at the Trafalgar Studios on November 16th. This time frame means that without further research it is impossible to determine the ontological production status of this trailer. However the use of quotes from UK critical reviews suggests that this trailer was created after the opening night, indeed the inclusion of critical acclaim must be a result of critics seeing the production, resulting in any trailer within the cathartic, or stage aesthetics being created in retrospect to an opening night.

The 1 minute 14 second trailer opens with bright blue intertitles quoting Libby Purves of *The Times* as saying 'A Star is Born' (Fig. 9a). These coloured intertitles assert critic's acknowledgement of excellence in performance (one even reads 'Someone give that woman an award'). These intertitles punctuate the whole of this trailer and contrast heavily with the montage of black and white shots of stage footage. The use of monochromatic footage of the stage production carries with it connotations of realism, and the reflective nature on Garland in *The Wizard of Oz* that starts out in black and white until the character of Dorothy progresses into the land of Oz. Overlaid the trailer is what is presumably Bennett's voice singing a slow, melancholic version of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' eventually synchronised with a single sequence of the star on the stage floor singing up, over the camera to the upper right of the screen. The performance footage is violent, with the protagonist being moved around the stage space alluding to Garland's documented conflicts within her personal life; however the trailer itself frames itself as a reflection of *The Wizard of Oz*, suggesting that the narrative within the film, was in fact a form of real-world escapism for the actress Garland.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 9a-d, Left to Right, End of the Rainbow

The next shots contrast with the narrative being established by interviewing audience responses, well-known actors familiar to UK television screens are among those offering their opinions, all in monochrome.

The last shot of star Tracie Bennet's on-stage performance becomes colour, after intertitles announce the performance location. Clearly then, there are visual allusions to the film *The Wizard of Oz* in which Garland stars and from which the song *Somewhere over the Rainbow* (albeit in a different tempo) is taken. The notion of 'liveness' is contained within its demarcation of performance space, indeed the camera obeys a 180 degree line that is not broken; the fourth wall of the fixed position of the audience. The trailer itself follows a slow montage of intertitles, in colour 'bracketing' stage footage, as well as interpersonal acclaim.

[Image Redacted]

Figure 9e Audience acclaim

At thirty seconds the trailer uses (still black and white) footage of audience member's feedback to the camera, 'I've never seen anything like it', 'Performance of a lifetime', 'She was absolutely brilliant, extraordinary vocals, just blow-out stuff, she is a-ma-zing'. Heavily within this trailer is an emphasis on the female lead as the primary protagonist, as well as the star and principle reason for attending the production. Indeed when other actors are shown on stage they are invariably static compared to the animated Bennet often shown, either physically thrown around the stage or on the floor in a solo looking up past the camera. Unlike other theatre trailers, backs of the first few rows are not visible, nor are the stage boundaries yet the camera maintains a distance from the action visibly panning rather than tracking the action, and the intertextual references within suggest an element of performance and theatricality that is implicitly an experience because it is 'live'. In emphasising a single star and a single star's talents in relation to the real-world actress Garland the trailer itself is performing and framing an element of performance that is inherently live.

The differences between this mixed stage and cathartic styles of promotion in the *End of the Rainbow Trailer* and other stage aesthetic trailers become clear in comparison to the *Chouf Ouchouf* trailer for the production at London's Southbank centre in which the

stage forms a clear aspect of an establishing shot, demarcated and framed by the silhouettes of a 'live' audience: while the *Chouf Ouchouf* trailer is an example of a stage aesthetic, it arguably is atypical because of the absence of any innovation (that are likely a result of the performance space, rather than the desires of the trailer creators). It is interesting that within this trailer there are only two direct references to Judy Garland, both from intertitles: one from a critic lauding the performance of Bennett as Garland, the other as a form of closing address 'Tracie Bennett as Judy Garland, In the End of the Rainbow, Book now Trafalgar Studios West End'. What is worthy of note is that there are no dates, nor website addresses nor point of contact from which to book tickets for the event, suggesting that this trailer may well have originated from a specific website (perhaps for the performance space), or simply be an oversight on the part of the trailer construction. In comparison, to the longshots exhibited other stage aesthetic trailers (such as the *Chouf* trailer), the *End of the Rainbow* trailer deals exclusively in mid-close ups, often emphasising the star's torso and face, whilst still allowing room for gestures. This helps create a sense of proximity, and thus intimacy. Indeed the audience is clearly supposed to feel for the Garland character, searching for hope as the overlaid song suggests only to be (literally) thrown back down to the ground. The camera largely remains static, unlike Barker's bravura moments there are no intricate camera angles that emphasise the stage content. Indeed at moments of particularly agitated violence on stage the camera pans to follow the action from a static point.

The RSC *Macbeth*

Similarly straddling the lines between aesthetic types is the RSC trailer for *Macbeth*, straddling film aesthetic with those of stage trailers. Opening with a deep voice over, quoting Macbeth's lines (and removing Lady Macbeth's) from Act 2 Scene 2, accompanied by subtle violin music:

Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep", the innocent sleep, Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care, [...] stil it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house: "Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more."

Violins reach crescendo as the voice over, heavy with emotion delivers these lines.

Opening with 'The Royal Shakespeare Company', and ending with 'Macbeth [...] Experience Live Theatre' only these intertitles actively denote 'theatre'. The camera tracks in a circle around the (onstage) ruins of a house. Yet there is little notion of a performance

space. Just as with the *War Horse* trailer the performance space is denoted through the absence of the physical audience, demarcated by darkness at the end of the illuminated performance space. The camera opens with an aerial shot slowly moving down onto a 'dead' child. Fast editing typifies this trailer. Unlike other trailers whereby individual images within a montage are easily discernible, the RSC trailer uses images only readily comprehensible upon repeat viewing with the use of a videoplayer pause function. Clearly then the RSC is asserting experiential qualities normally associated with cinema, and enabled by the technology of audio-visual recording, though the effect is one of increased sensory stimulus that may be the overarching goal, there is for instance little evidence of any 'bonus' gained from pausing the video to comprehend each sequence. Shots of children (who are presumably Macduff's children from Act 4 Scene 2, in which Macbeth murders Lady Macduff and her offspring), are shown in long shot, looking up at a crucifix, or in the foreground of a statue of an angel. The camera alternates between long shots in which the children are barely visible, or close-ups in which the children are positioned in one side of the frame. The actors are often obscured by out of focus scenery creating a claustrophobic atmosphere: this is in part owing to potential identification with characters, but more likely because the camera breaks the 180° rule, creating an impression of action happening from multiple angles in relation to the viewer. Occasionally the shaft of stage light is visible in the background but clearly the RSC here is going for a deeply moving, affective experience. This trailer seems to be an attempt by the RSC to reassert the power of theatre – despite using many identifiably 'cinematic' techniques to do so.

Interestingly the RSC trailer is branded with a Dusthouse logo, alongside the RSC under the title 'Trailer Created By', an indicator of a well-funded company (RSC) outsourcing its trailer production to another company (Dusthouse) which in part helps to unpack the disconnection between the corpus at the time of generation and the time of writing. It also helps to explain the straddling between a film aesthetic of rapid discontinuous editing in which no audience is present. The trailer for the RSC merely quotes from Shakespeare without actually any sense of narrative premise: indeed, the characters of this production are not readily identifiable without knowledge of the story upon which the play and thus the promotion is tangentially based. What we see here is not then the RSC attempting to disseminate the concept of a story as with *War Horse*, in which a basic premise was alluded to, but rather this trailer focuses heavily branding of the RSC: and its association with a very specific corpus of literature.

What is clear then, is that both the *Macbeth* trailer and *The End of A Rainbow* trailer operate within prima facie similar aesthetics that vary in their intertextual relationships with source material and aesthetic construction. In both cases through encouraging the audience to sense the potential experience provided by their theatre company, the trailer encourages an immediate affective experience. This serves to reassert theatre as an entertainment form whilst simultaneously asserting its experiential aspects either through intertextual referencing, or through high production values.

English National Opera: *The Marriage of Figaro*

The format of the ENO trailer is one of a documentary, yet shares the same high production values as the RSC. The ENO is a similarly well-funded company, comparable with the RSC. In the trailer, the director of the production Fiona Shaw, works as a visual commentator on an unseen production literally explaining it as the arias are performed along the audio track starting with the overture.

'My opera goes like this [she mimics well known music from the performance] complicated, sexy, vibrant, terrifying, I'm going to make you dance to my tune' the music reaches crescendo. 'Figaro is in a way a series of characters who all have fragments of human nature.'

Through opening with this statement the trailer exemplifies that which the RSC trailer is asserting visually, it could be expressed as "this production will make you, the audience, feel something." The ENO trailer emphasises this concept, not through striking visual motifs or moving dialogue (as the RSC does) but simply by announcing their intentions and colloquially narrating the action. Such a simple framing device actually serves to engage critical acclaim, in describing the narrative, Shaw drops the terms 'beautiful', 'incandescent', 'magic' into a description of Mozart's work that reflects upon her own interpretation (of which we are only given the audio). Indeed, the visual aspects of this trailer are played down, set against a black backdrop the camera alternates between close-ups of the director's face emphasising her enthusiasm for the performance, with mid-shots of her upper torso as she calmly explains the roles of the characters. Under the director's voice are selected arias that reflect the character she is talking about at the time. Indeed this trailer has a significant emphasis on the audio elements of an unseen performance that emphasise the emotions present within the story that may otherwise be missed. 'What Mozart's done is taken human ordinary dark light strange emotions, infused them with incandescent music and put them back in the mouths of people [...] and yet they're

delivered in a way that you can feel them immediately.' So here is a clear emphasis on the story being part of the affective experience that comprises a live event. By contrast the *Clybourne Park* trailer that includes only critical acclaim from different sources the audience and members of the press.

Clybourne Park

Opening with 'London's most talked about comedy' with black typing on bright yellow background the title changes to '*Clybourne Park*' as it moves into the centre of nine split screens, all depicting audience members simultaneously giving their opinions of the performance. The top left image changes in the person within and dominates the screen to show individual audience members (the first being UK based broadcaster Ian Hislop) offering their opinion. The background audio is one of general chatter, indiscernible noise reflective of the sounds of a crowd leaving an auditorium.

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 10a-b, Clybourne Park

Hislop's celebrity status here functions in dual role as reviewer and as an indicator of approval. That he is followed sequentially by unknown members of the audience suggests one of inclusion and support for the arts appealing to a wide range of people. The distinct rejection of images from the production allows the narrative of the production to remain ambiguous with the audience members providing a narrative of their experiences rather than a narrative of the product. In doing so the entire trailer essentially forms part of one larger review in which audience commentary is backed up with indications of critical acclaim (figs. 10c-10f).

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 10c-f, left to Right, Clybourne Park

The various audience reviews serve to reinforce the kinds of critical acclaim offered by the interstitials: 'hilarious'. One caption reads attributed to The Times, is bracketed by audience feedback that reflects it 'I thought it was thought provoking, I laughed a lot of times [male audience member]', [caption] 'it was absolutely fantastic, I've not stopped laughing, I think I've embarrassed my friends [female audience member]'. Here we see the use of different demographics, presumably with whom various audience members are supposed to identify, providing interpersonal coverage of a product that reflects those of the critics. Such a suggestion then is that critics and the general population alike are engaging with this production in the same manner. Yet we know little of the narrative of the production, just like the RSC trailer. So within the broad triad of representation, short film format, the cathartic, and the stage we see significant intersection that coincide with the ideals of what it means to have and use theatre. The distinct variation between the theatre trailers here makes it increasingly difficult to theorise the trailer as any one particular aesthetic or format, though this is potentially changing. What it does denote is that different theatre companies are using to different ends; aesthetics that interlink and overlap but are vastly different yet still retain core values of promotion. It opens up the possibility of a trailer existing distinctly separate from the product promoted, not connected to a specific instance of a performance but rather to an affective experience resulting therein. If the product can become removed from the trailer to a mediating experience what this shows is that trailer such as the Clybourne Park trailer, are narrative interpretations of a narrative product rather than a re-constituted narrative that warrants a subjective interpretation when viewed on-screen (as with the current understanding of film trailers).

While well-funded theatre companies are outsourcing to designated production houses there is a sense of the production shaping the narrative of the trailer, owing to the space, the availability of the performance with which to create a trailer and almost certainly an awareness of other trailers on the market. While the theatre trailer is in development, its existence as a response to increased digital technology demonstrates the connected way in which a culture of videosharing has impacted upon arts communities in order to improve funding. It is almost certain that the rise of theatre trailers could not have occurred without a free platform for dissemination like Youtube.com. This being said the existence of trailers on smaller websites suggests that trailers would have developed but it is entirely uncertain if they would have been called 'trailers' and if they would have been ridiculed by the press as mere novelties.

Chapter 3: Trailers and the Publishing Industry

Introduction

For centuries the publishing industry has existed, arguably taking form with the invention of the printing press and the development of distribution systems that allowed a single text to be rapidly reproduced (and delivered to customers) for profit. For the last hundred years, the publishing and bookselling industries have coincided with the film industry (and the emergence of the film trailer), and for a little over seventy-five years alongside broadcast television and the maturation of audio-visual broadcast networks that have resulted in a culture of audio-visual promotion. Yet it is only after the turn of the millennium; with the development of the internet, and both industrial and individual engagement with audio-visual technology, that short films known as book trailers became a phenomenon. In many ways the publishing and bookselling industry's engagement with book trailers runs parallel to those of theatre; the emergence of the book trailer occurs at a time of increased technological engagement and within the same post-millennial window that sees the rise of a wider videosharing culture, and theatre trailers themselves. Yet unlike the theatre trailer, the book trailer's emergence seems to have been catalysed by the introduction of electronic books rather than specific cuts to government grants.

Prior to the emergence of a short-form text, the term 'book trailer' has a long and complex history, being used to indicate a general form of promotion for books ranging from interviews to tie-ins: nor is it the only term being applied to these texts with competing terms to describe essentially the same phenomenon. Despite a long history in which book trailers exist either as a conceptual or actual entity, the post-millennial book trailers have been ridiculed in the press. Media essentialist debates emerge that surround the use of this promotion; being called 'terrific diversions' as their status next to the book is 'ambiguous' (Irvine 2012). In part such criticism focuses on the poor production values, as many book trailers are not created by dedicated production houses but by individual authors seeking to boost attention for their own work. As an emergent trend, these 'book trailers' range in style from a slide show of still images with accompanying music with voice-over narration, to short filmed indexical incarnations of elements of a book's plot. They may be images of the book itself in association with the author providing some form of address; they may be a montage of still images representing themes from the book's plot; images from its cover or animated sequences that seek to frame a book's narrative in a given way. In short, their shared features are the combined use of images and sound to create a form of promotion for books. Largely the books under discussion fall into the

genre of fiction though book trailers can conceivably be used for any form of writing. It is perhaps the emphasis on fiction that results in many commentators suggesting that the use of the book trailer stands in contrast to everything a book should be: namely printed words on paper rather than filmed images.

Alongside such media essentialism, the book trailer has an unlikely ally in librarians and educators who regularly write about the trailer's use in education and literature engagement albeit in a different vernacular. Despite the volume of educators discussing and utilising the book trailer, only two scholarly articles have attempted to engage with the book trailer as a phenomenon rather than a classroom tool.³⁴ Both works by Voigt (2013) and Davila (2010) have attempted to understand the book trailer but both do so without fully exploring the industry and the existing theory together: treating the trailer as either a product of industrial output from one company alone, or as an extension of a book's narrative respectively. The result is that despite the significant volume of work on book trailers, few in academia see the trailer beyond a functional device to increase student literacy, and fewer still have taken steps to understand the trailer in any detail with significant intellectual rigour. While the texts within the guiding corpus are significantly varied, they operate under the term 'trailer' sharing the same promotional goals, and indicate the various forms the book trailer can take. How these trailers are used, received, and ultimately understood within academic and popular discourse informs not only the understanding of the publishing industry, but suggests the book trailer as a wider element of a cultural phenomenon.

This chapter is broadly divided into two distinct sections, a historical trajectory of the factors that influence the emergence of the guiding corpus and a study of trailer nomenclature, aesthetics and the press reception of the book trailer. Due to a dearth of academic consideration this reception considers both academic studies of the book trailer. The historical frame is intended not as a continuous historical narrative but rather a discussion of elements that impacted upon the formulation of the book trailer. At points these overlap and interweave with the book trailer but for the purposes of clarity, the book trailer is absent from discussion of antecedent trends, referring back to these in the second

³⁴ The dominant number of references to book trailers found consider it a tool for enhancing learning and discusses it as such, rather than an emergent phenomena, such research is focused on literacy and education. Cf. Cortoni 2012, Chance & Lesesne 2012, Dopke-Wilson 2009, Gunter & Kenny 2008, Loranc 2013, Mayer 2010. Between 2009 and 2013 the Lexis database offers 1419 references to 'book trailer', with 133 for the period 2006-2009 and nine confirmed references for the period 2005-6 with 15 confirmed results for the period 1990-2005. The majority of this 15 are duplicates, with only 5 different instances being identified (Thomas 1998, Walker 2000, Business Wire 2000, Waxler 2002, Rush et al 2002).

section. This first section considers the industry in which book trailers are situated, briefly their historical antecedent forms and the impact of digital broadcast networks the space in which the publishing and bookselling industry and its constituent components now occupies. The second section of this chapter extrapolates upon the specific terminology used to describe the trailer, the ways elements within the industry have attempted to control the form, and considers the specific aesthetic and historical development of these trailers. This section uses the industrial and academic contributions of book trailer nomenclature as a framework around which to place and thus discuss the different aesthetics at work within the trailer highlighting a disconnection between the academic and industrial conceptualisation. Finally this section considers the varied aesthetics of the guiding corpus illustrating the previous discussion with case studies from the guiding corpus. Ultimately the conclusions drawn within this chapter are based on the corpus rather than the wider discussion of book trailer aesthetics; this may be said to be a limitation to the methodology employed, but is an inherent drawback to studying an emerging and potentially changing trend.

Historical Overview: before the trailer

While book trailers are comparatively new phenomena, throughout the history of the publishing industry, there has been a need to promote the goods within it. Given the focus on promotion of books, it makes sense then to merge the roles of book publisher and bookseller; for ease becoming 'the industry'. Understanding the history of book promotion aides the formulation of this chapter through providing a coherent, if abridged historical overview of key developments and these are later used to illuminate the contemporary phenomena under discussion herein. Much has been written on the history of publishing and bookselling and to reiterate all of this in great detail exceeds the purposes of this contextual overview detracting from the overall purpose of such context.³⁵ However, it helps to consider briefly the history of the industry in order to set out the object of study and observe the broad changes that precede the emergence of the book trailer.

The revolution of the 1800s saw the emergence of the triad of book printers, book publishers and book sellers, who up until this point were one and the same thing (Gault

³⁵ For comprehensive studies of the bookselling and publishing industry see: Norrie (1984), Schiffrin (2000), Clark (2001), and Raven (2007).

1982: 3-4. cf. 'Prologue' in Norrie 1982).³⁶ With the emergence of publishers as separate from sellers, came a mediator between the point of sale book providers, the booksellers themselves, and the authors.³⁷ Though the book has a long and complex history prior to this, it is during the 1800s that an industry similar to the current one emerged. Around this time the role of the fiction book as a commodity within the industry was furthered with the introduction of the bound novel, partially aided (in the UK) with the popularity of Walter Scott's *Waverly*, published by Archibald Constable in 1814. The success of the book (bound as three separate volumes, a so called 'triple-decker') influenced a further trend in the industry, breaking away from the serialised format of the time (Feather 1988: 150-1).³⁸ Prior to this it had already been the case that booksellers used myriad promotional strategies. Such strategies centre around shaping products for targeted clients: facilitating changes to 'the design and packaging of products, and presenting these, as well as wider publishing activities, as fashionable and *avant-garde*'. This developed into wider modes of consumer-seller interaction including 'critical reviewing and newspaper advertising; the encouragement of buying for the sake of fashion' (Raven 2007: 269-270). So with these strategies in mind we can see that:

[w]ith Scott and Constable[and their triple-decker], we can see for the first time the fundamental economics of modern publishing: heavy investment in a first edition, not least in advertising and marketing, in the hope of reaping profits from reprints once the title was established as a steady sell on the back-list (Feather 1988: 151)

This economic model requires significant investment on the part of the publishers and considerable faith in the book itself: revenue generation hinges largely on the creation of an advertising campaign in conjunction with sustained public demand for the product itself. Part of such a campaign was presumably the movement away from a serialised format to the triple-decker as a form of innovation (and thus product differentiation). As Raven notes, 'cheap print in traditional, familiar forms sold with relative and predictable ease; new and often costly books required fresh, regular and persuasive forms of

³⁶ The distinction of the publisher from the publisher-creator came about as a result of lapses within the early copyright laws, circa 1777, coinciding with the industrial revolution, when John Bell started to reprint public domain poetry, generating profits as long as a text was in demand (Feather 1988: 116).

³⁷ While as early as the seventeenth century 'a rudimentary type of book advertising existed in Old and New England that might include advance notices in previously published volumes, copy in newsbooks or newspapers and entries in publishers' lists' (Derounian 1988: 249). See also Raven (2007) who traces the origins of the industry to 1695, and outlines in greater detail than is contextually necessary here, the promotion of early books. (257-293).

³⁸ A useful discussion of this decline, albeit centred around *Sherlock Holmes*, is work by Wiltse (1998).

advertising' (2007: 257). With the amount of investment required to launch a book, it is unsurprising then that in the early industry the publisher held considerable power in shaping the climate of a forthcoming book in order to protect an investment. A network of contacts, and investment capital held by the publisher essentially acted as a conduit between the (presumably private) domain of the author and the public domain of the published work. The publisher took on the role of a distributor including sending copies of books to periodicals for review, and arranging the printed pages to be bound, occasionally selling these to other publishers in a different area in exchange for money as in the case of the early American publishing industry (Charvat 1944).³⁹ Indeed, Charvat's work on the early American publishing industry extrapolates this, noting that in many cases the publisher enclosed pre-written reviews and notes for a periodical's editor supposedly in order to prevent inconvenience (Ibid: 81).⁴⁰ In doing this, the role of the book publisher blurs with the role of the bookseller, taking up the end role of the supply chain; though it must be noted that while distinct roles, those of book seller and book publisher have never been mutually exclusive.

With the creation of the printing press, the ease of reproduction increased and multiple copies of the same newspapers, periodicals and books came to be sold and distributed to the public by individual sellers upon whom the publisher would rely. Within the sales space of the bookstore, the bound book became associated with visual elements; poster campaigns, dust jackets and cover art that developed out of increasingly ornate book covers of the 1820s (Matthews & Moody 2007 xii), with the dust jacket being traced to 1896, though several earlier examples exist (Tanselle 1971: 92)⁴¹. As visual printing techniques developed alongside the use of cover art at the beginning of the twentieth century, books became promoted with images reflective of generic signifiers, with 'showcards, posters and streamers' used at the point of sale (Matthews & Moody 2007: xiii). Visual promotion came to be of increasing importance and remains so to this day within this context (cf. Sutherland 1991, Andersen 2012). Such paratextual promotion, as

³⁹ Part of this process of review would form the Best Seller list, first published in America in *The Bookman* (imitating a London-based publication of the same name, in 1895, later extending to Canada) (Miller 2000: 289).

⁴⁰ As part of this interpersonal network, Charvat suggests that 'it was easy for a publisher to incur the displeasure of an editor who had the power to hurt him, by not sending him books or by sending him the wrong ones'(ibid 79). This has obvious similarities with the early American film industry, and the use of promotional slides distributed to exhibitors. See *Coming Attractions: The History of the Movie Trailer* (DVD, Kaleidoscope Creative Group, 2005) for wider context. See also a brief history of publication lists as promotion (Feather 1988: 99-100).

⁴¹ See Tanselle (1971, 2003-4), and Andersen (2012) for a comprehensive breakdown of the dust-jackets and associated paratextual materials.

it subsequently has come to be theorised by Gérard Genette (1987), would often come straight from the publisher who would offer incentives to integrate specific books with window and shelf displays (Matthews & Moody 2007: xiii). As the trade in books developed, bookstores became cultural hubs where readings and signings took place forming a key aspect of nineteenth-century culture surrounding the bookstore (Raven 2007: 113). This kind of interaction fostered discussion amongst patrons that has become known in an academic context as 'booktalk', a term coined by Aiden Chambers.⁴² Chambers implicitly suggests the booktalk comes about through discussion of the act of engagement with literature as a cycle of selection, reading and response (1985: 11).⁴³ This kind of discussion became part of the sense of community that emerged surrounding books, and indeed underpins the critical review, that is itself a form of public, unilateral booktalk.⁴⁴ Though the term was coined in the 1980s Lissa Paul has drawn retrospective connections between the early industry and the contemporary industry both as sites for booktalk (2011: 17). This concept of the booktalk in both periods has a clear application to the intertextual nature of all forms of promotional materials for books and can be applied to discussions held by both the end-users of the book, and to the promotional strategies used by those with a vested interest in a product's success.

While the roles of the publisher and bookseller within the industry have changed subtly since the early 1800s, the premise of these two functioning together for a book product's creation and distribution respectively has led the mediation of these products through the act of promotion; this remains a key element of the industry right through to the present day with the emergence of digital paratexts. It helps then, to consider publishers akin to film producers, videogame studios, and theatre companies (or constituent elements therein). Each of these provides a platform for talent, potentially exerting influence over creative output, sometimes recruiting specific creative personnel for projects, other times being solicited by potential clients seeking a well-known and

⁴² A publication by Bodart (1985) also uses the term 'booktalk' and it is unclear which of these came first. Gunter & Kenny suggest Chamber's coined the term though this may be inaccurate; while interesting, to explore this is tangential to the study.

⁴³ Gunter & Kenny neatly summarise Chamber's contribution to discourse:

One strategy that has been successful both in helping match potential readers with books and sharing their reading experience is the booktalk. Aidan Chambers (1985), an author of children's books and a literature teacher, coined the term to identify an activity in which teachers and students talk about the context of books they have just read. Chambers found that the process of sharing also helps others analyze a book's context and situate it for others who have not yet read it. (2008: 88)

⁴⁴ The term 'booktalk' retains its relevance directly with trailer promotion, but disappears from the public sphere until the turn of the millennium: similarly this chapter will return to the issue of booktalks as a rival term for book trailers, see page 115.

branded platform for distribution of their respective talents (regarding publishing see, Clark 2001: 82). In a usefully broad consideration John Thompson suggests that publishing (and bookselling, though Thompson considers this indirectly) is

both a *supply chain*, and a *value chain*. It is a supply chain in the sense that it provides a series of organizational links by means of which a specific product - the book - is

gradually produced and transmitted via distributors and retailers to an end user who purchases it. [...] it is a value chain in the sense that each of the links purportedly adds some 'value' in the process. (2010: 14-15)⁴⁵

It is by functioning in this capacity, as a controlling supply chain, and thus as public mediator, that the industry⁴⁶ is directly relevant to the act of book promotion that forms the focus of this chapter. This understanding as a chain of publication can be said to apply equally to the theatre, videogame and film industries; but historically and contemporaneously. Just as theatre, videogame and film trailers have the backing of studios and these studios may invoke similarly branded content to promote a product, so to do publishers: inexorably promoting their brand through the release of a new product and vice versa. While a publisher's branding may be considered as being less prominent than those of other entertainment industries there are undeniable areas of specialism across contemporary publishing groups that result in certain publishing houses taking on certain kinds of books (Clark, 2001: 85-6). Works in this model are often commissioned for specific purposes, as well as companies being open to suggestions from individual authors seeking to be published under the banner of a particular publisher. Largely the value chain theorised by Thompson largely remains the model of the industry, though with technological developments this is changing somewhat. As broadcast networks and communication infrastructure developed the established publishing chain saw changes to the links within it that decreased the publisher's central role in moving the book from the private domain of the author to the public domain of the reader. This development specifically allowed the increase of self-published work, and this implicates the kinds of

⁴⁵ The value added can be seen as a form of branding, a particular publisher being associated with a particular style or range. As Paul Grainge observes 'branding is an integral feature of modern consumer capitalism, a specific form of economic *and* cultural activity that has shaped the structure of market relations'(Grainge 2008: 23). The value added may of course be interpreted as a negative value, but the inclusion of a publisher adds to the mosaic of signifiers that inform interpretation and engagement. See also Royle *et al's* discussion of branding with respect to authors and publishers (1999/2000).

⁴⁶ This blurring of two distinct roles reflects that without a point of purchase or end-user access, the product can only be published in a distinctly limited manner, and accounts for publishers hosting their own storefront.

promotion used within the industry. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore all these changes and possibly implications therein so attention must turn to the internet and its impact specifically upon bookselling space and bookstores.⁴⁷ Hundreds of years after the industrial revolution, this thesis rejoins an established if not somewhat altered publishing industry, engaging with electronic sales, as well as electronic books.

The contemporary industry: the rise of the machines

The contemporary industry is at the time of writing, so integrated with the use of digital technology that each company may make full use of websites, public relations departments, digital content developers, and specific marketing departments (Clark 2000; 82-160).⁴⁸ These various departments represent an altered version of the interpersonal network of the publisher circa 1800. Undoubtedly the interpersonal network has altered with the rise of publicity departments, and promotional regulation at work within the industry. Many of the same marketing tools such as front covers and images of the product remain present in industry; a reminder of the origins of the physical displays within the bookstore. By way of response to or cause of, changes to the climate of the industry since the 1800s, the marketing of books now includes greater emphasis upon digital broadcast networks for the dissemination of both print, and electronic books. When the bookstore comes to the electronic domain we see these established elements are still present; the role of booktalk is still strong, with reader reviews and sample pages distributed separately from the product itself aiding this. Tied in with this maelstrom of digital engagement between the late nineteen-nineties and early noughties the book trailer emerged and it is logical then to provide an overview of the contemporary industry discussing the changes within it contemporaneous and pertinent to the book trailer's emergence. In conjunction with a move towards engagement with digital broadcast technology printed promotional materials continue to exist, and often serve as a directional channel towards (in these instances) the book's website, and a specific

⁴⁷A comprehensive overview to the print-to-digital transition can be found in Thompson (2005, 2010).

⁴⁸In this respect publishing is not dissimilar from theatre, film or videogame industries. The film and videogame industries as well as music (though not the focus of this thesis), have engaged with digital dissemination of products in order to curb piracy, while also providing a sustainable digital business model. Such online services for film as Netflix, Amazon instant, iTunes, and for videogames Steam and Amazon Digital Games serve as a legal platform from which to download games (for a fee). Theatre too is moving towards this model with DVDs and downloads of livecast and narrowcast events available for purchase though such a movement is more tentative compared to the others. See Digital Theatre [<http://www.digitaltheatre.com/production/details/much-ado-about-nothing-tennant-tate>] for indications of this engagement with digital dissemination. [accessed 3/6/14].

retailer.⁴⁹ So despite the rise of digital media there are competing promotional practices that suggest a movement towards integration of print and digital paratext. Offline promotional materials continue to exist but these increasingly reference other forms of broadcast communication and such materials on and offline reference the cover art as a signifier for the product just as the electronic bookstore does.⁵⁰ As will be shown with the book trailers, in the final section it is that the unifying feature of the various cross-media campaigns is the product's image; often an image of the book itself with focus on the cover art allowing faster recognition and point of sale identification either in physical or electronic point of sale. The use of the internet to sell books in the late 1990s shifted the storage medium of the product from shelves and displays to pixels and gigabytes allowing books to be largely stored away out of sight until needed for sale (Thompson 2005: 71). Perhaps most importantly for the economics of the consumer they could readily compare prices irrespective of a book's location, and allowed difficult to obtain work to be readily distributed to a paying consumer; knowing they can receive their orders through the post or as a digital download (Brynjolfsson et al. 2003). The online bookseller Amazon typifies this, starting out in a garage in Seattle in 1995, using a website for its storefront and taking global and cultural significance shortly after its emergence (Thompson 2005: 71).⁵¹ In a useful overview to the digital engagement on the part of the industry, Kipling & Wilson (2000) observed the use of booksellers' and publishers' web presence over the period 1995-1998, coinciding with Amazon's development (largely understood as an emerging period of online commerce for the publishing industry), covering 3,336 companies from

⁴⁹ They may take the form of posters, 'free samplers'; printed short extracts containing author information and images of the book cover art: often these may unfold to form a poster on the reverse. Free samples may physically stand alone or may be appended to the back pages of a book by the same author (as with the work by George R.R. Martin's *Song of Fire and Ice* series), or to work within the same genre. Often distributed at cinemas and similar public places un-appended printed promotional leaflets may also offer incentives. Four such leaflets, taken from the public foyer of Odeon, and Vue cinema chains in Norwich, all offered opportunities to win either electronic goods (Ipad touch, Ipad) or vouchers (£150 cinema voucher, £200 Topshop voucher) through interaction with a website or facebook group. *Throne of Glass* (Maas 2012), *MetaWars* (Norton 2012). *Magyk* (Sage 2005), *Mortal Chaos: Deep Oblivion* (Dickinson 2012). *Throne of Glass* explicitly mentions 'watch the book trailer' and features a QR code for engagement via a mobile device, while *Magyk* is a postcard with promotional competitions printed in small print on the reverse.

⁵⁰ Gillian Lathey (2005) notes the dominance of a single instance of cover art dominates the international editions of the *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Rowling 1997), and this can be said to form a global face of the product: that which Klinger calls of a film, the unique consumable identity (1989). The repeated use of the book's cover in promotion and point-of-sale can be said to reinforce the application of Klinger's principles to the book publishing and selling industry.

⁵¹ While not solely responsible for the changes in the publishing chain, Amazon is particularly useful for demonstrating the kinds of changes occurring within the publishing industry that led to the use of book trailers, and so is used here as an example.

the *Yahoo!* directory (Yahoo.com).⁵² Such developments of note by the authors include the use of: chat rooms, customer reviews of books (both of which enable booktalk), general company information, forthcoming events, order tracking, back catalogue search facilities, online ordering and presumably by extension, delivery tracking services, etc. (148-9). The authors observe that within the data set only 6% of the publishers used websites that contained audio-visual elements, 'some publishers use sound for readings from books, and among comic publishers the use of video clips seemed fairly popular' (151). This is in contrast to the majority of websites that were using:

a combination of text and graphics and photographs (67%). Many were book covers (presumably scanned, and not always of the best quality). Commentators on the publishing industry have always emphasized the importance of book covers to attract customers' attention. (Ibid)

This latter point the authors note, is applicable to booksellers, text only bookseller sites making up 4% of the data set, 'and seemed to be those of mainly smaller booksellers with small stocks.' (ibid: 152). It is clear then, that within both physical and digital marketplaces, the images of the book's cover play a significant role within book promotion and selection, and that elements of the earliest promotional practices remain in the online store in a new context. It is also clear that during the period of data collection few of these sites offered any content that could be retrospectively construed as a book trailer. The authors make no reference to trailers though noted that 'some publishers use sound for readings from books, and among comic publishers the use of videoclips seemed fairly popular' (ibid). While no subsequent data is available to update and replicate the study for comparison, a study by Laing implicitly suggests that the further rise of such online bookstores (within the UK) are a response to Amazon.co.uk's dominance on the book market (2008: 12).⁵³ What this overview of digital engagement does is illuminate the

⁵² The paper 'Publishing, bookselling and the world wide web' (Kipling & Wilson; 2000) makes it clear that the data collection began in 1995 but fails to include an end date; however it can be inferred that the data collection stopped in the period mid-1998 to 1999. 'The heading 'publishing' is broken down into 57 subheadings, in Yahoo! and included, in mid-1998, 3,336 companies 'as part of a review' (148) . As the paper suggests article submission was in December 1999 and it was published in 2000: the anticipated end date for data capture given may be incorrect. This however, does not detract from the notion of increased digital engagement from 1995.

⁵³ Since its launch Amazon has grown to become the largest mediator of book sales on the planet. Amazon.co.uk has been reported to hold nearly 69% share of the online book traffic, while physical bookstores that also have an online presence, such as WHSmith has around 1% and Waterstones around 0.7% of UK online traffic (Teather, 2007: 28-29). Teather does point out that the traffic alone does not suggest sales, nor intention, and it must be noted that Amazon.co.uk sells significantly more than books, yet the number of visitors, and thus potential online sales are significantly higher than those that host physical stores in addition to an online store.

decade for which there are no references to book trailers as short-form texts. It suggests that this time was one of increased digital engagement and through trial-and-error, a period of experimentation on the part of the industry. Specifically, this digital experimentation of the 1990s leads to one very important development: that of electronic books. These e-books fundamentally change the way in which the book is perceived and operates in the millennium, and offers authors the opportunity to bypass traditional links of the industry chain in order to develop their own products (and their own promotion).

E-books and Print on demand (POD)

Using Amazon as an example again we can see that elements of its business model were adapted to include the use of e-books; digital 'prints' that exist alongside and separately from any paper prints. Though the concept of the e-book dates back to 1949 (and arguably earlier), with the invention of Father Roberto Busa's index of medieval latin (Priego 2011),⁵⁴ More recently the e-book in conjunction with the e-bookstore, facilitated the use of increased digital downloading and precipitated the rise of dedicated digital devices as part of an online shopping experience.⁵⁵ This increased digital activity points towards the key impetus in developing a platform of increased online promotion. The occupied space of the bookstore and its products can be said to exist entirely digitally. This industrial context has fuelled some of the fears surrounding the future of the book itself and created an environment where books can be read and purchased via dedicated devices, fixed point computers, and any combination thereof.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Busa's 'e-book' 'began with punched cards and card sorting machines in the late 1940s and was completed (33 years later) in the 1970s, using large IBM mainframe computers with computer-driven typesetting equipment. With various indexes and other associated information, the *Index* consists of about 70,000 typeset pages.' (Teaching Scotland, 2001). The earliest recognisable e-book similar to contemporary conceptualisation is the Stephen King Novella, *Riding the Bullet* (2000) a PDF released by publishers Simon and Schuster that was initially priced at around \$2, before Amazon and Barnes and Noble offered it for free. Reports suggest around 500,000 people accessed it in the first week (Gunter 2005.). Thompson claims that 400,000 people accessed it in the first 24 hours (2005: 311).

⁵⁵ It has been announced by Amazon.co.uk, that for every 100 print books sold by Amazon, 114 e-books for the company's branded device 'Kindle' are also sold. Additionally, Amazon reported that Kindle owners were inclined to buy 'up to four times more' books than they were prior to owning an e-reader (BBC News 6/8/12). However, the number of those who purchase e-books against purchases of print books remains difficult to quantify entirely owing to second-hand print book market.

⁵⁶ This realises the observations of a UNESCO report commissioned in the 1980s as part of triad of investigations into the impact of new media in relation to the book. The report observed that:

[w]ith the far-reaching technological revolution we are now experiencing, it is precisely this same division of functions that is being called into question; book clubs now prepare, print and sell their products direct; soon, with the emergence of new media, powerful multinational groups currently being established, will prepare and market their products, not even needing to go through the intermediate stage of printing (at least in the case of those which will set themselves up as suppliers for data banks). (Gault 1982 Part II: 5)

The development of both print on demand, digital storage and the digital bookstore itself results in a comparative elimination of traditional costs associated with sourcing work from an author and promoting to the public. The result of print on demand is that of a reduced risk of over-printing books: print on demand services mean publishers can take on more projects selling only those copies for which there is a buyer, increasing the amount of economically viable products on the marketplace (Haugland 2006).⁵⁷ As well as being used to reduce space in warehouses, this model has been adopted by self-publishing *services*, in which authors can submit their own projects with minimal cost to the publisher who acts as a platform for dissemination but not necessarily of editorial control. Self-publishing, thanks to the emergence of digital technologies as well as the digital marketplace allows anyone to disseminate work to the public (unless such work violates terms of service). Services such as Amazon's self-publishing service; Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP), have therefore increased the ease with which individuals can create both digital and physical books.⁵⁸ This service, for which a commission of the proceeds (if any) is taken, uses many of the same processes available to the professional publishing house in terms of physically creating a book (both print and electronic) and acts as a value chain of conventional publishing. Even if the 'added value' may not be as culturally high as other publishing groups, the ability to publish without editorial permission should be seen as a form of 'added value'. There is no indication of a peer review or second party editing prior to publication using KDP, indeed the KDP website indicates the use of customer feedback to eliminate mistakes to the e-book only post-publication (KDP Content Quality 2012).

Self-publishing may provide a platform for a book that other publishing companies have rejected, or it may allow the author to exert greater control over that which gets published. The rise of self-publishing has therefore increased the number of products on the marketplace, and in doing so allowed authors without the financial and cultural capital of publishing houses to appear on the electronic marketplace, alongside print and electronically published products that arguably do have such capital backing them. Self-publishing and print on demand are both add to the complex environment that surrounds the online and offline industry in a digital age. So it is that the introduction of digital

⁵⁷ So important is the role of print on demand Amazon.co.uk have been reportedly attempting to renegotiate access to a publisher's catalogue (Page 2014).

⁵⁸ Amazon's self-publishing service, Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP), started in 2011 and allows authors to submit manuscripts directly to the Amazon marketplace for distribution to Kindles appliances or Kindle enabled appliances. Amazon.co.uk redirects to Amazon.com for this purpose. It is noted further that Amazon.com owns createspace.com that prints and binds physical copies of books.

technology has radically shaped the environment of creation and distribution within the industry; and this coincides and is directly responsible for, shaping the emergence of the book trailer as a promotional entity.

The book trailer, its competing nomenclature

The composite term 'book trailer', began to emerge in earnest around turn of the millennium with little evidence of it existing prior to this. The book trailer as a readily identifiable entity emerged after the turn of the new millennium and may still be said to be in the process of emergence at the time of writing.⁵⁹ Like the theatre trailers in the previous chapter, there is documentation suggesting that the term existed before it became widespread, though only one reference to book trailers prior to 2000 can be found. While the trailers gathered within the corpus have been identified on the basis of being called 'trailers' there are two competing terms that exist, describing texts that could be considered to be trailers: the 'vidlit' and the 'booktalk'. Though neither have been applied to audiovisual texts prior to 2004, and neither are used with as much frequency as the term 'trailer'. While the book trailer dominates public discourse these other terms highlight the issues with relying on a single form of nomenclature, and suggest further avenues for subsequent study that may have some impact upon the trailer's development. As part of this industry overview and methodological reflection they are included herein.

The vidlit, an amalgamation of 'video' and 'literature' coined by Liz Dubelman in 2004, has come to describe a specific kind of promotion by Dubelman's production house of the same name. Registered as a United States Trademark (Number 78441079) in 2004, Dubelman's trademarked term has no description of its application to audiovisual texts, and it seems in this instance that the trademark pertains to the company name rather than a specific product thereof.⁶⁰ Dubelman's company claims to be 'Web 3.1 and beyond. We are the advertising, marketing, and content creators that your project demands' (Vidlit.com). Despite this self-branding the company avoids the term 'trailer' in its discourse. Despite this, the vidlit has been directly equated to the book trailer by commentators:⁶¹

⁵⁹ Any historical observation of emergence, or arrival into the public domain is rooted in retrospect: at the time of writing it would be premature to suggest the trailer has done anything other than emerge into the public sphere.

⁶⁰ The description in the application form of June 24th 2004 states only: 'entertainment services, namely, transmitting streamed sound and audiovisual recordings via the Internet' (USPTO 78441079)

⁶¹ While the majority of comparisons between Vidlits and trailers occur by commentators rather than Dubelman, there is one reference where Dubelman appears to confirm this comparison in Maul (2006): Liz

Hollywood has movie trailers for marketing. The record business has music videos and now the publishing industry is experimenting with multimedia promotion which may be the next great way to sell books. (Scott Simon, in NPR 2005).⁶² Chronologically, the development of the vidlit occurs after the emergence of the book trailer and is dwarfed by comparison.⁶³ So while the Vidlit does appear to be a nomenclative entity distinct from the book trailer it is being subsumed within a wider discourse that concerns the book trailer. Despite exhaustive searches there is little evidence to suggest a use of the term 'vidlit' outside direct discussions of the company Vidlit.

The second term that coincides with the book trailer, the 'booktalk', already existed prior to the digital age, being applied to aural book reports and presentations within an educational context (cf. Chambers, 1985) as well as general reflections on books (Paul 2011). Educators, largely those working within child and adolescent literacy education, have used the term 'booktalk' to apply to an audiovisual text that functions within an educational context to promote a specific book and thus the act of reading. This therefore necessitates a distinction between the aural booktalk, and the profilmic booktalk. As Gunter & Kenny observe, within the classroom the classic aural booktalk presentation has become more multimodal tangentially leading to the development of the digital, profilmic booktalk:

More recently, supporters of [aural and written, classic] booktalks like Nancy Keane (2004) have modernized the concept by adding mediated communication channels into the mix. She has developed an extensive booktalk Web site (<http://www.nancykeane.com>), on which she explains that the purpose of a booktalk is to sell the book to potential readers by grabbing their attention in a shared environment using various means that include movie trailers from movies made from the books or actual scenes from the movies themselves. Others suggest videotaping the [aural] booktalks so students can share the experience on the Web (Keane, 2004). (Gunter & Kenny, 2008)

Dubelman, co-executive producer of VidLit, agrees: "It turns book trailers from marketing to direct sales." According to Dubelman, VidLits have click-through rates between 8 and 50 percent, with children's books having the highest rates.'

⁶² cf. *TheBookStandard.com* 2006; NPR 2006, and deWaal Malefyt, describing the company Vidlit as a 'successful book trailer company' (2006: 139).

⁶³ By way of broad indication only, a LexisNexis search of English language news sources found only 34 references to 'vidlit' whereas the same search of 'book trailer' found 1888 references in its database as a whole: [both accurate as of 9/7/14]. Of these 1888 references, not all could be verified.

This multimodal approach uses a text that can be seen as a book trailer operating under another name, within another context and for another (non-fiscal purpose). In this respect they are no different from fan-made trailers. As Gunter (2012) points out however, the aesthetic structure varies across book trailers that occur in the context of a booktalk.

It should be pointed out that the book trailer concept [for Gunter] has very specific goals and outcomes that differ greatly from those iterations [of the booktalk in general] developed by others. Some teachers, for example, merely record themselves or their students talking about the books. Others videotape students presenting written book reports. Still others create commercials about the books. The major difference with this approach is that it is based on a premise of teaching the story creation process as well as of students acting out various scenes from the book. (Gunter 2012: 142)

While the aesthetic diversity and differentiation may be true across the education sector (to explore this is tangential to this chapter: this aesthetic diversity is reflected within the guiding corpus), Gunter sees a distinction between readers talking to the camera, 'commercials' and the presentation of written work (ibid). For Gunter then it would appear that the dramatisation of plot and narrative are the key features of a book trailer in this context, but only in the context of conveying a book's narrative.⁶⁴ While only one opinion, this emphasis on audiovisual representation of a book's narrative is comparable with a much wider set of concepts about the role of the trailer against the role of advertising. Though it is unclear exactly where the boundaries exist between such a nomenclative division, and this is dealt with in the final section. However, for many the booktalk as an entity retains its educational (and unmediated, interpersonal) origins and remains not the profilmic booktalk but the wider act of commenting upon a book. This commentary may happen to take the form of, or use a profilmic book trailer, but there is evidence of a nomenclative division between the two terms (Link 2010; Dreon et al. 2011; Chance & Lesesne 2012; Loranc 2013).⁶⁵ What is clear is that as digital technology develops, the profilmic booktalk is gaining traction within an educational context. The profilmic booktalk is tied up within a wider set of nomenclature, goals and objects that suggest it is subject to different conditions of development; and these warrant further study in order to explore the role of the booktalk, the profilmic booktalk, and interaction of these with the book trailer.

⁶⁴ Gunter provides a breakdown of methods that underpin the work, based on Branigan's *Narrative Comprehension* (1992).

⁶⁵ Though this distinction is contextual rather than indicated by the collocation of 'aural' or 'profilmic'.

While the nomenclature and context of reception may differ, the ontological relationship of the vidlit, the profilmic booktalk, and the book trailer with the book promoted remain fundamentally the same. To use Henrik Gottlieb's table of semiotic translation, an audiovisual text for a book using images rather than words from the book itself constitutes a 'supersemiotic translation' where the channels of communication available to the translation (the audiovisual text) are greater than those available to the source material (2005: 7).⁶⁶ So it is that both the profilmic booktalk and the vidlit can be considered implicitly within a wider study of the trailer with the caveat that these may well develop further along different trajectories. Further, the profilmic booktalk, the vidlit, and the book trailer, all constitute a form of commentary on another text (regardless of the status of that text's existence). With audiovisual promotion for printed books this commentary exists primarily through the intertextual referencing and thus framing of a printed product. The booktalk (as understood by Paul 2011) can therefore serve as a hyponym for all these texts, such a hierarchical structure to nomenclature is premature at this time, and would see no difference between mashup, spoof or remix book trailers,⁶⁷ programmes that discuss literature, television, radio trailers, posters, presentation and so is limited in its application within this thesis.

The book trailer 1988-2001

While the development of the profilmic booktalk and the vidlit occur around 2004 with Dubelman (2004) and Keane (2004), the book trailer has a much longer history that precedes and overlaps these terms; though both are largely subsumed into discussion of trailers within this chapter. The earliest reference to the book trailer, occurs over a decade prior to the emergence of vidlits and profilmic booktalks, and has a complex history that forms the remaining focus of this industry case study. Like other forms of trailer in this thesis, the history of the book trailer can be traced by its reflected use in the archived press. This is particularly relevant considering the absence of any early book trailers from known archives.

⁶⁶ This translation is somewhat challenged when we consider the various incarnations of the book: as a text that can span multiple media; as a print media, a screen based media with electronic readers, as an audio book, and with several electronic reader programmes as both simultaneously. To consider these incarnations are beyond the scope of a study of book trailers however, and impact upon the very definition of the book itself.

⁶⁷ Within the corpus no remix or mash-up book trailers have been found and further research is needed to explore the possible existence of these in relation to books.

In 1988 *The Globe and Mail* (Canada) reported that the CBC⁶⁸ and the Book and Periodical Development Council were to work jointly on a programme to:

produce, promote and broadcast six 20 - second “trailers” on books chosen to complement selected TV programs [...] The CBC will produce the trailers on books suggested by the National Library. The first, scheduled to begin in September with the broadcasting of the Summer Olympics, will deal with books on the Olympics and on sports generally. Other suggested areas are books on medicine and research for a TV movie based on the discovery of insulin by Drs. Frederick Banting and C. H. Best, and children's literature for an undecided family program. (Kirchhoff 1988)

Kirchhoff's article here grounds the earliest known reference to the book trailer in the context of education, and unlike the early experiments with theatre trailers in art house cinemas this use is not directly linked with promotion for fiscal gain.⁶⁹ It is possible that this programme of literacy encouragement was applied in other locations and contexts prior to its subsequent emergence as a profilmic booktalk. While there is no evidence for this; the lack of evidence, is not in itself evidence of an absence. The principal driving force behind this early media engagement is a library promoting the *use* of books, rather than a bookseller promoting book sales, though the books included in this programme presumably may have been bought as well as borrowed. This commentary indicates an understanding of multimedia forms of engagement to promote reading that parallels the later development of the profilmic booktalk, specifically the emphasis on child literacy. This connection with the aural booktalk however, is not made explicit within the article, indeed this is only three years after the term emerged, and decades prior to the application of profilmic booktalks within education. Instead, the commentary here suggests that these book trailers are general advertising that in this instance appears on television, and that such advertising may encourage children to read.⁷⁰ Without the original trailer however, it is difficult to extrapolate further except to say that this (implicitly determinist) development perhaps stems from wider concerns about literacy, media and children in the mid-to-late 1980s. From the use of quotation marks around the term 'trailer', it can be inferred that this is an established term being used in a different context, probably taken

⁶⁸ It is unclear exactly what CBC stands for it is speculated that this refers to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation which operate under the acronym CBC though this is not included within the original report. See <http://www.cbc.ca/> [10/6/14]. It is however possible this references the Children's Book Council, (CBC) though this appears to be an American association, the possibility cannot be discounted.

⁶⁹ See Ch. 1 'Videogames'.

⁷⁰ This echoes Guy Cook's understanding of advertising irrespective of access to the product (2006).

from the film industry rather than an existing use within industries of videogaming or publishing.⁷¹ The other possibility is that such an audiovisual text labelled here as a 'trailer' would otherwise operate under a different name. This latter point in turn suggests that the term 'trailer' here is a promotional one included within a press release or interview and these 'trailers' would otherwise have a different name, probably advertising; given the use of the term trailer in promoting the videogame *Mortal Kombat* this is likely.⁷² The possibility of book advertising existing on television prior to this should not be overlooked but warrants further study that exceeds the scope of this thesis.⁷³

While *The Globe and Mail* is the earliest found reference to book trailers as form of promotion, the contemporaneous use of this term 'trailer' in conjunction with 'books' was largely not to describe promotion but rather an often mobile repository in which books were held or transported.⁷⁴

Prior to the turn of the millennium, the press commentary surrounding the book trailer when not referring to a mobile repository is of a concept or relations between texts rather than a specific kind of short film;⁷⁵ suggesting that the 1988 reference to a specific audiovisual text is atypical of the wider trend at this time. There are several articulations of the book trailer as an intertextual reference prior to the turn of the millennium, all from publications based in the UK, but much like the application of the term booktalk these refer to the wider intertextual referencing rather than a specific short form text; as with Kirchoff's article. Waldemar Januszczak of the *Sunday Times* (London) writing in 1993 suggested that:

If arts programmes are to be truly distinguishable from trailers and TV advertisements for a new book, a new exhibition, a new film, then they must be free to mount proper critical investigations and to come to properly independent conclusions. (Januszczak 1993).

⁷¹ This introduction of the term 'trailer' within inverted commas can be found throughout press commentary and as late as 2010. It would appear to be influenced by the author's awareness of the phenomena: newspapers are more likely to use this than industry publications.

⁷² cf. Gruson 1993. No original press release can be found however, and no corroborating press articles can be found that cite the use of the term 'trailer' in this manner; so this may be a single instance of a journalist using this term of their own volition.

⁷³ There is evidence for example, in 2006 that book trailers migrated from the internet back to the television screen as 'TV advertising' (Baker & Atkinson 2006).

⁷⁴ For example, 'The 800-square-foot trailer, at Buffalo Avenue and 26th Street, was built for 5,000 books.' (Poe 1990, St Petersburg Times (Florida)).

⁷⁵ This too applies across other industries: examples of this may be found to be present for theatre, videogames and books demonstrating a wider movement in the term 'trailer' irrespective of aesthetic forms towards the referencing of another text. For other examples of this kind of comparison within theatre and videogame industries respectively see also (Barker 1988), Kempley (1989) and Arnold (1989).

While it is unclear if Januszczak is making a direct reference to book trailers as a specific text, Januszczak is clearly articulating the concept of a trailer being the relationship between two different texts. This articulation of the book trailer as one of intertextual relationship rather than short-form audiovisual text exists up until the end of the first decade after the new millennium.⁷⁶ In 2005, a *Publishers Weekly* article observes that: 'He has put together a stellar list of authors who are contributing first chapters of their next books for free to a kind of anthology of tempting book trailers' (Baker 2005). Baker's use of the term 'book trailer' however, echoes the much earlier understanding of the book trailer in the 1990s⁷⁷ and is one articulation of book trailers rarely seen after the turn of the millennium, suggesting that after this time book trailers are an identifiable short form if only known as such by a specific sector of the industry.

Overlapping with this broader articulation of trailers as an intertextual relationship then, the trailer as an identifiable short form emerged. It is not difficult to see how such a development came about aside from Kirchhoff (1988): trailers have already been equated to press interviews, book samplers, and videogame promotion during the 1990s, and so the book trailer as an entity begins to take on cultural significance as an audiovisual form of communication. Reinforcing this, in 1998 writer James Patterson, interviewed on an NBC show segment alluded to the book trailer as a conceptual entity, rather than a normalised act of promotion:

[w]ell, I'll--I'll give you the--the--since we're television, I'll do the movie tra—
there isn't a movie, yet, but here's the movie trailer--the book trailer, let's call it.'
(NBC Transcripts 1998)

⁷⁶ It is anticipated that as the term 'book trailer' comes to apply to specific shorts, this articulation of the trailer will become increasingly qualified when used; as a way of differentiation between trailer-as-intertext and trailer as short form.

⁷⁷ This is explored in greater detail in the following chapter but serves to provide context for the book trailer herein. There are many indications of 'trailer' as an intertextual form. *The Independent* (London) for instance suggested that:

Meanwhile, Geoffrey Jellicoe's book, *The Landscape of Civilisation*, provides a trailer for the experience to come, and an introduction to one of the most intriguing minds of our time (Keen 1990, italics added).

A report from the *Daily Mail* reinforces this indirectly, suggesting that an interview (it is unclear what format this took) could form a trailer for a book. That illustrates the concurrent manner in which the application of the term refers not to a specific kind of promotion but to a conceptual form of reference:

But in an interview with Sunday Times editor Andrew Neil, as a trailer for the serialisation of her book, Lady Thatcher is said to be 'very supportive' towards the Major leadership (Greig1993).

That both examples come from UK based publications suggests the possibility that a shift in vernacular application of this term was led by publications within the UK, though further research is needed to corroborate this that exists outside the scope of study.

Patterson goes on to verbally narrate a hypothetical audiovisual interpretation of his work, complete with a 'screen [that] is shaking, as they do with movie trailers, loud noise, and whatever' (ibid). Although envisioning it for descriptive and presumably (given the context of his own interview) promotional purposes, Patterson is articulating a distinct interpretation of a book trailer. This can be used to form an intellectual bridge between the textual incarnation of the trailer that followed, and the trailer of intertextual relationship of previous articulations. There is no suggestion that Patterson's 'trailer' here is a turning point in a wider vernacular application (to do so would imply a universally recognised, and linear development of the term), only to suggest that it occurs chronologically midway between two identifiable points of development. Patterson's statement may be indicative of the manner in which the trailer moved perceptually from an intertextual relationship to a specific short form text. Patterson's book trailer would have the same function and aesthetics as the film trailer and this comparison parallels the manner in which the book trailer was later introduced; but not its dominant aesthetic form. In many ways Patterson's hypothetical trailer can be seen as being the idealised form of the book trailer: in that it replicates the film trailer in all but source product and acts as a form of promotion.⁷⁸ Given the evidence from up to a decade prior, it is likely that Patterson is articulating here the same concept of the book trailer as a general form of promotion, which is inherently intertextual.⁷⁹ Further it suggests that the book trailer as an *aesthetic* short form text was largely absent throughout the period broadly identified as 1988-2000.

Two years after Patterson's 1998 statement of book trailers (in absentia), is arguably the emergence of the contemporary short form book trailer. *The Washington Post*, reporting on the developments of Canadian company Blab Media Incorporated explicitly used the term 'trailer', but importantly loaded it with context, much like the early references to the theatre trailer:

Blab partnered with Random House recently to debut a new form of greeting card that announces new books. It resembles a movie trailer, and you can think of it as a

⁷⁸ Such a hypothetical idealised movie-trailer-for-books may be seen in the numerous press articles and throughout the academic discussion of the text's reception (cf. T. Walker 2012; Ayoub 2008; and Voigt 2013).

⁷⁹ Indeed what is seen here is an extension of movie trailer as advertising for a movie with the prefix changing to denote the product (a book), suggesting that the term 'trailer' is becoming synonymous with a mode of advertising in general. The notion of the trailer as intertextual relationship between two texts is one that is illustrated throughout press commentary of the trailer in general, irrespective of industry. It represents the wider mobility of the term trailer that underpins this thesis and specifically the following chapter. It is possible that this movement from intertextual reference to short-form film accounts for the adoption of the numerous aesthetic structures trailer seen throughout this thesis.

book trailer, one you can personalize. The first e-book card promotes Anne Rice's new novel, "Merrick." (Walker 2000).⁸⁰

The 'book trailer', as Walker goes on to indicate, capitalises on the mobility of viral communication as well as referencing the movie aesthetics of the existent and better known film trailer.⁸¹ This echoes the description offered of Patterson's hypothetical book trailer suggesting a shared use of terminology and concept between the two. That both Blab Media and the CBC are Canadian based, suggests the initial movements towards book trailers emerged out of Canada, though further research is needed into the specific media environment at this time.⁸² By capitalising on the known format of the film trailer within the press release, Blab Media invokes a set of expectations; that the book trailer is mimicking the qualities or the role of the film trailer.⁸³ In positioning the book trailer in direct relation to the movie trailer Blab Media Inc are suggesting a merging of experiential products, suggesting that the *Merrick* is more than any book, it is part of a wider textual event; similar to the promotional 'Mortal Monday' for the videogame *Mortal Kombat* (Gruson 1993).

Authorised by publishers Random House who launched the book, the Blab Media e-card-trailer is clearly an example of a publisher capitalising on a known form of film promotion for the purposes of publicity and financial gain with respect to a multimedia text. Random House's use of the promotional e-card-trailer demonstrates the continuation of an early lead in this type of new media engagement compared with other publishers. While Walker's article articulates the concept of the book trailer as a form of advertising similar to earlier historical references, it is the first time the book trailer was introduced in direct comparison to movies, and the first known time, a book trailer appeared on the internet. Given the subsequent trajectory of the book trailer existing almost exclusively online, Walker's article can be seen as an early indicator of a wider turning point in book marketing, at a time when, less than five years earlier, book publishers and sellers had yet to maximise their online presence (Kipling & Wilson 2000). The release of this e-card-

⁸⁰ Further reports from *Business Wire* (2000) and *Internet Wire* (2001) echoes this phrasing and thus gives rise to the assumption herein that the emergence of the 'book trailer' is a direct result of the press release from Blab Media Inc.

⁸¹ E-cards, are videos or images stored on a central database, they are emailed to the recipient's email address provided by the sender, who can view the cards in advance. Because of this central storage system, the private nature of emails and the website domain 'Blab.com' currently being for sale the e-card is unable to be viewed [19/7/14].

⁸² It is possible that book advertising has a history of book trailers under a different name, localised to Canada, and this would go some way in explaining the geo-centricity of much of the supporting evidence; though to explore this further is beyond the scope of this study.

⁸³ This is present in Kirchoff (1988) as well as Patterson's interview, (NBC Transcripts, 1998).

trailer coincides with the emergence of the e-book as an entity and a wider development of engagement with the internet, especially as the year 2000 also saw the use of viral marketing campaign for Stephen King's Novella *Riding the Bullet*, as an E-book (Gunter 2005, 513).⁸⁴ The parallel developments of the e-book, and the emergence of the e-marketplace with this early book trailer suggests a causation between the two that collectively suggests that the period of the late 90s to early 2000s was one of a realisation of (and subsequently experimentation with) use of the internet for book promotion.

Early Trailer History 2001-2005

Tied up within this climate of change are attempts to capitalise on the potential of internet marketing through intellectual property control. It is unclear if these are attempts to control a particular developing trend, or if these are a way of anticipating possible developments for subsequent gain⁸⁵; but the very act of enshrining with legal protection helps to chart significant developments in the attitudes to book trailers. Within a year of Blab Media's announcement, a patent application was filed by Julia Zborovsky-Fenster, for a 'method of advertising and promoting a book in a visual media, and an advertising product for advertising a book and the like in a visual media' (USPTO 20010030420).⁸⁶ Interestingly, the application process here notes that:

It is known that books are advertised in visual media such as for example television, Internet, etc. by showing a portion of a text of the book, or reading a portion of the book. However, no additional visual information is provided which would be attractive to potential users of a book and the like. (Ibid)

The patent that protects this process of creating an advert claims that it functions through 'selecting at least one portion of the book and staging a scene which represents the selected portion of the book' (Ibid, Summary of Invention: clause 0004).⁸⁷ While the method of selection and subsequent industrial application of this process is unknown it adds to the context that demonstrates an awareness of existing book promotion via broadcast media: specifically the internet. In a similar manner to Zborovsky-Fenster's

⁸⁴ See also Lynch (2001).

⁸⁵ Such Non-Practicing Entities (NPE) buy up patents for the sole purposes of licensing a patent to a third party.

⁸⁶ See also patent number 20020169663, both relate to the same patent filed 14th May 2001: see USPTO.gov.

⁸⁷ This process echoes a later description of the book trailer as a trademarked entity, while echoing similar work within the film industries and computer science areas. This has similarities with work by Li, Zhang & Tretter (2001); Chunpir, Gennies et al (2007); Hermes & Schultz (2006); Smeaton et al (2006).

patent, the term 'book trailer' was trademarked in 2002 by a US based publishing group *Circle of Seven Productions (COS)* (NPR 2006: Fox 2006, Soukup 2006).⁸⁸ Similar to Zborovsky-Fenster's patent, the term is described as 'the promotion of goods of others by preparing and creating advertisements for books in the form of videos' (USPTO, No.78178966).⁸⁹ This legal protection, both the patent and the trademark description, suggests that new ways of marketing a book were being sought in response to changes in the mediascape. In part, that the events of *Blab Media*, Zborovsky-Fenster's patent and *COS*' trademark occur in such close proximity may be due to an increased awareness of the potential of the internet in relation to book promotion from the late 90s onwards. What is clear is that the legal protection outlined, in association with *Blab Media Inc's* press release suggest that a market existed, or was perceived to exist as being conducive to the development of book trailers.

It can be suggested that both these events form part of an attempt towards industry control: as Janet Staiger notes of the early film industry, legal control and specifically litigation typified the industry and aided in its stabilisation and control (Staiger 1984).⁹⁰ The subsequent use of the term 'book trailer' by the press, and the existence of other book trailer creators suggests that there has been no attempt at legal ownership through enforcement of either trademark or patent. Control however, is possibly achieved through the very act of reification in intellectual property law rather than direct conflict resolution. Concurrently, either as a result of lapses in the enforcement of this ownership, or more

⁸⁸ There was another attempt, since abandoned to trademark the term in 2003. As Downloadable video recordings featuring previews for fiction and non-fiction books (similar [sic] to internet movie trailers ; Video with audio will show and tell the customer about the story or content of the book instead of the text blurb on the back or inside cover'(USPTO serial No. 78282283).

This additional trademark attempt reinforces the interest in book trailers by those who may seek to control the form for financial gain. There is no evidence however, to suggest that the applicant (a Mr Ronald Williamson) was acting on behalf of a company, or third party unlike the claim filed by an individual associated with COS.

⁸⁹ Between 1/1/1876 and 13/06/14 there has been no attempt within the UK to trademark (and thus legally define) the term 'book trailer'. The latter date is imposed by The Intellectual Property Office to incorporate trademarks being processed within the search parameters. See: www.ipo.gov.uk.

⁹⁰ The only form of legal regulation found is a law suit connected with this topic involving Pearson Education suing Little Brown publication over a parody of one of their works (*Yiddish with Dick and Jane*) that happened to be marketed with a Vitlit, and so Dubelman was named as a defendant (Maas, 2005). Counsel for Dubelman noted that: "This is an issue of fair use between two publishers, but it points to the phenomenon that the Internet seems to allow small skirmishes to become more important." (ibid)

It is possible that this control existed without the need for litigation. The act of seeing the term trademarked may have acted as a deterrent for using the term; but without industry interviews this can only be explored by cataloguing all promotional texts similar to a book trailer within the period 2000-2. Such a catalogue, in order to support any claim of industrial control or stabilisation, would have to suggest an increase in the use, or indeed presence of, short form audio-visual texts to promote books. It is noted that there are no statistically significant references to promotional book trailers in this time.

likely by the pre-existing trajectory of the trailer equating to varying types of promotional short, the book trailer has moved and is moving into the public domain negating any claim to brand ownership.⁹¹ The registered intellectual property rights in relation to the book trailer offer *modes* of control within a competitive market; but there is no evidence of *enforcement* of such control. The lack of enforcement or any documented legal contention, despite the ultimate rise of promotional texts under the same name suggests that the industry saw a brief window in which any industrial control *could* be enforced.

Despite being enshrined in intellectual property, the three-year calendar period 2002-5, sees only five verified press references to trailers suggesting a slow movement in the reception of the book trailer; but this provides no evidence as to the number of trailers in circulation.⁹² Of these references, an industry commentary by Mass (2005) notes the key players in the development of audiovisual book promotion: listing six 'key players' in connection with multimedia techniques used to promote books.⁹³ Of these, Dubelman's

⁹¹ Legally speaking, when a trademark has moved into a public domain it largely negates the use of the trademark to enforce ownership, particularly if the owner has no history of enforcing property ownership: i.e. the use of the trademarked term 'Hoover' in the predominately British phrase 'to Hoover' meaning to vacuum clean with any other brand of vacuum cleaner following the historically significant commercial success of the Hoover brand of vacuum cleaners. It may be that although the term is trademarked, COS are unable to prove the trademark was ever used in direct connection with their products alone, especially owing to the use of trailers in other industries and pre-existing references to book trailers. However, part of the application process for any trademark is clarifying that the term is not already in the public domain.

⁹² Cf. Rush et al (2002), Idato (2002), Maas (2005), Billhartz (2005), Timson (2005).

⁹³ Maas lists the following data by way of book promotional industry overview (2005):

Company	Core Business	Key Clients/Campaigns
VidLit	Creates entertaining audiovisual book trailers posted on the Internet that allow viewers to purchase books online. Top clip got two million hits in two months.	Yiddish with Dick and Jane
Teachingbooks net.	Produces streaming video mini-docs on the making of particular books that school districts can buy on a subscription basis; also aggregates book info from publishers and others.	Remember: TheJourney to School Integration
Bookstream.inc	Combines author video clips with tour info and chapter excerpts and distributes them through 300 e-retailers as well as book sites. Has produced 250 Bookwraps to date, with 100 more to come this year. Top clip got 53,000 hits in 2004.	No Second Chance
Marketorial	Designs intensely interactive Web sites using animation and other features aimed at keeping interest in books and characters alive (bartimaeustrilogy.com); (www.hyperion booksforchildren.com)	Disney (www.peterandthestarcatchers.com); Miramax

vidlit is included while *COS* is absent. Two companies (*teachingbooks* and *bookstream*) can be said to create profilmic booktalks based on the description, though Maas sees no distinction stating:

it may not be enough to make publishers forget about Hollywood yet, but some online marketing companies are getting closer to producing low-cost book-marketing vehicles that have the visceral impact of a studio film trailer. (Maas 2005)

What is clear from this is that a number of specialised promotional media boutiques existed in the period 2002 and 2005; suggesting that a recognisable market existed for online audiovisual book promotion. While the phenomenon of the book trailer clearly existed, the lack of press references to such would suggest either a limited interest on the part of the press, or perhaps more likely limited growth in the dissemination of the trailer as single identifiable entity. Maas does suggest however that the 'talking head' content is popular prior to this, and this helps to illuminate the work by Kipling & Wilson who note the early use of audiovisual promotional material often included 'readings from books' (2000: 151). The companies listed in Maas' overview presumably use end-user websites for hosting their respective content as videosharing site Youtube.com was launched after Maas' report (Burgess & Green 2009). The companies listed clearly contribute to a climate of multimedia promotion and it becomes clear that unlike the theatre trailer the book trailer emerged out of a combination of elements that may be broadly grouped under the term 'trailer'. As Maas notes in 2005:

As broadband makes it easier for the home Web user to download multimedia features, the line between marketing and entertainment--not to mention books and film--will continue to blur. Multimedia trailers won't all work, but the trend could help sustain readership and develop new readers. "You have to learn and invest in the technology," said [founder of Teachingbooks.net, Nick] Glass. "The more multimedia is out there, the

Clotho Advanced
Media Designs

Web sites equipped with multimedia interfaces and e-commerce components that aim to stimulate powerful word of mouth.

Built sites for teaching books.net and AmericanGirl.com

FSB Associates Well-established Web site design and Web PR firm helps individual authors (and some publishers)increase their fan base through interactive features.

Sue Graton
(www.suegraton.com);Mitch
albofivepeople.com)
Jonathan Franzen
(www.jonathanfranzen.com)

more interactivity people can have with a book. All of us in the industry need to figure out how to create and share it” (2005).

This observation fairly accurately predicts the process of development that surrounds the emergence of the book trailer. This can be seen reflected in the press commentary taken overall, particularly the parallel developments of social networking websites, video sharing, and of the mobile devices and hardware itself (cf. Timson 2005, Younker 2006, Maughan 2007). Given the technological context of Maas' report, it is likely that the diverse aesthetics seen in the contemporary trailer owe their roots to the various multimedia practices of this early period. It is likely that the term book trailer came to be applied to these animations and short form videos, retrospectively, and that the term book trailer crept into the dominant discourse as part of a wider process of industrial negotiation and understanding. This process is not one of replacement of previous terms, as the terms 'vidlit' and 'booktalk' are still used; but rather an increased use of a particular term to discuss a selection of aesthetic structures with a broadly shared purpose. Comparisons with this period of early industry engagement, and the trailers circulating at the time of writing cannot occur without a verified catalogue of trailers and promotional materials from this early period, and as the aesthetics of such are unclear, little can be further said without industry discourse or the website content as evidence.

The book trailer: post-2005

Within the scope of this chapter it is impractical to quantify the total number of trailers in circulation during this early period of development, or indeed at any other time. The growth of the book trailer from experimentation to cultural phenomena is shown when comparing press references.⁹⁴ The years 2005-2008 have been verified as pertaining to audiovisual book promotion, but due to the number of results, after 2008 these have yet to be verified. There is evidence to support the notion that the use of the book trailer increased between 2005 and 2013, and that this is due to increased industrial usage.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ References are gathered according to the Nexis Database. The years 2005-2008 have been verified as pertaining to audiovisual book promotion, but due to the number of results, after 2008 these have yet to be verified.

⁹⁵ The unlikely possibility remains however, of the 1419 unverified press articles referring to the same limited collection of book trailers as found within the corpus or to any other articulation of 'book trailer' considered in this chapter: a plethora of mobile repositories, for instance.

Year	Press References
2005	3
2006	24
2007	27
2008	78
2009	114
2010	213
2011	279
2012	330
2013	483

Table 1, Trailers by press references

It can be said that in the unverified references in the five years between 2008 and 2013 is indicated the increased development of book trailers as both a cultural phenomena and industrial phenomena.

Attempting to chart the specific developments within this period exists outside the scope of this chapter. It is anticipated that such a study would show several announcements on the

While it is difficult to quantify the industry's acceptance of book trailers based on reception alone, 2010 saw reports of an industry award ceremony; the *Moby Awards* organised by publishers *Melville House* specifically aimed at book trailers (Barnett 2010; Paul 2010; Walker 2012). Such an award ceremony reflects an industrial acknowledgement of book trailers as a part of the industries mediascape. The award ceremony however, appears to have only lasted only for three years, 2010, 2011, and 2012.⁹⁶ The existence of an industry award suggests an acknowledgement of the book trailer phenomenon on the part of the organisers, but that such an event included recognition for the best and *worst* book trailers could be said to form a point of industry reflection upon the practice in general rather than a sole form of validation and encouragement.⁹⁷ Indeed, as the *Moby Awards* have apparently ceased to take place and have not been replaced by any similar event it would suggest that the industry itself feels little need to celebrate the phenomenon of the book trailer, though further industry discourse is needed to extrapolate upon this point.

Given the gap between two quantifiable industry events; trademarking the term in 2001 (which would suggest a new phenomenon) and hosting awards for a (presumably established) phenomenon in 2010 it can be assumed that in the nine years between these

⁹⁶ Searching the *Melville House* website (www.mhpbooks.com) alludes to award ceremonies in 2010 (Johnson 2010) and 2011, while the 2012 awards page at the time of writing in 2014, is still awaiting update. There have been no reports found of 2012 awards taking place (cf. Popova 2011). At the time of writing 'Moby lives! July 13, 2014' appears on the publisher's website. This appears to be a blog section within the Mhpbooks.com website, rather than a reference to the awards: it is possible the awards have been merged into a blog form.

⁹⁷ cf. results of the 2010 Moby awards Johnson (2010).

two points the trailer emerged as a recognisable entity for many. Without any evidence of a single catalyst for this increase it is superfluous to explore each press article in turn in order to track these developments further, and so attention logically has to turn to the corpus itself as partially representative of the book trailer phenomenon.

The composition of the guiding corpus results from the increase in technological accessibility, combined with wider trends towards digital engagement, the rise of the online marketplace and companies as well as individual authors offering (or commissioning a company to create) online promotional content. Much of the press reception of the trailer as well as some elements of the industry reception (such as the *Moby Award* category for 'trailer least likely to sell a book') centres on 'amateur' or author made trailers and so reception offers some commentary on trailer aesthetics. Within this reception is a discourse that suggests an idealised form of book trailer akin to a film trailer. Such an idealised trailer implicitly suggests that trailers differing from this aesthetic are less valuable or effective as trailers though without evidence of this it remains a reception discourse only. It is logical then, to integrate discussion of aesthetics with their reception in the press and academia, in lieu of a larger, much needed study of audience-consumer reception and creator discourse.

The aesthetics and reception of the book trailer

The corpus consists of nineteen texts that promote books; all but one referred to as a 'trailer', and was identified in error. Of these trailers, one promotes a comic book and may be said to be atypical of the wider corpus of products. All but two of the trailers within the corpus were available for download, and thus sustained study, and all but one of the books promoted fall under the category of fiction. The exception here is a trailer for a book around the making of the *Star Wars* franchise. Of the corpus, five trailers can be said to be animated; where the content is not indexical footage: one of these is a slide-based text, with colour manipulation and voice-over text, promoting *Sounds of Murder*. The remaining thirteen trailers are all filmed indexical texts, with one of those being direct authorial address; promoting Christopher Paolini's *Inheritance*. One text was incorrectly identified as a trailer through the methodology; as part of the verification process it was found to be referred to as an advert within the context of a wider discussion of book trailers. James Patterson's *I, Alex Cross*.⁹⁸ However, given the dearth of trailers within the

⁹⁸ The original quote, citing former literary editor Robert McCrum reads:

corpus, the wider context of ambiguity surrounding both the term 'trailer' and ways of considering the aesthetics of such, it is included here to serve as a counterpoint for discussion, problematising the existing understanding of trailers.

In considering the aesthetics of the trailer there is a need to acknowledge the various nomenclative divisions based on aesthetics that have crept into both the limited academic, and press discourse. In her industry overview Kati Voigt (2013) centres on nomenclature in an attempt to 'categorize the genre' but in attempting to categorise for future, Voigt fundamentally overlooks the possibility that the aesthetic diversity may be a unifying attribute of the book trailer. Within Voigt's overview alone, book trailers are referred to by their function as 'advertising' (673), 'viral videos' (675), as 'book videos' (675) that serve as hypernym for 'author interviews'; 'book teaser', and 'book animation' (Ibid). For Voigt, a distinction is made between teaser and trailer, suggesting that the former is

a simpler and more rudimentary type of the book video. The book teaser uses images, music and some form of spoken narration although the latter is not necessary given. While sometimes also displaying video footage of persons or locations, the book teaser lacks a story line and most commonly uses voice-overs that describe the story, rather than having the actors talk themselves. (675-6).

Such a distinction places significant understanding on narrative comprehension (just as Gunter's 2012, understanding of the book trailer does), and indexical footage. This determinist understanding implicitly suggests a mode of viewing based on perceived narrative continuity for which there is no empirical evidence. Indeed this distinction between teaser and trailer emerges out of heavy emphasis on a list of texts on *COS*' website that appears, by Voigt's own admission, to exist based on production costs rather than stylistic differences (2013: 674). Voigt cites Sheila Clover English, CEO of *COS*, who claims that that:

Technically, a book trailer® is an acted-out dramatization of a book synopsis. If you look at the trademark on this term you'll note that the term's description is very specific. Like the term "aspirin," which was once a product name, this term

'My bet is that TV trails for books will be a passing fad – like tube advertising. The awkward truth is that this sort of thing only works if you spend a lot of money – and that's just what British publishers don't have.' That didn't stop some attempts, though, notably the short-and-sweet ad for James Patterson's thriller *I, Alex Cross*. (Barnett 2010, italics added)

has been so widely used by the public that its original definition is sometimes lost.

Many people use the term book trailer® for book video. (Clover English 2008:15)

Given the issues of ownership and brand competition it is likely Clover English's statement serves not as a reflection of a trend based on analysis of industry output but a way of asserting marketplace differentiation for her company. Following Clover English's logic further, no trailer can exist for a product that does not inherently have a narrative: non-fiction reference books for instance.⁹⁹ While no such reference book trailer has been found within the corpus or wider discourse it stands to reason that such a retrospective approach undermines the role of the audience in interpreting and anticipating a narrative for a forthcoming text. The retrospective approach of Clover English's trademark description prioritises a knowledge of the book's content in advance of the trailer's creation, and suggests a directly correlation between the two texts that can only occur retrospectively.¹⁰⁰ Despite Clover English's assertion of specificity, the trademarked term 'book trailer' as listed by the USPTO is distinctly broad; there is no evidence that the trademarked term solely applies to indexical film for promotional purposes.¹⁰¹ Within the corpus of 'book trailers' however it is fundamentally unclear what constitutes a synopsis or a specific interpretation of broader themes as a trailer constitutes its own narrative. That such a nomenclative division between book 'trailers' and 'videos' is offered by those with a vested interest in the use of specific terminology raises significant questions over its impartiality and accuracy. Yet this becomes the starting point, and basis for Voigt's overview of trailer aesthetics to which Voigt adds terminology of 'book animation' rather than interrogating that which exists (675). Of the nomenclature;

Circle of Seven Productions themselves distinguish on their official webpage between seven different types of book videos, ranging from various 'teasers' to 'publisher advantage', from 'author interviews' to the actual 'book trailer' (Voigt 2013: 674).¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Arguably of course every text has a narrative of engagement and consumption: cf. Ryan (2001), in this case it is applied on the basis of its use, rather than used on the basis of its narrative.

¹⁰⁰ This has clear comparisons with Johnston's (2009: 8) critique of Kernan's work (2004).

¹⁰¹ Trademarked as, 'the promotion of goods of others by preparing and creating advertisements for books in the form of videos' (USPTO, No.78178966), Zborovsky-Fenster's patent also echoes this understanding and articulation (USPTO 20010030420).

¹⁰² The COS website also lists 'Book Trailers, Book Videos, Book Commercials/Ads, Viral Videos, Author Interviews, Video Book Reviews, Vlogs, and Video Comments' (Clover English 2008: 15-17). Voigt does not account for the inclusion or exclusion of these terms within her study.

Yet this is one company offering different packages and there is no evidence that these terms are adopted outside of *COS*. Similarly Voigt's subsequent addition to the nomenclature is made redundant if these terms exist only within the logic of one academic article. So it is that based on the corpus these existing terminology can be challenged: this is because many of the distinctions in nomenclature made by Voigt and Clover English are blurred within the corpus of book trailers.

While the methodology limits the possibility of a 'teaser' within the corpus, a fifteen- second 'commercial' promoting *I, Alex Cross*, by James Patterson was inadvertently included within the corpus and serves as counterpoint to the nomenclature. Firstly that the text was discussed in the context of book trailers suggests the relationship between specific types of promotional materials albeit operating under different names. The 'commercial' consists of the author holding a copy of his book and saying to the camera 'I'm James Patterson, and I've an important message for you: Buy this book or I'll have to kill off Alex Cross [gunshot]. It's very good by the way.' Followed by a deep, unidentified voice-over reminiscent of movie trailer narration: "Unputdownable, James Patterson's 'I, Alex Cross'."

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 1a-c, left to right, James Patterson's I, Alex Cross

That this text is the only one of its kind in the corpus necessitates caution regarding the wider application of its aesthetic structure but it helps to unpack Voigt's understanding of teaser and thus the implications for understanding the trailer.

Both the author and images of the physical book form the prominent features for this trailer, forming a direct address by the author to the viewer rather than indexical or animated interpretations of the book's content. The shots used do not differ from those illustrated (Figs.1a-1c). The lack of indication of the plot, aside from the lead protagonist's name in the title, suggests this conforms to Voigt's understanding of the teaser. Patterson's direct address to the camera could be construed as an authorial interview, as outlined by Clover English's typology; but the author's presence here is better understood as a tag line reinforced with star persona rather than a commentary on the narrative. The only form of narrative commentary, aside from the book's title, is the voice-over claiming the book is

'unputdownable'. This text could be considered a teaser, lacking any plot synopsis and using minimal editing to convey its key features: the title, book cover, and author. This commercial corresponds with Voigt's understanding of the teaser at first glance, but it withholds the book's narrative interpreting the event of the book being available, rather than a specific experience. This suggests that this commercial could be considered as an audiovisual poster for the product rather than an interpretation of the narrative itself. In this respect comparisons can be drawn between this commercial and the trailer for Christopher Paolini's *Inheritance*. The use of humour from Patterson's interaction with the camera is both in keeping with Patterson's star persona, but functions as a joke amongst viewers.¹⁰³ What is clear here, is that like the advertising aesthetics in videogames the physical product is clearly placed as central to the promotion, rather than the ephemeral experience of the product (as with trailer aesthetic). The *I, Alex Cross* commercial uses certain tropes from the wider spectrum of trailer promotion and this demonstrates the issues with any attempts to categorise the book trailer, by aesthetic type alone, as Voigt does. Consider that the image of the book at the end is included in a similar manner for home-release DVD and Videogames, and is a trope of book trailers within the corpus and wider advertising aesthetics. Within the Patterson commercial are allusions to wider tropes of marketing. The use of the voice-over title echoes the voice-over narration work of Hal Douglas, or Don LaFontaine both noted for their deep authoritative tones with respect to film trailer.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the authorial address of Patterson echoes the role of the actor or director in introducing movie trailers functioning as a different kind of narrator framing a fictional world. This trope of creator (be it actor, director, game designer, etc.) features in trailers for other industries. Consider Mark Wahlberg introducing the 'sneak peek' trailer for *Transformers: Age of Extinction*. Indeed Patterson's introduction and rationale is similar to Wahlberg's; 'Hey I'm Mark Wahlberg, here to introduce the sneak peek of my new film Transformers: Age of Extinction in the UK this summer check it out.'

¹⁰³ This use of a joke could form the basis for sharing amongst a fan community, allowing the text to become mobile: viral. Though not included in the corpus, this is the rationale behind Simon Spurrier's book promotion in which swear words are spoken while handwritten narrative contained on cards is displayed by the author. The clear aim of this is humour intended to encourage interpersonal booktalk and the sharing of the video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abOuVyX_68c [20/7/14])

¹⁰⁴ It is possible that the voice-over artist in the *I, Alex Cross* commercial is Hal Douglas, Don LaFontaine having died the year prior to the book's release, Hal Douglas died in 2014 (cf. reports on the deaths of Don LaFontaine and Hal Douglas respectively, both containing examples of their audio work. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/7595352.stm> [19/6/14] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/13/hal-douglas-dead-dies_n_4957780.html [19/6/14]).

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 2a-b The opening two shots of the trailer for Transformers: AoE

In both cases, Patterson and Wahlberg assert authority over the text being promoted 'my book' and 'my film' respectively, while themselves offering little information about the plot, merely the announcement that product exists, the existence of the product itself being the given rationale for consumption: though this is reinforced with further footage in *Transformers: AoE*.

This kind of creator authority, for Clover English and by passive acceptance Voigt, forms a category of book trailers known as the author interview, '[t]he author interview may be executed in different ways; either by having the author simply talk about the book or featuring an actual interview (Clover English 2008: 16)'. This is illustrated fully in the trailer for Christopher Paolini's *Inheritance*. Opening with images that echo book cover art (but not necessarily that of the product promoted), the *Inheritance* trailer takes the form of indexical footage of Paolini addressing the camera and delivering the manuscript to the publishers.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 3a-c, left to right, The opening frames of Paolini's Inheritance trailer.

Paolini's trailer take the form of an author interview in the use of direct address in the form of a talking head, but then diverges from an interview format in which Paolini discusses *Inheritance* to show a narrative in which the manuscript is physically delivered to an editor. The trailer itself has two three distinct sections; a blog-like post that opens it¹⁰⁵, a documentation of the act of packing a bag to deliver the manuscript, and the deliverance of the manuscript itself (Figs. 3c-3e).

¹⁰⁵ Paolini's address is the following: 'I just typed the last few words, paragraph, of book four of the *Inheritance* cycle. I'm having trouble actually putting this into words because I've been working on this book

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figure 3d-f, left to right, Illustrations of the three sections of the *Inheritance* trailer

The first section of this trailer, Paolini's direct address, narrates the process of completion and the sense of relief felt as an author, while simultaneously framing expectations but not narrative points.

This has been just an amazing journey, uh. Book four, for both some creative and some personal reasons has been the hardest book of the series to write, I think it's hopefully the best book of the series uh, the characters really go through the wringer in this one, in a good way, and I've just been, I've had a great time writing it, it's been very difficult to write but I've really enjoyed the story and hopefully you guys are going to enjoy it as well. (Paolini's *Inheritance* trailer)

This opening sequence, with minimal editing techniques resembles the same kind of address that may be found on a blog; a familiarity with the fans as well as a discussion of the creative process. The dialogue may be scripted, ellipsis is used at one point suggesting editorial control, but it takes the appearance of a naturalised, unilateral conversation. Overt promotional techniques such as a tagline or extra-diegetic narration are absent throughout and what is seen is an interpersonal communication from the author to the camera that frames the product through the author's experience of writing and submission to the editor. The second and third stages consist of minimal framing, accompanying Fig. 3.4. Paolini says 'here we go, packing up book four of the inheritance cycle to go off to random house and deliver this to my long suffering editor Michelle Fry'. Cutting to an internal corridor Paolini walks into an office and has a brief interchange with his editor

and this series for so long I, I can't even really wrap my head around that fact that actually it's, it's done, it's I just wrote it, it's done 'the end.' (ellipsis) This has been just an amazing journey, uh, book four for both some creative and some personal reasons has been the hardest book of the series to write, I think it's hopefully the best book of the series uh, the characters really go through the wringer in this one, in a good way, and I've just been, I've had a great time writing it, it's been very difficult to write but I've really enjoyed the story and hopefully you guys are going to enjoy it as well and at the moment uh, I think I'm going to sign out now I need to go celebrate with my family and jump up and down and run up and down the road and uh, kinda let this sink in but I'm looking forward to seeing all you guys as many as possible on the book tour and hearing what you think about the book and signing your books and talking with you about the story, and uh, as Eragon would say, and I think this is going to be one of the last times I think I can properly say this, as Eragon would say [fictional language from the book], may your swords stay sharp.'

before final animations reflecting the possible cover art serve to bracket the indexical footage. This trailer is devoid of any narrative information and functions as an announcement of the product's availability; albeit one that uses elements of a 'making of' feature on a DVD. Yet it represents a seemingly author-controlled promotional text. In this respect Paolini's trailer here reflects elements of the profilmic booktalk; but retains a commercial rather than educational purpose. The hand-held camera and minimal editing, coupled with seemingly unscripted interaction creates the impression of a text that has no overt promotional agenda; which of course, it does. In keeping with this, the bracketing of footage ending with Fig. 3g gives this trailer the feel of one instalment in a series that captures the creative process, though there is no evidence this is the case. Indeed the end of this trailer is similar to the majority in the corpus in that it retains overtly promotional information; cover art and release date.

[Image Redacted]

Figure 3g The ending of *Inheritance* trailer

While *Inheritance* has tones of a 'making of' documentary it's author-originating qualities, the lack of high end production values and fast editing have come to typify the author-made trailer. The role of the author-created trailer, has increased, partly from the rise of self-publishing, but Paolini's trailer is partial evidence that suggests that even those with the backing of a publishing house are being encouraged to create their own promotional text. As Walker (2012) suggests:

Nowadays, however, many unsuspecting authors are also expected to produce a book trailer. And the medium, which began as simple YouTube clips of writers discussing their work, has become increasingly elaborate: encompassing mini-documentaries, mesmerising animations and misjudged pseudo-movie trailers.

There is however, little evidence of publishers *asking* authors to create trailers; but the contextual technological information, increased author participation via websites, and the *Moby Awards category for trailer least likely to sell a book*, coupled with articles

instructing authors on trailer creation practices would add to a body of evidence.¹⁰⁶ Despite such evidence only two trailers could be set to fit the profile of this amateur trailer potentially reflecting a movement away from this form of promotion. *Inheritance*, partially reflects this format but a more accurate reflection of this format comes in the form of the *Sounds of Murder* trailer winner of the 2010 *Moby Award* for the *Trailer least likely to sell the book* (Barnett 2010).

The seventy-five second long *Sounds of Murder* 'trailer' consists of images of the book cover that changes colour as the voice-over (identified within the trailer as that of the author) impersonates different voices in the context of developing an understanding of the product's narrative. This kind of slideshow, a montage of images, has been ridiculed by press commentators yet reflects a larger understanding of book trailers (both amateur and professional)¹⁰⁷ that dates back as far as 2005 with Maas' discussion of teachingbooks.net's use of 'flash slideshows with audio' (2005).¹⁰⁸

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 4a-c, left to right, The opening fifteen seconds of the Sounds of Murder trailer

While the images used change only in colour, it is the voice-over by author Patricia Rockwell that conveys much of the information and as the voice-over artist identifies herself as the author, this can be said to form direct authorial address; but maintains an emphasis on the product's narrative rather than the creative process of being an author: as with Paolini, or to some extent Patterson's humorous address.

'Some people sound loud, harsh like Mr T', 'Some people sound soft and breathy like Marilyn Monroe', 'Some people sound Nasal and whiney like Lily Tomlin'. With each statement the voice-over alters tone and volume to mimic the celebrities indicated. The trailer replicates this manner of abstracted description, emphasising the differences

¹⁰⁶ cf. Mascia (2012), Lowell, in Chance & Lesesne (2012), Buczynski (2009), Rutherford (2009) Fingleton et al (2008).

¹⁰⁷ The author of the book Patricia Rockwell also owns the publishing company *Cosy Cat Productions*, with which this book is published. The trailer was uploaded by a youtube account of the name Patricia Rockwell complicating any suggestion that this is an 'amateur' trailer. It can be said however that the 'creation of the book trailer herein is not Rockwell's primary source of income, though this prioritises Rockwell's role as author or publisher over promotional content creator that is problematic'.

¹⁰⁸ cf. Dreon et al (2011), Flannery (2007), Maas (2005).

between voices using the same process of mimicry. The voice-over narration references the plot at around fifty seconds:

Amateur sleuth Pamela Barnes knows all about sounds, she uses them to identify a killer in my new cosy mystery *Sounds of Murder*, can you figure out the sounds that she hears, and solve the mystery before Pamela does?

Throughout the trailer there is significant emphasis upon the book's cover, which is typical of almost all book trailers within the corpus. Whilst sections of the text are not read verbatim, this voice-over narration functions in the same way as a promotional synopsis often found on the back of physical books, and this type of narrative proposition within *Sounds of Murder* mimics the voice-over conventions of the film trailer. Posing a question 'can you figure out...?' on one hand issues a challenge to the audience members, setting up the premise of the narrative whilst simultaneously reinforcing the genre. Indeed the construction of this trailer fits in with issues of the amateur production. In March 2012 James Mascia, in *The Writer* magazine suggests the use of 'eight to 12 pictures for about a one minute trailer', music to convey the mood of the product, arranged in:

the order you believe will tell the best story. Your trailer should have rising action and a climax, but leave the reader wanting more. Place a picture of your book cover at the end.[...] Play with transitions to create a more than simple slide show. Upon completion of a book trailer Mascia suggests uploading to various free hosting sites such as Facebook, and YouTube (Mascia, 2012).

Thus it is that the *Sounds of Murder* trailer ends, having only provided a premise for the novel's plot without resorting directly to narrative descriptions or indexical interpretations. While not conforming to COS' understanding of the book trailer *Sounds of Murder* uses animation (of sorts) and could be considered under Voigt's understanding of the book animation, yet the manner in which Voigt articulates this suggests that the only difference between the book trailer, and the book animation is the use of iconic images rather than indexical ones and adds nothing new to an already complex debate. In contrast to the teaser, book animations are as elaborated as book trailers because they employ pictures, graphics and other art forms in combination with a voice-over summary of the book. (2013: 676). The implication herein is that animated book trailers as somehow different from indexical book trailers, and it would appear based on the corpus that the only difference between the two is the tendency for animated shorts to promote books aimed at

children and younger adolescents:(cf. trailers for *I want my hat back*, *A Monster Calls*, *Amy Green*, *Meet Ruby Redfort*).

The 'trailer' for Patrick Ness' *A Monster Calls* typifies the kind of animated trailer within the corpus, a complex use of discontinuity editing in the same manner as an indexical book trailer, illustrating a short yet coherent story that stops, ending with an implicit question. Indeed the 80-second long animated trailer illustrates the inlaid words upon screen and has no voice-over narration. The highly stylised sequences show a child in bed, a monster emerging from rocks and moving towards a house. The child looks out of the window as the monster approaches and interacts with the child.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 5a-b, A Monster Calls plot narration, onscreen

The full sequences reads 'At seven minutes past midnight/Conor wakes from his nightmare/to find a monster at his window/but this isn't the monster he's been expecting/this monster is something different, something ancient/and it wants the most dangerous thing of all/it wants the truth'. The transition between animated shots are largely done through continuous movement of the camera; there are fades, and extreme close-ups that form transition with a minimal amount of cuts between shots. The monochromatic imagery reflects the illustration on the book's cover but any further connection with the product's illustration is unclear.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 5c-h, left to right, The transitional and final images of A Monster Calls

The use of animation to play with issues of space suggest a dream-like sequence that could reflect back to the narrative, but this is fundamentally no different from the fast-paced editing of action movie trailers to reflect the speed of events or the minimal

transitions used in Paolini's *Inheritance* trailer to reflect 'reality'. This trailer, though devoid of voice-over narration, functions with the same tropes as indexical book trailers, the use of a discontinuous narrative, and discontinuous space to create a narrative that may or may not reflect that found within the product. In this instance though, the profilmic narration can be seen to reflect a similar kind of synopsis as employed by Rockwell in *Sounds of Murder*. Indeed the same can be said for *Lily Alone*, an indexical interpretation of action that potentially conforms to Clover English's understanding of the book trailer. *Lily Alone* uses the same tropes of film trailer editing and indeed could easily be mistaken for a film or television trailer were it not for the final animated image of the product itself introduced through the use of animated title cards.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 6a-e, left to right, Images of the product in the final frame of Lily Alone introduced through animated shots.

Prior to this final animated image of the product (Fig. 6d), Figs. 6a-6c appear chronologically juxtaposed with a final indexical image of the protagonist separating these from the final image. These sequences aside, the entire trailer is indexical and uses non-diegetic narration (from the protagonist) that sets up the protagonistic and antagonistic narrative developments: Lily's abandonment by her mother and subsequent montage of Lily looking after characters presumed to be her siblings. This trailer uses the narration to reflect the point of view of the character, while the images illustrate events within the narrative. The interplay of the protagonist's narration ('I wasn't on my own, [diegesis 'Come on'] but I sort of wish I was') with the images onscreen create the narrative premise herein and this is similar technique to that seen in movie trailers as well as in *A Monster Calls*. There is an opening sequence followed by a long shot (Figs. 6f-6g), the sequences within the trailer construct an emphasis on the protagonist Lily's relationship with her mother, reinforced again through the narration: 'Mum had really bad taste in men' juxtaposed with the diegetic dialogue between her mother, "So what do you think?", and Lily "You may as well wear your underwear!" (Fig. 6h, Lily storms out of a room

following an argument). The narrative juxtaposition of this interchange with Lily's mother leaving the property, (Fig. 6i) demonstrates the same kind of discontinuous narrative flow that stems from different sequences that create markers of narrative movement. In this instance the pace of editing speeds up leading to a montage in which the images illustrate the protagonist feelings: I don't want to be on my own. We're all going to be together, very, very soon.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted]

Figures 6f-j, Examples of indexical shots of Lily Alone

It is clear then that the same techniques found within movie trailers are at use here and although these images may be accurate reflections of the narrative events within the product, the very act of distilling them for the purposes of promotion creates a separate narrative upon which audiences can reflect on the basis of their interest in the product, that in this instance is a book.

The image of the book itself however, forms a unifying feature of each of the trailers within the corpus; but this is no different from other trailers for tangible products.¹⁰⁹ It is reductionist and determinist in the extreme to suggest that this is the identifying feature of a book trailer, though it would appear to echo Goodlett's explanation of the trailer, cited by Voigt:

the shortest explanation for the book trailer, as of yet, may have been provided by Matt Goodlett: 'consider it a marriage between the book jacket blurb and video' (Goodlett 2009 in Voigt 2013: 674).

As the aesthetics indicated by the corpus and the various nomenclature vary, the only empirically verifiable definition of the trailer is one already in existence; Johnston's conceptualisation of trailers as a short form text (2009). This can be expanded upon theoretically by suggesting that they are short form texts which make use of intertextual references to a book, though the temporal boundaries of 'short' needs further exploration. This understanding however, brings us back to Voigt's concept of the book video as a way

¹⁰⁹ There is one exception here: the *Going West* trailer has no image of a product in its final sequences.

of accounting for aesthetic diversity: that the book video be a hypernym under which others terms may operate, all pertaining to the same broad phenomena. Throughout the corpus there is a clear blurring of elements between separate texts: the role of the author for instance manifests itself visually, creatively, at an interpersonal level and through name-branding, while product narrative fundamentally becomes subsumed in to the narrative of the promotional text. This blurring of boundaries occurs between the shared use of a aesthetics and tropes from trailers in other industries, and of other texts outside the confines of 'trailers'. For the purposes of corpus generation, the term trailer forms the unifying feature of these trailers with the exception of *I, Alex Cross* that although referred to as a 'commercial' has many of the same elements as texts identified as 'trailers', and indeed is identified in the source material in the same context.

Only one study has considered the audience in relation to the book trailer, and given the scope of Davila's (2010) study, and the absence of audience research in relation to the audience and the trailer across other industries the impact herein is limited.¹¹⁰ Given the amount of available terminology and the degree of overlap between texts (as seen within modes of presentation in videogame trailers) it is difficult to see the use of so many overlapping subsets. The use of hierarchical language systems suggests degrees of proximity to a trailer without fully defining the trailer itself. This somewhat unwieldy term therefore incorporates the majority of contemporary programmes that generate additional revenue through books, and places emphasis on intent rather than reception and consumer response.¹¹¹ Writing in 2010, Denise Davila considers book trailers (rather than book videos or booktalks) as anticipatory stories comparing them with film trailers drawing on Kernan's work (2004). Davila offers a somewhat reductionist approach to trailers within a corpus of six trailers, but it is unclear by what process this corpus was created. From this corpus Davila identifies two types of book trailer: a montage of still or animated images with voice-over narration, while the second type 'most resembles a movie trailer' (2010: 34). In terms of the aesthetic structure Davila goes little beyond this comparison, noting the shared characteristics of title, author,¹¹² and book cover. Davila's key intervention however, lies in the consideration of audience response in relation to the

¹¹⁰ At the time of writing a wider study into audience attitudes to the trailer is forthcoming (cf. Greene et al 2014).

¹¹¹ ABC's TV show *Castle* (2009-????) is potentially an example of this while it has a holistic diegesis; books written within the diegesis are sold as texts in their own right, but also as part of a wider intertextual network.

¹¹² It is unclear how the author manifests aesthetically: based on the descriptions, it is unlikely this applies to a direct authorial address within the trailer.

trailer. The methods employed for this and the conclusions drawn lack the ability to be readily verified and are rooted in an understanding of the trailer as persuasive advertising and a passive audience. Indeed, Davila noted that due to the methodology the results (that the book trailers can both positively and negatively affect readers' expectations) are not widely applicable (2010: 39).¹¹³ In terms of the aesthetic implications, Davila notes that 'as product of today's digital Internet culture, online video trailers incorporate visual, audio, and textual modes into a digital storytelling framework.'¹¹⁴ But largely these conclusions; that the book trailer may form an experience in advance of the book, reiterate the work of Stephen Heath in 1977, and later Nick Couldry in 2000 who collectively suggest the notion of the text as one of a wider network of experiences. This comes back to issues of the propriety of the use of the term 'text' and, by extension paratext. What this collectively suggests is that defining the book trailer by a single term, or aesthetic form is unduly limiting. Until further studies with a larger corpus can be conducted, Voigt's conceptualisation is the most accurate reflection of the data; but the concept of the audience remains lacking from this consideration of the trailer. The sheer amount of descriptive categories to discuss the book trailer exceeds those found within the guiding corpus and to explore them all in detail would necessitate a significantly larger corpus that exceeds the scope of this chapter. As the corpus comprises of texts identified as 'book trailers' much of the discussion of nomenclature in relation to aesthetics has to fall to a separate research project and it remains to be seen if the book video sees clusters of concurrent or historical aesthetic trends. By way of conclusion then all that can be empirically said of the book trailer is that it saw an increased presence at a time of increased technological engagement, and that elements of the aesthetics of the trailer echo the older promotional practice of the use of cover art. The varied aesthetics within the corpus of 'trailers' suggest that the book trailer is an increasingly used term for a phenomenon of intertextual referencing rather than a single aesthetic entity; and this can be traced back decades further to the 1990s. Significantly more research is needed then into this industrial phenomenon before attempts can be made to theorise the industry's use of the book trailer.

¹¹³ The methodology takes college students enrolled on a undergraduate class on adolescent and young adult literature, and may be said to be predisposed towards reading (2010: 36-7).

¹¹⁴ The later conclusion that 'successful trailers influence viewers to deviate from digital video media in order to engage with the bigger source text in another mode' (2010: 39) is deeply problematic and determinist; prioritising the book over the experience of the consumer engaging with a network of texts.

Chapter 4: Further incarnations of the trailer

Introduction

Through being used within multiple entertainment industries, the very nature of the trailer as a textual entity has altered, taking on a wider cultural significance as it becomes associated with different industries and products. The trailer has therefore moved away from its association with a single industry to become a diverse text with multiple future industrial trajectories, histories, and aesthetics. That the trailers previously considered include diverse aesthetic forms and promote products in a variety of media, suggest a unifying feature of trailers is not any given aesthetic structure, but rather a short format in which a product or products are promoted. However, this understanding fundamentally overlaps with other forms of advertising that tend to be seen as distinct from trailers. What the previous case studies have demonstrated is that the trailer cannot be understood as a single kind of aesthetic structure, or as a single kind of ontological relationship. The question then remains of how best to understand the trailer and the implications of the corpus content on the study of trailers. The previous case studies' combined contribution repeats and reinforces Johnston's conceptualisation of trailers as short films, within a historical framework of industrial understanding (2009). Although the emphasis has been on nomenclature and the text identified as a trailer, this emphasis has helped open up the study of trailers to those texts outside the film industry moving away from ontologically determinist understandings of the trailer. However, despite the reinforced independence from a single form of product, this methodological understanding of trailer as short films irrespective of any given industry remains unwieldy.

While the methodology has highlighted a number of instances of trailers, the case studies that form the previous chapters have been based on the highest frequency of trailers identified by a third party. Yet this very process of relying on press mediators remains open to suggestions of nomenclative determinism within the less frequent results. Without significant audience and industrial based research, such a criticism remains inherent to the methodological approach of this thesis. In gathering texts identified as 'trailers' for this study the methodology identified of a number of 'anomalous' trailers that do not appear to readily fall into the industries explored previously. While criticism of nomenclative determinism is more likely to be levelled against these results, they cannot be immediately countered within the context of this thesis. While it is possible to do industrial case studies based on these 'anomalous' trailers, their frequency would suggest these are less common and the variety of the products and industries promoted within

these results exceed the scope of this thesis. So it is that these trailers are used here to provide a retrospective to the methodology and to explore the impact of videosharing culture, so important to the other industries. In considering these statistically anomalous trailers, this chapter identifies possible future trends in the application of the term trailer. Considering the vanguard of potential trends in the trailer as well as the previous case studies, allows for a holistic understanding of the trailer both mainstream and past and present.

The very existence of a set of 'anomalous' results outside the dominant industries explored previously is significant in its own right; supporting the concept that the application of the term 'trailer' may shift with time. Looking at all the trailers within the corpus allows a theoretical explication of the loose conceptual understanding that underpins each of the trailer case studies so far. These potential trends show a possible future shift in nomenclative application, and thus warrant consideration and investigation. Such an investigation of course, simultaneously challenges the dominance of the mainstream case studies of trailers within this thesis. Considering trailers within the context of a single industry has allowed in-depth case studies that consider the possible rationale for use and historical trajectory of, trailers. However, organising the corpus by an industrial framework risks removing wider context in which other instances of trailers may exist within the public domain. Organisation of the corpus then, has so far risked obscuring emergent trends that are not significant within a single industry but that may take on significance in a wider context; as a wider trend of industry-anomalous results. To marginalise these results risks intellectually policing the boundaries of trailers, and undermines the methodology used to explore the different applications of the term 'trailer'.

When organised by both industry and by frequency as with the previous case studies, these 'anomalous' results have little statistical significance within the wider corpus as a group they represent potential nomenclative application. As a result of the dearth within the corpus there is little to be gained by the kind of close visual analysis of the previous chapters. Similarly, these anomalous results may be atypical within the context of the promoted product's industry or can be attributed to nomenclative slips on the part of the press mediators. However, marginalising these trailers to linguistic mistakes fundamentally polices the boundaries of what is or is not a trailer. Considering these trailers as being atypical of a wider trend, but potentially at the vanguard of future trends, this chapter explores the boundaries of the of the concept of the trailer and explores these atypical trailers to highlight issues within the methodology as well as the existing theory.

To do this necessitates exploring this atypical corpus as a unified group from a variety of approaches; aesthetic, ontological and the broader theoretical. This chapter therefore opens considering the remaining trailers within the guiding corpus, outlining these anomalous results in relation to the case studies prior and proceeds to discuss, using examples from this corpus, the implications of these atypical trailers on the understanding of trailers in general.

The atypical corpus

Of the anomalous trailers identified overall, five were trailers identified in error; two television trailers, two trailers in which the product is unclear; either a film or videogame, a making-of documentary, and a trailer for a pornographic film based on the animated TV show *The Simpsons*. As these trailers are promoting film and television products, they can largely be considered the mainstream application of the term trailer already covered by much of the existing literature and are excluded from this study in-keeping with the overall goal of exploring trailers outside this area. Of the remaining trailers, the two largest trailer types by frequency are those promoting portable digital device programs or 'Apps' and trailers variously called parody, spoof, or mashup trailers (cf Ortega 2013, Williams 2012). The latter of these are texts that are created to promote a product that does not exist, thus complicating an understanding of trailers from an economic perspective. There remains then several trailers that occur as single instances, these single instances will be grouped together for ease of discussion. So it is that this chapter in considering the group as a whole will focus in turn on these three groups in order of frequency (table 1).

Apps	6
Parody (Remix/Mashup/Spoof)	5
Absolut Vodka	1
Comic Book	1
Dining Experience	1
Yoga Conference	1
Classical Season	1
Identified in Error:	
Film Trailer	2
Unidentified Film/Game	2
TV Trailers	1
'Making of Video'	1
Total	22

Table 1, The remaining trailer corpus, trailers by product

App Trailers

App trailers offer a product similar to videogames in their construction, existing as a computer programme with a ludic interface within a variety of hardware and software restraints. As software, apps may take the form of any computer program, from utilities (such as word processing) or games with any combination thereof also being possible. As software app trailers have a similar ontological relationship with their product as videogame trailers have with theirs. Of the six app trailers found five were available to download, and thus were available for aesthetic study (table 2). Within the corpus two apps were identified as utilities, with two apps identified as games and a further app being a utility that uses the gaming convention of levelling up built around a narrative advancement that encourages real-world productivity outside the app.

<i>ChuChu Rocket!</i>	Game
<i>Glitch Alpha</i>	Game
<i>Epic win</i>	Gamified Utility ¹¹⁵
<i>Zappar Advent Calendar</i>	Gamified Utility
<i>Cordy (video unavailable)</i>	Utility
<i>Mindings</i>	Utility

Table 2, App trailers by name and product function

The limited number of available app trailers in this corpus results in the reduced efficiency of close aesthetic study. Despite the limitations of the corpus, observations can be made, forming a starting point for future study. Indeed, four of the five app trailers correspond broadly to the kinds of representation seen in the videogame corpus. Across the corpus, as the primary function of the app moves away from that of a game there is evidence of an increased emphasis on the technological attributes of the app: often signified by images of the device. App trailers promoting games show little-to-no interaction between the person and the app itself. This has inverse similarities with the launch of a games console that emphasises technology, and the progression towards an emphasis on narrative in promotional materials after the console is established.

The two game apps emphasise the diegetic world of the game itself using sequences perceived to be from the game in a similar manner to narrative-promoting videogame and film trailers. The game app trailers are both comprised of short sequences of gameplay footage, visually the tone of the sequences change shot to shot, mimicking a rudimentary

¹¹⁵ *Epic Win* is an App that allows users to set real-world goals, such as going to the gym, and by completing these tasks are incentivised through digital rewards such as levels.

structure of levelling up. As a result of the nature of the game, the action for *ChuChu Rocket!* is contained within a frame that is directly representative of gameplay; the camera remains static while action takes place providing an aerial view of gameplay and there is no central character (fig. 1a). Sequences are separated with scoreboards that replicate a format of levelling up and gameplay advancement (fig. 1b-1c). *Glitch Alpha*, by contrast follows an in-game character using a midshot, the trailer follows a character through distinct sequences much like a 2nd person RPG, again separated by the use of end-of-level indicators (fig. 2c). In both cases there is little suggestion of an attempt to directly replicate the narrative of the game promoted, instead the trailers create a narrative of consumption similar to those previously seen in videogame promotion.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

[Image Redacted] *Figures 1a-c, left to right ChuChu Rocket*

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 2a-c, left to right, Glitch Alpha

The two trailers for game apps have a similar construction to those of videogames, consisting of animated sequences representative of game play and a discontinuous narrative organisation structured around short sequences. This is typical of videogame trailers emphasising narrative of games, rather than games in conjunction with a specific format. In the case of the game apps trailers the digital content of the app is emphasised over any device itself. The trailers here present only the app content rather than any profilmic interaction between user and product, while videogame trailers show interaction with metonymic hands, or show the device in use itself. With the examples here, interaction, when it does exist takes the form of on screen cursors seen in fig. 3a as coloured triangles, and fig. 3b as a hand-shaped cursor. The use of a cursor in both

instances however, suggests that the app is designed for use with a laptop or desktop computer rather than an established games console or mobile device; which potentially explains the absence metonymic hands but not the absence of any other visible device or platform within the trailer.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 3a-b, Interaction in ChuChu Rocket! and Glitch Alpha app trailers

This absence of player representation can be understood as a result of an established product and the delivery mechanism; this is likely given the availability of the apps via the Apple App store. The app store is a cloud based retail store that allows users to download software, and digital content directly to computing devices and cloud accounts. In order to use the store then, a degree of familiarity with either the computer or mobile device and the mode of delivery is needed; potentially removing the need to illustrate how a game app may function at a technological level. This knowledge may not be device or platform specific but rather a result of increased cultural awareness of apps as a downloadable commodity: consider that games consoles are no longer launched with demonstrations of them being plugged into electricity sockets. Without a larger corpus of games app trailers little more can be said of the aesthetics and it remains to be demonstrated if the games apps herein conform to a wider series of aesthetic structures of if the organisation outlined here is a result of a limited corpus.

By contrast however the representation of utility apps diverges from the aesthetics of *ChuChu Rocket!* and *Glitch Alpha*, instead of solely using the perceived product to promote the promoted product is placed within a diegetic real-world scenario, much like the promotion seen in console promotion. Throughout utility app promotion this is a wider emphasis on the real world and this often depicts interaction. The representation of interaction serves to illustrate the function of the app, and this is within the corpus but not ontologically linked to the technological abilities or the architecture of the app itself. In contrast to the game apps it is only the apps with a utilitarian purpose that show profilmic devices within their promotion. Utility apps can however, be promoted using similar aesthetics to those of game trailers, consider the trailer for the *Zappar Advent Calendar*. *Zappar* is an app reliant on augmented reality to create a digital advent calendar on a computer or device screen. In this instance the app, can be considered both a utility acting

as an indicator of the date during advent, but also as a form of game; traditionally the advent calendar reward users each day with an image or gift. As an augmented reality based app it creates a digital overlay on a screen in response to real world stimuli and this is depicted visually with a person holding a white board or large sheet of paper upon which the animation is overlaid (fig. 4a-4b). It is perhaps this reason that the device itself is absent from the trailer, commuting the role of device in the promotion to that of the screen showing the trailer, a technique seen with videogame promotion. The trailer here relies on action contained within the diegetic frame, held up here by a profilmic person. To the left and right of figs. 4a-4b portions of hands can be seen holding a white board. While the character holding the board is clearly visible, they are excluded from the frame throughout the trailer, suggesting that this is an indication of the practicalities of trailer construction, rather than any attempt to depict the app's interface. Indeed the character here is interacting with the board, rather than the app itself as in this scenario the app is restrained to the role of the camera, overlaying the images onto paper digitally.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 4a-b, Zappar Advent Calendar

While illustrations of the app in use fill the screen in a manner similar to the presentation of games, this is likely the result of an attempt to depict the app in use; showing both how the app works and how its functionality manifests itself aesthetically. In this instance the promotion is largely the aesthetic form of the app itself, albeit in a profilmic real-world scenario. This scenario however is given little emphasis, and this one shot, thirty second long trailer feels more like an interactive poster than the trailers previously seen. The absence of any cuts between sequences, and the lack of attention given to visible profilmic consumer creates the impression of poor production values when contrasted to other Utility app trailers.

The *Epic Win* trailer for instance has two distinct sections to its structure. The first part is in direct contrast to the presentation of the game itself: presenting images not associated with the product being promoted but a visually illustrated direct address outlining a real-world problem. The voice over narration frames this first sequence indicated by the narration as being examples of games and the videogame industry that hinder productivity, setting up a dichotomy between the roles of games and utilities. The narration notes;

It is sometimes easier to complete a forty-eight hour RPG than drag yourself to the gym, or wash your dirty car: the answer to this knotty problem; Epic Win, an App that is both a to-do list, and an RPG' (Voice over accompanying sequence represented by figs. 5a-5c).

Epic win is one of two gamified utility apps in the corpus, but it must be noted that this is the only app trailer that blends full screen depictions of the app itself with a series of shots designed to frame the product's purpose. It is unclear if this is a trend repeated across promotional materials for apps with similar utilitarian-game functions.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 5a-c, left to right, Sequences and images from the first part of the Epic Win trailer

This kind of sequence can be termed an orientation sequences as it does not depict the product, nor any idealised interaction or suggested use of the product itself. Functioning in a similar manner to the images of friends bonding through use of the game as with videogame promotion, *Epic Win* illustrates a voice over led context and rationale for the purpose of the app at a conceptual level. The orientation images in figs. 5a-5c stand in contrast to the sequences in which the app itself is visually depicted figs. 6a-6c); the app's representative sequences are dominated by orange and yellow hues and are visually distinct from the preceding section. Images of devices are shown in the first sequence (fig. 5a), but these are framed as distractions and no interaction is shown. Yet this second sequence demonstrates the app and interaction with it through the inclusion of a profilmic device and perceived app sequences. When interaction appears, the app and device appear in a positive context sequence in contrast to the orientation sequence. The app on the profilmic device is shown integrated within a sequence in which the images on the profilmic screen echo the background images, in a similar way to handheld games and their consoles previously considered.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 6a-b, Device demonstration in Epic Win

This visual division between the orientation sequences, and the potential sequences of the app itself provides insight into the construction of the trailer: suggesting the convention of showing images from the product to advertise the product remains strong in the app trailer conventions. Indeed, while *Epic Win's* trailer can be seen as two distinct sequences, the second sequence is dominated by illustrations of the app itself, either on a profilmic screen or through filling the screen with illustrations of the game itself. Within the second sequence the *Epic Win* trailer bridges the aesthetic styles of game promotion with the more utilitarian illustrations of the app (figs. 6a-6c). As a gamified app, it can be seen as bridging the two kinds of aesthetics seen so far.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figures 6a-c, Illustrations of the Epic Win software aesthetics

In much the same way that videogame trailers go through a process of technological representation that variously emphasises the context, device or console then the game, a similar sequence of representation can be seen within this very limited corpus though unlike the games trailers this is linked with functionality rather than co-dependence of media systems. Though the total corpus is not enough to make wider claims about aesthetics, within the corpus there is a distinctive aesthetic divide between the games app trailers and those for utility apps. Consider for instance the trailer for *Mindings* that almost exclusively features profilmic images of the device, with an emphasis on technological innovation and utility. The *Mindings* app is a utility designed to help organise the life of, and remotely monitor an (implicitly vulnerable) family member. The trailer broadly consists of a montage of short sequences of the app in use without any visible form of interaction, illustrating a voice over narration. The narration functions in an informational context, explaining the creative origins, and thus initial real-world reason for the app, and how it functions. The voice over narration includes the description:

Introducing Mindings, Mindings lets you share meaningful moments with your family from your mobile phone, personal captioned photos, text messages, calendar reminders, appear instantly on a digital photo frame they need never even touch. Rather than presenting sequences of the app's content that occupies the profilmic space, as with *ChuChu Rocket!* or *Glitch Alpha*, the *Mindings* trailer largely shows content on a

profilmic tablet or the *Mindings* photo frame: both of which needed for the app to function. The voiceover is visually illustrated by the images of both hardware and software. Images of the app in use appear on the profilmic device, while logos of compatible software used to interact with the device and app, appear as a separate shot, filling the screen. The narration however continues to list and illustrate the future possibilities of the app and photo frame that do not yet exist:

[...] what about Skyping granny without having to teach her how to use a computer, or if you could connect a device to your Mindings screen and see your weight or blood sugar levels on a graph, and how reassuring would it be to get a message first thing in the morning telling you that dad has switched his kettle on, and then you would know he was ok [...]

Unlike *Epic Win*, there is no overt visual division between the illustration of the app's current content and sequences of the possible technological directions for development, (figs. 7a-7b). This blend of (yet to be reified) orientation footage with representations of the product itself inverts *Epic Win*'s framing by suggesting possible future real-world applications of the product, rather than depicting a real world problem the product immediately fixes. In *Mindings* however, the actual and potential scenarios are illustrated with similar images, understanding the app as it exists at the point of sale, is reliant upon the voiceover narration around which the trailer aesthetics are organised.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figure 7a-b, *Mindings* app potential and actual product sequences

That the trailer is called 'An introduction to Mindings' in the press context (Dredge 2011) suggests that this trailer forms part of an educational campaign for the app itself: in a similar manner to a games console's launch. This awareness is reinforced through the emphasis on function rather than aesthetic or narrative form throughout the trailer, but could be an indication of an emphasis on utility.

The *Mindings* trailer does not emphasis interaction on a mediated screen, but rather uses images of screens and devices to emphasis the interaction of other apps with the app being promoted for instance (see figs. 7c-7d). This differs from the representation of *Epic Win* that presents a self contained series of images of the app itself, albeit contrasted on commentary about the usefulness of the app in achieving goals. The *Mindings* app itself

has a primarily utilitarian function; represented by the depictions of screens and mobile devices combined with the usual voice over narration with graphics that illustrate the connectivity of the app itself. As a result, the app itself is not represented in the same manner as a game, through the depiction of onscreen sequences, but rather on its technical specification. In the *Mindings* trailer the app's interaction with cloud software technology has significant importance; given these are the primary modes of communicating with the *Mindings* photoframe.

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Fig 7c-d, *Mindings' interaction with other apps*

What is clear then is that within the limited corpus of app trailers, when the primary purpose of the trailer is utilitarian rather than recreational, the trailers' emphasis on the aesthetics of the app is reduced. In terms of the nomenclature of the term trailer in relation to apps, has only recently come to be used as a nomenclative entity in its own right. Apps have a history of being connected with trailers but largely as facilitators of trailers, rather than being advertised through trailers. As early as 1994 apps were being discussed in the same context as trailers (Newsbytes 1994), but in this context the app is an on-screen TV guide that features trailers for other products. In 2008, the Apple App store made film trailers available to be downloaded in a similar manner to apps (Business Wire 2008)¹¹⁶ and 2009 saw the use of 'pre-roll video ads for the picture [*Notorious* (Tillman Jr 2009)] within the iPhone's vSnax app' (Quinton 2009). There therefore strong evidence that apps were facilitating trailers prior to the first found reference to an 'app trailer ' in 2011 (Elman 2011). Indeed this context alludes to a preceding, practice potentially operating under a different name.

I believe it's critical to create great trailers of our apps to post online for potential customers so they can see what the apps are all about. Smaller developers, in particular; need a better alternative to videotaping someone playing the app on a device. (Elman 2011)¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Trailers had been available for download prior to this (Johnston 2008), but there is no evidence in the LexisNexis newspaper archive that the term trailer had been discussed in the same context of an app.

¹¹⁷ see also PR Newswire (2011), and the trademarking of the term 'MYAPP TRAILERS' (US Fed News 2012) as further context to this period.

While Elman's statement appears in a press release for a specific studio suggests this quote but be used with caution it corroborates evidence that suggests trailers existed by another name prior to the potential adoption of the term 'app trailer'. Consider the earliest oblique found reference to an app trailer, in 2009.

A trailer for the game Dark Nebula was released today on Youtube, showing in-game footage of the title in action. The designer behind the game is game industry veteran Anders Hejdenberg, the lead designer of Battlefield 2: Modern Combat. This is yet another example of how the booming games market on the iPhone and iPod Touch is attracting talent from the console and PC games industry. (Business wire 2009)

Similarly, a press release from 2010 echoes this kind of overlapping of the videogame industries with apps stating simply 'the trailer for Rockstar Games' Grand Theft Auto: Chinatown Wars, released this week via the App Store' (Globeandmail.com 2010). It is likely then, based on these earlier applications that the term trailer emerged in a very short two to three year period, and did so directly in relation to downloadable videogames. It is suggested that the term 'app trailer' emerged through videogames and utilities being sold and disseminated via the same platforms. Indeed, that no press release announcement introducing an app as being marketed specifically with trailers can be found, suggests that this term moved from the previously established conventions with little attention and fanfare. As the case studies have shown, by this time the term trailer has moved away from a specific industry to become a varied textual entity as a result of increased media presence and an increased videosharing culture. While the wider press discourse of apps and trailers focuses around movie promotion, the language surrounding apps in general tends to be within discussions of videogame promotion, becoming conflated with videogame promotion.

This conflation actually illustrates a distinct methodological problem; the guiding corpus has been divided and organised on the basis of the perceived product promoted. While the case studies in other chapters have followed a historical discourse organised around a perceived product and thus industry, they have broadly followed the kind of historical framework set out by Johnston (2009). This approach has allowed trailers to be organised for academic discussion; aesthetic themes identified and discussed within a wider framework of understanding. Such a framework allows industrial context and additional contextual information to be used as part of a discourse, but is heavily open to researcher bias. This approach broadly works, in this thesis but is problematic when we

consider that the product promoted may straddle one or more industries simultaneously. For instance dividing up the videogame corpus into trailers that primarily promote consoles and game separately may result in a subtly different framework of understanding for each of these forms. Consider that while app trailers have been considered separately from videogames this very division is creating a boundary that may not exist for consumers and those within the industry. At one end of a spectrum we can see that games apps can be considered as videogames, indeed ontologically the two are the same. Yet videogames are computer codes that form software, and as such manufacturers for videogames also develop computer programs for mobile devices; indicated in the *ChuChu Rocket!* trailer, manufactured by Sega (fig. 8a).

[Image Redacted] [Image Redacted]

Figure 8a-b, *ChuChu Rocket!* and *Glitch Alpha*

Yet if *ChuChu Rocket!* is considered as videogame, so to must *Glitch Alpha*. The latter has little overt videogame branding, but the trailer follows the conventions of other videogame trailers. In distinguishing these two games from the utilities and gamified utilities there is a risk of making determinist claims about the intended use and the actual use of the product itself. As Ryan (2001) suggests, narrative may be applied to a number of utilitarian computer programmes with varying degrees of success and so organising the corpus indirectly using trailers' constructed product remains problematic. The trailers may suggest one use of the product, but this is one of several possible applications. Confining the role of any product to a single use, and that based on the use within the promotional material risks opening up issues of textual determinism. *Epic Win* for instance could be played without having any real-world impact, with the role of the player inputting data as they see fit in order to advance the game elements. Further, ontologically there is no difference between the utilitarian and recreational apps. Indeed, as the videogame corpus has shown hardware has a role in the promotion of trailers and so given the ontological and overlapping aesthetic similarities *Mindings* can be considered not wholly removed from the wider aegis of the videogame trailer.

In dividing the corpus on the basis of industries and perceived product the trailers have potentially been artificially grouped together on the basis of the perceived product within the trailer. Dividing the guiding corpus up by industrial output such as theatre and videogames has allowed a frame of discourse charting historical development within an industry, but has made assumptions surrounding the object of promotion that can often only be verified with interaction with the product or further research into specific campaigns and the consumer experience. In the case of app trailers the grouping is largely reliant upon the basis of context in the guiding corpus as the product itself may not be immediately obvious consider for instance, the *Zappar* trailer. Aesthetically *Zappar* is atypical from the wider trailer corpus, lacking any editing, the trailer itself appears to function as a form of audio-visual poster, in which the product itself is not clear, and this particular trailer demonstrates the problems of corpus division.

This artificial grouping is therefore open to inadvertent boundary construction and policing. This is problematic and opens up an underlying issue within the methodology posing the same problems as genre-based studies. Yet within this study, organising the corpus any other way is largely impractical. Grouping trailers by the products they appear to promote relies on the prima facie product in the trailer rather than suggesting any ontological determinism. This does not however, exclude trailers that promote non-existent products. This in turn opens up the potential for a trailer to be considered as an intertextual reference that is included as a 'trailer' within the corpus, rather than with a finite successful/not successful economic relationship to a product. As the act of promotion does not require the product to be bought, indeed the product itself only exist as a product if and when it is experienced directly as such, prior to this the product exists only through various references, often in promotion (cf Withalm 2003).¹¹⁸ As Bruce Austin notes of film trailers, at the point of sale for first time viewers, it is the framed possibility of the experience that is bought (Austin 1989: 46).¹¹⁹ As such the organisation

¹¹⁸ This intertextual referencing implies a fixed order to viewing, prioritising the promotion and then the product. Of course, even when the product is directly known to the audience the promotional materials still constitute a form of intertextual referencing and so this concept of the promotional material referencing a product intertextually allows for varied viewing orders simultaneously. As Gray notes, trailers like every other form of paratext function as an airlock allowing acclimatisation to a specific product (2010, 24). However Gray assumes this airlock is transitional and not a climate (or text) in its own right. Consider that many trailers are designed to keep out audience demographics likely to respond negatively to a film (Hediger, in Greene 2011).

¹¹⁹ Stephen Heath noted a similar phenomenon, stating that;
it has also to be seen that a film must never end, that it must exist — and even before it begins, before we enter the cinema — in a kind of englobingly extensive prolongation. The commerce of film depends on this too, recognized in a whole host of epiphenomena from trailers to remakes,

of the corpus can be said to be on the basis of the perceived product. As the previous studies have shown, trailers have a varying ontological relationship with the product promoted. In emphasising this, the case studies have opened up the consideration of another form of trailer, the product-less trailer, a trailer for which the product does not exist. This in many respects is the logical extension to Johnston's (2009) work on the trailer as a short film, though as these are trailers for which there is neither identifiable product nor identifiable industry, they offer further opportunity to explore the boundaries of the trailer in relation to both existing literature and the methodology employed herein.

Mashup, Recut, Spoof Trailers

The second largest trend within the miscellaneous corpus is comprised of five trailers for which there is no product in existence to be bought. These trailers variously operate under the labels 'spoof trailer', 'recut trailer', 'remix trailer', 'mashup trailer', and there is a clear overlap of texts being referred to by these largely interchangeable terms (cf Huffington Post 2014, collegehumour.com 2014). In addition to this area are the emergence of 'honest trailers' trailers that create a perceptually accurate narrative (albeit often abridged for comical effect) reflection of a previously released movie (Couch 2014). In each case these trailers are a text that resembles a film trailer in editing conventions, discontinuous montage, fast editing, voice over narrative and the use of imitation or actual studio branding images are often present. The very concept of this kind of trailer stems from the antecedent practice of vidding (cf Gray 2010, Coppa 2008). Due to the history and emergence of the fan vid it is difficult to pinpoint the emergence of the text, similarly the absence of a single term and industry for the product-less trailer further reduces the availability of press sources. Yet the product-less trailers provides an opportunity to reflect upon the very methods of analysis used herein, while providing an opportunity to interrogate the theoretical understanding of these trailers.

Of the five trailers within the corpus however, only one was available for download: a spoof trailer entitled *Greatest Marriage Proposal Ever* (2011) which is atypical as a product-less trailer.¹²⁰ The total product-less corpus comprises of: *Brokeback Squadron*,

from weekly reviews to star magazines, from publicity stills to mementoes (rubber sharks, tee-shirts). More crucially, since the individual film counts for little in its particularity as opposed to the general circulation which guarantees the survival of the industry (1977. 28).

¹²⁰ This 'trailer' is actually a short film centred around an audience member's response to a trailer on screen in a cinema. The character of this short film is watching a trailer on screen, that trailer posits a narrative in which the character's partner asks her father permission to ask the character to marry him. At the end of the 'trailer' on screen, the trailer's character walks through the door of the cinema and proposes to his partner.

*Broke Mac Mountain, Brokeback To The Future, Virtua Fighter 5; Final Showdown, and Greatest Marriage Proposal Ever.*¹²¹ The trailers' inclusion within the corpus suggests the existence of wider trend, that of vidding coming to operate under the term 'trailer'. Studies of the history and concept of vidding already exist and considering the intricacies of fan made texts is a mammoth task outside the scope of this thesis. However, as the trailers indicated in the corpus are unavailable to study, the existing literature offers the opportunity to reflect upon the trend from a theoretical standpoint, and to assess the methodology use throughout this thesis. This thesis has so far organised trailers on the basis of the perceived product, and knowledge of the perceived product's industry has been used to offer a frame of discourse, echoing Johnston's mode of contextual analysis (2009). Yet, while all the previous trailers within the corpus have been promoting real-world products within a largely distinct industry, these product-less (and arguably industry-less¹²²) trailers challenge the implicit assumption that a trailer has to have a product fiscal product, or be the product of a distinct industry. Unlike the statistically dominant trailers considered within this thesis, these product-less kinds of trailer have been discussed in the literature, often in relation to the film trailer or as a result of fan-based output. This literature offers a point of entry for this thesis back into the existing body of literature in absence of the texts themselves. Of recut and mashup trailers, Kathleen Williams offers a useful definition:

a type of fan-made trailer, which is disseminated through YouTube. The recut trailer is created by users by editing filmic material from one of more sources [sic], often to displace the genre of the original source text. The “recutting” refers to the act of splicing together materials, which may alter the music for the original trailer, directly engage with the audience through new text or voiceover, or by choosing elements of the source texts to amplify or omit. (Williams; 2010, 1)

The emphasis on YouTube here should not go unnoticed; indeed much of the widespread emergence of new forms of trailer as seen in the case studies can be traced back to a

It is therefore a film in which a product-less trailer is present within a diegesis, rather than a trailer in its own right when compared to the larger corpus.

¹²¹ These trailers were largely unavailable for download, but press commentary provides the context for discussion here. As the trailers cannot be verified on the basis of the press context, nor can the original posts be identified; no date of release can be attributed to these texts.

¹²² It is however, acknowledged that an industry can exist in the fan community and potentially this is the case; though worthy of a separate, dedicated study. However examples of recut trailers exist from the industry, consider Sky Movies *James Bond Car Chase* in which the chase sequences of the *James Bond* franchise are edited together to suggest James Bond played by one actor is being chased and/or chasing in turn, another incarnation of James Bond. This short, while not called a trailer aired on UK Freeview television during 2012. (Sky movies)

period in which YouTube and videosharing culture emerges. Though it is not suggested fan made videos emerged only from YouTube, the videosharing platform has allowed these texts to be disseminated widely, reach audience numbers that may surpass those of 'authentic' trailers. Further it is YouTube that has allowed the numerous nomenclative categories of mashup, remix, recut, spoof and fan-made trailer to circulate freely; largely these terms are interchangeable with 'recut', though 'mashup' has slightly different connotations. The recut trailer may represent an attempt to replicate an official promotional text, or invert known elements of source for comedic effect, the aesthetic effect however is the creation of a promotional short that posits a potential text. It is worth noting that if the inclusion on a subversive element is removed from Williams' work, the description amplification or omission is very similar to the industrial process of creating an 'authentic' promotional trailer as described by Frederick Greene (in Johnston 2012). Examples of the recut trailer outside the corpus (and thus available for sustained study) would be *Scary Mary* (2006¹²³) a trailer made using original footage from the film *Mary Poppins* (1964) to frame the narrative as that of a horror movie; with the Mary Poppins character appearing to terrorize the children.¹²⁴ By comparison a mashup typically involves the merging of two different sources often with a musical element (cf Lessig, 2008, 138). Consider for instance *Brokeback to the Future*, that blends elements of the films *Back to the Future* (1985), with *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), or *Brokeback Squadron* that blends *Brokeback Mountain* with elements of *Top Gun* (1986) (Dee 2006). In a later work Williams (2012) uses both the terms 'mashup' and 'recut', interchangeably with recut dominating this later discussion.¹²⁵ This appears to be due to Williams' (2010) excellent definition being applicable to both aesthetic forms and the overlapping, variable way in which these product-less trailers are labelled in the public sphere. Within mashup and remix trailers it is the displayed subversion of a known film or films that is intended

¹²³ Because of the nature of the text's creation determining a date of release is difficult, here it has been traced to a specific claim on YouTube.com, though this may be incorrect, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T5_0AGdFic (accessed 21/9/14)

¹²⁴ The trailer does however include new elements of music, and profilmic text, through these the trailer-narrative of a horror movie is constructed.

¹²⁵ It is noted that Ortega also uses 'recut', 'spoof' and 'mashup' interchangeably, Ortega's definition of spoof however mirrors Williams' (2010) understanding, though the latter is more comprehensive.

A 'spoof trailer' is a trailer for a non-existent film that has a parodic tone, changing the generic register of the source film or films. It may combine materials from different films in the form of mash-ups or re-order scenes or shots of a single film, altering the original title cards and voiceover narration. It may also incorporate images and sound bites from popular media artefacts. (Ortega 2013, 149)

to forms the (usually) comic element (Williams 2010, Ortega 2013).¹²⁶ This subversion is largely done through the use of source-specific material appearing in a different context, yet is only one way of subverting for comic effect. In some cases the object of subversion is not an indexically present product as indicated by the use of original source material, but more oblique, a series of conventions for instance. Consider the *Trailer For Every Oscar Winning Movie Ever* (2010) that spoofs the perceived generic conventions of Oscar winners, through a montage of filmed sequences, in which actors narrate the generic conventions or actions thus highlighting them as an object of ridicule, take the opening dialogue for instance where the characters narrate the developments of the scene, as each character speaks a new shot is used:

laugh, laugh, laugh, laugh/A toast, establishing me as the wealthy successful protagonist... who is handsome!/murmur of agreement/Friendly concern that something may be missing from your life/Confidence that nothing is missing from my life/Interrupted statement about-/reassurance that my good fortune will not waiver. (*Trailer For Every Oscar Winning Movie Ever* (2010))

This trailer is subverting perceived conventions from a broad group of films for comedic purposes. While the comedic effect is achieved through reflexive narration of perceived traits in films, the source texts are not overtly indicated through the use of footage. Instead this trailer uses original footage, trailer editing conventions, and reflexive dialogue to draw attention to perceived conventions. Given the differences in ontological construction of both *Scary Mary* and *Trailer for Every Oscar Winning Movie Ever* it helps to consider that Williams has made a distinction between the ontologies of fan made materials, the 'technical categories [of] recut trailers and original-footage trailers' (2012, 2.2). In the case of *Scary Mary* there is an ontological and experiential reliance on an existing product for both the source material and the effects of comedic subversion, while the *Trailer for Every Oscar Winning Movie Ever* relies only on this experiential subversion. With experiential subversion there is a reliance on audiences knowing directly (or indirectly) the object of subversion. This knowledge however, cannot be guaranteed, and as such this understanding of product-less trailers is open to echoes of the earlier criticism of Lisa Kernan (2004). Kernan's understanding of film trailers, as persuasive short texts has

¹²⁶ It should be noted however, that Williams has also seen remix trailers as articulations of audience desire. This understanding however remains predicated upon the subversion of another articulation:

[Fake and fan made trailers] allow creators and consumers to perform their cinematic desire for a film, which may be focused on an actor, a popular book from which the film was adapted, or a director, for example. In some instances, the fake and fan trailers allow consumers and producers to bypass the typical path of promotion by preempting an official trailer with their own (2012, 1.2)

previously been critiqued for analysing the trailer from a position of knowledge of the film promoted (Johnston 2009, 8). The reliance on the product as being the original or hierarchically higher sequence of the film trailer's components and the assumption of a direct ontological relationship implicitly suggests that in order to understand the film trailer, the film itself must be viewed. For the theorisation of fan-made trailers, the reliance on the knowledge of a specific object of subversion undermines the role of the trailer as a mobile entity, potentially enjoyed separately from the product it promotes (ibid). In defining the recut trailer as a subversion of an existing product, both Ortega (2013) and Williams (2010, 2012) suggest that the idealised purpose (comedy) can only be derived when the source material is known to the audience. This actually reflects the various relationships audiences may have with a promotional trailer. It is worth reiterating that Anat Zanger terms this the 'double identity of the trailer', noting that that the trailer 'both tells and holds back a story simultaneously' (1998: 208). So it is that in many instances the product may only exist (for the audience member at least) through the reference created in the trailer.¹²⁷ So understanding these product-less trailers offer an opportunity to explore the trailer as it exists for a potential audience member.

Theorising one aspect of the audience-trailer experience

While the *Trailer For Every Oscar Winning Movie Ever* (2010) for instance, is a short film that references a series of perceived cinematic conventions, it is unlikely but not impossible that an audience would fail to sense subversion of generic conventions. For those audience members then, the trailer could well be 'authentic'. Indeed, there exist trailers that are made long before the product is in existence; pitch trailers for instance are created as an audiovisual mode of gaining financial or industrial backing. Examples of this include the animated sequences for *Jurassic World* expected for release in 2015 (Orange, 2013) while the product is expected to be released at the time of writing this product is not available. The trailer here is essentially a way of demonstrating possible interpretations for creative directions (as well as forming a very early role in promotion of a potential product). Indeed, until the film is released or near completion the film itself may not ever be released to the public while the trailer may have been circulating in

¹²⁷ Indeed, more recently Jonathon Gray suggests this merging of text and paratext when he notes that precisely because paratexts help us decide which texts to consume, we often know many texts only at a paratextual level. Everyone consumes many more paratexts than films or programs. When we move onward to the film or program, those paratexts help us frame our consumption; but when we do not move onward all we are left with is the paratext. (2010; 26)

advance. Similarly trailers may be made at one point without a product, they exist primarily for the purposes of entertainment, or the films themselves are lost. As the trailer for *Machete* (2007) exemplifies, trailers may exist as a short film only and then retroactively have a product created to fit.

Machete is a product-less trailer that appeared as part of Quentin Tarentino and Robert Rodriguez's 2007 double feature film *Grindhouse*. The two features, *Planet Terror* and *Death Proof* were screened alongside trailers that were created for films that did not exist; mimicking the conventions of a double feature.¹²⁸ In 2010, Robert Rodriguez directed a film *Machete* using elements from the trailer to influence the casting and directing decisions (Sciretta 2007). In short, the trailer in 2007 remained a product-less trailer until 2010, wherein its intertextual references were realised and the trailer became a film trailer. This transition from product-less to product promoting trailer represents the variation that occurs across audience demographics. What is needed then is a mode of theorising the trailer that accounts for this variation.

Johnston's conceptualisation of the film trailer as a short film seems appropriate here, but the repetition of medium specificity (seeing a *film* trailer as short *film*) risks undermining other promoted products manifested in the trailer (2009). Consider that a videogame trailer forms part of an anticipatory experience that forms part of a wider narrative of a product's games consumption or experience; for many a game may exist only via its trailer, suggesting that the text of the game (in this example) is manifest in a film form, but not necessarily received as a short film. This echoes Zanger, but of more relevance here is Nick Couldry's understanding of text as combination of meanings seen as 'discrete unified whole' (2000, 70-1). Reworking Johnston's understanding to reduce the implied medium specificity better allows for audience, product, and medium variations and this is where the most recent work on the trailer becomes highly relevant to the thesis, and needs to be considered before this chapter can progress onto the single instances of trailers.¹²⁹ By way of summary as Hesford eloquently puts it of film trailers;

Perhaps a side-effect of their considerable commercial value, and aided and abetted by the internet's ability to reach millions of casual spectators, film fans and critics engage prolifically in the viewing, storage, discussion and exhibition of promotional

¹²⁸ It is noted that before it was made into a trailer, *Machete* was originally a script for a full length feature film written in 1993 (Edwards 2007). The product-less trailers included as part of this experience are entitled *Machete*, *Werewolf Women of the SS*, *Don't*, *Thanksgiving*, and *Hobo with a Shotgun*. (2007)

¹²⁹ In fairness, Johnston is primarily considering film trailers but within the literature there remains the suggestion that film trailers are the template by which all other trailers should be compared.

texts – in particular trailers. These archival efforts reveal a potential for diverse receptive experience, and point to a cultural resonance which digresses from the disposable, commercial qualities of conventional adverts. (Hesford 2013)

Added to the issues of reception, are the various industry, product, ontological, and aesthetic variations all of which necessitate a model of theorisation that allows for these significant changes. Stopping with either Zanger, or Couldry's contributions undermines the potentially unique social and promotional space the trailer offers, and fails to allow for any distinction between texts identified as 'advertising' and those of 'trailers'.

In considering the fan made trailer, both Hesford (2013) and Williams (2012) have suggested the concept of a trailer performing elements of a product it references. In Williams' case this is exclusively the product-less trailer providing a platform for audience-creators to share their conception of a text regardless of ontological relation to that text, and 'to perform their cinematic desire for a film [...] as performances of cinematic and digital literacy, play with the notions of anticipation, promotion, and hype' (2012, 1.2; cf also Gray 2010, 153). Similarly Hesford suggests that

[t]he idea of cinematic performance, [...] is used in correlation with the term's theatrical association – suggesting a degree of consideration, interpretation, staging and exhibition of some originating textual material (2013).

Both understandings of performance however, are rooted in a context that considers the role of the product-less trailer in relation to the promotional trailer. Comparing the *Machete* product-less trailer with the promotional trailer Hesford notes the very inclusion of product-less trailers in the double feature function to perform a specific kind of cinema experience. That;

these contributions reference and reflect the same participatory urge as the wealth of amateur fan- made content found on the internet, exploring the spectrum of influences and attitudes to this cinematic canon through eye-catching paratextual performances of genre, narrative and form (2013).

Hesford cites elements that offer 'performative rhetoric' such as the apparent aging and damaging of film stock, and with missing shots (Ibid). But problematically, Hesford here speaks from the position of knowledge knowing that the 2007 *Machete* trailer is product-less and that it references commercial, promotional elements (such as stars, and cost) it performs these rather than including these as part of a functioning role. For Hesford, the performative aspects are tied up with the use of conventional 'trailer' tropes, from the canon of film-trailer. This is true for also Williams' assertion of the articulation of

audience desire and anticipation (itself conceptualised as a performance). As Williams suggests

By playing with the genres of film promotion, the fake and fan trailers become performances of knowledge of and intimacy with the Hollywood system. They also evidence a desire to share this knowledge. (2012 5.1)

Yet such a performance for Williams again is reliant upon aesthetics of an idealised notion of the trailer and a single element of a specific industrial system. But these aesthetics may transfer across to other products outside the fan-made, as Hesford further notes;

Using trailers to create a cinematic performance has become high value cultural currency – so much so that 2012 Republican Party nominee, Rick Perry, released a campaign advert which was, for all intents and purposes a film trailer. The “polit-trailer”, *Proven Leadership* (Fig. 10) features a bombastic orchestral score, slickly-animated intertitles and a synthesized narrative of hardship, redemption and triumph. The polit-trailer is a clear indication of communicative ambition and an attempt to perform the political process in the style of a feel-good Hollywood blockbuster, with a familiar, affective narrative. (2013)

Throughout the discussion of trailers as a performance then, there is an emphasis on contemporary Hollywood promotional practices, and this is deeply problematic as it implies a template to which all trailers as a performance should adhere. The emphasis in both discussions of trailers' performances assumes a fixed understanding of trailer conventions (and this denies any radical shift in future promotional conventions), neither Williams nor Hesford account for product-less trailers that use codes and conventions from other systems of distribution and promotion. Yet it has to be noted that the same kinds of trends persistently occur within the aesthetics of the trailer corpus: montage, voice over, interstitials being a distinctly dominant trend. However, simply relying on aesthetics to theorise the trailer amounts to textual determinism, so if we strip Hesford and Williams' contribution to the discourse of the various determinist elements we are left with one unifying form; the trailer references a product. Yet the concept of the trailer as a performance remains useful; it allows for varying viewing practices, suggests a text with collaborative meaning as a result of interplay between the audience and the performative elements. This too allows the trailer be experienced in its own right as well as allowing for integration within a wider performance of the advertising campaign. Broadly this echoes that which Klinger calls the 'unique consumable identity' of a product (1989, 10), the public face of a product in the marketing campaign, which can be said to amplify and omit

elements in a similar manner to the performative elements identified in Williams and Hesford's separate notions of performance. Yet this remains a problem, under the definitions herein these performative elements can be subsumed under the theoretical notion of the paratext¹³⁰, and thus potentially include title sequences and 'coming next week' sections of Television Serials indeed, Abbott indirectly draws comparisons between such texts and trailers.

Clips from the show are often chosen to display key narrative moments from previous seasons, or preview upcoming moments of the current season. They also often highlight familiar character actions and behaviour – Buffy fighting vampires – Brennan examining skeletons in *Bones*. Even title sequences that do not contain actual footage from the show but rather specially conceived images and graphic designs produced by companies such as Digital Kitchen and Prologue, are constructed to evoke the narrative and thematic landscape of the series. (2012, 3)

The difference then, comes down to nomenclature, title sequences and previews within serials may be said to function in the same manner as trailers they are not called trailers. This nomenclature becomes key to understanding the trailer, indeed it is useful to consider the trailer as an experientially connected, but perceptually distinct performative event from the product itself: to use Genette's term a form of epitext (1997 344-404)¹³¹. So while there remains work to be done on adapting the roles of editing and aesthetics in performative elements of promotion, particularly integrating the audience perspective, there is a connection between the products being promoted and the use of the term 'trailer' in application to their respective promotional forms. So in the absence of audience studies into the trailer discourse, it may help to reconceptualise the notion of performance not as an output of particular aesthetics or of spatial relations, but rather as an intertextual reference to broad set of products. Consider that within the discussion throughout this thesis there has been an emphasis on the way the trailer may posit or represent a product on screen. The act of representation does not necessitate the product itself but merely presents an opportunity for elements of one text to exist in a different form, and a different manner; thus being spatially and temporally distinct from one another. It follows then, that at this stage in the discourse of the trailer it may be helpful to consider the trailer not as a

¹³⁰ We could therefore, logically consider the performance of promotion under the already heavily theorised area of paratextual studies (Genette 1997). But the very term paratext is problematic, not only does it imply that the paratext itself is not a text in its own right but it is constructed around a series of fixed spatial and temporal relationships that in a digital age no longer exist as standard practice.

¹³¹ This term has been applied to trailers by Kernan (2004) but remains problematic in its fixed spatial and temporal relations while failing to acknowledge nor account for the varying role of the audience.

mode of aesthetics but instead as a promotional 'performance' for a broad category of products or goods (irrespective of the availability of such a product).

While there are certain conventions at work within the broad corpus of the trailer the notion of performance remains vague and difficult to quantify at a textual level, but it is possible to suggest that at the moment the how and why of the trailers' performance is impractical to support when there is little audience-led evidence to support a reception of this. Further despite the extensive amount of research the lead studies in the trailer fail to quantify the trailer as anything other than an advert for a film. With this hypothesis in mind attention can turn to the guiding corpus as a whole and the remaining anomalous results therein. The corpus as a whole identifies over 400 videogame trailers¹³², 25 book trailers, 40 theatre trailers and 22 anomalous results. Yet all of these products may be grouped together within a broad category of goods. In the majority of cases the goods on offer here are narrative based, yet the inclusion of utilitarian goods (apps), and tangible goods (consoles) necessitates a broader boundary of consideration. Within the anomalous trailers several were unavailable for viewing, *Absolut Vodka* (2010) and *Yoga Journal Conference* (2010) both make heavy use of continuous music with discontinuous editing. While *Absolut Vodka* has the aesthetics of a music video (indeed rapping dominates the narrative), the *Yoga Journal Conference* quotes from consumers and uses images from presumably prior conferences that stand as metonymic for the forthcoming event. Obvious comparisons can be drawn between the aesthetics of these anomalous and the broad understanding of the trailer format but this understanding still has the implicit notion of textual determinism lurking spectre like within it.

Apps	6
Parody (Remix/Mashup/Spoof)	5
Absolut Vodka	1
Comic Book	1
Dining Experience	1
Yoga Conference	1
Classical Season	1
Identified in Error:	
Film Trailer	2
Unidentified Film/Game	2
TV Trailers	1
'Making of Video'	1
Total	22

Table 3, *The anomalous corpus*

¹³² The vague indication of the number of videogame trailers here reflects that certain app trailers may or may not also belong within this category, reflecting the identified problems of the methodology in relying on an industry.

The question of why the term 'trailer' has moved across different fields to become connected with a broader spread of products is in part due to the movement in vernacular, and the development of videosharing cultures. Referring to the product-less trailer Williams suggests an interesting concept;

Capitalizing on the ways in which people seek out trailers, their makers use tags and YouTube's ability to suggest related videos to users to rapidly create a network of knowledge and capital surrounding the original trailer (which itself may not even have been released yet, as was the case with *Twilight*). Fake and fan trailers thus promote what I call a network of literacy. (Williams 2012 5.1)

This network of literacy is what was seen overtly in press releases for new forms of the trailer in which a new form of trailer is introduced to the public. As technology develops videosharing platforms offer a catalyst to the spread of the term. As the term spreads, however the aesthetic and industrial affiliations of the text is altering and reflecting upon the corpus as a whole, it can be seen that this network of literacy is broadly grouped around goods that have at their heart the experience. In a discussion of films Cooper-Martin and Solomon (1991) conceptualise them as;

example of experiential products, defined as those products which consumers choose, buy and use solely to experience and enjoy. The consumption experience, especially its hedonic and aesthetic aspects, is key for understanding experiential products. (372)

It is important to note that this frame of understanding is a category to which any product may be positioned. Pine & Gilmore suggest a frame of understanding that articulates a movement from a service based system of marketing towards one of experience based marketing (1999). Within Pine & Gilmore's complex framework is the embedded notion that the elements of the product (in their framework the brand or organisation) form part of a wider performance of the product (cf Petkus 2002). This can be extended beyond the confines of the film industry to the products promoted within the book, theatre and videogame trailers as these products are fundamentally engaged with through the act of experience and retelling and this broadly correlates with the conceptualisation of the trailer as a performative act. Pine & Gilmore's framework, while an assessment of a period of economic development, is potentially outdated, it does suggest that products can become performative as part of a wider frame of engagement. While such a category of the experiential quite readily applies to narrative based products: such as videogames, theatre, and books, consider again the anomalous corpus (see table 3), in which it can be

seen that many of the goods promoted are arguably experiential through being ephemeral experiences. Consider that while conferences may have a utilitarian function, it is the act of attendance that is guaranteed rather than any other possibilities; just as the narrative of a theatre or film production is not guaranteed, the product sold is merely admittance to a narrative opportunity. Similarly a bottle of Vodka may be touched, or kept unopened as an investment (assuming it holds its value) but it is the act of consumption that is being promoted rather than any utilitarian benefits. This echoes Austin's observations that of the movie trailer, that the key selling points, namely plot and genre are largely inferred by the audience rather than quantifiably known (1989 46). Similarly cultural events, such as restaurants are primarily experiences rather than utilitarian in their consumption: the utilitarian equivalent would be the individual food. Yet analysis of a single trailer for these individual products sees them in isolation from the wider range of promotional materials promoting those products. It is therefore impractical to consider these trailers at an aesthetic level, and given the overlap of editing techniques in adverts and trailers to consider the anomalous results in this category requires significant work on other forms of promotion and advertising that includes an assessment of the rationale behind the creation of those texts. Despite the limitations of the study of these anomalous trailers within the corpus, the movement of the term trailer can be said to be under further change, and this is represented within the miscellaneous results. What can be seen is a wider, non-industry specific trend in the use of 'trailers' in connection with a specific kind of product. Without further exploring the rationale behind the use of the term 'trailer' that is to say, who in the chain of creative input is using this term, and how the advertising campaigns are being discussed and conceived of it is incredibly difficult to quantify without textual or nomenclative determinism lying underneath the methods employed.

Part of this wider trend may easily be the use of the term 'trailer' rather than advert as a way of capitalising on the cultural status of the trailer as a form of experiential promotion. This shift in the application of the term trailer is furthered by a whole host of texts identified as such after the compilation of the initial guiding corpus. These are mostly part of official advertising campaigns but at least one example of an amateur trailer has been found (Helmer 2014). Largely these other forms of trailer became known to this thesis after the time of data collection but reinforce the suggestion that trailers are being applied to as a broad category of goods: primarily experiences. 'Trailers' have been found to promote the brand of *Sainsbury's* supermarkets, rather than specific offers that vary week to week, (Sainsbury's YouTube channel, 2013), the *Resource Investment Conference*

hosted in Vancouver (Cambridge House YouTube Channel 2012), and the *Virgin Atlantic* brand (virgin-atlantic.com 2012), while sauce brand *Lea & Perrins* have the 'SORTED Series', trailers promoting the myriad use of the branded sauce (*Lea and Perrins* UK YouTube channel, 2014). Yet interestingly, promotion for both *Sainsbury's* and *Virgin Atlantic* refer to the same text as both a trailer and an advert via their official channels. *Virgin-Atlantic.com* invites users to watch the trailer, while following the video to *Virgin Atlantic*' YouTube account labels the same text as their 'new ad' (*Virgin Atlantic* YouTube Channel 2012). Similarly *Sainsbury's* YouTube channel hosts a text titled as a 'Christmas Advert' and in the description of the advert refers to it as a trailer (*Sainsbury's* YouTube Channel 2012). Further pre-roll adverts on UK catch up Service 4OD, clearly denote 'an ad will be selected for you in' as a timer counts down, while the voice over invites users to 'pick a trailer' (4OD 2014).¹³³ What the application of this nomenclature suggests then, is that the term 'trailer' is increasingly being connected with products that are conceptualised with a broad category of experiential products. However, it may be that the application of the term 'trailer' in this instance is part of a wider nomenclative shift irrespective of the kinds of products promoted. It suggests that trailers need to be considered as part of a wider movement away from the confines of film and television towards one of cultural vernacular. It remains to be seen however if audiences and consumers share the same understanding of the term trailer or if they reject these more niche 'trailers' from a wider cultural understanding. What is certain however, is that the term trailer is continually changing in its application and that such a movement is tied up within a wider videosharing culture.

¹³³ It is possible that the *Mini Countryman* series of promotional shorts is part of a campaign that posits the product within an experiential framework, but this remains at the vanguard of the anomalous results.

Conclusion

Trailers are incredibly pervasive. As the corpus used to guide this thesis has demonstrated, the trailer as an entity has come to be used to promote a hugely diverse number of products. Within a shift to promote different products, different industries are being represented on screen; the result of this is that the trailer has not only moved between different kind of screens, but the form has jumped across broadly identifiable industries and thus ontological relationships with the product promoted. As a result of this movement, the aesthetics of the trailer have the potential to be increasingly varied, and to move along different aesthetic, social and industrial trajectories. While earlier forms of, book, videogame and theatre promotion exist, it is the twenty year period 1990-2010 that saw huge upheaval in the application of the term trailer. In many respects this upheaval reflects a period of huge technological, linguistic, and economic changes in part this may be said to be a result of the internet. Certainly the later changes from around 2010 onwards, point to an increased speed of linguistic change, the use of the internet as a source of promotional and product dissemination reinforces this. It may however be a result of the methodology, using the internet based archives to guide the corpus may have resulted in a feedback loop in which internet sources are prioritised above others.

The use of trailers for different products sits somewhat at odds with the dominant film trailer literature that tends towards language that suggests only film trailers exist, or at least that of the trailers available film trailers are the most important. While historically dominant, the often implicit understanding of the trailer as a single form of industrial promotion has been empirically challenged. The dearth of any literature that considers the trailer outside the confines of the film industry has been countered within the case studies, but significant amounts of work remain to integrate this thesis within the wider but no more important study of film trailers. The industry case studies have offered an insight into the progression of the term and the manner in which that term has changed within those industries, outlining and demonstrating the aesthetic directions in which the term trailer has travelled and may continue to do so. They have shown that each industrial trajectory may take a slightly different course as a result of ontological, economic, and creative attitudes towards the object of promotion, and the promotion itself. The case studies within this thesis demonstrate that the use of the trailer in these industrial contexts come not from a single root cause but instead are the result of a whole host of industrial, and economic factors. Placing this within a wider historical grand narrative we can see that the trailer has moved from a diverse period of promotion in which the trailer was not

a single entity but rather the collective name for the positioning of advertising (Hamel 2012), to a period of stabilisation as indicated by Staiger's aside that the term has seen 'little deviation in its usage' (1990, 26) and back to current period of textual, industrial, and product variation. The current form of the trailer can be said to echo the earliest diversity of the trailer prior to its stabilisation in the film industry. This diversity appears to be a result of the videosharing culture that occurs on the internet, shortly after the turn of the millennium, but as the trailer saw antecedent forms (under different names) prior to this there is a genuine need to consider the industrial discourse; specifically that of the content creators. Considering the majority of pre-millennial trailers can be traced to a single press release suggests either the possibility of a nomenclative shift primarily for the purposes of framing promotion, rather than the emergence of a new form of promotion or that the form came to be called a 'trailer' because of some wider attributes aesthetically or perceptually shared with the existing understanding of the trailer. It is tempting to suggest that the trailer has entered a period of instability given the aesthetic and industrial

Though placing the trailer within such a grand historical narrative is useful to chart the emergence of the term 'trailer' there is a distinctly one-sided element to this thesis that centres heavily on the use of a specific term, rather than an aesthetic form or intangible understanding on the part of the audience. This thesis has taken the step of breaking from considering only, or predominantly the film trailer, the point of study here has been to consider other forms of the trailer. Considering the research that comes prior to this study that uses a corpus of trailers rather than individual studies the methodology employed has allowed distinct variation in the object of study, rather than relying on privately managed historical archives (Kernan 2004, Johnston 2009) or prima-facie understanding of the trailer (Maier 2006). While it has not been possible to explore fully the diverse array of trailers within this corpus in a single chapter, tentative steps have been taken towards integrating the diverse range of trailers found within a unified theory. Such a theory however, remains only tentative in nature and in its current form is not to be considered an all-encompassing understanding of the trailer. In part that is because the key intervention made by this thesis lies in the implementation of a methodology that itself engages with the question 'what things are being called a trailer'. Tied within this question are the nested questions 'what does a trailer look like?' and 'how should trailers be understood?' in both of these nested questions, there is an element of subjectivity and no theoretical framework can account for the audience if the audience remains an unknown variable. While the discourse within this thesis has attempted to move the boundaries of trailer study, it

remains rooted in discourse that concerns film trailers. That the study of film trailers has little considered the audience preferring to hypothesis audience response than actually verify it has hampered the work within this thesis; if only because after all the discourse there is considerable intellectual chasms in the agreement of how to conceptualise the film trailer theoretically, aesthetically and perceptually.

As the dominant literature remains rooted in the study of film trailers, there is a clear need then to understand how the film trailer is engaged with at an industrial and consumer level. This understanding allows for integration within the literature from which to form a solid understanding of the wider experience that surrounds the creation of film trailers and their reception. Following from such a theoretical and empirical foundation it makes sense to then consider the role of other forms of trailers, using the existing research as a solid starting point for future study. Such a study can then further advance the thesis herein. It remains to be seen, at the moment how audiences and industries see these trailers themselves. Work has been done on the industries creating the film trailer (cf Johnston 2009, 2013), but this is so heavily focused on film trailers that it is often unclear if the industry creators participating in such studies have any involvement with other forms promotional trailer. There is therefore a clear need to understand both the film trailer's reception as the academically dominant within the discourse, and to further the boundaries of this thesis with a holistic understanding of the creator and consumer discourse of these trailers. While the methodology has identified promotion deemed a 'trailer' it is unclear if this view is shared by audiences. Considering the nomenclature within an academic vacuum of a thesis is to marginalise the role of the audience and to potentially over-estimate the importance of a nomenclative title that may be dismissed by audiences or only used within an industrial promotional context.

As the previous literature and the methodology employed in this thesis has shown the confinement of the trailer to a specific temporal and spatial understanding has limited the considerations to a priori understandings of the trailer that marginalises changes in viewing habits and contexts over time, in short considering trailers from such a fixed position limits 'what trailers are, what they can mean, who they target, and why we should be interested in them' (Johnston 2008: 145). Far from focusing on specific instances of fidelity in the trailer, the absence of audience research in this area raises pertinent questions: who is watching the trailer, in what context, and what is happening when the trailer is being watched. Whilst responses vary person to person, courting negative feedback as a result of a promotional campaign is a risk of many industries. Yet the film

trailer, seen as distinct from the advert, has a specific discourse that surrounds it; despite the growing interest in paratexts, ancillaries, promotional materials, and specifically trailers themselves, no significant studies have been found that explore audience attitudes to the trailer. While industry studies are known exist, issues remain in accessing them, and the goal of the industry in assessing the effectiveness of specific trailers in relation to projected sales figures.

At the time of writing two separate research strands are known to exist that offer some potential insight into the problem of audience and industrial discourse. The first of these is work coming out of the Canadian based *Trailauralities* project (Deaville & Malkinson 2013), the project's ambitious goal is to explore the role of sound in the trailer at an aesthetic level, and at the time of writing includes aural-aesthetic analyses, and audience survey component and industrial discourse. There are plans for a further audience response study that echo the audience response study of Eastman et al (1985),¹³⁴ and such a study if replicated with a single or at least identifiable point of audience stimuli would allow subsequent analysis of the visual elements of a promotional text. However, as with any audience study, much like Schrödinger's cat, the act of studying can affect the object of study and it remains to be seen how the application of *Trailauralities* proposed audience response study will engage with audiences without affecting the experience of the study. Such a project seeks to fill the gaps in the trailer literature from the perspective of sound studies, but the aurally focussed approach of this project may risk studying in isolation elements that are received in tandem with visual and social stimuli. In addition to the Canadian research project is a similarly embryonic *Watching the Trailer* project (Greene, Johnston, Vollans 2014). Such a project seeks to advance the understanding of the role of the film trailer from the audience perspective. Using an extensive programme of multi-stage audience surveys the research has the potential and the methodological organisation to expand into considering trailers outside the confines of a single industry. The tentative results of the first round of trailer studies is anticipated to be released in a blog post on www.watchingthetrailer.com around late November 2014.

Whilst audience research offers opportunities that echo the goals of this thesis, namely; to help move the theory of the trailer away from that of aesthetic-theoretical interpretations of persuasive or promotional texts the very act of diversifying the trailer in this thesis opens up the opportunity for further case studies. Consider the role of Canada

¹³⁴ Personal correspondence with James Deaville throughout Jan-Sept 2014.

in the advancement of app, and book trailers, the earliest indications of both these forms of trailer can be found in a single Canadian Newspaper: *The Globe and Mail*. While the historical placement of these newspapers is useful in framing the understanding of the term's developments, that one newspaper covered both emergences albeit decades apart, suggests the possibility of there being an issue with the main database used throughout the study: *LexisNexis*. It is possible that earlier references exist that may point to another geographic location as being an early pioneer of this, but that such archives are not covered electronically by the *LexisNexis* database. With the case of book trailers however, the earliest instances before and after the term of the millennium suggest an industry-wide environment in which promoting the book through the use of trailers was enabled. Further study into the earliest instances of the trailer within the industries herein will better facilitate an understanding of the trailer from an industry perspective.

Considering the timeframe of these earlier instances of trailers in the 1980s and 1990s, it may still be possible to conduct research with the original creators of the trailer in question and so there is a temporal imperative in some elements of the study of trailers.

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