

“I’m Sorry, Shaun”: The Theme of Maturity in Edgar Wright’s *Cornetto* Trilogy

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Abstract

The topic of this thesis is the analysis of the theme of maturity and its portrayal in filmmaker Edgar Wright's *Cornetto* trilogy (2004–2013). The purpose of this research is to gain better understanding of how maturity and immaturity are portrayed in the entire trilogy, since much of the earlier research regarding this topic has been limited to just the first film in the trilogy, *Shaun of the Dead*. Even then, the theme of maturity has usually been discussed only as a secondary topic, while the portrayal of masculinity has received most of the attention.

This research is accomplished by utilising the evaluation device theory first created by William Labov. Additionally, further definition of the theory made by Tanya Reinhart and Yeshayahu Shen is discussed in order to help define the evaluation devices used for this analysis. By using this theory, a thematic analysis of the film trilogy is performed, which allows this research to point out scenes in the story that are intended to carry out the film's thematic statement. The thesis will also notify the fact that the evaluation device theory has originally been developed for analysing oral storytelling, and that there does exist challenges when applying the theory to storytelling in other forms of media. Due to the fact that the subject of this thesis is a film trilogy, special attention will be given to researching media-specific storytelling tools such as the films' soundtrack and visual elements. The concept of evaluation focus is also applied to this research in a way that allows the thesis to compare how the films alter between drama and comedy when using the evaluation devices.

The research reveals that the *Cornetto* trilogy depicts maturity as a rather flexible concept that takes a different form depending on the film. The film trilogy utilises a didactic argument to show how maturity can mean different things to different people, all depending on what the character in question requires the most in order to grow as a person. By analysing the film's depiction of the conflict between maturity and immaturity, the research reveals that the *Cornetto* trilogy actively dismantles the idea of maturity and immaturity being a binary concept. Instead, the films show that the main characters can combine their personal growth and newfound maturity with their old, juvenile personality traits in order to discover a healthier way of life. Furthermore, this thesis also offers a proposal as to how the evaluation device theory could be altered to suit the needs for different kinds of analysis.

Tiivistelmä

Tämän pro gradu -tutkielman aiheena on analysoida kypsyyden teemaa ja sen kuvausta Edgar Wrightin *Cornetto* -trilogian (2004–2013) elokuvissa. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on ymmärtää paremmin kuinka kypsyyden ja kypsymättömyyden käsitteitä on esitetty koko trilogian aikana, sillä aiempi tutkimus tästä aiheesta on rajoittunut trilogian ensimmäiseen, *Shaun of the Dead* nimiseen elokuvaan. Silloinkin, kypsyyden teemaa on usein käsitelty vain toissijaisena aiheena, kun taas maskuliinisuuden kuvaus on saanut aiheena eniten huomiota.

Tutkimus on toteutettu käyttämällä alun perin William Labovin luomaa arviointiin perustuvaa teoriaa. Tämän lisäksi Tanya Reinhartin ja Yeshayahu Shenin tekemiä jatkomääritelmiä arvioinnista käsitellään, jotta tälle tutkimukselle oleellisia arvioinnin välineitä voitaisiin ymmärtää paremmin. Tätä teoriaa käyttämällä elokuvatrilogiasta toteutetaan temaattinen analyysi, mikä antaa tutkimukselle mahdollisuuden tarkastella kohtauksia, jotka painottavat elokuvien temaattista sanomaa. Tutkielma huomioi myös sen, että arviointiin perustuva teoria on alun perin suunniteltu käytettäväksi suullisen tarinankerronnan analysoinnissa, minkä vuoksi tämän teorian soveltaminen toisiin tarinankerronnan muotoihin voi tuoda mukanaan haasteita. Koska analyysin tutkimuskohteena on elokuvatrilogia, tämä tutkielma tulee antamaan erityisen paljon huomiota elokuvalla ominaisille tarinankerronnan välineille, kuten elokuvien musiikille ja visuaalisille elementeille. Arvioinnin keskittymisen konseptia sovelletaan myös tätä tutkimusta varten tavalla, mikä mahdollistaa draaman ja komedian vertailun elokuvien välillä.

Tutkimus paljastaa, että *Cornetto* -trilogia esittää kypsyyden joustavana käsitteenä, joka muuttaa muotoaan elokuvasta riippuen. Elokuvatrilogia käyttää didaktista argumentointia näyttääkseen miten kypsyyden voi merkitä eri hahmoille eri asioita, riippuen siitä mitä kyseinen hahmo tarvitsee eniten kasvaakseen ihmisenä. Analysoimalla elokuvien kuvausta kypsyyden ja kypsymättömyyden välisestä konfliktista tämä tutkimus paljastaa, miten *Cornetto* -trilogia pyrkii purkamaan ajatuksen, että kypsyyden ja kypsymättömyyden olisivat binäärisiä käsitteitä. Sen sijaan, tutkitut elokuvat näyttävät miten elokuvien päähenkilöt yhdistävät heidän uuden kypsyytensä sekä heidän lapsellisemmat persoonallisuuspiirteensä saavuttaakseen terveellisemmän elämäntyylin. Tämän kaiken lisäksi tutkielma esittää ehdotuksen siitä, miten arviointiteoriaa on mahdollista muuntaa toisenlaista tutkimusta varten.

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1. Introduction

Edgar Wright's series of three comedy films from the early 21st century – *Shaun of the Dead*, *Hot Fuzz*, and *The World's End* – have all received critical acclaim both from the audiences as well as from professional critics. Collectively, these three films are referred to as the *Cornetto* trilogy (also known as *Three Flavours Cornetto Trilogy*, or *Blood and Ice Cream Trilogy*), as a reference to the appearance of ice cream in each of the films, as well as a nod to Krzysztof Kieslowski's *The Three Colours Trilogy* (Howell, 2013).

Edgar Wright is the director and co-writer for all three films, and all three films share much of the same cast with each other. Out of the actors, Simon Pegg and Nick Frost are always playing the two lead roles, with Pegg also serving as a writer alongside Wright. In terms of genre, all three films can be classified as comedies, but each of them has a unique twist. *Shaun of the Dead* could be described as romantic horror comedy, *Hot Fuzz* is a buddy-cop film, whilst *The World's End* has traces of science fiction sprinkled throughout its story.

Despite the fact that these three films are known as a trilogy, the films do not share a continuous narrative from the beginning to the end. What sets these movies up as a trilogy is their cast of actors, all of the films taking place in contemporary United Kingdom, the aforementioned play with the different genres, and finally a set of common themes found in each film (Howell, 2013). As Edgar Wright himself puts it: "They're all about the individuals in a collective, they're all about growing up and they're all about the dangers of perpetual adolescence" (Wright, as cited by Howell, 2013, 2nd question).

Out of these themes, it is the last one, the perpetual adolescence – the eternal state of immaturity – that I am the most interested in studying. If we follow the Oxford English Dictionary's (n. d.) definition, immaturity can be understood as the "state of being not yet fully grown or developed", with additional terms like "juvenility" and "childishness" being present as well (Definitions 2a & b). Thus, maturity can be reasoned to be the opposite of this, as the "fullness or perfection of growth or development" (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d., Definition 1b.). As the films depict physically grown men struggling to move past their own childishness, the films are ripe for different interpretations for how these character arcs are portrayed.

Of the themes listed by Edgar Wright, it is maturity and masculinity that have received the most attention in the research of these films. Both Walker (2015) and Decker (2016) have analysed these themes in *Shaun of the Dead*, the first film of the trilogy. In fact – as it will become clear in the literature review of previous research – it is mostly *Shaun of the Dead* that has truly received any

attention in the thematic research of the trilogy, as opposed to *Hot Fuzz* and *The World's End*, let alone the entire trilogy. The reason for why this is the case is unclear; all three films have had roughly similar critical reception from audiences, with 92% of *Shaun of the Dead*'s reviews being positive (Rotten Tomatoes, n.d., table 1), while for *Hot Fuzz* the number of positive reviews is at 91% (Rotten Tomatoes, n.d., table 1) and for *The World's End* the number is at 89% (Rotten Tomatoes, n.d., table 1). Similarly, out of all of the films in the *Cornetto* trilogy, *Shaun of the Dead* is the lowest grossing film at around \$37 million worldwide (Box Office Mojo, n.d., table 1), while *Hot Fuzz* and *The World's End* have respectively grossed around \$80 million (Box Office Mojo, n.d., table 1) and \$46 million worldwide (Box Office Mojo, n.d., table 1). Based on these numbers, it would be easy to assume that *Hot Fuzz* would be receiving most attention based on its box office numbers. However, the attention amongst the researchers is mostly given to *Shaun of the Dead* alone.

In addition to that, the past analysis made by various researchers about *Shaun of the Dead* appear to be somewhat contradictory with one another, as there are clashing views regarding the portrayal of the film's themes. Specifically, there appears to be much debate about how the film presents topics such as masculinity and immaturity, and whether or not the films are actively criticising or endorsing the portrayal of these topics. Because of this clash of interpretations and the lack of attention given to the latter films in the trilogy, I believe a thematic analysis that focuses on the theme of maturity is warranted, as it could shed light to the trilogy's message beyond just *Shaun of the Dead*.

The research question for this thesis is to understand how maturity is portrayed in the *Cornetto* trilogy, how it is contrasted with immaturity and what overall interpretation can be drawn about the theme, considering its portrayal in the entire trilogy. In the second chapter, I briefly discuss the films individually and what versions of the films are used for this analysis. The third chapter will discuss how the *Cornetto* trilogy has been analysed before. The fourth chapter will explain the methodology of this thesis, which is based on William Labov's evaluation device theory, and how the methodology is applied for this research. Finally, the fifth and the sixth chapter will analyse the evaluation devices found in all three films and draw conclusions on how the concept of maturity is portrayed in the *Cornetto* trilogy.

2. Description of the Materials

This section describes in brief the synopsis for all three films of the *Cornetto* trilogy. The versions of these films that are used for the analysis are DVDs imported from the UK as part of the *Three Flavours Cornetto Trilogy* box set.

2.1. *Shaun of the Dead*

Shaun of the Dead tells the story of Shaun (Simon Pegg), a retail worker who lives a boring, mundane life, going to the same pub every day after work and spending time with his girlfriend Liz (Kate Ashfield) and his slovenly childhood friend Ed (Nick Frost). Liz begins to grow tired of Shaun's uneventful life and decides to break up with him due to Shaun's inability to change. While recovering from the breakup, Shaun discovers to his horror that a zombie apocalypse has suddenly begun in his hometown. Fearing for their safety, Shaun embarks on a quest alongside Ed to rescue Liz and his mother Barbara (Penelope Wilton) by taking shelter in the pub they frequently visit. However, when their group does enter the pub, Shaun and his friends find themselves surrounded by zombies, who begin to attack the pub. In the ensuing battle for survival, Shaun loses his mother and Ed to the zombies, but he manages to save himself and Liz from the zombies. Having changed as a person during the course of the zombie invasion, Shaun wins back Liz's heart, and he and Liz get back together in the end.

2.2. *Hot Fuzz*

Hot Fuzz focuses on the story of Nicholas Angel (Simon Pegg), who is an exceptionally skilled police officer working in London. In fact, he is so successful in his job that his colleagues and superiors grow tired of having him make the rest of the police force look bad, so they orchestrate a plan which has Nicholas assigned to the tiny countryside village of Sandford in Gloucestershire, western England. There, Nicholas has difficulties settling down in the relaxed atmosphere of the Sandford Police Department, as his stern, by-the-book attitude towards fighting crime alienates him from everyone except his naive partner Danny Butterman (Nick Frost), who assumes that police work is similar to the action movies he watches. The duo begins to investigate a series of murders that have occurred in Sandford that everyone else dismisses just as a series of misfortunate accidents. Eventually the tracks lead the two to discover that a group of villagers from the local Neighbourhood Watch Alliance, led by Danny's father Inspector Frank Butterman (Jim Broadbent) are behind the murders. Since Nicholas realises that he cannot bring the criminals to justice by-the-book due to

Frank's involvement, he and Danny decide to take the criminals down by emulating the action heroes of the movies Danny watches. This leads to Nicholas not only succeeding in bringing the murderers to justice, but also finally managing to integrate himself among his colleagues in the police department, changing him as a person.

2.3. *The World's End*

In the finale of the *Cornetto* trilogy we are introduced to a man named Gary King (Simon Pegg), a free-spirited alcohol addict who recalls a story from his youth in which he and his high school friends attempted to complete a pub crawl in their hometown of Newton Haven. Despite having failed the pub crawl in his youth, Gary is adamant on getting the band back together in order to finish the pub crawl this time, even though his old friends find Gary's obsession with nostalgia inappropriate for a man of his age. When the men return to their hometown, they notice that Newton Haven feels a little bit off after so many years of not visiting the town. While the pub crawl initially goes well despite the friends' ideological differences, they soon discover to their shock that robots have taken over Newton Haven, having assimilated themselves amongst the local populace. While continuing with the pub crawl at Gary's insistence, the robots slowly attempt to convince the men to join their cause. After the men reject the robots' suggestions, they begin to chase the old friends around the town with the objective of assimilating the men into their ranks. With the robots now in active pursuit of them, most of the friends left alive attempt to end the pub crawl. However, since Gary is desperate to finish his childhood dream, his childhood friend Andy Knightley (Nick Frost) reluctantly follows him to the final pub in order to stop his alcohol addiction. While in the pub, the two men discover the leader of the robot invasion, an alien named The Network (Bill Nighy), who offers Gary a chance to be assimilated and able to live his childhood fantasies. In the end, Gary rejects The Network's offer and frustrates the alien to the point that it decides to leave Earth and humanity to live in peace. Consequently, the world is ravaged by an apocalypse that leaves the world without electricity. Despite their predicament, the old friends return back to their regular lives, with Gary continuing to live like a free spirit, but now free from his alcohol addiction.

3. Literature Review

As was stated in the previous section, most of the research regarding *Cornetto* trilogy has focused on for the most part in analysing the horror comedy *Shaun of the Dead*. One of the film's themes that has received a lot of attention is its portrayal of masculinity. As it is apparent from the name of the film, *Shaun of the Dead* was very much inspired by the horror films of the 1980s such as George A. Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* (Walker, 2015, p. 63).

When discussing analysis about cult-genres such as horror, a noticeable part of the research concerns their fandom. Hollows (2003) argues that in addition to being watched mostly by men, the fandom of horror films is often viewed as favouring masculine viewpoints (Hollows; as cited in Walker, 2015, p. 61). As such, cult genres are typically viewed as a space where patriarchal hegemony and immature humour and views on female gender are given space (Hollows, 2003; as cited in Walker, 2015, p. 61).

In the United Kingdom, men's magazines such as *Loaded* can be seen as an extension of this type of space (Walker, 2015, p. 61). As Genz and Brabon (2018) mention, *Loaded* was a magazine aimed at sub-culture referred to as *new lad*. New lad – whose interests revolved around images of naked women, football and alcohol – is best described as a rejection of the feminist idea of *new man* (p. 208). A key characteristic of the new lad culture was its use of postmodern irony as a way to espouse sexist views of women; if these sexist remarks were questioned, the new lad would simply argue for their statements as being mere jokes, all the while accusing the other for being a “spoil-sport” (Genz & Brabon, 2018, p. 209; Walker, 2015, p. 62). In Walker's (2015) opinion, this ironic tone is commonplace in British horror cinema, which is also bolstered further by the marginal status horror has in British cinema, as opposed to the “feminised” mainstream films (p. 62).

What makes *Shaun of the Dead* stand out in relation to other British horror films of its kind is its status as a horror comedy that is willing to parody not just the low status of British horror but also some of the laddish traits of the genre (Walker, 2015, p. 62-3). Walker (2015) argues that while the film certainly does have a lot of content that can be seen as being typical laddishness – such as featuring lot of indulging inside jokes to horror films of the 70s and 80s, as well as plenty of scatological humour – the film's success does not appear to rely simply upon being a zombie film (p. 64). In fact, Walker attributes the film's success as being possible by the way the film was marketed as a romantic comedy, and by giving the love story plenty of screen time in addition to the film's horror elements (2015, p. 64).

In Walker's eyes, *Shaun of the Dead* serves as a criticism of its main characters, Shaun's (Simon Pegg) and Ed's (Nick Frost), juvenile laddism. The film begins with Shaun valuing his friendship with Ed more over his romantic relationship with Liz (Kate Ashfield), which is an element of his life that Shaun must overcome by the end of the story in order to save the day and reunite with Liz (2015, p. 65). Walker views the end of the film as a kind of a "banishment" of Shaun's laddism into the margins of his life: while Shaun and Liz can enjoy their romantic life inside of their house, Shaun may only partake in his laddish traits in a garden shed with his now zombified friend Ed (2015, p. 65).

Besides masculinity, other societal critique is also present in *Shaun of the Dead*. In her analysis, Lindsey Decker (2016) views the film as being critical of the service industry popularised by Tony Blair's New Labour government at the turn of the millennium. In her view, the mundane life of the service economy is paralleled with the zombie outbreak, as many of the characters seen in the beginning of the film working in service jobs end up being some of the first characters to be seen as zombies. In addition to that, Shaun himself is also viewed in many ways as being a zombie without ever being bitten, simply due to his boring life and him being stuck in a dead-end job (Decker, 2016).

However, when it comes to the topic of masculinity in *Shaun of the Dead*, Decker appears to disagree with Walker regarding the film's way of handling new laddism. Whilst Walker argued that the film takes a critical attitude with laddism, in Decker's eyes the film's ending undermines some of these criticisms. According to her, Shaun does not develop much during the story, but rather returns to the same mundane routine that he had from the beginning of the film (2016). To Decker (2016), the key difference of the film is that Liz has grown more apathetic towards her boyfriend truly changing things and instead she has accepted the boring life she was unhappy with in the beginning of the film. As Decker puts it, "...the film imposes a moral ending, in that Shaun appears to have given up new laddism, but simultaneously undermines that ending by allowing Shaun's laddism to influence Liz and for Shaun and Ed's relationship to continue" (chapter 3, para. 9, 2016). Furthermore, Decker (2016) also notes that while laddism could be likened with zombification, due to Ed's immaturity and his fondness of video games, the film also plays up the importance of these skills during the zombie attack in the pub.

Linnie Blake (2008), much like Decker above, notes how the culture around Shaun has already turned him into a living dead. Instead of seeing just the service economy as an example of the societal mindlessness, Blake focuses her analysis on mass media. Shaun exists in a world that is actively "infantilising" males through pop culture phenomena; where characters are "unable to think, act or live for themselves" (Blake, 2008, p. 169). However, while Decker argues that the relationship

between Shaun and Ed is in a way still dominant at the end of the film, Blake sees Ed's banishment into the shed as a sign of the film's "heterosexist logic": that Shaun must suppress what Blake refers to as a 'homosocial camaraderie' he has with Ed for the sake of his maturity (p. 170).

When it comes to other films in *Cornetto* trilogy, Jenny McDonnell's review (2013) of *The World's End* offers us some insight to the themes of that movie in particular. She views the culture clash between Gary King and his former high-school friends regarding maturity as a major theme of the film, which suggests a similar conflict with Shaun having to choose between his best friend and his lover. However, McDonnell notes that the film's ending where all of the characters go back to their old lives suggests that whatever is the way in which the characters wish to live by, their choice is perfectly valid and acceptable (2013).

This literature review has highlighted some notable themes that have been found so far in the first and third films of *Cornetto* trilogy, such as masculinity and social critique. While it gives the analysis some ideas of what themes can be focused upon during the research, it also emphasises contradictions and holes in the research done so far. Regarding *Shaun of the Dead*, there appears to be quite differing interpretations regarding to what extent the film is condemning or celebrating the laddish image of masculinity. Most notably, while there certainly is analysis made about individual films, there is a clear lack of analysis of these themes series-wide. For that purpose, the themes brought up so far ought to be analysed in the other parts of the trilogy as well, in order to understand if the themes in the *Cornetto* trilogy evolve or stay the same throughout the films.

4. Analytical Framework

The analysis in this thesis will be conducted by using William Labov's evaluation device theory (alternatively evaluation devices can also be referred to as point markers). This theory has its roots in a research conducted by Labov (1977), where he analysed the narrative and themes of oral stories told by black Americans.

The word *evaluation* as it is used in his theory concerns the concept of "the evaluation of the narrative: the means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative, its *raison d'être*: why it was told, and what the narrator is getting at" (1977, p. 366). To Labov, stories can have multiple points or no points at all: while a story with a point will receive an interested reply from the audience, a pointless story will usually be met with a bored "so what" (1977, p. 366). The "so what" reply, in addition to it being a sign of pointlessness, also marks that the story in question is something ordinary, nothing unusual (Labov, 1977, p. 371). By contrast, a story with a point contains evaluation, or point markers, that signify to the audience that the events are "strange, uncommon or unusual—that is, worth reporting" (1977, p. 371).

There exists a number of different types of evaluation or ways to mark the point that can be used in narratives. Researchers like Labov and Reinhart have classified some of these evaluation devices as 'external' and 'internal', depending on their role in the story. External evaluation occurs, when the narrator states the point of the story to the audience directly, instead of letting the story tell it organically (Labov, 1977, p. 371).

On the other hand, internal evaluation is split into different sub-groups (Reinhart, 1995; as cited in Shen, 2002, p. 84). First of the groups is referred to as *equivalences*, which are also split into different categories: (a) *semantic equivalences*, and (b) *repetitions* (Shen, 2002, p. 84). The first group relates to the use of synonyms in the story to describe and call attention to specific events happening. The second group refers to both words and clauses that are repeated multiple times in the story; these repetitions can be "lexical, syntactic and semantic" (Shen, 2002, p. 84).

The second group of internal evaluation is known as *comparatives*, which can be (a) *metaphorical expressions* – or just metaphors for short – or (b) *modalities*: comparisons between the current state and what that state could be like; both in a positive and negative sense (Shen, 2002, p. 84). As Shen puts it, the comparison is usually done between the state the characters are at in the beginning and what they wish for it to be, or what is "highly desirable" (2002, p. 84).

For the use of evaluation devices, there is one more term that must be explained. *Evaluation focus* is the area of the narrative where evaluation devices tend to concentrate in, and where the point of the

story might be at its clearest. In the example that both Labov and Shen use in their explanation, it is noted that the evaluation focus was concentrated between the complicating event and the resolution of the conflict (Shen, 2002, p. 85). However, it should be noted that Shen does not make it clear whether the evaluation focus is always found in this part of the narrative, or if the evaluation focus is shaped after the discovery of where the evaluation devices are mostly found.

With all that said, we must address the fact that there exists a few obstacles relating to the applicability of the evaluation device theory to the analysis of *Cornetto* trilogy. While creating the theory, Labov was using it first and foremost to research oral storytelling. Even if he does not provide a clear explanation for his argument, researchers such as Shen argue that the evaluation device theory is equally valid for literary studies (2002, p. 78).

However, we must also take into account that the objects of analysis in this thesis are films instead of books. As such, in addition to analysing the films of *Cornetto* trilogy from the literary point of view, we must also take into account how the film uses evaluation devices both in terms of visuals and also in audio. For an example, in addition to analysing the repetition of certain quotes in the films, we must also analyse media-specific storytelling means as well, such as how the films might repeat certain visuals, or whether there are similarly framed shots, scenes or camera movements.

Additionally, evaluation focus will be used to not just highlight the concentration of the evaluation devices within the text, but also to highlight how these comedy films may find use for these elements such as repetition not just as thematically important moments, but also as opportunities to tell jokes and create comedy. It should be acknowledged that while these comedy films may use evaluation devices as a means of telling jokes, these light-hearted moments in the films can also be used to embed important narrative elements such as thematic and character growth into the films in a way that is organic to the films' roots in the comedy genre. In order to recognise this variety within the films, the evaluation focus for each film will be divided into two categories. These categories are (a) *ironic* and (b) *non-ironic* moments of using evaluation devices. The former category will highlight the comedic or mixed use of evaluation devices throughout the story, while the latter category will only include examples where evaluation devices are used purely for dramatic effect, with no comedic subversions or gags.

5. Analysis

In this section we will begin by analysing each of the three films, *Shaun of the Dead*, *Hot Fuzz* and *The World's End* separately from each other. After that, the analysis will then focus on the *Cornetto* trilogy as a whole, comparing the different points raised from each of the films together in order to find out similarities and differences in how these films portray immaturity and maturity. At the end of each section there will be a table that tallies up all of the evaluation devices that have been discussed in the analysis. The quotations from the films used in this chapter are based on the closed captions found in the film.

5.1. *Shaun of the Dead*

As *Shaun of the Dead* is the most researched film of the trilogy, in addition to analysing the use of evaluation devices, this section will also discuss the findings in relation to the previous research done on the film. Here, I make the argument that the film cannot be viewed simply as a pro-feminist or pro-lad film, as it instead takes a neutral stance towards these worldviews. Instead of focusing on which of these views is better for him, *Shaun of the Dead* is more concerned with Shaun's attempts at finding a healthier balance in his life, between his love life with Liz and friendship with Ed.

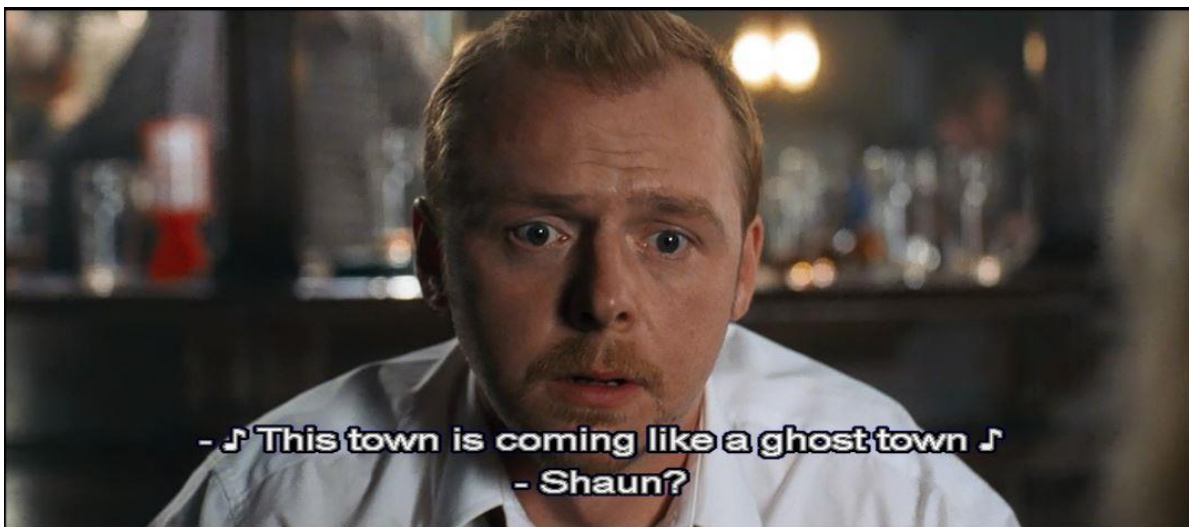
Throughout the first act of the film, during which we are introduced to Shaun's usual life, the cast of characters call attention to Shaun's immaturity and the need to change his ways. The very first scene of the film has Shaun and Liz sitting and talking in the Winchester, a pub that Shaun frequently visits with Ed. During their conversation, it turns out that the two visit the pub with their friends too often for Liz's liking. This leads to the following line from Liz, and the first example of an evaluation device being used in the film: "Shaun, what I am trying to say is I need something more. Something more than spending every night in the Winchester. I want to do more interesting stuff. I want you to want to do it" (Wright, 2004, 0:02:29).

Here, we see an example of internal evaluation being used in Liz's dialogue. Specifically, we are looking at a modality being used to compare the current situation with what Liz wishes it to be. This sets up the central conflict of the movie going forward: if Shaun wishes to remain with Liz, he must be able to provide her with experiences that break the ordinary life Shaun has.

After this line of dialogue, a suggestion is given to both Shaun and Liz that they should go to a seafood restaurant the following evening to have dinner. Having agreed to the idea, Shaun reassures Liz by stating that "Things will change, I promise" (Wright, 2004, 0:03:12).

Figure 1

Shaun's Vacant Expression After He Makes a Promise to Liz. (Wright, 2004, 0:03:23)



This dialogue serves two different purposes. Firstly, it serves as a tongue-in-cheek example of foreshadowing for things to come in the next couple of days, as the zombie epidemic begins to spread in London. Secondly – and this is something that may not be clear to the viewers yet – is that this is the first use of the word “promise” in the film. Here we have an example of another type of internal evaluation: repetition. While it may not be repeated immediately after being stated for the first time, the word gets repeated multiple times later on in the film as an arc word of the story; something, that allows us to track Shaun’s development in the story. In this first scene, it establishes Shaun’s willingness to try please his girlfriend, although the vacant look he gives to the camera as the scene ends suggests to the audience that the task might be far more challenging than what Shaun assumes, as a song in the background foreshadows the coming events of the film (Figure 1).

Besides Liz, another friend of Shaun who wishes to see him grow up and take responsibility is his roommate Pete, who lives alongside him and Ed in a shared apartment. Shaun’s two roommates appear as competing influences over Shaun’s life goals, with Ed appearing as the corrupting influence, who revels in slacking off, immaturity and not contributing to their household in any meaningful way. On the opposite side, Pete is responsible and ambitious, who wants Shaun to live up to his potential and for Ed to leave their home. Another element of repetition is set up here; that being Pete’s annoyance about the front door being open, and suspecting that it was left open by Ed (Wright, 2004, 0:04:47). Shaun is reluctant to have Ed thrown out of their home, seeing that he is his childhood friend, yet Pete insists on asking when Ed will go home. Pete’s statement is an example of

using a modality as an evaluation device: he is unhappy with the current situation at their household, and he believes it would change if Ed left. This prompts Shaun to go and talk with Ed who is busy playing a first-person shooter game, but it becomes clear that this is something that Shaun is not comfortable doing:

Shaun : Hey, man, listen... top left.

Ed: Uh-huh.

Shaun: I was gonna say... reload.

Ed: I'm on it.

Shaun: Erm, since... Nice shot!

Ed: Thanks. (Wright, 2004, 0:05:41)

Figure 2

Shaun Commentates Over Ed's Gameplay (Wright, 2004, 0:05:42)



In this scene, Shaun clearly knows that he needs to discuss uncomfortable and difficult things with a person dear to him, yet he is unable to bring himself to discuss the topic, instead choosing to commentate over his friend's gameplay. When he is put into a situation where he has to choose between doing the mature thing or holding on to his juvenile activities, he chooses the latter. During

the conversation, Shaun's unwillingness to discuss the topic can also be seen in the detail of him remaining in the background, instead of being upfront about the given topic (Figure 2). Having failed to address his best friend's misbehaviour, Shaun begins to make his way to work but before he can leave he is stopped by Ed:

Ed: I'm sorry, Shaun.

Shaun: It's all right.

Ed: (stares at Shaun, raising his eyebrows) No, no. I'm sorry, Shaun.

Shaun: (confused look, followed by him recoiling in disgust at Ed's fart) Oh! Oh, my god, that's rotten.

Ed: I'll stop doing 'em when you stop laughing.

Shaun: I am not laughing. (Wright, 2004, 0:06:39)

The aforementioned fart joke serves few purposes, with two of them having to do with repetition. Firstly, Ed's "I'm sorry, Shaun" first appears to be a genuinely remorseful apology for his laziness in housekeeping. However, when this line is repeated, it becomes clear that Ed's apology is insincere, which establishes his character as someone who truly relishes in his juvenile attitude when compared with Shaun. In that sense, what appears to be a dramatically important evaluation device is actually revealed to be just a punchline. However, the film also uses this exchange as a set up for another repetition of this conversation, that occurs later in the film. Lastly, this scene between the two helps to demonstrate the bond Shaun and Ed share. While Shaun too can be frustrated with Ed's behaviour at times, the two do share a similar sense of humour, despite what Shaun might claim here.

Alas, things do not go as planned for Shaun. The next day, as Shaun goes about his daily chores he forgets about the planned dinner with Liz and leaves the table reservation to the last minute. As one might expect, Shaun misses out on the last table of the evening, and as he and Liz consider their options, the only place Shaun manages to suggest to Liz is the same old place they go to every night: the Winchester. This proves to be the last straw to Liz, and she and Shaun have a fight regarding Shaun's constant failure to mature, with this exchange calling back to the first scene:

Shaun: Let's just go somewhere and have a laugh. Things'll be fine, I promise.

Liz: You promised you'd stop smoking. You promised you'd try drinking red wine instead of beer! You promised we'd go on a holiday.

Shaun: We went to Greece!

Liz: We met in Greece! (...) It's not the same. You promised things would change. (Wright, 2004, 0:15:44)

Here, the word “promise” becomes more relevant as a case of using internal evaluation to demonstrate Shaun's immaturity and Liz's growing exasperation at the state of their relationship. As a result, Liz decides to break up with Shaun, an action that should serve as a wake-up call to Shaun regarding his behaviour. Distraught, he spends the evening drinking in the Winchester, all the while Ed tries to lift his spirits with immature jokes and by urging him to move forward.

Having spent the night drinking, Shaun and Ed wander back to their home to continue their night, completely oblivious to the rapidly escalating zombie epidemic around them. Back home, the two proceed to play music loudly, which provokes their roommate Pete into a confrontation with the two about their lifestyles and his growing irritation with Ed:

Pete: (to Ed) You wanna live like an animal, live in the shed, you thick fuck!

Shaun: Leave him alone!

Pete: Stop defending him. All he ever does is hold you back. (Wright, 2004, 0:22:42)

The exchange above provides us with two uses of evaluation devices. Firstly, the statement “You wanna live like an animal, live in the shed” is an example of a metaphor being used. Pete likens Ed's behaviour with that of an animal, that he wishes to see banished to the outskirts of the normal household life. Together with Pete's statement “all he ever does is hold you back” – an example of a modality as an evaluation device – he expresses disapproval of not just Ed's general conduct, but also his disappointment in Shaun going along with his friend's antics, and failing to live up to his potential. The scene culminates with Pete again expressing his frustration that Shaun and Ed have left the front door open once again (Wright, 2004, 0:23:30), an example of repetition being used to emphasise the duo's irresponsible actions. Based on what we have seen so far, the film has set up the immaturity of

the two best friends as undesirable, as has been seen from the reactions of the rest of the cast towards them.

To make the matters only worse for Shaun, the next day dawns, and with it comes the zombie apocalypse. Once Shaun and Ed are taken from a regular domestic setting and pushed into a life-threatening situation, the film immediately displays how their irresponsibility is putting them in danger. In terms of evaluation devices, this is first shown by closing the circle on Pete's annoyance regarding the open door. As Shaun and Ed are distracted by the news, a zombie easily breaks into their home by walking through the open front door (Wright, 2004, 0:30:20). However, the epiphany of their actions is quickly ignored as Ed insists that the two of them can take on the zombies that are crawling in their backyard (Wright, 2004, 0:31:20). To Ed, the zombie apocalypse appears to serve as a means of experiencing thrill than it is about survival, almost as if it were a video game.

Once they are done dealing with zombies at their home, Shaun receives a phone call from his mother Barbara, who informs him that her home is under attack and that Shaun's stepfather Philip has been bitten and infected. Not wanting to lose people dear to him, Shaun immediately begins to formulate a plan to save not just his mother, but also Liz since he is worried about her safety. However, Shaun and Ed have difficulty finding a compromise due to their different priorities. While Shaun wants to find a suitable shelter that could keep all of them safe, Ed's biggest concerns are being somewhere familiar and being able to smoke at the premises (Wright, 2004, 0:35:30). After skipping on both Liz's home and their own home, the two men settle on the Winchester as being their choice of shelter. This repeated use of Winchester as a place of safety shows that despite the fact that Shaun is slowly trying to become more of a responsible man, he also still has difficulties letting go of the aspects of his life that are shown to hinder his maturity.

Curiously, when formulating their plan, Shaun expresses no concerns regarding the health of his stepfather, being more than willing to kill him in order to protect his mother from being infected. The film had earlier teased the fact that Shaun visits his parents reluctantly and that he has a rocky relationship with Philip in particular (Wright, 2004, 0:10:08). Later dialogue reveals that a part of Shaun's animosity towards Philip has to do with his upbringing, since Shaun references the fact that Philip used to chase him around with a piece of wood for misbehaving (Wright, 2004, 0:40:40). Despite being an adult now, Shaun still attempts to show Philip in a bad light by falsely accusing him of touching him when he was a child (Wright, 2004, 0:43:10). This leads to an exchange where in addition to Liz and Pete, Shaun's parents also call him out on his immaturity:

Barbara: Philip is my husband and has been for 17 years and I would at least expect you to respect my feelings. You must be more adult about these things.

Philip: (groaning, as if he had already turned into a zombie) Yeah. Come on, Shaun. There comes a time when... you just... gotta be a man. (Wright, 2004, 0:43:40)

Here, the film once again uses modality as a means of expressing what they wish Shaun would be like: a well-behaved adult. Philip also likens the adult behaviour in question to that of being a man, as opposed to a juvenile boy which has described Shaun's character well thus far. Immediately after Philip's line, the camera zooms towards Shaun, who is shown holding a kitchen knife, that glimmers dramatically when the light reflects from the blade. Shaun is once again put into a situation, where he has to do something difficult: kill Philip in order to protect his mother and himself. However, just like when Shaun was supposed to talk to Ed about him having to leave their home, Shaun is unable to bring himself to do it, and instead decides to take Philip along with Barbara with them to their shelter.

Shaun's decision to not kill Philip could be interpreted in various ways regarding his development of maturity. On the one hand, considering how Shaun had not earlier shown much concern about killing his stepfather, Shaun's action of taking Philip with them shows that despite his dislike of Philip, he is displaying maturity by being able to look past their differences. But on the other hand, Shaun's actions can also be understood as an example of how he is still unwilling to make difficult but right choices. Considering the fact that Shaun must know how dangerous infected Philip could be to everyone, his decision to not kill him or even leave him behind can be viewed as an example of Shaun wanting to do the morally correct thing, even if it is also very irresponsible thing to do. And just like how Shaun and Ed's inability to keep their front door open puts them in danger, Shaun's decision to take Philip with everyone does put everyone in great danger once Philip turns into a zombie (Wright, 2004, 0:51:45).

A notable change that can be seen here closer to the midpoint of the film's running time is that as the story goes on, the danger and the consequences of the characters actions also grows. When Shaun and Ed were attacked by a zombie in their living room, the two freak-out comedically but manage to kill the zombie after a brief battle no problem. In other words, Shaun and Ed's reckless behaviour did not lead to any major consequences. In contrast, Shaun's unwillingness to make the difficult decision of killing his stepfather has more serious after-effects, as the group is now left without the protection of their car and blunt weapons. It not only signals how dangerous the situation is actively becoming,

but also the fact that Shaun's refusal of being responsible is putting everyone close to him into a greater danger.

As such, as the group continues to make its way to the Winchester, there begins to appear signs of growing maturity in Shaun. For an example, Shaun begins to grow increasingly frustrated with Ed's antics, whether it has to do with his irresponsible driving (Wright, 2004, 0:51:10) or him revealing everyone's cover as they reach the Winchester while blending to the crowd as zombies themselves (Wright, 2004, 0:59:57). The latter event forces Shaun to run into the crowd of zombies as a means of distraction in order to buy everyone else enough time to hide inside the pub. Before he rushes into the crowd, he once again makes a promise to Liz that he "won't be long" (Wright, 2004, 1:01:10). However, unlike the promises Shaun made in the beginning of the film, this is one that he manages to keep by returning to the pub safe and sound:

Liz: Nice of you to join us.

Shaun: Yeah, well, I promised, didn't I? (Wright, 2004, 1:04:25)

Here we see Shaun's personal growth being demonstrated with evaluation devices as well, as the repetition of "promises" has now become a full circle, showing that Shaun is truly growing up into a man. However, there still remains an element of cockiness to Shaun's character. When asked how exactly he managed to escape from the zombies, he just assures everyone that he "gave them a slip", and that it was not a big challenge at all (Wright, 2004, 1:04:40). Shaun's overconfident attitude comes to haunt him soon afterwards, as he notices that the zombies managed to follow him to the pub, and are now encircling it. The familiar pub that Shaun was sure would be a safe haven for everyone now appears to be a trap.

As the group prepares to fight against the zombie horde at their doorstep, Barbara begins to succumb to the zombie bite she received earlier in the film. Barbara attempts to justify her choice of withholding this information until the end by arguing, that she was afraid Shaun might get worried (Wright, 2004, 1:12:30). This moment not only ties back to earlier examples of the characters' irresponsibility putting everyone in danger, but it also serves as a repetition of a line which could be considered Barbara's establishing character moment. When Shaun and Ed declared that they would come to her rescue, she exclaims how she did not want to cause any sort of fuss with her predicament (Wright, 2004, 0:35:23).

Here we see that Shaun and Ed are by no means the only characters in the film who have their share of issues relating to irresponsibility. Much like with Shaun, Barbara's irresponsible actions appear to stem from her unwillingness to make difficult, uncomfortable decisions. After all, had Barbara revealed immediately that she had been bit by a zombie, it would have put Shaun into a difficult situation of having to possibly kill a loved one; something that he was unwilling to do to Philip, despite his dislike of him. What makes Barbara's irresponsibility stand out as being more dangerous than that of Shaun and Ed is her lack of usefulness to the group. Shaun, despite the fact that his plan arguably puts everyone in greater danger, is throughout the film shown to be able to assist everyone with his quick thinking. By contrast, Barbara is shown to have a very poor comprehension of the situation that is unravelling, and not understanding that she is in the middle of a zombie attack, as is shown during her phone call with Shaun (Wright, 2004, 0:34:40). While most of the other members of the group are shown to be able to act during the crisis, Barbara appears to be more of a damsel-in-distress, who is treated as a burden to everyone else.

Besides Barbara, another character who throughout the film has been displayed as being immature and a burden is David. He is introduced as a roommate of Liz who reluctantly joins the group only due to wanting to stay close with Liz, who he has feelings for despite being in a relationship with their other roommate Dianna. What makes David similar in role to Barbara is their general unhelpfulness to everyone, with neither of the two contributing much towards the survival of the group. However, there is a notable difference in attitude that separates the two characters from each other. While there is no mistake that Barbara does very little to help everyone, she is generally portrayed as a sweet and loving mother, who supports her son and wishes to see Shaun grow up as a person. By contrast, David is portrayed as a much more unlikeable character, as most of his dialogue consists of snide remarks towards Shaun and his poor plan. At the same time, David is shown as being unable to contribute with a better idea of what everyone should be doing, which brands him as a nagging complainer, similar in light to Shaun and Ed's roommate Pete. It is probably not surprising that both David and Pete are shown to receive a gruesome end, as Pete turns into a zombie early on in the film while David is devoured by the zombie horde.

At the same time, David's character gives an interesting perspective to the way *Shaun of the Dead* portrays themes of masculinity and maturity. From the first glance, it would be easy to assume that David would be a polar opposite of Shaun and Ed. Contrasting the leading duo, David's appearance is much cleaner, and unlike Shaun and Liz who hang out at Winchester every night, he and Dianna are mentioned to spend a lot of quality time together (Wright, 2004, 0:02:03). He displays no interest in drinking and video games like Shaun and Ed do, being a self-proclaimed pacifist who refuses to

use guns when the zombies are all around the Winchester (Wright, 2004, 1:11:00). Due to the strong contrast in his interests with Shaun and Ed, and due to his general conduct during the zombie apocalypse, it would be reasonable to argue that his character is a comedic caricature of new man in a similar vein to how Ed is a comedic caricature of new lad. As a matter of fact, the film positions both of these characters as being similarly useless in dealing with the zombies, by having the two side-by-side as Shaun is shown to be fending off against a zombie (Wright, 2004, 0:56:05), another example of how the film uses visual comparatives to emphasise the similarity of these characters (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Ed and David Stand Still while Shaun Fights a Zombie. (Wright, 2004, 0:56:08)



After Barbara succumbs to the zombie bite, David panics and tries to have Barbara shot before she turns into a zombie. This leads to a heated argument between everyone as emotionally shaken Shaun demands David to put the gun down. Once zombified Barbara does rise up, David is unable to take the shot and hands the gun over to Shaun. Once again, Shaun is pushed into an uncomfortable situation where he has to make a difficult choice that would cost him personally a lot, as a repetition of scenes from earlier in the film. This time, however, as a continuing sign of Shaun's growth, he is willing to make that difficult situation that he was not unable to do before, and he shoots his zombie-mother before she can hurt anyone (Wright, 2004, 1:17:00).

While the characters are dealing with the shock of Barbara's death, the zombies break into the Winchester in full force, devouring David, seemingly killing Diana and mortally wounding Ed as well. Continuing off from Shaun's moment of character development from before, he protects Liz

and Ed by willingly setting the pub that is so dear to him on fire as a means of deterring the zombies (Wright, 2004, 1:21:15). Crawling to the cellar, Shaun and Liz attempt to escape the pub by using a lift, but Ed opts to stay:

Shaun: Come on, we're getting out of here.

Ed: I might just stay here.

Shaun: But we can get out.

Ed: You two should make a go of it.

Shaun: What are you talking about?

Ed: I only hold you back. (Wright, 2004, 1:24:42)

After having spent most of the film being a hindrance to Shaun's attempts to mature as a person and to survive the zombie outbreak, Ed's dialogue uses repetition of Pete's outburst from the beginning of the film (Wright, 2004, 0:22:42) as a way to signal that Ed finally realises the bad influence he has had on his friend. For Shaun, the scene signals leaving behind the person who has arguably been the closest person to him in his life, and that with Ed staying behind he and Liz can finally take the next step and rekindle their relationship. Going even further with the use of repetition, Ed gives Shaun another insincere apology that leads to a fart gag, with the exchange between the two being almost verbatim from earlier (Wright, 2004, 1:25:22). Here, though, Shaun's assurance about him not laughing is mixed with him sobbing, and the sincerity of Ed's apology can also be called to question, considering his earlier acknowledgement of him holding Shaun back.

Having survived the zombie apocalypse, the life in London eventually returns to being mostly normal. Shaun is still living in the same apartment he did in the beginning, but now Liz has moved in the place of Ed and Pete, in a scene that shows much difference and similarity to the beginning of the film (Figures 4 & 5). As can be seen in the latter picture, the living room has become far tidier, with the lighting of the scene giving a brighter picture of their living condition. Liz has taken Ed's place, and while she is shown browsing the television in a similar vein to how Ed plays his video games, she is quick to drop the remote and engage with Shaun about their activities, contrasting Ed's more passive stance in the beginning.

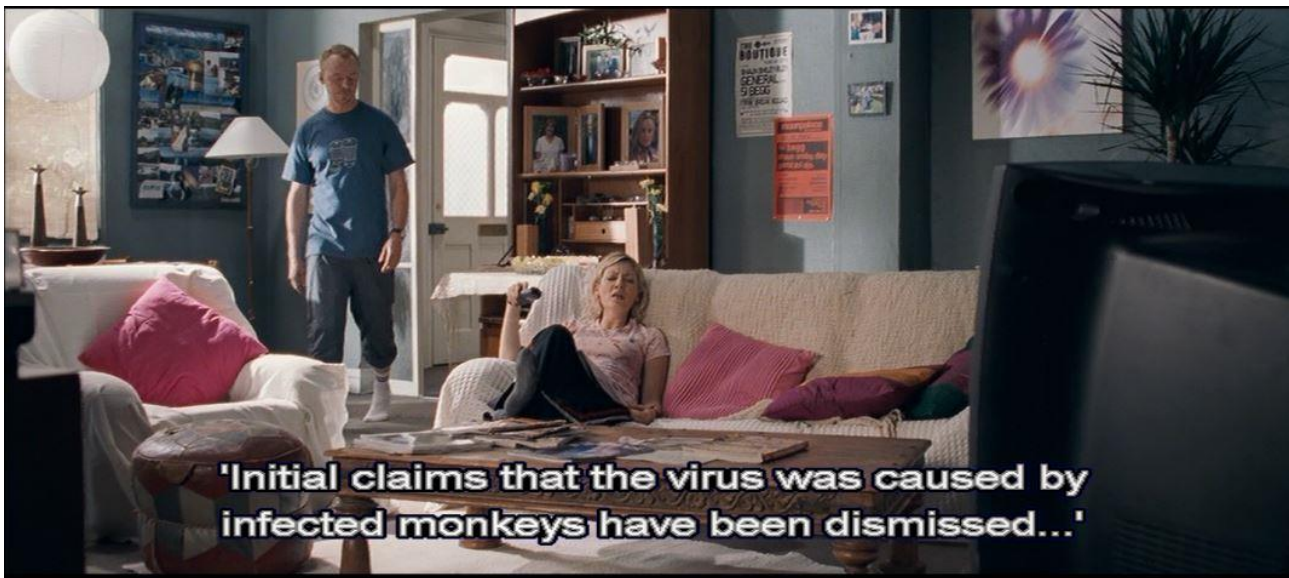
Figure 4

Shaun and Ed in Their Living Room in the Beginning. (Wright, 2004, 0:04:15)



Figure 5

Shaun and Liz in Their Living Room at the End of the Film. (Wright, 2004, 1:29:04)



After having made the plans with Liz for the day, Shaun decides to go to the shed in the backyard. The film reveals that Shaun keeps the now zombified Ed there as someone he can play co-operative video games together with. This final scene of the film also serves as one last use of repetition of the

film, calling back to the scene of Pete telling Ed to go “live in the shed” if he wanted to keep living like an animal (Wright, 2004, 0:22:42).

As has been discussed before in the literature review, this final scene has for many called into question as to what extent Shaun has truly grown as a character during the course of the film. After all, Shaun appears to get everything he wants: he is back in a relationship with his girlfriend, but he also gets to hang out with his childhood friend, who is free to be “used” anytime he wants. However, I would argue that *Shaun of the Dead*'s ending does not necessarily undermine the overall theme of growing up and becoming more mature as a person. Considering how dominant Ed's influence has been on Shaun for most of the film's runtime, the fact that Liz has claimed the spot once occupied by Ed implies that unlike in the beginning, the person who appears to be dearest to Shaun is Liz.

Furthermore, much like how Walker (2015) notes how Ed appears to be banished into the shed in the film's ending (p. 65), I see the ending as a message of finding balance and moderation in the important thing in life. Shaun's friendship with Ed and their fondness of video games in itself was never the problem in the film. Rather, what appears to be the problem was the lack of balance in Shaun's life, which led to Shaun's friendship with Ed to dominate most aspects in his life. Likewise, the ending could also be read as a balancing act between maturity and immaturity. As it has become clear from the analysis, characters like Shaun and Barbara alter between moments of trying to be mature, while occasionally lapsing into moments of making irresponsible actions. For both of them, these immature moments appear to stem from their uncomfortability when having to face the harsh realities of their lives: that sometimes they must make correct yet difficult choices in order to improve as people. While Barbara's reluctance to reveal her condition appears to be somewhat hypocritical – considering how she berated Shaun for not acting more like an adult – it most importantly highlights how otherwise responsible people can falter and act in an irresponsible way: no one is perfectly responsible. In that light, Shaun spending time in the shed playing video games with zombified Ed does not reverse his character arc. It shows that Shaun has managed to prioritise different things in his life over Ed, with the implication being that he has now managed to set foot on a new, healthier path that allows him to regulate things important to him better than before.

Table 1*Distribution of Evaluation Devices in Shaun of The Dead*

	Repetitions	Metaphors	Modalities
First Act, Non-ironic	1	1	3
First Act, Ironic	1	1	0
First Act, Total	2	2	3
Second Act, Non-ironic	0	0	1
Second Act, Ironic	4	1	1
Second Act, Total	4	1	2
Third Act, Non-ironic	3	0	0
Third Act, Ironic	3	1	0
Third Act, Total	6	1	0

Note. In order to better convey the dramatic arc of the story, the evaluation devices listed have been split into three acts. The acts have been defined here as follows: the first act starts from the beginning and ends the morning after Shaun's breakup with Liz (0:24:20). The second act ends when the group settles in the Winchester (1:05:03), and the third act follows this to the end of the film.

^a Due to the lack of examples, external evaluations and synonyms are omitted from this table.

Having now discussed all of the evaluation devices relevant to the themes of the film, we can now look at the evaluation focus of the film. Curiously, instead of what Labov (1977) suggested in regard to the highest concentration of evaluation devices being usually between the complicating event and resolution, *Shaun of the Dead* appears to consistently put evaluation devices all throughout the film. However, a clear difference can be seen when comparing the second act with the first and the third act: the second act contains a lot more ironic usage of evaluation devices, such as catchphrases that have been repeated throughout the film. The second act is also considerably more light-hearted than the first and the third act, as the drama of the failing relationship in the first act and the loss of family in the third act make way for the fun, action-packed romp through the zombie infested London.

5.2. *Hot Fuzz*

As the second part of the *Cornetto* trilogy and as a thematic sequel to *Shaun of the Dead*, the theme of maturity carries on to *Hot Fuzz* as well. However, the approach that *Hot Fuzz* takes with the theme is noticeable in the way it contrasts with the way that *Shaun of the Dead* handled it, and this becomes immediately clear with the introduction of *Hot Fuzz*'s main character Nicholas Angel. The film immediately begins with a case of external evaluation that was never present in *Shaun of the Dead*: opening narration. Here, the audience receives a recap of Nicholas' career and achievements, such as his upbringing in London, his education and work as a police officer (Wright, 2007, 0:01:01). The film immediately communicates to the viewer that Nicholas is exceptionally gifted at seemingly everything that he does, is well liked by the public and that he consistently receives special commendations for the work he does. In short, he can be classified as a model citizen and police officer.

Due to this set-up, the following scene comes as a surprise, as while Nicholas is promoted to the position of Sergeant for his excellent work, that same excellence and maturity gets him assigned to a countryside village of Sandford. The scene contains use of two different examples of comparatives, as Nicholas' superiors explain their decision to him. Firstly, the superiors express disapproval that Nicholas has not been considerate of how his high work rate affects the perception of the rest of the police force and for not thinking about what is best for the team, with the Sergeant noting that they can't have him be "the Sheriff of London" (Wright, 2007, 0:04:28). Secondly, the Chief Inspector's expresses his fear that if left to his own devices, Nicholas' exceptionalism would lead to everyone else losing their jobs (Wright, 2007, 0:04:42).

Based on these evaluation devices, we can observe that Nicholas' professionalism comes with a cost, as his dedication to his work alienates people around him. As such, while his professionalism is great for his work life, the film positions his professionalism as a hindrance to his personal life. This is further emphasised in the next scene, where Nicholas tells his ex-girlfriend Janine about his transfer at a crime scene she is working on. As he keeps getting distracted by all of the details at the crime scene, Janine expresses her frustration that Nicholas "can't switch off" (Wright, 2007, 0:06:17). In addition to hurting his professional relationships, Nicholas' dedication to work also has a negative effect on his love life as well.

Much like how the conflict and Shaun's character development was set up in the first two scenes of *Shaun of the Dead*, a similar set up can be seen in the beginning of *Hot Fuzz*. However, where the films appear to divert here is how they approach the topic of maturity. Shaun's problem in the

beginning of his story was his complacency, his unambitious look of his future and his unwillingness to grow up. By contrast, Nicholas appears to have all of the dedication and professionalism that Shaun was lacking, but he also appears to be mature to the point of exaggeration, swinging to the opposite spectrum of where Shaun was.

Once Nicholas makes his way to Sandford and begins his life as a member of the local police force, his past problem of failing to connect with people surfaces there as well. In addition to his dedication to his job, the rift between Nicholas and his colleagues also materialises in the form of conflict between the opposing values of life in the big city of London as opposed to the rural mindset of the people living in Sandford. These contrasts between Nicholas and the rest of his colleagues are best exemplified by thorough use of repetition and contrast throughout the film.

One such example of this is shown with Nicholas' drinking preferences. Due to his mindset of always being in work, Nicholas is shown to prefer drinking cranberry juice to alcohol, while the rest of his colleagues have no issues with consuming beer, as is shown by Danny ordering drinks in short order, with repeated exchange with the bartender (Wright, 2007, 0:09:40, 0:10:18). Another example of this can be seen in Nicholas' insistence that everyone should be using politically correct language in relation to their police work. When characters address the officers either as "policemen" or "policewomen", Nicholas is always shown to correct them with the gender-neutral term "police officer" instead (Wright, 2007, 0:09:52), or referring to an "accident" as a "collision" (Wright, 2007, 0:38:35). In addition to this, while his colleagues are shown to make a sexual innuendo every now and then, Nicholas is quick to change the topic in such cases (Wright, 2007, 0:17:14). These character quirks Nicholas has are used to position him as an uptight, overtly mature character, whose stern attitude to upholding the morality all the time will lead him to be antagonised by his work colleagues.

The conflicting values between Nicholas and his colleagues are also apparent in the way they approach their police work. Having lived in a small town known as being the safest village in the country (Wright, 2007, 0:15:47), local police officers are shown to have a relaxed attitude to handling crime. When murders begin to occur in Sandford, most of the officers are shown to repeatedly dismiss the deaths as mere accidents, which are often accompanied with wishes for Nicholas to "put a sock in it" and such (Wright, 2007, 0:39:14, 0:51:59, 1:04:50). To them, Nicholas' stern attitude for suspecting each of the deaths as a serial murder case is just a result of him having lived in crime-ridden London, and as such they view him as simply being paranoid. At the same time, the police officers are shown to rely upon Nicholas' experience and professionalism as a police officer, as due to the village's relative safety many of them have no idea what to do at a crime scene. This is shown with the repeated gag of Sergeant Fisher not knowing what to do, asking Nicholas for advice, and

then agreeing to everything, always ending with the phrase “Very good. What he said” (Wright, 2007, 0:38:01, 0:50:58).

This element of the police officers not having any idea of what the work is actually about is best exemplified in the character of Danny Buttermann, the son of Inspector Frank Buttermann, and Nicholas’ partner in Sandford Police Department. Having already been introduced as a heavy drinker, his work relationship with Nicholas is initially shown as being frosty, as Danny appears to imagine that the “real” police work that Nicholas has done in London resembles action films such as *Bad Boys II* or *Point Break*. To Danny, the fact that he has a “real” police officer as his colleague has him quickly idolise Nicholas, as is shown with him imitating Nicholas’ words in an attempt to sound cool (Wright, 2007, 0:33:40, 0:35:27). When Nicholas and Danny are working together on patrol, Danny opens to him about his fears and why he keeps talking to him about action movies that annoy Nicholas:

Danny: Sorry, I... I just... I just feel like I’m missing out sometimes. I wanna do what you do.

Nicholas: You do, do what I do. What on earth do you think you’re missing out on?

Danny: Gun fights. Car chases. Proper action and shit.

Nicholas: Police work is not about proper action or shit. (Wright, 2007, 0:31:17)

To Nicholas, what Danny assumes is actual police work sounds absurd, but it does also show that Danny is interested in learning to become a real police officer. As the serial murder case begins, it is his admiration of Nicholas that leads to Danny being the one person in the police department willing to go along with Nicholas’ theories.

As the two men keep working together on the case, they begin to slowly have an influence on each other. Nicholas, who had previously sworn off from drinking anything alcoholic, is shown to lighten up in Danny’s presence and is willing to spend the evening in the pub drinking with him (Wright, 2007, 0:45:49). At the same time, the naïve newcomer Danny begins to demonstrate how he is starting to learn from Nicholas’ instructions, switching away from discussing traffic collisions as accidents, in line with the professional terminology that Nicholas had mentioned to him earlier (Wright, 2007, 0:45:20). Here we see first traces of character development for Nicholas and Danny. While he does still spend much of the evening discussing work procedures, the fact that he is laughing and drinking

with Danny also shows that Nicholas is slowly lightening up and becoming more comfortable in the countryside than he was in the beginning of the film, having been transferred there against his will. As the night continues and the two men drink at Danny's home and watch action movies, Nicholas begins to open up about his past and his regrets about his failed relationship with his ex-girlfriend. Doing so, he begins to recognise how his obsession with his job is damaging his social life. As he reminisces his past mistakes, the scene leads to this exchange:

Nicholas: I just wanna be good at what I do.

Danny: You are good at what you do. You've just gotta learn to switch off that big old melon of yours.

Nicholas: That's the whole problem, Danny. I don't think I know how. (Wright, 2007, 0:48:44)

The conversation above most notably calls back to an earlier exchange where Nicholas argues with Danny about what the police work is supposed to be like. While harsh in tone, it was in Nicholas' interest in that scene to help Danny recognise what police work is truly about. Similar to that scene, Danny's words here encourage Nicholas to help overcome his work obsession, showing that the two men are truly beginning to care each other, helping Nicholas to slowly loosen up from his need to be mature at all times. Most importantly, both scenes use evaluation devices to showcase how they fear of what they might be; either missing out on action packed police work, or fearing that he is not good enough at being a police officer.

A genuine, human connection is born between the two police officers. Similar to how Danny imitates Nicholas' quotes, Nicholas in turn also begins to pick up mannerisms from Danny, such as the way how both of them insult other people and tell them to get lost (Figures 6 & 7). Despite the repetition of the gag, it is the small differences that showcase the change in Nicholas' character. In the first example, Danny's gesture is coupled with a quote that he appropriated from Nicholas in an earlier scene about rebuking theatre tickets (Wright, 2007, 0:33:40). Due to the inclusion of Nicholas' quote, the gesture appears to be a poor attempt at appearing cool on Danny's part. The annoyed expression Nicholas makes at Danny's antics emphasises Nicholas' attitude regarding how a proper police officer should act, considering until that point he has expressed his disapproval either by raising his voice or giving the person in question a silent treatment.

Figure 6

Danny Blowing a Raspberry (Wright, 2007, 0:35:33)

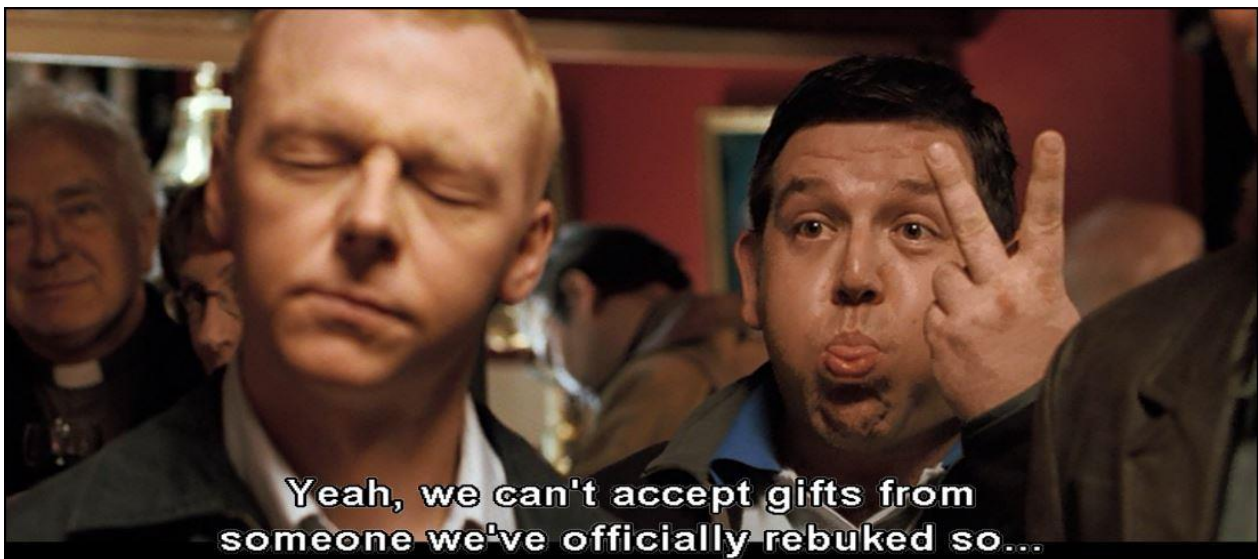


Figure 7, on the other hand, appears much later in the film, after Nicholas has started to bond with Danny. Moreover, the scene happens during the prolonged murder investigation, which has led to Nicholas becoming increasingly irritated that he is unable to prove his suspect guilty. The gesture is performed during a scene where Nicholas is conversing with his prime suspect, and is used to indicate his frustration with the case at hand. The scene is also lit very differently when compared to Danny's example. The first scene occurs during festivities in a pub following a theatre performance, and the atmosphere at the scene is very light and celebratory, if a bit awkward. By contrast, when Nicholas is shown performing the gesture, he is reviewing security footage at a supermarket, whose CEO he suspects of being behind the cases: the contrasting light and darkness are used to emphasise the unclarity of the possible murderer and his base of operations. The change in Nicholas' behaviour is apparent, and it shows that despite trying his best at remaining professional, the setbacks and the lack of trust he receives from his colleagues is leading him towards abandoning his more mature and professional behaviour behind in favour of acting more immaturely, more similar to Danny's general conduct.

Figure 7

Nicholas Blowing a Raspberry (Wright, 2007, 1:11:33)



Despite the difference in attitude when it comes to serious police work, there are a lot of comparatives and parallels drawn between Nicholas and Sandford when it comes to the idea of striving towards perfection. When getting transferred in the beginning of the film, one of the reasons mentioned as to why Nicholas is getting assigned specifically to Sandford is the town's prestige as having won the Village of the Year title multiple times (Wright, 2007, 0:03:48): an exceptional police officer in an exceptional village. As Nicholas is introduced to his superior Chief Inspector Frank Buttermann, he is congratulated for his work a day prior for arresting underage children for minor crimes, but he is also instructed to use more considerate tactics by Frank:

Frank: There's a reason why we accommodate a few of the younglings at the pub.

Nicholas: The greater good?

Frank: The greater good. Precisely. (Wright, 2007, 0:15:56)

When Nicholas mentions the phrase "the greater good", Frank's expression practically lights up, as if he is overjoyed to see that the new Sergeant in Sandford understands the importance of working for the benefit of everyone. This attitude of striving towards the greater good is echoed in the Neighbourhood Watch Alliance (NWA), whose members view the town's success in the Village of

the Year competition to be of utmost importance. Regarding the sentiment, Nicholas can also be seen as someone who works for the greater good, by keeping the city around him safe. In the beginning of the story, he believes police work to be about “procedural correctness in the execution of unquestionable moral authority” (Wright, 2007, 0:23:08), and that law is “proper, righteous and for the good of the humankind (Wright, 2007, 0:44:54). In his mindset, the belief that law is absolute is the key to serving for the greater good.

While both Nicholas and NWA share this goal of the greater good, they are shown to have drastically different methods for achieving it, as the NWA is revealed as being the main culprit behind the serial murders in Sandford. In a scene where the NWA’s motives are revealed, a notable amount of evaluation devices can be picked up:

Nicholas: You should be ashamed. Calling yourself a community that cares.

Philip: Oh, but we do care, Nicholas.

Joyce: It’s all about the greater good.

NWA: The greater good.

Nicholas: How can this be for the greater good?

NWA: The greater good. (Wright, 2007, 1:18:04)

The repetition of the phrase “the greater good” is used not just for the comedic effect by being repeated by NWA members in unison, but to also emphasise the fact that they view their actions as being justified for the sake of Sandford. While Nicholas had assumed that the murders were related to real estate schemes, the truth is that the NWA members were instead killing people they perceived as threatening their chances at winning the Village of the Year award. Here, repetition is also used as a means of emphasising the flawed qualities that were the reason for the victims becoming target for murder:

Skinner: Blower’s death was simply the result of his being an appalling actor.

NWA: Quite appalling!

Nicholas: And so Eve deserved to die too?

Robin: Well, she did have a very annoying laugh.

NWA: Annoying! (Wright, 2007, 1:18:19)

Besides repetition, the scene also uses modalities to express NWA members' fears about what would happen if some of the victims were allowed to live:

Skinner: Cousin Leslie was a terrible shame. But it seemed she was set on moving away.

Tom: We couldn't have her sharing her green fingers with anybody else.

James: Not least those heathens at Buford Abbey! (Wright, 2007, 1:19:30)

These evaluation devices are used to explain the NWA's murderous actions, while also emphasising just how seriously the members take the view of serving the greater good. NWA's motive rant also serves as a contrast to Nicholas and his own methods for serving the greater good; while his actions are based on following the law unquestionably, the NWA's actions can also be seen as a warning of what might become of Nicholas if he insists on not wavering in regard to his professionalism, and how extreme it might get.

Having heard the NWA's motive speech, Nicholas still holds on to his belief that the case can be solved through correct procedures and by arresting everyone. However, he is left shocked when Frank arrives at the scene and reveals himself as working together with NWA as an accomplice to the murders. As the local Inspector – and Nicholas' superior – is a member of the conspiracy responsible for the murders, the chances of having the members arrested and tried according to the regular procedure appear to be impossible. Danny rescues Nicholas from NWA and tells him to go back to London, but Nicholas attempts to persuade him to not give up:

Nicholas: I can come back. I can come back, and I can bring the blue fury of the Metropolitan Police Service with me.

Danny: They'll make it disappear. Who are they gonna believe? My dad, or a loony police officer?

Nicholas: But it won't be just me, will it. We can do it together. You and me. Partners.

Danny: Forget it, Nicholas. It's Sandford. (Wright, 2007, 1:24:14)

At the lowest point of the story, evaluation devices are used to express Danny's hopelessness at the situation, recognising how the poor reputation Nicholas has among the police in both London and Sandford are hurting their chance. Danny's final line is a para-phrased quote from Roman Polanski's (1974) film *Chinatown*, which shows how Danny views the situation in Sandford as being similar to the police corruption found in that film.

With all hope seemingly lost, Nicholas drives away and heads back towards London, stopping at a gas station. There, he notices on the side a shelf full of DVDs: those same action movies that he had earlier deemed as utter nonsense, but which he had eventually also watched together with Danny. Having been a proponent of following the procedures correctly all throughout the film, Nicholas has come to the realisation that the professionalism and maturity he has clung onto is not the way for solving the case in Sandford. At this moment, having been presented with the question of either following the law as an absolute or to see the NWA brought to justice, he chooses the latter by finally letting loose. When the cashier asks if he can help Nicholas with any of the groceries, he turns to look into the camera with a dramatic chord playing in the background, stating that "This is something I have to do myself", harkening to the comedic seriousness and machismo of the 1990s action movies whose style he has chosen to embrace (Wright, 2007, 1:25:35).

Figure 8

Nicholas Enters Sandford for Final Confrontation on a Horseback (Wright, 2007, 1:27:58)



The next morning, when Nicholas returns to Sandford, he enters the village centre wearing shades, toothpick in his mouth, stocked on weapons he had taken from the police station, while also riding a white horse, whose hooves clopping fills the audio track in the scene. In addition to referencing the visual and dramatic style of action films like *Point Break* and *Shaun of the Dead*, the film also makes multiple comparisons to old American western films, with Nicholas' appearance resembling both an action hero and a sheriff (Figure 8). While the scene could be interpreted as a simple visual gag – a by-the-book cop has transformed into a cowboy cop – the scene ties deeper into the film's commentary on authority.

In the beginning of the film, one of the reasons given for Nicholas' transfer is his superiors' fears that if his exceptionalism at work is left unchecked, he could become “the Sheriff of London” (Wright, 2007, 0:04:28). On its own, it is easy to assume that the term does not refer to the Wild West, as in the British context the term “Sheriff” can be used to refer to other figures of authority both in real life or fiction, such as the Sheriff of Nottingham of *Robin Hood* fame. However, another visual reference to westerns can be found in the introduction of Frank Buttermen, who is introduced with an image of himself dressed up as an American sheriff, admitting that he is “something of Wild West nut” (Figure 9). This, in addition to his actual job as Inspector, positions Frank as the head of authority in the town, lawful yet corrupt. Nicholas, on the other hand, is positioned both as a younger member of the law enforcement but also as a lone horseman, who wanders into the town to deal with the corruption of its law enforcement.

Figure 9

An Image of Frank, His Wife and Young Danny Dressed up in Wild West -style Clothing. (Wright, 2007, 0:15:26)



Furthermore, some of the evaluation devices found in the dialogue during the climax highlight not just the tensions between the city and the countryside that have been present throughout the film, but also referencing how westerners have historically echoed the tensions between the dominant eastern United States and the smaller, newer settlements of the Wild West. When the Sandford Police Department begins to understand what has happened in the city and choose to assist Nicholas in the operation, Frank is in disbelief that they would trust him, fearfully exclaiming that “he isn’t even from round here” (Wright, 2007, 1:36:25). To Frank, the fact that his crimes are being revealed is already terrifying enough, but what truly seems to set him off is the fact that it is being done by a police officer from London, coming from the big city to fix the corrupt system in the Wild West. This is further echoed during a fight between Nicholas and Skinner, whose dialogue also appears to imply that he views the conflict as a matter between the East and the West, and that Nicholas is the new Sheriff in town:

Skinner: (pummels Nicholas into the ground) Get out of my village!

Nicholas: (grabs Skinner’s arm and counterattacks) It’s not your village anymore! (Wright, 2007, 1:43:50)

The film’s shift from a more subdued yet comedic British crime mystery into more Hollywood style action-comedy film in the climax also corresponds with the character development of both Nicholas and the rest of the cast at the police department. Having spent the entirety of the film clamouring for a life of action similar to the films he has been watching, Danny immediately jumps to the call and begins to assist Nicholas. The rest of the Police Department agreeing to help Nicholas appears at first to be quite sudden and unexpected, considering that much of the explanations Nicholas gives to the police officers are similar to what he was talking about earlier, but earlier those arguments were dismissed as mere paranoia. The difference here is Nicholas’ general conduct; since he is less stern and more approachable as a police officer, he is able to connect with others much better than in the beginning.

In addition, there is also the fact that Nicholas has managed to assimilate much better into the local culture, which is shown by using evaluation devices such as repetition to close the circle on many of the running gags. For an example, after needing to have a Danny work as the actual translator for his supposed translator of the thick West County accent (Wright, 2007, 0:40:30), the film ends with Nicholas understanding the accent all on his own, showing that he no longer needs support for the

task (Wright, 2007, 1:36:17). Also, after first having a distaste for crass sexual innuendos his colleagues have been making for most of the film, at the end he relaxes his attitude regarding politically correct language, to the point of even being comfortable enough to make an immature joke himself and laughing about it with his co-workers (Wright, 2007, 1:47:33). After all of the NWA members are apprehended, the Chief Inspector of the Metropolitan Police – alongside the Sergeant and the Inspector – arrive at the scene and asks for Nicholas to return to London, having tried to contact him multiple times during the film (Wright, 2007, 1:46:38). Nicholas, having changed as a person and – paradoxically – grown up to be more immature than before, decides he would rather stay in Sandford, which shows that he has embraced his new way of life.

Even though the film ends with Nicholas adopting a more relaxed, perhaps a bit juvenile attitude to both work and social life, that does not mean that he abandons his dedication towards his work as a police officer completely. Throughout the climax, even though his methods are violent and not in accordance with the law, his number one priority still remains the police work and fighting crime, refusing to succumb to the police departments indifferent attitude of every misfortune being an accident. In fact, while Nicholas is shown to become assimilated to the local work culture, he also influences other police officers to become more serious about their police work. During the climactic shootout and raid to the supermarket, Sergeant Fisher is shown as being the one to issue commands of what to do, with Nicholas shown as being impressed and being the one to say “Very good. What he said”, using the repetition of an earlier beat with slight variation to demonstrate character development (Wright, 2007, 1:37:20). After apprehending all of the criminals, all members of the Sandford Police Department are shown to participate on doing the paperwork (Wright, 2007, 1:47:25), contrasting the beginning of the film where Nicholas was shown as being the only one to focus on such things (Wright, 2007, 0:13:05).

What this combination of relaxed attitude in social life with the dedication to fight crime shows is that much like *Shaun of the Dead*, *Hot Fuzz* does not argue in favour of completely changing as a person and removing all of the past aspects of the protagonist’s character. Instead, *Hot Fuzz* too is shown to appeal in favour of finding a moderate balance between maturity and immaturity, recognising that there is room for both sides in life, and having both is important for a healthy social life.

Table 2*Distribution of Evaluation Devices in Hot Fuzz*

	External Evaluation	Synonyms	Repetition	Metaphors	Modalities
First Act, Non- ironic	0	0	1	1	1
First Act, Ironic	1	1	3	2	2
First Act, Total	1	1	4	3	3
Second Act, Non- ironic	0	0	2	0	3
Second Act, Ironic	0	0	9	1	0
Second Act, Total	0	0	11	1	3
Third Act, Non- ironic	0	0	0	0	1
Third Act, Ironic	0	0	5	2	0
Third Act, Total	0	0	5	2	1

Note. The first act, as defined for this thesis, starts from the beginning and ends with the first murder (0:37:13). The second act ends when Nicholas decides to head back to Sandford (1:25:59), and the third act proceeds to the end of the film.

When looking at the evaluation focus for *Hot Fuzz*, it appears that the film follows Labov's (1977) definition of evaluation focus more closely, since there are far more evaluation devices being used in the second act when compared to the first act. It should also be noted that many of these evaluation devices that are used in the second act are concentrated towards the end of act two, during the confrontation between Nicholas and NWA, which gives further credence to the idea that evaluation focus is usually concentrated towards the culmination of the film.

Looking at the numbers, two clear differences between *Shaun of the Dead* and *Hot Fuzz* come to clarity. Firstly, *Hot Fuzz* appears to use repetition to much greater degree as an evaluation device than *Shaun of the Dead*, which suggests that *Hot Fuzz* uses the repetition far more as a tool for thematic storytelling instead of using it merely for running gags. However, this also leads to the second observation, which is the notable growth in using evaluation devices ironically, telling jokes in conjunction with providing the audience with point markers to emphasise the message of the film. A good example of this can be seen in the scene where Nicholas confronts NWA at the end of act two. The repetitious use of the phrase "the greater god" heavily emphasises NWA's motivation for murders and their dogmatic attitude for doing everything in the name of Sandford and the Village of the Year award. At the same time, the way the repetition happens is rather absurd, as by the NWA members repeat the phrase in chorus while wearing black ropes, which make the scene appear as being very humorous as well.

Comparing the two films in this light, *Shaun of the Dead* appears to keep the most dramatic and comedic moments more separate from one another than *Hot Fuzz*, where these otherwise dramatic story beats are usually lightened up with a joke. Viewing the two films this way, *Shaun of the Dead* appears to be more of a dramedy than *Hot Fuzz*, which plays its story more as a straight-up comedy film.

5.3. *The World's End*

The final part of this thematic trilogy, *The World's End*, is put into a unique position as a follow-up to *Shaun of the Dead* and *Hot Fuzz*. As has been discussed before, the first two films have been positioned as opposing views on the theme of maturity. The first film tells the story of an immature man learning to take responsibility, while the second film inverts that by telling a story of a responsible man becoming more relaxed. Even still, while the two movies appear to have opposite lessons, they also share the importance of finding a balanced ground between maturity and

immaturity, finding value in both qualities. With that in mind, how does *The World's End* fit into this equation, and what stance does the film take, then?

Much like *Hot Fuzz*, *The World's End* opens with an example of external evaluation in the form of an opening narration by the film's main protagonist Gary King. During the opening narration, he recalls his life experiences as a rebellious schoolboy, telling the listeners about his gang of friends: Andy, Oliver, Steven and Peter. On their final day of school, Gary and his friends were planning to complete a dream of theirs: a pub crawl known as The Golden Mile in their hometown of Newton Haven, that would take them through twelve different pubs during the course of a one evening.

This opening narration sets up two important points of interest for the thematic analysis of this film in question. Firstly, it gives us a point of comparison as to how Gary's personality contrasts with the earlier characters Simon Pegg has portrayed during the course of the trilogy. While Shaun was described as an everyman – a medium between Ed's indulging immaturity and Pete's ambitious maturity – and Nicholas as a work-oriented paragon of morality and maturity, Gary appears as a stark contrast to these characters, especially towards Nicholas. Gary, contrasting Nicholas' distaste of alcohol or sexist language, appears to embody many of the stereotypes typically associated with laddism. He is shown to be a teenage troublemaker, who enjoys drinking alcohol, making offensive jokes (Wright, 2013, 0:02:50) as well as insincere comments about his friends (Wright, 2013, 0:00:59), and that he is someone whose sole interest is seeking a hedonistic lifestyle (Wright, 2013, 0:01:31). What makes Gary stand out from Shaun on the other hand is Shaun's attempts throughout the movie to distance himself from lad culture, whereas Gary appears to indulge himself in it completely.

Speaking of indulgence, the second important point that can be made from the opening scene is the nostalgic view Gary has of his youth. The opening montage of his youth is filmed with soft and bright lighting, giving his teenage years a cheerful, idyllic appearance: something that is desirable and worth seeking for. Gary views the pub crawl as a "heroic quest", referring to it as an adventure with boyish delight (Wright, 2013, 0:01:49). While Gary and his friends are shown to fail at completing the Golden Mile, he still views the event with nostalgic joy, stating that his "life would never feel this good ever again" (Wright, 2013, 0:03:22).

The scene then suddenly changes to present day, showing that Gary had been recounting the story as an older man at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, showing no regrets about his past life. However, when asked by another man if he ever regretted not making it to The World's End – the final pub on the Golden Mile – Gary is shocked into a long silence (Wright, 2013, 0:03:48). After the pause, he states "no", but his hesitant answer suggests that he does actually have regrets about not completing

the Golden Mile. This opening, much like what earlier films in the *Cornetto* trilogy have done, sets up Gary's quest for the film: to recapture that indulging joy of nostalgia by reuniting every one of his friends for a new attempt at completing The Golden Mile. Echoing this hedonistic sentiment is the background song *Loaded* by Primal Scream (2013) that plays during the opening credits. Specifically, what is interesting here is the exchange of dialogue that is heard in the beginning of the song, which is taken from the film *The Wild Angels*, starring Peter Fonda:

Pastor: Just what is it that you want to do?

Peter Fonda: We want to be free! We want to be free to do what we want to do! And we want to get loaded. And we want to have a good time. And that's what we're going to do. We're going to have a good time. We're going to have a party. (Corman, as cited by Wright, 2013, 0:03:59)

Figure 10

Gary Dressing up in His Apartment. (Wright, 2013, 0:04:50)



Figure 11

Oliver Taking a Business Call (Wright, 2013, 0:04:45)



Following the opening of the film, we see Gary visiting all of his old friends as he attempts to convince all of them to join him in completing the pub crawl. Here the audience is shown an immediate contrast between Gary and his friends through visual comparison. While Gary is shown to wear similar black clothes he used to wear during the montage that showed his childhood life and living in a tiny apartment (Figure 10), all of his friends are shown to have moved on to middle-class lives, going to work while wearing business suits, with some enjoying a family life as well (Figure 11). This comparison sets up a major conflict for the duration of the film. While Gary is still hung up on his juvenile past, most of his friends have moved past Gary and their adolescence a long time ago, having matured and started working.

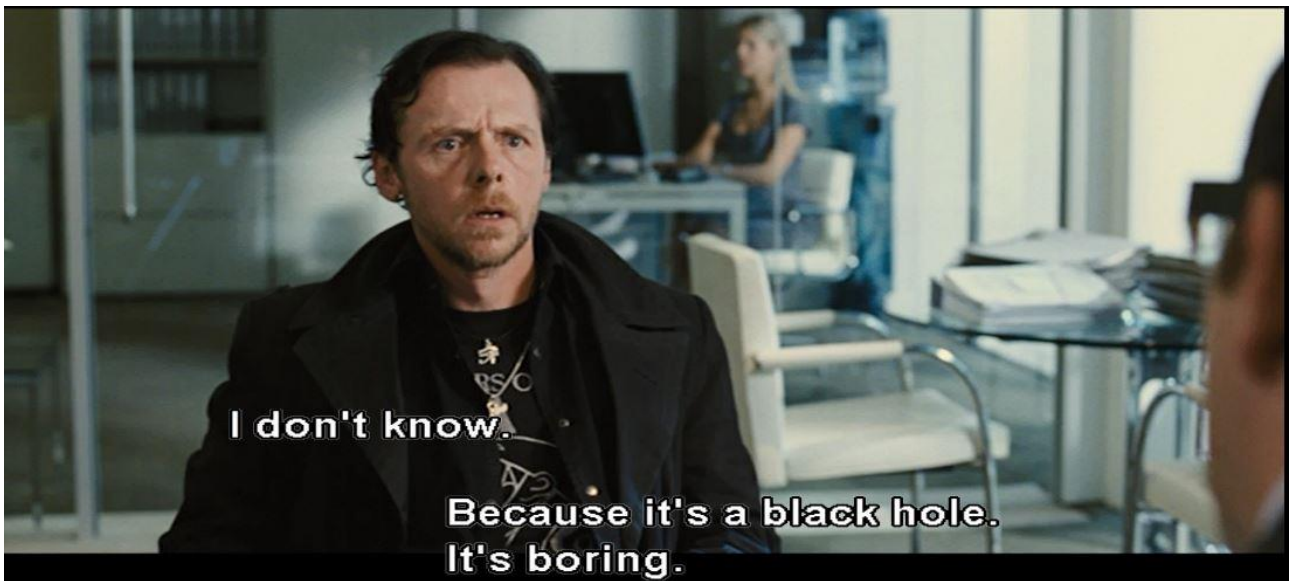
When Gary has to convince the others to join him, he often uses the lure of different modalities for them to agree to join him, such as reminding them of their camaraderie (Wright, 2013, 0:06:53), claiming that doing this would help everyone gain closure (Wright, 2013, 0:08:32) and by appealing to their sense of nostalgia (Wright, 2013, 0:09:49). While Gary's friends reluctantly agree to come with him, all of the friends are also shown through repetition to be in disbelief that one of their friends, Andy, would be willing to go drinking out with Gary due to an unspecified incident in their adolescence (Wright, 2013, 0:06:38, 0:08:16, 0:09:59).

Andy himself proves to be toughest one for Gary to convince to join the group, due to him being a teetotaler and unwilling to return to Newton Haven, comparing the town to a black hole (Wright, 2013, 0:10:53), a statement that based on his expression very clearly hurts Gary (Figure 12). Evaluation devices here show to us that not only is that while Gary is not alone with his yearning of nostalgia amongst his old friend group, but that he is also very much proud of his old hometown while

his other friends do not share that sentiment. There is also some tension going on specifically between Gary and Andy, which suggests that this is the one relationship in the story that the audience should focus on more carefully when compared with Gary's relationships with his other friends.

Figure 12

Gary's Hurt Expression when Andy Insults Their Old Hometown (Wright, 2013, 0:11:16)



As the friend group gather on the appointed day and everyone gets to interact with one another, the differences in the worldview between Gary and his friends starts to become more apparent. For one, when compared with his friends, Gary most certainly appears to be stuck in the past. When he pulls over to pick everyone up, the friends are surprised to see Gary driving the same car he has had since 1989 (Wright, 2013, 0:13:59). Considering the car's black appearance matches closely with Gary's own, one cannot help but feel the car itself has been modelled specifically in a way that it can be compared with Gary, with Oliver referring to the car as "antique" (Wright, 2013, 0:14:16). While in the car and listening to music, Steven is surprised that the tape Gary is playing is the same one he had made for him when they still were children (Wright, 2013, 0:15:12). The cringy look he gives to Oliver after learning the fact suggest that he is more worried than impressed by how Gary has kept clinging on to the nostalgia (Wright, 2013, 0:15:25).

Perhaps as a result of Gary being more emotionally immature than his friends, he appears to misinterpret some social cues quite often in his friends' dialogue. For an example, when Andy sarcastically mentions how Gary has a "selective memory" (Wright, 2013, 0:11:04), how it is

pointless to argue with him (Wright, 2013, 0:11:21) or how he is “never wrong” (Wright, 2013, 0:13:52), Gary always brushes these comments off with glee as if he is completely ignorant to the sarcastic tone of Andy’s comments, wondering just how exactly never being wrong is a bad thing. Also in regard to his immaturity, Gary is shown to have a poor understanding of popular culture, such as by referring to *Three Musketeers* as the Five Musketeers, or even thinking that it is real history like the Bible (Wright, 2013, 0:14:30).

As the pub crawl commences, having already criticised Gary’s indulgent nostalgia and his lack of cultural knowledge, the film next addresses his laddish behaviour. After Andy decides to order a glass of water from the pub, Gary reacts to his decision in horror and disbelief for Andy to not drink beer, which he views to be a “manly” drink (Wright, 2013, 0:22:15). The rest of the friends are supportive of Andy’s choice, considering the unexplained incident from his backstory, and criticise Gary for making politically incorrect jokes about Andy (Wright, 2013, 0:22:39). Getting annoyed with Gary’s behaviour, Andy attempts to have a serious conversation with Gary about his beliefs, although this does not go as well as he might have hoped:

Andy: There’s nothing “ooh ducky” about being teetotal, about walking into a pub after a rugby match and ordering a tap water at a bar packed full of big ugly bastards wearing warpaint. That, my friend, takes confidence, yeah? I’m talking balls.

Gary: (chuckles) You said it, poof. (Wright, 2013, 0:23:08)

During Andy’s first line, Gary continues to make faces and squirm on his seat uncomfortably, which suggests that he has difficulties having serious conversations with other people. When Andy concludes his monologue, Gary immediately latches on to the one word he can make a sexual innuendo about, deflating the situation while also avoiding having to face his personal responsibility for insulting his friend a moment ago. While the film continuously portrays his immaturity in negative and bigoted light, Gary is still unwilling to let go of that immaturity, which shields him from harsher facts of life.

The criticism of Gary’s immaturity is explored further in the second pub, when the audience is introduced to Oliver’s sister Sam. She was first seen briefly in the opening as someone Gary had an affair with when they were teenagers, and based on Gary’s and Steven’s repetitive use of her name upon hearing that she is visiting them, it becomes apparent that both of the men still hold feelings for her (Wright, 2013, 0:25:52). Once she arrives at the pub, Sam’s enthusiastic reaction to meeting

everyone is easily compared and contrasted with her lukewarm reaction to meeting Gary (Wright, 2013, 0:26:52), showing that she too prefers the mature company of Gary's friends to Gary himself. Gary, still believing that life is similar to that of his teenage years, follows Sam into the ladies bathroom thinking that they are going to have sex in the toilets, just like in their youth (Wright, 2013, 0:27:23). However, Sam's appalled reaction to Gary's lack of understanding consent only manages to earn him a slap in the face, further emphasising how out of touch Gary is from his old friends. The appalled reactions Sam and Gary's friends give to him, particularly when compared with Gary's buffoonish attitude, suggests to the audience that they are supposed to find Gary's behaviour as being unacceptable, in comparison with the mature behaviour of his friend group.

Figure 13

Gary Displaying an "Out of Order" Sign He Is Wearing (Wright, 2013, 0:28:19)



Once she is ready to head out of the pub, Sam tosses Gary an "Out of Order" sign from the toilets as an ironic parting gift (Figure 13). The sign is used here as a visual metaphor to emphasise the fact that Gary is "out of order": he has trouble fitting among his peers who have found employment and who have matured as people. Not only does Gary end up wearing the sign and displaying it with all the pride he has as they walk to the next pub (Wright, 2013, 0:28:29), but he also claims that being "out of order" and lacking attachment is more valuable:

Gary: You know what I think? I think you're jealous. Yeah, you've got your houses and your cars and your wives and your job security. But you don't have what I have. Freedom. You're all slaves and I'm free to do what I want any old time.

Andy: And this is what you want? You should grow up, mate. Join society. (Wright, 2013, 0:33:51)

In this exchange, evaluation devices can be seen used here as a way to exemplify the two competing viewpoints seen so far in this film. Gary compares the orderly lives his friends have to slavery, implying that he views maturity as something inherently restrictive. In turn, Andy expresses his disappointment in how Gary is spending his life, and wishes that Gary could mature to become like them and join the orderly lives they all participate in. Furthermore, as the men argue why their reunion does not feel right, Andy argues that they have changed too much, while Newton Haven still remains the same as it always was (Wright, 2013, 0:33:36).

However, much like *Shaun of the Dead*, *The World's End* also shifts from a relationship comedy to a different genre: in this case, science fiction. When Gary gets into a fight with a local youth in the pub's toilet, Gary ends up decapitating him, revealing that the boy he attacked was in fact a robot (Wright, 2013, 0:36:20). Following a fight with a larger group of youth, Gary reasons that there is a bigger infestation of robots in Newton Haven that explains why the town has felt so off: he argues that they have not changed, but the town has (Wright, 2013, 0:40:15). Andy, who is once again shown being frustrated due to it being impossible to argue with Gary, gives up on being a teetotal by drinking shots and agrees to continue with the pub crawl, even though they might be suspected of attacking the youth in the pub toilets (Wright, 2013, 0:41:43). While until now he has been the voice of reason in the group, the unexpected turn of the fight in the toilets is leading to Andy giving up on his principles. As the men proceed to head towards the next pub, the *Alabama Song (Whisky Bar)* by The Doors (2013) begins to play in the background. The song lyrics fit into the scene, with men asking how to get to the next bar discreetly, while fearing for death if they are not able to proceed with their pub crawl. Gary narrates that they are just "having a good time" (Wright, 2013, 0:42:54), making an ironic statement about their current predicament, with their situation having changed from an awkward reunion to a life-threatening situation. The non-diegetic nature of this line suggests that instead of talking to his friends, Gary is in fact narrating the fact to the audience, making this an example of external evaluation.

While the sudden introduction of robots into the storyline might at first seem confusing, the existence of robot invasion in Newton Haven is tied to the themes of maturity and order that have been discussed earlier. When Gary interrogates an old drug dealer from his past about the existence of robots, he receives angry objections for using the term "robot", since the term's original Czech form,

robotnik, means “slave”, which they insist that they are not (Wright, 2013, 0:46:13–0:47:00). This ties back to the conversation Gary and Andy had earlier regarding freedom and order, where Gary compared his friends and their orderly middle-class lives to slavery. Here, the comparison to slavery appears to be more appropriate, due to the violently repressive actions and stalking of susceptible targets that the robots like to engage in. Additionally, due to Gary’s earlier objections towards order and slavery, this also helps put him into opposition against the robots more clearly.

When trying to understand what motivation the robots actually have, Steven runs into the local conspiracy theorist Basil, who reveals what their plan is truly about:

Basil: It’s not like the replacements are evil, far from it. People got a lot friendlier. That’s how they do it. It’s not an invasion, it’s a merger. They don’t want to get rid of us, not if they can help it. They just want to make us more like them. Change the way we think. Bring us into line with all the others. Become another link in their chain. Which is fine, unless you say no. That’s when you get replaced. (Wright, 2013, 0:56:52)

Basil’s monologue, which explains why the robots are enforcing this new order, interestingly contains multiple examples of language that are often associated with corporations, such as “merger” and “link”. Early on in the film, when the men enter their first two pubs, Gary’s friends lament the current trend of gentrification that is occurring in the pubs, with Steven referring to it as “Starbucking”, after the famous café chain (Wright, 2013, 0:21:30). As they define it, all traces of character – whether they are positive or negative – are removed from the pubs as a result of making it more appealing to the customers. As a way to enforce this point, the film visually compares the first two pubs with similar visuals, making the two pubs look indistinguishable from one another, down to the setting of the furniture and customers (Figures 14 & 15).

Figure 14

The First Pub of The Golden Mile, The First Post (Wright, 2013, 0:21:29)



Figure 15

The Second Pub of The Golden Mile, The Old Familiar (Wright, 2013, 0:24:38)



Taking the film's satire of pub gentrification into account, the film uses the science fiction genre to take the concept of gentrification of pubs and cafes, and applying it to human nature as well. As a result, many of the town inhabitants the men have met during their pub crawl have all acted calm and affable with them, barring the youth that attacked them in the toilets. As the men come to realise what

is happening in Newton Haven, this calmness starts to become more unnerving, as if the robots that they are now referring to as “blanks” are lacking in any personal character of their own.

As the friend group starts to become more aware of what is happening in the town, the robots start to become more aggressive in their attempts to have them assimilated into their group. At a bar called “The Mermaid”, while Basil explains to Steven what is going on, Gary, Andy and Peter – true to the bar’s name – are being lured closer to the robots by the youthful sex appeal of former students who have been turned into blanks (Wright, 2013, 0:56:39). However, considering that the background music that plays during the scene is Kylie Minogue’s (2013) *Step Back in Time*, the scene also makes it clear that far more than the sex appeal, the lure the robots are using is nostalgia. Considering how much Gary has been arguing in favour of his nostalgic worldview, this appears to be a direct attack towards him specifically to reason with him in favour of the blanks. Supporting this is also the fact that Gary saw nothing wrong in getting closer to the blanks; after all, his views towards sex have not changed since his teenage years.

In The Beehive, the pub after The Mermaid, a robotic version of their former teacher Mr. Shepherd reasons with the group by appealing to their sense of order and progress, revealing that there are extra-terrestrial forces in play, and that though stern like teachers, the order they bring is better for the humankind (Wright, 2013, 1:01:52). However, while Gary was more easily lured to be closer to the robots in the earlier bar, Andy sees through the trap and attacks Oliver, which reveals that he had been turned into a blank a longer time ago. This suggests that, despite growing angrier with his predicament due to the robots and Gary’s antics, Andy is far more resilient to the temptations the robots are trying to offer him when compared with Gary.

In fact, during the ensuing pub crawl in which most of the friend group are trying to survive the assault by the robots, Gary appears to be disinterested in survival of himself or the others beyond finishing his drink, until he sees Sam being threatened by a robot (Wright, 2013, 1:06:04). Despite the unrequited nature of his crush, Gary still cares enough about Sam to protect her and send her away from the town to protect her. In a rare moment of mature honesty, Gary accepts the love between Steven and Sam, recognising him as being a better man (Wright, 2013, 1:08:18). Sam gives him a long reply, explaining why she cannot love him:

Sam: Gary, you’re not a bad person, but you’re not boyfriend material. The whole “free spirit quick one in the disabled toilets” thing is kinda cool when you’re 17, but not when your facing

40. There comes a time when you have to go forwards and not backwards. (Wright, 2013, 1:08:23)

Much like how Andy had expressed his wish that Gary would grow up and join society, Sam also states a similar feeling towards Gary, urging him to go forward with his life instead of dwelling in his nostalgia, noting that his behaviour is not suited for their age anymore. In return, Gary does not appear to directly confirm this belief; instead, he states how he and Sam “will always have the disableds”, choosing to reminisce about their past even now, instead of rising up to the challenge of maturing into the adulthood.

In fact, even with their part dwindling down, Gary clings onto his nostalgic views of the past even harder and grows more determined to see the pub crawl completed. His irresponsible choices start to have bigger consequences, as Peter gets soon after killed by the robots when Gary insists on going through with the crawl (Wright, 2013, 1:14:26). Having seen what happens to those close to him, Gary resolves to finish the pub crawl alone, but is pursued closely by Andy, who is equally determined to rescue him from completing his drinking trip (Wright, 2013, 1:17:40). At this point, Andy’s goal appears to be less about having Gary end his nostalgia trip as it is stopping Gary from drinking any longer and to end his self-destructive ways. While it has been clear since the opening scene that Gary has an alcohol problem based on the meeting he attended, the importance of alcohol itself has been mostly side-lined in terms of film’s themes, where more attention has been given to the nostalgia. Despite the lack of attention given to Gary’s alcohol addiction, it has been for the most part likened to the addictive effect nostalgia has had on Gary, who has been demonstrated multiple times throughout the film of being unable to let go of it.

The self-destructive and -hating nature of Gary is further emphasised during the confrontation between Gary and Andy at The World’s End. As the two men wrestle with Andy trying to prevent Gary from having his drink, Gary finally reveals why he is doing the crawl:

Gary: No! It’s just one more. Let me have this. You’ve got everything you want.

Andy: What are you talking about?

Gary: You’ve got your perfect job and perfect house and perfect wife.

Andy: You think it’s so perfect? She left me, Gary. She took the kids to her mum’s three weeks ago. Said I’m not present enough. I’m trying to win her back. And God knows I’m

losing. But I will continue to fight, because that is how we survive. For fuck's sake, Gary, I just punched my wedding ring out of a robot's tummy.

Gary: Exactly! You fight for what's important.

Andy: But what is so important about The Golden Mile?

Gary: It's all I've got! (Wright, 2013, 1:21:18)

This exchange completely flips the perspective on the way Gary's character has been portrayed so far. Despite having earlier compared the lives of his friends to slavery, the repetition of the perfect life mentioned earlier by Gary reveals that he is actually envious of his friends and their lives, feeling inferior for having nothing but a pub crawl that he can consider to be important. And yet, despite wishing to have what he perceives as being an ordinary life, he also has great resentment towards order, as is shown when it is revealed to Andy that Gary has been in hospital due to his alcoholism:

Andy: You need help, Gary.

Gary: I got help. You know what help was? Help was a lot of people sitting in a circle talking about how fucking awful things had got. That is not my idea of a good time.

Andy: And this is?

Gary: They told me when to go to bed. Me!

Andy: Gary, mate, how can you tell when you're drunk if you're never sober?

Gary: I don't wanna be sober. (Wright, 2013, 1:22:21)

In addition to emphasising how infantile Gary is for having to adhere to rules such as resting in hospital, the exchange here also presents us with more evaluation devices. Firstly, the repetition of the phrase "good time" shows up here once again, emphasising what Gary considers most important to him. The phrase is now also paired up with his declaration of being against sobriety, wanting to only experience the highs of life instead of the lows, which explains why he is so addicted to not just alcohol but also nostalgia.

When Gary finally thinks he gets to have his one last drink, he and Andy are instead taken to the lair where the leader of the alien invasion, The Network, is based in. Having witnessed what Gary has

been through, The Network offers him a chance to co-operate by revealing to him a replicant of Gary from the opening montage, giving Gary a chance to join their group while also retaining his youthfulness, saying “let the man you are become the boy you were” (Wright, 2013, 1:25:55). While touched by the gesture, he chooses to decline the offer by popping the robots head off, declaring that there is only one Gary King (Wright, 2013, 1:26:05). Having been offered a chance to get everything he always wanted – his youth and nostalgia – he instead chooses to hold on to his rebellious nature that he has retained from his childhood, taking offense to the fact that The Network thinks it can choose what is for the best. During the argument between whether it is right to be orderly or free – mature or immature – Andy and Steven rally to Gary’s side, supporting his argument that humans have a right to be flawed and to not be gentrified like the pubs (Wright, 2013, 1:27:05, 1:29:52). Despite being happy with their orderly lives in their society, Andy and Steven are also appalled by the idea of not being able to make choices for themselves, finding common ground with Gary despite all of their differences. Having been rejected by the humans, The Network decides to abandon its plans, but not before asking what it is that humanity truly wants:

Gary: We want to be free! We want to be free to do what we want to do! We want to get loaded. And we want to have a good time. And that’s what we’re going to do.

The Network: It is pointless arguing with you. (Wright, 2013, 1:30:15)

Here, the film repeats Peter Fonda’s line from the beginning one last time, reiterating that Gary has stuck throughout the film to his beliefs. This is further emphasised by The Network itself repeating a line about the pointless argument that had earlier been associated with Andy, showing not just how the alien is fed up dealing with Gary, but that very little has actually changed in Gary’s behaviour and values throughout the film. If anything, much like what McDonnell (2013) observed in her review, Gary’s declaration punctuates the fact that while he has spent most of the film in ignorance regarding his views on society, at the end he manages to become comfortable with the path that he has chosen, no longer letting himself be tied down to thinking about what could have been his life like instead.

Despite the fact that The Network’s departure plunges the world into an apocalyptic state due to the Earth losing all of its electricity, life on Earth continues still with all of the remaining members of the friend group surviving. Even though they had taken Gary’s side in the confrontation against The Network, Gary and Steven end up returning to their old lives, or at least what is left of them. Once

the blanks that had been disabled by The Network come back to life, they too appear to go back to living ordinary lives similarly to their original human versions. Instead of deciding between Gary and his friends that one of their lifestyles is the superior choice, *The World's End* instead takes a more liberal, non-judgemental view of what is an acceptable way of life. As Andy narrates the end of the film, he takes time to recognise the uncivilised immaturity humans can be prone to, as the humans begin to discriminate against the rebooted blanks (Wright, 2013, 1:36:30). As for Gary, he states that instead of wishing him to join the society, he only wishes him to be happy and free from alcohol (Wright, 2013, 1:37:47), showing that Andy too has given up on wanting to decide what is best for Gary and letting him choose for himself. At the end, while Gary has chosen to remain a free spirit living the highs of his nostalgia by travelling with young blank versions of his childhood friends, he has managed to abstain from alcohol for good, as is shown by him being comfortable ordering water at a pub he goes to, ready to brawl and have a good time (Wright, 2013, 1:38:30).

In conclusion, *The World's End* has been structured as a clash of ideals between freedom and order, with Gary representing the former view and his friends led by Andy represent the latter view. Most of the early film is spent on exploring what these values mean for these characters, and in what way they can be understood as being either valuable or obstructive. Despite the fact that Gary claims that his lack of attachment is better than the mundane lives his friends live, he spends most of the film in denial about this, secretly yearning for a similar life that his friends have. However, while Gary is shown to be uncertain whether or not his ideas of “freedom” and “having a good time” are acceptable lifestyles, the film itself takes a non-judgemental view on whatever is the correct path for Gary and his friends. Rather, what *The World's End* finds to be more deplorable is the idea of forcing people to live in a certain way, much like what The Network is doing to humanity. Having witnessed what forcing an orderly life on everyone eventually leads to, Andy chooses to stand against The Network's plan, even though Andy and his friends had spent most of the film's runtime trying to convince Gary to give up on his immature lifestyle. To Andy, what matters the most is for people to be able to choose for themselves whether or not they want to live by freedom or order, immaturity or maturity. The final confrontation with The Network also helps Gary to realise that there is nothing inherently wrong with wanting to “have a good time”. He too needed to accept that it is not an inherently more valuable lifestyle than that of his friends, but recognising this helps Gary to accept himself the way he is. Despite the fact that *The World's End* arguably has the grimmest ending in the trilogy due to its apocalyptic nature, the film still manages to end in a positive and encouraging note, as everyone is shown to be comfortable with the way they have chosen to live by.

Table 3*Distribution of Evaluation Devices in The World's End*

	External Evaluation	Synonyms	Repetitions	Metaphors	Modalities
First Act, Non-ironic	0	0	0	3	2
First Act, Ironic	1	1	5	3	1
First Act, Total	1	1	5	6	3
Second Act, Non-ironic	0	1	0	1	2
Second Act, Ironic	1	0	3	6	1
Second Act, Total	1	1	3	7	3
Third Act, Non-ironic	0	1	3	1	3
Third Act, Ironic	1	0	2	1	0
Third Act, Total	1	1	5	2	3

Note. The first act is defined here as starting from the beginning and ending when the pub crawl begins (0:19:40). The second act ends when Gary sends Sam away from Newton Haven (1:09:00), and the third act proceeds to the end of the film.

When trying to ascertain the evaluation focus for *The World's End*, it appears that the biggest concentration for the evaluation devices can be found during the first act of the film, where much of it appears to focus on repetition regarding Gary's behaviour. Much like *Hot Fuzz*, the film also

appears to take a more comedic tone in comparison with *Shaun of the Dead*, using evaluation devices as a means to tell jokes while also highlighting the point being made. However, it should also be noted that the third act appears to be split very clearly between the heavily dramatic confrontation between Andy and Gary in *The World's End*, and the comedic argument between The Network and the three drunk men. Unlike *Hot Fuzz*, *The World's End* refrains from using humour during its arguably most dramatic scene, where Gary is forced to confront his addiction.

5.4. Discussion

Taking into account everything that has been analysed thus far, structures can be seen to take form. Firstly, the lesson learned at the end of every film appears to create a basis for the next film's setting in what appears to resemble a kind of a pendulum effect. *Shaun of the Dead* ends with a message of emphasising the importance of personal responsibility, which in turn leads to *Hot Fuzz*, where the main character is stubbornly responsible and law-abiding to the point of it being an exaggeration of the lesson taught in *Shaun of the Dead*. Conversely, when *Hot Fuzz* ends with Nicholas learning to be more laid back, the pendulum swings to the other extreme in *The World's End*, where the main character starts with a total lack of responsibility and maturity. Despite not being connected to each other through story, this development does emphasise the way in which the films converse with each other, creating a thematically coherent trilogy.

Considering this conversation, the *Cornetto* trilogy appears to be having a dialectic argument about what maturity truly means throughout its duration. In this structure, *Shaun of the Dead* appears as the thesis, arguing through Shaun's character arc that the juvenile immaturity he displays in the film is actively harming and endangering his and his loved ones lives. As a solution, the film shows that Shaun must mature not just for the sake of earning the right to be with his girlfriend again, but also for the sake of his own survival. For Shaun, maturity takes the form of him becoming more willing to confront the scary and difficult decisions he must make for the sake of improvement, which allows him to become more responsible and respectful as a person.

If *Shaun of the Dead* is the thesis of this argument, then *Hot Fuzz* as a follow up takes the role of the antithesis. While Shaun was shown to struggle in his life due to his lack of responsibility and maturity, the overabundance of those qualities turns out to be the biggest obstacle for Nicholas in his quest to not just solve the murder case but also finding meaningful human connections in his life. *Hot Fuzz* shows that what *Shaun of the Dead* had earlier described as maturity does not fit into Nicholas' character arc: his absolute belief in responsibility and obsession with work are the elements that keep

him immature. Paradoxically, in order to save the day, Nicholas grows up to become more juvenile, which leads to him becoming more complete as a person: in other words, more mature.

Now that the thesis and the antithesis have made their arguments in favour of maturity and immaturity, we must now consider the synthesis of these arguments: *The World's End*. In this film the two main protagonists, Gary and Andy, hold opposite viewpoints of what is the basis for a good life; for Gary it is freedom to live like a teenager, and for Andy it is orderly family life. The two men spend most of the film's running time making arguments over and clashing in favour of their worldview. However, at the end the two men recognise the importance of being able to choose for themselves how they want to live their lives, and end up returning to live the same lives they were comfortable with in the beginning. As the finale of the *Cornetto* trilogy, *The World's End* emphasise the importance of being free to choose whether a person wishes to live as a free spirit or as a part of an orderly society. Again, just like in *Hot Fuzz*, the earlier film's idea of maturity does not fit as is into Gary's character arc. While Nicholas needed to become more relaxed in order to save the day, Gary already starts the film as a laid-back hedonist who secretly resents the fact that he does not fit into the world of order all of his friends are a part of. For Gary, the maturity is born from the realisation that he does not have to force himself to live by the assumed rules of the society: he is free to live as a wandering free spirit, indulging himself in his juvenile worldview.

Speaking of juvenility, even though the main characters of the *Cornetto* trilogy have undisputedly matured throughout the course of each film, there still does remain aspects of childishness in their behaviour. Even though Shaun ends his story as a more responsible man than he was in the beginning, he still takes time off to have fun with his zombified friend by playing video games together. While Nicholas is still a dedicated police officer with an interest to fight against crime, he is also far more casual at his work, having no issues joking around with his colleagues and behaving like an action movie character while in active work. Most blatantly, Gary's behaviour might have changed the least, as he continues his adventures with the company of the robotic copies of his childhood friends.

Looking back at the definition of immaturity used in Oxford English Dictionary (n. d.), the word "juvenility" is also used to describe immature behaviour (Definitions 2a & b). However, considering the character arcs of the *Cornetto* trilogy's main characters, it can be determined that the trilogy portrays juvenility and maturity as something not mutually exclusive to one another. Instead of viewing maturity and immaturity as being binary values that are kept separate from one another, the *Cornetto* trilogy dismantles this binary by showing these two attributes can exist in a person simultaneously. Not only is this shown to be possible, but it could also be argued that this state is necessary for Shaun, Nicholas and Gary to have in order to find a healthier life for themselves. After

all, the portrayal of these characters in the beginning of the stories is never shown as being healthy for their lives.

When looking at the evaluation focus for each of the films, there appears to be a similar dialectic structure to how the *Cornetto* trilogy presents itself in the comedy genre. While *Shaun of the Dead* contains plenty of scenes of humour and action-packed gore, the film also appears to be very grounded in the way it presents its most dramatic moments, removing the comedic elements almost completely during its most dramatically heart-breaking scenes. *Hot Fuzz*, on the other hand, is notably wackier of a film, choosing to use comedy as a way to give the otherwise dramatic scenes regarding Nicholas' work obsession more levity through the use of irony and jokes. And while *The World's End* does follow for the most part *Hot Fuzz*'s more comedic tone throughout its runtime, the film noticeably shifts to a more grounded tone when discussing the topic of alcoholism at the end, which is more similar in tone with how *Shaun of the Dead* treated its most dramatic subject material of matricide and loss of family and friends.

However, it could also be argued that the shifts in the balance between comedy and drama throughout the *Cornetto* trilogy may not have much to do with the dialectic argumentation. After all, the films share a very similar style of comedy, with multiple running gags occurring throughout the trilogy. Rather, it could be argued that the shifts in emphasis between comedy and drama have to do with value given to the films' subject matter. The lack of comedy during certain scenes – such as when Shaun is forced to kill his mother or when Gary has to recognise how his addiction to alcohol and nostalgia are destroying him – helps to emphasise just how serious these topics are, and they are given special attention in films that are otherwise very much comedic by nature. *Hot Fuzz*, by contrast, does not give the scenes of Nicholas being alienated from his colleagues and friends due to his mindset similar dramatic gravitas, because the film does not view his personal problems as being anywhere near severe to what Shaun and Gary have to go through in their stories.

To summarise, the *Cornetto* trilogy depicts how maturity can manifest itself in different forms, depending on where a character stands in the beginning and which direction he is positioned to be moving towards by the film's narrative structure. While maturity might mean learning to become more responsible or laid-back, for another character those lessons might instead be shown to be root causes for their immaturity instead. At the same time the *Cornetto* trilogy shows that maturity and immaturity do not necessarily have to be considered a binary concept. Rather, the films depict how these concepts can exist inside a character simultaneously, but that they can also be considered an avenue for a healthier life as well.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has discussed the thematic exploration of the concept of maturity in the *Cornetto* trilogy, detailing how the films discuss the theme on their own and as a part of a bigger thematic statement as a part of the trilogy. While this thesis had its focus on the topic of maturity, the analysis also shows how maturity can be tied to other themes such as nostalgia and collectivism as well, showing that themes can often be mixed together in order to link personal growth with social commentary and satire as well. By analysing the *Cornetto* trilogy through the lenses of another primary topic such as collectivism, new light could probably be shed on the topic of maturity as well.

The analysis also showed how one might go by using Labov's evaluation device theory as a means of analysing audio-visual media as well. Applying theoretical elements that were before associated with oral storytelling was challenging, but for the purpose of this thesis it proved to be a useful method for finding evidence for this analysis. With more consideration of how to translate some concepts of evaluation devices into other forms of media, the evaluation device theory could also prove to be a useful tool for thematic analysis outside of just oral and literary analysis.

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