

Environmental Representation in Popular Culture

An Ecocritical Analysis of Film

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Abstract

Popularized at the turn of the century, the coining of the geological epoch of the Anthropocene is intended to recognize the geological period where human activity has a significant impact on the planet's climate and ecosystem. With the proliferation of the term, there has been a push to re-evaluate humanity's relationship with the environment, from science to economics. This study evaluates human's relationship to the environment within film. Specifically, this study is a meta-analysis of environmental representations common throughout popular film.

A selection of 55 movies was screened for this study. These films covered a variety of genres, such as Westerns, sci-fi, horror, and documentary, and spanning 93 years, with release dates from 1927 through to 2020. The filmography predominantly features Hollywood films but also includes Japanese, Iranian, Indian, and Indigenous productions. I evaluated these films using an ecocritical approach. Due to ecocriticism's interdisciplinary nature, textual, ideological/theoretical, and genre approaches were also methods used in the meta-analysis.

The study also included an outreach component, as twenty-four blog articles and ten podcast episodes were produced reviewing the films from the study's filmography. These media were published on a website created for the project, where analytic data such as site traffic and reader/listener comments were collected. This data, quantitative and qualitative, was part of an assessment of Internet media publication's ability to establish public spaces/dialogue surrounding film.

The meta-analysis reveals that depictions of the environment fall into a selection of tropes. These tropes are not unique to film, each originating in older media such as painting and literature and reinforcing long-standing environmental beliefs and opinions. How these beliefs are represented, however, are unique to the medium.

Conclude that environmental tropes have remained mostly consistent across time and genre, at least where Hollywood productions are concerned. While optimistic of film's potential to act as a vehicle from which to engage the public on environmental issues, it is yet to be seen how this potential can be realized.

Foreward

When applying to graduate studies, I was split; half of my applications went to film studies programs, the other to environmental studies. Coming to York University in 2019 as a fresh-faced MES student, I had thought I had finally settled, choosing environment over film. This all changed at the MES Alumni Event and Anita McBride Luncheon when I met Mark Haslam.

The founder of the Planet in Focus film festival, and who has written on film, cultural studies, and environment for a collection of publications, Mark's career has joined a love for the environment with a love of film – I could have my cake and eat it too. My epiphany at the Anita McBride Luncheon did not leave much time to rewrite my plan of study. However, within a week, I rewrote my POS to focus on ecocriticism. For my studies, I wanted to look at the environment in popular media and how this influences audiences/represents pre-existing attitudes towards nature.

I focused my plan of study on three areas of concentration. First is film studies, as my research depends on an analysis of film. Courses such as *Film Criticism, Theory, and Practice* and *Film as History* allowed me to establish a foundational and practical knowledge of film. As I wanted to include an outreach component of my research using the Internet as a public space, I also concentrated on digital media. Courses such as *Activist Video Making* and York's *Knowledge Mobilization* seminar provided me with the theory and practical skills to write and edit digital media. Finally, as film offers only representations of its subjects, I wanted to be able to distinguish ethical representations. Courses such as *Food, Land, and Culture*, *Environmental History*, *Activist Video Making*, and *Reshaping Research with Aboriginal Peoples* displayed an array of environmental representations and engaged with the act of representing others and self.

The interdisciplinary nature of York's MES program allowed for the coming together of such a study plan, as courses such as *Activist Video Making*, *Film Criticism*, *Images of Animals*, and *Film as History* were detrimental in achieving my study goals. This is not to detract from MES's outstanding faculty; Peter Timmermans guidance as an advisor and the IDS course we coordinated helped to focus on film analysis and critique as a research method. Lisa Myers and her course *Food, Land, and Culture* encouraged me to infuse creativity and alternative research methods into my studies, which helped shape the outreach aspect of my research.

It has been said that history repeats itself, and to that, I would amend that narratives do as well. Through my studies and within my research, narratives about nature have been repeated across fields and time. The Edenic narrative, as it appears in the Christian bible, appears within the frontier narrative of the American

West, which appears in the plots of Hollywood films such as *Forbidden Planet* (1956). Our stories -- our films -- reflect our ideologies which influence our history, cycling onward. In recognizing the cycle, perhaps we can break it.

Dedication

Those mentioned here have contributed volumes to this research effort. Unfortunately, as a poor graduate student, I cannot offer much, but I can dedicate this work to you.

Peter Timmerman, for your guidance in this endeavour and patience for poor grammar. Lisa Myers for encouraging a creative approach to graduate studies. Mike Alexander, Kennedy Halvorson, Jess Lowes, Elizabeth McMillian, Veta Parco, Melissa Pare, and Trisha Pare for guest starring on a failed podcast. My mom, because I'm a cliché, and Japanese Breakfast album Jubilee, which I listened to on repeat every day as I wrote.

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Positionality Statement

The Truman Show (1998) tells the story of Truman Burbank (Jim Carry), an ordinary man living an ordinary life. Except it is not ordinary at all, he is actually living on a set, the star of a reality television show. Having discovered the truth, Truman decides to escape the world of the television series to join the real world.

Stories centering on modern society as a postmodernist landscape were very popular in the late 90s. The Matrix (1999) and American Beauty (1999) also focus on the dissatisfaction with contemporary life and real-life feeling more like a simulation, having been released only a year later. After screening the film for an undergraduate course, these themes were the center of the discussion.

While we were all able to make the connections of The Truman Show to Baudrillard, I was surprised that none of my peers related the film to questions of faith. Beginning the film as an unquestioning believer, an event which his current beliefs cannot explain, the crashing of a studio light into the street, shakes his faith. The showrunner (Ed Harris) is the god of the show's universe, exerting complete control over Truman's world. With the showrunner speaking to Truman as a voice from the sky itself, the final confrontation is potent religious imagery. The television set Truman was raised in, his faith, is a world of absolutes, where comfort can be found in the familiar, but this comfort is also a trap. Ultimately Truman chooses to leave the show, his faith, behind for the dark unknown that lies ahead. Again, no one else had made this connection; and of everyone in the class, I was the only one who had been to catholic school.

As audience members, we bring ourselves into every film we view, projecting our own biases onto the screen. While there is not one way to read a film, our experiences will direct us towards particular readings. As a good film critic, you must actively engage with that positionality.

I am positioned within Western film culture and theory. My undergraduate education centered on Hollywood productions and the Americans and Europeans who wrote on those productions. Theoretical approaches such as textual analysis, psychoanalytic, Marxist, feminist, genre studies, and auteur theory are the ontologies from which I watch movies.

Through my studies with the MES program, I sought to expand my horizons, hoping to look at the environment and film from new ontologies. (As a double major in Biology and Communications, I learned to look at the environment through a scientific lens, but through courses such as Environmental Policy,

Environmental History, and Food, Land, and Culture, I learned to look at the environment from legal, historical, and cultural perspectives.

As for film, I designed an IDS program with Professor Timmerman to gain an ecocritical perspective of film, practicing methodologies such as Estok's ecophobia. With the course Reshaping Research with Aboriginal Peoples, I sought to decolonize my viewing of films began to practice visual sovereignty as defined by Raheja (2010), which seeks to read films, not from a non-Indigenous view but taking an Indigenous perspective.

Introduction

The digital age is one of constant bombardment by information, most of which comes from popular culture. Consequently, opinions on various issues, including environmental concerns, are influenced by the representation of these issues in the media. It is important to critically engage with popular media representations of the environment to understand our understanding of the natural world and our relations to it. These perceptions become even more crucial when considering the current climate crisis -- a drastic change in our relationship with the natural environment is paramount. This project will analyze a collection of popular films to examine how cinema engages with environmental themes and how it communicates environmental messages to audiences and what those messages are.

1.Literature Review

The pursuit of academic scholarship, like research and writing, is one of discovery. After two years touring all of the introductory courses my undergraduate university had to offer, I settled on the bane of a tuition-paying parent's existence, an unconventional major. This major, which promised no hope of earning back my parents' initial investment, was a double major in Biology and Communications. Now, reader, I know the question you may be asking yourself – and if you are one of my peers, you have had to answer at many a family function yourself- *how do those things go together?*

Joseph W. Meeker sought to answer a similar question in his seminal work *The Comedy of Survival* (1997). Here, Meeker looks at the act and practice of storytelling from an ecological perspective. Comedy and Tragedy are not only literary devices but the very means of survival, crafted not by artisans but by evolutionary forces. Culture and nature are not separate entities but one and the same. This subversive approach to literary studies has been credited with the founding of literary ecology. This work is also the first time the term "ecocriticism" would appear in print.

Adjacent to Meeker's analysis of the function of stories in nature, ecocriticism looks more to the function of nature in stories — how we humans imagine and represent nature, which leads us back to Meeker, as our perceptions of nature, in turn, shape it.

“The cultural images describing what we might be have helped us to become what we are: however the human mind imagines the world, that is how the world tends to become for humans. If we think that the Earth is a farm, then we behave as if it were one; if we imagine the Earth is a spaceship, then we manipulate and direct its path toward our chosen goal.” (Meeker, 1997 p. 5).

Rueckert's early definition of ecocriticism would not stray too far from its original use as he describes ecocriticism as the "application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature" (1996). As the field has developed, this definition has too. The early adherence to ecology has softened to "the biological and physical environment" (Abrams and Harpham, 2012). Furthermore, what was described through the clinical lens of pure academic intent has grown to acknowledge its own advocacy intentions, as eco-critique is "conducted with an acute awareness of the damage being wrought on that environment by human activities" (Abrams and Harpham, 2012).

The ecocritics library went through a similar evolution. Confined initially to nature writing, evaluating the merits of key authors such as Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Rachel Carson, and Tempest Williams, the catalog of "ecocritical literature" has expanded to include any literary work that is suitably environmental. How to determine which works are suitably environmental then is a discourse onto itself. Fortunately, for our purposes Buell has outlined four criteria for determining if a work is suitably environmental for study (1995). These criteria are: (1) "the nonhuman environment is present not merely as a framing device" (p.7); (2) "the human interest is not [...] the only legitimate interest" (p. 7); (3) "human accountability to the environment is part of the text's ethical orientation" (p. 7); (4) "there is some sense of the environment as a process" (p. 7).

Following in the long tradition of film studies adopting the practices of literary studies, ecocriticism has slowly but surely been finding itself in movie houses. As a result, the eco-critique of film mimics the trajectory of its predecessor, but on an accelerated track — beginning with film's answer to nature writing, wildlife films, and nature documentaries, with titles such as *Creating the Nature We Must Save* (Armbruster, 1998), *Reel Nature* (Mitman, 1999), and *Wildlife Films* (Bouse, 2000). The eco-critique of film was quick to move into narrative film, with Cubitt's *Eco Media* (2005) and Ingram's *Green Screen: Environmentalism and Hollywood Cinema* (2004), as well as moving into genre analysis such as Gregersdotter, Hoglund, and Hallen's *Animal Horror Cinema* (2015), Parker's *The Forest and the Ecogothic* (2020), Carmichael's *The Landscape of the Hollywood Westerns* (2007), and Tidwell and Barclay's *Gender and Environment in Science Fiction* (2018).

This expansion of ecocritical analysis is not only in the variety of film content but has also developed into explorations of film technique with works such as Ivakhiv's *Ecologies of the Moving Image* (2013), as well as into the material cost of film production with Bozak's *The Cinematic Footprint* (2011) and Vaughn's *Hollywood's Dirtiest Secret* (2019).

2.The Trouble with Filming Wilderness

The trouble with wilderness, according to William Cronon in his paper of the same name, is a bit of a misnomer as it is wholly a human trouble. Our usual conceit of Nature (capitalized as to represent the concept of it, as opposed to the lowercase nature referring to the material world), as both a dark wilderness and a pristine garden — both the anthesis of modern civilization — creates a paradox wherein once one enters nature it ceases to be Nature (Cronon, 1996). The absence of humans becomes the defining characteristic of an unspoiled wilderness. While the construct of Nature provides us with a means of temporary escape from the human world, it provides little else; living alongside nature has become an impossibility.

This constructed Nature is well suited for film. Both act as a means of escape from daily life. Nature needs to be opposed to the human in order to serve as an escape from it (Cronon, 1996). Film's ability to provide respite from daily life is one of the medium's primary draws (Katz, Haas, & Gurevitch, 1973).

Film and Nature are not merely paralleling each other, however, as film is implicated in the construction of Nature. While presenting themselves as providing unbiased glimpses into the secret natural world, Wildlife films are instead constructing Nature, a place where no human influence is seen or felt (Armbruster, 1998; Mitman, 1999; Bouse, 2000). The narrative structure of the standard wildlife film achieves this by using an omniscient narrator and the all-seeing camera (Armbruster, 1998). These devices place the viewer outside of nature, reinforcing the human-nature dichotomy on which Nature depends.

2.2 The Gaze

Much of film theory is fixated on the concept of the gaze, with the locus of power in cinema centering on the act of looking. Since expanding to a multitude of potential viewers, the power of the camera to objectify that which it gazes upon was first highlighted by Laura Mulvey in *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (1975). The classical Hollywood narrative structure and the styles accompanying camera and editing techniques create an active observer/passive observed relationship. Men are active agents of narrative and observers of women, and women are passive objects to be looked upon for viewing pleasure (Mulvey, 1975). These same principles can be applied to the nature documentary, where the point of identification is the narrator (the outside observer), and the point of objectification is the natural elements portrayed on screen.

Beyond wildlife films, narrative films center on the active human characters, which are played out on a more often than not passive Nature as an object. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule, as the

landscape may be an active player within the story, but it is the exception that proves the rule. Often landscapes are not active participants in the story but are shown for our voyeuristic pleasure. This objective view of nature acts to reinforce ideas of nature as objects for human use, solidifying human domination over nature (Mitman, 1999). The camera not only places viewers outside of the wilderness but objectifies the natural world.

In his analysis of the nude painting, Berger notes that the male subject is often absent from the painting positioned as an observer outside of the frame, and the women object is looked upon by this subject – the viewer (Berger, 1989). The absent subject is a feature that the nude painting and the landscape have in common; we do not see him, but we the viewer are presumed to be standing with the active subject looking out into the vast Nature. With the movie camera the landscape painting is set in motion. Visitas which were once contained in gilded frames are now kept on film reels for viewing pleasure.

While Mulvey and Berger's view of the gaze sees the women viewer as becoming absorbed into the position of object as a consequence of the viewing experience, nature cannot subsume this role. Nature cannot objectify itself.

2.3 Narrative

The trouble with filming wilderness is not only in the way the camera looks at nature but how cinema constructs narratives. Many may be familiar with melodrama as a genre synonymous with the soap opera or weepie. Linda Williams takes a revised look at melodrama, determining that it is not a genre but a form; the dominant form at the foundation of the classical Hollywood style and beyond (Williams, 1998).

While a film genre is defined by the utilization of repeated conventions and tropes, a mode instead delineates how the film engages the audience. Melodrama engages audiences through human emotionality and morality (Williams, 1998, p.44). Williams has outlined five melodramatic qualities, or features, of the mode: (1) "melodrama begins, and wants to end, in a space of innocence" (p.65); (2) "melodrama focuses on victim-heroes and the recognition of their virtue" (p.66); (3) "melodrama appears modern by borrowing from realism, but realism serves the melodramatic passion and action" (p.67); (4) "melodrama involves a dialectic of pathos and action" (p.69); and (5) "melodrama presents characters who embody primary psychic roles organized in Manichaeian conflicts between good and evil" (p.77) (Williams, 1998).

Melodrama has had great success at telling stories and captivating audiences, but is the form suited to representing the environment? In the introduction to *Green Screen: Environmentalism and Hollywood Cinema*, Ingram finds part of the trouble with filming wilderness to be embedded within the form (2004).

As stated above, melodrama frames conflict as battles between good and evil, heroes and villains. Maybe the motivations are complicated or convoluted, but the acts can invariably be boiled down to individual actors. While allowing for concise and straightforward plots, this is a poor framework from which to explore environmental issues which are complicated and expansive (Ingram, 2004).

Environmental degradation results from individual actors, the direct result of their carelessness or apathy; one bad apple spoiling the bunch of nature for the rest of us, or in the absence of a realized villain resulting from a more vague, nebulous 'them' or 'us' – the forces of evil which humanity must always combat (Ingram, 2004). These simplistic narratives, which service the lowest common denominator, have been outlined in Dorfman's assessment of the capitalist theory of media. Unfortunately, within the economy of narrative, the environmental narrative is no exception (Dorfman, 2009).

Preservation, protection, and restoration of the environment are similarly the result of individuals, as these are actions enacted by heroes rather than communities (Ingram, 2004). The melodramatic mode supports a liberal approach to environmental activism; it is our individual choice that determines the environment's state, taking the responsibility off of industry practices, collective action, and government policy (Ingram, 2004).

The melodramatic mode also seeks a return to innocence; these films seek to provide their audiences with closure. For better or for worse, the film ends on a note of finality. For melodramas centered on environmental issues, Nature, or whatever representation of it, the film features, will be definitively saved or lost. Real nature, however, is never done being saved. There is no permanent state as the very nature of nature is change. Ingram indicates that the closure films provide may give audiences the impression that the environmental issue explored on-screen has been 'solved' – that that interaction between humans and wildlife is done (Ingram, 2004). Our relationship with nature never being over, but constant.

As the third feature of melodrama, Williams highlights the use of realism to appeal to audiences' modern sensibilities. Contemporary issues will therefore always be represented within melodramas. They will also always be subservient to the mode's primary goals of emotionality and morality. As such, environmental

issues become another means to portray morality tales, the state of wildlife acting as a reflection of the state of human morality.

3.Thesis Statement

The medium is the message, is a phrase that has been immortalized in communications scholarship (and in the larger popular culture thanks to Heritage Minutes). However, what Marshall McLuhan meant by this statement is often forgotten. According to McLuhan, the true message of any medium was not its content but instead the medium's form, as it is the form, not the content, around and through which societies will structure themselves (McLuhan, 2001; 107-108).

Media and the societies which construct them are mutually reinforcing. While European settlers built the railroads, the railroad built the settlement, as the shape America would take was along the track lines. The track lines, in turn, however, were laid according to the land they were set upon – square parcels of land linked by transport ribbons probing west. Again, media and society are mutually reinforcing.

McLuhan's contemporary Edmund Carpenter likened media to languages, wherein "each codifies reality differently; each conceals a unique metaphysics" (Carpenter & McLuhan, 1966; 162). As with language, each medium will exploit the biases inherent to that language. Media, according to McLuhan, do not just communicate messages but reshape the 'real' world to fit within its own form; media reorganize the natural world (Carpenter & McLuhan, 1966; 182).

Chapter 9 of Timothy Clark's *Ecocriticism on the Edge* (2015), coming after 150 pages exploring the shortcomings of nature writing, asks if these faults are in the writers' abilities or if they are the fault of the medium. While this is initially asked of the novel, it is a question that we should be asking of film – is the medium capable of representing nature, or will it always be Nature?

Considering all of the above, creating an environmental movie would seem doomed from the start. Perhaps the medium is beyond nature and only capable of Nature. Ecocriticism seeks to trace our problems with nature through our art — if we can change our presentation and figure out how to portray nature correctly, we could solve our relationship with it (Clark, 2015, p.18-19).

Only with a better understanding of the current state of environmental representation can we hope to evolve that representation.

4.Methods

As a result of ecocriticism's interdisciplinary character, there is no single established thought paradigm, theoretical framework, or mode of analysis. For the purposes of this study, the mode of analysis will be "green reading," an "analysis of the implications of a text for environmental concerns and toward political action" (Abrams & Harpham, 2012, p.98). To carry out a green reading, this study will be implementing a host of film analysis approaches.

Textual approaches to film look at films as individual texts — taking films outside of the larger contexts of production and mass audience. It is the film, as seen by the reviewer. A textual reading can provide a green reading, but it will not place this reading within a broader context.

One such context is how films relate to each other. The **genre approach** is concerned with categorizing films based on similarities, such as style, form, imagery, or subject matter. While traditional views of art value uniqueness and novelty, repetition is revealing. As established through genre, Conventions are acts of myth-making – or perhaps myth telling (Voytilla, 1999). Genre analysis allows the exploration of the repeated features of nature on film, those tropes, images, and themes, identifying a larger structure of representing nature on film.

While the genre approach examines films by comparison to other films, the **contextual approaches** relate films to the larger world outside of film. These approaches include the social science approach and ideological/theoretical approaches.

The **social science approach** considers films to be psychological and sociological phenomena, and films as being reflective of and influential over, an individual and culture's conscious and subconscious (if there are such things). Due to the cost of production, a mainstream film must appeal to a mass audience in order to be financially viable, and therefore it seeks to represent shared ideas and desires (or so social science critics argue), making films artifacts representative of a culture at a particular time (Bywater & Sobchack, 2009).

Bywater and Sobchack outline three areas of concern for the social science approach: “(1) the effects of film on viewer behaviour and attitude; (2) film as reflective of psychic and cultural identity; (3) the production, distribution, and exhibition of film as a social structure, organization, and institution” (Bywater & Sobchack, 2009, p. 115). This study is primarily focused on these first two concerns and will look at

films as artifacts revealing the cultures which produced them conscious and subconscious attitudes towards nature.

Finally, **ideological/theoretical approaches** analyze films from the perspective of an established theoretical framework. As an umbrella term the ideological/theoretical approach contains a series of different paradigms from which to analyze film. For this study, this will include Marxist, feminist, animal rights, postcolonial, and ecophobia paradigms, the last defined by Estok as “an irrational and groundless hatred of the natural world, as present and subtle in our daily lives and literature as homophobia and racism and sexism” (Estok, 2016, p. 132).

This introduction has outlined and defined ecocriticism, provided a breakdown of the difficulties inherent to the medium of film with representing nature, and an analysis of the methods used in the fourth coming chapters.

Chapter 1 will move directly into the meta-textual analysis, beginning with a textual analysis of the films screened. This chapter will cover the thematic trends that appeared throughout these films, such as Edenic narratives, ecophobia, and apocalyptic imagery.

The second chapter will move from what is represented by these films to how these ideas are represented, exploring the repeated technical aspects across the filmography. By investigating the mise-en-scene, cinematography, and editing, chapter 2 will illustrate what an ecological style of filmmaking might look like and determine which techniques lend themselves to an ecocritical reading.

This project was not only intended to further the ecocritical discussion of film, but to open the discussion to a wider audience and deliver these concepts to non-academic circles through outreach. Chapter 3 will detail the outreach methods used and reflect on the execution and reception of these elements.

Even the best-laid plans often go awry, and the research process is no exception.

The conclusion will reflect on the project's initial intents, whether these goals were met, what lessons were learned, and contemplate directions for potential future study.

Chapter 1: Themes

Like most film criticism, ecocriticism, while implicating the media in its critique, is not as interested in the form as it is in the content. This chapter will be exploring recurring themes throughout the filmography of this study – what these films have to say about nature.

1.The Sublime

Conservation and aesthetic appreciation of nature have always gone hand in hand, as the American conservation movement of the 19th century was born of transcendentalist thought (Merchant, 2003; Dunaway, 2000). Authors such as Henry David Thoreau appealed to readers to preserve nature not for its resources but its inherent value outside of human use – for its beauty.

“Conservationists turned to the camera, because they viewed it as a technology of memory, as a device that could preserve threatened lands. As they photographed places of silent beauty and expressions of physical force, they also hunted for reassuring images of themselves” (Dunaway, 2000 p.209).

Ethnographic films, a popular genre during the silent and early sound era, were formatted on exploring distant places and wildlife, such as *Chang: A Drama of the Wilderness* (1927), bringing the jungles of Thailand to American theatres. These films, many short subject and newsreels, made the wonders of the natural world accessible to all. However, not just any nature warrants being filmed; nature must prove satisfyingly exotic or beautiful. It must be sublime.

While not beginning as an environmental term, the sublime and the feelings that the sublime object evokes - feelings of awe, wonder, astonishment, and dread - have become synonymous with natural phenomena. For philosophers such as Kant and Burke, these were more than emotions; these experiences allowed the onlooker the opportunity to confront their place in the universe- to experience their status vis-a-vis nature, and for some, to see God (Merchant, 2003, p. 83).

Much of what is considered sublime: mountains, canyons, swelling ocean waves, etc., are extensive displays of nature's power. For instance, during the opening credits of *Long Weekend* (1978), the camera watches a lone crab climbing what appears to be a mighty cliff face, the struggle of the climb establishing the film's themes and the power of the rockface.

Destruction can also take on sublime qualities. The devastation of a landscape, a terrifying display of nature's power, can also be beautiful in its scale and force. The tsunami in *Ponyo* (2008) — a storm that

submerges the entire town deep underwater — is hauntingly beautiful in its destructive power as a bustling city is turned quiet. Whether the camera frames nature as an awe-inspiring beauty or a terrifying display of nature's power, the nature aesthetic is a sublime one.

These sublime landscapes — the image of a pristine and untouched wilderness — and its opposite — a ruined space — are intrinsically tied to the Edenic narrative. In *Reinventing Eden: the fate of nature in western culture*, Carolyn Merchant traces the Edenic narrative through Western art, arguing that this is the mainstream narrative of Western culture (Merchant, 2003, p.2). Merchant connects the Edenic narrative to both tragedy, as an interpretation of the Fall, and comedy which enacts the struggle to live in the fallen world. These are also the narrative modes explored by Meeker in *The Comedy of Survival*, which would indicate that the Edenic narrative is also the mainstream narrative of ecocriticism.

1.2 Edenic narrative

Edenic narratives are modeled after the book of Genesis of the Christian bible, which sees humanity as represented in the figures of Adam and Eve who begin in paradise — pristine nature — and then as a result of temptation and a loss of innocence become cast out of the garden and left to labour in the wilderness (Merchant, 2003).

Genesis does not end with God casting out Adam and Eve, but with Him tasking them with cultivating the earth. As embodied in the garden's original pristine nature, heaven on earth can again be realized through cultivation.

"The resurrection or end drama, heralded in the New Testament, envisions an earth reunited with God when the redeemed earthly garden merges into a higher heavenly paradise" (Merchant, 2003, p.17). Within the Edenic narrative exists the possibility of re-entry to the garden or its recreation.

Merchant's analysis of the Edenic narrative explores how the narrative has been used as a model for human history, a narrative that, rather than being replaced, is instead reworked to redefine the garden, the Fall and Heaven (see Appendix A). We can also see that the Edenic narrative, in its various forms, acts as the basis of many films and genres.

When seen in fiction, Edenic narratives often follow one of two trajectories. Either the story begins with or at the Fall and follows the characters' ascent as they seek to recreate Eden. Alternatively, the narrative begins in Paradise and follows the characters' descent as they are expelled from the garden. As Western productions dominate our filmography, the Edenic narrative consistently appears.

The Edenic narrative often appears cloaked within other narratives, namely frontier stories, which explore “new” “undeveloped” wilderness, and apocalyptic narratives.

1.3 Frontier

Turner’s Frontier Theory saw the process of transforming wilderness into civilization as the defining mechanism behind American identity formation (Turner, 1996). Despite being argued as largely outdated, particularly in its positivist outlook of the colonial process, the theory has remained relevant as a predecessor to environmental history. Turner was the first Western historian to attribute to the environment the qualities of the land itself as instrumental to how human societies developed on and around it.

I have chosen to describe these narratives through the frontier theory as opposed to colonial theory, as it is Turner's conceptualization of colonization -- of the frontier as identity-forming and of the colonist as the original American hero -- that I believe is most relevant to cinema as a myth that the cinema participates in.

Turner first wrote on Frontier Theory during what he believed to be the end of the American frontier (Turner, 1996, p 1). It was the end of the first age of American history, as a new mechanism of identity formation would have to come about; frontier theory imagines an American frontier that is constantly pushing onward. In the movies, it can. While the physical frontier may have disappeared, new frontiers could be discovered on screen, fueling the new American identity.

Frontiers often appear within the genres of the Western, which are often set during American westward expansion, and sci-fi, as space is "the final frontier."

i) Cultivation

Narratives set upon frontiers will often see our protagonists mastering the wild landscapes -- cultivating and developing the land as a means of transforming it into the garden state of Eden.

The landscape within the Western is not just an aesthetic marker but intrinsic to the genre's themes. The wide-open spaces are emblematic of freedom, the harsh desert of the perseverance needed to survive in this place; this is the landscape that makes the cowboy. Within the Western, civilization is always coming. That the desert and the cowboy would be lost was a given — a sad inevitability, just as the loss of wilderness to westward expansion was similarly framed. "The elimination of wilderness was a tragedy, but a necessary tragedy; civilization was the greater good" (Carmichael, 2006, p.20; Nash, 1983, p.77).

This is the crisis at the heart of *The Wind* (1928) as Letty (Lillian Gish) moves from civilized Virginia to the wild plains. This film is about humanity's necessity to tame nature, and is outlined with the film's opening script.

"Man – puny but irresistible- encroaching forever on Nature's vastness, gradually, very gradually. Wrestling away her strange secrets, subduing her fierce elements – conquers the earth!"

It is a man's fight against nature's forces that creates his character and Letty's fight against the wind, which will determine hers. While the wind itself is invisible, its influence can be seen throughout the film in the debris it carries. The breeze constantly musses clothing and hair, and dust coats every surface, evidence of the wind having been there. Throughout the film, Letty is seen dusting and sweeping, pushing the boundaries of nature back. The frontier is an active zone where nature and civilization continually fight for dominance. As per the film's pro-civilization message, Letty ultimately wins her fight against the wind.

Pale Rider (1985) is set in California during the civilizing process. In the hinterlands of the mountains, a small community of miners is trying to make a living panning the mountain rivers. The small community's livelihoods are threatened, not by any threat of the landscape or the Indigenous Peoples who were dislocated to make way for the settler town, but by industrialist LaHood (Richard Dysart) and his hydraulic mining enterprise.

The ecological western, so named by John Shelton Lawrence (2006), rather than looking at how the West was won, is more interested in what was left of the West afterward. "They often tell us how the landscape was lost, or what was lost when every area of the West came under exploitation for agriculture, mining, cities, tourism, of the development of military weaponry" (Carmichael, 2006, p.21). Where the traditional Western positions the landscape as a place of possibility, the ecological western shows how that potential was squandered.

LaHood's hydraulic mining is a highly destructive extraction method, blowing apart the mountain face for the minerals trapped beneath, which is juxtaposed with the 'good' frontier-ing done by Hull Barret (Michael Moriarty), as they extract gold in a much less destructive manner. The community's desire for economic prosperity and ambitions to further develop the community with a church and schoolhouse are framed as noble pursuits. Frontiering is not the issue so much as how one frontiers.

ii) Found paradise

Frontier settings are not always focused on cultivating the wilderness; sometimes, the new world is presented as a ready-made paradise. Dante's Purgatorio offers an example as a version of the Garden of Eden as rediscovered at the top of Mount Purgatory (Dante, 2017). During America's "discovery," the new world was advertised as a garden of Eden.

We can see this framing at work in *Dances with Wolves* (1990), *Pocahontas* (1995), and *Avatar* (2009), as each film's respective Adam "discovers" paradise on the Plains, in Virginia, and on Pandora. These landscapes promise Lt. Dunbar (Kevin Costner), John Smith (Mel Gibson), and Jake Sully (Sam Worthington) a land of possibility where they can build new, more fulfilling lives for themselves - lands on which Dunbar and Sully succeed and get to live the rest of their lives in paradise.

These three films -- having all been called copies of each other -- follow very similar plots, (*Pocahontas* (Irene Bedard) operates notably from a different perspective, that of Powhatan Pocahontas rather than the white James Smith), with a white outsider "going native" and joining a society of "ecological Indians."

Historically (and even today), colonists saw themselves as belonging to and bringing civilization to the colonies. Any Indigenous societies they may have stumbled upon in these exploits were seen not as civilizations in their own right but instead as features of the landscape (Ewan & Ewan, 2011).

This belief positions Indigenous Peoples as opposites of this binary, not as belonging to civilization but instead as belonging to nature, bringing us to the trope of the ecological Indian — "Of the Indian in nature who understands the systemic consequences of his actions, feels deep sympathy with all living forms and takes steps to conserve so that earth's harmonies are never imbalanced and resources never in doubt" (Krech, 1999, p. 21).

These three films establish the ecological consciousness of its Indigenous communities primarily through setting and cinematography. Mainly taking place outside of white settler society, the landscapes in these films are demonstrated as still being wild.

Narratively, the contrasting ecological values of the white explorers and the Indigenous Peoples are established through juxtaposition. In *Dances with Wolves* (1990), this is seen in the Buffalo hunt sequence. The confederate soldiers leave rotting bison corpses behind, treating the majestic creatures completely carelessly. Simultaneously, the Lakota hunt is shown as an artful and community bonding activity. The British colonists of *Pocahontas* (1995) destroy the landscape searching for gold, while Pocahontas and the Powhatan tribe (which remain unnamed in the film) are content with the gold of the earth, corn. *Mine, Mine,*

Mine, the musical number sung by Governor Ratcliff (David Ogdon Stiers), the British expedition captain, contrasts *Colours of the Wind*, demonstrating Pocahontas (the Powhatan's) views of nature.

“But I know every rock and tree and creature/ Has a life, has a spirit, has a name” – Song:
“Colours of the Wind” *Pocahontas* (1995)

Avatar (2009) similarly positions the white settlers as a colonial army looking to mine the land of its natural resources, replacing British for American forces and Virginia's coast for an alien planet. In the distant world of Pandora, the Na'vi has a similar philosophy to *Pocahontas* (1995) in seeing all of nature and humanity as interconnected.

"Energy runs through all living networks. All energy is borrowed, and one day you have to give it back." – Neytiri, *Avatar* (2009)

“Going Native” is the transformation of a white European settler into ecological consciousness, disavowing their home culture to join the Indigenous community (Baird, 1993). *Dances with Wolves* (1990), *Pocahontas* (1995), and *Avatar* (2009) each have their coinciding settler who goes native; Colonial Dunbar, Joseph Smith, and Jake Sully, respectively. These white men enter the communities as outsiders and as members of the colonizing force, Dunbar as a confederate soldier, Smith as an explorer working for the Virginia company, and Sully as an ex-marine aiding research of Pandora and the Na'vi people.

Despite being entrenched in the oppressional institutions, each man is quickly distinguished from his peers as possessing bravery and a romantic outlook. Dunbar, injured in battle, is sent to an outpost to recover. The journal he keeps will become the voice-over for the film; this narration is attentive to the landscape and beauty of the landscape. During the prologue in England, John Smith dives overboard to save a fellow crew member, and upon arriving to Virginia, he has a verse in the song *Mine, mine, mine*, where he expresses his desire to experience the landscape— not possess it as Ratcliff aspires. *Avatar* (2009) alludes that Jake Sully lost his legs in battle protecting fellow marines— it was a brave sacrifice. The loss of his legs causes Sully to appreciate the avatar program, which gives him the ability to walk again, more than his fellow avatar program members. Each of our three aspiring ‘natives’ appreciates the natural beauty of the landscape and the simple lives of the Peoples who live off of it.

Cubitt sees the process of animation as allowing the artist to embody their illustrations (Cubitt, 2005). In *Avatar* (2009), this metaphor is represented in the texts itself as Jake Sully animates a Na'vi avatar to

explore the world of Pandora. Embodying the avatar, transforming into the Na'vi, provides Jake with a new perspective. Beginning the film apathetic to the Na'vi's plight, this act of transformation kickstarts Sully's second transformation from an outsider to a community member.

Meta-textually, the actors who play the Na'vi are similarly transformed with animation, as CGI and motion capture animates over the physical form of the actor to create the alien Na'vi. Cinema can not only represent transformation but possesses the ability to transform.

A significant breakthrough in the "going native" story arc is the coupling of our outsider hero with an "Indian Princess" -- an Adam and Eve. The Indian Princess has existed as a symbol for the newly discovered virgin America (Bird, 1999). The trope is integrated into conceptions of the frontier and manifest destiny, as the Indian Princess, a familiar figure on maps, acted as a lure to the new world. It is intended to entice explorers and represent the bounty of the virgin new world.

While the film follows Pocahontas' perspective, John Smith and Pocahontas' first meeting when they first set eyes upon each other shifts from John's perspective (with John pointing a gun at her as though she were prey no less). Pocahontas is set here to appear alluring and mysterious, appearing from the mist.

Stands With Fist (Mary McDonald) similarly entices Dunbar, as his first meeting with the Lakota at their camp is to return a wounded Stands With Fist so she may recover. So, unlike her fellow Indigenous sisters, it is no surprise that the Indian Princess is often revealed not to be Indigenous but instead a white woman (Bird, 1999). This is the case in *Dances with Wolves* (1990), where Stands With Fist is revealed to be a white woman raised by the Lakota tribe since early childhood.

Neytiri (Zoe Saldana) is a Na'vi princess and Sully's first point of contact with the Indigenous Na'vi. Neytiri is introduced killing a pack of viperwolves to protect Sully, tying into the Indian Princesses' sacrificial nature (Bird, 1999). All three women, Stands With Fists, Pocahontas, and Neytiri, act as love interests and teachers, explaining the ways of the land and tribe to our outcast heroes, their lectures and relationship integral to their integration into the group. (It is of note that John Smith, who never "seals the deal" with Pocahontas, is also the only of the three who does not – cannot – remain in the new world.)

Characters who have gone native are often shown as repentant, atoning for their destruction and what their people have wrought by abandoning their white heritage and picking up an Indigenous ancestry. An essential component of the transition from outsider to community member is earning a new name (Baird,

1993). Dunbar becomes *Dances With Wolves* (1990), and Jake Sully is given the titles of Toruk Makto (given to those who can ride a great leonopteryx) and Olo'eyktao (clan leader). John Smith, who is not given a new name, is also the only male lead who cannot remain within the Indigenous community and must return to white society.

While presenting itself as an inversion of more traditional settler narratives, the going native storyline is merely a reframing of the narrative of white mastery over the environment. These men quickly become the most adept community members. Dunbar is a celebrity among the Lakota, proving himself as a skilled hunter during the buffalo hunt and a warrior during the war with the Pawnee, where his firearms are the deciding factor of the battle. John Smith takes a bullet to protect Chief Powhatan, winning the respect of the Pawnee and rousing his fellow settlers to turn against Ratcliff and return to England, and Jake Sully unites the Na'vi tribes to fight together against the occupying American forces, reclaiming Pandora. The white man who has gone native is a better Indian than the Indigenous Peoples.

iii) Ethnographic film

Before cinema was creating new frontiers, the medium was instrumental in exploring the current ones. The ethnographic film, a style of filmmaking nested within the genre of wildlife films, has been described by David MacDougall as “any film which seeks to reveal one society to another” (MacDougall, 1976, p. 136; Bouse, 2000 p.24-15). MacDougall's definition neglects the power dynamics implicit in the genre and the practices association with colonialism.

Chang: a Drama of the Wilderness (1927), despite presenting itself as educational, is more concerned with supporting Western views of the region than in accuracy. While presenting itself as a documentary, the film was primarily scripted or staged. The family that features as the film's protagonists were actors and ethnically Lao, not Thai (Klemm, 2018).

It was a convention of the genre to begin travelogue-type films with a map to orient viewers and place the location within the empire. *Chang* (1927), however, forgoes this convention which, while preventing “Siam” (present-day Thailand) from being placed within the context of the empire, also obscures the setting (Klemm, 2018). *Chang* (1927) could take place in any jungle of Asia, and in many ways, the film reinforces the western conception of the orient.

Said, in his seminal work, *Orientalism* provides several definitions for the concept. For our purposes, we will be using the third definition, "Orientalism as a Western-style for dominating, restructuring, and having

authority over the Orient" (Said, 1979, p.3). *Chang* (1927) simultaneously uses the jungle as an allegory for the frontier, with a family of homesteaders attempting to domesticate an elephant to aid in working the land and presenting these pioneer figures as culturally backward. European culture defined itself by juxtaposing itself with an other; this other is the Western conceptualization of the Orient (Said, 1979, p.3). The purpose of this look at the other is as a means of defining the self.

Chang (1927) gave viewers the impression that they were exploring the jungle for themselves, and this is a feeling that later nature documentaries and wildlife films would seek to replicate. *In Beaver Valley* (1950), with its animated preamble and the complete lack of human presence is meant to give the impression that you, the viewer, are discovering the valley for yourself.

While some would regard ethnographic film as a dark stain on cinema's past, a more apt description would be cinema's legacy, as the themes begun in "nonfictional" ethnographic films would continue into popular film. This was a rather natural transition as what is often considered the first Hollywood blockbuster, *King Kong* (1933), was written and directed by Cooper and Schoedsack. The same duo brought us *Chang* (1927).

iv) King Kong

Heavily inspired by their ethnographic filmmaking days, Cooper and Schoedsack's *King Kong* (1933), and every remake of it there-after, are scripted ethnographic films, re-enacting and idolizing the practice. Both the original and Peter Jackson's 2005 remake begin with director Carl Denham trying to secure funding for his latest picture. The pitch is predicated on the exotic location he intends to film his action picture. Where this location is, however, is kept a secret as Denham needs to be the one to 'discover' Skull Island.

Of course, the film crew, poised as a crew of explorers on their journey to make this film, do not actually discover Skull Island. While the island is assumed to be uninhabited, the colonial myth of a *terra nullius* is home to an unnamed Indigenous tribe. Despite Skull Island being located off of the coast of Sumatra (present-day Indonesia), Skull Island is evocative of 'Darkest Africa' with the Indigenous population fitting the 'savage' stereotype, as the Indigenous Peoples are depicted as violent, ignorant, and backward (Ewan & Ewan, 2011; Rony, 2000). This is best exemplified in the sacrifice of Ann Darrow to Kong – the tribes' reverence of Ann is just the European trope of African men being enamored by the white women (Ewan & Ewan, 2011).

Ethnographic film is known for its self-reflexive nature, and indeed *King Kong* (1933 & 2005) is a movie about movies. More broadly, *King Kong* (1933 & 2005) is a film about spectacle, the spectacle of the movies, and the spectacle of colonial exploits. Movies, as previously discussed, became a component of this spectacle. However, Kong acts out a much older form of colonialism's anthropological spectacle apparatus that of the living exhibit. Kong's arrival to New York in chains is reminiscent of the displays in natural history museums and zoos before him wherein Indigenous Peoples were showcased alongside the animals and artifacts of their homelands for Western audiences. "He is a freak on display in the tradition of Saartji Bartmann, Ota Benga, and a parade of others who, for more than a century, had been commercially exploited to vindicate the racial conceits of Western society" (Ewan and Ewan, 2011, p.436).

Mary Midgley, in her paper *Beasts, Brutes and Monsters*, articulates two rationales for animalizing another human being, as people who "have acted on motives which human beings are supposed either not to have at all or to prevent from ever giving rise to actions"; and as a means of dehumanization "the notion of an animal stands for the unhuman, the anti-human" (Midgley, 1988, p.35). Each of these rationales are at work in the characterization of Kong as representing the black male.

As a representative for the Black man, Kong is perverse in his attraction to Ann Darrow, the film's Eve (who is even introduced to the audience stealing an apple), meeting Midgley's first requirement for animalization. The sexual attraction between the two is palpable, with the tickling scene of the original film updated to a more tasteful ice-skating date in Jackson's remake. Despite the presence of romantic feelings, which are reciprocated in the remake, the pair cannot feasibly couple, not the least of which being due to Kong's immense size. Kong is an animal for pursuing Ann, a desire which he is not meant to have or act on. Haraway describes it most succinctly in her analysis of Kong, "the bestial over-reach also had the unmistakable tone of racial crossing; for the white inflamed imagination, he was the icon of the captive black man's love for the white women" (Haraway, 1989). The use of animation, stop motion in the original, and CGI in Peter Jackson's remake, to bring Kong to life onscreen adds another degree of separation between the flesh and blood Ann Darrow and the clay Kong. An animated object in the physical world, Kong does not belong and is therefore doomed.

King Kong (1933 & 2005) worked as a horror movie by evoking white society's fears of Black sexuality and interracial coupling. While transcending the boundaries of species, Kong is used to reinforce the designations of these boundaries, the human as the realm of culture, civilization, progress, and the animal as the realm of nature and the past.

Despite the seventy years separating the original and Peter Jackson's remake, the film has remained essentially unchanged, and its themes unchecked.

v) Fourth cinema

"Suppose some superior race should come from another planet,' Wilson warns, 'and find us as inferior and barbarous, according to their standard, as we consider the Indians when measured by our standards. And suppose they should conquer and put us on reservations" (Grewell, 2001, p.25)

These anxieties become a reality in *War of the Worlds* (1953), in which Martian vessels arrive on the American west coast from space. Outfitted with advanced weaponry and defenses, the Martian ships systematically survey and conquer the entire earth, only being halted in their hostile takeover by forces outside of alien or human control, a microbial infection.

In *Black Skin, White Mask*, Fanon introduces the theory of the look. Fanon describes how the look is a disrupting encounter in an encounter with a white French child, as how you see yourself is fractured by how others see you – how you, the 'other,' are seen by those in power (Fanon et al., 2008).

In this encounter, the look is a practice of colonial power and racial segregation, with the white French citizens permitted to look and black citizens looked upon. The look then becomes a question of who can look, the colonial look recognizing the relationship of the colonizer as possessing the ability to look, as the proponent of the gaze, and the colonized as being the seen object (Fanon et al., 2008; Kaplin, 2012).

In cinema, the eye is replaced with the lens and the look with the theory of the gaze. Colonial gaze draws attention to this relationship in cinema with colonizer pointing the camera, observing and defining the colonized "other" (Kaplin, 2012; Knopf, 2008).

The use of cameras in colonization is present symbolically in this film through the visualization of the Martians, their tripods, scopes, and tri-lensed eyes, all reminiscent of a movie camera. The Martians, their tripods, scopes, and beings, turn the colonial gaze onto the colonists, revealing the truth of their being and disrupting their self-image.

In constructing a methodology for the decolonization of research, Albert Marshall used the analogy of Two-Eyed Seeing to describe a new approach to research. Two-Eyed Seeing asks researchers to look through

two eyes, one coming from an Indigenous perspective and the other from a Western perspective. The researcher synthesizes these two perspectives into the completed research (Bartlett, Marshall, M., & Marshall, A 2012).

Making a film is in many ways similar to conducting research. The director and crew are a research team seeking to generate new knowledge in the form of the footage shot. Once extracted, the footage will be edited and worked into a final product- a completed film instead of a research publication (Latulippe, 2015). As such, the two-eyed approach may offer a collaboration model that can aid in the decolonization of cinema.

That a film is collaborative does not in itself prevent a feature from being exploitative. A point of intrigue with *Nanook* is the participatory role of the film's principal cast, as they helped repair the camera, develop the film, and determine and stage scenes (Zimmermann & Auyash, 2015). The collaborative filmmaking process did not prevent director Robert Flaherty from exploiting and misrepresenting his documentary subjects. The film is advertised as showing the authentic, daily lives of Nanook and his Inuit family, through pioneering techniques which are still used to denote legitimacy. However, the film was highly fictionalized, to the point that the 'titular' Nanook is really Allakariallak (Zimmermann & Auyash, 2015).

Through the Olive Trees (1994), the third feature of the Iranian Koker Trilogy (made up of *Where is the Friends Home?* (1987), *And Life Goes On* (1992), and *Through the Olive Trees* (1994)) explores this exploitative dynamic within the film itself. The film begins with the director (played by Mohamad Ali Keshavarz) picking extras. The girls who are being considered for the role they are currently playing discuss the previous film in the trilogy, *And Life Goes On* (1992), with the director. Despite the film taking place in the girl's village, Koker, few could see it due to a lack of access.

"Tahereh Poursadeghi: Sir, will you show us this film? What's it matter to us if you film us but don't show it anywhere?

Director: You mean on TV?

Tahereh: Yes

Director: You're right. But is that any reason not to film?

Tahereh: At least show it to us. Your last film was on Channel 2. We don't get that here. Why bother?

Director: What do you girls say? Should we film or not?

Crowd: Film! Film!

Tahereh: But you have to show it!"

- *Through the Olive Trees* (1994)

The film is stating its own opinion on the matter through the characters. Those who participated in making the movie should enjoy the fruits of their labour while revealing the reality of directors coming into villages, filming their movies, and leaving the communities with nothing while their careers advance.

The above have been approaches made by outsiders to film these communities; how does the narrative change when the community is empowered to film itself? Film is a predominantly Western medium, with many of the established conventions having been created by Western filmmakers in service to Western ideology. With a Two-eyed approach, Indigenous filmmakers can, with one eye, look at the filmmaking process from the Western perspective, applying the conventions that fit, and from the other eye, look at the filmmaking process from an Indigenous perspective, implementing Indigenous visual tradition to create a new cinema. A Two-eyed seeing approach to filmmaking seeks to establish a new type of filmmaking, which renegotiates the traditional power relations of film (with Western cameras gazing upon Indigenous bodies) to instead look from Indigenous perspectives — to create an Indigenous cinema, also referred to as a fourth cinema.

Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner (2001) takes place in a pre-frontier arctic. The lack of European presence or influence is the only indication of time; otherwise, the film provides no timestamp or title card. The story could be taking place at any time and is thus occurring at every time. This atemporal story demonstrates the usefulness and persistence of the Inuit tradition. As the same language continues to be spoken and the same methods practiced. There is an active connection between the past and present.

Ethnographic films such as *Nanook* have used a lack of temporality to support the colonial narrative of a 'backward' people needing western settlers to bring them to the present. Here, the technique is instead used to stake a claim of place. The "Inuit people have occupied the land since time immemorial, and it thus sets a precedent for their continued control of Nunavut" (Huhndorf, 2003, p 825).

Atanarjuat (2001) is primarily focused on the daily lives of Atanarjuat (Natar Ungalaaq) and his family, with many sequences devoted to hunting and the construction of shelter. The land is not an antagonistic force, nor is it an Edenic paradise, providing a nuanced view of nature.

Atanarjuat (2001) engages with the frontier by demonstrating how life was and could have continued without it. On the other hand, *Whale Rider* (2002) explores the contemporary frontier- at the "civilization" the settlers have cultivated.

Due to the pressures of colonization, the Ngati Porou of Whanagara's connection to the land and tradition is strained in *Whale Ride* (2002). Porourangi (Cliff Curtis), who is meant to take on a role as a community leader, has seemingly abandoned the land for opportunities in Germany, leaving Koro (Rawiri Paratene) to uphold tradition by teaching disinterested youth.

Paika (Keisha Castle-Hughes) is the transformational figure of *Whale Rider* (2002), as her character embodies and explores multiple boundaries. Her name connects Pai to the legendary figure of Paika, who rode on the back of a whale and brought the Porou of Whanagara to the land — the same land the community still stands upon (Adamson, 2012). Through her namesake, Pai brings the legend of Paika, the past, into the present. Not only does she have a strong connection to the past but to the land as well. This connection is so deep that Pai is physically unable to leave, remaining with her grandparents when her father returns to Germany. Through the land, the community, past, present, and future are all connected.

Paika also proves to have a mastery over tradition, as she excels at her grandfather's training, despite having to learn everything second-hand or through windows. The reason for Pai's distance learning is that according to tradition, leadership has fallen an unbroken line of male descendants, from her grandfather stretching back to Paika, the whale rider of legend.

Throughout the film, Pai's grandfather Koro has been searching for a boy to take up the mantle of leader. However, once his final training measure, a test to see who could retrieve his whale tooth necklace from the ocean, has failed, Koro gives up. Looking to help her grandfather, Pai asks the ancestors for help. A pod of whales answers her call.

The whale in Maori tradition, and established throughout the film, embodies the ancestors; the pod of whales is reflective of the state of the community. Beached on the shore, the community is at a critical moment, needing to be guided onto the proper path. In a reenactment of the legend of her namesake, Pai rides a whale, guiding the pod back into the ocean.

Whales are also liminal figures, negotiating the boundary between land and sea, whales act as the bridge between the two worlds (Adamson, 2012, p.33). Paika's riding of the whale is not a mere retelling of the

legend but a reinterpretation. In riding the whales, Pai brings the world of tradition, the ancestors, and nature into the contemporary, presenting a new model of leadership and a new harmony between the tribe and the land.

No movie is an island. The massive undertaking that is creating a film requires a team of people, the final product bearing the fingerprints of all those who touched it. *Atanarjuat* (2001) presents these prints for us in the credits. The names of those whose hands crafted the film are shown alongside their faces, as the camera is reflectively pointed at the production team. Photos and videos revealing the act of creation and those who created it.

In Pai's yard, there is an unfinished wooden canoe, a waka. Reminded of the vessel's presence throughout the film, as it appears in various shots, and is implicated in Paikea's reciting of the family genealogy. The long line of chiefs, stretching back to the whale rider Paikea, is carved into the hull, connecting the past to the present and both to the sea when launched.

At the film's conclusion, the vessel is completed and launched, with Paikea and Koro leading the rowers. This event is not only a symbol of community restoration but the very act. The community lacked a waka due to their expense. Still, together the film crew and the Ngati Porou of Whanagara collaborated to build the waka, which was gifted to the community after filming (Adamson, 2012). The waka and the film also collaborated to rebuild the community, reconstructing tradition into a contemporary context.

The colonial perspective of the new world was as terra nullius, a blank slate. *Atanarjuat* (2001) and *Whale Rider* (2002) counter this presentation- the land is not nothing; it is foundational to everything.

Frontier theory imagines the frontier and the wilderness as a terra nullius, a blank slate that will be transformed into a farm, and then a town, and then a city. Indigenous cinema films *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001) and *Whale Rider* (2002) look at the frontier from the perspectives of those already residing there. The existence of this perspective alone that for land, there exists a history prior to its discovery by colonists belies the myth of the frontier. These lands were, are, complete civilizations.

1.4 Apocalypse

Christian fundamentalism is entrenched in American history and culture, and therefore in Hollywood – the end of the world is always at stake (Sutton, 2014). As such, apocalypse is one of the oldest narrative motifs

in Western culture. Merchant connects apocalyptic narratives to 'the Fall of man' as humanity and the natural world descend into a lesser state (Merchant, 2003). Apocalypse connects to the beginning of the good book and its end, as the Book of Revelations depicts the end of the world, an Armageddon that will unfold over many centuries. The cyclical storytelling of the Christian Bible reflects the cyclical nature of apocalyptic narratives, as these stories often feature cycles of death and rebirth, destruction, and restoration.

Connected to the Fall and the Book of Revelations, apocalypse is often seen as an act of divine punishment, not the direct effect of a direct cause but emblematic of humanity's moral failings. This is particularly true of environmental disasters, as droughts such as the dustbowl were seen by Christian fundamentalists not as the result of farming practice but as a sign from God (Sutton, 2014, p.242).

While these punishments are enacted on a global scale, this is no cause for fear. Revelations, as conceived of as the Rapture by fundamentalists, is the beginning of the end of the physical earth; this fiery end is also the beginning of life eternal for the faithful. The apocalypse is only a concern for those doomed to damnation. The faithful will be born again.

While the popularity of this motif in Western culture is explained by Christianity, the apocalypse is also a popular motif in Japanese narrative, as explored by Susan Napier. These films "all center around a vision of disaster, of social, material, and sometimes spiritual collapse" (Napier, 1993, p. 329). While the nuances of these depictions should become clear, as Eastern apocalyptic narratives take on a more collectivist approach as compared to the West's individualistic one, the physical destruction of the apocalypse acts in both as a sign of a deeper metaphysical disruption.

i) Nuclear Apocalypse

The events of World War II – particularly the nuclear devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki - resulted in a new apocalyptic consciousness in America, as the populace realized that total annihilation was very much possible (Sutton, 2014, p.6). Witnessing such events on home soil could have a similar effect in Japan, as both nations saw the introduction of atomic monsters. The nuclear-born monsters of *Godzilla* (1954) and *Them!* (1954) were the manifestation of the anxieties surrounding developing nuclear technology and the testing of that tech.

Godzilla, sleeping since the Jurassic age in his underwater cave, is awakened by offshore H-bomb testing. The film makes several references to nuclear incidents that had occurred in Japan, such as American nuclear testing on Bikini Atoll, radioactive tuna, and the loss of a fishing vessel to radiation sickness when

encountering fallout from offshore nuclear testing — as represented in *Godzilla's* attack on the fishing vessel at the opening of the film (Rhoads & McCorkle, 2018).

The ants of *Them!* (1954) are transformed from regular ants into giant monstrosities which eat human flesh from nuclear fallout contaminated sugar. This contamination comes from U.S. military nuclear testing facilities in the Nevada desert. Like the fallout they arise from, the ants are scattered across the U.S. by the wind, thus giving authorities no way to know where the threat will turn up.

Both atomic monsters represent the threat of nuclear testing and act as a punishment for humanity's discovery and use of the technology.

Godzilla presents a nuanced condemnation of the developing technology, as nuclear technology is not relegated to destruction but is believed to have positive potential -- scientists just need to find it.

Dr. Kyohei Yamane (Takashi Shimura), the scientist who identifies *Godzilla*, is against *Godzilla's* destruction. In *Godzilla* (1954), he sees a learning opportunity. Dr. Yamane is not the only character to see the potential of nuclear science. Dr. Daisuke Serizawa (Akihiko Hirata), the oxygen destroyer's inventor, hopes to find a possible benefit to this technology. While advancing technology poses a threat to humanity and the environment, it also can save humanity.

The defeat of *Them!* is not nearly so nuanced. The beasts are only that, beasts, and offer no potential besides that as a tool of destruction. While scientists have a role in "Them's" oversight, only the military has the authority and ability to handle "Them." Dr. Harold Medford (Edmund Gwenn) may brief the military on this adversary and instruct how to defeat Them. Still, it is the military that executes this plan. In the hands of the military, the risks of nuclear technology can be mitigated.

ii) Climate Crisis

Taking a page out of *The Day After Tomorrow's* (2004) book, the apocalypses of *The Colony* (2013) and *Arctic Blast* (2010) take the form of extreme weather events that result in a new ice age. This icy punishment is the result of human industry, as carbon and chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) waste has resulted in global warming in *The Colony* (2013) and a hole in the ozone layer above Australia in *Arctic Blast* (2010).

Where *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) (the direct inspiration for these films (Svoboda, 2016)) frames its apocalyptic ends as a cautionary tale for its audience -- change your ways now, or this is our fate – *The*

Colony (2013) and *Arctic Blast* (2010) instead see the apocalypse, not as something to avoid but that can be weathered through.

Following in *The Day After Tomorrow's* (2004) footsteps, *The Colony* (2013) and *Arctic Blast* (2010) also use the melodramatic mode, while this helps to focus the narrative, scaling down hyperobjects such as climate change and world-ending disaster to an understandable level, the interpersonal crisis of the family, this also has the unintended effect of turning global, societal issues into individualistic ones (Ingram, 2004).

For fundamentalists, that the world-altering apocalypse is a personal concern is not contradictory, as your fate within the apocalypse is predetermined. "The earth will not be saved by legislation or by compulsion alone but by the responsible concern of men, women, and children who care for God's creation" (Sutton, 2014, p.362). It is individual responsibility; the faithful will be saved, and the nonbelievers are doomed.

The Colony (2013) concludes with a small group of survivors heads out from the bunkers and towards a thawed-out area. Bag of seeds in hand humanities legacy has set out to begin again, planting for themselves a new Eden. The faithful have been guided to a new paradise or welcomed to life eternal in heaven.

In *Arctic Blast* (2010), the threat is a false end, as human innovation can prevent the worst of the incoming extreme weather event. Even the apocalypse can be solved with human ingenuity.

iii) Eco-villains

Climate change has become a popular character motivator. Ecological villains such as *Kingsman: The Secret Service's* (2014) Valentine (Samuel L. Jackson) and Thanos (Josh Brolin) of *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018) and *Avengers: End Game* (2019), while coming from very different worlds and film genres, both maintain a Malthusian philosophy — with plots to wipe out a large swath of the population to restore ecological balance.

According to Malthus, a population regulating event, such as disease or famine, was inevitable. Our villains see themselves as providing this regulating event.

"When you get a **virus**, you get a fever. That's the human body raising its core temperature to kill the **virus**. Planet Earth works the same way: Global warming is the fever; mankind is the **virus**. We're making our planet sick." – Valentine, *Kingsman: The Secret Service* (2014)

"I am inevitable" -Thanos, *Avengers: End Game* (2019)

Thanos constantly brings up the idea of balance throughout his many speeches. Sentient life (as this is a plan at an intergalactic scale) has demanded too much of the natural world. The snap, according to Thanos, is restorative and equitable, as the snap would randomly kill half of all life, relieving the strain on the natural world.

While Thanos sees this more as an issue of scale, Valentine sees it more as a problem with humanity's very constitution. To him, humans are a virus, poisoning the earth—his plan is to nearly completely eradicate all life to restore the natural world to full health. Both Valentine and Thanos position themselves as the bringers of the apocalypse, but not the cause; this is all merely a symptom of society's failure.

While the villains of *Kingsman: The Secret Service* (2014) and *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018) and *Avengers: End Game* (2019) have lost hope in humanity, the heroes of these films, the Kingsman and Avengers, have not.

Representing humanity, these heroes focus on humanity's potential and deserving of a second chance. The issue with these villains is that the hero solves the problem of the villain and not the problem the villain represents, climate change. While these narratives are using audience concerns for the environment to make the villains more compelling, they simultaneously disregard the threat of climate change, turning it into a non-issue. There was nothing wrong with the environment, and the problem is people like Thanos. Eco-villains further perpetuate the role of individual responsibility in the oncoming apocalypse, as these apocalypses are caused by individuals and stopped by individuals. While the villain brings society to the brink of an apocalypse, the hero sees a return to normalcy, a return to business as usual.

iv) Miyazaki

The animated worlds of Miyazaki films are rife with apocalyptic imagery. Its use is most pronounced in *Ponyo* (2008), *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (1984), and *Princess Mononoke* (1997).

Set in a picturesque bay-side town, the town is completely flooded by a tsunami at the end of the first act. This flood was coordinated by Fujimoto (Liam Neeson), Ponyo's (Noah Cyrus) father. Fujimoto caused the flood as an act of retribution against the people of the bay and humanity at large for their pollution of the ocean.

"Human? What do you know about humans, Brunhilde? They spoil the sea. They treat your home like their empty black souls" – Fujimoto, *Ponyo*.

This conflict results from a split between the human world on land and the world of the animal/natural that lives under the sea. Ponyo can bridge this gap as she occupies a space between the two realms. Not only does her story involve navigating the land and sea, but her physical body also transforms from a fish to a human girl and a variety of forms in-between.

During her time on the shore, Ponyo reconnects the two realms through her friendship with Sosuke (Frankie Jonas). In order to maintain their friendship, however, Ponyo must forfeit her transformational powers, adopting a human form permanently. The film appears to suggest that any transcendence between the human/non-human boundary is temporary, and the two are intended to exist peacefully independent of the other.

Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind (1984) occurs after the fall, set in a post-apocalyptic world. Over a thousand years ago, an event known as the Seven Days of Fire wiped out modern civilization and much of the flora, fauna, and people; this event and the weapons that caused it –the giant warrior- symbolized the existential threat of nuclear war. During the film's timeline, humanity is forced into pockets of clean land, as much of the earth has devolved into "Toxic Jungles" inhospitable to humans without protective face masks.

While the people of the valley of the wind and those of the kingdoms of Tolmekia and Pejite live in fear of the Toxic Jungles and the giant insect species that reside there, the film's protagonist Nausicaa (Allison Lohman) is instead intrigued. The audience first meets Nausicaa as she rides her glider alone into the Toxic Jungle to collect samples for her research. Through her research, Nausicaa discovers that the Toxic Jungle, rather than polluting the earth with toxic radiation, is in actuality cleansing the soil, water, and air. The former sight of the end of the world, the battlefields of the Seven Days of Fire, is also the location of its rebirth as the flora purges the earth. The post-apocalyptic wasteland is becoming a garden of paradise, one from which humanity has already been cast from.

The third act sees the Tolmekians and Pejite forces come to a head, as the Tolmekian Princess Kushana (Uma Thurman) rebirths a Giant Warrior and the Pejite forces weaponize the Ohm into a stampede. The two forces on a trajectory to meet in the valley of the wind. This war would destroy not only the valley of the wind but the Ohm and the Toxic Jungles, on which Nausicaa now knows all humanity depends. The existential threat of this war mirrors the Seven Days of Fire of a thousand years ago, suggesting that destruction and rebuilding is not a singularity but a cycle of death and rebirth.

Nausicaa seeks to break this cycle of violence. Throughout the film, Nausicaa strives to solve problems in a non-violent manner, subduing a charging Ohm during the first act of the film with a whistle and her wits, and offering herself as a prisoner to prevent a battle between her people (the people of the valley of the wind) and the Tolmekian forces. When Nausicaa does act out in violence, entering a blinding rage after discovering Tolmekian soldiers murdered her father, she leaves it with regret.

In seeking to live peacefully, Nausicaa develops an understanding for the Ohm, learning how to interact with them, not through violence but compassion and seeking understanding. Throughout the film, Nausicaa speaks to the Ohm, as the giant insectoid creatures use golden feelers to communicate with her telepathically. It is Nausicaa's compassion that allows her to act not only as a bridge between the human and natural worlds, as she becomes an ambassador for the Ohm and Toxic Jungle, but a conduit for the spiritual as well. In a grand act of self-sacrifice, Nausicaa stops the war which had been building throughout the film by saving the life of an Ohm child. In an act of thanks, the Ohm use their golden feelers to revive the dead Nausicaa fulfilling a prophecy told earlier in the film.

Obaba: After a thousand years of darkness, he will come, clad in blue and surrounded by fields of gold to restore mankind's connection of the earth that was destroyed.

Nausicaa: And he will guide the people of this planet at last to a land of purity.

-*Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind* (1984)

In Nausicaa's resurrection, the relationship between the human and natural has been reborn. The film's credit sequence shows the people of the valley of the wind venturing into the Toxic Jungle, learning to live in harmony with the environment upon which they depend.

Princess Mononoke (1997), which is similar to *Nausicaa* (1984), also features war and violence as primary themes, as civilization and nature are actively at war. Lady Eboshi (Minnie Driver), the leader of Irontown, and her forces kill the forest's protective spirits, which are interfering with her extraction of iron from the mountainside.

Hatred is a transformational force in *Princess Mononoke* (1997). The film begins with a boar spirit in the process of transforming into a demon; this transformation is incited by an act of violence against the boar spirit as it had been shot with an iron bullet. This hatred spreads as Ashitaka (Billy Crudup) becomes infected by the demon boar transforming his human arm into a demon arm – violence begets violence.

The growing hatred between the warring factions incites the apocalypse in the film's third act, as Lady Eboshi and a team of samurai journey into the forest to kill the forest spirit. Using a shotgun, the weapon which began the film, its bullet infecting the boar spirit which attacked Ashitaka, Lady Eboshi beheads the forest spirit. This act of violence incites the apocalypse, as the decapitated forest spirit walks the earth, killing everything in its path, leaving only a black scarred earth in its wake.

Ashitaka and San (Claire Danes) are liminal figures, Ashitaka existing between the human and demon worlds, and San the films mononoke between the human and natural. Existing between worlds, the pair together reunite the forest spirit's body to its lost head, stopping his death march. Once the spirit, at peace, lies to rest his tracks, once charred and dead, begin to sprout new life. This is not a return to normal, as the forest flora is only primary species, sprouts where there were once trees, but it instead rebirth, a chance for the spirits and Lady Eboshi to begin their relationship again – "to build a better town."

Renewal arcs in apocalyptic fiction often present the destruction of civilization as a clean slate from which to build a new and better society. Miyazaki's oeuvre does not take such a staunchly anti-civilization stance. The Bayside community of *Ponyo* (2008), the People of the valley of the Wind, the Tolmekian, and the Pejite forces in *Nausicaa* (1984) and Lady Eboshi and the citizens of Irontown in *Princess Mononoke* (1997) are all humanized. Technology and innovation are also provided with nuance, as the boats that pollute the bay also aid Ponyo and Sosuke in their journey. Through research, *Nausicaa* discovers the truth of the Toxic Jungle — the wealth provided by manufacturing is framed as a benefit to the people of Irontown.

These apocalyptic ends are not the natural progression of society, not the organic culmination of invention and technology, but rather the result of war. These conflicts between the human and the natural are just that, conflicts. It is Fujimoto's hatred and anger that causes the flood, the ancient battlefield of the Seven Days Fire where the Toxic Jungle grows, and the war between Irontown and the spirits of the mountain, which ends in the decapitation of the spirit of the forest.

Ecopacifism is a philosophy that connects violence to the environment, wherein environmental degradation is recontextualized as violence against nature (DeWeese-Boyd, 2009). According to ecopacifists, our current relationship with nature is one of war. Nature is seen as an enemy that must be fought (or perhaps cultivated and managed) rather than the benevolent force it is (DeWeese-Boyd, 2009). The goal of ecopacifism then is to live with nature and not against it.

While nature is threatened by violence and hatred, it is reversed by non-violent intervention. The water recedes in *Ponyo* (2008) when Ponyo sacrifices her magic to demonstrate her love for Sosuke. Nausicaa's compassion for the Ohm stops a new world war from devastating what remains of humanity.

Furthermore, it is Ashitaka and San's healing of the forest spirit, reuniting the head to its body, which halts the devastation of the mountain. Following an ecopacifist philosophy, Miyazaki's heroes refuse to act violently towards the natural world, thus saving it.

v) ecological thrillers

The ecological thrillers *Charisma* (1999) and *Himatsuri* (1985) each feature an apocalypse. *Charisma* (1999) ends with the explosion of the totemic charisma tree, Yabuike walking out of the forest and towards a civilization engulfed in flame. *Himatsuri* (1985) ends with a violent murder-suicide committed by Tatsuri against his family.

These apocalyptic events were brought about by human exploitation of nature. *Charisma*, the sacred tree, is destroyed by Jinbo and the group looking to sell it. The devout Kiriya has lost his faith and abandons charisma. It is with the end of reverence for the natural world that the destruction of civilization begins. Tatsuri's family in *Himatsuri* (1985) has lived off the same land for generations; throughout the film, the family is put under pressure to sell. It is selling the land, which prompts Tatsuri's massacre. It is the destruction of the natural world that has led to these apocalyptic ends.

The tree charisma is destroyed twice within the film. The first charisma tree is uprooted and burned, and the second is blown up. *Charisma* is also reborn twice. Yabuike finds a second tree of the same rare species, and within the ruins of the explosion, finds a sapling green and healthy. These are opportunities to start again.

The apocalypse in *Himatsuri* (1985) is not an event of mourning but a cause for celebration. Tatsuri's family's massacre leads to a golden sunset, arresting all of the city in its glow. "It is a moment of enlightenment in which the villagers, by uniting with nature, join with the gods and with Tatsuri's spirit" (Nolletti, 1986, p.58).

While apocalypse refers to upheaval and destruction in the popular vernacular, the term initially also implied discovery, uncovering the fundamental nature of things, the revelation of something new and often better (Lisboa 2011; Napier, 2001). These events provide opportunities for renewal; however, *Charisma* (1999) and *Himatsuri* (1985) are ambiguous as to whether or not these opportunities are taken; Yabuike

does not retrieve the sapling to ensure its survival, and the villager's future actions can only be speculated. These new beginnings may lead to a better world, or they may be opportunities to repeat the same mistakes.

1.5 Eve

The Edenic narrative is not just a story about the human and nature binary, but the binary between man and woman. Eve is the active agent of the fall of man, as she is the one tempted by the snake, the devil in disguise, and who first eats from the tree of knowledge. Where Eve causes the fall, Adam, the hapless bystander, develops the means of cultivating the land, the potential to restore the wilderness to its garden state (Merchant, 2003).

Wall-E (2008) begins after the Fall, with humanity having been cast off-planet, drifting through the galaxy in a spaceship. Robots Wall-E and Eva act as the Adam and Eve of the new age. While Eve gave Adam the apple, which causes the Fall, the male coded Wall-E finds the plant that will allow humanity to return to a fructifying earth. Eva may not be natural as a robot, but she still needs to be tamed. From the cold affectless machine, Wall-E reforms her into a loving partner.

In Milton, Eve works in the garden and is associated with it. Eve acts as a boundary transcending figure, her connection to the garden often acting as an extension of the natural world – the human embodiment of nature.

As Adam must hold dominion over nature, he must also be master of his wife. Eve, and all women, become symbolic of nature and the garden. Merchant identifies three variations that Eve takes in Western culture: original Eve, fallen Eve, and mother Eve.

"As original Eve, nature is virgin, pure, and light—land that is pristine or barren but has the potential for development. Fallen Eve, nature is disorderly and chaotic; a wilderness, wasteland, or desert requiring improvement; dark and witchlike, the victim and mouthpiece of Satan as a serpent. Mother Eve, nature is an improved garden; nurturing earth bearing fruit, a ripened ovary; maturity."
(Merchant, 2003, p.21).

Altaira of *Forbidden Planet* (1956) is the first and only human born on Altaira IV. As the planet's original Eve, Altaira has an affinity for the flora and fauna of her homeworld, able to pet a tiger in her fathers'

menagerie of animals. The Edenic narrative meets Freudian Oedipal themes as Altaira's virginal status is meant to reflect the planet she is named after; Altaira IV is ripe for the taking.

The all-male crew of the United Planets starship C-57D competes for Altaira's affections, with Dr. Morbius threatened by the prospect of losing his daughter to another man. In this telling of the Fall, it is not Eve who eats from the tree of knowledge but Dr. Morbius, who bit the forbidden fruit when he plugged himself into the plastic educator, an advanced device left behind by the Krell. The film ends with the crew and Altaira fleeing the forbidden planet, which must be destroyed to prevent others from stumbling upon the knowledge housed there. Altaira is cast away from her home in paradise into the arms of Commander Adams (Leslie Nielsen); the pair are poised to continue Altaira IV's human lineage.

Dani (Florence Pugh) in *Midsommar* (2019) is the only woman in the group of American Masters' students who travel to Sweden. As the only woman, she is the only one who can adapt to the naturalistic lifestyle of the Harga. Compare this to *The Wicker Man* (1973), which follows a similar plot trajectory, with the male Howie (Edward Woodward) unable to accept the ways of Summer Isle. Howie's inability to adapt is also his inability to forsake God, as Dani takes on the role of the fallen Eve, giving in to the temptations of the cult.

Long Weekend (1978) presents an inversion of the Mother Eve trope, the bad mother. Rather than bearing fruit Marcia (Briony Behets) instead has had an abortion, an act which nature itself objects to. During a moment alone with a book, Marcia finds an eagle's egg. With the egg in hand, Marcia masturbates, linking her fertility to that of the eagle mother. The wail of the grieving dugong interrupts the act. Is this Marcia's guilt over her abortion manifesting in nature, or is nature rebelling against her perverse sexuality?

The wailing of a dugong child which has lost its mother becomes an audio motif for Marcia as the bereaved animal's cries torment her throughout the trip. The mourning of this child taunts her with her inability to feel a motherly instinct.

Marcia is not only connected to nature through her fertility but as prey. Early in *Long Weekend* (1978), when Peter first comes home with his new camping gear, he looks at his wife Marcia through the crosshairs of his new rifle. Later she is nearly shot by Peter's crossbow and finally meets her end by a rouge crossbow arrow.

2.Ecophobia

While eco-critique began with the idyllic, analyzing nature writing and the reflections of the sublime written by transcendentalists, Estok in *Ecomedia and Ecophobia* believes the field should reevaluate and instead begin not with our best feelings towards nature but our worst (Estok, 2016). Ecophobia, defined already in this study's introduction, was presented not merely as a concept but as a methodology of ecocritical analysis.

Ecophobia as a thought paradigm looks at how works represent humanity's irrational hatred and fear of nature. The romanticism of nature, as discussed above, is not an act against ecophobia but rather a function of it. The belief that there is kind and good nature means that there may also be evil nature – while in reality, nature is neutral (Estok, YEAR, p.208).

The horror genre holds a unique potential to explore the nature of these fears within the film's text. In her book, *The Forest and the Ecogothic*, Parker identifies seven sources of the West's fear of the forest.

(1) The forest is against civilization"(Parker, 2020, p.47). Conceptualizations of nature place it on a binary with civilization; the natural is where the cultural is absent - this is the trouble Cronon sees with wilderness. Derrida notes the definitions of nature and civilization in describing his theory of difference, as constructs only have meaning when juxtaposed to their opposite: nature and civilization "could not exist as identities apart from their difference from one another" (Derrida, 1978, p. 282). While for the transcendentalist, this allows nature to provide a respite from city life, for the horror writer, this presents a threat to the presence of cities (Parker, 2020; Cronon, 1996).

This fear is prevalent within the Edenic narrative, particularly when frontiers are concerned, as these stories are enacted within the transitional zone between wilderness and civilization. Cultivation of the wilderness is a desire to control, and indeed Estok traces the root of ecophobia to the fear of nature's agency, the result of which is a desire for control over nature (Estok, 2009; Estok 2016).

Apocalyptic narratives provide a view of nature that is out of control, as new ice ages, floods, and fire, eradicate cities leaving and leave behind nothing but uninhabited wilderness in their wake.

(2) The forest is associated with the past"(Parker, 2020, p.47). Seeking the wilderness is often spoken of as a return; we are "getting back to nature." These phrases imply that nature belongs to humanity's past; it is a place we left behind in our development (Parker, 2020). This often appears in film as nature being framed as a nostalgic setting associated with childhood. The Apu Trilogy (comprised of *Pather Panchali* (1955), *Aparajito* (1956), and *The World of Apu* (1956)) associate the countryside where Apu (portrayed by Subir

Banerjee, Pinaki Sen Gupta, Smaran Ghosal, and Siumitra Chatterjee) grew up with childhood and the city with the adult.

Miyazaki's oeuvre regularly implements nostalgia in this way, as nature becomes the realm of childhood, what is or one day will be a phase-out of the viewer's past. Many of the protagonists of Miyazaki's films are children, including *Ponyo* (2008), *Lupita: Castle in the Sky* (1986), *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988), and *Spirited Away* (2001)

(3) The forest is a landscape of trial" "(Parker, 2020, p.47). Facing the elements, the wilderness is a setting wherein our external and internal survival skills are tested (Parker, 2020). Survivalist elements appear throughout the filmography. From wildlife documentaries such as *Chang* (1927) and *In Beaver Valley* (1950) to the narrative films *Walkabout* (1971), *Long Weekend* (1978), and *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001), the question of survival provides the most basic narrative tension as it is the daily tension of the struggle for life.

(4) The forest is a setting in which we are lost" "(Parker, 2020, p.47). In entering wild spaces, there exists a possibility, a fear, that we may not find our way back out. In her analysis of the forest, Parker notes that the geometry of the forest itself inclines us to walk in circles, making disorientation inevitable for the unfamiliar traveler (Parker, 2020). The plot of *Walkabout* (1971) is centered entirely on this point as brother (Luc Roeg) and sister (Jenny Agutter) are abandoned by their father in the Australian outback. The pair is lost in more ways than one as the journey back to civilization often acts as one of self-discovery, the tension of finding their way back pairing well with the psychological tension of finding oneself.

(5) The forest is a consuming threat" "(Parker, 2020, p.47). In the accepted order of things, humans have positioned themselves at the top of the food chain as the consumers of nature. Sometimes framed as a tragedy, sometimes framed as a necessity, if we were to stop consuming nature, nature would consume us. This possibility becomes quite literal in animal horror, which Gregersdotter et al. define as "fictional movies where the animal seeks to challenge the predominance of the human through physical, sometimes *consumptive*, violence" (emphasis added) (Gregersdotter et al. 2015, p.5).

The threat of being consumed by animals appears throughout filmography. This threat is most poignant in *Long Weekend* (1978), where the threat of consumption is the film's focus. As stated above, the animal horror genre is centered on an inversion of the animal/human relationship; *Long Weekend* (1978) establishes the married couple Peter and Marcia as consumers. Peter spends two thousand dollars on new camping equipment for this trip, and Marcia would rather spend that money on a luxury vacation. Over the course

of the weekend, the pair consume their fair share of nature, intruding on the landscape by pitching their tent off camp, spray pesticide over the campsite, and cutting down trees. The tables turn as the wildlife begin to reclaim the campsite for themselves, ants infiltrate the food stores, a possum enters the couple's tent biting Peter in the process, and the wails of a dugong torment Marcia. In the end, the couple each die in a manner resembling the deaths of earlier wildlife. Marcia is shot with a crossbow, like a prey animal, and Peter is run over in a scene that mirrors an earlier scene where Peter ran over a baby kangaroo. Fear of consumption by nature is the fear of taking the place of nature.

Let the Right One In (2008) aligns the vampire character Eli with snow. The character is first introduced on a snowy playground at night, wearing a white dress with her dark hair emblematic of the sky. As a character symbolic of snow, of nature, Eli poses a threat to the human characters, taking multiple lives onscreen by consuming their blood.

(6) The forest is the site of the human unconsciousness"(Parker, 2020, p.47). Nature's impact on us is not only physical but psychological. The field of ecopsychology is dedicated to examining the psychological influences of nature. However, on film, this relationship often enters the symbolic as nature represents the internal. Yabuike (Koji Yakusho), experiencing extreme pressure from his work as a detective, escapes into the wilderness in *Charisma* (1999). This retreat into the woods is meant to provide a psychological reprieve, to heal Yabuike's mental health. More terrifyingly, however, we see nature bring characters to their psychological breaking points. Kiriya (Hiroyuki Ikeuchi), obsessed with *Charisma's* (1999) titular tree, gives his entire life to the dying flora.

Himatsuri (1985) is based on the criminal case of Ikeda Kazumichi, who murdered several family members before taking his own life (Tomonari, 2007). Rather than focusing the film on the crime itself, the director Mitsuo Yanagimachi instead chooses to focus on what would inspire such a violent crime, deciding on a natural setting as the location to explore the psychology of a murder/suicide.

Tatsuri (Kin'ya Kitaoji), Ikeda's film counterpart, is the master of his environment. Perfectly at peace in the wilderness, Tatsuri regularly communes with the mountain goddess, the spirit of the mountain herself. The tension of the film results from the growing strain between the natural worlds of the mountain, Tatsuri's domain, the sea, and the village nestled between. As developers take an interest in the area's natural beauty, hoping to build up the town to accommodate tourism, nature's reign is threatened.

It is this tension that fuels Tatsuri's descent into madness. As he has spoken and acted for nature before – with questionable words ("only I can make the mountain goddess feel like a woman") and objectionable tactics (as it is very likely that Tatsuri polluted the fishing grounds with oil to make the area less attractive to investors and a tactic in personal revenge) -- the murder/suicide Tatsuri commits can be said to be nature acting through him. Alternatively, Tatsuri believing he is acting on nature's behalf, as he is compelled to commit his crime after a spiritual revelation on the mountain; as the rain stops on his command, he heads home to carry out the act – "I understand."

(7) The forest is an antichristian place"(Parker, 2020, p.47). As the sublime sees nature as representative of the Edenic paradise, ecophobia instead associated nature with the wilderness Adam and Eve had been cast out into. Nature is feared as the setting rejected by God.

Two of the films in this film's filmography, *The Wicker Man* (1973) and *Midsommar* (2019) plots, center on pagan religions that live naturalistic lifestyles. Indeed naturescapes are the preferred setting of the cult horror film. Both Summers Isle and the Harga at first appear to be examples of Edenic nature; these are bountiful farming communities that appear to have successfully cultivated the wilderness. As the stories develop, both reveal these landscapes to be much wilder than previously believed, as these societies abide by the rules of nature, not of God. As the people of Summer Isle believe, the dead are reborn as animals and the Harga socially construct their community around a seasonal life cycle.

Analysis of nature and Nature as depicted in film as being a site of fear and worthy of being feared may appear counter-intuitive to ecocriticism activist ambitions. That such dark depictions of nature are so popular --to the point of spawning subgenres such as the Animal Horror film or the ubiquity of horror movie settings such as the cabin in the woods -- would point to a cultural fascination with hostile nature, a direct opposite to Edenic paradise (Hillard, 2009, p.688).

The romantic view of nature ascribes nature with a positive morality, the good and divine garden of Eden. In contrast, our fears and hatred of nature create a landscape of sin and evil – the wilderness Adam and Eve were cast out into - when in reality, nature is ambivalent, morally neutral (Estok, 2009). By investigating our fears of nature as made apparent on film, both those rational and irrational, we can institute a deeper relationship with nature if we simultaneously acknowledge its darkness along with its beauty.

3.Animals

There are many places from which to begin a history of film. A fairly common one is with Edward Muybridge's the horse in motion. When set in motion, the series of photographs revealed the nature of a horse's gallop (there is, in fact, a moment when all four hooves leave the ground). What his anecdote highlights is that animals have always played a starring role in motion pictures.

The role animals have played within films has not been uniform, but it does fall into fairly specific archetypes. The first is as set dressing. As animals and humans have cohabitated for all of homo sapiens history, realism often demands the presence of animals. From the horses acting as transportation in *Pale Rider* (1985) to the flies buzzing on a corpse in *Walkabout* (1971), these animals provide their respective films with atmosphere.

3.2 Animals Playing Themselves

Wildlife films present their features as animals playing themselves. *Chang* (1927), *In Beaver Valley* (1950), and *David Attenborough's: A Life on Our Planet* (2020) feature animals that were filmed going about their business and are meant to reveal the nature of the natural world, the private goings-on of animals.

The format intentionally obscures the presence of the filmmakers, a fit example of Cronon's *Trouble with Wilderness* or Armbruster's' *Creating the Nature we Must Save*, as the animal world, wild nature, is presented as being segregated from humans – and erased by humans. Non-human nature belongs out there in the wild, and humans belong in civilization.

Despite animals being presented as playing themselves, the films, through narration constructed through voice-over and editing, prescribe personalities to these animals. Elephants in *Chang* (1927) are violent, destructive threats. *In Beaver Valley* (1950) uses its animal stars to naturalize the nuclear family and good American values such as industry and hard work.

"He [beaver] learned his trade during a long apprenticeship at home." -*In Beaver Valley* (1950)

Audience members form para-social relationships with the animal personalities as represented in media — the busy beaver and the cunning wolf— similar to those developed between viewers and media figures (Bouse, 2003). The character of animals becoming a feature of media rather than biology and zoology, animal personalities become monolithic within species.

3.3. Animal Actors

Animal companions are fairly common within media. Humans and their bestial friends make a likely pair from the friendship between a cowboy and his horse, or those between Disney princesses and their comedic relief pet. Some films take this a step further and, rather than just being a feature, make the dynamic of animal/human relationships the film's focus. The animal companion film is a film wherein the film's primary relationship, the plot, is between a human character and an animal.

Animal companion features are so prevalent within the world of sentimental family films that they even have their own subgenres, such as the "horse-girl" movie. The species of an animal companion is interchangeable, so long as the animal is sufficiently cute. Familiar favourites the dog and the horse appear in *Old Yeller* (1957), *Wild Hearts Can't Be Broken* (1991), and *The Horse Whisperer* (1998); killer whale and geese fill the role in *Free Willy* (1993) and *Fly Away Home* (1997) respectively.

In his book *Animals in Film*, Johnathan Burt connects animals with themes of loss; families are often incomplete either as the result of a death or abandonment (Burt, 2002). In *Old Yeller* (1957), Travis's father must leave home for an extended period to work, leaving Travis (Tommy Kirk) as the man of the house. Grace (Scarlett Johansson) loses her friend and leg in a riding accident in *The Horse Whisperer* (1998). Sonora (Gabrielle Anwar) of *Wild Hearts Can't be Broken* (1991) is an orphan and social outcast at school. *Free Willy's* (1993) Jesse (Jason James Richter) is also an orphan, adjusting to life with a new foster family, and Amy (Anna Paquin) has just moved in with her father after her mother's death in a car accident. The hole left by loss is one that only the love of a pet can fill.

These bonds, much like those between real-world human and animal companions, are forged through the sharing of salient life experiences (Reisbig et al., 2017). It is not just the humans who are going through a difficult time but the animals as well. Yeller (Spike) is living as a scrappy stray, responsible for providing. Travis also needs to become a resourceful provider for his family to be a protector. Pilgrim is a survivor of the same riding accident as Grace, and the two work to heal together from their shared trauma. The state of one reflects the state of the other.

Willy (Keiko) has been captured and sold into captivity, separated from his parents. Jesse has similarly been captured. Apprehended by police and moved into the foster system, Jesse calls his foster father Mr. Greenwood (Michael Madsen), his jailor. Jesse can see his desire to be reunited with his parents in Willy, "bet you miss your family too. Hope you get to see them again one day."

The gaggle of geese in *Fly Away Home* (1997) has been orphaned, losing their mother to the development project. Not only have these geese lost their mother, but they must migrate south for the winter in order to survive – reflecting Amy’s move from New Zealand to Canada. The animal’s situations mirror those of the children they meet. These animals can relate to these children in a way no one else can.

By learning to form a connection with the animal, the protagonists also develop bonds with other humans. Through his connection to Old Yeller, Travis befriends Lisbeth (Beverly Washburn), who gifts Travis, the dog which will become Old Yeller’s replacement. After the accident in *The Horse Whisperer* (1998), Grace has become a bit of a recluse. However, while in Montana rehabilitating Pilgrim, Grace befriends Joe (Ty Hillman) and opens up to Tom (Robert Redford). Sonora, the lonely orphan, forms a family, marrying Al (Michael Schoeffling). Working at Adventure Park, Jesse meets Randolph (August Schellenberg) and Rae (Lori Petty), bonding over their shared love of Willy. Raising and teaching the geese to fly becomes a father-daughter bonding activity for Thomas (Jeff Daniels) and Amy. The two differing interests, geese and lightweight aircraft, converge. The animal companion not only mends the individual but the community.

While these animals become the main characters’ pets, they often begin the movie as wild animals. It is a common trope within horse girl films for the “girl” character to be the only one able to control a particularly unruly horse. This trope is nodded to in *Wild Hearts Can’t Be Broken* (1991) as Sonora is shown to have a way with horses, first at the beginning of the film, when a neighbour’s horse, Lightening, lets her ride bare-back and is directed into a jump, a trick the two had not practiced. The second is when Sonora is asking Doc Carver (Cliff Robertson) for a job. Ultimately Doc Carver is convinced after watching Sonora make eye contact with Lightening and allows him to get used to her smell, a trick he usually has to teach new hires.

Yeller, Willy, and the geese, however, are decidedly wild. Yeller enters the story as a stray, Willy in the ocean, and the geese as eggs in a marsh. These beasts become tame through the love, attention, and training provided by their human companions. Travis vows to keep Yeller too busy to prowl, transforming the tramp into a loyal farm dog, patrolling the crops, and aiding with boar hunts. Jesse trains with Willy daily, teaching him tricks and turning the stubborn prankster into a star performer. And Amy raises her gaggle of geese, teaching even the lazy Igor to fly. By domesticating these wild animals, the children can achieve the level of responsibility set out for them. Travis can become the protector of the family, the man of the house, by working with Yeller and eventually putting him down; “He’s my dog, I’ll do it.” Jesse becomes a law-abiding citizen, learning respect and discipline in the face of Randolph and Rae’s authority. And Amy becomes a maternal figure, nurturing her flock, transforming her into a mother.

Not only does the animal companion film begin with loss, but they also often end with loss. Yeller is buried, Willy is set free, and the geese are led away to a nature reserve. These losses are not the result of natural death but require the child's companion to let them go. Travis is the one to put Yeller down. Jesse is the one to initiate and lead the mission to return Willy to the ocean, and Amy is the one to fly the plane leading the flocks' flight south. The animal companion film provides a glimpse of what it may look like for the animal and the human to cohabitate and what harmony could look like but establishes this as only a momentary possibility. This temporary arrangement cannot last and must inevitably end.

In contrast, the horses and their girls remain paired at the end of their films. Jean Halley in *Horse Crazy* sees the horse-girl as a being unto itself when riding the horse-girl is more than either of them alone (Halley, 2019). The strict binaries of our world, which separate the human and the animal, cannot separate the horse from the girl.

Of course, animals are not always portrayed as friendly. Animals also provide a source of conflict, written as mindless adversaries. Descartes famously described animals as automata, no different from a machine; the animal was believed to have no reason, consciousness, and wholly undeserving human compassion (Descartes, 2011). While real animals have evolved in philosophy to be seen with much more nuance, the animals in our cinema are still too often automatons.

The ants of *THEM!* (1954), the beasts of *Long Weekend* (1978) and even the mighty Godzilla himself have little motivation besides instinct and rage. Sometimes these instincts are not even on behalf of the animal's interest but instead act as the tools for larger nature. If the animals of *THEM!* (1954), *Long Weekend* (1978), and *Godzilla* (1954) represent the Cartesian animal, then the killer whale of *Orca* (1977) represents the post-modern animal. He has reason.

The killer whale of *Orca* (1977) acts out a revenge plot, but this revenge is not being sought for the sake of nature. This time, it is personal. Captian Nolan (Richard Harris), the protagonist of the film, is responsible for the death of the orca's mate and unborn child, and for this crime, he seeks revenge. The attacks of the film are highly motivated and specific, such as the attack on the harbour destroying all of the boats, turning the townsfolk against Nolan, except for Nolan's boat. Leaving Nolan's boat behind sends a clear message.

"He deliberately left you your boat because he wants to fight you alone on the sea."

-Rachel, *Orca* (1977)

Animals having their own kind of reason does not stop them from being unreachable – that Nolan cannot reason with the orca, cannot talk him down, is one of the film's greatest sources of fear. While it is doubtless that this Orca has its own reasons and consciousness, these are entirely his own, utterly incomprehensible to us.

3.4 Symbolic Animals

Animals also fulfill an important symbolic role within media. While individual species of animals are used as symbols with their meaning determined by culture, here we will be discussing the significance of the concept of the animal. A common theme within animal studies is the role of the animal in self-identification as human, a famous example being Derrida's encounter with his cat as described in *The Animal That Therefore I Am* (Derrida, 2008). In this encounter, Derrida describes being caught naked by his pet cat; recognizing that he has been seen, he becomes naked – he has become aware of himself as something that is perceived. Animals in film similarly provide audience members and human characters with a point of self-realization.

Animal companion films are themselves a variant of the coming-of-age story. Travis, Grace, Sonora, Jesse, and Amy are all children on the threshold of adolescence, their companionship with an animal “other” helping each child self-actualize.

Due to animals' important function in defining the human, Berger in *Why Look at Animals* connected the retreat of animals from social life to the proliferation of animal replicas: “Zoos, realistic animal toys, and the widespread commercial diffusion of animal imagery, all began as animals started to be withdrawn from daily life” (Berger, 2009, p.26).

As animals disappear from our social spheres, they are being replaced with the animal image. *Blade Runner* (1982) follows this trend to its conclusion as the future world of the film is one in which all biological life on earth, outside of humans, is now extinct. The loss of animals has necessitated the manufacture of animal replicants. Rather than disappear, animals have been replaced with technological copies.

The electric animals of *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Blade Runner 2049* (2017), much like the replicants, are indistinguishable from their biological counterparts, as Deckard (Harrison Ford) has to ask Racheal (Sean Young) if the owl in Tyrrell's office is real or fake.

The institutions within the *Blade Runner* (1982) universe position their cyborgs as belonging strictly in the realm of the non-human, but for Donna Haraway, the cyborg is a boundary transcending being (Haraway, 2009). A product of biological engineering, the cyborg is organic, the replicants of *Blade Runner* (1982) bleed, they are born, and they die. Manufactured in labs piecemeal across the globe, they are also mechanical. The cyborg's power as a symbolic figure rests in its duality— that it is both biological and mechanical while simultaneously being neither.

Animals as a motif are connected to replicants throughout the film; the Voight-Kampff test questions heavily feature animals. A mechanical owl, first mistaken for the real thing, ushers Racheal into the film, foreshadowing her mechanic nature. Zhora (Joanna Cassidy) is also given an animal companion in the form of a mechanical snake. Even the sequel film *Blade Runner 2049* (2017) maintains this motif, with the primary clue of the missing replicant-born child being a wooden toy horse. This connection also reinforces the cyborg as a boundary transcending figure, tied to the human and the animal and the mechanical.

The nature of Haraway's cyborg is best explored in the question of Deckard – is he a replicant? The question is raised in the director's cut with the inclusion of a dream sequence where Deckard dreams of a unicorn. Deckard's dream is not only interesting in its connection to the animal, but in that it appears to be known. Fellow blade runner Gaff, who has created multiple origami animals throughout the film, folds a unicorn figure which he leaves outside of Deckard's apartment. Not only is this evidence of his having been there, but it is also evidence that Gaff is aware of Deckard's dream, a dream which he has not divulged with anyone. The replicant Racheal, who does not know she is a replicant, was given fake memories; that Deckard's unconscious thoughts are known suggests that perhaps this dream is also the result of an implanted memory.

It is a question that is not definitively answered. Schrödinger's replicants — so long as the question remains unanswered — Deckard is both replicant and human. Deckard is a boundary transcending figure, representing the porous nature of boundaries -- that these binaries are wholly manufactured. If the boundary between human and machine can so easily be dissolved, then what of that between the human and the animal, the human and the natural?

In *Virtual Menageries*, Jody Berland explores the continued popularity of animals, from menageries communicating the power of empires to cat memes used to communicate our emotions to our online followers (Berland, 2019). On coins, clothing logos, viral videos, and of course, in our movies, animals act as an essential medium of communication.

Chapter 2: Technique

A film is much more than its script. As a visual medium, much of film's content is conveyed through visuals. This chapter will be focusing on the technical aspects of the filmography. In identifying trends within the implementation of mis-en-scene, cinematography, and editing, this chapter will define and outline some elements of filmography, and specifically slant towards an ecological style of filmmaking.

1.Mis-en scene

The mis-en-scene comprises “all of the elements placed in front of the camera to be photographed: the setting and props, lighting, costumes and makeup, and figure behaviour” (Bordwell et al., 2016, G-4). While all these are employed in the representation of nature on film, for the purposes of this review we will be focusing on those which are not only salient, but which also feature in multiple films throughout the study's filmography.

1.2 Setting

The mis-en-scene is concerned with controlling the physical environment in front of the camera, and the studio provides filmmakers with extensive control over every aspect of this space. Despite the many benefits of shooting on a soundstage or studio backlot, sometimes filmmakers will choose to shoot somewhere else, or on location. *Hollywood on Location* identifies four considerations when deciding to shoot on location: economics, technology, aesthetics, and logistics (Gleich et al. 2019, p. 5).

Concerning the wildlife film, the strongest consideration is that of aesthetics, or more narrowly authenticity. The phrase “shot on location”, as pointed out by Gleich et al. has and continues to draw the conversation from the methods used to capture a space on camera to the place itself, as recognizable places have cultural connotations which are brought into the film space (Gleich et al. 2019).

While the idea that location shoots are more authentic and devoid of manipulation prevails, and adds to the aesthetic quality of such shoots, it is not in fact filming reality, as location shoots are just as subject to manipulation as studio sets. Cooper and Schoedsack, the directors of *Chang* (1927) are known to have constructed enclosures for the animal subjects of their documentaries within the natural habitat, made large enough so as to not impede authentic movement or behaviours, but small enough so as to take action shots with relative ease (Bouse, 2000). Such enclosures could be argued to be a form of open-air set. Being shot on location aids in the perception of authenticity, that what is on screen is appearing in a natural, unaltered state.

The supposed authenticity of location shooting is also a standard of the realism aesthetic. Style is not the only benefit to the realist director however, as the distance from the studio provides realist directors freedom from studio guidance; a freedom credited for the fruition of Italian neo-realism and the French new wave cinematic movements (Gleich et al. 2019). The practice is also believed to bring a “locative realism”, as every location comes with its own cultural and historical connotation attached to it, that when on film, becomes a part of the feature (Gleich et al. 2019).

Based on the Bengali renaissance novels *Pather Panchali* and *Aparajito* by Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay, Satyajit Ray’s *Apu Trilogy* uses location not only for its aesthetic beauty but as a means of saturating the films with the same culture that is present in the books. While the films tell a universal story, a coming-of-age narrative, the setting tells a local story, of a boy who comes from a real and specific place – rural Bengal.

Abbas Kiarostami’s *Koker’s Trilogy* takes a more unique approach to location shooting. While the story begins fairly typically, with the Koker having been scouted as the location for the first film, *Where is the Friends House?* (1987) specifically for its anonymity, to be a blank slate (Cheshire, 2019). Kiarostami’s continual return to the site created the locative realism that locations such as New York are selected for. The first film put Koker on the map, a fact the subsequent films play with within their narratives. Pulling back the curtain on the filmmaking process, the trilogy reveals the artifice involved in even the most “real” filmmaking, as we watch casting directors scout out extras, and the use of flats to bounce light onto the actors.

Shooting on location, film crews not only take pictures but leave their own imprint on the location. A filming truth that again Kiarostami engages with in the Koker trilogy. During production of *Where is the Friends House?* (1987) a zig zag path was constructed on a hillside. *And Life Goes On* (1992) and *Through*

the Olive Trees (1994) has Kiarstami and the audience return to that path, which remains as a relic from that first film.

The West

Every film, every scene, is comprised of or comprises, a set. Reviewing the study's filmography, however, there are repeated sets. The themes we can see represented by these sets are also repeated.

A staple of the Western and the home of Hollywood itself, the American West has been a long-time source of inspiration for American cinema. Appearing in eleven of the films I analyze (9, if you do not include the Portland Oregon setting of *Free Willy* (1993), or the Texas setting of *The Wind* (1928) as "west"), the American west is a recurring setting throughout the filmography.

One of the reasons for this is, of course practical. Hollywood's location makes California an easily accessible locale for film crews. A second reason is the location's history. The cultivation of the west, from desert to bustling metropolis is a source of inspiration for writers, and the result of years of environmental degradation. From the hydraulic mining depicted in *Pale Rider* (1985), the role of irrigation and farming in the plots of *Grapes of Wrath* (1940) and *Chinatown* (1974), or the use of the desert as the site of nuclear testing and the city lit up with nuclear energy, the repercussions of which are explored in *THEM!* (1954) and *The China Syndrome* (1979).

Finally, as a location, the west contributes its own cultural connotations to the films. L.A. as a city notorious for its high crime rate contributes to the noir aesthetic of *Chinatown* (1974), *Blade Runner* (1982), and *Blade Runner 2049* (2017). From a post-colonial lens, the west symbolically represents the concept of the frontier and Turner's frontier theory, implicating America's colonial history.

We see characters head west, as this is the direction of new beginnings in America, as we see the Joad's in *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) pack up their car to do just that. Frontier theory sees wilderness as wasted land that needs to be cultivated and made productive. Moving west, Letty (Lillian Gish) encounters an unsettled wilderness which she must confront and conquer in *The Wind* (1928). *War of the Worlds* (1954) and *Blade Runner* (1982) directly implicate colonialism within the film's text, and both locate their films at the boundary of American west ward expansion – California.

Traditionally, the symbolism of the cardinal directions places the east, the direction of the sunrise as the direction of new beginnings, awakenings, ascension, and the west as the east's opposite (Lynley, 2021). The

uniquely American symbolism of the west is tied to America's history of westward expansion and manifest destiny - the west becoming the direction of American destiny and the frontier a land of opportunity and freedom.

Despite being west of the California coast, Japan, rather than being the far west is instead the far east. The western boundary ends at the American coastline.

1.3 Lighting

Lighting is paramount to filmmaking. In capturing an image a camera is really making a record of the light in that moment, hence Nadia Bozak's labelling of cinema as "fossilized sunlight" (Bozak, 2011).

When discussing a film's lighting this is not a question of illumination (although anyone who has struggled to parse out what is even happening knows this is important as well), but a question of composition. What part of the frame is highlighted and what is in shadow; the light's quality (how intense or soft the light is); its direction (is the light coming from behind the subject? In front?); its source (where the light appears to be coming from in the frame, not all of the lights used by the filmmakers); the tone, and the colour.

Filming nature, the set acts as its own light source, or it must appear to be. This dictates the source, e.g. the sun during the day and the moon at night. Most of the lighting decisions when shooting outdoors, or what is intended to appear outdoors, are then a choice of what time to shoot, as it is the time of day, or more accurately where the sun sits in the sky, which will dictate the quality, direction, and colour of the light.

Natural lighting is not limited to day and night but subdivided into transitional periods as the sun rises, crosses the sky and sets. "Golden hour", which describes the period just after sunrise and before sunset, is when the sun is 6 degrees above to 4 degrees below the horizon (Marquès, n.d.). During golden hour the quality of light, while being bright, is softer than pure daylight resulting in no harsh shadows, and with a warmer colouring than daylight's white. Blue hour is the period shortly before sunrise and after sunset, when the sun is between 4 and 6 degrees below the horizon (Marquès, n.d.). The quality of the light is similarly soft, but rather than the golden colouring of golden hour blue hour has a cooler tone. Twilight, which is sometimes subdivided into three subsections, describes the period when the sun is 6 to 18 degrees below the horizon (Marquès, n.d.). The lowest quality, this soft light is blue in colour. The graphic in (see Figure 2) visualizes this relationship clearly.

Daytime lighting, as previously mentioned is high in quality and white in colour, in fact 19th century filmmaking was dependent on the sun as the only light source powerful enough (Gleich et al. 2019, p.7). For on location and outdoor shooting, daytime still provides the most logistically appropriate time to film, weather permitting.

A bright sun in a cloudless sky negates the need to have heavy additional light sources, which also requires less crew — this is of great benefit to genres such as wildlife documentary and realism which may not have the same access to resources, and aesthetically demand that as little intervention (at least observable intervention) take place as possible.

Excluding activities that can only be observed undercover by night, nature documentaries heavily favour the daytime activities of wildlife to those of the night; as can be seen in *Chang* (1927), *In Beaver Valley* (1950), and *A Life On Our Planet* (2020). While this works logistically, the overhead sun providing a clear image where everything in frame is illuminated, this also paints a lopsided view of nature as active during the day and at rest at night. In truth ecosystems have activity at all times of day.

Not only is nature put on the human 8-hour workday, but the time in which animals are active is moralized. In *Chang* (1927) (we see the family asleep for the night; it is the dangerous cats of the jungle awake and prowling about which send the family out of the homestead and into the night. *In Beaver Valley* (1950) also has the hard-working beavers tuck in for the night, it is only the troublesome animals that are out at night.

The realism films in our filmography, the Apu Trilogy and the Koker Trilogy also show a preference for daylight filming. The nighttime scene in *Where is the Friends House?* (1987) when Ahmed (Ahmed Ahmed Poor) decides to do Mohammed (Babek Ahmed Poor) homework, and the nighttime scenes throughout the Apu Trilogy, take place indoors or in the city. The night, lit by electric light (or candle), is the realm of the human, or more accurately civilization. Nature, ruled by the sun, is restricted to daylight hours; the city never sleeps.

For narrative films, which have more freedom aesthetically to interfere with the lighting, the bright light of day provides a proper atmosphere for Edenic nature. The final sequence of *Walkabout* (1971) sees the girl (Jenny Agutter) years after returning to civilization, living in an apartment identical to her parents with a husband of her own. This domestic scene is intercut with shots of the girl still in the outback, perhaps a flashback or maybe a dream, the shots of the girl swimming in the natural spring she, her brother (Luc

Roeg), and the Aboriginal boy (David Gulpilil) had visited earlier in the film, occur under a brightly shining sun with the water glittering beneath its rays – a stark contrast to the apartments harsh fluorescent light.

Midsommar (2019) and *Wicker Man* (1973), initially present themselves as being of an Edenic nature, and are consequently brightly lit – it is when the narrative turns, so too does the lighting. In *Midsommar* (2019), the night that Josh (William Jackson Harper) and Mark (Will Poulter) go missing sees the biggest shift in lighting as this scene is filmed during blue hour- this transition in the narrative is represented with the transition in light, from the pure white light of day to a cool blue. In *Wicker Man* (1973), the final ceremony on the cliff sees the sky go grey/cloudy, this darker hue nature's response to the dark truth that Officer Howie had been tricked onto Summers Isle.

Contrast this to the use of night. Appearing much less often, partially due to the logistics of filming under such conditions, the cool, dark blue tones of night are largely reserved for representing the darker side of nature – the godless wilderness the binary to the daytime garden.

The Australian horror film *Long Weekend* (1978) features many key plot points, people becoming lost on the way to the camp site, strange howling noises coming from ocean, and (husband name) (actor) shooting his wife Marcia (Briony Behets) with a cross bow, all occur at night. The titular orca of *Orca* (1977) conducts his attack on the shoreside town and murder of Captain Nolan (Richard Harris) wife under cover of darkness.

Nighttime lighting is largely reserved to the horror films or as a means of adding mood to the more sinister plot points in the other films. *Free Willy* (1993) and *Old Yeller* (1957) two family features from the filmography offer clear examples of this, as the attack on Willy's tank, and the fight between Yeller and a wolf which results in Yeller's contraction of rabies are both nighttime events.

While light is used to reveal too much light conceals, as overexposure, lens flares, and glares compromise the details the camera can capture. A glare occurs when light is refracted through the camera's lens and is registered by the film or digital sensor as an excess of light. Takes with glares are often implemented to suggest heat -- perhaps paired with some humming cicadas. The occurrence of a glare renders the invisible, the heat and the camera -- as it implicates the presence of a lens for the light to refract through – visible (Watkins, 2010).

Walkabout (1971) makes heavy use of glares, particularly in the first act. During the first act, when the siblings are disoriented, lost, and abandoned in the outback, glares signify the heat and are used to obscure; as for the siblings and the viewer, the surroundings are unclear. The inability to see imparts a sense of unease, the disturbance within the footage representing a disturbance within the narrative (Watkins, 2010).

1.4 Space

Mise-en-scene, to repeat myself, is concerned with what goes on in front of the camera. Space then, is concerned with where the set dressing, actors, and the rest are staged in relation to each other. Is the space in front of the camera cluttered with design elements and actors or is the frame filled with empty space?

Through this filmography scenes which take place in nature make heavy use of wide-open space. The sweeping vistas in films such as *Pale Rider* (1985), *The Horse Whisperer* (1998), and *Avatar* (2009) (see Appendix A) are full of tiny figures surrounded by space. Space in these shots is meant to convey nature as freeing. Wide open spaces of the natural world are often made all the wider by being juxtaposed with the confined spaces of civilization. Compare Willy's tank to the open ocean, *Walkabouts* (1971) cityscape to the outback, or the cluttered garbage patch earth versus open space *Wall-E* (2008).

Of course, there are exceptions to every rule and not every film has equated nature to wide open space. The exceptions, however, also did not frame nature in a good light. Natural horror films instead made use of cluttered space, as the human actors were crowded by natural affects. The screen of *Long Weekend* (1978) is cluttered with trees, between the branches of which our protagonist become lost. In *Wicker Man* (1973) and *Midsommar* (2019), where what is believed to be a good nature is revealed to be evil, nature is presented as open spaces of fields and meadows, until the respective climaxes. Sergeant Howie (Edward Woodward) is placed within a giant wicker man bursting with animal sacrifices and Dani (Florence Pugh) is sheathed in flowers, consuming her (see Appendix B). The frame overwhelms the human actors with wilderness, as opposed to the freedom of open nature.

1.5 Time

Film is not only a visual medium but a temporal one. The camera not only controls what we see but for how long we see it. The longer a shot is on screen, the more time the audience has to absorb the visual information being presented to them.

Shots meant to broadcast the landscape are often longer and slower, so the audience has time to take in the natural beauty. These longer takes also allow the film to have a more comfortable pace, when compared to the hustle and bustle of the city and shorter takes.

2.Cinematography

While mise-en-scene describes the manipulation of the space in front of the camera, cinematography describes what is happening inside the camera. This includes how the camera is capturing and recording information, and how that film stock or data is treated in post-production.

2.2 Framing

The concept of framing is very familiar to audiences and has already been invoked in describing the various elements of filmmaking in this chapter. For the sake of clarity, framing is the discussion of the edges of the film, how these boundaries are used to select and compose what will be visible on screen, and how these boundaries are set.

The setting of this boundary, the aspect ratio, is the ratio of frame width to frame height. Earlier films, as can be seen in *The Wind* (1928), had a much squarer frame than modern audiences are used to, with the films of the 1920's having a nearly one-to-one aspect ratio, set at 1.17:1 (Bordwell et al., 2016). Aspect ratios have only gotten wider, with the 1930s implementing the 'academy ratio' at 1.37:1, and then being replaced with the new norm of 1.85:1 by the mid 1950s (Bordwell et al., 2016).

Wider frames privilege landscapes over the human form – there is going to be a lot of empty space around your actor if you want their full body in frame. That the human world of films is framed in landscape rather than portrait is of note, film very easily could have remained square. In fact, new media video media TikTok has developed to be in portrait (although this caters to viewing on a smart phone – however the ability to record in landscape and rotate the screen for viewing does exist and if the content being filmed demands it, it could have also been adopted). Instead, aspect ratios grew wider: this showcasing of the environment is intentional.

It is not so much that the American west was made for the silver screen then, as the screen was adapted to better film the desert horizon.

2.3 Special effects

Special effects are the illusions used to simulate events within a film story. These are subdivided into mechanical effects, those which occurred during shooting, and visual or optical effects, which are photographic manipulations added to the footage in post-production.

Much of filming is waiting for the weather, but when the weather cannot be counted on, effects can step in to fill in the role. Weather events feature heavily throughout this filmography, either as narrative points or to create ambience and mood; weather is a crucial cinematic tool.

In her analysis of the use of snow in melodrama, Inga Pollmann identified three functions of snow; (1) narratively, to establish the setting or the plot; (2) affectively, to create mood or atmosphere; and (3) to inscribe technical mediation into the film (Pollmann, 2010). While the former points were explored in the previous chapter, we will be exploring that final point now. Inscribing technical mediation into a film merely means that snow points to itself as a special affect. Audiences become aware that what they are watching is staged.

Now, there is no reason that film snow must be fake. *Let the Right One In* (2008) and *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001) used in their filming locations naturally occurring snow well enough. However, the conditions which favour snow are rarely favourable for filming. Snow requires low temperatures which are difficult to film in. Not only is the cold uncomfortable for the crew but for the cameras and other equipment as well. All of which excludes the logistics of trying to schedule a shot around the narrow seasonal window when snow fall can be expected. And of course, expected does not mean guaranteed. A crew can come out wearing the appropriate clothing, with the appropriate weather resistant gear, and it does not snow. Even if it does snow, the crew has no means of controlling the quality of the snow. There is no way to control naturally falling snows density or weight' will it fall soft and slow or hard and fast?

The quality of the snow is detrimental to the first two points of snow's function- a light snow fall will not fulfill the narrative requirement of a blizzard, and sleet will not provide a romantic affect to your winter romance film.

For these purposes snow, particularly falling snow is often staged, and even when it is not it is mistaken to be – real snow could not be so perfect. Tim Burton addresses this artificiality in *Edward Scissorhands* (1990) as the snowfall in the famous “ice dance” scene is both literally and narratively fake.

Weather effects also have a starring role in *The Wind* (1928), where “movie magic” is able to render the invisible forces of nature seen right in front of our very eyes. A jet engine was used on set to create the giant gusts which are seen on camera by the waves of dust, rustling cloths, and actors struggling to move against the wind (Vaughan, 2019).

Within the narrative of film, weather effects are able to broadcast the wonder of nature; however, from an audience perspective they also proclaim the wonder of the filming apparatus. Viewers are not only in awe of what they are seeing, but curious as to how it was achieved.

As these weather effects get more intense, from daily weather occurrences to natural disasters, all the way to apocalyptic ruin, landscapes move from the sublime to spectacle.

Discussed in detail in the previous chapter, the sublime is a visual experience which inspires awe, and veneration, impressing upon the viewer a sense of grandeur and power; while spectacle is a visual display presented with the extent purpose of being seen and to be a pleasurable or exciting sight.

The technical mediation of snow, and similar effects, means that the audience is aware or suspects that they may be watching an effect, and thus the focus becomes on how that effect was achieved rather than any sense of awe that may have been achieved otherwise. Weather effects then are more about the experience of watching them on screen than what they are meant to represent.

Figures designed to inspire awe, such as *Kong* and *Godzilla* suffer a similar dilemma. Within the narrative they are sublime; but for the viewers they are spectacle, an effect put together by showman filmmakers for the viewing pleasure of an audience. This problem has only worsened as technology has progressed. Once bound by the material world, needing to go out and find or build something to shoot now filmmakers can create it themselves in digital space (Tuck, 2008).

CGI has become so prevalent within film that even supposedly live action films of the superhero genre are taking place within entirely fabricated landscapes. Creating non-existent locations is not new to film, however these landscapes previously had to be manufactured out of real places, or otherwise built. Now no physical element is necessary as these sets can be built from the ground up on a computer. Films such as *Avatar* (2009) and *Avengers Infinity War* (2018) and *End Game* (2019) have the actors film their roles in front of green screens, with the environment being added into the film in post-production.

While *Avatar*'s (2009) director James Cameron released the film with the intention of motivating audiences to protect the environment, the capabilities of CGI do not require the environment to be preserved in order for it to appear on screen.

2.4 Animation

If the medium is the message, then the decision to animate a story rather than to act it out in physical space, to use animation rather than acting, is highly motivated. Where the film camera captures movements acted out in physical space, animation creates the illusion of movement, enabling inanimate objects to come to life on the screen.

Cubitt gives the process a lot of attention in the third chapter of *Eco Media*, as informing themes and subjects common to the medium, namely the popularity of animals. As a process, Cubitt defines drawing as 'positively generative' (Cubitt, 2005, p.28). Unlike the comparative drawing of other species, such as a dog making a territorial map, human drawings, Cubitt posits, can be displaced— are displaced — as they are not bound to the context of a physical space (Cubitt, 2005, p.28-29). The animator can create new beings. This act of creation is at once an act of possession, as the artist through movement brings her drawings 'to life', and embodiment. Building on McLuhan's theory of media, drawing is a visible representation, a remnant, of the gesture; the marking on the page an extension of the pencil which itself is an extension of the hand (McLuhan, 2001). Haptic, as well as optic, the drawing is an extension of the artist, a part of her.

In the previous chapter, we explored the themes of agency as opposed to objectification of nature. The very form of animation itself adds a meta-narrative to this discussion. As Cubitt notes, animating, drawing, as an act, allows the artist to both possess the drawn object, and to identify with it (Cubitt, 2005). Every figure within an animated feature is an object, a drawing, and yet through movement the artist is able to take on the perspective of the drawn character, as well as to supply that character with agency.

Miyazaki was noted in the previous chapter as imbuing his nonhuman characters and environments with agency following in the philosophy of deep ecology. *Pocahontas* (1995) pays service to the idea of every "rock, and tree, and creature" having a spirit in the song *Colours of the Wind*, providing trees a voice and character with Grandmother Willow (Linda Hunt).

However, where the hand drawn feature is a result of the gesture, CGI is the product of technology, of numbers and processes. In Miyazaki's *Princess Mononoke* (1997), one of the themes is of the interplay

between technology and nature, and the depiction of this story explores this relationship as well. The film begins with a boar spirit, having been shot with an iron ball, a symbol of technology, transforming into a demon. This transformation is depicted with the use of CGI, overlaid into this hand drawn film. The physical drawing has been similarly transformed by the implementation of technology, reworked by the computer image.

James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009) similarly has the biological sheathed in the technological, as the actors through use of motion capture are represented on screen through CGI embodiments; the production a facsimile of the plot wherein humans animate the bodies of alien others. While Sully sees the world of Pandora as a Naturalistic escape from the human world, his escape and the escapism of the audience is only possible through technology, nature's supposed opposite.

CGI's connection to the realm of the technological is further supported by *Wall-E* (2008). As the only completely computer animated film within the filmography, the film bills a machine in the role of the typically biological protagonist.

3.Editing

Bordwell gives editing two definitions in *Film Art* (2016). During the filmmaking process, editing is "the task of selecting and joining camera takes" (Bordwell et al., 2016, G-2). When studying a completed film, editing is "the set of techniques that governs the relations among shots" (Bordwell et al., 2016, G-2).

When writing, much of the meaning of a word is determined by the words which surround it, as it is with the shots of a film. The images that proceed and follow a single shot provide the context necessary to understand the images intended connotation. This phenomenon has its own bit of jargon, the Kuleshov Effect, as it was most famously explored by Lev Vladimirovich Kuleshov.

"The content of the shot in itself is not so important as is the joining of two shots of different content and the method of their connection and their alteration" (Levaco, 1974, p.47).

While Kuleshov's own explorations of editing focused on the montage, filmmakers hoping to tell stories developed their editing techniques based on narrative continuity, thus leading to the development of the widely popular *continuity editing* (Bordwell et al, 2016). This style of editing intends to guide viewers through the story, with every shot progressing the narrative in some manner.

Continuity editing is the predominate approach taken within popular film and can be observed throughout this entire filmography, with the few exceptions that prove the rule. This leads me to question if continuity editing is itself anthropocentric, as the guiding principle from shot to shot is to center the narrative, which is a human enterprise – and the human actors as the focus of the shot. Principles such as the 180-degree rule are defined by the actors in a scene, with the axis of action drawn between them. It is the human actors who determine the framing, the continuity of motion, and the framing of the edit.

Even when humans are entirely absent from a film, these same principles govern the editing of wildlife. Continuity editing demands a narrative to be constructed of the footage. Despite nature not following a narrative arc, *Chang* (1927), *In Beaver Valley* (1950), and *David Attenborough: A Life on Our Planet* (2020), all follow a narrative arc. *Chang* (1927) follows the daily activities of a Thai family. *In Beaver Valley* (1950) is also centered on the family, following a year in the life of a family of beavers. And *A Life on Planet Earth* (2020) catalogues David Attenborough's career as a wildlife filmmaker.

Continuity editing demands that every shot which makes it into the final picture advances the story of the film – motion picture must always be moving. There is never a dull moment in the jungles of Thailand or beaver valley, all of the quiet moments are left on the cutting room floor in favour of the action sequences. This eliminates all of the empty footage, all of the patience needed when waiting to cross paths with wildlife, and the spontaneity of a wildlife encounter. We know something is coming, it is already there (Armbruster, 1998).

Continuity editing is not inherent to editing, but merely a style. Editing in realism films, as represented by the Apu and Koker Trilogies, favours longer, slower shots, with edits less motivated by the plot than by other factors, such as the flow of a conversation or the surrounding environment.

While the melodramatic mode favours continuity editing, the mode does not require it. The pace of *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001) as set by the editing is an oft noted aspect of the film. Mark Dujsik has called the film “under edited”, with the film's three hour run time and continued use of long takes in the height of the action, when conventional continuity editing would raise the editing tempo to match the action (Evans, 2010; Dujsik, 2002).

If we are editing to the story, Mark Dujsik has a solid argument; however the edits are not determined by the tempo of the story, but by the tempo of the environment; the pace of which is not dictated by such an individual story. That the story is secondary to the landscape it is acted upon is unusual, but it allows for

the story to be placed within perspective; Atanarjuat's epic is just a moment, an imprint on the snow, while the land is enduring.

Watkins, in her review of Roeg's *Walkabout* (1971), uses "elliptical editing" to describe the film's unique editing style. The style is defined by the heavy use of optical effects and blatant edits to draw attention to the act of editing itself.

"series of optical effects intersperse anticipated shot transitions. Such effects include the recurrence of still-images, extended dissolves and double-takes in which a section of a shot detailing a movement or gesture is frozen and immediately repeated. This process draws attention to the material and temporality of the film." (Watkins, 2010, p.109).

This style of editing draws attention to the artifice of film, that this is a manufactured view of nature. *Walkabout* (1971) also, however, gives nature an attentive eye. During the first act of the film, when the sister (Jenny Agutter) and brother (Luc Roeg) characters are alone in the outback, the editing often cuts to medium-close to close up shots of flora and fauna, with the tight framing of these shots making it difficult to place these animals in relation to our characters.

The Kuleshov effect would suggest that these animals are reacting to our protagonist, yet they are absent from the wider shots and do not interact with our protagonists. An earlier shot of a snake in medium-close up is not foreshadowing a snake bite to come; these animals exist independent of the narrative and of our human protagonist.

3.2 Animal eye motif

Bordwell defines a motif as "an element in a film that is repeated in a significant way" (Bordwell et al., 2016, G-4). Shots of the animal eye are not only repeated in films but can be observed across this project's filmography. The animal eye motif is a familiar shot, a close-up of an animal eye, most often the singular, gazing directly into the camera. Any film where an animal plays a significant role features at least one instance of this type of shot.

In *Animals in Film* Burt Foster's use of this shot as transforming the animal eye into a simile of the camera, a "non-human recording mechanism" (Burt, 2002, p.54). The gaze, as it functions in film, privileges the eye, as the primary power relationship within film is that of the observer and the observed. To be looked upon is to be an object, but to look is to be the subject; to be an individual.

The shot itself only accomplishes so much however, it is how these shots are organized by the editing, the shots preceding and following the look of the animal eye, which gives the look meaning. Bouse sees the intent of such shots, close up of animal eyes and face, as intending to provide psychological insight into the animal (Bouse, 2003). Based on the same principles which govern the close-up of human actors, the face and particularly the eyes, are believed to reveal the internal worlds of those they belong to. In the nature film, this is meant to provide supposed insight into the animals' psychological state; what is it that the beavers in *In Beaver Valley* (1950), are feeling as they lug logs for their new dam.

Within the sentimental animal film, such as horse girl films, *The Horse Whisperer* (1998) and *Wild Hearts Can't be Broken* (1991) and the animal companion films *Old Yeller* (1957), *Free Willy* (1993), and *Fly Away Home* (1997), the animal eye motif is also seen as a means of communication between the human and non-human actors.

Cinema is a visual language, and it is through the eye that the animal and the human are able to transcend the communications gap between species. *The Horse Whisperer* (1998) begins with Grace (Scarlet Johansson) and her horse Pilgrim going for a morning ride. The accident therein will be the ultimate test of their relationship. Before all this however, the two share a moment, establishing the bond between horse and girl. Over a close-up of Pilgrim's eye Grace asks, "*What are you thinking?*" Pilgrim's gaze is intended to provide this insight. For the audience however, we cannot know, will not know, until the next shot, until we see Grace's answer to this look. We can only guess what Pilgrim is thinking, but Grace knows. Just by a look.

Animal horror utilizes the eye to the opposite effect. The look does not bridge the gap between the human and animal other but accentuates it. We are being observed by an individual, with their own inner world and motivations, but ones we will never understand.

In *Orca* (1977) Captain Nolan (Richard Harris) has incurred the wrath of a male orca after accidentally killing his companion, a female orca pregnant with his child. In an attempt to appeal to the orca's humanity, Nolan plans on meeting him face to face, eye to eye.

"So I got to thinking and I thought, well if what— if what you say is right. That whales can communicate. Then I thought I'd look at him. Right in the eye. And I'd tell him the killing of his

wife and his child was a terrible accident. That I didn't mean it. I didn't mean it. I'd tell him that I was sorry. I hope he'd forgive me." - Captain Nolan, *Orca* (1977)

In an inversion of the familiar use of the trope the animal gaze does not bond the two but is a fruitless appeal. Perhaps the message did not get across, or perhaps the titular orca understood it all and simply did not care. The orca does not absolve Nolan of his sins. The recognition of an animal companion is a look of acceptance and understanding, of an animal foe it is discerning and unsympathetic.

The use of the animal gaze shot provides the audience with an awareness of the animal point of view - that these animals *see*. Historically, art and religion look through the animal gaze as a means of seeing the truth, with animals often acting as messengers or teachers (Perlo, 2003). See animals take this role in *Whale Rider*, as the pod of whales, in partnership with Paika, show the community the way forward.

"Myth and art give emphasis principally to ... sameness; in contrast, the hunt places emphasis on otherness" (Guenther, 1997:193; Perlo, 2003). In film, we see the two merge.

When focused on animal subjects, the camera has often been likened to a gun and the process of filming wildlife to hunting. One of the earliest wildlife photography guides directly made this comparison; *How to Hunt with the Camera* (1926). The thrill of the chase, which fuels the pleasure of the hunt, is the same for the nature photographer – stalking your subject with tracking shots and setting up bait and blinds to attract potential camera subjects like a hunter's snare (Dunaway, 2000).

Chapter 3 Audience

The release of Roland Emmerich's *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) was a bona fide media event — climate scientists, deniers, and politicians, all taking their slice of publicity, providing climate change a level of media attention previously unseen (Lowe et al., 2006; Nisbet, 2004; Svoboda, 2016).

The frenzy surrounding *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) displayed film's potential as a talking point to open the floor on discussions surrounding climate change and environmental issues. These conversations were not just about how the environment was (or would be) portrayed by the film but what bearing this portrayal had on the current state of the natural world.

The introduction of this paper discussed ecocriticism's activist ambitions. These environmental analyses are in the hopes of understanding our relationship with nature and using that understanding to improve that relationship. The media frenzy surrounding *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) proves film's potential as an event and conversation piece.

The difference between film criticism and film studies is more than semantics. While the film scholar writing in film studies is writing for an audience of fellow scholars seeking to further the discourse of film scholarship, the film critic is writing to the public. Film critics are trying to engage the public, inviting them into film discourse (and flim) (McWhirter, 2016).

As with most things, the Internet has been the cause of a significant shift in the landscape of film criticism. A profession that was ruled by those who could make it to print, the digital age allows anyone with the gall

to publish their work play the critic's role. The line between consumer and creator online is blurred, Internet users often fulfilling both roles, and the amateur critic is just such an example.

With the advent of the Internet, the critics' duty to engage the public, indeed what it means to engage with media, has evolved dramatically. While a consensus has not been reached on a definition of engagement, there is a level of agreement that it involves the active participation of the audience member beyond merely seeing the content, whether that be in the form of likes, dislikes, comments, links, or posting on personal social media (Napoli, 2011, p96-99). Engaging with media has evolved from audience attention to audience participation.

It is common to see the Internet discussed as a public sphere or possessing the opportunity to act as such. However, anyone who has used the Internet would agree that it has become too large a space to be discussed in the singular. Papacharissi defines the public space of the Internet not as one sphere but a collection of spheres, with each blog, webpage, and creator, developing a sphere around their content (McWhirter, 2016; Papacharissi, 2002, p.22). Film criticism posted online, therefore, poses the ability to create public spheres within cyberspace.

While the Internet continues to be seen as the land of opportunity — the new frontier — many traditional critics are not interested in the change the move into cyberspace presents. In his research into film criticism in digital spaces, McWhirter notes that many critics seek to maintain more traditional critic/audience hierarchies. Those working out of more traditional platforms such as print media are reluctant to engage with audience members over social media (McWhirter, 2016; Lasorsa et al., 2012). However, while statistically insignificant, there is two-way communication between critics and audiences on digital media (McWhirter, 2016, p.165).

Five years is a long time on the Internet, and this assessment may already be out of date. Artist and audience interactions will only expand online, especially as online buzz continues to be a valuable currency for film advertising and success (Roy & Zeng, 2014).

With this study, I did not just want to look at movies from an ecocritical perspective but also open that perspective to the larger public. To create a dialogue with my research, I decided to create a website and publish my materials online to foster a dialogue within the public sphere of the Internet.

1.Methods

For this project, I created a website to host my film critiques using Squarespace, a software service that allows users to build and host their websites.

The design and management of the website were planned using Content Rules as a guide (Handley & Chapman, 2010). Green Tinted Lenses (which can be found using the link <https://www.greentintedlenses.com/>) layout was organized with a homepage that included the site's statement of purpose and links to the most recent articles and podcast episodes (see Appendix C). Separate pages on the website were dedicated to the blog post articles, podcast episodes, and an about page (see Appendix C). Articles and podcast episodes were posted regularly within a six-month window, from November to April with articles posted weekly and podcast episodes bi-weekly. Video reviews were also planned in the initial study plan, however this medium of review was scrapped due to time constraints.

As the websites were intended for a general audience, the writing of the blog posts attempted to blend ecocritical discourse and theory with a more accessible writing style. Critics engage readers by including subjectivity as part of their evaluations (McWhirter, 2016; McDonald 2007) and through the use of accessible language and distinctive prose (McWhirter, 2016; Clayton & Klevan, 2011).

Blog post-production began with a screening of the film, followed by research into the current ecocritical discourse of the film, if any, and research into relevant theory. All of which was then synthesized into a final review with a typical length of 1000-1500 words.

Podcast production began much like the blog production, with a screening of the films discussed, research, and writing. However, rather than writing a script and recording myself reading it, the podcast instead used an outline to guide the discussion. The podcasts were formatted as a conversation between myself, the host, and a guest. The conversation were to be basically comparing how two films tackle a similar topic or themes surrounding the environment.

This format was decided upon for several reasons; firstly, to avoid the podcast devolving into me simply reading my written reviews. Secondly, to make the content more sonically interesting, with more than one voice. Finally, the website intended to engage non-ecocritics in the ecocritical review of film. The podcast then takes on a similar mission, as my guests, while having various overlapping interests, are not film ecocritics and are engaging with film from a new perspective (see Appendix D).

Covid introduced a unique challenge to recording, as on-campus facilities and the ability to meet with guests in person, were severely limited. Recording was done at my apartment, using Blue's Snowball model

microphone when possible; otherwise, my guest and I would meet over Zoom and record audio separately, with the two audio tracts combined in the edit. Editing was done using Garage Band to combine the audio tracks, cut out long pauses and redundancies, such as repeating points, and the use of filler words such as “like” and “yeah” – although those still do turn up a lot.

Once each episode is recorded and edited, they were uploaded onto Simplecast (as a podcast cannot be directly uploaded onto directories such as Spotify and require an RSS) and then embedded and published on Green Tinted lenses (my web site).

Each posting included a comment section where readers and listeners could express their thoughts on the review topics. The inclusion of a chat/comment section allows users to leave qualitative feedback. These comments will act as feedback and enable a community of viewers to develop as users can interact with each other, and myself, through these channels, forming a larger conversation around the topics/discussion introduced in the original media.

Squarespace and Simplecast also collect analytics data, documenting the traffic the site and each post received and simple demographic statistics.

2.Results

This chapter began with an anecdote about *The Day After Tomorrow*, and much like the film, this project did not reach the heights it aspired to. The website and the accompanying Facebook page did receive modest traffic, but outside of having readers and listeners, they did not have active commentators.

Active viewer engagement on social media websites is notoriously low. Nelsons 90-9-1 rule designates 90 percent of Internet users a “lurkers” who do not engage with content online, 9 percent as offering only the most basic comments, and 1 percent who are producing most of the content (McWhirter, 2016, p.155; Nielson, 2006). The 90-9-1 rule is reinforced by the Pareto Principle, which states that 80% of engagement comes from only 20% of the user base (Best & Neuhauser, 2006; Khan, 2017).

Most internet users are passive viewers; a blog post or podcast needs a lot of traffic to receive engagement. Future studies hoping to develop online communities need to develop a plan to foster and grow an audience for their content.

At the 1997 Economics of Digital Information conference, Michael H. Goldhaber described the Internet as running on an “attention economy” (Goldhaber, 1997). The Internet has grown considerably since 1997,

and the attention economy has created an Internet “environment in which digital products and services relentlessly compete to capture and exploit [users] attention” (Williams, 2018, p.33). Given the competitive landscape of the Internet, content creators need to advertise their work.

The need to advertise requires a dedicated social media plan, with posting on multiple platforms. A successful media campaign cannot just post the same announcements but also tailor these announcements to the social media platform — such as images and graphics for the image-based Instagram and short-form text for Twitter. Posts must also be targeted to a specific audience, those with intersecting interests in environment and film.

To meet this demand requires a great deal of work and time, which must be considered; this was under deliberated for this project, as producing the content itself took up most of the time, leaving little left for the promotion of said content. The website did have a dedicated Facebook page to promote the uploading of articles, but that is all. Facebook pages themselves are not advertised to other Facebook users but are found by searching for the page by name or related tags. In order to increase the outreach of this page, a project would need to have an advertising budget to pay to boost the page to other Facebook users.

Another means of raising engagement is to encourage engagement within the content itself. Closing articles and podcasts with a reminder to comment may inspire readers and listeners to engage. Asking direct questions of the audience within the content would act as a prompt and guide for what audience members could discuss. If invited to give an opinion more formally, audience members may be more likely to provide it.

Conclusion

Before the movies could talk, they spoke to the masses, captured the public imagination, and projected it onto the screen. Living in the "information age," popular media's role in public opinion cannot be understated. This study examined environmental representation within popular film to determine how the cinema engages with nature. Through this investigation, this study used film as a means of investigating cultural opinions towards nature. Given the current environmental situation, with climate change as one of the defining crises of our time, western culture needs to re-evaluate its relationship with the natural world. By recognizing our deep-seated perceptions of the natural world, we can change in art and in daily life.

The first chapter analyzed the overarching themes present throughout the filmography. Across these films, the influence of Christianity cannot be understated. One of the primary narratives present within environmental Hollywood films is the Edenic narrative, based upon the Bible's book of Genesis. Christian influence is also present in the frontier theory, providing the rationale of American colonialism — manifest destiny — with the added influence of American fundamentalism as apocalypse, as reimagined by premillennialist as The Rapture are primary influences in American use of apocalyptic imagery and themes.

The most significant deviation in these themes was not time as much as the approach, as films made outside of the Hollywood model — not belonging to first cinema — were the greatest cause of diversion. As defined by Solanas and Getino in *Toward a Third Cinema*, first cinema is part of, or follows, the Hollywood production model, supporting bourgeois ideology (Solanas & Getino, 1970). Second cinema represented European art films which existed outside of the Hollywood system but still represented the individual vision

of the auteur director, and third cinema as rejecting film as personal expression, using the medium instead to speak for the collective, as an art piece of revolutionary activism (Solanas & Getino, 1970). Fourth cinema, describing the adoption of film as a medium by Indigenous communities, has since also been added to this series of film movements by Barclay (2002).

These variations in nature's representation may result from two reasons: cultural, as the further along the line of cinema movements the film type moves, the further from the ideology of Hollywood; or stylistic, as the result of differing techniques. Does contrary ideology result in differing techniques, or do differing styles result in a different ideological reading: the chicken or the egg?

The second chapter explored the technical aspects of film, focusing on repeated elements that filmmakers used to represent the environment on camera. Film technology is balanced between responding to and documenting the natural world as it is and/or controlling the filming environment. Film cameras, when documenting images, are documenting light, leading to the philosophy of the camera as revealing the world as it is (Bozak, 2011). Alongside this philosophy, which can be seen in the stylings of documentary realism, the cinema is also about creating the world as the filmmaker wants it to be – a world which only exists within the camera – within the finished product of the coloured corrected, edited film.

In chapter 1, we discussed ecophobia as a way to read the text of film; in the art of filmmaking, we can see apply ecophobia as a meta-textual reading. Estok described ecophobia as arising from the human desire to control nature that our hatred of nature results from nature's agency (Estok, 2009). Filmmaking can be seen as an exercise of this control; the most foundational environmental elements such as light and sound are entirely manufactured – composed by human hands to meet the human expectation and image.

When choosing to focus the environment within the narrative, to feature nature as a character/force/theme within the story, a definite “natural style” of filmmaking is apparent. Elements such as shooting on location, spacious frames, longer shots, and slower edits define this "natural style."

These elements demonstrate a deviation from the Classical Hollywood style of editing and filmmaking as the focus is taken away from developing the story of human characters, and instead centering on the natural environment.

Currently, there is an informal approach to creating a more environmentally concise styled film. Recognition of this style means that directors can adapt this style to imbue their films with an environmental

message. *Blade Runner 2049* (2017) provides a ready example. The film has been recognized as having an "Anthropocene" style, despite the film text offering very little environmental messaging (Hamblin & O'Connell, 2020). The post-apocalyptic landscape acts as a backdrop to a human-focused story on what it means to be human, a question that included our relationship to the animal in the novel and the original film that is absent in this sequel.

Chapter 3 described the (attempted) public outreach component of the project, which sought to engage the public in ecocriticism by discussing these films. This was attempted by developing a website on which written reviews and podcast episodes were produced to gain an audience interested in the topic and engage said audience in discussion using the comment sections.

Overall, these efforts were unsuccessful as the website received modest traffic and no active engagement. Despite the poor outcome, I still believe that there is value in engaging the public in such discourse -- in using film as a vehicle to discuss and recognize our cultural relationship with nature.

Future researchers seeking to attract and engage readers/listeners/viewers need to dedicate the resources necessary to attract and build an audience outside of its content. Advertising and developing a social media presence are necessary for success in the overly saturated online environment. Researchers must be prepared for the added workload involved in creating and publishing regular social media posts on various platforms. Researchers may want to consider a dedicated PR member or team, as well as an advertising budget to boost ("pay to have your posts show up as sponsored content on non-followers timelines in order to gain more exposure" (Trull, 2018)) these posts.

Researchers should inspire audience members to engage with the media itself by asking direct questions or for opinions. Inviting the audience to enter the conversation may help them take that invitation, rather than have your reviews approached as a more traditional paper published reviews.

This study aimed to investigate how film represents the environment, with the idea that this informs and reflects the cultural attitude towards nature. Despite a growing environmental awareness within film, Hollywood productions have seen little change in how the environment is portrayed. Hollywood filmmakers looking to incorporate a more environmentally conscious ethos within their films should take inspiration not only from their predecessors (which may be helping to continue more antiquated environmental attitudes) but from other cinemas. However, these filmmakers need to be careful that this inspiration is deeper than merely a style, but actually substantive.

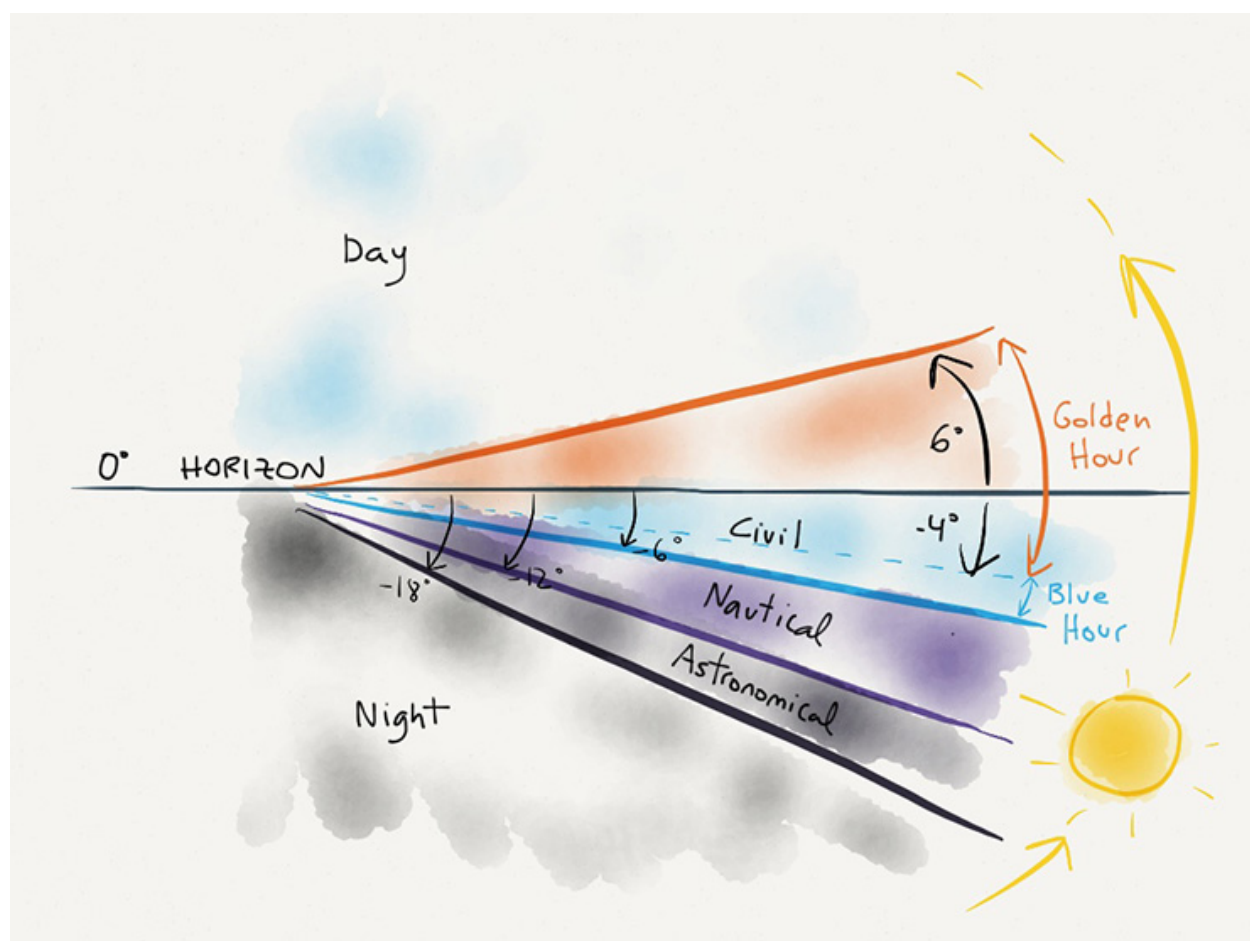
Figure 1
Reinventing Eden: Narratives of Western Culture

TABLE 2.1. REINVENTING EDEN: NARRATIVES OF WESTERN CULTURE

Christian	Modern	Environmentalist	Feminist
Eden	Golden Age	Pristine Wilderness	Matriarchy or Equality
Fall	Dark Ages	Ecological Crisis	Patriarchy
Birth of Christ	Renaissance	Environmental Movement	Feminist Movement
Heaven	Capitalism	Restored Earth	Emancipation, Equality

Note: this table shows how the Edenic narrative, as the predominant cultural/historical narrative within Christianity has been reformatted to become the cultural/historical narratives of other Western “secular” movements. Reprinted from: Merchant, C. (2003). *Reinventing Eden: the fate of nature in Western culture*. Routledge; p. 20

Figure 2
Sun Position and Light Quality



Note: This graphic demonstrates the quality of light in relation to the sun's position on the horizon. These light qualities are the same at sunrise and set. Image reprinted from: Marquès, G. (n.d.). *Understanding Golden Hour, Blue Hour and Twilights*. PhotoPills. <https://www.photopills.com/articles/understanding-golden-hour-blue-hour-and-twilights>.

Appendix A

Wide Open Spaces Film Stills

This appendix includes a collection of stills demonstrating the use of spacious shot composition and sweeping vistas to represent nature as a landscape of freedom.



Redford, R. (Director). (1998) *The Horse Whisperer* [Film]. Touchstone Pictures; 3.23



Cameron, J. (Director). (2009). *Avatar* [Film]. 20th Century Fox; Lightstorm Entertainment; Dune Entertainment; Ingenious Film Partners; 0:57.58



Eastwood, C. (Director). (1985). *Pale Rider* [Film]. The Malpaso Company; 00.29

Appendix B

Cluttered by Wilderness

This appendix looks at how Pagan horror films *The Wicker Man* (1973) and *Midsommar* (2019) use space – or a lack of it – to create a vision of a consuming and threatening nature.



Still from Hardy, R. (Director). (1973). *The Wicker Man* [Film]. British Lion Films; 1:26.57



Still from Aster, A (Director). (2019). *Midsommar* [Film]. Square Peg; B-Reel Films; 2:14.20

Appendix C

Website screenshots

This appendix features a series of screenshots of the website Green Tinted Lenses

<https://www.greentintedlenses.com/> which hosted the articles and podcast episodes produced to as a part of this study.

1. Homepage



an ecocritical lens, providing a
unique perspective on how media
tells stories about the environment

Latest Articles

Featured

< >



Visual Sovereignty in Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner (2001) and Whale Rider (2002)

Apr 23, 2021



Going Native: The Ecological Indians of Dances with Wolves (1990), Pocahontas (1995), and Avatar (2009)

Apr 12, 2021



A Hero is Only as Good as Their Villain: Eco-villains in Kingsman: The Secret Service (2014), Avengers: End Game (2018), and Infinity War (2019)

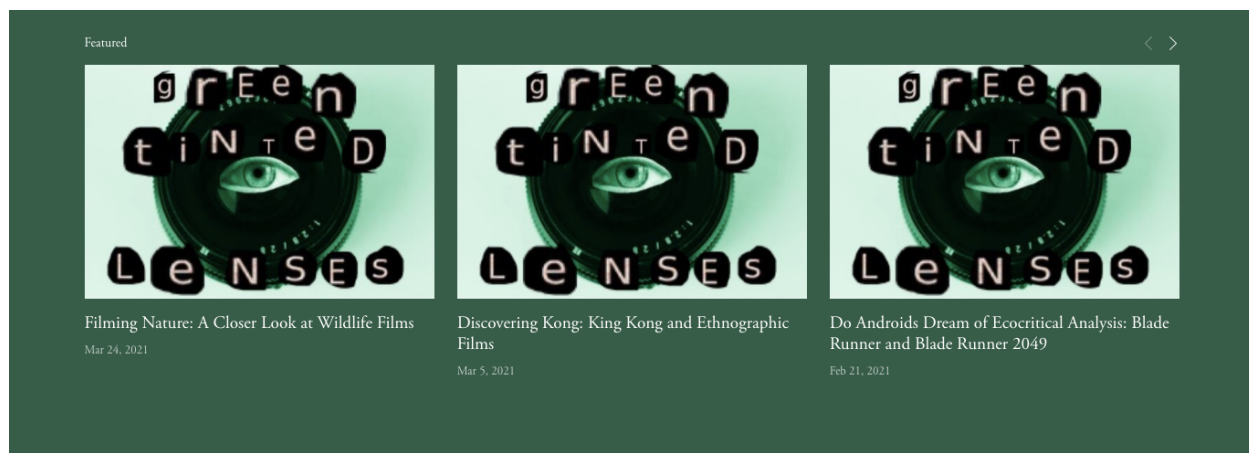
Apr 5, 2021

Latest Podcast

Featured

< >

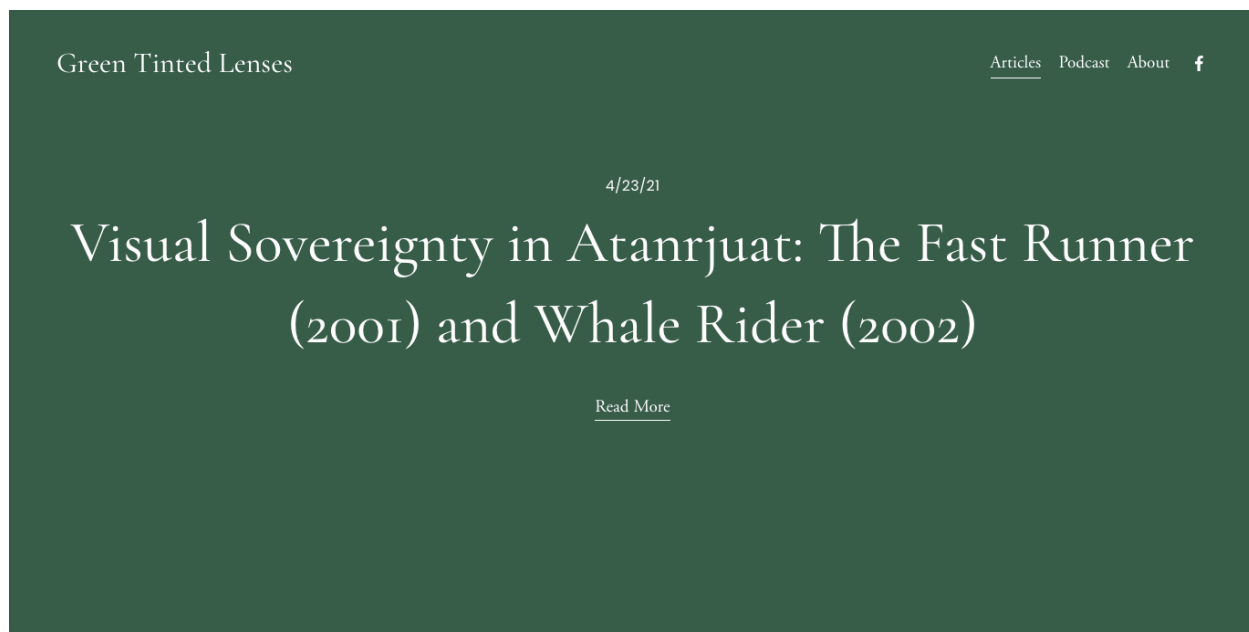




f

Made with [Squarespace](#)

2. Articles



Apr 23

Visual Sovereignty in Atanrjuat: The Fast Runner (2001) and Whale Rider (2002)



Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner (2001) movie poster

[Digital image]. (n.d.). Retrieved from
https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0285441/?ref_=tt_mv_close

Since the silent era of film, Indigenous Peoples have often found themselves in front of the camera. Starring in a long line of western and ethnographic films, Indigenous Peoples are hyper-visible, acting and re-enacting the same colonial archetypes while simultaneously being rendered invisible, overlooked, underpaid, and uncredited (Raheja, 2007).

On camera Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922) is guilty of all of these; overlooking the talent and instead aggrandizing the director, underpaying said talent, and crediting Allakariallak under a false name – the moniker Nanook. Behind the camera, the production was a much more collaborative affair. Allakariallak and his on-screen family participated in the filmmaking technically and creatively, providing feedback on the recording footage and suggestions for future shoots (Raheja, 2007).

3. Podcast

Green Tinted Lenses [Articles](#) [Podcast](#) [About](#) [f](#)

3/24/21

Filming Nature: A Closer Look at Wildlife Films

[Read More](#)

3/5/21

Discovering Kong: King Kong and Ethnographic Films

[Read More](#)

2/21/21

Do Androids Dream of Ecocritical Analysis: Blade Runner and Blade Runner 2049

[Read More](#)

2/5/21

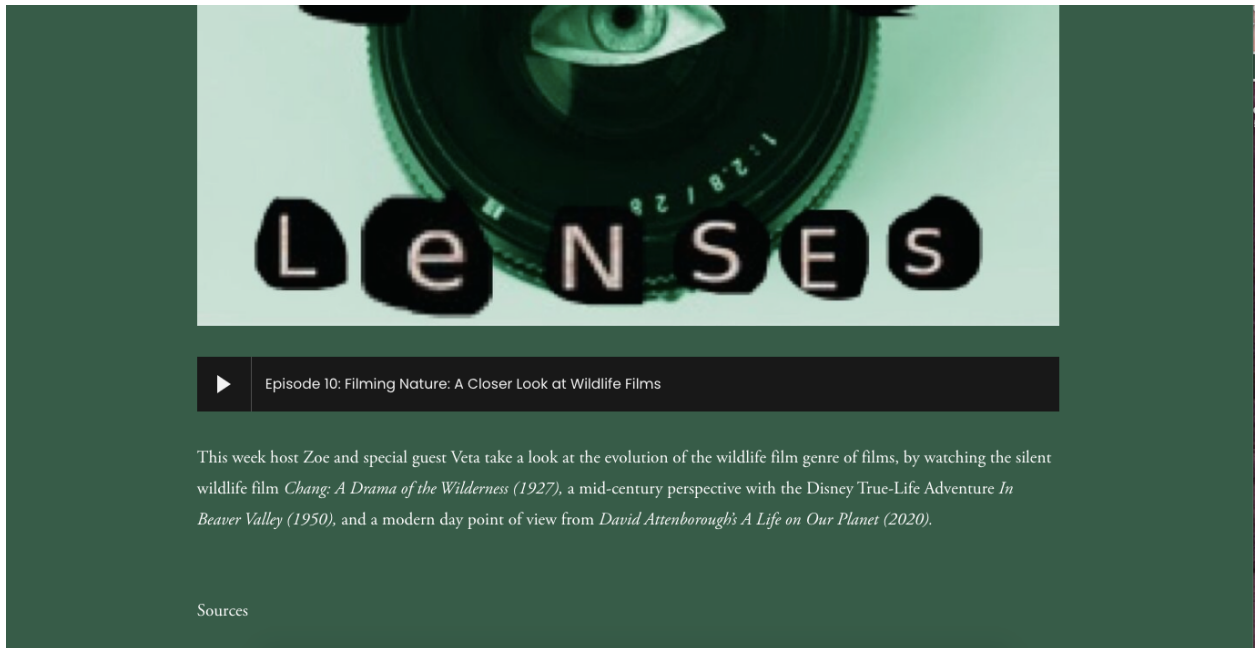
Make A Drama Out of It: Using the Melodramatic Mode for Environmental Messaging in The China Syndrome (1979) and Erin Brockovich (2000)

Green Tinted Lenses [Articles](#) [Podcast](#) [About](#) [f](#)

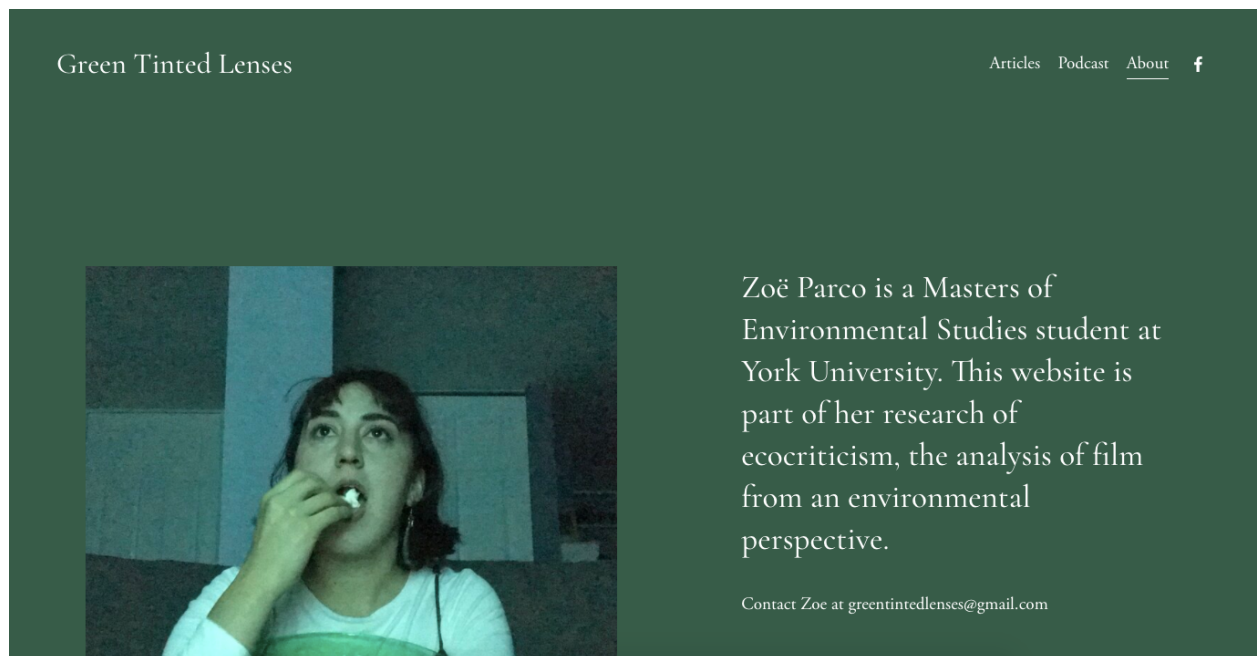
Mar 24

Filming Nature: A Closer Look at Wildlife Films





4. About Page



Appendix D

Podcast Details

This appendix includes a table which outlines the details of each podcast episode, this includes the episode number, films featured, the topic of the discussion, and the guest co-host featured in that episode.

Episode	Films	Topic	Guest
1	<i>Over the Garden Wall</i> (2014)	The ecogothic forest as a horror setting Ecophobia and horror genre/fears of nature	Melissa Pare
2	<i>Midsommar</i> (2019) <i>The Whicker Man</i> (1973)	Pagan/cult horror films and nature settings Ecophobia/ecogothic and nature as a godless setting	Kennedy Halvorson
3	<i>The Horse Whisperer</i> (1998) Wild Hearts Can't be Tamed	Horse girl movies as a subgenre –tropes etc. Animal/human companionship	Trisha Pare
4	<i>Let it Snow</i> (2019) <i>Edward Scissorhands</i> (1990)	Visual symbolism of snow Weather effects in film	Veta Parco
5	Miyazaki movies (pull from filmography)	The environmental philosophy of Miyazaki films Auteur theory	Kennedy Halvorson
6	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> (1940) <i>Pale Rider</i> (1985)	Ecological Westerns subgenre Frontier theory/colonialism and the environment	Veta Parco
7	<i>Erin Brockovich</i> (2001) <i>The China Syndrome</i> (1979)	Melodramatic mode of filmmaking and how it portrays environmental stories	Elizabeth McMillian
8	<i>Blade Runner</i> (1982) <i>Blade Runner 2049</i> (2017)	The environment in science fiction Post-apocalyptic landscapes Haraway's cyborg	Mike Alexander
9	<i>King Kong</i> (1933) <i>King Kong</i> (2005)	Imperial gaze Ethnographic films influence on popular film	Jess Lowes
10	<i>Chang: A Drama of the Wilderness</i> (1927) <i>Disney True-Life Adventure: In Beaver Valley</i> (1950) <i>David Attenborough's A Life on Our Planet</i> (2020)	Wildlife film genre – how it has changed, its tropes, ect. Ethnographic film Techniques in filming wilderness	Veta Parco

Filmography

- Alfredson, T. (Director). (2008). *Let the Right One In* [Film]. EFTI; Sveriges Television; Filmpool Nord; Sandrew Metronome; WAG; Fido Film; The Chimney Pot; Ljudiligan; Svenska Filminstitutet; Nordisk Film & TV Fond; Canal+
- Alger, J. (Director). (1950). *In Beaver Valley* [Film]. Walt Disney Productions
- Anderson, M. (Director). (1977). *Orca* [Film]. Famous Films
- Aster, A (Director). (2019). *Midsommar* [Film]. Square Peg; B-Reel Films
- Ballad, C. (Director). (1997). *Fly Away Home* [Films]. Columbia Pictures; Sandollar; The Saul Zaentz Film Center
- Burton, T. (Director). (1990). *Edward Scissorhands* [Films]. Twentieth Century Studios
- Bridges, J. (Director). (1979). *The China Syndrome* [Film]. IPC Films; Major Studio Partners
- Cameron, J. (Director). (2009). *Avatar* [Film]. 20th Century Fox; Lightstorm Entertainment; Dune Entertainment; Ingenious Film Partners
- Caro, N. (Director). (2002). *Whale Rider* [Film]. South Pacific Pictures; ApolloMedia; Pandora Film; New Zealand Film Production Fund; New Zealand Film Commission; NZ On Air; Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen
- Cooper, M. C. and Schoedsack, E. B. (Director). (1927). *Chang: A Drama of the Wilderness* [Film]. Famous Players-Lasky Corporation; Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation
- Cooper, M. C. and Schoedsack, E. B. (Director). (1933). *King Kong* [Film]. Radio Pictures
- Costner, K. (Director). (1990). *Dances with Wolves* [Film]. Tig Productions
- Douglas, G. (Director). (1954). *Them!* [Film]. Warner Bros. Pictures Inc.
- Eastwood, C. (Director). (1985). *Pale Rider* [Film]. The Malpaso Company
- Eggleston, C. (Director). (1978). *Long Weekend* [Film]. Dugong Films
- Fothergill, A.; Hughes, J. and Scholey, K. (Director). (2020). *David Attenborough: A Life on Our Planet* [Film]. Altitude Film Entertainment; Netflix; Silverback Films
- Ford, J. (Director). (1940). *The Grapes of Wrath* [Film]. Twentieth Century Studios
- Gabriel, M. and Goldberg, E. (Director). (1995). *Pocahontas* [Film]. Walt Disney Pictures
- Guillermin, J. (Director). (1976). *King Kong* [Film]. Dino De Laurentiis Corporation
- Haskin, B. (Director). (1953). *The War of the Worlds* [Film]. Paramount Pictures

- Hardy, R. (Director). (1973). *The Wicker Man* [Film]. British Lion Films
- Honda, I. (Director). (1954). *Godzilla (Gojira)* [Film]. Toho Studios
- Jackson, P. (Director). (2005). *King Kong* [Film]. WingNut Films
- Kiarostami, A. (Director). (1987). *Where Is the Friend's Home?* [Film]. Kanoon; The Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children & Young Adults; Farabi Cinema Foundation
- Kiarostami, A. (Director). (1992). *And Life Goes On* [Film]. Kanoon; The Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children & Young Adults
- Kiarostami, A. (Director). (1994). *Through the Olive Trees* [Film]. Abbas Kiarostami Productions; CiBy 2000; Farabi Cinema Foundation
- Kunuk, Z. (Director). (2001). *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* [Film]. Igloolik Isuma Productions Inc.; National Film Board of Canada (NFB)
- Kurosawa, K. (1999). *Charisma (Karisuma)* [Film]. Nikkatsu
- LaButef, N. (Director). (2006). *The Wicker Man* [Film]. Alcon Entertainment; Millennium Films; Emmett Furla Films; Saturn Films
- Miner, S. (Director). (1991). *Wild Hearts Can't Be Broken* [Film]. Walt Disney Pictures
- Miyazaki, H. (Director). (1984). *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind* [Film]. Studio Ghibli
- Miyazaki, H. (Director). (1986). *Lupita: Castle in the Sky* [Film]. Studio Ghibli
- Miyazaki, H. (Director). (1988). *My Neighbour Totoro* [Film]. Studio Ghibli
- Miyazaki, H. (Director). (1997). *Princess Mononoke* [Film]. Studio Ghibli
- Miyazaki, H. (Director). (2001). *Spirited Away* [Film]. Studio Ghibli
- Miyazaki, H. (Director). (2008). *Ponyo* [Film]. Studio Ghibli
- Ray, S. (Director). (1955). *Pather Panchali* [Film]. Government of West Bengal
- Ray, S. (Director). (1956). *Aparajito* [Film]. Angel Digital Private Limited; Epic Productions
- Ray, S. (Director). (1959). *Apur Sansar* [Film]. Satyajit Ray Productions
- Redford, R. (Director). (1998) *The Horse Whisperer* [Film]. Touchstone Pictures
- Renfroe, J. (Director). (2013). *The Colony* [Film]. RLJ Entertainment
- Roeg, N. (Director). (1971). *Walkabout* [Film]. Max L. Raab-Si Litvinoff Films
- Russo, A & Russo, J. (Director). (2018). *Avengers: Infinity War* [Film]. Marvel Studios

- Russo, A & Russo, J. (Director). (2019). *Avengers: End Game* [Film]. Marvel Studios
- Scott, R. (Director). (1982). *Blade Runner* [Film]. The Ladd Company; Shaw Brothers; Blade Runner Partnership
- Sjostrom, V. (Director). (1928). *The Wind* [Film]. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
- Snellin, L. (Director). (2019). *Let it Snow* [Film]. Dylan Clark Productions
- Soderbergh, S. (Director). (2000). *Erin Brockovich* [Film]. Universal Pictures; Columbia Pictures; Jersey Films
- Stanton, A. (Director). (2008). *Wall-E* [Film]. Walt Disney Pictures; Pixar Animation Studios
- Stevenson, R. (Director). (1957). *Old Yeller* [Film]. Walt Disney Pictures
- Trenchard-Smith, B. (Director). (2010). *Arctic Blast* [Film]. F. G. Film Productions
- Polanski, R. (Director). (1974). *Chinatown* [Film]. Penthouse; Long Road Productions; Robert Evans Company
- Vaughn, M. (Director). (2014). *Kingsman: The Secret Service* [Film]. Marv Studios; Cloudy Productions; TSG Entertainment
- Villeneuve, D. (Director). (2017). *Blade Runner 2049* [Film]. Alcon Entertainment; Columbia Pictures; Bud Yorkin Productions; Torridon Films; 16:14 Entertainment; Scott Free Productions
- Wilcox, F. M. (Director). (1956). *Forbidden Planet* [Film]. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
- Wincer, S. (Director). (1993). *Free Willy* [Film]. Le Studio Canal+; Regency Enterprises; Alcor Films; Donner/Schuler-Donner
- Yanagimachi, M. (Director). (1985). *Himatsuri* [Film]. Seibu Saizon Group Cine Saizon Production; Gunro

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