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Intensified Continuity

Visual Style in Contemporary American Film

For many of us, today's popular American cinema is always fast, seldom cheap, and usually out of control. What comes to mind are endless remakes and sequels, gross-out comedies, overwhelming special effects, and gigantic explosions with the hero hurtling at the camera just ahead of a fireball. Today's movie, we like to say, plays out like its own coming attractions trailer. Picking up on these intuitions, some scholars suggest that U.S. studio filmmaking since 1960 or so has entered a "post-classical" period, one sharply different from the studio era.¹ They argue that the high-concept blockbuster, marketed in ever more diverse ways and appearing in many media platforms, has created a cinema of narrative incoherence and stylistic fragmentation.²

Yet these judgments aren't usually based upon scrutiny of the movies. Scholars who have analyzed a range of films have argued persuasively that in important respects, Hollywood storytelling hasn't fundamentally altered since the studio days.³ If we examine visual style over the last 40 years, I think we're compelled to much the same conclusion. In representing space, time, and narrative relations (such as causal connections and parallels), today's films generally adhere to the principles of classical filmmaking. Exposition and character development are handled in much the ways they would have been before 1960. Flashbacks and ellipses continue to be momentarily teasing and retrospectively coherent. Credit sequences, openings, and montage sequences can display flashy, self-conscious technique. In particular, the ways in which today's films represent space overwhelmingly adhere to the premises of "classical continuity." Establishing and reestablishing shots situate the actors in the locale. An axis of action governs the actors' ori-

entations and eyelines, and the shots, however different in angle, are taken from one side of that axis. The actors' movements are matched across cuts, and as the scene develops the shots get closer to the performers, carrying us to the heart of the drama.⁴

Still, there have been some significant stylistic changes over the last 40 years. The crucial technical devices aren't brand new—many go back to the silent cinema—but recently they've become very salient, and they've been blended into a fairly distinct style. Far from rejecting traditional continuity in the name of fragmentation and incoherence, the new style amounts to an intensification of established techniques. Intensified continuity is traditional continuity amped up, raised to a higher pitch of emphasis. It is the dominant style of American mass-audience films today.

Stylistic Tactics

Four tactics of camerawork and editing seem to me central to intensified continuity. Some have been remarked upon before, often by irritated critics, but most haven't been considered closely. Above all, we haven't sufficiently appreciated how these techniques work together to constitute a distinct set of choices.

I. More rapid editing

Everybody thinks that movies are being cut faster now, but how fast is fast? And faster compared to what?

Between 1930 and 1960, most Hollywood feature films, of whatever length, contained between 300 and 700 shots, so the average shot length (ASL) hovered around eight to eleven seconds. An A-feature would seldom boast an ASL of less than six seconds;⁵ far more common were films with abnormally long takes.

John Stahl's *Back Street* (1932) has an ASL of 19 seconds, while Otto Preminger's *Fallen Angel* (1945) averages 33 seconds per shot.

In the mid- and late 1960s, several American and British filmmakers were experimenting with faster cutting rates.⁶ Many studio-released films of the period contain ASLs between six and eight seconds, and some have significantly shorter averages: *Goldfinger* (1964) at 4.0 seconds; *Mickey One* (1965) at 3.8; *The Wild Bunch* (1969) at 3.2; and *Head* (1968) at a remarkable 2.7 seconds. In the 1970s, when most films had ASLs between five and eight seconds, we find a significant number of still faster ones. As we'd expect, action films tended to be edited more briskly than other types (and Peckinpah's seem to have been cut fastest of all?), but musicals, dramas, romances, and comedies didn't necessarily favor long takes. *The Candidate* (1972), *Pete's Dragon* (1977), *Freaky Friday* (1977), *National Lampoon's Animal House* (1978), and *Hair* (1979) all have ASLs between 4.3 and 4.9 seconds. Midway through the decade, most films in any genre included at least a thousand shots.

In the 1980s the tempo continued to pick up, but the filmmaker's range of choice narrowed dramatically. Double-digit ASLs, still found during the 1970s, virtually vanished from mass-entertainment cinema. Most ordinary films had ASLs between five and seven seconds, and many films (e.g., *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, 1981; *Lethal Weapon*, 1987; *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, 1988) averaged between four and five seconds. We also find several ASLs in the three-to-four second range, mostly in movies influenced by music videos and in action pictures, such as *Pink Floyd: The Wall* (1982), *Streets of Fire* (1984), *Highlander* (1986), and *Top Gun* (1986).

At the close of the 1980s, many films boasted 1500 shots or more. There soon followed movies containing 2000-3000 shots, such as *JFK* (1991) and *The Last Boy Scout* (1991). By century's end, the 3000-4000 shot movie had arrived (*Armageddon*, 1998; *Any Given Sunday*, 1999). Many average shot lengths became astonishingly low. *The Crow* (1994), *U-Turn* (1997), and *Sleepy Hollow* (1999) came in at 2.7 seconds; *El Mariachi* (1993), *Armageddon*, and *South Park* (1999) at 2.3 seconds; and *Dark City* (1998), the fastest-cut Hollywood film I've found, at 1.8 seconds. In 1999 and 2000, the ASL of a typical film in any genre was likely to run three to six seconds.⁸

Today, most films are cut more rapidly than at any other time in U.S. studio filmmaking. Indeed, editing rates may soon hit a wall; it's hard to imagine a feature-length narrative movie averaging less than 1.5 seconds

per shot. Has rapid cutting therefore led to a "post-classical" breakdown of spatial continuity? Certainly, some action sequences are cut so fast (and staged so gracefully) as to be incomprehensible.⁹ Nonetheless, many fast-cut sequences do remain spatially coherent, as in the *Die Hard*, *Speed*, and *Lethal Weapon* movies. (The illegibility of some action scenes is partly traceable to misjudging what will read well on the big screen, as I'll suggest below.)

More important, no film is one long action sequence. Most scenes present conversations, and here fast cutting is applied principally to shot/reverse-shot exchanges. How else could *Ordinary People* (1980) attain an ASL of 6.1 seconds, *Ghost* (1991) one of 5.0 seconds, and *Almost Famous* (2000) one of 3.9 seconds? Editors tend to cut at every line and insert more reaction shots than we would find in the period 1930-1960.

Admittedly, by building dialogue scenes out of brief shots, the new style has become slightly more elliptical, utilizing fewer establishing shots and long-held two-shots. As Kuleshov and Pudovkin pointed out, classical continuity contains built-in redundancies: shot/reverse shots reiterate the information about character position given in the establishing shot, and so do eyelines and body orientation. For the sake of intensifying the dialogue exchange, filmmakers have omitted some of the redundancies provided by establishing shots. At the same time, though, fast-cut dialogue has reinforced premises of the 180-degree staging system. When shots are so short, when establishing shots are brief or postponed or nonexistent, the eyelines and angles in a dialogue must be even more unambiguous, and the axis of action must be strictly respected.

2. Bipolar extremes of lens lengths

From the 1910s to the 1940s, the normal lens used in feature filmmaking in the U.S. had a focal length of 50mm, or two inches. Longer lenses, from 100mm to 500mm or more, were commonly used for close-ups, particularly soft-focus ones, and for following swift action at a distance, such as animals in the wild. Shorter (wide-angle) lenses, commonly 25mm or 35mm, came into use when filmmakers wanted good focus in several planes or full shots of a cramped setting. During the 1930s, cinematographers increasingly relied on wide-angle lenses, a trend popularized by *Citizen Kane* (1941), and the normal lens was thereafter redefined as one of 35mm focal length. By the early 1970s, many anamorphic processes allowed filmmakers to use wide-angle lenses, and the lens's characteristic distorting effects (bulging on the frame edges, exaggeration of



1. *Jerry Maguire*: As Jerry, now fired, leaves his office, a telephoto lens provides an extreme long shot



2. ... followed by a closer long shot, also filmed in telephoto.

distances between foreground and background) were flaunted in such influential Panavision films as *Carnal Knowledge* (1971) and *Chinatown* (1974).¹⁰ Thereafter, filmmakers used wide-angle lenses to provide expansive establishing shots, medium shots with strong foreground/background interplay, and grotesque close-ups. Roman Polanski, the Coen brothers, Barry Sonnenfeld, and a few other filmmakers made wide-angle lenses the mainstay of their visual design.

Even more filmmakers turned to the long lens. Thanks to influential European films like *A Man and a Woman* (1966), the development of reflex viewing and telephoto¹¹ and zoom lenses, an influx of new directors from television and documentary, and other factors, directors began to use a great many more long-lens shots. Since the long lens magnifies fairly distant action, the camera can be quite far from the subject, and this proved advantageous in shooting exteriors on location. Even on interior sets, long lenses could save time, and multiple-camera shooting, becoming more popular in the 1970s, often required long lenses in order to keep cameras out of range of one another. The long lens could suggest either a documentary immediacy or a stylized flattening, making characters appear to walk or run in place (as in the famous shot of Benjamin racing to Elaine's wedding in *The Graduate*, 1967).¹²

The long-focus lens became and has remained an all-purpose tool, available to frame close-ups, medium shots, over-the-shoulder shots, and even establishing shots (Figs. 1-2). Altman, Milos Forman, and other directors might use long lenses for nearly every setup in a scene. The new lenses yielded several stylistic

byproducts, such as the "wipe-by" cut.¹³ Here a long-lens shot picks out a figure, and then something closer to the camera (traffic, a tree being dollied past) slides into view; cut as our view is completely masked; when the obstruction leaves the frame, we have a closer framing of the figure (Figs. 3-5). Similarly, the long lens encouraged the self-conscious rack-focusing that came to prominence in the 1960s and that in more recent years has been orchestrated with figure movement to create shifting compositions in depth (Figs. 6-8).

From the 1960s onward, exploiting the extremes of lens lengths became a hallmark of intensified continuity. For *Bonnie and Clyde*, Arthur Penn used lenses from 9.8mm to 400mm (1967).¹⁴ Several movie-brat directors appreciated the advantages of long lenses but also wanted to maintain the 1940s tradition of deep-space shooting. So Francis Ford Coppola, Brian De Palma, and Steven Spielberg freely mixed long-focus and wide-angle lenses within a single film.¹⁵ Robert Richardson, interviewing for the job of cinematographer on Oliver Stone's *Salvador* (1986), recalls Stone asking, "I have only one question for you. Can you cut a long lens with a wide-angle lens?" Richardson thought, "Are you kidding? Of course you can. No problem."¹⁶

3. More close framings in dialogue scenes

From the 1930s well into the 1960s, directors often played out stretches of scenes in a *plan américain*, which cut off actors at the knee or mid-thigh level. This framing allowed for lengthy two-shots favoring the players' bodies. After the 1960s, such two-shots were often replaced by "singles": medium shots or close-

ups showing only one player. Of course singles were also a common option during the studio years, but in recent decades filmmakers have been inclined to build scenes largely out of singles. Singles allow the director to vary the scene's pace in editing and to pick the best bits of each actor's performance.¹⁷

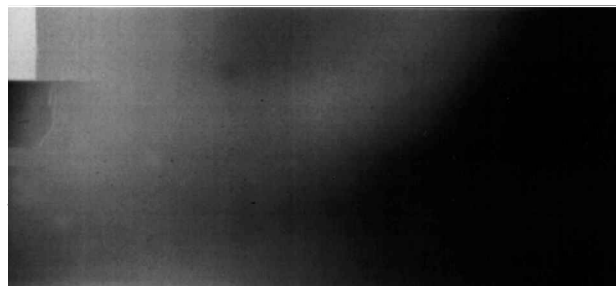
If a scene relies on rapidly cut singles, the filmmaker must find fresh ways to emphasize certain lines or facial reactions. The standard tactic is to differentiate shot scales, but again, post-1960s filmmakers faced a compressed range of options. The 1940s filmmaker could treat a single figure in *plan américain*, medium shot (waist-up), medium close-up (chest-up), standard close-up (full face), and extreme close-up (part of the face). As *plans américains* and ensemble framings became less common, the norms were re-weighted; in many films the baseline framing for a dialogue became

a roomy over-the-shoulder medium shot. So the filmmaker began to work along a narrower scale, from medium two-shot to extreme close-up single.

When widescreen processes were introduced, filmmakers often felt obliged to rely on long shots and medium shots, but by the late 1960s, thanks partly to Panavision's sharper, less distorting lenses, directors could present closer widescreen framings. Indeed, the wide format gives close singles a real advantage: the tendency to place the actor's face off-center leaves a fair amount of the scene's locale visible, which lessens the need for establishing and reestablishing long shots. When actors change position, a reestablishing shot may not be needed: with tight framings, performer movement is often a matter of "clearing" a medium shot. (Actor A exits in the foreground, passing in front of B; hold on B for a moment before we cut to A arriving in



3. *Jaws*: In a telephoto shot, Chief Brody anxiously scans the surf.



4. A figure entering from screen right provides an "invisible" wipe-by cut



5. ... revealing a closer view of Brody.



6. *LA Confidential*: In a long-lens two-shot, Exley tells his captain he'll break the suspects.



7. As he turns and pauses determinedly, we rack focus to him.



8. He exits, and a slight reframing downward discloses the skeptical Vincennes in the background.

another medium shot.) Now the long shot often serves to punctuate a scene, demarcating phases of the action or providing a visual beat which close-ups, because of their frequency, no longer muster.¹⁸ Indeed, the scene's most distant framing may well come at the very end, as a caesura.

Most important, the pressure toward closer views has narrowed the expressive resources available to performers. In the studio years, a filmmaker would rely on the actor's whole body, but now actors are principally faces.¹⁹ For Anthony Minghella, "dynamic blocking" means not choreographing several players in a wide view but letting one player step into close-up.²⁰ Mouths, brows, and eyes become the principal sources of information and emotion, and actors must scale their performances across varying degrees of intimate framings.

The faster cutting rate, the bipolar extremes of lens lengths, and the reliance on tight singles are the most pervasive features of intensified continuity: virtually every contemporary mainstream film will exhibit them. Although I've isolated these factors for ease of exposition, each tends to cooperate with the others. Tighter framings permit faster cutting. Long lenses pick out figures for rapid one-on-one editing. The rack-focus does within the shot what cutting does between shots: it reveals areas of interest successively (rather than simultaneously, as in the deep-focus classics of Welles and Wyler). All these options can in turn support a fourth technique.

4. A free-ranging camera

When we do find longer takes and fuller framings, the camera is usually in motion. Camera movement became a mainstay of popular cinema with the coming of sound, seen not only in the flamboyant tracking or crane shot which often opened the movie but also in those subtle reframings left and right which kept the characters centered. Today's camera movements are ostentatious extensions of the camera mobility generalized during the 1930s.

There is, for example, the prolonged following shot, where we track a character moving along a lengthy path. These virtuoso shots were developed in the 1920s, became prominent at the start of sound cinema (*The Threepenny Opera*, 1931; *Scarface*, 1932, and the like), and formed the stylistic signature of Ophuls and Kubrick. Bravura following shots became a fixed feature of the work of Scorsese, John Carpenter, De Palma, and other New Hollywood directors. Partly because of these influential figures, and thanks to lighter cameras and stabilizers like Steadicam, the

shot pursuing one or two characters down corridors, through room after room, indoors and outdoors and back again, has become ubiquitous.²¹ The same thing has happened with the crane shot, which formerly marked a film's dramatic high point but which now serves as casual embellishment. It enlivens montage sequences and expository moments: from a high angle, a scene opens with a car arriving, and then we crane down as someone gets out and walks to a building. "If somebody goes for a piss these days," Mike Figgis remarks, "it's usually a crane shot."²²

Today's camera prowls even if nothing else budges.²³ Slowly or swiftly, the camera will track up to a player's face (the "push-in"). Push-ins not only underscore a moment of realization but also build continuous tension, as when a shot/reverse-shot passage is handled by intercutting two push-ins. The master shot will often be an inching track forward or sidewise, the "moving master." Or the camera may arc slowly around a single actor or a couple.²⁴ A common variant is to start a sequence with an arcing or sidelong movement past a foreground element, a building or car or tree, with the camera revealing the subject. Whereas a 1930s scene might open on a close-up of a significant object and track back, contemporary filmmakers begin with an inconsequential part of the set and, as if a curtain were pulled aside, the camera glides leftward or rightward to unmask the action.

By the mid-1990s, a very common way to present people gathered around any table—dinner table, card table, operating table—was by spiralling around them. The circling shots might be long takes (the sisters' luncheon in *Hannah and Her Sisters*, 1985) or brief shots (the diner opening of *Reservoir Dogs*, 1992). The arcing camera also became a clichéd means of showing lovers embracing (perhaps as a borrowing from *Vertigo*). De Palma gave the rotating clinch an overblown treatment in *Obsession* (1976),²⁵ and it was parodied in *Being There* (1979), when Chauncy Gardener learns how to kiss by watching a TV couple embracing in a florid 360-degree tracking shot.

As a figure of style, the free-ranging camera may have been popularized by the late 1970s horror films which implied that a hovering, slightly shaky camera might represent the monster's point of view. But the device certainly predates the horror cycle, since uneasily sidling shots can be found in *Bullitt* (1968), *Chinatown*, *The Long Goodbye* (1973), and *All the President's Men* (1976). Paul Schrader has even suggested that unmotivated camera movement, so prominent in European directors like Bertolucci, became the hallmark of his generation of U.S. directors.²⁶ Today,

everyone presumes that a long take, even a long shot, is unlikely to be a static one.

There is more to contemporary film style than these devices; a complete inventory would have to consider at least axial cut-ins, desaturated and monochromatic color schemes, slow motion, and handheld shooting. And not all filmmakers have assimilated the style in all respects. Like other *Star Wars* installments, *Episode I: The Phantom Menace* (1999) is cut quite fast,²⁷ but it avoids ultra-tight framings and the roaming camera. Baby-boomer Lucas sticks closer to mid-1960s stylistic norms than to those of *Armageddon* and *The Matrix* (1999). By contrast, M. Night Shyamalan employs today's framing techniques but keeps his shots unusually lengthy (18.2 seconds in *Unbreakable*, 2000). Nonetheless, taken as a cluster, these four techniques constitute prominent and pervasive features of the current style.

An International Baseline

The regularities I've plotted are fairly general; further research could refine our sense of how they developed. Evidently the style didn't crystallize all at once. Cutting accelerated during the 1960s, when the long lens and flagrant rack-focusing also became more common. The reliance on more singles, closer views, and wide-ranging camera movements seems to have developed in sporadic fashion during the 1960s and 1970s. By the early 1980s, these techniques crystallized into the style of today, and successful films like *Superman* (1978), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), *Body Heat* (1981), and *Tootsie* (1982) probably made it attractive. Intensified continuity came to be taken for granted in film-school curricula and handbooks. Daniel Arijon's *Grammar of the Film Language*, a manual which professional directors sometimes consult in planning a scene, is virtually a compendium of the emerging staging and cutting styles.²⁸ Later manuals incorporate instructions on sidewinding camera movements.²⁹

Seen from another angle, though, the intensified approach has an ancestry stretching back several decades. A late silent film like *Beggars of Life* (1928) looks much like today's movies: rapid cutting, dialogue played in tight singles, free-ranging camera movements. Kuleshov and Pudovkin, with their insistence on suppressing establishing shots in favor of facial close-ups, in effect promoted an early version of intensified continuity,³⁰ and today's wilder tracking and panning shots recall those of Abel Gance (*Napoleon*, 1927) and Marcel L'Herbier (*L'Argent*, 1928). When sound came in, bulky cameras and recording equipment discour-

aged fast cutting and flexible camera movements. With the camera so difficult to move, even just to change setups, directors were inclined to capture the scene in longish takes. This habit remained in place for decades. In the 1960s, it seems, popular filmmaking began to recover some of the fluidity and pace of silent movies.

I've concentrated on mass-market cinema, but films outside the mainstream don't necessarily reject intensified continuity. In most respects, Allison Anders, Alan Rudolph, John Sayles, David Cronenberg, and other U.S. independents subscribe to the style. The major distinguishing mark of off-Hollywood directors is greater average shot length. Quentin Tarantino, Hal Hartley, and Whit Stillman typically work with ASLs of eight to twelve seconds, while Billy Bob Thornton's *Sling Blade* (1996) has a remarkable ASL of 23.3 seconds. Long takes aren't too surprising in the lower-budget sector; apart from an aesthetic commitment to centering on the performances, directors who plan long takes carefully can shoot quickly and cheaply. Interestingly, though, when an independent goes mainstream, the cutting is likely to accelerate. Jim Jarmusch moved from the one-take scenes of *Stranger than Paradise* (1984) to steadily shorter ASLs (*Mystery Train*, 1989: 23 seconds; *Night on Earth*, 1991: 11.3 seconds; *Dead Man*, 1995: 8.2 seconds; *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*, 1999: 6.8 seconds).

Many movies made outside North America use the same expressive tactics I've highlighted. Werner Herzog (*Aguirre: The Wrath of God*, 1972), Rainer Werner Fassbinder (e.g., *Chinese Roulette*, 1976; *Veronika Voss*, 1982), and *cinéma du look* directors like Jean-Jacques Beineix (*Diva*, 1981) and Léos Carax (*Mauvais Sang*, 1986) employed intensified continuity devices as they were emerging in Hollywood. The techniques can be found in Luc Besson's *La Femme Nikita* (1990), Jane Campion's *Portrait of a Lady* (1996), Tom Tykwer's *Run Lola Run* (1998), and several of Neil Jordan's films. More broadly, intensified continuity has become a touchstone for the popular cinema of other countries. The new style was a boon for marginal filmmaking nations; close-ups, fast cutting, sinuous handheld camera moves, long lenses on location, and scenes built out of singles were friendly to small budgets. In Hong Kong during the 1980s, John Woo and Tsui Hark reworked Western norms, creating a flamboyant style that amounts to an intensification of an intensification.³¹ In 1999 a mass-market film from Thailand (*Nang Nak*), Korea (*Shiri*; *Tell Me Something*), Japan (*Monday*), or England (*Lock, Stock, and Two Smoking Barrels*) was likely to display all the marks of intensified continuity. It is now the baseline

style for both international mass-market cinema and a sizable fraction of exportable “art cinema.”

Some Likely Sources

What created this stylistic change? We might be tempted to look to broad cultural developments. Perhaps audiences trained on television, computer games, and the Internet can absorb rapidly cut movies more easily than earlier generations? Yet there remains the fact that during the silent era viewers were perfectly able to assimilate ASLs of four seconds or less. As often happens, we can find the most proximate and plausible causes in new technology, craft practices, and institutional circumstances.

Some aspects of the new style stem from the perceived demands of television presentation. Cinematographer Phil Méheux remarks:

It's a shame that most films rely so much on tight close-ups all the time, filling the screen with an actor's head like you might for television, when there is so much more than you can show. The style is really just a result of what producers want for video release.³²

The belief that television favors medium shots and close-ups has been a commonplace in industry discourse for decades.³³ One could add that television, usually watched in a distracting environment, needs to hold the viewer's attention by a constantly changing visual display—if not cuts, then camera movements. A 1968 TV production manual recommends that a director should seek out “animated visuals”: “Can you dolly in to contract and concentrate the interest? Dolly out to expand the field of interest? Pan from one part of the subject to another? Arc around it for a progressively changing view?”³⁴

It's also significant that TV cutting accelerated over the same years that film cutting did. Before the 1960s, many filmed TV programs had ASLs of ten seconds or more, but in the decades since then I can find no ASLs averaging more than 7.5 seconds. Most programs fall in the five-seven second ASL range, and a few (1960s “Dragnet” episodes, “Moonlighting”) run between three and five seconds. (Of course, TV commercials tend to be cut even faster: ASLs of 1-2 seconds are common for 15- and 30-second spots.) Perhaps cutting rates accelerated independently in the two media, but when in the 1960s studios began selling their post-1948 films to broadcast networks, filmmakers knew that all theatrical features would wind up on television, and this may have encouraged them to step up the cutting

pace. Reciprocally, rapid editing in influential early 1960s films may have provided a model for television (particularly commercials and shows like “The Monkees” and “Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In”), which in turn encouraged theatrical films to be cut faster.³⁵

Television influenced the intensified style at other levels too. Film has long recruited directors trained in television, so we ought to expect stylistic carryovers.³⁶ Since the 1980s, flashy technique has made TV-proven directors attractive to film producers. “These guys,” noted an agent, “are risky bets but they offer a higher stylistic yield.”³⁷ Just as important, many new technologies have preformatted a theatrical film for television. Complex scenes are “previsualized” on video or digital software, and actors' auditions are videotaped.³⁸ The Steadicam's viewfinder is a video monitor. In the late 1970s, film crews began to rely on the video assist, which allows the director and cinematographer to rehearse scenes and watch a shot as it is being taken. The process yields an immediate readout of the scene, but video-assisted shots, lacking in detail and framed for the TV format, may favor loose compositions over precise ensemble staging.³⁹ Video-based editing, first on tape or laserdisc and now on computer, is another way to shape the image for television. Walter Murch notes that editors must gauge how faces will look on a small monitor:

The determining factor for selecting a particular shot is frequently, “Can you register the expression in the actor's eyes?” If you can't, you will tend to use the next closer shot, even though the wider shot may be more than adequate when seen on the big screen.⁴⁰

In sum, video-based production tools may have reinforced filmmakers' inclination to emphasize singles and closer views, which are more legible in video displays all along the line.⁴¹

As strong an influence as television was on intensified continuity, it is probably one of several. We shouldn't forget the example of prestigious filmmakers such as Welles and Hitchcock, whose works abound in the techniques that would coalesce into intensified continuity. In the 1960s and 1970s, Bergman and Cassavetes proved that tight close-ups looked fine in widescreen formats. Sergio Leone did the same, along with flaunting extreme lens lengths and soaring camera movements. Peckinpah and other 1960s directors showed that very fast editing was feasible, particularly if one were to alternate already-seen setups in ABACABC fashion. During the 1970s, Altman freely intercut “creeping zooms,” prefigurations of the omni-

present push-ins of today.⁴² Certain canonized films have probably had some influence too. The great set pieces of film history tend to consist of rapid-fire montages (the Odessa Steps sequence, the shower assault in *Psycho*, the opening and closing carnage of *The Wild Bunch*) or virtuoso following shots (the party scene in *Rules of the Game*, the ball in *The Magnificent Ambersons*, the opening of *Touch of Evil*).

The media's celebration of rapid cutting may have made filmmakers fear that static long takes were out of sync with the audience. In 1990 Scorsese reflected ruefully, "I guess the main thing that's happened in the past ten years is that the scenes have to be quicker and shorter. [*GoodFellas*] is sort of my version of MTV . . . but even that's old-fashioned."⁴³ Rapid cutting also seems to stem from producers' insistence that there be many alternative takes for postproduction adjustments. While A-list directors can argue that a flashy tracking shot can complete several script pages efficiently, there are many pressures toward multiplying choices in the editing room. Even independent producers demand coverage: Christine Vachon, for example, asks directors to shoot both master shots and closer views, agreeing with her editor's complaint that "inexperienced directors are often drawn to shooting important dramatic scenes in a single continuous take—a 'macho' style that leaves no way of changing pacing or helping unsteady performances."⁴⁴ (For an older view of the gendering of style, compare Orson Welles: "A long-playing full shot is what always separates the men from the boys."⁴⁵) Against producers' advice, Steven Soderbergh initially shot the trunk scene in *Out of Sight* (1998) in a single take, but he learned his Kuleshovian lesson when he saw the preview audience's interest flag at that moment. "What I should have understood is that every time you cut away and came back, you bought so much, because the audience filled in the gap for you."⁴⁶

Changing production practices also made intensified continuity a good solution to particular problems.⁴⁷ I've already mentioned how long lenses helped in shooting on location and suggesting a documentary look. As production schedules got shorter in the 1970s, directors began to film much more coverage, protecting one-take scenes with cutaways. The prowling shot was certainly facilitated by 1970s body-braced cameras like Panaflex, Steadicam, and Panaglide. The lightweight Louma crane and later airborne remote-controlled cameras such as SkyCam made swooping boom shots easy. Fast cutting was encouraged by tape-based editing in the early 1980s (used chiefly in music videos and the films influenced by them) and then by the arrival of

digital editing systems. Cutting very brief shots on celluloid is labor-intensive and complicated, since trims only a few frames long can easily go astray. By cutting on computer, filmmakers can easily shave shots frame by frame, a process known as "frame-fucking."⁴⁸ Frame-fucking is one reason some action sequences don't read well on the big screen. After cutting the car chase from *The Rock* on computer, Michael Bay saw it projected, decided that it went by too fast, and had to "de-cut" it.⁴⁹ "We see faster rhythms everywhere," remarks Steven Cohan, who edited one of the first digitally cut features, *Lost in Yonkers* (1993), "which is at least partially due to the fact that we now have the tools to make that kind of editing easy."⁵⁰

Shot scale, lens length, and editing pace were also probably affected by the demand for multiple-camera filming. From the early 1930s to the early 1960s, filmmakers usually worked with just one camera, retaking portions of the scene from different positions. Multiple-camera shooting was usually reserved for unrepeatable actions such as fires, collapsing buildings, or vehicles plunging off cliffs.⁵¹ Influenced by Kurosawa,⁵² 1960s directors like Penn and Peckinpah shot scenes of carnage with several cameras fitted with very long lenses. In the 1960s and 1970s, when location shooting and tight schedules required faster work, many directors began using multiple cameras to cover ordinary dialogue as well. For *The Formula* (1980), several of Marlon Brando's scenes were filmed with two cameras. "When you get someone like that earning big dollars by the day, there's a lot of pressure to finish scenes as quickly as possible. The second camera helped us do that."⁵³ As producers demanded more coverage, extra cameras provided it, which in turn made the editor more likely to assemble the scene out of singles taken from many angles. Happily, the new lighter cameras were more maneuverable in multi-camera situations. During the 1980s, the B camera was frequently a Steadicam, roaming the set for coverage, and the fluidity of its movements around static actors may have made circling shots and push-ins good candidates for inclusion in the final cut. By the time *Gladiator* (2000) was made, a dialogue would be filmed by as many as seven cameras, some of them Steadicams. "I was thinking," the director of photography explained, "someone has got to be getting something good."⁵⁴ The search for "something good" at each instant, from a wide range of angles, will predispose filmmakers to cut often.

We could consider other causal factors, such as the influence of machine-gun coming-attractions trailers, but a particularly intriguing possibility is changing

exhibition circumstances. Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs have suggested that in the period 1908-1917, as cinema moved from vaudeville houses to dedicated venues, screens got smaller; in order to seem correspondingly larger, actors were filmed from closer positions.⁵⁵ William Paul has argued that similar exhibition pressures in the 1920s inclined filmmakers to use more close-ups.⁵⁶ With the twinning and plexing of the 1970s, screens shrank again, and perhaps filmmakers intuitively moved toward bigger faces, assuming as well that faster cutting would read adequately on smaller multiplex screens.

The Aesthetics of Intensified Continuity

All these circumstances warrant detailed inquiry, and they need to be integrated with an analysis of changing sound and color practices. But let the foregoing stand as a broad outline. What concerns me now are the consequences of the new style. What aesthetic possibilities does it open up or foreclose?

Contrary to claims that Hollywood style has become post-classical, we are still dealing with a variant of classical filmmaking. An analysis of virtually any film from the period I've picked out will confirm a simple truth: nearly all scenes in nearly all contemporary mass-market movies (and in most "independent" films) are staged, shot, and cut according to principles which crystallized in the 1910s and 1920s. Intensified continuity constitutes a selection and elaboration of options already on the classical filmmaking menu. Building a scene out of tight, rapidly cut singles was a strategy adopted by some B-filmmakers (e.g., James Tinling, for *Mr. Moto's Gamble*, 1938), as well as by Hitchcock. Autonomous camera movement was likewise an option, although it was traditionally reserved for moments of high drama, not perfunctory underscoring. The long lens had been used for close-ups since the 1920s, so it could be appropriated for other shot scales.

Granted, today we find some untraditional moments—incoherent action scenes, jump-cut montage sequences. Granted too, some moviemakers play more daringly on the fringes. Oliver Stone's post-*JFK* films are probably the most disjunctive made in Hollywood, intercutting color and black-and-white, replaying shots, inserting an occasional long shot crossing the axis of action. But Stone's aberrations stand out as such, momentary deviations from a still-powerful cluster of norms to which even he mostly adheres.

I don't, however, want to leave the impression that nothing has changed. Intensified continuity represents

a significant shift within the history of moviemaking. Most evidently, the style aims to generate a keen moment-by-moment anticipation. Techniques which 1940s directors reserved for moments of shock and suspense are the stuff of normal scenes today. Close-ups and singles make the shots very legible. Rapid editing obliges the viewer to assemble discrete pieces of information, and it sets a commanding pace: look away and you might miss a key point. In the alternating close views, in the racking focus and the edgily drifting camera, the viewer is promised something significant, or at least new, at each instant. Television-friendly, the style tries to rivet the viewer to the screen.⁵⁷ Here is another reason to call it intensified continuity: even ordinary scenes are heightened to compel attention and sharpen emotional resonance.

One result is an aesthetic of broad but forceful effects, often showing strain but sometimes summoning up considerable power. The schemas of intensified continuity can be handled in rich and varied ways, as the films of Jonathan Demme, Spike Lee, David Lynch, John McTiernan, and Michael Mann illustrate. We have subdued, tasteful versions (Nora Ephron, Ron Howard, Frank Darabont, Anthony Minghella), more pumped-up ones (the Bruckheimer films), and even parodically delirious ones (Sam Raimi, the Coen brothers). Hong Kong directors have explored the style with particular acuity. Tony Leung Chiu-wai's abrupt entry into the Macau restaurant in Patrick Yau's *The Longest Nite* (1998) and the wineglass-breaking competition in Johnnie To's *A Hero Never Dies* (1998) make bold, precisely choreographed passages of intensified continuity mesmerizing. From another perspective, the premises of the intensified approach can be recast more ascetically. Hal Hartley, for instance, uses big close-ups and push-ins to create unexpected staging patterns. Todd Haynes' *Safe* (1995) heightens the artificiality of the style by injecting small doses of it into a texture that favors static long shots and slight, rather geometrical camera movements.

But every style excludes certain options, and intensified continuity has cut itself off from some resources of classical filmmaking. For one thing, as the range of likely shot lengths has narrowed, mainstream directors have been discouraged from making a two-hour film out of fewer than five hundred shots. It's not that he or she can't use a long take—indeed a couple of them seem de rigueur in every film—but a movie built primarily out of prolonged shots is very rare in today's Hollywood. (Significantly, *Unbreakable*'s long takes provided product differentiation for its publicity campaign.⁵⁸)

Further, by concentrating on camerawork and editing, practitioners of intensified continuity have neglected ensemble staging. Two staging options have come to dominate current practice. There's what filmmakers call "stand and deliver," where the actors settle into fairly fixed positions. Usually this is handled in singles and over-the-shoulder angles, but we may get instead the floating-head treatment, with the characters fixed in place and the camera drifting around them. In either case, if the characters shift to another part of the setting, their movement isn't usually aiming at expressive effect; it's a transition to another passage of stand-and-deliver. The alternative staging option is "walk-and-talk," with a Steadicam carrying us along as characters spit out exposition on the fly. Both stand-and-deliver and walk-and-talk were used in the studio years, of course, but so was complex blocking, as in Lang's and Preminger's delicately changing two-shots or Wyler's checkerboarding of figures in depth. Such blocking, however, has all but vanished from popular cinema. Perhaps only Woody Allen, with his avoidance of close-ups and his very long takes (an ASL of 22 seconds for *Manhattan*, 1979; 35.5 seconds for *Mighty Aphrodite*, 1995), offers an echo of this tradition.⁵⁹ "In the old days," a Hollywood agent remarked to me, "directors moved their actors. Now they move the camera."

With the loss of ensemble staging comes a greater constraint on actors' performances. The contemporary stress on close-ups is not that, say, of the Russian montage filmmakers, who filled their films with hands, feet, and props in dynamic relation to the actors. In intensified continuity, the face is privileged, especially the mouth and eyes. If hands are used, they are typically brought up toward the head, to be in that crucial medium shot or close-up. We lose what Charles Barr calls, in his fundamental essay on CinemaScope, *graded emphasis*.⁶⁰ Eyes have always been central to Hollywood cinema,⁶¹ but usually they were accompanied by cues emanating from the body. Performers could express emotion through posture, stance, carriage, placement of arms, and even the angling of the feet. Actors knew how to rise from chairs without using their hands to leverage themselves, to pour drinks steadily for many seconds, to give away nervousness by letting a fingertip twitch. *Physiques* (beefed-up, semi-nude) are more frankly exposed than ever before, but they seldom acquire grace or emotional significance. In popular cinema, it's again the Hong Kong filmmakers who have best integrated intensified continuity with a respect for the kinesis and expressivity of human bodies.⁶²

Finally, intensified continuity has endowed films with quite overt narration. Classical studio filmmaking was never wholly "transparent": figures in two-shots were usually slightly pivoted to the audience, and there were always passages (montage sequences, beginnings and endings of scenes, beginnings and endings of films) which acknowledged that the scene was addressing a spectator. Yet gestures which earlier filmmakers would have considered flagrantly self-conscious—arcing camera, big close-ups, the flourishes of a Welles or Hitchcock—have become default values in ordinary scenes and minor movies. Interestingly, this more outré technique doesn't prevent us from comprehending the story. Having become accustomed to a new overtness of narration, we seem to have set the threshold for obtrusiveness higher. And like earlier generations of spectators, we can appreciate displays of virtuosity—the legerdemain of wipe-by cuts, the soaring exhilaration of SkyCams. For such reasons, the new style suggests that we can't adequately describe the viewer's activity with spatial metaphors like "absorption" and "detachment." At any moment, stylistic tactics may come forward, but viewers remain in the grip of the action. The mannerism of today's cinema would seem to ask its spectators to take a high degree of narrational overtness for granted, to let a few familiar devices amplify each point, to revel in still more flamboyant displays of technique—all the while surrendering to the story's expressive undertow. It would not be the first time audiences have been asked to enjoy overt play with form without sacrificing depth of emotional appeal. Baroque music and Rococo architecture come to mind, as do Ozu and Mizoguchi. The triumph of intensified continuity reminds us that as styles change, so do viewing skills.

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Notes

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1. The idea of Hollywood "classicism" is presented at length in David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

2. For example, several essays in *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, ed. Steve Neale and Murray Smith (London: Routledge, 1998), presuppose or argue for a post-classical Hollywood. See in particular Elizabeth Cowie, "Storytelling: Classical Hollywood Cinema and Classical Narrative," 178-190; Thomas Elsaesser, "Specularity and Engulfment: Francis Ford Coppola and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*," 191-208. Murray Smith offers some useful clarifications of the issue in "Theses on the Philosophy of Hollywood History" (3-20). A helpful overview of the position is Peter Kramer, "Post-classical Hollywood" in *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 289-309.
 3. See Warren Buckland, "A Close Encounter with *Raiders of the Lost Ark*: Notes on Narrative Aspects of the Hollywood Blockbuster," in Neale and Smith, 166-177; Kristin Thompson, *Storytelling in the New Hollywood* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 2-3, 344-352; and Geoff King, *Spectacular Narratives: Hollywood in the Age of the Blockbuster* (London: Tauris, 2000), 1-15.
 4. Principles of continuity filmmaking are surveyed in David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, fifth ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), 284-300.
 5. The concept of average shot length derives from Barry Salt, *Film Style and Technology: History and Analysis*, second ed. (London: Starword, 1992), 142-147. All ASLs here are based on watching the entire film and dividing its running length, given in seconds, by the number of shots. Both images and intertitles are counted as shots, but production credits aren't.
- My estimates of studio-era norms are taken from Bordwell et al., *Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 60-63. Salt's results from the post-1960 period can be found on pp. 214-215, 236-240, and 249 of *Film Style and Technology*. Whereas Salt seeks to condense the average shot lengths of a period into a "Mean Average Shot Length," Bordwell et al. argue for thinking of ASLs as occupying a range of probable choice.
- More generally, ASL is a helpful but fairly blunt instrument. Naturally, a film with one long take and 800 short shots can have the same ASL as one with fewer but approximately equal shots. Other measures of central tendency, such as mode and median, would allow us to make finer distinctions, but measuring the length of each shot in a finished film is with present technology very arduous.
6. The rest of this essay draws its evidence from a corpus of 400 Anglophone films made or distributed by U.S. studios from the years 1961-2000. For each decade, I chose 100 films, with each year represented by 7-12 titles. The corpus was not the result of a random sample; strict random sampling is not feasible for a body of films because vagaries of preservation and canons of taste do not give every film made an equal chance of being studied. (See Bordwell et al., *Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 388-389.) I have tried to pick films from a wide range of genres and directors, though the sample is based on major releases and may not hold good for exploitation or straight-to-video titles.
 7. For a detailed discussion of Peckinpah's rapid cutting, see Bernard F. Dukore, *Sam Peckinpah's Feature Films* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 77-150.
 8. Barry Salt finds a shortening in Mean ASL from 11 seconds to about 7 seconds in the period from 1958 to 1975,

and a lengthening to 8.4 seconds in the years 1976-1987, though he is more tentative about the latter results (*Film Style and Technology*, 265, 283, 296). My results roughly agree with his for the first period, but for the second I find little evidence of a tendency for shots to lengthen. I cannot explain the discrepancy fully, but two factors may be relevant. First, Salt's decision to seek a single Mean ASL, instead of a range of more and less likely options, may skew the result because a few very long-take films, such as Woody Allen's, can push the average up farther than a few very fast-cut films can push it down. If most films of the period come in at around six seconds, as Salt believes, a few films with 12-20-second ASLs will push the mean upward more than even many films with 2-4-second ASLs can depress it.

Secondly, in the only publication in which Salt has explained his viewing procedures, he indicates that counting the shots during the first 30 to 40 minutes of a film yielded an adequate measure of ASL ("Statistical Style Analysis of Motion Pictures," *Film Quarterly* 28, 1 [Fall 1974]: 14-15). In my experience, this isn't a trustworthy assumption for contemporary films, since a great many of them are cut significantly faster in the final stretches. The first 55 minutes of *Jaws* (1975) yield an ASL of 8.8 seconds, but the film as a whole has an ASL of 6.5 seconds. If we sampled only the first 35 minutes of *Body Snatchers* (1994), we'd find an ASL of 10.8 seconds, significantly high for the period, but the ASL of the entire film is 7.7 seconds. Many modern filmmakers seem deliberately to weight the first part with long takes in order to enhance a fast-cut climax. Perhaps, then, some of Salt's figures on 1976-1987 films derive from sampling only opening portions.

9. Todd McCarthy remarks that in *Armageddon* "director Bay's visual presentation is so frantic and chaotic that one often can't tell which ship or characters are being shown, or where things are in relation to one another" ("Noisy 26 'Armageddon' Plays 'Con' Game," *Variety* [29 June-12 July 1998]: 38).
10. See David Bordwell, *On the History of Film Style* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 238-244.
11. Telephoto lenses are long-focus lenses that have optically telescoped the lens elements so that they are physically shorter than their stated focal length. Thus a prime lens of 500mm length is physically longer than a telephoto lens of equal focal length. See Paul Wheeler, *Practical Cinematography* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2000), 28.
12. For more on this trend, see Bordwell, *On the History of Film Style*, 246-253.
13. Verna Field uses this term in Tony Macklin and Nik Pici, ed., *Voices from the Set: The Film Heritage Interviews* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2000), 243, where she discusses the shots in *Jaws* shown in Figs. 3-5.
14. John Belton, "The Bionic Eye: Zoom Esthetics," *Cineaste* 9, 1 (Winter 1980-81): 26.
15. For more discussion, see Bordwell, *On the History of Film Style*, 253-260.
16. James Riordan, *Stone: The Controversies, Excesses, and Exploits of a Radical Filmmaker* (New York: Hyperion, 1995), 154.
17. See Jon Boorstin, *Making Movies Work: Thinking Like a Filmmaker* (Los Angeles: Silman-James, 1990), 90-97.

18. "Dropping back to the master shot or even an establishing shot in the middle of a scene can let it breathe, or alternately can give it a beat that will then invest your close-ups with even greater force and intensity" (Paul Seydor, "Trims, Clips, and Selects: Notes from the Cutting Room," *The Perfect Vision* no. 26 [September/October 1999], 27).
19. Throughout *Secrets of Screen Acting* (New York: Routledge, 1994), Patrick Tucker assumes that film acting is facial. He advises actors on how to cheat their faces to the camera in tight shots, how to react in close-up, and how to speak in close-up (44-45, 55-57, 75). Blocking, he remarks, "is a way of getting the camera to see your face" (129). See also Steve Carlson, *Hitting Your Mark: What Every Actor Really Needs to Know on a Hollywood Set* (Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese, 1998), 23-47, 63-81.
20. Jay Holben, "Alter Ego," *American Cinematographer* 81, 1 (January 2000): 70.
21. For a discussion, see Jean-Pierre Geuens, "Visuality and Power: The Work of the Steadicam," *Film Quarterly* 47, 2 (Winter 1993-1994): 13-14. See also Serena Ferrara, *Steadicam: Techniques and Aesthetics* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2001).
22. Quoted in Mike Figgis, ed., *Projections 10: Hollywood Film-makers on Film-making* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 108.
23. Several types of contemporary camera movements are discussed in Jeremy Vineyard, *Setting Up Your Shots: Great Camera Moves Every Filmmaker Should Know* (Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese, 2000), 35-50.
24. For *The End of the Affair* (1999), Neil Jordan sought to mark off flashbacks by having the camera circle the characters in one direction during a scene set in the past; the camera arcs in the opposite direction in present-time scenes. See David Heuring et al., "Impeccable Images," *American Cinematographer* 81, 6 (June 2000): 92, 94.
25. Nonetheless, the camera movements in *Obsession* look discreet by comparison with the extravagant arcs around the transgressing couple in *Body Double* (1984).
26. *Schrader on Schrader*, ed. Kevin Jackson (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), 211.
27. *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* (1977) has an ASL of 3.4 seconds, quite short for the 1970s. *Episode V: The Return of the Jedi* (1983) has an ASL of 3.5 seconds, and *Episode I: The Phantom Menace* (1999) has an ASL of 3.8 seconds.
28. Arijon presumes, for instance, that the director will rely on tight close-ups; see *Grammar of the Film Language* (London: Focal Press, 1976), 112.
29. See, for example, Steven D. Katz, *Film Directing Shot by Shot: Visualizing from Concept to Screen* (Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese, 1991), 300, 315.
30. Lev Kuleshov, "Art of the Cinema," in *Kuleshov on Film*, trans. and ed. Ronald Levaco (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974), 67-109; V. I. Pudovkin, *Film Technique and Film Acting*, trans. and ed. Ivor Montagu (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 87-109.
31. See David Bordwell, *Planet Hong Kong: Popular Cinema and the Art of Entertainment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 22-25, 162-168, and 224-245.
32. Quoted in David Williams, "Reintroducing Bond . . . James Bond," *American Cinematographer* 76, 12 (December 1995): 39.
33. See the comments gathered in Jack Kunej, *Take One: Television Directors on Directing* (New York: Praeger, 1990), 12, 29, 45, 46, 119. See also Frederick Y. Smith, "Rambling Thoughts of a Film Editor," *American Cinematographer* 25, 2 (Summer 1975): 18-19. Richard Maltby offers a perceptive discussion of TV style and its influence on 1960s and 70s cinema in *Harmless Entertainment: Hollywood and the Ideology of Consensus* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1983), 329-337.
Despite practitioners' conceptions of the two media, we probably shouldn't see modern film as simply replicating TV style. With respect to shot scale, for instance, there wasn't and isn't just one televisual norm for film to match. Talk and game shows use long shots, while sitcoms and soaps rely on medium shots and *plans américains*. Video games are characteristically framed in long shot. Instead of blending the broadcast movie into the programming flow, filmmakers may have sought to create a distinct look for theatrical film *as seen on the box*, marking it with intense close-ups and flamboyant camera moves seldom found on other TV fare. (Still later, it seems, shows like "The X-Files" tried to look like a 1990s film as seen on TV.)
34. Colby Lewis, *The TV Director/Interpreter* (New York: Hastings House, 1968), 164.
35. An in-depth study of television techniques of the period I'm considering can be found in John Caldwell, *Televsuality: Style, Crisis, and Authority in American Television* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1995).
36. Critics of the 1960s often noted how TV-trained directors seemed to carry their habits over to feature films. An acerbic example is Pauline Kael's "The Making of *The Group*," in *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), especially p. 100.
37. Quoted in John Brodie and Dan Cox, "New Pix a Vidiot's Delight," *Variety* (28 October-3 November 1996): 85.
38. On this practice, see the remarks in Jeremy Kagan, ed., *Directors Close Up* (Boston: Focal Press, 2000), 50-77.
39. Cinematographer Roger Deakins offers several comments on how composing shots on a video monitor yields less attention to detail in *Cinematography: Screencraft*, ed. Peter Ettedgui (Crans-Près-Céligny, Switzerland: Rotovision, 1998), 166.
40. Walter Murch, *In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing* (Los Angeles: Silman-James, 1995), 88.
41. Editor Paul Seydor notes that long shots and extreme long shots might not read well on home TV monitors, especially if they come at the end of a scene, where they could be mistaken for an establishing shot opening the next scene. Although Seydor prefers to retain such shots, he notes that many editors might not do so. See "Trims, Clips," 29.
42. See Paul Mazursky's comments in Figgis, *Projections 10*, 25.
43. Quoted in Peter Brunette, ed., *Martin Scorsese Interviews* (Jackson, MI: University of Mississippi Press, 1999), 155.
44. James Lyon, quoted in Vachon and David Edelstein, *Shooting to Kill: How an Independent Producer Blasts Through the Barriers to Make Movies That Matter* (New York: Avon, 1998), 263.
45. Orson Welles and Peter Bogdanovich, *This Is Orson Welles* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 201.
46. Ann Thompson, "Steven Soderbergh," *Premiere* (December 2000): 65.

47. For information on some associated technological innovations, see Salt, *Film Style and Technology*, 251-296.
48. See Peter Bart, *The Gross: The Hits, the Flops—The Summer That Ate Hollywood* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999), 232; David Kleiler, Jr. and Robert Moses, *You Stand There: Making Music Video* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1997), 168.
49. David Ansen and Ray Sawhill, "The New Jump Cut," *Newsweek* (2 September 1996): 66.
50. Quoted in Thomas A. Ohanian and Michael E. Phillips, *Digital Filmmaking: The Changing Art and Craft of Making Motion Pictures* (Boston: Focal Press, 1996), 177.
51. In the silent era, William C. deMille often used multiple cameras to preserve the continuity of performance. See Peter Milne, *Motion Picture Directing* (New York: Falk, 1922), 45-46. Much later, Richard Lester, transferring television practice to film, became noteworthy for using multiple cameras for dialogue scenes, from *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) onward (Andrew Yule, *Richard Lester and the Beatles* [New York: Primus, 1995], 14).
52. See Stephen Prince, *Savage Cinema: Sam Peckinpah and the Rise of Ultraviolent Movies* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998), 51-56.
53. Anonymous, "The Five Films Nominated for 'Best Cinematography' of 1980," *American Cinematographer* 62, 5 (May 1981): 503.
54. John Mathieson, quoted in Douglas Bankston, "Death or Glory," *American Cinematographer* 81, 5 (May 2000): 38.
55. Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs, *Theatre to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 164-168.
56. William Paul, "Screening Space: Architecture, Technology, and the Motion Picture Screen," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 35, 1 (Winter 1996): 145-149.
57. Noël Carroll discusses how a constantly changing display maintains viewer attention in "The Power of Movies," in *Theorizing the Moving Image* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 80-86, and "Film, Attention, and Communication," in *The Great Ideas Today* (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1996), 16-24.
58. Benjamin Svetkey reports that 30 scenes in *Unbreakable* consist of single shots. "That's an astounding thing to have in a film," remarks Bruce Willis ("Fractured Fairy Tale," *Entertainment Weekly* [1 December 2000]: 38).
59. Allen explains that he seldom cuts within a scene because a sustained master is faster and cheaper to shoot, actors prefer it, and he doesn't have to worry about matching shots. See Douglas McGrath, "If You Knew Woody Like I Knew Woody," *New York Magazine* (17 October 1994): 44.
60. Charles Barr, "CinemaScope: Before and After," *Film Quarterly* 16, 4 (Summer 1963): 18-19.
61. See Janet Staiger, "The Eyes Are Really the Focus: Photoplay Acting and Film Form and Style," *Wide Angle* 6, 4 (1985): 14-23.
62. See Bordwell, *Planet Hong Kong*, 200-245.