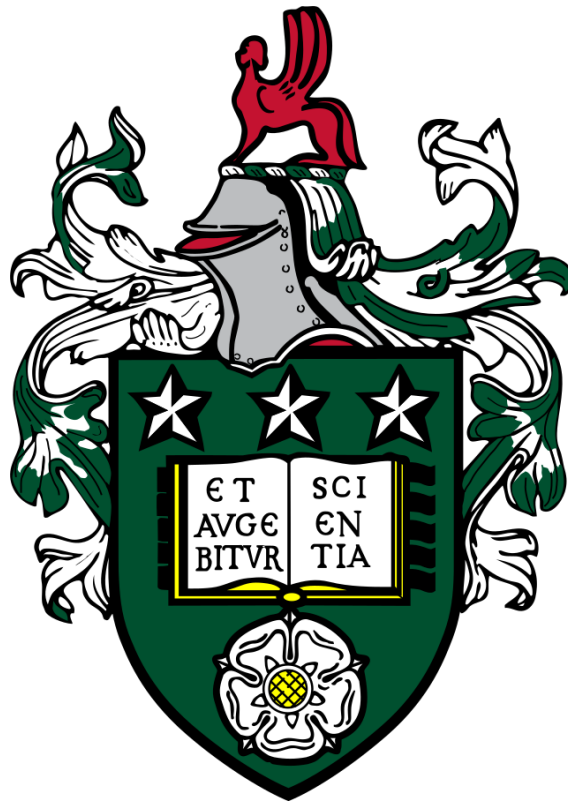# Animal Constellations:

An investigation into the censorship of animal violence in British cinema

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds

School of Media and Communication

May 2022

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

In this thesis I combine the work of Adorno and Wittgenstein in order to investigate the censorship of animal violence in British cinema. The philosophies that underpin this thesis share a rejection of the idea that there is a neat and linear correspondence between language and reality. This project treats language and reality as inseparable, but in a very specific way. Adorno's notion of constellations provides **the main theoretical framework, but I also make use of** Wittgenstein's thinking on 'family resemblances', **rule following, and his tool analogy.** Through **this framework,** the **following** thesis demonstrates that the myriad concepts and social activities that make up the censorship of animal violence in British cinema are not self-identical. That is to say, this thesis shows that the meaning of any word is its usage, but to understand the activity through which a word is used one must analyse the broader social structures that make such activity possible. Rather than assuming that words such as 'censorship', 'animal', and 'violence' have an essential meaning, this thesis will look at how they are used within some of the forms of life that relate to the censorship of animal violence in British cinema. With this in mind, the investigation that takes place in this thesis will move from the film screen to the zoo to the censor's office and back again.

Acknowledgements

Writing a PhD during a global pandemic was the hardest thing I've ever done. Those closest to me know the struggles that I've been through, and I am endlessly grateful for your love and support. Bruce, you are the love of my life. I would not have found the strength to continue with this PhD program without you. The Acknowledgement section of my PhD thesis is not the place to pour my heart out, so I will keep telling you in person how much you mean to me. To my brother John, I love you so much. You are my family. To my Grandma Muriel and my Grandad Eric, I hope that Bruce and I can love each other for as long as you loved each other. I miss you both. I'm sorry that I couldn't be there in your final days; this virus has been cruel. Finally, to my supervisors Tom and Melanie, you have been more than inspirational. Speaking with you always leaves me both excited about the future, and confident that I will find my place in it.

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Introduction

Grainy footage captures two bulls standing beneath a single spotlight. Their eye sockets are blackened by the long shadows. Nothing can be seen behind the bulls except a ray of sunlight piercing through a crack in the wall. Their white bodies are framed by the void. There is a cut, followed by the raising of a gate. Something seems to move underneath the raised gate before it slams down again. The next shot is taken through a gap in the top of the gate. Through this gap we see the face of another bull. Perhaps he is one of the bulls that we saw moments ago. The bull struggles to make his way through the narrow corridor of concrete and steel. The walls of the corridor are much taller than his bulky frame. A beam of light from a nearby window slices across his face as he shuffles into position. Next, we see a shot taken from above a bull. Again, this could be the same bull as from the previous shot, or it could be another. The shot begins with the bull holding his head down in the waist-deep shadows. His body can be seen below the arm of a worker resting on the fence. It is not until the bull raises his head that his white skin frames the barrel of the gun that has been pointing at his head. The music that has been playing throughout the scene, the Overture to Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, is silenced by the sound of the gun firing. The bull immediately drops to the metal grate upon which he stood. The camera holds the shot, framing the bull's body. He lies perfectly still except for a twitching muscle at the top of his front left leg. A few seconds later we see a bull hung from the ceiling by his rear left leg and the music starts again. A worker drags the bull's body along the runners on the ceiling. The room is dingy, with rusted frames surrounding the doors of the booths. After momentarily struggling to handle the weight of the bull's body, the worker managers to get the runner in motion. The worker positions himself directly behind the bull pushing with both hands and leaning forwards to make use of all his strength. He pushes the bull into position. The next shot is from a worm's eye view beneath

the worker, and beneath the bodies of two bulls both hung from their left leg. The bull on screen right is motionless, while the bull on screen left is kicking violently. The following shot is of a worker sharpening a knife. The audience can only see the bull's body, flashes of his red flesh, and the swinging of the worker's arms.

Figure 0.1: ***McLibel*** **(2005)**

Lost in the desert, Lassie befriends cattle rancher Mort Morgan. During her stay with Morgan, a wolf sneaks into the farm and attacks the chickens. Just in the nick of time, Morgan scares the wolf away with his rifle. He tells Lassie that they must hunt down the wolf to prevent any more attacks. After sunrise the following morning the pair make their way into the desert. Lassie spots the wolf hiding in the shadows of the trees, gnawing at something by their feet. A standoff ensues between Lassie and the wolf. Snarling and barking erupt between the pair as the music raises the tension. Eventually the fight breaks out, initiated by the villainous wolf. The pair

wrestle violently, swinging claws and snapping fangs. Morgan overhears the fight and races to help Lassie. He raises his gun to shoot the wolf, but the fighting is so wild that he cannot get a clean shot. The pair continues to wrestle, and Morgan keeps on aiming his rifle. He takes his shot, but deliberately misses. The sound scares the wolf, who then turns away from Lassie and tries to escape. Morgan takes his chance and aims his rifle once more. After a moment, he pulls the trigger. The wolf falls down and lies motionless. Lassie walks over to the dead wolf and checks their body. Morgan joins her and performs his own checks. In the next shot, Lassie looks upwards towards an eagle who will eventually lead her back to safety.

Figure 0.2: ***Lassie: Look Homeward* (1965)**

The first scene is taken from the film *McLibel* (2005) and the second is taken from *Lassie: Look Homeward* (1965). In 2005, the British Board for Film Certification (BBFC) allowed one of these two scenes to be included in a PG-rated film uncut, while the other scene required several

cuts before the film could be distributed or exhibited legally in the UK. Because it contained scenes of animal cruelty, the BBFC censored *Lassie: Look Homeward*. While animals have been trained to 'play dead' since the early days of film, the BBFC concluded that the action contained within the twenty-two problematic frames could only have been achieved through the cruel mistreatment of a dog. The shot begins with the dog (who plays the villainous wolf in the film) running towards screen right. When the wolf is hit with the bullet from Morgan's rifle, the dog playing the wolf falls to the ground at a forty-five-degree angle to the direction that they were running. The movement that initiates the change in direction comes from the dog's front shoulders, and then the rest of their body follows. For the BBFC, "the animal *reacts as if* it has been hit by an object, knocking it to the ground" (2007, p.37, my emphasis). The force required to send the dog tumbling across the ground would be enough to cause pain and suffering. Because the BBFC only makes their decisions based on the film as it is presented to them for certification, they contacted the distributor of *Lassie: Look Homeward* to request evidence that the stunt was orchestrated in a way that did not involve animal cruelty. Perhaps there was a way that the dog had been trained to fall in such an unusual manner that did not require forcefully knocking them to the ground. The distributor could not provide the requested evidence, and so the BBFC demanded that the twenty-two frames were removed from the film before it could be distributed in the UK, or exhibited to a UK audience. Figure 0.3 contains six stills taken from the censored scene.

Figure 0.3: The dog "reacts as if" they have been hit by an object

But what of the bulls who were strung upside down in *McLibel?* How was this footage approved by the BBFC and included in a PG-rated film? From the footage alone, as it was presented to the BBFC, it seems extremely likely that the bull who was kicking wildly with one leg while being hung upside down by the other is also experiencing pain and suffering. The major difference between the two films is that *McLibel* is a documentary and *Lassie: Look Homeward* is

fictional (BBFC, 2007, p.37). In other words, the bull would have been hung upside down in the slaughterhouse whether the filmmakers were there or not, whereas the pushing of the dog in *Lassie: Look Homeward* was done by the filmmakers. But this distinction is not as clear cut as it seems. For example, in an earlier scene in *Lassie: Look Homeward*, the villainous wolf scares Morgan's herd of cattle. As he loses control of his cattle they begin to stampede. While trying to mount his horse, Morgan is thrown to the ground leaving him unable to move. Lassie leaps to the rescue and begins controlling the stampede. After dodging horns and hooves, her luck runs out. Lassie is hit by a bull and thrown to the ground, as shown in figure 0.4.
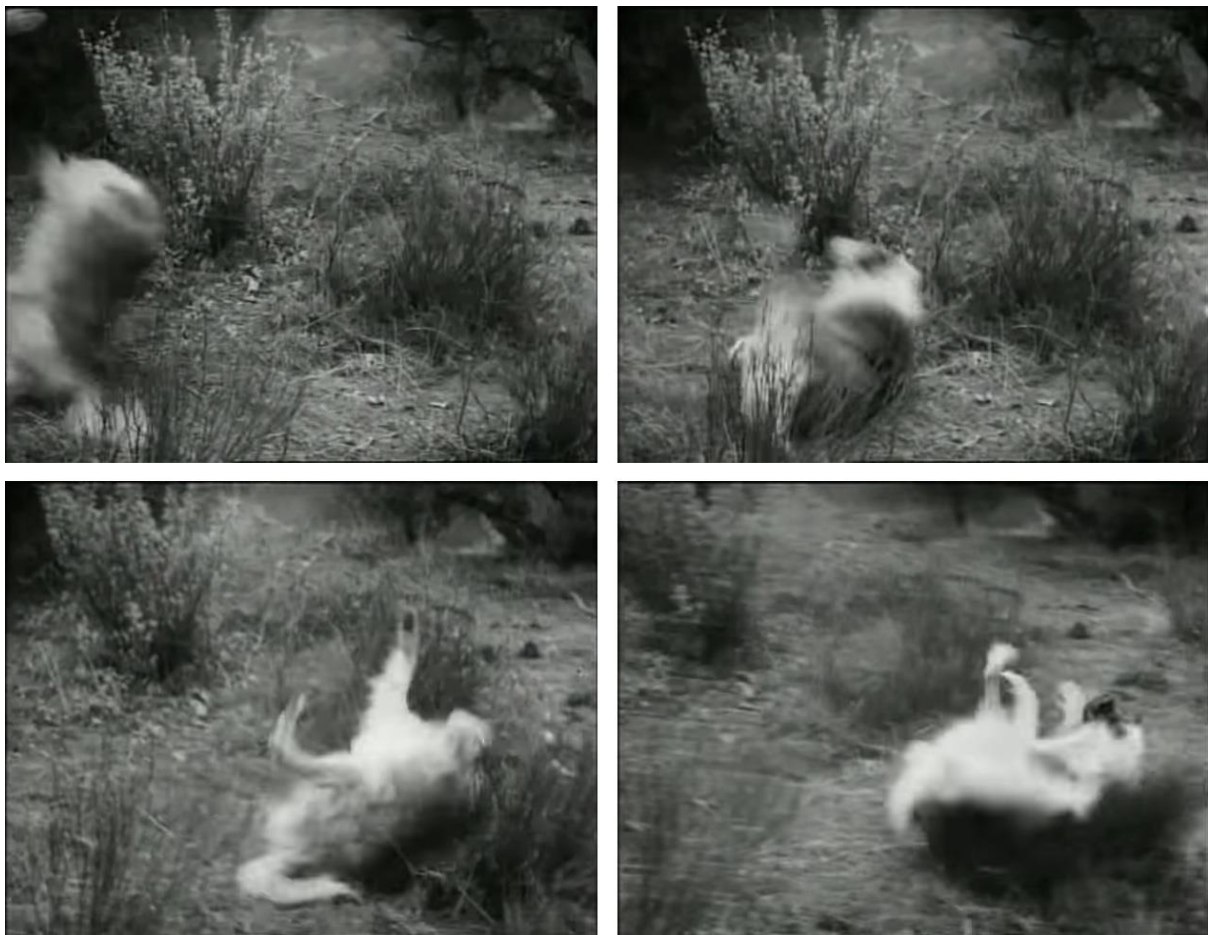
Figure 0.4: Lassie is thrown to the ground

On closer inspection of this scene, a human hand can be seen in the top left-hand corner of the screen. The hand gestures with the movement of Lassie as she tumbles into the frame, as seen in figure 0.5.

Figure 0.5: The human hand

While the human hand is difficult to identify in the stills in figure 0.5, the same is true for

Lassie's body. The human hand that throws Lassie is clearly visible in the footage itself. The

presence of the human hand begs the question about the BBFC's reasoning behind their

censorship decisions. Why did they decide to censor the footage of the dog being hit with an

object, but not the footage of Lassie being thrown to the ground? Perhaps the BBFC simply missed

the human hand in the top left corner of the screen. Perhaps they would have censored this footage

if they had seen it. But this explanation falls short when we recall that the BBFC censored the

footage of the dog being hit with an object not because they saw the object itself, but because the

dog "*reacts as if* it has been hit by an object" (2007, p.37, my emphasis). Dogs can be trained to roll

over on command, but they cannot be trained to leap sideways through the air with such force

that they continue to tumble when they hit the ground. Perhaps the BBFC considers knocking

over a dog with an object to be cruel, but throwing a dog to the ground to be humane? The human hand might actually provide the reason why this footage was not cut by the BBFC.

In 2017, footage taken on a camera phone was leaked from the set of *A Dog's Purpose* (2017). It showed Hercules, a German Sheppard, being lowered into a pool of turbulent water despite showing clear signs that he was terrified and in a state of distress. Some members of the film crew justified the events captured by the leaked footage by insisting that the presence of an animal trainer on set was assurance that Hercules was actually okay, and that the footage "mischaracterises what happened" (Bradley, 2017). This echoes the opinion of Rudd Weatherwax, the animal trainer who worked most closely with Lassie. For Weatherwax, audiences who complain about any of the *Lassie* films fail to appreciate that the scenes were contrived and the animals were well-trained (1952, p.31). Weatherwax is adamant that Lassie was trained using "patience, firmness, and love," and that any mistreatment of a dog is inexcusable (1971, p.6). Perhaps, then, the presence of Weatherwax on the set of *Lassie: Look Homeward* was enough for the BBFC to assume that Lassie was thrown to the ground with "patience, firmness, and love." But again, this does not resolve the issue about the difference between throwing a dog to the ground and hitting a dog with an object. Perhaps the dog who played the wolf was hit by an object that was thrown firmly, and with patience and love by Rudd Weatherwax?

Matters become even more unclear when we see examples of the BBFC censoring films because they contain footage of an animal being psychologically abused. Another film from the *Lassie* franchise provides a good example. In the same year that they censored *Lassie: Look Homeward*, the BBFC censored *Lassie's Great Adventure* (1963) "to remove a scene where an eagle is tethered to the ground and goaded to fury by a barking dog" (2007, p.70). In this scene, Lassie is fighting with the eagle sidekick of Chinook Pete. The eagle swoops down from a tree and begins attacking Lassie. After three passes, Lassie gets the better of the eagle and brings them down. In the diegesis of the film, the eagle and Lassie continue to fight. But according to the BBFC, the

scene could only have been made by tethering the eagle to the ground to prevent them from escaping. While tethered to the ground, the terrified eagle was barked at and attacked by Lassie. The BBFC condemned this scene as an example of animal cruelty because, as with the example of a dog being hit with an object, the events would not have taken place were it not for the intervention of the filmmakers. Stills from the censored footage can be seen in figure 0.6.

Figure 0.6: ***Lassie's Great Adventure*** **(1963)**

However, like with the causing of physical pain and suffering, the BBFC seems inconsistent with their decisions to censor films that show scenes of animals being psychologically abused. In another scene from *Lassie: Look Homeward*, we can see Lassie tumbling down a ravine into a turbulent river. Before Lassie hits the water, the same problems arise as before. Dogs cannot be trained to throw themselves sideways down a ravine, tumbling over themselves into the rocks. However, what can be seen is Lassie doing exactly that. With regards to the issue of an animal being psychologically abused, Lassie eventually falls into the river. The footage shows Lassie rolling into the river before struggling to keep her head above the water. Several shots follow that show Lassie being dragged through whitewater rapids. In the same report that the BBFC justified

censoring the footage of the eagle that had been "goaded to fury," they explained that they also censor footage of animals that have been terrified (2007, p.70). It should be asked if being thrown into whitewater rapids is a terrifying experience, not just for dogs, but for any land-dwelling animal. Weatherwax has another anecdote about Lassie that seems to offer assurances about her emotional well-being during filming. During her first screen test, Lassie was commanded to swim across the San Joaquin River to a designated spot on the other side. When she emerged from the river, she resisted the urge to shake off the water, and instead followed Weatherwax's command to slowly walk forwards, drop her head, and then close her eyes (1952, p.18). This anecdote is also used by writers in the field of animal studies, such as Jonathan Burt, as evidence of Lassie's extraordinary acting skills (2002a, p.32). In other words, while Lassie might appear to be exhausted, scared, injured, and so on, she is actually just a great actor. However, Weatherwax's anecdote could be taken to demonstrate the opposite point. Adrienne L. McLean argues that "there is no treat tasty enough" to make the experience of lying bedraggled and soaking wet a pleasurable one (2014, p.19). When Lassie is thrown into the whitewater rapids in *Lassie: Look Homeward*, perhaps she is able to disguise her feelings of terror. If she is able to hide these feelings, as she is able to hide other urges and emotions, how are the BBFC able to know when an animal has been "goaded to fury" or when an animal has had terror inflicted upon them?

Earlier, I mentioned that the distinction between *McLibel* and *Lassie: Look Homeward* was that the former was a documentary, and that the latter was a fictional film. This is true, but in the context of this argument such a distinction needs further clarification. The reason that the slaughterhouse footage was allowed to remain in a PG-rated film was because the filmmakers were not the ones who hung the bulls from their rear leg. The slaughter of the bulls would have taken place whether or not the filmmakers were present. The BBFC would have allowed this footage to be used in any film whatsoever, whether it was a fictional film or a documentary. A further illustration of this can be found in *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), a film that was

released uncut and given a U certificate. During the infamous tunnel scene, Wonka appears to lose

control of his boat. Despite the loss of control, Wonka shows no fear, and instead begins a manic

and screaming chant. While the mania builds, creepy and gruesome images are projected onto the

walls of the tunnel. One of these projections is footage of a chicken having her head cut off with

a meat cleaver. The footage of the decapitation was allowed to remain in the final cut of *Willy*

Wonka, and can be seen in every subsequent UK release.

Figure 0.7: Is the grisly reaper mowing?

      Another example of a fictional film making use of documentary footage of animal cruelty

is *Hable con Ella* (2002). When the BBFC first reviewed *Hable con Ella*, they were convinced that

the bullfighting scene towards the end of the film was orchestrated by the filmmakers. Bullfighting

had been illegal in the UK for over a century prior to the making of the film. According to the

BBFC, as long as the filmmakers did not orchestrate the bullfights, they would allow the footage

to remain in the final cut:

> However, in two scenes the lead actress was herself apparently engaged in staged
>
> bullfights, with shots showing the bull with bloody wounds from the pics stuck in

its flesh. With some difficulty, the BBFC was able to extract from the producers

clear and convincing evidence that the director, Pedro Almodovar, had in fact

filmed a real bullfight, which would have taken place regardless of the presence of

the cameras, and digitally superimposed the image of the actress over the image of

the bullfighter (BBFC, 2003, p.46).

More specifically, the filmmakers "arranged to film a trainee bull fighter, fighting a bull in

a training session which would have taken place anyway." The filmmakers then went to the

location of the bullfight to film the trainee matador wearing "the same costume as the female

character" who had her face "superimposed onto his body so the fight appeared to involve the

actress" (BBFC, 2020c). To describe this footage as 'documentary' is to trust the BBFC's reports.

It is actually very unclear what evidence was presented to the BBFC that proved that the bullfight

was not directed and orchestrated by the filmmakers. In 2001, Madrid's Animal Amnesty filed a

complaint against the film's production company, El Deso, charging them with committing acts

of animal cruelty. In response to the accusations, El Deso insisted that it "had the proper permits

to carry out the slaughter." Defending themselves further, El Deso released a statement claiming:

"When we bought the bulls we never denied that it was for shooting a film. We haven't done

anything illegal. The bullfight was conducted in the least painful way possible" (BBC News, 2001).

The version of events that El Deso told to the press shows that the bullfight was definitely directed

and conducted by the filmmakers. Regardless of what 'really happened' on set, the BBFC released

Hable con Ella uncut in the UK even though it contained footage of a bull being tortured to death.

The sequence can be seen in figure 0.8:

Figure 0.8: Hable con el toro

The BBFC has become increasingly consistent with allowing footage of the "quick" and "humane" killing of animals orchestrated by filmmakers. In the film *Oldboy* (2003), Oh Dae-Su eats a live octopus. In their 2004 annual report, the BBFC describes Dae-Su biting off the octopus's head as "a quick, clean kill" (2005b, p.68) . This also helps to explain the inclusion of the footage of a chicken being decapitated in *Willy Wonka*. The meat cleaver moves from just above the chicken's head to flat against the chopping block in only one or two frames. Because her death is so swift, it would not matter to the BBFC whether or not the filmmakers orchestrated her killing. Another example is to be found in the Italian horror film *Cannibal Holocaust* (1980). In this film, a turtle is decapitated by actor Luca Barbareschi. According to the BBFC, the death happens "almost immediately" (2012a, p.52). Because the death was so quick, the BBFC decided that the involvement of the filmmakers in the killing of the turtle should not factor into their censorship decisions, and the footage was allowed to be included in the 2011 DVD release of *Cannibal Holocaust*. The quickness of the turtle's death is debatable, since "the perception of pain can continue for at least several minutes after [a reptile's] head has been removed" (Hyndman, 2017, p.449). Putting this caveat to one side, it can be seen that the BBFC do not censor films that

contain footage of animal killing that has been orchestrated by filmmakers, just as long as the killing is, according to the BBFC's judgment, swift and humane.

And so, the BBFC censor footage of animal cruelty, but only if the abuse was orchestrated by the filmmakers. The scope of this abuse includes both the physical and the psychological wellbeing of an animal. Footage taken of an animal being physically and/or psychologically abused will not be censored if the abuse would have taken place without the presence of the filmmakers. This footage can be used in any genre of film, whether it is documentary or fictional. What counts as abuse depends upon what the BBFC sees in the version of the film that is presented to them. A swift killing is not, in the BBFC's eyes, the same as cruelty. Two important questions should be raised at this point. The first is: why are these films being censored in the first place? Why would the BBFC censor footage of animal abuse? The clash between the freedom of artistic expression and animal welfare was a contentious issue in the early days of cinema (Robertson, 1985, pp.45–47). Still today there is a debate surrounding whether or not animal cruelty is permissible in the name of art (Davis, 2017; Baecker, 2017). For over a century the UK has had stringent animal welfare laws, including the far-reaching *Protection of Animals Act 1911*. Animals on filmsets are protected under these laws, and censoring films that show animal cruelty does nothing to protect the animals who have been abused in order to obtain the footage. This leads to the second question: why does the censorship of animal violence in Britain take the particular form that it does? Take the example of *Hable con Ella*. The BBFC were concerned that the bullfight had been orchestrated by the filmmakers, and so they threatened to censor the footage. Only when Almodóvar provided evidence that the bullfight would have taken place without his presence did the BBFC allow for the footage to be included in the UK release. What difference is there between footage of a bull being tortured to death under the direction of a trainee matador, and footage of a bull being tortured to death under the direction of a trainee matador that has been organised by Pedro Almodóvar? The act of killing has already happened, and so the BBFC cannot protect the

bull. The events took place in Spain where bullfighting is legal, and so no laws were broken. Perhaps there is a difference for UK audiences? Assuming that an audience knows the exact context of how the scene that they are watching was made, how does the lack of direction by a filmmaker change their experience of watching footage of a bull being tortured to death? Assuming that an audience knows nothing about the context of the scene that they are watching, how does the lack of direction by a filmmaker change their experience of watching footage of a bull being tortured to death? This PhD thesis will answer these questions.

Structure of the PhD

The answers to these questions revolve around an obscure piece of legislation. The *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937* (henceforth referred to as the '*1937 Act*') is only two pages long (see appendix one) and remains in place to this day in the same form in which it was passed. The *1937 Act* expressly forbids the distribution and exhibition of films that contain scenes in which an animal has been cruelly mistreated. The BBFC reference the *1937 Act* in all of their decisions to censor films that contain footage depicting animal cruelty. At first sight, the *1937 Act* seems to be quite straight forward. It appears simply to prevent the exhibition of any film that contains footage of animal cruelty. However, as the previous discussion has shown, there are many issues regarding the interpretation and enforcement of this law. A research project such as this could take an historiographic approach. This would look a lot like James C. Robertson's *The hidden cinema: British film censorship in action, 1913-1975* (1993). In this book, Robertson examines the historical trajectory of the censorship decisions made by the BBFC, beginning with their first ever report in 1913. As part of his relatively chronological analysis of British censorship, Robertson draws from contemporaneous historical events, such as WWII, new legislation, and changes in the structure of film studios. There are numerous books that analyse censorship in this way, such as Jeffrey Richards' *The Age of the Dream Palace: Cinema and Society in 1930s Britain* (2009); Anthony Aldgate's *Censorship and the Permissive Society British Cinema and Theatre, 1955-1965* (1995); Sian Barber's *Censoring*

the 1970s: The BFFC and the Decade that Taste Forgot (2011); and Julian Petley's *Film and Video*
Censorship in Modern Britain (2011). For this PhD project, I would like to contribute to the discussion
on film censorship in Britain by taking a much more unorthodox approach. As I will explain in
the next section, this PhD project will combine the philosophy of Theodor Adorno with that of
Ludwig Wittgenstein in order to investigate the censorship of animal violence in British cinema.

Chapter 1: setting the scene

What do I mean by 'animal'? Are humans not also animals? Do insects count as animals?
Are octopuses animals? Many authors working in the field of animal studies find the word 'animal'
to be problematic. The most common concern is that the word 'animal' designates a strict
hierarchical demarcation between humans and animals. Another concern is that this linguistically
sustained demarcation perpetuates the abuse, killing, and exploitation of animals. Another line of
argument that is less ethically driven claims that the word 'animal' when juxtaposed with the word
'human' is simply nonsensical. If these concerns are correct, that the word 'animal' is prejudicial,
abusive, and even non-sensical, then my project immediately gets off on the wrong foot. Similar
arguments have been made regarding animal imagery, especially live action footage of animals.
Some authors argue that animals hide from humans in order to protect themselves, and the filming
of an animal necessarily violates this self-protection. Others argue that while filming an animal
might not be much of a problem, the editing of that footage inevitably anthropomorphises the
animal, and thus erases any authenticity that might have been present. In this PhD thesis, I must
look at animal representations on the screen. Like with language, such an analysis requires a
distinction to be made between images of humans and images of animals. And, if these authors
are correct, this will require looking at anthropomorphised animals who might have had their
animality erased through the act of filming. But my analysis of the word 'animal' and of moving
images of animals will be about more than just a clarification of terms. I will argue that while the
concerns of anthropocentrism, prejudice, abuse, and so on, are valid, each argument falls into the

same traps. In other words, the analysis in chapter 1 will demonstrate the need for an alternative method. This method will be shown in chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Adorno and Wittgenstein

After setting the scene in chapter 1, chapter 2 introduces Adorno and Wittgenstein. From the work of Adorno, I will be using his notion of 'constellations', immanent critique, and his commitment to metaphysics. From Wittgenstein I will be using his notion of 'family resemblances', his tool analogy, and his rejection of metaphysics. In order to do this, I will need to use the work of each philosopher in ways that neither intended. However, along the way it will be shown that these thinkers share more in common than meets the eye. One of the problems that keeps appearing in chapter 1 is the desire to create more precise concepts in order to solve some of the problems found with the word 'animal'. Using Adorno, I will show that all concepts, no matter how precise, repeat the same issues that are found with the word 'animal'. Using Wittgenstein, I will show that the word 'precise' is more of a problem than the word 'animal'. What is meant by 'precise'? What reference point is being used to assess the precision of any word? Another problem that keeps appearing in chapter 1 is the assumed split between language, meaning, and 'reality'. This assumption understands meaning to be related to, but ultimately separate from language: "Here the word, there the meaning" (Wittgenstein, 2009, §120). Using Wittgenstein, I will show that the meaning of language *is* its usage. Note that meaning is not *determined by* the usage of language; the meaning of language *is* its usage. Using Adorno, I will show that usage should not be understood on a strictly individual level. Language use is a social activity, and words such as 'animal' gain their meaning through their usage in a particular social context. This insight is also found in Wittgenstein, but only in a relatively abstract form. Adorno has a much more developed social theory, and so provides a better way of analysing the social context of language.

The way that I will combine the theories of these two thinkers is through Adorno's notion of 'constellations'. In the most concise terms possible, Adorno's notion of constellations claims

that language is always already fragmentary. When looking up the word 'animal' in a dictionary, for example, the definition given is in the form of a collection of *other* concepts, such as 'human', 'living', 'organism', 'creature', and so on. If a person wanted to know the definition of these words in order to better understand the meaning of the word 'animal', they would repeat this process *ad infinitum*. In Adorno's words, "[y]ou only need to try looking up some concept or other in the dictionary (...) to see how much this life of concepts fully unfolds within a constellation rather than in isolation" (2017, p.199). But Adorno does not confine the fragmentary and elusive character of language to a strictly textual level. The way that words are used must be considered when analysing any language. The living constellation through which a word is used is interwoven with the textual constellation mapped out through an exploration of definitions. This is not to say that the two are identical, or that the way that a word is used across several forms of life would be mirrored in a dictionary. This is only to say that language is always already constellatory and that a constellation is more than a mere expression of the relations, or structures, between concepts. It is *also* the relationship between language and the material practices of the people using that language. With this in mind, this thesis will be constructing a constellation in order to answer its questions.

Chapter 3: cinematic images and editing

The first thing that I will be doing in this chapter is laying the groundwork to address the concerns raised in chapter 1 regarding moving images of animals. This thesis examines cinematic representations of animals, and so requires a theory fit for purpose. The first theory that I will be drawing from makes a distinction between 'fabula' and 'sjužet'. With any narrative art, including film, there must be some material with which the story is told. Fabula is the story being told through sjužet, and sjužet is the material with which the story is told. This chapter will combine the theory of fabula and sjužet with another theory, namely 'cinematic suture'. The term 'suture' in cinematic theory refers to how a film is not only able to present a diegetic filmic reality to the viewer, but also enables the viewer to become immersed within that reality. Borrowing from the medical definition of suture, this term refers to the way that two elements are stitched together in

order to close a wound or a gap. In this case, the two elements that are stitched together are provided on the level of sjužet. Jonathan Burt (2002a, pp.159–163) argues that animal violence in cinema causes audiences to move their attention away from the animal image to the welfare of the actual animal. By combining the theory of fabula and sjužet with that of cinematic suture, this chapter will provide a theoretical framework to account for the way that animal violence in cinema can 'rupture' the animal image, the way that 'reality' can burst the seams of the suture that holds together the animal image.

Chapter 4: zoo animals and the animal image

Numerous texts have noted the particularly strong reaction that scenes of animal violence provoke in British audiences and in the BBFC. What are British audiences *seeing* when they watch cinematic depictions of animal violence? In the previous chapter I use the theory of cinematic suture to argue that continuity editing creates a self-contained filmic universe. Everything in this universe has its natural place. Chapter 4 will argue that animals have been edited before they have even been filmed. Using the theory of fabula and sjužet alongside the theory of suture, this chapter will show that the *real*, authentic animal that is assumed to exist beyond all social, cultural, and filmic mediation, is in fact already a product of an editing process. In short, this chapter will argue that animals are already images. In order to defend my claim, this thesis will examine zoo animals. There are several reasons why a thesis on censorship in British cinema is taking a trip to the zoo. The first reason is historical. The first films that featured 'wild' animals were exhibited to British audiences relatively late in the history of film. It was only after 1909 that wildlife films began to grow in popularity. An encounter with a wild animal required a trip to the zoo. The second, and closely related reason why this thesis examines zoo animals is because the editing of zoo animals predates the invention of film. Many authors argue that nature documentaries deceive their viewers by presenting a version of nature that is much more exciting than it really is. All of the mundane, quiet, and uneventful periods of an animal's life are removed during the editing process so that the final product is as exciting as possible. Jonathan Burt argues the same point with regards to zoo

animals (2001, p.214). He argues that the mundane activities of animals, such as foraging, sleeping, and so on, have been removed from their lives in order to make them more exciting for zoo-goers. In this chapter I will be developing this idea by using the theory of film editing found in chapter 3. Suffice to say here that my argument is that zoo animals are images whose material support is flesh and blood, concrete and electric lighting, air conditioning and selective breeding programmes.

Chapter 5: censorship

This thesis examines the censorship of animal violence in cinema. By this point, chapters 1 through 4 have worked to establish what is meant by animal image. In other words, the previous chapters have worked to explain what British audiences see when they watch cinematic depictions of animal violence. Chapter 5 is about censorship. The first thing that I will be doing in this chapter is exploring the debates that surround film censorship. The debates revolve around more than whether or not censorship is desirable, but also what counts as censorship. The first port of call in the censorship debate will be an examination of the "Liberal conception" of censorship followed by an examination of what Matthew Bunn (2015, p.26) calls "New Censorship Theory." The Liberal conception frames censorship as external, coercive, and repressive. New Censorship Theory argues that the Liberal conception is far too narrow to properly encompass the vast complexity of censorship. New Censorship Theory does not deny the insights offered by the Liberal conception, but expands upon them. This expansion pushes the notion of censorship out of the censor's office and into the marketplace, politics, and social life.

The second thing that this chapter will be doing is using Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblances, language games, and the tool analogy to avoid making essentialist claims about what censorship *really is*. Instead, this chapter will make a *non-essentialist* claim about what censorship *really is*. The meaning of the word 'censorship' is guaranteed through concrete social activity. By showing what language games are being played using the word 'censorship', and the forms of life to which the games belong, this chapter will argue that the way that the word 'censorship' is used

in film relates most closely to the Liberal conception of censorship. Part of this treatment is also to demonstrate that New Censorship Theory is correct to recognise the way that censorship is both prohibitive and productive. This needs to be considered when examining the *1937 Act* in the next chapter. Does the *1937 Act* simply prevent animal cruelty in cinema, or does it codify and regulate its proper articulation?

Chapter 6: the *1937 Act*

The final chapter of this thesis will examine the aforementioned *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937*. At first sight, the *1937 Act* seems to be quite straight forward. It appears simply to prevent the exhibition of any film that contains footage of animal cruelty. If, for example, a film contains a scene in which a tripwire is used to bring down a horse, then this film cannot be shown to the public in the UK. However, upon closer inspection, one finds that some of the wording of the *1937 Act* is quite vague and contains some rather large loopholes. In relation to the example of a film containing a shot showing a horse fall caused by a trip wire, does the *1937 Act* render the exhibition of *any* version of this film illegal because there is clear evidence that the filmmakers cruelly mistreated an animal during production? Or does it mean that this shot in particular is a problem, and so the film can be shown to the UK public once it has been removed? The interpretation of the *1937 Act* greatly effects the range and scope of censorship in the UK. In this chapter I will clarify some of the ambiguities of the *1937 Act*, as well as assessing the effectiveness of the *1937 Act* according to the intentions of the MPs who supported it. To do this, I will need to examine Acts that relate to the *1937 Act*, such as the *1911 Act* and the *2006 Act*. This examination is doing several things. The first is to ask *who* is being protected by the *1937 Act*. The second is to assess the effectiveness of the *1937 Act* on its own terms. The third is to demonstrate a synthesis of the theories laid out in the previous chapters. The *1937 Act*, the parliamentary debates that preceded its passing into law, and the related Acts that it draws from relate extremely closely to questions of the animal image, censorship, violence, language games, and so on.

Visualising the thesis

Figure 0.8 is a visualisation of the structure of the PhD as described in the previous section. Each box contains the chapter number at the top in bold. The box itself contains the content of what will be discussed in the chapter. For example, the box labelled 'Chapter 1' contains a single sub-box called 'Problems with the word 'animal'/ problems with animal image'. The box below this is labelled 'Chapter 2'. In this box there are three sub-boxes. The left sub-box is labelled 'Adorno: Metaphysical/Social meaning', the right sub-box is labelled 'Wittgenstein: Usage = Meaning', and the centre sub-box is labelled 'constellations'. The left sub-box represents the ideas and theories of Adorno, and the right sub-box represents those of Wittgenstein. The centre sub-box, titled 'constellations', refers to the method through which these sub-boxes, these sets of ideas, will be joined together. The third box follows in sequence, but from Chapter 2 onwards there is an addition of smaller arrows composed of dashed lines. These dashed lines refer to the aforementioned differences between Adorno and Wittgenstein providing the overall structure of this thesis. Following the dashed arrow that extends down from the Adorno sub-box, we can see that it connects to the sub-boxes of the following chapters. This is to make explicit that the sub-boxes found in each chapter relate to the ideas and theories of Adorno. The same is true for the right side of the diagram that sees a dashed arrow extending down from the Wittgenstein sub-box of chapter 2. In each chapter, the sub-boxes on the left and right of the main box are connected with a central sub-box. In every chapter this refers to the constellatory method that is explained in chapter 2. In chapter 6, the thesis brings the threads together, but not as a conclusion. Chapter 6 shows how the discussions of chapter 1 through 5 relate to the *1937 Act*. The introduction and epilogue buttress the six chapters. The introduction provides the reader with an overview of what to expect, and the conclusion will make explicit what has been achieved through such an analysis.

Chapter 1

Problems with the word 'animal'/
problems with animal image

Chapter 2

| Adorno: Metaphysical/ Social meaning | ← Constellation → | Wittgenstein: Usage = Meaning |

Chapter 3

| Fabula | ← Style/Suture → | Sjužet |

Chapter 4

| Species | ← Animal image → | Zoo animal |

Chapter 5

| Productive | ← Censorship → | Repressive |

Chapter 6

1937 Act
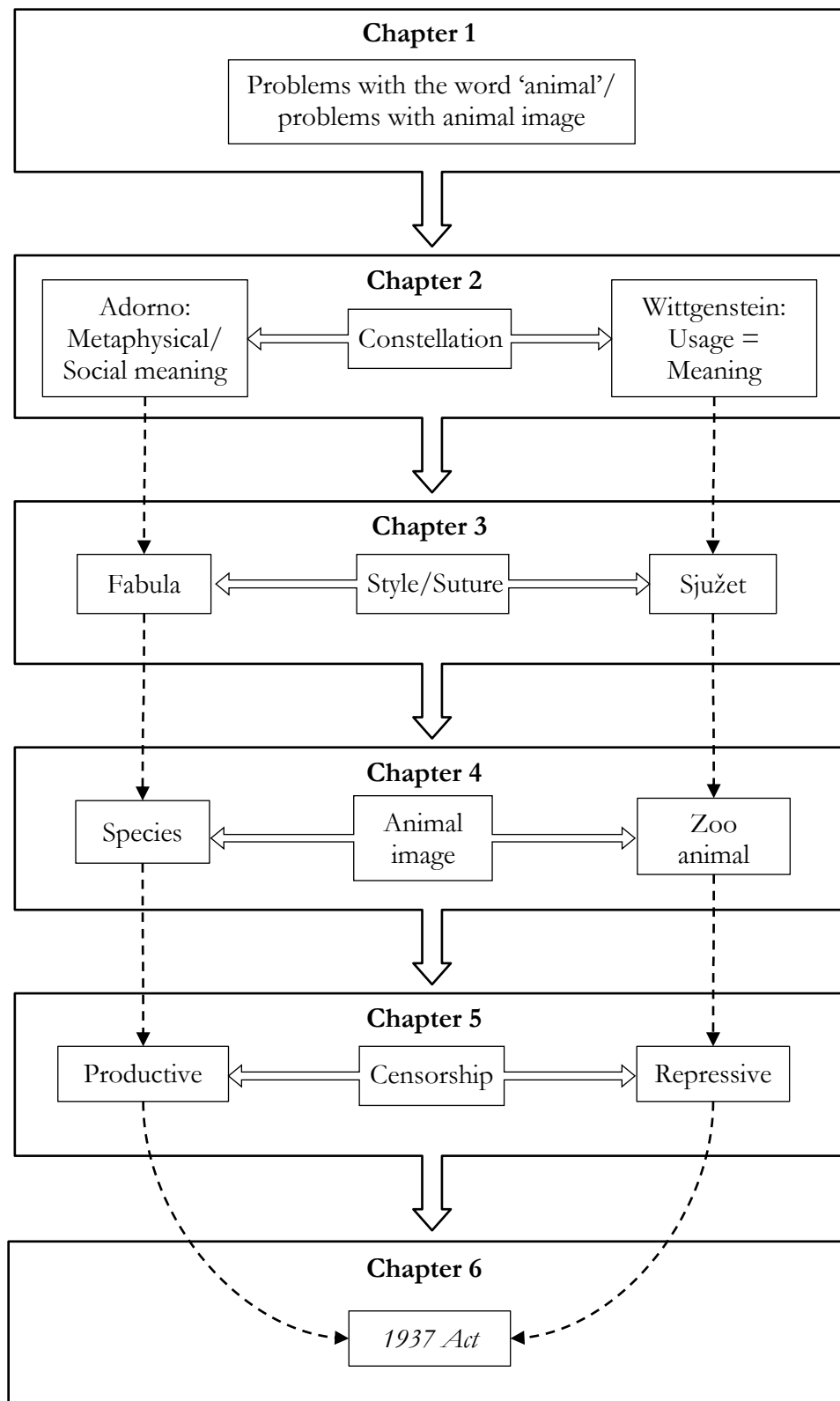
Figure 0.9: Visualising the thesis

Chapter 1: Are we talking about the same 'animal'?

Many authors working in the field of animal studies find the word 'animal' to be problematic. Despite the range of arguments addressing this contentious word, they share in common several concerns. The most common concern is that the word 'animal' designates a strict hierarchical demarcation between humans and animals. Another concern is that this linguistically sustained demarcation perpetuates the abuse, killing, and exploitation of animals. Another line of argument that is less ethically driven notes that the word 'animal' when juxtaposed with the word 'human' is simply nonsensical. The three points mentioned here are found in varying combinations across a range of different texts. The issue at stake for these authors is how to problematise the assumptions and cultural norms that are embedded within the split between humans and animals, and within the words 'human' and 'animal', without reproducing those same assumptions and cultural norms in their critical texts. A common tactic is the use of words and terms to replace 'animal', such as 'other animals' and 'nonhuman animals', as well as uncommon terms such as 'anymal' and 'aotha'.

In a similar vein, scholars have taken issue with visual representations of animals, especially live action footage of animals. The arguments regarding the problems embedded within the word 'animal' parallel similar arguments regarding visual representations of animals. One argument is that animals hide themselves from humans as a form of protection, and the filming an animal necessarily violates this self-protection. Another argument is that while filming an animal might not be much of a problem, the editing of that footage more often than not anthropomorphises the animal, and thus erases any authenticity that might have been present in the original footage. Like with the word 'animal', each critique is coupled with a proposed alternative. The proposed solutions range from the avoidance of filming animals altogether; the continuation of filming animals, but with an effort to preserve the authenticity of the animal encounter/animal absence in

the final edit; and the active participation of the filmmaker to emphasise the perspective of the animal being filmed.

In section 1 of this chapter, I will address the idea that the word 'animal' is problematic. For the most part, I agree with the ideas under examination despite rejecting the arguments themselves. This is because each argument has its own set of inconsistencies and antagonisms. I will address each of these issues individually before moving on to the next section which deals with the proposed solutions. A number of terms have been proposed that purportedly negate the problems of the word 'animal'. I examine each one and detail how they come up short of their intended purpose. Section 3 of this chapter shifts focus to examine similar tensions that have arisen in theories of visual representations of animals. Here I will examine three arguments that visual representations of animals are anthropocentric. I will examine each one individually, as well as examining their proposed solutions. The proposed solutions are less theoretically robust than those found in section 2, and instead argue by using examples of non-anthropocentric visual representations of animals. However, like section 2, I will be showing how the proposed solutions remain anthropocentric. Rather than simply offering critiques of the proposed solutions, I will offer my own approach to this problem in chapter 2.

1.1 Language and the 'Animal' problem

In this section I will address three arguments regarding the problematic nature of the word 'animal'. The three arguments are usually found together or in varying combinations. However, I will separate them in order to examine each one on its own terms. The first argument relates to the accuracy or the intelligibility of the word 'animal', especially when juxtaposed with the word 'human'. The second argument focusses more specifically on the anthropocentric character of the division between 'human' and 'animal', and the speciesism that this division expresses. The final argument regards the claim that the split between 'human' and 'animal' determines how animals

are understood, and by extension, how they are treated. According to this argument, the speciesist nature of the word 'animal' ultimately leads to, and perpetuates, speciesist behaviour.

1.1.1 'Animal' intelligibility

The most sustained critique of the relationship between language and animals is found in Joan Dunayer's book *Animal Equality: Language and Liberation* (2001). Chapter 2 begins by claiming that the word 'animal' is nonsensical when examined in any detail. Dunayer points out that "both bonobos and chimpanzees share more of their genes with humans (about 98.4 percent) than with gorillas (97.7 percent) or orangutans (96.4 percent)" (2001, pp.11–12). Yet, 'animal' is a word that groups together "chimpanzees, snails, and tree frogs," but not humans, who are, of course, also animals. Dunayer is not alone in this line of argument. Many authors turn to the natural sciences, especially genetics and evolutionary biology, to point out the absurdity of separating 'human' from 'animal' (Goodwin, 1994, p.101; Ryder, 2000, pp.6–7; Grayling, 2002, p.83; Singer, 2003; Kemmerer, 2006, pp.11–12; DeMello, 2012, p.15). Describing 'animal' as a "category error," Ken Shapiro argues that the juxtaposition 'humans and animals' is as incoherent as "tomatoes and vegetables" since tomatoes are vegetables (2008, p.4). (The irony of Shapiro's example should not be overlooked. While his argument seems to ground itself in scientific terminology, the category 'vegetable' is not scientific. Tomatoes are fruits, potatoes are stem tubers, broccolis are leaves, etc. The category 'vegetable' arises from culinary practices and refers to the 'edible' part of any plant.)

It should be mentioned here that the use of the natural sciences in this context can be misleading because it risks repeating a fallacious assumption that science is free from internal conflict. In evolutionary biology, for example, there is no consensus on how to organise the natural world. The method of classifying species known as 'cladistics' groups organisms together according to the most recent division in the 'tree of life'. A striking consequence of this method is the way that the groupings run counter to common parlance, and perhaps even common sense. According to cladistics, organisms that are commonly called 'fish' are often more closely related

to land animals than they are to each other. For example, according to the cladistic outlook, salmon are more closely related to lizards than they are to sharks, and lungfish are more closely related to cows than they are to trout (Gould, 1997, p.48; Kitching et al., 1998, p.1). Cladistics is far from being the only way of organising the natural world. Phenetics, for example, organises organisms according to their morphological similarity. In this case, salmon would be grouped with sharks and lungfish, rather than cows and lizards. However, both systems have been criticised for oversimplifying the natural world. According to Stephen Jay Gould, cladistics misleadingly depicts the 'tree of life' as extending across two-dimensional space through a steady, linear form of time (1991, p.420). Phenetics, on the other hand, lacks a reliable method that avoids the pitfalls of subjective judgement. Also, phenetics cannot yet account for features of evolutionary biology such as diversity, punctuated equilibrium, density, etc. With these antagonisms in mind, it would be misleading to use the natural sciences to provide *certainty* with regards to the validity and intelligibility of the word 'animal'.

Other arguments regarding the sensibility of the word 'animal' do not draw from the natural sciences, and instead focus on the problem at a linguistic level. Dunayer cites the *American Heritage Dictionary*, which defines an animal as "an animal organism other than a human" (2001, p.11). Dawne McCance (2013, p.57) observes that the definitions of 'animal' found in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Webster's Dictionary* also explicitly exclude humans. Away from direct references to the dictionary, other authors have pointed out the problems of shrinking such a vast and rich multiplicity into one single word (Wolfe, 2009, pp.566–567; Borkfelt, 2011, p.120). Tom Tyler has made a similar argument, but has done so specifically in relation to the definite singular generic reference (2014, p.36). Tyler focuses on the idea that an individual will only ever be an *example* of a species so long as the grammatical form aligns the singular with the general. For example, "the Boar" is a generic noun phrase that captures both an individual boar and the general concept 'boar'. 'The Boar' groups together the wide variety of boars from across the planet so that

each individual boar, regardless of location, living habits, or genus, is an example of 'the Boar'. The problems associated with 'the Boar' are also found in 'animal'. Any animal will only ever be an example rather than an individual.

Tyler's observation can be pushed one step further. Tyler's attempt to negate the over-reaching power of the definite singular generic reference repeats the same problems. Tyler uses the word 'boars'. The plural form of 'boar' refers to a plurality of individuals rather than a generic category. But this plural form necessitates a general category. Perhaps 'boars' are not merely *examples* of a species and devoid of individuality, but they remain absolutely tied to the general category 'boar'. As an individual *boar*, whether as an example or in being, the characteristics that render it to be an individual, to be distinct from other boars, are covered over by the concept 'boar'. Individual boars are firstly boars, and then individuals.

This tension can be drawn out using the texts cited above. The first two words of the prologue from *Animal Equality* are "A gorilla" (Dunayer, 2001, xv). The concept 'gorilla' is already too general since there are four subspecies of gorilla (WWF, 2012a). "A gorilla" ignores these differences. However, even if Dunayer used a more specific term, such as 'A Western Lowland Gorilla', the analysis given below still stands. The individual to which Dunayer was referring possessed characteristics that do not fit into the concept 'gorilla'. In terms of personality, temperament, lived history, and so on, he was unique. Not only that, but the evolutionary theory that Dunayer uses shows that offspring differ genetically from their parents. Whatever the differences might be, whether it is temperament, personality, lived history, or genetics, each individual gorilla, and each animal, is in some way unique. They have something about them that extends beyond the general concept used to identify them.

However, one might respond to this problem by subsuming this individual and all of his unique characteristics into the general concept 'gorilla'. In this way, the characteristics that used to render the individual to be different from the general concept 'gorilla' are now a part of that

concept. This subsumption, however, would force the concept 'gorilla' to include everything that this individual is not, that is, the characteristics of other individuals that he does not share. And so, the individual would not do justice to the emphatic concept 'gorilla' and would once again become a mere partial example of a universal concept. The individual and the concept 'gorilla' would remain non-identical. It is actually here that it becomes clear that the opposite problem is also true: a 'real' gorilla does not accurately represent the mythology, idealisation, culture, and stories embedded in the word 'gorilla'. No biological, chemical, or zoological analysis of a gorilla will find the essence of that which is embedded in the concept 'gorilla'. There is a contradiction immanent to the concept 'gorilla', a contradiction that says simultaneously that 'X is a gorilla' and that 'there are no gorillas'. 'X is a gorilla' because 'gorilla' is the concept used to denote certain individuals. 'There are no gorillas' because no individual actually fits this emphatic concept. They are always missing something while simultaneously possessing something more. I labour over this point in order to show that the solution to the inaccuracy of the concept 'animal', or 'gorilla', or even 'human', cannot be mitigated with more 'precise' concepts. The movement between individual and general is an antagonism immanent to concepts themselves.

And so, on a relatively sterile linguistic level, the problematic nature of the word 'animal' can be brought to light. However, this problem is specific to concepts as such, rather than an issue relating to individual concepts. But it is misleading to present the 'animal' problem as a purely linguistic problem. In the next section I will address the claims that the split between 'human' and 'animal' is speciesist.

1.1.2 Anthropocentric/Speciesist Language

The most common concern with the debates surrounding the word 'animal', especially when it is juxtaposed with the word 'human', is that it "clearly" expresses a form of prejudice, namely 'speciesism' (Ryder, 2000, p.2). 'Human' and 'animal' stand in opposition to each other in such a way that any individual being referred to as an 'animal' is considered to be inferior to any

individual being referred to as 'human' (Ingold, 1994, p.4; Cazaux, 1998, p.373). The word 'animal', when used to refer to humans, is most often used as an insult or as a way to justify the oppression of a particular social group (Grayling, 2002, p.84; Patterson, 2002, p.28). According to these authors, using the word 'animal' in this way strongly implies that being an animal is something altogether undesirable. This being said, there are examples of when using the word 'animal' to refer to a human is a form of compliment. For example, to be an 'animal' in the bedroom is to be an exciting and energetic sexual partner, and to be an 'animal' in sports is to be a ruthless and powerful athlete. Although the aforementioned authors do not make this link, the use of the word 'animal' as a compliment in the context of prejudicial language still relies upon a form of speciesism. Although there are clear differences, which I will detail later, the use of such complements parallels the problems found with so-called 'positive stereotypes'. While statements such as "Asians are good at maths" (Shah, 2019) and "Black people are good at dancing" (Kay et al., 2013) might appear to be harmless complements, their functioning depends upon and reproduces racist stereotypes. Harmful stereotypes are reproduced under the veil of good intentions. As will be shown, following the line of argument that the word 'animal' is speciesist, the use of 'animal' as a complement is also a veiled form of prejudice.

Speciesism is an attitude of bias in favour of one's own species *and* against those members of other species (Singer, 2009, p.35). The important thing to note is the way that the identity of one group requires the negation of another. The fact that 'animal' is defined as that which is *lacking* humanity is what renders the distinction between 'human' and 'animal' to be speciesist. History is littered with texts arguing that humans are somehow special because they possess something that animals lack. The wide variety of anthropocentric arguments more often than not make claims that certain traits, such as the capacity to reason, to think, tool usage, language, culture, and so on, are all exclusively human. Through the discovery of these same traits in animals, several authors have shown, time and again, that claims of human exceptionalism are fallacious at best (Tanner,

1994, pp.127–128; Ryder, 2000, pp.6–7; Dunayer, 2001, pp.11–20; Singer, 2003; Haraway, 2005, pp.151–152; Beirne, 2009, pp.7–8; Cook, 2015, pp.590–591). In the words of Stephen Clark (1977, p.96):

> [I]t is not that we have *discovered* [beasts] to lack a language, but rather that we define, and redefine, what Language actually is by discovering what beasts do not have. If they should turn out to have the very thing hitherto supposed language to be, we will simply conclude that language is something else again.

This process is more than just a case of constantly shifting the goal posts for the sake of categorisation. The concept 'human' *requires* the negation of the concept 'animal' in order to sustain itself. The aforementioned use of 'animal' as a compliment is a veiled form of prejudice because it repeats the speciesist gesture of defining humans against that which animals supposedly lack. To be an 'animal' in the bedroom is to be *without* inhibition, self-consciousness, prudishness, and so one. To be an 'animal' in sports is to be *without* mercy, compassion, consideration for others, and so on.

The arguments against human exceptionalism can risk making some familiar mistakes. The search for so-called human traits in other animals repeats the fallacious reasoning found in such fields as sociobiology. In an attempt to explain all human behaviour in terms of evolutionary biology, sociobiology assumes that if any trait observed in humans is exhibited by other animals, then this behaviour *must* be a result of natural processes. For example, if a male mammal is observed to fornicate with multiple females, this behaviour can be used to explain why some men cheat on their wives (Wróblewska-Skrzek, 2021, p.1888). However, as Gould argues, sociobiologists are not discovering the biological root of these behaviours, but are instead rediscovering their own anthropocentric assumptions based on "misleading external and superficial similarities" between humans and animals (1990, pp.242–244). The nuances and subtle

differences between animal behaviours are extinguished in the search for similarities. The erasure of difference must be avoided in any attempt to debunk myths of human exceptionalism. As Tim Ingold emphasises, animals that do not possess traits found in humans should not be seen as *lacking* anything. If animals are unable to grasp a working understanding of, let's say, generative grammar, this should not be seen as a defect or evidence of human superiority (1994, p.10). Equally, in an attempt to avoid any trace of human exceptionalism, animal languages should not be valued for their resemblance to human language. A non-anthropocentric approach might be to analyse an animal on their own terms, rather than comparing them to humans. However, even with this caveat, the speciesist ideology cannot be negated simply by providing more robust and convincing counter-evidence.

Slavoj Žižek points out that ideology finds its strength by using counter-evidence to support itself (2008, pp.49–50). For example, antisemitism is not founded on any kind of truth about Jews. Any negative stereotype ascribed to Jews can be found in individuals belonging to any other social group, and there may well be individual Jews who do actually fit certain stereotypes. However, antisemitism is not sustained by anything that Jews are or anything that Jews do. Instead, antisemitism uses particular ideas about Jews as a way to cover over the inconsistencies and contradictions immanent to the antisemite's self-image (Žižek, 2008, pp.48–49). Any form of evidence that challenges antisemitism, whether scientific, logical, or experiential, is co-opted by antisemitic ideology because antisemitism was never based on facts in the first place. For example, an antisemite might have a Jewish neighbour who does not fit any antisemitic stereotype. But this truth would be taken by the antisemite as evidence of the Jew's stereotypically deceptive character. By not conforming to any stereotype at all, the Jew confirms to the antisemites suspicions about Jews being sneaky. So too with ideological figure of the animal (Adorno, 2007, p.201). Evidence of animal consciousness, language, emotional expression, tool usage, and all the rest, actually serves as an affirmation of the instinctual and irrational character of animals, while those who disagree

are guilty of anthropomorphising animals. The question is not 'is speciesism correct?', but rather 'what function does the idea of the animal play in the reproduction of speciesist ideology?'

Speciesism has been compared directly to other forms of prejudice, such as racism, sexism, ableism, and so on (Ryder, 1975, p.5; Dunayer, 2001, p.1; Adams, 2010, p.100; Borkfelt, 2011, p.120; Milburn and Cochrane, 2021, pp.1–4). The above cited authors agree that in the same way that, for example, claims regarding the superior intelligence of white people over black people, or of men over women, are based on junk science and cultural bias, the speciesist division between humans and animals is also indefensible. Human exceptionalism has been demonstrated to be a myth, and yet language still expresses this exceptionalism. This is why the juxtaposition of 'human' and 'animal' is deemed to be prejudicial. While arguments regarding speciesist language are for the most part correct, there are differences between speciesist language and other forms of prejudicial language. There are two things to consider.

Firstly, prejudicial language can directly harm an individual (Butler, 1997, pp.2–6; Brah, 1999, pp.7–9). Secondly, it can indirectly harm individuals through the perpetuation of certain ideas about them. The next section of this chapter will be devoted to addressing the latter claim, and so I will only focus on the former here. Few authors *explicitly* claim that speciesist language directly harms animals. For example, in arguing that animals should be protected by hate-speech laws, Josh Milburn and Alasdair Cochrane (2021, pp.14–16) reject the direct harm argument altogether. They find that arguments regarding what they call the "subjective harm" caused by hate speech are misplaced. This is because, according to them, individuals can feel "harmed" by non-prejudicial language (such as being rejected by a love interest), and individuals can be unharmed by prejudicial language (such as not being a speaker of the language in which the hate speech is used). What matters more is the harm that prejudicial language causes through the creation of a hostile environment. However, there are some authors who do argue that prejudicial language can *directly* harm animals. Piers Beirne (2009, p.14) has gone so far as to describe speciesist language as

"a form of animal abuse," and Joan Dunayer (2003, p.61) claims that speciesist language can obliterate an animal's sentience. However, neither author explains how this relationship works.

Despite the dearth of explicit claims regarding the direct harm towards animals caused by speciesist language, any argument that speciesist language is *just like any other* form of prejudicial language implicitly makes this claim. While I agree that the capacity for language is not unique to humans, I think it is wrong to conflate each instance of language. While there are commonalities to be found in the way that bats, bees, and buzzards fly, there are also distinct biomechanical, physiological, social, and behavioural differences between each species (and even between individuals of each species). To talk about the way that buzzards are able to glide by locking their wings in place is not to comment on the inferiority of the way that bees fly. Continuing this analogy, history is littered with theorists who insist that only buzzards can fly, changing the definition of flight each time another species exhibits such behaviour. However, we should not let this history deter us from highlighting and discussing difference.

Returning to language, differences between animal languages should not be overlooked. To say that dolphin language has features that are not found between lions is, of course, not a comment on the superiority of dolphin language. So too with the claim that Korean has features not found in English, and vice versa. Authors have used examples of animals failing to 'fully' grasp human language as evidence that animals do not possess the capacity for language, even though no human has ever learned to speak the language of lions. To paraphrase Wittgenstein, and to risk taking his metaphor far too literally, we might say that *when* a lion speaks, we do not understand what is said. Similarly, if someone tried to insult a lion by calling him a 'rat', he would not understand what is said. In order for prejudicial language to cause direct harm, it must be part of the language games in which an individual participates. This is true within human languages, let alone between languages of other species. A non-Korean speaker would not be directly harmed by being referred to as a '쥐', even if this word could somehow cause indirect harm by promoting

prejudicial ideas. Not only is identity given, it is received (Butler, 1997, pp.6–7). The prejudicial language used against, let's say, black men, is not only used to perpetuate prejudicial ideas, but it is used by black men as part of their identity, often resulting in an "inferiority complex" (Fanon, 2008, p.9). Having one's identity formed through a language that expresses a hatred and disdain for one's self elicits "feelings of humiliation, isolation, and self-hatred" (Delgado, 2013, pp.179–186). This direct harm is not present in speciesist language.

One final demonstration of how speciesist language is not like other forms of prejudicial language is that many authors who argue that the term 'animal' is speciesist continue to *use* it in their texts. Even academic journals that insist that contributors avoid using the word 'animal' continue to use the word 'animal' in their titles. Shapiro, cofounder of the *Animals and Society Institute*, has also observed this trend (2008, p.4). A common defence of using speciesist language is one that favours grammatical elegance, as will be shown in section 1.2.2 of this chapter. The alternatives to the word 'animal' are said to be cumbersome and stylistically unpleasing and the majority of the alternatives fall into the same traps that they are trying to avoid (Cazaux, 1998, p.373; Ryder, 2000, p.2; Beirne, 2009, pp.17–18; Nibert, 2010, xiv–xv; Korsgaard, 2011, pp.91–118; York and Longo, 2017, p.43; Sollund, 2019, p.5). Another argument for the continuation of the use of the word 'animal' is the way that it functions as a reminder of existing prejudices. According to Shapiro, using the word 'animal' in certain contexts, such as in the names of journals, "highlights the contradictions in current usage while retaining the emphasis on human-animal relationships" (2008, p.5). If we follow the logic that speciesist language is like any other form of prejudicial language, it becomes immediately clear how absolutely inappropriate such arguments would be. It is hard to imagine any academic supporting the use of racist/sexist/transphobic/etc. language to *refer to* individuals as a way of highlighting contradictions in such language use. It is even harder to imagine a journal devoted to understanding issues on race, or gender, or sexuality

having a prejudicial word as part of its title. In short, while the word 'animal' does meet the definition of speciesism, this should not blind us to the nuances of prejudicial language.

1.1.3 Language determining reality

The last argument that I will examine concerns the relationship between language and thought, and by extension, between language and action. Rather than trying to summarise several centuries of philosophical debate, I will instead narrow my focus to the actual arguments made by scholars who claim that the word 'animal' influences thought and action. Many authors who express their reservations about the word 'animal' argue that the relationship between language and action is extremely close, and perhaps even linear. David Nibert claims that "[t]he very words we use exert a considerable control over our consciousness and our views of the world" (2010, xiv). For Dunayer, language is inseparable from how we treat animals (2001, p.9). She argues that speciesist language allows animal abuse to continue by hiding the truth of the matter behind deceptive words. Along with these authors, others argue that *because* language influences our thoughts and behaviour, speciesist language will in turn lead to speciesist behaviour (Wolch and Emel, 1998, xi; Borkfelt, 2011, p.117).

Like the linguistic problems of the word 'animal', these observations should be pushed one step further. The phrasing of the aforementioned arguments posits a crude distinction between the 'real world' and language. The arguments imply that there is an objective, unmediated world that is only accessible through the filter of language. However, as will be shown in more detail in chapter 2, the separation between 'the world' and language, or between reality and language, is false. In the words of Adorno (2001, p.68):

> It is true that we can only speak in a way which is mediated through language, but
> for that reason language itself, as one phenomenon among others, becomes a part
> of reality as a whole, a moment of reality, and should not be hypostatized over
> against it. It is in the nature of language that we can speak of an absolutely formless

matter, even though speaking of formless matter is itself a form. It is as if we were

in the prison of language but were able to recognize it as a prison.

And so, Nibert's claim that language "influences consciousness" falls half a step short. Not only does language influence consciousness, it constitutes subjectivity, identity, and reality. The speciesist division between 'human' and 'animal' is not just a smear on the lens that filters the 'real world'. Language is not a dreamlike illusion built to escape reality; it is the basic support of reality itself (Žižek, 2008, pp.45–46). Those interpellated through speciesist language find their identity, find their being, through the negation of 'animal' (Wolfe, 2003, p.6).

By elaborating on the arguments found in the previous sections, it seems that the theoretical underpinnings of this project coincide with the claims made by the above cited authors. However, the elaborations actually point to an important difference in conceptualising speciesist language. I mentioned briefly that authors continue to use the word 'animal' due to a lack of viable alternatives. This quest for alternatives requires that certain assumptions are made about how language functions. In order to demonstrate these assumptions, and how they fall apart under examination, I will examine the proposed alternatives to the word 'animal' in the next section.

1.2 Solving the 'animal' problem

The issue at stake for the previously mentioned authors is how to problematise the cultural norms embedded within the split between 'human' and 'animal' without reproducing those same cultural norms in their own language. A popular approach is to avoid using the word 'animal' altogether. There are several ways of avoiding the use of the word 'animal', such as 'non-human animal', 'other animal', 'anymal', and 'aotha'. As previously mentioned, the aforementioned problems found with the word 'animal' are for most part correct. However, the quest for suitable alternatives expresses untenable assumptions about language. It is these assumptions that this section will explore. Each term expresses these assumptions in slightly different ways. Addressing

each one individually provides a richer and more thorough critique of some of the problems within critical animal studies.

1.2.1 Non-human animal

'Non-human animal' is supposed to serve as a reminder that humans are also animals (Lindgren and Öhman, 2018, p.1). The specific placing of 'human' alongside 'animal' within discourse is also supposed to reflect the natural and cultural interconnections between humans and animals (Dunayer, 2001, pp.12–13). The problem, however, is that the *implicit* demarcation between 'human' and 'animal' becomes expressed *explicitly* through the addition of 'non-human'. 'Animal' is inscribed with what was a purely negative, and therefore contingent difference that sat somewhere between 'animal' and 'human'.

In 'non-human animal', the first signifier is 'non-'. 'Non-' is without content and sits as an empty negation that anticipates a future subject. 'Non-' begs the question, 'what is to be negated?' Its presence indicates that the real subject is yet to come. 'Human' arrives to fill the void, making its home in 'non-'. The term 'non-human' appears at first sight to be a term that establishes the absence of 'human'. What happens instead is 'human', as the subject and content of the original open negation, becomes the concrete subject against which the remaining sentence is to be measured against. Of course, 'non-human' operates like other linguistic signs in that it remains open until further linguistic content stitches its meaning in place. However, the arrival of 'animal' is one that merely establishes specificity to the term 'non-human'. 'Animal' only clarifies what is being measured against 'human'. In this way, 'human' doubles in strength as it becomes not only a privileged category of its own, but the standard by which the rest of the sentence is measured.

As Geertrui Cazaux rightly points out, the word 'animal' is replaced with a term that places 'human' as the yardstick (1998, p.373). To make her point clear, Cazaux uses the example of referring to women as "non-male humans" as a way of negating the problems associated with the word 'women'. The attempt to erase the hierarchical distinction between 'human' and 'animal' is

initiated by replacing 'animal' with a term that enunciates 'human' once again. 'Animal', by becoming 'non-human animal', is immediately and explicitly subordinate to 'human' before any other consideration.

1.2.2 Other animals

The second term, 'other animals', is a shortened version of 'humans and other animals' (Nibert, 2010, xv). The shortening is one that removes the word 'human' from the text and thus appears to avoid the problems found with 'non-human animal'. It also addresses the point raised by Shapiro in relation to the 'tomatoes and vegetables' problem (2008, p.4). This juxtaposition is saved from its unintelligibility with the addition of the word 'other': 'tomatoes and other vegetables'. The main issue with 'other animals' is that it reminds the reader that humans are also animals while continuing to grant humans a special category of their own. Humans are just animals: philosophy, fascism, video games, and pornography are simply examples of this animal's behaviour. And yet, this animal is so special that it cannot be considered to be some 'other animal'. The so-called 'human animal' retains its position of privilege as the yardstick that the rest of the animal kingdom is measured against. Even when 'human' is not present, 'other animals' remain secondary and subordinate.

A less detrimental problem, although one that is worth discussing if we recall the claim that speciesist language is an example of prejudicial language, is that authors who use 'other animals' do so inconsistently and in ways that confuse their argument. The author who most consistently uses the term 'other animals' is David Nibert. An example of this comes from his book *Animal Rights/Human Rights* (note that it is not titled *Other Animal Rights/Human Rights*):

> The human species has existed for at least five million years, but many scientists
>
> believe that the hunting of other animals is a fairly recently development in human
>
> history (Nibert, 2010, pp.21–22).

This sentence reads as though the word 'animal' has been directly substituted for 'other animals'. If there is a *direct* substitution, then the term loses its critical edge by no longer reminding the reader that humans are also animals. This sentence also reads as though humans hunted other humans for a period of time before they began hunting animals. Carol Adams also advocates for using 'other animals' and yet struggles to remain consistent: "We also distance ourselves from *animals* through the use of metaphors or similes that distort the reality of *other animals'* lives" (2010, p.94, my emphasis). As previously mentioned, many authors agree with the ethos behind 'other animals' but choose to stick with the word 'animal' to avoid such confusion and inconsistency (Beirne, 2009, p.18; Korsgaard, 2011, pp.91–118; York and Longo, 2017, p.43; Sollund, 2019, p.5).

1.2.3 Anymal, aotha

In this final section I will examine two neologisms: 'anymal' and 'aotha'. The first, 'anymal', was invented by Lisa Kemmerer (2006). It is a contraction of 'any' and 'animal'. The term refers to "all animals, unique and diverse, marvellous and complex, who do not happen to be *homo sapiens*." For Kemmerer, the distinction between humans and animals is important to express in language, but the term 'animal' distances humans from animals by focussing on differences, whereas 'anymal' focuses on similarities. Kemmerer also claims that the term avoids the "Western dualisms" of 'non' and 'other' (2006, p.11). The second term, 'aotha', is an acronym of 'animals other than human animals' (Janssen, 2017, p.417). It was first coined by Geertrui Cazaux in 2002 (Beirne, 2009, p.17). The term is very rarely used. Even Cazaux does not use it in her later writings (Cazaux, 2007). The motivation behind its creation was, like 'anymal', to grant to ability to speak about animals through a word that did not carry with it the cultural baggage of the word 'animal'.

The reason that I am analysing these terms despite their rarity is because they are great examples of the way in which inventing new words in order to replace old ones fails to address the problems that the old words expressed. 'Anymal' expresses this failure most clearly. Kemmerer tries to negate "Western dualisms" that designate 'humans' and 'everyone else' by coining a term

whose definition also makes this distinction: "all animals (…) who do not happen to be *homo sapiens*" (2006, p.10). This definition is almost identical to the dictionary definitions of 'animal' given earlier. The only difference is, according to Kemmerer, that 'animal' carries with it a negative "social agenda," whereas 'anymal' reminds us of "morally relevant similarities" (2006, pp.11–12). Richard Ryder unwittingly expresses the problem perfectly. Ryder laments that there is no word to refer to "those creatures who are not of the human species" (2000, p.2). One can easily throw together a random series of letters and ascribe the above definition, so what is the problem? Ryder, and Kemmerer, want a word that marks humans as distinct from animals without marking them as distinct. This problem is also found with 'anymal'. The problem is not with an individual's ability to string together a series of letters and ascribe to it whatever definition that they like, but with the fact that *language* does not function in this way.

1.2.4 The quest for alternatives

Although the previous arguments are not made in these terms, the quest for an alternative to the word 'animal' assume a much stronger version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. This hypothesis claims that a language can determine the thought and perception of its speakers (Bussmann et al., 2006, p.1027). The Hopi language, for example, has a verbal system and grammar that imbues the speakers of Hopi with a specific perception of time and space. The structure and grammar of the Hopi language separates the function of a building from the building itself. This is markedly different from English where the word 'school' refers to both a building and the function of that building (Carroll, 2012, p.22). According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, if a native speaker of one language became fluent in another language, they also gain access to the specific perception of time and space generated by that language. The stronger version of the Sapir-Wharf hypothesis implied in the creation of 'anymal' and 'aotha' is that individual words, separate from grammar, syntax, structure, etc., influence the perceptions of the speaker. By plucking the word 'animal' out of the English language and replacing it with 'other animal' or 'anymal' or 'aotha', one

is granted a new perception of animals that is less burdened with notions of hierarchy and domination.

The implication is that the transmission of ideas and meaning is ascribed to individual words. However, to think of an individual word removed from any other linguistic context is impossible. Take the word 'beautiful' as an example. If we try to remove the word 'beautiful' from any other linguistic determination it becomes completely meaningless. One way to understand the meaning of the word 'beautiful' is by looking up the definition in the dictionary. But would the dictionary definition of 'beautiful' be exhaustive? By examining how the word 'beautiful' is actually used we can start to get a much fuller picture. For example, the meaning of the word 'beautiful' is *retroactively* posited in the following sentence: 'they are beautiful but intelligent'. By using the word 'but' rather than 'and', part of the meaning of the word 'beautiful' in *this* sentence is that beautiful people are not known to be intelligent (Lacan, 2006, p.419). Also consider that the meaning of the word 'beautiful' in this sentence changes according to wider contexts. What, for example, is the meaning of the word 'beautiful' in the sentence 'they are beautiful but intelligent' when this sentence is used to demonstrate a linguistic theory in a PhD thesis? Would the meaning change if a CEO used this sentence to describe his female members of staff? Would it be different again if used by an ornithologist to describe blue tits? The word 'beautiful' remains open within a plethora of formal and cultural meanings. All words, including the word 'animal', have this openness about them. This is why the following sentence in no way expresses equality between humans and animals: anymals have been put on earth to serve human beings. The point is that the way in which words attain their meaning is not linear and, as will be shown in chapter 2, depend upon how they are used.

1.3 Animal images

One of the reasons that the above discussion is important and relevant to this thesis is that I am writing about animal violence, as opposed to human violence. Since the linguistic distinction

that underpins the focus of this study has been charged with reproducing anthropocentrism and speciesism, as potentially contributing to the continuation of animal violence, and as being nonsensical, an examination of these claims was necessary. Running closely alongside this line of thinking is the emergence of a similarly troubling distinction in the visual realm. In order to write about animal violence in British cinema, I must look at animal representations on the screen. Like with language, such an analysis requires an *a priori* distinction between images of humans and images of animals. Despite such a distinction being made, there are marked differences between the word 'animal' and animal images. An obvious difference is the way that the word 'animal' can subsume "chimpanzees, snails, and tree frogs," whereas images do not have such power. There is no singular 'animal image' that represents all animals. One immediate consequence of this difference is that the analysis of the word 'animal' given above cannot be transplanted *tout court* onto visual representations of animals.

Another important difference is that while the significance of the word 'animal' comes from the fact that this thesis is written in English, and remains well within the confines of academic prose, the subject of this study is not animal images in general. This thesis examines cinematic representations of animals, and so requires an analysis fit for purpose. The methods required to analyse animal images in medieval bestiaries, for example, may well be of some use, but ultimately cannot offer any insight with regards to understanding moving images, editing, the indexicality of film, the possibility of showing elements of the material world that cannot be seen by any human eye, etc. And so what follows is an overview of some arguments that address the "anthropocentric" character of certain representations of animals in film, and an overview of some proposed solutions. While the question of anthropocentrism links this section to the first half of the chapter, the subject matter necessitates a slightly different approach.

Like with the word animal, some authors argue that animal images, especially live action images in film, can directly influence human behaviour. Barbara Creed and Maarten Reesink claim

that the film *Babe* (1995), "a feature film about a pig determined to escape the butcher's axe, was such a hit that the sales of bacon and sausages fell worldwide" (2015, p.96). Creed and Reesink do not provide any sources to support their claims about falling bacon and sausage sales, but there is an abundance of counter-evidence. In 1995, the year that *Babe* was released, the agricultural publication *Successful Farming* reported the pork industry's successes:

> Last year there were 31 farms owning at least 10,000 sows. This year there are 44.
> The top 10 farms added 159,500 sows in the last year (19% growth). This elite
> group now owns almost 1 million sows (Freese, 1995).

An independent report by Hayri Önal et al (2000) confirms that pork consumption in the US rose throughout the 1990s, including in 1995. Pork consumption also rose in Japan, Korea, the United Kingdon, Norway, and New Zealand (Chern et al., 2003; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2021). However, even without such counter-evidence, economic, social, cultural, racial, gendered, religious, and political influences of meat consumption (Gossard and York, 2003) inevitably overshadow the influence that a single film might have. With this in mind, I will be trying to avoid analysing claims that animal images directly influence behaviour. Instead, I will be focussing on claims regarding the anthropocentrism of animal images.

What does it mean to describe representations of animals in film as 'anthropocentric'? It should be stressed that 'anthropo*centric*' does not mean the same thing as 'anthropo*morphic*'. I will assume a meaning of the word 'anthropocentric' that is found within many texts discussed in this chapter. 'Anthropocentric' refers to anything in which humans are given central importance. 'Anthropomorphic' refers to any object or being, other than a human, that has a human form or shape. While anthropomorphic representations of animals are very often anthropocentric, this is not always the case. As will be shown in this section, even though authors such as André Bazin condemned certain forms of anthropomorphism, he was not completely against it (Pick, 2011,

p.111). Bazin thought that certain forms of anthropomorphism can bring to light the similarities between humans and animals, thus undoing any anthropocentric pretences (Jeong, 2011a, p.180). And so, with this in mind, what follows is an analysis of arguments made by three authors that certain representations of animals in film are anthropocentric. The first author is Randy Malamud, whose argument rests upon Laura Mulvey's theory of the male gaze. Malamud uses Mulvey's work in formulating his concept of the 'human gaze'. The next author is Seung-hoon Jeong whose arguments make use of the work of Andre Bazin, specifically, Bazin's writings on montage and *decoupage.* The final author is Anat Pick whose arguments also draw from the work of Andre Bazin, but in combination with the experimental biology of Jakob von Uexküll.

1.3.1 The human gaze

Randy Malamud's thinking on anthropocentric representations of animals in film draws from Mulvey's theory of the male gaze (2010, pp.6–8). Malamud uses Mulvey's work in formulating his concept of the 'human gaze'. In Malamud's words, "I simply transpose [Mulvey's theory] to characterize the image of the animal as passive raw material for the active gaze of the human." Mulvey, according to Malamud, argues that:

> the viewer at the movies is in a masculine position (and quite possibly a voyeur or
> a fetishist as well), deriving visual pleasure from a dominant, sadistic perspective
> (Malamud, 2010, p.7).

In this passage, the "viewer" is without gender, but occupies a "masculine position." The additional positions, held between parathesis, imply that the viewer will inevitably occupy the masculine position, while the voyeur and the fetishist are only possibilities. A key element of the masculine position is that the perspective offered is dominant and sadistic. While the genderless viewer looks at a film from a dominant and sadistic perspective they ultimately experience visual pleasure. What is the viewer looking at from this particular perspective? "The object on the screen is the object

of desire—paradigmatically, the objectified woman" (Malamud, 2010, p.6). The male protagonist provides the image in which the viewer identifies with from the masculine position, whereas the "objectified woman" is not to be identified with. She is only to be looked at. Since cinematic images of women are there solely to be looked at, they are stylised in such a way as to enable the dominant and sadistic pleasure gained from the masculine position.

There are a few things to consider with Malamud's reading of Mulvey. Firstly, the viewer is genderless. However, as Janet Bergstrom and Mary Ann Doanepoint out, "there is no trace of the female spectator" in Mulvey's famous essay (1989, p.7). The male gaze is not only from a masculine position, but is also constituted through male eyes. The viewer/spectator "projects *his* look" onto the screen (Mulvey, 1989, p.838, my emphasis). The genderless character of Malamud's viewer makes the transfiguration from male gaze to human gaze much easier by glossing over the specificities of Mulvey's gender theory. Related to this point, the second thing to consider with Malamud's reading is how voyeurism, fetishism, sadism, and domination are psychoanalytical concepts used by Mulvey (1989, p.840) to describe the "male unconscious." These concepts relate to how the male unconscious tries to overcome castration anxiety through a "preoccupation with the re-enactment of the original trauma (investigating the woman, demystifying her mystery)" and/or through a "complete disavowal of castration by the substitution of a fetish object or turning the represented figure itself into a fetish so that it becomes reassuring rather than dangerous" (1989, p.840). According to Mulvey's reading of Freud, only males experience castration anxiety, whereas females experience penis envy. Fetishism, voyeurism, sadism, and domination are psychoanalytic concepts that are gender specific in the way that they relate to the castration complex. Sadism, for example, is a particular form of pleasure that relates to the formation of the male unconscious. And so, not only is Malamud's viewer genderless, but as a consequence the pleasure they experience is abstract. This leads to the third thing to consider with Malamud's reading. By "simply transposing" Mulvey's theory, Malamud is gesturing strongly towards

something like a 'human unconscious'. Sadism in relation to the male gaze relates to the overcoming of castration anxiety in the male unconscious. If castration anxiety in the male unconscious relates to the fear of losing one's penis, what causes the anxiety felt by Malamud's genderless viewer? What is the original trauma that sadism in the human gaze seeks to overcome in the human unconscious? These questions are left unanswered in Malamud's work, but the genderless, cultureless, and ahistorical human will also be discovered in other texts. For now, it is worth returning to Malamud's work to see what he has to say about how the human gaze functions.

An element of Mulvey's theory that is certainly present in Malamud's human gaze in the central role of sexual pleasure. For Malamud (2010, p.7):

> The practice of consuming visual culture embodies an unbridled omniscient lust ensuring the visual object's absolute subalternity. The animal is rendered vulnerable, free for the taking, in whatever way the human viewer chooses.

This omniscient lust is, according to Malamud, charted across a continuum. At the more depraved end of this continuum is the most compelling example of the sadism and fetishism of the human gaze in the 'crush film': "amateur sadistic/fetishistic pseudo-pornographic footage of erotically-costumed women stepping on insects, mice, cats, crushing them in stiletto heels" (2010, p.4). An animal in a crush film is completely subject to human power. They are, according to Malamud, stripped from their natural context, subject to the whim of their human captor, and then slowly tortured and killed solely for the sadistic, sexual gratification of the human gaze. Although crush films are an extreme case, Malamud argues that they exemplify the anthropocentric construction of all filmic representations of animals. For Malamud (2010, p.5):

> the literal harm enacted upon animals in crush films is not so fundamentally different from the figurative harm visited upon so many other animals in visual culture as they are "crushed" by being rendered inauthentic.

In other words, although animals in other films might not be physically crushed to death under the heel of a stiletto, they are crushed by being stripped from their natural context, subject to the whim of their human captor, and anthropomorphised in order to provide the human gaze with an implicitly sexual pleasure. For Malamud, this figurative crushing is part of how filmic depictions of animals are anthropocentric. The two-step process is initiated with a decontextualization of the animal and then completed with a recontextualization of the animal with human "values, agendas, and norms."

While fictional films that feature animals, such as those from the Disney franchise, are obvious examples of this kind of anthropocentrism, Malamud claims that documentary and scientific films are equally culpable. For Malamud, documentary films "impose a human narrative, a human cultural aesthetic, upon animals" (2010, p.11). The narrative form that documentaries take, the stylisation of each shot, the use of editing, the presence of a narrator, musical accompaniments, etc., serve to present animals in a way that gratifies the human gaze. This relates to Malamud's assertion that "when a person and another animal come into contact, the other animal almost always ends up the worse for this encounter" (2010, p.20). Animals hide themselves from humans in order to protect themselves, and documentary films about animals necessarily violate this self-protection through the encounter between camera and animal. The "authentic" context of animals is, according to Malamud, a life at a distance from the sight of humans. Nature documentaries decontextualise animals by making them visible, and they recontextualization those animals with human "values, agendas, and norms," in this case, the norm of being an object *for* the gratification of the human gaze. Documentaries about animals, in Malamud's theory, are on the same continuum as crush films. Where in crush films cockroaches are powerless beneath a heel of a stiletto, cockroaches in animal documentaries are powerless beneath the figurative stiletto heel of David Attenborough's dulcet tones.

In relation to avoiding anthropocentric representation of animals in film, Malamud puts filmmakers in a difficult position. Malamud is quite serious with his claim that an animal almost always ends up worse off when encountering a human, stating that even while writing his text he is probably causing harm to animals because of "the habitat damage caused by emissions from the electricity plant whose engines power" his computer (2010, p.1). And once the damage that comes from filming animals has been caused, "the deficiency in looking at animals in visual culture as compared to really looking at real animals" is, for Malamud, a "lazier and more voyeuristic" way of seeing animals (2010, p.20). Malamud's recommendation for a non-anthropocentric, "kinder way of looking at animals" is, in short, that animals should not be looked at (2010, p.21).

In order to explain this, Malamud analyses the film *The Lord God Bird* (2008) and an episode from the television series *Nature* titled *Silent Roar: Searching for the Snow Leopard* (2005). Both media are about the difficulty of seeing animals. The film *The Lord God Bird* shares its name with its absent protagonist, the Lord God Bird, also known as the ivory-billed woodpecker. The Lord God Bird is assumed to be extinct, with the last reliable sighting being made decades prior to the film being made. The film, according to Malamud, "wonderfully frustrates its viewers, because it's about an animal that we may not be able to see" (2010, p.21). The film is a 90-minute-long journey towards *not* seeing the elusive bird. A similar thing occurs in *Silent Roar*. Living in the Himalayas near the base of Mount Everest, snow leopards are notoriously difficult to film. *Silent Roar* "depicts people trying as hard as they can to see snow leopards, with all the possible technology available, and the keenest sense of adventure" (Malamud, 2010, p.21). Despite this, the filmmakers, according to Malamud, ultimately fail in their long and strenuous task, returning only "a few short and fuzzy shots of the leopards" (2010, p.21).

The reason that Malamud advocates for this form of animal film is because they make the difficulty of seeing animals a central theme. These media avoid the decontextualization that occurs with other animal films in their effort to gratify the human gaze. This context stems from the way

that animals, according to Malamud, try to avoid being seen by humans. *The Lord God Bird* and *Silent Roar* are both "experiences that don't flatter our omnivisual fantasies, but instead suggest what we are *not* meant to see, and explain why." What these media offer is a chance for audiences to experience the reality of the long and strenuous work that it takes to actually see an animal "out in animal habitats." In this way, the "authentic" relationship between "humans and other animals" is depicted accurately on screen.

The first thing to note with Malamud's examples is that *Silent Roar* surely fails to meet his own criteria. The episode features several minutes of footage of snow leopards, and much of it is of the same quality as the footage taken of other animals. The film is certainly about the profound difficulty of seeing snow leopards in the wild, with the film making clear that it took over four-years to get the shots that they did. If the four-year struggle of *Silent Roar* amounted to *not* seeing a snow leopard, then perhaps it would meet Malamud's criteria. As it stands, *Silent Roar*, if we accept Malamud's high standards, is an anthropocentric film *par excellence*. The message is that no matter the cost, no matter the time scale, no matter the arduousness and peril of the adventure (chief cinematographer Michael Kelly almost died from acute altitude sickness and had to abandon the project after three years), animals *will* be seen. The relentlessness of the hunger that drives the "omnivisual fantasies" of human gaze are seen most clearly in *Silent Roar*.

The second thing to note is the way that Malamud's misanthropic declarations ensure the return of human dominance. His claim that an animal is harmed through being seen by a human certainly begs the question regarding visual encounters between animals themselves. Is there any other animal who shares the same harmful gaze as humans? Does this relationship exist anywhere else in the animal kingdom? It should be made clear that the claim that Malamud is making is not that when a human sees an animal they will *go on to cause* the animal harm. His claim is that the *act of seeing* causes harm to the animal. And so, it may be the case that the likelihood of a gazelle being harmed increases through being seen by a lioness, but this potential harm comes after the look,

from the chance of being hunted by the lioness. The look itself does not cause any harm. In trying to dethrone the human from their self-constructed hierarchy, Malamud grants humans a category of their own. This category is defined by the absolute and God-like visual power that humans possess and wheeled over the rest of nature.

This relates to the third thing to note about Malamud's thinking. There is a latent anthropocentrism in his idea of the "reality" of animals. Why is it the case that being seen *by humans* is so central to the reality of an animal? Assuming that the animal in question does, in fact, try to hide themself from being seen by humans, they might also be trying to hide themselves from other animals. However, the God-like power that Malamud grants to humans renders the look of other animals to be superfluous. The superfluousness of the look of other animals is also apparent in Malamud's arguments by the way that he misses the insights offered by the filmmakers in his chosen texts. While speaking to the camera in *Silent Roar*, chief cinematographer, Michael Kelly, admits that he has probably been seen by snow leopards dozens of times, even though he had not seen a snow leopard the entire time that he had been in the Himalayas. When Malamud claims that the authentic relationship that exists between "humans and other animals" is shown in his chosen media, it needs to be noted that the animal's look does not exist in this relationship. The fact that it can be the animal who does the looking, that a snow leopard is the one who covertly observes the human filmmakers, is absent from Malamud's notion of the animal's reality. And so, in trying to move beyond anthropocentric representations of animals in film, Malamud grants humans a category of their own, and then understands the reality of animals to be structured around the human gaze.

1.3.2 Montage and *decoupage*

Taking a different approach to understanding anthropocentric representations of animals in film, Seung-hoon Jeong uses the work of Andre Bazin. As Jeong notes, Bazin argues that the use of "montage" allows filmmakers to violate cinematic realism by eliciting "the illusion of

animals' humanized actions" (2011a, pp.178–180). Rather than allowing the camera to capture the reality of an animal, filmmakers stitch together disparate shots of an animal, or even several animals, in order to synthesise an illusion of an animal moving in a humanised way (Jeong, 2011a, p.179). This kind of anthropocentrism is found throughout Andrew Marton's *Clarence, the Cross-Eyed Lion* (1965). Marton anthropomorphises animals through a range of other techniques, such as dressing Clarence in a pair of glasses, but it is Marton's use of montage that illustrates Bazin's thinking. The stills shown in figure 1.1 serve as an example.

Figure 1.1: Clarence outwits Gregory (Clarence, the Cross-Eyed Lion, 1965)

The scene shown in figure 1.1 begins with Clarence hiding in the bushes. Although the context in which Clarence finds himself is clearly governed by a human filmmaker, the way that he moves and interacts with his environment onscreen corresponds to what Jeong calls a "spatiotemporal unity" (2011a, p.179). The shot expresses Clarences authentic animality. Any chance for this shot to qualify as cinematic realism is shattered with a cut to the next shot that shows the film's villain, Gregory, driving into a pile of bracken. Gregory exits his vehicle and tries to clear the road. The next shot of Clarence shows him emerging from the bushes to climb into the back of the distracted

Gregory's vehicle. When Gregory has finished clearing the obstacle, he returns to the vehicle and drives away. A shot of Clarence is in the back of the moving vehicle confirms that Gregory remains unaware of his personal danger. Moments later, Gregory realises that Clarence is right behind him. In a panic, he jumps out of the vehicle and rolls to the ground. Before he comes to a stop, the long chain dangling from Clarence's neck wraps around Gregory's leg. Clarence then takes the wheel and drives the vehicle with Gregory being pulled behind him. The film uses montage to create the illusion that the shots that make up this sequence share the same spatiotemporal continuum. In other words, a series of disparate shots taken of Clarence were stitched together in post-production in order to create the illusion that he actually moved in such a way under his own power. In Jeong's words, "only the manipulation of screen effects matters when spatial and temporal continuity is sacrificed" (2011a, p.179). In constructing a humanised lion, Marton sacrifices the spatiotemporal unity between the onscreen Clarence and the 'real' Clarence. This sacrifice is what makes such uses of montage anthropocentric. The violation of the "continuity" of time and space is how audiences are "tricked" into seeing Clarence act like a human.

It should be noted that Bazin's reservations towards montage did not apply to all forms of editing. A form of editing known as *decoupage* was, for Bazin, a preferable way to film animals (Jeong, 2011a, p.179). Where montage "tricks the film," *decoupage* "films the trick." Montage pieces together shots that do not share the same spatiotemporal reality for the sake of synthesising a spatiotemporal unity that exists only in the film. *Decoupage*, on the other hand, goes to great lengths to script and plan a scene "according to the actual locations and movements of" animals in reality (Jeong, 2011a, p.179). Jeong notes that a filmic representation of an animal that Bazin approved of is the lion scene in Charlie Chaplin's *The Circus* (1928). For Bazin, the fact that Chaplin and the lion share the same frame, the same spatiotemporal unity, attests to the reality of what is shown on screen. In other words, the audience are not tricked into seeing a spatiotemporal unity through the manipulation of film, but instead are shown a film of a trick that actually happened.

This conception of *decoupage* informs Jeong's thinking on non-anthropocentric representations of animals in film. Like Malamud, Jeong (2011a, p.182) emphasises the way that many animals avoid being seen by humans. When an individual human shares the same spatiotemporal unity with an animal, they do so in ways other than direct visual contact. While discussing Bazin's analysis of *Kon-Tiki* (1950), Jeong notes the way that a "whale is part of the sea, apparent without appearing" (2011a, p.182). A human visiting a whale's natural environment will share the same spatiotemporal continuum as a whale, even if they never come into direct contact. Jeong coins the term "para-index" to describe when a film is able to capture the affirmative absence of an animal (2011a, p.182). That is to say, the absence of an animal in film is "an index of what should have been represented but couldn't be. An index of its own failure." The visual absence that forms part of an animal's "ontology" impresses itself onto the screen. It does this through the spatiotemporal unity between the filmmaker and the scene. The audience are not tricked into feeling the absence of an animal, but are instead shown the filmmaker's "actual" encounter with this affirmative absence. An encounter like the one in *Kon Tiki* is an example of *decoupage* because the film is meticulously planned around an animal's environment and movement. *Decoupage*, according to Jeong, "respects and preserves the ontological otherness and the presence of animals" (2011a, p.179). This is the case with all films, "whether documentary or fictional" (2011b, p.78).

The filmmaker "being there" in an animal's environment also matters for Bazin, and for Jeong, because animals not only exist "on the boundary between visible reality and the invisible Real," but are simultaneously sublime and dangerous (2011a, p.183). In analysing *Kon-Tiki*, Bazin notes that the whale has a divine splendour *and* the ability to kill the entire film crew with a simple flick of their tail. The footage in *Kon-Tiki* was not mixed together with shots of whales taken from disparate times and locations in order to fulfil the director's human-centred creative vision. Instead, the footage in *Kon-Tiki* testifies to the reality of the filmmakers *being there*. What makes such representations of animals non-anthropocentric is the unity between the para-index on screen and

the affirmative absence of the whale in reality. The film shows the struggle and the failure of putting oneself on the threshold of the seen and the unseen, on the threshold of a deadly encounter and a sublime experience. Such para-indexicality, according to Jeong, attests to the ontological copresence of a "filming subject and an invisible object" (2011a, p.183).

One difficulty with Jeong's line of thinking is trying to distinguish between anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric forms of editing. The difference between montage and *decoupage*, in Jeong's reading of Bazin, pivots around an ideal of maintaining spatiotemporal unity with "reality." The lion scene in *The Circus* demonstrates the difficulty of identifying *decoupage*. Despite being only three minutes in length, the scene required two hundred takes over a period of three weeks. The footage was also taken during different shoots, with Chaplin returning from the editing suite for more filming. Prior to filming, Chaplin rehearsed the scene meticulously, at times playing the role of the lion in order to demonstrate to the animal trainers exactly how he wanted the lion to move. These instructions were so specific that Chaplin even choreographed when and how the lion would roar. It should be noted that 'the lion' refers only to the lion who forms part of the film's diegesis. The onscreen lion was played by two "real" lions (Vance, 1996, p.196). Jeong's commitment to a form of editing that links "shots that have been carefully thought out according to the actual locations and movements of" animals does not seem to be commensurate with the massive amount of control required to fulfil Chaplin's creative vision. It is difficult to reconcile the dissonance between the spatiotemporal "reality" of Chaplin, the two lions, the animal trainers, the film crew, and the three weeks it took to film the scenes, with the spatiotemporal "reality" of Chaplin, the lion, and the three minutes of screentime in the finished film. Such dissonance begs many questions regarding Jeong's notions of "reality," "ontology," "authenticity," "copresence," and so on. Trying to determine what counts as being part of the "ontological" reality of animals, and which forms of editing allow for an authentic expression of this reality, relates to another difficulty with Jeong's line of thinking.

The para-indexicality in *Kon-Tiki* expresses only the inability of the filmmakers to see a whale. The logic of an affirmative absence underpinning the para-indexicality in *Kon-Tiki* does not necessarily have a symmetrical counterpart for the whale. Perhaps the whale could see the filmmakers the entire time that they were filming? And if so, if the whale could see the filmmakers, surely the notion of an affirmative *absence* can only relate to the experiences of the filmmakers? Related to this, how does Jeong know that the filmmakers were a part of a whale's reality at all? To suppose that 'being unseen by a human' is part of a whale's reality, a part of their ontology, is another anthropocentric gesture. Related to this is the idea that filmmakers actually "being there" guarantees that the film remains authentically non-anthropocentric. How is the risk of danger and the promise of sublimity that comes from "being there" non-anthropocentric? Who is this whale a danger to? As Mullan and Marvin (1999, p.5) point out, while hedgehogs are not a mortal threat to humans, they certainly are to a nearby grub. And a supposedly deadly whale is no threat to a grub. The so-called ontological copresence found in *Kon-Tiki*, the potentially deadly/sublime copresence that guarantees the authenticity of the non-encounter between whale and filmmaker, is structured through anthropocentric notions of sight, danger, and sublimity.

Many of these problems arise because, as Pick shows, Bazin's realism "was still attached to the specificities of species" (2011, pp.110–117). Bazin's notion of cinematic realism lends itself to a non-anthropocentric form of cinema, but not without development. The meaning of Bazin's concept of cinematic realism is not developed by Jeong, but is instead used alongside terms such as "authentic," "ontological," "real," "actual," and "genuine" to describe "reality." The result is that the idea of reality as a process of co-authorship between subject and object is present in Jeong's text, but the subject remains human and the object remains animal. It is through a development of Bazin's work that Pick offers her vision of a non-anthropocentric cinema.

1.3.3 The dung beetle in a box

According to Pick, Bazin's concept of cinematic realism is not a crude commitment to the idea that cinematic images could ever be unmediated. In Pick's (2015, p.223) words, Bazin's realism:

> avoids both a simply noumenal view of cinema's ability to show things 'as they are', and a thoroughly subjectivist one that submits [sic] cinema to the whims of industry, technology or the auteur.

Bazin's realism does not advocate for a passive relationship between camera and scene. Instead, Bazin's realism is, according to Pick, an active relationship between camera, scene, and filmmaker that works to undo a "subjective investment in images" (Pick, 2015, p.222). Pick posits a 'Trinitarian' relation that structures this idea of cinematic realism, as can be seen in my diagram in figure 1.2 below.

Photographic negative
inside the camera

Cinematic
Realism

Scene before   Photographer's
the camera   mind
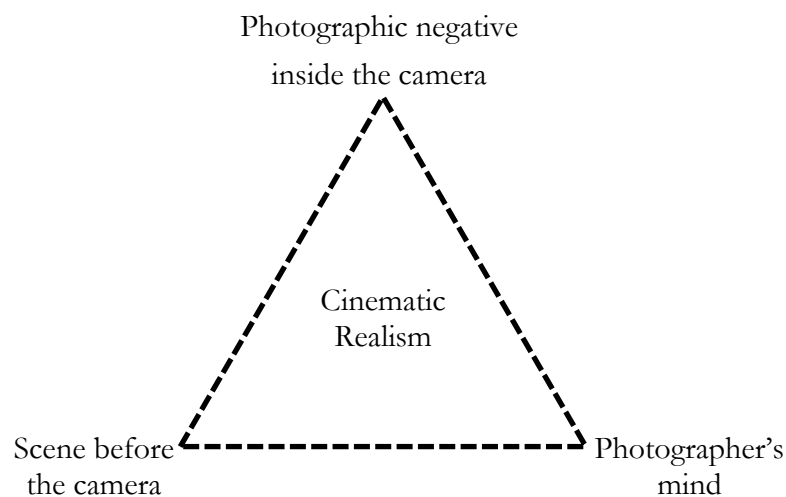
Figure 1.2: Trinitarian relation that structures Bazin's cinematic realism

Rather than standing at a passive distance, the "photographic negative inside the camera" is in a continuum with the "scene before the camera." This continuum is enabled through the encounter of the "photographer's mind." This relationship is both creative and generative: the camera does

not capture, and the filmmaker does not impose. Instead, the Trinitarian relationship shows how reality itself "is a construction" (Pick, 2015, p.234). Reality "is crafted between subject and object" rather than simply existing "out there." The crafting of reality is a process of co-authorship between subject and object. Subjects make their own reality, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already. For Pick, this line of thinking lends itself to the idea of coexisting human and non-human realities. It is here that Pick develops Bazin's cinematic realism by combining it with the experimental biology of Jakob von Uexküll.

As Pick explains, "Uexküll was troubled by what he saw as the implicit nihilism" of Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection (2015, p.224). To counter this nihilism, he "turned his attention to particular animals as subjects whose behaviour, he claimed, is not strictly mechanistic" (Pick, 2015, p.224). Despite the idea of animal subjectivity being entirely compatible with Darwin's theory, Uexküll established several working postulates regarding the non-mechanistic behaviour of animals. The first is that nature as a uniform, mechanistic object that exists beyond all subjective interpretation does not exist. Uexküll rejected the idea that nature was inherently meaningless, that is, purely mechanistic, and instead argued that meaning was omnipresent. The omnipresence of meaning comes, in part, from Uexküll's claim that "not only humans but animals too are active perceivers of their world" (Pick, 2015, p.223). The idea that reality is the process of mediation between subject and world is extended by Uexküll to include animals. But Uexküll also went one step further by claiming that every "element in a living system" is a carrier of meaning (Pick, 2015, p.226). In Uexküll's theory, an individual organism is better thought of as a vast and complex multitude of interacting elements, from molecules to bacteria to lions, interacting with their environment. Each element both "receives and acts upon environmental signs" (Pick, 2015, p.225).

Another of Uexküll's important postulates is the logical conclusion of this overview. As Pick summarises, "Uexküll's philosophical biology suggests that there is no living being without a world, and no world that does not correspond to the being that inhabits it" (2015, p.222). Uexküll uses the term '*Umwelt*' to refer to:

> the totality or network of relations between an animal and its environment. The Umwelt is not the objective world an animal inhabits; it is made up of those elements within the animal's perceptual field *that are intelligible to it* (Pick, 2015, p.224, my emphasis).

An *Umwelt* is specific to individual animals, not entire species. It refers to the environment in which an animal lives, what the physiological constitution of their bodies allows them to perceive, how they respond to their environment, how their environment responds to them, as well as the dynamic relationship between all of these elements. The multiplicity of animal worlds forms a "weblike edifice," a vast, interconnected *Umwelten* (Pick, 2015, p.226). These *Umwelt* are, in Uexküll's words, like soap bubbles. Some are large and others are small, some touch and overlap while others do not come into contact at all. However, none of them can be said to occupy any central position.

This line of thinking can be shown by way of example. The *Umwelt* that arises from the relationship between, let's say, a dog and a park differs in many ways from the *Umwelt* that arises from the relationship between the dog's human companion and that 'same' park. On a physiological level, the dog might have access to certain elements of the park that the human is barred from. With regards to smell, a dog typically has around fifty-times more sense receptors than any human. Conversely, with regards to vision, dogs possess two types of cone cell (the cells in the eye responsible for colour vision) whereas humans typically possess three types of cone cells. This difference means that the range of colours that any dog is capable of perceiving is narrower than that of any human, but the opposite is true when it comes to smell. Beyond physiology, the

dog will have different encounters than the human, different relationships with other beings and objects in the park. They will have their own memories, desires, and experiences that inform their reality. There is no singular park to speak of, but instead there is the park of the dog and the park of the human, neither of which can be said to be 'more real' than the other. This is not to say that the dog and the human will have entirely incommensurable and unrelated *Umwelt*. Although the physiology of each individual may affect the range of colours and smells that they can experience, there is still a significant overlap between the two. The human will also be in the memories, desires, and experiences of the dog, and vice versa. The dog and the human might even share some memories. While the dog and the human might not reminisce through a spoken/written human language, they may reminisce when visiting the place in which a memory was formed, or when they play with a souvenir that they took home together.

In thinking about non-anthropocentric representations of animals in film, Pick understands this particular conception of reality as suggesting "the copresence of different spatiotemporal worlds, and their corresponding film-worlds" (2015, p.223). Pick's names this form of cinema 'zoomorphic realism'. This term denotes a style of cinema in which the active and generative relationship between filmmaker, camera, and scene is capable of making the multitude of coexisting *Umwelt* present on screen. It should be made clear that Pick takes from Bazin the understanding that cinematic realism is not the capacity of cinema to *express* reality, but is instead the capacity to make this reality present on screen. This reading of Bazin is very similar to Jeong when he speaks of the ontology of cinema. Pick is expanding the concepts of 'subject', 'object', 'world', 'reality', etc., to include animals, but she is not denying cinema's capacity to show, rather than express, these elements on screen. An example of zoomorphic cinema, according to Pick, is from the dung beetle scene from the film *Microcosmos: People of the Grass* (1997).

In the famous scene in *Microcosmos*, a dung beetle struggles to free a dung ball impaled on a thorn. The dung beetle, according to Pick, undertakes "a physical task, solving a problem that

requires dexterity, attention and effort, whose final objective concerns the question of freedom" (2015, p.232). To add to this, "liberty and bondage are not only concrete but broadly philosophical predicaments." Pick insists that the struggle of the dung beetle should not be written off as an automatic and mechanical response since "we see it try out different angles, persisting in its mission" (2015, p.232). To see the dung beetle dig a trench, push from different angles, change position, and so on, is to see "an interior zone of the animal perceiving, acting and reacting, from the inside out, as it were, taking heed and responding, 'thinking' the environment it functionally inhabits" (Pick, 2015, p.222). The film, according to Pick, shows the "inner real," the "interiority" of the dung beetle (2015, p.222). By showing the dung beetle engaging in a "Sisyphean" struggle, *Microcosmos* challenges "anthropocentric conceits rooted in reductive human and nonhuman ontologies" (Pick, 2015, p.233). Struggle, relief, and striving towards freedom are shown to exist outside of humans. For Pick (2015, p.233), the zoomorphic realism of this scene is guaranteed through the way in which it was filmed. Related to the aforementioned concept of *decoupage*, the makers of *Microcosmos*, Claude Nuridsany and Marie Pérennou, claim that the scene was shot "'practically in real time', without special effects." According to Pick (2015, p.233), the dung beetle scene does not use editing to fabricate behaviour, but instead reveals actions that took place in the continuity of space and time; the beetle really did get the dung ball stuck, and really did labour to free it. Through *decoupage*, the contours of the dung beetle's *Umwelt* make it onto the screen. Zoomorphic realism, then, "neither makes the beetle more like us, nor subsumes his world under our gaze," but instead shows that "it is we who are like the beetle rather than the other way around" (Pick, 2015, p.234).

Pick's chosen example demonstrates some problems that Uexküll's experimental biology brings to the study of animals in film. Before continuing, we should recall Nietzsche's (2006, pp.118–119) famous quote:

> If I make up the definition of a mammal, and then, after inspecting a camel, declare
>
> 'look, a mammal,' I have indeed brought a truth to light in this way, but it is a truth
>
> of limited value.

Similarly, such things as the dung beetle's "inner real," "interior zone," "meaning," and so on, were discovered where they had been hidden. When Pick asks if the dung beetle's "actions are conscious or *merely* reflexive" (2015, p.232, my emphasis), she firstly sets up a binary between consciousness and reflexivity, and then elevates the importance of consciousness by describing the other option as "merely" reflexive. Not only could there be a spectrum between these two poles, but there is no obvious reason why such a spectrum is not already reductionist. Perhaps there are other poles and other spectrums that lay beyond notions of consciousness and reflexivity, beyond the boundaries of any human *Umwelt* through which the dung beetle's movements have "meaning." Perhaps words like "meaning" and "perception" already posit the importance of an "inner real" before analysis takes place. What *Microcosmos* shows is carefully selected footage of a dung beetle moving in a particular way, and what Pick discovers is evidence of the dung beetle's "inner real." This is not to say that Pick's argument should be taken as false or mistaken, and certainly should not be taken as a claim that dung beetles do not have any kind of "interior zone." This is only to say that an animal's body can also be used as evidence of their lack of interiority. For example, in 1904 the *Report of the Committee on Humane Slaughtering of Animals,* members of parliament interviewed slaughterhouse workers, butchers, and local officials about slaughtering practices. Most interviewees agreed that animals showed clear signs of terror if they saw or smelled blood. The most common counterargument to this opinion came from workers who pointed out that prior to slaughter, animals are often so unfazed that they are able to go on eating and drinking as they do in any other environment. Captain W. Melville Lee dismissed this line of thinking because, as he saw it, "if an animal saw a man take a whisky and soda just before he was going to be hanged, and so concluded that he was indifferent, his opinion should not be worth much" (Lee, 1904b,

p.36). So too with the dung beetle. The footage in *Microcosmos* is both evidence of the "Sisyphean" struggle and the dung beetle's "inner real", *and* it is evidence that the dung beetle's actions are "merely reflexive."

Another problem with Pick's use of Uexküll's theory relates to the so-called "meaning" of the dung beetle's movements *for* the dung beetle. Perhaps the dung beetle's movements are completely imperceptible to the dung beetle themself. An *Umwelt*, as Pick emphasises, is not just an objective world, but "a relationship between the perceiving being and the *world it perceives*" (2015, p.223, my emphasis). This is as true for the objects that make up the environment of any *Umwelt* as it is for subjects themselves. As mentioned previously, there is no park *as such*, only the park of the dog and the park of the human. There are elements of the park that each individual is barred from, and elements that are shared. What needs to be made clear with this line of thinking is that there is also no dog *as such*. There is only the dog for themself and the dog for the human. For example, with regards to smell, the dog might be able to perceive elements of the human that the human is barred from. And so too with colour vision. The human might be able to see colours on the dog's own body that the dog will never be able to perceive. Would it make any sense, in this regard, to ask what the red colours of the dog's fur means *to the dog* when the colour red is outside of their *Umwelt*? With regards to the movements of the dung beetle, is it not already an anthropocentric assumption to posit what is perceived by human observers to be part of the dung beetle's *Umwelt*?

Part of Pick's claim regarding the zoological realism of the dung beetle scene in *Microcosmos* is the way that its creation was an example of *decoupage*. That is to say, Pick understands that the footage was not edited in a way to deceive viewers, but was shot in real time. When it comes to the filmmaker's claims about the dung beetle, I call bullshit(!). Here we run into the same difficulties that Jeong faced when trying to distinguish between montage and *decoupage*. While the making of *The Circus* is well documented, the same cannot be said for the making of *Microcosmos*.

Most accounts of how it was made are from the filmmakers themselves. On the one hand, the filmmakers could be taken at their word, but on the other hand, their claims can be put into doubt. The scene is around two-and-a-half minutes long and contains 14 cuts. At the beginning of the scene the dung beetle navigates a deep trench, later they move up and down a bank, and the scene ends with the dung beetle pushing their ball across a field. All of the shots, with the exception of the final one, are taken on a set, as can be seen by the two sources of artificial light reflecting off the dung beetle's body in figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: Lighting the dung beetle (Microcosmos: People of the grass, 1997)

Already there are legitimate reasons to doubt the claim that the sequence was filmed in real time. How many takes were required to get the shot of the dung beetle in the trench? Was the footage of the dung beetle pushing their ball through the field taken on the same day as the trench footage? Does the ordering of shots in the sequence correspond to the order in which they were shot? Was the dung beetle in the final shot the same as the one in the studio?

With regards to the dung ball becoming stuck on the thorn, it seems extremely unlikely that a dung beetle could possess the required strength and dexterity to do such a thing. Leading

up to the shot of the ball being skewered, the dung beetle is extremely unstable, frequently losing their footing and falling to the ground. It can be seen that the dung beetle is also smaller than the ball. This means that the beetle pushes the ball with some upwards thrust. In the shot of the ball being skewered, the ball is moving from right to left with some downwards pressure, as evidenced by the deformation of the gravel and the movement of the thorn. Once the ball has been fully skewered, the only direction that the beetle can move it is around the axis of the thorn, and when they try to apply force, the gravel gives way. It seems much more likely that the dung ball was pushed onto the thorn by the filmmakers. Questions can also be raised with regards to the dung ball, or dung balls. In the diegesis of the film, the cropped stills in figure 1.4 were taken just seconds apart.

Figure 1.4: Two dung balls (Microcosmos: People of the grass, 1997)

The presence/absence of the leaf and the different textures and colour of the two balls seems to imply that the filmmakers used several different balls. There are many other elements that call into question the "realism" of this scene, such as the musical accompaniment that is synchronised with the dung beetle's struggle. Although there is no narrator, the musical score is structured around Western conventions of consonance and dissonance, melody, harmony, and so on, in order to provide a musical narrator. My analysis of the dung beetle scene does not definitively prove

anything at all about how the scene was made. What it does is call into question Pick's claim that the scene "reveals actions that took place in the continuity of space and time." Like with the issues raised with Jeong's treatment of *decoupage*, it is extremely difficult to know when filmmakers are "tricking the film" or "filming the trick."

1.4 The dung beetle in whose box?

In attempting to find a non-anthropocentric means of representing animals in film, all three authors found themselves back alongside the human. There are two ways in which this happened. Firstly, the "realities," or "ontologies," or "*Umwelten*" of animals found their legitimacy by way of the human. For Malamud, animal realities are structured through a negation of the human gaze, that is to say, their realities depend upon not being seen by humans. Similarly for Jeong, animal ontologies rest between the threshold of the seen and unseen, but the owner of this sight is the human. Pick's use of Uexküll leads her to discover what had already been hidden, that is, the discovery of the dung beetle's "inner real." The *Umwelt* of the dung beetle is structured around what is perceived from Pick's human *Umwelt*. The second way in which the human makes a return in the texts of these author's is through film. For Malamud, the God-like power that he grants to humans diminishes the relevancy of the sight of animals. It seems that what qualifies as a non-anthropocentric depiction of animals is, for Malamud, a film in which only humans can see. A similar issue arises for Jeong. The idea that an animal can return, or even initiate a gaze is absent in his description of a non-anthropocentric representation of animals. Related to this is the difficulty of establishing what counts as montage and what counts as *decoupage*. The arbiter of what is and is not an authentic depiction of animal ontologies is always the human. Pick also requires the human as arbiter to distinguish between editing that deceives and editing that reveals. Pick's uses of the collective pronouns "we," "us," and "our," especially when meaning is "creature-specific," begs many questions. Which creatures are being referred to when Pick speaks of "our

gaze?" When Pick claims that "we" see a dung beetle engaged in a "Sisyphean" struggle, does this include creatures who have never read Homer?

Am I arguing that it is impossible to depict animals in film in ways that are not anthropocentric? Of course not, but only because I do not think that the question makes any sense. The distinctions between humans and animals are fuzzy, perhaps even permeable, but the lack of sharp, well-defined boundaries between humans and animals shows that the question of anthropocentrism is itself anthropocentric. Returning, again, to the example of the dog and their human companion, if one claims that a film is anthropocentric, is the human to which the 'Anthropos' refers that of the dog or that of the human? Is the human in the dog's *Umwelt* any more or less real, any more or less "authentic," than that of the human in their own *Umwelt*? Does it make any sense to describe the human in the dog's *Umwelt* as 'human' at all? Perhaps the way that the dog perceives their world is skýlocentric? In other words, to claim that certain depictions of animals are anthropocentric is to hermetically seal the concept of the Anthropos within itself: the human is discovered, once again, where they had hidden themself.

In this thesis I will be writing about animals, rather than humans. I will be analysing filmic representations of animals, rather than humans. In the next chapter I will be combining the work of Adorno with the work of the later Wittgenstein in order to analyse and write about animals in film. The combination of these two thinkers will provide this thesis with a means of using the term 'animal', with its implicit segregation from the term 'human', without making any normative claims about the status of this term. As will be explained in more detail in the next chapter, it would be a mistake to assume that a rook piece being used as a piece in a game of checkers is still a rook. While its materiality attests to its role in a game of chess, its movements are governed by the rules of the game of checkers. Similarly, the term 'animal' can be used in different language games. Like the rook, the implicit hierarchical demarcation between animals and humans embedded in the word 'animal', and in some animal images, does not govern the movement of the word 'animal' in

every language game. Similarly, the rules of a game cannot be discerned from the rook piece alone. With regards to how the rook can move, is the chess player correct, or is the checkers player correct? Perhaps the chess player is correct since the rook is mentioned in the official rules of chess. Or perhaps the checkers player is right because they have been playing checkers with the so-called 'rook' piece for as long as they can remember. Again, here, the question of a correct usages for the rook piece do not make much sense outside of the games in which it is used. So too with the term 'animal' and filmic depictions of animals. Can anything at all be said about them outside of the rules of the game in which they are used? A rook does not move only in straight lines when it is not being used in a game of chess, and the term 'animal' does not always carry with it an implicit hierarchical demarcation between humans and animals. This very brief overview will be expanded upon in the next chapter. In this chapter the question of language will take centre stage, and then chapter 3 will return to the question of animal images.

Chapter 2: Animal Constellations

The previous chapter drew out an antagonism that irks some sections of animal studies. In short, the antagonism is the way that the term 'animal' simultaneously illuminates and obscures, denotes and defiles. This problem cannot be overcome through the implementation of more precise concepts. This is partly because of the indeterminacy of the word 'precise', and partly because concepts are not self-contained units. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I agree with many of the criticisms given of the word 'animal'. With this in mind, what follows is not a corrective or a solution to the problems that were drawn out. Rather, it is a contribution to the ongoing conversation about how to problematise the assumptions and cultural norms that are embedded within the word 'animal', and animal imagery, without reproducing those same problems in one's own writing.

In this chapter I will argue for a mode of analysis that takes into account the observations and limits discussed in chapter 1. I will be drawing upon the notion of 'constellations' as found in the work of Theodor Adorno in order to show that the content of any concept is both multifarious and determined through the particular linguistic form in which it is used. It is through such forms that the content of individual words can be challenged and reconfigured. The shadow cast by the light of conceptual thinking can only be illuminated through the light of other concepts. However, with each concept comes another shadow. Constellatory thinking avoids trying to shine a light that casts no shadows, and instead attempts to place concepts in such a configuration that their meaning is able to reveal itself.

In this chapter I will also be making use of the work of the later Wittgenstein. This is because, as I will explain later, there are clear convergences between his work and that of Adorno's. There are also many differences between the two, some that appear at first sight to render their work to

be incompatible. Where Adorno's notion of constellations exhausts itself, Wittgenstein's range of metaphors and style of philosophy can offer support. And where Wittgenstein does not offer any way to analyse specific 'forms of life', Adorno's materialism can offer a helping hand. Thinking with each philosopher, as well as using their work in ways that they did not intend, can offer a productive and insightful mode of analysis for this project. While I will be using Wittgenstein's work throughout this project, it is Adorno's notion of constellations that will provide the main thrust.

2.1 A gorilla is not a gorilla

The most notable feature of constellations is that they are not systems, and Adorno made sure that his work avoided giving any instructions. Adorno's writings have been described as "extraordinarily unsystematic" and "fragmentary" (Palamarek, 2007, p.42). This is not to say that his work is chaotic or random, only that he tries to avoid imposing any system onto the object of enquiry. This approach relates to Susan Buck-Morss's observations that Adorno's notion of constellation is deliberately antagonistic to the 'commodity form':

> The form of commodities, as Marx had explained in the first chapter of *Capital*, was governed by principles of abstraction (of exchange value from use value), identity (of all commodities with each other through the medium of money), and reification (ossification of the object as a mystifying fetish by splitting it off from the process of its production) (Buck-Morss, 1977, p.98).

Adorno draws from Marx's thinking to show that in the commodity form, exchange-value takes priority over use-value. Exchange-value unites commodities under one general form, negating their particularities. Two qualitatively distinct objects, such as a cup of coffee and a bicycle inner tube, can be united beneath the concept of value through the act of exchange. As will be explained, Adorno's concepts of 'non-identity' and 'identity' share much in common with Marx's thinking on

'use-value' and 'exchange-value' respectively (Rose, 1978, p.61; Hogh, 2017, p.134). Where Marx was concerned with the way that exchange-value obfuscates the uniqueness of a commodity's use-value, Adorno was concerned with the way that identity obfuscates an object's uniqueness. I will first discuss the notion of identity, and the remainder of this chapter will focus on non-identity.

The previous chapter of this thesis examined several ways in which writers within the field of animal studies have struggled to overcome certain problems with the word 'animal'. For example, when Dunayer (2001, xv) uses the term "gorilla" to refer to the caged gorilla that she saw as a child, she repeats a process of equation that her critique of the word 'animal' attempts to avoid. In the same way that 'animal' is a word that groups together "chimpanzees, snails, and tree frogs" (Dunayer, 2001, p.11), 'gorilla' is a term that not only groups together Western Lowland Gorillas, Eastern Lowland Gorillas, Mountain Gorillas, and Cross River Gorillas, but also the individuals who have already been incorporated into these subspecies. Tying together Marx's notion of exchange-value with Adorno's thinking on identity, we might say that the term 'gorilla' obfuscates an individual's uniqueness in the same way that exchange-value obfuscates a commodity's use-value. Exchange-value is blind to the uniqueness of individual commodities, seeing only their ability to be traded. The term 'gorilla' is blind to the uniqueness of the individuals it subsumes, seeing only their ability to be categorised. Adorno's thinking on this subject was also influenced by Nietzsche. The following passage nicely captures the line of thinking outlined above:

> Every word instantly becomes a concept precisely insofar as it is not supposed to serve as a reminder of the unique and entirely individual original experience to which it owes its origin; but rather, a word becomes a concept insofar as it simultaneously has to fit countless more or less similar cases – which means, purely and simply, cases which are never equal and thus altogether unequal. Every concept arises from the equation of unequal things (Nietzsche, 2006, p.117).

Identity, then, refers to the hubristic relationship between concept and object (Adorno, 1983, p.149). The relationship is hubristic, in Adorno's understanding, because the logic of identity assumes a perfect fit between concept and object. The idea that both the concept and the object have excesses that do not fit the equation is completely incompatible with the logic of identity. 'Gorilla' sweeps into itself a plethora of heterogenous individuals, some living in zoos, some living in mountains, and some living in laboratories.

What is important to note is that in the processes of equation the agency is given to language itself, rather than to individual speakers. Adorno's focus, like Marx's, is not on the psychological state of individuals. From the powerful prose in her discussion of the gorilla, it is absolutely clear that Dunayer recognises his individuality. However, Dunayer is "trapped in the prison of language" (Adorno, 2001, p.28). In order to communicate the uniqueness of the individual subject of her discussion, she is forced to use terminology that hides this uniqueness. To elaborate on this point, I will borrow from Slavoj Žižek's thinking on the notion of fetishistic disavowal (2008, pp.9–16). This can be summarised in the phrase: "I know very well, but still…" For Žižek, knowing that a commodity is unique in its use-value, or knowing that a commodity is just a material object like any other, is not the point. What matters is that people *act as if they don't know*. Even if the owner of a commodity is fully aware that value is not 'real', that no atomic or chemical analysis will discover any 'actual' value, they *act* as if they don't know by trading them for non-identical goods or money. Commodities are not traded *because* they have value, or because people *think* that they have value: it is through being traded that commodities have value (Žižek, 2008, p.13). The important point of this argument is its anti-psychological character. To say that individuals "act as if they don't know" is to say that within a network of relations in which individuals are forced to treat commodities as though they *have* value, the inner workings of their minds is of secondary importance. The same is true with the logic of identity. Dunayer *knows* that the gorilla in the cage that she saw as a child was an individual, that he had his own personal history

and biological uniqueness, but the term 'gorilla' inevitably categorises him in a way that negates his individuality. It is not that there is something essential about gorillas that gives rise to the term 'gorilla', it is the other way around: "to say that two things are identical is to make them identical" (Rose, 1978, p.30). It is through the processes of categorisation that objects are given their identity.

Adorno (1983, p.149) argues that despite the problems with identity, the 'ideal' of identity must not be discarded. By this, Adorno means that one can discern from the logic of identity the ideal of a relationship between concept and object that is without contradiction. With identity, in order for there to be no contradiction between the term 'gorilla' and individual gorillas, it is assumed that the denoted individuals are equivalent. Therefore, according to this logic, there is no contradiction or antagonism in using the term 'gorilla' to denote an individual gorilla. However, despite this not being the case, as shown in the previous discussion, Adorno insists on retaining the ideal of finding a relationship between concept and object that is without contradiction. Adorno's notion of non-identity is a relationship between concepts, and between concepts and objects, in which immanent material practices, as well as sociohistorical particularities, take priority. Rather than subsuming myriad distinct objects under a monolithic concept, non-identity pertains to the uniqueness of an object. However, Adorno argues that since we are stuck within the prison of language, non-identity can be achieved only through concepts. The difficulty with this approach is trying to use concepts to mitigate their own limits (Palamarek, 2007, p.63). As discussed earlier, the implementation of more precise and specific concepts defers the problem under examination rather than solves it. So how does Adorno envisage a way of using concepts against themselves?

2.2 Ordinary language

Before discussing the ideal of identity and its relation to non-identity, it is important to introduce Adorno's thinking on 'ordinary language practices'. For Adorno, in order to understand a concept, one must examine the 'ordinary language practices' through which it is used, *as well as* the relationships between each concept (Gandesha, 2007, p.89; Hogh, 2017, p.129). There is no

priority given to one or the other. Language is not some epiphenomenon that floats above the 'actual' material practices of individuals, and these material practices are not mere social constructions that can be understood through an analysis of language alone. The particular form of life and the structures through which concepts relate to each other are socially and historically mediated. For Adorno (2017, p.210), the meaning of a word does not become vague when one refuses the stable ground of formal definitions, but instead, a word becomes vague when it is isolated from the language, and from the form of life in which it is used.

There are two aspects under consideration here: the formal definitions of words and the material practices through which language is used. Neither are completely separate from each other, but for the sake of discussion it is worth focussing on them individually. In a helpful analogy, Adorno describes the way that a person might learn a new word in a foreign language. This person could use a translation dictionary to look up the word that they wish to learn in their own language, and then find an equivalent in the foreign language. Depending on the quality of the dictionary, it will perhaps provide a handful of related words and definitions. However, something that is immediately apparent with this approach is the way that it relies upon a specific knowledge of other concepts. Every definition is always a reference to other concepts (Adorno, 2017, p.194). When looking up the word 'animal', for example, the definition given is in the form of a collection of *other* concepts, such as 'human', 'living', 'organism', 'creature', and so on. If one wanted to know the definition of these words in order to better understand the meaning of the word 'animal', they would repeat this process *ad infinitum*. In Adorno's words, "[y]ou only need to try looking up some concept or other in the dictionary (...) to see how much this life of concepts fully unfolds within a constellation rather than in isolation" (2017, p.199). The strict and procedural linguistic form of, let's say, the Oxford English Dictionary cannot exhaust concepts such as 'human', 'living', 'organism', 'creature', and so on. Even if one were to read the entire dictionary and have at their disposal every definition of every word, the form of language that they have would be hollow and

detached from the life that language attains through its actual usage. The complexities of each concept, the sociohistorical changes through which each concept undergoes, the wide range of uses of each concept, and the relationships between all of the above, are lost in linguistic forms that are reduced to the bureaucratic task of transmitting information.

With regards to the material practices of language, if the aforementioned person trying to learn a word in another language were to immerse themselves in books written in the foreign language, or they were to live amongst native speakers of this language, they would find that the word that they wish to know is *used* in a wide variety of ways (Adorno, 2017, p.224). They would find that the word that they wish to understand is used differently in different contexts, and within different forms of life (Hogh, 2017, p.130). The living constellation through which the word is used is interwoven with the textual constellation mapped out through an exploration of definitions. This is not to say that the two are identical, or that the way that a word is used across several forms of life would be mirrored in a dictionary. This is only to say that language is always already constellatory and that a constellation is more than a mere expression of the relations, or structures, between concepts. It is *also* the relationship between language and the material practices of the people using that language. In other words, to say what words mean, one must also talk about the actual world in which words are used. The logic of identity recognises the messiness and indeterminate uses of words, but takes this to be erroneous. The formal definition is taken as proper, and any usage beyond this as invalid (Gandesha, 2007, p.89). For Adorno, this relates back to his claim that the logic of identity is hubristic: the definition always knows best.

Adorno's notion of constellations rejects the crude and naïve understanding of meaning that assumes that concepts have a direct and fixed meaning (identity), but it must be emphasised that it also rejects the idea that the relationship between word and object is merely arbitrary. This is because, as discussed above, concepts relate to and express a concrete form of life (Hogh, 2017, p.131). The attribution of a new meaning to a concept is not achieved at the whim of an individual.

Equally, as discussed in section 1.2.3 of this thesis, one cannot invent new words that are capable of avoiding the problems expressed by the words they replace (Adorno, 2007, p.37). The communicability of language is guaranteed through a discernible level of stability. If it was not possible to fix the meaning of a concept, communication would be impossible (Palamarek, 2007, p.48). But 'fixed' does not mean permanent, and it certainly does not mean unitary. In the same way that contemporaneous forms of life differ from each other, each form of life differs from itself through time. If language was permanently fixed, it could not express any new event or activity. But if it could not be fixed at all, communication would be impossible. The meaning of a concept is determined by and changed through the constellation in which it is used, but the constellation is also determined by the meaning of the concepts that it is made from (Hogh, 2017, p.132). What is referred to here as ordinary language is the way that language is used within particular forms of life, as opposed to how philosophers think language should be used. As will be shown in the next section, Wittgenstein also argued that language finds stability through the form of life through which it is used just as much as those forms of life require language in order to function (Andrews, 2002, p.83).

2.3 Adorno and Wittgenstein

So far I have mentioned Adorno's interest in 'ordinary language practices'. These practices refer to the way in which language is actually used, as opposed to any ideal of how language *should* be used, and they refer to the way that language is always already constellatory. Wittgenstein shares a similar understanding of language. Despite the obvious scholastic differences between Adorno and Wittgenstein, the style of thinking and metaphors used by Wittgenstein can be used to work alongside Adorno's notion of constellations in a way that is productive for this project. This project is not an attempt to reproduce Adorno's thinking, nor is it an attempt to provide a specifically Adornian analysis of the censorship of animal violence in British cinema. One of the key elements that I take from Adorno is his commitment to giving priority to the object, rather than to any

prescribed theory. This line of thinking is also found in the work of Wittgenstein who says that philosophical investigation should look for "one out of many possible orders," rather than "*the* order" (2009, §132). There are several elements to Wittgenstein's thinking that allows the subject matter of this thesis to find expression. The first is Wittgenstein's tool analogy and the second is his concept of 'family resemblances'. I will first focus on the tool analogy, before going onto the concept of family resemblances.

2.3.1 Metaphysical Toolbox

When it comes to thinking about how language is actually used, Wittgenstein (2009, §11) compares words to tools. A toolbox contains saws, screwdrivers, measuring tapes, glue, and other heterogenous objects. The ways that a hammer is used differs dramatically to the ways that a set of tweezers is used, and yet they are both "tools." What, then, is a 'tool'? Is there something common to all tools? One could try to invent a single description, such as "all tools serve to modify something," but such a broad and vague description is misleading. What, for example, does a speed square modify? And a cat's purr can 'modify' their human companion's emotional state even though a cat's purr will not be found in any toolbox. Rather than trying to pin down what a tool *really* is, Wittgenstein argues that we should instead *look* at the objects that we call tools and see how they are actually used: "For if you look at them, you won't see something that is common to *all*, but similarities, affinities, and a whole series of them at that" (2009, §66). Returning back to language, Wittgenstein (2009, §43) argues that for the vast majority of words, although certainly not all words, their meaning *is* their usage. Rather than looking for *the* essential meaning of a word, looking past all of the 'imperfect' applications of this word found in everyday life, we should *look* at how the word is actually used. Words perform a range of functions, such as "giving orders, describing, reporting, speculating, asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying and many others" (Andrews, 2002, p.82). To continue the toolbox analogy, we should ask if one language contained all of these features, but another language did not, perhaps not offering a way to express gratitude, does this mean that the latter language is *lacking* anything? Or does this mean that the former

language is somehow excessive? Perhaps these two languages can be compared to a third language. This third language has none of the aforementioned features, but does allow for "requesting objects and activities, initiating social interactions, expressing personal feelings, describing aspects of the world, requesting information, and pretending" (Schaeffer, 1982, p.289). Where does this third language fit into the discussion of languages lacking anything, or having an excess? As Marie McGinn (1997, p.50) points out, Wittgenstein's tool analogy helps to show how speaking of a language as *lacking* something makes as much sense as speaking of a tool box lacking something. Is a toolbox *lacking* because it does not contain a whisk? Not if it belongs to an electrician.

Although Adorno would no doubt reject the ideological connotations of the tool analogy (for example, the undertones of instrumentalisation), commonalities between each thinker's ideas can be found. The first is Wittgenstein's reluctance to claim that the meaning of *all* words, including the word 'meaning', is their usage. Adorno (1968, pp.2–3) also had a strong aversion to totalising claims, instead opting to write of tendencies. And, as mentioned earlier, his work is deliberately fragmentary in order to avoid totalising claims. The second commonality is Wittgenstein's command to *look* at how words are used, rather than to merely think about it. Discussing the way that philosophers must work with the material with which they are given, Adorno notes that "[w]ords and phrases tainted (*verdorben*) by use do not reach the secluded workshop intact" (2005b, pp.141, translation modified). The philosopher sitting in their lonely study must *look* at how the words and phrases they are given are actually used, rather than using the words and phrases in accordance with how they think that they *should* be used.

Although the two thinkers share some common ground on their own terms, the brightest sparks of insight emerge from bringing their ideas together at their most antithetical points. For Wittgenstein, "[w]hat *we* do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use" (2009, §116). In doing so, philosophy makes use of language in the struggle against the "bewitchment of our understanding" by metaphysics. Wittgenstein's tool analogy leads the way

towards demystifying words, but through an Adornian lens we can show that 'metaphysics' is not a synonym for 'mystification'. For Adorno, the metaphysical and the everyday are inseparable (Gordon, 2020, p.557). Reversing the commitment to immutable and general forms found in traditional metaphysics, Adorno's notion of metaphysics centres upon the "the infinite relevance of the intra-mundane" (2001, p.100).

In traditional metaphysics, the intra-mundane, the everyday, was merely the imperfect material manifestations of pure, immutable forms. For Adorno, identity thinking, the subsumption of unique individual objects under a single unifying concept, has become so pervasive that metaphysics today refers to that which lies beyond the forms, namely, the intra-mundane. Rather than being denied access to the forms by our encounters of the everyday, it is the "everyday" that is blocked by the forms. Identity thinking, a mode of thinking that prioritises abstract and formal definitions over the actually existing, has become so prevalent that it has now established itself as the "everyday." Peter Gordon (2020, p.557) succinctly captures the pivotal moment in Adorno's thinking: "If the traditional concept of metaphysics implied a kind of beatitude in the mind's grasp of timeless perfection," metaphysics today requires a "turning of the mind, from the fantasy of invariance and toward the mundane." Rather than taking the nuances of the actually existing to be of secondary importance to the socially determined idea about that thing, Adorno seeks to find a mode of thinking and writing that allows the particularity of any object the dignity of expression (Angermann, 2020, p.544). In a provocative way, we might say that metaphysics today is a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding through [*durch*] the resources of our language.

We can use Adorno's critical twist on metaphysics to build upon Wittgenstein's tool analogy in a way that both thinkers would most likely reject. On a basic level, we can say that the identity of a tool is its usage, for example, a rolling pin finds its identity through being used to flatten pastry. Of course, it is possible to use other objects to flatten pastry, such as a hammer. However, the shape, weight, material, and texture of a rolling pin has been crafted in such a way

that it is the best available tool for flattening pastry. There is nothing stopping a person from flattening pastry with a hammer and it is perfectly possible to use a rolling pin to try to drive nails into timber. However, flattening pastry with a hammer is not just absurd in an abstract way, but begs a very specific question: "why not use a rolling pin?" The usage of tools is not purely individualistic; it is also determined through the social needs that they have been made to satisfy. A joke from the sitcom *Friends* helps to return this analogy back into language. In trying to make his speech for Monica and Chandler's wedding sound more sophisticated, Joey makes use of a thesaurus. He describes the bride and groom in the following way: "They're humid, prepossessing homo sapiens with full-sized aortic pumps." Monica asks what the sentence was originally, to which Joey responds: "They're warm, nice people with big hearts." There is more to each word than its immediate correspondence to a particular meaning, more than the way it is used by a single individual. Of course, by the fact that Joey simply replaced one word for another demonstrates that an individual can perform such arbitrary substitutes. However, there is something about referring to 'nice people' as 'prepossessing homo sapiens' that makes it comical, rather than meaningless. That something is the social character of language usage.

It is here that we invest Wittgenstein's tool analogy with metaphysics. The usage and body of a tool expresses more than the immediate task at hand. They also express particular sociohistorical relations. For example, a rolling pin made of silicone did not fall from the sky. It was produced through specific sociohistorical and economic relations, ones that differ from those of a Victorian rolling pin made from Whale ivory. A silicone rolling pin did not exist in Victorian Britain, and the Whale ivory rolling pin no longer flattens pastry. More than this, the scars and stains on the body of the Whale bone rolling pin attest to its individual history. Without ever seeing it in the hands of a baker, a Whale bone rolling pin can still express something tangible, namely, it's individual *history*, as well as the socioeconomic relations through which it was produced. What makes these historical elements metaphysical in an Adornian sense is, firstly, that "history is at

work" (2005b, p.219) in the body of tools despite the fact that there is not a single atom of "history" to be found, and secondly, that they attest to a unique and *real* object that is hidden by the pervasiveness of identity thinking (2001, pp.100–101). The logic of identity lumps together unique objects, ignoring their subtle yet real differences, and in doing so generates an ideal to which the real object is measured against. The real yet nonmaterial elements of individual objects are either understood to be inessential or seen as a blemish on an ideal form. What is unessential in the Whale ivory rolling pin? Or the silicone rolling pin? How many elements could each one lose or gain before they were no longer rolling pins? Such questions presuppose an ideal to which actually existing rolling pins are measured. These questions arise when, to paraphrase Wittgenstein (2009, §38), a philosopher tries to fathom the relation between name and what is named by staring at an object in front of him and repeating the word 'rolling pin' innumerable times.

Another approach to this problem is through the idea that language is somehow *defective*. Wittgenstein (2009, §106) argues against the idea that ordinary language is somehow defective. He does this by describing a person trying to repair a torn spiderweb with their fingers. The person repairing the torn spiderweb is, firstly, trying to return the web to an imaginary ideal state, and secondly, they are frustrated because they assume that their inability to do so is due to their fingers being too cumbersome (Baker and Hacker, 2005, p.239). The problem, as Wittgenstein sees it, is not that the person's fingers are too big or that the web is torn, but that the person assumes that if they had access to a more delicate and precise mode of operation (perhaps specialised tools), then they could restore the spiderweb to some idealised form. This is, according to Wittgenstein, completely misguided. The idea of a perfect spiderweb and the idea that one's fingers are too cumbersome go hand in hand. The realisation that there is no need to repair the spiderweb brings about the realisation that one's fingers are not too cumbersome. When Adorno (2005b, p.219) states that words and phrases entering the secluded workshop are tainted by use, he also makes clear that one cannot repair any "historical damage" that they might find. Like Wittgenstein,

Adorno is rejecting the idea that there is any ideal to which words can be returned. As if upon receiving a silicone rolling pin, the first job is to strip it down and apply intricate Whale ivory handles.

The analogies used by each thinker are found in arguments that appear to be incompatible with each other. Wittgenstein uses the spider web analogy to argue against the idea that ordinary language is not suitably nuanced for philosophical writing (Baker and Hacker, 2005, p.239). Invented words are, according to Wittgenstein, "cold, lacking in associations, and yet [play] at being 'language'" (1980, p.52). Adorno's argument, on the other hand, is against the idea that one must use the simplest language possible in their philosophy, avoiding at all costs any word that is obscure or complicated. On closer inspection, Adorno and Wittgenstein's thinking converges again. Wittgenstein is arguing against the idea that language is defective because it is not nuanced enough, and Adorno is arguing against the idea that language is defective because it is too complicated. The demands for more nuance and for less nuance are demands that prioritise an idealised language over actually existing language. In addition to this, both thinkers have argued in the other direction in other texts. For Wittgenstein (2010, p.24), demanding that an explanation be given in the simplest possible terms is akin to boiling down sugar until all that is left is ash, and then declaring that ash is all that sugar really is. It may well be possible to reduce language to extremely simple parts, but this transformation causes great damage. And for Adorno (2007b, p.37), the invention of new words, especially by philosophers, is more often than not an attempt to avoid the burden of history that is at work inside language. The creation of neologisms imbued with pseudo-etymologies is an illusory form of linguistic control that Adorno rejected throughout his life (Hullot-Kentor, 1984, p.101). Whether trying to repair language by adding decorative pieces, or by rounding off the edges, attempts to repair language prioritise an ideal over how language is actually used.

We can see that while it is true that a word abstracted from its actual usage takes on a mysterious form, it is not completely without expression. Words express their sociohistorical character on their bodies. This is the metaphysical character of words that only becomes *mysterious* when they are detached from the social life through which they are used. The discussion regarding the word 'animal' in chapter 1 demonstrated how critical animal scholars frequently note its sociohistorical character, but they do so in a way that reifies the gap between the physical and the metaphysical. Replacing a rolling pin with a cylindrical length of wood does not change the social relations that necessitate the existence of rolling pins. And the replacement of the letters

'A-N-I-M-A-L'

with the letters

'N-O-N-H-U-M-A-N A-N-I-M-A-L'

does not alter the material relationships through which the word 'animal' is used to denote "chimpanzees, snails, and tree frogs." What we are given in our secluded workshops is the word 'animal'. Its body is tainted by usage, baring the marks of a world in which animals are, in almost every way, condemned to be treated as inferior to humans. But the word 'animal' is the word that we are given.

2.3.2 Cosmological Families

This project brings Adorno and Wittgenstein together in another way. As noted earlier, Adorno argued that language is always already constellatory. That is, the meanings of words unfold into a whole series of other words, rather than into a self-contained, essential meaning. Wittgenstein also argued this point but through his notion of 'family resemblances'. As will become clear later, the reason for bringing these two thinkers together is because they are doing slightly different things with their work, which at first glance seems incompatible. However, bringing them

together in this way allows for this research project to push at the boundaries of its subject matter in productive and illuminating ways.

It should be noted that in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein is in a dialogue with a very specific school of thought. The philosophy of figures such as Frege, and the philosophy found in his own *Tractatus*, relied heavily upon the notion of determinacy of sense (Baker and Hacker, 2005, p.11). This idea operated on the assumption that for any concept to be usable it *must* have solid and well-defined boundaries. In fact, for Frege, the idea of a concept without a definite boundary is oxymoronic, since by definition a concept must have a definite boundary. As discussed in the above section, the later Wittgenstein rejected this idea. The tool analogy helps to realign one's focus from the imagined essence of words to the actual usage of words. The notion of family resemblances elaborates on this line of thinking even further. A family is an identifiable group of people, but there is no single, *essential* characteristic that is shared by any given family. There is instead a range of characteristics, from "build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, and so on," that overlap and intertwine in a way that is specific to each family (Wittgenstein, 2009, §67). Supplementing the notion of family resemblances, Wittgenstein introduces the metaphor of a rope. The integrity and strength of a rope is not down to the work of a single, essential fibre, but is instead determined by the "overlapping of many fibres."
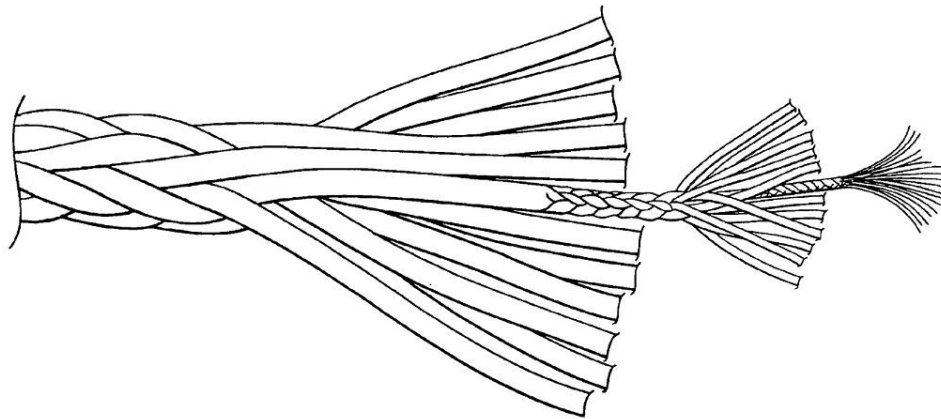
Figure 2.1: Wittgenstein's thread

Which is the central, essential fibre in figure 2.1? Is there any single fibre that could be removed and take with it the integrity of the entire rope? Plucking apart a rope in search for the essential, strength-giving fibre would result only in a pile of thread and a self-inflicted mystery. Wittgenstein argued that the meaning of a word is not formed of a single, easily identifiable element. The meaning of a word is made up of a range of elements tied together in a specific way. Which elements are included and how they relate to each other are firm enough to provide consistency, but permeable enough to allow for adaptation and development.

Wittgenstein actually had little to say about how words change over time, but we can build upon his thinking in a way that is enlightening to the discussion on language. Families can add new members through the birth of a child, adoption, rescuing an animal, marriage, and so on. Family members can also depart, through death, divorce, or whatever else. Individual family members can also change, whether this is through aging, life choices, trauma, or whatever else. The border between a family and everyone else is not rigid, but permeable. Family members come and go, as well as changing in themselves, and in the process the family itself changes and evolves. It does this while retaining its identity as a family.

The thrust of Wittgenstein's argument is two-fold. Firstly, most words, such as the word 'game', do not have a clear boundary, and secondly, there is not actually any need for such a boundary for these words to function. As mentioned earlier, definitions *can* be made, but with

regards to philosophical investigations, very little would be gained through their creation, or they tend to be so general that they become self-defeating:

> But if someone wanted to say, "So there is something common to all these constructions — namely, the disjunction of all their common properties" — I'd reply: Now you are only playing with a word (Wittgenstein, 2009, §67).

Hans-Johann Glock (1996, p.121) responded to Wittgenstein's claim that the concept 'game' is without boundaries by attempting to show that a definition of game can actually be found. Glock defines 'game' as a "rule-guided activity with fixed objectives that are of little or no importance to the participants outside the context of the game."

The first thing to note is that the word 'game' is included in this definition of the word 'game'. This leads to a feedback loop for the person seeking to acquire a definition of the word 'game'. The second thing to note is that this definition does not address Wittgenstein's point that a word does not *require* a fixed definition for it to be usable. A person can invite their friend to play a game without ever having in their possession a definition of the word 'game'. Glock (1996, pp.121–122) does concede this point, but continues to try to show that a definition can still be found. The third thing to note is that Glock's definition still comes up short, and does so in a way that Wittgenstein anticipated. Glock's definition is more precise than one that synonymises games with all activities, but there are many activities that are not called 'games' that fit his definition. Visiting a safari park is certainly a "rule-guided activity." Woburn Safari Park (2020) has a long list of rules that visitors must abide by, such as remaining in their car, not feeding the animals, and the prohibition of dogs. The "fixed objective" is to see the animals living at the safari park. And visiting a safari park is "of little or no importance to the participants outside" of the park. And yet, it does not make sense to invite a friend for a game of visiting the safari park. *Minecraft* (2020), on the other hand, is a game that does not fit Glock's definition. *Minecraft* has no

"rules" that players must follow, which relates to the way that the game has no fixed objectives. A player can try to defeat the Ender Dragon, or they can build a replica of Manhattan Island, or they can dig gigantic holes and fill them with chickens. Players can do nothing but blow themselves up with TNT for hours on end and yet they would still be playing a 'game'. And with regards to the importance of *Minecraft* outside of the context of the game, the sheer amount of merchandise, the Netflix created show *Minecraft: Story Mode* (2018), the hundreds of dedicated Youtube channels, as well as the many *Minecraft* conventions and competitions, attests to the fact that the game is extremely important to many of its players even when they are not playing it.

The problem with Glock's definition relates back to Adorno's argument that definitions always unfold into a constellation of other words. Wittgenstein argues the same point from a different angle. Glock's definition does not provide any essential core to the word 'game', but instead constructs a definition from a set of other words, such as "rule-guided", "important", "objective", "context," and so on. Each of these are also made-up of a set of interweaving words. This is why visiting a safari park both does and does not fit Glock's definition. When I claimed that visiting a safari park was of little to no importance outside of the park, this can easily be disputed due to the indeterminacy of the word 'important'. Perhaps visiting the safari park is someone's dying wish, or after visiting the safari park, a person could be inspired to change their life to become an animal rights activist dedicated to irradicating safari parks. Are *Minecraft* conventions to be included in the "context" of the game? What is the definition of the concepts "important," "objective," or "fixed"? Some activities that are called 'games' meet some of Glock's criteria, while others include extra elements. Like members of a family, the resemblances and differences between the activities called 'games' are multifarious.

Family resemblance, then, refers to the way that the meaning of words is "a non-unitary play of identity and difference" (Gandesha, 2007, p.93). Again, these commonalities and differences are not to be isolated, but analysed within their specific configuration. Wittgenstein's

thinking on the intricacy of the aforementioned elements can be used alongside Adorno's (2005a, p.131) claim that "truth is a constantly evolving constellation." Returning to Glock, the elements that made up his definition of game, such as "important," "rule-guided," "objective," and so on, undergo their own changes. The word 'important' does not sit in a petrified state in order to provide stability to the definition of 'game'. So too with the activities that the word 'game' is used to describe. In the same way that on a linguistic level the constituent parts of any word undergo their own changes, the activities that are called 'games' undergo their own internal changes. More than this, as with the case of *Minecraft*, previously inconceivable activities become included into the range of activities referred to as 'games'. As the material practices through which language is used undergoes changes, the language itself changes. However, the relationship works both ways. Samir Gandesha succinctly capture's Adorno's thinking here:

> If we encounter objects in the world only through the multiplicity of language games through which they are given to us, then such a pushing up against the limits of language pushes up against and occasionally ruptures the limits of the world (Gandesha, 2007, pp.95-96).

It should be stressed that it is not the *world* that is ruptured, but the *limits* of the world. Referring back to Adorno's critique of identity thinking, a form of thinking that assumes a congruence between language and world, pushing the limits of language can reveal the non-identical latent within ordinary language, and perhaps also the non-identical in any given form of life. This is more than a philosophical game, but a way to demonstrate the contingency of what *is*.

In the next section I will show how Adorno does this, and how I will be using his notion of constellations to guide my own research. Before I do, it should be noted that Adorno and Wittgenstein's thinking appears to be totally incompatible with regards to the task of the philosopher. Gandesha identifies in Wittgenstein's work a "conservative tenor" that is "suspicious

of change" (2007, p.94). The proof of this conservative tenor is from §124 of *Philosophical Investigations*, where Wittgenstein insists that philosophy should leave "everything as it is." Where Adorno speaks of "rupturing" limits, Wittgenstein (2009, §119) argues that philosophy simply reveals "the bumps that the understanding has got by running up against the limits of language." However, referring back to the provocatively worded line in this chapter, Wittgenstein argued that philosophy is "a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding through [*durch*] the resources of our language" (2009, §109, translation modified). As noted by Dimitris Gakis, Wittgenstein's philosophy is of "a deep transformational nature" (2018, p.236). Rather than being suspicious of change, Wittgenstein is committed to changing not only how philosophy operates, but the self-imposed limits on our understanding.

I read the passage quoted by Gandesha with §109 of *Philosophical Investigations* in mind. Here Wittgenstein states that the problems of philosophy "are solved, not by coming up with new discoveries, but by assembling what we have long been familiar with" (2009, §109). Wittgenstein is making a very similar point to Adorno who scorned the creation of neologisms imbued with pseudo-etymologies, and his own point about 'invented words' being cold and lacking in *associations*. To "leave everything as it is" is not to accept the status quo, but to resist the urge to invent terminology that might better express what ordinary language cannot. Through the arrangement the familiar, that is, through the arrangement of ordinary language, we begin to engage in the struggle against the bewitchment of our intelligence. This, again, echoes Adorno's assertion that if a philosopher wants to "posit a new truth, there remains for him [sic] no hope other than to place the words in a new configuration" (2007b, p.38). New philosophical insight does not come from the invention of new words that are purportedly more 'precise', and it certainly does not come from accepting the formal definitions of words. Instead, it comes from a new arrangement of the language that we are given. However, despite the transformative current found in both the philosophy of Adorno and Wittgenstein, they are not identical.

For the purposes of this project, there are two key differences between these thinkers that the other can resolve. Firstly, while Wittgenstein mentions material practices, and makes steps towards a materialist account of language (Gandesha, 2007, p.95), he offers no sociological, economic, or any other material analysis. This is not a fault or deficiency of his work, it is only to say that such analyses are not present. Adorno, on the other hand, has written extensively on these matters, and on how they relate to language and philosophy. The second difference is the nature of the imagery that they deploy to explain their ideas. For this project, it is difficult to speak of a transformational writing style through the notion of family resemblances. The metaphor breaks down when speaking of pushing certain concepts to their breaking point, or when speaking of the construction of new configurations. On the other hand, discussing the minute details of the everyday with reference to astronomical metaphors risks presenting a misleadingly astrological tone. While Adorno might have been averse to the ideological implications of Wittgenstein's tool metaphor and his ideas on language 'games', for a project that is examining animal violence in film they work extremely well. Although Adorno's notion of constellations will serve as the main guide for this project, I will be making use of the work of Wittgenstein to support my analysis.

2.4 Non-identical constellations

Where identity seeks to arrest the movement of the concept, seeks to find an immutable point from which analysis can begin, and in the processes obfuscate the expression of the particular, non-identity seeks to do the exact opposite. Adorno's approach is notably, and deliberately, frustrating. By avoiding giving any definition, by avoiding the urge to draw a neat circle around any concept, constellations point towards an idea without ever presenting it on a platter. In terms of his philosophical approach, his work is more demonstrative than instructive. With a focus on non-identity, the connections made between each concept, the context in which each concept is used, and the overall structure of the text are committed to *expressing* what something is, rather than finding which category something falls under. Where identity seeks to

capture and clarify the messiness and complexity of life, non-identity uses linguistic form to express what is lost through identity, namely, the life of concepts. There are a number of elements involved with the construction of constellations that express non-identity, a few of which I will outline below.

2.4.1 Immanent critique

The spirit of Adorno's transformative approach to language is expressed memorably by Marx:

> Men [sic] make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past (Marx, 1979, p.105).

This quote sheds more light on why Adorno insisted on using the term 'metaphysics' in his philosophy. Not only did Adorno give a critical twist to metaphysics, he claimed that this twist was partially a historical necessity. The fact that Adorno was writing after Auschwitz is tremendously significant. Adorno (2001, p.101) used the name 'Auschwitz' not only to denote the appalling events of World War II, but the conditions through which Auschwitz was made possible. These conditions, Adorno argues, continued after the fall of the Third Reich and manifest in events such as the emergence of mutually assured destruction, the Vietnam war, governments resorting to the systematic use of torture, and so on (Gordon, 2020, p.557). There now exist mass institutions in which "human beings are to be standardized by force" (Adorno, 2001, p.106) through such means as electroshock therapy, gay conversion therapy, solitary confinement, and so on. This is not to say that Adorno *equates* Auschwitz with electroshock therapy. His point is that despite the horrors of the gas chambers, horrors that should have prompted a radical change to the organisation of society, the torture, annihilation, and domination of human beings in the name of an abstract ideal

has become par for the course of contemporary society. For Adorno, the highest expression of a mode of thinking that treats idiosyncratic particularities as irrelevant, or erroneous, in the face of a pure and ideal form is found in and through Auschwitz.

It is, of course, possible to continue with the traditional notion of metaphysics after Auschwitz, but doing so would be "inhuman":

> To assert that existence or being has a positive meaning constituted within itself and orientated towards the divine principle (if one is to put it like that), would be, like all the principles of truth, beauty and goodness which philosophers have concocted, a pure mockery in face of the victims and the infinitude of their torment (Adorno, 2001, pp.101–102).

So why does Adorno insist on using the term 'metaphysics'? Why did Adorno become a "metaphysician with no faith in metaphysics" (Buck-Morss, 1977, p.67)? Firstly, because doing so necessarily embraces the historical weight of the term. As discussed earlier, Adorno (2007b, p.36) argued that philosophers cannot side-step the historical weight of the language that they are given. Secondly, it allows for a critical reappraisal that uses the traditional notion of metaphysics against itself. As discussed earlier, rather than treating the intra-mundane as mere fragments through which we can discern the immutable forms, Adorno argues that it is the intra-mundane that must now be discerned through the dominating forms that have established themselves as the everyday. Metaphysics, in its new configuration, seeks to break through the everyday that can be found after Auschwitz, and bring to the surface the hidden particularities behind the forms.

These two points coincide in Adorno's approach. Immanent critique works with the material at hand and pushes it to breaking point on its own terms. Through this approach non-identity is expressed negatively. The process through which one engages with the matter at hand should be thought of as a movement. The text moves back and forth between what a concept is

on its own terms, and what this logic looks like when pushed to its breaking point, pushed until it reveals itself to be immanently contradictory. The success of this procedure is granted not through the presentation of a "spurious harmony," but the creation of harmony in a negative form. That is, immanent critique must not only demonstrate how a concept is self-contradictory, but must also point towards a way out (Adorno, 1981, p.32). If the process of immanent critique is a movement, the measure of its success is not its capture in the form of empty aphorisms ("things need to change"), nor its presentation in the form of an instruction manual on how to think, but in steering the momentum of that movement beyond the text. It is the movement itself that expresses what something is, not the concept under which it falls. To put it another way, a philosophical analysis and argument should not be considered a means to an end, but an end in itself. As mentioned earlier, concepts are always already constellatory, but they are much more than the sum of their parts. The tensions between and within each element, and their relationship to the form of life through which they are used, requires a style of philosophy that brings this constellation into view without trying to ensnare it.

2.4.2 Differentiation

Along with immanent critique, Adorno utilised the notion of 'differentiation'. In musical composition, differentiation refers to the practice of articulating nuances which pinpoint the qualitative differences between apparently similar phenomena (Buck-Morss, 1977, p.98). This process denied the possibility of treating two distinct phenomena as though they were identical simply because they have both been subsumed under the same concept. Two ways that Adorno did this were, firstly, to treat the same phenomena differently depending on the context, and secondly, to use a concept in the opposite way in which it was intended. With the former technique, Adorno frequently noted that the identity of an object changes through its social context:

Perhaps a film that strictly and in all respects satisfied the code of the Hays Office might turn out a great work of art, but not in a world in which there is a Hays Office (Adorno, 2005b, p.191).

What Adorno means here is that a work of art cannot be spoken of as being inherently "good" or "bad." To do this is to speak about an idea of a thing rather than an actual thing. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Adorno's claim that films made under the Hay's code cannot be works of art, the important point for this discussion is that Adorno is stressing context. Adorno wanted to allow for the critical interrogation and contextualisation of concepts by showing how neither objects nor ideas are identical to themselves.

A concrete example of Adorno using differentiation is with his assessment of certain musical elements that express 'childishness'. According to Adorno, the childishness found in Stravinsky's music is an attack on the "grown-up world," an expression of a juvenile and reactionary powerlessness. Whereas the childishness found in Ravel's work is a constellation of play and grief that expressed a particular social tension (Buck-Morss, 1977, p.99). It is not that Adorno simply preferred one composer over the other. The difference between the two expressions of childishness came from the context of the piece itself, and the context of the time in which each piece was written. The childish character of each composition was radically different, and yet they were both 'childish'. In this way, Adorno's work both condemns and celebrates the same musical concept depending on how it is used. To stress this point, it is not that Adorno is articulating how best to use a certain concept, but how the concept itself changes through the way that it is used.

The second way in which Adorno utilised differentiation was to use a concept in the opposite way to which it was intended. The logic of identity groups similarities in order to present a coherent and ordered image of the world. By breaking from this logic, Adorno is able to express antagonisms, contradictions, and indissolubility through the form of his argument. For example,

when trying to decipher the meaning of Bonnie Barker's song *Especially for You*, Adorno (2012, pp.43–44) juxtaposed the content of the lyrics with the copyright notice on the sheet music. The copyright notice had a specific, standardised function, namely, to communicate that the content of the sheet music was privately owned and that the ownership was protected by US law. Rather than accepting the copyright notice on its own terms, as a merely political/economic formality *outside* of the meaning of the artwork, Adorno included it into his analysis of the content of the lyrics of the song. The lyrics conveyed the message that everything, from the moon to the month of June to the song itself, was "for you", that is, for the listener. However, under the coercion of private property law, the song was anything but 'for you' since 'you' did not own the song. Instead, the listener belonged to the product in the sense that listening to the song was permitted only under strict conditions prescribed by the State (Buck-Morss, 1977, p.101). The moon, the month of June, and so on, are 'for you', but the song itself is absolutely not 'for you'. And so, the message of the song is mockingly negated as the words 'only for you' are never addressed to the listener, but instead to the beneficiary of private property law. But Adorno also noted that neither the songwriters nor the audience were so naive as to *really* believe that the song was really 'for you' (Adorno, 2012, pp.44–45). Again, his argument is not about the psychological workings of listeners, but about the meaning of the artwork within a certain social context. The mockingly coercive character of *Especially for You* was revealed through bringing together elements that were, on their own terms, not supposed to be brought together. Again, relating to the previously mentioned assertion that truth is a constantly evolving constellation, Adorno's *conclusions* might be completely wrong today. The song would have to be analysed again within the context of contemporary social relations and technological development. What would a constellatory approach to analysing *Especially for You* look like today with how easy it is to pirate music? Whatever it might look like, it surely would not come to the same conclusions as Adorno's argument did.

2.4.3 Active Transformation

Active transformation is the recognition that not only are concepts, ideas, and objects not identical to themselves, but they must be translated into a readable text. An idea does not imprint itself onto a page, it is written by an author. The intermediary process is a process of translation. The important thing to note is the fact that translation is not the mere substitution of one word for another. The German word 'Geist', for example, can be translated as 'mind' or 'Spirit'. When 'Geist' is transposed directly into English, it splits in two and generates words with meanings that stand in opposition to one another; 'mind' as secular, 'Spirit' as religious. It is down to the translator to decide which term best expresses the original text's meaning. However, meaning is conveyed through the cultural specificity of certain terms, puns, jokes, form, structure, historical context, and everything else. The translator must look beyond the bare text in order to tap into its meaning. They must then somehow capture this 'beyond' in their working language.

The following German joke serves as an example: "Wie hat der Physiker geschlafen? Wie ein Stein." Translated directly into English it becomes: "How does the physicist sleep? Like a stone." What is completely lost is that 'ein Stein' is a pun; it means both 'a stone' and 'Einstein', the surname of the famous physicist. Another failed attempt at translating the joke might be: "How does the physicist sleep? Like Einstein." The translator must either translate the joke in such a way that the English version contains a pun, or they must add a footnote to explain the joke. Either way, the original is modified in order to convey the meaning of the original: translation is active transformation. To add to this, translations are received in a specific context. The English language, for example, changes in both form and content through its usage across heterogeneous cultures and societies that are themselves in constant flux. This dynamic means that translations are never complete.

With this in mind, Adorno's notion of constellations is aware that philosophy is more than just finding pristine concepts that directly correspond to reality or to self-contained ideas. In the construction of a constellation, the ephemeral and intangible character of social truth must

somehow be translated into a text. When writing about a social practice, the element of active transformation is the translation of that which is not language into language. Of course, as discussed earlier, one cannot in actuality separate language from the form of life in which it is used, but one also cannot equate the two. The act of writing about, or reading about, how a slaughterhouse worker ran their knife across the throat of a cow is a qualitatively different act than the actual slaughter itself. So too with the act of writing about film, or even the presentation of a film in the form of stills. When one writes about a film, what details are to be included? Is there a way to *directly* translate a sequence in a film into written text? The vast majority of films are shot at twenty-four frames per second. A ten-second sequence from a film will contain two-hundred-and-forty frames. It possible to identify which of these two-hundred-and-forty frames capture the *essence* of the sequence in question without relying on the judgement of the author? Although this is, on one level, an obvious point, what must be stressed here is that the relationship between concept and object, between text and screen, is not direct and seamless. It is the task of the author to translate into language something that is not language. Adorno embraces this notion of active transformation by rejecting the imperative to tell things 'how they really are', and instead uses a wide range of techniques to express what would otherwise be lost in translation. In the same way that the aforementioned joke loses its identity as a joke when translated word-for-word, social truths become their opposite in a style of writing designed only to transmit information.

2.5 Visualising constellations

Although it would no doubt irritate Adorno to see his ideas represented in pictorial form, I think that the visually rich metaphor of constellations merits such a representation. First of all, figure 2.2 shows the notion of concepts as having a solid and well-defined boundary, as discussed in section 2.3.
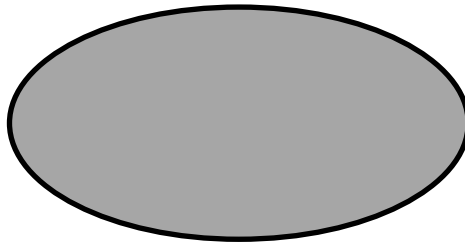
Figure 2.2: Concept with solid and well-defined boundary

Here a black line both surrounds and demarcates the concept. With the idea of something like the determinacy of sense found in Frege, this boundary is essential. However, as shown in the above discussion, it is something that loses its self-evident solidity with even the most rudimentary of investigations. What is the solid and well-defined boundary of the concept 'tool'? What the discussion also showed was that, in Wittgenstein's words, a concept reveals itself to have "blurred edges" (2009, §71). Figure 2.3 shows a concept with blurred edges.

Figure 2.3: Concept with blurred edges

The idea of concept with burred edges relates to the notion of family resemblances and the structural integrity of the thread in figure 2.1. To go with this logic, Wittgenstein (2009, §164) also uses the metaphor of stripping an artichoke of its leaves in order to find the *actual*, real artichoke hiding beneath the surface. Of course, a concept appears to be a mysterious thing if it assumed that its essence is hiding beneath the multitude of ways in which it is used. What Adorno's notion of constellations brings to this line of thinking is the fractal character of how concepts unfold into an open-ended network of other concepts. To serve as an example of this logic, figure 2.4 shows a drawing of the Ursa Major constellation both with and without lines.
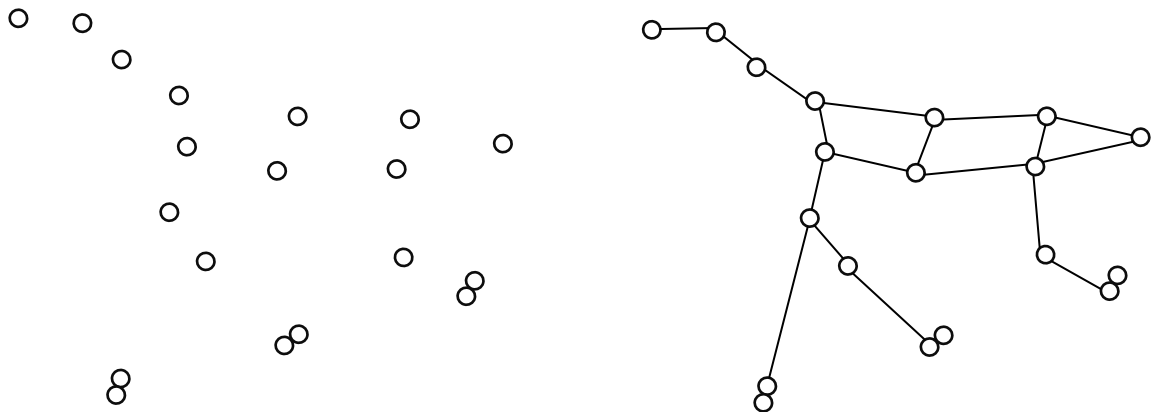
Figure 2.4: Ursa Major

The first thing to note is that there are no lines connecting the actual stars in the sky. The connections between the stars are both real and non-material. The lines show themselves only through an observer who is situated within a particular sociohistorical moment. The name Ursa Major attests to this cultural, rather than individual specificity, especially when considering that some of the same stars are used in the Ancient Egyptian constellation the 'Foreleg of Ox' (Nadieh, 2018). Figure 2.5 shows the Foreleg of Ox on the left and Ursa Major on the right, with the shared stars coloured in red on Ursa Major.
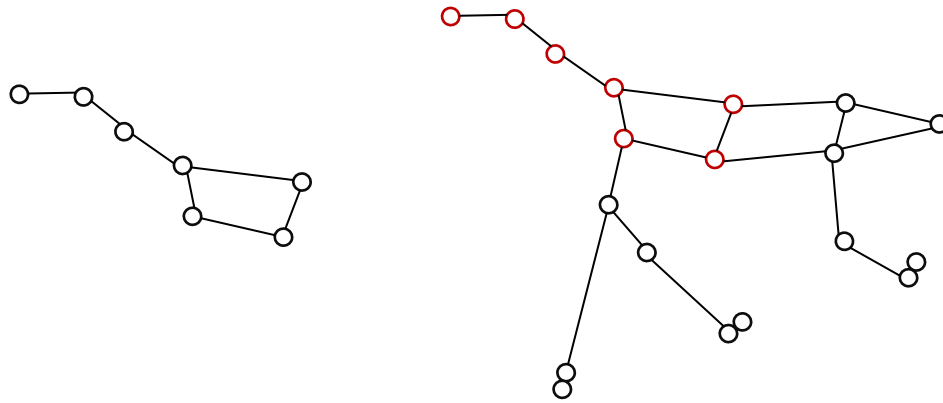
Figure 2.5: Foreleg of Ox and Ursa Major

It does not make much sense to say that the Foreleg of Ox is *lacking* anything, or that Ursa Major is somehow *excessive*. To talk of a lack or of an excess is to posit an ideal against **which each is measured.** Each constellation shares some of the same stars, but this does not imply that they should both be understood within the same context. The lines that connect the stars attest to the role of the observer in the creation of each constellation. The sociohistorical circumstances through which such constellations are created should be analysed on their own terms.

Describing each star as being 'the same' hints at a potential problem with this method. Are the stars *really* the same? Does such language risk repeating the same problems mentioned earlier, namely the problem of prioritising the identity of a concept over its non-identity? There is, of course, a risk of this. Fortunately, the Ursa Major/Foreleg of Ox constellations help to show how this can be avoided. One of the stars that makes up each constellation is Alcor. However, to call Alcor a star is a slight misnomer since Alcor is actually a star system. What we call a 'star' is, on closer inspection, a collection of stars. Of course, with constellations in the night sky this logic cannot continue forever. However, for philosophical analysis, the metaphor of a constellation being constructed through other constellations works extremely well. Focussing on a single concept shared by two other concepts, such as the concept 'living' being shared by both 'human' and 'animal', would lead to the discovery of other constellations fraught with similar difficulties.

Concepts do not sit in a petrified, solid state in order to provide stability to other concepts. Each point of the constellation does not revert to the solid concept as given in figure 2.2, but instead unfolds into a constellation of its own. And so, figure 2.6 is a visual representation of a concept as informed by this line of thinking:
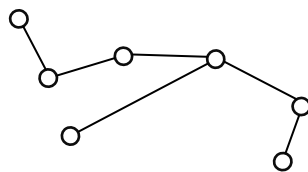
Figure 2.6: Concept as constellation

The boundary is not 'blurred' as such, but certainly does not have a clearly defined boundary. *How* each element fits together relates to the sociohistorical context of the observer in relation to each element. It is not enough to simply list each element. The means of construction must express the particular way in which the constellation is held together. To speak of a 'centre' or of an 'essential element' of a constellation loses all sense. Following this, a closer inspection of any individual element will reveal yet another constellation structured through the same principles.

2.6 Constellations and the censorship of animal violence in British cinema

So how will I be using everything that has been discussed so far to analyse the censorship of animal violence in British cinema? Chapter 1 set the scene for this PhD. As will be recalled, I argued that while the concerns that the word 'animal', and some animal images, are anthropocentric, prejudicial, abusive, and non-sensical are valid, the arguments used to air these concerns fall into some familiar traps. In other words, the analysis in chapter 1 demonstrated the need for an alternative method. Chapter 2 provided that method. With this method in mind, we can again ask what the term 'animal' means. Is the use of the word 'animal' in evolutionary science the same as the use of the word 'animal' on a filmset? How is the term 'animal' used in the Houses of Parliament? How is the term 'animal' used in a zoo? How is the term 'animal' used in the title

of this PhD thesis? Which of these uses can be said to be more or less precise than the others? What is meant by the word 'precise'? Precise according to which language game? Perhaps the term 'animal' is a contradiction, or nonsensical, or anthropocentric? But again, what is meant by *these* terms? The same problems arise for the words 'censorship', 'violence', and so on. In fact, this thesis is filled with tens of thousands of words constructed through just as many combinations. There will inevitably be points at which I need to take meaning for granted, but in doing so I hope that the reader will follow the line of thought laid out in this project and ask how these words are used, rather than ask about their essential meaning. The words that I am examining are in the title of this PhD. Some of these will be examined extremely closely, such as the words 'animal', 'censorship', and 'violence'. While others, such as 'cinema', 'British', and 'investigation', will be examined in a peripheral manner alongside and intertwined with the close examination of other words.

As will be recalled from the introduction, the differences between Adorno and Wittgenstein provide the overall structure of this thesis. Wittgenstein's relentless focus on the here-and-now, his imperative "don't think, but look" (2009, §66), constantly calls attention to the world in front of our noses. With something like the word 'animal', I will use Wittgenstein to actually *look* at how the word is being used, rather than merely thinking about it. This commitment to the here-and-now will be found throughout this thesis. Adorno's commitment to metaphysics will provide a way of focussing on historical and social forces that mediate the here-and-now. To use Wittgenstein's tool analogy, Wittgenstein can describe how a hammer is used but Adorno can account for the social forces that give rise to the need for hammers. This requires turning away from the here-and-now in order to focus on the bigger picture. With the word 'animal', for example, Wittgenstein can describe how it is used and Adorno can show the concrete social activity that renders such usage to be valid. And so, in a thesis that is examining the censorship of animal violence in British cinema, there will be a constant movement between the here-and-now of

language, the forms of life in which this language is used, and the historical and social forces that render such uses to be valid.

Another thing that should be made explicit at this point is the unsystematic character of a constellatory approach. Adorno's writings have also been described as "extraordinarily unsystematic" and "fragmentary" (Palamarek, 2007, p.42). This thesis, by adopting a constellatory approach, will also maintain a fragmentary and unsystematic structure. But 'unsystematic' is not synonymous with 'chaotic', or 'random'. Unsystematic, in this context, means that the method used to analyse any particular subject matter does not take precedence over the subject matter itself. The censorship of animal violence in British cinema can be analysed through all sorts of methods, from content analysis to a periodised and chronological history. However, the validity of any method says more about the form of life that grants such validity than it does about that method's capacity to bring truth to light (see section 5.4 of this thesis for a detailed discussion on this). With the theoretical discussion of this chapter in mind, it is extremely difficult to claim that a constellatory approach is *better* than any other. But what can be said is that by rejecting the idea of a neat and necessary correspondence between language and meaning, by rejecting the idea that Platonic ideals can be used as the arbiter of truth, this thesis proceeds by *looking* at the subject of animal violence in British cinema. And in writing this thesis, as I explained in section 2.4, what I see when I *look* at the censorship of animal violence in British cinema must be translated into text. From the BBFC's annual reports to Acts of Parliament, from the guidebooks of London Zoo to Hollywood films, from Rhonda Britton's bunnies to Pomeroy Watsons' donuts, I have to translate that which is not language into language. While a systematic approach might provide a cipher to facilitate this translation, there is always a risk that with such a cipher, the physicist will always sleep like a stone. In other words, this thesis will avoid making up the definition of 'censorship', and then, after inspecting a BBFC annual report, declare 'look, censorship!'

This thesis will be using the work of Adorno and Wittgenstein, but will be doing so without constant reference back to this chapter. For example, in chapter 5 I make the only explicit return to Wittgenstein's notion of language games in order to better understand the concept of censorship. A large part of this discussion focusses on two individuals trying to clarify a set of rules. A very similar procedure will be seen throughout chapter 6 as I examine the *1937 Act*. Chapter 6 is the most sustained and focussed application of Wittgenstein's ideas, despite the fact that his name is never mentioned. And so, to begin this investigation, chapter 3 will be combining the theory of fabula and sjužet with the theory of cinematic suture in order to begin the work of understanding the animal image.

Chapter 3: Boiling Bunnies

I just don't see the point in crying over a dead rabbit, you know, who never even feared death to begin with (Donnie Darko, 2001).

"Rabbits or Bunnies, Pets or Meat" reads a hand-painted plywood sign nailed to a telegraph pole. Michael Moore asks Rhonda Britton about the sign. She confirms that she is selling bunnies as pets, and rabbits as meat. Later, Britton explains how she kills the rabbits. Holding a large rabbit under her arm she explains her process to more. "Hang 'em upside down and strip their fur off," she smiles, as though it is the most obvious thing in the world. "And gut 'em. And chopped their heads off." Britton then places the rabbit on the ground. The rabbit lays still before she bludgeons him over the head with a metal bar. The first strike causes the rabbit's tail to wag and his feet to kick sporadically. The second stops his tail but not his legs. The third leaves the rabbit motionless. Britton then does as she promised. After hanging the rabbit upside down, she strips the fur from his body, removes all of his internal organs, and finally removes his head (Roger & Me, 1989). After the film's release, Moore was bombarded with complaints about the scene. People told Moore that they were outraged and horrified at seeing a "poor little cute bunny" being butchered. Some people were so affected by the scene that they left the cinema. Only a few seconds after the rabbit is butchered, the film shows footage of Brian Quentin Richards being shot down by police officers. What puzzled Moore (2001, p.3) was that this scene received no complaints at all.

The response that Moore received about the rabbit scene is not uncommon. A similar sentiment has been observed in Britain. Authors have noted how British audiences, tabloids, and the BBFC condemn scenes of animal violence more vocally than scenes of human violence (Stone,

2004, p.75). Filmmakers, such as Alejandro Iñárritu, have commented on how scenes showing a human being decapitated receive less outcry than scenes showing comparatively mild violence against animals (Burt, 2002a, p.162). In a similar vein, Emir Kusturica expressed his contempt towards the BBFC for the concerns they raised regarding the treatment of a pigeon during the making of his film *Life is a Miracle* (2005). For Kusturica, the British "killed millions of Indians and Africans, and yet [they] go nuts about the circumstances of the death of a single Serbian pigeon" (2005). British film critics have also noted the sentimentality of British audiences. Patrick Peters, in his review for the film *The Isle*, said that "it's fine for filmmakers to depict the insertion of sharp metal implements into a woman's labia, but heaven help them if they harm a fish." John Trevelyan, secretary of the BBFC from 1958 to 1971, noted the concern of British audiences with regards to animal violence. According to Trevelyan (1973, p.170):

> The exploitation of human beings appears to be less of a concern to many people in this country than the exploitation of animals. The British in general are sentimental about animals and are more worried about cruelty to animals than cruelty to children.

Rudd Weatherwax (1952, p.31), the animal trainer who 'discovered' the famous animal actor Lassie, noticed that the most severe complaints that he received were from Britain. American studios also warned filmmakers about the uses of animals in their films if they wanted to reach British audiences (Hunnings, 1967, p.139).

This project will move past a simple dichotomy between humans and animals. The dichotomy is one that can hinder research more than enable it. The question of why audiences respond more negatively to animal violence than human violence more often than not moves the focus from animals to humans. Also, the question is usually framed in a misleading way. Moore's comments serve as a good example. According to Moore (2001, p.62), there is a simple way to

explain the lack of audience outrage at seeing Richards being shot: "he was just a black man, not a cute, cuddly bunny." According to Moore, violence against black men in America, and in American media, is so normalised that the sight of a black man being shot to the ground by police officers does not shock American audiences. What Moore's conclusions overlook are the massive differences between the two scenes. The rabbit is on camera for several minutes, being held and stroked by Britton in an affectionate way. The camera is close enough to the pair that the rabbit's legs are cut off. Sometimes the camera is held so close to the rabbit that all that can be seen is his soft, furry face. The rabbit also shows signs of struggle, wriggling in Britton's arms and biting her fingers. The words "Pets or Meat" render the fate of the rabbit to be uncertain until Britton confirms that the rabbit will be her supper. She continues to stroke the rabbit, talking to him in a way that one would talk to a pet. The uncanniness of the scene echoes John Berger's comments regarding the "peasant who becomes fond of his pig and is glad to salt away its pork" (1980, p.7). The rabbit is a pet *and* meat. The killing of the rabbit is preceded by this intimate sequence, and then followed by several closeup shots of his body being dismembered. The scene in which Richards is shot takes on a much more distanced tone. In the film, Moore refers to him as "one guy [who] thought he was the cousin of Superman," and in his later anecdotes refers to Richards simply as "a black man." Moore never uses Richards' name. The footage of Richards is a long shot taken with a low-quality camera, his face often hidden by the post of a nearby traffic sign. The rifle in his hands remains clearly visible. Richards is on screen for five-seconds before he is shot to the ground. Before we see that he survived the shooting, a clip is taken from an interview in which a man recalls how Richards wanted everyone to refer to him as "Captain Da." This comment maintains the scene's subtle comic undertones initiated by Moore's "cousin of Superman" line.

Figure 3.1: Pet and Meat (Roger & Me, 1989)

Figure 3.2: Brian Quentin Richards (Roger & Me, 1989)

With such stark differences in mind, it is quite misleading to compare audience reactions to these

scenes. By focussing on animal representation without having to rely on a comparison with human

representation, I hope to present a much more nuanced and specific analysis that is able to account for the power that animal violence in cinema has.

Jonathan Burt argues that "the animal image is a form of rupture in the field of representation." Burt phrases this argument in a number of ways, such as:

> the fact that the animal image can so readily point beyond its significance on screen to questions about its general treatment or fate in terms of welfare, suggests that the boundaries of film art (...) cannot easily delimit the meaning of the animal within its fictions (Burt, 2002a, p.11).

And in another section, Burt makes a more specific claim that the representation of animal violence "breaks the boundary between image and reality" (2002a, p.136).

Burt's argument refers to film, but he does not provide a theory of filmic representation. In this chapter I will discuss filmic representation in more detail. In doing so, I want to build from Burt's observations as well as questioning the latent essentialism of his argument. Rather than accept the idea that animal imagery collapses fiction and reality, I want to show how animal imagery forms a short-circuit between one form of fiction to another. To explain this, I will marry together two ideas from film theory. The first is the cinematic application of fabula, sjužet, and style. For this I will be drawing from the work of David Bordwell. This line of thinking addresses the distinctions between the story of a film and the material with which that story is constructed. The second theory is that of suture. The notion of suture in film studies tries to explain how classical cinema can both create a self-enclosed diegetic world and enable audiences to become immersed in that world. I want to show how the model of fabula, sjužet, and style in cinema accommodates the notion of suture. In conclusion I want to show how the narrative of a film, and the narrative of what really happened 'behind the scenes', is constructed through the hegemonic ideas embedded in a film and brought to a film by the audience. In other words, I want to elaborate on

Burt's claim that animal violence collapses fiction and reality by showing that the reality into which fiction collapses is also a fiction.

3.1 Fabula/Sjužet/Style

In this section I will discuss the theory of fabula and sjužet, with Bordwell's addition of style. With any narrative art, there must be some material with which a story is told. The distinction between fabula and sjužet is the distinction between the material and the story (Shklovsky, 1991, p.170). Fabula and sjužet are found across all narrative arts (Bruner, 1986, pp.19–21; Brooks, 1992, p.13; Culler, 2002, p.189). Sjužet refers to the material with which a story is told. It is the formation of specific characters, events, scenes, etc. Fabula refers to the story itself, but the story of fabula is not so simple. Some authors argue that fabula exists independently of any text, and whatever fabula is told within a text is a *re*construction rather than a construction (Bruner, 1986, p.19; Hiles, 2007, pp.36–37). Other authors hold the opposite position, arguing that fabula is something constructed through a text (Walsh, 2001, p.604; Culler, 2002, pp.190–191; Bordwell, 2014, pp.50–51). In the following section I will discuss sjužet before going into more detail on fabula and Bordwell's addition of style.

3.1.1 Sjužet

Sjužet is the material provided in a narrative text. This includes events, characters, scenes, and so on, but also the system through which these elements are structured (Bordwell, 2014, p.50). Sjužet deals with the dramaturgical aspect of a narrative text. For example, in Richard Adams' *Watership Down* (2014), there is a scene in which Bigwig becomes caught in a snare. His fellow travellers panic, unsure how to go about removing the shining wire from Bigwig's throat. Through gasping breaths Bigwig tries to guide the other rabbits: "Owsla – no good – biting wire. Peg – got to – dig out" (Adams, 2014, p.120). This information is not enough to guide the rabbits for whom the concept of a peg remains alien. Hazel sends Pipkin and Fiver to a nearby borough to get more help. When the pair return, they explain that the other rabbits refused to come. After a frantic

exchange of ideas the rabbits workout what is meant by 'peg' and begin digging out the ground. Hazel, Silver, Buckthorn, Pipkin, and Fiver take turns trying to remove the "man-smelling peg" from the earth. Once freed, the rabbits turn back to Bigwig. "The peg's free," Blackberry says into Bigwig's limp ear:

> There was no response. Bigwig lay still as before. A great fly settled on one of his ears. Blackberry thrust at it angrily and it flew up, into the sunshine.

> 'I think he's gone,' said Blackberry. 'I can't feel his breathing' (Adams, 2014, p.122).

Hazel then tries to check that Bigwig really is gone. A light breeze prevents him from being able to tell if Bigwig is breathing. He tries again to tell Bigwig that he is free, but again there is no response. Blackberry then recites a prayer. Hazel recognises that the group is without a leader and decides to take the role himself. In his newly self-appointed position, he tries to determine why the rabbits in a nearby borough failed to come to their rescue. Pipkin tells Hazel of how the leader of the other rabbits, Cowslip, made clear that he did not care if they lived or died. "'I'll kill him,' gasped a low, choking voice behind them. They all leapt around. Bigwig raised his head and was supporting himself on his fore-paws alone" (Adams, 2014, p.123).

The characters, events, dialogue, environmental elements, actions, and so on, are part of the sjužet of Adam's *Watership Down*, the material elements used to tell the story. Bordwell (2014, pp.54–55) describes sjužet as having "tactics" through which a story is told. The purpose of these tactics is to delay the completion of the story by leaving gaps. In this scene, the reader is given *some* information regarding the fate of Bigwig, but not enough to know that he did not die. The reader is given enough information to infer that Bigwig probably died, with Hazel assuming the role of leader, and with two separate rabbits checking his breathing. But the reader is not given enough

information to know for sure that he dies. The light breeze preventing Hazel from knowing that Bigwig had stopped breathing also prevented the reader from knowing.

As mentioned earlier, fabula and sjužet are found across all narrative texts. This can be seen in the film adaptation of *Watership Down* (1978). The scene in which Bigwig is caught in the snare features shots of Bigwig being strangled by the wire, Hazel and the other rabbits desperately trying to figure out how to free him, the rabbits digging out the peg, Bigwig laying still and unresponsive, Blackberry reciting a prayer, and finally Bigwig revealing that he is still alive by vengefully sputtering "I'll kill them!"

Figure 3.3: Bigwig and the shining wire (Watership Down, 1978)

In both the novel and the film, the suspense is built and maintained because the revelation of Bigwig's fate is delayed. In each medium the sjužet is utilised to tell the story in a particular way. Much more is at stake with the sjužet than the transmission of information, as can be seen if we reorder the sequence of events. The scene would take on an extremely different tone, and would have an extremely different meaning if it was revealed early on that he survived. For example, if the snare scene was part of a flashback in which Bigwig is sharing a story of his past. Because Bigwig is the one telling the story his survival is a given, thus nullifying any suspense regarding his fate. Some authors argue the role of sjužet is to reconstruct, rather than to construct, the story (Bruner, 1986, p.19; Hiles, 2007, pp.36–37). Although there is truth to idea that similar sjužet information can be found across different texts, the medium through which a story is told informs

the storytelling process (Herman, 2004, pp.53–57; Bordwell, 2014, p.50). For example, a novel is able to express meaning and contribute to the narrative through stylistic devices such as uses of grammar and punctuation, manipulation of tenses, page layout, etc. Film has its own set of characteristics. Bordwell refers to this as 'style' which I will discuss in section 3.1.3.

3.1.2 Constructing fabula

The fabula of a narrative text refers to the story being told by the sjužet. Fabula is often described as the action playing out in chronological order, the cause-and-effect chain of events (Bordwell, 2014, p.49). On the level of sjužet a film might show a character driving away from a building, and then in the next shot show them arriving at another building. Each shot provides the material, the sjužet. In each shot the fabula and sjužet marry up and become synchronous. But the journey taken by the character between the shots is not provided on the level of sjužet since there is no footage of them taking that journey. However, from the fact that the film shows them departing and the fact that the film shows them arriving, on the level of fabula, on the level of the story, it can be inferred that they drove their car between each location. This can be seen in figure 3.4. Each circle represents a film sequence. Those shown with a solid line are present within the sjužet, and those shown with a broken line are only found in the fabula. Shot 1 might show a person driving away from a building, and shot 5 might show that person arriving at another building. Between 1 and 5 are "shots," or in this case it is more accurate to describe them as "events" 2, 3, and 4. This might include the person stuck in traffic, getting lost, stopping for coffee, driving steadily between locations, etc.
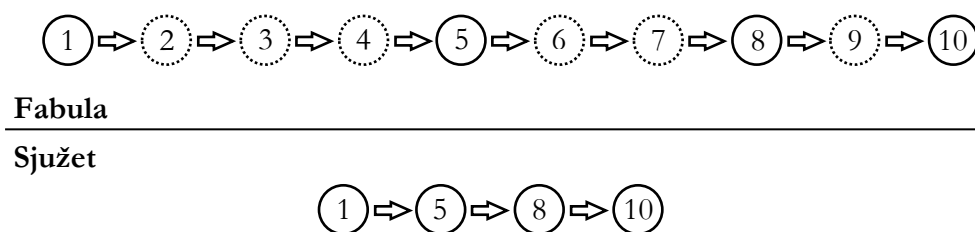
Figure 3.4: Fabula/Sjužet

An important element of this fabula/sjužet relationship is the status of fabula. In my earlier discussion of sjužet, I told two versions of *Watership Down* in the form of plot summaries, and I provided a rudimentary story board containing stills from the film. Add to this the storyboards and script used in the making of the film, the drafts discarded by Richard Adams as he wrote the novel, and the many reviews and analyses that followed the release of text. Each one of these texts constructs the fabula of *Watership Down* in one way or another. Does this mean that fabula exists independently of all mediums? Does fabula exist in an abstract state awaiting its articulation in a text? Perhaps there is a *pure* fabula free from subjective interpretation? As mentioned earlier, some authors argue that fabula does exist independently of any text, and the role of sjužet is to *re*construct, rather than to construct, the story (Bruner, 1986, p.19; Hiles, 2007, pp.36–37).

The claim that fabula exists independently of sjužet, or that fabula is somehow prior to any specific articulation, is difficult to maintain. For example, the claim that fabula is a chronological sequence of events begs the question about the definition of an event (Culler, 2002, pp.190–191). The demarcation of a start and end point that brackets an event is far from given. Richard Walsh (2001, pp.595–596) has shown how the structuring power of sjužet is necessary to prevent fabula events from slipping into an infinite regression. Take the following passage: Bigwig took a breath, and then he left the borough. Does this passage contain one or two events? In fact, it could be argued that there are even more events happening. The opening of Bigwig's mouth to let air in, the rising of his chest, the sound of his exhalation, his eyes moving to focus on the exit of the borough, and so on. What about the events that led up to the moment that Bigwig takes a

breath, or the events that happen after he leaves the borough? It is only through the material provided by sjužet, through the actual articulation and delimitation of events, that fabula can be said to have any event at all. Fabula, pure fabula, without further determination is in fact nothing, and neither more nor less than nothing.

Walsh (2001) provides several insightful counterarguments to the idea that fabula exists independently of any text. In conclusion he actually saves the notion of fabula from his own critique by reframing it as something constructed and dependent upon sjužet. For Walsh (2001, p.604), fabula is an "interpretive process" that takes its cues from sjužet. With regards to the question of several different texts containing the same fabula, Walsh (2001, p.600) argues that this commonality is a posterior construction. A fabula can be common to several texts, but in no way independent of them. This mirrors Bordwell's (2014, pp.50–51) idea that fabula is an intersubjective construction that springs from the reader's inferences. It should be noted that Bordwell does sometimes speak about fabula in terms that imply that it comes before any sjužet, as when he describes the way that sjužet "selects" fabula events (Bordwell, 2014, p.55). Other authors have pointed out that the language in Bordwell's argument lacks precision (Chatman, 1990, p.128). Rather than trying to clarify what Bordwell 'really' thinks about the fabula/sjužet relationship, I will focus on his explicit claims that fabula is constructed through sjužet.

Fabula is not independent of any text since it requires some material through which it can be expressed. However, fabula is not only in the minds of individual audience members since there needs to be some mechanism through which it remains *inter*subjective. Audiences come to films 'tuned' or 'equipped' with a set of expectations, ideas, values, etc. These constitute schemata through which audiences recognise certain character types, events, stories, motivations, etc. (Bordwell, 2014, p.34). Take for example schemata for the femme fatale found in *Fatal Attraction* (1987). On the level of sjužet, *Fatal Attraction* is not the source for ideas about the dangers that men face being seduced by a young, attractive woman. It does not provide an explicit blueprint

for how to understand Alex Forrest as a dangerous seductress, how to understand Dan Gallagher as victim of his male instincts, Beth Gallagher as the innocent housewife/protective mother, etc. What is provided on the level of sjužet is all the information that the audience needs to construct a fabula in which this image of the femme fatale takes shape. For example, Forrest smokes during the scenes in which she is being most seductive. This is a classic femme fatale trope that shows not only that Forrest is rebellious, but draws from Freudian tropes regarding the symbolic status of the cigarette as a penis (Leonard, 2009, p.52; Kaplan, 2019, p.54). In figure 3.5, Gallagher lights Forrest's cigarette.

Figure 3.5: A discreet cigarette (Fatal Attraction, 1987)

During this sequence Gallagher is discussing what it is like to be a lawyer, to which Forrest responds, "you must have to be discreet?":

Dan Gallagher: Oh, God, yeah.

Alex Forrest: Are you?

Dan Gallagher: Am I what?

Alex Forrest: Discreet.

Dan Gallagher: Yes, I'm discreet.

Alex Forrest: Me too.

In this scene, nothing is provided on the level of sjužet that makes explicit that Forrest is a dangerous seductress. Forrest simply smokes a cigarette and informs Gallagher that she is also 'discreet'. And yet, this scene is necessary for the revelation that Forrest is a "bunny boiler" to be believable. The symbolic nature of the cigarette, the double entendre of the word 'discreet', and so on, are only present within a particular field of sense-making. The interplay of sjužet parts is specific to the symbolic order through which fabula is constructed, both on the side of the audience and on the side of the film itself. The filling of gaps created by sjužet requires that the film and the audience operate within the same field of sense-making. For an audience to infer the same fabula, the sjužet must facilitate this by conforming to a set of logics within which this inference is at all possible. Even if Forrest defied expectations of the femme fatale, the film would need to do this by providing counter-intuitive information on the level of sjužet to establish this character on the level of fabula. Of course, this is not to say that audiences will approve of such depictions, or that cultural norms will not change over time. But through sjužet, Forrest becomes what she always was on the level of fabula. Fabula is a set of inferences, but it must be added to this claim that the logics through which these inferences are possible are also already in the text.

3.1.3 Style

As previously mentioned, Bordwell's notion of style plays an important role in film narration. The definition of style given by Bordwell is a "film's systematic use of cinematic devices" (2014, p.50). These include editing, lighting, camera movement, and so on. A film necessarily implements a wide range of these devices. For example, the camera must always stand at some distance and angle to the object being filmed, thus framing the subject matter in a particular way.

If that camera then moves, it will do so through a particular movement, such as a dolly, pan, or tilt. Style differs from sjužet in that they treat different aspects of the phenomenal process of cinema. Sjužet treats the dramaturgical aspect of a film, whereas style treats the technical side. In other words, if the sjužet is the on-screen events and the system through which they are ordered, style is the mise-en-scene, editing, cinematography, and sound used in the presentation of those events. Style is most often at the service of sjužet, but they are not identical (Bordwell, 2014, p.52). For example, take the use of speed ramping, a technique in which a film is sped up and slowed down within the same shot. This technique is used in the film *300* (2007) in order to accentuate the action on screen. Speeding up the film shows the rapid and chaotic moments between each swing of a weapon. Slowing down the film allows each weapon strike to be exhibited in as much detail as possible. The temporal unsteadiness that comes from quickly switching between each speed heightens the disorientating feeling of being in a bloody battle. However, in a film like *Donnie Darko* (2001), the use of speed ramping highlights the protagonist's unsteady mental state, and serves as an indication of his ability to manipulate time. Rather than being used to accentuate the action, the use of speed ramping in *Donnie Darko* enables time to become a central element of the narrative.

Bordwell (2014, pp.162–163) helpfully notes three key aspects of style in classical cinema. Firstly, it is completely at the service of sjužet, so much so that it should go unnoticed; secondly, style works to facilitate the construction of a linear, coherent fabula; and thirdly, there are a set of techniques, codes, and conventions that the classical style conforms to. Of all the elements that make up the classical style, 'continuity editing' is perhaps the most explicitly codified. Continuity editing presents a self-contained filmic universe. Every decision made during editing is intended to facilitate the construction of a reality in which the characters, narrative, and action are at home. More than this, the result of an editing process must be that the editing process is invisible. The film must *feel* as though it was shot exactly as it appears on screen (Dmytryk, 1984, pp.11–13;

Rosenblum and Karen, 1986, p.2). This is not to say that editing should be kept to a minimum. On the contrary, editing film requires a tremendous amount of labour in order to create a film that feels like the editing has been kept to an absolute minimum. The invisibility of the editing process is what grants film its natural feel. The relationship between fabula, sjužet, and style can be seen in figure 3.6.
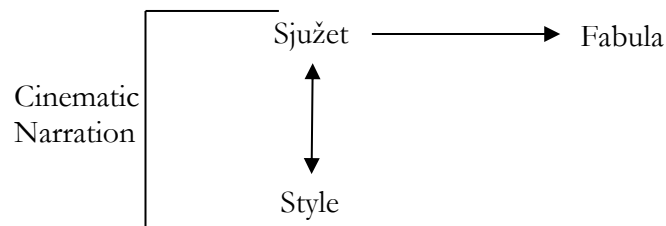
Figure 3.6: Diagram of fabula/sjužet/style relationship (Bordwell, 2014, p.50)

Cinematic narration is made up of fabula, sjužet, and style. Sjužet is the information provided in a narrative text. This includes events, characters, scenes, and so on, but also the system through which these elements are structured. Style is a film's systematic use of cinematic devices. These include editing, lighting, camera movement, and so on. The bidirectional arrow between sjužet and style in figure 3.6 indicates that they interact with each other in the construction of fabula. But since fabula has no material presence on its own, since it emerges from the materials provided in the narrative text, it does not influence sjužet. Bordwell's (2014, p.53) original diagram includes an element called 'excess'. This refers to the aspects of film that are, according to Bordwell, incidental and do not play a role in the narrative or stylistic processes. An example of this might be the colour of a car in the background of a certain scene. The colour is perceptible, and audience members might notice it, but it does not play any role in the narration of the film. Excess will not play a role in the analysis found in this thesis, and so it has been removed.

What is of particular interest for this chapter is the way that Bordwell's description of style overlaps with the notion of 'suture'. They overlap, rather than coincide, due to Bordwell's (2014,

pp.110–113) rejection of the notion of suture. Despite Bordwell's rejection, in the next section I will discuss the notion of suture before showing how it relates to the notion of style.

3.2 Suture

The term 'suture' in cinematic theory refers to how a film allows audiences to become immersed in the narrative. Borrowing from the medical definition of suture, this term refers to the way that two elements are stitched together in order to close a wound or a gap. There are, as with all theories, a multiplicity of tensions and conflicts between the different approaches to understanding suture. But what connects each approach is the attempt to understand the relationship between the worlds created by classical cinema and the viewer. How is it that cinema not only presents a diegetic filmic reality to the viewer, but also enables the viewer to become immersed within that reality?

3.2.1 I

Kaja Silverman (1984, pp.195–201) helps to answer this question through the psychoanalytical roots of the notion of suture. To begin with, Silverman discusses the radical contingency of the signifiers that relate most intimately to the subject. Take for example the signifier 'I'. On the one hand, 'I' designates a point of pure immediacy for the subject, it confirms the subject as a self-contained, individual unity. On the other hand, 'I' has no reference to organic reality. The meaning of 'I' changes entirely from speaker to speaker (or writer to writer (Silverman, 1984, p.46)). Not only this, 'I' existed prior to the birth of the subject, as did the cultural and historical significance of the subject (Silverman, 1984, p.199). The cluster of elements that make up the subject are developed somewhere other than the subject. But this tension is exactly what Silverman tries to maintain in her discussion. The signifier 'I' requires a speaker for it to have any substance because it is the speaker who becomes the substance of 'I'. There are several things going on here.

Firstly, on the side of the subject, there is a simultaneous effect in which they become the substantial content of 'I' and identify themselves with 'I'. This is the difference between the *speaking* subject and the subject *of* that speech (Silverman, 1984, pp.196–197). Both subjects "can only be apprehended in relation to each other, they can never be collapsed into one unit" (Silverman, 1984, p.46). This irreducible gap is sealed together within 'I', but not erased. Also, as previously mentioned, the substance of 'I' changes from speaker to speaker. The signifier 'I' changes radically if it is uttered by another subject. 'I' is no longer self-referential, but refers to another speaker. And with this change, the subject no longer identifies with 'I' and is no longer the substance of 'I'. In more concrete terms, when a person says, "I will see you in five minutes," they become the speaker *and* content of 'I' while at the same time identifying with it. However, when they hear the response, "Okay, I look forward to seeing you," everything changes. The speaker of the latter sentence performs the dual action themself as they designate the first speaker to be 'you' which the first speaker then identifies with.

The second thing to note is on the side of language, or more specifically, the symbolic order. 'I' is an example from a set of signifiers that require a subject in order for them to have any substance at all. Others include 'you', 'here', 'when', conjugated verbs, and so on (Silverman, 1984, p.196). 'There', for example, has no reference to any physical space, just as 'I' has no reference to any actual individual. The language is not a consistent totality free from contradiction or antagonisms. One of the functions of such signifiers, in particular the signifier 'I', is to contain the gaps between disparate elements that make up the social fabric whose consistency "depends on subjects whose participation in the symbolic process sustains it" (Žižek, 2012, p.263). In other words, although the elements that make up the subject existed prior to the birth of the subject, they do not exist in some transcendental state. It is only through the active participation and identification of the subject that language is able to sustain itself. And the signifier 'I' is an entry point for the subject, a place where the stitching together of language takes place. The point to

take from this brief overview is the way that there is a gap, or lack, both on the side of the subject and on the side of language. It is this double lack that the suture holds together, or incorporates, but never erases. The subject is mediated through signifiers that function by closing gaps between socially and historically disparate elements, as well as gaps between enunciation and content.

3.2.2 Cinematic suture

Suture in cinematic theory borrows from this line of thinking by treating the relationships between shots as syntactical and constructive (Silverman, 1984, p.201). Suture theory pursues two lines of enquiry. Firstly, how it is that the representations on screen can form a self-contained filmic reality, and secondly, how it is that the viewer can become immersed within that reality. The first theorist to implement suture in film theory was Jean-Pierre Oudart. Drawing from Ordart's theoretical contributions are a range of scholars such as Daniel Dayan (1974, p.31), Nick Browne (2001, p.254), Jon Hackett (2017, pp.122–123), and Steven Nolan (2009, p.84). According to Bordwell (2014, p.110), what these authors also have in common is a subtle misreading of Ordart's argument.

In laying out an exemplary case of cinematic suture, Oudart (1977, pp.41–42) refers to a "mythical" moment in which an initial shot in a film sequence is perceived as boundless. Nothing comes between the viewer and the screen image. This apprehension is pleasurable, pure *jouissance*. "Suddenly however, prohibition is there in the guise of the screen" (Oudart, 1977, p.42). The viewer becomes aware that what they see is framed, that it is determined by some Other. Oudart (1977, p.36) argues that every filmic field is coupled with a notable absence. That is, with any representation *on* the screen, there is an implicit gesture towards that which is *behind* the screen. What appears on screen is understood as the subject *of* speech. This is created and governed by the *speaking* subject, by what Oudart calls the 'Absent One'. The viewer's awareness that what they see is the gaze of some Other who determines the visual field nullifies the pleasure felt in the initial apprehension. It should be noted that, according to Oudart (1977, p.43), the movement between

the initial apprehension and the latter realisation is not linear, but form a pair in an oscillation. The second shot, according to Oudart (1977, p.43), rectifies the tension created in shot one. The place from which the Absent One situated its gaze is contained within the frame of the second shot. Usually, according to Oudart (1977, p.43), this shot is of a character in the film. The second shot has the effect of re-inscribing the meaning of the first shot. Here is where is problems start to emerge with the subtle misreading of Oudart.

Dayan (1974, p.31), Browne (2001, p.254), Hackett (2017, pp.122–123), and Nolan (2009, p.84) argue that the second shot renders the speaking subject to be a subject inside the diegesis of the film. Using screenshots from *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), figure 3.7 demonstrates this understanding.
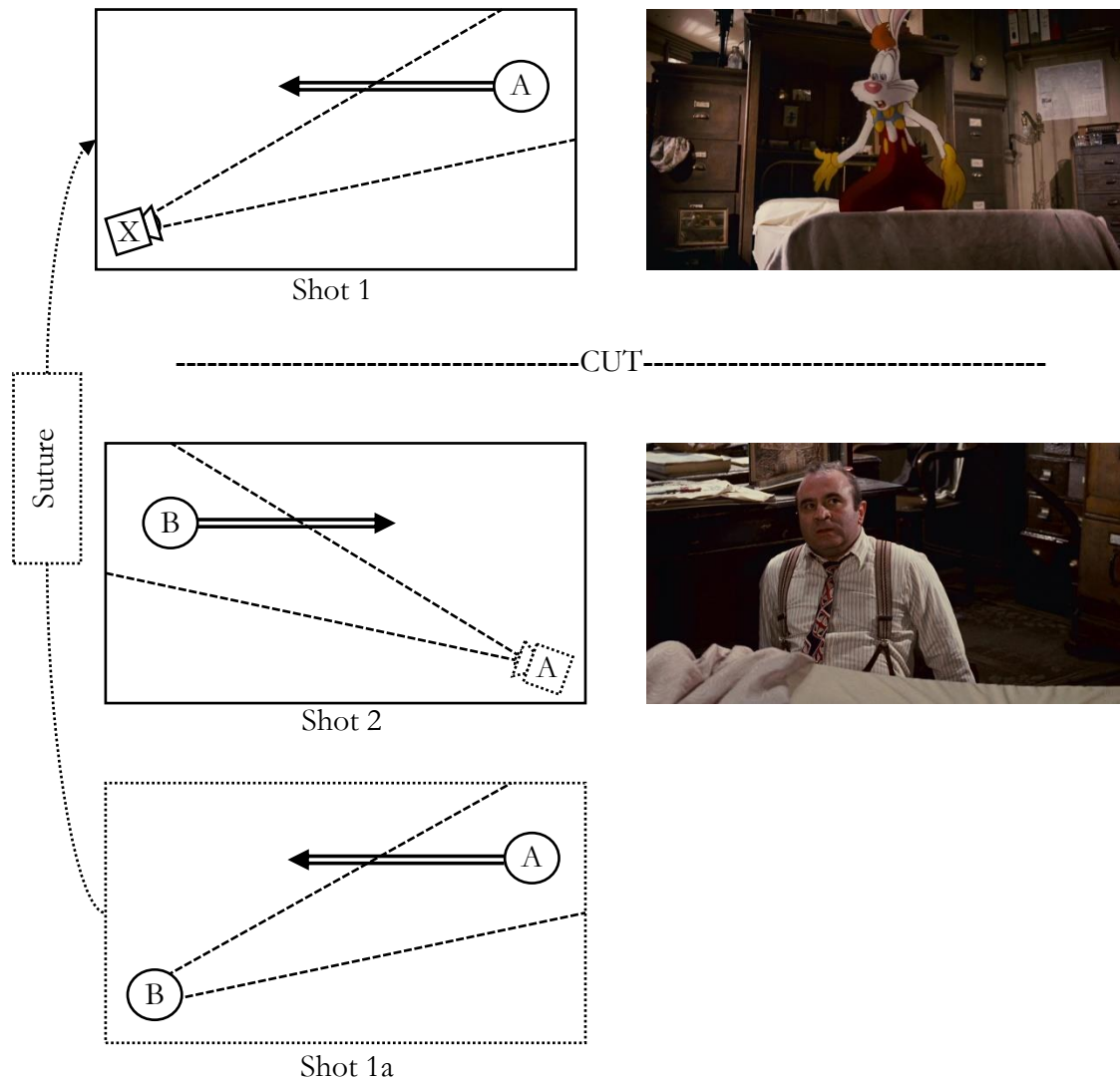
Figure 3.7: Reading of suture as found in Dayan, Browne, Hackett, and Nolan

In figure 3.7, the left column is occupied by diagrams depicting a bird's eye view of the filmset where the shots in the right column were taken. In Shot 1 there are two subjects: character A (Roger Rabbit) and the Absent One (marked by an X). Character A occupies a space within a filmic universe saturated with its own rules, narrative structures, and so on. The indexicality of Shot 1 attests to the actual presence of another subject, a camera, a someone or something looking at character A. At this point, character A is being watched by another subject, namely, the Absent One. Shot 2 appears on screen after a cut. The framing of the screen is still, of course, created by a camera set up in a film studio. However, the instantaneity of the switch between shots changes the nature of the framing. Where Shot 1 is determined by the Absent One, the framing of Shot 2

is created by the perspective of character A. The audience can now see what or who character A was looking at, namely, character B (Eddie Valiant). The movement between Shot 1 and Shot 2, firstly, establishes that the perspective in Shot 2 is that of character A, and secondly, it retroactively posits the perspective in Shot 1 to be that of character B. Shot 1a supplants Shot 1 as the suture reconstitutes a view from outside of the filmic universe as being always already a perspective from within the film. As the suture operation takes place, the viewer is able to identify with a subject inside the filmic reality that they see. The viewer is no longer held outside of the film by being at the mercy of some Other who looks in, but is instead granted access to a subject-position inside the film. This understanding draws on the earlier discussion of the signifier 'I' and the way that it holds together the gap between the speaking subject and the subject of speech. By being able to identify with the perspective of a character in the film, the viewer is able to close the gap between the content of the screen image and the one who determines that content.

However, as Bordwell (2014, pp.110–111) shows, this is not how Oudart describes suture. In fact, Oudart (1977, pp.45–46) explicitly states that he is not describing a technique that grants to the viewer the perspective of a character in the film. In figure 3.7 it can be seen that the line of sight between the two characters is not the same as the line of sight of the camera. Shot 1a shows this asymmetry most clearly. Character A and character B are looking at each other and yet never look directly at the camera. Rather than situating the Absent One to be within the diegesis of the film, the function of the second shot is to erase the presence of a narrator (Bordwell, 2014, p.111). Shot one establishes an on-screen presence but also a notable absence (Oudart, 1977, p.36). To put it another way, with *every* shot there is an unavoidable absence due to the technological apparatus required to create film. The camera always occupies a physical space on any filmset, but never appears on screen. In terms of the diegesis of the film, there is a presence unaccounted for who determines the sjužet, provides the information provided on screen. This functions as a narrator, thus establishing film as a story being told rather than an established world in itself. Shot

two shows the place from which the perspective of shot one is situated, but in doing so it erases the possibility of the presence of a narrator. Suture functions to deny the existence of the camera, and of the narrator (Silverman, 1984, p.201). The effect is that the viewer is able to move from "I am seeing what the camera/narrator is allowing me to see" to "That's what *I* see" (Silverman, 1984, p.205). This closes the diegesis of the film and closes the gap between the viewer and the screen by presenting the film as how it 'really' happened.

3.2.3 In defence of suture

The theory of suture has received criticism from several authors. Rothman's (1975) direct criticism of Oudart and Dayan lays out a number of objections to the idea of suture. The first is that Oudart and Dayan do not explain why the viewer's experience of the first shot oscillates between pleasure and unpleasure. They fail to explain why there is a sudden realisation that what the viewer sees is not boundless *and* how this realisation disrupts the initial experience. This problem is also pointed out by Stephen Heath (1985, pp.89–90) who notes that Oudart's reliance on the notion of pleasure/unpleasure necessitates a theory of cinematic pleasure that Oudart fails to provide. By borrowing directly from psychoanalytical theory, Oudart speaks about the initial pleasure found in shot one in ways that equate it to Lacan's theory of the mirror-stage. One problem with this is that Lacan's account of the mirror-stage only *assumes* that an infant experiences pleasure during this stage, rather than demonstrates that they do. Even if Lacan had proven that infants experience pleasure during the mirror-stage, another problem with Oudart's use of this theory is that the vast majority of cinema audiences are far beyond the mirror-stage. Oudart lacks an explanation of why adults watching a film experience a similar process to the subject formation undergone by infants. And so, for Rothman and Heath, Oudart's notion of pleasure in his theory of suture is misleading. Rothman's (1975, pp.46–48) second issue is that Oudart and Dayan confuse which editing techniques are most common. Without direct reference to suture, Barry Salt (1977, pp.50–51) conducted a study that showed that only 30-40% of all editing techniques used

in classical Hollywood conform to the model described by Oudart and Dayan. How, then, do films allow for audiences to become immersed in the narrative during the remaining 60%?

Rothman's criticisms of Oudart and Dayan unintentionally offer a way to strengthen the notion of suture. His first point regarding the undeveloped notion of cinematic pleasure is correct. Oudart and Dayan do not provide a theory of cinematic pleasure, and instead borrow from theories of childhood development. This is not to say that it is impossible to incorporate a psychoanalytical theory of cinematic pleasure into the concept of cinematic suture, but that in the absence of one, I will not be pursuing that line of thought in this thesis. As with other aspects of this thesis, my focus is not on individual psychology but on the structural forces that surround and embed themselves within cinema, language, censorship, and so on. Suture is identifiable in (classical style) film without the need for a model of the human psyche. The spirit of Rothman's second criticism is also right, but by rebutting Oudart and Dayan with reference to the relative scarcity of a specific editing technique he misses the general function of suture. This is understandable, since suture is systematically laid out as a clear process that is essentially a shot/reverse shot. If this shot/reverse shot is the example of suture *par excellence*, and if this technique only accounts for 30-40% of all classical Hollywood editing, then how is the viewer immersed in the rest of cinema?

Heath (1985, p.98) offers an insightful answer. Oudart's model of suture is one that recognises a theoretical need in film theory, but responds to this need with a rather monolithic theory. By placing so much emphasis on the shot/reverse shot, this line of thinking overlooks the multitudinous and nuanced operation of suture. As stated by Silverman (1984, p.214):

suture is (...) largely synonymous with the operations of classic narrative, operations which include a wide variety of editing, lighting, compositional and other formal elements, but within which the values of absence and lack always play a central role.

Classical cinema does not so much try to hide the gap or absence created by the technological apparatus of cinema, but instead contains it vis-à-vis the suture (Heath, 1985, p.45). Through a variety of editing techniques, uses of lighting, camera movement, and so on, the presence of the camera is rendered invisible. In doing so, the 'classical style' presents 'unmediated' access to a self-contained universe.

The difference between this reading, and the reading of the aforementioned authors, is that it does not prioritise the subject. In other words, there is much more to suture than the establishment of the subject. There is also the way that suture establishes consistency on the side of the language (Oudart, 1977, p.38). If the general function of suture takes centre stage, it can be thought of as something that establishes a consistency to reality. As mentioned earlier, language is not a consistent totality. The function of 'I' contains the gaps between disparate elements that make up the social fabric whose consistency "depends on subjects whose participation in the symbolic that process sustains it" (Žižek, 2012, p.263). The signifiers through which the subject finds their identity are given to them by some Other that requires the subject to grant it consistency. It is as though a narrator is providing the meaning and substance of the subject's reality, but the narrator also requires the subject to make narration possible at all. The signifier 'I' sutures together the disparate elements of language and of the subject into a self-contained unity, and in doing so denies the existence of the narrator.

The shift is similar to the one described earlier in cinematic suture, a shift from "I am seeing what the camera/narrator is allowing me to see" to "That's what *I* see" (Silverman, 1984, p.205). Through the signifier 'I', the shift is from "reality is merely an effect of the symbolic order" to "this is reality." The shot/reverse-shot structure might well be an example of cinematic suture *par excellence*, much like 'I' is an example of suture *par excellence*. But this does not mean that the central function of suture is to establish a subject-position inside a film's diegesis. As mentioned earlier, the classical style is a catalogue of techniques in which the diegesis of a film is able to

present itself as a self-contained and consistent reality. The consistency of the filmic universes created by the classical style do not depend upon one technique that grants the viewer access to the point of view of a character, but instead grants 'unmediated' access to another world through the continual incorporation of the gaps that accompany every shot.

3.3 Style/Suture

The first section of this chapter ended with figure 3.6 showing Bordwell's model of fabula/sjužet/style. The second section discussed how suture functions through the techniques found in the classical style of film making. This final section will bring these elements together. By placing style and suture on the same level, it can be shown how the construction of a film's narrative extends into the non-diegetic world 'behind the scenes'. Figure 3.8 is a synthesis of these ideas building from Bordwell's diagram.
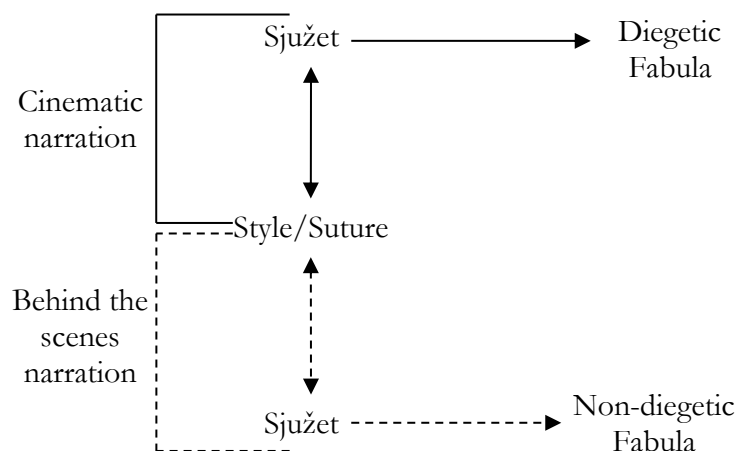
Figure 3.8: Modified diagram of fabula/sjužet/style relationship

Cinematic narration, identifiable in figure 3.8 by the solid arrows, is made up of fabula, sjužet, and style/suture. Sjužet is the information provided in a narrative text. This includes events, characters, scenes, and so on, but also the system through which these elements are structured. Style is a film's systematic use of cinematic devices. These include editing, lighting, camera movement, and so on. Style and suture overlap in the way that they work towards the creation of a self-contained unity.

The bidirectional arrow between sjužet and style/suture indicates that they interact with each other in the construction of fabula. The 'behind the scenes narration', identifiable in figure 3.8 by the dashed arrows, shares the same structure as filmic narration. The following sections will provide the theoretical underpinnings to this addition.

3.3.1 Style and suture

On the level of filmic narration, sjužet and style interact with each other in the construction of fabula. But since fabula has no material presence, since it emerges from the materials provided in the narrative text, it cannot influence sjužet. If we recall Bordwell's (2014, pp.162–163) three key aspects of the classical style, one of the main functions is to disguise itself, to present film as unmediated. This is exactly how Silverman (1984, p.214) and Heath (1985, p.45) describe suture. The classical style allows for the viewer of a film to become immersed in the film because it presents itself as unmediated. The distance between the viewer and the screen is closed because the film is structured in such a way as to allow the aforementioned shift from "I am seeing what the camera/narrator is allowing me to see" to "That's what I see" (Silverman, 1984, p.205).

On the level of filmic narration, of the diegesis of a film, it is the Absent One, the non-present narrator who is concealed via the suture. As mentioned earlier, the Absent One is established via the technological apparatus of filmmaking, most notably the non-diegetic presence of the camera. On figure 3.8, what I have called the 'Behind the Scenes Narration', suture also denies the existence of the camera itself. However, it needs to be emphasised that the camera is never present *on screen*. It is through the camera that the content on the screen is recorded, but the camera does not show itself. As Bordwell (2014, p.119) notes, awareness of the camera is produced in the same way that fabula is produced. The audience are not shown a camera, or a film crew or a lighting rig, or anything else. They are shown a shot in a film, and it is through the knowledge that they bring to the film that a camera can be said to be present.

The presence of a camera in the making of a film might seem obvious because of how pervasive this basic knowledge of cinematography is today. However, as animators have shown for almost a hundred years, the effect of a camera's presence can be created without any cameras at all (Bordwell, 2014, p.119). In fact, with the advent of CGI, it is possible to intersplice shots taken by a 'real' camera and shots designed to emulate the presence of a camera. To put this back into the language of figure 3.8, the sjužet of the 'behind the scenes' would be the framing of the shot itself, the movement of the camera, lighting effects that do not occur in nature, and so on. In other words, the style of a film's diegetic narrative contributes to the sjužet of the behind-the-scenes narrative. From this information audiences can infer the fabula of 'behind the scenes', that is, what 'really' happened on set can be inferred. This is not to say that whatever happened on the set of any film is 'fictional' in the same way as the film itself. It is only to say that the non-diegetic fabula, the story of what 'really happened' on the set, is constructed through information provided on the level of style and sjužet. Thinking back to the previously mentioned schemata in Bordwell's (2014, p.49) writings, audiences are able to infer behind the scenes activity through knowledge that they bring to a film. Knowledge about what happens on a filmset has been produced in a variety of ways.

3.3.2 Constructing the behind-the-scenes fabula

One way that knowledge about filmsets is produced is through documentaries and featurettes that detail how Hollywood films are made, or even how a specific film was made. Public interest in what happens on a filmset have been catered to since as early as 1908 (Arthur, 2004, p.39). Documentaries such as *Making Motion Pictures: A Day in the Vitagraph Studio* (1908) gave a tour of a studio to show audiences how film is shot and edited. By the 1930's, almost every film studio in America had their own series of backstage features that showed what went on behind the camera. This trend waned due to the restructuring of Hollywood studios after the antitrust Paramount Case, but long-form trailers still provided audiences with glimpses of how films were made (Steinhart, 2018, p.96). The 'making-of' genre of documentary film made a resurgence in the

1970s with films such as *The Making of Superman* (1978) and *The Making of Star Wars* (1978) showing interviews with cast and crew members, as well as short clips of the filming processes (Evans, 2010, p.588). The popularity of such documentaries increased quickly, but the rise of DVD technology in the late 90s and early 00s saw a surge in interest in what goes on behind the scenes. One example of this is the 2008 DVD release of *The Matrix* which contained over thirty-five hours of bonus material (Evans, 2010, p.587). Contemporary examples include the Youtube channels of film studios such as Warner Bros. Entertainment, Universal Pictures, and Paramount Pictures uploading hundreds of clips from behind the scenes of their latest releases.

As Nicola Jean Evans (2010, p.596) has pointed out, such documentaries present a pseudo backstage. The careful selection of which footage to use, which actors and cast members to interview, which parts of these interviews to use, which special effects to explain, and so on, are the elements through which the 'real' story of what happened on a filmset are shaped. These events are selected during the editing process and then stitched together in order to create a narrative. The question of whether behind-the-scenes documentaries are fake or misleading misses the point. The knowledge that these documentaries *produce*, rather than reveal, go towards constructing the non-diegetic fabula behind the camera. While the classical style goes to great lengths to form a unified filmic universe, audience members are not so naïve that they cannot distinguish between, let's say, Bob Hoskins and Eddie Valiant. Suture enables immersion but does not necessitate it. By creating media that gives audiences access to how a film was made, filmmakers can control the narrative of what actually happened on the set.

There are other ways in which the knowledge of the non-diegetic narrative of a film is gained, and by extension how the fabula of this narrative is constructed. In a similar vein to behind-the-scenes documentaries, leaked footage can contribute to the narrative of how a film was made. For example, in 2017 footage taken on a camera phone was leaked from the set of *A Dog's Purpose* (2017). It showed Hercules, a German Sheppard, being lowered into a pool of turbulent water

despite his clear distress (Bradley, 2017). Beyond leaked footage, there are leaked emails, testimony from cast and crew, movie trivia websites, books, and so on, that go towards building the knowledge of what happens on a filmset. For the purpose of this chapter, it is enough to establish that the style/suture of a film's diegetic narrative contributes to the sjužet of the non-diegetic behind-the-scenes narrative. This is the framing of the shot, the movement of the camera, the set design, lighting, and so on. The non-diegetic fabula of the behind-the-scenes narration is built from the information provided by sjužet, but also from the knowledge, the field of sense-making in which both the audience and the film exist.

Recall figure 3.4 and the way that it showed how the sjužet is understood as the "selection" of fabula events. In between each sjužet event are innumerable events inferred through the relationship between cinematic text and the audience. In figure 3.9 I have reproduced this diagram with the inclusion of the non-diegetic fabula discussed above. On the level of sjužet the events are now marked with both a number and a letter. The number refers to events taking place within the diegetic fabula, and the letter refers to events taking place on the non-diegetic fabula, that is, on the filmset.
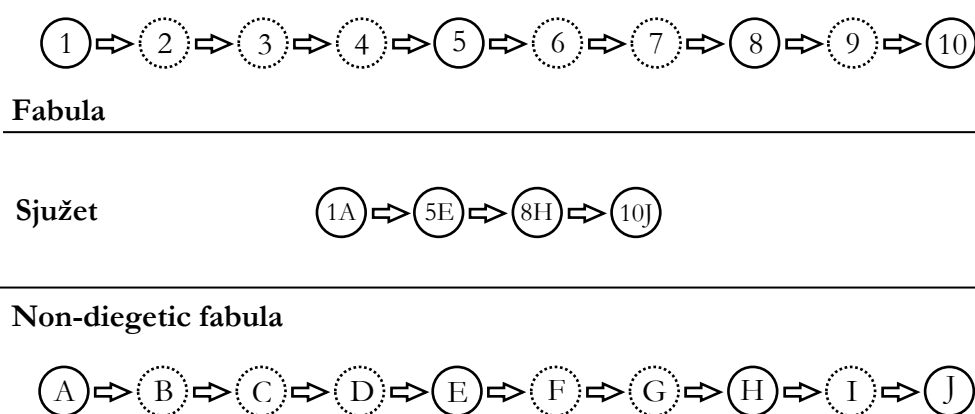
Figure 3.9: Diegetic and non-diegetic fabula

The sjužet might show event 1 and event 5, leaving events 2, 3, and 4 to be left to the intersubjective inferences of the audience. So too with the non-diegetic fabula. Event A might be

present on screen in the form of the camera movement, the mise-en-scene, the lighting, and so on. Event E might also be present on screen in a later shot taken in a different location, with different camera work and cast, and so on. The events between A and E, such as the building of the sets, the trouble that the filmmakers encountered, the way that the special effects were prepared, and so on, are left to the intersubjective inferences of the audiences. Again, these inferences come from the wealth of knowledge produced by film studios, documentaries, news reports, and so on. A concrete example is from chapter 1 of this thesis, namely, the dung beetle scene in *Microcosmos*. The dung beetle, according to Anat Pick, undertakes "a physical task, solving a problem that requires dexterity, attention and effort, whose final objective concerns the question of freedom" (2015, p.232). For Pick, the realism of this scene is guaranteed through the way in which it was filmed. Filmmakers Claude Nuridsany and Marie Pérennou claim that the scene was shot "'practically in real time', without special effects." According to Pick (2015, p.233), the dung beetle scene does not use editing to fabricate behaviour, but instead reveals actions that took place in the continuity of space and time. The beetle really did get the dung ball stuck, and really did labour to free it. In the terms of figure 3.9, Pick's reading of this scene would leave very little on the side of both the diegetic fabula and non-diegetic fabula that was not present in the sjužet, as seen in figure 3.10.

Fabula

Sjužet

Non-diegetic fabula
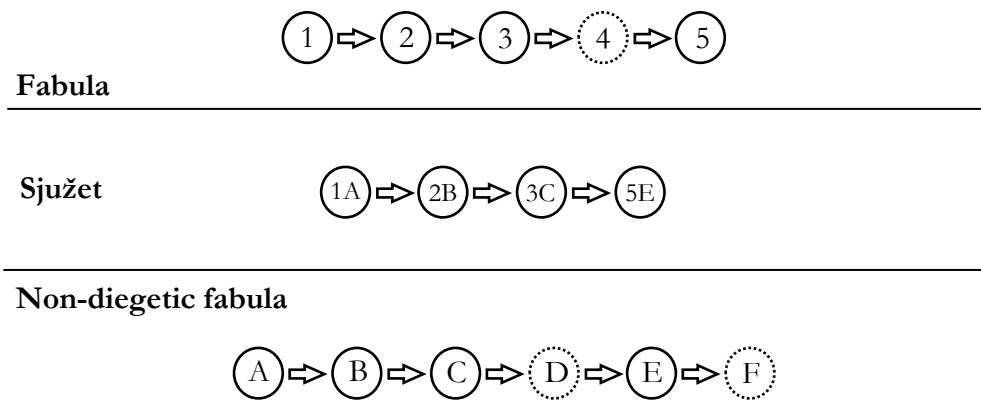
Figure 3.10: Anat Pick's reading of the dung beetle scene

However, my analysis brought Pick's claims into dispute. How many takes were required to get the shot of the dung beetle in the trench? Was the footage of the dung beetle pushing their ball through the field taken on the same day as the trench footage? Does the ordering of shots in the sequence correspond to the order in which they were filmed? Was the dung beetle in the final shot the same as the one in the studio? With regards to the dung ball becoming impaled on this stick, it seems to me to be much more likely that it was pushed onto the thorn by the filmmakers rather than the beetle. This reading would agree with Pick that there would be very little on the side of the diegetic fabula that is not present on the level of sjužet. However, on the level of non-diegetic fabula my reading would include many more events, such as changes in location, the intervention of the filmmakers to pierce the dung ball, the changing of beetles, and so on.

Fabula

Sjužet

Non-diegetic fabula
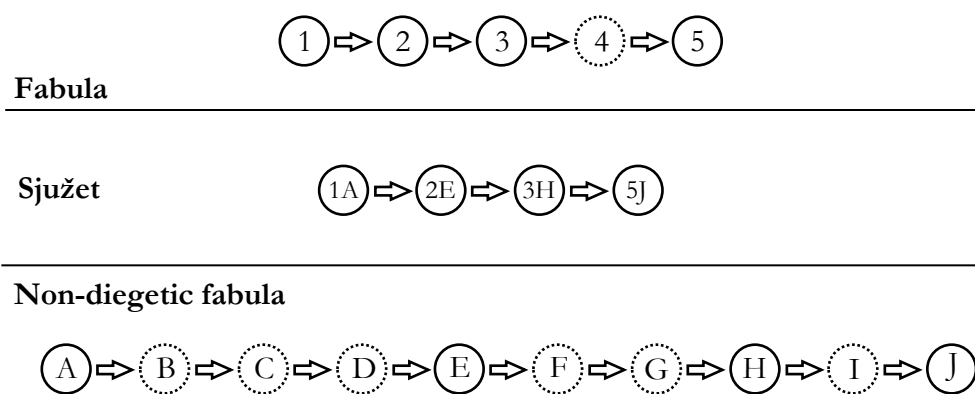
Figure 3.11: My reading of the dung beetle scene

But, as I concluded in chapter 1, my analysis of the dung beetle scene does not prove anything at all about how the scene was *actually* made. In other words, my claim to the "reality" of the making of this scene is equally valid to that of Pick's. What my analysis demonstrates is the fictional character, that is to say, the constructed character of the non-diegetic fabula of film.

3.3.3 Rupturing representation in cinema

At this point we can return to Burt's claim that "the animal image is a form of rupture in the field of representation" (2002a, p.11). More specifically, his claim that the representation of animal violence "breaks the boundary between image and *reality*" (2002a, p.136, my emphasis). We can start to unravel what it means to "rupture" a field of representation. Burt is careful to avoid claiming that the animal image 'signifies' any kind of rupture or any kind of reality. For Burt (2002a, p.88; 2005, p.206), treating animal imagery in such terms focuses on the "textual animal" rather than the "visual animal." What he means by this is that there is a tendency for authors, such as John Berger and Akira Lippit, to read animal imagery through a semiotic lens. By doing this, they treat animal images purely as signifiers, rather than things in their own right. While Burt (2002a, pp.31–32) recognises the value in analysing the textual animal, he also thinks that such analyses tend to overlook the reality embedded in the animal image.

There are two closely related ways in which Burt theorises the rupture between representation and reality. One is on the side of production while the other is on the side of

reception. On the side of production, Burt offers examples of the role that animals play in constructing the animal image. By being on screen, the animal image does not act as a signifier for the technological and logistical apparatus required to create such footage, but instead it embodies the process itself (Burt, 2002a, p.87). The vast array of animals found on film require an equally vast array of techniques in filming, editing, training, and so on. An animal's body, habits, and needs place limits on filmmakers as well as enabling them to develop new techniques. For Burt, the animal image is not some empty vessel through which anthropocentric stories are told, even if this does end up being the role that they play in the final product. The materiality of animal lives directly influences how the image comes to be, and how filmmakers must design their films around the animal (Burt, 2002a, p.151).

Burt uses the film *Lassie Come Home* (1943) as an example of an animal participating in the creation of their screen image. In a scene in which Lassie emerges from a river, she does not shake off the water, and instead staggers about in an exhausted manner. According to Burt, by "responding to his training [and] utilizing his understanding of the context in which he is placed," Lassie is able to "regulate [his] symbolic effects" (2002a, p.32). In this way, the animal image, more specifically, the image of Lassie, is not void of meaning or signification. It is, in part, created and regulated through the animal being a "great actor."

The other way that Burt (2002a, pp.159–163) describes a rupture between representation and reality is via reactions to the animal image. This relates closely to the role that an animal plays in constructing an animal image. The body and the needs of an animal place certain limits on filmmakers. An infamous example is the way that filmmakers have caused horses to fall on demand. The use of trip wires was common in the early days of cinema, as was the disgust at such practices from animal rights campaigners, MPs, and audience members. As discussed earlier in this chapter, audiences come to films with certain ideas, knowledge, and values. The disgust at the use of trip wires came from audiences knowing that if a horse is forced to fall forward they risk serious

injury or death. The fiction of *Charge of the Light Brigade* (1936), for example, is ruptured when the horses fall towards the ground in a way that would cause them actual harm. The rupture causes the audience to move their attention away from the animal image to the welfare of the actual animal.

Another example of rupture on the side of reception is from an alternative reading of Lassie's so-called great acting skills. Against Burt's perspective, Adrienne L. McLean (2014, p.19) argues that "there is no treat tasty enough" to make the experience of lying bedraggled and soaking wet a pleasurable one. For McLean, a gesture towards 'training' to explain Lassie's state is not enough to excuse any suffering that he might have gone through. The BBFC (2012b, p.34) have also doubted Lassie's acting skills. In 2006 they upheld a decision to cut a scene in which "the animal reacts as if it has been hit by an object, knocking it to the ground." Because the distributor could not prove that this was not the case, the BBFC ordered the scene to be cut. What complicates this picture is the way that Burt's argument anticipates McLean's and the BBFC's reading of *Lassie*. Burt (2002a, pp.159–160) draws from the work of Rudd Weatherwax, the animal trainer who worked most closely with Lassie. For Weatherwax, audiences who complain about any of the *Lassie* films fail to appreciate that the "scenes were contrived and the animals well-trained." For Burt (2002a, p.161), there seems to be a "misunderstanding" from audiences about how films are made. However, we can complicate this picture even further. Burt refers to "Lassie" the great actor, when in fact the original actor's name is Pal. The conflation between the actor's real name and his screen name was a result of a marketing strategy by the film studio who sought to manufacture authenticity. The intention was to create the sense that audiences see and get to know the 'real' Lassie. The result was that Pal lost his individuality at the expense of the studio's marketable fictional character (Wolf, 2014, pp.110–111).

With all this complicated and contradictory knowledge about the *Lassie* films, it is a good time to ask which 'reality' the fiction of a film is rupturing into. Was Lassie a great actor, or was

he coerced? Is it closer to reality to use the name 'Lassie' or the name 'Pal'? With regards to the influence that animals have in creating the animal image, Burt notes how the materiality of the animal body limits and enables filmmakers. However, the title of Burt's book offers an interesting, if not ironic insight into the complexity of the rupture that he identifies. *Animals in Film* (2002a) never mentions the fact that gelatine is an essential and active part in the making of film (Shukin, 2009, p.104); animals are literally *in* film. But there is more to the story of gelatine. As Nicole Shukin (2009, pp.109–110) has noted, the chemical composition of the gelatine used in the making of film is extremely precise. Many of the chemicals found in film-grade gelatine can only be added through the digestive system of the animals whose bodies are boiled down into the final product. Mustard allyl, for example, is necessary to prevent film from fogging during the development process. The only way to get mustard allyl into gelatine is if mustard seeds are ingested by the animal. C. E. Kenneth Mees, former head of Kodak's research laboratory, remarked that if cows did not like the taste of mustard seeds then there would never have been cinema at all (Shukin, 2009, p.109). Whether or not cows actually 'like' the taste of mustard seeds is another question, but the point here is that the activity of the living animal prior to their body being melted directly affects the possibility of creating an animal image in film. However, as Shukin (2009, pp.110–111) shows, this is not the end of the story. To ensure that the bodies of the animals used in the making of gelatine contained the correct balance of chemicals, an industrial system was built by the Kodak Company that strictly regulated how the animals lived. Every aspect of their lives was tightly controlled to ensure that their bodies grew and developed to the specifications required by the film producers. To paraphrase Mees, if cows did not like being industrialised then there would never have been cinema at all. In Burt's two-hundred-page book *Animals in Film* (2002a, p.26), the word 'capitalism' is mentioned only once, and is done so only as a way of dismissing John Berger as a pessimist. However, the industrialisation of animal bodies is an absolutely necessary component in the 'reality' of the animal image in film. With this in mind, the title of Burt's book, *Animals in Film*, refers to all films since animals are literally in film.

The 'rupture' in the animal image identified by Burt is much more complex than even Burt realised. The rupture is not one that moves between fiction and reality, but one that moves between one narrative and another. There is a short-circuit created between what I have called the 'diegetic fabula' and the 'non-diegetic' fabula. Earlier I mentioned the leaked footage from the set of *A Dog's Purpose* (2017) showing Hercules in a state of distress. Some members of the film crew responded to this footage by insisting that the presence of an animal trainer on set was assurance that Hercules was actually okay, and that the leaked video "mischaracterises what happened" (Bradley, 2017). This echoes Burt's use of Weatherwax's testimony about the welfare of the animals on the set of *Lassie,* and the idea that audiences "misunderstand" what is "really" happening when they see an animal in distress. How does the fact that an animal trainer is present on set change the reality of an animal's suffering? And how is it that the reality that the audience perceives through the animal image is a "misunderstanding"? Burt is right to identify the rupture of the animal image, but it must be added that with these realities being so highly contested, with some realities containing more information than others, and some information being granted more importance than others, the rupture is between one narrative and another.

The reason that this matters is because of the way it changes Burt's observation that the "conflict over acceptable and unacceptable animal imagery turns on the point at which (...) fiction and reality collapse into each other." Not only are the "acceptable and unacceptable" highly contested, but so too is the establishment and legitimacy of reality. As later chapters will show, the BBFC, UK legislation, scientific bodies, animal training, audience reactions, and even zoological gardens, directly influence what is and is not considered to be the "reality" of animals in film. To complicate matters further, this network of authorities changes over time. An example of this is from the 1980 film *Cannibal Holocaust.* In 1980 and 2001, the BBFC cut several scenes for containing animal cruelty. However, in 2011 the BBFC (2012b, pp.34–35) changed their decision because although the "scenes of a turtle being butchered are distasteful and difficult to view, the

turtle is decapitated almost immediately." The act of killing did not change, and neither did the footage used in *Cannibal Holocaust*. What changed was the reality of the turtle. The decision by the BBFC was a decision about whether or not the turtle suffered, not whether or not animal suffering is acceptable or unacceptable. What is and is not considered to be reality, and what information counts as being included in reality, is what the animal image brings to light.

Before moving on to the role that these official bodies play in determining the reality of animals in film, Burt's observations regarding the rupturing effect of the *animal* image need further clarification. Why is it that the *animal* image causes this rupture? Perhaps it is, as Burt (2002a, p.137) shows, that the animal image is very often considered to be more "natural", or closer to "the real" than other imagery. Interestingly, Burt begins to answer this question in another text. Burt (2001, p.214) observes that the management of the Hamadryas baboons living in London Zoo between 1924 and 1955 resembled the process of film editing. In the next chapter, I will be elaborating on this observation. I will be showing how the 'continuity system', or the 'classical system', of film editing and the management of zoo enclosures both favour the same idea of the natural. Both the continuity system and the management of zoos go to great lengths to replicate the *appearance* of something occurring naturally. This appearance manifests through the efforts that each practice goes to in order to render themselves invisible. I will be exploring the idea that zoo animals have been edited by thinking about the zoo through the framework outlined in this chapter, namely the fabula/sjužet system of figure 3.8.

Chapter 4: How to Torture an Elephant

Jumbo did not know he was an elephant (Sutherland, 2014, p.46).

The previous chapter ended with a claim that the 'reality' of what happens during the making of a film is carefully curated in a way that is analogous to the curation of a film's fictional story. The reason that this matters is because of the way that it changes Jonathan Burt's observation that the "conflict over acceptable and unacceptable animal imagery turns on the point at which (...) fiction and reality collapse into each other" (2002a, p.11). In expanding on Burt's observations, the previous chapter showed that not only are the "acceptable and unacceptable" highly contested, but so too is the establishment and legitimacy of reality. In this chapter I will show that the reason that the fiction and reality of the animal image causes such traumatic responses in British audiences is because animals are already images. Interestingly, Burt offers a way to explain this idea in another text. Burt (2001, p.214) observes that the management of the Hamadryas baboons living in London Zoo between 1924 and 1955 resembled the process of film editing. In this chapter I will use Burt's observations regarding the editing of zoo animals as my starting point. In doing so I will show that the collapse between reality and fiction initiated by the sight of animal violence in film is a collapse between one fiction and another, or to put it more specifically, between one image and another. It is important at this point to stress that claims such as 'zoo animals are edited' and 'animals are images' should not be taken as metaphors or as poetic turns of phrase. I want to show that animals *are* images, and I want to show the role that zoos have played in their creation.

There are several reasons why a thesis on censorship in cinema is taking a trip to the zoo. The first reason is historical. Animal films that attracted audiences in the late 19th Century were *actualités* (Bousé, 2000, p.44). For the most part these were short films featuring trained domestic

animals performing tricks, or they featured animals living in zoos. The first films that featured 'wild' animals were exhibited to audiences relatively late in the history of film. It was only after 1909 that wildlife films began to grow in popularity. Many of the reasons for this relate to the technological difficulties of filming animals in the wild. The fragility of the lenses, film, and cameras made it exceptionally difficult to film an animal in the wild (Petterson, 2011, p.25). Filmmakers would need to carry several hundred, if not several thousand feet of film into environments that were both difficult to navigate and extremely hostile to the delicate equipment. Early cameras also required a lot of time to set up, making it almost impossible to capture unexpected and spontaneous encounters with wild animals. What little footage could be taken of wild animals was, for a long time, short, unclear, and could not attract audiences. Another reason that films featuring wild animals did not attract audiences until relatively late in film history is because of the culturally specific meaning of the word 'wild'. There are plenty of examples of films prior to 1909 that featured pigeons, swans, seagulls, and other animals. These animals are in most senses of the word 'wild', but they are also commonplace for British audiences who might walk past a flock of pigeons on their way to watch a flick. As noted by Petterson, 'wild' usually meant "untouched by human civilization and culture" (2011, p.17). The connotations of this understanding of the term 'wild' are made explicit by Bousé who notes that 'wild' usually meant the absence of Western, "*white* people" (2000, pp.15, original emphasis).

The second, and closely related, reason why this thesis is taking a trip to the zoo is because the editing of zoo animals predates the invention of film. Bousé has argued that nature documentaries deceive their viewers by presenting a version of nature that is much more exciting than it really is:

consider the example of African lions, who often spend up to twenty hours a day

at rest. In a one-hour (fifty-two-minute) wildlife film for television this would

amount to about forty-two minutes of relative inactivity—true to nature, perhaps,

but anathema to distributors, broadcasters, and advertisers (Bousé, 2000, pp.6–7).

David Attenborough has said that he spends months out in the field only to return with fleeting shots of birds and monkeys, whereas a finished animal documentary misleadingly presents the natural world as being filled to the brim with creatures (Bousé, 2000, pp.15–16). All the mundane, still, and uneventful periods of an animal's life are removed during the editing process so that the final product is as exciting as possible. Burt (2001, p.214) argues the same point with regards to zoo animals. He argues that the mundane activities of animals, such as foraging, sleeping, and so on, have been removed from their lives in order to make them more exciting for zoo-goers. In this chapter I will be developing this idea by using the theory of film editing found in chapter 3, but suffice to say here that zoo animals were being edited decades prior to the invention of the film camera. In trying to educate zoo-goers on what an animal *really* is by 'exhibiting wild animals' in the flesh, zoos had to edit the animals that they held captive. As will be shown, the design of enclosures, feeding times, an animal's behaviour, and even an animal's physiology, became the materials with which zoos created an image of a wild animal. When motion picture technology arrived on the scene, animals were already edited.

Before I begin, I want to address the elephant in the thesis. The idea that animals are images might seem completely absurd. However, it should be asked what is meant by the word 'image', not just in this text but in language more generally. This is, of course, very different from asking what an image *is*. As pointed out by W. J. T. Mitchell, the word 'image' is used to "speak of pictures, statues, optical illusions, maps, diagrams, dreams, hallucinations, spectacles, projections, poems, patterns, memories, and even ideas as images" (1984, p.504). Mitchell goes on to show the multifarious, and often contradictory ways that the word 'image' is used. For example, there are what Mitchell calls "Graphic Images," which include pictures and statues; there are "Perceptual Images," which refer to pure sense data; there are also "Verbal Images," which include metaphors

and descriptive writing, and so on (Mitchell, 1984, p.505). This is not an exhaustive list, but one that tries to offer a way of seeing some of the different language games in which the word 'image' is used:

> [M]ental imagery belongs to psychology and epistemology; optical imagery to physics; graphic, sculptural, and architectural imagery to the art historian; verbal imagery to the literary critic; perceptual images occupy a kind of border region where physiologists, neurologists, psychologists, art historians, and students of optics find themselves collaborating with philosophers and literary critics (Mitchell, 1984, p.505).

Does it make any sense to talk about such things as mirages as 'images'? If a person claims to see a mirage of an oasis, are they referring to an image in their head? Or are they referring to an image 'out there' in the world? If a person says that they have an image in their head, are they talking about a physical photograph or painting that has been lodged in their brain?

With regards to the claim that animals are images, it seems intuitive to dismiss this claim as nonsense since animals are *real*, that is, their materiality, their flesh and blood existence testifies to their reality. However, are paintings, photographs, sculptures, film, and so on, not also physical? One could argue that a painting is not an *image*, but a collection of oils containing different pigments applied to a sheet of canvas stretched across a wooden frame. And, in many ways, this would be correct. But reference to the bare materiality of the oils, canvas, and wood used in Dali's *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (1946) would not refute the claim that it is a surreal 'image', especially since the version on this computer is made up of pixels rather than oil.
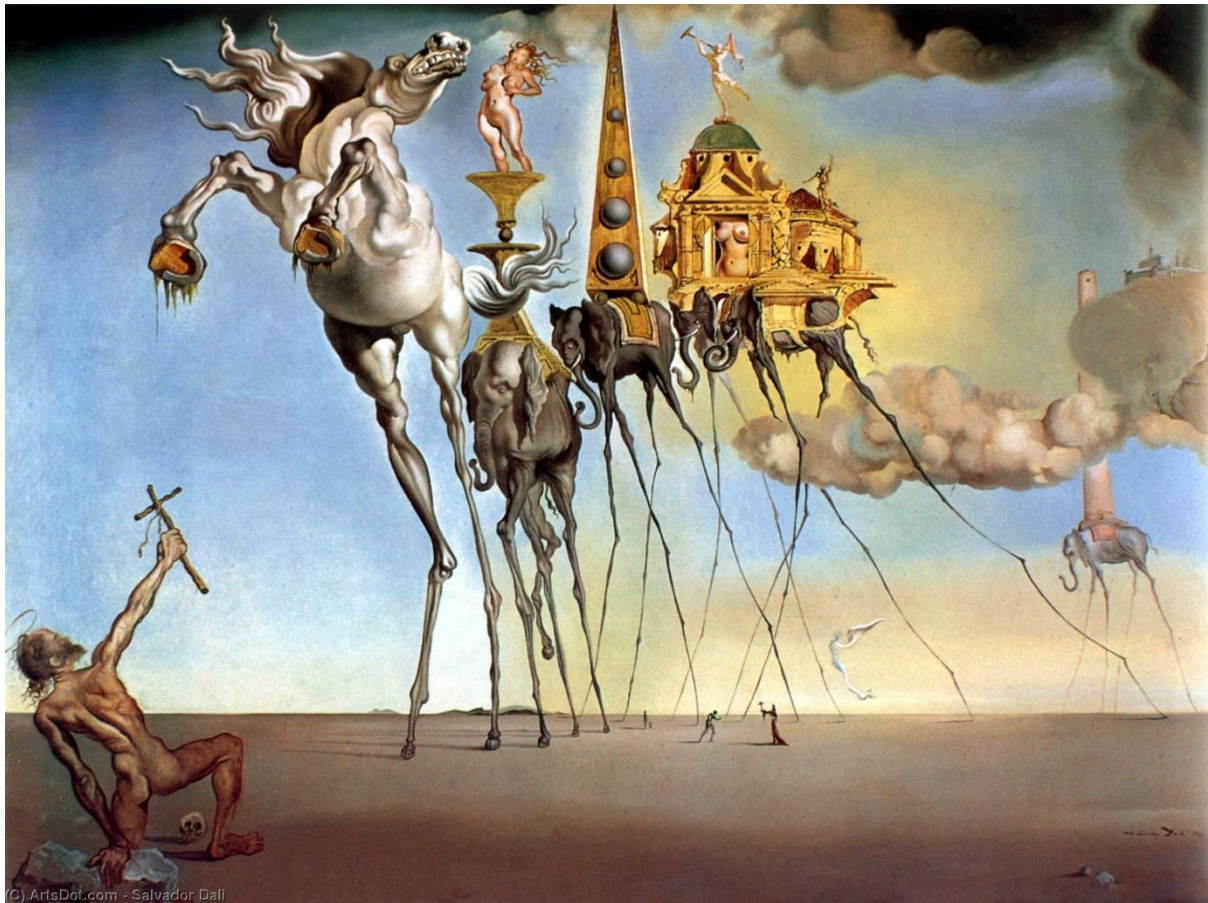
Figure 4.1: Dali's *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (1946)

As is so often the case, the word 'image' does not have a single, core definition, but is instead used in multifarious ways, some of which overlap, some of which do not. With this in mind, I would like to clarify the language game that I am playing. To expand Wittgenstein's analogies, I am not trying to invent a new language game in which I use the words 'image' and 'editing' in deliberately counterintuitive ways. Rather, I think that this analysis is akin to showing that some well-known and popular games are actually following (almost) the same rules. The way that I am using the word 'editing' has been covered in chapter 3, and will be a core focus of this chapter. However, with the word 'image' I will borrow a definition from Mitchell (2015, p.30):

> An image can move from one medium to another, appearing now as an equation,
>
> now as a diagram, now as a figure in a narrative, and now as a figure in a narrative
>
> painting. (...) [T]he "image as such," if we can speak of such a thing, is not itself a

material thing, though it must always appear in or on some material support— a

statue, an embodied perceiver. An image is a relationship and an appearance.

My argument is that zoo animals are images whose material support is flesh and blood, concrete and electric lighting, air conditioning and selective breeding programmes. These elements are crafted in such a way that zoo animals bear a likeness to an imaginary, and idealised archetype of the species to which they belong.

4.1 Editing zoo animals

While researching early films of London Zoo, Jonathan Burt came to realise that the films "did not so much document the animals in the Zoo as present them in a different light" (2002a, p.19). The distinction between the documentation of animals and the presentation of animals in a different light is an important one. The former implies a relatively unproblematic relationship between an animal and a camera, where the animal is left to their own devices and the camera simply records this activity. The latter, on the other hand, implies that the animal is already the result of a form of presentation and the camera works to reproduce the animal in another form of presentation. To put it another way, Burt argues that the lives of zoo animals are already edited before they are filmed and edited again. The reason that Burt argues that zoo animals are 'edited' is because the form of presentation found in zoos emphasises action over the mundane.

Burt (2001, p.214) uses the 'edited' Hamadryas baboons of Monkey Hill to demonstrate this logic. Monkey Hill was supposed to replicate the open air, terrain, and environment that Hamadryas baboons would occupy in the wild. It was also supposed to increase the visibility of the baboons for the zoo-goers (Burt, 2002b, p.264). This combination of interests meant that the design of Monkey Hill had several notable elements. Firstly, it prevented the baboons from being able to hide from the gaze of the zoo-goers; secondly, it limited their environment to $0.54km^2$ (around 200 baboons per km^2); and finally, it provided them with a plentiful amount of food.

Hamadryas baboons living in the wild spend the vast majority of their time foraging over an area of roughly 50km² (around 5 baboons per km²) while retaining the ability to hide themselves should the need arise (Stevens and Price, 2000, pp.30–31; Flinn, 2011). Having so much free time and so little space, the baboons of Monkey Hill were extremely social, sexual, and aggressive. Burt (2001, p.214) argues that the design and management of Monkey Hill resemble the process of film editing because in both cases the goal is to eliminate the mundane and to frame exciting events. Compared to the fights and intense social interactions between the baboons, foraging for the majority of the day is extremely dull. A zoo exhibit that showed the baboons engaging in such mundane activity would not provide the interest required to captivate audiences (Croke, 1997, pp.97–98).

This understanding of film editing is quite specific. Even during the most exciting moments of a film, there are 'mundane' periods. I will use a sequence from *Hannibal* (2001) as a demonstration. After years of planning his revenge, Mason Verger apprehends Hannibal Lecter. The entire film up until this point has been a cat-and-mouse game between FBI agent Clarice Starling, Verger, and Lecter. When Verger finally meets Lecter, he describes the long and gruesome way that he will torture and kill him: "The meal will begin with an *aperitivo tartare*: your feet. The main course–the rest of you–won't be served until seven hours later." Verger's men then drive Lecter to an isolated farm. The first frame in figure 4.2 shows the van arriving at the farm, and the second frame shows the van pulling up inside a barn. The third frame is an establishing shot from the inside of the barn. Finally, in the fourth frame, Lecter is strapped to a crucifix being wheeled into a dark and decrepit corridor.

Figure 4.2: *Hannibal* (2001)

This scene creates tension and suspense through its pacing. As previously mentioned, this scene is the result of a prolonged and tense pursuit of Lecter. The film is effective in establishing Lecter as a genius and a monster. Not only does he spend days luring a French police officer into a false sense of security before publicly disembowelling him, but he also spends that time using cryptic messages hidden in plain sight to show the police officer exactly what he is going to do to him. Lecter's capture is a surprise because of his genius, and satisfying because of the harm that he has caused. These feelings are coupled with uncertainty: will Lecter escape yet again, or will he finally get what's coming to him? Somewhere between the cuts that separate the second, third, and fourth frame Lecter is removed from the van, strapped to a crucifix, and then mounted onto a forklift truck. The tension that the film had been so successful in building and maintaining would be ruined if the audience was forced to watch the necessary, but mundane events between the cuts. We can imagine a version of *Hannibal* in which we watch the gang members removing Lecter from the van, loading him onto a trolley, wheeling him into place beneath the crucifix, awkwardly fumbling with the straps, slowly lifting him up into place, struggling to hold him in place while remaining out of reach of his cannibalistic bite, and so on. How long would it take to go through

this mundane process? In order to maintain audience interest, the editing of *Hannibal* ensures that it all happens within the space of around two seconds. The editing in *Hannibal* removes the mundane events that occur between those that create suspense. According to Burt, this logic can be seen with Monkey Hill, and with zoos in general. An editing process had been undertaken to eliminate the mundane aspects of animals in order to grab the attention of the zoo-goers. The expanses of time between the fights, feeding, and breeding were removed, ensuring that the zoo-goers were not left bored by the Monkey Hill exhibit.

London Zoo still tries to make their exhibits as exciting and as captivating as possible for the zoo-goers. One example of many is public feedings. The format has changed over the years, with events such as the 'Chimps Tea Party' no longer running, but London Zoo still offers visitors the chance "to feed some of [the] animals their breakfast" (Zoological Society of London, 2021). Another example is a "series of after-dark entertainment events with alcohol and live music" (Dalton, 2019). These events allow zoo-goers to look at zoo animals while also watching "acts such as comedians and acrobats close to the enclosures." Despite this, the style of editing as described by Burt is not unique to Monkey Hill, London Zoo, or even zoos in general. It could be applied to almost any captive or domesticated animal used for entertainment. The travelling menageries of the early 19th century are just one example of this (Cowie, 2014, p.75). The lions of George Wombwell's travelling menagerie were usually fed after dark when they were thought to be most active, and most ferocious. The feeding of the lions was the menagerie's most popular event, but the timing prevented the elderly and those travelling into large cities from attending. To account for this, additional feedings were added at specific times during the day. In line with Burt's thinking on film editing, the way that the lions acquired sustenance was controlled by an 'editor' who ensured that the most exciting moments of an animal's life were displayed to an audience.

One reason that Burt's observations can be applied to menageries, and even theatres and circuses, is because editing is much more than a process of removing boring events. Such a

definition implies that editing is primarily focussed on the cutting of film, rather than the creation of film. And, as chapter 3 of this thesis demonstrated, editing also aims to present a self-contained filmic universe. Every decision made during editing is intended to facilitate the construction of a reality in which the characters, narrative, and action are at home. More than this, the result of an editing process must be that the editing process itself remains invisible. The film must *feel* as though it was shot exactly as it appears on screen. In other words, the continuity system of editing strives to make a film feel natural. Animals held in captivity at the zoo are not primarily valued for their ability to perform tricks, even if zoos have certainly used animals in this way in the past. London Zoo is no exception in this regard. Throughout its history London Zoo has struggled to find a balance between providing entertainment and adhering to practices that the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) considered to be educational and scientific. In 1854, the wide-spread use of animals for entertainment, such as elephant rides and snake charmers, saw the Zoo stripped of its scientific status (Zuckerman, 1976, p.10). In the 1930s this issue arose again, with the Zoo having to prove that it was a scientific and educational institution. The courts eventually ruled that activities that seemed like entertainment, such as elephant rides, were, in fact, educational because they "widened a child's mind" (Zuckerman, 1976, p.11). Despite these instances, the primary value of animals held captive in zoos is that they are 'wild', that zoo-goers are given a chance to see an animal acting in accordance with their 'nature'.

Zoos spend a massive amount of human labour to create the feeling that the animals held in captivity remain wild, that they remain uncontaminated by human influence. In the words of Irus Braverman (2013, p.25):

> A great deal of human work must be invested to create nature amidst an urban landscape—and even more work must be invested to make such human work invisible.

Like the continuity system of editing, a massive amount of human labour is required to design and manage a zoo in such a way as to create the sense that everything is in its natural place.

In order to develop Burt's observations that zoo animals have been edited, I will expand upon the theoretical underpinnings of his notion of editing. By using my extended version of Bordwell's Fabula/Sjužet/Style diagram in chapter 3, I will show how zoo animals have been constructed in such a way as to appear non-constructed. The antagonism that Monkey Hill tried to solve, 'to exhibit wild animals', can be found from the beginnings of London Zoo because it is found in the very concept of zoos. Keekok Lee (2005, p.34) has argued a similar point in reference to the words 'wild animals in captivity'. This is a grammatically sound statement, but does not yield conceptual coherence. Because this research project focusses so much on the visual, and since a wild animal must be held in captivity in order for them to be exhibited, I understand the statement 'exhibiting wild animals' to contain the same contradiction that Lee identifies. The contradiction is akin to planning one's own surprise party. Although 'planning one's own surprise party' is a grammatically sound statement, the act of planning nullifies the possibility of creating the conditions required to elicit surprise in oneself. However, one could try to get around this problem by planning to appear surprised to the party guests. So too with any attempt at 'exhibiting wild animals'. Through the massive amount of human labour and infrastructure required to exhibit an animal at a zoo, the possibility of that animal being in any way 'wild' is rendered impossible. Despite this, zoos invest a huge amount of effort to make the animals appear wild to the zoo-goers. The analysis that follows is applicable to the general concept of zoos, but for the sake of specificity and close analysis I will keep my examples within the scope of London Zoo. It is tempting to make a softer claim about the editing of zoo animals by analysing zoo animals 'through the lens' of film editing. However, I want to make a much stronger claim and insist that zoo animals *are* edited. As will be recalled, in chapter 3 I problematised the idea of 'reality' showing itself in cinema. I concluded that any rupture between fiction and reality is better understood as a rupture between

one fiction and another. This analysis of zoo animals as moving images intends to pursue this claim to its most difficult point. The bare facticity, the material, physiological reality of the flesh and blood individuals living in a zoo must surely be evidence of their reality? As this chapter will conclude, these elements, that is to say, the animal body, forms part of the apparatus of creating the fiction of the animal image.

4.2 Sjužet and Fabula of the zoo

In the next two sections I want to elaborate on Burt's idea that zoo animals are edited. To do this I will map the zoo onto my extended version of Bordwell's Fabula/Sjužet/Style diagram illustrated in chapter 3. For clarity, I will reproduce this diagram here:
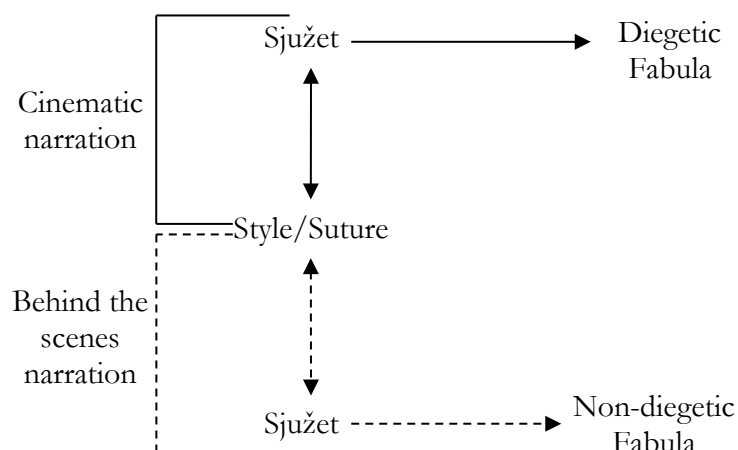
Figure 3.8: Modified diagram of fabula/sjužet/style relationship

As discussed in chapter 3, sjužet is the information provided in a narrative text. This includes events, characters, scenes, and so on. Sjužet refers to the material with which a story is told. Fabula, on the other hand, refers to the story itself. Style is a "film's systematic use of cinematic devices" (Bordwell, 2014, p.50). Style differs from sjužet in that they treat different aspects of the phenomenal process of cinema. Sjužet treats the dramaturgical aspect of a film, whereas style treats the technical side. Style is most often at the service of sjužet, but they are not identical (Bordwell, 2014, p.52). Before I discuss the diegetic and non-diegetic fabula, I will talk about the sjužet

elements through which this story is told, and later in section 4.3 I will discuss the 'style/suture' of the zoo.

4.2.1 Sjužet at the zoo

Obvious examples of the sjužet of the zoo are the placards, guidebooks, educational talks, tour guides, and so on. Each of these provides written, spoken, or recorded information about the zoo and the animals that are held captive. This information contributes towards informing the zoo-goers about the animal that they are looking at, as well as animals of the same species living in the wild. London Zoo has always utilised these elements to supplement the exhibition of their animals. At a council meeting in 1828 the ZSL ordered the publication of a catalogue detailing all of the animals held at London Zoo. This catalogue was intended to promote and popularise London Zoo by presenting the latest discoveries in zoology in a way that a non-expert could understand (Åkerberg, 2001, pp.149–150). Unofficial guides were produced at the same time offering much more flamboyant and poetic accounts of the author's visit to the zoo. The ZSL also began labelling their enclosures to inform the zoo-goers about the animal that they were looking at. Advocates of zoos point to the informative signage and guidebooks, as well as the tours, educational talks, audio recordings, and so on, as evidence of the educational value of zoos. A study conducted at London Zoo found that one third of the participants showed a "noticeable change towards greater understanding of animals and habitat" after watching an educational talk (Wagoner and Jensen, 2010, p.68). What is important to note for this thesis is that these elements are the sjužet of the zoo, they are part of the material with which the zoo constructs a story (fabula) about animal species and individual animals.

A less obvious place to identify the sjužet of the zoo is an animal's body. Numerous commentators, and zoos themselves, have argued for the value of observing animals in captivity. Vicki Croke (1997, p.100) describes an unmediated, "atavistic" connection with animals that can only be gained from direct physical and visual contact. Others argue that animal bodies tell the

story of the species to which they belong, as well as the historical lineage of that species (Lee, 2005, p.32). For example, an elephant's trunk is an artifact of natural history, the work of millions of years of natural selection. London Zoo describes the animals that they hold captive as "ambassadors for their species," offering a window through which their wild relatives can be discerned (Zoological Society of London, 2015). Stephen Bostock also argues that seeing an animal at a zoo provides direct contact with nature, but adds that this contact also communicates the story of "the individual lives of a great many creatures" (2004, pp.181–182). For Bostock, only direct visual contact with a living animal can communicate their individuality. In a different vein, Hutchins et al. (2019, p.4) argue that with species that scientists know relatively little about, keeping members of that species in captivity enables a reliable and consistent source of original data. It is through the animal's body that scientists construct the story of the species to which that animal belongs. In each of these cases, the animal body is part of the material with which a story of their life, and the story of their species is constructed and told.

Another location that one can find the sjužet of the zoo is with the enclosures. The changes in the design of zoo enclosures has been well-documented, and will be covered in more detail later in this chapter. This history is conflicted, with some arguing that modern zoo enclosures are simply cages without bars (Mullan and Marvin, 1999; Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier, 2002; Jamieson, 2006), and others arguing that, while more work needs to be done, the move from cages to naturalistic enclosures is beneficial for all involved (Croke, 1997; Hancocks, 2001; Bostock, 2004; Barrington-Johnson, 2005; Braverman, 2013). However, for the purpose of this discussion, what matters is the role that the enclosures play as sjužet. In short, the cold iron bars that stood between elephants and humans worked towards constructing the story of elephants just as much as the open-air enclosures of contemporary zoos. Iron bars not only hold elephants captive, but express their power and strength (Mullan and Marvin, 1999, p.52). For this study, the question is not so much about the benefits of the changing design of zoo enclosures as it is about what these designs

do as sjužet in the construction of the narrative of the zoo. It is no accident that the penguin enclosures of London Zoo do not contain English Oak trees. The presence of rocks, vegetation, stimulative objects, and so on, are to be included as sjužet elements telling a story of the animals inside the enclosures.

4.2.2 Fabula at the zoo

As discussed earlier, fabula refers to the story itself. In chapter 3 I showed that not only do the film and the novel of *Watership Down* contain the 'same' fabula, but so do the two plot summaries that I presented. In this chapter I have made several references to 'wild' animals, usually by way of comparison to animals held captive at zoos. In keeping with the theoretical underpinnings of this project, these references to 'wild' animals should be taken as another example of sjužet constructing the fabula of the animals in question. There are authors who make the comparison between animals living in the wild and captive animals in order to make arguments against zoos (Mullan and Marvin, 1999; Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier, 2002; Jamieson, 2006). While my argument might lend itself to this perspective, the comparison between the two in this chapter is not one that favours a *natural*, superior form of life over an *artificial*, inferior form of life. For this argument, the focus is on how the sjužet of the zoo works to construct the diegetic fabula of the animals that they hold captive and the non-diegetic fabula of animal species living in the wild. Put another way, the focus is on the construction of the non-constructed.

4.2.2.1 Diegetic Fabula/The Story of Jumbo

Disentangling the diegetic fabula of zoo animals from the non-diegetic fabula of an animal species is difficult, especially since the two are usually constructed together. However, a productive way to do this is through the presentation of a famous animal. I will use Jumbo the celebrity elephant to make this point. Volumes have been written about Jumbo, but an interesting place to demonstrate the diegetic fabula of the zoo is by looking at the story of how Jumbo ended up living in London. Recent versions of this story that are more sympathetic to London Zoo describe the

event in as little detail as possible. ZSL fellow J. Barrington-Johnson describes how Jumbo "*arrived at London Zoo on 26 June 1865*" (2005, p.57, my emphasis). This account does not include Jumbo's place of birth, or any other location that Jumbo lived prior to arriving in London. The palatable tone of Barrington-Johnson's account echoes those given nearer to the time of Jumbo's arrival. Including slightly more detail than Barrington-Johnson, newspapers reported that Jumbo was brought to London from Paris (The Illustrated London News, 1865, p.33). Later authors such as John George Wood (1882, p.172), Charles Victor Alexander Peel (1903, p.182), and Lee Saunders Crandall (1975, p.154), also tell their readers that London Zoo obtained Jumbo from Paris. Contemporary authors who are more critical of popular narratives infuse the story with slightly more emotive language:

> Caught by Arab hunters in Abyssinia in 1861 *when he was just a calf*, he was sold to the Italian animal dealer Lorenzo Casanova, who in turn sold him to the Parisian Jardin des Plantes (Cowie, 2014, p.147, my emphasis).

The name Lorenzo Casanova appears in some stories about Jumbo's early life, but not others. Those that include Casanova tend to mention that many of the animals that were being held with Jumbo were killed on a six-week journey through the desert, or were later killed through being trapped below deck on a voyage across one of the hottest regions on earth (Chambers, 2007, p.31; Sutherland, 2014, p.43). Charles Frederick Holder delves further into Jumbo's past, noting the name of the first English game-hunter who saw Jumbo, and the Austrian collector who facilitated Jumbo's purchase:

> In 1861, when he was about four feet high, an elephantine toddler, Sir Samuel Baker saw him in the possession of some Hamran Arabs, who were taking him down the Settite River for delivery to a collector named Johann Schmidt. The latter sold him to the Jardin des Plantes (Holder, 1888, p.64).

The memoirs of Sir Samuel Baker contain very little detail about Jumbo, but do provide insight into how he might have been captured. On one of his killing expeditions, Baker had become acquainted with Taher Sheriff, a local elephant hunter. Sheriff told Baker about a hunt that he had just returned from in which his "party had killed several elephants, and had captured two young ones" (Baker, 1871, p.291). One of these "young ones" was later claimed to be Jumbo (Chambers, 2007, p.211; Sutherland, 2014, p.37). Although Baker was not present for Jumbo's capture, he did attend an elephant hunt with Sheriff earlier in the year. During this hunt Baker saw what he described as the typical method of bringing down an elephant with only "two strokes of the sword" (Baker, 1871, p.119). David Hancocks writes that Jumbo's mother was "probably shot" during his capture (2001, p.5), but based on Baker's accounts, it seems likely that Jumbo's last hour with his mother was spent watching her bleeding to death from the gashes across her rear legs. However, as previously mentioned, Baker did not actually witness the capture of Jumbo. Paul Chambers has shown that other rumours about Jumbo's origins were circulating at the time. One rumour claimed that Jumbo was captured by a group of Matabele hunters and sold to British colonialists, while another rumour claimed that Jumbo never lived in Africa at all, but was secretly bred in a "backstreet menagerie" (Chambers, 2007, p.211). Along with these contested and conflicting accounts are more fanciful, and typically racialised tales. Eric Mathieson's *The True Story of Jumbo the Elephant* (1963, pp.8–9) tells a story of "brown-skinned and fierce" Arabs starving and abusing Jumbo, and of "the white man" Herr Schmidt who saved Jumbo, giving the emaciated elephant his first taste of whiskey (which Jumbo apparently enjoyed!).
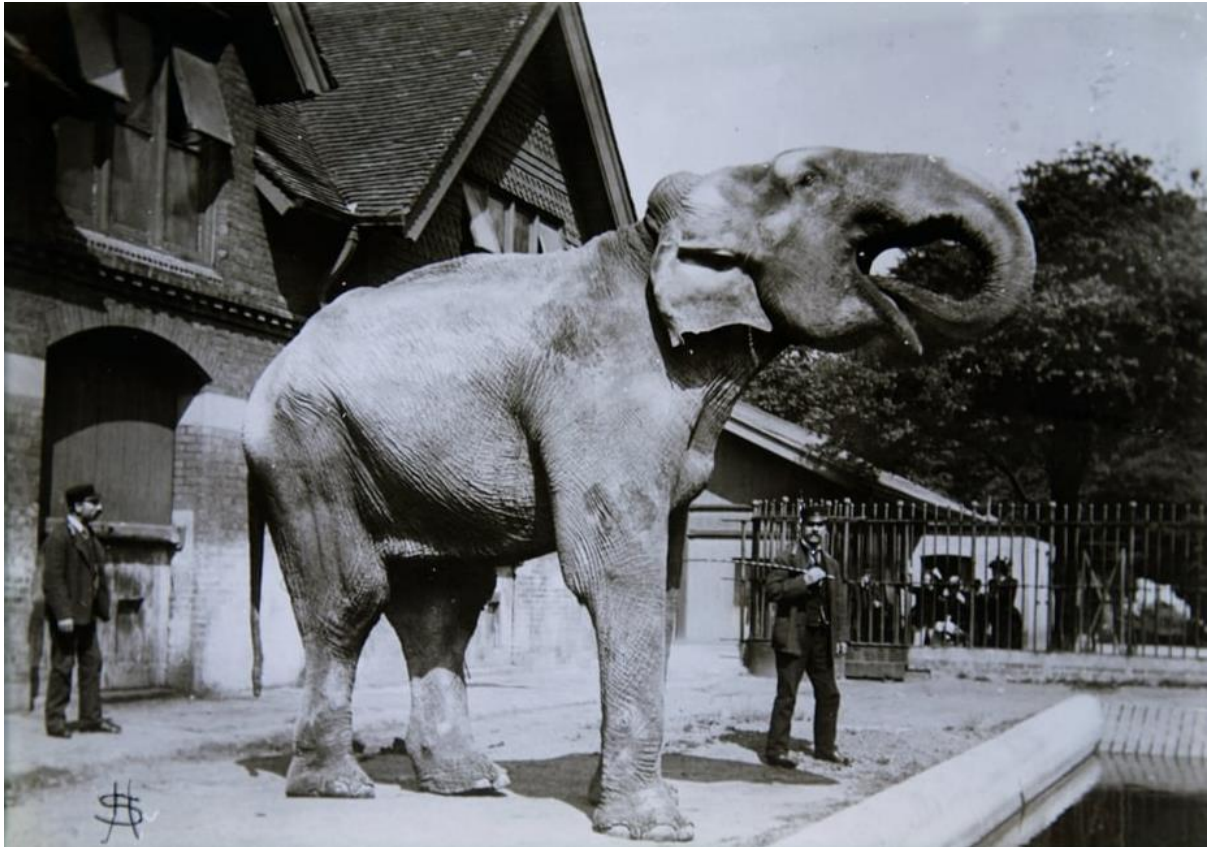
Figure 4.3: Jumbo the Elephant at London Zoo (Anon, c1870)

Which version of Jumbo's beginnings relates most closely to 'what really happened' is not a question that can be resolved. For this project, what matters is the version that the ZSL retold in their construction of the story of Jumbo. Interestingly, their story of Jumbo's origins is quite brief. The day after Jumbo arrived in London, ZSL secretary Philip Lutley Sclater reported the "arrival (...) of a young male African Elephant, received in exchange from the Jardin des Plantes" (Zoological Society of London, 1865, p.510). Five months later, while reporting the most notable new additions to the Zoo, the ZSL reported that two Elephants, one of which being Jumbo, had arrived:

> into the London market for sale, having been remitted here from Vienna, where
>
> they had been brought from the Soudan, along with other animals, by the well-
>
> known traveller Casanova (Zoological Society of London, 1865, p.676).

The first guidebook to be printed after Jumbo's arrival describes his origins in the following way:

> The young male African Elephant was acquired by exchange from the Jardin des
>
> Plantes at Paris, and is believed to be the first of this species ever brought alive to
>
> England (Sclater, 1866, p.57).

The account described in the guidebooks remained identical until Jumbo was sold by the ZSL to the American entertainer Phineas Taylor Barnum in 1882. Decades after Jumbo's death, Abraham Dee Bartlett, a former superintendent of London Zoo, continued to describe the events in as little detail as possible, mentioning only that Jumbo was "received in exchange for other animals on June 26, 1865" (1899, p.45). One-hundred-and-fifty-years later, the ZSL celebrated the anniversary of 'Jumbomania' (the public outcry that broke out in Britain at the announcement of Jumbo's sale to Barnum) by retelling his origins in the following way:

> According to the author John Sutherland, *'Baby Jumbo's exact place and date of birth is*
>
> *vague'*. Like Disney's eponymous hero Dumbo, *'he might as regards the genealogical record*
>
> *have been brought in by the stork'*.

> It is widely agreed that the young calf and his mother inhabited the border regions
>
> between Abyssinia and the Sudan (what is now modern Eritrea). Sutherland writes
>
> that Jumbo's birthdate is *'most reliably put at sometime between early 1860, or shortly*
>
> *thereafter'*. (Sylph, 2015, original emphasis)

John Sutherland's text does also contain some slightly less whimsical details that are not mentioned on the ZSL website, including a section in which he asks the reader to imagine Jumbo's mother:

> bleeding slowly to death, grunting pathetically, shrieking as her tusks were sawn
>
> off, as her calf wailed. And then chunks of her, cooked and devoured, within a few

yards of her now motherless calf a few hours later, her maternal odours clearly

identifiable to nasal membranes infinitely more sensitive than those of the human

nose. Hannibal Lecter could not devise a more ingenious torture (Sutherland, 2014,

p.45)

In 2017, the ZSL were prompted to write about Jumbo again by the release of *Attenborough and the Giant Elephant*, a BBC documentary that details the severity of Jumbo's life-long abuse. In a blog post they returned to the stripped-down version of Jumbo's origins:

Jumbo was born in East Africa around 1860, and whilst still very small arrived at

the Jardin des Plantes, Paris. He was transferred to ZSL London Zoo in 1865

(Zoological Society of London, 2017).

Although brief, London Zoo constructed the story, the diegetic fabula, of Jumbo's origins. Of course, this is true for more than just the story of his arrival in London. The sale of Jumbo to Barnum in 1882 is easily the most famous event in his life (Walk, 2004; Sutherland, 2014, pp.111–117). What is important for this project is the way that the practices that London Zoo engaged in can be best conceptualised as a form of editing. Again, this is not to say that aspects of Jumbo's life were *excluded*, but that the story of his life was constructed through the interplay of carefully selected and composed sjužet elements.

4.2.2.2 Non-diegetic Fabula/The Story of the 'African Elephant'

It is difficult to summarise popular knowledge of elephants in Britain before Jumbo's arrival at London Zoo. The first elephant in Britain was given to Edward III by Louis IX in 1255 (Jolly, 1976, p.11; Åkerberg, 2001, p.24; Grigson, 2016, p.1). Prior to that, medieval bestiaries contained lengthy descriptions of elephants, including those provided by Aristotle and Pliny (Druce, 1919, p.1). Images of elephants were, for educated classes, to be found in many historical

texts, including those that recounted such stories as Hannibal's march across the alps. Knowledge about elephants was, in short, a mixture of mythical tales, historical accounts, tales from colonialists and explorers returning from Asia and Africa, and whatever menagerie owners would spout in order to attract an audience. Public knowledge was sometimes farfetched, such as the idea that elephants would battle dragons (Fryer, 2018, p.7). But it was also racialised, with the taming of an African Elephant being symbolic of Britain's taming of the African continent (Sivasundaram, 2005, p.52; Yeandle, 2019, p.60). For example, the aforementioned superintendent of London Zoo, Abraham Dee Bartlett, claimed that the reason that African Elephants had not been tamed in Africa was because "Negroes [are] too great savages" (1899, p.63). In his opinion, other cultures and races could tame the African Elephant and "confer a blessing on the continent." Such ideas are echoed in the Zoo's guidebooks. Take for example a line from the 1866 guidebook that claims that the idea that African Elephants cannot be tamed is a misconception since "there are good grounds for believing" that European societies have been able to do so for centuries (Sclater, 1866, p.50).

In keeping with their desire to educate the general population, the ZSL sought to provide as much information on their animals as possible. While constructing the story of Jumbo, the ZSL also constructed the story of the elephant species. They were careful to communicate the existence of three species of elephant: the African Elephant, the Indian Elephant, and the Asian Elephant. The section on African Elephants in the 1866 guidebook contains a mixture of Jumbo's personal history, a general history of elephants, and some information of the species. The closest thing to scientific information on the African Elephant reads as follows:

> The African Elephant is usually less [sic] in size than the Asiatic species. The head is rounded, the front is convex instead of concave, the ears are much larger, and the general physiognomy is quite different from that of the Indian Elephant. (Sclater, 1866, p.56)

The mistake regarding the size difference between African and Asian Elephants was to be found in the Zoo's guidebooks until 1882. However, the information about the "general physiognomy" of the African Elephant remained the same for decades afterwards. Even the guidebooks published after P. Chalmers Mitchell became secretary of the ZSL in 1903 contain almost identical zoological information on African Elephants. But guidebooks were not the only way that the ZSL sought to educate the public. Other publications, such as the *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* and the *Transactions of the Zoological Society of London*, were advertised as a way for members and the general public to learn about the latest scientific discoveries (Sclater, 1866, pp.59–60). However, these publications contained nothing substantial about the individuals living at London Zoo. It was only when an animal died that they became of scientific interest to the ZSL. The majority of the scientific research in the late 19th and early 20th Century was conducted on dead animals (Olney, 1976, p.138). In the words of Baratay and Hardoiun-Fugier (2002, p.134), the layman enjoyed the sight of the living, and the scholar the use of the dead.

Despite the lack of zoological information on the African Elephant species compared to contemporary guidebooks, what can be seen is an attempt to construct the 'non-diegetic fabula' of the African Elephant species. As discussed in chapter 3, the non-diegetic fabula of a film is part of the behind-the-scenes narrative, that is, the narrative of what *really* happened during filming. For example, Sony Pictures Entertainment (2000) have released short behind-the-scenes documentaries that show how the film *Jumanji* (1995) was made. It features interviews with Robin Williams, Kirsten Dunst, Bonnie hunt, as well as other members of the cast and crew. The interviews are interspliced with unfinished CGI and animal models, as can be seen in figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Behind-the-scenes of *Jumanji* (Sony Pictures Entertainment, 2018)

Along with the behind-the-scenes documentary there are dozens of promotional interviews with the cast and crew. These interviews not only establish how the film was made, but they also establish an idea of who the actors really are. In an interview with *E! News* (2020), for example, Robin Williams seems to be unable to control his laughter at certain anecdotes, fumbles on his words, and so on. These offer a window into the 'real' Robin Williams and what he was thinking and feeling during the making of *Jumanji*. For example, when Williams recalls a story about getting too excited during filming and punching a stuntman inside one of the animatronic models, audiences are then able to see the character Alan Parish fighting a giant crocodile while simultaneously seeing Robin Williams punching a stuntman in the head. It should be noted that the media that accompanies *Jumanji* exists within an already established set of narratives. These relate to the characters, but also knowledge about how films are made. The image of Robin Williams, for example, has been constructed from other media, such as his other films, TV shows,

and stand-up comedy. It is also built from news articles, books, gossip columns on his personal life, interviews with celebrities about their experiences working with Williams, and so on. The two narrative levels exist *simultaneously* within the screen. And so, when the audience stops seeing Parish and instead see Williams, they are not gaining unmediated access to Williams. They are instead shifting into another already present narrative, the non-diegetic fabula of *Jumanji*.

The same can be seen with Jumbo. It is not the case that Jumbo provided the chance for zoo-goers to have a pure, "atavistic" encounter with an African Elephant. Instead, zoo-goers simultaneously observed the diegetic fabula of Jumbo and the non-diegetic fabula of the African Elephant species. The accounts given of the African Elephant species by London Zoo formed part of an already established image of elephants in the public imagination. As previously mentioned, public knowledge of the African Elephant was at the time a mosaic of scientific literature, religious myths, folk tales, historical events, and the accounts of hunters and explorers. While the mention of how Europeans are able to tame African Elephants was hardly scientific, the early guidebooks show the beginnings of London Zoo's attempt to establish that they were exhibiting an animal who remained wild whilst living in captivity. It should be made clear that the purpose of the comparison being made is not to claim that zoo animals and films are identical. The comparison is to stress that both have come about through a process of editing as described in chapter 3. While the flesh and blood existence of Robin Williams, or Kirsten Dunst, or Bonnie Hunt, is not being doubted here, the thrust of this analysis is to emphasise that this is not what the names 'Robin Williams', 'Kirsten Dunst', and 'Bonnie Hunt' refer to. With regards to the non-diegetic fabula of a cinematic narrative, these names refer to the figures that exist in the cultural imagination as the *real* thing. This is important because the *raison d'etre* of zoos is to offer a piece of the real, an authentic encounter with wild animals, but as will be discussed in the next section, the very thing that guarantees the authenticity of such an encounter, the body of animals, is the material support for the animal image. To put this another way, to see a 'real' African Elephant at

a zoo is like seeing the 'real' Robin Williams, or the 'real' Kirsten Dunst, or the 'real' Bonnie Hunt on TV. The key difference between the two is the medium: one is film, and the other is flesh and blood. In the next section I will discuss the style/suture of the zoo, and in doing so explain how the zoo uses its own material limits, which includes the animal body, to establish the animal image.

4.3 Style/Suture at the zoo

As discussed in chapter 3, the definition of style given by Bordwell is a "film's systematic use of cinematic devices" (2014, p.50). These include editing, lighting, camera movement, and so on. A film *necessarily* implements a wide range of these devices. For example, a camera must always stand at some distance and angle relative to the object being filmed, thus framing the subject matter in a particular way. If that camera then moves, it will do so through a particular movement, such as a dolly, pan, or tilt. The technological and material limits of cinema form the boundaries of style. As will be recalled, style is always at the service of sjužet. The choice to use a dolly over a pan, for example, is informed by what the director is trying to achieve on the level of sjužet. The interest of this thesis is the use of style in the continuity system of editing. This system aims to present a self-contained filmic universe. The result of an editing process must be that the editing process remains invisible. The film must *feel* as though it was shot exactly as it appears on screen (Dmytryk, 1984, pp.11–13; Rosenblum and Karen, 1986, p.2). Through the careful use of style, the continuity system gives a film its natural feel by rendering the editing process invisible. This is exactly how Silverman (1984, p.214) and Heath (1985, p.45) describe suture. The classical style enables the viewer of a film to become immersed in the film because it presents itself as unmediated. Suture enables immersion but does not necessitate it. The distance between the viewer and the screen is closed because the film is structured in such a way as to allow a shift from "I am seeing what the camera/narrator is allowing me to see" to "That's what *I* see" (Silverman, 1984, p.205).

What about the editing of zoo animals? For the sake of this analysis, zoo animals can be described as the result of the aforementioned internally contradictory goal: to exhibit wild animals.

Part of this process is the use of such things as an animal's body, signage, enclosure design, and so on, in the construction of narratives about individual animals and animal species. However, these elements need to be held together in such a way that enables zoo-goers to become immersed in the story being told by the zoo. Just as the physical presence of a non-diegetic camera constantly risks shattering the illusion of a self-contained filmic universe, the physical existence of some kind of apparatus that holds the animals captive constantly risks shattering the illusion that the animals remain wild. And, just as the physical presence of a camera necessitates the use of particular cinematic techniques, the apparatus that keep the animals in captivity necessitate the use of particular techniques. Finally, it is important to emphasise that style/suture in film is used to create the feeling that everything in the film is in its natural place. With zoos, that *thing* that needs to appear as though it is in its natural place is the animal. Rather than seeing the flesh and blood existence of zoo animals as testament to their reality, I will instead show that they form part of the technological and material limits of zoos, and as such they are choreographed and edited in such a way as to make the animal appear *natural* to zoo-goers. This section will show how the design and management of London Zoo has dealt with the contradictory task of exhibiting wild animals.

In 1848, the ZSL stated that the promotion of the study of animal physiology and anatomy requires that naturalists be given access to healthy animals. They condemned menageries like the Exeter 'Change because of the way that they kept a large number of animals in small, narrow cages. For the ZSL, such conditions violated the nature of the animals being held. A better system, they claimed, would be one in which the captive animals were given less intrusive enclosures and more space to move (Cowie, 2014, p.22). Such conditions were also thought to benefit zoo-goers. Spacious, elegant gardens separated each animal enclosure, giving the zoo-goers ample room for contemplation and observations of the animals (Toovey, 1976, p.180; Hancocks, 2012, p.123). In 1853 London Zoo opened the world's first public aquarium. Up until this point, scientists would keep their specimens living inside small jars and vessels kept at their homes or offices (Vevers,

1976, p.109; Barrington-Johnson, 2005, p.37). In line with the idea that animals should be held captive in a more "natural" environment, the aquarium boasted of having a plentiful amount of space, as well as the appropriate rocks and plant life to support the organisms (Hancocks, 2001, p.49). The design of the aquarium was a familiar balancing act between creating a natural environment for the fish and ensuring that the fish could be observed at all times. For the fish, the new design might have been an improvement upon a solitary life inside a jar on the desk of a naturalist, but their worlds were still designed in such a way as to render their lives constantly observable (Hancocks, 2001, p.49). The presence of rocks and vegetation created an image of the natural world, rather than a habitat. But the image was not for the fish who actually formed part of the image itself. The careful curation of each tank was to create a window through which the zoo-goers could glimpse into the wild.

Birds at London Zoo received similar treatment. During a time in which birds were at the centre of ground-breaking new theories, such as the important role of finches in Darwin's theory of evolution, the ZSL claimed that the relatively spacious bird houses of London Zoo provided "original data" to the scientific community (Olney, 1976, pp.133–135). As the sizes of the bird cages increased, so too did the bird houses in which they were kept. The bird houses were well-stocked with hundreds of different species from around the world. However, like other animal enclosures, the bird houses were primarily a site for leisure and entertainment. The famous Parrot Walk, for example, was a seasonal attraction in which parrots were tethered to posts in order to give zoo-goers a chance to see them close-up (Rothfels, 2002, p.36). As previously mentioned, the majority of the scientific research in the late 19th and early 20th Century was actually conducted on dead animals (Olney, 1976, p.138). The interest in the scientific study of living birds did eventually grow. The Snowdon Aviary, designed in the 1960s, was designed with a "free-flight" principle in mind (Steiner, 2003, p.16).

Figure 4.5: Snowdon Aviary, London Zoo (Lambert, 1965)

The birds housed in the Snowdon Aviary (figure 4.5) were given much more room than they would have had in the older bird houses, and they could use this extra room to fly. Architectural critic Reyner Banham described the task of designing the Snowdon Aviary as one that ensures that it is "broad enough for large birds to fly *convincingly*—and yet keep the public close enough" to see this convincing flight (1999, p.119, my emphasis). The same principles can be seen with the Aviary's most recent redesign. The ZSL (2020) boasts that the redesign will offer more space for the captive animals, and an increased opportunity for zoo-goers to see them, describing the new design as

being "[b]eyond the bricks and mortar." Instead, it is through anodised netting stretched across aluminium legs that visitors of London Zoo can "have a close encounter with nature."

During the building of the new Elephant and Rhinoceros Pavilion in the 1960s, the *London Zoo Guide* claimed that the design focused on providing the "healthiest possible conditions for the animals":

> This will also mean—thanks to modern thinking on the subject—that certain animals will be separated from the public, not by ugly iron bars, but by attractive moats (Zoological Society of London, 1963, p.84).

The architect, Hugh Casson, sought to design an enclosure that could "display [the animals] to the public to their best advantage, both inside and outside the building" (1966, p.123). Even the lighting was designed to present the elephants in the most "dramatic way possible." John Barrington-Johnson describes the elephant pavilion in the following way:

> [The] building represents a group of elephants around a waterhole with their trunks raised. In fact, the 'trunks' are all vents and lantern towers directing daylight into the animal areas inside the building, and members of the public walking a darker central area (...), creating, in its turn, an impression of standing in a jungle watching animals in sunlit glades. (Barrington-Johnson, 2005, p.148)

The ZSL's current description of the Pavilion claims that the "texture of the hand hacked concrete which forms the external façade of the building emulates the skin of the animals it was designed to hold" (Zoological Society of London, 2016). However, the brutalist architecture was not designed to express the grandeur of the elephants to the elephants themselves. The exterior walls may well "emulate" elephant skin to humans, but the design is primarily functional since the sharp edges discourage the animals from marking the walls (Casson and Conder, 1966, p.125; Guillery,

1993, p.43). The concrete walls that emulated elephant skin to the zoo-goers was designed to cut the skin of the elephants being held captive. Sketches of the Elephant and Rhinoceros Pavilion can be seen in figure 4.5, and a photograph of the Pavilion standing behind two elephants and a zookeeper can be seen in figure 4.6. The removal of the "ugly" iron bars and the addition of a moat was intended both to enable the zoo-goers to feel closer to the elephants, and to present them in a more natural-looking setting.
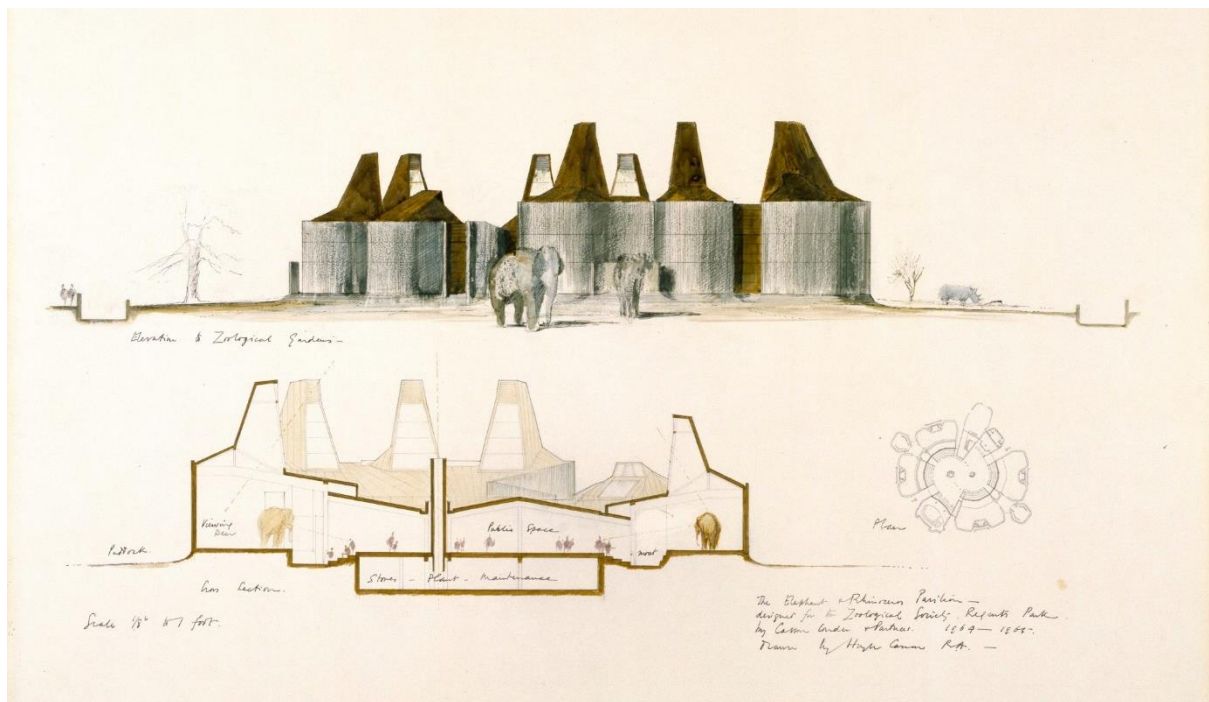
Figure 4.6: Record drawing for Elephant and Rhinoceros Pavilion (Casson, 1971)

Figure 4.7: Elephant and Rhinoceros House (Galwey, 1965)

What can be seen with the Aquarium, the Bird House, and the Elephant Pavilion is a trajectory that is common to all enclosures at London Zoo. This trajectory is a move from outwardly restrictive and intrusive enclosure designs to more 'open' enclosure designs. Recall the foundational, contradictory task of zoos: to *exhibit* wild animals. The animals held captive in zoos must be *seen* by the zoo-goers, and must appear to be wild. The existence of more 'natural looking' rocks and foliage begs the question, 'more natural looking for *who*?' The flight of the birds in the Snowdon Aviary is more convincing to *who*? Is the Snowdon Aviary designed to enable the birds to convince themselves that they are flying? And with the Elephant Pavilion, were any of the

elephants held captive there given the impression of standing in a jungle? Lee (2005, p.37) argues that zoo-goers are like travellers in a desert who see a mirage of an oasis on the horizon. Zoo animals, on the other hand, are stood where the mirage is taking place. This is not to say that zoo animals fully grasp their situation as captive, and the zoo-goers remain naive. This is only to say that in order for there to be a mirage of an oasis, one must be stood at an appropriate distance. A person stood where the oasis is being seen might not be at all aware that there is any mirage to speak of. The mirage of a 'natural' environment is not for the animals, but is instead to enable the immersion of the zoo-goers. I would push Lee's metaphor one step further in order to emphasise the way that animals themselves are part of the mirage. As I have been arguing throughout, it is not the case that behind the façade of zoo enclosures stands a real, authentic animal that transcends all social and cultural specificity. The mirage is not framing a real flesh and blood being, but instead the flesh and blood of this being is used as part of the structural integrity of the mirage.

To return to the language of film editing, the 'style' of a zoo is the technological and material limits. In the same way that a scene in a film requires the physical presence of a camera, a non-diegetic presence that risks disrupting the coherence of the onscreen fiction, zoos require a means of holding wild animals captive. The techniques that are used facilitate the sjužet of the zoo, that is, the physical elements used in the construction of the zoo's narrative. Iron bars hold elephants captive just as well as moats. While iron bars express the strength of the animal being held, they also serve as a reminder of an animal's imprisonment (Mullan and Marvin, 1999, p.52). Moats, on the other hand, successfully hold animals captive, but the open space between the zoo-goer and elephant serves to express that the animal being held captive is somehow freer than they would be in an iron cage. Recall that with suture, the viewer of a film is able to move from "I am seeing what the camera/narrator is allowing me to see" to "That's what *I* see" (Silverman, 1984, p.205). This closes the diegesis of the film and closes the gap between the viewer and the screen by presenting the film as how it 'really' happened. With the technological and material limits of a

zoo, zoo-goers are able to move from "I am seeing what the zoo is allowing me to see," to "That's what *I* see." In other words, despite being in an urban environment, surrounded by concrete in a temperate climate, zoos enable zoo-goers to see a 'real' elephant. In this context, the body of zoo animals forms part of the image used to convince zoo-goers that they can see a wild animal. The gap between the diegetic animal and the non-diegetic species is closed not only through elaborate and carefully planned enclosures, signage, tours, and so on, but also through the animal body. To emphasise this point, take the phenomena of behavioural stereotypy. This term refers to the 'unnatural' behaviour of animals held in captivity (Croke, 1997, p.34). This includes pacing in circles, the relentless scratching at the same spot in a cage, swaying back-and-forth, and so on. Unnatural here refers to behaviour not observed in animals living in the wild. For a zoo animal to appear wild, zoo-goers must be convinced by the way that an animal acts. The mirage evaporates when zoo animals act in ways that fall outside of a prescribed set of behaviours. Stereotypic behaviour is "cured" through stimulation, enrichment, or even medication such as Prozac (Croke, 1997, p.38). But even after a cure, the so-called wild behaviour of zoo animals is, of course, curated by an editor who decides *which* behaviours to display. African Elephants living in a zoo will not be allowed to fight each other, and they will not find themselves fighting for their life against a pack of lions, even though this behaviour is seen in African Elephants living in the wild. The physiology, behaviour, and habits of zoo animals are like the foliage, rocks, moats, and ponds of zoo enclosures in that they form part of the material support for the animal image. Behind an inescapable moat, surrounded by carefully manicured and designed foliage and rocks, under the constant gaze of zoo-goers, eating carefully controlled and prepared food, maintaining a 'healthy weight', is an image of a wild animal. To put it succinctly, zoo animals are moving images.

Figure 4.7 shows a version of the modified diagram of fabula/sjužet/style. This version makes explicit reference to the elements that make up the sjužet of the narrative of Jumbo. This

version also makes explicit reference to the diegetic fabula (Jumbo) and the non-diegetic fabula (the African Elephant).
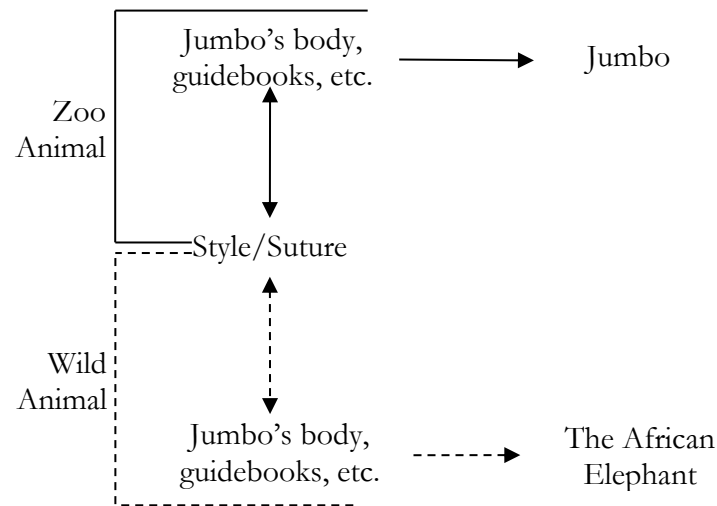
Figure 4.8: Sjužet and Fabula for Jumbo

4.4 Violence towards the animal image

The previous section showed how zoos engage in practices that resemble the process of editing as described in chapter 3. There are several reasons why this is relevant to this research project. One important reason is that zoos pre-date documentary films of wild animals by several decades. The first film showing an elephant living in the wild was not made until around 1915 (Bousé, 2000, p.49), several decades after Jumbo had died. Another important reason is to establish what is meant by 'animal image', especially in relation to Burt's claim that the animal image is a rupture in representation. Earlier I claimed that when an audience watches *Jumanji*, they see both Allan Parish and Robin Williams. This simultaneity is unavoidable in live action films since there must be a 'real' actor who plays a character. By showing that zoo animals have been edited, that they are moving images, we can show that this simultaneity can be found inscribed upon the living bodies of animals. The tensions that make up the animal image, the interplay between sjužet, the diegetic fabula, and the non-diegetic fabula, were firmly established long before being re-captured in film. Another way of putting this is that the relationship between the zoo-goer and the zoo

animal intersects with the relationship between cinema audiences and the animal on screen. In this section I will discuss the 'rupture' of representation found in the animal image. To do this I will return to Burt's discussion of the rupture between image and reality initiated by animal violence in film.

> [T]he animal is caught in an uncertain space between the natural and the contrived. The elements that make up the response to animal imagery appear to compose a similarly ambiguous space. On the one hand, it can be argued that an emotional response to animals is an empathetic and hence a straightforward natural expression of sentiment towards fellow creatures. On the other hand, it can as easily be said that it is film itself that, since its arrival in the mid-1890s, has increasingly influenced the construction of the animal in the public domain and that the force of the viewer's response to the animal is imbued with the techniques by which film provoked feelings in its audience (Burt, 2002a, p.10).

As this chapter has shown, techniques typically identified as being specific to cinema were being deployed at the zoo long before the invention of film. The physical, material, actually existing zoo animal forms part of the material support for the animal image created by the zoo. This relates to Burt's claim that the sight of animal violence in cinema collapses fiction into reality because animals are already images. Recall the definition of an image that I am borrowing from Mitchell (2015, p.30):

> An image can move from one medium to another, appearing now as an equation, now as a diagram, now as a figure in a narrative, and now as a figure in a narrative painting.

The animal image created by the zoo is one that is intended to transcend mythological or fantastical misconceptions. By using animal bodies in the creation of the animal image, zoos have imbued the animal image with a connection to the real. In the same way that the image of Dali's *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (1945) can circulate beyond the original materials used in its creation, the animal image, imbued with a connection to the real, migrates beyond the materials used in its creation. The animal image on screen is not an image of a pure, authentic being who is embedded in an unmediated reality. Instead, the animal image in cinema is the same animal image created through the editing process found in zoos.

This chapter has been emphasising the constructive character of editing. This is, in part, because I wanted to develop Burt's observations that understood editing as a process of removing undesirable imagery. But it was also to show the construction of the non-constructed. The 'real', wild animal exhibited by zoos is an image created through the material support of animal bodies. However, now that this chapter has established what is meant by the animal image, the remainder of this thesis will watch the animal image on the silver screen. I want to focus on the censorship of animal violence in the construction of the animal image. The two key ideas are 'censorship' and 'violence'. In keeping with the theoretical drive of this thesis, I will not be taking the words 'censorship' or 'violence' at face value, and will instead spend the next two chapters examining how each word is used, and what practices the words refer to.

Chapter 5: Crazy, Stupid, Dove

Good evening. You are an idiot. You are stupid, weak, impressionable, easily led, and unable to distinguish between fiction and reality. If you're an adult, you're probably an immature one. If you're a parent, you're a very bad one. I, on the other hand, am intelligent, cultured and sophisticated, parentally adept and able to appreciate art and eager to prevent you from attempting to do the same thing because, frankly, well, you're just not up to the job. In short, I know what's good for you and you don't (Eyes Wide Open: A Case Against Film Censorship, 1999).

One of the most controversial films of the Video Nasties genre is *I Spit on Your Grave* (1978). The film's notoriety comes from the infamous rape scenes. Lasting 20-minutes in total, the three scenes are extremely graphic, disturbing, and protracted. Media campaigns were waged against it, and film critics almost unanimously condemned the film's gratuitous depictions of violence against a woman (Starr, 1984, pp.48-49). The film was banned from UK cinemas upon its release. However, the film was able to be distributed via home video. Because of this, it contributed directly to the creation of the Video Recordings Act 1984 which provided the police with the legal power to confiscate the film from video shops. When the film was eventually cleared for release in the UK in 2002, the BBFC demanded that several minutes of the rape scenes were removed, in particular any shot that showed the face of the victim Jennifer Hills (Oldridge, 2003, p.121).

Despite the severe backlash against the film, writers have defended *I Spit on Your Grave* as "feminist" (Bindel, 2011; Clover, 2015, p.165). There are several reasons for this, including the way that the film forces the audience to identify with Hills rather than her attackers, the film's refusal to offer any easy resolutions to sexual violence, and the way that the film goes to great

lengths to counter some common misogynistic ideas about rape (Starr, 1984, pp.48–55; Oldridge, 2003, pp.113–126; Bindel, 2011; Clover, 2015, pp.114–165). In relation to censorship, defenders of the film argue that the infamous rape scenes are feminist *because* they are so graphic and protracted. Daniel Oldridge (2003, pp.120–123) argues that rape scenes in films are usually short, and edited in such a way as to remove the most graphic violence. Such presentations of rape leave much of the act to the imagination of the viewers. In other circumstances this technique can be extremely effective in provoking uncomfortable feelings in audiences. However, according to Bindel (2011), the demand that films hide the most disturbing aspects of rape reflects patriarchal judicial systems in which rape victims and the anguish that they suffer are rendered invisible through being doubted or silenced. By forcing the audience to confront the traumatic and disturbing violence of rape, by refusing to let the audience escape, *I Spit on Your Grave* counters any attempt to downplay the severity of its subject matter. Hills' expressions force the audience to recognise her suffering. According to the film's defenders, by censoring and cutting the most disturbing scenes, by demanding that Hill's expressions are hidden, the BBFC undo the film's power. In the BBFC version of *I Spit on Your Grave*, the extent of Hills' suffering is made invisible to the audience, but not to Hills herself. Hills' suffering is not ended, but instead it is designated its proper place out of sight of the audience who might be troubled by the confrontation with it (Oldridge, 2003, p.122).

In this chapter I will be exploring the debates that surround film censorship. The debate revolves around more than whether or not censorship is desirable, but also what counts as censorship. Without direct use of these terms, the censorship debate also ties together with the discussion on fabula, sjužet, and style to show how censorship changes a film's meaning. Much has been written on the censorship of human sex, human violence, and many other taboo themes. This project will examine the censorship debate in order to draw out the complexities that surround the censorship of animal violence in British cinema. The first port of call in the debate

will be an examination of the "Liberal conception" of censorship followed by an examination of what Matthew Bunn (2015, p.26) calls "New Censorship Theory."

The Liberal conception frames censorship as external, coercive, and repressive. In short, it sees censorship as something done to an individual by a powerful third-party that is trying to hide any material that it sees as unfit for public circulation. Censorship in this view is destructive, regressive, and almost always undesirable. New Censorship Theory argues that the Liberal conception is far too narrow to properly encompass the vast complexity of censorship. New Censorship Theory does not deny the insights offered by the Liberal conception, but expands upon them. This expansion pushes the notion of censorship out of the censor's office and into the marketplace, politics, and social life. New Censorship Theory also recognises the way that censorship is both prohibitive and productive. Helen Freshwater (2004, p.234), Nora Gilbert (2012, p.10) and Leo Strauss (1988, p.25) note how censorship produces new forms of discourse and styles of writing that are able to say the unsayable. There are problems with New Censorship Theory, such as the way that it risks overstretching the concept of censorship to such a degree that it becomes useless (Burt, 1994, xiii; Freshwater, 2004, p.241; Gilbert, 2012, p.4; Bunn, 2015, p.43). Another problem is the way that New Censorship Theory risks equating all forms of censorship.

The last half of this chapter will make an explicit return to Wittgenstein in order to take stock of the discussion. Using family resemblances, language games, and the tool analogy will help to avoid making essentialist claims about what censorship *really* is. Instead, this chapter will make a *non-essentialist* claim about what censorship *really* is. The meaning of the word 'censorship' is guaranteed through concrete social activity. By showing what language games are being played using the word 'censorship', and the forms of life to which the games belong, this chapter will argue that in film, the way that the word 'censorship' is used relates most closely to the Liberal conception of censorship. With this in place, this chapter will conclude by offering a way to analyse film censorship without slipping into abstract and detached definitions. In other words, this

chapter will avoid making up the definition of 'censorship', and then, after inspecting a BBFC annual report, declare 'look, censorship!' This chapter will offer a way to analyse the censorship of animal violence in British cinema.

5.1 The Liberal conception of censorship

Texts and discussions about film censorship, especially those published before the 1980s, tend to have a particular form of censorship in mind. This form is one that finds its clearest articulation in Classical Liberalism. Philosophers such as John Milton, Adam Smith, and John Stuart Mill conceptualise censorship in the same way that it is most commonly used to describe film censorship. In this section I will layout the Liberal conception of censorship before moving onto the recent critiques that have come from New Censorship Theory.

5.1.1 External, coercive, and repressive

Matthew Bunn (2015, pp.29–33) succinctly captures the three core elements of the Liberal conception of censorship. They are that censorship is external, coercive, and repressive. External because it is enacted by a third-party interfering with the free exchange of information between consenting individuals. This can be anyone, from an individual to an organisation, that is not part of the creative processes involved in the communicative acts. Coercive because the third party formally possesses the power to use force to prevent the free exchange of ideas. The third party can go as far as making use of violence in their mission to suppress certain materials. Finally, censorship is repressive because the offending material is removed from public circulation. Examples of this range from specific words being removed from individual texts to the oppression of entire groups of people.

With the above definition in mind, it is worth noting that there are a range of restraints on 'free speech' that the Liberal conception of censorship recognises, but not as censorship. Francis G. Couvares notes how these restraints come in many forms, such as:

self-regulation by trade associations or informal oversight groups, (...) boycotts or protests that exert pressure on producers, [and] conformity (conscious or unconscious) to conventions of taste or quality (Couvares, 1996, p.10).

These restraints fall outside the Liberal conception of censorship because they do not encompass all three of the aforementioned elements. Boycotts, for example, may well be made up of individuals who are external to the initial act of communication, and they may well seek to repress certain materials, but they do not formally possess the coercive power that the State enjoys. This model of censorship only recognises organisations with explicit institutional remit to censor (Kuhn, 1988, p.3; Couvares, 1996, p.10). The BBFC, for example, fits into this model. Despite not being a governmental organisation, the BBFC operates with governmental backing in order to prevent statutory censorship (Green and Karolides, 2005, p.74). The BBFC sit outside of the filmmaking process (external), they are able to make use of state power to meet their demands (coercive), and they seek to prevent public exhibition of any material that they interpret as violating UK obscenity laws (repressive).

5.1.2 Is the Liberal conception of censorship so simple?

At this point it would be good to ask whether the Liberal conception of censorship is so simple. Helen Freshwater (2004, p.226) has noted a lack of close readings of any text that supports the so-called Liberal conception of censorship. For Freshwater, this leads to a suspicion that there are no authors who really understand censorship in such a simple way. Freshwater's observations also come from the fact that most texts on censorship also discuss the socioeconomic, political, and cultural landscape surrounding censorship, as well as the history of pressure groups, boycotts, and market forces. For example, James C. Robertson's book *The hidden cinema: British film censorship in action, 1913-1975* (1993) maintains a close eye on the relationship between the BBFC and the UK government. Such a book would be a perfect example of an author subscribing to the Liberal conception of censorship were it not for Robertson's frequent ventures into the other forces that

played a role in the censorship of British cinema. So too with Neville March Hunnings' book *Film Censors and the Law* (1967). Hunnings' states that his focus is to avoid "vague rhetoric" by providing an empirical study of the relationship between censorship and the law (1967, p.11). However, like Robertson, Hunnings frequently ventures into the network of relations that surround and influence censorship. With this being said, Freshwater's observations still do not hold up. The socioeconomic, political, and cultural influences on censorship are, as mentioned earlier, considered to be separate from censorship itself. The Liberal conception focuses on the formally recognised organisations that use State power to repress and control communications between free individuals. Robertson and Hunnings offer important insights into the context of the censorship that they are analysing, but always maintain the definition of censorship as encapsulated by Bunn (2015, pp.29–30): external, coercive, and repressive.

5.2 New Censorship Theory

What Bunn (2015, p.26) refers to as 'New Censorship Theory' is a direct response to the Liberal conception of censorship. The term is not one that is used by any theorist to describe their own work. It also encompasses a wide range of approaches to thinking about censorship, some of which are incompatible with each other. The difficulty of neatly defining New Censorship Theory reflects the way that it approaches its subject matter. However, there are discernible commonalities to be found that are relevant to this discussion. One is a critique of the narrowness of the Liberal conception of censorship, with some authors arguing that censorship is intrinsic, and even necessary to every communicative act. Another commonality is a recognition of the way that censorship is both repressive and productive. As this section will show, New Censorship Theory looks to extend the concept of censorship in order to account for the ways in which different networks of power silence certain voices while amplifying others.

5.2.1 Socioeconomic, political, and cultural forces

Annette Kuhn was part of the first wave of authors to critique the Liberal conception of censorship. There have been authors who appear to challenge the Liberal conception of censorship, but their critique focusses on the way that it is used to benefit certain sections of society. Marx, for example, passionately rallied against censorship that suppressed dissenting voices in order to benefit the ruling classes (Jansen, 1991, p.95). He also noted the way in which the power of a capitalist market nullified the possibility of free expression (Jansen, 1991, p.93). However, Marx did not challenge the definition of censorship, he only protested how it was used. He also did not see the power of the market as a form of censorship, even if he recognised it as a restraint (Kallio, 2015, p.45). Kuhn, on the other hand, re-evaluates the definition itself. Her argument is that censorship is not an "object", or a thing that can be easily identified, but is better described as a process. For Kuhn (1988, p.127):

> censorship is not reducible to a circumscribed and predefined set of institutions and institutional activities, but is produced within an array of constantly shifting discourses, practices, and apparatuses. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as either fixed or monolithic.

This approach to censorship does not deny the insights offered by the Liberal conception, but expands upon them (Kuhn, 1988, p.3). Examples of censorship that are external, coercive, and repressive are recognised, but are so in a way that avoids the reification of the notion of censorship. Kuhn (1988, p.6) asks how censorship operates rather than asking what censorship is. This approach avoids letting the established definition of censorship determine the outcome of an investigation. Drawing from Foucault, Kuhn describes censorship as part of a *dispositif*, as part of a network of power relations that operate between social, political, and economic components. In Kuhn's (1988) own study, she shows how a variety of moral pressure groups, health councils, and

other bodies outside of the film industry did not *influence* censorship, but were instead part of the mechanisms of censorship in early 20th Century British cinema.

Susan Curry Jansen also notes the limited scope of the Liberal conception of censorship. Jansen (1991, pp.181–182) explains how the Liberal conception succeeds in recognising the oppressive influence of external authorities on individuals, but in doing so overlooks the role that wider inequalities play in censoring individuals. Jansen notes that members of excluded groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community, foreigners, women, people of colour, the working class, etc., are often denied equal material power to express themselves. Jansen (2010) uses the term "market censorship." Such censorship is the private ownership of the means of cultural production. Under these conditions, it is those in possession of the most political, social, and economic capital who become the new gatekeepers to the free exchange of information. To be clear, Jansen does not argue that the censorship office has simply moved from the State to the corporation, even if "market gatekeepers" do have a determining role in contemporary cultural output. For Jansen, censorship "refers to the conditions of production and consumption that produce cultural hegemony" (2010, p.14).

Applying Jansen's argument to film, even the smallest productions require a considerable amount of capital. What the British Film Institute (BFI) term a "micro-budget" film is any film that costs less than £250,000 to make, and a "no-budget" film is any film that cost less than £50,000 (Woodward, 2008, p.9). In the UK, 16 million people have less than £100 in their savings, and 12 million have only £1,000 (Milligan, 2016). The majority of the UK population cannot afford to make a no-budget film. Anyone wishing to make a film must already be in possession of wealth or have their film financed through a loan, or a grant from an arts council, or through a studio. Securing funds requires that filmmakers meet the requirements of the financiers. These could be as simple as maximising a return on the investment, to the promotion of certain ideas. In these conditions, financiers have the power to remove film content, and to deny funding entirely.

With regards to film, one example of market censorship can be seen with the many versions of Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982; 1992). The film was financed through the capital put forward by businessmen Run Run Shaw, Jerry Perenchio, and Bud Yorkin. The agreement was that if the film went over budget, then they would provide the extra capital required to cover the costs (Loud, 1992, p.114). In exchange for their financial support, the businessmen were given completion bond rights, which meant that they had the final say on the theatrical release of the film (Turan, 2017). After a test screening, the financiers decided that the film was too confusing for audiences and needed to be changed.

Figure 5.1: ***Blade Runner*** **(1982)**

Figure 5.2: ***Blade Runner*** **(1992)**

As can be seen from figures 5.1 and 5.2, there are both minor and major visual differences between the film that Scott wanted to make (figure 5.2), and the film that the financers of the film allowed to be released (figure 5.1). Roy Batty holds the dove close to his chest before leaping between two buildings to give Deckard his final 'Tears in Rain' monologue. This sequence is almost identical in both versions of the film. The only differences relate to the aspect ratio, colour saturation and tone, the sharpness of the image, etc. After the famous speech, Batty releases the dove that he held close to his chest. The dove flies away into the sky, leaving both Batty and Deckard alone in the rain. In the 1982 version of the film, the dove flies in front of a factory captured on film, whereas in the 1992 version the dove flies in front of a dark cityscape created by CGI. The footage of the dove is the same in both films. The most striking difference between the two films is the inclusion of a narrator. In the 1992 version of *Blade Runner*, there is no narrator. The film *shows* the audience what Deckard is feeling rather than telling them. In the 1982 version of the film, Harrison Ford was called back to the studio to record a voiceover to supplement the scene. The voiceover *tells* the audience what Deckard is thinking. The inclusion of a voiceover was demanded by the financers of the film because they worried that Scott's version would confuse audiences. Such confusion might lead to negative reviews, which would then lead to the film losing appeal, which would then lead to a smaller return on their investment. Not only did Scott and Ford "hate" the voiceovers (Loud, 1992, p.114), but they were, like the Ladd Company and Warner Brothers Studios, powerless to influence the final cut (Turan, 2017). Ford made clear that he was "very, very unhappy" with the changes being made to the film, especially because "nobody involved in the process was an original member of the team" (San Francisco Chronicle, 1999, p.59). Despite the director and the star of the film insisting that the voiceover would ruin the feeling and the expression of the final scene, the financers, the individuals in possession of the necessary capital, changed the film to satisfy their own needs.

As for other sources of funding, institutions such as the BFI, Film4, Enterprise Investment Scheme, and so on, finance film projects that meet their creative demands while rejecting others. For Jansen, censorship should not only be thought of as the explicit interference of film studios and funding bodies. For Jansen censorship is also the socioeconomic conditions in which select organisations possess the capital required to make films while the majority of individuals are denied such capital. Both the film studios and other funding bodies fall outside of the Liberal conception of censorship because even though certain ideas and themes are repressed, they do not formally possess the coercive power of the State. Censorship, in Jansen's terms, is the repression of certain ideas and themes, but not solely through State institutions (Jansen, 2010, p.14). Censorship operates through the systematic deprivation of social and economic capital from individuals with the simultaneous amassing of such capital in the hands of a select few financiers.

5.2.2 Omnipresence of censorship

Going beyond the socioeconomic, political, and cultural forces that are a part of censorship, some authors, such as Pierre Bourdieu, Michael Holquist, and Judith Butler, argue that censorship is a necessary condition of all forms of discourse. Bourdieu (2009, pp.137–139), for example, argues that censorship operates on two levels: firstly on a manifest level, and secondly on a structural level. The manifest level of censorship disguises the "deeper, secondary" level of structural censorship (Burt, 1994a, xvi). The manifest level of censorship regulates the tension between prohibited and free discourse. This is analogous to the Liberal conception in that it is an explicit effort to repress certain communicative acts. The secondary, structural level of censorship goes much deeper and is, according to Bourdieu, unavoidable. This level of censorship determines what can and cannot enter into this tension between prohibited and free discourse. The discursive field, the structure and form of language, exists only through the tension between intelligible and unintelligible. Censorship makes communication possible by regulating the border between these two poles. With this secondary level of censorship in mind, Bourdieu (2009, p.138) argues that manifest forms of censorship can never be as "perfect" as when an individual has nothing to say

except what they are "objectively authorized to say," in other words, what the structural level of censorship allows to pass as intelligible.

Conforming to a clear pattern amongst authors of New Censorship Theory, Holquist (1994, p.16) and Butler (1998, pp.252–255) also recognise the manifest, explicit forms of censorship that underpin the Liberal conception. Both authors also argue that this form of censorship disguises a deeper level of censorship. For Holquist, manifest forms of censorship are "a layer of obviousness concealing the counterintuitive subtleties" of censorship on a structural level (1994, p.16). Butler embraces such counterintuitive subtleties by asserting that "[c]ensorship produces speech" (1998, p.248). Linguistic, discursive, and grammatical rules and procedures enable communication by demarcating and prohibiting speech that is unintelligible (Butler, 1998, p.153). From this perspective, discourse is *never* completely free. Which forms of speech are recognised as legitimate or intelligible are a result of a process of censorship. Every field of discourse demands and determines what can and cannot be said, and by extension, what can and cannot be thought. From this perspective, to be for or against censorship misses the point. As Holquist succinctly expresses, "Censorship *is*."

5.2.3 Repressive and productive

Another important element of New Censorship Theory is that it recognises the way that censorship is both prohibitive *and* productive. In this context, productive refers to the generative force of censorship, not necessarily the benefits of censorship (Butler, 1998, p.251; Žižek, 2000, p.11; Bunn, 2015, p.26). This being said, there are scholars that try to show the benefits of censorship, such as Nora Gilbert and Deborah Shuger. Gilbert (2012, p.145) celebrates the way that censorship can "improve" artworks by making their risqué material suggestive, rather than explicit. Shuger (1998, p.104), on the other hand, argues that words can be both directly and indirectly harmful, and so censorship can enable a level of civility by securing an individual's place within a community.

Avoiding the advocation of censorship, Helen Freshwater (2004, p.234) and Leo Strauss (1988, p.25) note how censorship produces new forms of discourse and styles of writing that are able to say the unsayable. This also produces new modes of reading that are able to detect messages hidden between the lines. An author looking to express an idea that has been prohibited by the authorities can do so through innovations in esoteric writing styles. This can also be seen in film. Gilbert (2012, pp.36–38) shows how Preston Sturges found ways to create intensely sexual scenes in *The Lady Eve* (1941) despite having to operate under the repressive Hays Code. Through the use of body language, double-entendres, vocal inflections, and other stylistic devices, Sturges managed to create a 'sex-scene' without any sex at all. Pushing this analysis further, Slavoj Žižek (2000, p.11) shows that the Hays Code was never simply repressive, but produced a codification of how certain themes are to be articulated. The Hays Code was not designed to *prevent* sex from being shown on screen, but instead regulated its proper articulation. From this perspective, it is not, as argued by Gilbert (2012, p.38), that filmmakers "outsmarted" the Hays Office by getting around the repressive nature of the Code, but that the Hays Code was *always* about producing sex-scenes without sex.

Kuhn argues that the productive power of censorship extends beyond the content of films to the construction of the limits of cinema's 'public sphere'. For example, groups like the National Council for Public Morals (NCPM) went to great lengths to influence the function of cinema (Kuhn, 1988, pp.37–48). At a time when cinema was established as a form of entertainment, the NCPM pushed to popularise its educational function by trying to include cinema in the domain of social purity. The 1916 anti-abortion film *Where Are My Children*, was promoted by the NCPM as a 'propaganda' film that stood separately from commercial films since it had moral and educational benefit. The BBFC eventually accepted such a distinction. However, the NCPM's success had its complications. Rather than changing the function of cinema, the NCPM helped to create a new "genre" of film (Kuhn, 1988, p.47). Films that acquired the status of propaganda were effectively

"outlawed" from the public sphere because the BBFC refused to certificate them for commercial screening. This also produced a new form of censorship that focussed on the *context* of a film, regardless of its content (Kuhn, 1988, p.45). The distinction between propaganda and commercial film reinforced the idea that cinema was a form of public entertainment. The border between cinema's public and private sphere was a product of the tensions between public health concerns, moral pressure groups, and assumptions about the influence that cinema has on public behaviour (Kuhn, 1988, p.127).

5.3 Swanning around in salt mines

A potential problem with New Censorship Theory that has been raised by many authors is the way that it risks overstretching the concept of censorship to such a degree that it becomes useless. As Richard Burt argues, by equating such a gargantuan set of practices, from arts councils refusing to finance a film, to governments banning a film, to enabling the possibility of discourse itself, "the term [censorship] is overwhelmed, even trivialized, its usefulness as a tool of cultural criticism called into question" (1994a, xiii). Daniel Biltereyst and Roel Vande Winkel (2013, p.2) describe such concepts of censorship as "quasi-claustrophobic" and "not so productive" in analysing the nuances and complexities of day-to-day censorship practices. Frank Schauer also takes issue with overstretching the concept of censorship. For Schauer (1998, p.149), the term 'censorship' implies a "relatively identifiable" subset of human activity. Therefore, arguing that it is present in all human activity does not make any sense. To illustrate how such a conception of censorship is unworkable, Schauer (1998, p.159) uses an example of a person sitting in silence at a public event. For the first half of the event, the person sitting in silence expresses politeness and respect for the speakers. This changes when one of the speakers says, "now let's bow our heads and pray." The person sitting in silence does not move a muscle, and yet with this declaration, they are no longer expressing politeness and respect. Instead, they are expressing ungodliness, or rebellion, or arrogance. In other words, they have been "forced to speak" (1998, p.159). The way

that they chose to express themselves was taken away by a third party who rendered the possibility of expressing politeness by sitting in silence impossible. Schauer argues that calling this dynamic 'censorship' is a category error. Language of all sorts is governed by rules, but to equate, or conflate, linguistic 'rules' with 'censorship' is to render the term 'censorship' meaningless.

Aside from potentially making the term censorship useless, New Censorship Theory has been criticised for equating all forms of censorship, or at least trivialising the more serious instances. Post (1998, p.4) argues that by oscillating between the minute detail of censorship to extremely broad abstractions, New Censorship Theory flattens out the distinctions between day-to-day censorship. By placing the rules that govern speech acts into the same category as State repression, New Censorship Theory struggles to *conceptually* distinguish between the tyrannical oppression of journalists in North Korea (Kim and Kim, 2017), and a parent telling their child not to swear. Some authors of New Censorship Theory do acknowledge this problem. Qualifying the "joy" that she finds in censorship, Gilbert recognises that there are differences between the most severe forms of censorship and those found in countries that have "established foundational levels of artistic and political freedom" (2012, p.4). For Bunn, such a simple acknowledgement of these differences is "a half-measure at best" (2015, p.40). It does not deal with the problem of overstretching the term 'censorship' to a point that it becomes useless. Terry Eagleton describes such ideas of censorship as "nothing but sophistry". For Eagleton (2005, p.176):

> this is rather like claiming that since swanning around the Savoy all day is quite as shaped by social convention as labouring in a salt mine, guests at the Savoy are no freer than miners.

Freshwater's arguments try to resist such characterisations by framing censorship as a continuum, with "brutal extremes of incarceration or murder at one end" and structural censorship at the other (2004, p.242). For Freshwater, placing examples of censorship on a continuum does not negate

their differences. The way to navigate this continuum is, according to Freshwater, to use the experiences of individuals. In short, if an individual claims that they are a victim of censorship, their claims should not be denied because it does not fit within an "inflexible" definition of censorship. Instead their experience should form part of the definition itself (Freshwater, 2004, p.241). In this way, examples of oppression that are external, coercive, and repressive can be recognised for their severity without ignoring the "shadowy" workings of structural censorship. Unfortunately, this solution quickly finds itself creating the same problems it sought to solve. If censorship is defined by the experiences of individuals who *claim* to be the victims of censorship, then we find ourselves again in the dubious position of equating forms of censorship. If US Senator Mike Lee, one of the most powerful and influential people in the world, claims that he is a victim of censorship because his statements are being "fact-checked" (O'Connell, 2020), or if Tucker Carlson, the host of America's most watched cable news show, claims that he is a victim of censorship because competing news anchors criticise his opinion (Carlson, 2021), Freshwater's model of censorship compels us to take them at their word.

Finally, New Censorship Theory recognises that censorship is productive as well as repressive, but must be cautious not to present each side as equally significant. There is a risk that such an approach downplays the severity of the harshest forms of censorship. Filmmakers operating under tyrannical regimes are tortured, imprisoned, and exiled for their work. In 2011, while awaiting trial in Iran for "making a film without permission" (Liffey, 2010), Jafar Panahi made another film by shooting all the footage on a camera phone, saving it onto a flash drive, and smuggling it out of the country by hiding the flash drive in a cake (Aftab, 2020). While it might be true that Panahi found new and cunning ways to resist the censorship of the Iranian State, describing his actions as being part of the productive power of censorship risks downplaying the severity of his oppression. To use a metaphor that is as vulgar as Eagleton's, one must avoid claiming that breaking a person's legs produces new forms of walking.

Another criticism of New Censorship Theory's focus on the productive power of censorship is that it overlooks the way that censored texts continue to reproduce the status quo. Gilbert (2012, p.147) details Oscar Wilde's tragic encounters with the highly censorious culture of Victorian Britain. Wilde was forced to rewrite texts that failed to hide their homosexual themes, and even then, many libraries refused to stock his "dirty novels." Wilde was also sentenced to three years hard labour for "gross indecency." In Gilbert's (2012, p.147) words, Wilde was "destroyed" by the extreme censorship that he suffered. Despite celebrating the "joy" of censorship, Gilbert (2012, p.9) also reminds us that the styles of esoteric writing that Wilde developed in order to write about homosexuality in a vehemently homophobic culture still kept the unsayable unsaid. While readers trained to read between the lines have successfully deciphered Wilde's hidden messages, on the surface his works remain a "blindingly white, compulsorily heterosexual place." As Jansen notes, "esoteric communication" can only be "decoded by an intellectual or conspiratorial vanguard," and if the "cat-and-mouse game" between censor and author "goes on too long, the cat usually gets the mouse" (1991, p.194). And, as previously mentioned, Žižek (2000, p.10) has shown that censorship is rarely ever simply about repression. The success of censorship goes beyond removing content, and into the continual codification of the proper way to articulate certain themes. In this context, Kuhn's (1988, p.128) argument that censorship is "simultaneously productive and prohibitive" needs to be kept at arm's length from her argument that censorship produces resistances. The boundary between what can and cannot be said *is* in constant flux, but the productive power of censorship is not always a form of resistance. The dual power of censorship can also redouble its oppressive force by controlling the proper way to say the unsayable.

5.4 'Censorship', censorship, and "censorship"

In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein argued that "philosophical problems arise when language *goes on holiday*" (2009, p.23). By this he meant that in order to understand a language, one must analyse how it is used. By removing language from the context in which it is used, it is the

philosopher who creates the mystery that they seek to unravel. Taxidermists do not take their tools to the beach, and they certainly do not stuff any animals there. It would be futile to try to understand what a taxidermist is by observing them on holiday. In the same way, words do not carry their meaning with them regardless of context. It is only by analysing language at work that one can grasp the meaning of words. With this in mind, New Censorship Theory sometimes finds itself taking 'censorship' on holiday. It is important to find a way to put 'censorship' back to work without falling back into narrow and outdated definitions and avoiding overinflated and abstract definitions.

5.4.1 A family of censors

Beate Müller tries to avoid "quibbling about terminological and typological issues pertaining to various forms of discourse control and their censorial nature" (2004, p.14). A better way of approaching the censorship debate is, according to Müller, to identify the "essential elements of censorship," distinguish between the characteristics at its "core and periphery," and to "map censorial actions and reactions systematically" (2004, p.15). This line of thought leads Müller to summarise the tension that frustrates contemporary approaches to understanding censorship in the following way:

> while censorship always implies the control and regulation of discourses, the reverse is not true because not all such discourse regulation is equivalent to censorship (Müller, 2004, p.12).

The unfolding of this sentence reveals, firstly, an important antagonism in the censorship debate, and secondly, that Müller repeats this antagonism in her own work. The sentence begins by talking about language, the way that the word 'censorship' "implies" a set of practices. However, the sentence ends by talking about "discourse regulation," a set of practices, and their relationship to the word 'censorship'. In other words, at the beginning of the sentence Müller is talking about

language, at the end of the sentence she is talking about practice. This is not necessarily an issue, as I will show later in this section, but in Müller's work it does present some problems. The problems arise partly due to Müller's aversion to the "quibbling" that is going on within the censorship debate, and it is partly due to her reading of Wittgenstein. Müller uses Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblances to do two things. The first is to decipher the "essential" elements of both the word 'censorship' and the practice of censorship. The second thing is to provide an account of how the word 'censorship' and the practice of censorship can change over time (Müller, 2004, p.15). As will be recalled from my reading of family resemblances given in chapter 2, Wittgenstein is explicitly against the idea of there being any "essential" or "core" elements to any language game, and he had little to say about how language changes over time. The issue with Müller's argument, then, is that she uses Wittgenstein's metaphors to make an anti-Wittgensteinian argument. This being said, the latter half of Müller's text offers an interesting framework to analyse censorship that avoids relying on an abstract, monolithic, and outdated notion of censorship, and avoids over-inflating it to an equally abstract and unworkable level. Rather than writing-off Müller's text, I will use her later theoretical framework alongside my own reading of Wittgenstein in this chapter's examination of censorship.

5.4.1.1 Rules of a language game

Where Müller makes an essentialist claim about what censorship *really* is, I will be making a *non-essentialist* claim about what censorship *really* is. To do this I will return to Wittgenstein's notion of language games, in particular his thinking on the rules of language games. What does it mean to follow a rule? What does following a rule *look* like? Do rules guide activity, or is the relationship between rules and activity more complicated? Wittgenstein has a lot to say about rules and rule following, and there have been libraries of texts devoted to this topic. In this section I want to focus only on two closely related elements of Wittgenstein's thinking on rules. The first is that the rules of any language game are grounded by concrete social activity, and the second is that the correct interpretation of a rule is itself grounded by a set of rules and assumptions.

In Abbott and Costello's *In the Navy* (1941), Pomeroy Watson has just finished baking twenty-eight donuts for the officers on the ship. He tells his friend Smokey Adams that he cannot spare a single donut because he only just has enough to give the seven officers thirteen donuts each. A bemused Smokey tries to correct Pomeroy, telling him that twenty-eight divided by seven is four. To this Pomeroy appears equally bemused and mutters under his breath that Smokey must have gone to a cheap school if he thinks that twenty-eight divided by seven is four. To settle the dispute, the pair go to a chalk board so that Pomeroy can show Smokey that twenty-eight divided by seven is thirteen. Pomeroy writes the following equation:

$$7/28 =$$

From here he walks Smokey through his calculation. Working from left to right, he first tries to divide seven by two. Both he and Smokey agree that "seven will not go into two no matter how much you try." Pomeroy leaves the two for a later stage of the calculation:

$$7/\cancel{2}8 =$$

Continuing to work from left to right he shows that seven goes into eight once, and writes a number one as part of his answer:

$$7/\cancel{2}8 = 1$$

Pomeroy claims that he must now "carry the seven," which prompts him to write a number seven below the number eight:

$$7/\cancel{2}8 = 1$$
$$7$$

Then Pomeroy shows, again, that seven "goes into eight" once, and so writes a number one below the number seven:

$$7/\cancel{2}8 = 1$$
$$7$$
$$1$$

At this point, there is still the question of the number two that was put to one side. Pomeroy brings the two back into the picture by placing it next to the number one at the bottom of the equation:

$$7/\cancel{2}8 = 1$$
$$7$$
$$21$$

Finally, he shows that seven goes into twenty-one three times, and puts a number three as part of his answer:

$$7/\cancel{2}8 = 13$$
$$7$$
$$21$$

The result of all this is that the answer to the equation 7/28 is shown to be 13. Seven officers, twenty-eight donuts, thirteen donuts per officer.

Of course, Smokey can tell that this way of calculating is absurd at best. He tells Pomeroy to do the equation again but backwards. That is, he tells Pomeroy to multiply thirteen by seven to see if the answer is twenty-eight. Pomeroy is happy to oblige. He writes the following equation:

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ \underline{7} \end{array}$$

First, he multiplies seven by three:

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ \underline{7} \\ 21 \end{array}$$

And then he multiplies seven by one:

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ \underline{7} \\ 21 \\ 7 \end{array}$$

Finally, he adds together the twenty-one and the seven to get a total of twenty-eight:

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ \underline{7} \\ 21 \\ \underline{7} \\ 28 \end{array}$$

A frustrated Smokey gets Pomeroy to show him one last calculation. This time Pomeroy must write down the number thirteen seven times and let Smokey add them all together. Smokey begins adding together the threes: "three, six, nine, twelve, fifteen, seventeen, twenty-one." At this point, Pomeroy takes over and finishes the equation by adding together the ones, starting from Smokey's current total of twenty-one: "twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight." By using division, multiplication, and addition, Pomeroy shows that twenty-eight donuts will provide seven officers with thirteen donuts each.

How can Smokey show Pomeroy that he is wrong? Smokey could say that Pomeroy did not follow the proper procedure for multiplication, and then show him that he wrongly multiplied seven by one when he should have multiplied seven by ten:

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ \underline{7} \\ 21 \\ \underline{70} \\ 91 \end{array}$$

But Pomeroy could respond that there is no number ten, that it can be seen as plain as day that the number thirteen is made up of a number one and a number three. What justification does Smokey have to claim that the number one next to the number three should be treated as the number ten? Perhaps he could explain to Pomeroy that thirteen is the total of adding together ten and three, and since he has already used the three in his calculation, he must now focus on the ten. But Pomeroy might respond that thirteen is also the total of adding together nine and four, and

just like the number ten, neither of those numbers are anywhere to be seen in the calculation! There is only the number one and the number three, each of which he will deal with individually. Where could Smokey go from here? As an individual, this might be as far as he can go (Kripke, 2000, p.88). As discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, there are no Platonic and eternal truths about the proper way to treat the number one/number ten that Smokey can use to give his method irrefutable legitimacy. Smokey could offer a list of examples of different calculations in the hope to *show* Pomeroy the correct way of doing things, but eventually his reasons will give out, and then his calculations will show themselves to be acts without reasons (Wittgenstein, 2009, §211). Smokey will "reach a level where [he acts] without any reason in terms of which [he] can justify [his] action" (Kripke, 2000, p.87). In other words, Smokey will have to admit that his way of calculating is correct because that's just the way it is!

Another approach that Smokey could take is to concede that his way of calculating is the one that is found in the community to which he belongs. To put this another way, the rules that Smokey lives by are not simply his own, and they do not exist in a metaphysical state, but are instead part of a particular form of life. The rules of any language game are learned and taught through activity, through concrete interactions between people. How, for example, did Smokey learn the proper way to calculate 13x7? It was *shown* to him by his teacher. Smokey's teacher did not tap into the metaphysical realm of eternal truths and implant the truth of 13x7 directly into Smokey's mind. Rather, Smokey's teacher *wrote* the equation on a chalkboard, *told* the class how to do the proper calculation, *used* other equations as examples of what is meant by 'multiplication', and so on. And in order to prove that he actually understood how to calculate 13x7, his teacher will have asked Smokey for a demonstration, or more likely for several demonstrations. Whether or not Smokey 'understood' the proper way to calculate 13x7 will have depended upon whether the answers that he wrote down correspond to the answer that the teacher expected to see. "Following a rule is analogous to obeying an order. One is trained to do so" (Wittgenstein, 2009,

§206). Smokey will have been admitted "into the community" as an individual who understands basic multiplication only if, "in enough concrete cases," his actions corresponded to the expectations of this community (Kripke, 2000, p.96). The same is true for Smokey's classmates, and the same is true for his teacher when they learned how to calculate 13x7. Smokey, his classmates, his teacher, and his teacher's teacher "belong to a community which is bound together by [mathematics] and education" (Wittgenstein, 2008, §298). The 'correct' answer to 13x7 is not governed by Platonic rules that individuals learn to decipher from examples. Instead, what governs the correctness of any given answer is the concrete social activity of the community to which an individual belongs. Both Pomeroy's and Smokey's answers say less about their grasp of mathematics *as such*, and more about the particular forms of life that give truth to the language games that they are playing.

Before returning to censorship, the example of rule following should be looked at from another angle. To put this discussion of rule following into the language of games, let us consider Pomeroy and Smokey playing a game of chess. They have played together for a number of years without squabbling over the rules. However, one day Smokey notices that Pomeroy flicks his wrist in a particular way whenever he moves the knight. When asked what he is doing, Pomeroy explains that the flicking of his wrist helps him to remember the way that the knight moves. Using his finger, he shows Smokey the route that he moves the knight, as shown in figure 5.3:
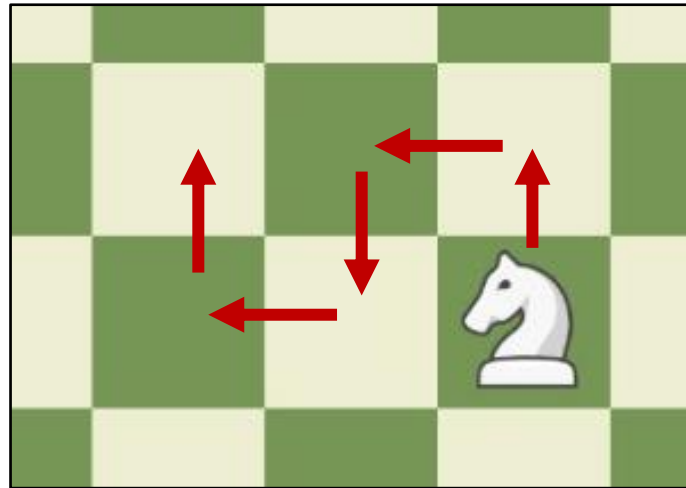
Figure 5.3: A valid move by a knight?

Smokey tells Pomeroy that he cannot move the knight in such a way because a knight moves in an 'L-shape'. That is to say, the knight can move two squares in any direction vertically followed by one square horizontally, or two squares in any direction horizontally followed by one square vertically. He uses his fingers to show an example of a valid move, as seen in figure 5.4:
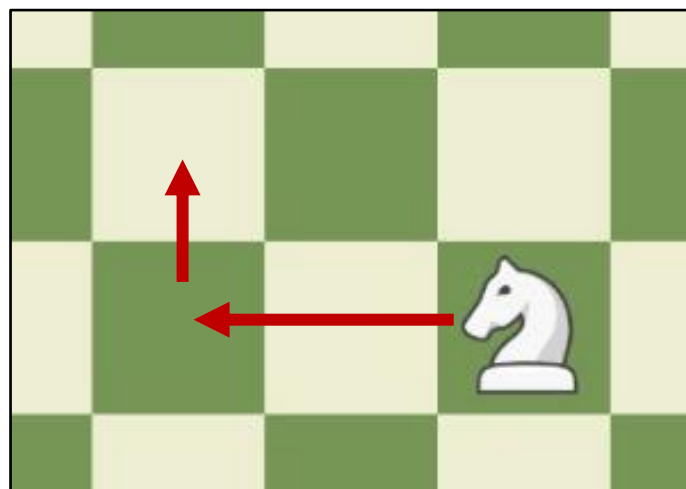
Figure 5.4: A valid move by a knight

Pomeroy could claim that Smokey was not following the rules either. He points out that Smokey has never moved a knight piece in an 'L-shape', but instead moves the night along a diagonal line, as shown in figure 5.5:
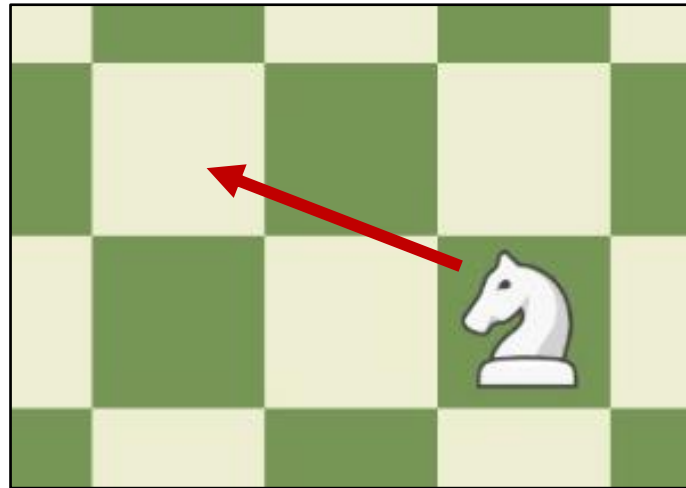
Figure 5.5: The knight moves diagonally

The pair have been playing chess for years without any trouble. In figures 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5, the knight moves from e3 to c4. If Pomeroy had not given himself away with the flick of his wrists, how would Smokey know that he was not 'following the rules'?

One way out of this predicament is to fashion a rule that avoids the specific problems that arise from the 'L-shape' version. Eric Schiller's *Rules of Chess* (1975) does a good job in this regard. According to rule 3.3: "The knight moves to one of the squares nearest to that on which it stands but not on the same rank, file or diagonal" (Schiller, 1975, p.18). What is meant by "rank" and "file" and "diagonal" is clarified in rule 2.4, which states:

> The eight vertical columns of squares are referred to as *files*. The eight horizontal rows of squares are referred to as *ranks*. A straight line of squares of the same color, touching corner to corner, is referred to as a *diagonal* (Schiller, 1975, p.17).

Even though this rule exists, and seems to resolve the issue between Smokey and Pomeroy (for now), the first interesting thing to note is that neither player had any idea that this rule existed until they checked Schiller's book. So the question is, has either player ever played a 'proper' game of chess before they learned of this rule? The second thing to note is that the interpretation of the rule is not self-evident. Suppose that each player formally agrees to follow the rule as found in

Schiller's book. Does the rule make clear *how* to interpret phrases such as 'same colour', or 'touching corner to corner'? Rule 4.1 of Shiller's book states that "each move must be made with one hand only" (Schiller, 1975, p.19). Does this mean that the two players must pick one of their four hands and only use *this* hand for all the moves, regardless of whose turn it is? Does this rule mean that an individual who does not have hands cannot play chess? Or, if such individuals do play a game that *looks like* chess, they are not actually playing chess because they cannot satisfy rule 4.1? In other words, there are no rules in chess that instruct the players on how to follow the rules of chess. The way that rules are followed is governed by a set of other rules, and by a set of assumptions. How the knight piece moves is explained in rule 3.3. The terminology of this rule is defined in rule 2.4. However, as previously mentioned, "the reasons will soon give out" (Wittgenstein, 2009, §211). Eventually there is a point at which it is taken for granted what is meant by phrases such as 'same colour' and 'touching corner to corner'. When Smokey and Pomeroy agree to follow Shiller's rule, they also implicitly agree on the interpretation of 'same colour' and 'touching corner to corner', and so on. This agreement is part of a shared language game that is outside of, and distinct from the rules of chess, but governs the way that the rules of chess are to be interpreted.

There are two closely related points to take from this brief overview. Firstly, every language game, every use of a particular word, can only find legitimacy through the community to which it belongs. This does not mean that language is random or chaotic or without substance. It means that concrete human activity sustains the meaning of words, sustains the proper use of language. A person is said to understand a particular word if their particular responses "agree with those of the community in enough cases" (Kripke, 2000, p.92). The second thing to note is that the correct way to interpret the rules of a language game is itself governed through a community, through concrete social activity. It is taken for granted, for example, that rule 4.1 of Shiller's rule book

refers to a single hand of the player whose turn it is. Schiller's rule book does not provide a set of rules on how to follow his rules.

5.4.1.2 Returning to censorship

The way that the word 'censorship' is used is multifarious. Take for example Mike Lee's aforementioned claim that fact-checking a statement is a form of censorship. I cannot peer into Mike Lee's mind to see what he 'really means' when he uses the word 'censorship', but I can examine the form of life through which this usage is given validity (Kripke, 2000, pp.91–92). As a Senator for Utah, one of the communities to which he belongs is the Republican Party in the US. How is the word 'censorship' used by the Republican Party? Republican senators Marco Rubio, Mike Lee, Mike Braun, and Josh Hawley used the word 'censorship' to describe Amazon's decision not to sell the book *When Harry Became Sally* (Marcus, 2021). When the US Department of Justice received a request to support teachers being harassed and abused by parents, Republican lawmakers, such as Charles E. Grassley, Lindsey O. Graham, John Cornyn, and Mike Lee, claimed that the government's involvement in the matter would infringe upon the parents' right to free expression, which is tantamount to censorship (Aerts, 2021). Republicans such as Marco Rubio, Jim Jordan, Brian Mast, and Matt Gaetz, use the term 'censorship' to describe Twitter removing Tweets that violate their terms of service (Rieger, 2021). However, social media websites created by Republicans, such as Donald Trump's 'TRUTH Social', do not use the word 'censorship' to describe their own policy to remove speech that is seen to "disparage, tarnish, or otherwise harm, in our opinion, us and/or the Site" (Reed, 2021). When the State intervenes to repress texts on race, sexuality, gender, and so on, Republicans tend to refrain from using the word 'censorship'. Republican lawmakers have banned books from schools in Texas, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and Wyoming (Gabbatt, 2022; Aldrich, 2022). In 2021, Republicans introduced 81 anti-protest bills that seek to limit the ability of individuals to express their political beliefs (Epstein and Mazzei, 2021; Cooper, 2021). These activities are described by Republicans as a form of 'protection'. Senator Mike Lee has introduced his own bill that seeks to "protect" schools from

Critical Race Theory (Lee, 2021). These individuals "belong to a community which is bound together" by a particular set of concrete social activities (Kripke, 2000, pp.91–92; Wittgenstein, 2008, §298). The way that the word 'censorship' is being used, the relationship of this use to the use of other words, such as 'protection', and the form of life, the concrete social activity, through which the word 'censorship' is used shows us the meaning. 'Censorship', in this linguistic and social context, is used to do more than simply denote any example of communication being repressed by a third party. The use of the word 'censorship' is part of a political strategy, it is used to facilitate the implementation of laws that reduce civil liberties, it is used to amplify the opinions of individuals who promote the ideals of the Republican party, and so on.

These uses are not to be found in the texts of New Censorship Theory. One distinct use of the word 'censorship' in New Censorship Theory is an explicit effort to expand the definition of 'censorship'. Richard Burt makes clear that his text attempts to "reconceptualize censorship" (1994b, p.18). Kuhn uses the word 'censorship' in her text as part of her attempt to "transform" what 'censorship' means. For Kuhn, it is through this transformation that "censorship ceases to be a reified and predefined object, becoming instead something which emerges from the interactions of certain processes and practises" (1988, p.6). Jansen uses the term 'censorship' to develop "a self-conscious and self-critical awareness of" the fact that "censorship is an enduring feature of all human communities" (1991, pp.4–5). The title of Freshwater's essay is 'Towards a Redefinition of Censorship' (2004). And, of course, Müller (2004, p.15) uses the word censorship as part of a process of pinning down the "essential" characteristics of censorship. The claim that the word 'censorship' is being used to reconceptualise, clarify, pin-down, and redefine the word 'censorship' might seem strange. However, to reuse the tool analogy, a carpenter can use their old pine-handled saw to make a new oak handle for their old pine-handled saw. It is impossible for a carpenter to do this using *only* the pine-handled saw. The saw being modified is part of a set of tools used in the modification of the saw. So too with the use of 'censorship' in New Censorship

Theory. There are some things to note about this particular use of the word 'censorship'. Firstly, this is one of many interrelated and simultaneous uses; secondly, it is distinct, perhaps even unique, to New Censorship Theory; and thirdly, this distinctness in no way implies that this is the essential, defining feature of the definition of 'censorship' as found in New Censorship Theory. Rather than expressing anything "essential," it instead points towards the form of life through which this particular use of the word 'censorship' finds legitimacy. Burt, Kuhn, Jansen, Müller, Freshwater, and others are academics paid to work on projects in Media and Film studies. The world of academia is one in which the concrete social activity is shaped around producing research, analysing social and cultural phenomena, and sharing ideas at academic conferences. One example of many is the text *Censorship and Silencing* (Post, 1998). This text was the result of a:

> collaboration between the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS), the Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, and the Humanities Research Institute of the University of California (UCHRI) (Post, 1998, ix).

This collaboration included months of conferences involving dozens of academics, including Judith Butler, Wendy Brown, Richard Burt, Stanley Fish, and Nancy Fraser (Post, 1998, pp.328–332). This form of life grants legitimacy to the use of the word 'censorship' as an explicit means of redefining the word 'censorship'.

With regards to film censorship, the word 'censorship' is not used as a way of affirming, in the words of Judith Butler, that "censorship precedes the text" (1998, p.248). Neither can one find examples of filmmakers, critics, or audiences agreeing with Michael Holquist that to be "for or against censorship as such is to assume a freedom no one has. Censorship *is*. One can only discriminate among its more and less repressive effects" (1994, p.16). Or that "[c]ensorship is a necessary moment in all perception (to see a tree, I must cut out of my purview the rest of the

forest.)" (Holquist, 1994, p.24). Equally, one cannot find any examples of filmmakers using the word 'censorship' as a way of pushing through laws that erode civil liberties, nor as a way of redefining the word 'censorship'. This is not to say that such uses are superfluous, and this is not an attempt to discover the "essential" characteristics of 'censorship'. Rather, highlighting the absence of certain uses of the word 'censorship' amongst filmmakers it is to *avoid* making any essentialist claims. As discussed in chapter 2, 'censorship' reveals itself to be a concept with "blurred edges" (Wittgenstein, 2009, §71). Or, more specifically, 'censorship' shows itself to be a constellatory concept made up of myriad linguistic and social elements, tied together in specific ways through particular forms of life.

To return to the Pomeroy and Smokey examples, justifications for using 'censorship' in a particular way eventually give out. Justification can only come by way of reference to particular forms of life. In the words of Nigel Pleasants (1999, p.64):

> Wittgenstein does not use the notion of practice as a superior kind of theoretical explanation, or indeed as any kind of explanation at all, but, rather, as a means to bring explanation to an end.

The superstition that there must be a steady foundation anchoring the proper meaning of 'censorship' "is produced by grammatical illusions" (Wittgenstein, 2009, §110). The second thing to note is that even if a new definition was to be created, the acceptance and interpretation of this definition is subject to a set of rules that are distinct from the definition itself. Like with Pomeroy and Smokey implicitly agreeing on how to interpret the phrase 'same colour', the acceptance of a new definition of the word 'censorship' requires an agreement on a different set of rules, and a different form of life.

Even though I reject Müller's claim to know the "essential" and "core" characteristics of censorship, her operational definition of 'censorship' provides a useful summary of the way that

the word 'censorship' is used in ordinary language when talking about film. The summary is very similar to the Liberal Conception of censorship: "an authoritarian control over what reaches the public sphere by someone other than the sender and the intended receiver of a message" (Müller, 2004, p.12). This is, of course, only a rough summary because, as previously discussed, the words that Müller uses do not sit in a petrified state in order to provide stable footing. One can probe into how words such as 'authoritarian', 'message', and 'public' are used within different forms of life. And like with the way that the interpretation of rules is governed by another set of rules, the rough sketch provided by Müller does not guarantee and regulate its own interpretation. However, it should be clear from the above discussion that the use of this rough sketch in this thesis is not an implicit claim that this is the proper definition of 'censorship'.

5.4.2 Classical model of communication

Müller uses her operational definition of censorship within what she calls the "classical model of communication." This model is made up of six elements and is used by Müller (2004, p.15) to analyse the relationships and dependencies within and between the individual components of censorship. The six elements are as follows: "the sender of a message, its receiver, the message itself, the code employed, the channel (or medium), and the context."

Censorship against the sender of a message includes:

> all actions taken to threaten, influence, or punish an author (...), whether they be ideologically motivated negotiations with an author about a text, the exertion of psychological pressure, the levying of fines, or the imprisonment, exiling, or even assassination of an unruly author (Müller, 2004, p.16).

Such actions are not only intended to prevent specific authors from sending their message, but also to deter others. The most common example of this form of censorship in film is to be found with documentary filmmakers. Examples of this include the arrests of filmmakers such as Jafar

Panahi (Beaumont-Thomas, 2015; Aftab, 2020); Trevor Birney and Barry McCaffrey (Carroll and correspondent, 2018); and Lindsey Grayzel and Carl Davis (Anderson, 2016). However, the authoritarian control over what reaches the public sphere by someone other than the sender of a message does include those who possess the capital required to make films. For example, Hollywood and British studios have a long history of refusing to hire black directors, screenwriters, and actors. This was more than a case of racist employers not wanting to work alongside black people. It was also the suppression of black voices and ideas from the public sphere (Erigha, 2019; Obeng, 2021).

Censorship directed against the receiver of a message is relatively rare since the intermediary steps (pre-publications, post-publication, distribution, etc.) are easier to control. However, there are examples of authoritarian controls over the intended receivers of a message. In the UK, for example, it is a criminal offence to *possess* extreme pornography. Section 63(7) of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 defines extreme pornography as any media that portrays "in an explicit and realistic way":

(a) an act which threatens a person's life,

(b) an act which results, or is likely to result, in serious injury to a person's anus, breasts or genitals,

(c) an act which involves sexual interference with a human corpse, or

(d) a person performing an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive) (Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, p.50).

Possession of extreme pornography in the UK can lead to "imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or a fine or both" (Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, p.53). While such examples are rare, it is worth noting that censorship aimed towards the receiver of a message is possible. There are some who argue that age ratings on films are an example of this form of censorship. Writing about censorship and children, Marjorie Heins (2007, p.256) argues that denying access to films about taboo topics such as sex, drugs, and violence actually harms children. For Heins, these themes reflect the harsh realities of life. Depriving children from experiencing the embarrassing, upsetting, and scary emotions the come with watching such films prevents them learning how to confront and work through the messiness of life. David Buckingham (2001, p.72) also argues in favour of allowing children to choose whatever films they like, even if those films are severely frightening or upsetting. Like Heins, Buckingham sees the experiences of watching such films as important in childhood development. While age ratings in the UK are only legally recognised for distributors and exhibitors, the age rating system contributes to a culture in which individuals, in this case children, are prevented from viewing films that other individuals enjoy access to.

Censorship directed towards the message being sent can occur in either pre-publication or post-publication. Pre-publication censorship "means that the text is changed before it obtains a licence to go to print," whereas post-publication censorship "comprises all measures aimed at preventing an already printed text from being (further) disseminated" (Müller, 2004, pp.15–16). An example of pre-publication censorship was used by the Committee of Cinema Affairs (CCA), a board of censors created by the USSR. One of the main roles of the CCA was to monitor and to control the content of scripts to make sure that every film aligned with the ideas of the Soviet Government (Hunnings, 1967, pp.370–371). The form of censorship found at the BBFC is an example of post-publication censorship. If a film being assessed by the BBFC breaches UK law, or if "a central concept of the work is unacceptable," they will prohibit the film's exhibition and distribution in the UK until the offending material has been removed. For example, in 2020 the

BBFC again reviewed *I Spit on Your Grave* (1978) and concluded that "the film's scenes of sexual violence (...) remain in breach of BBFC Guidelines" and so needed to be removed from the film before being distributed in the UK (BBFC, 2021, p.36).

Censorship towards the code employed within a particular text means that it is the way that a message is constructed, rather than the content of the message, that is scrutinised. Müller uses the example of the cultural administrators of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) taking issue with West-European, modernist, and avantgarde techniques. The target of the censors was not necessarily aimed towards any particular theme, but towards "aesthetic devices which, in the eyes of the cultural administrators, seemed to be irreconcilable with the dogma of socialist realism" (2004, p.17). The "cultural administrators" of the GDR would not only censor a piece of art to remove content that explicitly violated their codes, but they would also censor any piece of art made using particular techniques, such as those associated with "West-European, modernist, and avantgarde" art movements. This can also be seen with the aforementioned Section 63(7) of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. The law does not prohibit any depiction of rape, necrophilia, bestiality, and so on. It only targets films that portray these acts "in an explicit and realistic way" (Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, p.50).

The relationship between censorship and the medium of the message is also an important element to consider. Muller (2004, p.18) discusses the censorship of poetry, novels, and films to show the different ways in which censorship operates across these mediums. However, since my thesis is focussing only on film censorship, suffice to say here that there are elements of censorship that are unique to film. One example is the censorship of films that depict the actual breaking of certain laws. For example, and as will be discussed in chapter 6, the *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937* forbids the exhibition of films that contain scenes in which an animal has been cruelly mistreated. This means, in short, that if filmmakers harm an animal during the making of their film, footage of this cruelty must be removed before the film can be given access to the UK market.

The tension between simulated and 'actual' harm is not to be found in other mediums, such as novels and poetry. There are, of course, plenty of elements of censorship that are found across mediums, such as moral panics, the protection of children, offending individual sensibilities, and so on.

Finally, "censorial actions, whether they concentrate on a writer, his or her text, its code, its recipient, or its medium, need to be seen in their political and historical context" (Müller, 2004, p.18). To add to Müller's contextual considerations, we should consider social and cultural factors that surround censorship. With regards to film, the context of censorship might relate to the technologies of the time. For example, when the BBFC investigates animal cruelty in film, the technology available at the time of filming plays a major role in their decision making. If they are not convinced that the animal cruelty in a film could have been simulated with the technology available to the filmmakers, the BBFC will contact the distributors of the film and ask for proof of how the scene was made before making their decision to censor the scene in question. Recently the BBFC (2005a, p.79) have been so convinced by scenes of animal cruelty created by CGI that they opened an investigation into the treatment of animals during a film's production. Beyond technological context, film censorship is also informed by legislative changes. For example, in 2018 Craig Lapper from the BBFC explained that an infamous scene from *Oldboy* (2003) in which an octopus is eaten alive does not qualify as animal cruelty because "invertebrates, such as octopuses, are not protected by animal welfare laws in the UK (Lapper, 2018). Because of this, the BBFC had no grounds to interfere with the scene. However, in November 2021, lobsters, octopuses and crabs were formally recognised as sentient beings in UK law (Benyon and Goldsmith, 2021). This change will affect future censorship decisions with regards to animal cruelty. Legislative changes also point towards the strictness of the BBFC's interpretation of the law, and how this strictness has changed overtime. One example of this is *Cannibal Holocaust* (1980). When first reviewing the film in 2001, the BBFC demanded several lengthy cuts to remove the sight of animal cruelty. However, in 2011

they reviewed the film again and concluded that "the decision to cut these scenes in 2001 was primarily the result of the disgusting nature of the sequences, (...) rather than the result of a strict application of policy" (BBFC, 2020a). According to the BBFC, and according to the laws that they use to guide their decisions, some of the animals killed in *Cannibal Holocaust* died "swiftly" and therefore did not suffer.

In short, the operative definition of censorship can best be used to analyse censorship when combined with what Müller calls the classical model of communication. This model examines censorship in several different areas of the communication process. However, it should be made clear that neither the operative definition nor the classical model of communication provide absolute certainty with regards to analysing censorship. As previously mentioned, words such as 'authoritarian', 'message', and 'public' do not sit in a petrified state in order to provide stable footing. Equally, and especially with film, who counts as the 'author' is far from given. For example, perhaps the completion bond company who demanded last minute changes to *Blade Runner* should be considered as authors? The classical model of communication does not provide an exact way to decide whether or not producers, screenwriters, casting managers, cinematographers, editors, and film studio CEOs count as 'authors'. This being said, if one demands an exact means of determining who does and who does not count as an 'author' of a film, "then you still owe me a definition of exactness" (Wittgenstein, 2009, §69).

5.5 The censorship of animal violence in British cinema

As previously mentioned, the *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937* forbids the exhibition of films that contain scenes in which an animal has been cruelly mistreated. Since their inception, the BBFC have been explicit about their position against animal cruelty, but it was only with the passing of the *1937 Act* that this position gained legal backing. The BBFC frequently and openly use the *1937 Act* as justification for making certain cuts to films. This has caused a lot of anger amongst filmmakers. Alejandro Iñárritu complained that scenes showing a human being

decapitated receive less outcry than scenes showing comparatively mild violence against animals (Burt, 2002a, p.162). In a similar vein, Emir Kusturica expressed his contempt towards the BBFC for the concerns they raised regarding the treatment of a pigeon during the making of his film *Life is a Miracle* (2004). In Kusturica's opinion, the British "killed millions of Indians and Africans, and yet [they] go nuts about the circumstances of the death of a single Serbian pigeon." The sequence in question begins with a closeup shot of a black and white cat. They are looking upwards at something just beyond the frame. The next shot is of a pigeon sitting on a roof, letting the audience know what the cat was looking at. The pigeon is sat still with their eyes closed. Just before the cut, the pigeon flaps their wings and falls forwards towards the camera. The next shot is a long shot of the building upon which the pigeon was sat. We see the pigeon falling to the ground, and when they land, a cat sitting on a nearby monument leaps towards the fallen bird. The next shot is taken from inside a nearby house, as signified by the visible window frames. Through the glass we can see the cat mauling the pigeon. The pigeon appears to be alive, flapping their wings and struggling for their life. This sequence can be seen in figure 5.6:

Figure 5.6: *Life is a Miracle* **(2005)**

When the BBFC threatened to remove this sequence, Kusturica threatened to cancel the UK

release of the film entirely. He called the censor who contacted him a "jerk" and asked if he was

"brought up by pigeons or something" (Kusturica, 2005). The BBFC explained to Kusturica that

the decision to remove the sequence was informed by the *1937 Act,* and was, effectively, out of

their hands. In order for the sequence to remain in the film for the UK release, the BBFC needed

evidence that the pigeon was not 'actually' harmed by the filmmakers (Kermode, 2010, p.263). In

the BBFC's 2005 annual report, they describe the incident as follows:

> After some consultation between the BBFC and the company, detailed assurances
>
> were provided as to how the action was performed, using a combination of live
>
> and stuffed animals, and special effects, ensuring that the scene did not breach the
>
> legislation (BBFC, 2005a, p.79).

Film critic Mark Kermode is unconvinced by the evidence that Kusturica provided to the BBFC

(2010, pp.263–264). According to Kermode, Kusturica claimed that the pigeon was already dead

and that the wings were flapping because he fastened them to a set of strings and moved them like

a marionette. Because the BBFC could not prove otherwise, *Life is a Miracle* was passed uncut for UK release.

This quarrel over a sequence that last for around two-seconds encompasses many of the issues that surround the censorship of animal violence in British cinema. One issue regards whether or not the legislation at the centre of the quarrel should be understood as censorship at all. Despite being vehemently against all forms of censorship, and despite being an outspoken critic of the BBFC, Kermode fully supports any decision to make cuts to a film if they infringe upon the *1937 Act*. This is because, for Kermode, the *1937 Act* is *not* an example of censorship since it does not regulate freedom of expression. Instead, the law regulates the behaviour of filmmakers on set (Kermode, 2005). Another issue regards the tension between 'real' and 'simulated' animal cruelty. Whether or not the BBFC received sufficient proof regarding the treatment of the pigeon during filming, the images that audiences see when they watch *Life is a Miracle* do not change. Unlike the aforementioned scenes in *I Spit on Your Grave* that were censored because of their content, the sequence from *Life is a Miracle* was assessed according to the events that happened during filming. Related to this, another issue relates to the 'actual' death of the pigeon. If Kusturica's claim is true, that the pigeon was already dead before being used in the film, would the *1937 Act* require that the BBFC investigate how the pigeon died, or how the pigeon was killed? Additionally, if Kermode is right that the *1937 Act* regulates behaviour, then it is fair to ask why films that contain scenes of animal cruelty are ever allowed to reach UK audiences. Assuming that the sequence from *Life is a Miracle* did infringe upon the *1937 Act*, their decision to demand cuts, rather than an outright ban, should be examined. Even though these scenes are evidence that animals were cruelly mistreated during the production process, the film would have been granted access to the UK market once the problematic sequences were removed. The message would not have been that filmmakers who abuse animals during any part of the production of their films are forbidden from showing their film in the UK. The message would have been that filmmakers who abuse animals in the making

of their films can do so long as UK audiences do not see it. The final thing to note that relates closely to this point is Žižek's observation that the Hays Code was not designed to prevent sex from being shown on screen, but instead regulated its proper articulation. This needs to be considered when examining the *1937 Act*. Does the *1937 Act* prevent animal cruelty in cinema, or does it simply codify and regulate its proper articulation? The next chapter will be dedicated to trying to answer these questions by providing a close reading of the *1937 Act*, as well as examining the laws that surround the Act, and the debates that led to its passing into law.

Chapter 6: The 1937 Act

In the UK, there is only one law that relates to the treatment of animals in film. The *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937* (henceforth referred to as the '*1937 Act*') expressly forbids the exhibition of films that contain scenes in which an animal has been cruelly mistreated. This law remains in place to this day in the same form in which it was passed. At first sight, the *1937 Act* seems to be quite straightforward. It appears simply to prevent the exhibition of any film that contains footage of animal cruelty. If, for example, a film contains a scene in which a tripwire is used to bring down a horse, then this film cannot be shown to the public in the UK. However, upon closer inspection, one finds that some of the wording of the *1937 Act* is quite vague and contains some rather large loopholes. For example, the phrase "any scene represented in the film" turns out to be quite ambiguous (Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937, p.1). In relation to the example of a film containing a sequence showing a horse fall caused by a trip wire, does this phrase mean that the exhibition of any version of this film is illegal because there is clear evidence that the filmmakers cruelly mistreated an animal during production? Or does it mean that this sequence in particular is a problem, and so the film can be shown to the UK public once it has been removed? The interpretation of these words greatly effects the range and scope of censorship in the UK. The former interpretation would see a widespread ban on hundreds of films, especially in the Western genre that regularly made use of trip wires. While the latter interpretation would allow for any film at all to be shown in the UK, no matter how often or how severely animals were cruelly mistreated during production, so long as those acts were not exhibited to the UK public.

There are also questions to be asked regarding the need for the *1937 Act* in the first place. Prior to the creation of the *1937 Act*, the UK had several animal welfare laws, including the far reaching *Protection of Animals Act 1911* (henceforth referred to as the '*1911 Act*'). Animals on filmsets were already protected under these laws, and so the need for a new law that specifically

protects animals in film might seem redundant. However, as this chapter will show, filmmakers found ways to get around UK animal welfare laws by filming in countries with less stringent legislation. Another motivation to create the *1937 Act* was that lawmakers sought to prevent audiences from seeing animal cruelty. Sir Robert Gower, the MP who wrote the bill for the *1937 Act*, was explicit about his conviction that seeing animal cruelty, whether real or simulated, had a corrupting effect on public morals.

In this chapter I will clarify some of the ambiguities of the *1937 Act*, as well as assessing the effectiveness of the *1937 Act* according to the intentions of the MPs who supported it. To do this, I will need to explore Acts relating to the *1937 Act*, such as the *1911 Act*. Such an exploration will not only provide the definitions to some of the terms within the *1937 Act*, but it will also provide more context to the general climate around the attitudes towards animal welfare at the time. I will also need to explore the economic factors that helped to create the Act's loopholes. American films were extremely popular in the UK at the time. Since animal welfare laws in America were not as rigorous as they were in the UK, American films would often contain scenes that used animals in ways that would be deemed cruel in the UK. Lawmakers tried to find a balance between concerns for animal welfare and the commercial interests of the UK cinema industry. This balancing act itself will also be explored since it also determines the line between cruelty and suffering. As will be shown in this chapter, the distinction between cruelty and suffering is not primarily based on severity of the pain experienced by an animal, but on how useful it is to cause that animal to be in pain. The severity of the pain immediately experienced by an animal does play a role in such judgements but it remains secondary to human interests. Another element of the *1937 Act* that will be discussed is the parliamentary debate prior to its passing into law. It is during this debate that many of the concerns about the effectiveness and extent of the bill were addressed. For example, MPs were concerned that the *1937 Act* might restrict the exhibition of scientific films. The way that the *1937 Act* navigated these concerns led to even more loopholes that limited

its effectiveness. In the end, I hope to have given a sufficient analysis of the *1937 Act* to provide context for discussing its role within the decisions made by the BBFC, and how it has shaped filmmaking in the UK and abroad.

6.1 *Protection of Animals Act 1911*

Legislation relating to animals has a long history in Britain, going back before the 17th century (Munsche, 2008). Up until 1822 these laws only recognised animals as property, granting protection only to the owners of animals for any potential damages incurred if their animal is harmed. *The Black Act 1723*, for example, would only prohibit the treatment of an animal that damaged the income of the owner of an animal, or the treatment of an animal that caused a nuisance to the public (Radford, 2001, p.29). Eventually new legislation was passed that recognised the wellbeing of animals. In 1822, the *Martin's Act* was passed into law followed by dozens of other laws due to heavy lobbying from organisations such as the RSPCA and from an increasing number of sympathetic MPs. The jumble of laws that had been amassed were eventually consolidated into the *1911 Act*. Several laws were passed after 1911, but these worked alongside the *1911 Act* which remained central. Eventually the *Animal Welfare Act 2006* (henceforth referred to as the '*2006 Act*') consolidated the majority of the animal welfare laws again (Bennet, 2005). The *1937 Act* borrows many of its terms from existing animal welfare laws. With this in mind, I will first examine the *1911 Act*, and will later examine the *2006 Act*.

6.1.1 Domestic, captive, and wild animals

The *1937 Act* borrows the definition of the terms 'animal', 'cruelty', and so on, from the *Protection of Animals Act 1911*. In this Act, 'animal' is defined as a "domestic or captive animal" (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.9). Of course, this definition avoids the philosophical problems of defining 'animal' as such, but the purpose of this definition is to eliminate 'wild' and 'game' animals from consideration. Game animals fall under separate legislation, and wild animals were

not granted protection from cruelty under UK law until 1996 (Kean, 1998, p.202). According to the *1911 Act*, domestic animals are:

> any (…) animal of whatsoever kind or species, and whether a quadruped or not which is tame or which has been or is being sufficiently tamed *to serve some purpose for the use of man* (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.9, my emphasis).

Captive animals are defined as:

> any animal (not being a domestic animal) of whatsoever kind or species, and whether a quadruped or not, including any bird, fish, or reptile, which is in captivity, or confinement, or which is maimed, pinioned, or subjected to any appliance or contrivance for the purpose of hindering or preventing its escape from captivity or confinement (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.9).

Both definitions include in their scope "any animal of whatsoever kind or species," casting an extremely broad net.

The *1911 Act* clumsily navigates the broadness of its scope by trying to list a selection of domestic animals. Section 15 first lists general categories of animals, such as 'horse', 'fowl', and 'cat', and then lists all the subcategories of animal: "the expression "horse" includes any mare, gelding, pony, foal, colt, filly, or stallion" (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.9). The *1911 Act* does not make the same effort to define captive animals. The distinction between domestic animals and captive animals is that domestic animals have been, or are in the process of being, broken-in or trained to perform certain tasks on behalf of their human owners. Whereas captive animals are 'wild' animals that are being held in one form or another. A captive animal exists between a 'wild' animal that sits outside of human activity and a domestic animal that has been assumed by culture. But even this distinction is vague. As pointed out by Mike Radford (2001, pp.211–212), problems

arise when one asks how long a wild animal must be held before they are considered to be in captivity. Citing the *1911 Act* (and the *Wild Animals in Captivity Protection Act 1900* which was consolidate into the *1911 Act*), the courts have ruled that a wild animal being held temporarily before they are killed or rereleased does not qualify as being held in captivity. For example, a fox who is unable to escape a burrow because all of the exits are covered by hunters and their dogs is not recognised to be in captivity. In section 10 of the *1911 Act*, terms are laid out for the inspection of animal traps. A person must check any trap that they have set "at least once every day between sunrise and sunset" (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.7). From this we can assume that if a wild animal is held for longer than one full day then they are considered to be a captive animal. But if an animal is held for less than one day then they are considered to be a wild animal in a state of temporary restraint and thus fall outside of the protection of the law. If a captive animal is released, are they immediately considered to be wild again? According to the judgement made for *Waters v. Meakin* (1916) 2 K.B. 111, an animal is "liberated" from their captivity the moment that they are "set free from the receptacle in which [they have] been confined" (1916, p.121). This means that in the case of *Waters v. Meakin*, the fifty-five rabbits that were killed by being set upon by hunting dogs were not legally recognised as being held "captive" due to the fact that they were released from their cages into an enclosed field. While in their cages, the rabbits were protected by the *1911 Act*, but the moment that they stepped foot into the field they were fair game. The courts have also ruled that for an animal to be classed as being "held in captivity" a human must have clear and sufficient dominion over them. In the case of *Steel v. Rogers* (1912) 76 JP 150, "a person cut a piece off a whale stranded on a beach. The tide later came in and other beached whales were able to return to the sea" (Hughes, 1996, p.6). It was ruled that the whale was not protected by the *1911 Act* because the person who mutilated the whale did not have sufficient dominion over them. In the case of *Rowley v. Murphy* (1964) 2 Q.B. 43, the courts ruled that the stag that had become trapped under a van before being dragged into a nearby enclosure and stabbed to death was not protected by the *1911 Act* because the stag had "merely" been captured, rather than confined (1964, p.1066).

The courts have also rejected the idea that restraining a wild animal while they are beaten to death constitutes sufficient dominion (Radford, 2001, p.212).

There are a few interesting exceptions that are worth noting. Firstly, in section 11 the Act makes reference to injured animals. It says that a police constable has the right to kill any injured animal if the constable deems it to be cruel to allow the animal to continue living. In subsection 11(4), the definition of "any animal" is given as "any horse, mule, ass, bull, sheep, goat, or pig" (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.7). There is no reason given as to why dogs, cats, and fowl are excluded from the definition of 'animal' as given in section 15(b). Secondly, in section 8(b) the Act creates another general category of animal: small vermin. The Act grants to a defendant the opportunity to prove that they took all reasonable precautions to prevent any "dogs, cats, fowls, or other domestic animals" from accessing any poison that they left out in order to kill any "rats, mice, or other small vermin" (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.6). This reduces the scope of subsection 1(1)(d) which forbids the poisoning of *any* animal at all.

6.1.2 Cruelty and suffering

Along with the tricky task of pinning down the definitions of the word 'animal', the *1911 Act* seems to juggle the terms 'cruelty' and 'unnecessary suffering'. Subsection 1(1)(a) of the *1911 Act* expressly forbids any person to "cruelly beat, kick, ill-treat, over-ride, over-drive, over-load; torture (…) any animal" *and* to "cause any unnecessary suffering" (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.3). Does 'cruelty' and 'unnecessary suffering' amount to the same thing? It seems that they do. The term 'unnecessary suffering' has been made synonymous with 'cruelty' in legal and political literature since 1776. Cruelty is understood to be more than the mere infliction of pain. The infliction of pain must be done "without good reason" for it to qualify as cruel, and this "good reason" must be one of necessity (Radford, 2001, pp.199–201). Of course, one should ask: necessary for *who*? There are exceptional cases in which inflicting pain onto an animal is necessary for their own wellbeing. For example, taking a dog with a fractured leg to a veterinarian might

cause the dog to be in more pain than they experience by lying still in a certain position. But the infliction of this pain is ultimately necessary to repair the dog's broken leg. However, in legislative terms, the idea that the infliction of pain onto an animal might be necessary arises from a relationship with animals that prioritises the utility of animals over their welfare. Animals were used in almost all aspects of Victorian and Edwardian life. Horses were used for pulling carriages, ploughing fields, and policing the streets; dogs were used for hunting, guarding, and in medical experiments; cows were used for their flesh, milk, skin, and so on. As I will show, the term 'necessary' is anthropocentric.

The anthropocentric nature of the term 'necessary' might not be obvious due to the fact that it has an ambiguity that both limits the protection of animals, and expands it. The term 'necessary' limits the protection afforded to animals in the *1911 Act* through the utilitarian judgements of the courts. A court ruled that dehorning a cow, a practice of sawing off the horns from a cow's head without anaesthetic, a practice that demonstrably causes immense suffering to a cow, was necessary in the pursuit of increasing profit (Radford, 2001, p.247). This decision clearly placed the needs of the farmer way above the needs of the cow. The term 'necessary' expands the protection afforded to animals in two ways. The first is from changing socioeconomic conditions. Working a horse to exhaustion and using a whip to keep them moving would have been considered necessary in the mid-19th century when industries heavily relied on their labour (Musson, 1976). However, technological changes saw a massive reduction in the need to use horses in industry. In 21st century Britain, working a horse to exhaustion in a mill would be considered unnecessary and therefore cruel. The second way in which the protection of animals is expanded is through the utilitarian judgements of the courts. An example of this is with regards to the ending of some cruel agricultural practices. In Oxfordshire, a traditional means of securing a higher price for a cow was to exhibit the cow at a farmer's market before she had been milked. The excessive size of the cow's udders was a way of demonstrating her value in dairy farming. However, the courts ruled that the

obvious suffering endured by the cows outweighed the marginal gain in profits for the farmers (Radford, 2001, p.249). The result was that the practice was made illegal, thus offering more protection to cows.

Radford (2001, p.123) argues that these judgements demonstrate that the law is not as anthropocentric as it seems since the needs of animals can outweigh the needs of humans. However, what Radford overlooks is that in court cases that use the *1911 Act*, animal needs are restricted to their mental and physical wellbeing, whereas human needs expand into socioeconomic and cultural areas. Before any utilitarian judgement takes place, a process of equation occurs that places the immediate suffering of animals on the same level as the financial, or scientific, or commercial burden suffered by humans. The result of such utilitarian judgements might be that an animal is granted more protection, but the process through which this protection is afforded recognises the wellbeing of animal bodies and minds as equal to the wellbeing of a person's finances. With so much more weight given to human needs, the term 'necessary' in the *1911 Act*, and therefore the Act itself, remains anthropocentric.

There are two other important factors to consider in the *1911 Act*. The first is that it recognises the mental and emotional suffering of animals. In subsection 1(1)(a), the Act lists activities that are considered to be cruel, which includes if any person was to "infuriate, or terrify any animal" (Protection of Animals Act 1911, p.3). The recognition of emotional pain in animals had long been recognised at the Parliamentary level in the UK. The *Report of the Committee on Humane Slaughtering of Animals* in 1904 recommended that animals should be spared the sight, sound, and smell of slaughter (Brooman and Legge, 1999, p.177). This recommendation came from a long investigation into slaughtering practices in the UK and Europe which included interviews with slaughterhouse workers, butchers, and local officials. Most interviewees agreed that the majority of animals clearly showed signs of terror if they saw or smelled blood. The most common counterargument to this opinion came from workers who pointed out that prior to slaughter,

animals are often so calm that they are able to go on eating and drinking as they do in any other environment. A particularly interesting response to this observation came from Captain W. Melville Lee who pointed out that an animal might experience severe terror and anguish without ever showing typical symptoms of such a state. He dismissed the idea that if an animal eats or drinks before they are slaughtered then this is proof that they do not feel terror because: "if an animal saw a man [sic] take a whisky and soda just before he was going to be hanged, and so concluded that he was indifferent, his opinion should not be worth much" (Lee, 1904b, p.36). The committee took these considerations seriously, and strongly recommended that all slaughterhouses should be designed in such a way as to prevent an animal experiencing terror from seeing or smelling blood (Lee, 1904a, p.5). Of course, like with animal bodies, the emotional and mental wellbeing of animals is incorporated into a highly anthropocentric framework. The discussion about how to slaughter an animal without causing 'unnecessary' terror, rather than how to prevent any terror, is testament to this. More than this, an animal's emotional and mental wellbeing depends on much more than the terror they feel at the sight or smell of blood. It also depends upon their social bonds (Lyons et al., 1993; Landsberg, 2019); the maternal and paternal bonds of animals with their young (Stěhulová et al., 2008; Wagner et al., 2015); the friendships formed between individual animals (Boissy and Le Neindre, 1997; Dagg, 2011); and so on. However, like acts of cruelty onto the animal body, the 'necessity' of an animal's emotional and mental suffering is measured against the commercial interests of the dairy industry, meat industry, and other forms of animal commerce.

The second interesting thing to note about the definition of cruelty in the *1911 Act* is that death is not considered to be a form of suffering. Both mental and physical pain require some form of duration. Judgements involving animal welfare laws have made explicit reference to the significance of the temporal aspect of pain. Judge Kelly CB pointed out that thirty seconds seems like a short amount of time until one is holding their hand over a flame (Radford, 2001, p.243).

But even if a person was to cause an animal to suffer for only one second, this would bring their action into the focus of the *1911 Act*. Dead animals feel no pain, and so cannot suffer. If the transition from life into death is instantaneous, the killing of an animal would not be recognised as causing any pain at all. The *1911 Act* was used in *Patchett v. Macdougall* [1984] JC 63 in an attempt to find Hilary Richard Geoffrey Patchett guilty of causing unnecessary suffering to a dog. Patchett used a semi-automatic 12-bore shotgun to shoot a local farm dog between the eyes at point blank range. The police officer called to the scene found the dog with a large wound between their eyes, brain matter exposed, and a pool of clotting blood beneath their head. Despite the extremely violent and graphic nature of the act, the courts concluded that the massive damage caused to the dog would be sufficient to cause death instantaneously. Since the dog did not suffer, Patchett could not be tried under the *1911 Act*, and was instead found to be guilty only of malicious mischief.

With the *1911 Act* in place, and with the animal welfare laws that followed it, animals used in the production of film were afforded a range of legal protections. If an animal is made to suffer, either physically or emotionally, during the making of any film, then there are grounds to prosecute those who initiated the suffering. With this in mind, it is worth asking why there should be any additional laws created to regulate the use of animals in the film industry. Before I try to answer that question, it is worth noting that the *1911 Act* was replaced by the *Animal Welfare Act 2006*. A brief look at this act will help to guide an analysis of censorship of animal violence after 2006.

6.2 *Animal Welfare Act 2006*

Several new animal welfare laws followed the *1911 Act*. Some of these were industry specific, such as the *Breeding of Dogs Act 1973* and the *Zoo Licensing Act 1981*. However, many of these laws were much more general in their focus. In 2006 this collection of laws was consolidated into the *Animal Welfare Act 2006*. Because the *1934 Act* used the *1911 Act* as a reference up until it was replaced by the *2006 Act*, an examination of this law is necessary to understand how censorship decisions that relate to the *1934 Act* have changed over time. However, less attention will be given

to the *2006 Act* because it did not affect the debates surrounding the creation of the *1934 Act*. The *2006 Act* is much more general in its scope, and also much more detailed. For the purpose of this thesis, the following analysis will only examine aspects of the *2006 Act* that relate directly to the treatment of animals, rather than those that relate indirectly, such as licencing considerations and legal powers to detain vessels, aircraft, and hovercraft.

6.2.1 Vertebrates other than man, and maybe octopuses

Section 1(1) of the *2016 Act* defines 'animal' as any "vertebrate other than man" (2006, p.1). Section 1(5) provides a definition of 'vertebrate' using terminology derived from scientific taxonomy: ""vertebrate" means any animal of the Sub-phylum Vertebrata of the Phylum Chordata" (2006, p.1). While this definition is succinct and precise, especially when compared to the one provided in the *1911 Act*, section 1(4) allows for invertebrates to be included. According to the *2006 Act*, "if the appropriate national authority is satisfied, on the basis of scientific evidence," that an invertebrate animal is "capable of experiencing pain or suffering," then they can be included into the definition of "animal." Who is "the appropriate national authority?" The explanatory notes state that for Wales, the appropriate national authority is "the National Assembly for Wales, and for England it means the Secretary of State" (Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, 2007, p.3). The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who introduced the *Animal Welfare Bill* in 2004 was Margaret Beckett. This is interesting to note because of the tension found in section 1(4). While it could be read that scientific evidence guides the *2006 Act*, scientific evidence only matters if "the appropriate national authority is satisfied," that is, on whether individuals such as Margrett Beckett are satisfied.

The extremely broad definition of section 1(4) is narrowed in section 2 which provides the definition of 'protected animals'. Vertebrate animals are protected if they belong to a species that is "commonly domesticated in the British Islands, (...) under the control of man whether on a permanent or temporary basis, or is not living in a wild state" (2006, p.1). Although section 2

narrows the range of animals who are protected by the *2006 Act*, the wording is much more inclusive than that of the *1911 Act*. For example, "commonly domesticated" does not refer to a domesticated animal. Feral cats and stray dogs are granted protection because, as the explanatory notes clarify:

> Kinds of animals which are to be considered commonly domesticated in the British Islands are those whose collective behaviour, life cycle, or physiology has been altered as a result of their breeding and living conditions being under human control, in the British Islands, for multiple generations (Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, 2007, p.3).

The phrase "under the control of man" found in section 2 extends the protection that was offered by the *1911 Act*, which only protected an animal being held captive rather than an animal being restrained. And the phrase "not living in a wild state" ensures the protection of animals who have been release from their captivity but are not yet able to survive in the local environment without the aid of humans. The addition of these clauses means that under the *2006 Act*, the men involved in the aforementioned case of *Waters v. Meakin* (1916) 2 K.B. 111, in which fifty-five rabbits were set upon by dogs, would be found guilty of animal cruelty. Under the *1911 Act*, the rabbits were fair game from the moment they set foot in the field, but under the *2006 Act*, they remained protected for an extended period after their release.

Sections 1 and 2 of the *2006 Act* have been referenced in some censorship decisions at the BBFC. In the film Oldboy (2003), Oh Dae-Su eats a live octopus. The actor who played Dae-Su, Choi Min-Sik, ate four live octopuses. This is because the scene required four takes, and for all of them Min-Sik ate a live octopus (Mathews, 2021). In their 2004 annual report, the BBFC described the scene in the following way:

a man appears to eat a live octopus in a sushi bar. However, the Board considered that the scene – which actually cuts away at the crucial moment – represented a quick, clean kill (BBFC, 2005b, p.68).

In the sequence that is included in the UK release of *Oldboy*, the octopus is grabbed by Min-Sik, squeezed in his fist, and then pushed into his mouth. The camera remains on his face as he bites down onto the octopus's head. Then, there is a cut to a very brief closeup shot of the waitress who just served him the living dish before the film cuts back to the killing of the octopus. Min-Sik pulls the octopus with his fist as he bites down on their head. He pulls his fist away from his mouth until he tears the octopus's head completely off.

Figure 6.1: Min-Sik and the octopus(es) (Oldboy, 2003)

It is not clear what the BBFC mean by "at the crucial moment," but it takes place after Min-Sik has put the head of the octopus between his teeth, but before he tears the octopus's head off. Figure 6.2 shows the frame immediately prior to the film cutting to the waitress, and the frame immediately after cutting back to Min-Sik.
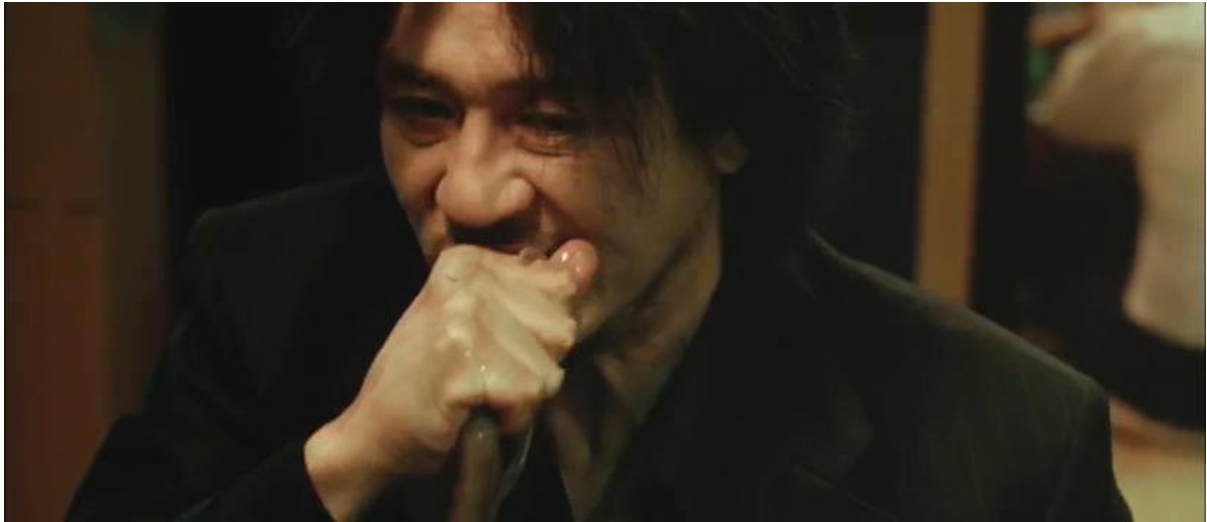
-------------------------- crucial moment --------------------------

Figure 6.2: The crucial moment cannot be seen

In the bottom still in figure 6.2, the octopus's head is still attached to their body, and Min-Sik has

not bitten through their head with his teeth. Min-Sik is still holding the octopus in place with his

teeth as he tears their head off. According to the judgement of the BBFC, the octopus is dead in

the second still, killed by a quick, clean, and humane kill. However, after the *2006 Act* was passed

into law, the BBFC changed how they described the scene of the 2003 film. In 2018, Craig Lapper,

head of compliance at the BBFC, wrote in *The Guardian* that:

> *Oldboy* was classified uncut because the *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937*, (...) only applies to "protected animals" as defined by the *Animal Welfare Act 2006*. Currently invertebrates, such as octopuses, are not covered by the *2006 Act* and we therefore had no grounds on which to intervene (Lapper, 2018).

The BBFC's current description of *Oldboy* confirms this new reading. They state that "in one scene a man eats a live octopus. While at least one animal was killed in order to create this sequence, octopuses are invertebrates," and are therefore not protected under the *2006 Act* (BBFC, 2020b). The first thing to note is that it is unclear why the BBFC changed how they justified releasing *Oldboy* uncut. If the death of the octopus was swift, then it would not matter if the octopus was protected or not. It is also not clear why they began using a piece of legislation that first came into force in 2007 to justify the censorship decision that they made in 2003. The second thing to note is that since the *Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986* the UK government have recognised that at least one species of octopus, *Octopus vulgaris*, can experience pain and suffering. During the 2005 Animal Procedures Committee it was discussed whether or not, based on the latest scientific evidence, more species of octopus should be protected. The committee members, who included dozens of professors, scientists, and experts, agreed that all species of octopuses should be protected. The RSPCA, the Born Free Foundation, and Advocates for Animals agreed with this recommendation, adding that protection should also be extended to all cephalopods (Bennet, 2005, p.14). However, Margaret Beckett's office decided that while:

> some cephalopod species have sophisticated nervous systems, complex behavioural repertoires, some cognitive capacity, and will avoid noxious or damaging stimuli, (...) these features cannot automatically be assumed to indicate an ability to suffer (Animal Procedures Committee, 2006, p.16).

The Animal Procedures Committee argued that the same argument can be made about the assumption that all vertebrate animals are capable of experiencing pain and suffering. If the government remains consistent in this line of reasoning, then they should withdraw protection from vertebrate species for which there is no conclusive scientific evidence demonstrating their ability to experience pain and suffering (Animal Procedures Committee, 2006, p.15). However, this argument did not convince the government to change their reasoning. And so, the BBFC's decision to censor *Oldboy* partly rested on what they meant by "crucial moment," and partly rested upon Margret Beckett's opinion, rather than scientific evidence, on whether or not octopuses feel pain.

6.2.2 Unnecessary suffering

Section 3 of the *2006 Act* specifies who is responsible for the welfare of any protected animal. In short, any individual who owns an animal (e.g. owner of a dog), or is responsible for the day-to-day care of an animal (e.g. professional dogwalker who cares for the dog while the owners are away), or assumes temporary responsibility for an animal (e.g. a friend of the owner who takes the dog for a walk), is considered to be legally responsible for ensuring the welfare of that animal. In section 4 the *2006 Act* sets out what is meant by "unnecessary suffering." Building from the previous three sections, section 4(1) explains that a person is committing an offence if they are deemed to be responsible for an animal, if the animal is a protected animal, and if their actions cause an animal to suffer unnecessarily. Section 4(1)(b) also removes the need to prove that a person actually knew that their actions caused an animal to suffer, only that they "ought reasonably to have known" (2006, p.2). However, as with the *1911 Act*, the two important words for this thesis are 'unnecessary' and 'suffering'. The definition of "suffering" in the *2006 Act* remains unchanged from the *1911 Act* (Collinson, 2018). Both mental and physical suffering require an individual to experience pain for a measurable period of time. If the killing of an animal is deemed to be instantaneous, then this act of killing is not recognised by the *2006 Act* as causing any suffering at all. A similar situation is to be found with the word "necessary." Alice Collison

(2018) provides an excellent analysis of the judgements and debates that have centred around the word 'necessary'. While her analysis shows that the word 'necessary' is fraught with both new and familiar complications, these complications are built upon the same anthropocentric foundations as the *1911 Act*. Section 4(3)(c)(ii) of the *2006 Act* explicitly states that if an animal is made to suffer while being used to protect human property, such as the use of police horses for riot control, then this suffering is deemed to be necessary. Again, the immediate physical and emotional wellbeing of animals are equated to the financial, or scientific, or commercial burden suffered by humans.

With this in mind, the *2006 Act* does make explicit what was only implied in the *1911 Act*, namely, what counts as an instantaneous killing. Section 4(4) makes clear that the *2006 Act* does not apply "to the destruction of an animal in an appropriate and humane manner" (Animal Welfare Act 2006, p.3). The only circumstances in which the *2006 Act* would be relevant is if an animal is killed in such a way as to inflict unnecessary pain and suffering. Killing itself is not recognised as an act that inflicts suffering. How, then, does UK law define appropriate and humane animal killing?

The range of killing methods is extremely wide. However, across all the laws pertaining to animal killing, the general consensus is that the killing of an animal should be done so in such a way as to avoid pain and suffering (Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009; The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015). Exceptions include the hunting of wild animals, animals killed in a laboratory setting, and animals deemed too dangerous to be killed "under the best welfare conditions due to emergency" (Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009). To help navigate the law, the UK government has created a set of guidelines on what constitutes humane animal killing. The guidelines are both specific and precise. A bird weighing less than 5kg can be killed via the mechanical dislocation of the neck, whereas a rabbit weighing less than 5kg can be killed via a blow to the head. Before being killed, a cow younger than six months old must

be stunned with an electric current that is no less than 1.25amps, whereas a cow older than six months must be stunned with 1.28amps. Sheep, deer, pigs, and goats must be bled for twenty seconds, whereas a cow must be bled for thirty seconds (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2015). Although the guidelines make explicit reference to livestock animals, the *law* makes no reference to which animals can and cannot be killed in this way (Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, 2009; The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015). So long as the animal is a protected animal, it can be killed legally in a manner that causes the least amount of pain and suffering possible. With killing a protected animal, the question of necessity is irrelevant if there is no suffering to begin with.

I would like to piece together the discussion so far in order to ask a hypothetical question. The first thing to note is the division between the treatment of an animal and the killing of an animal. The second thing to note is the lack of specificity regarding which animals can and cannot be killed. The third thing to note is the BBFC's claim that they adhere strictly to the letter of the law when deciding whether a particular scene should be cut. In November 2017, Dominic O'Connor killed a border collie called Jess, "cut it up and cooked some of it and fed it to the [other] dog with a few onions and an Oxo cube and salt and pepper" (BBC News, 2017). However, news outlets focussed on the act of killing, rather than the method of killing. The BBC reported that O'Connor has been "jailed for killing and cooking a dog" (BBC News, 2017). ITV referred to O'Connor as "the dog killer" (ITV Report, 2017). The Metro claimed that he was jailed "for killing his dog" (Hartley-Parkinson, 2017). However, O'Connor was convicted because he had caused *unnecessary suffering* to a dog, not because he had killed her. O'Connor first tried to strangle Jess using a lead. This act alone breaches the *2006 Act*, but O'Connor then decided to switch leads because the first one was not strong enough to cut off the dog's windpipe. Leaving Jess half-strangled, he later returned with a more rigid lead and finished the act of killing. O'Connor would not have broken any laws if he had used a 12-bore shotgun at point blank range, as per *Patchett v.*

Macdougall (1983) JC 63. Related to this, despite the fact that the sale and purchase of dog meat is illegal in the UK, there are no laws that regulate the *consumption* of dog meat (Rahman-Jones, 2018; Finnis, 2018). There are also no laws preventing an individual from feeding the flesh of one dog to another dog. Legally, O'Connor could have stunned Jess, used a captive bolt gun to kill her, and then made as much dog food with her flesh as he liked. If O'Connor had filmed himself killing and cooking Jess, and if he then used this footage as part of his own feature film, one wonders whether the BBFC would release his film uncut since he did not violate the *2006 Act*. Of course, the public outcry, captured nicely by news outlets, is not the same as the law, and one would assume that this outcry would ensure that O'Connor's film would not see the light of day in the UK.

With the *2006 Act*, animals receive more protection than they did under the *1911 Act*, but with regards to the notion of pain and suffering, concerns for their wellbeing remain restricted to their immediate experiences. Even though the *1911 Act* was not as robust as the *2006 Act*, it was the primary animal welfare act that was in place when the *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937* was first read to parliament. With laws already in place that protected animals, why would there be a need to enact another law that only protects animals used in the making of films? In order to answer this question, the following section will provide a close reading of the bills that were introduced before the *1937 Act* was passed into law.

6.3 *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937*

On 6th December 1933, Robert Gower introduced a bill into parliament that would later be named the *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937*. In the same sitting Gower also supported the *Protection of Dogs Bill* that made illegal all vivisections performed on dogs. Gower was an extremely active member of the animal rights community, serving as the chairman of the RSPCA for 23 years, chairman of the National Canine Defence League, and founder of the Pit Ponies Protection Society (The Times, 1953, p.8). As an MP he helped to enact several animal protection

laws, although his first attempt to put through the *1937 Act* failed. The bill did not pass the second reading on the 2nd February 1934, and on the 23rd July 1934 was finally discharged (Hansard HC Deb, 1934). It is not clear why the bill failed to pass the second reading since there are no records available of any meetings that might have taken place. However, if we compare the bill of 1933, the version of the bill reintroduced in 1937, and the final *1937 Act*, we can find some clues as to why this might be.

6.3.1 Parliamentary debates

The memoranda of both the 1933 bill and the 1937 bill state that they have two purposes. The first is "to prohibit the public exhibition of films in the production of which suffering is caused to animals," and the second purpose is to prohibit "any films which depict the suffering of animals which is brought about by any means whatsoever, that is, by natural or artificial means" (Cinematograph Films (Animals) Bill 1933, p.175; Cinematograph Films (Animals) Bill 1937, p.1). The first part survives into the *1937 Act*. The notable difference is in the way that this idea is worded in the body of each bill. Each of the bills makes explicit that both the exhibition *and* the production of films fall within their scope. By including production, the bills try to directly intervene into the treatment of animals on filmsets. Both the 1933 bill and the 1937 bill would give legal power to anyone wanting to prevent animal cruelty during the making of a film. However, treating an animal cruelly in any situation was already prohibited under the *1911 Act*. This was pointed out by Lord Cautley in the Lord's sitting for the 1937 bill (Hansard HL Deb, 1937). Whether or not this cruelty takes place on a filmset does not change the application of the law. With production and exhibition lumped together in one section, both the 1933 bill and the 1937 bill overreach. This could have been enough to dismiss the 1933 bill, but was certainly enough to have production removed from the scope of the *1937 Act*.

The second purpose of each bill, to prohibit the exhibition of "any films which depict the suffering of animals (...) by natural or artificial means," is another way in which this bill could be

seen as overreaching. However, as pointed out by Graham Kerr MP, the wording of the bill is quite vague (Hansard HC Deb, 1937). One interpretation of the phrase "artificial means" could be that it refers to actual fights between real animals that have been orchestrated by the filmmakers. During the second reading, Gower argued that for the most part animals in the wild live harmoniously. However, even if they do fight, they can only do so with members of their own species, or members of a species that lives in the same environment. Fights between giant crabs and monkeys, for example, are "artificial" in that they could only occur through the intervention of filmmakers. Another way of interpreting the phrase "artificial means" is to include any simulated depiction of animal suffering. Geoffrey Lloyd MP and Alfred Denville MP pointed out during the second reading that filmmakers already used artificial animals in conjunction with camera tricks to depict animal suffering without harming any real animals (Hansard HC Deb, 1937). The use of rubber horses, for example, was a common technique. Bearing in mind that the definition of cruelty is taken from the *1911 Act*, the proposals in the 1933 bill and the 1937 bill could have had huge repercussions on the film industry. The prohibition of any film that simulated animal cruelty as defined by the *1911 Act* might have included any film that used artificial horses in battle scenes from thousands of westerns, as well as from films about war, films set in medieval times, and fantasy films. Since the *1911 Act* includes the psychological wellbeing of animals, the 1933 bill and 1937 bill might have forbidden the exhibition of films that simulated an animal in terror. It might have also included animation. However, the ambiguity of the term "artificial means" can be cleared up by referring back to the issue of production and exhibition. The orchestration of *any* fight between two animals falls under the *1911 Act*, and so is already prohibited. The prohibition of exhibiting films that *simulate* animal suffering was something new to UK law.

It is not immediately clear as to why Gower would push to ban the simulation of animal cruelty. If animal welfare legislation prevented animal cruelty both on and off filmsets, then there seems to be no other way of protecting animals. However, Gower was very clear when he

announced the bill that the prohibition of any film that "faked" animal cruelty would be one of its main aims (The Manchester Guardian, 1933, p.10). For Gower, witnessing animal cruelty leads to more animal cruelty. Gower stated that a primary reason for the creation of the *1937 Act* was because "it is demoralising and degrading for young children to visit cinema shows and there witness representations of the sufferings of animals" (Hansard HC Deb, 1937). Gower argued that by preventing people from seeing animal cruelty in the cinema, whether real or simulated, the less likely it would be that members of the public would be encouraged to commit acts of animal cruelty. This perspective echoes the fears expressed by prominent voices of the time. Groups such as the National Council of Public Morals thought that the cinema should be used for good and high motives, and warned against the ill effects that cinema could have on the masses (Kuhn, 1988, p.120). The Church was also extremely interested in the moral and cultural effects of cinema. On the one hand, they worried that cinema might corrupt the masses and lure them away from God. On the other hand, they saw cinema as having the potential to spread their message more effectively (Machin, 1998, pp.76–77). Prominent figures such as Hesketh Bell also saw the educational potential of cinema, claiming that it should be used as a tool to civilise the "native character" of colonial peoples (Dickinson and Street, 1985, pp.47–48). There was also a fear that British culture was being 'Americanised' through cinema. In the year before the introduction of the *Cinematograph Films Act 1927*, the Act that introduced a quota designed to increase the amount of British films shown in cinemas, only 23 out of 577 film shown in the UK were British (Dickinson and Street, 1985, p.11). The effectiveness of the *Cinematograph Films Act 1927* is debateable, but by 1936 American film companies had found other ways of establishing themselves in the UK, such as using vertical integration for production and distribution, and trying to push through mergers and acquisitions of British film companies (Dickinson and Street, 1985, pp.59–61). The fear was that the masses would lose their sense of Britishness through the influence of American films. Viscount Sandon MP attributed the deterioration of traditional British values to the rise in popularity of American films, which, according to Sandon, frequently showed scenes of

violence, murder, and divorce (Street, 2009, p.23). Michael Chanan (1995, pp.105–106) explains, these ideas are part of a larger climate of bourgeois moralism that condemned any kind of working-class festivity, cinema-going included, that did not have an immediately productive function. Whether the art form was theatre, literature, music, or whatever else, moralists stirred up a panic regarding how the lower-classes would become corrupted to such a degree that society itself risked collapse (Pearson, 1990). The concern was always towards the uneducated or lower classes who were thought to be most susceptible to a copy-cat response to the arts (Barker and Petley, 1997, p.5). Education was understood to be something that could provide an antidote to any toxin received through the hypodermic needle of the arts. By making the cinema a place for education and moral refinement, rather than a place of pure entertainment, Britain would be provided with another means of controlling the masses and preserving British culture. Despite the power of the panic-stricken voices of the moralists that Gower represented, the simulation of animal cruelty was not included in the *1937 Act*.

During the debate for the second reading of the 1937 bill, some MPs were concerned that new legislation might prevent the exhibition of videos that have scientific value. Graham Kerr MP and Francis Fremantle MP both raised their concerns that the bill would prohibit the exhibition of films depicting animal experimentation (Hansard HC Deb, 1937). They argued that if medical students were not able to watch such films, then they would need to repeat the same experiments on real animals, thus increasing the instances of animal suffering. With the technology available to reduce the amount of animal experiments performed, the *1937 Act* would see an increase in instances of people causing unnecessary suffering to animals. Gower responded with a reassurance that an amendment would be added to the bill to ensure that this situation did not occur (Hansard HC Deb, 1937). An amendment specifically for scientific films was not actually added to the final Act, but the reason for this relates to another objection brought to Gower. MPs raised concerns that the exhibition of films that show accidents that injure animals would be made illegal. The

Grand National was used as an example of such an event (although Thomas Groves MP argued that the Grand National causes so much suffering to animals that no film featuring it should be exhibited in the UK (Hansard HC Deb, 1937)). In response to the problem of exhibiting films that show animal suffering caused accidentally, Gower pointed out that section 1(3) of the bill explicitly exempted any such film from its scope. This section was actually later removed by the select committee. The reason is because section 1(1) was amended in such a way as to make clear that for a film to fall under the scope of this Act, it must be "*directed* in such a way *as to involve* the cruel infliction of pain or terror on any animal" (Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937, p.1, my emphasis). The amendment to section 1(1) resolved both the concerns for scientific films and for films that include scenes that depict accidents involving animals. The suffering caused to an animal must have been a result of a directorial decision for the film to fall within the scope of the act. With films showing animal experimentation, so long as it can be proven that such an experiment would have occurred without the presence of a camera, the exhibition of this footage would remain legal. As too with events such as the Grand National. If a horse were to fall and break their neck, the exhibition of this footage would be legal because it was not directed in such a way that caused the horse to fall. While Groves might be right, that the Grand National is organised in such a way that the cruel mistreatment of an animal is an inevitability, so long as the person filming the event does not organise for a horse to fall and break their neck, or they do not organise for a horse to be whipped while having a metal rod forced into their mouth, then the footage that they procure would not fall under the *1934 Act*.

There are some things to note about the wording of section 1(1) and the way it was designed to provide the exceptions mentioned above. The first is the way that footage of animal suffering that provided educational value was deemed to be suitable for public viewing. This idea is in line with the distinction between cruelty and suffering as defined by the *1911 Act*. Only activities that cause unnecessary suffering to an animal are deemed to be acts of cruelty. In the

same way that causing an animal to suffer is not considered to be cruel if that suffering has anthropocentric use-value, a film depicting animal suffering is not considered to be corrupting and morally corrosive if it has educational value, that is, if it has anthropocentric use-value. The difference between animal cruelty and animal suffering hinges upon the same distinction as the difference between a film being morally repugnant and a film being socially valuable. This distinction is not the wellbeing of animals, but the utility that the animal suffering provides. The advocation of educational films also echoes the moralist concerns mentioned earlier. In line with the bourgeois moralism of the time, the public could view footage of animal suffering so long as the film was deemed to be educational rather than just entertaining. However, by this logic, if the same footage was used as part of an entertainment film, this same footage might end up corrupting the public in some way. Related to this, the second point to make about the wording of section 1(1) is the way that it *does* actually allow for extremely graphic animal violence to be used as part of entertainment films. This can be understood as the difference between the spirit of the law and the letter of the law. The *1937 Act* does not make any explicit distinction between documentary and fiction films, it only stresses the role of the filmmakers. As we saw, the spirit of the law was to prevent the exhibition of film that involved animal cruelty without also prohibiting scientific films and documentary films. However, according to the letter of the law, a fiction film can use footage of extremely graphic and disturbing animal violence for the purposes of entertainment so long as the filmmakers can prove that the violence would have occurred anyway. A famous example of this is Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979). During an infamous scene, a water buffalo is decapitated with a machete by local Ifugau tribes people. The inclusion of this scene in an entertainment film did not violate the conditions of the *1937 Act* since the decapitation was not orchestrated by Coppola.

A final important part of the second reading was Gower's reference to how the proposed bill could reduce animal cruelty on an international level. Filmmakers were able to get around UK

animal welfare laws by producing their films in countries where analogous laws were not as strict or non-existent. UK lawmakers could not directly influence legislation in other countries, and had no power to stop filmmakers from travelling to these countries to make their films. However, Gower noted that in order for films to be financially viable, they must be accessible to audiences (Hansard HC Deb, 1937). If filmmakers found ways around UK animal welfare laws in order to cruelly mistreat animals during the production of their film, the 1937 bill would render their film unsaleable in the UK. By blocking films in this way, animals used in the making of films in any part of the world would need to be treated to the same standards as determined by UK animal welfare laws. How effective the *1937 Act* is in preventing films that have been made using animal cruelty from accessing the UK market will be discussed in the next section.

6.3.2 Content of the *1937 Act*

The content of the *1937 Act* is much more focussed than the 1933 bill and the 1937 bill. As mentioned previously, the production of films was no longer within its scope, and neither was the simulation of animal suffering. What made it into the *1937 Act* is worth examining, especially when compared to the version prior to the Lord's amendments. Even after the scope of the *1937 Act* had been significantly narrowed, the slight changes made in the House of Lords had significant ramifications.

The *1937 Act* does not prohibit any activity relating to production. It only prohibits the exhibition of any film in which animals were mistreated during production. The opening paragraph of the *1937 Act* describes the purpose of its creation as follows:

> to prohibit the exhibition or distribution of cinematograph films *in connection with the production* of which suffering *may have* been caused to animals; and for purposes connected therewith (Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937, p.1, my emphasis).

In this paragraph, the Act appears to be designed to prevent the distribution and exhibition of films in which animals may have been treated cruelly during *any part* of production. However, in section 1 of the Act, the wording is a little different. Section 1 forbids the exhibition of any film:

> if in connection with the production of the film *any scene represented in the film* was organised or directed in such a way as to involve the cruel infliction of pain or terror on any animal or the cruel goading of any animal to fury (Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937, p.1, my emphasis).

There are some important differences with these paragraphs.

Both passages use the words "in connection with the production," but the opening paragraph makes reference only to "cinematographic films" in general rather than to any specific scene within a film. This would mean that the focus would not only be on animal cruelty that makes it onto the screen, but also on the production process in general. An example is if a filmmaker wanted to film an elephant performing a trick that required traumatic and abusive training (Nelson, 2011). Such a film would be in violation of the *1937 Act* even if the abuse itself was not filmed. There are numerous examples of acts of animal cruelty occurring during the production of films. During the making of *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*, twenty-seven goats and sheep died from dehydration (Wyatt and Walker, 2013); on the set of *Eight Below Zero*, a husky was punched in the throat several times (Baum, 2013); and the infamous 1925 version of *Ben Hur* saw the death of over one hundred horses (Hansard HC Deb, 1937). Even though none of these incidents appeared in the final edits of each film, the wording of the opening paragraph of the *1937 Act* would mean that the films fall within its scope. It would be illegal to exhibit these films in the UK because during their production animals were cruelly mistreated.

However, with the inclusion of the words "any scene represented in the film" in section 1, the Act potentially changes its focus from production in general to the content of the final edit. The addition of these words can be interpreted in several ways.

1. These words simply emphasise the Act's strictness by focussing on the production process. The *1937 Act* is trying to make clear that any scene at all, no matter how short, is to be included in its scope. This would mean that if a film contained even a few frames in which an animal was cruelly mistreated *during any part of the production process*, then the film would fall under the scope of the *1937 Act*. This interpretation would make the Act quite thorough and would reinforce the strictness implied in the opening paragraph.

2. The *1937 Act* treats any scene of a film as separate from the production process in general. Since UK law cannot intervene in film production outside of the UK, and since other laws regulate the treatment of animals during the production of films in the UK, the *1937 Act* can only control what appears on UK screens. This interpretation is used by the BBFC and is only concerned with cruelty that makes it onto the screen in the final edit and not with any cruelty that might have happened behind the scenes. For example, if a film contained a scene in which the filmmaker orchestrated a cockfight, the sequences that displayed the fight could be removed in order to allow the film to be exhibited in the UK, even though there is clear evidence that the filmmakers cruelly mistreated an animal. Section 2 of the *1937 Act* contains a line that seems to confirm this interpretation. It states that during "any proceedings brought under this Act in respect of any film, the court may (...) infer from the film *as exhibited to the public*" (Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937, p.1, my emphasis). However, this does not necessarily support the BBFC interpretation, as will be seen.

3. Another interpretation emphasises other aspects of the *1937 Act*. The first is that there is no legal consensus on what counts as a 'scene' in a film. The definition of the word 'scene'

taken from the film industry refers to a unit of cinematic storytelling in which a series of events occur in the same location. A 'scene' is composed of several shots, and shots are made up of frames, usually around twenty-four frames per second. The second thing to note is that the *1937 Act* does not say that animal cruelty must be exhibited directly on screen for a film to fall within its scope. Rather, the acts of animal cruelty must have happened "in connection with" the production of a *scene* shown in the film. The BBFC do not ask filmmakers to remove scenes from films, they only ask them to remove the frames in which the audience witnesses animal cruelty. Since the *1937 Act* demands the removal of an entire scene, this final interpretation would see that any scene that was made using animal cruelty during *any stage of production* is removed from the film before it is cleared for UK release.

The significance of the difference between these interpretations becomes apparent when they are framed within Gower's intention to restrict access to the UK market.

The British public were avid cinemagoers in the 1930s. In the year that the *1937 Act* was passed, there were 946 million cinema admissions, compared with 177 million in 2018 (UK Cinema Association, 2019). The average ticket price in the same year was 4.22 pence which means that cinema-going was an activity worth £39.9mil per year (£1.9bil today) (Film Research, 2017). That idea behind the *1937 Act* was that filmmakers would be wasting their money by making films that would not reach the large UK market. The intention to influence filmmakers outside the UK, however, only has an effect if filmmakers are actually unable to access the UK market. The first interpretation of the phrase "any scene represented in the film" would have a huge impact on filmmakers. For example, the 2001 film *Azaad* contained a scene that showed cruelty to horses through the use of a wire-trip (BBFC, 2002, p.40). The film was submitted to the BBFC who made note of the problematic events. According to the first interpretation of the *1937 Act*, this would be enough to ban the film in the UK since there is clear evidence that "in connection with the

production" of *Azaad*, an animal had been cruelly mistreated. Such a strict interpretation and enforcement of the *1937 Act* would greatly damage the profits of the filmmakers, and most likely cause massive damage to the UK cinema industry. The second interpretation, however, was the one that was actually followed by the BBFC. The second interpretation of the phrase "any scene represented in the film" separates the version of the film seen by UK audiences from the production process. *Azaad* was granted full access to the UK market so long as the problematic frames were cut. Six seconds of footage (around two-hundred frames) were cut from the scene to remove the sight of cruelty. Even though the BBFC saw evidence that animals were abused during the production process, the film was granted access to the UK market once the problematic frames were removed. The message was not that filmmakers who abuse animals during any part of the production of their films will be forbidden from showing their film in the UK. The message was that filmmakers who abuse animals in the making of their films can do so long as UK audiences do not see it. However, with the third interpretation, the problematic scene in *Azaad* would need to be removed in its entirety, rather than just the 6 seconds that displayed the animal cruelty. The *1937 Act* refers to scenes, not shots or frames. With the BBFC interpretation, the version of *Azaad* that was granted access to the UK market contained a scene in which animals had been cruelly mistreated, but the frames in which this occurred were hidden from the audience. With the third interpretation, the scene would be removed in its entirety, but the film would still be granted UK release.

6.4 Cut the scene

It is worth asking who the *1937 Act* actually protects. The *1937 Act* was written with several motivations. The first was to provide protection to animals used in the making of films. This is evident from Gower's defence of the bill during the second reading and from the way that the original bill tried to include production, rather than just exhibition, into its scope. Since UK law already protected animals on and off filmsets, this motivation was misplaced and was removed

from the final version. The second motivation was to protect UK audiences from being exposed to the harmful effects that come from seeing animal cruelty on screen. Specifically, Gower argued that there would be a risk of copy-cat behaviour that might lead audiences to mimic the animal cruelty that they see on screens. Gower made clear that even if the animal cruelty is simulated or faked, showing such scenes in UK cinemas risked corrupting public morals. This line of thinking was found in many influential groups of the time. The ideas of these groups were not only moralistic, but anti working class. Only the working class were at risk of being corrupted due to their lack of education and due to their desire for debased pleasure over personal refinement. Despite the influences of these groups, the prohibition of exhibiting films that simulated animal cruelty was not included into the *1937 Act*. However, the *1937 Act* still tried to protect UK audiences from seeing footage of actual animal cruelty. On the one hand, the *1937 Act* was quite effective with this goal. The BBFC applied the *1937 Act* meticulously, often refusing to grant films access to the UK market unless the filmmakers agreed to remove just a few seconds of animal cruelty. On the other hand, the *1937 Act* often fell short of this goal. The reasons for this partly relate to the attempts by MPs to prevent the prohibition of films with scientific value and documentary films. The wording that was used in the Act did allow for such exceptions, but it also allowed for filmmakers to use footage of extremely graphic animal violence in entertainment films. As long as the suffering inflicted onto an animal was not the result of a directorial decision by the filmmakers, scientific, documentary, *and* entertainment films could make use of scenes of animal cruelty. Another part of the reason that the *1937 Act* fell short of its goals is because the word 'scene' in relation to film has no legal consensus. In the film industry, 'scene' refers to a specific unit of cinematic storytelling, whereas for the BBFC, it seems that the word 'scene' has a looser definition.

The third motivation to create the *1937 Act* came from the inability of UK lawmakers to influence the animal welfare laws of other countries. Gower argued that filmmakers would be

wasting their money by treating animals cruelly during the making of their films if those films were not able to access the sizable UK market. The desired result would be that the financial damaged caused to filmmakers would force them to treat animals on their sets to the same standards of UK animal welfare laws. However, the BBFC's interpretation of the *1937 Act* does not see this intention through to the end. Filmmakers are granted full access to the UK market as long as the version of the film exhibited to the public does not contain any frames that show actual animal cruelty. A filmmaker can violently abuse an animal during filmmaking, and even include clear evidence of this in the version submitted to the BBFC, but as long as they do not show this abuse to UK audiences then they do not violate the terms of the *1937 Act*.

The *1937 Act* only protects UK audiences from seeing acts of animal cruelty that were orchestrated by filmmakers. It does not prevent them from seeing acts of cruelty that would have happened even if a film crew was not present, and it does not prevent them from seeing animal suffering that is deemed to have educational value. The *1937 Act* also does not prohibit the exhibition of films in which a filmmaker has killed an animal in a 'quick and painless' manner. The *1937 Act* cannot protect animals since the production of films falls outside of its scope. And it does not deny access to the UK market to filmmakers who abuse animals. If an animal is abused during the making of a film, but footage of the abuse is not present in the UK theatrical release, the film does not violate the conditions of the *1937 Act*. The only penalty incurred by filmmakers who orchestrate and film the abuse of animals is that the footage must be removed from their film before it can be shown in the UK.

Epilogue: human/animal constellations

I suddenly see the solution of a puzzle-picture. Where there were previously branches, now there is a human figure. My visual impression has changed, and now I recognize that it has not only shape and colour, but also a quite particular 'organization'. —— My visual impression has changed - what was it like before; what is it like now? —— If I represent it by means of an exact copy - and isn't that a good representation of it? - no change shows up (Wittgenstein, 2009, pt.II, §131).

This PhD thesis set out to investigate the censorship of animal violence in British cinema, and in the process paid a visit to the zoo, meticulously examined uncensored footage of a dung beetle, and tried to figure out the rules of chess. These seemingly unrelated parts formed the material through which I applied the philosophies of Adorno and Wittgenstein. Chapter 2 provided close readings of these philosophies, but three aspects that are important to recall here are, firstly, the ways in which language can obfuscate and hinder understanding. In Adorno's words, concepts are blind to the differences that testify to an individual's uniqueness, seeing and recognising only those elements that can be categorised. In the words of Wittgenstein, language can bewitch our intelligences. The second aspect to note is the rejection of the idea that concepts must have neat and well-defined boundaries. It was shown that concepts do not contain some *a priori*, self-contained, and essential meaning, but rather, to use Adorno's words, the meanings of concepts unfold into a whole series of other concepts. To use Wittgenstein's words, the meanings of concepts are found to span across a variety of resemblances. Finally, the third aspect I would like to recall is the notion of constellations. By accepting that concepts do not have clear and fixed boundaries one is able to look for clusters of meanings rather than a core meaning. Alongside this

way of investigating the meaning of concepts, one is able to use concepts in a way that traverses the linguistically sustained boundaries that keep things in their proper place. In this PhD thesis I constructed a precise and specific constellation in order to dislodge the habits of thought that maintain fixed boundaries between concepts such as 'censorship', 'animal', 'human', 'image', and 'violence'. One of the biggest challenges with such an approach is providing a conclusion. It is anathema to a constellatory approach to wrap everything up, to present findings, to synthesise the main points, to summarise the central arguments, and so on. With this in mind, I will be doing two things in the following sections. The first is to make explicit the relevance of some of the connections that I made between the seemingly unrelated parts of this thesis. The second is to show that this method has an inherently ethical dimension.

7.1 Making connections

I began this thesis by asking what is meant by the word 'animal'. This was in part to investigate arguments regarding its prejudicial, abusive, and even non-sensical character. I also addressed similar concerns that have been raised with animal imagery, especially live action footage of animals. If these claims were correct, then a project that sets out to investigate the censorship of *animal* violence in British cinema would immediately get off on the wrong foot. But my analysis was not simply about clarification. The analysis in chapter 1 demonstrated the need for an alternative method. This method was shown in chapter 2 which introduced Adorno and Wittgenstein. In order to combine the ideas of these two philosophers, I needed to use their work in ways that neither intended. Take for example the way that I brought together Adorno's commitment to metaphysics with Wittgenstein's rejection of metaphysics. Wittgenstein has a relentless focus on the here-and-now. His imperative, "don't think, but look" (2009, §66), constantly calls attention to the world in front of our noses. Adorno's commitment to metaphysics shows that identity thinking has become so prevalent that in order to actually *see* the here-and-now, one must turn towards the historical and social forces that mediate the here-and-now. To

use Wittgenstein's tool analogy, Wittgenstein can describe how a hammer is used but Adorno can account for the social forces that give rise to the need for hammers. With the word 'animal', for example, Wittgenstein can describe how it is used and Adorno can show the concrete social activity that renders such usage to be valid. And so, in a thesis that examined the censorship of animal violence in British cinema, there was a constant movement between the here-and-now of language and the animal image; the forms of life in which they are used; and the historical and social forces that render such uses to be valid.

In the next section I will make explicit some of the connections made in this thesis. Firstly, I will show how the analysis of the word 'censorship' in chapter 5 relates to the way that chapters 1, 4, and 6 brought to light the different uses of the word 'animal'. Secondly, I will provide more detail on the connections made throughout this thesis by focussing on how the word 'animal' in chapter 6 related to the concepts of fabula, sjužet, and style as given in chapter 3 and to the concept of the animal image given in chapter 4. Thirdly, I will provide a pictorial presentation of the different uses of the word 'animal' found in chapters 1, 4, and 6 in order to relate this discussion back to the theories laid out in chapter 2.

7.1.1 Animal, animal, animal

In chapter 5, I argued that the use of the word 'censorship' within New Censorship Theory points towards the form of life through which such usage finds legitimacy. Richard Burt, Annette Kuhn, Susan Curry Jansen, Beate Müller, Helen Freshwater and many others are academics paid to work on projects in Media and Film studies. The world of academia is one in which the concrete social activity is shaped around producing research, analysing social and cultural phenomena, and sharing ideas at academic conferences. This form of life grants legitimacy to the use of the word 'censorship' as a means of redefining the word 'censorship'. I did not make such an explicit conclusion in chapter 1 while examining the word 'animal', in part because the discussion of the word 'animal' reared its head again throughout the thesis. However, in chapter 1, the form of life

that granted legitimacy to certain uses of the word animal is an amalgam of academic conferences, research groups, vegan activism, the writing of this PhD thesis, book writing, and so on. This is not the case for the forms of life investigated in chapter 4 where the meaning of the word 'animal' came up again. Here I juxtaposed the flesh and blood existence of animals with my treatment of the animal image given in chapter 3. What does the word 'animal' mean when someone says that they saw an animal at the zoo? Does it refer to the simple flesh and blood existence of an individual living inside a fortress of concrete and steel, or does it refer to the *idea* of an animal, a representative of an imagined species? Chapter 4 showed that the legitimacy of the use of the word 'animal' to refer to a being living inside a zoo comes from a particular form of life. This form of life includes the careful design of animal enclosures, the use of neurochemical drugs, selective breeding programs, the violent procurement of living beings, and so on. These activities are not found to be part of the social activity that grants legitimacy to the use of the word 'animal' in chapter 1, but they were found again in chapter 6.

In chapter 6 the meaning of the word 'animal' was discussed again but in the context of UK law. In this chapter I showed that the forms of life that grant legitimacy to certain uses were not academic conferences, vegan activism, and book writing, but instead came from the use of animal bodies in human culture and human industry. To provide some detail on how this dialectic unfolded, consider section 5.4.1 of chapter 5. Here I discussed two situations that required individuals to follow the same rules in the same way. The first situation related to the correct way to do basic arithmetic, and the second related to the movement of a knight piece in a game of chess. Two conclusions were drawn from this discussion. The first was that the veracity of any rule is not self-evident nor absolute. In the example that I used, Smokey could not offer an explanation of how to do basic arithmetic that did not spring from an account of the community to which he belonged. The second conclusion was that the interpretation of a rule says more about the form of life that grants legitimacy to such an interpretation than it does about the core, essential

characteristics of the rule. Pomeroy and Smokey solved the issue of how to move a knight piece by referring to an official rule book, but this rule book did not provide a way of interpreting the phrases 'same colour' and 'touching corner-to-corner'. The interpretation of these phrases expressed a particular form of life shared by Pomeroy and Smokey, rather than anything essential about the formal rules that such phrases were used to communicate. In chapter 6 I treated the *1937 Act* in the same way. What is meant by the word 'animal' in the *1934 Act*? Paragraph 4(b) tells the reader that 'animal' has the same meaning as found in the *1911 Act*. This meaning is given in paragraph 15 of the *1911 Act* which lists a range of animals, from domestic animals to captive animals to bitches, saplings, and puppies. What is the difference between a domestic and a captive animal? It was shown that such questions are subject to interpretation by the courts. The definition of the word 'animal' in the *1937 Act* is deferred yet again from the *1911 Act* to individual court rulings. As with Pomeroy and Smokey trying to play a game of chess, this ultimately defers the problem of how to correctly interpret a rule. By following the deferral of this problem to its end, we found ourselves, again, examining forms of life. While examining the *1937 Act*, the word 'animal', and the constellation of words that spring from it, it was shown that part of the definition of 'animal' was a particular understanding of violence. Causing an animal to suffer physically and/or psychologically is not in itself considered to be an act of violence. It is only if a human causes an animal to suffer "unnecessarily" that the infliction of pain is considered violent. When it comes to what is meant by 'necessary', UK law restricts animal needs to their mental and physical wellbeing, and extends human needs into socioeconomic and cultural areas. While legal judgements sometimes offer animals more protection, this protection is one that recognises the wellbeing of animal bodies and minds as equal to the wellbeing of human finances. The explanation for this disparity is not to be found in any official legal definitions. In the same way that a shared form of life allows for an agreement to be made between Pomeroy and Smokey on phrases such as 'corner to corner', with the definition of the word 'animal', it is a shared from of life that allows

for an agreement on the phrase 'necessary suffering'. As was shown, the legal definition of the word 'animal' is used within a community which is bound together by the exploitation of animals.

Chapter 6 also used the theories in chapters 3 and 4. As will be recalled, chapter 3 discussed the notion of suture, and asked how continuity editing, and the classical style more generally, allows for the viewer of a film to become immersed in the film's diegesis. The conclusion was that this style of editing presents a film as *unmediated*, that is to say, this style of editing is the construction of the non-constructed. What I called the 'behind-the-scenes narration' is constantly incorporated and stitched into the diegesis of a film. In chapter 4, I discussed the animal image in order to provide a theoretical backdrop for Burt's observations that animal violence 'ruptures' the animal image. For Burt, animal violence in film breaks the boundary between image and reality. By showing that animals are already images, I concluded that the so-called reality that ruptures the animal image is itself another form of fiction, namely, the non-diegetic fabula of the behind-the-scenes narrative. By using the materiality of animal bodies in the creation of the animal image, zoos imbue the animal image with a connection to the real. In the same way that the image of a painting can circulate beyond the original materials used in its creation, the animal image, imbued with a connection to the real, migrates onto the screen beyond the original materials used in its creation. The animal image was also created in accordance with a particular ethical position, namely that the proper treatment of an animal is one in which an animal is able to act as they would outside of human interference. In other words, the animal image is *not* purely visual, but is intrinsically bound up with a particular ethical position regarding the proper treatment of animals. Zoo animals should behave as they would if they were living in the wild, even though they are not living in the wild, and as long as this 'wild' behaviour aligns with the needs of the zoo. Animals fly convincingly, but they cannot migrate; animals can eat, but they cannot be eaten. In other words, the animal image is the construction of the non-constructed. The integrity of the animal image falls apart when it does not align with the expectations of human observers, and when the human violence used in

its creation starts to fray the seams that hold it together. In chapter 6 it was shown that the *1937 Act* focusses on the mistreatment of animals on filmsets. In the language of chapter 3, the *1937 Act* focusses on the non-diegetic fabula of a film, the so-called 'reality' of what actually happened on a film set. The *1937 Act* tries to prevent the suture that holds together the animal image from rupturing. This rupture is caused by the animal image being treated in a particular way, namely one that tears the seams that hold together the construction of the non-constructed. When a human inflicts *unnecessary* violence upon an animal in film, the ethical framework that forms part of the animal image is violated. The issue is not that an animal on a filmset is physically or psychologically harmed, but that a particular human ethical position has been violated. The *1937 Act* controls the depiction of animal cruelty in cinema not to protect animals, but to protect humans from witnessing a human violating a particular ethical standard, from witnessing a human acting in a way that is less than human. The *1937 Act* regulates and codifies cinematic depictions of animal cruelty in order to discipline individuals to conform to a particular ethical standard.

For demonstration purposes, the concept as constellation shown in figure 2.6 from chapter 2 is used here to provide a pictorial comparison of the different uses of the word animal found in this PhD.

Chapter 1 Animal   **Chapter 4 Animal**   **Chapter 6 Animal**
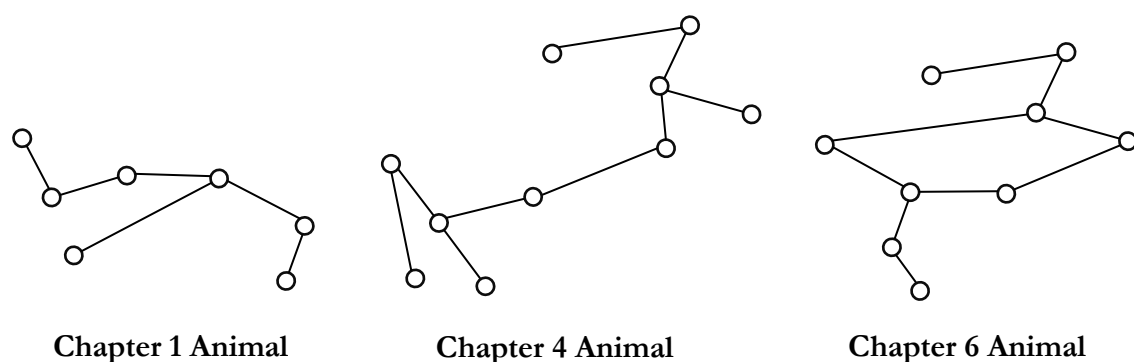
Figure 7.1: Animal constellations

The circles in each constellation relate to a concept and/or a concrete social activity (recall the discussion in section 2.2 that showed that constellations are not merely textual, but are intertwined with particular material practices). The lines between each circle denote the specific way in which these elements relate to each other. For example, in the 'Chapter 1 Animal' constellation, the circles relate to vegan activism; academic conferences; research groups; personal friendships formed with animals; the findings of scientific research; and so on. By contrast, in the 'Chapter 4 Animal' constellation, the circles relate to selective breeding programs; research groups; the use of neurochemical drugs to sedate imprisoned animals; the findings of scientific research; the use of animal bodies for entertainment *and* education; the disciplining of human bodies; and so on. For the 'Chapter 6 Animal', it was shown that the constellation was constructed through the use of animals in human industries; the disciplining of human bodies; particular uses of the words 'violence' and 'necessary'; an understanding that cinema should be for entertainment *and* education; a set of assumptions about the cinema's ability to reproduce reality; a particular ethical position; and so on. There are congruencies between each constellation, but these should not be understood to be essential to the word 'animal'. To recall Wittgenstein's family resemblance metaphor, each member of a family might have black hair, but this is not the thing that makes them a family, especially since there are other families made up entirely of individuals with black hair. One of the reasons that I brought these different animal constellations to light in this thesis is because the use of the word 'animal' when discussing 'violence', 'censorship', 'cinema', and so on, is not consistent. While investigating the censorship of animal violence in British cinema, I found that sometimes the word 'animal' related to the 'Chapter 1 Animal', and sometimes it related to the 'Chapter 6 Animal'. By mapping out these constellations, I could show that within the *same* conversation, the word 'animal', and the words 'violence', 'censorship', 'image', and so on, relate to different forms of life.

7.2 Ducks and rabbits; humans and animals

Wittgenstein used Joseph Jastrow's ambiguous duck-rabbit drawing to investigate how we talk about perception, seeing, observing, distinguishing, and so on. When looking at figure 7.2, a person might say that they see an image of rabbit. However, after a few moments they might say something like, "now I see an image of a duck."
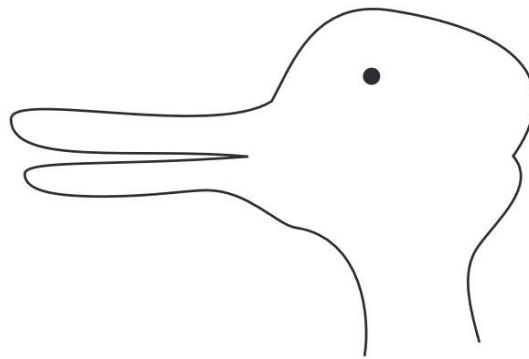
Figure 7.2: The duck–rabbit (Wittgenstein, 2009, pt.II, §118)

Wittgenstein was curious about the differences between the uses of the word 'see' in each instance. A person saw an image of a rabbit, *and then* they saw an image of a duck. What does it mean to say "*now* I see an image of a duck" when the image shown in figure 7.2 remains identical? We could ask this person what change they are alluding to (Wittgenstein, 2009, pt.II, §124). Did their perception change? Did their attitude or their understanding or their vison undergo any changes? We can imagine another person who has never seen a rabbit or a duck in their life and is even completely unaware of the words 'rabbit' and 'duck'. They could describe in minute detail every line and shape given in figure 7.2 and yet never *see* an image of a rabbit or a duck. What, then, does it mean when the first person, who sees the exact same lines and shapes as the second person, says that they *see* an image of a duck?

The constellation brought to light in this thesis might look something like a human. The word 'animal' when used to lump together chimpanzees, snails, and tree frogs, also places these individuals into a unitary, gargantuan category that exists separately from, and below 'humans'. So

too with live action moving images of animals. The crux of the examination in chapter 1 seemed to be that all visual representations of animals re-established a distinctly human perspective of the world. The reasons for the strict and seemingly insurmountable demarcation expressed between the word 'human' and the word 'animal', and expressed through the animal image, was shown to emanate outside of simple textual considerations. The theory that underpins this thesis meant that the examination of the word 'animal' and of animal imagery led to an examination of the concrete social practices, the forms of life, through which they were used. While visiting the zoo, it was shown that animal bodies are regulated and choreographed with neurochemical drugs, controlled diets, selective breeding programmes, and specially designed enclosures. In other words, animals are so completely instrumentalised that their bodies and behaviours form part of the material with which humans create images for themselves. While examining what is meant by 'violence', it was shown that causing an animal to suffer physically and/or psychologically was not in itself considered to be an act of violence. It is only if a human causes an animal to suffer "unnecessarily" that the infliction of pain is considered violent. The word "necessary" always seemed to relate to human needs. And while examining censorship, it was shown that the laws that regulate depictions of animal violence in British cinema do nothing to protect animals, but instead protect humans from seeing animals being harmed by filmmakers. The *1937 Act* ensures that humans are not harmed, either morally or emotionally, from seeing footage of violence being inflicted upon an animal. It seems, then, that the word 'animal' and the animal image is used to affirm and support the human.

If we follow Wittgenstein's imperative, "don't think, but look," the same stars start to reveal a different constellation. Returning to chapter 6, it was shown that causing an animal to suffer physically and/or psychologically is not considered to be an act of violence if it was done to satisfy human needs. But here we should ask *which* humans have their socioeconomic and cultural needs placed on the same level as the immediate physical and emotional needs of animals. Consider

the act of sending a half-naked child into a pitch-black, narrow cavern filled with toxic chemicals for twelve-hours a day (Turner and Blackie, 2018, p.25). Would it be an act of 'violence' to do this to a child if it was done purely for personal pleasure? Would it be an act of 'violence' for the owner of a coal mine to do this to a child? Or consider forcing individuals to spend the vast majority of their time in an environment that causes deafness, blindness, rheumatism, pneumonia, and bronchitis (Greenlees, 2016, p.465). Would it be an act of 'violence' to do this to a group of individuals simply to see what would happen? Would it be an act of 'violence' for the owner of a cotton mill to do this to the same group of individuals? Finally, consider forcing mothers into a situation where they must choose between drugging their new-born child with laudanum, or starving with that child in the streets (Lomax, 1973, p.172). Would it be an act of 'violence' to do this to the mothers for no reason at all? Would it be an act of 'violence' for the owner of a textile mill to do this to hundreds of mothers? The infliction of physical and psychological pain and suffering onto animals was deemed necessary if such abuses benefitted industry. Is the same not true for industrial workers who were made to endure physical and psychological pain and suffering?

In 21st century Britain, children are no longer sent down mines, cotton and textile mills are a thing of the past, and working mothers have child-minding options that extend beyond the pharmacological sedation of their infants. Like animals, it seems that the previously exploited humans have been offered more (although certainly not complete) protection under the law. There is, of course, a lot to unpack and examine with this claim. But for the purposes of this PhD thesis, what is important to note is that the immediate physical and psychological needs of the children in the mines, the workers in the cotton mills, and the mothers operating the jennies were placed on the same level as the financial needs of the owners of the mines and mills. In chapter 6 I argued that with so much more weight given to human needs than animal needs, the term 'necessary' in the *1911 Act*, and therefore the Act itself, remains anthropocentric. When there are countless

examples of humans who are treated in the same way, does it still make sense to describe such imbalances in UK law to be 'anthropocentric'? I argue that it does.

I showed that in UK law, human needs extend into cultural areas. But the application of the term 'necessary' is not uniformly spread across humans. At the same time that organisations such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) condemned dogfighting, the Royals themselves continued to massacre animals, with figures such as George VI killing twenty-nine tigers and ten rhinos during a two week trip to Nepal (Hancocks, 2001, p.41). Queen Elizabeth II and her late husband Prince Philip continued this tradition by killing Bengal tigers while Philip was in the process of becoming president of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF, 2012b; Farhoud and Lines, 2021). While legislation was passed to make bearbaiting, cockfighting, and the mistreatment of caged animals illegal, those same laws often explicitly made exceptions for activities such as fox-hunting (Radford, 2001, p.112). Setting one dog against another in a fight to the death was made illegal while setting a pack of dogs onto a single fox was considered sport. The horses, the packs of dogs, and the legal access to the swathes of land that are necessary to hunt and torture a fox are only available to certain type of humans. The money and the time away from work required to travel to India, hire a group of local guides and servants, buy ammunition, and transport several dozen corpses and a couple of prisoners back to the British Isles is also only available to certain types of humans. In other words, UK animal welfare laws are not designed to completely prevent animal cruelty, but instead work to control and regulate human behaviour, namely the proper way to cause an animal to experience sever pain and suffering. The zoo also expresses this imbalance through its acceptance of one form of violence, and its condemnation of another. London Zoo condemned the mistreatment of animals in menageries, travelling shows, and the use of animals in fights. But at the same time, London Zoo depended upon, and even celebrated, the violent practices of hunting, trapping, and shipping that secured their specimens. While making an argument in favour of zoos, Hilda Kean inadvertently expresses the antagonism

that I am trying to draw out regarding the disciplining of humans. In Kean's words (1998, p.43), people had to be "trained to regard animals previously seen in menageries as objects of fun as creatures worthy of awe and wonder." As chapter 4 of this thesis showed, London Zoo not only sought to provide a zoological education to the zoogoers, but a lesson on the proper way to treat animals. The lesson was: do not keep animals in small cages for entertainment purposes, but do hunt them, kill their parents, and keep them on display in open-air prisons. Like with the previous paragraph, there is a lot more to be said about the relationship between class, animal welfare, and tradition. But for the purposes of this PhD thesis, I am stressing a very specific point. The word 'necessary' when being used to justify the infliction of pain and suffering onto an animal is not uniformly applied across human cultures. Hunting is a "necessary" part of British culture, but dogfighting is not. The cultural value of hunting is elevated to the same level as the physical and phycological needs of animals, but dogfighting is rendered superfluous. In both instances animals suffer, but the suffering is only necessary in the former activity because it is an activity that upholds a particular image of the human. Animal welfare laws codify and regulate the proper way to cause an animal to suffer.

Recall my argument in chapter 4 regarding the construction of the animal image. In short, my argument was that animal bodies and behaviours are part of the material with which humans create and construct a living representative of an idealised and archetypal species. My argument was that zoo animals are images whose material support is flesh and blood, concrete and electric lighting, air conditioning and selective breeding programmes. Behavioural stereotypy (pacing in circles, the relentless scratching at the same spot in a cage, swaying back-and-forth, and so on) is "cured" through stimulation, enrichment, or even medication such as Prozac (Croke, 1997, p.38). The word 'cure' here refers to controlling an animal's body to prevent the animal from exhibiting behaviours that do not align with an idealised and prescribed set of proper behaviours. An elephant cured of their stereotypic behaviour does not pace back and forth, but they also do not migrate

and explore the savannah. African elephants living in a zoo will not be allowed to fight each other, and they will not find themselves fighting for their life against a pack of lions, even though this behaviour is seen in African elephants living in the wild. The physiology, behaviour, and habits of zoo animals are like the foliage, rocks, moats, and ponds of zoo enclosures in that they form part of the material support for the animal image. Behind an inescapable moat, surrounded by carefully manicured and designed foliage and rocks, under the constant gaze of zoo-goers, eating carefully controlled and prepared food, maintaining a 'healthy weight', is an image of a wild animal. Like with the previous two paragraphs, this distinction between animals and humans is not so clear. Volumes of texts have demonstrated the mechanisms of power that discipline human bodies in accordance with a particular image of the human. Prisons, the pharmaceutical industry, architecture, the human sciences, schools, food sciences, and so on, not only produce knowledge about the ideal or archetypal human, but they form part of the mechanisms of biopower. For example, what 'good' 'mental health' looks like is *produced* through scientific institutions deploying a particular set of methodologies. This knowledge is then used as part of the construction of the archetypal human being. Humans who are unable to conform to this image are both studied by different branches of the human sciences in order to *produce* ever more knowledge, and they are subject to a range of correctives that modified their behaviour in accordance with the ideal (Nadesan, 2008, p.142). As mentioned in chapter 2, there exist mass institutions in which "human beings are to be standardized by force" (Adorno, 2001, p.106) through such means as electroshock therapy, gay conversion therapy, solitary confinement, and so on. Outside of psychiatry, knowledge is constantly being produced about human beings, including 'healthy weight' (Evans and Colls, 2009; Wright and Harwood, 2012; Morris, 2020); proper behaviour (Raman and Tutton, 2010; Allen, 2011); gender and gender roles (Diamond and Quinby, 1988; Kirkup and Keller, 1992; Ramazanoglu, 1993); and so on. This is not to say that the mechanisms of power that control, discipline, and institutionalise animals are *identical* to those that structure humans. It is only to say that both the immediate, 'here-and-now' individual living in a zoo and the immediate, 'here-and-

now' individual peering into the enclosure are treated as an inferior manifestation of an idealised image of themselves.

So, to return to my claim that the imbalances identified in UK law are 'anthropocentric'. Does this still make sense even though there are countless examples of humans who, like animals, have their bodily needs placed on the same level as the financial and cultural needs of other humans. What do I mean by the word 'human'? Hopefully it is clear by now that I do not use it only to refer to the flesh-and-blood existence of 'human' individuals. To describe UK laws, such as the *1937 Act*, as anthropocentric is not to say that these laws satisfy the needs of flesh-and-blood 'human' individuals. The anthropocentric character of these laws emerges from the way that they discipline bodies to accord with a particular image of the human. Provocatively, we might say that humans are anthropomorphised. Animals and humans alike have their bodies and behaviours codified and regulated in line with a particular vision of the human. And so, the censorship of animal violence in British cinema is part of a larger constellation. Like Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit, at first glance one might see in this constellation something human, *and then* see something animal: a human-animal image. However, as we look closer, the constellation might also reveal a new image between the human and the animal. Perhaps this image fails to reveal itself because the constellation that I have constructed in this PhD thesis is confined to the textual dimension. Constellations are, as will be recalled, the relationship between language and the form of life through which that language is used. This textual constellation was constructed within a community that is bound together by the exploitation of animals and the exploitation of humans. Hopefully the fleeting image that starts to show itself in this constellation will one day be fully realised by being seen from a position within a form of life that has moved beyond such exploitation.

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Appendix One: *Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937*

[1 EDW. 8. &   *Cinematograph Films*   [CH. **59.**]
1 GEO. 6.]   (*Animals*) *Act*, 1937.

CHAPTER 59.

An Act to prohibit the exhibition or distribution of cinematograph films in connection with the production of which suffering may have been caused to animals; and for purposes connected therewith.   [30th July 1937.]

A.D. 1937.

BE it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :—

1.—(1) No person shall exhibit to the public, or supply to any person for public exhibition (whether by him or by another person), any cinematograph film (whether produced in Great Britain or elsewhere) if in connection with the production of the film any scene represented in the film was organised or directed in such a way as to involve the cruel infliction of pain or terror on any animal or the cruel goading of any animal to fury.

Prohibition of films involving cruelty to animals.

(2) In any proceedings brought under this Act in respect of any film, the court may (without prejudice to any other mode of proof) infer from the film as exhibited to the public or supplied for public exhibition, as the case may be, that a scene represented in the film as so exhibited or supplied was organised or directed in such a way as to involve the cruel infliction of pain or terror on an animal or the cruel goading of an animal to fury, but (whether the court draws such an inference or

1

[CH. **59.**]   *Cinematograph Films*   [1 EDW. 8. &
                     (Animals) Act, 1937.   1 GEO. 6.]

A.D. 1937. not) it shall be a defence for the defendant to prove
———   that he believed, and had reasonable cause to believe,
           that no scene so represented was so organised or directed.

(3) Any person contravening the provisions of this section shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

(4) For the purposes of this Act—

    (*a*) a cinematograph film shall be deemed to be exhibited to the public when, and only when, it is exhibited in a place to which for the time being members of the general public as such have access, whether on payment of money or otherwise, and the expression " public exhibition " shall be construed accordingly; and

1 & 2 Geo. 5. c. 27.

2 & 3 Geo. 5. c. 14.

    (*b*) the expression " animal " has the same meaning as in the Protection of Animals Act, 1911, and the Protection of Animals (Scotland) Act, 1912.

Short title and extent.

2.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act, 1937.

(2) This Act shall not extend to Northern Ireland.

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