

The Amateur Historian and the Electronic Archive: Identity, Power and the Function of Lists, Facts and Memories on "Video Nasty"-Themed Websites

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In a piece devoted to the gender dynamics of internet chatrooms, Lori Kendall argues that the web is a particularly useful receptacle for the performance of identities, and, in particular - considering that, according to her research, the web remains a male dominated realm - the performance of a variety of masculine identities. As she argues:

... because taken-for-granted visual cues are unavailable in online text-based communication, people must make choices about what to reveal about themselves, [and] how to describe themselves [...] The limitations and special factors of online interaction can thus make participants more conscious of both their own identity performances and their evaluation of others' identity performances (Kendall, 2000: 259).

My own research into "video nasty" websites was an attempt to test this hypothesis - to consider the nature of the relationship between online fans of the "nasties" and the object of the "nasty" itself, and the power relations and identity performances that might exist behind this relationship. Although my study was on a much smaller scale to Kendall's (in total I polled twenty "nasty" sites and followed "nasty" debate and discussion on four horror or cult-orientated message boards), some interesting themes, which relate to this idea of performed online (and implicitly gendered) identities, clearly emerged [1].

Sites differ in their origins. Some, such as *Video Carnage* and *I Fell in Love With a Video Nastie* are small operations, devoted solely to a discussion of previously banned video titles and reminiscences about the "video nasty" era of the early to mid 1980s. Others, such as the "nasty" pages in *Dark Angel's Realm of Horror*, *Hysteria/Slasher/Nasties*, *The Horrorscope* and *Keith's Flesheaters* exist as off-shoots of British fan sites devoted to horror films or exploitation cinema. Despite such differences, all sites adopted a similar approach in terms of the content and presentation of their information on the "nasties". Firstly, such sites showed an almost obsessional interest in lists, statistics, facts and numbers (usually based around censorship information relating to the "nasties") as well as frequently including sections devoted to memories and nostalgia. Secondly, on the whole, site creators appeared to want to allow the presentation and display of this information to foreground their ability to teach others about the "nasties", and thus allow this to strengthen the unique identity of the site and the site's creator.

Arguably, what also seems to mesh with these tendencies on "nasty" sites is the fact that, as far as it was possible to determine, and bearing in mind that, as a number of critics have identified, the internet is a form of media where gendered identities are frequently masked and indeterminate (for instance, see Bassett, 1997), such sites appeared to have been largely constructed by male fans and collectors of the "nasties" [2]. While this may seem a large theoretical "leap" to make (in terms of linking such tendencies to the site creator's gender), the work of other cultural critics can help to firm up this idea, in relation to my findings on "nasty" sites.

Firstly, such an approach, of presenting information and facts in a pedagogic manner, is something that Julian Hoxter also identifies in his study of fan sites devoted to *The Exorcist* (although, notably, he fails to link this up to the fact that

the majority of the *Exorcist* sites that he polled were also constructed by male fans [3]. As he argues:

In terms of content, the typical fan website is helpful and friendly in its tone, but it is helpful in the way of a "sage advisor". There is a pedagogic quality to the presentation of information. The site provides a service that has to do with pleasure certainly, but that service is offered on certain terms [...] and with the understanding that the visitor is there to be informed: to learn something. There is, in this way a kind of double play with the notion of fandom. All fans are equal and welcome, but this is *my* site, *my* contents (even if, as is often the case, every other site has many of the same entries) and I'm teaching you *my* way (Hoxter, 2000: 175).

Thus, if Hoxter's findings and my own findings are to be believed, such fan related sites: 1) appear to want to function, or present themselves as functioning, as educational forums, where the website creator has control through the wielding of information, and, through this wielding of information, is given the right not only to speak but to teach, and 2) to present the site as unique because it is their site, and, therefore, these facts belong to them. What Hoxter's observations suggest is that while such websites (based around banned horror video titles or censorship *cause celebres*) appear to be spaces that welcome others into the fold (and, indeed, at least on the "nasty" sites that I visited, frequent encouragement is made to visitors to supply the site creator with further information), such sites, on the whole, only welcome such visitors in on certain terms - namely that they should, fundamentally, appreciate and respect the autonomy of the website creator as teacher and guide.

Such an approach - where the collecting together, and wielding, of facts and figures allows the male "nasty" website creator to construct and maintain a distinctly powerful identity as a subcultural historian of the "nasties" - has key correlations to Joanne Hollows' recent work on the inherent masculinity of cult (or subcultural) audiences and their consumption patterns. Hollows, employing the theoretical approaches adopted by Sarah Thornton (1995) in her book *Club Cultures*, critiques the supposed democracy and liberality of certain types of cult or subcultural practices by suggesting how they hinge on ideas of distinction and exclusion - where the authentic practices of those who indulge in the obscure or forbidden (which the "video nasty", with its explicit status as a previously banned object, seems to exemplify) are always masculinised, in opposition to a supposedly feminine, mass and commercial mainstream. For Hollows, such authentic and implicitly masculine practices involve a series of oppositions which can be labelled as positively masculine versus negatively feminine - a serious and "intense" involvement in important cultural objects as opposed to a "random, directionless" disinterest in mere entertainment (Xavier Mendik and Graeme Harper cited in Hollows, forthcoming); an appreciation of the "public" arenas of the grubby "seedy" video outlet or grindhouse theatre versus the more "private" feminised space of the home; and, perhaps most notably, a conception of the fan as an authentic, and trivia-minded, collector as opposed to a mindless consumer of goods.

The collecting together of facts and figures on "nasty" websites can be seen as a part of the "nasty" fan's primary status as a collector of previously banned, imported or uncertified videos - with the primacy of this idea of the "nasty" fan as collector being clear on all websites I visited, in message board discussion (where fans' video collections were frequently discussed at length) and from the fan discourse (letters, editorials, classifieds, etc.) in such UK horror magazines as *The Dark Side*. Indeed, it should be noted, here, that, the approaches of magazines such as *The Dark Side* provide a key link to the layout and norms of the "nasty"

website. As websites often concede [4], the frequent source of some of the facts and information on such “nasty” sites are niche British horror magazines like *The Dark Side* (who often feature lists of “nasty” titles accompanied by facts, figures and statistics relating to their censorship and distribution histories). What this reveals is that the use of such lists in *The Dark Side* (as well as the magazine’s frequent use of memory and nostalgia in their discussions of the “nasty” era) [5] have become the staple means of discussing and consuming the “nasties”, for “nasty” collectors who, on the basis of a number of “nasty” sites, are also readers of such magazines. This observation has key correlations not only to Hollows’ work, but also to Brigid Cherry’s research into female horror audiences, where she notes that such audiences often avoid magazines like *The Dark Side*, because of their frequent misogyny and gore, but also, crucially, because of their obsession with trivia and facts (Cherry, 2002).

Taking both the observations of Hollows and Cherry into account, then, what this seems to suggest is that, while it cannot be assumed that all fans of the “nasty” are male (and this is not what I’m attempting to argue here), certain networks of “nasty” appreciation and fandom, utilised on the whole by male fans, have distinct norms (of employing facts, information and memories) which relate to the inherent masculinity that underpins dominant notions of cult collecting and consumption practices (identified by Hollows). Furthermore, such norms appear to be largely influenced by the approaches adopted by such niche publications as *The Dark Side*, a publication which, at least according to Cherry’s research, has a predominantly male readership. Arguably, then, it is such norms that are adopted on a significant number of “nasty” websites, and are then utilised in order to construct the “nasty” website creator’s identity as a powerful subcultural teacher and historian.

While this approach of collecting together facts and figures as a means of strengthening a male fan’s sense of identity can be seen (in Hollows’ terms) as a powerfully masculine act, it can also be viewed as a problematically masculine act, in the sense that knowledge, facts and collecting have an ambiguous position in relation to traditional notions of masculinity. As Will Straw acknowledges, in his study of the gender dynamics of record collecting:

... [there is an] uncertainty [...] rooted in competing images of the collection as cultural monument and private haven. Record collections are seen as both public displays of power/knowledge and private refuges from the sexual and social world; as either structures of control or the by-products of irrational and fetishistic obsession; as material evidence of the homosocial information-mongering which is one underpinning of male power and compensatory undertakings by those unable to wield that power (Straw, 1997: 4).

With this in mind, it is worth considering how such (in Hollows’ terms) implicitly masculine subcultural activities as the collecting of the facts, figures and materials surrounding an illicit or illegal object may not be as straightforwardly masculine, dominant and powerful as they may, at first, appear. For Straw, while such activities may appear, on the surface, to connote masculine authority (achieved through “public display”), they also suggest an irrational obsession with cultural artefacts and a regression into a private world. Indeed, as should be apparent, what is clear, here, is that if the links between collecting, knowledge and masculinity are underpinned by an “uncertainty” in terms of competing images of masculine identity, they are also underpinned, as the above Straw quote recognises, by a pull between notions of the public and the private (something which complicates Hollows’ notion that the “private” is always a feminised space and the “public” a distinctly masculine space).

The analysis that follows, then, focuses in on these male networks of “nasty” appreciation and consumption and looks in more detail at the nature of these pulls, between the private and the public and autonomy and insecurity, within the realms of male-orientated “nasty” website discourse. My aim will, firstly, and in line with Hoxter, be to demonstrate how male website creators present their sites as educational forums, or, to employ Jim Collins’ rhetoric, as “archives” (Collins, 1995), where facts and memories about the “nasties” are used to solidify the creator’s identity as a powerful subcultural teacher and historian. Secondly, my analysis will also attempt to demonstrate that such websites are based on a complicated meshing of the public and the historical, and the private and the personal, which hints at the “uncertainty” that exists behind such male identity projects, and which, in the more “public” arena of the message board, can lead to such approaches appearing defensive or combative, as opposed to powerful and masterful.

Checklists and Other Animals: The “Greedy Gathering” of Facts, Numbers and Lists

At the top of the home page of the *Video Carnage* website, the site’s creator opens with a mission statement which attempts to demonstrate the function and the purpose of the site to its visitors. It notes that:

This web-site is aimed primarily at building an archive of the many weird and wonderful films (horror, sleaze, exploitation, etc...) available on tape in the UK, before BBFC video certification came into force [...] I created *Video Carnage*. My own humble effort to try and preserve some of the memorable and not-so-memorable video releases of yesteryear **[6]**.

What such a statement immediately conveys is not so much the idea that the site will operate as a forum for discussion about the “nasties” (and other pre-certification videos) and the relative merits, or lack of merits, of the films concerned, but that the site’s primary function is to operate as an online archive of lost and forgotten videos - where materials and information will be “preserved” and offered up to those who visit the site. What such an approach immediately suggests is that this site is, in many respects, presented as a museum exhibit - put together and displayed by a sole curator, who collates and archives material for the benefit, and education, of others.

As Hoxter recognises, such an approach (where websites promote the unique and personal service of their site) appears counter to the fact that the majority of such sites often present similar content in remarkably similar formats. Indeed, the same staple information does tend to appear on the large majority of “nasty” sites - with sections being devoted to scanned video covers and stills of video covers, lists of different running times and distributor details for different versions of each video, lists of cuts imposed on each version of these videos, lists of alternative titles for each video, and a lengthy synopsis of the censorship background behind, and the press campaign against, the “nasties”.

Although the use of particular types of information often appears identical and standardised (in line with the fact that some of this information has been culled from, and influenced by, magazines or other published sources), it is notable that the information presented is often imperfect, inconsistent and does vary slightly from site to site. Thus, while entries for certain “nasty” titles will include an original ex-rental video cover (scanned on both sides) and a lengthy review, other

entries provide very little information, with maybe only a still of a video cover, or a scanned cover of an imported video or a DVD re-release, rather than an ex-rental original. These inconsistencies are quite obviously based on the fact that some of the information provided has been culled from the creators' own video collections (which, considering the illicit nature of some of the methods involved in "video nasty" collecting, will include a piecemeal mixture of videos obtained from a variety of sources and with a variety of origins). Indeed, it is admitted by certain websites that their information is rather general in places as they "...haven't had the pleasure of viewing all of [...the 'nasties'] yet" [7].

In some ways, it is this mish-mash of different pieces of information being collated together, and of significant gaps existing in this information, that gives each site its "human" dimension, and the sense that it is engaging in an ongoing, unique and original act of retrieving lost and forgotten facts and materials. Such a dimension, therefore, assists in presenting each site creator as an amateur historian, or, to use Jim Collins' terminology, a "popular archivist" (Collins, 1995: 27) - committed to the activity of hunting down and placing items and pieces of information in their collection of online artefacts. However, if this suggests, as the *Video Carnage* creator does, that this role of amateur historian is a "humble" activity, it also appears, in some ways, as a noble and heroic one - in the sense that such website constructors are putting together this archive for the benefit of others, and their subcultural education. While the fan's collection of videos, materials and facts could have been kept as a private haven of pleasure for the collector himself, they have been turned into a "public display" - which, through the site's supposed function as an archive, gives the website constructor a sense of contributing to cultural history and of contributing to a field of learning about the "nasty" and all that surrounds it.

However, if a number of facts and materials are amassed in this way on "nasty" websites (by plundering the creator's own private video collections and placing the materials therein for public display as a contribution to a cultural history which can benefit and enrich the sites' visitors), this "collective enterprise" (Straw, 1997: 6) seems to give the website constructor a sense of self-worth, in the sense that this is *his* contribution, of *his* facts and materials, on *his* website. While this sense of self-worth is convincingly achieved through the placing of materials online which belong to the archivist (in the sense that they originate from the archivist's collection), this does not account for the fact that a number of other materials and facts placed online quite obviously derive not from the website creators themselves (or even, primarily, from niche horror publications), but from academic, official, governmental or state sources.

Indeed, it is notable that, if "nasty" websites sometimes include pages of video covers, and sometimes include lists of running times, cuts and distributor details, every single site that I visited always has one central and identical staple - the Director of Public Prosecutions' (DPP) list of "video nasties" (or, more specifically, the list of videos that, in the early 1980s, were deemed liable for prosecution under the 1959 Obscene Publications Act). While the contents of this list vary from site to site - something which is perhaps inevitable, considering that the DPP frequently removed and added titles to the list prior to the passing of the 1984 Video Recordings Act - it is always included, and is often given the air of a being an "official" list (in particular, on the *Hysteria/Slasher/Nasties* site, where the list is introduced as "...the original, the infamous, the banned, the...video-nasties" and on *Wayney's Movie World*, where it's described as "...the DPP's original list of 'Video Nasties'" [8]).

In terms of Hoxter's initial comment, that such websites present information as *their* facts, which *they* own and that *they* will teach, the constant inclusion of this

list, and of other British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) press releases problematises what has been argued thus far. To put it simply, how can websites present these facts as their information, and as part of their archive, when the facts so obviously derive from official documents produced by governmental or state departments? A couple of clues can be obtained from a number of message board discussions surrounding the "nasties".

On a message board thread, set up as part of the *Guardian Unlimited* website, a long debate on the "video nasties" (stretching to 86 messages) is initiated by a posting which asks if others have seen any of the "nasties", and, if so, what their opinions are of them. While the initial debate centres around experiences of renting "nasties" in the 1980s, and of the merits of particular titles, this debate soon becomes subsumed by a discussion of which websites to look at, and which sources to use for further information and facts. Towards the end of the thread, the participants begin to discuss the intricacies of cuts to particular videos, and why such cuts were made by the censors. Constant references are made to BBFC decisions, culminating in the recommendation that: "if you want to keep track of the BBFC, check out <http://www.melonfarmers.co.uk> or visit their website at <http://www.bbfc.co.uk>. It has all their guidelines, press releases and other geek shit" [9].

This comment, although made as a simple and friendly recommendation to other message board users, is incredibly useful in its labelling of such official and governmental documents as "geek shit", and the use of this term reveals two related, but seemingly opposed, ideas. Firstly, there is the simple fact that these pieces of information, press releases and lists are not seen as "governmental shit" but "geek shit", and that they therefore seem to function, for such "nasty" enthusiasts, as sources for fan information, rather than as documents used and distributed amongst official bodies. What such an approach suggests is that not only is such information appropriated by the fan, but that, in some ways, the fan therefore owns it - it is their property, to use as they so desire.

If this comment suggests that such fans and website creators reclaim official sources as their collective property, it does not suggest how they use it and why they use it. A useful example of the purpose such information has for such fans and enthusiasts can again be found on a message board thread. Here, as with the previous example, a thread discussion is initiated by a fan who requests recollections and experiences of watching slasher films in the early 1980s. While the vast majority of this discussion is enacted by American fans, a separate debate (woven throughout the thread) begins to occur between two British message board users (one of whom, significantly, has his own "nasty" site, *Hysteria/Slasher/Nasties*), who commence a discussion of the intricacies of British censorship decisions. The "nasty" site creator, Justin (responding to mentions of such titles as *Nightmares in a Damaged Brain* and *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*) begins by explaining the background to the "video nasties" and the "video nasty" era to the message board's American users, with a number of his postings sounding exactly like entries from his website, where the "story" of the "nasties" is recounted in the form of a mock-history lesson (beginning with the phrase "when the Video Recordings Act came into being in the mid-80's...").

Justin's dominance over this discussion is suddenly broken by another British participant (Tim), who, while confirming that Justin is correct in his assumption that *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *The Exorcist* never appeared on the DPP's "nasty" list, notes that the former film was rejected by the BBFC in 1975 and had not been given a cinema release until the late 1990s. If this questioning of Justin's ability to hold mastery over official information does not fully succeed in bursting his "power bubble", Tim continues his posting by pasting in a

reproduction of the BBFC press release issued when the film was finally given a theatrical certificate. Justin then, in turn, admits defeat on this particular factual detail, but strikes back with a lengthy quotation from James Ferman, secretary of the BBFC at the time the film was resubmitted and rejected in 1977, culled from an academic book on censorship **[10]**.

While this message board thread seems to have the friendly air of users passing back and forth pieces of information, and of pooling together knowledge for the greater good (an important aspect of such threads), such a discussion also appears to be firmly based around the need for “nasty” fans to maintain their identity as teachers and guides, in the sense that official sources and facts can be used as “weapons” to win arguments and emerge as the proven expert. Further to this, it is interesting that Tim is able to reproduce an entire official source by visiting another website (in all likelihood, the BBFC site), and pasting it in to his own text. Here, the particular workings of the internet (where text from other sources can be retrieved from other sites, and can be re-incorporated as part of the fan’s message board text) appears as a particular advantage for such discussions - allowing for a literal reclaiming of such official texts as the property of the fan, for the purposes of authenticating and giving power to fan discussion and debate.

However, as this particular message board discussion should suggest, this reclaiming of official material may appear to be a positive and progressive act, but it also appears as an implicitly defensive one. While the messages posted by Justin and Tim appear, on the surface, as a friendly discussion, they appear to mutate into a “battle of wills” where one lecture on the intricacies of the “nasties” is counter-acted by another, and where, at sticky and awkward moments, sources of information are utilised to back up particular points. Thus, in the sense that such fan debates continue to fall-back on, and are dependent on, official and published sources to win arguments and retain their power to teach, it could be suggested that what underpins this approach is a defensiveness and an insecurity that such power will be taken away from them by a knowledgeable competitor, with a greater mastery over the facts concerned. As Julian Hoxter points out:

The acquisition of fan knowledge is about learning, certainly, but its display in websites often reads like the kind of learning Margot Waddell describes as the “...greedy gathering-of-facts-and-information” which, for her, signifies an overwhelming need for security [...]. Waddell cites a pattern of academic, intellectual or knowledge-based achievement of this sort in adolescent patients, whose motivations have very little to do with [...] “learning as understanding” and “for development”[...] and everything to do with a kind of intellectual consumption as defence (Hoxter, 2000: 179) **[11]**.

This notion of the fan gathering together knowledge and facts as an insecure, defensive display of learning is identified by both Kendall and Straw as a traditional characteristic of the nerd, who can be seen as using a mastery over facts or, in Kendall’s examples, technology as compensation for a lack of social and implicitly male power in the real (or off-line) world (and this is the second, and more obvious, connotation of the labelling of official sources as “geek shit”). Thus, for Straw, while “...nerdish dispositions are marked by their ability to turn virtually any domain of expertise into a series of numbers on a checklist” (Straw, 1997: 8), this is countered by the fact that “...canonical forms of nerdishness take shape around domains of knowledge [...] which may only in special circumstances emerge as heroic or eroticised...” (Straw, 1997: 10)**[12]**. If, in the world at large, such dispositions (and attempts to wield power through knowledge) may often fail to appear straightforwardly masculine and powerful, within the insular world of

the fan website, where hierarchies of power operate on different terms, such actions potentially give a sense of autonomy to the fan. The assumed geek ownership of facts and official sources becomes part of an attempt to contribute to and occupy the cultural history surrounding the "nasties".

It is with this in mind that I return to the question of why such official sources are utilised and reclaimed by such message board contributors and "nasty" website creators. If, as has traditionally been argued, subcultures and fan formations, of the kind of which the "nasties" culture is an example, have operated as subversive forces in society [13] - existing in opposition to established and dominant bodies and organisations (of which the DPP, the BBFC and, to some extent, academia in general are clear examples) - then why are the press releases, lists, published works and documents of such bodies reclaimed in this way, and used as a defensive tool by such fans?

For Hoxter, a major sense of insecurity for the fan, when considering their relationship to the object of their obsession, is the fact that "in normal circumstances, the fan can only ever aspire to becoming, at most, a post facto addition to the cultural meaning of [...] film" (Hoxter, 2000: 178). In terms of a number of fan cultures that centre around films, it is the background information surrounding the film itself (star profiles, production information and critical reception) that come together to give the film its cultural meaning. However, in terms of the "nasties", whose reputation and status is based more around the details of the press campaign against them and the subsequent state legislation which banned them, it is the activities of the government, the censors, and the media (in the form of the national press and campaigners) which have assisted in giving them a cultural meaning and a history.

In this sense, for fans to obtain any closeness to their favoured object, the history of the "nasties" needs not only to be recounted and preserved by fans, but, through the snatching back of facts from official bodies, to be wrenched away from those who have traditionally been seen as the main contributors to the "nasties" cultural meaning. Thus, while official sources are consistently utilised by such website creators, the bodies from whom such sources have been obtained or borrowed are consistently set up as the enemy (in a way which correlates with Hollows' notions of the need for male cult consumers to appear as authentic and radical). This theorised enemy or "other" appears to be a hugely malleable entity on such sites - while some cite specific bodies, or individuals, whom they are directly opposing (for instance, *Hysteria/Slasher/Nasties* has a section entitled "...why I grew up to hate the *Daily Mail!*" [14]), other sites use rather general terms to describe the perceived enemy, including such phrases as "the intelligentsia", "a certain vocal minority of so-called do-gooders", "the righteous fools", "the blue-rinsed octogenarians", "the media", and "society's intellectually challenged" [15].

It is perhaps the fact that this enemy is so vague and malleable that allows website creators to easily mock, dismiss and parody their antagonist or "other". For instance, in the *Dark Angel's Realm of Horror* message board, mysterious postings from a "Mrs Mary Whitehouse" argue for the banning of everything - from pigeons to gardening shears. As Mark Jancovich has pointed out, about the politics of cult fan formations in general:

...cult movie audiences are less an internally coherent "taste culture" than a series of frequently opposed and contradictory reading strategies that are defined through a sense of their difference to an equally incoherently imagined "normality", a loose conglomeration of corporate power, lower

middle class conformity and prudishness, academic elitism and political conspiracy (Jancovich, 2002: 315) **[16]**.

If, as website sections on the "nasties" censorship history often convey, it was this malleable enemy who not only removed their object of obsession from them (by banning it), but also, in the process, dismissed those who coveted it as social inadequates, deviants and, in extreme cases, perverts, then a sense of autonomy can be achieved by the fan by reclaiming the right to educate, to teach and to wield facts and statistics, and to proclaim, in a total reversal of logic that it is "them" ("normal" or dominant spheres of society) that are "intellectually challenged", and "us" (the fans) who are committed to an authentic, heroic, and truly factual, project of learning.

However, while this seems a powerful act on the part of "nasty" fans, and an act which redeems the problematic masculinity of their potential "nerd" or "geek" status, it still remains an act that fundamentally depends on those they so fervently oppose. If such fans want to obtain a sense of themselves as authentic and original educators and historians, and to achieve dominance over other fans by knowing the most facts, figures and information, then this can only be achieved 1) by "propping themselves up" with bookish and factual sources, which are wrenched away from their original contexts and reclaimed as their own, 2) by adopting a educational, pedagogic and journalistic tone, which replicates the tone and approaches of those newspapers, magazines, and books that they wish to distinguish themselves from, and 3) by closeting themselves away in the safe and secure realm of the website, where they call the shots and where power can be wielded without being challenged or questioned.

If this dependency on second-hand information is sometimes exposed in debates with other "nasty" fans (as in the message board discussion between Justin and Tim), then the fan can always unleash a second weapon to demonstrate their true authenticity, power and knowledge - their ability to reminisce and recount nostalgic memories and experiences about renting the films themselves. If one prominent staple of the "nasty" site is to collate together facts, materials and statistics, as a means of educating others and constructing a history around the object of their obsession, then another staple is the site section where creators regress away, not only into the private and autonomous haven of their online archive, but back in time to a nostalgic past - the "golden age" of the "video nasty".

The "Halcyon Days of Horror": Nostalgia and the Construction of a Male Rite of Passage

In terms of what has been argued thus far, it can be seen that the activities of "nasty" website creators are underpinned by a particularly contradictory logic. While the creation of an archive and the wielding of facts are presented as heroic and, implicitly, powerful activities within the confines of a "nasty" website, they could also, from an external point of view, be seen as irrational and anti-social activities - in the sense that such website creators are displaying an attachment to a series of lifeless objects, factual information and materials. The inclusion of sections which recount nostalgic memories on such sites seems to add to this sense that website creators are not just hiding behind facts, sources and materials, but are hiding away in a romanticised past.

This contradictory state of affairs is something that Fred Davis is quick to identify in his book-length study of nostalgia *Yearning for Yesterday*. Here, in one of the

few direct references to gender in the book, Davis confirms that nostalgia appears to be an activity and a tool that, historically, has tended to be utilised more by men than by women, and that, in some respects, this stands in opposition to the idea that nostalgia is popularly considered to be an emotional, irrational and, thus, a particularly feminised activity. As he argues:

Early studies, including the many by American psychologists during the 1930-1960 heyday of the "personality inventory" approach to behavioural phenomena, seemed to establish, though by no means conclusively, that men are the more nostalgic. This, of course, flies in the face of that familiar strain in popular thought which holds that women are the more sentimental, more romantic, more open to emotional influence, and in general more "feelings-orientated" and hence, one would infer, more nostalgia-prone (Davis, 1979: 55).

However, in another part of the book (devoted to nostalgia and identity), Davis attempts to demonstrate how nostalgia can be used as a powerful, rather than an emotional or regressive, tool, allowing a person to strengthen their sense of identity - by making them feel, through a use of past memories, that at one time in their life (in particular, in their adolescence or early adulthood) they were not only active and dynamic, but that they participated in radical, subversive and illicit activities. To put it simply, such an approach, and its use on "nasty" websites, can act as a demonstration that such fans were there at the beginning - doing radical things, opposing the mainstream and taking part in what would later become a phenomenon. As Davis puts it:

...[nostalgia] likes to fasten on those periods in our past when we thought and felt ourselves different; when we espoused minority tastes in movies, music, comics, clothes, and ice cream flavors; when our secret sorrows and exclusion from the mainstream seemed somehow more ennobling than the "vulgar enjoyments" of the crowd (Davis, 1979: 40).

This feeling of participating in illicit activities and of taking part in the making of the history of the "nasties" (before it was even known about or widely documented) does not just succeed in giving a unique autobiographical and "human" quality to each site. In contrast to the idea that a "nasty" archive is a stuffy, anti-social realm, this feeling also gives each site a sense of dynamism - mixing together the distinct romanticism of a past age, with the excitement, risk-taking and danger which are part and parcel of traditional ideas of what it's like to be young and male.

This pull (between romanticism and ideas of danger and risk-taking, or, to put it another way, emotional attachment and active participation) is something that comes across distinctly in the sections devoted to memories and nostalgia on a number of "nasty" sites. Notably, such stories operate in three different, but related, threads. Firstly, sub-headings or titles such as "growing up during a moral panic..." combine with stories of parents renting "nasties" and watching them in the family home, and of kids swapping stories about "nasties" in the schoolyard [17], to give a sense of how the "nasties" impacted on the fan's life - how it permeated their existence and how it was, to all intents and purposes, part and parcel of *their* generation.

Secondly, website creators pinpoint their particular personal and emotional relationship to the "nasties", through accounts of the delights of the early 1980s video-shop (replete with descriptions of dusty or dirty local shops, with over-sized rounded video cases, and gory posters on the wall, which stand in opposition to ideas of the stream-lined, and implicitly mainstream, *Blockbuster Video* type

outlets of today) [18], and their particular romantic attachment to such delights and the experiences that surrounded it. Thus, while one fan states that "I fell in love with a video nastie..." and talks about the local video shop which has now been turned into an Indian takeaway, another notes, in his site's opening mission statement, that "the early 80s in England were the halcyon days of horror films for me" [19].

Thirdly, while such descriptions demonstrate a distinct emotional attachment to imagined and romanticised times, places and objects from the fan's past life, these descriptions also demonstrate the fan's active participation in such a time, and the dangerous and illicit activities they took part in, in order to obtain and watch the object that fascinated them. As the *Hysteria/Slasher/Nasties* site notes:

...so, yes I did get to see quite a few horror movies - including some of those mythical nasties, on friends VCRs. Despite the virulent crackdown on all things dubious there were still a number of local shops that had the odd unsavoury item tucked away on a dusty shelf and would turn a blind eye to a trembling fourteen year old with his parents video card [20].

Here, the site creator not only demonstrates how the "nasties" phenomenon provided the background to his generation, and how he felt a sense of attachment to the "nasties", but also, notably, how he got involved himself, responding positively to the "nasties'" connotations of danger, illicitness and scarcity, taking his parents' video card into the video shop, and watching "nasties" on friends' VCRs.

These three approaches (in combination) allow the fan to demonstrate, and describe, how he was a part (and *is* a part) of a particular community of other fans - those of the same age, nationality and upbringing, and with the same cultural heritage. At the same time, the fan can demonstrate his own particular authentic status as someone who grew up with the "nasty", is intrinsically tied to it, and has participated in activities surrounding it from an early age. This demonstration of the fan's link to the "nasties" (through nostalgic descriptions of renting them and experiencing the "video nasty" era) seems to act, for this particular generation and particular group of internet-users, as a standard (almost default) way of demonstrating their status as truly authentic card-carrying "veterans" of a "nasties" subculture, with a true, deeply ingrained and long-running investment in all that is illicit and subversive. In addition to this, it also seems to act as a useful means of solidifying a website creator's identity as active and masculine, where descriptions of participating in the "nasty" phenomenon have a distinct air of male rites of passage (in the sense that such fans seem to talk about watching and renting the "nasties" as part of growing up, taking risks, and, implicitly, of becoming a man [21]).

To return to my initial observation, if this use of nostalgia and memory appears to operate as a way of solidifying a powerful and dynamic subcultural identity, it still does not account for the fact that such supposedly heroic activities exist in the past - that they are a subsidiary of the website creator's past identity, and not their present one. Indeed, it is noticeable that while websites remember, in a positive fashion, the dynamic activities of their past - where "nasties" were sought out and rented from the grubby local video shop, and stories were swapped in the schoolyard - these sites also express (as the comment about the Indian takeaway should demonstrate) a sense of regret that the video shop, and the consumption activities surrounding it, have changed. As the *Hysteria/Slasher/Nasties* site puts it: "...even the days where one or two 'nasties'

would cling to the shelves was in decline, gradually replaced by cut-to-shit Friday the 13th sequels, and soon there would [be] none left ..." [22].

Taking the earlier-cited mission statement from the creator of *Video Carnage* into consideration, it is apparent that such memories, while functioning on the one hand as a demonstration of the authenticity of the "nasty" website creator, are also offered up as particular materials that will be preserved in the website - alongside the facts and figures re-claimed from official bodies and the materials from the website creator's collections - as part of a unique "nasty" archive. In this sense, these materials operate almost like oral histories, presented as precious, undiscovered and unique artefacts and slotted into the "nasties" official cultural history (and thus, in some ways, allowing the fan to rewrite this history from their perspective). To employ the terms used by Stuart Tannock in his discussion of Bakhtin's nostalgic vision in *Rabelais and His World*, the use of nostalgia on such sites appears to be a key means of "...opening up a space in the historical record, of recuperating a set of practices and discourses, within which we can now read formerly illegible activities and potentialities of resistance" (Tannock, 1995: 462).

However, while the "nasty" website creator can use nostalgia to re-write a history of the "nasties" (a powerful act within itself), he can simultaneously justify the importance and uniqueness of his site and further demonstrate his own important position within an ongoing "nasty" subculture. While the gathering together and constructing of an online archive of his own memories is shown to be a goal that can only be achieved by the website creator himself (for the purposes of preserving the memories of a generation), it also, in turn, justifies his possession and control over the object of the "nasties" and the facts (official or un-official) surrounding it, as well as his right to teach others about these facts.

Thus, while the use of nostalgia by website creators can be seen as a highly progressive act (allowing the site creator to feel a sense of power and of direction for himself, and a sense that he is also participating in a shared subcultural project of archiving the memories, and the heritage, of a particular generation), it is still (in line with Hollows' arguments) based on the exclusion of others - whether those who are excluded from the particular narrative that is constructed around the "nasties" and its history, or those who refuse to "buy in to" and invest in the logic around which it is constructed.

While such exclusions operate to solidify and secure the carefully constructed world of the "nasty" website (and the logic around which it operates), there is always the danger that such excluded parties will "bite back" in more "public" fan arenas - exposing and challenging the "uncertainty" that underpins this approach. A discussion on the *Dark Angel's Realm of Horror* message board appears to provide a particularly illuminating example of this, where a debate occurs between a number of male and female horror fans.

The *Dark Angel* board, while claiming to be a general forum for the discussion of horror films, tends to concentrate, in the main, on discussions of collecting and watching the "nasties". While the board appears to be dominated by male horror fans, at least during the course of my research (from July to September 2001), two female horror fans also used the board. During the course of this time, an argument was initiated by one of these female fans (Andrea), as to the particular merits of the "nasty" title *I Spit on Your Grave*. Andrea argues, in ways which correlate with Cherry's observations on female horror fans (Cherry, 1999; Cherry, 2002), that this film (which, for her, is misogynist and "tasteless") gives horror fans a bad name, is vastly inferior to the "art" and "flair" of such films as *The Blair Witch Project* and *The Haunting*, and, as she puts it, allows for the "...painting [of] the picture that all horror fans are into snuff pics..." [23]. While

previous message board discussions involving Andrea had been friendly (experiences being shared with other fans of watching, enjoying and collecting horror films, including a number of "nasty" titles such as *The House by the Cemetery* and *Evil Speak*), this comment receives a particularly defensive response from the other message board users, including the other female participant, who defends the film as a feminist tract. In particular, one male participant (CJ) warns that "...you asked for it Andrea!!!", and then proceeds, in an argument which correlates with Hollows' observations, to dismiss Andrea's tastes as mainstream "Hollywood pap" and to defend *I Spit on Your Grave* and *Cannibal Holocaust* as "honest" and ground-breaking (in opposition to this "Hollywood pap"). He gives further power to his argument, in an approach which is based around all the power games and defensive displays that I have identified thus far, by acknowledging his status as a "qualified" fan who has been watching horror films for "over twenty years", and, most notably, by referencing the 1980s "video nasty" era as evidence that "...to the masses we are equally disturbed" [24].

Such a defence appears to be a means of telling Andrea "to get back in line", show other fans the respect they deserve [25], and "play by the rules of the game", but this is something that Andrea is clearly not willing to do. In a large spate of invective (running over several pages of message board discussion), Andrea notes that "...the year is not 1984...", that CJ's reference to the 1980s is "pointless", and, most markedly, that *I Spit on Your Grave* is a film that is valorised and adored by "...young dumb drive-in males or wannabe movie critics, helplessly repeating lines they have read in magazines or on the internet in a vain attempt to give validity to the kind of movies they watch". Notably, she also defends *The Blair Witch Project* by arguing that "...even Alan Bryce from [*The Dark Side*] liked it, and many of you seem to like to have your options written for you..." [26].

While I do not wish to offer this message board discussion as an emblematic example of the differences between male and female horror fans (indeed, as I've acknowledged, two female fans were on opposite sides of the argument in this particular discussion), it is particularly illuminating for two reasons. Most obviously, it correlates convincingly with Hollows' arguments, in terms of the frequent use of notions of the anti-commercial to defend and distinguish the tastes of male horror fans, or female horror fans who, in Hollows' terms, wish to present themselves as "culturally 'one of the boys'" (Thornton cited by Hollows, forthcoming). More interestingly for my purposes, what it also reveals is the extent to which facts and nostalgia can be used as a defence by male "nasty" fans, but a defence which, in its inherent insecurity, can be deflated by an excluded female opponent. By exposing all that other "nasty" fans wish to sideline and avoid about their carefully constructed online world, Andrea connects the fan's imputed maleness to a regression into the past ("...the year is not 1984...") and to a dependence on other people's words or opinions. As a result, she is able to devalorise all the supposed male power that has been set up around specific narratives of the "nasty" fan - allowing her to dismiss their logic as "pointless", "dumb" and unoriginal (insults which immediately deflate the fans' wish to prove themselves as authentic and original educators and important cultural historians).

Conclusion: The ambiguities and insecurities of the "popular archivist"

For Jim Collins, "the emergence of new repositories of information such as the computer network [...] exemplify the widespread reformulation of what constitutes an archive, and just as importantly what constitutes an archivist" (Collins, 1995: 25). As my analysis of "nasty" website discourse demonstrates, this new democracy of archivization (achieved through the emergence of the

web) has allowed male "nasty" fans to operate like even more liberated versions of Henry Jenkins' "textual poachers" (Jenkins, 1992), reclaiming official facts and collating memories, and giving them new uses and new meanings within the realm of the personal website.

Through the meshing together of the objective - facts, figures and lists - and the subjective - memories and nostalgia and the use of items from fans' collections - within online archives, such fans carve a niche for themselves between the public (fan magazines such as *The Dark Side*, as inspiration and primary source of the facts and information used on such sites, but also wider, more legitimate bodies such as the BBFC and the DPP) and the private (the individual activities of "nasty" video collectors, who watch, order and catalogue such videos in the private spaces of their homes).

However, as Will Straw recognises, while such approaches seem to have a social, dynamic and heroic bent (with published and establishment sources being reclaimed, with ongoing archives being constructed, with dynamic memories being recounted and preserved), they also have an anti-social and insecure flipside (a "propping up" with published sources, an emotional attachment to past objects and past times, a hiding away in the stuffy realm of the archive and the collection). What the existence of such a flipside reveals is that while the uses of the "video nasty" on such sites can operate as a means of obtaining a feeling of autonomy, power and activeness for the identity-seeking fan, the ambiguities that exist behind these uses always run the risk, on more free-flowing message board discussion, of being easily exposed and opened to criticism. Particularly, if the earlier-cited message board discussion is taken into consideration, by female horror fans with differing approaches to the appreciation or consumption of horror and/or cult cinema.

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Endnotes

[1] Most of this research was conducted during August and September 2001, using the <http://www.google.co.uk> search engine. I chose to disregard a number of sites that appeared amongst my search results (including the British Board of Film Classification site, a number of sites which dealt with the sale or exchange of "video nasties", and the infamous *Melonfarmers Video Hits* site), on the basis that I wanted to look at a representative sample of explicitly personal and unofficial sites. [back](#)

[2] Clear, in most cases, from either the site's URL (which frequently featured the name of the site creator), from the site's title, from the biographies or mission statements on such sites, or, in one instance (*Hysteria/Slasher/Nasties*), from the fact that the website creator used his real name in message board discussions. [back](#)

[3] As Hoxter acknowledges, "...my own investigation into Internet fan sites has concentrated, in as much as this is possible to ascertain given the structure of the

object of enquiry, on young, male (mainly British), adolescent fans of *The Exorcist*" (Hoxter, 2000: 174). [back](#)

[4] Most explicitly, *Dark Angel's Realm of Horror* references *The Dark Side* and recommends Allan Bryce's book (see note 5). See <http://website.lineone.net/~darkangel5/nasties.htm> (Accessed on: 28th August 2001). [back](#)

[5] To date, *The Dark Side* has published two special "nasty" issues, complete with a list of "nasty" titles, facts and figures, stills of original sleeves, and short reviews, in May 1992 and July 1996, with the second issue being produced due to reader demand, and the fact that the original issue had sold out. It also published a limited edition book, written by *The Dark Side's* editor, Allan Bryce, which included similar material (sleeves, censorship and distributor details, running times and short reviews). The centrality of nostalgia to *The Dark Side's* construction of the "nasties" is clear from an advertisement for this book, which featured in the magazine. The ad reads: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times [...] For all too short a time, movies like *Driller Killer*, *The Last House on the Left*, *Zombie Flesh Eaters* and *Cannibal Holocaust* were legally available in an uncut form, and we grabbed our viewing chances while we could" (*The Dark Side*, 1998: 48-49). In addition, Nigel Wingrove & Marc Morris' limited edition book, *The Art of the Nasty*, which is referenced in a number of message board discussions about the "nasties", also appears to be a key influence on the structure of such sites. [back](#)

[6] See <http://www.videocarnage.co.uk/vccontents.html> (Accessed on: 29th August 2001). [back](#)

[7] See <http://website.lineone.net/~darkangel5/nasties.htm> (Accessed on: 28th August 2001). Also see the "video nasty" list on http://www.south-over.demon.co.uk/Hysteria/slasher_nasties_1.html (Accessed on: 9th October 2000). [back](#)

[8] See http://www.south-over.demon.co.uk/Hysteria/slasher_nasties_1.html (Accessed on: 9th October 2000). [back](#)

[9] See Kittt, sent on: 19th May 2001, <http://filmtalk.guardian.co.uk/WebX?50@211.89sQfdXQmr6^0@.ee6ec50> (Accessed on: 4th September 2001). While *Melonfarmers Video Hits* is not an official site, it is also not strictly a personal site. Instead, it is widely known amongst fans and, increasingly, academics as an extensive and exhaustive provider of UK censorship information - detailing cuts to film and video releases in the UK, and often including lengthy press releases from the BBFC. [back](#)

[10] See Justin, "Texas Chainsaw vs. the BBFC"; Tim, "Chainsaw was rejected by the BBFC in 1975"; and Justin, "The Pornography of Terror", from: <http://www.mhvf.net/cgi-bin/anyboard.cg...z&aK=4810&gV=0&kQz=&a0=1&iWz=0> (All sent on: 8th October 2000, and accessed on: 4th September 2001). Incidentally, the book cited by Justin is Tom Dewe Matthews (1994), *Censored: What They Didn't Allow You to See, and Why: The Story of Film Censorship in Britain*, London: Chatto & Windus Ltd. [back](#)

[11] Hoxter takes the terms, and the idea of, "learning for understanding" and "for development" from Wilfred R. Bion (1991), *Learning From Experience*, London: Karnac. [back](#)

[12] Also see Lori Kendall's discussion of the problematic status of the nerd in terms of computer technology, where, for Kendall, an adeptness at computer technology, while seen as ambivalently masculine by society at large, can also

allow a person to indulge in "...aggressive displays of technical self-confidence..." (R. Wright cited in Kendall, 2000: 261). Another example of this nerdish disposition, where "any domain of expertise [is turned] into a series of numbers on a checklist", can be found on the *Dark Angel's Realm of Horror* message board, where participants frequently compare their personal lists of the top ten best banned videos. See, for instance, Darkest Desires, "All Time Top 10 Uncut/Banned Collectors List", (Sent on: 13th July 2001 from: http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=2500&date_query=995257783 (Accessed on: 5th September 2001) [back](#)

[13] I'm referring, here, to arguments in such classic subcultural texts as Dick Hebdige (1979), *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, London: Methuen, and Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, (eds.), (1976), *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*, London: Hutchinson. [back](#)

[14] See http://www.south-over.demon.co.uk/Hysteria/slasher_nasties_1.html (Accessed on: 9th October 2000) [back](#)

[15] See, for instance, <http://website.lineone.net/~darkangel5/vnphenom.htm> (Accessed on: 28th August 2001) and http://www.south-over.demon.co.uk/Hysteria/slasher_nasties_1.html (Accessed on: 9th October 2000). [back](#)

[16] Jancovich is explicitly concerned with issues of class-related distinction within cult fandom (using the work of Pierre Bourdieu). While the class demographic of "nasty" site creators would be even more difficult to determine than issues of gender, research into such issues (in terms of "nasty" collectors and fans) is something that would, arguably, be extremely illuminating, in the sense that issues of class quite clearly permeated the original "video nasty" press campaign and the Parliamentary Group Video Enquiry's *Video Violence and Children* report (for instance, see Petley, 2001). [back](#)

[17] See <http://www.geocities.com/spuffjockey19/nastie.html> (Accessed on: 4th September 2001) and http://www.south-over.demon.co.uk/Hysteria/slasher_nasties_1.html (Accessed on: 9th October 2000). Interestingly, when recently interviewing a "nasty" collector, such themes emerged again: the trips to the shop with his parents' video card and the story swapping in the schoolyard (where it was a recognised symbol of coolness to have watched *I Spit on Your Grave* and *The Evil Dead*). Notably, such discussions were not prompted by me, but were initiated by the respondent himself. (Interview with "Nasty" Collector, conducted on 14th June 2001). [back](#)

[18] This idea of dusty, dirty, marginal video shops as an implicitly masculine space is something which is developed by Hollows. Replacing the local video shop with the cult movie theatre (and noting its status a smelly, run-down space, on the outskirts of town), she argues that a sacralization of such spaces "...works to confirm the figure of the cult fan as a [...] 'manly adventurer' who sets out into the urban wilderness (Straw, 1997: 13), a position less open to women." (Hollows, forthcoming). [back](#)

[19] See: <http://www.geocities.com/spuffjockey19/nastie.html> (Accessed on: 4th September 2001) and <http://www.wayney.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/video%20nasties.htm> (Accessed on: 29th August 2001). Another website, *Videocream*, while being official and journalistic (rather than an unofficial fan-based site), is noteworthy, here, as it actually sets itself up as an electronic version of an "old-fashioned video shop", asking visitors to the site to enter the realm of "...the TV Cream Video Rental

Shop, where the shelves still heave under those slightly oversized video cases [...] you know, the ones with the rounded spine. You never see 'em any more...". See <http://tv.cream.org/videocream.htm> (Accessed on: 4th September 2001). [back](#)

[20] See http://www.south-over.demon.co.uk/Hysteria/slasher_nasties_1.html (Accessed on: 9th October 2000). [back](#)

[21] This air of "manliness" about the fan's nostalgically constructed era of the 1980s comes across again in a discussion on the *Dark Angel's Realm of Horror* message board, where a male participant notes, about the superiority of the "nasties" and other low-budget slasher films over more recent examples of the horror genre, that: "...my girlfriend would kill me for sayin it - but [...] The 80s were better because most were made on the tiniest budgets (you can tell), had LOADS more death scenes in, terrible storyline and dialogue and [...] loads of T/A". See Mutilator, "Girls Who Just Scream and Die", (sent on: 27th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3440>). (Accessed on: 28th August 2001). [back](#)

[22] See http://www.south-over.demon.co.uk/Hysteria/slasher_nasties_1.html (Accessed on: 9th October 2000). [back](#)

[23] See Andrea, "How Far is too Far?" (Sent on: 24th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3320>) "Please Don't Take This The Wrong Way But..." (Sent on: 24th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3326>) "Personal Insults?" (Sent on: 25th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3370>), (All Accessed on: 28th August 2001). [back](#)

[24] See Beatrice, "What Are You Missing?" (Sent on: 24th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3322>) CJ, "Re: Please Don't take this the Wrong Way But..." (Sent on: 24th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3343>); and Anonymous (but later equated to CJ), "Re: A Classic? Oh Please!" (Sent on: 25th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3372>) (All Accessed on: 28th August 2001). It is interesting, in some senses, that *The Blair Witch Project* and *Scream* are the films which are brought into this discussion, and attacked by CJ and the other female participant, Beatrice. For Mark Jancovich, *Scream* has provoked "struggles between horror audiences", with Jancovich arguing that the film's high budget and success with teenage females has allowed other fans to claim that such films are "...not just inauthentic horror but [...] are made for, and consumed by, inauthentic fans: young girls who cannot have the subcultural capital to define what is hip!" (Jancovich, 2000: 29-30). See also Timothy Noble's unpublished MA dissertation, which also explores these issues (using internet fan discourse) in relation to both *Scream* and *The Blair Witch Project* (Noble, 1999). [back](#)

[25] Or, as CJ puts it: "...I would appreciate a little more civility and respect, as I have shown you". See Anonymous (but later equated to CJ), "Re: A Classic? Oh Please!" (Sent on: 25th August 2001, from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3372>, Accessed on: 28th August 2001). [back](#)

[26] See Andrea, "A Classic? Oh please!" (from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3364>), Andrea, "Re: Oops...that was me above!! (nt)" (from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3375>), and Andrea,

"Personal Insults?" (from: <http://disc.server.com/discussion.cgi?id=126992&article=3370>) (All sent on: 25th August 2001, and accessed on: 28th August 2001). [back](#)

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