

106-448 Theorising the Spectator

**A Post-Cinema of Distractions: On the Genealogical
Constitution of Personal Videoblogging**

BY

Matthew Clayfield

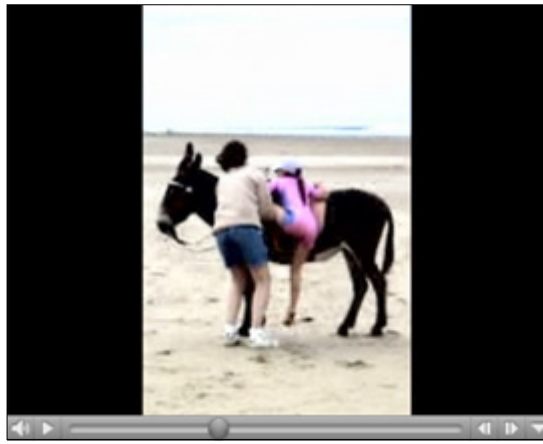


Figure 1. Duncan Speakman, 'Friends' (2005)

Instead of the cinema of attractions, we have the cinema of distractions.

(Nicholas Rombes in Adams 2005)

INTRODUCTION

This paper marks a preliminary attempt to think through the genealogical development of contemporary personal videoblogging insofar as it can be considered a kind of radicalised amalgamation of various other specular technologies, aesthetic strategies, and cultural practices of audiovisual production and reception. It identifies some, if by no means all, of personal videoblogging's constituent roots, tracing its developmental trajectory through pre- and early cinema, home movies and home video, and, briefly, broadcast television, laying the groundwork for a more comprehensive, and potentially more evaluative, genealogy.

SOME METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

As I demonstrate herein, personal videoblogging, like digital media more generally, is not at all an ahistorical phenomenon, emerging out of the ether perfectly formed, but rather a thoroughly overdetermined and radicalised one, endlessly evolving. Drawing upon numerous theoretical sources and a broad cross-section of textual examples, the paper appropriates these theoretical paradigms of overdetermination and radicalisation, mobilising them as its key methodological principles and using them to structure its inquiry. Before we begin, it might be an idea to consider these principles briefly, taking note of their combined import to my overall project.

The first of these principles, overdetermination, stresses the mutually interpenetrative influences of various phenomena on one another, refusing to afford explanatory primacy to any one element or actor. This refusal is at one and the same time essentially a refusal to subscribe to any deterministic teleology, be its privileged base technological, economic, cultural, or authorial-intentional. Such teleologies can only serve to reduce often complex historical developments to overly simplistic, and in my mind essentially misleading, narratives of monodirectional causality. I have no desire to write such a narrative for personal videoblogging here.

The second of these principles is what I refer to somewhat aphoristically as radicalisation, which emphasises, as a supplement to the widely accepted notion that certain phenomena return to us at the end of the twentieth century in digital media (Lister *et al.* 2003, p.149), the important qualification that they return to us qualitatively changed, or radicalised, their distinguishing characteristics taken to the extreme and maximised, if not taken beyond themselves entirely. I have borrowed this principle of radicalisation from Anthony Giddens (1990), who argues in his institutional analysis of modernity that, far from being absent in contemporary society, the defining characteristics of modernity have, on the contrary, been radicalised and exploited, becoming more or less all-pervasive in their influence. I have merely lifted this emphasis on radicalisation from Giddens' epochal inquiry and applied it to a far more specific field of audiovisual media.

The notion of radicalisation is important, I believe, for the way it forces us to think, not only of the continuities and parallels that exist between temporally quite separate phenomena, but also of the

inevitable mutations and perversions that occur between them as well (which are not, it should be pointed out, the same thing as discontinuities, of which there are obviously also many). An emphasis on radicalisation bespeaks a far more dynamic, and in my mind accurate, understanding of genealogical development than a somewhat static emphasis on recurrence or return does on its own. QuickTime is the Kinetoscope on acid. It is not the Kinetoscope itself.

THE GENEALOGICAL ROOTS

In the following section of the paper I outline what I consider to be some of the most significant genealogical influences on the technologies, aesthetics and cultural practices of contemporary personal videoblogging, breaking them down into three categories: ‘Pre- and Early Cinematic Influences’, ‘Amateur Home Movie and Video Practices’, and ‘The Televisual Image: Broadcast and Syndication’.

While I do believe that these categories provide a useful framework for thinking about the genealogy of videoblogging, it is also important to note that, despite my having distinguished them from one another here, namely for the sake of clarity and structure, in reality the boundaries between these various fields and practices are much hazier and ill-defined. Just as each of these categories feed into and inform the videoblogging medium, so too, in many cases, have they fed into and informed one another at various stages in their own unique developmental histories. Each of them is as much a result of overdetermination as videoblogging can be seen to be, a point worth keeping mind as connections between categories begin to emerge that space does not always allow me to draw out and make explicit.

Additionally, just because I have chosen to highlight these three categories here does not at all mean that videoblogging doesn’t have other genealogical roots that can’t or shouldn’t be explored, nor that I am necessarily correct in choosing these three in the first place. There is certainly a case to be made, for example, against my omission of certain hypertextual reading and writing practices and their influence on videoblogging, though to the extent that my study is concerned with the constitution of the medium in its contemporary, personalised form, which has by and large taken its cues from a number of other sources (for better or worse), I think that such an omission may for the time being be considered justified. I can only speculate as to whether future developments will force me to reconsider.

Which brings me—finally—to the good stuff.

PRE- AND EARLY CINEMATIC INFLUENCES

[D]igital media returns to us the repressed of cinema.

(Manovich 1999, p.192)

As has often been pointed out, particularly by Lev Manovich (1995, 1996, 1999), the radicalised, if not always conscious or intentional, reappropriation by new media of certain pre- and early cinematic forms (the loop [see Manovich 1995]), genres (the actuality), aesthetic strategies (the cinema of attractions and its “harnessing of visibility” [Gunning 1990, p.56]) and reception practices (individualised viewing of novelty-sized images) has been particularly significant. This reappropriation is indicative, firstly, of the qualitative affiliations, resonances and radical developments that often exist between temporally separate media, and, secondly, the extent to which the limitations and potentialities of a given technology can often be seen to determine the forms of expression available to media producers at a given historical moment. Bringing these points to bear on a practical example, Manovich (1995) has noted that

the introduction of QuickTime in 1991 can be compared to the introduction of the Kinetoscope in 1892: both were used to present short loops, both featured the images approximately two by three inches in size, [and] both called for private viewing rather than collective exhibition.

Following Manovich’s lead, one might be similarly compelled to argue that, if QuickTime can be seen as a radicalised Kinetoscope for the digital age, then personal videoblogging can arguably be seen as its ideal aesthetic counterpart, the cinema of attractions’ radicalised corollary, the post-cinema of distractions. We can begin to understand the extent to which this is true when we consider, firstly, videoblogging’s reappropriation of early cinema’s aesthetic of attraction, and, secondly, the manner in which digital media more generally encourages the same individualised reception practices as pre-cinematic technologies. I consider the first of these two points here; space unfortunately precludes a

discussion of the second (see instead the sections by Nicholas Rombes, Chuck Tyron and myself in Adams 2005).

Tom Gunning (1989, 1990) has identified an emphasis on privileged instances and singularities as one of the defining characteristics of what he calls the cinema of attractions, “a basic aesthetic of early cinema [...] which envisioned cinema as a series of visual shocks” (1989, p.116). Gunning writes of this cinema of attractions that it “[incites] visual curiosity” and “[supplies] pleasure through an exciting spectacle in itself—a unique event, whether fictional or documentary, that is of interest in itself” (1990, p.58). He proceeds to cite three examples of this aesthetic strategy at work in early cinema: Lumière’s *The Arrival of a Train at the Station* (1895), in which the tension between photographic realism and an emphasis on visual spectacle renders the image of approaching train at once both unnerving and exhilarating; Edison’s *Electrocuting an Elephant* (1903), in which the death of an elephant, by its very exoticism and novelty, arouses spectator curiosity; and *Photographing a Female Crook* (Biograph, 1904), in which forward-tracking camera movement seems to foregrounds itself as the film’s formal punctum simply by virtue of its taking place (1989, p.122-3).

As the disparity of these three examples seems to suggest, the overall logic of the cinema of attractions can be seen to allow for a number of different modes or methods, or types of attraction, by which viewer attention and curiosity may be solicited and rewarded. In *Electrocuting an Elephant*, it is the depicted event itself that is of most interest to the viewer; in *Photographing a Female Crook*, it is the formal tropism of camera movement. Obviously, the line separating such contentual and formal attractions is a tenuous one at best (particularly in the case of a film like *Photographing a Female Crook*, where the depicted image of the female crook may be considered interesting in and of itself as well), with certain fundamental similarities continuing to persist between the two. The most important of these is that both types of attraction continue to share an emphasis on their own singularity and that of the cinema of attractions in general on “the fulfilment of [viewer curiosity] by [a] brief moment of revelation [...]” (ibid., p.123). It is my belief that the vast majority of personal videoblog entries can be seen to share this same emphasis.

In his video ‘The art of storytelling – part 1’ (2005), practicing videoblogger Richard Bennett-Forrest, a.k.a. Richard BF, demonstrates, and explicitly encourages, the use by videobloggers of classical

Matthew Clayfield



narrative forms and storytelling devices to structure their videoblog entries. Arguing that such forms and devices have heretofore proven most effective at eliciting and retaining viewer attention, in videoblogging and elsewhere, Bennett-Forrest claims that “most of what we read, listen [to] or watch that we find interesting is in fact a story” (ibid.).

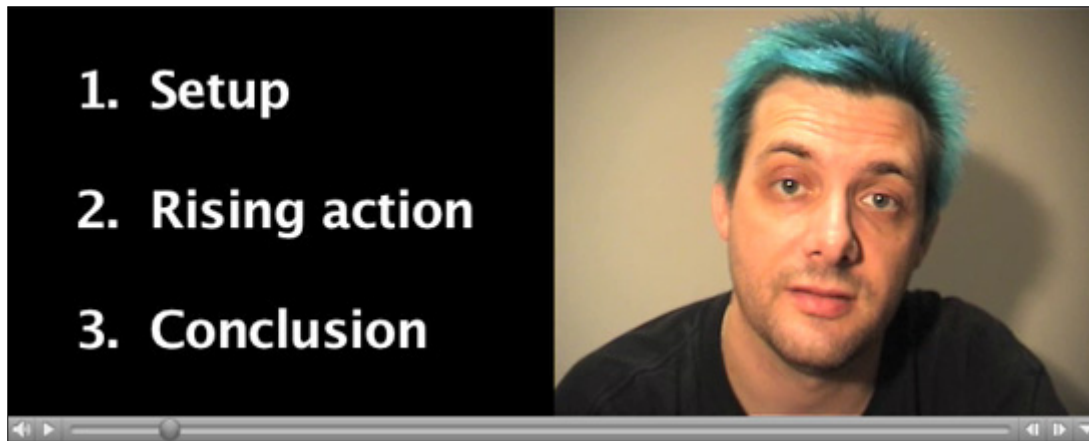


Figure 2. Richard BF, ‘The art of storytelling – part 1’ (2005) “[M]ost of what we read, listen [to] or watch that we find interesting is in fact a story.”

However, while it is certainly true that the videoblog medium, as a serial form, often lends itself towards ongoing or overarching narrative development (a point we shall come back to), with a few notable exceptions (of which Richard BF himself is one), the vast majority of personal videobloggers, including most of Richard’s cited examples, can in actual fact be seen to structure their individual videoblog entries, not around stories or developing narrative situations, but rather around singular ideas, instances, and events, much like the cinema of attractions. These singularities, of interest for either the uniqueness of their depicted content or their aesthetic-formal qualities, or both, are just as effective as narrative, if not more so, at soliciting and satisfying viewer attention. These points prove instructive as we begin to consider the internal logics of individual videos.

Although much personal videoblogging is typified by its quotidian content (as I discuss in the section entitled ‘Amateur Home Movie and Video Practices’), we shouldn’t forget the extent to which the everyday is itself typified by a surplus of unique instances and events, special occasions, and so on, which are, or at the very least can be considered, interesting in and of themselves. If the reader can forgive a foray into self-congratulatory hubris, we might cite a number of my own videoblog entries, not only for the novelty of the profilmic events which they depict, but also for the range of forms they



Figure 3. Matthew Clayfield, ‘The Sound of Pushups’ (2005)



Figure 4. Matthew Clayfield, ‘A Country Football Match’ (2005)

suggest the depiction of these events may take. ‘The Sound of Pushups’ (2005), ‘Adrian Martin on the Australian Film Industry’ (2005) and ‘A Country Football Match’ (2005) all solicit viewer attention by and through the novelty of their depicted profilmic content, but use considerably (or at least relatively) different approaches to do so (and find themselves dealing with different types of singularity as a result). ‘The Sound of Pushups’ presents a quotidian yet sufficiently novel (or at least unnervingly strange) event—myself exercising to Rodgers and Hammerstein’s ‘Sixteen Going On Seventeen’—of interest in and of itself, irrespective of its contextual relation to my life or the rest of my vlogblog (the whole of which it is a qualitatively constituent part), functioning very much like the contextually abstracted electrocution of the elephant in

Edison’s early actuality. ‘Adrian Martin on the Australian

Film Industry’ takes the form of a monologue or lecture, if not quite that of a media soundbyte (the interview form is comparable here also), and is again sufficiently interesting in and of itself (though probably to a smaller group of people) not to require any further contextual or narrative information. One of the vlogosphere’s most famous examples of this form of attraction is Michael Verdi’s ‘Vlog Anarchy’ (2005). ‘A Country Football Match’, while clearly not as molecular as either of the other two examples, strings together a number of minor instants (the dog on the field, the shot of the sun) to effect an aggregate image of the country football match as a still relatively singular, not narrative *per se*, but rather experientially and accumulatively affective, profilmic event.

Where these examples can be seen to elicit viewer attention with more or less contentual attractions, following in the footsteps of *Electrocuting an Elephant*, a number of more experimental personal vlogblogs, such as Duncan Speakman’s *29fragiledays* and Charlene Rule’s *Scratch Video*, can be seen to concern themselves with more explicitly aesthetic attractions, following in the footsteps of

Photographing a Female Crook. Of course, today, with a few notable exceptions, camera movement alone is no longer of interest in and of itself, and the harnessing of the spectator's eye and ear thus requires something more. The individual videos of these videobloggers, made possible by the development of powerful consumer-level post-production software (as discussed in the following section), are often complex, artistic, and genuinely beautiful works, both visually and aurally (in fact sometimes especially aurally). The deft manipulation of tone, colour, framing, motion and temporality in a video like



Figure 4. Duncan Speakman, 'Shelter' (2005)

Speakman's 'Shelter' (2005), not to mention the manipulation of raw and non-diegetic sound, effectively illustrates—in a very literal sense—Manovich's claim that cinema "is no longer an indexical media technology but, rather, a sub-genre of painting" (1995). Speakman's incitement of spectatorial curiosity and pleasure seems almost purely aesthetic.

In the same way that each of my three videos could be seen to be concerned with a more or less singular contentual event, so too can the individual entries of this more painterly type of personal videoblog be seen to concern themselves with formal and aesthetic singularities. Rules' work is exemplary in this respect, with each video effectively demonstrating the potentialities of a certain



Figure 5. Charlene Rule, 'Spherical Subway' (2005)

technique or manipulation, from time-lapse photography ('Brooklyn Snow Storm' [2006]) to the use of a surveillance camera ('Spherical Subway' [2006]).

Of course, the line between contentual and formal attractions, here as in Gunning's examples, is ultimately a little arbitrary. Rule's 'Brooklyn Snow', for example, is arguably just as interesting for its profilmic content (the morning after a blizzard) as it is for its aestheticisation of it, and, similarly, though the aestheticisation of my videoblog content is much less explicit or painterly than Speakman's or Rule's, it remains incredibly important to my work. The point is not that a videoblog entry must be either

contentual or formal in its interest, but rather that it constitutes a more or less singular attraction, of which there are various types, in the first place. In this respect, videoblogging can quite clearly be seen to be genealogically contiguous with the cinema of attractions.

Additionally, to return to the fact of videoblogging's serial form and its tendency towards overarching order on a molar level, if one's individual videoblog entries, when taken together, at all seem to suggest some sort of overarching narrative—typically that of the videoblogger's life, given the medium's roots in the home mode (see the following section)—then they do so to the extent that they have effected this narrative from an endless flow of banal singularities, standalone events, occasional privileged instants and “brief moment[s] of revelation” (Gunning 1989, p.123), which each individual video ultimately depicts but one of. We can here begin to see how personal videoblogging not only adopts but also radicalises pre- and early cinema's aesthetic of attractions, adding to its emphasis on singular contentual and formal-aesthetic attractions a corollary emphasis on their progressive accumulation over time as qualitatively constituent parts of an ever-evolving whole.

AMATEUR HOME MOVIE AND VIDEO PRACTICES

Mundane is the new punk rock.

(Old Videoblogger Proverb, see Olsen 2005)

Personal videoblogging can also be seen as having made a significant contribution to the history and development of the home mode of amateur visual practices, among which we might include amateur photography ('snapshotting'), home moviemaking, and home video practices. Videoblogging's connection to this mode is at once both technological and functional, its further development or radicalisation of it, as we shall see, particularly extreme.

Following visual anthropologist Richard Chalfen, James M. Moran (2002) has established a functional taxonomy of the home mode of visual representation, in which he defines it as "an authentic, active mode of media production for representing everyday life" (p.59). It is, he argues, to be distinguished from other modes, most notably those of professional and industrial origin, by its amateur aesthetic, quotidian content, and autobiographical-historical functions (p.36).

Clearly, much personal videoblogging can be seen to exhibit these same characteristics, though we



Figure 6. Jay Dedman, '3 of 7 Videoblogging Week 2005' (2005)

might cite, to take but one example, the work of Jay Dedman as particularly illustrative of an almost traditional home mode practice. Dedman's work is particularly notable for its emphasis on videoblogging's autobiographical-historical functions, the videoblogger championing the medium as a form of historical documentation. In addition to his intentionally unpolished amateurism and pointedly mundane content, Dedman has

suggested that "moments you've recorded of yourself will become like gold to your offspring and other cultural farmers" and that "regular citizens recording their lives [...] over several generations will change how history is told" (2005). In this, he echoes Moran's claim that

in every home video [...] we will find a tension between the autobiographical and the historical, between a conscious desire to tell our own stories in the present and an unconscious concession that others will tell about us in the future.” (p.61)

To greater or lesser extent, I would argue, most, if not all, personal videoblogs retain some residual trace of this autobiographical-historical function of the home mode. If nothing else, the very notion of the permalink, inscribed as it is in blogging software, demands—or at least encourages—the artefactuality, as opposed to ephemerality, of the videoblog entry.

However, not all videoblogs are as exemplary of the home mode as Dedman’s appears to be. Indeed, there are also countless examples of personal videoblogs that only exhibit one or two of the home mode’s defining characteristics at any given time, usually as authorial intention calls for them. Dave Huth of *90 Seconds of Dave*,



Figure 7. Dave Huth, ‘Extraordinary Things 2’ (2005)

for example, while dealing almost exclusively with typically quotidian home mode content, often does so in a highly aestheticised manner, rejecting the amateur handheld camera of Dedman for a more professional- (or at least semi-professional)-looking *mise en scène*. The same is true of both *29fragiledays* and *Scratch Video*, which we have already discussed as exemplary of videoblogging’s radicalised aesthetic of attractions. Two less extreme, slightly more ambiguous, examples would be the videoblogs of Josh Leo and Steve Garfield, which, while retaining a semi-amateur aesthetic and the home mode’s emphasis on the everyday, also adopt certain aesthetic tropes (non-diegetic soundtracks, opening titles) and modes of address that bespeak other, non-home mode, influences. The proliferation of this second type of personal videoblog, which borrows from the home mode while simultaneously departing from it—or rather radicalising or perverting it—has been made possible by the development of certain technologies, which have been developed in response to authorial intentions at the same time as they have shaped them. We shall consider some of these now.

Departing from and improving on Chalfen in its historicisation the home mode, stressing a sort of soft technological determination (though not, it should be noted, technological determinism), Moran's work is particularly valuable for the emphasis it places upon home mode artefacts as "end products of specific media apparatuses" (p.37) and for its exploration of how the specificity of substrate and apparatus affect and differentiate various production and exhibition practices. Celluloid, for example, as a costly, silent, non-reusable substrate that requires high light levels and professional processing, can be seen to encourage brevity of shot length, selectivity of content, increased control of the profilmic event, outdoor shooting (for lighting reasons), and an increased emphasis on the visual or iconographic (due in part to lack of sound). In contrast, video, a relatively cheap, sync-sound, reusable medium that requires little light and no special processing, encourages continual shooting, an indiscriminate willingness to embrace the aleatoric and the mundane (tape is cheap), indoor shooting (light is no longer a significant restriction), and, with the introduction of synchronous sound, direct address and on-screen narration (p.40-1). In terms of exhibition, too, Moran discusses the ways in which technology—particularly the projection or transmission apparatus—determines receptive practice (p.42).

The development of digital video can be seen as yet a further technological determination, or radicalisation, affecting the practices that constitute the home mode, particularly as regards postproduction, distribution and exhibition. We can pinpoint three technological developments that are especially important here.

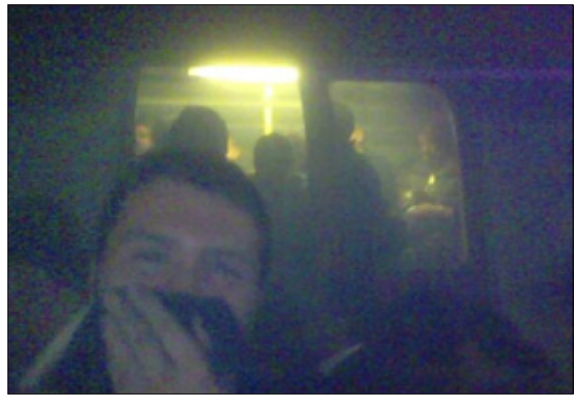
The development of digital imaging devices, which record images and sounds to tape, or, more recently, removable storage devices (flash disks, DVDs, hard drives, etc.), not as analogue signals, but rather as binary code. This has been particularly significant for the way in which it has allowed for the comparatively simple manipulation of recorded audiovisual data. These devices not only include digital camcorders, but also, increasingly, smaller digital still cameras, mobile phones, and indeed anything else with an optional 'Movie Mode.' As a result, just as video "substantially increase[d] the potential range and volume of events and behaviours [to be] recorded during home mode production" (p.41), so too has the development of these increasingly portable imaging devices opened up even greater possibilities. The low-quality videos of people leaping to their deaths from the burning World Trade Centre towers on September 11 2001 and the still images taken with mobile phones following the London bombings on

July 7 2005 can in many ways be considered end products of a radicalised home mode practice, albeit terrible ones. The fact that such images were so quickly disseminated is also relevant, as I discuss below.

The development of consumer-level post-production software, which, directly related to the development of digital imaging devices, has made it possible for amateur and home users to edit their home movies into semi-professional works, such as the aforementioned videoblog entries of Speakman, Rule and Huth, often complete with titles, credits, and so on, which they can then either burn to DVD, compress and e-mail to family and friends, or—what else?—upload to the web.

The development of networks and social software, which, as Manovich points out (in Adams 2005), “facilitate movement of information between people” and include “SMS, forward and redirect function in E-mail clients, mailing lists, Web links, RSS [Really Simple Syndication], blogs, social bookmarking, tagging, publishing [...], peer-to-peer networks, Web services, Bluetooth, FireWire,” and so on. These “paths”, as Manovich calls them (ibid.), radicalise the home mode in the sense that they make home mode artefacts available to a far wider audience than they have heretofore been available to, thus transforming it from a private mode into an increasingly public one.

The example of 9/11 and London bombing artefacts is again particularly relevant here. The immediacy of their dissemination and breadth of their exposure, particularly in the latter case (images from the tube were online within minutes of the attack and were no longer restricted to the traditional home mode audience of family and friends), are to be seen as indicative of a truly radical development of the nature of the mode. Some further, perhaps less appealing, ramifications of the development of such distribution methods are discussed in the following section.



Figures 8 & 9. Still images taken with mobile phones following the London bombings.

Clearly, these three developments and their affects on the home mode can clearly be seen to directly inform—and indeed, in the case of the first two, make possible—personal videoblogging practice, not to mention new amateur and home mode practices more generally. The third of these developments is particularly notable for the way in which it has effected a major qualitative change in the distribution and reception of home mode artefacts. We shall discuss this development further, albeit briefly, in the following section.

THE TELEVISUAL IMAGE: BROADCAST AND SYNDICATION

At the risk of pushing the analogy farther than it can reasonably withstand, and arguably veering towards a kind of teleology of return in doing so, one might nevertheless say that if QuickTime is comparable to the Kinetoscope, and videoblogging to the cinema of attractions, then the video iPod might in its own way be seen as radicalised version of the televisual apparatus, or at least the VCR. Indeed, increasingly, with the introduction of tools like RSS and devices like the video iPod, digital media in general, and contemporary personal videoblogging in particular, has come more and more to resemble television, not only in terms of form and format (though this is certainly true [see Clayfield 2006]), but in terms of distribution and exhibition practices as well. We shall consider but one of these resemblances here, though it remains a particularly important one.

Hinted upon in the last section, the development of RSS technology has, as Adrian Miles acknowledges, “provide[d] the infrastructure for the development of an alternative distribution regime [...] [leading] to a rise of audiovisual ‘prosumer’ commentary on a variety of topics” (2006a, p.215). As Miles notes, this development is impressive, particularly in light of our discussion of the home mode, though not without its problems. He continues:

While the viewpoints expressed in such content may provide an alternative to the views covered in the mainstream media, the forms of audio and video which are distributed and published via blogs remain resolutely conservative in their interpretation of how audio and video [function] as a material practice and object: by and large, they continue to follow those media forms and formats which have been established over the course of decades in the broadcast media. (p.216-7)

And thus we unwittingly stumble upon the reason this paper omits hypertextual reading and writing practices from its genealogy: the overpowering formal influence of broadcast technology and its corollary formal conservatism, both of which have been compounded by the widespread utilisation in the vlogosphere of RSS as a broadcast and syndication technology. The development of the video iPod and

other non-networked viewing devices can be seen as an extension of this tendency. The video iPod, as I have argued elsewhere (Adams 2005), is essentially a hardcopy device, only capable of handling network-ignorant material. It necessarily follows that the advent of distribution practices such as pod- and videocasting, which both demanded and have emerged in response to the fact that programs such as Apple's iTunes and FireAnt can now automatically download syndicated audiovisual content to external viewing platforms, "effectively drain[s] networked video of its immanent hypertextual and softvideographic potential [...] thus [constituting] the apparatus as an intravenous drip" (Clayfield 2006) and neutering what could have potentially been a rich source of new forms and relations. If these devices can be seen to mark an intriguing (and certainly radicalised) new chapter in the history of time-shifting and Raymond Williams' concept of "mobilised privatization" (1975; see in particular the sections by Nicholas Rombes, Chuck Tyron and myself in Adams 2005), the extent to which they preclude so many possibilities for media makers can only be detrimental, the technological limitations of these devices insofar as they can be considered exhibition apparatuses essentially demanding the holistic and hardcopy bodies of traditional film and television at the expense of the malleable, fragmented and interpenetrative bodies of post-cinema and the network.

CONCLUSION, OR: TO BE CONTINUED...

To the extent that I have hopefully gotten the ball rolling on this genealogical project of ours, it should also be made abundantly clear that I feel as though am leaving this paper essentially unfinished. So much remains left to say; we're not even half way there. It is for this reason that, in conclusion, I would like, firstly, to briefly summarise the points I have made thus far, and then, secondly, to point out those I wish I had the space to make in the first place and will endeavour to make in future revisions. So:

Personal videoblogging can clearly be seen to appropriate the cinema of attractions' aesthetic emphasis on the contentual or formal singularity, adding to it an emphasis on the accumulation of these singularities as constitutive parts of an ever-evolving whole. There are hints of Deleuzian becoming in this that Adrian Miles (2006b) has recently begun to tease out. In future work I wish to emphasise this point as it relates to personal videobloggers' reflexive exploration and ongoing construction of personal identity and the modes of self-representation they employ in this process.

Personal videoblogging is also very clearly a continuation and radicalisation of the home mode of visual representation, particularly as regards distribution practices, the influence of televisual broadcast and syndication on which has been simultaneously significant and formally restrictive. I wish in the future to expand considerably upon this section on home mode and its intentional appropriation and/or unknowing perversion by television, exploring the ways in which, firstly, these developments can be seen to affect, not only the formal qualities of home mode artefacts, but also the intentions of home practitioners.

Finally, I wish to explore the complex web of relations that exists between personal videoblogging's singular objects and serial form, distribution practices of syndication, external viewing devices and mobile privatisation, alienation and radicalised modernity, and the category—at once aesthetic, economic, ideological and ontological—of distraction (radicalised, of course).

This paper is a step.

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