

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

1. See Robinson, who points out that many Hollywood films “frame the male body in a narrative that moves from objectification/eroticization, through a temporary destruction that ‘masochizes’ the male body, and ends in a regeneration of that body and a reemergence of the phallic masculinity” (141). See also Fradley, who sees “masochistic spectacles of heroically suffering white men” as “the key trope in recent Hollywood action cinema” (239).
2. According to Jeffords, “sequentiality itself was one of the mechanisms for Hollywood responses to crises in the representation and marketing of U.S. masculinities in this period” (“Masculinity” 247).
3. Another important trend consists in the practice of “front-leading the picture [...] diminishing the potential damage done to weak pictures by negative reviews and poor word of mouth” (Schatz 19).
4. See Greven’s discussion of the “rise of the double-protagonist film” (9). Greven claims that this doubling shows that “manhood’s center cannot hold [...] that the burden of male representation must be carried by two stars rather than one” (125).
5. See Greven’s claim that “a struggle between narcissistic and masochistic modes of manhood defines Hollywood masculinity in the Bush-to-Bush period” (4).
6. Schatz’s claim that there are only two genres left, comedy and action-adventure (33), can be read as an acknowledgment of this trend.
7. Bordwell also notes the increasing importance of irony and “playful knowingness” (7).
8. While we appreciate the historical impact and innovative insights in Laura Mulvey’s theories on spectatorship, we follow newer studies that assume that the male body is a spectacle in its own right (Powrie/Davies/Babington 3).
9. See Robin Wood, who claims that “the hysteria died out but the overemphasis on ultra-macho masculinity did not: the 90s has [*sic*] merely substituted a kinder, less blatant, less parodic, and less downright silly form of it” (xxxvi).
10. On the central role of blockbuster films for the financial viability of Hollywood, see Maltby 36–40.
11. See Lewis, who claims that “nineties American film went soft politically” (5). Lewis too interprets the absence of overt political messages as an economic strategy.
12. See Michael Wood, who remarks that “problem movies, over the years, have helped us to understand the ‘problems’ they themselves created” (128).
13. See also King, who claims that films “offer fantasies of recuperation in which real social issues are raised and resolved at an imaginary level” (*New Hollywood* 109).
14. See Brady, who points out that in movies “psychology is not a deviation from politics; it is politics” (135). See also Dyer, who explains that the star system reinforces this trend: “stars with obvious political associations act unavoidably to obscure the political issues

- they embody simply by demonstrating the life-style of their politics and displaying those political beliefs as an aspect of their personality” (*Stars* 31).
15. King makes a similar claim: “The desire to appeal to a mass market is likely to produce a degree of built-in incoherence and conflicting demands” (*Narratives* 4).

CHAPTER 2

1. On fighting and killing women in film, see the essays in Andris and Frederick; Powers, Rothman and Rothman 167.
2. On corrupt cops as a movie theme, see Powers, Rothman and Rothman, particularly 101–19.
3. See, for example, the description of FBI agent Krendler and Lecter’s victim Mason Verger as more odious monsters than Lecter himself in Picart and Greek, “The Compulsions” 246.
4. Period pieces set in the more recent past, such as *L.A. Confidential*, show us screen detectives whose ethical stance is much more embattled than that of *Sleepy Hollow*’s straightforward Constable Crane.
5. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the ethical brain or brawn detective has moved to television, where he most often works for an equally incorruptible justice system. The longest-running and most successful series of this kind are NBC’s *Law and Order* (1990, currently in its twenty-first season) and the *CSI* franchise originally aired on CBS (*CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, 10 seasons since 2000; *CSI: Miami*, 8 seasons since 2002; *CSI: NY*, 6 seasons since 2004; as of this writing [2010]). On television, this idealistic view of law enforcement is rarely modified. One notable counterexample is *The Wire* (2002–08), which takes a huge bite out of the extreme contrast between cops and criminals as portrayed in standard cop shows. Criminals in *The Wire* are not always motivated by greed or bloodlust, just as the show’s cops are not always motivated by a wish to protect and serve, but often by the conceit that they are smarter than the criminals they chase. Whereas *CSI* revels in the glories of forensic technology and revives the standard brain and brawn detectives, *The Wire* has been praised for its “realistic” portrayal of police work as severely undermined by bureaucracy and ethical issues. Despite its critical acclaim, *The Wire* has not been commercially successful. On *The Wire*, see “The Wire: arguably the greatest television programme ever made”; “The Wire is unmissable television”; and Kevin Carey.
6. Greek 181; on police brutality in America, see also Champion; Holmes and Smith; McArdle and Erzen.
7. See, among others, the findings reported in Ogletree, Prosser, Smith and Talley; Waegel; Terrill.
8. On the Rodney King case, see above all Gibbs; Gooding-Williams for a relation of the entire case; Patricia J. Williams on the change of venue for the case to the nearly all-white Simi Valley, whose population had a high proportion of active or retired policemen; Crenshaw and Peller on narrative representations of the beating at the trial; Jacobs on news coverage of the case, and the essays assembled by Khalifah (black writers responding to the case). A defense of the police officers guilty of the beating is offered in Deitz’s *Willful Injustice*. Deitz also coauthored a book titled *Presumed Guilty* with Stacey Koon, the senior “arresting” officer at the incident.
9. On *Dirty Harry*, see Houck; Lott 120–21, and the essays assembled by Arnold and Esser.
10. On Eastwood’s cowboy roles, see the chapter on cowboys in this volume.
11. In problematizing the town’s artificial racial homogeneity and in portraying the framing of two blacks, the film takes a stand against discourse that scapegoats racial minorities and against fearmongering. The simplistic perception of Armenians and Iranians as a threat

- ("The problem in this town ain't the people that live here. It's the element that visits") is portrayed rather critically. And yet, the blacks racing Superboy on the bridge are shown as extremely aggressive, and his error seems understandable since viewers, too, are led to believe that they are armed.
12. Freddy as a fat slacker is so effective partly because he provides an unmissable reference and the greatest imaginable contrast to Stallone's most defining roles, Rambo and Rocky.
 13. See Greek for an analysis of the film in the context of the Rodney King beating.
 14. The film's narrow focus on Alonzo and his men is striking. It is expressed by bird's-eye shots of Alonzo and his car that refuse to show the world around them. The only authority to which Alonzo and his crew answer are the corrupt police chief and judge; beyond Alonzo's team, no other cops—corrupt or otherwise—are shown.
 15. On the symbiosis between detective and killer in films based on Harris's novels, see Philip Simpson, "Gothic Romance."
 16. From a 1994 National Examiner headline, "Serial Killers Are as American as Apple Pie," cited by Schmid 25.
 17. Cf., for example, Picart and Greek: "the terrorist has currently replaced the serial killer as the most monstrous of all criminals" ("Profiling the Terrorist as a Mass Murderer," 256).
 18. On this trend, see McKinney; Schmid (245–57). Serial killers have, however, always been a popular topic in cinema, where they account for a far higher percentage of homicides than they do in real life. While only about 1–3 percent of homicides in the U.S. are attributed to serial murders, the ubiquity of serial killers in movies has "caused serial murder to be constructed and accepted as the dominant homicide problem in the United States" (Surette 207 and Dyer, *Seven* 37 on statistics; the quotation Surette 219). The FBI has used the spectre of serial killers repeatedly to increase and maintain its funding levels (Schmid 26, 66–101).
 19. For the purposes of this discussion, it makes little sense to distinguish, as cinematic portrayals sometimes do, between paid and unpaid "workers" in the genre, for example, between paid assassins and serial killers who murder for personal satisfaction. In the cinematic tradition, the difference between the two is linked to the presence or absence of violent fantasies, a distinction originally advanced by the FBI. Robert Ressler, the FBI profiler who coined the term, defines as a serial killer anyone who, compelled by a violent fantasy, has planned and executed the murder of at least three people. In subsequent discussions among forensic psychologists, the number of victims required for the status varies (some definitions require as many as ten), but all definitions insist on premeditation and the compulsive force of violent fantasies. On the FBI's definition, see Picart and Greek, "Compulsions" 249–53.
 20. The implication here is less the alignment between cop and killer implied in cop movies but between killers and the general working population. In this, serial killer films are very different from gangster films, whose "grifters" often deride the "grafters" (those stupid enough to work for a living) (*Goodfellas*, 1990; see also *A History of Violence*, 2005).
 21. For this tradition, see the work of Philip Simpson, particularly *Psycho Paths*; Surette 208 and 221.
 22. On *Seven*, see especially Dyer, *Seven*; Lacey; Gormley; Schmid; and Philip Simpson, *Psycho Paths* 194–202.
 23. *Seven*'s producers were initially hesitant to cast Freeman as Somerset because they worried about being accused of imitating the *Lethal Weapon* series. On the character constellation Somerset-Mills, see Dyer, *Seven* 24–25.
 24. Numerous critics, including Lacey 26–28 and Gormley 174, commented on Somerset and Mills as opposites.
 25. On the significance of culture and learning in the film, see Dyer, *Seven* 71–73.

26. See Philip Simpson's citation of Joel Black in *Psycho Paths* 85–86.
27. Noted by many, for example Dyer, *Seven* 67; Philip Simpson, *Psycho Paths* 200; Gormley 174; Lacey 71.
28. Somerset's superior officer refers to him as a "great brain."
29. In Arabian legend, they cool the sun with ice and snow to prevent the Earth from burning up.
30. Mills's stable home, which makes him the object of Doe's envy, is a small oasis in this dystopian landscape: at least he loves and is loved in return. But even this idyll is compromised by Tracy's deep unhappiness—she is, in fact, sorely tempted to leave the city and by implication also Mills—and her inability to communicate to him either her unhappiness or her pregnancy.
31. Lacey quoting John Wrathall, 6; see also his analysis of the city on 37–38 and Fincher's comment on the city, Dyer, *Seven* 63–65.
32. Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy*, canto 3, lines 1, 2 and 9; citation and discussion in Lacey 50.
33. Dyer, *Seven* 77; on the added final line, see also Philip Simpson, *Psycho Paths* 201.
34. Mike Leaveck, communications director for Vietnam Veterans of America, in a 1986 article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* claiming that violence in Hollywood films has a reassuring effect on the viewer. The article is cited in Kendrick 21.

CHAPTER 3

1. The literature on the subject is too extensive to be reviewed here (see Harwood 43). Seminal sources include works by Faludi (*Stiffed*), Bly, Corneau, and Modleski (*Feminism Without Women*).
2. There are, of course, many challenges to masculinity in addition to "the crisis of fatherhood," among them the outsourcing of jobs to other countries, a restructuring of the workplace that favors "service jobs," that is, traditionally female jobs, and the dominance of an image culture where men can no longer be "doers" but are reduced to the status of onlookers. On men's changed working conditions, see Warren; Luce.
3. "[T]he concept of one male breadwinner per family has been one of the most powerful family discourses of the modern era, and one that has had dramatic effects on constructions of fatherhood, masculinity, motherhood, femininity and family life" (Harwood 44).
4. Cited and discussed in Lupton and Barclay 2. This discourse is race and class-inflected. The absence of fathers is often framed as a problem of black, poor neighborhoods, while the discourse of the "new father" usually pertains to the white, upper-middle class. On absent fathers as a social issue, cf. Blankenhorn.
5. For divorce rates in the United States between 1992 and 2002, see the Divorce Statistics Collection of the organization "Americans for Divorce Reform" at <http://www.divorcereform.org/rates.html> (last accessed August 10, 2009); see also Feasey 43.
6. On Clinton's mobilization of his paternal image, see Tincknell, *Mediating the Family* 62–63, Lupton and Barclay 2, and Malin, *American Masculinity* 7, 61, 64.
7. On the effects of America's "display culture" on both genders, see Faludi, *Stiffed*, and Krimmer's relation of this phenomenon to recent Hollywood films.
8. Particularly in the 1980s, when traditional men's jobs in industries were replaced by newer service-related jobs, often done by women (Harwood 43); see also Trice and Holland, "Gump and Gumper" 196; Reiter 15.
9. See particularly John Bly's influential book *Iron John* and related movements, such as the Rev. Wildmon's militant American Family Association, and 1990s organizations such

- as *The Promisekeepers and Families Need Fathers*. On these movements, see Harwood 43 and 178; Tincknell, *Mediating the Family* 59–60 and 73; Lupton and Barclay 2; MacKinnon 20–21. Other writers complained bitterly about the obstacles besetting working fathers—long hours at work, the double workload at work and at home, the lack of adequate childcare, paternity leave, and so forth—that have beset working mothers for decades but gain in urgency if experienced by male parents (cf. Rotundo's long list of social hindrances to "participant fatherhood," particularly 71–77, and Trice and Holland, "Gump and Gumper" 196).
10. Krimmer 29; the term was coined by Solomon-Godeau.
 11. Davies and Smith quoting Donna Haraway, 21. See also Krimmer; Harwood 73; Tincknell, *Mediating the Family* 56–57; MacKinnon 10–15; Silverman 3; Tasker, "The Family in Action" 253 and *Spectacular Bodies* 2–3. Philip Green states the problem succinctly: "'having it both ways' most prominently means [...] that we can 'have' our feminism or our women's liberation as entertainment without having it as a persistent politics" (86).
 12. Even when mothers play a significant part (*Mrs. Doubtfire*; *Junior*), the films are plainly obsessed with the extraordinary feat of a male birthing or caring for children, not with the rather ordinary one of a female accomplishing the same tasks. The tendency in movies to award fathers pride of place is expressed precisely in Joyce Ostin's celebration of fatherhood in the introduction to her book on real-life *Hollywood Dads*: "Being a father is not an easy job. In fact, my husband, Michael, says it is much easier to go to work than it is to stay at home. Staying home, however, is not an option for him or for any of the hardworking men in this book. Fathers have many roles to fulfill. I could probably think of thousands, too many to list. A father has to be the friend, the disciplinarian, the advisor, the fashion consultant, the driving-school teacher, the schlepper, the tour guide, the bartender, the banker, the listener, the calmer-downer, the chauffeur, the 'bad guy,' the guest-list advisor, the rental-ski carrier, the fire minder, the spider scooper, the tick remover, the burglar watcher, and the clicker controller. After attending to all of these duties, a father can relax . . . until the next emergency arises. His job is relentless." And where, we might ask, are the mothers in this description of family life? Obviously, their nonparticipation in raising their children leaves them shouldering a rather hefty burden of gratitude to these untiring dads: "Wives [...]—women are forever indebted to the fathers of the world" (7).
 13. Notable exceptions are Sally Field, Julia Roberts, Jodie Foster, and Nicole Kidman, all of whom have played single mothers.
 14. Analyses of the film have been offered by Krimmer 32–35, Bruzzi, *Bringing up Daddy* 177–80, Philip Green 146–51, Lupton and Barclay 70, and Nicole Matthews 120–28, among others.
 15. Cf. Philip Green 151: "At the moment in *Mrs. Doubtfire* when we see Robin Williams's hairy legs peeping out from under his dress, we know that everything is still for the best in this best of all possible worlds: the world in which men, now happily humanized, can safely be allowed to go on ruling." Green here reiterates the feminist criticism of the appropriation of "feminine" qualities by men, a criticism that does not, in our view, transfer cleanly to *Mrs. Doubtfire*: it is difficult to imagine Daniel as "ruling" anything at the end of the film.
 16. Lupton and Barclay 70: "simultaneously the ideal mother figure and the ideal father figure"; Nicole Matthews 90: a "combination of a female appearance and a male temperament."
 17. Williams has made a career of playing childlike fathers, for example in *Hook* (1991) and *Jumanji* (1994).

18. Cf. Tasker, *Spectacular Bodies* 2–3, on late 1980s father-only films such as *Three Men and a Baby* (1987) and *Parenthood* (1989).
19. Cf. Tincknell, *Mediating the Family*, particularly 142, on absent or evil mothers as figures of anxiety in 1990s Hollywood films such as *Home Alone*, 1990; *Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead*, 1991; *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle*, 1992, and others.
20. Cf. Freud's and Lacan's seminal texts on the subject and the application of these ideas to Hollywood films by Danae Clark, Bruzzi (*Bringing up Daddy*), and Reiter.
21. The director Sam Mendes on "The Making of *Road to Perdition*," supplementary DVD-material, *Road to Perdition*.
22. The film offers a paternal role model to the black community, where fatherlessness is a major issue; other race-related issues—black anger, the cluelessness of whites (Chris's bosses keep borrowing money from him)—are also allotted some screen time.
23. The film is based on the real-life story of Chris Gardner, who wrote the book on which the screenplay is based and was consulted on the making of the film; see "The Man behind the Movie: Meet the Real Chris Gardner," supplementary DVD-material, *The Pursuit of Happyness*.
24. In 2010, four years after the film aired, economists estimated that the chances to swap a lower-income bracket for a higher one are smaller in America than in any other developed economy (see Luce).
25. For Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex and father-son relationships, see particularly his "The Dissolution of the Oedipus complex."
26. These final lines essentially state that fatherhood trumps moral considerations, for they define as comparatively negligible or even unanswerable one of the most profound paradoxes of the film: that Mike, a contract killer, is cast as a profoundly decent guy. "Decent" in this context means that he kills because he owes Rooney a debt of gratitude, rather than for enjoyment like Rooney's other son Connor. He also does not kill purely for money like the contract killer Maguire (Jude Law), although Mike's job too is presented as one that puts food on the table. "Decent" also means that Mike is troubled by his job; his success as a father is mainly encapsulated in steering his son away from his own profession.
27. Rooney insists time and again that Michael is not to be harmed, but it is obvious that neither Nitty (Stanley Tucci) nor the assassin Maguire will heed these instructions.
28. Andrew Spicer offers an excellent analysis of the film in "The Reluctance to Commit."
29. See, for example, statistics and discussion in Blankenhorn, Corneau, and Dennis and Erdos.
30. See, for example, Dennis and Erdos; Emery; Bob Simpson, McCarthy, and Walker; and Clulow and Vincent.
31. A similar distinction exists in Freud's writing on fatherhood; cf. Bruzzi, *Bringing Up Daddy* xiv.
32. For the purpose of this discussion, we define the "world" as the film's diegetic world (Los Angeles in *Volcano*; Rome in *Gladiator*; the emerging United States in *The Patriot*). Often, of course, the film's world is cast as the entire world (for example, in *Signs*; *The Day after Tomorrow*; *War of the Worlds*; 2012).
33. *War of the Worlds* is an intriguingly incongruous film: on the one hand, Ray Ferrier (Tom Cruise) constantly performs superhuman feats; on the other hand, the world eventually rids itself of the alien threat, like Rachel's (Dakota Fanning) hand rids itself of the splinter: "when it's ready, my body will just push it out." However, Ray's heroics are instrumental in ensuring Rachel's survival until the world is ready to heal itself, for example, when he rescues his daughter from absorption into the alien pod by exploding it with a grenade.
34. Natural catastrophes in disaster movies appear universal and indiscriminate, but as King has shown in his analysis of *Volcano*, this is by no means the case (King, *Spectacular*

- Narratives*, 150). *Volcano's* Los Angeles is a modern-day Sodom that deserves to be destroyed; the lava flood targets particularly those parts of the city most afflicted by poverty or corruption.
35. See many comments, by Steven Spielberg and others, on *War of the Worlds*; supplementary DVD-material, *War of the Worlds*.
 36. On *Gladiator*, see Fradley; Cyrino; Rose; Radner; Geoff King, *New Hollywood Cinema* 178–201 and 255 and Jeffords, “Breakdown,” 221; on *The Patriot*, see McCrisken and Pepper 24–35.
 37. In *Gladiator*, Maximus's life as a farmer is established rather cursorily in his fleeting descriptions of his home life to the emperor and other soldiers; he is never shown as a farmer. The extreme unlikelihood of this alternate existence for Maximus is established early in the film, through Quintus's ironic comment “Maximus the farmer. I still have difficulty imagining that.” Similar troubles might well afflict the audience, who are spared visions of Maximus plowing a field or milking a cow by Maximus's death, which recasts him firmly in the two roles he actually plays: a gladiator who dies in the arena and a soldier who dies in combat.
 38. Both Maximus and Benjamin are reborn as saviors of the nation after their son's deaths. While Benjamin refuses military involvement before this, Maximus has served as a soldier in wars of conquest whose moral righteousness is doubted even by Emperor Marcus Aurelius; he does not take on the more idealistic duty of restoring the Republic to Rome until after the murder of his family.
 39. On the historical congruence between U.S. history and the history portrayed in *Gladiator*, cf. Cyrino and Rose.
 40. Although *Gladiator* equates Imperial Rome with decadence and decline, it serves up a potential Republican Rome as an easily recognizable stand-in for America, the world's oldest democracy. The equations between Rome and America, America and freedom, are drawn by many commentators in the supplementary material of the DVD version.
 41. We would disagree here that the film eliminates patriarchy through the failure of the transition from father to son, and with Radner's statement that in *Gladiator*, “masculinity, nation, and history are mourned rather than celebrated” (73).
 42. Gabriel is killed when he pursues Tavington to avenge his young wife; fighting heedlessly rather than strategically, for personal rather than political motives, and with no Father to hold him back, he gallops straight into destruction.
 43. Many participants in both films, including directors, screenwriters, actors, producers, and costume designers claim careful attention to historical accuracy. Cf. the supplementary DVD material for both *Gladiator* and *The Patriot*.
 44. Historical inconsistencies in both films are too numerous to mention. For example, Marcus Aurelius had no intention to return power to the Senate, nor did he disinherit Commodus. The film's conceit that a deviation from the patrilineal line was unusual is also ahistorical; most Roman emperors were, in fact, adopted, and Commodus was one of the very few emperors “born to the purple.” For this reason, we would resist mapping Roman history onto the film's ending. We cannot conclude from the historical fact that Rome did not become a republic following Commodus's rule that the film indicates the failure of the republican project at the end. The film ends with Maximus fulfilling his promise to Marcus Aurelius and leaves open whether Gracchus actually succeeds in reinstating the republic.
 45. Producer Mark Gordon, supplementary DVD material, *The Patriot*.
 46. In *Road to Perdition*, the killing is justified as defense of the son, but paradoxically also through the understanding that becoming a killer is the worst of all fates: Mike kills to save his son from becoming a killer.

CHAPTER 4

1. Cf. Allmendinger, *Imagining the African American West*; Philip Durham and Jones; Taylor; Michael K. Johnson.
2. Buscombe has pointed out that women played a far greater role in frontier life than they do in the Western tradition: “the Western had too much invested in masculinity and its discontents to spend much time on what women want [. . .]. In such an extreme world women, though often the ostensible reason why the man struggles to impose the law, are regarded as little more than a distraction” (21–22). One notable exception in recent and not-so-recent Westerns is Mattie Ross in Charles Portis’s *True Grit* (1968) and four cinematic or television adaptations (*True Grit*, dir. Henry Hathaway, 1969; *Rooster Cogburn*, dir. Stuart Millar, 1975; *True Grit: A Further Adventure*, TV film dir. Richard T. Heffron, 1978; *True Grit*, dir. Ethan Coen and Joel Coen, 2010).
3. Marcus on John Wayne: “professional American, he wears the mantle of Manifest Destiny easily, happy to represent America to the world, to itself, to himself” (209).
4. Baur and Bitterli 10; cf. also Koch 58 and Michael Kimmel’s important essay on the link between the cowboy as a template for the “American Social Character” and U.S. foreign policy from the Civil War to the 1980s.
5. “Bush says bin Laden cannot hide,” *St Petersburg Times*, September 15, 2001, http://www.sptimes.com/News/091501/Worldandnation/Bush_says_bin_Laden_c.shtml (last accessed March 20, 2011).
6. Buscombe has linked the Western’s marginality since the 1970s to the Vietnam War and resulting doubts about the concept of “heroism” (8–11); see also Lenth 116–17.
7. On Academy Awards for Westerns, cf. Kitses 2, Buscombe 84–85, and Lenth 116–17. The only three Academy Award winners so far in the genre (in the Best Film category) are *Cimarron* (1931), *Dances with Wolves* (1990), and *Unforgiven* (1992), the latter two made when the talk about the demise of the genre was already in full swing.
8. Although prominent in Westerns, this conflation is hardly exclusive to the genre (for example Arnold Schwarzenegger as the Terminator/Governator or Cary Grant as the Ladies’ Man).
9. Dir. Franklin B. Coates; cast: Jesse James Jr. and Diana Reed.
10. Bingham 234. This is one of the standard interpretations of the film; cf. also, for example, Knapp 19–20 and 162–63.
11. Cf. Buscombe 85–87 on the scholarly debate on the film as “revisionist.”
12. The film’s cast and crew advanced the idea of *Unforgiven* as an antiviolent film. Morgan Freeman stated in an interview, “Nothing good comes of it [violence] ultimately. It does damage the soul.” Gene Hackman said of Eastwood: “I like to believe that he set out to make an anti-violence pro-woman picture.” Eastwood himself: “I’m not doing penance for all the characters in action films I’ve portrayed up till now. But I’ve reached a stage of my life, and we’ve reached a stage of our history where I said to myself that violence shouldn’t be a source of humor or attraction. . . . We had a chance here to deal with the moral implications of violence” (all citations in Buscombe 72–73). Hackman supposedly refused the role as Little Bill until Eastwood convinced him that “if we do it right, it’s not exploiting it [violence], in fact, it’s kind of stating that it doesn’t solve anything” (Breskin 382).
13. The link is made in the most traditional way: the symbolic identification of guns and penises. For example, Little Bill, after defeating and humiliating English Bob, sends him on his way with a bent gun. Corky “Two Gun” Corcoran is so called not because “he was sportin’ two pistols. It was because he had a dick that was so big it was longer than the barrel on that Walker Colt that he carried.” And in a dialogue snippet between the

Kid and Ned, in which the Kid criticizes Munny for not defending himself against Little Bill's beating (after he and Ned jumped out of the whores' windows to escape Little Bill): *The Kid*. "Yeah well, at least I woulda pulled my pistol, Ned." *Ned*. "Well, you did! Right outta the lady an' out the goddam window."

14. Little Bill Daggett is a composite figure made up of various intertextual allusions. For one thing, Bill functions as an alter ego for Will (Munny), a link made obvious by both characters' use of similar-sounding or identical turns of the phrase at central junctures in the film. Little Bill is also a historical allusion to Wild Bill (Hickok), who, like Little Bill, was a town marshal in Abilene, KS (Hickok lost his job there for committing two murders; cf. Rosa, *They Called Him Wild Bill*). Like Little Bill's Big Whiskey, Wild Bill's Abilene had a town ordinance requiring all visitors to surrender their firearms to the authorities.
15. In their relation to violence, women play contradictory roles in *Unforgiven*; they are cast as the instigators of violence (the prostitutes' offer of a bounty), as its victims (Delilah), and—hypothetically and *in absentia*—as capable of ending it (Munny's dead wife, Claudia).
16. Kitses 312; see also, on the same page: "Ambitious, compelling, but finally flawed, Eastwood's critique of the Western as a genre sustained by masculine codes of violence is itself all too satisfyingly sustained by that same violence."
17. "The lines 'You just shot an unarmed man,' 'Well, he shoulda armed himself' drew laughter in the theater each time I saw the film" (Bingham 242).
18. Italics indicate quotations from the film's narrative voice; dialogue quotations are rendered in regular type.
19. Andrew Dominik, who wrote the screenplay, followed the original novel closely and often quoted from it verbatim (Hansen, *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*, 1983); Dominik's screenplay was one of the film's two contenders for the 2007 Academy Awards.
20. Bob's pursuit of Jesse clearly defines the film as a stalker movie, with a rather self-referential subtext about movie stars, their fans, their lack of privacy, and so forth. Bizarrely, Brad Pitt was the victim of an incident very similar to that described in this scene in January 1999, when Athena Rolando broke into his house, put on his clothes, and slept in his bed. On the case against her, see Martinez.
21. For example, Patterson 79–85; Alley. The two most extensive and most theoretical investigations of homosexuality in cinema to date are Chris Straayer's *Deviant Eyes, Deviant Bodies* and David Greven's *Manhood in Hollywood* (see his chapter on *Brokeback Mountain*, 218–40).
22. "Traditional views of masculinity and manhood placed value on whiteness, independence, power, control, reason, able-bodied strength, hard work, self-reliance, stoicism, heterosexual prowess, and endurance of a hardscrabble life. Historically, women, children, and people of color held a place beneath white men on the social hierarchy. The characteristics prescribed to women and children such as communicative expression (verbal, artistic, interpersonal, etc.), domesticity, gentleness, kindness, tenderness, affection, emotion, and playfulness were devalued.
Thus, Ennis and Jack find themselves in a situation where they are compelled to express their manliness through stoic silence and disinterested posturing. To appear friendly or engage in verbal repartee would compromise their subject positions as 'real' rural Western men" (Garza 201).
23. Stacy, "Love and Silence" argues the opposite, see especially 211–12.
24. Patterson castigates this interpretation as "plain stupid or [...] the result of willful distortion," without, however, offering an alternative (114).

25. In an article in the *New York Times* (“Cowboys Are My Weakness,” January 1, 2006), the comedian Larry David offered the following (tongue-in-cheek?) explanation for his refusal to see the film: “I don’t want to watch two straight men, alone on the prairie, fall in love and kiss and hug and hold hands and whatnot. [...] If two cowboys, male icons who are 100 percent all-man, can succumb, what chance do I have . . . ?” (quoted in Mehler 136).
26. The quotation is taken from W. C. Harris 118. On the reception of the film, see also Stacy, “Love and Silence” 205–06; Jessica L. W. Carey on the actors’ public “negotiation” of their roles (both Ledger and Gyllenhaal have publicly advocated the “universal love story” theory while making it very clear that they are both heterosexual); Mehler, who argues that the film did not win in the Best Film category because of the homophobia of the judges; and Boyle on the controversy whether *Brokeback Mountain* is a “gay film” or a “universal love story” (88–90). Perez and Arellano have argued most strongly against a reading of *Brokeback Mountain* as a “gay” or “pro-gay” film.
27. W. C. Harris 121; see also Arellano, who has read the film as heteronormative (“The ‘Gay Film’ That Wasn’t”).
28. Stacy in his preface to *Reading Brokeback Mountain* 1–2.

CHAPTER 5

1. We will not discuss Mel Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ*, because the religious dimension of the film differs from the secular frame of conventional superhero films. Similarly, Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe) is set apart from the superheroes discussed in this chapter because of his age.
2. Even though savior films are drawn to the notion of fate and predetermination and ponder the possibility of human freedom, humans are inevitably granted agency.
3. Even in films that focus on a city, such as *Spider-Man*, the threat is defined as global.
4. For a detailed account of the film’s Christian symbolism see Fontana; for its Buddhist references see Ford; for references to Vedanta see Lännström. One may, of course, also agree with Žižek, who claims that “there is something inherently stupid and naïve in taking the philosophical underpinning of the *Matrix* trilogy seriously and discussing its underpinnings” (198).
5. See Lichtenfeld, who calls *The Matrix* a “cyber-age Christological allegory” (233). On Neo as a Christ figure see also Witherington III.
6. See Clover; Lawrence; Yeffeth; Diocaretz and Herbrechter; Haber; Irwin.
7. See Clover, who points out that the “fact that these few, the rebels, are preponderantly women and/or people of color is one of the political charms of the movie” (69).
8. The name is, of course, that of the biblical Babylonian king. It can be read as an allusion to humankind’s hubris and its subsequent humbling at the hands of God. In the book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar must live in the wild as a punishment for his sinful pride.
9. King makes a similar point: “Who could blame him, given the bleak nature of the naked reality and the fantastic possibilities unleashed in the simulation” (*Narratives* 191).
10. Related to this ideology is the film’s aestheticization of violence. As Danahay points out, “it becomes a matter of admiring the choreography of two bodies in motion and not of fearing damage to real, physical bodies” (42). See also Nardone and Bassham who claim that “the *Matrix* films glamorize violence in a way that very few other films have” (186).
11. On choice in the *Matrix* sequels see Schick.
12. On the role of love in the *Matrix* trilogy see Lawler.
13. According to the latest statistics, 43 percent of Americans have less than \$10,000 saved up for retirement and 36 percent do not manage to save anything at all; 24 percent of

American workers say they have postponed their retirement age; for the first time in U.S. history, more than 40 million Americans are now on food stamps; more than 40 percent of Americans who work are employed in low-paying service jobs.

CHAPTER 6

1. Even before 9/11, Cheney had been an eager participant in survival scenarios designed to test the efficiency of government after a nuclear attack or smallpox outbreak (see Mayer 1–2).
2. Under Saddam, Abu Ghraib had housed political prisoners. During the U.S. occupation, indiscriminate arrests led to overcrowding. According to Ricks, 90 percent of this prison population had no intelligence value (238).
3. In the domestic arena, the administration introduced the domestic wireless surveillance program, which wire-tapped citizens without obtaining warrants.
4. In *Die Hard*, for example, government bureaucracies are not only unhelpful, but impede the hero's progress through incompetence and inflexibility (see Jeffords, *Hard Bodies* 60).
5. In *Days of Thunder* (1990), Cruise portrays a race-car driver who has lost "his ride" because his father embezzled his money. In *Top Gun* (1986), the Cruise character is haunted by the unexplained disappearance of his father's plane and struggles to achieve his full potential as a pilot and lover, until he learns that his father was not a traitor to his country but a war hero.
6. See Lehman, who claims that "many male action films present a hero and a villain who seem to be opposites but are, in reality, very much like each other" ("Don't Blame" 112).
7. In this, Bourne resembles the terminator, another killing machine with incipient self-awareness.
8. Fleming's first choice for the role, David Niven, was rejected because he lacked the requisite macho toughness (Spicer, *Typical Men* 75).
9. Trice and Holland claim that the Dalton films initiated a transformation of the genre that de-emphasized espionage and made Bond an action hero (*Heroes* 159).
10. As Bennett and Woollacott point out, the Bond films are famous for a "putting-back-into-place of women who carry their independence and liberation too far" ("Moments" 28).
11. Bennett and Woollacott claim that "Bond embodied the imaginary possibility that England might once again be placed at the center of world affairs during a period when its world-power status was visibly and rapidly declining" ("Moments" 19). Here, we will disregard the significance of Bond as an English icon. In recent years, Bond ceased to signify Britishness and has instead become a hero of the NATO alliance. Bennett and Woollacott predict that "Bond is likely to be increasingly Americanized" (*Bond and Beyond* 283).
12. See Bennett, who calls Bond "a highly malleable signifier, capable of being adjusted to changing cultural and ideological pressures and priorities" ("Preface" xi).
13. The producers of the Bond franchise made the preference for unknown starlets an explicit policy. According to Cubby Broccoli, "there's no lady today who contributes that much success if she's high priced or otherwise" (qtd. in Bennett/Woollacott, *Bond and Beyond* 196), although, as the casting of Honor Blackman suggests, there were exceptions to this rule.
14. Brady draws attention to this quasi-satirical attitude: "The James Bond films are successful satires because they play Bond's flawless personal style against an editorial-cartoon version of world politics. Satires of Bond films succeed only at those points where the original slips and takes itself seriously. Otherwise they are like people who make a career of imitating impersonators" (62). One might write the history of the Bond franchise as a

- decrease in satirical potential and concomitant increase in the depiction of serious political challenges.
15. A true Bond villain, Elektra is orientalized. Her mother is from Azerbaijan, and as her evil nature is revealed, the costumes increasingly reveal her heritage.
 16. On women in Bond films see Packer and Sharma's comment that the "Bond Girl never achieves feminist status, but rather passes from a-feminist to postfeminist no longer in need of feminism" (91).
 17. She manages to signal her location to Bond, but cannot break out of a makeshift prison that would not hold Bond for five seconds.
 18. According to Lichtenfeld, "much action movie terror is conducted with no underlying political conviction" (43).
 19. The Bond producers Saltzman and Broccoli did not acquire the rights to *Casino Royale*. It was first produced by Charles Feldman as a spy spoof with an all-star cast, including Peter Sellers and Woody Allen (see Hagopian 30; see also Benson 4).
 20. See Flanagan, who claims that a "prime example of the cinematic hero with no discernible interior life is James Bond" (112). See also Lee Pfeiffer, who points out that the traditional Bond films provide almost no background information on the character (24).
 21. On torture as spectacle in action films see Tasker, who claims that "suffering—torture, in particular—operates as both a set of narrative hurdles to be overcome . . . and as a set of aestheticized images to be lovingly dwelt on" ("Dumb Movies" 230).

CHAPTER 7

1. With the possible exception of *The Hurt Locker*, the films discussed in this chapter promote the same tenets that Cawley sees as typical of the war genre as such: "A moral impulse is behind every American war [. . .] Individuals prove themselves by personally participating in combat, which teaches truths impossible to learn elsewhere. The foreignness of the enemy is a sign of evil, although 'foreignness' needn't be evil if the foreigners have acquired the cultural traits of Americans. Americans themselves are better, friendlier than other nationalities [. . .] But if there is conflict, Americans are inherently better at violence and will win" (70).
2. There is, of course, Michael Winterbottom's *Welcome to Sarajevo* (1997).
3. Prospects for success are dim. According to a study of 648 terrorist groups in the second half of the twentieth century, conducted by the RAND Corporation, military force ended terrorist activities in only 7 percent of the cases (Korb and Conley 248).
4. John F. Harris relates a conversation between Clinton and Dick Morris, his controversial adviser, during which Morris argued that no president can achieve greatness without war (243). One should add that neither Clinton nor Bush had any military experience. To avoid military service during the Vietnam War, Bush secured a position in the Texas Air National Guard, otherwise known as the "champagne unit" (Wilentz 412).
5. The film fits the classic parameters of the combat film genre (see Basinger, *Anatomy* 67–69).
6. Hammond speaks of Spielberg's "over dependence on sentimentalism, his unerring attraction for the positive story, and his mechanical expertise as the cinematic master of summoning tears" (155).
7. Although the central character in the film is not Private Ryan, but Captain Miller, the old Ryan, who visits a World War II memorial in France, frames the action; shots of him open and close the film. In the final scene, Ryan breaks down at the cross that bears Miller's name and implores his wife to tell him that he was a good man and worthy of Miller's

sacrifice. Here, Spielberg's film shifts from a celebration of the great generation to the burden imposed upon the sons who grew up under the shadow of fathers who fought the last great war, a war that, unlike all the wars that followed, is perceived as fully justified and not tarnished by moral ambiguity.

8. There is a 1944 film, titled *The Sullivans*, which focuses on five brothers from one Iowa family who all died during an enemy attack.
9. According to Auster, there is some disagreement whether or not Lincoln actually wrote the letter (208).
10. The savagery of the film's first twenty minutes led to protests against a planned ABC screening during the Iraq occupation and ABC complied by pulling it off the schedule (Bourgoyne, *Hollywood Historical Film* 52).
11. See Clarke's description of Spielberg's techniques: he "often exploded a blood squib directly beneath the camera lens, intending for the lens to be dirtied" and he "put a Black and Decker drill, without the bit in place, fixed to the pan handle of a fluid head, and locked an oblong bowl with an eccentric washer in the chuck. The resulting vibration created a nervous energy to the footage captured" (121).
12. Spielberg's motley crew does not include Afro-Americans since in "the Jim Crow American Army of World War II, no black soldier could have been in the company of whites. The American Armed Forces were entirely segregated during the war" (Rogin 83).
13. The films contain many parallels. Eastwood also depicts a lengthy beach landing sequence and frames his action with scenes of the soldiers as old men. His concluding statement "they fought for their country, but they died for the men beside them" holds true for Spielberg's film as well.
14. Eastwood is also acutely aware of the problematic role of war photography and film itself. "The right picture can win or lose a war," viewers are told.
15. Aidid, who seized and sold foreign food shipments to buy guns for his soldiers, is directly responsible for the starvation of his people. But he also opposed and went to prison for his resistance to Somalia's previous president, Mohammed Siad Barre, whose human rights record was equally dismal. As Rutherford explains, "Aidid especially feared Boutros-Ghali's role because when he was Egypt's foreign minister, Boutros-Ghali and Somalia's then president Barre were good friends—this during a time when Aidid was serving a prison sentence imposed by Barre" (55).
16. The policy that was in place before the attempt to capture Aidid focused on speaking with all parties in the conflict to avoid the notion that the United States was taking sides. Radio programs, Somali-language newspapers, and visits to local leaders were designed to explain the humanitarian mission. According to Rutherford, this strategy had worked extremely well (100–03).
17. For a detailed account of U.S. politics before and during the operation see Rutherford.
18. See Clooney's comment: "you start out doing something for mercenary reasons and personal gain, and eventually you do what's right" (qtd. in Clarke 266).
19. The film's ironic treatment of racism continues when Saddam's Republican guards are watching a tape of the Rodney King beating when Archie and his men happen upon them.
20. Some critics believe that this character is inspired by CNN's Christiane Amanpour, who became widely known because of her reports of the Persian Gulf War (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christiane_Amanpour).
21. The same holds true for wars. Although the U.S. Army has now integrated some female soldiers, it is still a mostly male affair. Ducat points out that 45 percent of men strongly supported the war on Iraq, but only 21 percent of women (ix).

CHAPTER 8

1. According to Tasker, “adventure bears much more explicit narrative expectations” than other action films (“Introduction” 7).
2. See Neale’s characterization of the genre: “while imperial, colonial and ethnocentric assumptions underlie the genre as a whole, its commitment to an ethos of altruism, liberty and justice, to ‘the valiant fight for freedom and a just form of government’ can generate all kinds of ideological contortions and an array of quite distinct political positions” (“Action-Adventure” 76).
3. When Don Rafael visits the prison to identify Zorro, every inmate claims “I am Zorro.” This theme of Zorro as a cipher is reiterated in the final scene when Alejandro tells his baby son a story about Zorro and ends with the telling words: “What face shall I give this dashing rogue? He could be anywhere.”
4. Here, the film tries to have it both ways. In Diego’s relation to Alessandro, paternity is not a biological given but the result of a social construction. With respect to Elena, however, nature wins out over nurture as Elena intuits that Diego is her biological father.
5. His relation to his horse also symbolizes Zorro’s relation to the people. Although he steals the horse, this theft is a rescue action of a wild and beautiful creature, mistreated by the soldiers who possess it.
6. While *The Mummy* maintains clear distinctions between the Arab and the Western worlds, *The Mummy Returns* (2001) blurs boundaries. *The Mummy* mentions Evy’s Egyptian mother, but does not integrate this heritage into the narrative. In the sequel, in contrast, Evy has a past life in which she was the Pharaoh’s daughter, Nofertiri, while Rick is revealed to have been a Medjai. Ardeth’s role is also enhanced. The leader of the Medjai now commands an army of thousands and proves his valor and courage on many occasions. In spite of these changes, though, the Arab world is still presented as a backwater, in awe of Western technology, including the bus and the airplane, and it is again the Western heroes Evy and Rick, now enhanced by their Egyptian heritage, who protect the world from Imhotep’s destructive passion.
7. This is somewhat complicated by the fact that the White House ironized its own propaganda. At a White House Correspondents Association banquet early in 2004, Bush showed a film skit in which he searches for WMDs all around the White House (Wilentz 445).
8. Tellingly, when Commodore Norrington of the British Royal Navy sets out to woo Elizabeth, he is presented with a sword instead.
9. When Elizabeth does make a choice in the third sequel, Will has shown Jack’s capacity for betrayal and Jack Will’s capacity for selflessness.
10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Royal last accessed on December 10, 2010.
11. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Royal, last accessed on December 10, 2010.
12. As Lichtenfeld points out, this is typical: “the villain is the villain because he is the slave to his desires while the hero is the hero because he is the master of his own” (74).
13. See also Spicer, who makes a similar point without recourse to psychoanalysis: “Audiences clearly took great pleasure in the ways in which rogues, drawn from all strata of society, dodged responsibility” (*Typical Men* 4).

CHAPTER 9

1. According to John F. Harris, Hillary Clinton “dreamed of a virtual deputy presidency, with her reigning over domestic policy” (97).
2. Preston speaks of “the necessary shedding of the wrong person” as an established plot device in romantic comedy (235).

3. On DiCaprio's divergence from the expected body type of traditional male romantic heroes see Lehman and Hunt 89.
4. The strong emphasis on empathy that characterizes the screen lover is also evident in the public persona of both Clinton and Bush. Although Clinton was the first to introduce empathy of the "I-feel-your-pain" variety to the political vocabulary, Bush clearly recognized the benefits of this strategy and campaigned on a platform of "compassionate conservatism."
5. As Preston points out, traditionally the "insularity of the couple" is typical of the genre of romantic drama, not of the romantic comedy (238).
6. See <http://www.imdb.com/boxoffice/alltimegross> (last accessed September 3, 2011). The film, only recently surpassed by the latest Cameron extravaganza, *Avatar*, was the first motion picture to earn \$1 billion worldwide (Sandler and Studlar, "Introduction" 1).
7. Wyatt and Vlesmas describe in detail how the excessive production budget of the film featured prominently in the advertisement strategy (29–45).
8. Cameron also called the film a "gender-bending twist on the Cinderella myth" (qtd. in Ouellette 179).
9. Lehman and Hunt point to another important contradiction: although *Titanic* critiques phallic masculinity and the concomitant obsession with size, it can itself be described as "the largest moving picture ever made by the hand of man in all of history" (105).
10. See Studlar and Sandler, who argue that the film presents class privilege as "attainable but unenviable" ("Introduction" 10).
11. Malin points out that, as an artist, Jack stands apart from the working class even though he nominally belongs to it ("Classified" 86).
12. Ouellette claims that the film "promotes the illusion that the United States is now a classless society" (170). It "invites viewers to observe overt class differences and prejudices—and then dismiss them as anomalies of a bygone era" (175).
13. King also draws attention to the parallel between "the physical consummation between the two principals and the less joyful coming together of the *Titanic* and the iceberg" (*Narratives* 59). Krämer reads the iceberg as a symbol of female rage: "Whether she admits to it or not, Rose does want this power, this society, and thus this ship to be destroyed so that she can be free" ("Women First" 119).
14. The film certainly appealed to women, in particular young women. Nash and Lahti report that 60 percent of the audience was female, and 63 percent under twenty-five years of age (64). 45 percent of women under twenty-five had seen the film twice (Nash and Lahti 64.). However, they also suggest that this popularity is due largely to romantic investment in DiCaprio rather than interest in the character of Rose. On Cameron as a director of woman-centered action films see Krämer, "Women First."
15. See Keller, who claims that "Cameron's fierce women are always pressed back into the service of patriarchy" (145). According to Negra, the film's feminist aspirations are compromised by the fact that Rose's survival is presented as the fulfillment of her contract with Jack (227).
16. Massey and Hammond make a similar point: "*Titanic* demonstrates this same faith in the cinema's ability to redeem the past, the real, and 'that which was never real.'" (255).
17. On the film's sexism see Douglas, who points out that "not one of the thoughts of the women on the street is about the substance of her work, a social or political issue . . . what women really (and only) think about is dieting, shopping, men, relationships, and babies" (116–7).
18. There is a tradition of "marriage as a condition of discord and passion" (Kae Young 165) in screwball comedy, but discord does not escalate into violence.

CHAPTER 10

1. See, for example, Christopher Jencks and the response to his article by Fred Block; Egan; “A Look Back at Welfare Reform”; and Edelman.
2. The full text of the bill is available at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=104_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ193.104 (last accessed July 16, 2009). Our thanks to the Hon. Scott Clarkson for pointing us to important sources on the welfare reform bills of 1996 and 2006.
3. Edelman, citing a study by the Kaiser Foundation.
4. Between 1997 and 2000, the total number of welfare recipients in America dropped by 53 percent (cf. Schram and Soss, “Success Stories”); some areas saw even more drastic reductions (cf. DeParle, who has documented a 66 percent drop within two years in Milwaukee).
5. On the Deficit Reduction Act of 2006, see the link provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, on Welfare Reform Reauthorization, http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Fiscal/Legislation%20&%20Regulations/Legislation/fiscal_far_3010_012007.html (last accessed July 15, 2009), and the discussion in Haskins, Sawhill, and Weaver, as well as Blank and Haskins.
6. Alain de Botton’s *Status Anxiety* describes the social and psychological consequences of this premise at length.
7. See Botton, particularly 85–91 and 193f., on Social Darwinism and the equation of social failure with moral degeneracy.
8. See Botton 57–60 on American self-help books from the early nineteenth century to the present; on Hunt’s book 86.
9. Botton 11; cf. his introductory chapter, “Lovelessness,” which he defines as one of the five prime causes of status anxiety (along with Snobbery, Expectation, Meritocracy, and Dependence).
10. “Section 101: Findings,” http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=104_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ193.104 (last accessed July 16, 2009). For an opposing view, see Falkof, who argues that there is no tangible evidence that marriage, beyond enriching wedding planners and divorce lawyers, benefits society in any way. See particularly chapters 2 and 3.
11. In *Virgin*, there is a clear sense that Andy’s coworkers are themselves rather hapless lovers; they may be more experienced at sex but are clearly adrift when it comes to love. In other words, the distance between Andy and his male buddies is not as extreme as it initially appears. Andy’s coworkers have a positive part to play in his development and remain part of his social context at the end of the film, but no longer get to dispense relationship advice.
12. True Love Waits (TLW) is a Christian organization promoting abstinence outside of marriage (home page at <http://www.lifeway.com/tlw/>, last accessed July 17, 2009).
13. This conservative conclusion aside, the film’s gender politics are strangely progressive, and there is a good deal of gender bending going on. Andy’s male buddies, for example, behave like stereotypical “girls” with their girl talk, their attempts to rid themselves of body hair in the waxing scene, and their longing for intimacy (not merely sex); whereas some girls in the film behave like stereotypical “guys” (they want sex, but not all of them are out for intimacy).
14. The film’s “emancipation” of its loser through violence raises misgivings, all the more so since this violence transfers seamlessly into the love dialogue when Barry tells Lena: “I want to smash your face with a sledge hammer.” These words do not

- reassure viewers that Barry's extreme anger issues have been resolved at the end of the film.
15. On the history of love as a socially accepted reason for marriage, see Stone; Falkof 1–42.
 16. Under George W. Bush, federal funding for abstinence-only education as a method of birth control rose by 74 percent (a total of \$176 million annually). Federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs began in the Reagan administration. The Obama administration eliminated two of the program's three funding streams; the third, allowed to expire in 2009, was resurrected as part of the health care reform package in March 2010. Cf. "A Brief History: Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding" (<http://www.nomoremoney.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=947&nodeID=5>, last accessed July 16, 2009).
 17. As the film later explains, Bernie is partly responsible for his own situation because of his earlier gambling addiction and his neglect of his son. Yet neither theme is developed beyond the briefest mention. Rather, Bernie's steadfast refusal to give in to Shelly's most tempting offers rather elides his gambling addiction, and his son's abuse of Bernie is both more visible and memorable than Bernie's earlier abandonment of his son. Crucially, we only find out about this because Bernie blames himself for it, which may throw some doubt on the story: as many conversations with Natalie reveal, Bernie willingly takes the blame for everything, whether or not he is, in fact, responsible.
 18. On the film's commercial and critical failure, see Green et al. 127 (the citation on that page); Tyree and Walters 7–9 and 87.
 19. A complete list of paper titles is in Green et al. 164–66. Some gems included "Dudespeak," "Figurin' the Fuckin' Carpet," "I Hate the Eagles: *The Big Lebowski* Meditates on Musical Genre," and "Size Matters."
 20. See Robertson 40. For a description of the protest and following indictment by a member of the group, see Roger Lippman.
 21. On links between *The Big Lebowski* and *The Big Sleep*, including direct quotations of scenes, setups, lines, and characters, see Tyree and Walters 14, 17, 20, 29, 41–50 and Robertson 43.
 22. Coen and Coen 4–5. The screenplay is available online at <http://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Big-Lebowski,-The.html> (last accessed July 17, 2009). Future quotations from the film will refer to the cinema version, which differs slightly from the published screenplay by Ethan and Joel Coen. Citation and discussion of both passages in Tyree and Walters 49–50.
 23. Historically, the term "dude" had associations with unmanliness; see Tyree and Walters 82–85 for a brief history of the term.
 24. Like several other lines, Bush's "This aggression will not stand . . . This will not stand!" is recycled throughout the film, moving from one character to the next. Several critics have remarked on this; Tyree and Walters provide a list of crossover expressions and phrases on p. 34. "The overall effect is to suggest a kind of endemic recycling, as if the state's water or power shortages might also apply to thoughts and words" (Tyree and Walters 35).
 25. Walter is based on John Milius, who wrote *Apocalypse Now* and wrote and directed *Conan the Barbarian*. Milius is "known throughout Hollywood as a maverick, a militarist, and a political conservative in a town famous for its left-leaning politics" (Green et al. 119; see also Tyree and Walters 28).
 26. In a conversation with Susanne Kord, who thanks her here for the idea, Amber Hsu immediately and clear-sightedly linked the Dude's behavior with Buddhism, although at that time she had yet to see the film.
 27. The psychological explanation for Sy's behavior emerges relatively late in the film. Thus, Sy, who begins the film as an irredeemable loser, moves closer to the lovable loser at the

- end, which may partly explain why *One Hour Photo* was financially more successful than other irredeemable loser films discussed here.
28. This includes the parts of the world that are themselves striving for change. Sam is snubbed by his “superiors” and by the repressed; his attempt to seek alliances with oppressed minorities (his suggestion to the Black Panthers to re-form as The Zebras, a joint force of black and white oppressed against the white oppressor) is rejected as ludicrous. Opposing the oppressors directly is never presented as a viable option: in *Quiet Man*, for example, both Bob and the other shooter aim for their coworkers, not the firm’s CEOs or executives, who are safely out of reach on the top floor.
 29. In this fascist credo, Bob only seems to lash out against his world; in reality he exemplifies it (see the big poster reading “Fascism” outside of his boss’s office). That this is the state of the diegetic world (rather than merely Bob’s own troubled psyche) is also indicated by the fact that he is not the only person in the film who submits to homicidal impulses.
 30. The film is set in 1949 Los Angeles and should, according to lead actor Thornton, be watched “like you’re watching *The Big Sleep*.” But Roger Deakins, cinematographer for *The Man Who Wasn’t There* and winner of the 2001 Academy Award for best cinematography, has identified the second purpose of the film’s black-and-white aesthetics as creating an alienating effect. For both interviews, see the supplementary DVD-material for *The Man Who Wasn’t There*.
 31. The idea is the Hon. Scott Clarkson’s (personal communication with Susanne Kord).
 32. Interview with Mike Binder, supplementary DVD-material (*Reign Over Me*).
 33. Anna Clark 5. For a social analysis of how this process of exclusion works on a grand scale, see Faludi’s *Stiffed*.

CHAPTER 11

1. *He Was a Quiet Man* was not produced for release in theaters, but even for a straight-to-DVD film, these numbers are dismal.
2. Single-salary families with more than one adult are now a rarity in the United States; see statistics at the American Census website, <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004/tabFG1-all.csv> (last accessed November 15, 2010).
3. Quotation in “Manly Movie Stars.” The article referred to is Hanna Rosin’s “The End of Men.”
4. This seems to be a trend in many action movie genres; see, for example, Quillen.
5. The assassination of Osama bin Laden was another major hit in the video game that is American politics. Both Bush and Obama responded to it as a gamer would to the killing of an enemy alien—gloating over the kill, untroubled by ethical considerations, and confusing a momentary adrenaline rush with omnipotence (Obama: “Today we are reminded that as a nation there is nothing we can’t do”; qtd. in Tapper, Khan, Raddatz, and Efron, <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/osama-bin-laden-hid-wives-firefight-counterterrorism/story?id=13507836>, last accessed May 3, 2011).
6. Even Jet Li’s martial art feats, impressive in every other movie, paled beside all this muscle: his character’s running joke in *The Expendables* consists of good-humored complaints about being ignored because “I’m smaller.”
7. That gender stereotypes work best in syndication is generally assumed; see, for example, “The Economics of Gender Stereotyping.”

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