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Introduction

George S. Larke-Walsh and Murray Leeder

After a successful workshop at the 2014 Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference in Seattle, Murray Leeder and I co-edited a dossier that considered current practices in online teaching in Film and Media. The resulting articles can be found in Vol 3(1) Winter/Spring 2015. Since early 2020, COVID-19 has forced many universities worldwide to rapidly readjust almost all their teaching from face-to-face to online formats. Such experiences have highlighted the need for further assessments of teaching practices and available resources in online teaching, especially in terms of technological innovations, online assessments, student engagement, and perhaps most importantly, the sharing of individual teaching experiences during a pandemic. Therefore, when *JCMS* suggested an updated dossier it was these areas we most wanted to explore. We also reached out to the original contributors to ask for updates on their earlier work in light of the current circumstances. The result is a blend of articles that updates relevant practices and offers new experiences and advice on teaching online in the time of COVID.

Four of the new contributions deal directly with teaching media production online. Samantha Iwowo, Christa Van Raalte, and James Fair discuss how the current shift online may have provided opportunities for students to improve their employability by emphasizing critical and innovative film practice. Focusing on the re-centering of pre-visualization in the filmmaking process, Iwowo et al. offer a comparative analysis of pre-COVID and COVID student projects and experiences. Their results show how many of the imposed challenges have encouraged keener skills in areas such as risk assessment and project management. In a similar vein, Ted Fisher's essay on cinematic color correction techniques promotes ways to offer standardized access and fairness in the evaluation of off-site production. Focusing on phone camera apps, Fisher's essay provides a step-by-step guide to creating course parameters and productive teaching moments. His analysis also suggests the ways current challenges offer opportunities for students to improve employability, especially in navigating decentralized production practices. Lastly, Hamidreza Nassiri provides detailed analyses on issues of equal access, student collaboration, and online pedagogy in media production classes. In his essay, he argues for courses that value processes as much as final outcomes in order to foster student confidence in the exploration of new ideas and practices. Finally, Vladimir Rosas and Luis Horta provide insights into navigating online teaching in Chile. Focused on both production and theory, Rosas and Horta found the virtualization of theoretical and practical film and media modules not only implied a challenge in terms of their elaboration, but also opened the field up to methodological experimentation. Challenges, such as a weak infrastructure, limited access to non-Chilean media, and slow connectivity for internet users were all necessary factors in planning and teaching. The results suggested that, unlike other experiences featured here, the emphasis had to be on the individual rather than collaboration. As Rosas and Horta state, "this type of constraint could open up a new style of image-making" in the region.

Lindsay Nelson's experience teaching film studies in Japan highlights the difficulties of accessing media across national boundaries. Her essay provides strategies for accessibility and student engagement, but also reveals the benefits of rethinking content to the extent of focusing less on watching media and more on discussing everything that surrounds it. Similarly, a team of film studies tutors from Monash University in Australia, Drs. Luke Creeley, Robert Letizi, Whitney Monaghan, Grace C. Russell, and Simon Troon, were determined to make their Zoom seminars for first year students a dynamic and meaningful environment this year. Working closely together and assessing their models and designs carefully they came up with various ways to make sure their course remained student-centered. Paying close attention to what worked and what did not, they focused on positive experiences, such as the integration of unstructured and unmonitored social interaction into their synchronous online tutorials. Andrea Wood found Flipgrid to be useful in her efforts to ignite deeper engagement and investment in class conversations among her online students. Attracted to the diversity offered by the software, Wood's essay focuses on the opportunities for personal reflection, debate, scene analysis, and peer review. When synchronous interaction is not an option, she has found Flipgrid to be a valuable tool for increasing engagement, not least because it helps students feel more connected to their peers and instructor.

As well as commissioning new essays, we asked our 2015 contributors if they wanted to provide an update on their online experiences. Kelly Kessler suggests COVID is a time where we should consider "stepping back" from innovation so as to avoid swamping students with too many online tools and options, while Kimberlee Gilles-Bridges offers a postscript to her essay on hybrid pedagogy that focuses on what students need to succeed, such as clear, direct communication from instructors regarding assignments, grading, and expectations. Meaningful interaction and multiple examples, especially real-world examples, help make the online environment a useful and productive environment. Finally, Antoni Roig & Talia Leibovitz provide a detailed update on their developments in collaborative creative environments and tools that shows how the early development of online pedagogy for production courses continues to offer teaching challenges and constructive outcomes for instructors and students alike.

Contributors:

Dr. Luke Creeley teaches Film and Screen Studies at Monash University. He is a screenwriter and film director. His research areas include Australian cinema, national cinemas, horror cinema, and film production. He recently completed his PhD which specialized in the visual analysis of cinema and explorations of film style and directing craft.

Dr. Robert Letizi is a Film and Screen Studies Lecturer at Monash University. His research is focused on the audiovisual essay, technology and aesthetics, and progressive pedagogy. He was awarded an Education Fellowship by Monash University (2019) to develop teaching innovation and enhance curriculum design and is co-coordinator of the subject that this article discusses, "Introduction to Film Studies." He has published in *JCMS* on audiovisual essay teaching pedagogy.

Dr. Whitney Monaghan teaches in Film and Screen Studies at Monash University. Her background is in screen, media, and cultural studies and her research examines the representation of gender, queer and youth identities, digital culture, and new forms of screen media. She is the author of *Queer Girls, Temporality and Screen Media: Not 'Just a Phase'* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), co-editor of *Screening Scarlett Johansson: Gender, Genre, Stardom* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), and co-author of *Queer Theory Now: From Foundations to Futures* (Red Globe Press, 2020).

Dr. Grace C. Russell is a teaching associate in Film and Screen Studies at Monash University and an online training development consultant. She recently completed her PhD as part of the “Utilitarian Filmmaking in Australia 1945-1980” Australian Research Council Research project. Her research focuses on instructional filmmaking, industrial safety, and non-cinema uses of film.

Dr. Simon Troon teaches Film and Screen Studies at Monash University. His research explores the representation of disaster and eco-catastrophe across film genres and styles and is concerned with ethics, realism, and methods for textual analysis. In 2019 he was awarded an Education Fellowship by Monash’s Faculty of Arts to develop teaching innovation and enhance curriculum design. He has published in *Studies in Documentary Film* and *Australasian Drama Studies*.

Ted Fisher is an Assistant Professor in the Art Department at Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi. He has an M.F.A. in Photography from Claremont Graduate University and an M.F.A. in Film Directing from the University of Edinburgh.

Dr. Samantha Nkechi Iwowo is a filmmaker and lecturer in Directing Drama at Bournemouth University. Her research is primarily on postcolonial cinema (particularly neo-Nollywood), transnational film studies, and *mise en scène* in film.

Dr. Christa van Raalte is Deputy Dean of Media and Communication at Bournemouth University. Current research interests include constructions of gender in science fiction and action films, narrative strategies in complex TV, and workforce diversity in the media industries.

Dr. James Fair is a Principal Academic in Film & Television Production at Bournemouth University. He teaches in the BA (Hons) Film program and continues to practice as a filmmaker.

Hamidreza Nassiri is a PhD Candidate in Communication Arts (Film Studies) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His dissertation examines how the emergence of digital technologies in the Iranian film industry has influenced social, cultural, and economic equality in film and media at the domestic as well as global levels. He has taught “Media Production,” “Introduction to Film,” and “Speech Composition” at the UW-Madison.

Lindsay Nelson is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science and Economics at Meiji University in Tokyo. Her work has appeared in *Journal of Japanese and Korean Cinema*, *East Asian Journal of Popular Culture*, and *Studies in the Humanities*. Her research interests include Japanese horror films and contemporary Japanese popular culture. Her first book, *Circulating Fear: Japanese Horror, Fractured Realities, and New Media*, is forthcoming from Lexington Books in 2021.

Vladimir Rosas received his MA in Film and Screen Studies from Goldsmiths, University of London, and is currently a PhD student in Film and Television Studies at the University of Warwick. His research work focuses on audiovisual microhistories through amateur media.

Luis Horta is the Coordinator of the Academic Program of the University of Chile's *Cineteca* (Film theatre). His research specializes in the audiovisual heritage, aesthetics, and language of cinema. He has published several books in Spanish about Chilean cinema.

Andrea Wood is Professor of Film and Media Studies in the English Department at Winona State University, where she teaches courses on popular film genres, LGBTQ+ cinema, and more. Her primary research interests include transnational comics and animation, horror cinema, digital media and fandom, pedagogy, and feminist and queer theory.

Kimberlee Gillis-Bridges is a Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Washington, where she also directs the Computer-Integrated Courses Program. Since the mid-1990s, she has experimented with educational technologies and smart classrooms in her film, literature, cultural studies, and writing courses. In addition to teaching, she gives frequent, invited presentations on technology-integrated pedagogy and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Her writing has appeared in *More Ways to Handle the Paper Load—On Paper and Online* (NCTE Press, 2005) and *The Bedford Bibliography of Basic Writing* (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004).

Kelly Kessler is an Associate Professor of Media and Cinema Studies in the College of Communication at DePaul University. Her research engages primarily with the areas of gender and genre studies in American film and television. Kessler has been engaged in online learning at DePaul since 2009: conducting faculty workshops addressing online teaching techniques, developing and teaching three different online courses, and serving as the Chair of the university's Online Education Taskforce since its 2013 creation.

Antoni Roig is a Senior Lecturer at the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) in the Information and Communication Sciences Department. His research has been connected to the different ways of opening creative processes in digital media production. He has been writing, from a critical point of view, about participatory culture in video sharing sites, videogames, fandom (particularly related to fan movies), machinima, collaborative filmmaking, and transmedia experiences, as well as on crowdsourcing and crowdfunding in filmmaking projects. He has also been writing about practice theory in community-based filmmaking processes.

Talia Leibovitz is a PhD candidate in the Information and Knowledge Society program at the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) and the Internet Interdisciplinary Institute (IN3). Her research in Film Studies focuses on cultural production and collaborative practices in the digital era. She is a part of the research group MEDIACCIONES at the UOC. She has also directed several documentaries and short films.