

Raider of the Lost Art - What Kind of a Product is Film?

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Abstract

Purpose of this study

Film is a complex product that can be used in many different ways. The age of the digitalization has affected not only the product itself, but the way we consume it as well. If once film could be seen as a magical experience, then nowadays it reminds more of a disposable product. New innovations give us the freedom of enjoying it whenever and wherever. My objective in this research is to reveal the current value of film. How do we perceive films nowadays, how do we watch them and in the end what kind of a product film is in 2013?

Methodology

The theoretical framework discussed the literature relating to postmodernism, consumer culture theory, hedonic consumption, and downloading. The empirical part of the study is of the qualitative manner. The long interviews (McCracken, 1988) were used as data collection for the study. The ten participants all had a different approach to film, some worked with film and some studied film. Through these discussions I found ten different perceptions of film and ways of using film. The discussions revealed not only interesting ideas and concepts about the format of art itself. The question “how we use film “eventually lead to a much more fascinating question “why is it that we use film in that specific way” ...

Findings

Every time an individual puts a film on, he/she has a goal. Sometimes it is related to the film itself, sometimes it is not. The film watching experience is always unique. The reasons for watching a film are endless and quite often they do not treat the product as art. Art vs. entertainment, individual experience vs. social experience, theatre vs. laptop, these are all examples of the decisions we as viewers need to make. Though we can be criticized of not using the format properly, it is the richness of the format that in the end makes it so personal for us.

Keywords

Film, Postmodernism, Consumer Culture, Hedonic Consumption, Downloading, Piracy

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Research Background

The history of cinema dates back to the late 19th century, and although the showing of Louis Lumière's "*La sortie des usines Lumière*" in the Grand Café Boulevard in Paris on the 28th of December in 1895 is not technically the first screening of a film, it was the first time film was introduced as a commercial product. Skladanowski had already screened his own work in early November of the same year, but he had not handled the format as a business opportunity. Lumière, on the other hand, understood its potential and had invited scientists, publishers and theatre managers to experience the new technology. Among these people there was also a certain enthusiast of magic, Georges Méliès. Lumière always captured the realism of our world. His films were short glimpses of real-life situations. He found the beauty in the mundane. It was Méliès that quickly understood the format's possibilities of creating visual trickery and optical illusions with film. Realism or fantasy, mundane or special, there has always been magic in the film.

This new technology that projected 24 images per second on a screen was greeted with great enthusiasm and it did not take long for the new form of art to dazzle the viewers. The French critic and theorist André Bazin has explained the rise of cinema through two different interpretations. It has emerged both from the human's idealistic urge of "capturing the moment" and from the obsession of pushing technical innovations forward. After a century these two interpretations are still the guidelines of cinema. The mixture of reality and fantasy is a combination that still thrills us, moves us, fascinates us and amazes us. Cinema is a format that gives room for both the artist's vision and the newest technical wizardry. Though the rules of the storytelling both visually and narrative-wise have changed in the course of time, the recipe for "the magic" has still stayed the same.

One of the most iconic stories of the birth of cinema tells about the screening of Lumière's "*L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat*, (1895). The film shows us a train that arrives to the station. However, in the late 19th century people were not familiar with moving pictures and as the train approached the camera, the viewer's became increasingly terrified that the train was going to run over them (Von Bagh, 2005). 116 years later, the American icon Martin Scorsese made a highly nostalgic picture "Hugo" that not only re-enacts the very screening event, but also transforms it suitable for the modern eye. In Hugo we experience through 3D-

technology how a train is arriving to the Paris train station, but fails to use the breaks and flies through the screen straight at the viewer. It is clear that the technology has evolved, but cinema still plays with the same sense of excitement it used to play in 1895.

The history of cinema is full of big technical innovations that have changed films forever. The evolution of sound in films began in 1927 with "The Jazz Singer". In the 30's Technicolor introduced its first three-strip coloring process that started slowly to diminish the amount of B&W films. The 50's marked the emergence of the use of 3D technology and although it cannot be considered to be a success then, it is an important innovation when we are examining the hit films of the current decade. Jaws and the summer blockbusters, Star Wars and the special effects and Cassavetes with the rise of the independent cinema can also be seen as a relevant part in the road of film and what it has become.

The way we consume films has evolved also. Some consider big screens to be the only acceptable way to enjoy films, but since the emergence of the television, the living room has become more and more our entertainment and media center. Also films were being consumed increasingly through televisions. This expanded in the 80's with VCRs and finally exploded with the emergence of DVDs. Television put more pressure on the film industry and the film theatres. Movies had to become more extravagant and the technical requirements of film theatres became more complex. Though the fight of the viewers' attention has always existed, it has become more evident today. In order to see a film, you do not need any more a theatre, a player or even a television. In the 21st century all you need for watching a film is a broadband network and a mobile device.

The digitalization of film, the ending era of celluloid, has not only affected the working methods of the film industry, but it has also led to whole new ways of consuming films. Where it leads will presumably be the death of film projectors, the death of DVDs and blue rays, the death of traditional video stores and quite possibly the death of "the magic" in films. The video itself gave the individuals the ability to control time with such functions as pause and rewind (Cubitt, 1993). Now the digital age has given the individual the opportunity to control the space as freely as time. Films can be consumed wherever there is a screen, making it an even more mundane product. We have become the perpetual absorbers of video messages.

The film industry has divided into two parties. The one that sees the digital era as the democratization of the format and the other that sees it more as a cheap copy of a once great

form of art. In the documentary *Side by Side* (2012) the likes of David Fincher, James Cameron and Steven Soderbergh explain what makes the new era so great and how it actually improves the quality of their films. Then we have, for example, Paul Thomas Anderson that still sees the traditional film the only way to go. The feeling and the colors are something that can never be manufactured digitally. It is difficult to evaluate the ability to copy the feel of celluloid digitally, but Cubitt (1993: 100) adds that we must also remember the thoughts of Gene Youngblood, who suggested in his opus *Expanded Cinema* (1970) that we are creating mythology out of the raw materials of science. The importance of celluloid for film art might just be a mythological creation by some of the industry leaders. In 2012, in the Hollywood Reporters annual directors' roundtable Quentin Tarantino states: "I can't stand all this digital stuff. It's not what I signed for." He also describes the digital presentation of films "just television in public". For Tarantino cinema has always been about film. Working his whole life with film and projectors, he has fallen in love with the process and transformed it as something essential for the art. Whether the transformation to digital representation has an effect on the purity of the art or not, I find the term "television in public" to be highly appropriate to describe the evolution of cinema and video art in general.

Bolter and Grusin (2000: 15) state "what is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media." It is interesting to notice that although the film industry has evolved its whole existence, only now that the physical product of film is disappearing, people are becoming worried about the future. Film has always greeted enthusiastically new inventions. From the animated birds of *Mary Poppins* to the motion capture techniques of the *Lord of the Rings*, innovation has always been exciting. New inventions themselves are not the problem. The problem is the extinction of the old ways they cause. The celluloid is what made film unique and limited. As the video content has become easier to watch and make, the exclusivity of film is disappearing. At the same time the medium is evolving. The video content itself is becoming more fragmented and the importance of the film industry as a video content provider is diminishing.

Initially it started with piracy. People were easily able to download movies on their computers. In the last decade we have seen service providers start fighting piracy through iTunes, Amazon Instant Video, Voddler, Netflix, Mubi...just to name a few film providers in the year 2013. They do an exquisite job of providing a high number of different films to people all

over the world. Through broadband connection you are able to enjoy films wherever you are. Though I am personally glad for these services, I'm aware of the harm it is doing for film. It deletes the exclusivity in film and it enables film to be consumed as a disposable product. This is a challenge for the film theatres and in the end for the quality of film. There lies also a risk that people are becoming less and less willing to pay for film content. If films can be consumed wherever and whenever, then what is the value of film in 2013?

In this study I am trying to understand film as a consumed product in the year 2013. Has something happened to the product in the past ten years and what does it mean to the film industry. I want to know how, and in what circumstances do people watch films nowadays? I am also interested about the downloading phenomenon of the 21st century. How do people feel about downloading movies and is illegal downloading of films considered to be a crime? What is actually the appropriate price for a film? Finally I want to understand where film consumption is going? How do people plan on consuming films in the future? In a way, by interviewing people I want to form a deeper understanding of the status of films in our postmodern society in the year 2013.

The research questions that guide this study are:

1. What kind of a product is film?
2. How do people use film?
3. How have the new innovations affected the way we understand film?

This study is divided into two parts, the theory and the methodology. The theory starts by explaining our postmodern society and the postmodern consumer. What are the thinking patterns of the consumers of today? Then I will briefly analyze the theory behind Consumer Culture Theory, a quite new field of study under consumer research emerging in the wake of the "paradigm battles" or "science wars" (Hietanen, 2012: 24). After that I move on to hedonic consumption and the sense of enchantment. What makes our consuming situations such pleasant or unpleasant experiences? A highly important topic when we are analyzing the consuming of films, whether it is in a theatre or on a mobile phone. Finally we will address the downloading culture. Little literature is written about the illegal downloading of films, but music is a splendid parallel product.

The conducted research is a qualitative one. McCracken's concept of long interviews was used and the different individuals were interviewed. By constructing an interpretive account from

these interviews I will build a descriptive narrative of the many different meanings of film and how it is used in our daily lives.

In order to better understand the different channels of film consumption, I have also started to use different broadband service providers. So, I will also be exploring my own perceptions of my personal behavior towards films after my use of new channels and devices in consuming films.

2. Postmodern Days

2.1 The Birth of the Postmodernist Age

Robert Venturi attacked the modern architecture and especially the monumental buildings of the International Style with his idea of pop buildings and decorated sheds, Andy Warhol developed the groundbreaking concept of pop art, Philip Glass saw the possibilities of combining the classical and “popular” styles in music and creating a whole new angle in composing, and Jean Luc Godard decided to abandon the structure of plot driven movies and became one of the forerunners in the film genre called *nouveau vague* (Jameson, 1988). These are all excellent examples of the evolution of postmodernism in different fields of culture. After the World War II a new kind of society seemed to emerge where the speed of change was apparent. The rapid building of networks and superhighways, the constant change in fashion and styling, the arrival of television as a part of media and the penetration of advertising in our everyday life are all part of the transformation our modern society experienced (Jameson, 1988). Firat and Schultz (1997) see Las Vegas as the prototype of the new postmodern city. The city that Time Magazine has declared as the “New All American City” (Andersen, 1994) is experiencing constant change. It is no longer considered to be the gambling town, but a juxtaposition of different manufactured themes such as ancient Egypt (Luxor Hotel), Roman Empire (Caesar’s palace) or pirate land (Treasure Island Hotel). In Dubai men have built an island shaped like a palm tree that can be seen from a spacecraft. The island includes over 40 hotels with all kinds of different themes (Bennet, 2004). According to postmodernist sensibilities real does not have to be naturally real. Constructed reality is as real as any other. What matters is not the object’s relation to the natural surroundings, but the object’s relation to people (Firat and Dholakia, 2006). The individual is the one who communicates the reality in which he/she wants to live. He participates in the construction of the reality, instead of just passively accepting one (Firat and Schulz, 1997).

Jameson (1988) sees the rise of postmodernism as a response to the so-called forms of the high-modernism (like the university, the museum etc.). He also highlights the importance of the convergence of high culture and popular culture. Although it must be noted that Cubitt (1993) sees mainstream popular culture more as a simplified reality of the mass media. Brown (1993: 21), on the other hand, emphasizes the meaning of the counter-culture movements of the late 60’s – early 70’s against “authority, aspirations, assumptions and

artifacts of the establishment.” The evolution of culture is the driving force behind postmodernism. However, Firat and Dholakia (2006) add the development of technology into the equation. The improvements in technology are the driving force behind the transformation of culture, but at the same time, it is culture that is steering the development of technology. Postmodernism is a complicated concept that has no “one-and-only” explanation. It can, however, be characterized by “*the celebration of skepticism, subversiveness, irony, anarchy, playfulness, paradox, style, spectacle, self-referentiality and, above all, by hostility towards generalizations*” (Brown, 1993: 21). This has led to two opposed views. One believes that this phenomenon is a liberating force (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995) where the individual is free from all commitments (Dawes and Brown, 2000). The other sees the world as a dystopian and alienating society (Goulding, 2003) where people lack depth and reality is merely superficial (Eco, 1987). The postmodern condition is seen as identity confusion (Kellner, 1995) and as an inability to make choices that leads to even further confusion of one’s roles and responsibilities (Gergen, 1991). If the revelation in Voltaire’s *Candide* was that happiness was found in the simple life, then the postmodern pressures of succeeding and being connected 24/7 are far from it. Freedom is the virtue and the doom of the postmodern world. The pressure of using that freedom right is what creates the anxiety, which so often crushes the individual.

Nicholas Roeg directed one of the saddest visions of alienation in our postmodern society with his 1976 film “*The Man Who Fell to Earth*”. David Bowie plays a humanoid alien who comes to earth in order to save his dying planet. In order to get back home, he must establish a high technology company to build a return spacecraft. During his stay he finds a girl who falls deeply in love with him, but he also learns the ruthlessness of business and the numbing effects of alcohol and television. Gin & tonics are used to escape the coldness of reality, and the silence is muted with the constant information flow sucked from the televisions, to the point where real love ceases to exist. Television becomes the most important connection to the reality and to the humanity.



Figure 1: The alien becoming human in the postmodern society (The Man Who Fell to Earth, 1976)

We have now come to understand the complexity of postmodernist world, where the reality is constructed together, but everybody is in the end alone – without the imagined security of over-arching and stable ideological grand narratives.

2.2 The 50 Shades of Postmodernism

Modernism set clear goals and targets that people then aimed at. Even capitalism and communism can be seen as modern ideologies that offered straight answers to the individuals and a quest for a better future. Modernism gave a feeling of safety and sort of a meaning of life to the individuals, but postmodernism sees modernism as a grand failure (Firat et al, 1995). There is no big plan for tomorrow or a common future. What matters is the moment we live in, the now. Whereas modernity cherished the scientific virtues of objectivity, rigor, detachment, precision, logic and rationality, postmodernism is all about the artistic attributes of intuition, creativity, spontaneity, speculation, emotion and involvement. The characteristics of modernism and postmodernism are well exhibited in the following table of Brown (1993) that combines the findings of Harvey (1989) and Bouchet (1993).

Modern/Modernity	Postmodern/Postmodernity
Order/Control	Disorder/Chaos
Certainty/Determinacy	Ambiguity/Indeterminacy
Fordism/Factory	Post-Fordism/Office
Content/Depth	Style/Surface
Progress/Tomorrow	Stasis/Today
Homogeneity/Consensus	Heterogeneity/Plurality
Hierarchy/Adulthood	Equality/Youth
Existence/Reality	Performance/Imitation
Deliberate/Outer-directed	Playful/Self-centered
Contemplation/Metaphysics	Participation/Parody
Congruity/Design	Incongruity/Chance

Table 1: The Modern and the Postmodern Characteristics and Dichotomies (Brown, 1993)

In “The Differend” Lyotard (1983) explains how the postmodern society entered a time where ethics have seized to exist because of the language-games, the non-existent connections between reality and language. The fragmentation of the society has led to a situation where difference is good and difference is equal. There are no questions of superiority and inferiority in the postmodernist worldview (Firat and Dholakia, 2006); preferences however are approved (Best and Kellner, 1991). Different communities have different preferences for different ways of living (Firat et Dholakia, 1998). In a worldview that highlights freedom, individuality and the current moment, some basic ground rules or conditions can, however, be distinguished (Firat et Dholakia, 2006; Firat et Schultz, 1997; Elliot, 1997; Firat et al., 1995).

Firat and Dholakia (1996) identified five familiar attributes for postmodern times. These attributes are *hyperreality*, *fragmentation*, *decentering of the subject*, *paradoxical juxtaposition* and *tolerance for difference and multiplicity*. Hyperreality is a condition in which we understand that reality is not “out there”, but it is a culturally constructed entity that is independent of all human agency. Reality itself has vanished, and what we are left with is the culture’s simulation of the reality (Baudrillard, 1988). Fragmentation can be seen as the result of our everyday life that is filled with different roles in different situations daily. Instead of

panicking because of the chaotic maze that our lives have become, people act as players in the construction of their own identity. They do not choose a given role, but they build their role through negotiating with several different cultures (Bauman, 1996.) The de-centering of the subject questions the modernistic view of the relationship between the subject and the object. Humans do not always control the objects. In fact, the objects and structures may have surprisingly strong power over the human (Baudrillard, 1983). The paradoxical juxtaposition of opposites can be seen in the constant mixing of different ideas and trends in the postmodern culture, whether it is ideological oppositions or fashion. Finally, postmodernism does not object or ban anything, it tolerates everything. Difference and multiplicity enrich our world and they should be encouraged (Firat and Dholakia, 2006). Everyone is a unique individual and you should never have the need to apologize for your opinions and ways of living. Never say you are sorry for being you.

Although postmodernism is a constantly growing way of observing life, modernistic ways of thinking are still apparent in our everyday lives (Firat and Dholakia, 2006). Culture may have become a fragmented organ that cherishes diversity, but market orders are still tightly bent on the old modern ways. For us the most important thing is, however, to acknowledge that the view of the consumer in modern marketing is too simple. Through postmodernism we can better understand the consumer of the 21st century. However, it is important to understand that postmodernism itself is more of a cultural critique (Shankar and Patterson, 2001), than an “answer sheet”. Actually Firat and Venkatesh (1995, 255) even suggest that a true postmodernity actually threatens the marketer’s dominance and will eventually lead to a situation where consumers can no longer be controlled at all.

2.3 The Postmodern Consumer

So we have come to the conclusion that the postmodern society is a fragmented place where the people construct and mold their own realities. Diversity should be cherished and there exists no such thing as the one true goal. But, in order, to understand the phenomenon, we must also examine what it all means for the people, and in this case, the consumers.

Giddens (1991: 201) describes the postmodern consumer as a person who is threatened by the “dilemmas of the self”: fragmentation, powerlessness, uncertainty and a struggle against commodification, which are all driven by the “looming threat of personal meaninglessness”,

due to the basic characteristics of the postmodern society. Whether consumer feels postmodernity as a liberating force (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995) or an alienating force (Goulding, 2003), it is clear that the consumer has the ability to constantly change and communicate his or her identity. Elliot and Wattanasuwan (1998) write about free will and how it is led by values that in the end are a social product. Thompson (1995) sees the self as a symbolic project that is constructed out of the available symbolic resources. The fact that a consumer may possess more than one identity makes the studying of a postmodern consumer even more difficult.

In addition to Firat's and Venkatesh's (1995) framework of the five conditions of postmodern culture, Brown (1993) found three unique tendencies for the postmodern consumer. Postmodern consumer lives in the perpetual present, emphasizes form and style and has a greater acceptance of disorder and chaos. Now we have established the difference between the modern and postmodern consumer, but we must still dig deeper into the construction of the postmodern consumer's identity.

The development of identity has been explained through narrative identity theory (Ricoeur, 1992) as well as through the development of collective social identity (Jenkins, 1996). We create our own identities both through the stories we experience and through the social interactions we are part of. The development of the identity or identities is a complex process where the consumer both intentionally and unintentionally constructs, maintains and communicates the inner self/selves (Elliot and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Holt and Goulding (2004) exhibited how men continuously supported their "man-of-action" identities through even the most mundane consumption. What we as marketers must understand, is that the material we possess and the way we consume, is in fact a vital part of the construction of our identities. We must understand the drama in consumption.

Consumption can be seen as a way of negotiating the conflicting themes of freedom and control from social, cultural and psychological perspectives (Elliot, 1997). The symbolic meaning of consumption is evident in the postmodern society. Elliot and Wattanasuwan (1998: 134) declare "*all voluntary consumption carries, either consciously or unconsciously, symbolic meanings; if the consumer has choices to consume, he or she will consume things that hold particular symbolic meaning.*" However, these symbolic meanings are not formed based on the product the consumer possesses. The product can mean different things for different consumers. Elliot (1997) explains the meaning of consumption through five dialects; the

material versus the symbolic, the social versus the self, desire versus satisfaction, rationality versus irrationality and creativity versus constraint. Although, explaining the phenomenon through such opposite's ideas might simplify the entity from the postmodernistic point of view, it does help us understand the complexity of consumption as a symbol of our identity. A single purchase can hold several different meanings. Make no mistake, our possessions reflect and are an essential part of our identities (Belk, 1988). A purchase can have symbolic value (Baudrillard, 1981), it can make you part of a group or differentiate you from all the others (Elliot, 1995), it can be the consequence of the desire created by advertising (Featherstone, 1991), and it can be rational "lifestyle" solution (Cushman, 1990) or an unconscious irrational choice. In a sense, consuming is the freedom that people can experience in our postmodern society. They have been offered the possibility of inventing and consciously creating a self-identity through consuming (Bauman, 1996). Varman and Vikas (2007) offer us a totally opposite opinion on the subject. Freedom through consuming is actually a privilege of the few and it can be argued that the whole idea of finding freedom through consuming is a capitalist illusion, which again is tightly linked to the ideas of modernism and fordism.

2.4 The Postmodern Marketing

Because of the complexity of the postmodern society, marketing has become also a far more complicated task. Long back are the days when people could have been categorized easily into nice little boxes (Firat and Schultz, 1997). According to Addis and Podesta (2005) the new marketing language is founded upon four C's of *change, complexity, chaos and contradiction*.

Postmodern marketing is sternly linked to the traditions of critical marketing as many of the early critical marketing academics have become the promoters of postmodern marketing (Tadajewski, 2010). Critical marketing is an idea that has arisen from the belief that marketing itself should be investigated more critically. It draws inspiration from other substantive critical traditions i.e. feminism, Marxism, ethnography and symbolism, poststructuralism, hermeneutics, postmodernism, environmentalism, sustainability, ethics and discourse analysis (Bradshaw and Firat, 2007). According to Hansen (1981: 215) the problem with traditional marketing was its assumption that "an intellectual self-controlled individual" could be manipulated so easily. Critical marketing offers a more perplex view of the theory and a richer set of research tools (Bradshaw and Firat, 2007). Shankar (2009) sees a risk that

the constantly growing philosophical thinking in critical marketing might marginalize the whole phenomenon and diminish its importance, even though it is something that is deeply needed. The critical theory has an important role in the emergence of postmodern marketing, but it should also be noted that the postmodern research has and will continue to have a relevant role in the critical analysis of marketing (Tadjewski, 2010).

The modernist way of marketing believed that the image should represent the value of the product. Postmodernistic way of looking turns this idea around its head. It is the image that the consumer values and therefore it is the product that should represent and support the image. Depending on the time and place, the consumer then alters and mixes these images to represent the desired self-image. This is the homo sapiens of the postmodern times that Firat and Schultz (1997) aptly call *Homo consumericus*. Being part of the consuming eventually turns the consumer into a producer as well (Kozinets, 2004). We ourselves create those images that later are desired by others.

The neoclassical tradition of modern marketing also believed its target was the consumer and the pursuable goal was satisfaction. In the postmodern age, however, the consumer is much more than a passive target. The consumer is a customizer and a producer of (self)-images at each consumptive moment, and therefore marketing should aim at consumer empowerment and giving the consumer communities the possibility of extending the symbols and values of the offering (Firat and Dholakia, 2006; Firat et Schultz, 1997; Firat et al, 1995). Eventually this leads to an outcome where brand equity will eventually become a shared asset between the organization and the post-consumer (Schau et al, 2009). Zwick et al. (2008) even argue that the old days of Kotler and 4 P's are long gone, and that the firms that will succeed best are the ones that understand the concept of co-creation where the customers produce and share their technical, social and cultural knowledge. It will lead to the best results and the most satisfied customers since it cleverly obtains relevant information of the customers' opinions and needs.

This shows the difficulty in postmodern marketing. Companies should be able to offer tempting images that are not however set in stone. The final image is obtained through the co-creation of the company and the consumer. Elliot and Wattanasuwan (1998) describe this relationship as dialectical, where advertising both creates new cultural meanings and takes old ones from the consumer's worldview and invests them into the product.

How should marketing then adapt to the postmodern sensibilities? Marketing should be experience-based and emphasize the creativity and connectivity (Cova, 1996), give room for the consumer to apply the product in his/her own way, enable the customization of products for individuals (Balasubramanian et al, 2001 in Simmons, 2008) or collaborative customization (Gilmore and Pine, 1997), and empower the consumers through interaction with the companies via the web (Auger, 2005). Firat and Schultz (1997) explain the postmodern marketing strategies through words like flexibility, adaption, thematization, immersion, image fragmentation and clustering, market destruction and empowerment.

In the age of web 2.0, giving power to the consumer is easier than ever. The online environment helps companies to interact with the consumer and enables the consumers to form their own communities and tribes for specific brands. The Internet has provided *homo consumericus* the ability to express their own individuality within homogeneous groups. (Simmons, 2008) The postmodern consumer wants to cherish individuality, but is still afraid of isolation. Therefore, the Internet is an excellent tool for the consumers as well as the marketers of the postmodern times. It supports creativity, individuality, communality, interactivity and many other concepts that are so often linked to postmodernism.

We already learned that what matters is the image. This leads to the fact, that in the fragmented markets of the postmodern time, marketers tend to have the most potential in detecting social trends that can eventually lead to important strategic implications that help the companies to obtain relevant competitive advantage (Firat and Schultz, 1997). So, the postmodernist view asks "how does your image in the end support the consumer's self-image?"

In Ascher's documentary "Room 237" (2012), the deeper meanings of the Stanley Kubrick movie *The Shining*, are explored. Five different enthusiastic have their own interpretation of Kubrick's message. The horrors of the holocaust, the destruction of the Indian culture and the faking of the 1969 moon landing are all seen hidden in the scenes of the horror masterpiece. One of the narrators puts it excellently. He explains that Stanley Kubrick might not have been that conscious about the details in the specific scenes. According to the postmodernist view, the director's conscious choices are only a part of the whole scenery. It is the unconscious choices that have a great weight in the matter as well.

Although some of the theories of the film can be seen over the top and incredibly unlikely, it is clear that this individual with an IQ over 200, has communicated his understanding and knowledge over humanity, unconsciously as well. Specific lines of characters, visual decorations in the scenes and a specific can of baking powder can all be unconsciously communicated thoughts of the director. At the same time it unveils the characteristics of the narrators, as it is clear that at least some of them only see what they want to see in the film. The documentary itself is a fascinating view of a classic movie, and at the same time it unveils the possibilities of postmodern research and analysis. Based on the idea of the death of the author (Barthes, 1967), a film or a book is not a finished product, but an open discussion. Postmodernism dismisses the characteristic author figures of modernism (Trimbur, 2000).

3. Consumer Culture Theory

Through the analysis of the emergence of the postmodern consumer, we can see that the old ways of looking at marketing might not be that effective anymore. The consumer researchers have become more and more interested about the sociocultural, experiential, symbolic and ideological aspects of consumption. This has led to the evolution of consumer culture theory (CCT). Arnold and Thompson (2005: 868) do not see it as a unified, grand theory, but as “family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and the cultural meanings”. The consumer culture theory abandons the traditional ways of categorization, like gender, nationality, social class, and sees culture as a phenomenon that is born from similar ways of consuming. It conceptualizes culture as the very fabric of experience, meaning and action (Geertz, 1983).

Consumer culture theory shares a lot of insights with the tradition of interpretive consumer research (ICR). ICR has evolved from the early quasi-positivistic ideas of the researcher being an outsider and finding “the one truth” to a much more fragmented method, where it is acknowledged that there is no truths and that the research will always be affected by the narration of the researcher - the downfall being that the end result might be merely an act of “narcissism or scholarly masturbation” (Shankar and Patterson, 2001: 492). The postmodernists even deny the existence of a free thinking subject since the “subject” is only first born through the language and the moment (Brown, 1995), therefore favoring the experience more than the interpretation.

A common misconception is that consumer culture theorists study some specific contexts. This is not true. CCT researchers do not study consumer contexts; they study in them. Their aim is to find new constructs. These studies are not based on specific cults, events or groups of people (i.e. Schouten and McAlexander with the HDMC, 1995; Sherry with flea market, 1990; Goulding et al. with rave parties 2002), but on the behavior and habits that are relevant in these situations (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Because of the intangible characteristics of the CCT, experiments, surveys and quantitative are not the best suited methods for research. The experiential and sociocultural dimensions are best understood with the help of vivid qualitative data (Sherry, 1991), but quantitative data can be used as well if it helps the theoretical agenda (Arnould and Price, 1993). CCT does not restrict the researcher to use only some specific research methods. The researcher can use his imagination in the way he/she performs and displays his/hers research and findings.

Holbrook (1987) sees that consumption itself contains such strong experiential and sociocultural aspects that a too orthodox managerial perspective is not suitable for the research. Product symbolism, brand meaning, ritual consumption practices are found deep in the human psyche. Holt (2002) has dedicated a lot of his studies to understand the stories behind the most meaningful brands. Whether it is the so-called identity brands or myth marketing, he emphasizes the importance of understanding the consumer meanings and trends.

Consumption is often a ritualistic act. It is a hedonistic habit of creating one's own identity (Belk et al, 2003). The products, the brands, the ads can also be seen as a more shortsighted ways of creating an identity and achieving specific goals (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Consumption habits can be rooted or they can be fairly alterable. Arnould and Thompson (2005) distinguish four different research programs of consumer culture theory; 1) the consumer identity projects; 2) the marketplace cultures, 3) the sociohistoric patterning of consumption and 4) the mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies. This distinction is not holistic, but it does give us a better understanding of the scope of CCT. The four programs study how consuming affects the building of self-identity, how consuming is seen in the alteration and creation of cultures, how consuming habits are or are not driven by the social structures like class, community, ethnicity and gender and how the marketing messages are delivered to the consumer and how the consumer then reacts to them and mixes them. They should, however, not be treated as totally separated structures, as Arnould and Thompson (2007) later dug into the intermediaries between the four paradigms that are as relevant in the CCT studies as the suggested structures.

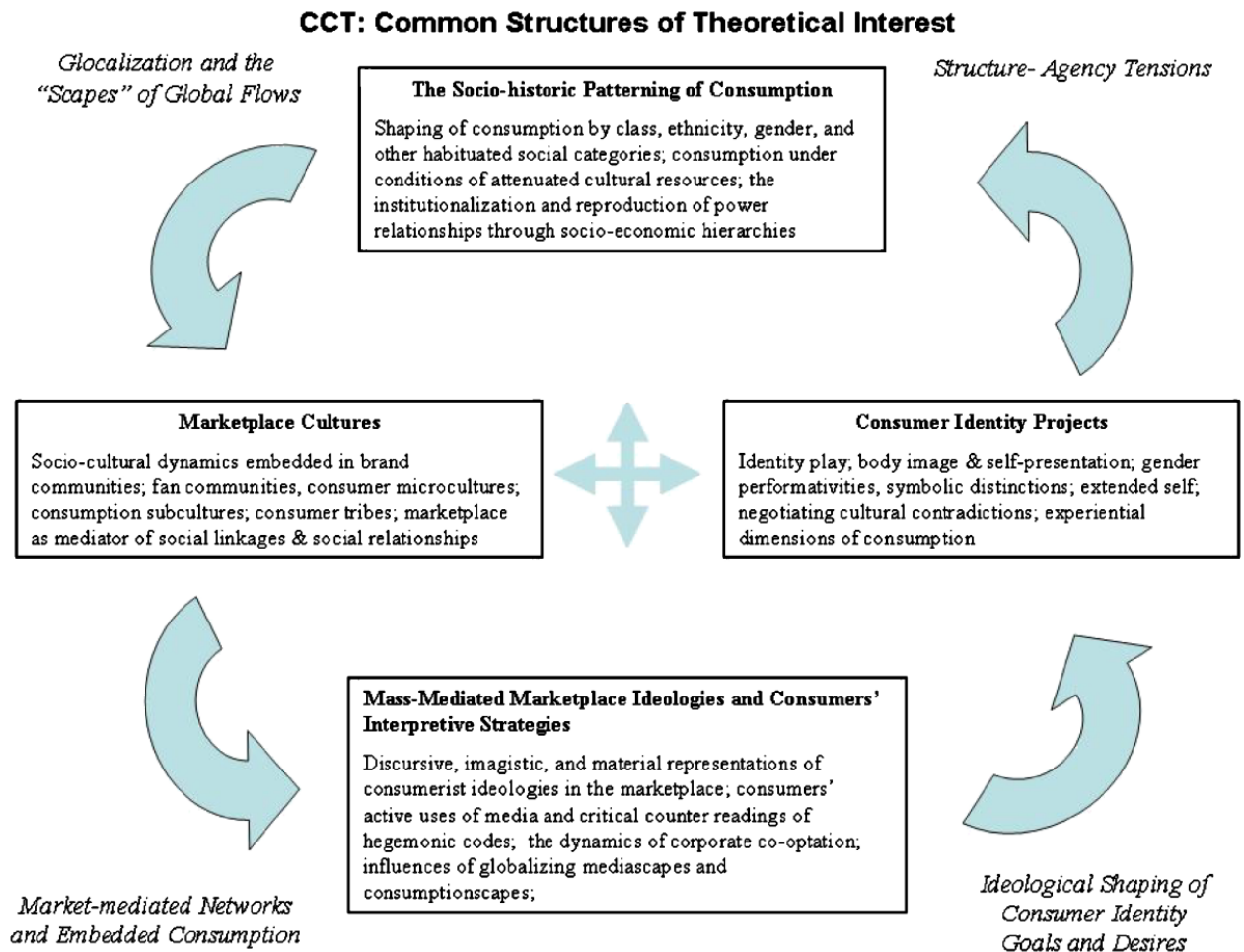


Figure 2: CCT: Common Structures of Theoretical Interest (Arnould and Thompson, 2007)

The holistic connections are 1) Ideological Shaping of Consumer Identity Goals and Desires, 2) Structure – Agency Tensions, 3) Glocalization and the “Scapes” of Global Flows and 4) Market-mediated Networks and Embedded Consumption. They examine the relationships between ideology and consumer agency, social reproduction and identity transformation, interpretation of globalizing structures and global economy, and exchange networks with identity construction and social relationships. Although the figure above helps us understand the entity of CCT, it should not be read religiously. It should be used more as a tool for helping to find the right questions.

Arnould’s and Thompson’s (2007) fascination of conceptualizing the CCT again came from the conclusion that their initial ideas had some inconsistencies. They suggested that consumer culture theoretics would be a more suitable name for it, since it acknowledges the diversity of the alternative research method. CCT should not be regarded as theory that evolves, since the researches seldom enrich “the one theory”. The conclusions are more often a set of new

questions than a proper answer. Consumer culture theory wants to unveil the consciously and unconsciously hidden truths and meanings behind the ways we consume and act, independently and in a group.

4. At the Movies: The once hedonic and enchanting experience

Shopping motivations are a much-studied subject in consumer research, often giving the focus to the task-related and rational ways of consuming. Although studies have proved that sometimes shopping is considered as “work” (Fischer and Arnold, 1990; Sherry, McGrath and Levy, 1993), the rest of the time it is seen as pure fun (Bloch and Bruce, 1984; Sherry, 1990). In a much-cited study, Tauber (1972) divides the shopping motivations under personal motives and social motives. Westbrook and Black (1985) see that our shopping habits are dictated by three fundamental reasons: “to acquire a product, to acquire both a product and provide satisfaction with non-product-related needs, or to primarily attain goals not related to product acquisition.” Another way to analyze shopping motivations is to concentrate on the rewards of shopping. Based on the several acknowledged authors (Belk, 1987; Fischer and Arnold, 1990; Sherry, 1990) Babin, Darden and Griffin (1994) divide the shopping motivations under two categories: the utilitarian value and the hedonic value. The idea of calculating a specific value of an action is highly modernistic and therefore does not really function well in a postmodernistic worldview where every individual and every action is unique. However, I do believe that the distinction helps us yet to understand the traditional reasons behind consuming and gives us a “starting point”.

Utilitarian values reflect the mentality of the people who describe shopping as work. It must also be emphasized that it does not necessarily depend on the product; it can also be about the situation. For example, many consider Christmas’ shopping to be somewhat mandatory and tiresome and in no way does it create hedonic value. So, because the hedonic rewards may also depend from the situational factors, we cannot take for granted that an experiential product like a movie creates automatically hedonic value. Sometimes a movie can only offer utilitarian value. A critic is forced to see movies for the reviews, a researcher must study a movie that is mainly for the sake of work, and a teen might need to watch a certain TV series in order to be hip. Even I have a compulsion to systematically watch all the Oscar contenders for the best picture before the ceremony. I might not always be that intrigued by the movies, but in order for me to have an absolute understanding of the category, I need to have seen all the movies myself.

The hedonic shopping value on the other hand describes the entertainment and emotional worth of consuming (Bellenger et al, 1976). It is also task-related, but in this case the task is concerned with hedonic fulfillment (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). It is a more subjective and

personal reaction to shopping than the utilitarian counterpart. Increased arousal, heightened involvement, perceived freedom, fantasy fulfillment and escapism may all be outcomes of a hedonic shopping experience (Babin et al, 1994). Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) define hedonic consumption as consumer behavior habits that are driven by the multisensory, fantasy and emotional aspects of product usage. Instead of the goal driven, rational motives of utilitarian shopping, hedonic shopping is about the fun and sensational feelings you get from consumption. Consumption is “a primarily subjective state of consciousness with a variety of symbolic, hedonic responses and esthetic criteria” (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982: 132). It gives you pleasure, and as we can learn from the dozens of different women’s magazines and TV shows like *Sex and the City*, it can even become an addiction. Although I already stated the possible utilitarian values of “buying” movies, I argue that movies, since the late 19th century, have always been about thrilling and mesmerizing the viewer. Cinema is first hand a hedonic product and therefore I am interested on how the hedonic values of movies have transformed during these fast moving technological times.

Hirschman (1983) divides hedonic behavior into four categories: problem projection, role projection, fantasy fulfillment and escapism. People want to both confront and escape the unpleasant realities of their lives, but they also want to understand better and strengthen their own roles, and create fantasies and augmented realities. Hedonic behavior is tightly attached to the consumers’ own identities and lives, but also to the pursued and dreamed ideas of the future. Therefore hedonic products are products that arouse emotions. According to Lacher (1989: 368) music is consumed because it “is capable of arousing in us deep and significant emotions” and it “offers a more direct access to mental process than say speech, since the manipulation of perception and recall is so central to it”, but also because it is heavily influenced by social factors (Hantz, 1984; Lacher, 1989). Though Lacher (1989) focuses on the hedonic consumption of music, the hedonic product can be as well a bottle of wine, a baseball stadium, a Harley Davidson motorcycle club or a skydiving experience (Aune, 2002; Ritzer & Stillman, 2001, Schouten and McAlexander, 1995; Celi et al, 1993). Although the hedonic motive might at first be about the thrill and danger of the new exciting experience, it traditionally evolves in to the seeking of pure pleasure and fun – the servant becomes the master as the unknown becomes controlled and understood (Celsi et al, 1993).

Hirschman’s (1983) idea of role projection is a fascinating one, especially from postmodernistic popular culture point of view. Horkheimer and Adorno (1947) saw

commodities as the new way to realize social identities in the modern era of consumer capitalism. This can be seen from the expansion of mass culture industries after the World War II, but the culture industry eventually became mere a shotgun aimed at us with stereotypes and clichés. Cubitt (1993: 75) argues that the Hollywood film and therefore popular culture in general treats the individual as a unified, coherent subject that can be exposed to images in such a clear order that the film can perfectly perform its ideology – leading to the loss of the importance of the viewing process and interpretation, and exposing the medium as the message. The three-dimensional reality that is projected on the two-dimensional screen is the simplified, manipulative perception of the mainstream cinema. The idea of the James Deans, the Elvises and the Gagas being the most effective way to communicate your identity is frightening and troubling from the postmodernistic worldview.

As I have stated before, films are experiential products. The fact is that the way you consume a film has a lot to do with the hedonic value it produces. As we have seen, technological inventions have made movie watching easier than ever. Long gone are the ages, where a movie could only be consumed in a movie theatre. Nowadays you can even watch a movie on your mobile phone in the subway. This, in my opinion, has led to a revolution of the product. The way we use it and the way we feel about it is constantly changing. You can basically watch nowadays whatever you want, whenever you want and wherever you want. Because of this freedom, it has lost its exclusivity and it has become a more mundane product. Because, at least some of the magic has disappeared, new gimmicks must be used in order to enchant the consumer.

Ritzer describes in *“Enchanting a Disenchanted World”* (1999) how the postmodern times have altered the places where we consume goods and products. Casinos, Cruise Boats, Malls and even Churches have gone through this change. In the article *“The Postmodern Ballpark as a Leisure Setting: Enchantment and Simulated De-McDonaldization”* Ritzer and Stillman (2001) explain the evolution of a great American tradition: the baseball stadium. We are introduced three types of baseball parks, the early modern ballpark (1900-), the late modern ballpark (1960-) and the postmodern ballpark (1990-). First these ballparks began to grow in size and then they started to take other factors, such as weather, in consideration. The modern ballparks are models of rationalization and economies of scale. Then in the nineties the ballparks started to concentrate more on the extravaganza and less on baseball itself. Suddenly there were whole new means of consumption and new set of attractions. At the

same time the stadiums manipulated time and space, so that feelings of nostalgia could be experienced. Ritzer (1999) calls this evolution as McDonaldization. It can be characterized by efficiency, predictability, calculability and replacement of human with nonhuman technology. Because of the risk of losing the magic through McDonaldization, recently the ballparks have concentrated also on the simulation of “the magic”, the goal being the total enchantment of the consumer i.e. by designing the environment to remind of the “old way”. This creates a feeling of nostalgia, which Holbrook (1993) found to be effective on diverse group of people. This highly postmodern evolution can also be seen in the progress of films and film theaters.

The film is a medium that plays well with the postmodern sensibilities of time and space. Deleuze’s idea that “cinematographic image is never in the present” draws from the concept that cinema is constructed of “psycho-mechanics” that affect our nervous systems in a new way (Rajchman, 2008: 307-310). Cinema is able to play with different formats, styles and mediums, so that it creates new messages in the interaction between the content and the viewer. *Ocean 11* and its sequels are an excellent example of a postmodern McDonaldized film. They take a classic 60’s ratpack film, fill it with the biggest stars of the day and add just the right amount of the 60’s style and swing to make it feel nostalgic. Another great example is the 2011’s surprise hit “*The Artist*”, a B&W, almost mute homage to films of the silent era that is still energized so that it will entertain the hectic audience of the 21st century, even adding a metacinematic element by setting the story in a time when sound was conquering cinema.



Figure 3: *The Artist* (2011) borrowing a classic scene from *7th Heaven* (1927)

The postmodernism in film theaters can be seen in another way. Small film theaters have disappeared from the landscape and multiplexes have conquered the stage. What we have nowadays are huge complexes that do not only sell you tickets, but food and entertainment as well. The natural progress has also lead to a situation where the movie theatre can be found inside a mall. The movie is no longer itself the main goal; it is simply a part of consumption. The McDonaldized baseball stadium begins to resemble a lot the McDonaldized movie theatres. The environment makes us escape the real world and eventually we begin to consume the environment (Kozinets et al, 2004) instead of the films. Ritzer (1999) uses the term *cathedral of consumption* to describe these centers dedicated to consuming. It captures excellently the almost religious dedication we often give to consuming. On the other hand the evolution of the McDonaldization has also created a trend of objecting the dictation of the global market forces. The Alamo Drafthouse Cinema is a chain founded in 1997 that has grabbed the attention of film lovers with its strict etiquette and its focus on offering unique experiences with untraditional programming. Although we can never truly escape the market, we can vote and protest with our wallets (Kozinets, 2004). Commerce itself is not considered to be the devil; it is the forces that rule it.

The other factor I need to tackle is the technological improvement of the movies themselves. This belongs to a much larger question about the evolution of the film industry, that Christopher Kenneally tackles exquisitely in his documentary "Side by Side" (2012). The fact is that since the emergence of such movies as Jaws and Star Wars, a certain formula for blockbusters has existed (Biskind, 1998). This has led to the march of the highly effect-driven entertainment movies. The sense of wonder is delivered through special effects. It is understandable, since the format itself is losing its magic, the industry must always create something newer and bigger. This became even more evident after the VCR emerged. Although in the beginning it often slaughtered the original ratios of the films (Cubitt, 1993: xiii) it posed a big question whether people should watch films in the theatres. The answer came in the form of the visual treats spread on the big screens. Now let's jump to the 21st century, where people are able to buy big widescreen televisions with little money. How do you continue to attract the viewer? The answer is still the magic, but the magic is nowadays 3D and, even moving benches and scents. 3D is a highly controversial topic among the film industry people as well as among the moviegoers, but it proves that movie theaters are struggling to offer the people magical experiences.

I still remember when I was travelling in Asia in the winter of 2011. As a film geek and a lover of old-school cinemas, I have a habit of always catching a movie in a new city. I find movie theaters magical places, where my mind wonders and my soul rests. I spent one week in Hanoi, Vietnam. I had picked up the information of a certain movie theater from the guidebook and I navigated my way through the small and filthy corridors of Hanoi. My experience of finding the theatre can be described with the words of Harvey Dent in *The Dark Knight*; "The night is darkest just before the dawn". I was slowly getting lost in the narrow streets of Hanoi, before I suddenly found this incredible French-era cinema with a unique ambience. It was hidden inside a quarter and equipped with an old-school bar. They were usually playing old classic movies, but this specific night there was a guest professor from New York showing his favorite short movies, music videos and video clips. The theme was crazy Americana! The cinema was filled with young people from all around the world. I understood they were studying in Hanoi and had all a highly analytical way of reviewing visual arts. I grabbed a beer from the bar, sat down in the old, technically humble theatre and listened to the guest introduce a video clip after another. I watched one of the first Mickey Mouse cartoons, and I watched Kenneth Anger's homoerotic Ford car commercial. I even watched a widely unsettling video art piece of different B&W butterfly forms changing in a rapid pace. In no way did I enjoy all of the art pieces, but still it remains the most precious movie theatre experience I have been a part of. What affected me in such a powerful way were the people, the place, the atmosphere and the authenticity of it all. I was far away from home and I had found this historic cinema filled with people that shared the same interests as I did. I was even able to take a bottle of Bia Hanoi with me to the theatre, something I could never have done in my home country. The feeling of enchantment was born from the history of the building, the culture of cinema and the romanticism of finding this intimate place in the middle of the city far away from home. It was a highly subjective experience, but it was an experience I could have never experience in the McDonaldized multiplexes of the 21st century metropolises.

5. The Fascinating History of Movie Piracy in Brief

Creating art on screen is neither easy nor cheap. The basic steps in producing a movie are 1) development, 2) pre-production, 3) production, 4) post-production, 5) marketing and distribution and 6) exhibition (Young et al., 2008). Each one of these steps creates a vast amount of costs. Whether it is the screenplay, the actors, the locations, the editing, the music etc. they all cost a big penny for the studios. Therefore it is not such a big surprise that the motion picture industry is extremely concerned about the unauthorized copying and distribution of movies. It is said to harm not only the theatrical releases of the pictures, but also the DVD and VOD sales. Online piracy is a phenomenon that has already revolutionized the music industry (Giesler, 2008) and to say that the same is happening to the movie industry is a vast underestimation.

Piracy itself has existed since the birth of VCR. I will explain the methodology of the study later, but it was interesting to notice how many of my participants emphasized that piracy is not a new thing and that Estonian bootleg versions of movies were watched in the mid 80's all the time. Some people even tried to sell them to the video rental stores. However, to state that piracy in the 80's is equal to the piracy of the 21st century is like comparing your "most-likely dead" block kiosk to a 7-eleven... and these 7-elevens are open 24 hours per day, every day. Internet has changed many industries and it will continue to change them. It is the evolution of the digital market place and the movie industry has only just now realized that they need to be a part of it.

In an interview of The Guardian, the Internet's cult hero and the face of piracy Kim Dotcom stated; *"...I respect copyright, what I don't respect is copyright extremism, and what I don't respect is a business model that encourages piracy"* (Manhire, 2013). What we learn from these words is, that the 21st century consumer is no longer satisfied with other people dictating what, when and where a certain piece of entertainment is to be enjoyed. This has eventually led to the generalization of online piracy and the necessity for the motion picture industry to reassess its business strategy.

5.1 The Background

Although nowadays the Internet is filled with services that offer the consumer the possibility to download files instantly to the computer and enjoy them right away, this was not the situation in the 90's. The digital age came fast and grew big overnight. One of the most famous forerunners of the digital piracy service providers was a program called Napster. It is a highly important part of the evolution of the digital sharing and a success story that might not have led to that classical success story of a company, but to a fascinating destruction fable of an industry that had lived their eyes shut for too long, objecting to change their own outdated routines in any way. In 1999, a first year student Shawn Fanning from the Northeastern University invented the Napster not only from the frustration towards the existing services, but also from the desire to create an all new music community. This led to a service that attracted over 10 million users in its first six months and achieved a growth rate of over 200,000 new subscribers per day. In its heyday being part of the community was being part of a ring of 100 million subscribers worldwide and having the access to download over 100 million copyrighted songs. Giesler has written immensely on the subject of downloading and Napster. Since little academic studies have been made of the downloaders of motion pictures, I am going to use Giesler's and Pohlmann's (2003) and Giesler's (2008) findings from the music industry and generalize in order to give a picture of the evolution of downloading.

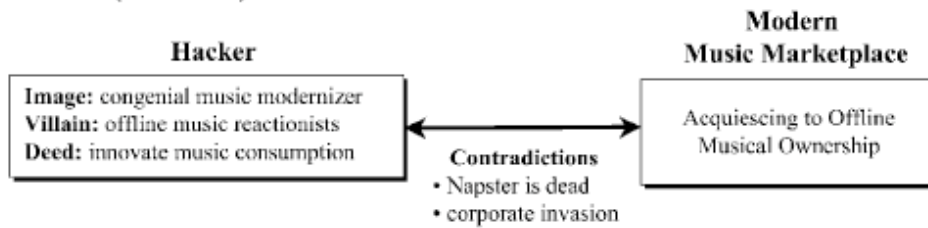
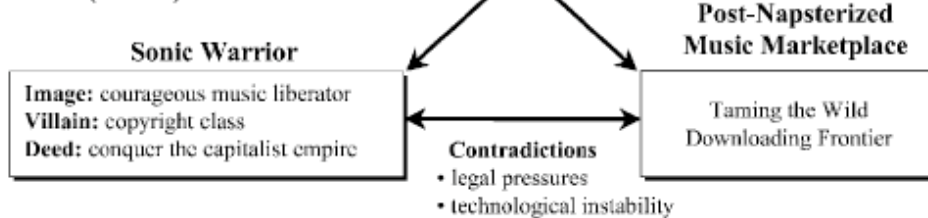
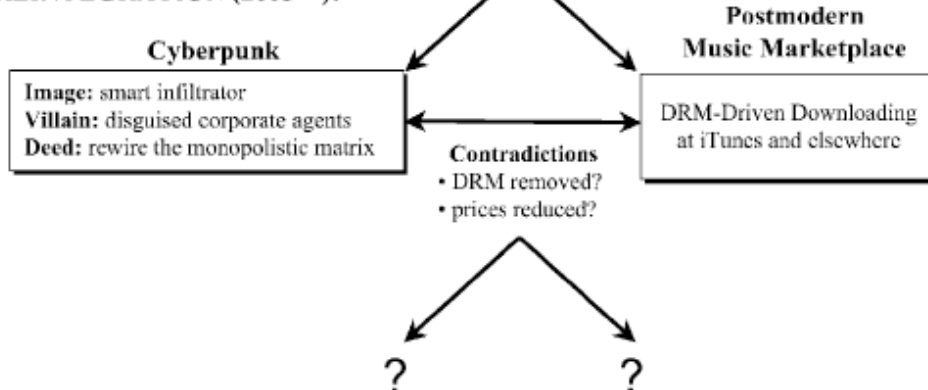
Napster and services alike do present themselves accordingly to Schouten and McAlexander's (1995) definition of subcultures of consumption. They are "*a distinct subgroup of society that self-selects on the basis of a shared commitment to a particular product, class, brand, or consumption activity*" (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995: 43). Giesler and Pohlman (2003) add that Napster in fact is a subculture of consumption "*that challenges the interrelations between technology, culture and consumption*". No longer did the old rules of the market place drive the consumption, since technology had brought a new answer to the consumers. But, as Napster's subscriber base continued to expand, so did the music industry's interest as well. By 2001 Napster was attacked by large wave of lawsuits and was forced to decline from the throne of online downloading (Giesler and Pohlman, 2003). It is important to remember that though the lawsuits might have hit hard on Napster, they failed to hit on the phenomenon of peer-to-peer sharing. This was actually just the opening shot for the revolutionizing of the business strategies. Internet had come and was destined to change the way things were done. The music industry felt it first, but nowadays the book and newspaper industries have understood

it and the motion picture industry as well. The old systems grew old and the postmodern consumers are more demanding than ever.

5.2 The Evolution of the Downloader

Deighton (1992) describes markets as theatrical “stages” where the stakeholders perform the drama. Giesler (2008) sees the evolution of a downloader as a four-step story that is built around a main conflict. In the case of such products as music, movies and the written word the conflict arises from two opposite views concerning the ownership of such creations. *Social utilitarianism* sees art as a cultural resource that should be open to be experienced by everyone (Vogel, 1998). It nods strongly to the utilitarian idea that actions should be chosen by maximizing the amount of the collective good (Bentham 1789/1984). According to these beliefs art should always be downloadable to everyone. Everybody should be able to enjoy art in the easiest way possible. Although the idea of calculating the utilitarian good is simply impossible according to the postmodernistic worldview, it is important to understand the basis and the historical power of such thoughts.

The opposing ideal is *possessive individualism*. In today’s business environment it basically means that he or she who invents it, owns the intellectual rights to it. This basically means that a song is owned by its composer, a novel is owned by its writer and a movie is owned by its creator. Instead of maximizing the collective good, possessive individualism believes that the action should first hand maximize the individual creator’s good. These two ideals basically introduce the dilemma of file sharing. Naturally the truth is a lot more complex when we start analyzing the downloaders’ moral justifications for their actions. When we study the Giesler’s (2008) framework of the war on music downloading, we notice the transformations in the market environment affect the transformations of the downloader. The downloader is now seen as the actor in the drama, playing its part in the grand drama of consuming.

BREACH (1999-2001):**CRISIS (2001-3):****REDRESS (2003-5):****REINTEGRATION (2005→):****Figure 4: The War on Music Downloading (Giesler, 2008)**

The Giesler's four acts of the war on downloading divides are the breach, the crisis, the redress and the reintegration. Therefore the downloader has also had four different parts to play in the transformation of the music industry. He/she has started as a hacker and then moved on to become a courageous sonic warrior. As the battle of copyrights continued the downloader transformed him/herself into a sonic pacifist. Finally when we entered to a time on reintegration, where the market has become what Giesler (2008) calls a postmodern music marketplace, the downloader plays the part of a cyberpunk. The whole idea of seeing the ongoing conflict as a dramatic opera and the stakeholders choosing again and again different

kinds of characters to reinvent and reposition themselves is a very postmodern phenomenon. Although the emergence of file sharing did create a huge conflict that rightfully forced the industry to change its ways, it is still interesting to notice the romanticized characters that both parties took.

The downloaders, and now I am talking about the heavy downloaders, started as these ordinary people that became mavericks and wunderkinds and found a whole new way to enjoy music. Giesler (2008) describes a group of people that created a genuine community that was enthusiastic of this new family they had found. The simple joy of finding a new song and then recommending it to another was the essence of what the service was about. With the help of Napster, the fans and the band grew closer. It is easy to draw into this romanticized hacker myth, but the truth was that people were getting stuff for free, which they earlier had to pay for...

In to 2001 when the shit hit the fan and Napster was faced with a "lawsuit marathon" (Giesler and Pohlmann, 2003), the roles changed. Suddenly the joyous hackers became warriors and freedom fighters and the music industry became the great nemesis. The Robin Hoods of our time were fighting for our cultural right to enjoy art. At the same time the conflict became a trendy subject and even artists started to take sides. It became a bigger question of art vs. money, t-shirts vs. suits and better future vs. corrupted old habits. These views are supported by the findings of Kozinets and Handelman (2004). They noticed that the activists often portray themselves as the *"Modern day puritans"* who have almost a divine task of reforming the wrongs of the corporate world that feast through the consumerism of you and me (Kozinets and Handelman, 2004: 701).

When the music industry began to condemn the individual downloaders, the role of peer-to-peer file sharing a new role was adapted. The downloader became a sonic pacifist, a victim of the big corporations. The hackers became the victimized faces of the war, but the truth was that it was the record companies that were hurting the most. Commercial sales went down four consecutive years since the emergence of Napster (Recording Industry Association of America 2004). The music industry also began finally to react to the new trend and they started to create new ways for people to enjoy music. iTunes was the forerunner and it is still going strong. However, this did not satisfy the true downloaders, the real subculture of peer-to-peer file sharing. Though the music industry had reacted and worked an agreement to the conflict, they did not get the approval of the cyberpunks. The cyberpunks are still

against the online stores, since it is not a genuine form of evolution, it merely a digital transformation of the old ways.

Giesler fascinates us with the story of how the joyous hacker with full on enthusiasm became the rather cynical cyber punk. He uses well the Deighton's (1992) view that market is the stage. We get a sense of the whole picture and what the atmosphere has been like. Now we understand the myth of the downloader. However the truth is that few of us are truly orthodox downloaders. Napster did not grow to its size because everybody believed in the revolution of file sharing. The glue of the community came from somewhere else and in order to understand why downloading is still happening we need to dig deeper into that glue...

5.3 The Glue that Holds the Community Together

What is the binding force between millions of people that share content online? What is the glue in the subculture of file sharing?

First we need to understand that the users of file sharing services have very different motivations for the use. Although the first file sharing services were described as communities where people share content together, the truth was far from it. Adar and Huberman (2000) cite a study conducted by the Palo Alto Research Center of the user base of a music community called Gnutella, where 70 % of the members did not actually share one bit of their hard drive. To go even further, the top 1 % of sharing hosts returned nearly 50 % of all responses. They concluded that as the services grow bigger, the growth rate of content downloaders will increase, but the growth rate of content uploaders will cease. This is a fairly interesting trend considering that the subculture of consumption in these services is built on individual contribution, the end goal being a state of communal prosperity. Schau et al (2009) believed that the newcomers would learn the code of conducts of the brand communities through their progressive appropriation of practices, and would eventually transform into members that obey the rules and appreciate the values, leading to an even richer community. But it seems that only few consider the file sharing services as tight communities with shared ideals and values. It is through giving that the service maintains its importance and therefore it should be analyzed as a gift exchange service, although as noticed before, the transactions are seldom two-way (Giesler and Pohlmann, 2003) and the sense of a true community is shared only by the top hosts.

We must also take in consideration the allurements of the illicit pleasure of file sharing. It is true that we are sometimes seduced by the illegal activities and “the law of transgressing taboos remains a vital form of consumer desire” (Belk, 2000: 17). However, it must be acknowledged that unlike the escapism from the mundane in the article of Goulding et al. (2009) about clubbing and drug use, the file-sharing phenomenon is quite low-profile. The downloading culture and cyber punk age was a clear display of anarchy, but the pleasure was born from the idea of “sticking it to the man”, not from breaking a taboo, which in a postmodern world is itself an impossibility.

Giesler and Pohlmann (2003) view Napster and its fellow services as gift exchange communities. Mauss (1954) found that there are three obligations related to gift-giving; 1) the obligation to give 2) the obligation to receive and 3) the obligation to repay. Belk (1979) saw that gift-giving had four distinctive roles in our lives; 1) communication, 2) social exchange, 3) economic exchange and 4) socialization. What combines these traditional views is that gift-giving is seen mainly as an action between two individuals, and the effects of the gift-giving stays mainly between the two individuals. When you eliminate the person from the equation of gift-giving and exhibit the giver and the receiver as total strangers, you notice how the reasons behind the actions change. In file sharing you do not have any obligations and few use it as a platform for personal two-way communication. The Internet has offered us the ability to become faceless opportunists in the concept of gift-giving. The later studies have understood that gift-giving can have a much larger impact, and that it has its own unique role as a statement. Gift-giving itself can be seen as an act of finding your own permanent place in the society (Weiner, 1992). Social ties are held by gift exchange and it is a natural human action. In the study they introduce four sets of reasons behind the gift-giving in Napster that vary depending on the purpose of the action and the addressee of the action. These four types of behavior are *realization*, *participation*, *purification* and *renovation*. They grasp quite well the various values, objectives and worldviews of the users of the file sharing services.

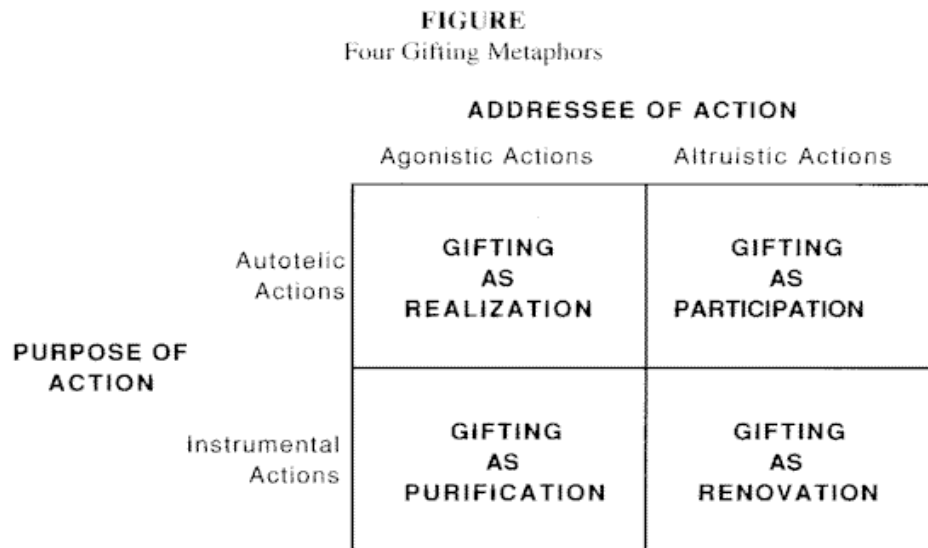


Figure 5: Four Gifting Metaphors (Giesler & Pohlmann 2003)

Gifting as realization refers solely on the utilitarian purpose of sharing. Users are part of the community in order to get the end product easily. Giesler and Pohlmann (2003) describe the phenomenon as “for myself and the song”. What matters the most is the richness of one’s own consumption experience.

Like it could be read from Kim Dotcom’s statement earlier, there seems to exist a strong idealism behind piracy as well. Many people have described the music and the motion picture industries as outdated and afraid to take any real risks. *Gifting as purification* is exactly a counterattack against these accusations. It is a form a resistance, where the user refuses to accept the rules that the industry dictates. It can even be considered to be an agonistic act of ethical purification for oneself. You reveal your true values by the way you consume the products.

Although it can be argued that the majority of the downloaders are part of the community solely for utilitarian reasons, there seems to exist a smaller group that has a strong feeling of co-independence. Downloading is a way of objecting the ruling market forces and sharing these values with similarly opinionated individuals – a phenomenon that Kozinets (2004) vividly described in his article on the Burning Man festival. *Gifting as participation* is about finding your place in this world. The community is actually more of a movement and the consumption itself is no longer in the middle of the entity. It becomes more about the social

ties and communication. It is closely related to the idea of subcultures. Schouten and McAlexander (1995) spent their days examining the subculture of the Harley Davidson brand. It was the “*outlaw mystique*” that drew people together. Its authenticity can be argued in the 21st century, but it was the silent message of a specific motorcycle that spoke to these people. The Harley Davidson motorcycle represented certain values that should be embraced in life. The subculture can have a commitment with certain brands and ways of living. They can even become iconic and create missionary-like behavior. McCracken (1998) found similar behavior with the fans of such television shows as The Simpsons and The X-files. The fans do their own interpretations of their favorite episodes and become a major part of this show in its own subculture. McCracken describes how the fans first sacralize the commercial code of the show, then singularize it and finally internalize it. Kozinets (1997) found a similarly strong subculture in the fan base of X-files. With no profit motive, members of the community continue spend their time creating extensive content in the TV-shows “universe”. In the metaphorical group “*gifting as participation*” the service itself is much more than a databank for free songs or movies. It is actually a life style and a way of communicating with other members of the subculture.

Finally the file sharing services can be seen as well as part of a bigger picture. Napster, Gnutella and many other services can be seen as a revolution of the industry. *Gifting as renovation* is all about changing the old structures and introducing the world to new ideas. An opinion, that many of my participants shared as well, was that in the end it is the music and the movie industries’ own fault that they have not woken up earlier and realized in what direction the world is moving. Giesler and Pohlmann (2003) go on to even describe downloading as a practice that is attached to anarchistic and socialistic worldviews. Gifting is seen as a way to crumble the old capitalist market. I am not going to argue what the situation was in year 2003, but in 2013 downloading cannot be seen as a highly political and left wing practice. .

So, in the end what Giesler and Pohlmann (2003) propose to us, is a framework that divides the act of downloading into four categories. We have the individualistic utilitarian goal, we have the goal of underlining your own opinion and purifying yourself from the “dirt” created by the industry, then we have the goal of finding a family, a home and finally we have the goal of being a part of an actual social movement, a revolution of the once creative industries. It is important to try to understand the meanings behind downloading, since it seems that it is an

illegal action that creates little moral dilemmas to the downloader. Although many years have passed from the heydays of Napster, the phenomenon is still alive. Some new innovative services such as Spotify for music and Netflix for movies have emerged, but illegal downloading is still happening.

It was New Year's Eve 2003, or more precisely it was the first hours of the year 2004. My sister was having a party in our house and I was playing the role of the cool kid brother that all the guys wanted to impress by offering beer and throwing jokes left and right. I was never a wizard with a computer, a fact that I was probably proud then, but now regret immensely. I knew the basic stuff and had downloaded a few file sharing programs for the sake of music, but I had not really dug into the world of torrents. Anyway, I was drinking a cold one with this one guy and we started to talk about our favorite films. I was already back then a walking dictionary of films, so we were listing our favorite films and directors. You always know a guy knows his films when he begins to namedrop directors. Naturally the conversation also went to the subject of Tarantino, an easy favorite of the kids of the 90's. Kill Bill vol.1 had come out a few months back and it was brutally restricted from viewers under the age of 18. I was a 16-year old guy that honestly resembled more of a 12-year old kid than an 18-year old "adult". The cool guy #-whatever asked if I had seen the film and I told him that "no way with this face and height". Then he asked if I used torrents and suddenly a new world opened to me. He downloaded for me all the programs I needed, so that I could start consuming the library offered by the lovely guys of the pirate services. He even started to download Kill Bill. A few hours and a couple of beers later I had Kill Bill on the computer and I made myself comfortable and put VLC player running. By 6 a.m. first of January in 2004 this 16-year old brat had watched the new Tarantino film and was damn enthusiastic about it. This little guy had begun to drool since the first trailer of the film and was waiting and waiting for the emergence of the DVD. Now he did not have to wait any longer. Piracy had made it possible for him to see a film that would have otherwise taken several months more, and it did not cost a penny for him.

The truth is that when people are waiting for content as eagerly as I waited back then, they should be able to get it instantly it hits the market. Nowadays no age limit can restrict me, but it still pisses me off if a film opens in America several months before it opens here. Films should be consumed in a theatre and I actually do wait for the theatrical releases of films that are important to me (The waiting of "The Master" was a real burden), but I do not remember

when was the last time I watched a TV series the broadcast television way. It was probably the first seasons of *Lost* that made it impossible for me to wait for a series to appear on television. *House of Cards* was probably the first television series I watched 100 % legally...yeah, you get the point.

This is the End

We started this study by introducing the postmodern society and the postmodern consumer. Our world is nowadays so aware of itself that this “cross-referencing” is happening in everything. The authenticity has lost its one and only meaning and the lines between real and fantasy have blended. Everyone is a unique individual with personal characteristics and personal goals. The world is a fractured and a disorganized place where everything is happening at once. The old orthodox chain of ideas of educating yourself, finding a job, forming a family and taking care of your family are gone and what is encouraged is to live by the moment.

Fandom burst out suddenly as well. We became fans of people, objects, events, ideas and basically everything. Whether it is sports, stars, fast cars or collectable action figures, we tend to have some interest that becomes bigger than life for us. Suddenly the interest is sacred for us and we start to worship it by consuming it more, but in our fast moving fragmented world the sacred can become profane even more quickly than it took them time to initially amazed us (Belk et al, 1989). We create our own rituals in order to show respect for the sacred and then forget them in an instance. For some it was the digitalization of the cinema that shred the sacredness of the art to pieces, and for some it is the dominance of Hollywood in the marketplace.

John Lennon once called The Beatles “more popular than Jesus”. The quote describes perfectly the postmodern world. Nothing is sacred, not even religion and a product of popular culture can become bigger than a 2000 year-old myth. Actually, popular culture began to produce new myths in a conveyor belt. Whether it was “the young rebel” James Dean, “The King” Elvis Presley or the one and only Kennedy family, people became obsessed with these people that were in the end much larger than the sum of their parts.

Hand in hand grew the movie industry as well. Every country’s movie industry produced its own kinds of movies and new trends were born. Postmodernism has affected the movie industry immensely. The 70’s auteur driven Hollywood cinema of the movie brats is directly

influenced by the French ideas of auteur and the nouvelle vague (Biskind, 1998). On the other hand, Italy began to produce its own western since Hollywood stopped. However, these movies were not based on history, but on movies of the Hollywood (Cousins, 2011). I actually believe that the Spaghetti western genre is one of the best examples of early postmodernism in the history of cinema.

The new Hollywood movies are so aware of themselves that it is impossible to distinguish them from the history of cinema. Think about the Quentin Tarantino movies. These are movies that actually do not include a single new idea in their individual scenes, but as whole entities they are creative motion pictures. The constant remaking and homage doing is a highly postmodern way of making movies. But it is not only the movies that have become postmodern; it is we as consumers that have become as well...

We are highly fragmented persons in terms of our sense of individuality nowadays and thus we seem to have the trouble to focus on single tasks alone. We live in the noise and we need the noise to feed our creativity. These are observations I have made in my interviews, as well as in general. I do believe that the smart phone is an invention that will finally make us totally dependable of the digital reality. It seems that people can no longer be not connected. It seems that the length of a movie can be too long to stay unconnected to the digital reality. The movie needs to do more than ever before to capture the interest of the viewer.

At the same time the cinemas, the stadiums and the restaurants are no longer individual premises, but parts of a bigger centers of commerce. The funniest part is that this romanticism of old movie theatres and stadiums is also part of postmodernism. Whether they are built in a "supermall" way or "old style" way they are as authentic and as unauthentic as the other. In a postmodern society we have the possibility to choose a reality by the way we consume.

Then finally we talked also about the phenomenon of illegal downloading. People have nowadays little patience and they want everything whenever and wherever. The truth is that it seems that the hands of piracy reach farer than the movie industry's hands does. There is a problem, when piracy is the easier way to get your hands on a movie. That is a fact, but at the same time it has deleted the exclusivity of movies. If indeed it is so that people feel no moral responsibility of downloading illegally, then the product itself has become a disposable

product. Therefore, my biggest question is “WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A MOVIE IN CONTEMPORARY CONSUMER CULTURE”?

6. The Methodology

My goal is to understand how consumers perceive their experience of movies nowadays. How has the new technology both in filmmaking and film distribution affected the product? I personally have a very strong bond with films in general and I appreciate them the highest. I truly do believe that they are the highest forms of both art and entertainment. I do, however, acknowledge that it is an opinion that is not shared by the majority. Therefore I wanted to understand what part films play in people's lives. What are the reasons why people watch films and how do they affect the viewers. Like any art, film itself is a highly personal experience. The feelings it creates are always unique and often hard to describe. A quantitative research would not have helped me to explore the tacit ideological nuances that go into the meaning-making of the cinematographic experience. My aim is to build some understanding about the feelings that films bring to the postmodern consumers' minds and I believe that a quantitative research would have simplified both the film and its experiencing. The conscious choices the respondent makes in a survey do not interest me. What I am trying to tentatively explore are the unconscious motives, the habits of how we enjoy the consumption of the art of film.

6.1 The Data Collection

This research uses long interviews for data collection (McCracken, 1988). Below I will explain the concept of long interviews, go into the specifics of conducting the interviews and finally introduce my ten participants and how they were chosen.

6.2 The Long Interview

According to McCracken (1988) the long interview is one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative researcher's toolkit. Its aim is to not only get answers to your questions but to actually take you inside the individuals mind and life. See the world through the participant's eyes and be a part of it. What I tried to do was to see the meaning of film according to my ten participants. Naturally I do not have nor do I want to present some statistics or absolute answers to the question of the value of film. What I will present is, however, some interesting

interpretations on how these ten individuals use, watch and think of films and how strongly it is actually connected to the times that we live in.

McCracken mentions that one of the key issues in qualitative research and in long interviews is the relationship of the researcher and the culture that he or she is researching. The researcher's strong relationship with the culture and the subject does give him a greater understanding of the whole entity. It helps the researcher to see the connections and consequences of certain aspects and it helps him to make deeper and more powerful interpretations of the interviews. It does, however, create the risk of the researched being blind to cultural assumptions and practices.

That said, in this particular study, the researcher as in I, is extremely close to the culture and the question itself. As it has become already pretty clear from the text above, I do feel greatly about this subject and I am indeed concerned about the future value of films. My stand is protective of course, but it does not mean that I would not be open to opposite opinions. I am fascinated by the possibility of interpretative analysis of the future of film, therefore it is the most interesting to hear different people talk about their habits, their ways of watching a film and their opinions of the whole form of art, or should we call it form of entertainment as well?

6.3 Conducting the Interviews

I began this research by studying the literature behind such concepts as postmodernism, consumer culture theory, enchantment and hedonism in consumption and downloading & peer-to-peer file sharing. There was no specific subject that fully grasps the basis of my subject, but the literature helped me to broaden my worldview and ideas and open my mind for new opinions and concepts.

When I felt comfortable with the amount of literature I had studied, I began to book my interviews. The final amount of interviews was ten and although some fell through, others came and brought new interesting insights. The interviews were held in various places, depending on the participant's comfort. A quite a few interviews were held in bars and cafes, some were held in the participant's home and some were held in mine. Focus was always to maximize the participant's openness to the questions. The interviews lasted from one hour to

two hours. All the interviews were then transcribed on paper before starting the analysis phase.

The interviews themselves were semi-structured. I had not planned any specific questions, but there were themes that I wanted definitely to address to. The feeling I wanted to create in the interview situation was open and mellow. I wanted to not only record ideas and meaning-makings, but to actively constitute the context – producing data actively with my participants, not to think of myself as passively “collecting” it. I started out with a question that was on one hand very easy, but on the other hand it actually revealed quite a lot of the participant and his or hers relationship with films. I began by asking the participant’s favorite films. This is a question that is rarely easy to answer. At the same time it actually made the participant think about the films he or she had seen and assess them and pick a few that have made the biggest impact on him or her. I truly believe that a lot is revealed solely based on the favorite film and the reasoning. You will later notice how I do find quite clear connections with people’s favorite films and their ideas on the subject.

As I already mentioned, the interviews “went with the flow”. If the persons were very eager to talk about the films they had seen as a child, I would let them talk about the subject freely. I did, however, have certain areas I wanted to cover. It does not mean that I always asked a the same questions, but I did at certain point during the interview address to such subjects as the meaning of film, the ways of watching a film, the importance of technology, film as a social activity etc. It was also interesting to see the things the participants revealed about their life when they talked about films. You started to notice how there were stories behind the ideas about films. History was revealed and deeper connections could be made. The long interview’s goal is to step into another person’s world. I never asked the question “what does film mean to you?” but I do feel that I found the answers. By letting the participants talk about film, they would eventually reveal their perception of the value of film.

6.4 The Participants

To understand the different forms of relationships people have with films, I chose different kinds of people. The ten participants had all very varied opinions about films and the ways of consuming them. I did not want to focus on a specific group solely, since I wanted to explore the different dimensions of the industry and the product itself. Half of the participants worked

in some way with film and the other half had interesting ways of enjoying them. At the same time film had a unique role in everybody's life. In the table below, I introduce the participants and give a short description of their thoughts and habits. This table is just an overview of the ten individuals. The actual findings of the research are introduced further away.

Name	Favorite Films	Consuming habits	Thoughts on Piracy	Meaning of Film
Ben – A Business student in his mid 20's	Argo, Blow, The Dark Knight, Casino Royale	The ultimate experience is found from the theater, but it is a social activity as well. Home viewing is a way of relaxation and killing time.	Does not really create any moral dilemmas. Big Hollywood productions make their money anyway.	Film is most of all a form of entertainment. Stories and emotions are a part of entertaining yourself.
Kevin – A media student in his mid 20's with an enthusiasm in photography and filmmaking	Les Intouchables, Watchmen, Schindler's List, Scarface	Theater is the best place to view films, but also an expensive one. Watching films from a computer is a daily routine. It is a hobby and a habit.	It is the easiest way to consume films, but at the same time he feels bad, since he hopes to become a part of the industry in the future. Eating the hand that feeds...	Films are a way of life. Films for him are like a dog for a pet owner. It is something that is a part of the everyday life.
Charlie – A mid 20's literature student	Chaplin's The Kid and Fellini's La Strada	Visiting the theater is rare since new films have seldom anything to offer. He wants to understand the art form and he constantly educates himself. Concentration is the key to enjoy film.	Have only positive thoughts about the phenomenon. Is now able to see films that he would normally have a tough time to get his hands on. It is good for film that everything is at reach.	Bigger than life experiences. A form of art – poetry of images. It is sad if it would be just for the sake of entertainment.
Joel – A marketing director for a Finnish film production company	Gladiator	Enjoys films, but not an enthusiastic. Watches a lot of films through work and	Is afraid of the web sites and viruses. Is very careful of personal information	Films bring joy and excitement to life. A escape from reality and in the end, mostly
Joel – A marketing director for a	Gladiator	Enjoys films, but not an enthusiastic.	Is afraid of the web sites and viruses. Is very	Films bring joy and excitement to life. A escape

Walter – CEO of a Finnish film distribution company	A Clockwork Orange, Fight Club, The Godfather, Sideways, Borat, The Deer Hunter	Films became more important after entering the industry. Watching films are first of all work, but he does naturally enjoy them as well. Films are consumed in a theater.	A huge threat for the whole industry that should be eliminated. However he believes that the business model should change. People should be able to watch movies the way they want to watch as long as they pay for them.	To create emotions and take the viewer on a ride that he/she chooses.
Ridley – An employee in a store that specializes in films	Depends of the genre... Star Wars, Blade Runner, Alien, Beasts of the Southern Wild, Chaplin's movies	Does not go to theaters that much. Home is almost as good of a place to watch films. Watches most of the films on Blue Ray. It is the definite format.	There has been piracy since the 80's. Its effects on the industry are little. Important titles are still bought and disposable entertainment is pirated.	Films and film collecting is a hobby. Films are not that much earthshaking experience, but a subject of deep interest. Thought more than feel...
James – An entrepreneur and an aspiring producer	Shawshank Redemption, Heat, The Hurt Locker, Miami Vice, Good Will Hunting	Films are pirated and watched at home, usually from a laptop. Appreciates professionalism in films and aims to learn from them. Interested in how a good film is constructed.	It is the industry's own problem that they have not achieved to fight back piracy. Would have no trouble of paying for films, if the service would be as good as the peer-to-peer file sharing services are at the moment. Uses the best, and the current is piracy.	Though presents himself as a film enthusiastic, the truth is that he is more interested in the product as business. Likes films, but likes even more the idea of being a filmmaker.
Jane – An academic in her late 20's	Ferris Buller's Day Off, 16 Candles, Age of Innocence, My Fair Lady, Eloge	Theater is a place for the epic movies. Most of the films are consumed at	Downloads daily pirated material. Feels that she has already invested and	Films are nostalgic experiences, forms of entertainment,
Jane – An academic in her late 20's	Ferris Buller's Day Off, 16 Candles, Age of	Theater is a place for the epic movies.	Downloads daily pirated material. Feels that she	Films are nostalgic experiences.

John – A owner of a “buy and sell” film store	Casablanca	Picks up films daily from the store and watches with his wife occasionally. Is ashamed how seldom he goes to the theater, but enjoys watching home. The amount of good films is incredible.	Remembers piracy already from the 80’s. The bootleg VHS tapes that came abroad. Does not know how to use a computer and is not interested in technology at all. Is accustomed to the old ways...	Good films stay longer with you and you revisit them. They entertain you, but also give you some thoughts. They bring quality to your life.
Terrence – The CEO of a Finnish art-house driven distribution company	Takes time, but the first ones that pop into mind are the early nostalgic experiences and new findings; Psycho, Berlin Alexanderplatz, The animations of Ghibli	Films are watched on festivals and they are an essential part of the work. Work affects the viewing process, but sometimes it is forgotten. It was actually the passion for film that drove him to the work. Sometimes parts of films are watched on computer due to the working process, but in the end all films are watched in theaters.		Sees film as a living organ that continues to amaze the viewer. Understands the industry and the business, but now and then is still sunk into the magical world of film. It is a form of art like any other, but it is also the strongest one since it manipulates several senses at once.

Table 2: A summary of the participants of the study

7. The Findings

In the next chapter I am going to introduce my findings based on the interviews I have conducted. First I am going to explain why people watch movies? How are movies used? In what situations do we watch them and why? I am trying to explain the reasons how film is used nowadays and what kind of a part it plays in our lives. Then I go into the specifics of the industry and some other interesting ideas that came up in the interviews. I will be evaluating the technological innovations and how we perceive them. In the last part I will introduce my framework that tries to capture the essence of film and film viewing. It is a simplification of the findings of the research. I do not present it as an ultimate answer to the question of what film is, but I do think it will help people understand the complexity of a product called film.

7.1 The Way We Use Film

Film is a complicated product. It makes us laugh, it makes us cry, it makes us see things that we thought were impossible and it takes us to places we never imagined. Our minds may become empty of all thoughts or filled with strong emotions. Still the viewers will always be just the observers of the action and magic on screen. We are the Peeping Toms and the Jeffrey Beaumonts, sitting in the audience and watching the drama that is played in front of us for our excitement. At the same time it is we who dictate what is shown to us. We vote by our wallets and in the end it is we who decide what movies are made. In “The Perverts Guide to Cinema” (2006) Žižek explains how actually cinema is an art form that frees us from the constraints of the modern world. With the help of cinema and fiction we can experience who we really are.

At the same time film has quite possibly become a too general product for its own good. In the late 1970’s Andy Warhol explained to the future Oscar winning director Katherine Bigelow that “film is a way more populist than art – that’s very elitist, so you exclude a large audience” (Winter, 2013). Back then most of the films were still however experienced in theaters. In an age where a film can be consumed on a mobile phone, it has lost its exclusivity. The truth is that the majority of films are made for the sake of entertainment. In an interview of the Empire Magazine, the genius director David Lynch explains that a reason for his loss of inspiration for film is due to the nature of cinema of today. Modern films have become cheap and disposable. “That’s a huge sadness. So you have to do those things you are just in love with”, he ends. (Braund, 2013)

It is an overly romanticized idea that films are solely made for love of the art form. This is a thought I personally love to think and hate to evaluate. Through the interviews I found out different ways of watching movies and I found different meanings for the use of film. It is pretty clear that films are not always made out of love, but neither are they consumed out of love. The following reasons were found from the answers of the ten individuals I interviewed.

7.1.1 Looking for the Escape Route from Reality

Our lives are filled with routines. They may not all be the same, but still every one of us has our own routines. They are born from our daily timetables, which are hugely affected by work. Work does not only consume a big part of the day time-wise, but it also affects our energy levels. It eats at least one third of our day and it quite directly affects the rest of the time as well. Ben says that he watches films often for the sake of entertainment.

"If I have done a quite a long day at work, I just want to get my thoughts out of the work related issues...I just want to boot my brains. I'll go and grab a snack, have a beer and watch The Avengers."

Ben feels exhausted after a day at work and is therefore no longer capable or willing to challenge himself when watching a film. In a way he also enjoys the clichéd idea of a man after a long day's work. Beer boots the brains and action kicks the heart. The movie offers him an escape route out of the ordinary day and work. For a few hours' time he can free himself from the reality and just not think.

John's life is dictated by his work. He works six days a week 8 -10 hours per day selling and buying movies. It is not the most stressful work, but it is the foundation of his days. He often talks about work and how it leads to a lack of free time. Going to the theater is a rare treat because he simply does not find the time. When describing the process of choosing what film to watch he mentions that it depends on the feeling.

Well the feeling can be affected by what kind of a workday I have had. If it has been really lousy and everything has gone wrong then I choose a film that takes my mind off work, probably an action picture.

Work seems to exhaust Ben and John and when they come home, they do not want to challenge themselves anymore. What they like to do is to simply not think.

Ridley is a much more determined film watcher. He buys them on Blue Ray and often has certain titles that he knows he will watch next. However he also acknowledges that situational factors do affect the films that he picks up.

It takes an effort to pick up a film with a rough subject... i.e. my son is a murderer, though it is a good film. Sometimes you just want to watch a light comedy.

Ridley is not the film watcher that picks always the most entertaining titles, but even he feels moments where a light comedy can lift him up from the pressures of reality. When asking of his favorite films, he mentioned the Chaplin comedies and how they were timeless. He went on to describe how new comedies are filled with disposable jokes. Still, sometimes he picks up those light comedies...

Certain genres in general seem to be more suitable for the escapism. For example Jane, who does not visit the theater as often and has a more “art-driven” choice in movies, is happy she saw *The Hobbit* in the theatre because “*it is a movie that is good to be seen in the theaters at least the first time*”. Also, many of the participants who did not go to theaters that often, had all seen the new James Bond (*Skyfall*) in cinema. This goes on to prove that fantasy, action and comedy are genres that help people to extract themselves from the everyday life they are living and that we do need time to time reboot our brains.

Although I went already to declare the ultimate escape genres, I need to go deeper into Jane’s film habits. She is an academic that focuses on the study of gender. She spends her days reading and making analysis. It is impossible for her to watch contemporary popular culture without making some ties with her work. As a self-described feminist she finds her often disgusted by the Hollywood stereotypes of men and women. Her difficulty to distinguish work and entertainment is perfectly captured when she explains her feelings of watching the movie *TED*. She was on a long flight travelling from Australia to Finland. Because she was dead tired she just wanted to find some easy entertainment from the film selection of the airplane. She chose *TED*, but was quickly forced to fast-forward the movie because “*the story was so bad and the gender roles were so horrible. HELP!*” As we talked longer she returned to the subject of the gender roles and how disgusted she is about them. Naturally it has a lot to do with her own opinions, but she has also the habit of constantly analyzing the films through her own

studies. It shows that it is impossible to just “turn her brains off” when she is watching popular culture. Therefore we come to her actual genre of escape. She watches a lot of films and television series, but the genre that she consumes the most, is the costume dramas of BBC and likes. Because of the setting of the story and the rules of the genre she is able to enjoy them more than a typical romcom set in current time. Costume dramas are her way to escape the reality of her life, just as special effects heavy action was Ben’s and light comedies were Ridley’s.

People do not always need the entertainment to even be good. James fast-forwarded Steven Seagal movies and Ridley was obsessed to watch all the Resident Evil films although he admitted that the last ones are pretty bad. It does not come from their respect for the art form or even for the sake of entertainment. It’s just for that little moment where they do not have to think. When you spend your all day thinking it is genuinely refreshing to hop on the escape vessel from reality.

We discussed with Walter the top grossed films of 2012 in Finland and it became clear that people are not looking for surprises. They know what they want and often that something seems to be a film that has fantastical elements and a number in the end of the title...

#1 is James Bond, #2 is The Hobbit, #3 is Ice Age 4, #4 is Madagascar 3, #5 is The Dark Knight and #6 is Risto Rättö. Everyone of them are sequels in some way. Is it good or bad, I do not know, but that is what has been ordered... Majority of people buy their tickets to films, which contents they already know.

People’s tastes do differ immensely, but still film seems to be always used as a way to extract oneself from the reality. Be it a God with a hammer, a raging zombie or the British aristocrats, individuals find their ways of escaping the reality. Work does burden us and luckily film can free us from that burden, if only for a few hours.

7.1.2 Finding Emotions

Although a film is used as a distraction of the real world, it is also used as a way of emphasizing the reality. People often watch movies that they can relate to. People often say that films should first of all tell stories, but after that they instantly mention the emotions. Films need to create emotions. Kevin’s everyday life is filled with films. He watches them

constantly. It is a habit like smoking. He does not think or analyze it in a deeper way, he just happens to watch a lot of movies. However when asked how he decides what film he is going to watch he says:

My mindset affects the choice. A few weeks ago, I was in Tallinn and the weather was shit and the weekend had been busy in work...It was dark, depressing, slushy and I was fucking angry. I looked from imdb some depressing documents and started to download them. I downloaded six documents about dolphin execution, the world's resource crisis, people's shitty life situations and how we are all going to die here... When I feel down, I tend to watch depressing movies.

Kevin chooses films in order to strengthen the emotion he is feeling at the moment. It comes from his will to live the emotions and the films are a way to emphasize them. It is quite the opposite what a lot of the other participants were doing. Instead of trying to brighten the mood with a happy film, Kevin chooses dark moody pieces. Life has its ups and downs, and in a way Kevin cherishes them both.

Charlie does not watch the easiest movies. He challenges himself and respects cinema as a grand art form. He mentioned that one of his favorite films is Chaplin's *The Kid*. When later describing the reasons for watching movies he says:

*Sometimes I become very emotional. When you asked about my favorite films I started to think that in the last scene of Chaplin's *The Kid*, when they try to take the kid away and lift him in the car, I almost always start to cry, cause it is such a horrible scene.*

Film is an extremely powerful tool in making us, the viewers, feel. Charlie is probably not the most emotional person, but great art makes him extremely emotional. It can as well be literature, his favorite, or cinema, but art affects him in a deeper level.

But, the other participants were also looking for some emotions as well. The difference is that when they were feeling down, their weapon of choice was a more entertaining film. However, when asking about what makes a film exceptional, majority emphasized that entertainment is just not enough. A good film needs to pose questions and inspire. A good film stays with you and lasts for repeat viewings. Some of the participants watched mostly entertaining films, but still the best films always had more in them than just action. Kevin feels that the best films have a lot of different emotions in them. They make you feel good and sad, make you laugh and eventually feel proud of your own doings. So, in order for the film to go the extra mile for

Kevin, it has to touch on a personal level as well and reach over the screen and remind of your own life as well.

Naturally films have a lot of emotions in them. In the end, however, the most important thing is how you perceive these emotions. The link between the films' emotions and your own life is the invisible factor that turns a film from good into great. Film is a product that, at its best, connects us in a deeper level. It moves us, saddens us, frightens us, excites us and gives us hope. A really good film is not just entertainment. It asks us questions and makes us think the answers many days after.

Jane saw the Finnish film called Puhdistus and it stayed with her many days after. It shocked her, it grabbed her attention and she could not just let it go. Charlie still remembers the lead from Aki Kaurismäki's Laitakaupungin valot.

You know how it tells about that lonely guy. Wee, doesn't that guy just keep living in your mind... It's like that character actually exists.

So even though we watch films to make us not think, sometimes the films actually cross the line of fiction and become part of our reality. Fiction becomes a way of coping with the feelings we actually have in reality.

7.1.3 Filling the Void

Our everyday lives have become hectic. The 21st century urban citizen seems to respect the active lifestyle, where you have to be always on your way to somewhere. In a way you have to always be doing something, whether it is work, exercising, education or social life and often doing one thing at a time is not enough. We multitask, in order to feel active and alive.

Our hectic lifestyles have made us feel uncomfortable in silence. Silence is no longer the best working and thinking environment. We need more distractions. Be it the music that you are listening, the smart phone you are constantly fumbling, the television you are watching or the conversations you are eavesdropping in a coffee house. The postmodern consumer does not enjoy the silence. He/she feels at home in the noise.

Therefore the third use of film is called "Filling the Void". I already mentioned that the participants watched films to escape the reality of their lives. I however noticed also that the

so-called entertainment films were used in different ways. Sometimes the film was actually just playing a supporting role in the everyday lives. It seems that nowadays it takes a lot of effort to focus on a film especially in the comfort of your own premises. More and more, films are played as a source of background noise. Films are becoming more and more a media not unlike television...

John focuses always in films, but he did agree that the television is a device that is often on, just blabbering in the background. This is perfectly stated when John describes how he on Sundays wakes up, makes coffee and puts the kids' animations on. Neither does he have any kids nor is he particularly interested in the shows, but it is a habit of him to create a more hectic environment. It is straight related to the phenomenon that Joel has noticed in his office. Many of his co-workers go to coffee shops and restaurants for a few hours to work, even though they would have a totally peaceful and quiet conference room available. In order to think creatively, they seek places filled with noise and distractions.

Ben seems to think the same way. He often spends the evenings on the couch with a laptop on his lap and at the same time watching a film on the television. The films that he watches in these situations are not demanding. Actually he has often seen them once or twice before and he knows that they are good. Then he works on his laptop and watches the films "with half an eye".

It became clear to me from the interviews that broadcast television, excluding live sport, is nowadays mostly noise. Television series, due to the format, are also becoming more and more a source of noise and distraction. Peer-to-peer file sharing and legal streaming services have made it possible to watch episodes whenever, so they are beginning to eat broadcast television's share of "distraction content". Ben did admit that since registering to Netflix, the habit of putting an episode or a movie on, has increased. This also leads to the phenomenon of filling the empty and free moments of our day with moving content. The Internet and its streaming services have made a wide range of films open to us at anytime. Ben remarks:

It is true that when I have a one and a half hours or two hours break, I put a movie on and start watching it... Yeah you could say that it has increased my film watching, since I can start watching them with one press of a button.

Jane is not a user of the legal streaming services. She downloads and she downloads a lot. When describing her downloading habits, she describes how at work, depending of the day,

she downloads one to ten files. James does the same. Computers offer an access to a huge database of films that can be downloaded anytime. The easy access of films has made the use of film (read watching) easier as well. The Walkman revolutionized the way we use music, the film is on a similar trip. Because films are no longer products that you need to seek, the time and effort we give to them is becoming leaner.

In the 21st century we need distractions to feel alive. We need to move and we need to do something all the time. Therefore film has become a way of filling a void, filling the empty moments of our days and suffocating the silence.

We no longer have to stay alone with our thoughts. Smart phones keep us connected to the rest of the world. Bus trips are no longer spent thinking, since we can entertain ourselves with the new portable devices. Although the participants saw no idea of watching a feature length film in pieces on bus trips, they did use their smart phones in other ways. On a four-minute bus trip to school, Kevin spends his time in Youtube watching videos. No moment seems to be too short not to fill it with visual entertainment. Every second must be used for some gains. It seems that we have lost the ability to entertain ourselves solely by the power of our minds. We do not want to be alone; we do not want to be unconnected. We must eliminate the silent moments and film helps us with that. We are able to fill even the smallest void.

7.1.4 Travelling Back Time

Well, naturally at first you think about the newest findings or the earliest experiences. When I was a small toddler I saw in the Swedish television Psycho, which is one of the fundamentals.

Terrence puts it well, when I asked him about his favorite films. Nostalgia is a word that is strongly related to the answers we give when asking about our favorite films. The films we watch as a kid stays with us forever. It is no surprise then so many of the participants talk about the films that they saw at an early age. Ben has seen The Lion King dozens of times and has tried to find it on DVD. Charlie's favorite film was The Kid, which made a huge impact the first time he saw it with his family. He also mentions how he watched the Blues Brothers over and over again and how perfect the film actually is. Jane watches over and over again the 80's John Hughes movies like 16 candles and Ferris Bueller's Day Off. Even Walter, a man that has never been a film freak and who watches most of the films as a part of his work, remembers

how he has seen Ferris Bueller's Day Off 30 or 40 times. Great films make an impact and make us think, but we rarely watch them as often as the films that we fell in love when we were kids.

Certain types of films have made a huge impact on us and therefore we continue to watch them. We want to travel back in time to experience the excitement of the youth, when everything was new. It is pure joy to listen how Kevin talks about the action films and thrillers he watched all the time with his big brother.

The Terminator. It's such a king movie. And Robocop and all the action flicks, all the time... Terminator, Robocop and yeah horror. Lots of horror movies and x-files.

The 80's action flicks are actually a genre that seemed to be on a lot of the participants' minds. Charlie raved about Die Hard and what a great film it is. What actually highlighted for me the importance of 80's action was the fact that a lot of the participants mentioned the film series Expendables. They did not consider it to be a piece of great film art, but they loved the pure absurdity of the films. Charlie describes it:

The idea that we take a crazy amount of these guys, so that it does not even matter what it is all about. The initial idea is just so mad that you have all these fucking stars and then you just fucking let it go. It is so over the top. Sometimes I go for these kinds of films...

Walter tells that he knows one of the most art-house driven people in the industry that feels also really enthusiastically about The Expendables. Although the quality of the films is questionable, it is just the idea of seeing all these yesterday's heroes on the same film that brings you back to your childhood, and it creates the excitement you actually rarely get from films anymore. Some films are watched solely for the pure joy of feeling young again. Psycho might be the first movie that made you cry, Terminator may have been the first one that blew your mind, Ferris Bueller's Day Off showed Matthew Broderick act like you would have liked to act in high school. Some films hit us hard when we were young and therefore they will always hit us hard. Nostalgia will always have a part in our hearts.

7.1.5 Bringing People Together

Film is also used purely as a vessel for social interactions. Film is often watched in total silence, but it is rarely watched alone, at least in cinemas. Film is a product used to gather people together. Film is a social product and therefore the theatres hold a specific atmosphere. Jane feels it:

Then you have all the other people around you and everybody has decided to see this particular film. It becomes this communal experience.

Although Jane seldom goes to theaters with her friends, she does feel that the theatre experience is a social one. It is an experience that is not expressed through words, but meaning. Although you analyze and run the film in your mind alone, the experience is still shared. It is an interesting fact that though Jane consumes the majority of films alone and needs no friend around, she still feels and enjoys the atmosphere of a theatre

James feels quite the opposite. Film is a social experience for him, but in a totally different way. He believes that the watching of a film in a theatre is an overrated experience. He instantly sees the other people more as a distraction. The average moviegoer is more often an irritant than a creator of communal experience. However, James does make one statement:

I would gladly go to the movies, so that the only people present are my friends and I.

Although James does not need the audience, he still feels that his friends are an important part of the theatre and film experience. When he thinks about an empty theatre, the thought of him being alone there never crosses his mind. We do like to sink into the magical world of film, but we also use them to bring people together.

Ben goes often to the theatres with his friends. He sees it as a social event. You book the tickets and you always meet an hour upfront and go to a coffee house. You can also go and grab a beer after the movie. For Ben, going to the movies has its own rituals and traditions. There seems to be a certain code of conduct and a set of habits you obey, decreasing the role of the actual film. Sure, film is still at the centre of everything, but it also plays the reason why people gather together. In the end, it is not that far away from the experiences James and Kevin shared from their youth: taking girls out.

Ben also watches films with his friends at home. Then the experience is no longer divided into clear sections (pre-film, film, post-film). Then the social interacting is happening at the same time and remarks are made instantly. If the theatre still has some rules to obey, then at home you are free to do as you please. The film can be discussed, laughed, joked, analyzed while you are watching it. Though the film may no longer grasp 100 % of your perception, it is neither used as only a reason to gather people together. It actually becomes more of what Jane described as a communal experience.

The social factor in watching films is fascinating. It seems that the participants do on one hand enjoy films in company, but on the other hand they also respect the moments when films can be consumed all alone in total calmness. James remembers how he has watched Samsara all alone in the total darkness of his own home theatre and how he really sank into that film's world. Charlie describes how he sometimes really savors the moments when he can enjoy motion picture art all alone.

I remember how I was alone at home. Usually we watch with my girlfriend cult films that we have not seen, just for the sake of entertainment. But back then, I had like really a lot of time on my hands and I watched Fellini's Juliet of the Spirits. It's his first color film. So, yeah I could sort of really savor the film and watch it really properly.

To properly watch a film, not for just the sake of entertainment, alone is the best way to do it. Still we consume films mostly within a group. It supports the idea that film is also a communal experience. Star Wars, Lord of the Rings and the Twilight films have all shown us how a film is more than just two hours of moving images and how a screening actually becomes more of a rock concert than a film.

So we distinguish two ways of how film is a social product. First of all we use it as a social lubricant. It is a reason for us to meet and also an easy topic for discussion. Then, on the other, hand it connects us with a random set of strangers. It is the simple idea, that all these people want to see this specific film, which brings us together. This is acknowledged by laughing out loud or clapping your hands together. The social factor is important, although it is not that often thought of.

7.1.6 Looking for the Magic

It's something primitive that intrigues me in old photos. It's the same thing in old photos and old films. I was once in the film archives watching this movie where they go to the sea, I don't remember its name, but when the camera begins to swing, the feeling is so fucking cool that it literally scares you as well. That's what is called the magic of the film.

Charlie sees magic in films. It is the way the camera manipulates the viewer's mind and the viewer forgets that he/she is watching only a film. Žižek (2006) says that it reveals our hidden feelings, our true selves. Hitchcock saw film mostly as a manipulation of the viewers' mind and he had the vision that one-day films would actually be "feelings" that would be inserted straight into the human brain. So, my argument is that the romanticized idea of "the magic of the film" is actually the film's ability to manipulate our brains, shake our senses of reality. It is the moment where we are no longer able to rationalize our feelings. It is the moment when the film reaches us out of the screen.

It was interesting to notice that when James explains the justifications for piracy, he uses drug trade as an example. When Ridley gives his views on piracy, he declares that those who are film lovers will always find the ways to watch films, even without money. It is an interesting idea to view film as an addiction, and the magic can then be described as the kick.

We all have our weapons of choice. Whether it is the surrealism of Fellini, the futuristic vision of Cameron or the intellectual puzzles of Nolan, they all have a sense of magic. Some of the participants mentioned the word, others did not, but they all had experienced it. Maybe I could dig even deeper to delete the magic from film, but the film lover in me objects to it. As I am decomposing film to understand it as a consumer product, I still want it to be magical and still leave one last bit of mystery in it...

Charlie recalls how the most famous Finnish film writer Peter Von Bagh once declared that the film theaters should introduce the curtains again to the audience. Charlie raved that *"That's exactly what sucks you into the whole film – the curtains open and the film starts to roll. That's what's cool!"* For different people, it is different things, but I do never want to be that analytical and cold that I could not believe in the magic of the film. It is there somewhere and like the pictures in the Rorschach test, the suitcase in Pulp Fiction or the last words of Bill Murray to Scarlett Johansson in Lost in Translation – we all have our own interpretations.

7.1.7 The Role of Film

Although our viewing habits and experiences are highly diverse and the films we consume will always differ, to sum up the precedent analysis, I have created this framework to better understand how the viewing itself differs. The framework is a traditional matrix and the two dictating parameters are “the importance of the film” and the “the sense of community”. The first one is based on the value of the product itself. How big of a role does the film play in that specific situation? The other one focuses on the role of other people. How important are the social interactions and the feeling of being part of something? Depending on these parameters I have found four different ways of using film.

The Role of Film

		SENSE OF COMMUNITY	
		LOW	HIGH
IMPORTANCE OF THE FILM	LOW	NOISE	DATE
	HIGH	ART	EXPERIENCE

Figure 6: The role of film in our lives

The four different roles of film are noise, date, art and experience. The names should not be read and used in a holistic way, but they are meant as lively descriptions. The first is called noise. When the film's role is to create some noise and distraction, then the importance of the film and the company is minimal. In these situations the use of film resembles the use of television. Most of the participants did use television seldom and when they used it, they often did something else at the same time. Because we are nowadays able to watch a wide range of films as easily, film has become a relevant source of “noise” as well. It is our need of constant

distraction that drives this kind of use of film. Ridley surfed online while watching sitcoms; Ben wrote school papers while watching a film the second time and James read e-books in bed while watching a film at the same time. Postmodern times are fast and hectic and the biggest effort for us is to focus on only one thing.

The second role is called date. Sometimes the company and the idea of watching a film are more important than the film itself. We meet our friends for a Friday night flick or rent a DVD on the lazy Sunday afternoon. The film is only a means to an end. At this stage the choosing of a film is often also a compromise. John described how he could not watch horror or action with her wife. James felt the same way and therefore when he watched a film with his girlfriend, they chose quality dramas. I am not saying that this would hurt the quality of the chosen film, but more important than the film is the feeling of being together.

Art on the other hand focuses solely on the film. What drives the action of watching a film is the film itself. You focus more on the film and your analyzing process of the film is probably more complex. You do not have to be alone for the film to be art, but the film is the main focus of the whole event. Terrence considers the theatre to be the one and true place for films and consumes them only in theatres. Kevin never does anything while he is watching a film or even an episode of a television series. Although James seldom gives 100 % of his concentration to a film, *Samsara* is a film that he described as *“that film I want to watch alone and just focus on it, you know with full sounds”*. When you are willing to give your total attention and your fullest respect, then film is the form of art it should be. Some said that films should be watched only in theatres; some even say they should be projected from film and not digitally and some find the Bluray and home couch to be the best place for films. In the end it is not the location that matters, that is just a question of opinion. What matters is the amount of attention you are willing to give to the film.

The fourth category is called experience. Experience demands not only your full attention, but as well the attention of the fellow viewers. When film is an experience, it becomes something that you share with your fellow people. Walter worked with a film called *Nightmare – Painajainen merellä*. This was a film that is based on the most successful Finnish television soap at the moment. The film was an individual piece that took the youngsters of the series' cast and put them on a thriller environment. The film was put together just in ten months, from the pitch to the premier. It is a highly respectable achievement. However, from the critical point of view, we can hardly talk about a groundbreaking film, a film classic or even a

solid thriller. Still, according to Walter some of the screenings had had a lot of applause in them. This film had its own strong fan base that enjoyed the film immensely in its premier. Same behavior is happening with the twilight series. The quality of the product can always be argued about, but for the target group these are important films and therefore the premier is a must, and since they all share the same enthusiasm for the films, they create an experience out of it. Though film critics tend to hate for example the twilight series, at the same time they should relish the fact that cinema can still create such huge experiences for people. Film festivals, double bills and special screenings can also be seen situations where the film becomes an experience, but it does not necessarily have to be a special situation. In the end it just depends on the people and their relationship with the film. Kevin watching 80's action films with his brother can be as big experience as the premier of the new Star Wars film.

In the framework I am not suggesting that one role should be better than the other. It just draws a picture to visualize our different ways of consuming film.

7.2 The Different Aspects of the Evolution of Film

In the following chapter I am going to tackle the big questions concerning the future of the film industry. Through the interviews I have grasped the understanding of how the participants felt about certain aspects of filmmaking and how the evolution of the industry has changed their habits of consuming. The digitalization of the product is something that has affected the distribution of the film both in the theatre business as well as in the home entertainment market. For me to make the final analysis of the product called film, I need to assess some of the interesting phenomenon of the consumption. How the theatre experience is nowadays considered, is 3D a groundbreaking new old format and how important it is to own the film on a concrete disc? These all reveal a lot about our true perception of the product.

7.2.1 Digital Distribution

Films used to be filmed in and projected from film. Nowadays this happens very seldom since the digital solution is a much cheaper and easier way. There is a huge discussion going on in the film industry concerning the digital film. Can it offer the same authenticity as film or does

the end product remind a cheap and cold alternative. I am not going to the specifics, but to sum it up shortly; what digital film offers is lighter and smaller cameras that can be put in places where film would never dream of, the possibility of endless amount of takes since it does not cost to film more, and a total manipulation of the pictures in post-production. In the end it actually makes the filming process less stressful, but at the same time less meaningful. The critics of shooting digitally declare that when you remove the film out of the process, it loses certain warmth that is essential to cinema. One could argue that the sunsets of Lawrence of Arabia can never be achieved digitally. Some also say that the quality of the image in digitally shot films is not as good as in films shot with 70mm, but the truth is that the technology is constantly evolving, and now we already have 6k digital cameras. It is not my job or my expertise to say which is better. What matters is that after over a century's tradition of shooting cinema on film, the film itself is disappearing from the process. The iconic concrete product that has always represented cinema is now becoming invisible.

Although the filmmakers can continue the argument, the truth is that film theatres and the distribution are at least big winners. The digital transfer has offered them the possibility to give films a wider premier. It all becomes clear when we listen to Walter's a bit exaggerated story on how things used to be in Finland (a while ago):

"The business worked so that the managing director went to some nice film festival, where he drank and danced for a few weeks and came back with the film (reels). Then the reels went on from village to village around the country with some salesman. The salesman went always to the nearest theatre, gave the film and then he drank, danced and went to the sauna. The fact was that when the film, which arrived to a village, was often the only window to the outside world. It was exotic and exciting."

Although the story has a nostalgic point of view from the old world, it does reveal us the true difficulty in distributing film reels. Films could not be distributed effectively, at least based on the new standards. When Walter describes the change realistically, he calls it the most radical change in the industry since moving from the B&W pictures to color, or from mute to sound. When a decade ago it took some small theatre to get a certain film to play four months, now it receives the film instantly. Films are no longer distributed in reels, but through the Internet. It has enabled the truly global premiers that are a straight attempt to reduce piracy and to generally offer people the films that they want to see as soon as possible. Although Walter does condemn piracy, he does understand it off the book in situations where people should

otherwise have to wait for months for a film. It simply does not fulfill the 21st century consumers' standards.

The digital revolution has also lead to the distinction of the minor theatres since not everybody were able or willing to make the required investments in the technical systems. The industry has evolved and therefore some of the old ways have died. It is one of the major reasons for the McDonaldization of the film theatre scene. The theatre industry has become a battlefield, where size does matter. The Finnish market environment is an excellent example. Finnkino, the leading theatre chain in Finland is almost a monopoly. Walter was concerned about the fact that Finland is one of the only civilized countries that does not have a proper art-house theatre chain. Whose fault it is, is difficult to say. The power of the big players is evident, but at the same time it is the everyday consumers that vote with their wallets. If art-house does not drive any cash flow, why should those films be played in theatres then? The Independent Cinema in America has already found the possibilities of VOD (Video-on-Demand). In future many more films will be premiered not in theatres, but online.

Walter shed also some light on how the changes in distribution have affected the overall chain of command. The need for the middlemen has decreased and it is Hollywood that has gained the most. They decide when and what time certain films will be played. Because the product can be transported so easily from Hollywood to the rest of the world, they do not need much aid any longer. Walter talked openly about these things and it became clear that the business of being a distribution company is becoming leaner and tighter. Although the digital transfers have made it easier to distribute films to theaters, at the same time it increases "mostly" Hollywood's dictating power over the conditions and it has totally revolutionized the distribution of such films to the home environment. When asked about services like Netflix, Walter was a bit contradicted. On one hand, the more the people watch films, the better it is for the industry, but on the other hand *"Netflix is a service that will reduce our need for staff in the future"*. The DVD and Blueray markets have and will be strongly affected by the online services, piracy or no piracy. Therefore when we are talking about the distribution of film, we must also include the distribution in the ancillary markets...

7.2.2 Owning the Film

How important is it to own the physical product? This is an interesting question and very relevant to the distributors of the DVDs and Bluereys. Nowadays people have not only the possibility of downloading pirated films, but they can also stream, rent and even buy films online. What then drives people to still purchase films in physical products?

From business point-of-view, the habit of buying DVDs and Bluereys is diminishing. Eventually the manufacturing of DVDs will end and the Bluerey will become the definite format. What happens after then is still a question mark. The truth is that those who are used to buy physical products will continue to buy them, but the new generation has not formed any habits or relationships with them. Walter's two-year-old son entertains himself with a tablet and watches animations from Netflix. He does not and will never need the content on a disc. James has embraced the service he uses to the point that he has gotten rid of all of his old DVDs. Although his collection consisted of the works of his favorite directors they still remain just "*pieces of plastic*". James has embraced the digital age and he is a great example of a consumer type that will become more common.

Ridley on the other hand is a collector. He never bought DVDs, because he knew that a better format was just behind the corner. For him the Bluerey is the definite format. His collection exceeds over 500 titles and though many might question the rationality behind such a collection, he presents himself as a very rational consumer. He has strict rules on which titles he will take home and eventually leave on the shelf. First of all I found it fascinating that he waited until Bluerey was published. It shows that he puts a lot of emphasis on quality and he wants the best of the best. This became even clearer when he described how he studies the different publications of certain titles and buys them only after he is certain that the product is the ultimate version and an improved copy will no longer be published. The discs that end up in his shelf are also films that last for repeated viewings; otherwise they go back to the shop. Ridley's relationship is fascinating. The way he talks about films is not overly enthusiastic, but still it plays a major role in his life and in his wallet. He does not brag about his extensive collection, but it becomes clear that a lot of thought is put in the construction of it. In the end entertainment can be pirated, but good titles need to be purchased. Ridley is willing to pay for quality and he does want to physically own quality. Good films are what he collects.

John is another type of collector. James and Ridley were very precise of the way they watch and collect films. They had put a lot of effort and thought in the way they consume, but James is actually the kind of consumer that does not really like to put a lot of effort or change his old ways. In the end this is a characteristic that is apparent in his whole way of living. He has never learned to use the computer and is not even interested in learning. His whole business is facing a huge challenge and yet he has little interest in the evolution of the ancillary markets. His capability of challenging himself and performing is best captured in the following story.

"In the old store I had the DVD player in the ceiling. When it broke down and it could not play any other film than the one it had inside. I think it played Casablanca over 500 times before I got it fixed."

John is not a person who grasps the moment or puts the effort to change things. His lifestyle has its own routines. He is an entrepreneur and work plays a big part in his life, but in the end neither does he feel passionate about it nor is it something that he wants to develop. His film collection contains over 100 titles. They are films that he likes and likes to watch again, but they do not give him bigger than life experiences. If work is something that fills his days, then his film collection is something that fills his free time. He is a collector by nature. He has over 1000 CDs and music is something he feels more passionate about. Films are something that has come sort of as a side product from collecting music.

Although the Internet has given us the possibility to download a wide range of films, it does not give us an unlimited catalogue. Both Jane and Charlie still buy DVDs because it is the only way to get their hands on certain films. Charlie buys mostly old more rare classics and Jane buys more art-house driven titles and British television series. Although the main reason is to see those films, the purchase decision is also affected by the fact that these are more unique than the traditional Hollywood tent pole films. Charlie is proud of owning Pier Paolo Pasolini's works and Jane's most valuable DVDs are the films of Jane Campion. Jane actually buys films the same way she buys CDs. She said that although she is fond of Spotify she still buys the CDs of Björk and Tori Amos. When an artist achieves a sufficient level of respect, Jane is prepared to purchase their output.

It seems that none of the participants are willing to buy films in "pig in a poke" mentality. For a purchase, they need to have seen the film already once, or the film must have a reputation.

Downloading is so easy, that for the sake of noise or entertainment, a film is not purchased. In a way the DVD or Blu-ray has become more and more like a book. They are not purchased for this moment, but for the future. When I asked Ben what kind of films he would be prepared to buy, he mentions *The Godfather* and *Lion King*, not his favorite films *Argo*, *The Dark Knight* or *Casino Royale*. Films that deserve the place in the shelves are classics that everybody should have seen, like everybody in America should own “*Catcher in the Rye*” and in Finland “*7 veljestä*”. At the same time film no longer represents so much your personal taste, but the universal taste.

In the age where the physical product has vanished from the theatres, it is quickly vanishing from our homes as well. Collectors will continue to collect, but the average users are less driven to purchase physical products. It does not hurt film, but it does hurt the ancillary markets and simply the idea of buying only a single film is becoming outdated. Most of the participants are still prepared to pay for films online, but at the same time they are not thrilled by the idea of paying for each single film. The bulk buying is the preferred way. I would also like to emphasize that appreciating film has nothing to do with owning the film. In the end some still feel that film’s home is the theatre and the big screen.

7.2.3 The Piracy

I can still remember the Metallica’s anti-Napster commercials from over ten years ago. Lars Ulrich carrying the coolness factor of a republican politician and “borrowing” the girlfriend of the downloader. Even though how lame the antipiracy advertisements have been, they do carry some truth in them. Piracy does create losses for the industry and they have done extensive measures to tear it up. At the same time piracy has lead the industry to step up its game. As Walter puts it: *“Piracy has also taken the industry further. We have had to improve the quality and the experience in order to fight back”*.

The more interesting question however is why piracy is such a popular sin among people. Why is it that online theft does not create guilty conscious for us? Does our moral ambiguity come from the immateriality of the product or from the capitalism of the industry? Most of the participants admitted of being illegal downloaders and felt little moral dilemma in it. Actually the most interesting part is that they all had proper justifications for their actions. Even

though they did not feel bad for it, they still wanted to explain where they stand. In the following list I have picked up the different justifications for piracy.

Time Efficiency

We live in a time where we have a constant hurry everywhere. Tight schedules dictate the way we live when we want to watch a certain film; piracy just might be the only way to “perform the task” immediately. It is easier, faster and less time consuming. Charlie has sudden urges when and he wants to watch a certain film and piracy might just be the only answer.

Minimal Effect

In the end it might not affect the industry as much as it is believed to, at least according to the downloaders themselves. Different films have different values. In the end, piracy does not affect the purchasing decision of films. Collectors still buy the films on discs. The pirated films are disposable entertainment that does not matter at all. Therefore the alternative of pirating a certain film is not renting or buying that certain film.

The Failure of the Business Model

It is not the downloaders’ fault; it is the industry’s fault of not reacting as fast as it should have. If the studios would build a platform that worked as well as piracy, then the consumers would be willing to pay for it. Consumers use the best alternative and at the moment that alternative is piracy.

The Industry is Capitalist

The film industry does not gain many sympathy points from the downloading participants. The idea of a money worshipping Hollywood has left stains on the whole industry and few shed a tear for the studios. “They make enough money already” is the usual way of thinking.

“I Have Already Given the Industry so Much”

One justification is also the idea that once you have spent enough money in films it becomes accepted to download as well. You have already proven to be an important asset to the industry, so it is completely all right to watch pirated films now and then. I must admit that this is a justification I have used as well....

As important as the justifications is our very need for justifications. Although we do not consider piracy to be an outrageous act, we do feel the need to defend ourselves. The fact that some of the participants added that they tend not to download small films or Finnish films, proves that they do understand the consequences. Even James reveals a soft spot when he raved how he was going to see Tarantino's new film in the theatre because "*I want to really support the guy*". It shows that there does exist a level of importance for a film that exceeds the intention of downloading.

The downloading of films has also become relatively routine-like. It is the empty moments in work or at home, when the participants began to download films. It is also important to notice that downloading does not eventually lead to the actual watching of the film. For example Jane had a wide range of films on her computer that she had never watched. Some of them dated even two years back.

Opposite to the majority, Kevin was actually ashamed of downloading. As an aspired filmmaker, he felt he was letting his peers down. The truth is, however, that his remorse was not fully honest. It is impossible for me to truly believe his shame, considering that he has over 1000 pirated films. Some part of him does accept piracy and in the end the remorse is more of a feeling that he should feel, rather than one he actually feels. The same can be said of Walter's unwavering opinion about the piracy. Although I believe that he is fully against illegal downloading, I also felt that it was an opinion that was born from working in the industry. It is the only opinion he is allowed to have, and it is an opinion that he has learned through the industry's code of conduct.

In the end, what seems to matter the most is the quality of the film and the consumer's respect for the filmmakers. Important films are watched in the theatres, or at least they are not pirated. Downloading itself is an action comparable to surfing online. It is effortless and in the end a pretty meaningless way of killing time. Though the industry can lecture consumers about the consequences of piracy, the true best way to fight back is to offer them better service, better quality and better experiences, whether it is in the theatres or on the home sofa.

7.2.4 The Theatre

I have already revealed quite a lot of the participants' opinions about the theatre experience, but some further analysis is required. The product called film experienced its first major

challenge when the television became a standard technological innovation at homes. Moving image lost part of its exclusivity. Then came the VCR and videocassettes. People were able to watch specific films more easily than ever before. Now that the consumers have almost the entire film catalogue on their laptops, films have a fiercer battle than ever before. Walter mentions that before the age of television over 30 million tickets were bought in Finland. The year 2012 is considered to be highly successful and the amount of tickets sold sums up to 8,5 million (Koistinen, 2013). The film theatre has lost its importance as the definite source of entertainment and magic.

Price is an easy reason to blame. Many of the participants felt that the ticket price is getting extremely close to the point where it is just not worth it anymore. But maybe the main focus should not be on the price, but on why it is not worth the while. Kevin said that one of the reasons he downloads films is that it holds no risk. You can quit the movie anytime you want and it does not cost a thing. If films are decreasingly blowing our minds, then the purchase is a failed one. Jane feels that the McDonaldization of the film theatres (in Finland) has led to a homogeneous selection that eventually gives the feeling of *"Hey, I'm watching the same film"*. We watch more visual content than ever before, so we are no longer that easy to be amazed.

Many of the participants also felt that it takes a lot of effort to go to the theatre. Work takes major part of the day, and little energy, or time is left to go and see a film in a theatre. Home means a lot for the Finns. We spend a lot of time to make our homes comfortable and nice and we like to dwell there. One can blame the weather or the distance, but what matters the most is the value of the concept of home. Home is the only place where we feel comfortable. Ben said that in home he could be as he pleases. John cannot think of seeing a film straight after work. He needs to go home first. James says that he does not need material, but there are certain things he invests in like the sauna and the bed. We build our own nests and it becomes difficult for us to leave them. I do think that it is the burden of leaving home that drives us to watch films from our homes and in our beds.

Almost all of the participants mentioned that naturally the theatre is the best place to enjoy films. The reasons were evidently the big screen, loud sound systems and complete darkness, but another reason that often stood up was also that in the theatre they are still able to concentrate solely on the film. The home environment distracts us from the film and a mobile phone, a computer or a newspaper is an object that often comes into the play. Jane said that she focuses only in the film, but sometimes she begins to knit or iron. It is very difficult for us

to focus only on one thing anymore. I believe that it is linked to the times that we live in and to the technology in general. We need to be linked all the time, so the Facebook is a page often visited when watching a film. The effort of watching a film in a theatre does not only limit to the travelling from place A to B. You also need to cut yourself off from the rest of the world for a few hours' time.

The theatre is still the place where the biggest emotions are expressed, but for some the experience is diminishing. Charlie feels extremely close to the grand tradition of cinema and the nostalgia it produces in him. He likes old seats and curtains in front of the screen, so when he was in Berlin in a theatre called "Lichtblik Kino"; he felt the sudden feeling of utter disappointment. It was during the second film that he realized that *"Fuck, this does not come from film. I felt so betrayed that I did not want to go there anymore. It's gotta be film you know? That's what gives the feeling!"* So the theatre itself is a lot more than just the best place to watch a film. For guys like Charlie, it is an experience itself. A film reel does not just contain a story in the images, but the reel itself has also a story of its own.

The ultimate experience does not necessarily demand the surroundings of a theatre. Kevin told us how the Black Swan mesmerized him when he watched it on his mobile phone in the little shed in Bali during a storm. Ridley and James swore that the home theatre is as good as a proper theatre or even better. One thing however seemed to be a quite popular opinion. Big movies belong to big screens. Skyfall was a film that many watched in the theatre, simply because that is how it should be. Films take us on magical trips and it seems that action and visual effects belong on the big screen.

7.2.5 Special Effects and 3D

And now we come to a subject that has interested me for many years, the role of special effects in films. The camera itself is a fascinating apparatus. The traditional idea was to capture the reality, but how real can a photograph or a video ever really be? Is it not the choices of perspective, scale, light and angle that eventually affect the emotions we get from the photograph or the video? The responsibility of the director has been an age-old question in film theory. Should you capture the reality or should you capture the reality of the emotion. Is it all right to manipulate the viewer with cuts and effects or should you just offer the world as it is? These are questions I will dig deeper later, but the truth is that cinema has always

noded to both directions: the reality and the fantasy. The Lumière brothers were above all documentary makers. They were more interested in the technology and therefore they never used it as a storytelling device. The other French famous director of that time was Méliès. He did not consider camera and film as a way to capture the truth, but as a way to take the viewer on a trip. He understood how you could create fantasy worlds in film and how you could manipulate the moving image and trick the viewer's eye.

Fantasy is an essential part of films of the 21st century. Just by watching the top grossing films of 2012 it becomes clear that visual effects and fantasy are something that opens our wallets. The top 15 films of 2012 were:

Top Grossing Films of 2012

#	Film	Worldwide Gross
1	The Avengers	\$1.5 billion
2	The Dark Knight Rises	\$1 billion
3	Skyfall	\$950.6 million
4	Ice Age: Continental Drift	\$875 million
5	The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2	\$778.2 million
6	The Amazing Spiderman	\$752.2 million
7	Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted	\$742.1 million
8	The Hunger Games	\$686.5 million
9	Men in Black 3	\$624 million
10	The Brave	\$ 535.3 million
11	The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey	\$533.8 million (and counting)
12	Ted	\$501.8 million
13	Prometheus	£402.5 million
14	Snow White and the Huntsman	\$396.4 million
15	Taken 2	\$363.4 million

Table 3: Top Grossing films of 2012 (Acuna, 2012)

The films nearest to realism on the list are probably Taken 2 and Skyfall and that says much. It proves the point that consumers go to theaters to watch films that have fantasy, unrealistic characters, special effects and action. It should also be noted that only The Hunger Games (although sharing a lot in common with Death Race 2000 and Battle Royale), The Brave and

Ted could be considered to be original creations. All the rest are sequels, prequels, remakes or re-imaginings of already existing products. In addition over half of the titles represent 3D films. The industry is often criticized of being generic, uncreative and money driven, but does it matter if the majority still chooses the effects driven comic book films?

I was interested how my participants felt of special effects. How important were they in films and what kind of thoughts they brought in mind. I was especially interested in the opinions about 3D, since it is an innovation I personally am not that fond of. 3D itself was already used in the 50's and even Hitchcock has used it in his film "M for Murder", but it is first now that it has broken the scene. Martin Scorsese, Ang Lee, Wim Wenders have all used the new technology in their films and when these kinds of directors began to use the technology, it proves that that the 3D has become a standard.

The word that the participants used to describe 3D and special effects was "additional value". There was a lot of talk about the quality of the technology itself. The glasses irritated some and others said that it just does not work the way it is supposed to, but almost all of them talked about how it does not bring any more value to the product. Basically they did not think of the technology as a part of the film, but as a by-product. Charlie does not condemn 3D. He enjoyed Martin Scorsese's Hugo and its meta-ideas, but he does condemn deliberate use of 3D just for the sake of 3D:

"Film as an art form has always been based on technology. Méliès is a good example, transforming the film into magic. This 3D is basically the same thing, so it can be positive as well. But you gotta understand the medium and not just bring additional value. All the films that I have bought on DVD that had been in theaters in 3D were incredible pieces of shit, like that Avatar! That film did not have any fuckin' sense!" I could not grasp that the 3D was the only thing that mattered, that the additional value was the whole point of the film."

Ridley said that he has seen only one good 3D film. Wim Wender's Pina is a documentary about a dancer. According to Ridley what made the film so effective, was that the 3D is not used as a cheap trick, but it is actually the format to tell the story. It seems that few filmmakers handle the technology for the sake of the story.

Ben was the only one that was thoroughly happy for 3D. His taste was also the most commercial of the lot. He enjoys effects and the use of 3D at the moment is comparable to special effects. The importance of visual trickery depends on what the consumer is searching

from a film. The special effects driven films are seldom the art house-driven Charlie's cup of tea. The truth is that special effects are usually linked to entertainment, which again is a way of escaping reality. Visual trickery takes us on a trip even though the quality of the film itself might be questionable. The participants draw a picture where the film and the special effects are separate products and the latter offering additional value for the former. Seldom is the latter enough, but still it is something that attracts us and based on the list of top grossing movies of 2012, it attracts us often.

7.2.6 The Use of Film

The section above consisted of different aspects of film as an experience and as a business. My intention was to draw a picture of how the technology has affected our habits and how the business is forced to change its ways. In the end I also wanted to get a grasp of how we make the decisions concerning the films we watch. We all have different taste in films, but I do believe that the reasons of watching films do not differ that much. In the end I have come to the conclusion that there are two factors that affect the way we choose to consume a film:

The Value of the Film

The more important the film is, the more we give it our attention. James focused 100% on Samsara, Charlie wanted to watch and savor alone Fellini's films and Jane appreciated the creatively courageous films of Campion. The film's value may come from the actors, the directors, the topic, the screenwriters, the size of the production etc. When the film becomes important to the viewer, then the viewing experience becomes important also. The viewer wants the situational factors to be the best when watching the film, and he/she also wants to support the team that has made the film. James wanted to buy the ticket to Tarantino's films and Ben said that he does not really want to download Finnish films. By mesmerizing the consumer the film succeeds to enhance its value.

The Importance of the Experience

As it has been already mentioned many times, people seek fantasy from cinema. The experience is affected by many things, but it became clear that when a film is "bigger than life"

and includes a lot of special effects, it should be experienced in a theatre. The participants did not generally appreciate 3D that much, but special effects on the other hand were something that was now and then nice to watch. Jane explained that the reason she watched *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* in a theatre was because *“it’s the kind of a film, that you need to see on the big screen, at least the first time”*. As simple as it may sound, this idea of “that kind of a film” is what draws many of us in the theatre.

What I want to say is that film can fight piracy by focusing on the experience and by investing in the value of the film. The digital era has made it possible to watch more films, but it probably does not affect us that much when the film is the right film for us. A good film is more than just a disposable product and therefore people are still willing to pay for them. I am suggesting that the two factors mentioned above are essential when the consumers are making the decision of buying, going to the theatre, renting or downloading the film.

The following framework is not bulletproof since the participants and the consumers in general do have their own opinions about the definite experience (Home vs. Theatre) and about owning a physical product. However buying a film does represent a certain commitment to a film that is linked to the value and watching a film in the theatre does speak for the importance of the experience. The framework is based on the participants’ ideas about different channels for film. I am not trying to give definite answers, but I want to point out certain factors that do have a strong link to the way we make our decisions

The Decision-making Model for Film Channel Selection

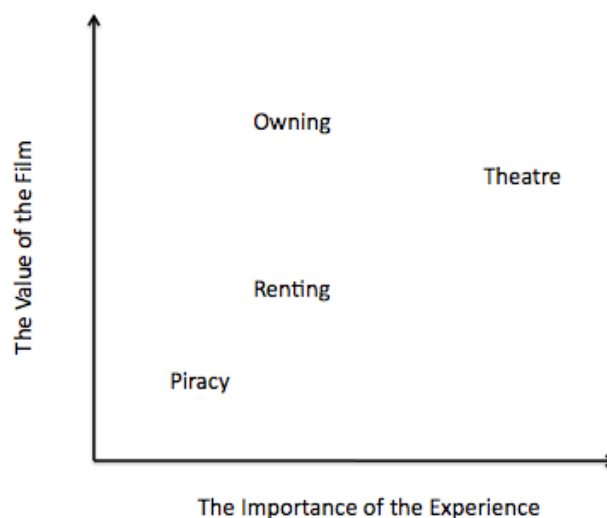


Figure 7: The Decision-making model for Film Channel Selection

7.3 A Film, the Product

Finally we come to the last part of the study, where I pursue to understand film from a slightly more theoretical point of view. The major film theories ponder the questions concerning the format and medium. What is the meaning and purpose of film in general and what are the rules concerning filmmaking. Understanding film theory is not necessary for the appreciation of film in general, but I do argue that having a keen eye for the overall entity of filmmaking does eventually give more appreciation for the product. Understanding the importance of the camera angles and the role of editing in film are vital, when analyzing the film as a form of art.

One of the most interesting discussions of film deals with the purpose of film. What is the role of the filmmaker and what are his/hers responsibilities? What kind of reality does the camera capture and how should it be used in general? How important are the technological innovations in film and how should films be reviewed then? Should we value a film for its complexity in lighting and editing or should we appreciate it for the raw and natural footage that it offers? Is Eisenstein's manipulation of the emotions through editing acceptable or should film be used to capture the reality like De Sica uses it in *The Bicycle Thief*. All in all film theory asks fascinating questions about the medium, and it shows us the richness of the art form.

Finally we need to keep in mind the importance of it all when we are talking about the experience of watching a film. Terrance talked about the viewers' interest to unravel the magic behind film. We as viewers have become rather smart about how film is manipulated and it is not necessarily a good thing. He gives as an example the *Vertigo*'s famous rooftop chase scene. Is it good that we understand the role of editing and even the amount of edits in that specific scene? Probably not, but as viewers it is difficult for us to avoid it anymore. Terrance cleverly poses the question that maybe we nowadays know too much. If we think about the dolly zoom shot in *Vertigo*, is it not grander for us to feel and experience the dizziness of that shot rather than just understand the technical specs of how it was done?



Figure 8 & 9: We feel James Stewart's anxiety and vertigo through a dolly zoom shot where the camera and the zooming move to opposite directions (Vertigo, 1958)

The truth is that a film can be judged by many different aspects of the process. One watches films based on its technical merits, while another wants to see stories come to life. But in my opinion not to recognize the different parts that together construct the whole entity of the film, means that a deeper analysis of the film as a piece of art, is impossible to conduct.

However, if a film is watched for the sake of the trip that it takes you on, then the details might

not matter that much and in the end that is why films are watched by the masses. One of my personal favorites is Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous*. I do not find the film to be a revolutionary piece of the art form, but I do think that it has a heart like few other films have. It goes on to show the complexity of the ways films affect us. So although film theory does give fascinating views of the medium, it often forgets the human factor from the process.

7.3.1 The Purpose of Film

Munsterberg divides the development of film into two parts. The outer development, the body of the film, is the technological innovations. The inner body is the way consumers use film. According to Munsterberg it is the society's craving for information, education and entertainment that enables the existence of cinema. Film itself is a medium that understands the ways of the mind and therefore it works so well. The way we form our ideas, emotions and thoughts in our mind, is an interesting phenomenon that the technology of film understands. Because of the idea of the laws of the mind, Munsterberg believed that the technology of film was sufficient already in 1915.

Arnheim introduced the idea that film is a reflection of the reality that is affected by a set of different factors. Like watching the world through a window, we see the frame of the glass, the texture and the way the light hits it. "Film art is a product of the tension between the representation and distortion" (Andrew, 1976: 31). Arnheim believed that film art, like any other art is the result of the artist's expressions of the world, but at the same time they are expressions of universal feelings that can be therefore felt universally. The forces that drive art are forces that act throughout the universe.

One of the most famous theorists was the Russian director Sergei Eisenstein. He understood the power of a singular shot and the possibilities of a montage. Only through a montage can the artist fully expose the meaning of the film. He felt that film is first of all for the emotions and only secondly to reason. This attitude can be seen in his famous Odessa steps scene from the film *Battleship Potempkin* and the emotional impact he achieves through editing. Andrew suggests that Eisenstein's theory could be even described as propaganda. It captures the idea of composing scenes from effective shots in order to have an effect on the viewers' emotions, not unlike propaganda films and commercials. Eisenstein was not interested in capturing the

reality on film. It was the artist's responsibility to rip it apart and rebuild it to achieve emotions.

When analyzing the theory of Béla Balázs, Andrew makes an interesting remark. Balázs thought that European cinema should learn from the films of Hollywood on how to create an illusion where the spectator becomes part of the world of film. Andrew argues that the whole idea of treating the viewer as a part of the film, distances the viewer from the role of spectator of the art. How can one critically assess the art if he/she is being a part of it? This goes on to prove the complexity of film itself. If we think about the emergence of the third dimension in the cinemas, is it not an attempt to break the invisible border between the film and the viewer? And if so, then how does it affect our ability to experience the artfulness of the film?

The above-mentioned formative theorists understood film as a form of art that can be broken, rebuilt, folded etc. There were not necessarily any ground rules in making films. More important was the reactions gotten from the audience. It was the realist theorists such as Siegfried Kracauer and André Bazin that introduced the idea that the ones using the camera should carry some responsibility of the medium. Kracauer damned unrealistic cinema since it was comparable to using a scientific instrument as a toy. The filmmaker's two objects were to record the reality and reveal the reality, but the recording should always come first. Kracauer eventually came to the conclusion that art failed and fell into the abstractionism of culture because of the artists desire to unite the reality with his vision.

André Bazin is considered to be the most relevant writer of the realist film theory. For him film was first of all representation and therefore realism was essential to it. It should however be noted that realism stood for being true to the original, not for overall realism of the film. Olivier's *Henry V* was a success because it opened up with a shot of the theatre and the stage instead of a manufactured London. This also meant that Bazin did not object technological inventions if they achieved to bring reality better on the screen. On the question of the montage vs. long-take, Bazin's opinion was clear. The long take is the standard mode of vision in cinema. Bazin respected immensely the Italian neorealist directors for their rejection of the classical editing.

The contemporary French film theory was more accepting to different styles of filmmaking. Jean Mitry compared the art of filmmaking to the art of poetry. Both create their unique rhythms, poetry uses words and films use the raw material of film images. Film however has

its totally unique language. Andrew explains us that Mitry believed that “true films, even the bad ones, make us aware of a contingent meaning by allowing us to look through the poetry, through the filmmaker’s world, and through the images he has taken, to the bare perceptions which are at the basis of our lives. Cinema does not capture the whole reality of the world, but it does find the human meaning.

Film theories discuss the meaning and the purpose of film and they analyze the different techniques and their acceptability. The power of the frame, the manipulative nature of the montage and the reason for the existence of camera are discussions that can be twisted and turned as much as one likes. The truth is that they do reveal some interesting ideas about the medium, but in the end, for the sake of joy, they may not be that important. I have described film as an experience and the theoretical analysis of film makes it more difficult to see it as one. On the other hand to properly review a film, one must understand the little details that together create the product that many of us so much love. The eye for film does evolve and the more time and effort you give to the medium, the more you will understand it. I am not going to say that some of my participants enjoy films more than others, but I do argue that like any hobby or passion, the more you dwell on it, the more it will mean to you.

7.3.2 The Body of Film

The following framework is based on the interviews I conducted. I have tried to combine the theoretical point of view and the experiential point of view of film. I argue that the art in cinema is found only if you understand the language of film. On the other hand, if your goal is to entertain yourself, then it is the emotions and the thrills that matter. I, however, do not say that both qualities could not be appreciated at the same time. A film can be entertaining and artful at the same time, but the details that you pay attention to differ.

The Particles of Film

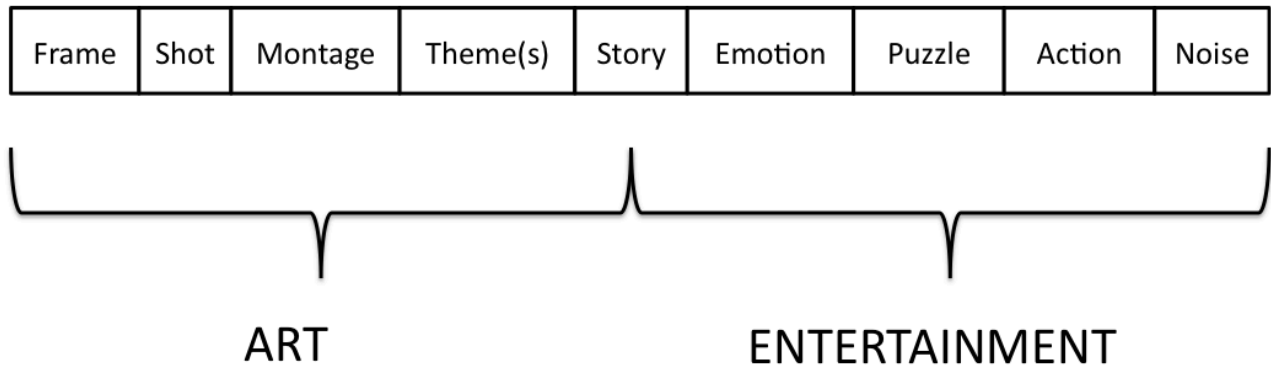


Figure 10: Different ways of understanding film

The figure above can be criticized of being too simple, too contradictory and most of all totally useless. It just picks up random words and throws them at two ends: true. However, at the same time it illustrates what film is about and what is it that stands out of film. Film is art and film is entertainment. It is the viewers' eye that makes the decision of what it searches. My participants' goals differed and therefore film was used differently and that is why different details stood up. Holbrook (2004, 1999) sees a clear distinction between films of critical acclaim and popular appeal, even suggesting that the creators of film should make a decision between the two. Although there might be some truth to that concerning the choice of story, style and rhythm, I also find it to be an overly simplified view on commercial film, with a too strong emphasis on the awards distribution system. I argue that the most essential part in the composition of a film is to understand the ways it will be watched. I believe that the art/entertainment distinction is a much richer and superior division than the "popular appeal/ expert judgments" (Holbrook, 1999) division and in the question of "art versus commerce" (Holbrook, 2004), I find the idea of the counterpart of art being commerce to be far too negative. The distinction of art and entertainment gives us a better understanding of the objectives of film and the set of tools for composing it.

Art

A single frame can be essential to a film. Harold Lloyd hanging from the hands of a clock, Marilyn Monroe standing on an air vent, John Wayne posing outside the door, Robert De Niro pointing the mirror with his gun, ET wanting to phone home and raising its finger towards the sky, the close-up of the eyes of Uma Thurman and the list goes on. One single frame can

become iconic, because of what it represents. It is a visually stunning photograph of a film that understands the human mind. Deleuze identifies five features of the frame: 1) the information it provides, 2) the role of limiting the border, 3) the ability to separate and unite the different details of the frame, 4) the angle of the frame, meaning the point-of-view and 5) the choice of including and excluding the entity of the scenery (Bogue, 2003, 42-43).

A single frame can become immortal and it shows the pressure in composing images. Charlie has always loved the imagery in cinema. He says that his father was always proud when even as a child he could respect the composition of a frame.

"Many children were blown away by the films of Kubrick because of the violence and other stuff that isn't really part of the art form, but I somehow was able to always appreciate the frame, the composition of it and the aesthetics of it all".

A single frame can stay in our minds much longer than a whole film. Charlie even goes to say that a single frame might even save the whole picture. He remembers how he watched a film of Tarkovski that was simply too difficult for him at that time. He did not necessarily enjoy it, but the opening scene was visually something that has stayed with him forever. I argue that to truly appreciate film as art, one must understand the possibilities and pressures of a single frame. Charlie mentions also Akira Kurosawa and how he mastered the composition of frames. The way the frames are filled is basically the language of film.

James' favorite director is Micheal Mann. When I kept asking the reasons why he repetitively watched Micheal Mann films and especially the film Miami Vice, I got the answer because it is done well and it looks good. For James the visuals are important in cinema. He likes when films are beautiful and with Miami Vice *"you can take any frame of that movie and make it a poster"*. Although the way James watched films was hectic, disrupted and overly technical, he could still be mesmerized by visual imagery. It shows the power of images and the power of cinema. If it has the ability to blow our minds in one frame, what can it do in two hours?

Though both Charlie and James understand the power of the frame, it is Charlie's understanding of the frame that is more analytical. James sees the beauty, but Charlie's eye begins to decompose the frame. He goes the most far to understand where do the beauty and the power come from. Only when you cut the whole film into frames, do you understand the complexity of how it is constructed and how it can be manipulated.

“Think about Scorsese. You remember the guy from his editing”, adds Charlie. If you understand the concept of the frame, you understand the meaning of editing as well. Editing tells the story and creates the emotions that the viewer feels. Few of the participants thought about editing even though editing has a huge effect on us. I have talked enough of the theory behind film, but basically it is no surprise that the Oscars for best editing and best picture often go hand in hand. If frames are the words of film, then editing is how you construct the sentences. It is the poetry of film.

When I am talking about the importance of editing, I am naturally also implying to the grander idea of the montage as well. The montage is basically a compilation of shots – but although it forms the entity, montage is still firmly guided by the decisions of the shots or as Deleuze calls them “the plan”. Therefore Deleuze sees the plan (shot) as “the determination of the movement that is established in the closed system” and the montage as “the determination of the Whole” (Bogue, 2008, 48). I am not going to go deeper in theoretical frameworks of film, but the idea I want to provide is that in order for watching films as art, you need to understand how a film is compiled. When you have the ability to deconstruct the scenes, you will see the art in cinema.

Charlie has this ability. It is fascinating to listen him talk about the epic Lord of the Rings trilogy of Peter Jackson. He dismisses the effects, the grandeur of the story and the action and finds only a one good cinematic shot in the film.

I still remember when we discussed about LOTR with my brother. We both agreed that there is only one good shot in the whole series and that is when Aragon is wounded and he mounts the horse. It is the only scene that stands out from the 9+ hours’ epic. And that has to do with aesthetics of cinema; the lightning, the angle, the framing. The only good thing in the whole series.

Film is always composed of frames, shots and montages. They are the constants of cinema and there lies the art of the craft. The technology evolves and the image can be always manipulated in new ways, but in the end the film is still constructed from frames, shots and montages. Through these “blocks” the artist sells us the themes of the film that quite often are wrapped inside a story.

Most of us watch movies for the sake of the stories. It is the ability to see past the story that makes film the art it is. In the end it is not the story itself that defines the film, it is the

filmmaker's reason that defines the film. I found out that when talking about film, few began to talk about the medium itself. For most of the participants it was the story and the plot that mattered. The idea of the framework is to illustrate that the things the viewer concentrates in, defines the art value and the entertainment value of the film.

Entertainment

Films entertain us and they are used as a source of entertainment. Emotions, laughs and thrills are feelings that we seek from films. When we are seeking cheap and fast sensations from cinema, we treat it mostly as entertainment. What I am arguing is that when films are means to a certain end, in this case a feeling, they are not considered as art. Ben says that he watches films for two reasons, entertainment and puzzles. Entertainment is obtained by watching a fun action flick after a hard days' work. On the other hand, if he has not been able to use his head the whole day, he likes to challenge himself with a complicated film. Ben is actually a pretty standard film watcher, though he watches a lot of them. Films are not considered to be unique pieces of art. They are ways to "stabilize" the brain and to find the perfect balance between "mind work" and "free of thought".

Viewers can focus on entertainment, but when the attained goal is not the film itself, then it will remain just entertainment. Films free us from the mundane of our everyday lives and they are used to bring some joy, thrill and laughs in our days. But films can be watched both as art and entertainment at the same time. It is difficult to start arguing that when Terrance watches *Psycho*, he will not also enjoy the piece. Seldom is art and entertainment so close to each other, than in a film.

I like to think that story is always at the center of a film. It does not have to be a rich story, it could also be called an idea, but it is always there. From there the creation goes to two directions. One is the imagery the filmmaker decides to capture in order to sell the idea. The other one is the "rollercoaster"-conception of the idea that the filmmaker wants to offer the viewer. In my opinion it is these two ends that capture the essence of film and in a way the dilemma of it as well. But in the end, art or entertainment, all the participants tend to feel that the more films are watched, the better it is. And what defines at the end the status of the film is the viewer's own eye and opinion of the film. James' use of film as a source of entertainment can lead to a situation where the film itself is hardly respected anymore.

"You know Ben Affleck's bank robbery film...Yeah the Town...the beginning is good. It grabs your attention, but you could honestly cut at least half an hour of it and you would not miss a thing. It has got just some relationship bogus and he has met the gal and you got a conflict and they fell in love at the end. It was an ok movie, but I was in a hurry."

James did not watch the film for the film's sake. He just wanted to see some bank robbery action and therefore he could not care less about the characters. I am not saying that The Town is a masterpiece, but the way James decided to watch the film proves that the film was considered to be fast entertainment.

Finally I will explain a bit about the concept of noise. I have already talked about the lack of focus that creates a phenomenon where a film is watched only with "one eye". Ben did schoolwork at the same time and James read a few pages of an eBook. Noise is the lowest kind of respect the film can be treated with. In my opinion one cannot really say his/hers opinion of the film if it has only played the role of noise. To perfectly capture the idea of noise I am going to take you back a few months ago, when I was at my friend's place. We had just finished a film and began to play PS3. His girlfriend came to the room and she and my friend started to talk about putting another film on. They had noticed that Perfume: The Story of a Murderer was on Netflix and neither of them had seen it. So they decided that it was the right time for the literary adaptation of Tom Tykwer. I had already seen the film a couple of times, but though I could watch a bit of it. When the film had ran about 20 minutes my friend suddenly said *"Oh, I did not no there is coming a sequel to Star Trek"*. He was surfing online and checking what films were coming this summer. At the same time I noticed how the girlfriend was browsing shoes and clothes online. I was the only one that was actually watching the film and I had already seen it a few times. I decided it was my time to go and then my friend said that he would go to the grocery store at the same time. The film was never at the centre of the action. It played the role of noise in the room, because silence feels nowadays odd. I believe that radio and television have already played their part of the noise, but now when films are so easy to reach, film itself has become also a source of noise. The technological innovations have not only brought more magic to the experience, they have also brought out the mundane in film.

8. Discussion

Now we have investigated the theory of postmodernism and gotten a grasp of its complexity. We have also introduced the new kind of approach to consumer research called consumer culture theory, or theoretics (Arnould and Thompson, 2007). Then we analyzed the hedonism of consumption and how it is visible in film. Finally we also looked at the history of piracy and the downloading culture. These subjects formed the theoretical basis for the research that acknowledged the McCracken's (1988) method of long interview to dig the deeper meanings behind the participants' use of film.

We are free to express ourselves (aren't we Firat and Venkatesh?), but the loss of the modernistic structure of life has led to identity confusion as well (hasn't it Kellner or Goulding?). We are forever surrounded by the machinegun fire of information flow. The world is at our hands, or at least in our pockets and handbags. Meta this and meta that, everything is a representation and interpretation of one another, and naturally a unique piece at the same time. Time and space are irrelevant, since yesterday and tomorrow still have an important part in today. The cinema plays in the same rules as life. It is not just a projection of a story on screen, but representations of our deeper, hidden lusts in life (that's sick Zizek!), an interaction-creation between the medium and the viewer (yes, Cubitt) and the brain's (d)evolved perception of reality (did I get it right Deleuze?). When Lars Von Trier was asked about the meaning of his film "Antichrist" in an interview done by Sean O'Hagan for Variety, the auteur responds, "I am really the wrong person to be asked what the film means or why it is as it is. It is a bit like asking the chicken about the chicken soup" (Variety, 12/7/2009). Although the director is famous for being ambiguous, the comment reveals a lot about the medium and especially about the construction of the reality (of the film).

The psychological, philosophical and theoretical study of film is fascinating. It is also something that few stop to think. I am sorry Zizek, but I was not able to reveal any perversions of the participants. On the other hand, I understood that films are used to fill the emptiness in life. The boring moments, whether you are alone or in a group, are easily filled with a film. Film is also a tool of emphasizing and diminishing the power of emotions; the non-prescription drug to stabilize the brain from the risk of thinking too much and the healthy version of alcohol to make you feel more (or less, yeah). Maybe even the reality is too grim for us, so that we need fiction in order to shed a tear (that is deep and sad). Our never-ending

freedom of doing as we please (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995), work lousily with our incompetence in making choices (Gergen, 1991).

If the postmodern revelation was that the individual is free from all norms of the old world, then the postmodern doom is actually the over-emphasizing of the difference, leading to an arms race of heterogeneity. Although chaos belongs to postmodernity (Brown, 1993), one could even see that it has all evolved to a parody of a parody. The biggest fault in postmodernism is probably that it is still treated and explained as a counterforce to modernism, since the whole concept of opposites and contrasts is modernistic. In the end, though some may call these isms the essence of academic BS, they do help us understand history and the individual. The concept of the postmodern consumer understood finally the complexity of a single human being (Firat and Schultz, 1997), leading to a need of whole new research methods such as ICR and CCT.

I find film to be an excellent product to study in the context of consumer culture theory/theoretics. CCT helps us to understand the complexity of how we behave and consume, and how a simple thing like film can actually mean a lot more than just a few hours mind trip. Neither was I trying to create a new theory nor develop an old one, but instead through the grand tradition of CCT, I have studied “the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace and the cultural meanings” (Arnould and Thompson, 2005: 868).

Arnould and Thompson (2005) began their quest to unravel the quandaries of CCT by introducing the four basic structures of it. Though they later came back to enrich the theory by concentrating on the interstitial linkages between the main categories, the focus was still the same (Arnould and Thompson, 2007). The problem with the former was not necessarily in the information, but in the way it was presented. In the grand tradition of CCT, the representative figure should not contain any empty entities, since everything is connected. Therefore my opinion is that the four common structures are enough, but one should not use them as totally separate particles. The interstitial linkages are always apparent and there lays the researcher’s difficult task of drawing the whole picture. A good director understands that the focus should not always be on the characters or the objects, but in the air that binds them. So is the case in CCT as well.

Good CCT researchers will, therefore, not communicate their messages by aptly listing all the findings under different categories, but instead recreate the world the best way they can. The role of the researcher should always be taken in consideration, but it should not be treated as the necessary evil. The Shankar's and Patterson's (2001) fear of an egomaniac researcher is in the end not the biggest concern. The biggest concern is a researcher that does not understand his/hers role in the situation. We as people act differently in different situations and with different people. I prefer an egoistic researcher with situational understanding to an objective researcher, since let us face it, there exists no such thing. Thus, more important than the researcher is, in the end, the interpretation.

My research object was quite a vast one – the film as a product. This means that I focused more on the reasons and the situations in which we use film, instead of digging deeper in a specific kind of behavior. Therefore I did not holistically focus on a more specific detail in the consumption itself. The diversity of my participants helped me to form a wider view, but at the same time prevented me from digging deeper in such interesting phenomenon as the film's role in the construction of the identity based on gender or our continuous fascination in bashing and consuming mainstream entertainment at the same time. Consumption of films and consumption in general truly is a very complicated action that captures the most complex causation (Belk et al, 2003) and therefore, as Holbrook (1987) suggested, a more "free" perspective is recommended.

As I am writing my last words on this research an idea comes to my head. The Arnould's and Thompson's figure could and should be used as a coordinate system, where the researcher can posit different findings and ideas while doing performing the study. It could help him/her understand the entity as well as help him/her distinct the interesting specifics to focus on. It also supports the idea, that CCT does not leave anything on the "outside".

Unfortunately there is a specific question that still keeps on haunting me. "Why do we watch crap?" This question that needs an answer my fellow researchers! People do at some lengths understand the concepts of cinematic art and brainless entertainment and they often acknowledge the "so-called" great films, but still they continuously choose the film with less content, more nonsense. Could it be that in this fragmented world, we are becoming unable to put too much concentration on one specific thing. The SO-SO films work as shock treatment for us to forget Giddens' "dilemmas of the self" and NO-NO films are just for the sake of noise,

because silence distracts us. We need as much stimulus as possible to feel alive and the screens are an effective way to distract us from a single moment of stability. Chaos reigns!

The talk about “the death of cinema” has gotten out of control to the point where its object is merely the egocentric masturbation of the cineaste. Film has always been the product of the now and therefore it is simplistic and childish to start comparing it to what it has been. As Youngblood had wisely written, we tend to create myths out of raw materials, as well as history. The film itself has become more aware of itself. For the last 50 years it has learned to play with itself and break the invisible boundaries set by the late artists. Jean-Luc Godard once said, “A film must have a beginning, middle and an end, but not necessarily in that order.” It captures perfectly the playfulness of the new age of cinema, without ever threatening the seriousness of it all. The structures of the medium are acknowledged but it does not mean you cannot bend them.

The hedonic sensations we experience through films are an interesting subject as well. Like music (Lacher, 1989: 368), films are capable of “arousing in us deep and significant emotions”. We however noticed that these emotions are not always triggered unpredictably by the film, but actually sought personally. Be it a numbing affect or an intellectual exercise, film is often used for the purpose of finding specific emotions and moods. This poses the question how hedonic can the film itself be if we initially use it as a tool to manipulate our own emotions?

Hirschman’s (1983) division of hedonic behavior into the categories of problem projection, role projection, fantasy fulfillment and escapism works fine with the film medium as well. We noticed how the film could be used in a variety of ways that were affected by the inner feelings, the social factors, the value of the art format, and the importance of the experience. These details have then an impact on how, when, where and what is consumed. So basically the viewing experience is affected by so many variables, that it is ridiculous to start talking about a method of calculating the hedonism (hail to you postmodern studies!) that describes the entertainment and emotional worth of consuming (Bellenge et al, 1976). I am not going to even go that deep into the individual hedonic sensations attained from films, since they are always related to the specific case.

Avoid the brain crash,
 the unbearable weight of being.
 Fill the brain with trash,
 and avoid that treacherous feeling.
 Forget
 and do as you please.
 Connect.
 Please, please turn off that Grease.
 Interact and create, it's all part of the awake.

If Ritzer (1999) found the phenomenon of McDonaldization in the American ballparks, then I argue that it can be found in film theaters as well as in films. The majority of the new theaters have become consumer centers injected with artificial “magic”. Although Kozinet et al. (2004) suggest that we begin to consume the environment; I believe that the environment consumes us as well. The mainstream cinema itself has played for too long with the same rules. Although as sly as it may have been, it has failed to show any real evolution. But in the end, it is we who constitute most to the future of cinema. It is we who can make the decision of no buying the ticket (Kozinets, 2004).

Finally we also need to address the evolution of the downloader, the myth of the hacker. Based on Deighton's (1992) idea that market is a drama, Giesler gave us the evolution theory of the downloader. He noticed how the characteristics, ideals and justifications of the downloader changed as the phenomenon grew. Giesler's four roles of the downloader were the hacker, the sonic warrior, the sonic pacifist and the cyberpunk. At different stages the roles changed differing from the anarchist to the martyr, but never questioning the legitimacy of the movement. Although few of my participants can be regarded as the true downloaders, I am still brave enough to make some remarks of the following stage of the cyberpunk.

Like all human beings, the hackers of the 90's are now facing the sedative phase of the middle age. They are no longer the radical group that was destined to change the world. For their benefit, they have already succeeded quite well with that. Neither do I see the downloaders vs.

the market as a cat and mouse play between cunning agents. The market has learned from history and is now constantly moving to the downloaders' direction. At the same time the downloaders have become the business geniuses of our age and their expertise is highly needed and valued. The downloaders have therefore become conscious of their own value in the society. Therefore I suggest that the cyberpunk has become "the guru". The guru is aware of its highly respected position. The guru is also an innovator. Laws will always be a few steps behind of the reality and should not therefore limit the way of thinking. The guru can time to time step outside the jurisdiction of the law, since he/she is the visionary that understands not how it is, but how it should be.

The diabolical villain is also absent from the universe of the downloader. In a way, the downloader has already won the war, and what is keeping him/her away from the total knock-out, is the old roots and structures of the market force that are still hidden under the soil. None of the legal service providers are able to offer the best, because they are still restricted by the invisible old ways of the market. Therefore, the biggest challenge is to completely destruct those old structures that still have some control. It will still take a lot of time, but it is clear that the change is happening. The guru's main task is to delete the inefficiencies caused by the market's inability to start a new page and forget the yesterday's tactics. It has a lot to do with the fact that corporations have still a lot of resources invested in the structures, but in order to cope with the changing world, they need to study the ideas of the visionaries, the gurus. Therefore I propose a fifth role to the Giesler's (2008) model of the evolution of the downloader:

The Guru

Image: A visionary innovator and the prophet of tomorrow

Villain: The old structures that are deeply rooted in the market

Deed: Eliminate the structures and make the corporations adapt to the new rules of the era.

As always when conducting the interviews and writing the research, more new questions arose than answers were actually found. We now understand the ways and the reasons the product is used, but I urge my fellow researchers to dig deeper into the subject. This research was more of a shotgun approach to film – please, pick up the sniper and go into the details. A lot more is to be found. I acknowledge also that my role in the findings of this research is essential. As a simple guy that fell in love with cinema in my teenage years, I have difficulty to

approach the subject objectively (but isn't that the case always Shankar and Patterson?). Therefore, you may find drops of film romanticism spread through these pages.

Film is not just a film, leading to the conclusion that film experience and therefore, the reality of the film will always be unique. Sure, it is strongly affected by the team behind it, but the reality that it creates is always a new one, depending on the interaction between the screen and the viewer (nod to Cubitt, for sure). The most important question for the future is how is this discourse changing when the screens are evolving? I suggest more research on the subject of the importance of the screen in this discourse.

I have great aspirations of ending this thesis in some grand gesture that wraps everything and anything together in just one sentence and gives a sensation of ambiguity and total revelation at the same time. I am not going to do that (is it my will or my inability, you decide). Instead I am going to give you all a suggestion of watching Leos Carax's 2012 masterpiece of "you make the interpretations yourself", *The Holy Motors*.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Managerial Implications

I have now revealed the way we use and the way we feel about films. This information must be now analyzed through the eyes of the business. If the film is the kind of a product I have just spent explaining for dozens of pages, then how should it be made and how should it be sold? How should piracy be understood and what does it teach the business?

Important Content Is Worth the Buck

The biggest finding business-wise is that people are no longer prepared to pay for disposable entertainment. There is an invisible line that divides the films into two categories, those that are important for us and those that are simply ways to kill time. When a film becomes important enough for us, we are ready to pay for it and we want to experience it in the best way we can. For some it is the theatres, for some it is the comfort of the home-theatre, but the quality must be good. Piracy still brings in mind the risks concerning the quality and when a film is important for us, we do not want to risk of shattering the experience because of a pirated copy. Therefore when a film crosses the invisible line and becomes important to the consumer, the consumer will use money. As simple as it sounds, this should always be remembered. Whether it is the help of the actors, the director, the screenplay or a single poster, the filmmakers should always aim at convincing the viewer of the importance of the film. Because if the film loses the deep interest of the viewer, it becomes just entertainment and then the viewer loses the obligation of paying for the film. Some of us use films more than others, but for important films we are willing to pay for. So the filmmakers' number one job after making the film is to exhibit its value to the customers.

Now one of the tools to beat piracy is to create worldwide premiers. The old way of opening a film in one country and then slowly expanding its release is a dated way to sell films. Although the strategy of slow expansion may be effective WOM wise, in general it can be considered to be outdated. Because everything has become digital, the distribution logistically is no problem anymore. Basically it is unreasonable to ask for the consumers to wait for a film for many months in the year 2013. As Walter agreed, when a film premieres, it should be possible to watch it whenever, wherever and however one pleases as long as it is paid for. People are not going to wait for months for a film, if it is possible to get it free instantly. Films are already having their premieres on VOD in the United States. I argue that these premieres should be

worldwide as well. The question whether films should always premier in theatres is irrelevant. Consumers still enjoy the big screen and total darkness, and I do believe, that people would still visit the theatres. If people are ready to pay over 10€ for the possibility to stream a brand new film, I do not see the problem in it. The film industry should open its eyes and understand that the best way to please the consumers is to offer them the possibility to choose how to watch the film.

You Buy Access to Entertainment, Not Entertainment

The second important factor that should be noted is that because of the emergence of illegal and legal downloading and streaming sites, people are no longer prepared to pay for just entertainment. People buy in bulks rather than for individual titles unless the title crosses the invisible line of importance. Netflix does not necessarily affect the way we go to the film theatre, but it does affect our television viewing and our Sunday night film renting. The idea of paying for a single film has become more outlandish for us and we want more bang for a buck. At the same time television does no longer dictate what we watch. Now we have the ability to choose our weapon of choice for entertainment. Does it affect the value of the product? I honestly do not think so, because we still have this invisible line and I believe that when a film is important enough for us it will always matter.

What I do suggest is that the video rental stores and services should start to think about an alternative business model to the existing pay-by-the-film strategy. If you can guarantee an ultimate quality and you continuously attain the newest films in the library, then why should you not offer a monthly payment method? The problem is that Netflix and such other services do not have that great of a database at the moment and they rarely get the new releases instantly, and the actual online video rental stores have an outdated payment system. Piracy on the other hand offers basically the largest library of films with no cost and since piracy seldom creates moral dilemmas for the consumer it does offer a alluring alternative. Also the more you start to download, the more automatic it becomes. We see it from the behavior of James and Jane who may even download ten films per day.

It is easy to cast the blaming finger on the services themselves, but the truth is that it is the whole industry that is too complex for the realization of a service that can truly satisfy the consumer. It is an impossible task to create a big enough video library that satisfies even the most demanding customers' needs. The web of different rights is a mess that few truly

understand. But when you consider how easy it is to download illegally, it shows that James' aggressive raving about the need for change in the business models is justified.

I would feel like a complete idiot if my suggestion for the filmmakers would be just to make good films. We have a long history of great films that turned out to be great flops. But if we consider film as a commercial product then the filmmakers should always understand their audience. From the artistic view this will sound horrible, but the truth is that studios should understand their audiences and build from there the films they produce. By understanding the customers is the only way for the studios to create products that satisfy their needs. By giving importance and value to the film (from the viewer's perspective), you can effectively charge for the film. Cross that invisible line.