'The Glue of the World': Popular

music in film soundtracks.

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Abstract.

Popular music has a strong presence in many contemporary films, frequently replacing, or displacing, the 'classical' soundtrack. The question arises of whether a popular music soundtrack achieves similar functions to traditional, 'classical' film music. Investigating this question is the primary aim of this thesis.

An outline of film music theory is followed by an overview of how meaning is produced in popular music. These two areas of discussion are then brought together in the neoformalist analyses of the textual relations between the popular music soundtrack and the narrative, characterisation, and themes of three contemporary films: *Sliding Doors* (1997, Peter Howitt), *Empire Records* (1995, Allan Moyle), and *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* (1997, Harry Sinclair). The uses and functions of the music in these soundtracks are then compared to the conventions of 'classical' Hollywood film music.

This thesis will show that the popular songs in the soundtracks of the three films generally fulfil one or more of six functions which are usually performed by 'classical' Hollywood film music. There are some important differences, however, as the songs frequently draw on features which are specific to popular music. Taken together, the three case studies provide valuable insight into the ways popular music works in contemporary mainstream films.

Acknowledgements.

Contents.

Introduction.

Contemporary movie soundtracks increasingly, indeed almost ubiquitously, utilise popular music, especially rock. Recent films such as *Reality Bites* (1994, Ben Stiller), *William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* (1996, Baz Luhrmann), *Men In Black* (1997, Barry Sonnenfeld), *Armageddon* (1998, Michael Bay) and *Scarfies* (1999, Robert Sarkies) have been complemented by the simultaneous release of high profile soundtrack albums. While many consider the starting point for this trend to be during the fifties and sixties, when films like *Blackboard Jungle* (1955, Richard Brooks), *A Hard Day's Night* (1964, Richard Lester), *Scorpio Rising* (1963, Kenneth Anger) and *Easy Rider* (1969, Dennis Hopper) were conspicuous in their use of popular and rock songs in their soundtracks and credit sequences, Altman has noted that popular music has been linked with film since the earliest days of nickelodeon illustrated song slides[1] (1999, n.p.). However, it was during the fifties and sixties that the use of the pop score became widespread[2]. Since then, popular music has come to pervade not just credit sequences, where it initially appeared in films like *Blackboard Jungle*, but sometimes entire films, as in the case of *American Graffiti* (1973, George Lucas) or *Forrest Gump* (1994, Robert Zemeckis). As Romney and Wootton note, "For nearly half a century, the repertoire of memorable pop moments in film has been mushrooming, until they can be fairly said to outnumber the more traditional canon of musical epiphanies on screen" (1995, p.2).

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As noted above, the popular music used in a film's soundtrack is frequently incorporated into the marketing strategy for the film. More and more films these days have an accompanying soundtrack album which contains tracks that are used in the film. In some cases, two different albums are released: one contains the orchestral score, while the other contains the popular music from, or inspired by the film[3]. The level of promotional activity surrounding soundtrack albums (high levels of advertising, promotional give-aways and so forth) means that, as Romney and Wootton point out, "It's increasingly hard, faced with a film and its soundtrack CD, to tell which product is really supporting which" (1995, p.4).

Soundtrack albums are 'big business', as Russell Baillie (1999) has noted. For many music-buyers, "...the movies, television and their tie-in albums are where they can hear new or unfamiliar older artists for the first time outside narrow broadcast formats" (ibid.). Roger Marbeck, of Marbeck's Records in Auckland, finds that soundtracks are notable sellers in the New Zealand market, providing a significant percentage of sales per annum (quoted in Baillie, 1999). In mid-1999, the soundtrack to the film *Austin Powers: The Spy who Shagged Me* (1999, Jay Roach) received intensive promotion in New Zealand. Over one weekend in June, a local popular radio station gave away copies of the film's soundtrack album, and played songs from it frequently throughout the two days (such as Madonna's 'Beautiful Stranger' and Lenny Kravitz' 'American Woman'); at the same time, the DJ's promoted a station-exclusive pre-release premiere screening at the local cinema. The focus on the soundtrack of

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this film is made more significant when one considers that *The Spy Who Shagged Me* is a parody of sixties 'special agent' films (more specifically, the James Bond series); as Smith has noted, it was during the sixties that pop music and the popular music aesthetic came to dominate film scoring techniques (1995, p.6).

Russell Baillie (1999) also notes that film soundtracks provide good exposure for relatively unknown artists. A recent illustration of this trend is the soundtrack to the high-school comedy *American Pie* (1999, Paul Weitz). New Zealand singer Bic Runga has two tracks on the soundtrack to this top rating American film. As Baillie points out, the inclusion of her early New Zealand hit 'Sway' (45 seconds of which can be heard during a memorable scene in the film) and 'Good Morning Baby', a duet with Dan Wilson of American band Semisonic, has been a 'boon' for the singer-songwriter: "It's resulted in markedly increased American sales for Runga's debut album and increased traffic on her Website... by newly won American fans". Runga's manager, Campbell Smith, sees soundtracks as "...a really important way to promote her" (quoted in Baillie, 1999). Neil Finn is another New Zealand artist who has drawn on 'soundtrack status' to increase his exposure in the United States (his song 'She Will Have Her Way' is the lead track on the soundtrack to the New York television drama *Felicity*).

These examples of heavy marketing of soundtracks highlight the fact that the popular music in many films is almost impossible to ignore; the popular music soundtrack now seems to have replaced, or at least displaced, the 'classical'[4] film score. This raises the question, essential to

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this thesis, of whether the popular music soundtrack is still used in similar ways to the 'traditional', 'classical' score. With analyses of the textual relations between the popular music on the soundtrack and the narrative, characterisation and themes of three contemporary, relatively mainstream films, the uses of and functions carried out by the popular music are compared to those considered to be conventional in 'classical' Hollywood film music.

The analyses of the film soundtracks will draw broadly on a neoformalist approach. Kristin Thompson has provided a comprehensive overview of this approach in *Breaking the Glass Armour: Neoformalist film analysis* (1988)[5]. As she explains, neoformalism is an approach based fairly closely on the work of the Russian Formalist literary theoretician-critics (1988, p.6). It is an approach that does not prescribe one specific method: Thompson states that for the neoformalist critic "Each analysis uses a method adapted to the film and the issues at hand, and interpretation will not always be used in the same way…[it] may emphasise meanings within the work or the work's relation to society" (1988, p.13).

Neoformalism examines 'devices' within the filmic text (such as camera movement, theme, or music); one of the analyst's main jobs is to find a device's functions (in various contexts) and the motivations for the device's presence. As Thompson points out, formal devices serve a variety of functions: they can serve the narrative, appeal to similar devices familiar from other artworks, imply verisimilitude, and defamiliarise[6] the structures of the artwork itself (1988, p.20). This emphasis on the functions and motivations of filmic devices (rather than, say, a

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psychoanalytical focus on gender specific maturation processes) makes neoformalism a relevant approach for research into the role and function of popular music in film.

A further relevant feature of the neoformalist approach is its attention to historical context: Thompson states that "Every viewing occurs in a specific situation, and the spectator cannot engage with the film except by using viewing skills learned in encounters with other artworks and in everyday experience" (1988, p.21). Thus, in analysing a film, the neoformalist critic does not treat the film's devices as "...fixed and self-contained structures that exist independently of our perception of them" (Thompson, 1988, p.26). The qualities that are of interest to the analyst (such as the film's representations, its unity, and its meaning) are considered to result from interactions between the text's formal structures and the mental operations viewers perform in response to them (ibid.).

This attention to historical context and viewer response means that the neoformalist approach fits well with the conception of active viewers implicitly adopted in this study (outlined in the second chapter). Thompson maintains that the neoformalist view finds a medium between the totally text-constructed 'spectator' and the actual subjective 'viewer'. While the background of each individual viewer is unique, and has an undeniable effect on the interpretation of the text, the text itself is constructed to encourage viewers to apply certain schemata; that is, the work 'cues' viewers in their responses. The analyst's task then becomes to "...point out the cues and on the basis of them to discuss what responses would reasonably result, given a knowledge of backgrounds on

the part of the viewer" (Thompson, 1988, p.29). However, because a work exists in constantly changing circumstances, perceptions of it will differ over time. Therefore, it is also crucial not to assume that the meanings and patterns noticed by the analyst are 'completely there in the work, immutable for all time' (Thompson, 1988, p.25).

This attitude underlies the analyses in this study: the meanings I have read from the films and their soundtracks are not taken as 'carved in stone'. They are considered to be 'likely' interpretations of the film/music relationship, but by no means are they believed to be the only possible reading of the texts. Because the analyses in this thesis are text-focused, however, the notion of potentially differing audience receptions is not discussed in any depth. It is recognised that the area of viewer responses to film music is essential to a full understanding of the way film music creates meaning, but it is a topic that could not be covered due to the limited time frame available for the study. Moreover, it should be noted that the readings I have outlined in this thesis are based on repeated, intense viewing of the films chosen; this viewing 'style' is different to what 'normal' audience members would engage in, so their responses might be quite different to mine.

My readings are also somewhat different to a notable trend in several published critiques of 'nostalgic' films such as *Forrest Gump* or *American Graffiti*. Analyses of these films tend to focus on the way the popular music 'summarises' or reflects the themes that were dominant within society in a certain era. Because I have focused on contemporary films, it is difficult to discuss such themes with any specificity, as they are

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still evolving, and have yet to be identified and accepted as indicative of this time. Moreover, an understanding of a 'zeitgeist' would seem to rely strongly on audiences' perceptions of their societies; because I have not engaged in any audience research, a meaningful account of dominant themes of contemporary society is near impossible (though I have attempted to indicate where I think a particular song might be trying to signify 'now-ness' to an audience).

In order to carry out the analyses of the textual relations between film narratives and popular music, then, it is important to understand the conventions of 'classical' film music, as well as the ways in which the meanings of popular music are received and constructed. Critics such as Claudia Gorbman, Kathryn Kalinak, Caryl Flinn, George Burt, Royal S. Brown, Jeff Smith and Noël Carroll have debated the functions of 'classical' Hollywood film music; their key ideas have been brought together in the first section of Chapter Two, which contains a discussion about the conventions of the 'traditional' score. The second section of this chapter brings together ideas from several critics and theorists about how meaning is gained from popular music. Here, I have drawn on the work of, among others, Simon Frith, Anahid Kassabian, Richard Middleton, Per-Erik Brolinson and Holger Larsen, Theodore Gracyk, and Brian Longhurst. The three case studies which follow combine these two strands of debate to consider the way popular music works in the selected soundtracks.

The first case study is an analysis of *Sliding Doors* (1997, Peter Howitt). This film was chosen because it is a contemporary film with a

significant amount of popular music on its soundtrack. The story line does not contain an explicit 'youth' theme, and so the film provides a good example of how popular music has become ubiquitous in 'general' film soundtracks. In contrast, the second analysis is of *Empire Records* (1995, Allan Moyle) which is a youth film set in a record store. It thus contains a clear link to the youth focus of popular music, but still begs the question of whether the popular music that dominates the soundtrack functions in a similar way to the 'classical' music that used to dominate Hollywood films. The third case study is an analysis of the recent New Zealand film *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* (1997, Harry Sinclair). This film is included because of its status as a 'New Zealand film'; I was interested to see whether the local music in the film's soundtrack was still used in a similar manner to Hollywood film music.

As will be argued later in this thesis, the songs in the soundtracks of these three films generally fulfil one or more of the conventions of classical Hollywood film music. There are some important differences, however, as the songs frequently draw on features which are specific to popular music, such as strong extratextual meanings and associations. Taken together, the three case studies provide valuable insight into the ways popular music works in contemporary mainstream films.

NOTES:

[1] Song slides were first invented in the mid-1890s, and grew in popularity as sheet music publishers recognised their publicity value. A highlight of increasingly popular nickelodeon programmes, the illustrated song was 'a

live entertainment featuring a popular song illustrated by colourful lantern slides' (frequently involving audience participation during the last chorus). As Altman notes, song slides offered a "...convenient and inexpensive manner to occupy audiences while the film was changed" (1999, n.p.). They maintained their popularity until around 1913 when most projection booths had a second film projector installed, thus removing the need for 'fillers'. Altman suggests that early silent film accompaniment was influenced by the popular music conventions of song slides, and he maintains that the influence of the nickelodeon's song-oriented accompaniment practices is visible throughout the history of film music (ibid.).

[2] See Smith (1995) for a detailed discussion of the rise of the pop score during this period.

[3] The high-profile release of Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989) was complemented by the release of two soundtrack albums: Danny Elfman's orchestral score, and Prince's songs (many of which do not actually appear in the film) (Donnelly, 1998, p.144).

[4] Throughout this thesis, the term 'classical' is placed in quotation marks following Royal S. Brown (1994, pp.38-39) to indicate that the term is used to "...designate not two centuries of musical tradition, but only the styles commonly employed in late silent film accompaniment and in through-composed sound cinema" (Altman, 1999, n.p.).

[5] This approach is also utilised by Bordwell and Thompson in *Film Art: an Introduction* (1997) and by Bordwell in *Narration in the Fiction Film* (1985).

[6] Thompson argues that 'defamiliarisation' is an aesthetic play through which artworks achieve their 'renewing effects on our mental processes' (1988, p.10). She draws on Victor Shklovsky's definition of defamiliarisation which states that "The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived, and not as they are known" (Shklovsky, 1965, pp.11-12, cited in Thompson, 1988, p.10). Thus, art, including film, defamiliarises our habitual perceptions of the everyday world; it transforms material from this world by placing it in a new context and formal patterns. Defamiliarisation can occur with regards to representations of 'reality' itself, or to the conventions established by previous artworks. Thompson states that "Defamiliarisation is the general neoformalist term for the basic purpose of art in our lives" (1988, p.11).

Literature Review: analysing film soundtracks and popular music.

In order to understand how popular music works in film soundtracks, it is necessary to examine two areas of literature: that which discusses the conventions of film music, and that which discusses meanings in popular music. This chapter seeks to provide an outline of theories and criticism from these two areas which will then be drawn on in the analyses of the three case studies. Theoretical developments are situated historically in order to better consider the contemporary understandings of film and popular music.

Analysing Film Music:

A prominent date in the history of cinema is 28 December 1895, when the Lumière brothers presented, for the first time ever, a series of short films to an audience at the Grand Café in Paris. It is also an important date in the history of film music, as at the screening a pianist provided the first musical accompaniment for a film. As Royal S. Brown has noted, from that moment on music and movies have been virtually inseparable (1994, p.12). From the early days of silent film to the later era of synchronised sound, films have had a not-so-silent partner of musical accompaniment.

Kalinak outlines three basic conventions of musical accompaniment, developed during the period of silent cinema in Hollywood. Firstly, continuous accompaniment was introduced to overcome the points where

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the images' ability to sustain continuity was weakest, and to ensure narrative integrity. Secondly, correspondence between the structural properties or associative powers of the music and the implied content of the image was important, although the question of the degree to which music should reproduce or imitate references to diegetic action was a key issue for debate. Finally, musical selections were unified through the structural principle of the leitmotif[1] (Kalinak, 1992, pp.48-63).

Claudia Gorbman points out that critics and scholars have drawn on a variety of perspectives to explain *why* music accompanied silent films (1987, p.40). The art-historical approach links film music with past dramatic traditions that also utilised incidental music such as Greek theatre and nineteenth century melodrama (Royal S. Brown (1994, p.14) also points to these traditions as precedents for the dramatic motivation of film music). Early movies were often shown in a theatrical setting as part of an evening's live entertainment, and it was natural that the musicians who were already present for the vaudeville skits and musical numbers accompany the moving picture segment of the program as well. This approach draws on 'historical-evolutionary' arguments, assuming the power of continuity of tradition to explain the presence of musical accompaniment in early cinema (Gorbman, 1987, pp.33-36).

A more pragmatic, technologically specific argument asserts that music was used as an effective means of neutralising the noise from the projector and from the audience who were not yet used to the movie etiquette of sitting in silence (Kalinak, 1992, p.41; Gorbman, 1987, pp.36-37; Brown, 1992, p.12; Kivy, 1997, p.313). While this practical

explanation seems realistic it cannot be a total answer, as it does not account for music's continuing presence after projectors and audiences were quieted.

According to Gorbman, the explanation provided by 'aestheticians' can be maintained over a period of time. Aestheticians see music as compensating for the lack of actual human presence in cinema's mechanical reproduction of 'reality'. Music's harmony, texture, and instrumental 'colour' also lend it the quality of 'fullness' which it is seen to transfer to the flat cinematic image (Kalinak, 1992, p.44; Gorbman, 1987, p.38). Film music, then, is believed to fill the 'vacuum of silence', adding the dimension of expressive sound and spatial presence to the silent world (Kivy, 1997, p.313). As Gorbman sums up, "The argument runs that sound, in the form of music, gave back to those 'dead' photographic images some of the life they lost in the process of mechanical reproduction" (1987, p.39).

Eisler and Adorno concur with this type of explanation, arguing that music had a 'magical' function as an antidote to the ghostliness of the cinematic image (cited in Gorbman, 1987, p.40). They further argue that music bears the sociological/psychological value of evoking the collective community: thus they believe that film music plays a particular role in the spectator's relation to the surrounding community of spectators as well as to the screen (ibid.). Simon Frith also maintains that film scores are important in representing community in both film and audience: "Music is central to the way in which the pleasure of cinema is simultaneously individualised and shared" (1984, p.86).

The advent of sound film technology resulted in some changes in film music conventions. Kalinak notes that while the notion of music as indispensable to the image was retained, as was the emphasis on narrative integrity and narrative motivation of musical accompaniment, the sound model initially moved away from the diegetic nonspecificity and continuous musical accompaniment of the silent era towards 'uncompromising diegetic fidelity' and selective musical accompaniment (1992, p.65). In fact, Kalinak maintains that during the very early years of sound film, in contrast to later conventions, there was a tendency for there to be very little nondiegetic music at all. This was largely because of technical limitations, and the fact that nondiegetic music was at odds with the then prevalent ideology that saw sound as an opportunity to strengthen the impression of reality (Kalinak, 1992, pp.66-67). Eventually, this situation was reversed, and Hollywood films began to be more heavily scored again.

Despite these changes, however, some of the arguments about film music's functions in the silent era still apply to sound film. Notions of music's ability to restore 'lack' in film, and of its power to evoke the collective in the cinematic experience still receive much critical attention, particularly in psychoanalytically-based accounts of film music. As Gorbman notes, the 'continuity of traditions' theme also still holds: that is, music's presence is explained by appeals to tradition (it is present because it has always been present). Music in the sound film is still felt to provide 'depth, rhythm, life' to the picture even though it is no longer needed to compensate for lack of speech or colour (Gorbman, 1987, p.41). Peter

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Kivy addresses this issue in 'Music in the Movies: a Philosophical Enquiry' (1997). He argues that music in films is there to make up for a certain 'dimension' (similar to Walter Benjamin's 'aura') lacking in the filmic image; it provides an aspect of human expression that the 'speaking effigies' on the screen cannot provide (1997, pp.317-318). "Even where sight *and* sound are made present, with all of the technical resources of the cinematographer and sound engineer at our command, the expressiveness of music seems to be wanted. What else can it be wanted for but some subtle essence of expressiveness that these impressive resources lack?" (Kivy, 1997, p.321). He maintains that music 'warms the emotional climate' of a film: while music cannot substitute for any emotive cues that are apparently lost, it can assuage this loss by amplifying what remains (1997, p.323). Kivy's account is a useful one: without resorting to sweeping 'übertheories' of the cinematic apparatus, his argument provides a valid reason for the ubiquitous use of music to accompany films, and his notion of the fundamental nature of musical expressiveness can be seen to underlie most other accounts of the conventions and functions of film music, particularly Noël Carroll's theory of 'modifying music', which will be explained later in this chapter.

Film Music Conventions

Before examining the broader accounts of how music is believed to 'work' in films, it is useful to outline the conventions and principles that Classical Hollywood film settled on in terms of musical accompaniment. In general terms, as Karlin (1994, p.85) and Levinson (1996, pp.256-257) both note, according to the classical paradigm, the musical score must

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'serve' the film and its narrative completely and fully, and it must 'complement and amplify' the emotional text and subtext of the film. This understanding posits music as secondary to what is seen on the screen: the score must *reflect* the film's largely visually explicated dramatic theme(s), characters, rhythms and textures, and it must *follow* the film's dramatic requirements[2]. Despite it's supposedly 'secondary' nature, music's role is nevertheless considered to be vital: music and film are considered to interact to produce a 'larger' statement of atmosphere or feeling which would not be possible with one or other medium on its own (Burt, 1994, p.16).

In classical Hollywood films, the 'story' or narrative was the key concern, and all aspects of cinematography, from dialogue to editing, functioned to ensure unhindered narrative exposition. Music was no exception. It was primarily used to illustrate narrative content, both explicit and implicit. As Kalinak points out, this frequently included a high degree of synchronisation between music and action, or 'Mickey Mousing' (1992, p.79). Frith notes the importance of music for narrative effect, to propel the action forward or to hold it back (1996, p.122).

Music was also used to sustain structural unity (Kalinak, 1992, p.79). Use of musical themes or leitmotifs was a key method drawn on by classical Hollywood film score composers to provide this formal and narrative unity. In a continuation of the practice used in silent film, leitmotifs were linked to character, place, object and abstract idea. They unified the score by binding temporally disconnected musical cues into an integrated whole through repetition and variation (Kalinak, 1992, p.104;

Gorbman, 1987, p.73). Kalinak also points out that this technique strengthened the link between musical and visual text: "Music responded to the dramatic needs of the narrative and in turn clarified them, sealing music and visual text into mutual dependence" (ibid.). Finally, leitmotifs were also believed to heighten spectator response, each repetition of the theme bringing with it accumulated associations established in previous occurrences (ibid.).

As well as providing structural unity, several critics have noted that, as in the silent era, classical Hollywood film music lent a sense of continuity to the editing at points where this continuity may have been challenged[3] (Kalinak, 1992, p.80; Gorbman, 1987, p.73 & p.89; Levinson, 1996, p.258; and Copland, 1949, cited in Smith, 1996, p.232). A montage sequence is an example of such a 'weak point': as Kalinak notes (1992, p.82) quick cutting, superimposition of several images, and the absence of dialogue, diegetic sound, or both, taxed the conventions of narrative construction. Music served to regulate this flow of images, lending a sense of rhythmic temporality (ibid.). Kalinak states that music provides a variety of functions in the montage: "...it elides the boundary between narrative exposition and virtuosic technical display; it compensates for the absence of diegetic sound; it marks out a regular rhythm often lacking in the complex structure of the montage; and it helps to provide unity through conventions of musical form" (1992, p.83). All of these serve to enhance continuity. In general, then, music compensates for potentially disruptive or confusing shifts between shots by playing continuously, and often by relying on 'extended melody or established musical forms'

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(Kalinak, 1992, p.81). As Gorbman states, "As an auditory continuity [music] seems to mitigate visual, spatial, or temporal discontinuity" (1987, p.89).

A fourth feature of classical Hollywood film music is that musical form is determined by or subordinated to narrative form (Gorbman, 1987, p.76; Flinn, 1992, p.14). The music's mood or tone must be 'appropriate' to the scene it accompanies; as Gorbman notes, classical Hollywood composers generally avoid writing music that would distract viewers from their involvement in the narrative[4] (1987, p.78). Music is used, then, to anchor the image or narrative in meaning. As well as reinforcing the setting (in terms of both time and place) established by the images[5], music can underline or modify feelings or psychological attributes of characters that have been 'independently grounded by other elements of a film' (Levinson, 1996, p.257; also Copland, 1949, in Smith, 1996, p.232; and Kalinak, 1992, p.86). This is music's 'connotative' function: it expresses moods and connotations, which help in interpreting narrative events and indicating characters' values. Gorbman points out that classical cinema tends to overdetermine these connotative values because of its insistence on telling a story with the 'greatest possible transparency': "Soundtrack music reinforces what is (usually) already signified by dialogue, gestures, lighting, colour, tempo of figure movement and editing, and so forth" (Gorbman, 1987, p.84).

The dominance of narrative form has meant that classical Hollywood film music is perceived as 'inaudible': paradoxically, 'good' classical film music was not meant to be obviously heard (Gorbman, 1987,

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p.73; Kalinak, 1992, p.79). Conventions were developed so that music could be introduced to a scene without being noticed by the audience (such as 'sneaking' it in at low volume). The convention of music reflecting or being in parallel to the action seen onscreen is also related to the principle of 'inaudibility'. As well as these conventions to ensure music's 'inaudibility', other sound elements which were considered more 'narratively significant' received priority over music in the soundtrack mix; particular emphasis was given to dialogue, which was privileged above everything else (Kalinak, 1992, p.79; Gorbman, 1987, p.77).

As well as reflecting the narrative and evoking specific moods or settings, music can be used in classical Hollywood film to signify emotion in general. It can serve as a type of neutral background filler, or it can accentuate the theatrical/dramatic build up of a scene (Levinson, 1996, pp257-258; Copland, 1949, in Smith, 1996, p.232). In particular, as Gorbman (1987, p.81), Levinson (1996, p.258) and Frith (1996, p.118) all note, music can impart a sense of 'epic feeling', a notion that the happenings in the film are more 'important' than those of everyday life, the significance deeper: "In tandem with the visual film narrative, [music] elevates the individuality of the represented characters to universal significance, makes them bigger than life, suggest transcendence, destiny" (Gorbman, 1987, p.81). On a more specific emotional level, the music can suggest to the viewer how the narrator feels about the story, suggest how the viewer ought to feel, indicate the filmmaker's attitude or view on the story, or it can attempt to directly induce in the viewer feelings of tension,

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fear, cheerfulness, or some other 'cognitive or affective emotional state' (Levinson, 1996, p.258; Frith, 1984, p.83 & 1996, p.118).

The above, then, are the key conventions of classical Hollywood film scoring. Music, whose form is determined by the narrative, is used to illustrate, reflect or comment on narrative content, provide structural unity and continuity, and to signify emotion with regards to narrative. It is important to note, however, that the conventions that developed were not rules set in stone; as Gorbman notes "A given score may violate any of the principles... providing the violation is at the service of the other principles" (1987, p.73).

How does film music work?

Although critics and scholars generally seem to agree on the established conventions of musical accompaniment, there are some significant differences in the broader conceptions of music's operation within the cinematic apparatus. In this project I intend to analyse the roles of popular music in 'mainstream' films; hence, I need to consider here the ways musical accompaniment in such cinema has been theorised in the past.

A significant trend in recent theories about classical Hollywood film music is exemplified in the works of Claudia Gorbman (1987), Caryl Flinn (1992) and Katherine Kalinak (1992). They argue, from a psychoanalytic perspective, that film music sutures the viewer into the narrative. However, as will be elaborated later, a theory based on Noël Carroll's 'modifying music', combined with his concept of a two-tiered system of

communication, is more applicable to the analysis of popular music in film soundtracks, and is thus more suitable for my purposes in this thesis.

As Smith notes (1995, p.44) the theory used by Gorbman, Flinn and Kalinak developed historically out of an increasing interest in linguistics, semiotics, and psychoanalysis as they might be applied to cinema. Critics and theorists such as Raymond Bellour, Christian Metz, Jean-Pierre Oudart, Colin McCabe, Daniel Dayan, and Stephen Heath explored the ways a cinematic discourse was constituted and the ways it might engage the psychic processes of the spectator (ibid.). As Smith maintains, "Though often divergent in the specifics of their theories, what unified this work was an overarching interest in how the classical realist film effaced all marks of its cinematic construction, and established a subject position which bound the spectator into the fiction" (ibid.).

The process of cinematic suture is believed to work as follows: the filmic discourse presents the spectator with structures considered to be marked by absence. The spectator fills these absences in, momentarily completing them and thus deriving a sense that the film is 'coherent, unified and homogenous'; these qualities are in turn appropriated by the subject him/herself. Carroll states "The film is sutured by binding or positioning the subject in the process of the production of meaning by the film as discourse" (1988, p.187).

Music, as Smith points out, is believed to be particularly well suited to this process of binding the spectator into the fiction because of its tendency towards 'inaudibility' and abstraction: "Film music skulks guerrilla-like in the perceptual background, attacking the subject's

resistance to being absorbed in the diegesis and warding off potential censorship by the subject's preconscious" (1996, p.233). That is, music is seen to perform its suturing role in films without a conscious act of perception on the part of the viewer/audience.

The suture process, especially when drawn on to theorise film music, is often related to psychoanalytic understandings of childhood development. The pervasiveness of background music in sound film is seen to evoke psychic traces of the subject's bodily fusion with the mother (see Gorbman[6], 1987, and Flinn, 1992). That is, film music is seen to aid in the regression of the subject and helps create what Baudry (1986) terms the 'subject effect' of cinema: "Music's special relation to the spectator's psychic experience is exploited in classical cinema to abet the process of suture by both fusing the subject to the screen, which Baudry argues is analogous to the mother's breast, and encouraging the spectator's narcissistic identification of his/her own perceptions with those represented within the film" (Smith, 1995, pp.44-45).

The suturing process, by encouraging the spectator to identify his or her own perceptions with those of the film, is often seen as inherently ideological. Gorbman clearly implies a certain ideological effect when she talks of film music 'lulling' the spectator into being an *untroublesome* (less critical, less wary) *viewing subject'* (1987, p.58, her italics). Music is seen to lessen defences against the fantasy structures to which narrative provides access, increase susceptibility to suggestion, and encourage the suspension of judgement (Gorbman, 1987, pp.5-6).

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Despite the apparent prominence of suture theories, some theorists have rejected it as a means of understanding the cinematic discourse and the operation of music within that discourse. Bordwell (1985), Carroll (1988 and 1996), and Smith (1995 and 1996) all outline and develop cognitive accounts of film and film music's operation. Drawing on the work of these three, I want to argue that suture theory is not an appropriate method for my analysis. Instead I intend to adopt an approach which is based on Noël Carroll's theory of 'modifying music' (1988).

As outlined above, suture theory relies on a conception of film music as 'inaudible' and thus able to bypass the viewer's conscious perceptions. Writings on suture theory most often refer to Classical Hollywood style cinema, which usually uses (or used to use) 'classical' music. This style conventionally does not contain lyrics, and is thus seen as being subordinate to the dialogue, which is believed to be the most important means of narrative exposition. In contrast, as Smith (1995) notes, popular music in film soundtracks is usually 'audible'. He states

> My assumption here is that spectators will typically pay greater attention to a pop score at various points during the screening of a film. By this I do not mean to suggest that audiences are always attuned to the film's score; instead I am arguing that there are usually moments in a film in which the music will be foregrounded as a functional equivalent of the film's narrative and visuals. In these moments, the pop score will have the greatest purchase on the spectator's attention and will have the best chance of 'selling' the film's music to an audience of potential customers   (1995, p.42)[7].

Popular music's 'audibility' emerges largely as a result of its use of lyrics. As Altman notes, there is a 'fundamental difference in saliency between wordless music and popular songs' (1999, n.p.). The use of 'words' rather than just 'sounds' means that the music can no longer be subordinate to

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the dialogue (if it ever was in the first place), and is thus more noticeable. Because popular music in film soundtracks is 'audible', then, suture theory, which relies on a conception of 'inaudible' music, is not a suitable theoretical base from which to analyse popular music soundtracks.

A second problem with suture theory that I hope to avoid by focusing instead on the modifying music theory, is suture's apparently automatic attribution of ideological effects to cinematic techniques. While not questioning the notion that films can be used to disseminate certain ideologies, I do not agree that these ideologies are necessarily inherent in the cinematic apparatus or cinematic techniques such as continuity editing[8]. Thus, in this study, the idea that music can provide a level of expressive fullness, or enhance a film's illusion of continuity, is not automatically linked to the unquestioned adoption of an ideology by the spectator (as it tends to be in suture theories).

A related problem is the conception of the viewer as a passive receptacle of ideological effects. Smith maintains that this argument rests on a false assumption that people always listen to film music differently to how they listen to other types of music:

> Because film music is placed within a dramatic context, it is believed that spectators cannot and do not attend to it as closely as they would a fugue or sonata. From this claim, theorists such as Gorbman, Flinn, and Kalinak have concluded that music is not apprehended at a conscious level, but rather is heard only subconsciously or unconsciously (1995, pp.49-50).

Smith contends that this conception is the result of a limited understanding of differing modes of musical apprehension: suture models often presume a drastic opposition, whereby listeners either consciously attend to all the complexities and details of musical structure, or ignore all aspects of

music as a component in the film (1995, p.50 and 1996, p.239). This model implies that the only person who could 'get' anything from film music would be someone who was musically educated and familiar with Western classical music codes (ibid.). In contrast he argues, as does Kassabian (forthcoming), that music is apprehended through a variety of listening modes and competencies[9]. Smith draws on Kivy's work (1990) on musical interpretation, outlining four possible strategies ranging from the gross, almost physiological, 'toe-tapping' response, through associations which take music to be representational and the understanding of music in terms of emotional expressivity, to the close attentive apprehension of musical form and structure (1995, pp.50-51 and 1996, p.239). As Smith points out, in all of these different interpretive strategies, even the non-musically educated person's understanding is neither mindless nor unconscious, as the suture theorists often posit it as being.

Smith also argues that viewers' listening ability is not diminished when faced with competing visual and aural stimuli (1995, pp.51-56). He draws on theories of cognitive perception developed by Sloboda, which find that viewers can be aware of visuals and music at the same time without any perceptual difficulty. Thus, Smith concludes that we are always aware of film music, even if we do not pay it specific attention; that is, film music is not 'inaudible' (Smith, 1995, pp.54-56).

Kassabian also points out that the degree of attention paid to the music exists along an 'infinitely divisible' continuum; rarely does it receive 'none' or 'all' of the audience's attention. She notes that "In each

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specific case, the rest of the soundtrack and other aspects of the film define the limits of the music's prominence" (forthcoming, p.49). Further, Smith notes that in Western contemporary cultures music is more often consumed 'while driving, cooking, studying, shopping, working or doing housework than seated quietly in front of a stereo or radio' (1995, p.59); thus, he posits that it would perhaps be better to compare film music's perception to one of these contexts in which music plays a more or less functional role, rather than to the totally focused perception apparently favoured by Gorbman. That is to say, while music is not always the primary object of a viewer's attention, it is not necessarily unheard, or inaudible. Rather, viewers "...will likely not use all of their musical faculties, but will use enough of their more mundane, ordinary, 'unconscious' listening skills to develop at least a crude apprehension of musical affect and significance, one that is entirely functional within the film's larger systems of signification and our comprehension of them" (Smith, 1995, p.61).

An understanding of viewers as having varying levels and modes of perception, as well as the ability to perceive (and understand) more than one thing at one time, allows for a conception of a more active viewer (as compared to the passive, sutured viewer). It is important to note that this does not mean that the viewer is necessarily resistant to whatever ideology is held within the text. As Jackie Stacey has noted, 'activity' in itself is not a form of resistance: individuals may be active viewers in the sense of *actively* investing in oppressive ideologies (1994, p.47). However, the notion of an 'active' viewer still implies that the text is not 'all powerful'.

According to this understanding, then, viewers are only 'passive receptacles' if they want to be, but similarly they can utilise their critical faculties if they so choose.

A further problem with suture theory that is hopefully avoided by utilising a more 'small-scale' approach, is its tendency to try to fit each incident or text into a pre-existing theoretical paradigm. While suture theory can be seen as asking, 'How does this scene/cue suture the viewer into the film?' I believe it is more productive (and more 'open', instead of the 'closed' question posed by suture) to ask, 'How does this cue affect this scene?' By following this 'bottom up' method, I hope to avoid the overarching and monolithic theoretical statements that critics such as Carroll have identified as being problematic in suture theory (1988, p.224).

The modifying music theory which I will draw on when analysing the use of popular music in film soundtracks asserts that music and images function reciprocally to create meaning. Noël Carroll (1988) sees music as acting like a linguistic modifier (an adjective or adverb) that helps clarify a particular on screen mood, character, or action: "Just as adjectives and adverbs characterise, modify, and enrich the nouns and verbs to which they are attached, modifying music serves to add *further* characterisation to the scenes it embellishes" (1988, p.219).

Carroll points out that 'film music' involves co-ordinating two different symbol systems, music and movies, which are placed in a complementary relationship (1988, p.219). He notes that music is a very expressive symbol system: that is, it projects qualities describable in

'anthropomorphic, emotive terms' (ibid.). However, Carroll contends that this expressive music lacks 'emotive explicitness'. Movies, then, with their numerous overlapping referential dimensions (visuals, dialogue, narrative, synchronised sound), supply "...the kind of reference required to particularise the broad expressivity of the musical system" (Carroll, 1988, p.221).

Royal S. Brown (1994) and George Burt (1994) have also noted the way 'expressive' music interacts with images to produce a more 'particularised' meaning or association. Brown asserts that the difference between the two 'opposing' symbol systems contributes to the success of the film-music amalgam, though his account does not focus so much on the reciprocity that Carroll mentions. Brown contends that music is an 'unconsummated' symbol which needs the image or narrative to 'consummate' it or fix its meaning (1994, p.27). He believes that music 'mythifies' the cinematic object event: "...the general tendency of the film/music interaction is to enfold the morphological qualities of its various arts into a string of consummated symbols meant to be read in a single way" (1994, p.30).

Brown's account is somewhat limited in that he doesn't examine the notion of music/film reciprocity in meaning formation (and in his implication that musical accompaniment causes scenes to be read 'in a single way'). Because it focuses on the dual interaction, Carroll's theory is applicable to a wider range of situations: it is able to account for cases where the music 'explains' the film (telling viewers a scene is 'scary', for example), as well as times where the film 'explains' the music (Frith

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(1996) and Kassabian (forthcoming) have both asserted that many people have gained part of their understanding of musical meaning from watching films; for example, sweeping violin pieces are read as signifying romance or romantic tragedy because of their frequent use in such scenes).

Carroll provides the following summary of the workings of 'modifying music':

> ...the music tells us something, of an emotive significance, about what the scene is about; the music supplies us with, so to say, a description (or, better, a presentation) of the emotive properties the film attaches to the referents of a scene...The musical system carves out a broad range or spectrum of feeling...The movie elements, the indicators, then narrow down or *focus* more precisely the qualities in that range or spectrum that are relevant to the action...the focusing operation of the movie-as-indicator, in turn, enables the music-as-modifier to fill in the action as a highly particularised feeling   (1988, p.221).

Modifying music is thus, according to Carroll, one of the devices that work to increase the likelihood that audiences of movies will follow the action in the way that the filmmaker deems appropriate. Interestingly, when he outlines his theory of modifying music, Carroll himself borders on attributing to viewers the 'passivity' that he denounces in suture theory. He states: "...given the almost direct expressive impact of music, [modifying music] assures that the untutored spectators of the mass movie audience will have access to the desired expressive quality and, in turn, will see the given scene under its aegis" (1988, p.223). This contention that spectators will automatically see a scene in the same way as the filmmaker intended because of the modifying music is problematic. It is instead better to argue that the *chances* of a spectator seeing a scene in a particular way are increased with the use of modifying music, rather than assuming that it is necessarily so, as Carroll's assertion implies.

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The theory of modifying music is also useful in that it allows us to conceive of music as able to perform a range of different functions within the film, rather than only operating to suture the viewer into the narrative. Thus, it can be seen as fulfilling the functions that Kassabian outlines (forthcoming, p.50): she maintains that music can go from evoking mood (when the music is 'similar in emotional tone to the other threads of the film') to providing some commentary on the situation[10]. Kassabian states that functioning as commentary, music acts as 'counter mood' or *Verfremdungseffekt*[11]: "The music, for example, might tell us that a seemingly romantic situation is actually humorous, or that the daisy-filled meadow contains some unseen danger, or it might break or prevent 'suture' (prevent us from becoming 'absorbed' in the film)" (forthcoming, p.53). That is, when drawing on its function as commentary, film music can encourage reflective evaluation of a given scene (ibid.). Moreover, Kassabian notes that sometimes music can function as both mood and commentary simultaneously: horror music, she notes, can be seen as 'commentary' in that it signifies danger to the viewer, but also as 'mood' music as the viewer experiences an unconscious increase in tension (ibid.).

The theory of modifying music also provides an understanding of film music that is closer to what film composers seem to believe they are doing when they arrange accompaniment for a film: that is, they believe the music accompanies, reflects or comments upon the visual images (see Karlin (1994) and Burt (1994) for outlines of composers' viewpoints). In particular, modifying music allows for audible accompaniment. As Smith notes, the concept of inaudibility favoured by suture theorists was often

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"...questioned by the same Hollywood composers whom suture theorists believe to be its chief proponents" (1996, p.235). Such prominent composers as Max Steiner and Miklos Rozsa have been quoted as heartily disagreeing with what Rozsa termed the 'silly theory' that good film music is not heard (ibid.).

Jeff Smith (1995) draws on another concept developed by Carroll that can be usefully adapted for analysing popular music in film soundtracks. Carroll developed the concept of a 'two tiered system of communication' in relation to films of the seventies. He believed that a prominent feature of films of this decade was their use of 'allusion', and asserts that this had become a major expressive device, a means that directors used to make comments on the fictional worlds of their films (1982, p.52). The term 'allusion' is used to cover a range of practices, including quotation, the memorialisation or reworking of past genres, *homages*, and the recreation of 'classic' scenes, shots, themes and so forth from film history. In this way, popular cinema could send "...an action/drama/fantasy-packed message to one segment of the audience and an additional hermetic, camouflaged, and recondite one to another" (Carroll, 1982, p.56). By drawing on previous meanings and associations, the film could satisfy the 'uneducated' audience members who seemed to simply want to be entertained, while also "pitching allusions to the inveterate film gnostics in the front rows" (ibid.).

Jeff Smith (1995, p.353) provides a succinct summary of the way Carroll's two tiered system of communication works in terms of film music and the compilation score:

On one level, an audience of uninformed viewers may interpret the song as background music pure and simple. As such, they may make judgements regarding the overall style and its appropriateness to considerations of setting, character, and mood. However, an audience of informed viewers will recognise the song's title, lyrics, or performer, and will apply this knowledge to the dramatic context depicted onscreen.

Following Smith's work, Carroll's concept will be drawn on in this study to increase understanding of the uses of popular music in the case studies.

In summary, then, the theory of modifying music, combined with the concept of a two tiered system of communication, will be drawn on for the analysis of popular music in film soundtracks. Noël Carroll's outline of film music's operation is applicable to a wide range of cinematic situations (including those where the music is audible) and it does not limit the music to performing only one function. Further, the concept of a two tiered system of communication provides a way of understanding the range of meanings that popular music can provide to different viewers, implicitly acknowledging varying levels of competence within an audience.[12]

Analysing Popular Music:

Before beginning to examine the ways popular music is used in film, it is necessary to consider what meanings are attached to popular music in its 'normal' listening contexts (that is, as music rather than as soundtrack). As Frith (1984, p.79) and Lapedis (1999, p.368) have both noted, one cannot develop an understanding of the meaning or effect that popular music 'gives' to film or how the music 'works' in the movie without looking at what kinds of meanings it has more generally, and how listeners

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may understand it; as Lapedis' states, "...[the soundtrack has] a discrete and intrinsic meaning in addition to its function within or beyond the diegesis" (ibid.).

It is thus necessary to define what is meant by 'popular music'. This is not as straightforward a task as it may seem. Shuker (1998) identifies three different ways popular music tends to be defined: by focusing on the term 'popular', by emphasising the commercial nature of the music, or by using general musical and non-musical characteristics (pp.227 – 228). All three of these modes of definition are problematic, however, leading Shuker to conclude that "...a satisfactory definition of popular music must encompass both musical and socio-economic characteristics. Essentially, all popular music consists of a hybrid of musical traditions, styles, and influences, and is also an economic product which is invested with an ideological significance by many of its consumers" (1998, p.228). Following Shuker, I will adopt a definition which equates 'popular music' with "...the main commercially produced and marketed musical genres, primarily in a Western context" (Shuker, 1998, p.ix). For the purposes of this study, 'popular music' is distinguished from the 'film score' according to whether a particular cue is recognisable as part of a song; that is, if a musical cue is a few bars or verses of a song, it is considered to be 'popular music', while if it is a few bars of music that are not obviously 'song' based, then the cue is considered to be 'classical film music'.

Much of the literature that examines popular music focuses on the development of the 'meta-genre'. Main areas of discussion include the rise of rock and pop music after World War II, the influence of country

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music, folk music and 'black' music (for example, rhythm and blues) on rock and pop, and the perceived differences between rock and pop (for example, pop's perceived shallowness compared to the allegedly more sincere rock). In contrast to this emphasis, the areas that are fundamental to this study are the meanings and reception of popular music.

As Brackett notes, explicating the meaning of popular music is not a simple exercise; he asserts that,

> there is not necessarily one way of interpreting popular music, but…different types of popular music use different types of rhetoric, call for different sorts of interpretation, refer to different arguments about words and voices, about musical complexity and familiarity, and draw upon different senses of history and tradition (1995, p.31).

Kassabian has also pointed out that the question of what music evokes is a complex and murky area, noting that specific music will evoke different things for different listeners. As Leonard B. Meyer noted, "Even where the original association appears to be relevant and appropriate to the character of the music being played, affective experience may be a result of the private meaning that the image has for the particular listener" (1956, p.257, cited in Kassabian, forthcoming, p.50).

A useful starting point for understanding the range of meanings of popular music is the Producer-Text-Audience schema utilised by Longhurst (1995, p.22). Different theorists and critics place emphasis on different parts of the schema according to who or what they think has control over meaning of the text. For example, Adorno's theories of popular music (with Horkheimer, 1977, cited in Longhurst, 1995) emphasised the passivity of the audience and the standardisation of the text, so he saw the producers as holding the power of meaning creation. In

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contrast, Dick Hebdige's work on subculture (1979) and John Fiske's discussion of Madonna fans (1989) emphasise the active nature of an audience who appropriate cultural artefacts for their own purposes and meanings: here the audiences hold the power. In contrast again, conceptions of popular music's meaning which focus on genre or the lyrics of a song can be seen as attributing the power to the text (discussions of the 'aesthetics' of rock or pop music could be seen as text-focused studies, for example).

Each of these understandings of the construction of meaning in popular music is limited however, presenting only part of the fuller picture. To gain a more realistic idea of the meaning of popular music it is necessary not just to look at one part of the schema, but to consider all three aspects as interacting to contribute to the final meaning of the artefact. As Grossberg notes, "Somehow we must come to terms with both the activity and the determinateness of both the text and the audience" (1992, p.157). In sum, then, the meaning of popular music is not just that encoded by producers, or inherent in the text, or that read by audiences. One needs to consider all three as influencing meaning. For the purposes of this study, however, analysis is limited to the textual relations between films and popular music; an extensive discussion of production and reception is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Audiences

Although this study is text-focused, it is essential to bear in mind that audiences play an extremely important role in constructing the meaning of both music and films. While a comprehensive study of

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audience responses to popular music in film soundtracks does not form part of this study, an outline of discussions about active audiences is provided because an understanding of this area of study implicitly informs the analyses.

Theories of the audience have passed through three broad phases. The first phase was the 'hypodermic needle' model, which posited the audience as a group of passive 'dopes' who were injected with the values of the text.   The second phase saw the development of the uses and gratifications model, which asserted that the audience was 'in control', using the text to satisfy their own needs. The third phase (encompassing much contemporary theory) argues, as Longhurst points out, that "...it is important to recognise the complex two-way relationship between texts and audiences. Texts are structured in certain ways but are open to be understood or decoded by the audience in ways which are not necessarily determined by the text itself" (1995, p.199). Moore also states, "The sense that audiences make of music does not result from the decoding of any previously encoded message, but from the making of sense, by listeners, within a range afforded by the music they receive" (1993, p.163). Thus, listeners can tailor the meanings broadly contained in the text to their own purposes or environments; meaning is not seen to be solely held in the text, but is created through audience interaction with it.

A lot of the writing about active popular music audiences seems to focus on subcultures and the way the music is incorporated into a total way of life (for example, Dick Hebdige's work). In contrast, Clarke[13] (1990, in Longhurst, 1995, p.221) maintains that the activities of all

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categories of youth should be studied, because large numbers of youth draw on elements of subcultural style and create their own meanings and uses, rather than entering into subcultures in the elite form described in much of the literature. As Wicke points out, "...in spite of the significance of such sub-cultural contexts in the development of rock music and its different stylistic forms, we must not overlook the fact that these contexts are only supported by a relatively small circle of active fans. Most teenagers have only a more or less playful relationship with these, one which often changes from one subculture to another" (1990, p.89).

Wicke's statement alludes to the idea that there are various different levels, in terms of activity, at which the audience can engage with the text[14]. These can range from using music as a background accompaniment to which little attention is paid, to using the music as an 'agent' for deep personal introspection. Lull has outlined several different ways that audiences can participate in popular music. His three categories are 'physical', for example, toe-tapping, singing along or dancing, 'emotional', that is, feeling the music, reminiscing, romanticising, or achieving a spiritual 'high', and 'cognitive', which refers to processing information, learning, stimulating thought, framing perceptions and so forth (1992, p.19). All of these categories, particularly the 'cognitive' one, imply that the audience is active; that is, they are not simply passively adopting ideas in the text like the 'cultural dopes' described by Adorno.

Friedlander has also described different levels of activity, this time two modes of listening. He outlines the emotional or visceral level where

the music is "...received at an intuitive level, one that contains a rich variety of knowing and feeling without the process of logical thinking that usually accompanies what we usually think of as understanding" (1996, p.4), and the 'analytical' approach, which involves listening to the music with the goal of collecting a wide range of specific information about it, so the listener can make judgements about the nature of the music, its quality in relation to other music and so forth (ibid.). While Friedlander asserts that the two modes of listening are both valuable and complementary, the first, 'intuitive' level is arguably the level used when people hear music for the first time (and when they hear music in a cinematic context): on first exposure to a song, a listener relies on his/her general understanding of the emotive connotations of music, rather than collecting a lot of information about that particular piece – "They listen and it makes them feel... you can fill in the blank yourself" (Friedlander, 1996, p.4).

The notion of competence is crucial to understanding how meaning is produced in the consumption of popular music. Anahid Kassabian has described listener 'competence' as "...the skill that generates consistency in encodings and decodings of ...music" (forthcoming, p.12). She asserts that this competence is a culturally acquired skill possessed to a certain degree in varying genres by all hearing people in a given culture, and that it can only function for speakers and listeners of the same language or musical genre. Further, its consistency will depend on factors such as fluency (extent of experience in the genre) and personal history. Thus, "Competence is based on decipherable codes learned through experience. As with language and visual image, we learn through exposure what a

given tempo, series of notes, key, time signature, rhythm, volume and orchestration are meant to signify" (forthcoming, p.15).

Stefani is another theorist who has discussed the notion of competence (1987, described in Moore, 1993, p.168, and Brackett, 1995, p.13). He describes two basic types of competence: 'high' competence which focuses on pieces as autonomous works, and 'popular' competence which experiences pieces more on the levels of general codes and social practices[15]. Stefani's idea is useful because it raises the idea that most people do gain some sort of meaning from music, whether they can articulate it or not. As Moore notes "...just because particular listeners may not be able to conceptualise their understanding, this does not necessarily mean that they lack a competence" (1993, p.168). Listener 'competence' thus refers to the range of subject positions available to a listener dependent on that individual's history and memory (Brackett, 1995, p.13). Brackett points out that an advantage of Stefani's model is that it introduces the notion of context, the background of the senders, receivers and of the message itself (that is, the social and cultural background) (ibid.).

Kassabian makes an important point when she says that while all members of a culture may acquire a competence in music, it does not follow that they acquire competence in the same music or that competence in one style of music is transferable to others (forthcoming, p.15). Moore also points this out as a shortcoming in Stefani's theory: "What Stefani fails to emphasise is that each competence must be defined in relation to a style: competence (of either kind) in listening to Led Zeppelin does not

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automatically mean one has the equivalent, or any, competence regarding Phil Collins" (ibid.). Thus, Moore suggests renaming Stefani's categories of competence: he believes the terms 'high' and 'popular' are too loaded and proposes that the distinction between the terms 'recognition' and 'explanation' (both of which are measures of competence) is more helpful (thus, 'recognition' of a style must be distinguished from 'explanation' of it) (ibid.).

In summary, then, the conception of 'audience' that informs this study is of a group of active viewers whose personal backgrounds and levels of competence interact with the range of meanings afforded by the text to provide a variety of potential interpretations.

Textual features

Because this study primarily considers the textual relations between popular music and films, the analyses will mainly look to the textual aspects of popular music's meaning, such as sound, genre, lyrics and the context of the music.

When listening to popular music the first thing to strike the listener is the 'sound' of the song (for example, the tone of voice, the instruments used, the level of distortion (if any) and so forth). The sound of a piece of music is often seen to evoke 'moods'. Lull notes, "Music has the ability to stimulate extraordinary emotional feelings...[It] may be used to establish, reinforce, or change moods" (1992, p.22). For example, a slow tempo song performed by a solo singer playing his/her guitar can evoke a mood of quiet reflection.

Grossberg also alludes to this 'power' of music in his discussion of 'affect', which he defines as "...the dimension or plane of our lives that we experience as moods, feelings, desires and enervation" (1992, p.164). He believes that if one can encapsulate music's 'affect' it would help make sense of fans' responses to music, because its encapsulation depends on how the music feels and how it makes one feel (ibid.). As Lewis asserts, music is 'symbolic communication', easily evoking feelings, emotions, memories and systems of beliefs (1992, p.135). This notion of music as 'evoker' of affect and emotion (which are not necessarily clearly specified) is one that is adopted by film music composers and theorists, as noted in the previous section.

Different 'sounds' can usually be attributed to different styles, which are grouped into 'genres' of music[16]. At a broad level, for example, the use of genre to understand meaning is seen in the widely held distinction between rock and pop. Although it is difficult to clearly separate the two styles musically (for example, both rely on a strong, regular beat and generally conform to Western musicological norms), they are frequently held to be quite different. These differences mainly seem to be 'attitude' based, as Harron outlines:

> Pop stands for mutability and glitter. Its mode is the 45 single and the pinup, and its value is measured by record sales and the charts. Pop is about dreams and escapism and ecstatic moments; it believes in clichés and its philosophy is 'give the people what they want'. It is egalitarian by nature – anyone can make it – and capitalist.
>
> Rock is about the search for permanence within the free-floating values of the marketplace. It is about tradition (blues, country, and folk roots), and it is hierarchical in that it believes in geniuses and heroes. Its mode is the long-playing album and the in-depth interview. Rock wants deep emotion and catharsis and truth; it has a religious element that pop does

not. Rock believes in originality and self-expression in defiance of crass commercialism (1988, p.209).

Such distinctions between rock and pop are, however, quite problematic: they are very simplistic, ignoring the range of differences that exist within the genres, and further, the implied notion that rock is somehow not so concerned with money is inaccurate (see Wicke (1990, pp.24-25), who notes that rock musicians are just as reliant on the capitalist marketplace for their success).

Problems with approaching meaning through genre also occur when genre is conceived on a more specific level. It is reasonable to assume that a common view would posit that the various genres of popular music broadly imply different meanings. Thus, for example, hard rock could be seen as implying aggression and anger, while 'folksy' sounding music could be read as thoughtful or intelligent. In reality, however, each of these styles is capable of conveying many different meanings (to continue the example, the folk singer could be angry, while the hardrocker could intelligently convey concerns about some issue). Moreover, the same meanings could be found in several different genres; that is, one hard rock song could be seen as 'angry' compared to the other songs in the genre's repertoire, and so could one folk song[17].

Thus, although genre is a common method of understanding the meaning of popular music, it is not unproblematic. Because different meanings can exist within a certain genre of songs, and because the same meanings can exist across songs from different genres, it is not always accurate to attribute a distinct meaning to a text simply because it is of one particular generic type. However, despite these shortcomings, in the

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cinematic context considering the genre of a song can be a useful way to gain a quick and reasonably accurate sense of the meaning that was probably intended by the music supervisor of the film.

Another important factor of songs' meanings is the lyrics. Lull notes that the words of a song are important even though the 'sound' or 'tune' is generally heard first (1992, p.20). Frith states "In a culture in which few people make music but everyone makes conversation, access to songs is primarily through their words. If music gives lyrics their linguistic vitality, lyrics give songs their social *use*" (1988, p.123). A common approach to lyrics is to interpret them using practices derived from literary theory, looking at syntactic and semantic meanings. Using these methods, it is usually possible to elucidate a reasonably coherent meaning; as Brolinson and Larsen point out, "...the basic principles involved in interpreting a verbal statement are largely uncontroversial" (1990, p.118).

One facet of the interpretation of lyrics is the way they are sung (this is usually linked to the style or genre of the song). That is, the tone of the singer's voice influences the meaning of the text. The singer may sound angry, sad, joyful, or as experiencing any number of emotions. The tone may thus alter the interpretation of the lyrics. The notion of vocal timbre affecting the meaning of the song relies on certain levels of 'cultural competence'; that is to say, what a particular tone is considered to mean will probably be specific to a certain culture (just as the meanings of facial expressions are considered to be culturally specific, the acquired

competence of musical meaning discussed above is also culturally specific).

A significant problem with focussing on lyrics as a primary source of meaning is that it relies on the listener actually hearing them. It is often the case that what the singer is saying is not clearly understood until after repeated exposure to a song, and yet arguably the song still has meaning before the words are distinguished. In the cinematic situation, a song is still considered to be 'meaningful' even when the words are masked by dialogue. Moreover, in some cases, incoherence is part of the point of the meaning: for example tracks by groups like Nirvana, and, in a very different style, R.E.M., are often difficult to understand at first, but this can be read as highlighting the groups' 'separateness' from mainstream society (they don't want or need to be understood by the average radio 'station-surfer', they prefer to be understood by those who sit down and listen to them more carefully).

Despite difficulties such as this, lyrics are often seen as the primary source of meaning. Several theorists contend that this is not an entirely correct approach: they believe it is necessary to consider a song's sound to obtain a more complete understanding of its meaning (Moore, 1993; Brolinson and Larsen, 1990; Frith, 1988 & 1996; Gracyk, 1996, pp.64-65). As Brolinson and Larsen maintain, the music provides a particular effect to the lyrics: they argue that the musical style and the lyrics work symbiotically to create meaning. That is, the character of a piece of music is seen to be quite vague, and the lyrics are seen to provide a point of reference otherwise lacking ('meaning in the everyday sense of the term').

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At the same time, the music provides 'perspective and character' to the lyrics. They state

> when we listen to [a] verbal statement performed within a musical context, we instinctively feel that several factors affecting the meaning have been added. The vocal delivery, the musical gestures and the sound put the lyrics in a certain perspective and give them an individual character. Since many rock lyrics look simple and commonplace on paper, these added elements of musical meaning are of vital importance (1990, p.118).

Thus, the music is seen to 'concretise' the meaning of the lyrics; to an extent, this works in the opposite direction too[18].

The problem, as Brolinson and Larsen (ibid.) and Kassabian (forthcoming, p.18) note, is that there are no commonly accepted principles for the interpretation of musical meaning comparable to those applicable to verbal statements. Kassabian states

> ...music scholars have no equivalent of a dictionary of musemes or museme compounds as a starting point, nor are there any parallels to language-to-language dictionaries available...Moreover, any attempt to create these resources would necessarily be limited by the differences between music and language. Museme compounds, even within specific musical genres, have even less stable values than words. (ibid.).

Thus, the meaning of musical sound is much more ambiguous than the meaning of the words.

In a cinematic situation, it is arguable that lyrics and 'sound' are both important factors, as each contributes significantly to the meaning of a popular music track. Lyrics are often relatively easy to hear in films, frequently providing a deeper level of information than that which is provided by image and dialogue alone. However, it is important to recognise that these song words are quite dependent on the overall musical sound for their 'total' meaning.

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Looking at 'deeper' levels than often considered on first hearing, several critics have drawn on semiological theories to describe the meaning of popular music. Longhurst gives a very basic summary of some of the fundamental ideas of semiotic theory as follows: any image or text can be said to contain different layers or levels of meaning, especially denotative and connotative levels; the nature of these meanings depends on the context or surrounding circumstances, that is, meaning is relational; some levels of meaning or codes are relatively neutral or objective, whereas others will be saturated with social meanings and discourses; and finally, recognition and elucidation of these different meanings involves analysis or decoding which often depends on the nature of the knowledge and experience brought to the analysis (1995, pp.162-164). A semiotic approach thus involves considering the secondary meanings, or connotations, of all aspects of particular songs (such as lyrics, sounds, tempo, genre and so forth), as well as the broader social codes that influence the reading ('decoding') of the text.

Richard Middleton (1990, pp.172-246) has outlined a system of eight types of 'secondary signification'[19]. His system is an example of a semiotic approach to analysing popular music; the group of secondary connotations is a comprehensive outline, and when a song is analysed by following these eight categories, a detailed sense of its meaning can be obtained. However, it is reasonable to assume that in most listening situations meaning is attributed to a song without specific analysis of, for example, 'axiological' or 'rhetorical' connotations, or the 'positional implications' of the chorus. Moreover, in the cinematic situation, one

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does not normally have the opportunity for the repeated listening that an analysis according to Middleton's system would require. However, 'intentional values', 'ideological connotations', or 'style connotations', and any other features listed by Middleton, may still contribute to meaning, even without being specifically acknowledged and named as such (using Moore's terminology, they are 'recognised' by the listener or film viewer but not 'explained').

One problem with text-based approaches such as semiotics is the implied concept of a meaning that is 'locked in' by the texts' producers, with the listener's task being to 'unlock' these meanings. The idea that musicians communicate unambiguous meanings by expressing themselves is considered questionable by Moore (1993, p.157) and Budd (1985, p.18). As Budd notes, in his work on music and emotions, the feelings or meaning that the composer 'put in' to the text, or the feelings or meaning the performer 'put in' as he or she performed the text, are not necessarily the ones the listener will read out of it:

> ...the emotion the composer or performer once felt – that particular episode of emotion – is not a feature of what the listener hears and that he (*sic*) can perceive in the music. The listener may be inclined to infer from the character of the music that the composition or the performance arose from the experience of a particular emotion. But this would be an inference from the music's audible character, not an aspect of that character (1985, p.18).

Budd's point highlights the idea that the creation of meaning is not controlled by one person or group of people in the Production-Text-Audience schema; rather, meaning is produced through interaction across the aspects of the schema.

One way to conceive of the multiple potential meanings in popular music is, as Gracyk notes, to turn to poststructuralist thought, which often stresses the 'iterability' and 'polysemy' of signs. Iterability is "...a signifier's capacity for repetition in new contexts." (Gracyk, 1996, p.172). Polysemy, in turn, is the capacity of a sign to support reinterpretation across cultural relocations (ibid.). That is, any particular sign is not confined to its initial or intended site of circulation; it can be repeated and interpreted in a new context, thereby obtaining a new meaning[20]. The example Gracyk draws on is Wagner's 'Ride of the Valkyries'. He notes that when this piece is used in a Warner Bros. cartoon that 'spoofs' opera, or against the background of helicopter attacks in Vietnam in *Apocalypse Now* (1979, Francis Ford Coppola), it plays very different roles and conveys very different meanings to 'those that Wagner intended to pack into that sound structure' (ibid.). Middleton has also noted that semiologists emphasise the polysemic nature of all signs. He states that "This is especially true of music, which is a peculiarly 'open' code. Signification varies according to the context, the identity and experience of the reader, his (*sic*) 'competence' in reading the code, and so on" (1981, p.33).

Context also plays a significant role in the creation of meaning. The same song heard in different places or situations can have very different associations and connotations for different people. Wicke uses a 'jigsaw' metaphor to outline the importance of context:

Just as in a jigsaw puzzle each individual piece is only partly defined by its shape and form, while the context of the whole picture and the place of the piece in it is equally important, the 'content' of rock music is not merely grounded in the musical form of the songs. On the one

hand this 'content' is determined by the contexts which its fans give it, and on the other hand it is also preconditioned by the social relations of its production and distribution together with the institutional contexts in which these stand. In other words, these contexts become a component of the lyrics, a component of a cultural text formed from cultural symbols of the most varied kind (1990, p.ix).

Wicke is thus arguing that contexts of production and consumption frame the meaning of the text. Frith (1983, 1996) also emphasises the fact that the wider context is important to the meaning of the song. He asserts that meaning is determined by culture and context, and has to be related to the wider issues of entertainment and leisure (1983, p.38). He also argues that "...to grasp the meaning of a piece of music is to hear something not simply present to the ear. It is to understand a musical culture, to have a 'scheme of interpretation'" (1996, p.249). That this 'musical culture' is essential to meaning creation implies to Frith that the meaning of music is not inherent in the text, rather it is a social process (ibid.).

Frith further maintains that there are different modes of listening according to the social situations in which music occurs; for example, music heard in a concert hall will be 'listened to' in a different manner than if the music was heard in a car, or in a cinema (1996, p.250). Thus, the context of consumption has an important influence on the way music is heard (Frith, 1996, p.250; Brackett, 1995, p.18). A particular context will establish the 'code' that a listener is most likely to apply in that situation; that is, the discourses that surround a particular song/style/genre often give clues about what codes are activated by the song and the range of possible connotations (Brackett, ibid.). For example, songs that receive a lot of publicity in the news or music press because of the perceived 'dissident'

nature or defiant behaviour of their singers will probably be interpreted as 'rebellious' and 'anti-social' (for example, songs by Marilyn Manson).

Further, as Frith maintains, certain musical styles are bound to specific environments, and they refer to this 'ideal' situation even if they are heard in another one altogether. For example, carnival-style music's ideal listening situation could be seen as the fun fair or circus, with the associated connotations of fun and happiness. Because the music generally always refers to this 'ideal' environment, it can be drawn on to create irony by placing the music in an incongruous setting, such as a horror or thriller film. In sum, then, the 'listening environment' (whether 'actual' or 'ideal') plays a significant role in the construction of meaning.

The notion of 'intended' context can be important in situations where popular music is used in film soundtracks. The original context of the song comprises part of the meaning that will frequently be associated with that song; thus, when the song is used in a new context (such as in a film narrative) the meaning that the original context created will be applied to the new situation or scene. For example, songs associated with the peace movement in the sixties (such as 'If You're Goin' to San Francisco (Be Sure To Wear Some Flowers in Your Hair)' by Scott MacKenzie, or 'Give Peace a Chance' by John Lennon) will always carry meanings of 'anti-violence' and 'anti-war' from when these songs were originally popular; when a song such as one of these two is combined with a scene from a film, these peaceful connotations will be linked to the action or characters within that scene by way of juxtaposition.

In conclusion, the features of popular songs that will be taken into consideration when analysing the soundtracks of the three case studies will be the general musical 'sound' or genre of the song, the song's lyrics, and any connotations associated with 'context' (either the song's original context, or the context of the film's narrative). The songs' relationships to the film will be analysed according to the theory of 'modifying music'; that is, each scene will be examined to see how the song affects the scene it accompanies, and whether the scene affects the reading of the song. The concept of a two tiered system of communication is also drawn on in the analyses. In neoformalist terms, then, this study examines the musical 'devices' in the films in order to understand their 'functions' and the 'viewer responses' that are 'cued' by the text. The functions of the songs in the soundtrack will then be compared and related to the conventions of 'classical' Hollywood musical accompaniment (as outlined above) in order to ascertain whether popular music is still being used in similar ways to the 'traditional' film score.

NOTES:

[1] The leitmotif is a principle developed from Wagnerian opera whereby a musical phrase becomes identified through repetition with a particular character, place or idea; leitmotifs served to unify lengthy and often convoluted material (Kalinak, 1992, p.63).

[2] This conception reinforces the visual bias that Kalinak (1992, pp.20-24) and Flinn (1992, p.6) note as being predominant in Western culture whereby sound functions as sight's 'lesser counterpart'.

[3] 'Seamless' editing is a key characteristic of classical Hollywood films, and was perceived as essential in achieving the goal of unhindered narrative exposition.

[4] This is in contrast to Sergei Eisenstein's call for contrapuntal use of sound; he believed that music should be in 'sharp discord with the visual images' in order to produce the 'necessary sensation that will result consequently in the creation of a new *orchestral counterpoint* of visual and sound images'. In their 'Statement On Sound', Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Alexandrov asserted that "Sound, treated as a new element of montage (as an independent variable combined with the visual image), cannot fail to provide new and enormously powerful means of expressing and resolving the most complex problems" (Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Alexandrov, 1999, p.361).

[5] See Frith's (1984 & 1996) discussion of music's cultural codes. Frith notes that composers do a lot of research to achieve a 'realistic' sound for a particular time or place, sometimes to the extent that the sound they develop (for example, the music for *Zorba the Greek*) becomes so powerfully connotative of a certain setting that it is taken to be more 'real' than the music from the actual place itself (some Greek restaurants apparently have had to use music from *Zorba* to convince customers of their 'Greekness') (1984, p.84).

[6] Gorbman draws on Rosolato and Anzieu's theories of sound in the development of the subject. They argue that auditory space is the first psychic space; the infant exists in a 'sonorous envelope' consisting of sounds originating in the infant itself and in its environment (for example, the mother's heartbeat and her voice). At this stage there is no distinction between self and other, nor between inside and outside the body. The mother's voice is seen as largely defining the original illusion of fusion, the imaginary longing for which is never erased (Gorbman, 1987, pp.61-63).

[7] Here Smith broaches the notion of the marketing of the popular music score, an important aspect, but one which will not be covered explicitly in this thesis.

[8] See Carroll (1988 and 1996) for extensive discussion of 'ideological' theories of the apparatus.

[9] See the section on analysing popular music for further discussion of musical competence.

[10] Although these functions mentioned by Kassabian can be seen to fit in with Carroll's theory of modifying music, on a broader level her

conception of film music's function is quite different. Rather than emphasising the relation to the narrative, in *Tracking Identifications* the focus is on the ways in which film music encourages identification processes among perceivers. The processes encouraged by the sound and music track are seen to be quite separate to the visual track, and Kassabian describes two different types: assimilating identifications, when a soundtrack 'narrows possibilities towards one position' (forthcoming, p.112), and affiliating identifications, which 'permit resistances and allow multiple and mobile identifications' (forthcoming, p.134).

[11] This term was first coined in relation to theatre by Bertolt Brecht with regard to his own productions in the 1920s and 1930s. His purpose was to distance the audience through numerous strategies so that it could "...see how theatre practices and characterisation serve to reproduce society as it is ideologically and institutionally constructed" (Hayward, 1996, p.71). I have kept the term in its original German following Kassabian, who points out that it seems to have 'lost focus' in common usage (forthcoming, n.23, p.177). She states "'Alienation-effect' or 'distanciation-effect' – the standard translations – have come to mean something like 'a technique that encourages rational critical distance'. The term would better be translated as 'anti-identification' or 'anti-suture effect'" (ibid.).

[12] See the section on analysing popular music for a discussion of the notion of 'competence'.

[13] Clarke notes significant shortcomings in subcultural approaches. He maintains that in much work on subcultures there is a lack of consideration of flux and the dynamism of styles: he asserts that a 'vague conception of style' is often elevated to the status of an 'objective category' which means that the subculture is constructed as a stylistically stable entity which is separated from the rest of society (which is seen as 'the dominant', a consensual mass of mainstream people).

[14] See also the section on analysing film music for discussion of varying modes of listening.

[15] Friedlander's modes of listening can be loosely related to Stefani's two competences: 'high' competence can be seen as along the lines of Friedlander's analytical listening, while 'popular' competence can be related to 'intuitive' listening.

[16] As Anahid Kassabian notes (forthcoming), "The choice of word to describe a group of musical events with similar intra- and extra-musical features is rather complicated" (n. 8, p.174). She draws on Franco Fabbri's work (1982); he defines genre as 'a set of musical events (real or possible) whose course is governed by a set of socially accepted rules'

(p.52, cited in Kassabian, ibid.). Thus, Kassabian defines 'musical genre' as a set of intramusical features (such as rhythmic patterns and tone of voice) and extramusical associations (for example, 'trendy' clothing and youthful, energetic performers), that combine to give meaning to a name (such as 'teenybop') (ibid.).

[17] This depends on audience 'competence' to a certain extent; that is, a listener who is not familiar with a genre may not hear the differences in meaning between songs. As noted above, competence in one genre does not guarantee competence in another or all genres.

[18] Brolinson and Larsen's conception of the lyric/music relationship is similar to Carroll's theory (1988) of the 'modifying' relationship between screen image and music.

[19] Middleton argues that there are two levels of coding: primary coding (to do with the structure and composition of the song), and secondary coding (to do with the content and connotations of the song). His eight types of secondary coding are: intentional values; positional implications; ideological choices; emotive connotations; links with other semiotic systems; rhetorical connotations; style connotations; and finally, axiological connotations (1990, pp.172-246).

[20] Gracyk also notes that Derrida emphasises iterability in order to show that complex texts escape authorial intention. That is to say, because new meaning can be obtained when a text is reinterpreted in a new context, the meaning that the 'author' encoded may not be the one that is 'decoded'.

Sliding Doors.

Sliding Doors (Peter Howitt, 1997) is a contemporary mainstream film that contains a significant amount of popular music on its soundtrack, despite not having an obviously 'youth-' or 'teen-focused' story line. As will be shown in this analysis, the popular songs all tend to be used in similar ways to 'classical' scores and cues.

The film examines the timeless question of 'what if?' Telling the story of Helen (Gwyneth Paltrow), a recently fired London publicist, the audience is shown the effects that catching, or not catching, a morning train back to her apartment has on her life. In one story-line, she misses the train, gets mugged on her way home, arrives at her apartment moments after her partner's 'mistress' has left, and carries on in a fairly mundane existence as a waitress and delicatessen assistant. In the second story, Helen catches the train, arrives home to find Gerry and Lydia (John Lynch and Jeanne Tripplehorne) in the bed together, walks out, meets and falls in love with James (John Hannah), and starts her own PR business. The two stories are cleverly edited together throughout the film, eventually converging into a fateful ending.

The *Sliding Doors* soundtrack is comprised of approximately 50min 12sec (0:50:12) of music[1]. This is a little over half of the total film length of approximately 1hr 31 min. Just under half of the musical accompaniment is popular music[2] (slightly more than 23 minutes of popular music, organised by Anita Camerata, and slightly more than 27 minutes of cues composed by David Hirschfelder). The beginning and the

end of the film, points where music is considered to be very noticeable (see Kalinak, 1992, p.97), are accompanied by popular songs. Further, the pop cues are generally longer than the composed cues[3]. Thus, popular music makes a significant contribution to the *Sliding Doors* soundtrack[4].

The functions that the songs perform can be grouped into five main areas: indicating setting, acting as source scoring, explicating or reflecting characters' thoughts or moods, providing some commentary on the narrative, and maintaining continuity between the two stories. Nearly half of the popular music tracks are used completely non-diegetically; the rest are diegetically motivated in some way, though they may be arranged to perform some non-diegetic functions as well (that is, they work as 'source scoring'[5]).

Opening and closing sequences

The popular songs that accompany the opening and closing scenes of *Sliding Doors* are non-diegetic tracks (in both cases no implied source is present, the song sounds 'close' (see Williams, 1981, pp.150-152) and most of the diegetic sound is reduced); they can be read as providing narrative commentary. The opening track, 'Have Fun Go Mad' by Blair, provides some connotations about Helen's character and how she fits in to the city. The closing track, 'Tenderness on the Block' by Patty Larkin, presents a synopsis of sorts, summing up the themes of the film with regards to Helen's 'character development'.

'Have Fun Go Mad' is mixed in to the first composed cue, which accompanies an opening long shot of a large bridge over a river on a sunny day. The cue is a lively but gentle, syncopated solo piano

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composition. A longer, aerial shot locates the bridge as part of a large city (London), and at this point the composed piano cue is mixed into the introduction of 'Have Fun Go Mad', which becomes the dominant theme as the camera cuts to a close-up shot of Helen's hand knocking a cup of tea as she rushes to get ready (this cut is synchronised with the first main beat of the song).

During this main title sequence we see Helen hurry through town to her workplace: she catches the underground, picks up a sandwich which she ordered on her cellular phone and stops in to a liquor store to make a purchase. Intercut with this are scenes showing her partner, Gerry, getting up (he comes to life just as she walks out the door; he had been feigning sleep), taking the telephone off the hook and having a shower. The music fades down as Helen arrives at work cursing under her breath that she is late again.

The track has an upbeat sound, with a moderately fast tempo and a strong, clear rhythm. The lead vocalist is male, and his 'funky', 'wahwah' sounding voice is accompanied by several female backing-singers (who are mainly audible during the chorus). The strong beat and the fairly fast rhythm give this track a positive, energetic feel. The song maintains the 'performance' tone that it established in its introduction, with background voices cheering and talking and so forth: this tone is intensified by the fact that the song doesn't have the 'sterile' sound of a usual studio recording, in which all ambient noise is removed. Despite this incorporated 'pseudo-ambient' noise, it is still not possible to consider the song as diegetically motivated. As Williams (1981, pp.150-152) has outlined with regards to

popular music in musical films, the 'closeness' of sound which is recorded according to a popular music aesthetic (as the non-diegetic popular tracks are in *Sliding Doors*), violates the impression of 'realism' created by a film. For this reason, a 'closely' mixed popular song (even if it contains 'pseudo-ambient' sound) which is not motivated diegetically can be assumed to be non-diegetic.

The lyrics of 'Have Fun Go Mad', combined with the song's energetic aural qualities, serve as an important site of meaning construction. After one verse (whose lyrics are largely indistinguishable on first hearing), the chorus is repeated three times:

'Have fun go mad (do what I say)

Have fun go mad (don't do what I do)

Have fun living in the city'

These words are clearly audible. The last line of the first repetition of the chorus coincides with the appearance of the film's title over the action, serving to link the song to the film and its characters.

These lyrics can be seen as creating the impression that the city is an environment for fun and recreation, as opposed to a perhaps more common association of it being a place of work and industry. By using this song to accompany the opening sequence, which focuses on Helen, a potential reading is made possible: it is implied that she is a 'fun' character, who is perhaps not completely devoted to working for her firm in the city (she is running late, after all, and apparently not for the first time). The lyrics thus contrast with the images of Helen's office, which does not look particularly 'fun' or 'mad' at all. That the lively music

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fades out on Helen's entry into the building can be read as strengthening this connotation of the firm's 'serious' nature. The contrasting associations of 'fun Helen' and 'serious public relations firm' are also reinforced in the subsequent scene in which we see Helen lose her job because she 'had fun and went mad' with some vodka (which she 'borrowed' from the firm for her birthday party).

Another potential reading of the relation of 'Have Fun Go Mad' to these opening scenes is to see the song as providing an ironic commentary. While the singer is exhorting us to 'have fun living in the city', Helen looks as if she is having anything but a good time rushing to work. The song thus acts as a type of counterpoint to the action depicted on screen.

This opening track can be seen as functioning similarly to conventional classical Hollywood musical accompaniment. It can be read as constructing associations about the film's main character, or as providing an ironic commentary on the situation in which she is shown. 'Have Fun Go Mad' thus 'modifies' the film, acting as an 'adjective' which describes the sequence of shots that it accompanies: it provides a set of ideas that can be associated with 'the city' and Helen's place in it. That the song can be read in at least two different ways reinforces the notion that audience activity affects meaning creation (as outlined in a previous chapter). In this situation, the song can be seen to provide different sets of associations (which are not mutually exclusive) that an audience member might apply to the narrative.

The closing track, 'Tenderness on the Block', functions somewhat differently to 'Have Fun Go Mad', but it can still be read as providing

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commentary on the narrative. This track plays over the final scenes of the film as Helen 1[6] leaves the hospital, having survived finally finding out about Gerry's affair, as well as a fall down the stairs at Lydia's apartment building (Helen 2 died in the hospital after being hit by a van). The song's introduction begins as Helen 1 asks Gerry to leave and never come back, and it continues as James 1 (that is, the James who hasn't yet met Helen 1) is shown leaving his mother's room. As with 'Have Fun Go Mad', this song is non-diegetic: there is no implied source in the hospital, the sound is 'close', and most of the diegetic sound is reduced (apart from some key lines of dialogue, and Helen's conversation with James in the lift).

'Tenderness on the Block' has a gentle, moderately paced but lively guitar accompaniment, with a female vocalist and backing singers (during the chorus). Its upbeat sound gives the song a positive, hopeful feel. The lyrics are also positive: they are about a girl who has 'grown up' and is now wise to all the lies that surround her. Despite this wisdom (and potential cynicism), the lyrics assert that she will still find 'true love'. These lyrics can be read as describing the Helens' stories: both became aware of Gerry's infidelity eventually and found 'true love' with James. Although the audience is not shown Helen 1 falling in love with James, the song's words can be read as providing the basis of an assumption that she will indeed live 'happily ever after' with him (the line 'She's gonna find true love' is repeated over the shot of the lift doors sliding closed in front of the couple).

Thus, 'Tenderness on the Block' provides a summary of the story of *Sliding Doors*. It reinforces the theme of the search for true love amongst

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what the song calls 'all the lies and the child talk'. Hence it can be seen as providing thematic unity for the story: it serves as a type of conclusion for the film, linking the theme of finding 'true love' with the 'sliding doors' of the title. It thus explicates the narrative content, a function often attributed to 'classical' film music.

The popular song that accompanies the end credit sequence ('Thank You' by Dido) also serves to extend the 'happy ending' of the film past James and Helen's initial meeting in the lift. Again, the vocalist is female, and the accompaniment is guitar based. The tempo is moderately slow, with a gentle regular beat. The lyrics recount the happiness the subject feels with her partner. She sings '...thank you/for giving me the best day of my life'. 'Thank You' can be seen as an outline of a character's thoughts, a function reminiscent of 'classical' Hollywood film music. The song describes what Helen's feelings will be about the implied relationship which her and James come to develop, and thus provides some assurance that the pair do 'make it'.

In between 'Have Fun Go Mad' and 'Tenderness on the Block', there are fourteen other popular songs. Five of these are diegetically motivated and function primarily as assisting in the construction of setting. Three function as 'source scoring', which means they are diegetically motivated, but fulfil some functions which are usually performed by non-diegetic accompaniment (see Kassabian, forthcoming, pp.36-38). Six songs function totally non-diegetically, describing characters' thoughts, providing commentary, or maintaining unity between the two story lines.

Constructing setting

Providing information or connotations about a film's setting has been noted as being a key role of 'classical' composed film music. The first of *Sliding Doors'* diegetically motivated 'setting songs' to be heard are the two tracks by Elton John, 'Benny and the Jets' and 'Honky Cat'. 'Benny and the Jets' plays while Gerry and Lydia are in bed together, while 'Honky Cat' plays later as Gerry has a shower. Both tracks are diegetically motivated: they play on the tape recorder beside the bed. The diegetic nature of these tracks is clear even though their source is not initially seen: the tracks have a more 'ambient' quality than the studio-like, closely mixed non-diegetic tracks in the film (see Williams, op cit., on 'close' mixing). That the songs are diegetic is also reinforced by the fact that the sound cuts out when the camera cuts to another location (Helen 1 in hospital for example); when it returns to Gerry and Lydia the song has progressed a little (this mainly occurs during 'Benny and the Jets'). The diegetic status of the tracks is confirmed in both story lines when we see Gerry turn the tape off when either Helen arrives home.

Even though these tracks are diegetically motivated, they can still be read as having some connotations which can be linked to the narrative or characters: as Gorbman points out, it does not matter if music is diegetic or non-diegetic, its mood can still be associated with the narrative (1980, p.198). These two songs by Elton John provide some connotations that can be applied to the film's setting, as well as to the characters whose actions they accompany. At a broad level, the songs confirm that this movie is set some time after the 1970s (when 'Benny and the Jets' and

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'Honky Cat' were first released), or after the late 1980s, when Elton John had a resurgence of popularity on the re-release of his greatest hits album.

The songs also constitute part of Gerry's deception of Helen: he has told her that he 'can't stand' Elton John, but here he is shown enjoying listening to him 'on the sly'. Further, that Gerry likes listening to Elton John, though he refuses to admit it to Helen, can be read as implying that he is perhaps not as 'trendy' as she is: Helen is associated with more contemporary tracks throughout the film (such as 'Have Fun Go Mad').

'Turn Back Time' by Aqua also functions to reinforce the setting of the narrative. This song, which charted highly at its time of release, plays very quietly on a radio or music player in the milk bar where James takes Helen 2 for a milkshake (it is barely audible under their conversation).

'Turn Back Time' has an electronic 'dance music' sound, but as it is a ballad, it has a much slower tempo than most dance tracks (and most of Aqua's other releases). This genre of music, and indeed this song, has been very popular in the late 1990s. 'Turn Back Time' can thus be seen as functioning as 'period wallpaper', indicating setting. Most of the songs in this film have a contemporary edge, but 'Turn Back Time' is one of the most recognisable as being by one of the late nineties' chart-topping groups[7]. Hence, this song provides a more specific level of 'setting information' than is otherwise given in the film. There are few other specific, definite indications that *Sliding Doors* is set in the late 1990s.

Though most of the lyrics are not able to be heard in this scene, it is likely that many viewers of *Sliding Doors* would have recognised the song (and remembered the words) because of the level of radio play it received

when it was initially released. The theme of the lyrics seems to be focused on wanting to have a second chance in a relationship that has ended. Thus, while 'Turn Back Time' serves to reinforce the film's setting, it also potentially relates to Helen 2's concerns (she may still be wanting to work things out with Gerry or wishing things could have been different). Hence, the track may have been included because it typifies what may have been playing on the radio at the time the film is set, but it may have also been chosen because it underlines Helen 2's mood at this point in the film.

'Drug Soup' (by Space Monkeys), 'Miracle' (by Olive) and 'More Love' (by Brand New Heavies) are three other songs which are diegetically motivated: 'Drug Soup' plays in the rowing clubrooms under a conversation between Clive, James and Helen 2; 'Miracle' plays at Clive's restaurant opening; and 'More Love' plays under a conversation between two customers that Helen 1 overhears at the restaurant at which she waitresses. All three songs are recognisable as 'contemporary' sounding tracks, which fall somewhere between 'alternative' and 'mainstream'[8]. Their lyrics, which could have given a clearer indication of their meaning, are largely inaudible under the conversations and other diegetic sounds. These three songs do not seem to provide any specific connotations that can be related to particular aspects of the film; however they do work to provide some general connotations applicable to the setting and characters. These songs apparently play 'innocently' in the background, but they all come from the same broad genre, which means

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that the genre's associations of 'contemporary trend' and so forth can be linked with the characters and the world they inhabit[9].

Source scoring

The three songs which function as 'source scoring' are 'Call Me A Fool' and 'Got a Thing About You', both by Those Magnificent Men, and 'Use the Force' by Jamiroquai. 'Call Me A Fool' is played by a band in the bar where Helen 2 goes after she runs out of the apartment having 'discovered' Gerry and Lydia. It plays as James and Clive arrive later in the evening, after Helen 2 has been sitting there for a while. The track is diegetically motivated: a medium shot of the band playing is shown at the beginning of the song, and thereafter they remain visible in the background behind Helen 2 as she sits at the bar drinking. Another factor that indicates that this track is diegetic is that the song's 'mix' contains 'ambient' noise[10].

'Call Me A Fool' has a country feel to its guitar sound and a moderately fast tempo. The lyrics are largely indistinguishable, though some lines come through in gaps between portions of dialogue (for example, 'Well, I knew she'd be my cup of tea/We danced all night to Disco 3'). The song seems to be a typical pop song with a love theme.

Within the context of Helen 2's story, the performance of this song indicates that the evening is wearing on. It locates Helen 2 as quite alone in a bar that is filling up with people, and shows that life is carrying on around her. The track takes the film out of the bubble of her thoughts that was represented by the previous track ('Amateur' by Aimee Mann, which will be discussed later).

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Thus, 'Call Me A Fool' acts as source music: it is performed by a band that is visible in the bar. However, it also fulfils the 'classical' film music function of maintaining continuity. The song plays over the cuts between the two story-lines: the clever editing of this sequence means that 'Call Me a Fool' accompanies Helen 2's conversation with James, as well as Helen 1 and Gerry as they drink at the same bar (the style of the song seems to better fit their situation: its upbeat feel reflects Gerry's attempt to cheer Helen 1 up). The song thus covers over the switch from one story to the other, making the quick transitions from Helen 1 to Helen 2 and vice versa easier to watch. That the music plays in both of their 'worlds' serves to emphasise the paradox of how much and yet how little difference catching the train made to Helen's life.

The next song that the band plays, 'Got a Thing About You', also functions to maintain continuity, though this song can be read as better reflecting Helen 2's mood. Its beginning coincides with Helen's best friend Anna's entry: she is looking for Helen 2. As 'Call Me a Fool' did, 'Got a Thing About You' maintains continuity between the two story lines (playing over cuts between Helen 1 and Helen 2). This track also functions as 'source scoring' in that it covers the passage of time: a good half-hour is implied to have passed (Anna has a glass of wine, and James and Clive leave) in the space of one verse or so of song time.

This song still has a 'country' feel, with a steel guitar sound, but this time the tempo is reduced and the male vocalist sounds plaintive and sad. The lyrics of this track are more audible than the previous one, although the dialogue still takes precedence so that only select verses are heard:

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'I was lost, I was found

I was cast to the ground

I was taken for a clown...'

This time the song's slightly maudlin lyrics seem to relate more closely to Helen 2's mood than to Helen 1's situation. Thus, as well as maintaining continuity, this song can be read as reflecting Helen 2's emotions. While it is motivated as source music, it performs two significant functions usually performed by non-diegetic, 'classical' music.

The third track in *Sliding Doors'* soundtrack that can be seen as 'source scoring' is Jamiroquai's 'Use the Force'. This lively song plays at the opening of Clive's restaurant and bar (scenes of the opening are intercut with shots of Helen 1 working at the restaurant while Gerry is away in Dorset). The introduction of the song begins over the end of the previous composed cue as Gerry and Lydia arrive at their hotel. It is implied that the song is diegetic (its volume increases as the camera enters the bar, and the volume is altered again later for inside/outside changes). However, for a large part of this sequence, the song is dominant over most diegetic sound: no dialogue is heard even when close up shots of people talking are shown (although camera flashes and a hum of conversation are audible). Moreover, 'Use the Force' (along with the ambient sound of the party) carries on playing over the cuts to Helen 1 working at 'her' restaurant. Thus, the song can be read as performing some non-diegetic functions.

The drums in the song's introduction have a slightly 'Latin-American' flavour, with an electronic, disco-style beat over the top. This

sound locates the song as part of the 'retro-dance' genre that is popular in the late 90s. Further, it is likely that many viewers of the film would recognise Jamiroquai as a popular contemporary group[11]. 'Use the Force' thus lends a 'fashionable' edge to Clive's bar, presenting it as a 'hip' and 'trendy' place. Further, the moderately fast tempo and reasonably fast cutting reflect the busy, slightly stressed nature of the evening, which is also indicated when Helen 2 stops and leans against a wall to catch her breath. This tempo also relates to Helen 1's situation: she appears rushed at the restaurant in which she waitresses.

The lyrics of 'Use the Force' are very audible at first, later being reduced so that the dialogue between Helen 2 and Gerry can be heard. The vocalist sings 'I must believe/I can do anything/I can be anyone/I must believe'. These words can be read as reflecting both Helens' thoughts. They fit with Helen 2's new 'successful' status, but they also imply a certain precariousness to it ('I must believe I can do anything' rather than 'I *know* I can do anything'). The lyrics can also be read as reflecting Helen 1's thoughts, as a kind of 'mantra' that she may be reciting to herself in order to keep going at work.

The lingering instability in Helen 2's implied thoughts becomes more obvious when Gerry turns up. Here the music mix becomes muffled and 'woozy', and the filming slows down, as if Helen 2 has gone a little dizzy. The lingering shot of a flash bulb can be read as reflecting the shock that she feels at seeing him at Clive's bar. The sound-effect comes in on the line 'I've got to get myself together', thus implying that Helen 2 must be strong and 'Use the Force' when she talks to Gerry. At this point,

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then, the music becomes both more explicitly diegetic and more closely related to the story: the audience hears what Helen 2 presumably hears (this also happens when the two Helens have their simultaneous dizzy spell and stumble).

That the mixing of the song reflects what Helen 2 hears can also be seen as linking the lyrics' theme with her character. Thus, the words are reinforced as being a reflection of her thoughts, and the upbeat, energetic sound can be read as indicating her mood and sense of achievement at the busy party. Hence, while 'Use the Force' is diegetically motivated, it performs some functions of non-diegetic accompaniment as well. It can be seen as fulfilling the classical Hollywood function of explicating or modifying Helen 1's and Helen 2's thoughts and mood. The way the song is mixed further reflects Helen 2's feelings when it translates her shock at seeing Gerry at the party into the 'woozy' sound. This track is also used similarly to 'classical' film music by providing continuity to the editing between the different story lines of the two Helens (particularly when they both have a dizzy spell).

A further non-diegetic function that 'Use the Force' performs is creating 'spectacle' (which Kalinak (1992, pp.97-99) has noted as being a function of 'classical' film music). The volume of the music, which dominates most other elements on the soundtrack, and the fact that it accompanies an important event in the narrative, mean that this sequence seems much more significant and lively than it might have without musical accompaniment.

Mood, commentary, and spectacle

'Amateur' by Aimee Mann also serves to explicate Helen 2's thoughts. This song plays as she sits in the bar having a drink and smoking a cigarette, presumably trying to calm down, having stormed out of the apartment (after walking in on Gerry and Lydia). It is not entirely clear whether this track is diegetic or non-diegetic: the song could have been playing on the bar's (unseen) stereo as the band sets up for the evening (which can be seen in the background), but the fact that the other diegetic sounds are reduced (in the bar), the mix is 'close', and the song is very 'audible' lead one to conclude that the song is probably non-diegetic.

Either way, the song's sound and lyrics relate closely to what Helen 2's thoughts may be at this point. 'Amateur' is a moderately slow track, with a gentle waltz-like beat. It is sung by a female soloist accompanied by a piano and some subtle string instruments. The singer's voice sounds full of emotion, which one can assume might be regret, as the lyrics indicate that the singer has been disappointed by someone's actions. The words can be read as explicating or reflecting what Helen 2's thoughts towards Gerry may be at this time ('I was hoping that you'd know better', for example).

The lyrics and 'sound' of the song combine to provide a 'mellow' or 'contemplative' mood; this clearly fits in with the general tone of the scene implied by Helen 2's facial expressions (she is trying not to cry), and the fact (established by the narrative) that she is alone in a bar pondering the end of a long-term relationship. The link between 'Amateur' and Helen 2 is strengthened by the fact that the song fades out

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over a cut to Gerry and his friend Russell drinking at another pub. 'Amateur' thus functions to 'underline feelings of a character' (sadness, regret) 'that have been established by other elements in the film' (shots of facial expression, the narrative and so forth), which is one of the key conventions of classical Hollywood musical accompaniment as outlined in the previous chapter.

Another popular track which can be read as explicating characters' thoughts or moods is 'On My Own' by Peach Union. 'On My Own' was a Radio One hit in the UK at the time of its release, and was re-released in the U.S.A. in late 1997 (which was approximately when *Sliding Doors* was released). This could mean that for viewers familiar with the song, this sequence may have gained different meanings to those I have suggested here. Some viewers may have projected meanings of their own from earlier experiences with the song onto this sequence.

'On My Own' performs three functions attributed to 'classical' Hollywood film music: it serves to maintain continuity between the two story lines, creates 'spectacle', and provides commentary on the narrative. 'On My Own' begins on the cut to a 'morning after' shot (both Helens having been out the night before to the bar where Those Magnificent Men were playing): Helen 2 is woken by Anna and Helen 1 is woken by Gerry (both Helens are suffering from the previous evening's over-indulgence). The song continues to play over a sequence which portrays Helen 1 looking for a new job, and Helen 2 getting a radically new haircut with Anna's encouragement.

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'On My Own' functions as non-diegetic accompaniment: the mix is 'close' and most diegetic sound is reduced. Some significant lines of dialogue are heard (Helen 1 laments "There are no PR jobs", and Anna tells Helen 2 "What you need is a change of image") but most are muted under the music. Moreover, the song covers a significant period of diegetic time in the space of a few minutes.

This track is louder and more upbeat than the songs by Those Magnificent Men which played in the previous scenes, and it has a moderately fast tempo. The instrumentation sounds amplified, with drums and piano being the most audible instruments. The female vocalist has a very strong sounding voice. The lyrics that she sings are very audible, as there is little diegetic sound. The theme of the song is 'moving on': some of the key lines are 'It's right for me to go/I'm on my way' and 'I've got to do this on my own'.

In the context of the film, then, this song can be read as relating to both Helens' situations: they are both moving on from setbacks. However, the upbeat, positive feel of the song seems to fit better with Helen 2's situation: she seems to be reasonably happy with her changes, while Helen 1 looks like she is struggling to accept her new position as a waitress, a job she has to take on in order to make ends meet (her stressed state is shown in a scene where she encounters a particularly rude customer). Helen 1's situation could seem all the more unfortunate to the audience, who are also aware of Gerry's infidelity. The song can thus be read as highlighting the hopelessness of Helen 1's new circumstances in contrast to Helen 2's positivity and hope.

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Hence, 'On My Own' makes a comment on the narrative content of this sequence, in one case literally, in the other more ironically. The song can be read as an accurate translation of Helen 2's thoughts, its cheerful sound at the same time contrasting sharply with Helen 1's unfortunate circumstances. During this sequence, then, 'On My Own' works both in parallel and in counterpoint to the action depicted on-screen.

The track also functions to maintain continuity both between the two stories again, and over the montage of shots. As Kalinak notes (1992, pp.81-83), music was frequently used in montage sequences in classical Hollywood films to maintain continuity over potentially disruptive shot changes and to provide a sound that was easier to listen to than the constantly changing diegetic sounds; the music is seen to construct a sense of unity over the whole sequence by relying on extended melody and established musical forms. 'On My Own' clearly fulfils this goal of creating unity by accompanying a moderately fast montage of shots: the song carries on playing as we see a variety of settings (such as Anna's flat, the hairdresser's salon, Helen 1 and Gerry's place, and the restaurant). The montage serves to describe a length of story time in a few minutes of film time: if the events depicted in the montage had been shown in 'real time', the scenes would need to have comprised much more than the few minutes of montage.

The addition of an upbeat popular song to the montage also means that the sequence can be seen as a 'spectacle', which stands out as different to the rest of the 'normal' narrative development. The importance of the actions depicted (that is, Helen 2's haircut as a sign of

'moving on' from Gerry, and Helen 1 being stuck with him, unaware of his infidelity) are highlighted by the fact that a prominent song accompanies this sequence.

'Don't Feel Like Crying' (by Abra Moore) is another song that 'covers' a montage of shots, and can thus be seen to create 'spectacle'. It plays as Helen 2 applies for a loan from a small business centre, continues under a conversation with Anna about James, and then carries on as Helen 2 and Anna set up Helen 2's office with the money she receives. 'Don't Feel Like Crying' functions as non-diegetic accompaniment. It plays under some dialogue near the beginning of the track, but for the latter part (depicting the montage of shots of redecorating the office) no diegetic sound is audible at all. This sequence thus appears similar to a music video, with the song assisting in the creation of a 'spectacle' out of the actions depicted.

The song is upbeat, with a moderate tempo and a 'rock' sound (with some guitar distortion). The lead singer is female, and she sings with a strong voice. 'Don't Feel Like Crying' connotes a mood of strength and positivity, which the lyrics reinforce. The first line of the song, which accompanies a shot of Helen 2 contemplating the small business centre's window, asks 'Is that you? Looks like you've changed your ways'. Because these words are sung by a woman they could be associated with Helen 2's thoughts about Gerry. However, a more likely reading is to relate them to Helen 2's change in attitude: she really wants to succeed in this venture. Moreover, she seems glad to be involved with James rather

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than the unfaithful Gerry, and has regained her motivation and independence, finding the power to achieve on her own.

Thus, in the context of *Sliding Doors'* narrative, 'Don't Feel Like Crying' can be read as underlining or emphasising Helen 2's new state of mind, which has also been shown in her newly rediscovered motivation to be a successful PR person (this is made clear in her conversation with Anna at the start of the song). The repeated line 'Hey look at me, I don't feel like crying anymore' is one which can be easily related to Helen 2. Hence as well as providing continuity during a montage sequence, the song fits into the classical Hollywood conventions of reflecting narrative content, more specifically underlining character's feelings, and signifying emotion (the tempo and mood of the song evoke a certain level of 'excitement' in regards to the prospect of Helen 2 starting her business). That this upbeat positive song fades out during the subsequent scene in which Helen 1 is confronted by Lydia about food poisoning in the office serves to highlight the differences in the two Helens' situations: while Helen 2 is moving on to bigger and better things, Helen 1 is still stuck delivering sandwiches to make ends meet.

'Good Enough' (by Dodgy) appears shortly after 'Don't Feel Like Crying' on the soundtrack. It accompanies the scene where Helen 2 cheers James on at a rowing competition on the river, while Helen 1 takes a stroll along the bank of the same river with Anna. The song is non-diegetic: there is no source shown, and moreover, no source is likely to be present on the river. The song also lacks 'ambient' noise in its recording, further reinforcing its status as non-diegetic. A lot of the diegetic noise is

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made less prominent initially: Helen 2's enthusiastic shouting vies for attention with the song.

'Good Enough' is an upbeat song with a moderately fast tempo. Its strong beat and reasonably high volume connote a positive cheerful mood. The lyrics also allow for similar associations, with lines such as 'It's where I long to be'. The first verse of the song is clearly audible (though not so clearly distinguishable), but the song's volume is reduced when the camera pans to Helen 1 and Anna walking along the river bank (so that their conversation is audible).

Though the lyrics do not seem to explicitly relate to a character's thoughts, the upbeat sound of this track can still be read as reflecting the excited mood on the river as Helen 2 and Clive cheer James along in his race (the characters' moods are also evident in their facial expressions and tone of voice). Hence, 'Good Enough' still functions like a 'classical' Hollywood film music cue. The song is associated with Helen 2's story-line in this scene by the fact that it is hardly heard under Helen 1's conversation, while it is clearly audible during shots of Helen 2. This further strengthens the notion that the song's 'mood' is reflecting her mood.

'Coming Up For Air' by Patty Larkin is another song, which can be read as reflecting Helen 2's mood. The penultimate popular song of the soundtrack, it plays as Helen 2 goes out for dinner with James and some friends, not having seen him for a week or more. A montage of Anna approving Helen 2's outfit, some dinner scenes, James and Helen 2's walk home and a kiss goodnight is accompanied by the track, which is the only

element on the soundtrack for this sequence: no diegetic sound can be heard at all.

'Coming Up for Air' is a slow, gentle, simple song. The female vocalist is accompanied by a guitar and another female voice. This sound gives the track a 'contemplative' feel, and lends the sequence (depicting a reconciliation of sorts between Helen 2 and James) a certain poignancy. Thus, as well as reflecting mood, this track can be seen as signifying 'emotion in general', which was one of the conventions of 'classical' Hollywood film music outlined earlier.

While Helen 2 and James seem to be enjoying themselves at dinner, when they catch each other's eyes their smiles drop and their expressions become serious. There is also a significant lack of smiles for the walk home and kiss goodnight, leaving the sequence with an ambiguous meaning. While the two seem happy in each other's company, a certain level of restraint and uncertainty hovers between them. It is as if they are aware of how they almost lost each other because of lack of communication (James thought Helen 2 needed some time to sort things with Gerry; Helen 2 thought James was ignoring her. The unexplained factor of James' wife could also be contributing to his restraint.)

The mellow nature of 'Coming Up For Air' can thus be read as reflecting this uncertainty. Unlike an unquestionably romantic, 'happy ever after' type song (for example, 'Looks Like We've Made It' by Shania Twain), this track is not clearly positive or negative in its theme. The lyrics speak of 'coming up for air' which connotes refreshment and relief, but the mellow mood of the song partially undermines this 'positivity'.

Summary

Overall, the popular songs in *Sliding Doors* seem to have been used primarily to fulfil functions conventionally performed by 'classical' film music, rather than because of any particularly obvious associations they may carry as popular music. That is not to say, however, that the 'popular music associations' do not modify the meaning in some sequences. Several songs, such as 'Turn Back Time' and 'Use the Force' draw on their status as popular songs to augment the meanings they have already imparted by virtue of their 'sound'. 'Use the Force', for example, 'sounds' busy, and thus reflects the mood depicted on screen. However, the fact that the song is by a popular contemporary group provides another level of meaning (of 'trendiness') that would be difficult to convey with 'traditional' film music. That is to say, the popular music in *Sliding Doors* can be seen to function on two levels: on the first level, it works as 'plain and simple' soundtrack, matching conventions of classical Hollywood film music accompaniment, while on the second level it can provide further meanings for the 'educated' viewer who is aware of a wider range of extratextual connotations associated with a particular track or artist[12]. Thus, the music functions as a 'two tiered system of communication' (Carroll, 1982). That is, in *Sliding Doors* the music functions primarily as conventional soundtrack, but the popular songs used can also provide a range of meaning for the viewer who is aware of their contextual and extramusical associations.

In summary, the popular songs in the *Sliding Doors* soundtrack can be seen to perform one or more of five functions: providing setting

information, functioning as source scoring, explicating characters' thoughts or moods, providing commentary on the narrative, and maintaining continuity between the two story-lines. These functions have all been noted as being conventions of 'classical' Hollywood musical accompaniment. *Sliding Doors'* appropriated popular music soundtrack can thus be seen as functioning in very similar ways to a 'classical' composed soundtrack, while also containing additional levels of meaning available to 'informed' viewers.

NOTES:

[1] This figure does not include the end credit sequence (which is accompanied by a popular song). I have not included it in my 'calculations' because I am trying to get an idea of how much of the narrative action is accompanied by music; including the credits would skew the results.

[2] The style of popular music used could broadly be classified as 'adult alternative pop'.

[3] The average length of the popular music cues is fifteen seconds longer than the average length of the 'classical' composed cues.

[4] See Appendix I for lyric transcripts and the production information for songs on the soundtrack of *Sliding Doors*.

[5] Kassabian (forthcoming, pp.36-38) describes 'source scoring' as "...music which falls between diegetic and non-diegetic music; it is like a source in its content, but tailored to meet scoring requirements". That is, music which is initially motivated in the diegesis can take on functions of non-diegetic accompaniment, for example, ensuring continuity.

[6] From this point forward, the Helen who misses the train and hence remains unaware of Gerry's infidelity (and also remains brunette) will be referred to as Helen 1, while the Helen who catches the train and thus finds out about Gerry and Lydia's affair (and who later dyes her hair blonde) will be referred to as Helen 2. All other characters in each story line will be 'numbered' in the same way as the Helens; thus, the James

that meets Helen 2 is James 2, and so forth. Moreover, when Helen does the same thing in both story lines, she will be referred to simply as 'Helen'.

[7] Jamiroquai is also recognisable in this sense; one of their songs is used later in the film.

[8] The style I am implying here is popular yet not as mainstream as music by pop groups such as Aqua and B*witched. The style tends to be a mixture of musical styles and tastes, often incorporating jazz/acid jazz and blues influences as well as Caribbean or Latin American effects. Examples include Portishead, Headless Chickens, Bjork, and the Dave Matthews Band.

[9] A simple way to see how tracks that play in the background like this work to convey meaning is to mentally substitute them for other tracks and imagine how this would alter the meaning of the sequences. For example, if 'Miracle' (which plays at Clive's restaurant) was replaced by a piece of classical music, or a track by Kenny G, the viewer's resulting impression of the restaurant's image and its clientele would be significantly different.

[10] This is as opposed to the 'close', more sterile mixing of the non-diegetic tracks.

[11] Jamiroquai have released four albums since 1993; their 1995 'Return of the Space Cowboy' achieved platinum sales levels.

[12] The notion that there is a second level of meanings accessible to viewers also implies that viewers are active.

Empire Records.

Empire Records (1995, Allan Moyle) is a teen comedy-drama that centres on a group of youths who work at the eponymous record store. The film is thus clearly linked to the field of popular music even before it begins to play the first of the many songs on its soundtrack. As was the case for *Sliding Doors*, the popular tracks tend to be used in a 'classical' way, fulfilling functions that used to be performed by a 'traditional' score.

The story of *Empire Records* takes place over approximately a twenty-four hour period, starting when Lucas (Rory Cochrane) loses the day's takings at the gaming tables in Atlantic City (with the best intentions, of course). The following day, Corey (Liv Tyler) swears she will finally liberate herself from her good-girl virginity, while Gina (Renee Zellweger) has been there, done that, and will do it again. A.J. (Johnny Whitworth) has vowed that he must tell Corey that he loves her by 1:37 p.m. Mark (Ethan Embry) wants to start a band, but he just needs to learn how to play something. Debra (Robin Tunney) turns up for work and shaves her head, hiding the cuts on her wrist with a large white bandage. Jaded teen idol Rex Manning (Maxwell Caulfield) is doing an in-store appearance with his frustrated personal assistant Jane (Debi Mazar). Finally, there is a fifteen-year-old slacker calling himself Warren Beatty (Brendan Sexton, Jr.) waving a gun and trying to rob the store. Keeping it all together is Joe (Anthony La Paglia), the manager who has just one day to save the store from a corporate take-over. This *mélange* of

characters eventually pull together to save the store, and each other, and all the while the music plays.

Music permeates the world of *Empire Records[1]*. A significant proportion of the film is accompanied by music (approximately 62% of the narrative[2]). Of the 51 minutes of musical accompaniment, there are only 3 minutes 45 seconds of composed cues[3] (average length 28 seconds); the remaining 47 minutes 26 seconds are comprised of popular songs (average length 57 seconds[4]).

It is difficult to clearly distinguish whether many tracks are diegetic or non-diegetic. It is reasonable to assume that music would be playing most of the day at the store, so in that respect the setting justifies the presence of the music. However, many of the tracks are either mixed very closely (that is, lacking any ambient 'noise'), implying that they are not playing 'in' the scene, or they are used in ways that mean it is impossible for the track to be diegetically motivated (for example, by starting in one scene and playing over the cut to the next scene which may be set in a different locale). That it is not always obvious whence a particular song may originate in the diegesis helps to maintain and reinforce the notion that music is almost omnipresent in the characters' lives - as Eddie (James 'Kimo' Wills) says, 'Music is the glue of the world...it holds it all together'. In at least two situations it can be inferred that the music that the audience hears occurs within characters' thoughts (that is, the song playing on the soundtrack is one that someone is hearing inside their head).

The first example of this occurs at the beginning of the film. Lucas is seen drumming on the table in time to a song that plays on the soundtrack. The track plays loudly and is 'closely' mixed, implying that it is not sourced within the setting as such. The song stops fairly suddenly when he finds the Music Town franchise agreement in Joe's desk drawer. The track seems to come to a 'contrived' ending, so it is possible to infer that what was heard was 'in his head'.

Another song which is 'uncertainly motivated' is the first playing of 'Say No More (Mon Amour)' (Rex Manning's single). This song starts on a wipe to its video clip, continues over Mark showing Gina and Corey how Rex's dance step is done, and then carries on further to show Mark singing along as the song fades out while he sweeps. At this point Joe yells out "Mark, can you please not sing?" Mark stops, and so does the accompanying song. The implication that the song was in Mark's thoughts could be read as a way of bringing the film back to the 'real' story having just presented a type of interlude in the form of Rex's music video. The pervasiveness of music in the characters' lives is emphasised in these scenes that imply that the music plays on in the characters' thoughts.

Setting

Most of the popular music in *Empire Records* appears to fulfil the 'classical' film music convention of assisting in constructing setting. The music achieves this by bringing its associations from its 'real life' context and applying them to the film by way of juxtaposition. Most of the music from the film can be considered to fall into the broad genre of 'mainstream

alternative pop/rock'. That is, each track lies somewhere on a continuum between the more mainstream sound of The Cranberries, for example, and, at the other end of the scale, the very alternative metal sound of Gwar or Suicidal Tendencies. The connotations linked with this type of music can be seen to explicate or relate to the film's characters and the store itself. As Frith and other popular music critics note, popular music can help to construct identities and is often appropriated as a means of self-expression (see Frith, 1983).

The associations provided by this genre of music are strengthened by the implication that much of the music played in the store is chosen by the staff (it is implied that the music is playing on the store's stereo. Almost half of the popular music in the film plays as 'background' for scenes in the store: the songs play quietly underneath the dialogue, and their mix is not very 'close'). By "subtly reminding viewers that the film's characters are also consumers of this music" the diegetic motivation emphasises the fact that "...the music [is located] in a particular sociocultural milieu" (Smith, 1995, p.365). That this alternative music is motivated within the diegesis as the characters' choice thus reflects something significant about their personalities. That is to say, the group is a moderately 'alternative' crowd. They are not the idealised, stereotypically 'normal' American teens as constructed in films such as *Can't Hardly Wait* (1998, Harry Elfont and Deborah Kaplan): there is no star football player here, and even the beautiful Corey (whom Deb calls 'Miss Teen America') is hiding a drug problem. Moreover, the type of

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music played also gives a reasonable indication of the film's target audience.

The store 'Empire Records' also fits into the associations conjured up by the alternative music: it is an independent store in a retail environment obviously dominated by corporate chains. The disgust displayed by the staff when told that they will have to fit in to 'Music Town's' strict regimen regarding appearance highlights the value they place on Empire Records' independence. Thus, the associations that the style of music on the soundtrack has obtained in its 'real life' context function to provide connotations that can be applied within the context of the film to its characterisation and setting.

'Significance'

As well as providing connotations about the film's setting, many songs on *Empire Records'* soundtrack can also be read as fulfilling more specific functions, usually relating to the narrative in some way, or creating 'spectacles'; these functions are also typical of 'classical' Hollywood film music. There are three songs that can be seen as relating to the general significance of the day depicted. It is strongly implied in the film that this day is a watershed after which the characters' lives will not be the same. By the end of the day, and of the film, Joe has bought the store from Mitch (Ben Bode), A.J. has decided to go to art school, Corey and Gina have moved to a new level of honesty within their friendship, and Deb has discovered that there are many people who care about her. This theme of 'life change' is also evident in three songs in the film: 'The Honeymoon Is Over', 'This is the Day', and 'Free'.

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'The Honeymoon Is Over' (by The Cruel Sea) plays at the very beginning of the film, starting over the Regency and Warner Bros. logos. Its first line ('Boy it ain't no fun no more') coincides with a shot of the film's title. The song continues as the camera pans down the façade of the store, from the rooftop sign to the front door, through which one can see the lights being turned off. The music fades out after a cut to Lucas reciting Joe's' instructions for closing the store.

Only the first verse of the song is heard during this sequence; the lyrics are as follows:

'Boy it ain't no fun no more

I don't know what to say

The honeymoon is over baby

It's never gonna be that way again'

These lyrics can be read as foreshadowing the events to come. The singer functions as a narrator of sorts, warning that the characters' world is about to change from the idyllic, innocent 'present' (the 'honeymoon') implied in these opening shots, to something more 'grown up'.

The song that plays over the final scene of the film (as all the staff dance on the roof of the store) also reinforces this notion. It thus links back to the first track thematically, rounding off the film's story. 'This is the Day' (by The The) is the only song in the film where there is absolutely no diegetic sound audible: the song is the only element on the soundtrack, even though the characters are shown laughing and talking as they dance (moreover, there is no implied source on the roof).

The song has an upbeat sound, with a moderate tempo and lots of clapping along to the beat. The person described in the lyrics is looking back on old letters, and thinking how much he/she has changed since then. The chorus states:

'This is the day your life will surely change

This is the day when things fall in to place'

This last line coincides with a cut away to a long shot of the roof with everyone dancing on it. This line can thus be read as providing a final conclusion to the film: everything has fallen neatly into place for the characters. These words also strengthen the notion introduced at the beginning of the film that the characters' lives will never be the same again after this particular day at Empire Records. The fact that the song is non-diegetic, and that there is no diegetic sound, can be seen to imply that it functions as external narration (as 'The Honeymoon is Over' did). This is a function attributed to 'classical' Hollywood music, though in this case it is the singer rather than the 'sound' of the cue which provides the comment in the story and its theme.

The reprise[5] of The Martinis' 'Free' which starts as the credits begin can also be seen to maintain a connotation of 'moving on' from how one's life used to be. The lead vocalist sings

'Who are you to tell me it'll always be this way?

I close my eyes and I turn around

And leave it all behind

So free for a moment'

These lyrics can be read as relating to the characters' feelings: now that they have sorted out who they are, and what they mean to each other, they are all free to move on past the boundaries they had set for themselves.

Relating to scenes or sequences

These three songs relate to a general theme within the film as a whole; in contrast, many of the popular songs in *Empire Records'* soundtrack fit with the 'classical' convention of relating to an individual scene or sequence. The first of these is 'Can't Stop Losing Myself' (by the Dirt Clods), which is the song that plays as Lucas is drumming in Joe's office (the song is possibly playing in his thoughts). This song has a fast drum introduction which begins on a cut to a shot of drumsticks beating on neat stacks of money. The camera cuts back to show Lucas doing the drumming, while smoking a cigar and drinking some beer (everything Joe specifically told him not to do). The lyrics can be seen as clearly relating to Lucas' actions which are against the 'rules' Joe set:

'Can't stop losing myself, yeah

Don't need nobody else

Breaking the rules

No, there's nothing to lose, yeah

Can't stop losing myself'

These words match Lucas' behaviour and apparent attitude. The implication that this song is playing in Lucas' thoughts further reinforces the link between his actions and the song's lyrics.

The next song that relates to a particular scene is also by the Dirt Clods. 'Hey Joe' plays as Joe storms out to the back room where A.J. and

Mark are trying to look as though they do not know what Lucas has done (though they have figured it out from what Lucas said to them as they arrived). Joe has obviously heard that the money did not make it to the bank the night before, and his face is like thunder as he finds that the safe is empty. The gentle tone of this moderately paced, Led Zeppelin-esque track provides a counterpoint to Joe's obvious anger. When the singer inquires 'Hey Joe, where you goin' with that gun in your hand?' it almost seems as though the vocalist is personally asking Joe to calm down.

'Free' by the Martinis also relates to a character's thoughts, though more literally than apparent commentary of 'Hey Joe'. As well as playing during the end credits, this track plays as Deb shaves off her hair. In this context, the lyrics of the song can be read as reflecting Deb's implied thoughts as she snips and shaves in front of the bathroom mirror. The song's lyrics focus on breaking free, and changing away from a perceived 'norm', which is exactly what Deb is trying to achieve with her radical action.

Gina's attempt to rebel against Music Town's new rules regarding appearance is also highlighted by music. As she prances out wearing nothing but the Music Town apron, Corey flicks on a stereo which blasts 'Thorn In My Side' (by Quicksand). This track is loud alternative rock, whose lyrics are largely indistinguishable on first hearing. The general sound of the song can be read as 'rebellious' (the type of music deplored by groups such as the PMRC[6]). Thus, it clearly relates to Gina's attempt to twist Music Town's strict uniform rules (moreover, for anyone who

recognises it, the title of the song links well to Joe's exasperation at her behaviour!).

'Romeo and Juliet' (by Dire Straits) is a song which relates to a character as well as to a specific scene. This song is non-diegetic: its mix is 'close', and it plays over several different locales. It begins as Deb puts on her headphones after talking to Berko, continues over a cut to the roof where A.J. is practising what he is going to say to Corey, and then over a cut back inside to Corey who is tidying albums. The first line of the song is heard as A.J. approaches Corey, takes a breath as if to say something, but then turns away again, having lost his nerve. Mark Knopfler's words 'A love struck Romeo' clearly relate to A.J.'s state of mind, and construct him as a 'romantic'. The song's title also links him and Corey to William Shakespeare's play about teenage lovers, *Romeo and Juliet*, which is widely considered to be one of the greatest love stories of all time.

The song continues over a cut to Mark and a customer who is dancing at a listening post. The song does not seem to relate as literally to this scene, but the romantic lyrics can still be seen as appropriate to Mark's awkward attempts to kiss the girl without her noticing. 'Romeo and Juliet' can be seen as providing a sort of 'interlude' to the action: little of narrative importance occurs, but the sentimental song lends a certain poignancy to seemingly normal or mischievous actions (such as Mark trying to kiss a pretty girl).

'Ballad of El Goodo' (by Evan Dando) seems to be diegetically motivated but it still relates to the scene it accompanies (it does not have a very 'close' mix, and the dialogue takes precedence over the song,

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although the lyrics remain largely audible). The song plays quietly in the background as Joe talks to Deb, who is filling out the tax return in one of the listening booths (he tries to offer her help, in a 'bumbling' sort of way). It is largely due to the editing of this scene that the song can be related to Joe and Deb's conversation: the song begins on a cut to Joe looking for Deb, and it ends on a cut to Corey entering Joe's office to ask about taking Rex his lunch.

'Ballad of El Goodo' fits into the 'mainstream alternative rock' genre, but its sound is mellow and gentle, with a guitar accompaniment and male vocalist. The lyrics describe someone who refuses to change their persona to fit in with what the rest of the world wants just because their persona may not be especially successful. These words can be read as relating to Deb's attitude in this sequence: she may be feeling that Joe is trying to interfere and make her change to be like the others in the store who appear more stable. However, it seems as though Joe in fact appreciates Deb for who she is: at the end of their conversation, he says 'You're doing a good job, Deb'.

'Snakeface' (by The Throwing Muses) is another diegetically motivated song that can be seen to relate to a character's mood during a particular scene. This track plays as Corey prepares Rex's lunch, dancing around the table to the music which plays on a stereo on the bench behind her (she is shown turning it off when Rex walks in). The slow tempo song is sung by a female vocalist, and the lyrics seem to recount an experience of 'making out' at a drive-in movie. The romanticised scenario implied in

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these lyrics can be seen as relating to Corey's desire to 'make love' with Rex Manning.

Her dreams are shattered in the following scene when Rex shows his 'true colours'. While Corey had imagined a 'Mills and Boon' style romantic encounter, it transpires that all Rex wants is some no-strings-attached 'action'. In the background of this scene, 'What you are' by Drill plays. There is no diegetic source shown, and the mix is reasonably close. The song is fairly slow, with a female vocalist again. The only lyrics audible are from the repeated refrain 'What you are'. This song can thus be read as applying to Corey's new awareness of Rex's personality; he has revealed his true personality, one in direct opposition to the rosy, romantic picture of him that she had painted.

As Corey runs up to the roof in tears, 'How' by the Cranberries plays. The song begins as Corey grabs her clothes and runs out of the room, continues as she reaches the roof, and fades out as A.J. talks to her. This song plays again a few minutes later, after A.J. has gone away (not having received the response he wanted to his declaration of love). The lyrics of 'How' can be read as relating to Corey's mood at these points. The first time the song plays, the following verse is heard:

'Look you're standing alone (standing alone)

However I should have known (I should have known)

Never before, never again'

These words can be seen as explicating Corey's thoughts: she should have known better than to have 'thrown herself' at Rex, and will never try something so brash again.

The second time the song plays, the same verse is heard, but this time with the added line of 'You will ignore, I will pretend'. This time the words can be read as also relating to what has just happened between her and A.J. Corey has been left alone, and now has to pretend that nothing has happened between them so that they can remain friends. The lyrics of 'How' can thus be read as providing a neat explication of what Corey's thoughts might be during this sequence (for example, they highlight her apparent feelings of loneliness).

A later song also relates to Corey's mood[7]. The song is loud, fast and distorted; it plays as Corey screams "Nothing's ever fine" after her argument with Gina. She runs into the store tearing down the Rex Manning posters on her way. The sound of the song can be seen as reflecting Corey's anger at Gina and towards life in general. The song stops dramatically on a cut to Deb dunking Corey's face in a sink of water to calm her down. That the song stops once her outburst is over serves to emphasise the link between Corey's anger and this track.

At Deb's 'funeral' (organised by Corey so Deb can see what it would be like), 'Surround You' by The Billy White Trio begins to play after Gina has confessed her lack of self-confidence to Corey and the rest of the group. Apparently inspired by her openness, Lucas and Deb also explain something important about themselves. 'Surround You' is a non-diegetic song: there is no implied source, and previous shots of the 'funeral' did not have any music at all. Although its mix is 'close', it is very quiet, and the lyrics cannot be clearly distinguished underneath the dialogue, except for the refrain 'The whole world changes just in time'.

These words can be seen to relate to the turning point that this scene represents: the characters finally feel comfortable enough with each other to reveal their weaknesses, knowing that they will not 'lose face'. Their 'confessions' prevent the group from self-destructing, and mean that, having overcome their individual issues, they can now band together to save the store.

As this unexpectedly momentous 'funeral' carries on out the back, the shoplifter Warren arrives back at the store, this time carrying a gun. When he starts walking around the store firing into the air and yelling at A.J., 'L.A. Girl' by The Adolescents plays in the background. This song plays at a higher volume than the 'background' song that was playing in the earlier scene, and its 'thrash' rock sound can be read as fitting in well with Warren's crazy, angry outburst. The song is further linked to his 'mood' by the fact that it stops when Warren fires at Joe; it is as if Warren has shocked himself back into reality.

The last two songs to relate to particular scenes are 'Sugarhigh' (by Coyote Shivers, who plays Berko) and 'Til I Hear it From You' (by the Gin Blossoms). 'Sugarhigh' is played by 'Berko's' band at the party held to 'save the Empire'. It is loud, closely mixed, and the lyrics are clearly audible[8]. The 'sound' is fast paced, mainstream alternative rock, and the lyrics (about being on a 'high') relate to the excited mood of the party (and to Gina's thrill at singing in a band at last). As 'Sugarhigh' plays, Mitch arrives and tries unsuccessfully to shut down the party, eventually deciding to sell the store to Joe (who has given Mitch the money gathered at the party to cover Lucas' losses). During this sequence, a wide range of

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young people (from hippies in a combi-van to metal heads) are shown dancing together to 'Sugarhigh', symbolising the unity felt within the group as they try to achieve the common goal of saving their store.

'Til I Hear it From You' plays shortly after 'Sugarhigh' for the romantic 'clinch' between A.J. and Corey: she finds him up on the roof still trying to fix the sign, and explains that contrary to her previous reaction, she really does love him. The song's introduction begins as A.J. tells Corey he is going to go to art school in Boston in order to be near her at Harvard. The lyrics start when Corey falls into A.J.'s arms and they kiss (the lights also flicker on at this point, just to complete the moment!). The song is mainstream alternative pop, with a male vocalist. Though the lyrics don't seem to explicitly relate to Corey and A.J.'s situation, the romantic tone fits with this romantic 'high point' of the film[9].

Character associations

The songs described above generally relate to narrative development in scenes. In contrast, several of the songs in *Empire Records* can be seen to construct character associations, which is another conventional function of 'classical' film music. That is, the connotations implied by the song can be read as applying to the character that the song accompanies. A few songs can be read as providing connotations that apply to the whole group. The first of these is 'I don't want to live today' by The Ape Hangers. This song plays at the beginning of the film as Lucas rides to Atlantic City (some credits are still appearing at this point). The song is the dominant element on the soundtrack: the diegetic noise of Lucas' bike engine is significantly reduced. The lyrics of this rock song question whether there

is anything worth living for. They can thus be read as relating to the 'Generation X slacker' stereotype into which most of the staff at 'Empire Records' fit (particularly Lucas, who appears to have no qualms about gambling away his boss' money). Two other songs that play in the background at a different point in the film can also be seen as fitting with this stereotype. 'I don't know why' (by Sacrilicious) and 'Real' (by Real) play under a scene out the back of the store in which Lucas and Warren wait on the sofa, and A.J. sketches at the desk behind them. Only key refrains from both songs are audible, but both seem to be questioning the 'nature of life'. The lyrics of 'I don't know why' ask 'Do you ever feel you can't go on? /Do you ever feel you just don't belong?' while Real inquires 'Can you tell me what's real in this world?' Both themes can be seen to fit in with the disillusionment that has been identified as a key characteristic of the Generation X identity, and which seems to be a key aspect of some of *Empire Records'* characters' thoughts.

Along with these 'group' character associations, there are several tracks that can be read as being associated with individual characters. For example, as Deb arrives at work for the day (before she shaves her head) 'She Walks' by the Poster Children plays. The lyrics for this song are not entirely clear as lines of dialogue dominate at certain points, but the general sense is as follows:

'She walks on hollow ground

She walks on hollow ground

She walks on open hearts

She walks on open hearts

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She rides over....'

The song ends as Deb slams the door into the bathroom, cutting herself off from her colleagues, and cutting off the song that was giving some insight into her character. Thus, if the lyrics are read as relevant to her, Deb is not stable (walking on 'hollow ground'), but still manages to come across as tough (walking on 'open hearts'). This perception of her is reinforced by her reaction to the greetings of the other staff members: she does not meet their eyes and gives them 'the finger'.

Songs which relate to Mark's character are the punk/metal songs 'I shot the Devil' (by Suicidal Tendencies) and 'Saddam-A-Go-Go' (by Gwar), which obviously construct him as a metal fan. Both songs are diegetically motivated: Mark puts 'I shot the Devil' on the store stereo, and he watches a video of 'Saddam-A-Go-Go' on the television out the back (while eating some of Eddies 'special recipe' brownies). A further insight into his character is provided by the overlaying of 'Rock'n'Roll/EGA' (by Daniel Johnston) onto Gwar's track. This more gentle song plays as the 'monster' in Gwar's video 'speaks' out of the television set to Mark, and asks him to play with the band (at which point Mark appears in the music video). The vocalist sings

'There was a day when I was so lonely

Every day was an eternity

But, oh, that rock and roll

It saved my soul'

It is not clear whether Mark is aware of this song or not: it is arguable that he isn't, as Gwar's monster sounds are still audible quietly in the

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background. 'Rock'n'Roll/EGA' could be read as a comment on Mark's character: even though he presents a cheerful, even slightly manic, persona, Mark is in fact not all that happy, but he gains solace from listening to 'his' music.

There are three songs that can be considered to be associated with Warren, the shoplifter. The first is 'Whole Lotta Trouble' (by Cracker) which plays very quietly in the background as Lucas first approaches Warren in the store, suspecting that he is stealing CDs. This song is almost inaudible under the dialogue, but once recognised, its title certainly reflects Warren's situation. The second song to be more explicitly associated with this character is 'Ready, Steady Go' by the Meices. This track begins on the cut to Warren running out of the store with his 'loot', with Lucas in hot pursuit. Lucas chases Warren around the store and through the car yard opposite, until finally Warren runs into an open car door and falls down. The fast paced song reflects the urgency depicted in the 'chase', and the repeated chorus line of 'ready steady go' serves to link the 'chase' to the idea of speed in a race. However, the lyrics can also be seen to relate to Warren's character. The opening verse describes a 'reject from the wrong side of the tracks' who is to be turned in to 'skin and bones'. Along with the later song 'Little Bastard' (by the Ass Ponies), which is also associated with Warren, 'Ready, Steady, Go' implies a fairly clear idea of his delinquent character.

There is only one song that is clearly associated with Joe's character, and that is 'If You Want Blood (you've got it)' by AC/DC. Joe plays this on the jukebox in his office so he can vent some anger by drumming along

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(Lucas then puts it across the PA system so the entire store can hear). AC/DC is an older group than most on the soundtrack, and can thus be read as reinforcing the age difference between Joe and his staff.

Edwyn Collins' song 'A Girl Like You' is associated with Gina, Corey, and A.J. This song begins quietly as Gina talks to Rex in store about what colour and style his underwear are (she apparently has a 'gift' of being able to tell without looking). The song increases in volume when she goes out the back to the money room so that Rex can follow and answer the 'sixty-four thousand dollar question', as he puts it. The first line ('Never known a girl like you before') is heard as Gina walks into the room, with Rex's entrance coinciding with the second line. This track's lyrics can be read as relating to Gina's character: the woman described in the song seems to control the singer with her 'sexiness', just as Gina seems to manipulate the men she encounters.

The camera soon cuts away to A.J. painting outside, but the song keeps playing over the cut. In this following scene, Corey tries to talk to A.J. about their earlier 'discussion' on the roof, explaining that she thinks he is too close a friend to get involved romantically. When he storms off, she takes one of her tablets (which turn out to be amphetamines); this action is on the line 'You've made me acknowledge the devil in me'. The song eventually fades out after a cut to Deb making some badges to sell.

'A Girl Like You' is one of the most clearly non-diegetic songs in *Empire Records*: its mix is close (though all diegetic sound is still audible), there is no implied source, and moreover, it would be logistically impossible to have the same source playing simultaneously and

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continuously in three different places. That the song plays over two significant scenes means that it can be associated with A.J. and Corey as well as Gina. Although some specific lines can be seen as related to Corey or A.J. (such as the mention of 'the Devil' as Corey takes her drugs), the lyrics seem to most closely relate to Gina's personality. Hence, it is possible to see the continuous playing as a chance to get the song heard (thus increasing the audience's awareness of the music in the hope of selling more copies of the soundtrack album).

Rex Manning is associated with 'Video Killed The Radio Star' (by the Buggles). This song plays as the staff prepare the store for his visit. Rex is a jaded television-turned-pop-star whose latest single ('Say No More (Mon Amour)') is selling well among those who remember his appearance in 'The Family Way', but not among the younger market he wants to reach[10]. There are two potential ways of reading the relation between Rex and this song. First, one could see Rex as one of the new 'video stars' implied by the song: he is one of today's new 'multimedia' stars who is known for his video clips and television appearances as well as his 'hit' song. Alternatively, one could read Rex as one of the 'radio stars' described in the lyrics whose careers have reached their 'use-by' date and who are left to gather the proverbial dust in anonymity, remembered only by a few devoted fans. The film goes on to imply that Rex Manning is well on his way to being one of these 'uncelebrated' stars: although he is famous now, he seems to be a product of 'yesterday' (the vanity and concern over image, the 1980s bouffant hairstyle and shirts, the

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'cheesy' music video and lyrics and so forth) and is thus on his way 'out', much to his disappointment.

Spectacle

'Video Killed the Radio Star' is also one of several songs in *Empire Records* which can be seen to be constructing a 'spectacle' out of relatively mundane activities. While the song plays, there is a montage of shots showing the staff setting up tables, bringing out television screens, stringing up signs and so forth. These activities would be fairly uninteresting to watch on their own (there doesn't even seem to be much conversation going on between them all), but putting the song with the action converts the montage sequence into a 'music video' which is much more exciting, and is more likely to maintain audience attention, as well as piquing their interest in the music (in the inevitable hope that this will increase soundtrack album sales)[11].

'Seems' by Queen Sarah Saturday and 'Plowed' by Sponge also function to create 'spectacle'. 'Seems' plays near the beginning of the film as the group get the store ready for the day, dusting and sweeping and so forth, while 'Plowed' plays as they prepare for the party at the end of the film. As well as creating spectacle, 'Plowed' can be seen to mask the passage of diegetic time: during the few minutes of song time, the Empire Records staff set up all the gear for the party, which one could assume would have taken significantly longer than 'minutes' to achieve. Both 'Seems' and 'Plowed' are the most prominent element on the soundtrack: most diegetic sound is reduced, except for the voices of the group singing along to 'Seems'. Because of this 'audibility', awareness of the music is

likely to be increased in these sequences, probably in an attempt to encourage purchase of the soundtrack (even though some of the most prominent songs, including these three, are not on the soundtrack album[12]).

Summary

While the popular music does fulfil several 'classical' functions of film soundtracks, *Empire Records* is a film that also seems to rely on audience recognition for some of its meaning construction. Because a significant proportion of the music plays very quietly in the background of certain scenes, viewers could easily let it pass by unrecognised if they are not acquainted with that particular track. However, if viewers are knowledgeable in the area of 'mainstream alternative pop/rock' and are familiar with a certain song, they may gain a different level of meaning for that scene as compared to the unversed viewer. This means that, as in the *Sliding Doors* soundtrack, the music in *Empire Records* functions as a 'two tiered system of communication', wherein the range of extratextual connotations available to an 'educated' viewer can enrich the more 'obvious' meanings that the songs impart in their capacity as straightforward soundtrack.

In summary, the popular music in *Empire Records'* soundtrack mainly functions to assist in the construction of setting and characterisation. Overall the music lends the film a contemporary, 'trendy' edge which would otherwise not have been so obvious. Often, it seems as though the music is playing just for the sake of it, to overemphasise the intended 'hip-ness' of the film, but in some situations

the music does perform certain roles, such as explicating or reflecting something in a scene or sequence (generally achieved through lyrical juxtaposition with narrative action), or constructing a 'spectacle' out of a sequence. All three of these functions rely on features particular to popular music: they rely on it being 'popular' within a certain societal group; they rely on the music generally having words; and they rely on popular music's strong structure to maintain the long 'spectacle' sequences. Moreover, these functions are all recognised as functions of classical Hollywood film music. Hence it can be concluded that the popular music soundtrack of *Empire Records* fulfils similar roles to the classical film score, while also providing a range of meanings for the viewer who is aware of its contextual and extramusical associations.

NOTES:

[1] See Appendix II for lyric transcripts and the production information for songs on the soundtrack of *Empire Records*.

[2] As with the analysis of *Sliding Doors*, the end credit sequence is not considered part of the 'narrative'; this is in order to obtain a clearer idea of how much of the actual narrative action is accompanied by music.

[3] The eight composed cues were distinguished from the popular music tracks by their lack of lyrics, and 'uncannily' close fit with the length of the scene they accompany (most of the popular music tracks are more autonomous in relation to the action).

[4] There are 51 popular music cues made up of 45 different songs. These figures come from my own counting; it should be noted that there are 49 songs listed in the film's credits.

[5] 'Free' plays earlier in the film, accompanying the scene where Debra shaves her head.

[6] The PMRC (Parents Music Resource Centre) was formed in the United States in 1985 and headed largely by wives of Senators or Congressmen who were also 'born again' Christians. The group aimed to 'clean up' rock music, which they believed was potentially harmful to young people. They published a *Rock Music Report* in which they denounced what they claimed to be the five major themes in rock music (rebellion, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity and perversion, violence-nihilism, and the occult), began an organised letter writing campaign, and started campaigning for ratings on albums. They were also involved in the 1985 US Senate Commerce Committee hearings on pornography in rock music (Shuker, 1994, pp.263-267).

[7] I do not recognise this song, and even after repeated listening cannot figure out what its title might be.

[8] The lyrics that play in the film are a 'sanitised' version of the song that is on the soundtrack album; moreover, 'Gina' does not sing on the album.

[9] The fact that 'Til I Hear it From You' was written for *Empire Records* also goes a long way towards explaining why it is used in this climactic scene.

[10] Ironically Maxwell Caulfield (the actor who plays Rex Manning) has also appeared in several television programmes (such as *Dynasty*, and *Beverly Hills 90210*) as well as many films (the most widely known would be *Grease 2* with Michelle Pfeiffer).

[11] Hilary Lapedis maintains that such montage sequences are an example of the way using the 'three minute pop song' in film soundtracks has altered the form of films in general; she states that "Just as commercial television in America has learned to structure its narrative around frequent commercial breaks...so the scenes in numerous Hollywood and, more recently, British movies emulate the structure of the pop record" (1999, p.368). Lapedis asserts that more and more films contain an episodic plot structure that takes advantage of the structure of the pop song to draw in its audience who are familiar with this form of spectatorship ('the pop song is [their] dominant timespan') (1999, p.369).

[12] It is likely that the selection of songs for the album had more to do with the licensing and copyright arrangement than with which tracks were most prominent during the film.

Topless Women Talk About Their Lives.

Topless Women Talk About Their Lives (1997, Harry Sinclair) is a New Zealand made film that premiered at the Cannes film festival in 1997[1]. Its soundtrack is also 'New Zealand-made', featuring songs from several local artists. Despite the more idiosyncratic style of the music, the popular tracks are still largely used in similar ways to 'classical' Hollywood film music cues.

The film centres on a group of twenty-something adults living in Auckland, New Zealand. Liz (Danielle Cormack) is disturbed to find she is about to face motherhood on her own. Her cute but tiresome boyfriend Geoff (Andrew Binns) seems to be more concerned with ravishing her pregnant body and knitting than dealing with his previous girlfriend's imminent return from overseas. Liz's best friend Prue (Willa O'Neill) is coping with some dramas of her own as she deals with marriage to Niuean-born Mike (Shimpal Lelisi). Neil (Joel Tobeck), Liz's 'ex' and the father of her baby, is trying desperately to figure out what his role is going to be in this child's life. Then there is Ant (Ian Hughes), a neurotic, aspiring film-maker who presents his debut feature film 'Topless Women Talk About Their Lives' to a less than impressed audience. Harry Sinclair's 'slice of life' film examines all the characters' trials and tribulations, not quite tying up the loose ends before the birth of Liz's baby at the end of the narrative.

Music accompanies approximately 32% of *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives'* narrative[2]. These 25 minutes are made up of 14

different songs arranged into 24 cues[3]. While the proportion of the film that has musical soundtrack is significantly less than was the case for *Sliding Doors* or *Empire Records*, in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* all of the music is made up of pre-existing songs, most of which are popular. Moreover, all of the tracks are clearly audible, and mixed closely Most of them function as non-diegetic accompaniment; only a few are motivated within the diegesis. This audibility means that the chance of a viewer noticing the soundtrack is increased, which also potentially increases soundtrack album sales. Cushla Dillon, the film's music supervisor and editor, expressed the hope that the film's soundtrack might open the door for some New Zealand music overseas (quoted in Aldworth, 1997).

All of the songs used in the *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* soundtrack come from the catalogue of the New Zealand music label, Flying Nun[4]. As the film's director, Harry Sinclair, explains, Flying Nun is "...a record label which for 15 years has promoted an independent sound in New Zealand and which has developed a cult following overseas" (New Zealand Film, 1997, p.2). Because the music in the film is by New Zealand groups, one of the functions of the music in the film can be seen as representing 'New Zealand-ness' to both local and international audiences. Despite the fact that the film was a great opportunity to use a side of New Zealand music which is not very widely known locally (but has cult status both in New Zealand and overseas), Dillon noted that they "...never set out to make a grand statement about New Zealand music", that the soundtrack was 'just a compilation'.

Dillon and Sinclair raided the Flying Nun archives and chose songs that they felt "...honoured and conveyed the emotions and energies within the story" (Aldworth, 1997). Thus, besides representing 'New Zealand', most songs in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* can be seen to fulfil functions considered conventional in 'classical' Hollywood film music. Some songs act as source music, providing connotations about setting, while others reflect, underline or explicate mood, or provide commentary on a scene[5]. Some can also be seen as functioning to maintain continuity or provide unity to the film.

A couple of tracks do not seem to have a clear function (these are the first playing of Superette's 'Saskatchewan', accompanying Prue, Mel and Liz's walk along a beach, and The Clean's 'Anything Could Happen' which plays as Liz waters the plants on the rooftop 'patio'). The tracks are clearly audible (both play non-diegetically), but the sound of the song, or the lyrics (if audible), does not appear to relate closely to the apparent mood or action in the accompanying scene in any way. It is arguable that such tracks are present to increase the audience's awareness of the soundtrack as a commodity that they may buy after the film (or have already bought before seeing the film). The beginning of the scene in which Saskatchewan plays, for example, contains little dialogue, so the viewer can clearly hear the reasonably loud song playing.

Setting and source music

Four songs can be considered to be source music, even though they are all mixed more closely than is usual for this type of diegetically motivated music (which usually contains some ambient noise to make it

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sound 'realistic'). 'Jungle Beat' by King Loser begins over a scene in which Neil helps Liz cut her toenails (she can't reach over her pregnant torso); the song continues in the subsequent scene where Liz, Prue and Mel are having a night out at a bar. This continuation of the music links the two scenes together: one can assume that Liz was getting ready to go out in the first scene.

While there is no obvious source for the music in the toenail cutting scene, it is reasonable to expect that a song such as this one would be playing in the bar; its strong, surf sounding beat also matches the tempo of the strip-show occurring in the background. The song can be read as possibly diegetically motivated, but it also carries some connotations that can be linked to the bar, and its clientele: that is, the associations carried by this 'alternative' music (for example, an implicit 'anti-mainstream' attitude) are linked to the setting by way of juxtaposition.

'Buddy' by Snapper also plays in the bar. It starts on a cut to the friends dancing, just after Prue has found out that Ant is staying with Mike. The song is loud, fast-paced, and distorted. As well as fitting in with the setting of the bar, this track can be read as reflecting Prue's anger, discontent and confusion about her crumbling relationship with Mike (also represented by her 'violent' dancing).

Two other songs also function as diegetic source music, providing connotations about the setting. The first one is 'Outerspace' by the 3Ds; this lively track begins on a cut to a close shot of a cocktail being poured out of a shaker in a bar. The song continues under conversation between Neil (who is revealed as the barman) and Liz, who was frustrated sitting at

home, and so decided to come out. It is a moderately paced rock song which plays fairly loudly, but the lyrics are still indistinguishable under the dialogue. The lively mood of the song matches the sociable ambience of the bar, which is destroyed when Geoff and Kerry start to fight (the song cuts out when Geoff pushes Kerry up against the wall).

The final song to imply connotations about setting is 'Hot Murder' by Solid Gold Hell, which plays at the party to which Kerry takes Geoff after they leave the bar. The moderately paced song has a 'metal' sound to it, with heavy guitars and drums playing (no lyrics are audible). The 'thrashy' sound of the track seems to fit with the apparent nature of the party that was obviously in full swing earlier: the house looks like it has been ransacked.

Reflecting mood

Several other songs can be read as reflecting or underlining a mood that has been established by other elements, which is a function commonly attributed to 'classical' Hollywood film music. The first popular song after the opening credits ('North By North' by The Bats) plays as Liz hurries to make her appointment at the abortion clinic; it also plays near the end of the film when she tries to get to the hospital to have her baby. In both cases the song's guitar introduction starts as Liz gets into the elevator in her flat telling Geoff that he needn't come with her. As she rushes outside the bass and drums begin, both at a fairly fast tempo. The lyrics of the song are largely indistinguishable.

'North by North's' pulsing beat emphasises Liz's hurry and frustration as she first misses the bus, then has trouble hitching rides. In

the first case (at the beginning of the film) she is eventually picked up by a woman with a carload of mischievous children. As they drive along, the vocalist can be heard singing 'Some people are happy most of the time'. This line is the only one that can be heard above the music and the chaotic noise from the children. It is in stark contrast to the image of a worried Liz sitting in the back of a crowded car, trying to get to an appointment at an abortion clinic: the song thus acts as a counterpoint to the action depicted on screen.

When 'North by North' plays at the end of the film, it carries a similar set of connotations: again, Liz is hurrying to get somewhere before it is 'too late'. In this sequence, she walks as fast as she can, gripping on to lampposts as her contractions begin. Eventually she finds Ant, who is about to leap off a motorway over-bridge. She orders him to help her, and he ends up taking her to a vet clinic when they realise that there is no time to reach a hospital. The music stops on the cut to the interior of the vet's waiting room, just as in the earlier sequence, the song stopped on a cut to the abortion clinic's receptionist filing her fingernails. In these two sequences, then, 'North by North' functions to reflect the mood ('urgency') depicted in the action, which is a key convention of 'classical' film music[6].

'Fish', by the Clean, is another song that can be read as reflecting the mood of the scene it accompanies. This song first plays as Liz irons a shirt and gets ready to go out to Ant's film premiere. The song has an upbeat sound with strong bass and drums; it has a slightly 'sixties' rock feel to it in terms of the guitar playing. This lively track can be read as

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conveying a similar mood (of excitement and so forth) to that which one would expect Liz to be experiencing as she gets ready for a big night out. Her plans for getting ready are interrupted however, by her amorous boyfriend Geoff.

At this point the song and the camera both cut away to Mike and Prue walking along an inner-city street. After their brief conversation, Prue kisses Mike and at this point 'Fish' resumes playing. It continues over a cut back to Geoff and Liz, and stops on a cut to them lying spent on the floor of the flat. This second sequence of shots of Geoff and Liz is quickly edited, further emphasising the fairly frenzied mood of the scene, which the song can be seen to reinforce.

As well as being played over the scene on the beach (mentioned earlier), 'Saskatchewan' plays at two later points in the film. The second occasion is when Ant is wandering around slightly panicked and confused. The song begins on a cut away from a close-up shot of his face, to show that he had been talking to a billboard, and had unwittingly stripped off all of his clothes. 'Saskatchewan' is one of the louder, more thrashy sounding songs on *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*' soundtrack, and its strong distorted sound fits well with Ant's apparent puzzlement at his own behaviour. That is, the sound of the song fits well with the elements of the character's mood that have also been indicated in the visuals.

The third and last time that 'Saskatchewan' plays is as Liz gives birth to her baby at the vet clinic. The child is delivered in the kennel room; Liz's pained yelling is accompanied by a cacophony of animal

sounds as well as this song from Superette. In this scene, the distorted nature of the song adds to and matches in tone with the dissonant sounds of the animals barking, chirping and meowing. Its sound thus reflects and contributes to the mood of this rather chaotic scene.

'Hey Suess' by the 3Ds is another song that reflects or underlines the scene it accompanies. This song plays twice in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*: it is first heard during the opening credits (which will be discussed later) and then again nearer the end of the film as Geoff 'borrows' a car to chase Bryony as she drives towards the airport (he ends up colliding with Neil, who is riding on his Vespa to find Geoff). 'Hey Suess' has an alternative rock sound, with 'jangly' guitars alternating with distorted riffs and largely indistinguishable lyrics. Its fast pace matches Geoff's frantic mood: he wants to stop Bryony from going overseas.

Explicating mood

Some songs in the *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* soundtrack fulfil the 'classical' Hollywood film music function of explicating or illustrating the otherwise unclear mood of a particular scene. The first of these tracks is 'Ugly Things' by Superette. This song plays fairly early on in the film: its introduction begins under the end of the scene in the Chinese restaurant just after Geoff has told Liz that he already has a girlfriend. It continues over the cut to Liz at work, where Neil comes to visit, and fades out as Liz tries to get Neil to leave. The song begins again after Liz has been fired, as she walks away from Neil on the street outside. It ends when Neil catches up to Liz to apologise.

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'Ugly Things' plays underneath the dialogue and other diegetic sounds of the scenes it accompanies, but is still closely mixed. It has a gentle, slow tempo, guitar based introduction; this is all that is heard in the first cue. The sound of the song lends a tone of sadness or melancholy to the shot of Liz at the office: she seems to be having trouble focusing on her work. The song can thus be read as indicating that Liz is feeling 'down' having found out that Geoff has a girlfriend. One could assume that she is wondering how she is going to cope as a solo mother; it appears that she had been assuming Geoff might stay around to help her.

The reprise of the song a few minutes later draws on similar connotations. Now Liz has lost her job, on top of having to cope with the prospects of solo motherhood, and to make things worse, Neil, her ex-boyfriend and the father of her baby, is nagging her to clarify his involvement. As Liz walks home through the city, she encounters a fun run which blocks the street she had wanted to cross. At this point, the introduction of 'Ugly Things' ends, and it turns into a more upbeat, rock sounding song. The vocalist sings:

'If you think about it now,

Thoughts don't feel good'

These words, and the more lively, rock-sounding tone of the body of the song can be read as illustrating Liz's mood which now seems more angry and frustrated than sad or melancholy.

'Waves', also by Superette, is another song that can be read as explicating the mood of a scene. This track begins over a shot of Mike watching Prue lead Ant away from the crowd at the film premiere. It

continues over shots of Liz's taxi ride, which Geoff invades, and then further over the friends' plane flight and arrival at Niue.

'Waves', like 'Ugly Things', has a slow, gentle guitar sound, which is maintained throughout this sequence. Its general sound is quite melancholic, and can thus be seen as a reflection primarily of Mike's and Liz's moods. Mike seems to be concerned about Prue's level of commitment to their relationship (this was made clear in the conversation they had while walking along the street in an earlier scene). As Prue brushes him off in order to save Ant from the potential embarrassment of facing reporters (or lack thereof) at the premiere, Mike's facial expression could be read in a variety of ways, but the tone of the song clarifies his mood as more 'disappointed' than anything else.

Meanwhile, Liz is taking a taxi home, with a no doubt well-meaning taxi driver who is chatting about solo motherhood. When they stop at some traffic lights, Geoff climbs in the back seat with Liz and tries to apologise for following her to the theatre and embarrassing her there. Liz doesn't want to speak to him, however, so she hops out at the next set of lights. As was the case with Mike, Liz's mood could be read in several ways, but the mellow song suggests it is a fairly glum kind of annoyance at Geoff, rather than a more spirited anger.

Because it also plays over the scenes of the group's arrival in Niue (for Mike and Prue's wedding), 'Waves' can be seen as providing a level of information not present in the visual elements of this sequence: while the characters all seem happy and smiling as they meet Mike's family on the island, the continuation of the slow, melancholy song implies that the

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issues that developed on the night of the film premiere will become significant again at some point during their stay (which does end up happening: Liz opens up about her worry of being alone during her pregnancy, and Ant finds out that, contrary to what Prue told him, no-one really liked his film).

A third song that clarifies the mood of the scenes it accompanies is 'Spooky' by the 3Ds. This song plays three times in the film; the first two times it connotes a certain mood, while the third time it can be read as commentary (this instance will be discussed later). The first time this track plays is in Niue, just after Ant has found out from Mike that Prue lied to him about the reaction to his film. When Ant sees her shortly after this revelation, he runs away, apparently leaping off a cliff into the ocean beneath. 'Spooky' begins as Prue screams for Ant over the edge of the precipice. It continues over a cut to some fishermen (with Neil) noticing a bemused looking Ant floating in the water, then keeps playing over shots of Ant recuperating in bed, and shots of Liz snorkelling the next day. The song ends as Liz expels the water out of her snorkel when Neil taps her on the shoulder.

'Spooky' is a slow song, with only a guitar accompanying the vocalist's gentle lyrics. Its tone matches the idyllic scene of men fishing at sunset off a tropical island, but the words can also be seen to relate to Ant's thoughts or state of mind (the first line of the song, 'I was so lonely', coincides with a shot of Ant looking decidedly perplexed about finding himself floating in the sea). The melancholic tone of the song also links with the scenes of him recuperating in bed. He still seems confused

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about what is going on, and appears to be in a 'post-outburst' state of surreal calm.

The gentle tone of 'Spooky' can also be read as matching the scene of Liz snorkelling: it implies that she is escaping from the 'real world', just enjoying the beauty of underwater life. This connotation is strengthened by the fact that the song ends suddenly when Neil interrupts her, and brings her back to reality with a discussion about their relationship.

The second time 'Spooky' is heard is just after this conversation. Liz and Neil establish that they could never fall in love with each other again, so decide to be together in a boring 'convenience' relationship for the sake of their child. This time the song can be read as connoting a certain 'poignancy' to their agreement: it doesn't seem to be what either of them would have imagined for themselves and their futures, but they will settle for it, because it is better than any other viable option. The lyrics can be read as reflecting this situation metaphorically:

'Turn out the day light,

Turn on the night'

These words can be related to the end, for Liz and Neil, of the dream of spending the rest of their lives with someone they really love.

'Spooky' continues playing over the group's arrival back in New Zealand. The sober mood of the song fits in with the less than perfect homecomings that they all experience: Liz sees Geoff there, but he is actually waiting to meet his girlfriend Bryony; Mike greets his friends and family without his new wife Prue, who has followed Ant outside (but he

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runs away from her again). The song ends on a cut to Bryony saying hello to her car.

The last song that can be read as explicating mood is 'Animal' which is also by the 3Ds. This song plays twice, both times functioning to connote something about Liz's thoughts or feelings. The first time it is heard, the song starts on a cut to Liz rubbing oil onto her now obviously pregnant belly, and continues as she cleans the flat; the music fades out when Neil arrives home. The song has a moderately slow tempo, achieving a relatively alternative sound with a distorted guitar. Most of the lyrics are not distinguishable, apart from the first line which says 'Day's going nowhere'. The gentle tone and slow pace of the song can be read as clarifying Liz's thoughtful mood as she sits on her bed apparently pondering her pregnancy, possibly wondering about the broader state of her life in general (the line of the song suggests that she might be worried about her lack of 'direction' and clear plans for the future).

The second time 'Animal' is heard Liz is again shown lying on her bed, this time playing with a child's toy. The song continues and eventually fades out under a conversation between Neil and Liz on the roof. As with the previous scene in which 'Animal' played, the song lends a 'thoughtful' tone to the shot of Liz playing with the toy. The imminent birth of her baby seems to be occupying a large proportion of her thoughts.

Providing commentary

A few songs in the *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* soundtrack can be read as providing commentary on the narrative. This is another function noted as common to 'classical' Hollywood music. The

first of these is 'Hey Suess' by the 3Ds, which plays over the opening credits. This song can be read as commenting on the film as a whole. Combined with the unconventional hand-held filming style, this loud, distorted, generally alternative sounding song constructs the film as 'alternative' or 'independent' too. That the 3Ds are a New Zealand group also means that the 'New Zealand-ness' of the film is reinforced. Moreover, the alternative lively sound is likely to be seen as 'youthful' (as much popular music is associated with 'youth') and contemporary. This credit sequence, then, can be read as providing an idea of what the audience can expect from the rest of the film (that is, a non-conventional, youth-focused film, made in New Zealand).

Chris Knox's song 'Not Given Lightly' can also be read as providing commentary on the scenes it accompanies. This song starts on a cut to Liz talking to Prue on the telephone just after she has told Neil that she really does love him (and he has admitted that he feels the same way about her). 'Not Given Lightly' is a fairly gentle love song with guitar and some acoustic sounding percussion accompanying the vocals. The lyrics are reasonably typical of a love song (''Cause it's you that I love/And it's true that I love/And it's love not given lightly'). They thus contrast strongly with what Liz is telling Prue on the telephone: she admits that she doesn't actually love Neil, that she only told him that she did because she doesn't want to go through everything alone. The romantic lyrics can be seen as providing an ironic commentary or counterpoint to Liz's situation: while the words describe an idyllic romantic situation, she is lamenting the fact that she lied to Neil about loving him. On another

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level, Liz's confession can be read as modifying potential perceptions of the song: if she has managed to lie so convincingly to Neil, then how does one know that the apparently sincere vocalist is not lying too?

'Not Given Lightly' also continues over a shot to the 'other end' of the phone call, depicting a reconciled Prue and Mike in bed together. In their case, the song seems to relate more literally to the scene it accompanies. Prue and Mike seem to have discussed the problems that had separated them for a time, and their relationship appears to be stronger again.

The third time 'Spooky' is heard, at the end of the film (as Prue and Mel visit Liz and her new baby), it also functions as commentary on the scene. The song starts as Prue passes the baby over to Liz, and then snuggles up next to her commenting on Neil's absence (he is lying down a bank beside the road having been hit by Geoff as he tried to lure Bryony back). 'Spooky' continues over the end credits. The mellow tone of this song here emphasises the 'underside' (Neil's death) to what Prue, Liz and Mel think is their 'happy ending'. It thus can be seen as providing an external commentary which modifies the narrative action depicted on screen.

Unity and continuity

As well as providing connotations about particular scenes, some tracks in the *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* soundtrack function on a formal level to maintain continuity or provide unity to the film; these two functions are conventions often performed by 'classical' Hollywood film music. Several songs maintain continuity by playing 'around' a scene

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(they begin, stop for the key action, and then play again at the end) or playing over a significant scene change or narrative development. The first of these is 'Ugly Things' which, as described above, plays 'around' the scene in which Liz is fired from her job. The repetition of the song serves to link the moods of the two scenes it accompanies: the second time it plays (as Liz walks away from Neil) the despondent mood is linked back to the first time it was heard (when Liz found out about Geoff's girlfriend). Thus, the song links these separate scenes into a sequence, maintaining continuity in terms of mood.

A second song which functions to maintain continuity is 'Fish' by the Clean, which plays as Liz and Geoff get ready for the film premiere. The song pauses to show Mike and Prue's conversation, but resumes just before the cut back to Liz and Geoff. The song is linked with these two characters, and implies that the 'action' was occurring simultaneously with Mike and Prue's talk on the street. That the song is the same for both shots of the scene reinforces the notion that the same scene has been continuously occurring, thus implying continuity to the action.

'Waves' is a track that plays over a significant scene change (from Auckland at night, to a flight to and arrival at Niue during the day). The fact that the song continues playing implies a link between these very different settings: it can be inferred that the happenings of the night in Auckland will become significant somehow during their stay at Niue (which does happen, as was outlined above).

'Spooky' plays over significant narrative development (the agreement between Liz and Neil to be together for the sake of the child).

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That the song stops for their conversation means that the talk is highlighted as a significant 'event' that should be seen as crucial to the development of the narrative. The song connotes a similar melancholy or despondent feelings both times that it plays here, so it functions to maintain continuity of mood around Neil and Liz's decision. It thus implies that their feelings about their situation have not changed to any great extent, despite the fact that they have made such a significant decision.

Some tracks in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives'* soundtrack play over a few different scenes but fulfil similar functions each time they are heard. They thus function like the leitmotifs of 'classical' film music, which aim to create unity by repetition. 'Animal' functions similarly both times it plays: it can be read as explicating Liz's thoughts about her baby. 'North by North' also functions in this way, contributing to the parallels between Liz's rush to the abortion clinic at the beginning of the film, and her rush to the hospital to deliver her baby at the end. Both times, 'North by North's' beat can be read as reinforcing the notion of urgency depicted onscreen. The functions that 'Saskatchewan' performs can also be linked: the song can be read as a signifier of intense or extreme emotion, as it plays when Ant rushes away to get dressed having unwittingly stripped in the street, and when Liz gives birth to her baby. 'Spooky' is perhaps the most obviously 'leitmotivic' song in the *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* soundtrack, as it plays over the end credits, which is a very prominent point. This track seems to be used to signify a certain melancholy in some scenes, but more broadly it can be read as implying

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emotion in general or poignancy, particularly at the end of the film, when Liz, Prue and Mel are unaware of Neil's fate.

Because these songs are repeated, each time they play during the film, they allude to the previous time the track was heard. They thus become associated with a particular idea or feeling, and work as leitmotifs to structurally unify the plot (see Kalinak, 1992, for a discussion of leitmotifs in classical Hollywood film scores). *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* has a fairly episodic narrative structure because the film was developed out of a series of short television programmes[7]; the music can be seen as one means of overcoming this disjunctive nature.

Summary

Even though the music in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives'* soundtrack is all by alternative New Zealand groups, each track can be seen to fulfil one or more of the 'classical' Hollywood film music functions. However, because of the local status of the music, the notion of a 'second tier' of communication is again relevant. It is reasonable to assume that the songs would carry a wider range of extra-textual connotations for viewers who are familiar with this music than it would for viewers who are not familiar with it (the meanings that an 'educated' viewer would gain from the soundtrack of this film are likely to be far beyond those that I have outlined here: my experience with Flying Nun music is limited, and thus my readings will not reflect any fine variations in meaning that an informed viewer might obtain from this film).

Thus, as with the soundtracks for *Sliding Doors* and *Empire Records*, the music in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* functions as

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a 'two tiered system of communication' whereby it provides a variety of different connotations and associations for viewers who are 'educated' in the field of alternative New Zealand rock and pop, at the same time remaining accessible to the 'less educated' viewer as it fulfils several functions typical of 'classical' film music.

In summary, even though the music in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives'* soundtrack is from relatively alternative New Zealand bands released on an independent label, and even though the film is nowhere near as mainstream as *Sliding Doors* or *Empire Records*, the tracks can still be seen as functioning in similar ways to 'classical' Hollywood film music. While also providing a range of extra meanings for 'informed' viewers, the songs in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* function to reflect or clarify the mood of a scene, provide commentary, or maintain continuity or unity within the film; these are all functions that have been noted as conventions of a 'classical' film score.

NOTES:

[1] This film is not as mainstream as *Sliding Doors* or *Empire Records*, but it did receive a reasonably widespread commercial release in New Zealand, so I consider it to fit within the parameters of this thesis.

[2] As with *Sliding Doors* and *Empire Records* this figure does not include the end credit sequence.

[3] See Appendix III for lyric transcripts and production information for the songs on the soundtrack of *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*.

[4] As Aldworth points out, by sticking with one label the film's producers saved problems associated with copyright, production and distribution.

He states that "Flying Nun seemed a logical choice given the amount of talent on its books" (Aldworth, 1997).

[5] It is interesting to note that in many cases in this film the lyrics are not a key site of meaning formation, as they are in *Sliding Doors* and *Empire Records*. Frequently in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*' soundtrack, the songs' words are not distinguishable, so it is the overall sound of the track that provides the connotations.

[6] The repetition of the song over similar sequences means that 'North by North' can also be seen to function as a leitmotif; this aspect will be discussed later.

[7] Dillon also notes that the average length of each episode in the first television series was about four minutes, which is the same as a pop song; moreover, she asserts that "Harry's narrative style in those early episodes seemed to be quite well suited to the verse-chorus-verse format" (in Aldworth, 1997). She thus implies that the popular music aesthetic has been an implicit part of *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives* from its inception.

Conclusion.

Popular music clearly has a strong presence in the soundtracks of contemporary films, often displacing the 'traditional' film score. This study has loosely followed a neoformalist approach, examining the functions of the musical devices in three case studies: the popular music 'devices' in the soundtracks studied can be seen as performing one or more of a range of six functions usually carried out by 'classical' film music. The first is providing information or connotations about setting and/or characterisation. This is one of the main functions of the music in *Empire Records*, where the popular songs draw on their extra-textual associations (from their status as moderately 'alternative' tracks) to indicate the type of store that the film is set in, as well as saying something about the young people who work there. The second function of popular music in the soundtracks of the case studies is explicating, reflecting, or clarifying the moods of characters. This was seen in all three films; certain tracks from each soundtrack could be seen as relating quite closely to the mood of a certain character or scene. The third function is providing commentary on the narrative. This occurred mainly in *Sliding Doors* and *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*: in both of these films, a few songs could be read as providing a comment on the narrative action that would not have been clear without the music's presence (the music could be said to be in 'counterpoint' to the action). A fourth function is reflecting narrative; this occurred on occasion in all three films. In these situations, rather than making a comment on the narrative, the music could

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be seen to imply the same theme or idea to the action (that is, it ran in parallel to the narrative). The fifth function is to create spectacle, which occurred most clearly in *Sliding Doors* and *Empire Records*. In a couple of situations in both of these films, a song accompanied a sequence in such a way as to make a 'spectacle' of that sequence (usually by masking most diegetic sound, and by playing at a reasonably high volume). The sixth function is working to maintain the continuity or unity of the film's story. This was mainly evident in *Sliding Doors*, where the music worked to improve the continuity between the two simultaneous story-lines, and in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*, where the music helped to unify the fairly episodic narrative structure.

All of these six functions have been identified as conventions of 'classical' Hollywood film music. Thus, one could conclude that popular music generally fulfils similar functions to 'classical' composed cues in the film soundtrack. It is important to note, however, that the way in which popular music fulfils these functions is different to the workings of 'classical' music. The compilation score draws on features which are particular to popular songs: the lyrics (which also make the songs more 'audible' than 'classical' music), songs' structural independence, and the wealth of extra-textual meanings that popular music inevitably carries.

As Smith maintains, the linguistic elements of popular songs (that is, the titles and lyrics) provide an 'associational potency' (1995, p.346). These linguistic elements are the aspects of songs that most often confer referential meaning on music (Smith, 1995, p.351). Altman also notes that "Titles and lyrics so dominate public evaluation of a popular song's

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emotive or narrative content that a song rarely signifies separately from its linguistic content" (1999, n.p.). This is to say that, as noted in Chapter Two, a song's words are an important element of the song's overall meaning; songs often use lyrics to increase the chance of cueing a particular response from a spectator. As Kassabian (forthcoming) points out, the meanings of song titles and lyrics are based in commonly accepted rules of language rather than an understanding of musical conventions. Hence, the specificity of meaning often afforded by lyrics is in contrast to 'classical' music, which tends to rely on "...generalised parallelism between the emotive connotations of particular musical textures and the content of specific image sequences, rather than...verbal context" (Altman, 1999, n.p.).

Rather than being subordinate to dialogue as 'classical' film music usually is, popular music's lyrics can replace or substitute for dialogue. In a filmic context, lyrics often perform functions such as being used to 'speak' for a character, thus establishing or underlining character traits. Lyrical relation to character and action is seen particularly clearly in *Sliding Doors*, in which the song words can often be read as reflecting Helen's thoughts or aspects of her character. Like dialogue, then, the lyrics can assist in the movement and development of the narrative.

Song lyrics also contribute to the greater structural 'independence' of popular music. Altman (1999, n.p.) and Smith (1995, p.348) both point out that popular music exhibits greater independence than 'classical' music. As Altman (1999, n.p.) notes

Because it has an obvious coherence, with each line clearly connected to the overall structure and a universally expected musical cadence and

linguistic conclusion, popular song never allows listeners of the song's individual parts to escape from the whole. As such, the popular song always remains a coherent block that appears to be authored separately from whatever images it accompanies, whereas 'classical' music's meandering capacity often conceals overall structure, implying that the music is generated not by some global vision, but by the image at hand.

Thus, even when only a brief snatch of a popular song is heard in a film, it automatically alludes to the presence of the rest of the song as a 'separate' entity that exists apart from the soundtrack.

This structural independence can prevent popular songs being used for some of the 'classical' film music functions (Smith, 1995, p.348 and Kalinak, 1992, p.187). Kalinak states that "...the insistence on the integrity and marketability of the nondiegetic song frequently brought it into conflict with some of the basic principles of the classical model" (1992, p.187). One of the principles that is difficult to maintain with popular music is that of direct synchronisation of music and image. Because a popular song is not usually composed for a specific sequence, as a 'classical' cue is, it is not as likely that its rhythm and inflection will exactly match the action. This difference between classical and composed cues is evident in *Empire Records*: the half dozen composed cues can be distinguished from the popular music tracks by the way they match 'too' closely with the narrative action. That is to say, the independence of popular music prevents it from being used to 'Mickey-mouse'[1] what is depicted onscreen. This autonomy can also hinder the use of the music to accentuate the dramatic build-up of a scene (this tends to be achieved through variations in the popular music's volume and the prominence of diegetic sound, rather than through compositional changes in key or tone,

or conforming to Western musical codes which call for 'closure', as might occur in a composed cue).

Smith and Kalinak also believe that the formal autonomy of popular music lessens its chance of being used to maintain structural unity or continuity (Smith, 1995, p.333; Kalinak, 1992, p.187). In 'classical' soundtracks, unity and continuity are usually maintained through repetition of short musical themes, or 'leitmotifs'. Smith implies that because popular songs cannot be segmented in the manner of leitmotifs, they are unlikely to be used to fulfil this function (1995, p.348). He maintains that compilation scores tend towards functions that maximise rock and pop music's sociocultural specificity, rather than towards maintaining structural continuity and unity. The examples studied in this thesis show that popular music can in fact be used to maintain continuity and unity, though reduction to short themes or leitmotifs is not necessarily required to achieve this. In *Sliding Doors*, the music frequently functions to assist in sustaining continuity between the two concurrent story lines by playing over shot changes. In *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*, the music functions to maintain unity by repeating long segments of certain songs over sequences in the film. While these case studies in no way constitute a statistically significant sample of films, they do provide useful counterexamples which illustrate the notion that popular music is not necessarily as limited in its potential formal uses as Smith implies.

The prominence of lyrics and the greater structural independence or autonomy that tends to be exhibited by popular 'compilation' scores also mean that these soundtracks elicit greater attention than 'inaudible'

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'classical' film music. This audibility is linked to the marketing of the soundtrack as a 'tie-in' item that the viewer can purchase: the soundtrack's status as something that is designed to assist in the generation of revenue means that, ideally, the soundtrack must be noticeable and memorable enough to secure extensive radio play and sell albums. Smith asserts that while film scores were available for purchase in the early days of film accompaniment (as sheet music, for example) this focus on the soundtrack-as-commodity became a major aspect of film marketing in the sixties, when pop aesthetics took hold in film scoring. He states

> ...the pop score is not so much a unique species of film music as it is a form which amplifies and exploits those moments when film music stakes a greater claim to the spectator's attention...Many films of the fifties and sixties foregrounded their scores to make them saleable commodities as tie-ins. Either through repetition or careful placement in their respective films, songs...took on an extratextual audibility in ancillary radio, record, and sheet music markets (Smith, 1995, p.62).

Another feature of popular music frequently drawn on in film soundtracks is its strong extratextual associations. In conveying setting and character associations, popular music in soundtracks tends towards functions that maximise popular music's special sense of sociohistorical specificity (Smith, 1995, p.333). That is to say, extramusical associations and allusions are very important to the compilation score's meaning: "...because of the compilation score's heavy reliance on pop and rock tunes, its meaning within a film is often dependent upon the meaning of pop music in the larger spheres of society and culture" (ibid.). As Frith puts it, popular music can 'drag all sorts of meanings in and out of films' (1984, p.79). The extramusical associations that are brought about by rock history and culture are used by filmmakers to cue settings, character traits,

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and dramatic situations (Smith, 1995, p.362)[2]. As Romney and Wootton note, "Nowadays, no use of pop in film can signify without being filtered through our knowledge of the cultural codes which govern no longer just film, but pop itself" (1995, pp.4-5).

Because popular music in compilation soundtracks has been seen to fulfil functions of 'classical' film music, as well as convey meanings that are related to music's social and historical contexts, it can be considered as functioning as a two tiered system of communication (Carroll, 1982). As outlined in Chapter Two, a two tiered system occurs when one device (for example, a popular song) can be read on two different levels, according to how much the audience 'knows' about that particular device and its associations.

As noted in the individual analyses, the popular music in the three case study soundtracks can be considered to operate according to Carroll's two tiered system. In each film, the music functions as 'soundtrack', working to reflect narrative or characterisation, for example, while also implicitly providing a wealth of differing meanings to those viewers with knowledge of the music used in the film. This was clearly the case in *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives*, for example, in which a more specialised and less widely known genre of music was drawn on for the soundtrack. Fans of the 'Flying Nun sound', who have a higher level of knowledge than uninformed viewers, could create quite different meanings and associations from the songs that accompany the film's narrative, according to their own personal levels of competence and the meanings they associate with the songs in non-filmic contexts. As

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Romney and Wootton maintain, films using pop songs today "…appeal to specific areas of knowledge, to the viewer's adherence to distinct genres of music or film – as if each film exclusively addressed habitués of one particular rack in a megastore whose clientèle is fragmented as never before" (1995, p.5). The specialist appeal of pop and rock music, however, does not prohibit the compilation score from successfully fulfilling the functions of 'classical' film scores for an uninformed audience.

From the preceding case studies and discussion, then, it can be concluded that popular music in contemporary film soundtracks is generally used to fulfil similar functions to those that 'classical' film music has always performed. However, popular music tends to draw more clearly on sociohistorically specific meanings from its existence outside the film (compared to a composed cue or score, whose meaning is largely based within the film). Because of this, it is useful to conceive of the compilation score as a two tiered system of communication. This understanding of the compilation score provides for the popular songs' function as 'film music', as well as incorporating popular music's inescapable extratextual, sociocultural meanings.

NOTES:

[1] 'Mickey-mousing' is described by Kalinak as the 'most obvious type of parallelism…which matches the beat of the music to the physical action in the image' (1992, p.26). It is not solely used to refer to matching beat; the term can also describe the matching of other aural factors such as sound to the images.

<superscript>2</superscript> A significant aspect of the workings of extratextual associations is to do with audience recognition of a particular song and its contexts. If the song is well known, it will allow for a wider range of individual inflections than one that has only been released for a short while. Moreover, audience identification with music also plays a crucial role. A comprehensive discussion of audience competence and identifications with popular music is beyond the scope of this study (for a discussion of identification processes, see Kassabian, forthcoming).

Appendix I: *Sliding Doors.*

Credits:

Orchestration   David Hirschfelder and Ricky Edwards

Orchestra Australia   Film Harmonix

Music notation   Sam Schwartz

Scoring mixer   Chris Scallan

Recording Engineer   Chris Scallan

Original music recorded at Adelphia Studios, Melbourne

Music Editor   John Finklea

Assistant music editor   Shenna Finklea

Music co-ordinator   Kaylin Frank

Music Supervisor   Anita Camerata

Soundtrack (information as listed in film credits):

'Have Fun Go Mad'
Written by Blair Mackichan and Phil Taylor
Performed by Blair
Courtesy of Mercury Records Ltd. by arrangement with PolyGram Film and TV Music.

'Bennie and the Jets'
Written by Elton John and Bernie Taupin
Performed by Elton John
Courtesy of Mercury Records by arrangement with PolyGram Film and TV Music.

'Honky Cat'
Written by Elton John and Bernie Taupin
Performed by Elton John
Courtesy of Mercury Records by arrangement with PolyGram Film and TV Music.

'Amateur'

Written by Aimee Mann and Jon Brion
Performed by Aimee Mann
Courtesy of DGC Records under license from Universal Music
Special Markets.

'Call Me A Fool'
'Got a Thing About You'
Written and composed by Andre Barreau
Performed by Those Magnificent Men
Courtesy of Way Out West Records.

'On My Own'
Written by Pascal Gabriel, Paul Statham and Lisa Lamb
Performed by Peach Union
Courtesy of Mute/Epic Records by arrangement with Sony Music
Licensing.

'Turn Back Time'
Written by Soren Rasted, Claus Norreen, Johnny Poderman and
Karsten Delgado
Performed by Aqua
Courtesy of MCA Records under license from Universal Special
Markets

'Don't Feel Like Cryin''
Written by Abra Moore
Performed by Abra Moore
Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc.

'Good Enough'
Written by Nigel Clark, Matthew Priest and Andrew Miller
Performed by Dodgy
Courtesy of A & M Records Limited, London by arrangement with
PolyGram Film and TV Music

'Drug Soup'
Written by Richard McNiven-Duff, Tony Pipes, Dominic Morrison,
and Charles Morrison
Performed by Space Monkeys
Courtesy of Chingon Records, Factory Records and Interscope
Records.

'Use the Force'
Written by Jay Kay, Toby Smith, Derrick McKenzie and Sola
Akingbola
Performed by Jamiroquai
Courtesy of Sony Music Entertainment Ltd/S2/The Work Group by
arrangement with Sony Music Licensing.

'Miracle'

Written by Tim Kellett and Robin Taylor-Firth
Performed by Olive
Courtesy of RCA Records label of BMG Entertainment.

'Coming up For Air'
Written by Patty Larkin
Performed by Patty Larkin
Courtesy of Windham Hill Group.

'More Love'
Written by Siedah Garrett and Simon Bartholemew
Performed by Brand New Heavies
Courtesy of Delicious Vinyl, LLC.

'Thank You'
Written by Dido Armstrong and Paul Herman
Performed by Dido
Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc.

'Tenderness on the Block'
Written by Warren Zevon and Jackson Brown
Performed by Patty Larkin
Produced by Patty Larkin
Courtesy of High Street Records, a Unit of the Windham Hill Group.

Lyrics:

These lyrics are my own transcriptions as taken from the film soundtrack (not the album). I have only included here those songs whose words are clearly audible when they play during the film (I have indicated where the words become indistinguishable due to dialogue or mix factors).

'Have Fun Go Mad'

(Chorus)
Have fun go mad (Do what I say)
Have fun go mad (Don't do what I do)
Have fun living in the city

'Amateur'

I'll have this meagre defence
I was hoping
But you're an amateur
I was hoping
That you'd know better
But I've been wrong before... (fade)

'Got a Thing About You'

I was lost, I was found
I've been cast to the ground
I was taken for a clown
...(indistinguishable)...
Knock me down with a feather
I'll replace your little pain girl
Gotta think about you
...(indistinguishable)...
Gotta think about love
...(fades)

'On My Own'

Baby, you know it's not that I don't care
Maybe it's a changing atmosphere
And I've seen the signs, I know
That it's right for me to go
I'm on my way
So when you think of yesterday
Remember all the things we said
And through the course of history
I hope you'll still remember me
And there can be no other way
There's nothing left for us to say
I thought I'd see it through alone
I've got to do this on my own
...(music interlude; fades under scene)

'Don't Feel Like Cryin''

Is that you?
Looks like you've changed your ways again
Is that you?
Funny how you can't remember
I knew you better than that
At least I thought I knew you then
What I know now
It's not always a happy ending
Yeah, but hey, here comes that rainy day again
Hey, look at me, I don't feel like crying, no
Hey, look at me, I don't feel like crying, no
I don't feel like it (repeat to fade)

'Good Enough'

I've got an aching in my bones
I've been exposed to what I want to see
The fuse is burning somewhere, it's drenched in need
It's where I long to be
There's always two sides...(fades under dialogue)

'Use the Force'

I must believe
I can do anything
I can be anyone
I must believe
I am the wind
I am the sea
I am the wind, I am the sea
I am the sun
I can be anyone
This world is mine
For all of time
...(indistinguishable)
...
I can do anything
I've got to get myself together
Get myself ahead
Use the force
...(indistinguishable; fades)

'Coming up for Air'

Coming up for air
Rising to a ...(indistinguishable)...
Somewhere
Coming up for air
A last breath around
A last breath around

'Tenderness on the Block'

Mama, where's your pretty little girl tonight?
She's trying to run before she can walk
That's right, she's grown now
She's got a young man waiting
Yes, she's grown now, she's got a young man waiting
She's wilder, she'll be street wise
To the lies and the child talk

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But she'll find true love
And tenderness on the block
She was wide-eyed, now she's street wise
To the lies and the child talk
And she'll find true love
And tenderness on the block
She's gonna find true love…(repeat to fade)

'Thank You'

My tea's gone cold, I'm wondering why
I got out of bed alone
The morning rain clouds up my window
And I can't see at all
And even if I could it'd all be grey
Got your picture on my wall
It reminds me that it's not so bad, it's not so bad
I drank too much last night, got bills to pay
My head just feels in pain
I missed the bus, there'll be hell to pay
I'm late for work again
And even if I'm there they'll all imply that
I might not last the day
And then you call me, and it's not so bad, it's not so bad
I want to thank you
For giving me the best day of my life
And, oh, just to be with you
Is having the best day of my life
I push the door I'm home at last
I'm soaking through and through
Then you handed me a towel
And all I see is you
And even if my house falls down now
I wouldn't have a clue because you're near me
I want to thank you
For giving me the best day of my life
And, oh, just to be with you
Is having the best day of my life (repeat chorus)

Appendix II: *Empire Records.*

Credits:

Music editor	Sally Boldt
Associate music supervisor	Bob Knickman
Music co-ordinator	Desiree Craig
Music production manager	Hope Stolley-Sugarman
Location music assistant	Pennie D. Ellis
Soundtrack album consultants	Michael Lippman
	Terry Lippman
Music consultant	Karen Glauber
Executive soundtrack album producers	Jon McHugh
	Mitchell Leib
Music Supervisor	Mitchell Leib

Additional music by Larry Lee and Brian Reeves.

Soundtrack (information as listed in film credits):

'Till I hear it from you'
Performed by the Gin Blossoms
Written by Jesse Valenzuela, Robin Wilson and Marshall Crenshaw
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'Can't stop losing myself'
Performed by the Dirt Clods
Written by Larry Lee, Brian Reeves, and Curt Cuomo

'The Honeymoon is Over'
Performed by the Cruel Sea
Written by Danny Atkins, James Cruickshaw and Gregory S. Perkins
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'I don't want to live today'
Performed by Ape Hangers
Written by Ape Hangers
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'Hey Joe'
Performed by the Dirt Clods
Written by Billy Roberts

'Video Killed the Radio Star'
Performed by the Buggles
Written by Geoffrey Downes, Trevor Charles Horn and Bruce Martin Wooley
Courtesy of Island Records, Ltd.

'Dark and Brooding'
Performed by Noah Stone
Written by Noah Stone
Courtesy of World Domination Music Group.

'Whole Lotta Trouble'
Performed by Cracker
Written by John Hickman and Chris Leroy
Courtesy of Virgin Records America, Inc.

'Ready Steady Go'
Performed by the Meices
Written by Billy Idol and Tony James
Courtesy of London Records
By arrangement with PolyGram Special Markets.

'Thorn in my side'
Performed by Quicksand
Written by Sergio Vega, Alan Cage, Walter Schreifels and Tom Capone
Courtesy of Island Records, Ltd.

'Little Bastard'
Performed by Ass Ponies
Written by Charles Cleaver, Randall Cheek, David Morrison and John Erhardt
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'I don't know why'
Performed by Sacrilicious
Written by Jeff Perry and Lori Bauer
Courtesy of Frontier Records
By arrangement with Ocean Park Music Group.

'Real'

Performed by Real
Written by Riz Story
Courtesy of Vis-à-vis Records.

'Counting Blue Cars'
Performed by Dishwalla
Written by J. R. Richards, Rodney Browning, George Pendergast,
Scot Alexander and Greg Kolanek
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'If you want blood (you've got it)'
Performed by AC/DC
Written by Angus Young, Bon Scott and Malcolm Young
Courtesy of Eastwest Records America
By arrangement with Warner Special Products and Abeles, Clark,
Osterberg and Prager.

'Circle of Friends'
Performed by Better than Ezra
Written by Kevin Griffin
Courtesy of Swell Records

'Crazy Life'
Performed by Toad the Wet Sprocket
Written by Dinning, Guss, Nichols and Phillips
Courtesy of Columbia Records
By arrangement with Sony Music Licensing.

'Romeo and Juliet'
Performed by Dire Straits
Written by Mark Knopfler
Courtesy of Warner Bros. Records, Inc. Phonogram Ltd.
By arrangement with Warner Special Products PolyGram Record
Operation Limited.

'Ballad of El Goodo'
Performed by Evan Dando
Written by Chris Bell and Alex Chilton
Courtesy of Tag Atlantic Recording Corporation.

'Snakeface'
Performed by Throwing Muses
Written by Kristin Hersch
Courtesy of Reprise Records, 4AD Records
By arrangement with Warner Special Products

'What you are'
Performed by Drill
Written by Lucia Cifarelli and Dan Harnett
Courtesy of DVB Records.

'Candy'
Performed by Full Tilt Gonzo
Written by Lance Whitson
Courtesy of Mike Bosley and Geoff Siegel.

'How'
Performed by the Cranberries
Written by Dolores O'Riordan
Courtesy of Island Records, Inc.

'Liar'
Performed by the Cranberries
Written by Dolores O'Riordan and Noel Hogan
Courtesy of Island Records, Inc.

'A Girl Like you'
Performed by Edwyn Collins
Written by Edwyn Collins
Courtesy of Bar/None Records and Setanta Records

'Hardlight'
Performed by Peg Boy
Written by Peg Boy
Courtesy of Quarterstick Records.

'Chew Toy'
Performed by Fig Dish
Written by Blake Smith and Richard Ness
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'Bright as Yellow'
Performed by Innocence Mission
Written by Karen Peris
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'Power Shack'
Performed by Fitz of Depression
Written by Mike Dees, Brian Sparhawk, and Craig Becker.
Courtesy of K Records
By arrangement with Ocean Park Music Group.

'Rock'n'Roll/EGA'
Performed by Daniel Johnston
Written by Daniel Johnston
Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp.
By arrangement with Warner Special Products.

'Saddam-A-Go-Go'
Performed by Gwar

Written by Brad Roberts, Dave Musel, Michael Bishop, Michael Derks, Peter Lee and David Brockie
Courtesy of Metal Blade Records, Inc.

'Here it comes again
Performed by Please
Written by Paul Casanova
Courtesy of Regency.

'Backdown Blues'
Performed by Loose Diamonds
Written by Jud Newcomb
Courtesy of Dos/Antone Records

'Tomorrow'
Performed by Mouth Music
Written by Jackie Joyce and Martin Swan
Courtesy of Rykodisc/Triple Earth Records

'Plowed'
Performed by Sponge
Written by Mike Cross, Tim Cross, Joe mazzola, Jim Paluzzi, and Vinnie
Courtesy of The Work Group
By arrangement with Sony Music Licensing.

'Surround you'
Performed by the Billy White Trio
Written by Billy White
Courtesy of Dos/Antone Records.

'L.A. Girl'
Performed by the Adolescents
Written by Tony Brandenburg and Frank Agnew
Courtesy of Frontier Records
By arrangement with Ocean Park Music Group.

'Sugarhigh'
Performed by Coyote Shivers
Written by Coyote Shivers
Courtesy of Regency.

'Seems'
Performed by Queen Sarah Saturday
Written by John Phillip Irion III, Jonathon Lee Hutchins, Christopher Holloway and Ryan Dean Pickett.
Courtesy of Thirsty Ear/Columbia Records
By arrangement with Sony Music Licensing

'Vinyl Advice'

Performed by Dead Hot Workshop
Written by Brent Babb, Brian Griffith, Curtis Grippe, and Steven Larson
Courtesy of Tag Records
By arrangement with Warner Special Products.

'This is the day'
Performed by the The
Written by Matthew Johnson
Courtesy of Epic Records
By arrangement with Sony Music LIcensing

'Nice Overalls'
Performed by Lustre
Written by Greg Clayton, Will Marley and John Ray
Courtesy of A & M Records, Inc.

'Free'
Performed by the Martinis
Written by Linda Mallari-Santiago and Joey Santiago
Courtesy of Regency.

'Say no more (mon amour)'
Performed by Maxwell Caulfield
Written by Ralph Schuckett and Chris Ward.

'She Walks'
Performed by the Poster Children
Written by Richard Valentin, Rosanne Marshack and Shannon Drew
Courtesy of 12 Inch Records
By arrangement with Ocean Park Music Group.

'I shot the devil'
Performed by Suicidal Tendencies
Written by Michael Muir
Courtesy of Frontier Records
By arrangement with Ocean Park Music Group.

'Sorry'
Performed by Sybil Vane
Written by Dave Hillis
Courtesy of Island Records, Inc.

'Infinity'
Performed by Mouth Music
Written by Jackie Joyce and Martin Swan
Courtesy of Rykodisc/Triple Earth Records.

'Money (that's what I want)'
Performed by the Flying Lizards

Written by Berry Gordy, Jr. and Janie Bradford
Courtesy of Virgin Records, Ltd.

Lyrics:

These lyrics are my own transcriptions as taken from the film soundtrack (not the album). I have only included here those songs whose words are clearly audible when they play during the film (I have indicated where the words become indistinguishable due to dialogue or mix factors).

'The Honeymoon is over'

Boy it ain't no fun no more
I don't know what to say
The honeymoon is over baby,
It's never going to be that way again
…(fade)

'Can't stop losing myself'

Can't stop losing myself yeah,
Don't need nobody else
Breaking the rules
No, there's nothing to lose, yeah
Can't stop losing myself

'I don't want to live today'

Woke up this morning to a filthy sky above
I didn't want to get out of my bed
When I was dreaming I was so in love
So in love, I wish that I was dead
Can you dig it?
Can you help me?
Can you help me?
Look in to these eyes and tell me
Something here's worth living for today
Well I work so hard but all I got
Well that ain't much, but what I got is mine all mine
Sometimes a helping had is everything
Can you understand?
You ever feel to lost to find?
Can you help me?
Can you help me?
I don't want to live today
Look into these eyes and tell me
Something here's worth living for today

Yeah, yeah…

'Seems'

Nothing left to sing about this time
It's over now, the word is out
It hit the bolds
…(indistinguishable)…
And last night's shows, the 'have you heards'
And the 'did you knows', but I've got my place
Will you be still, and try to keep in mind
But it seems I never get enough of me
Seems I never get enough of me.

'Free'

Omnipresent phrase in my mind
Spoken words I've said one million times
Who are you to tell me that I'll always be this way?
I close my eyes and I turn around
Leave it all behind
So free for a moment
Blossoming between the earth and sky
So free for the moment
Lost because I wanna be lost…(fade)

'Money (that's what I want)'

The best things in life are free
But you can give them to the birds and bees
I want the money, that's what I want
That's what I want
That's what I want
Your love gives me such a thrill
But your love won't pay my bills
I want money (that's what I want).

'Video Killed the Radio Star'

I heard you on my wireless back in '62
Lying awake intent in tuning in on you
If I was young it didn't stop you coming through
Oh, oh
They took the credit for your second symphony
Rewritten by machine on new technology
And now I understand the profits you can see

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Oh, oh, I met your children
But did you tell them
Video killed the radio star
Video killed the radio star
Pictures came and broke your heart (oh, oh)
And now we meet in an abandoned studio
We hear the playback and it seems so long ago
And you remember the jingles used to go 'oh, oh'
You were the first one
You were the last one
Video killed the radio star
Video killed the radio star
In my mind and in my car
We can't rewind we've gone too far...

'Ready Steady Go'

This little reject from the wrong side of the tracks
Turn him into skin and bones
By the time I've found out who I was really in love with
It wasn't...(unable to be heard under dialogue)...
Ready steady go, and all the things she said
Ready steady go...

'Romeo and Juliet'

A love struck Romeo
Sang the streets a serenade
Laying everybody low
With a love song that he made
Playing in the streetlight
Steps out of the shade
Says something like 'You and me, how 'bout it?'
Juliet says 'Hey it's Romeo, you nearly gave me a heart attack'
He's underneath the window, she's singing 'hey la, my boyfriend's
back'
You shouldn't come around here
Singing up to people like that
Anyway, what you gonna do about it?
Juliet the dice was loaded from the start
And I be when you exploded into my heart
I forget, I forget, Juliet...

'Ballad of El Goodo'

Gets so hard at times like now
To hold on, girls they wait to be stuck by

But my side has died
Ain't no one gonna turn me round
Ain't no one gonna turn me round
People around tell you what they know
Places they've been to and it's easy to go
Zip you up and dress you down
Stand you in a room
You know you don't want to
You could just say no
Ain't no one gonna turn me round
Ain't no one gonna turn me round...

'Snakeface'

Not another drive in movie
You know you can't be still
Move me
Snake, snake me, one more button undone
Next week I'll be a lousy liar...

'How'

Look, you're standing alone (standing alone)
However I should have known (I should have known)
Never before, never again,
You will ignore, I will pretend...(fade)

'A Girl Like You'

Never known a girl like you before
Now just like in a song from days of yore
Here you come a knocking, knocking on my door
And I've never met a girl like you before
You give me a taste so I want more
Now my hands are bleeding and my knees are raw
Cause now you've got me crawling, crawling on the floor
And I've never known a girl like you before
You've made me acknowledge the devil in me
I hope to god I'm talking metaphorically
Hope that I'm talking allegorically
Know that I'm talking about the way that I feel
And I've never met a girl like you before
Never, never....(fade).

'Rock'n'Roll/EGA'

There was a day when I was so lonely
Everyday was an eternity
But oh, let's rock and roll
And save my soul
That rock and roll
I never thought that I could be happy
Seems like that always faded away
And all the girls already have boyfriends
I was as lonely as lonely could be
I laid asleep and turned on the radio...

'Plowed'

Will I wake up
Some dream I made up
No, I guess it's reality
What will change us
Or will we mess up our
Only chance to go...(unclear)...
Say a prayer for me
Say a prayer for me...(fades)

'Sugarhigh'

They all said life's just a bowl of cherries
But sometimes it seems like anything but then think again
Sometimes reputations outlive their applications
Sometimes fires don't go out when you're done playing with them
I feel so funny deep inside
I wanna kiss myself goodbye
Sugarhigh (gotta have it, really need it to get by)
Sugarhigh (wanna feel it, can't conceal it, sugarhigh)
I could go out and not even leave the house
A TV set, a bottle of wine's just fine
Crashing out on that old pull out couch
Watching 'Saturday Night Live'
I guess that's why
I feel so funny deep inside
I kiss myself goodbye
Sugarhigh
When I think about my life
I wanna kiss myself goodbye
Sugarhigh
Sugarhigh
...(Gina stumbles)...far and wide
I looked in the deepest caverns of my mind

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To try and find an explanation why
I get this funny feeling deep inside
When I think about my life
I wanna kiss myself goodbye
Sugarhigh (gotta have it, really need it to get by)
Sugarhigh (wanna feel it, can't conceal it, makes me high)
Sugarhigh (need it now I've got to live until I die)
Can you feel it, can you feel it, Sugarhigh!

'Til I hear it from you'

I didn't ask
They shouldn't have told me
At first I'd laugh but now
It's sinking in fast
Whatever they've sold me
Well, baby, I don't want to take advice from fools
I'll just figure everything is cool
Until I hear it from you
It gets hard
The memory's faded
Who gets what they say
It's likely they're just jealous and jaded
Well maybe I don't want to take advice from fools
I'll just figure everything is cool
Until I hear it from you
Until I hear it from you
I can't let it get me off
Or break up my train of thought
As far as I know nothing's wrong
Until I hear it from you
Still thinking about not living without it
Outside looking in
'Til we're talking about it, not stepping around it
Maybe I don't want to take advice from fools
I'll just figure everything is cool
Until I hear it from you.

'This is the day'

Well, you didn't wake up this morning
Because you didn't go to bed
You were watching the whites of your eyes turn red
The calendar on your wall
Is ticking the days off
You've been reading some old letters
You smile and think how much you've changed
All the money in the world

Couldn't buy back those days
You pull back your hands and the sun burns into your eyes
You watch a plane flying across the clear blue sky
This is the day your life will surely change
This is the day when things fall into place.

Appendix III: *Topless Women Talk About Their Lives.*

Credits:

Music by Flying Nun Records

Music Consultant   Cushla Dillon

Music Liaison   Paul McKessar

        Leslie Paris

Soundtrack (information as listed in film credits):

'Hey Suess'
Composed and performed by the 3Ds
Flying Nun Records

'Spooky'
Composed and performed by the 3Ds
Flying Nun Records

'Outerspace'
Composed and performed by the 3Ds
Flying Nun Records

'Ugly Things'
Composed and performed by Superette
Flying Nun Records

'Animal'
Composed and performed by the 3Ds
Flying Nun Records

'Waves'
Composed and performed by Superette
Flying Nun Records

'Saskatchewan'
Composed and performed by Superette
Flying Nun Records

'Submarine Bells'
Composed and performed by the Chills
Flying Nun Records

'Fish'
Composed and performed by The Clean
Flying Nun Records

'Buddy'
Composed and performed by Snapper
Flying Nun Records

'Anything Could Happen'
Composed and performed by The Clean
Flying Nun Records

'North by North'
Composed and performed by The Bats
Flying Nun Records

'Not Given Lightly'
Composed and performed by Chris Knox
Flying Nun Records

'Koe Ola Mae'
Composed by the late Fineole Maika
Performed by Matapua

'Koe Talolagi'
Composed and performed by Matapua

'Hot Murder'
Composed and performed by Solid Gold Hell
Flying Nun Records

'Jungle Beat'
Composed and performed by King Loser.
Flying Nun Records

Lyrics:

These lyrics are my own transcriptions as taken from the film soundtrack (not the album). I have only included here those songs whose words are clearly audible when they play during the film (I have indicated where the words become indistinguishable due to dialogue or mix factors).

'North By North'

Some people are happy most of the time
All people follow…(indistinguishable)…
I don't know what to do wi..(cut)

'Ugly Things'

If you think about it now
Thoughts don't feel good
You make me sick
If you think about it now
Thoughts don't feel good
You make me sick...(fade)

'Waves'

...don't understand, it's crime
I told her she was the one
I told you over the sun
It's something just then
In his head, waving his head
Now she's dead...

'Spooky'

I am so lonely
Some people care
So please don't worry
Not so...(indistinguishable)...
Didn't even see me
Didn't even take good care
Of all your friends down there
They're rising high in the air
Turn out the day light
Turn on the night
Fat shallow moonlight
Holds me so tight
Fallen and lonely
In my room tonight
I couldn't even feel you breathe
I think it's time to leave
Leaving all your friends down there
Waving goodbye up there
Walk past the bullshit
On broken glass
Past all the stones
The shaking trees
Past all the lonely
Standing in shame
Didn't even feel you leave
You didn't even take good care
Of all your friends down there.

'Buddy'

No more bloody Buddy
No more messing around
I'm not gonna be
Be a fucking clown
Trusting words I don't believe
I've got...(indistinguishable)...
Fire in my brain that you'd like to put out...

'Not Given Lightly'

Hello my friend, it's morning, time to wake now
Your body and mine entwined have to break now
I want your flesh, your warmth to stay beside me
Oh how I wish you could be deep inside me
Show my your eyes, your love, most tender feelings
And I'll give you mine, be truthful and revealing
'Cause it's you that I love
And it's true that I love
And it's love not given lightly
But I knew this was love
And it's you that I love
And it's more than what it might be
When we're alone I cannot always face you
Maybe my mood won't let these arms embrace you
That doesn't mean my love's somehow diminished
Give me the time to show our love's unfinished
'Cause it's you that I love
And it's true that I love
And it's love not given lightly
But I knew this was love
And it's you that I love
And it's more than what it might be
I need your body, your mind and your emotions
Shed me your tears and I'll drown in your oceans
'Cause it's you that I love
And it's true that I love
And it's love not given lightly...

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