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FABRICATING FREDDY VS. JASON: UNDERSTANDING A MOTION PICTURE AS A SOCIAL ENCOUNTER BETWEEN FANS AND FILMMAKERS

by

Jason M. Rapelje

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Sociology
Dr. Paula S. Brush, Advisor

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The break in the mass communicative chain, which separates producers and receivers from one another in both time and space, impedes researchers from studying motion pictures as social encounters. As with face-to-face encounters, producers and receivers of motion pictures depend upon the use of “rules of relevance” (Goffman, 1961) and “typifactory schemes” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) for their encounters to take place. I examine the social encounter that takes place between some of the filmmakers and fans of Freddy vs Jason through the use of these concepts, as well as a revision of John B. Thompson’s (1990) methodological framework of depth hermeneutics. The four steps of my methodological framework follow.

First, I undertake a textual analysis of Freddy vs Jason to provide those readers who are unfamiliar with the film an understanding of its narrative structure. Second, I undertake a template analysis of a purposive sample of statements made by nineteen filmmakers on the special feature sections of the film’s DVD to identify those aspects of Freddy vs Jason to which they felt obligated to attend. Third, I undertake a template analysis of a purposive sample of statements made by eleven fans on an Internet message forum to identify those aspects of Freddy vs Jason to
which they expected the filmmakers to attend. Fourth, I compare the statements made by these filmmakers and fans to see if the perspectives on aspects of the film that both groups discussed were consistent, or if the filmmakers broke frame by expressing a perspective not in line with the fans’ expectations.

I found that the nineteen filmmakers and eleven fans discussed five aspects in common, and more often than not, the nineteen filmmakers broke frame by expressing perspectives not in line with the eleven fans’ expectations. Because of these findings, it appears that *Freddy vs Jason* was not a successful interaction between these particular filmmakers and fans. Nonetheless, I was able to study the motion picture as an encounter “fabricated,” or socially created, through the continual negotiation of the filmmakers, fans and their typifications (Griswold, 1987).
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to Laura Geist for agreeing to marry someone whose idea of a first date was watching *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Friday the 13th* back-to-back.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge that I have a lot to be thankful for. First and foremost, I cannot thank Dr. Paula Brush enough for her guidance, support and inspiration, not only during my writing of this dissertation, but throughout my entire graduate education at Western Michigan University. This dissertation would not be the same without her suggestion that I consider Goffman’s (1961) notion of “rules of relevancy” with regards to the interaction that occurs between two parties. I am also thankful for having experienced Dr. Brush’s stellar teaching abilities for which she has received numerous, deserved, accolades. While I could not be more proud of her advancement to the position of Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Radford University, I must admit that I miss her dearly. I especially miss attending her theory lectures. Watching her get covered in chalk dust as she fills the blackboard from end-to-end with such an invigorating passion for her subject is like watching Frida Kahlo paint her own reality. The inevitable chalk mustache that rests on Dr. Brush’s upper lip at the end of these impassioned lectures is also comparable to exaggerated facial hair that Kahlo included in her self-portraits. Indeed, Dr. Brush’s lectures, and other scholarly endeavors, have provided me with the best examples of sociology as an art form.

I thank all the members of my committee for providing me with examples of ideal type educators to which I believe few others are comparable not only in their intellect, but also, more importantly, in their humbleness. Specifically, I thank Dr.
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administrators of *Friday the 13th: The Forum* for their insights, and I especially thank Brenna O’Brien for her support. I would also like to thank Nick Barna, Mike Erickson and Chris Cox for the many memories between us that I will forever cherish.

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Jason M. Rapelje
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He who fights with monsters should be careful lest he thereby become a monster. And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee.

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Aphorism 146.
CHAPTER I

Introduction

In this dissertation, I conduct a case study of a motion picture as a social encounter that takes place between two groups of people. These two groups of people consist of producers (i.e., the filmmakers) and receivers (i.e., the film’s audience), and it is their relationship or interdependency that interests me. As Croteau and Hoynes (2000) indicate, “sociologists often link discussions of social relations to the concepts of structure and agency” (p. 21). Whereas structure implies “constraint on human action,” agency implies “independent action” (p. 21). Most existing studies of motion pictures tend to focus on either their production or their reception, but not both. In fact, ethnographic analyses of audiences as empowered “interpretive communities” have dominated a substantial portion of media research since the 1980’s. Such micro level “reader-response” approaches are in part a backlash against older macro “structuralist” approaches that viewed an audience’s media consumption as:

the always-already-determined effect of some more fundamental structure—whether the economic structure of the cultural industries . . .the political structure of the capitalist state. . .or the psychic structure of the human subject (Morley, 1993, p.16).

As of late, this dichotomy between micro and macro approaches to media research is being called into question and abandoned in favor of more “processual” approaches that attempt to understand the way in which “macro structures can be reproduced only
through microprocesses" (p. 17). I adopt such a processual approach in this dissertation.

Before understanding how the structure of a motion picture as a social encounter arises through the microprocesses of its producers and receivers, it is important to realize what sociologists mean by the term “structure.” To the sociologist, “structure is not something physical,” but rather it “describes any recurring pattern of social behavior” (Croteau and Hoynes, 2000, p. 21). Producers and receivers of motion pictures exhibit such recurring patterns. However, since motion pictures, like other forms of media, detach their producers and receivers from one another in both time and space, it is difficult to conceive of motion pictures as social encounters or “interactions,” especially in comparison to face-to-face interactions. Moreover, this “break” in the communicative chain, though always present even in face-to-face interactions, seems exacerbated in the mass communicative context. Media researchers standing at the precipice of this break gaze into the abyss that it represents, only to find it gazing back at them. They strain hard to see the producers on the other side of its gulf, but alas they cannot. So, they turn their backs on the producers at the other side of the abyss and become content to study the “interactions,” or rather what they deem the “performances,” that occur between a media text and its audience.

The critical mindset of the sociologist will not allow this to happen: he or she must find the courage to face the abyss and ponder its structure. Therefore, researchers instilled with some semblance of a sociological imagination will be able
to link “the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self,” and perhaps more importantly, “to see the relations between the two” (Mills, 1959, p. 7). Those researchers wishing to understand the processual character of motion pictures as social encounters need merely to stretch their own sociological imaginations in order to overcome their seeming methodological inhibitions. More pointedly, they should heed Mill’s (1959) advice and “let theory and method again become part of the practice of a craft” (p. 224).

I intend to craft my case study of a motion picture as a social encounter by utilizing various sources of available data pertaining to its dimensions of production and reception. Specifically, I use the commentary tracks and other “behind the scenes” special features made available through DVD technology to gain access to the domain of production, and the messages written by fans on an online forum to gain access to the domain of reception. While it is true that these are determinate object domains (i.e., seemingly “cutoff” from one another, as are the social agents that comprise them), they are nonetheless linked through their subject matter or topic: the “slasher” film Freddy vs Jason (2003).

The research question I seek to answer in this dissertation is this: what typificatory schemes did the producers and receivers feel were relevant to the fabrication of Freddy vs Jason? As Berger and Luckmann (1966) suggest: language typifies experiences, allowing one to subsume them under broad categories in terms of which they have meaning not only to oneself, but to others as well (p. 39). By analyzing the language or statements of the producers and receivers, I will be able to
uncover the categories or themes through which they communicate or interact historically, as well as those categories or themes that seem relevant only to one of the two parties involved in the communicative process. Those categories or themes shared by both parties represent (some of) the typificatory schemes upon which the social encounter is based.

Thus, my argument is as follows: as with face-to-face communication, mass communication can be studied as a social interaction based upon the premise that participants engaged in any form of communication act in accordance with typificatory schemes that have their own histories. One places oneself in a tradition by referring to the prior historical use of such typifications, as Thompson (1981) suggests:

> the projection of meaning which governs understanding is not the act of an isolated subjectivity, but stems from the tradition to which one belongs” (pp. 40-41).

Here Thompson is drawing upon the work of Gadamer who believed that “in the process of understanding there takes place a real fusing of horizons” (Gadamer, as quoted in Thompson, p. 41). Similarly, Griswold (1987), drawing upon the work of Jauss, suggests that “how people read a literary work depends on the ‘horizon of expectations’ created by their previous reading” (p. 1081). Moreover, drawing on the work of Baxandall, Griswold suggests that those engaged in the fabrication of cultural meaning share a set of presuppositions constructed by the group’s historical experiences (p. 1081). I will come back to Griswold’s work later in this chapter, but
before going any further I find it important to acknowledge my own value-position
and agency in the research process.

I am an avid consumer of motion pictures, a fan of horror films in particular,
and although I am an admirer of both the fictional characters Freddy and Jason, I am
a “Freddy-fan” at heart. This places me in the category of a “scholar-fan” attempting
to craft a study involving a subject about which I already have a great deal of
familiarity, affinity, and a priori assumptions. Nonetheless, I do not believe that any
scholar approaches his or her research as a tabula rasa. Consequently, I view my
dissertation as more of an “artistic” endeavor than a scientific one. I do not attempt
to claim that other analysts working with the same sources of available data that I
work with will draw the same conclusions that I do. I believe that notions of “proof”
and “verification” are dangerous when followed in such a naively ritualistic manner
that they constrain creativity (Nisbet, 1976, p. 17). Therefore, I seek the same
creative flexibility in generating an interpretation of a motion picture as a social
encounter that grounded theorists seek in generating a theory (Glaser and Strauss,
1967, p. 103).

However, it is important to stress that such creative freedom does not mean
that, as a researcher, I wish to abandon the rigor of systemization. I simply wish to
achieve an understanding, or “verstehen,” of the meanings expressed by both the
producers and receivers of a motion picture (Weber, 1949). Once I understand the
separate meanings or interpretations of both groups, I will compare them and generate
my own interpretation of the processual character of the motion picture as a social encounter. I assume, as did Goffman (1961), that:

like any other element of social life, an encounter exhibits sanctioned orderliness arising from obligations fulfilled and expectations realized, and that therein lies its structure (p. 19 italics added).

Available data is especially useful in this regard because it contains the non-reactive traces of sociocultural life from which the meanings of an agent’s expressed obligations or expectations are interpretable. If it is not already apparent, I am purposely emphasizing a “hermeneutic-phenomenological” approach rather than the “performative” approach that currently dominates the style of research in this area (see, especially, Hills, 2005b). While researchers who adopt such performative approaches can and do provide a great deal of insight into the process of “reading” media texts, some take a perverse postmodern turn. This segment of researchers tend to steal the agency away from social actors and attempt to “hide” or bestow it upon cultural texts in and of themselves. Later, I will point out how this tactic also crops up in relation to the literature on horror films. However, I first want to briefly touch on the business-side of the motion picture industry using data derived from the 2002-2003 Encyclopedia of Exhibition.

“W e’re in the Money!” - The Motion Picture Business

Motion pictures are a social phenomena entailing the participation of many individuals. According to the results of a Motion Picture Association of America
(MPAA) survey found within the 2002-2003 Encyclopedia of Exhibition, in the year 2000, 27% of adults and 49% of the teenagers reported going to the movies at least once a month (p. 356). These percentages contributed to the sale of 1.4 billion movie tickets that year totaling $8,100 million in US movie admission revenue (p. 259). However, movies are not just consumed at the theater. The MPAA also reports that in the year 2000, there were approximately 102 million “TV households,” 88 million “VCR households,” 69.5 million “basic cable households,” and 33.7 million “pay cable subscribers in the US” (pp. 362-363). While all of these technologies are not used solely to watch movies, I feel it is safe to assume that they helped to build what Norman Denzin (1995) calls “the cinematic society,” a social formation comprised of voyeurs.

Yet, if we are to understand motion pictures as social encounters between two groups of people, we must also heed the realm of production. The MPAA reports in the 2002-2003 Encyclopedia of Exhibition that, in the year 2000, the average movie production cost per feature film totaled $54.8 million, while the average movie advertising costs per feature film totaled $24.0 million (pp. 354-355). In that same year, there were a total of 461 new films released by US distributors (p. 258). Suffice it to say, movie making is big business and worthy of sociological examination. However, before moving on, I thought it appropriate to note the box office data for Freddy vs Jason and the films comprising the two franchises that it unites. Freddy vs Jason bridges two different horror franchises: The Nightmare on Elm Street film series (1984-1994) with its character Freddy, and the Friday the 13th film series...
(1980-2002) with its character Jason. The seven films comprising the Nightmare series grossed a total of approximately $225 million, whereas the ten films comprising the Friday series grossed a total of approximately $235 million. In comparison, Freddy vs Jason grossed a total of approximately $82 million by itself. If one includes the film Freddy vs Jason, these two franchises encompass eighteen films with a total combined gross of approximately $542 million. Now, let us take a closer look at horror films in general.

“It’s Alive!” - The Strange Case of the Horror Film

As a category or genre, horror films have a tendency to attract cult followings despite their dire subject matter. Carroll (1990) coined the phrase “the paradox of horror” to grapple with the genre’s perplexing attractiveness:

The imagery of horror fiction seems to be necessarily repulsive and, yet, the genre has no lack of consumers. Moreover, it does not seem plausible to regard these consumers—given the vast number of them—as abnormal or perverse in any way that does not beg the question. Nevertheless, they appear to seek that which, under certain descriptions, it would seem natural for them to avoid (p.160).

Carroll eventually comes to the conclusion that horror films become popular when their “iconography and structures...articulate the widespread anxiety of times of stress” (p.214). That is to say, Carroll believes that viewers derive “pleasure” through the film itself as text; particularly through the emotions its monster character elicits. According to Carroll, audiences find the anomaly that is the monster interesting; it is what commands their attention: “One wants to gaze upon the unusual, even when it is
simultaneously repelling” (Carroll, 1990, p. 188). However, Carroll fails to account for the fact that monster characters are found within the texts of other genres, and not every horror text contains or displays a monster character.

Gelder (2000) also talks about the power of horror texts’ iconography and structure, as though they were living, breathing entities “performing” or “doing things” of their own volition. For instance, he suggests that horror texts “have real socio-cultural effects, making available...a range of positions and dispositions;” he continues, “they have their own ‘politics’, in the sense that they are never represented to the world in a neutral way” (p. 1). Gelder deems the positions and dispositions that horror films make available to their audiences “the rhetorics of horror,” which provide:

ways of defining...what is evil (and what is good) in societies, what is monstrous (and what is ‘normal’), what should be seen (and what should remain hidden) and so on (p. 1).

Similarly, Clover (1992) goes so far as to suggest that such dispositions, which she calls the “identifications” of horror, “are already in place...long before the individual movie was even a glint in the director’s eye” (p. 10). The most agency she attributes horror filmmakers is to suggest that they: “operate more on instinct and formula than conscious understanding” (p. 11). While there is no doubt that horror film producers rely on formulas, I think it is safe to assume that they do so precisely because they understand what works, or rather, what sells.

The horror films that producers create encompass a number of different subgenres, which, again, do follow identifiable formulas replete with recurring textual
features. The film I focus upon in this dissertation falls within the subgenre of the
“slasher” film, which adheres to a very rigid formula. Although the formula for the
slasher film is indeed rigid, it is by no means concrete. However, it generally tells of:

- a group, usually consisting of teenagers, who are picked off one at a
time, usually in explicitly violent fashion, by a vicious killer. The
killer is punishing the group either for trespassing upon its territory
or is avenging an earlier wrong perpetrated by that group or a group
that they symbolically represent. The killing continues until the
closing scenes of the film when one character is left, most
frequently a girl, who after a protracted chase and struggle with the
killer, finally makes a stand and kills him/her (Whitehead, 2000,
pp. 7-8).

Through this description of the slasher film’s formula, we see that it exhibits the
trappings of a specific cultural context: it evokes America’s “pioneering and puritan
past, which is linked to the sanctity of home and family and the taming of the
wilderness” (p.8). Alfred Hitchcock’s Psycho (1960) serves as the forerunner of the
slasher film, while John Carpenter’s Halloween (1978) is often cited as the slasher’s
blueprint. 

However, the producers of the film Friday the 13th “opened the
floodgates to countless retellings of the same tale throughout the 80s” (p. 8).

Slasher films quickly gained notoriety with the release of Friday the 13th. On
October 23rd, 1980, film critics Siskel and Ebert brought the slasher controversy into
the mainstream by attacking what they called ‘a disturbing new trend in today’s
movies’ (Siskel and Ebert, as quoted in Rockoff, 2002, p.17). The two critics berated
Paramount executives for releasing the reprehensible Friday the 13th, and Siskel even
went as far as to implore “the faithful readers of the Chicago Tribune to boycott all
Paramount releases” (p. 17). Even though slasher films were largely an American-
made phenomenon, their influence and infamy crossed cultural borders during the 80s. In England, slasher films fell under the heading of “video nasties” where the Department of Public Prosecutions banned 74 such films under the Obscene Publications Act; eventually, the ill repute of slasher films also helped usher in England’s Video Recordings Act in 1984, which required video releases to be classified by the British Board of Film Classification (p.19).

Surely, anything this seemingly “deviant” or controversial is worthy of sociological examination. However, none of this tells us how to research horror films (or motion pictures generally) as social encounters, or why such an endeavor seems to have eluded researchers. I touched on these matters briefly in the introduction to this chapter, and I will now turn to the literature on mass communication in an attempt to elaborate upon this train of thought more fully.

The Artificial Interactions of Mass Communication

Although different theorists lend different labels to the interactions that occur through the use of mass communication devices, they all tend to highlight what I call its artificialness. I use the term “artificial” to emphasize specific details of its definition. In particular, the term artificial is used to describe that which is “humanly contrived often on a natural model,” or that which is “based on differential morphological characters not necessarily indicative of natural relationships” (Merriam-Webster Online). I believe that the seeming artificialness of mass
communication is what indeed confounds much of the research attempting to study it as a social encounter. I aim to clarify that confoundedness with this dissertation.

Extensions and Repressions of Ourselves

The numerous types of communication technologies available to humans enable specific types of interaction to occur between them. Marshall McLuhan (1964) captured the importance of this when he uttered the phrase “the medium is the message,” by which he meant that:

the personal and social consequences of any medium—that is, of any extension of ourselves—result from the new scales that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology” (p.23).

Still, most social and political theorists have largely ignored the significance of mass media in the modern world (Thompson, 1990, pp.1-2). The critical theorists of the Frankfurt School proved to be an exception. They investigated how entertainment commodities produced in mass by the culture industries contributed to the people’s development of an instrumental rationality. By “instrumental,” the critical theorists meant that people’s thought processes had become just as programmed and mechanized as the quality of industrialized labor they were forced to endure throughout the work day. According to the critical theorists, it is no wonder that the socialist revolution prophesied by Karl Marx did not occur as expected. Instead of people developing a revolutionary consciousness, the critical theorists believed that the people instead developed a “false consciousness” through their consumption of
cultural commodities: “what sinks in is the automatic succession of standardized operations...[as] pleasure hardens into boredom” (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944/1972, p.137).

A Peculiar Type of Interaction

While the critical theorists believe that the products of the culture industries aid in the development of a particular type of rationality, or consciousness, that keeps its users complacent, John B. Thompson (1991) argues that an ever-growing “mediazation of modern culture” has lead to a particular type of interaction. Similar to McLuhan, who believed that any medium is an “extension of ourselves,” Thompson believes that mass media extend:

the availability of symbolic forms in time and space, and they do so in a way which permits specific kinds of mediated interaction between producers and recipients. Since mass communication institutes a fundamental break between the production and reception of symbolic forms, it makes possible a specific kind of interaction across time and space which we may describe as mediated quasi-interaction (pp.227-228).

Thompson characterizes the interaction that occurs through the use of mass media as a “quasi-interaction” because it establishes a flow of communication that is “predominately one-way and the modes of response through which recipients can communicate with the principal communicator are strictly limited” (p. 228). Although Thompson uses the qualifier “quasi” in front of the word interaction, he insists that mediated quasi-interaction is an actual type of social interaction.
Mediated quasi-interaction entails people communicating with "others who respond to them in certain ways and who may form bonds of friendship, affection or loyalty with them" (p. 228).

In this sense, Thompson's notion of mediated quasi-interaction somewhat parallels the notion of "parasocial interaction" used to study the relationship between audience members and a media persona. An illusion of intimacy is created through parasocial interactions when the media persona tries to eradicate or blur "the line which divides him... from the audience both in the studio and at home" (Horton & Wohl, 1956/2006, para. 12). Although he does not use the term "parasocial interaction," Conrich (2000) clearly demonstrates some of the principles behind the concept in his article "Seducing the Subject: Freddy Krueger, Popular Culture and the Nightmare on Elm Street Films" with regard to the fans' infatuation with Freddy Krueger as a media persona. In this article, Conrich provides numerous examples of how the Freddy character "ruptures the boundaries between the imaginary and the real" (p. 223). Indeed, in a certain sense it can be said that Freddy managed to overcome the "fundamental break" in the mass communicative process described by Thompson.xii

In a certain sense, the fundamental break that Thompson identifies is the crux of what he deems the "mediazation of modern culture." Yet, postmodern theorists have interpreted this break differently, seeing it not merely as giving rise to a particular form of interaction, but transmogrifying our very sense of self. Mark Poster (1994) has articulated this line of thought in his "mode of information" theory:
Electronic culture permits a different interpretation of the gap. The tremendous extension of the space between speaker and listener in the mode of information upsets the confinement of the gap to the self-identical subject. The combination of enormous distances with temporal immediacy produced by electronic communications both removes the speaker from the listener and brings them together. These opposing tendencies...[reconfigure] the position of the individual so drastically that the figure of the self, fixed in time and space, capable of exercising cognitive control over surrounding objects may no longer be sustained (p. 176).

In Poster's mode of information theory, a person's sense of self is tied to his or her position, which is what becomes reconfigured through electronic communication.

Another postmodern theorist, Jean Baudrillard (1985/1988), has concerned himself with the positioning of people during a mass communicative exchange. While noting that definitions of communication usually revolve around some notion of a reciprocal exchange between a speaker and a listener, Baudrillard surmises that the very architecture of the media forbids a response on the part of the “listener” (i.e., the receiver). Baudrillard further suggests that such unilaterality of communication is founded on a system of social control in which power belongs to those that give and to whom no return can be made (pp. 577-578). Ending on this notion of response, I will now turn to the manner in which “audience response” is handled within the literature of the sociology of culture and cultural studies.

From One Extreme to Another

The conceptual shift in regards to audiences has gone from one extreme to the other. This dramatic shift is reflected within the subtitles of various articles found in
the Annual Review of Sociology where a concern with the “mass media audience” (Holz & Wright, 1979, italics mine) has come full swing to an emphasis on individual “readers” (Gamson et al, 1992). Others note a “history of oscillation between conceptions of powerful media and powerful viewers” (Livingstone, 1993, p. 6). Ang (1995) suggests that earlier conceptions of media audiences, as either a “mass” or a “market,” share two important assumptions about the nature of those audiences:

First, they tend to ignore the fact that media audiences consist of human beings who…are actively involved, both emotionally and intellectually, with particular forms of media material. Second, they do not take account of the fact that we [consume media material] in particular social settings and within certain cultural frameworks (p. 212).

It is in regards to traditional assumptions like these that contemporary researchers, working within either the “uses and gratification” or the “reception analysis” paradigms, are responding. Researchers adopting one of these two paradigms assume that audience members are active agents, and they deploy different methods to capture such agency. Whereas uses and gratification researchers largely use questionnaires to find out why audience members actively seek out particular media, reception analysts deploy qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews and ethnographic studies, to uncover what meanings audience members actively construct during their interaction with media. The literature on media research needed this re-casting of audience members as “active agents” as opposed to cultural dupes who passively take in ideological transmissions. However, it sadly came at the expense of researchers turning their backs on the role the producers of such transmissions played in the communicative process.
It seems as though the pendulum has indeed crossed the chasm of the fundamental break in the communicative chain, coming to rest on the side of the receivers. Yet, in one of the most influential texts on audiences, *Reading the Romance* (1984), author Janice Radway noted the danger in reducing such a complicated social interaction to that of a “simple interaction” between a text and a reader (p. 20). More specifically, Radway noticed that literary critics tended to “move immediately from textual interpretation to sociological explanation,” and by doing so they could:

conclude easily that changes in textual features or generic popularity must be the simple and direct result of ideological shifts in the surrounding areas (p. 19).

To compensate for such narrow or limited explanations, Radway structured her work in a “tripartite,” or three-part, fashion, attempting to take into account the manner in which the efforts of readers, the publishing industry, and writers coalesce to create the cultural meaning of a romance novel. The publishing industry creates categories and formulas that target certain audiences, such as the case with the marketing of romance novels to women. Women are likely to buy and actively read such novels, but they are not free to interpret them in any old way. The writers intently structure the novels in such a way as to make some interpretations more likely than others.

In the wake of Radway’s groundbreaking work, other researchers began to look outside the text for social processes at play in the creation of cultural meaning. The work of Wendy Griswold (1987) provides a good example. Griswold asserts that cultural meaning is a “fabrication,” which is to say that it is “humanly made and
remade... rather than simply residing in the cultural work itself” (p. 1080). However, the tendency to focus upon the receivers persists. Even Griswold is at times guilty of displaying this tendency, as evidenced by the following statement: “when a cultural object engages at least some of the presuppositions of the person encountering it, meaning is fabricated” (p. 1080).xvi A more recent example is Henry Jenkin’s work *Textual Poachers* (1992). Jenkins derives the analogy of “textual poaching” from the work of Michel de Certeau, who uses it to characterize “the relationship between readers and writers as an ongoing struggle for possession of the text and for control over its meanings” (de Certeau, as paraphrased by Jenkins, p. 24). However, although the writers of the text are implicated in this struggle for cultural meaning, Jenkins’ focus remains primarily on a “grouping of enthusiasts of film and television which calls itself ‘media fandom’” (p. 1).

**Methodological Frameworks**

There are a few methodological frameworks coming out of the sociology of culture and cultural studies that do attempt to account for the relationship between the producers and the receivers of media texts. Griswold’s (1987) *Methodological Framework for the Sociology of Culture* attempts to bridge the interpretive approaches of the humanities, which focus on the complexities of reading cultural texts, and the institutional approaches of the sciences, which aim to generalize and test causal claims. By using social agents as the pivot of her framework, she is able
to demonstrate that the “intention of the producer and reception by the audience are based on their shared sensibility” (p. 22). Norman Denzin (1990) has critiqued Griswold’s methodological framework for fragmenting:

a unified phenomenon into elementary, empirically describable units that stand in a linear (not interactional) relationship to one another. Meaning, that is, goes from sender (object) who encodes meaning in a text, to a receiver who decodes these messages (p. 1578).

This critique of Denzin’s can be directly applied to encoding/decoding framework established by Hall (1993) who suggests that the moments of encoding and decoding, “though relatively ‘autonomous’ in relation to the communicative process as a whole, are determinate moments,” and also that “the ‘message’ form is the necessary form of appearance of the event in its passage from source to receiver” (pp.91-92).

Henry Jenkins (1992) has also made a similar critique of Hall’s encoding/decoding framework, identifying it as being based upon a theory of “misreading” that is necessarily evaluative in that it bestows “a privileged status to authorial meanings over reader’s meanings” (p.33). Jenkins further insists that Hall’s model places the reader in a stabilized position, either that of the dominant, negotiated or oppositional reader, which therefore suggests that the meanings readers produce are fixed and classifiable as well (pp. 33-34). In contrast, as already discussed, Jenkins adopts de Certeau’s “poaching” model, which is based on a theory of “appropriation” rather than misreading, and emphasizes “the process of making meaning and the fluidity of popular interpretation” (p.34). However, Jenkins is also critical of de Certeau for drawing a sharp distinction between seemingly isolated
readers and institutionally backed writers, and for believing that what is produced by
writers “has a materiality and permanence which the poached culture of the reader is
unable to match” (p. 44). Instead, Jenkins champions the community of fans who he
believes “do not simply consume preproduced stories; they manufacture their own
fanzine stories and novels, art prints, songs, videos, performances, etc” (p.45).

Lastly, I discuss John B. Thompson’s (1991) methodological framework of
depth hermeneutics. Thompson constructs his framework as a “tripartite,” or three-
part approach. The three parts include: 1) a social-historical analysis of production
and/or reception, 2) a formal or discursive analysis of the symbolic form being
produced and/or received, and 3) a reinterpretation of the symbolic form as a
meaningful phenomenon (pp.277-291). Thompson suggests that various methods can
be deployed in the first two stages, and that all three stages should be linked together,
as they are necessary steps along the path of interpretation (p.21). For instance,
interviews, participant observation and other kinds of ethnographic methods can be
deployed in the social-historical analysis phase, while semiotic analysis, conversation
analysis, syntactic analysis, narrative analysis and argumentative analysis can be
deployed in the formal analysis phase.

The reinterpretation phase, “proceeds by synthesis, by the creative
construction of possible meaning” (p.289). This phase is a “reinterpretation” on the
researcher’s part because the agents within the object domain have already interpreted
what is taking place therein. However, Thompson suggests that this reinterpretation
on the part of the researcher contains a critical potential:
It may open the possibility for a critical reflection on the relations of domination in which subjects are enmeshed. [In this respect]... the interpretation of ideology bears an internal connection to what we may call the critique of domination (p.320).

The critical potential of the reinterpretation phase is that it represents an interpretation of doxa on the part of the researcher, or in other words "an interpretation of the opinions, beliefs and understandings which are held and shared by the individuals who comprise the social world" (p.279). Therefore, Thompson's depth hermeneutical model stands as "a general methodological framework for the analysis of cultural phenomena, that is for the analysis of symbolic forms in structured contexts" (p.21).

My Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks

I craft this dissertation through an integration and re-envisioning of existing theoretical and methodological frameworks. My re-envisioning of these frameworks provides a canvas upon which I paint a picture of Freddy vs Jason as a social encounter. The frameworks I bring together are Goffman's (1961) theory of encounters, which he presents within the framework of a game model, and Thompson's (1991) method of depth hermeneutics. I discuss my re-envisioning of these frameworks below before concluding the chapter.
Re-Envisioning Goffman’s Notion of Encounters

In studying “encounters,” Goffman (1961) limited himself to what he called “focused gatherings” or social arrangements that occur when people are in one another’s immediate physical presence (p. 17). I want to re-envision, or broaden the concept to account for social arrangements that occur when people find themselves at opposite sides of the fundamental break of mass communication as described by Thompson (1991); when they are engaged in what he calls “mediated quasi-interaction” with one another (pp. 227-228). Recall Goffman’s (1961) assumption that:

like any other element of social life, an encounter exhibits sanctioned orderliness arising from obligations fulfilled and expectations realized (p. 19).

I believe that, much like the “focused gatherings” of face-to-face interactions, mediated quasi-interactions also exhibit such sanctioned orderliness through the presence of obligations fulfilled and expectations realized. Therefore, in order to understand a mediated quasi-interaction as an encounter, one needs to understand what obligations and expectations the actors involved in the interaction hold. Goffman further suggests that a distinguishing characteristic of encounters is that their order, or structure, pertains to what is attended to as well as what is disattended to, or in other words, what is considered relevant or irrelevant to those involved in the interaction (p. 19). As I argue in what follows, this logic is applicable to mediated quasi-interactions as well as face-to-face interactions.
Goffman uses the metaphor of a game to demonstrate what he calls “rules of irrelevancy” (p.19-26). He points out that school children, convicts, prisoners of war and mental patients at times redefine an imprisoning wall as a game board; the fact that it is a wall and not an actual game board becomes irrelevant to those playing the wall game (p. 20). Drawing on the work of Bateson (1955), Goffman suggests that:

games place a “frame” around a spate of immediate events, determining the type of “sense” that will be accorded everything within the frame. Rules of irrelevance...cause confusion only when the individual “breaks frame” and tries disrespectfully to assert one perspective when another was expected to hold sway. (p. 20).

I see no reason why the insights pertaining to games (i.e., rules of irrelevancy, framing, etc.) cannot be applied to a mediated quasi-interaction as exemplified by a motion picture. For what is a motion picture but a “wall game” in which the players agree to suspend their disbelief in order for the magic of the movie to take place, to become “sutured” into a cinematic narrative?

Berger and Luckmann (1966) also discuss the role that relevancy plays in the social construction of meaning. Indeed, they suggest that institutions “hang together” based upon shared relevancies, noting that some relevancies can either be common to all members of a collective or relevant only to certain “types” or groups (e.g., the producers and receivers of a motion picture). In the latter instance, which they note occurs because of “differences brought about in the course of social interaction,” relevancies involve “incipient differentiation” in the manner that the different groups create relatively stable meanings (pp. 63-64). Furthermore, they note that “several areas of conduct need not be integrated into one cohesive system,” but rather “they...
can continue to coexist on the basis of segregated performances,” and moreover, “while performances can be segregated, meanings tend toward at least minimal consistency” (p. 64). In this regard, I have reason to believe that the segregated performances of the producers and receivers can develop relatively consistent meanings within the context of mediate quasi-interaction.

In the literature on horror films, Vera Dika (1990) has come the closest to treating such films as encounters, or games, in her text Games of Terror. Quite perceptively, she concerns herself with how the spectator of a stalker film is “implicated by a number of conventionalized formal strategies” that encourage the spectator to “play” the game of the film (p. 22). Drawing heavily upon the work of Wright (1975), she seeks to demonstrate how the stalker film creates meaning by comparing its “deep structure” (i.e., “the interaction of all its parts”) to “the narrative form that precedes the stalker film in its developmental history” (pp. 28-29).

Unfortunately, Dika’s over emphasis on the formula and structure of the stalker film does not allow her to draw back far enough from the game board (i.e., the text) to see that it is the players (i.e., the producers and receivers alike) who imbue the game with meaning.

My analysis is similar to Dika’s in that it utilizes the game metaphor and includes a comparative element. However, my comparisons will be based upon the statements of the producers and the receivers of Freddy vs Jason; the players of the game, as it were. Specifically, I am interested in statements by the producers that describe what specific elements or aspects of the film they felt obligated to attend to,
and statements made by the receives that describe what specific elements or aspects they expected the film to contain. Once I ascertain these statements, I can compare which elements or typificatory schemes both parties found relevant to the fabrication of the game that is *Freddy vs Jason*. My methodological framework for achieving this endeavor follows.

Re-Envisioning Thompson’s Methodological Framework

Recall that Thompson’s (1990) methodological framework consisted of three parts or phases. The first phase constituted a social-historical analysis of production and/or reception. The second phase constituted a formal or discursive analysis of the symbolic form being produced and/or received. The third phase constituted a reinterpretation of the symbolic form as a meaningful phenomenon. My methodological framework differs in that I break apart the analysis of production and/or reception into separate analyses, thus forming four phases instead of three. I devote a chapter to each of these four phases. First, I undertake a template analysis of *Freddy vs Jason* (in Chapter Two). In this phase, I seek to understand how the film’s narrative is organized, particularly in terms of a “hero myth.” To do so, I draw heavily upon the work of Clover (1992) and Vogler (1992). Second, I undertake a template analysis of the statements made by the producers or “filmmakers” of *Freddy vs Jason* (in Chapter Three). To do so, I utilize transcripts of the film’s commentary track and other special features found on the film’s DVD as sources of available data.

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Third, I undertake a template analysis of the statements made by the receivers or “fans” of *Freddy vs Jason* (in Chapter Four). To do so, I utilize pertinent messages that fans post to a specific online message forum. Lastly, I conclude my dissertation with my reinterpretation of *Freddy vs Jason* as a social encounter that takes place between its filmmakers and fans (in Chapter Five). To do so, I compare the results of both template analyses from chapters three and four.

**Template Analysis**

As I stated above, I make use of template analysis in chapters two, three and four. Therefore, I cannot conclude this chapter without clarifying what template analysis is. Template analysis is a kind of qualitative research technique used to uncover themes from a text through the use of a codebook. King (1998) suggests that template analysis is often referred to as “codebook analysis” or “thematic analysis” (p. 118). In fact, the words “codebook” and “template” are often used interchangeably, which can lead to confusion. King (1998) states that template analysis occupies a middle ground between the traditional content analysis approach in which “codes are all predetermined,” and a grounded theory approach in which “there is no *a priori* definition of codes” (p. 118). A code itself is simply “a label attached to a section of text to index it as relating to a theme or issue in the data which the researcher has identified as important to his or her interpretation” (p. 119). Moreover, the codes in a codebook are organized hierarchically, where “higher-
order” codes are used to capture broad themes while “lower-order” codes, subsumed underneath the higher-order codes, are used to capture fine distinctions and details relating to the broader theme. King notes that “there can be as many codes as the researcher finds useful,” but he warns that “too many levels can be counter productive to the goal of attaining clarity in organizing the data” (p. 120).

I have come to view template analysis as a research process in which a researcher develops a final template of themes through the continual revision of his or her codebook. For instance, in chapters three and four, I endeavor to develop a final template of themes by engaging in the following steps. First, I begin by outlining some a priori codes for my initial codebook. Second, I undertake a preliminary coding of the data using my initial codebook. Third, once my initial coding is complete, I adjust my codebook with insights that I garner from my preliminary coding. Fourth, I undertake a subsequent coding of the data using my revised template. After this subsequent coding of the data, I make further codebook adjustments, which result in the creation of my final template. I view this final template as a set of codified themes through which I can organize my data in order to begin making interpretations. Therefore, I find template analysis to be highly conducive to a hermeneutical framework such as my re-envisioning of Thompson’s methodological framework of depth hermeneutics.

My use of template analysis differs slightly in chapter two. If you recall, my aim in chapter two is to achieve an understanding of how the film’s narrative is organized in terms of a “hero myth.” To do so, I draw on Vogler’s (1992) text *The
Writers Journey: Mythic Structure for Storytellers & Screenwriters. Specifically, I use the twelve stages of the hero’s journey, as outlined by Vogler, as higher-order codes, and the various representative elements of each stage as lower-order codes. Therefore, my template analysis in this chapter comes closer to a more traditional version of content analysis because I adhere closely to a set of a priori codes and do not make any substantive changes to my codebook. Moreover, because of the vast number of codes my codebook contains in this chapter, I utilize what I call a “code chart” to help facilitate my coding of the film. I intend my template analysis of the film’s narrative to provide those readers who have not seen the film with a working understanding of its story. I believe that such an understanding will aid in the contextualization of statements made by the producers and receivers, which I uncover in chapters three and four through the use of template analysis as outlined in the previous paragraph. I conclude the dissertation by comparing the final templates for the producers and receivers in chapter five in an attempt to understand what elements they discussed in common, and if their discussions of these elements were thematically consistent or inconsistent.

Conclusion

Through comparing the results of the final templates for the producers and receivers in chapter five, I hope to demonstrate the interdependency both parties exert upon one another during their fabrication of the game that is Freddy vs Jason. By
evoking Griswold’s notion of fabrication, I mean to highlight the fact that “cultural meaning is humanly made and remade. . .rather than simply residing in the cultural work itself.” In this fabrication, as in a game of chess, “each move of one group determines each move of the other group and vice versa” (Elias, 1978, p. 77). As a sociologist, I am in agreement with Norbert Elias who believes that “sociology is the study of people; its central issues are their interdependencies” (p. 100). Elias calls these interdependencies “figurations” rather than “human relationships” because he feels it more aptly describes the complexity of modern life:

the term ‘human relationships’ often conjures up ideas of one’s immediate day by day, hour by hour experiences within the cramped circle comprising oneself, one’s family and one’s job. People are hardly aware of the problem created by the possibility that hundreds, thousands, millions of people may have some relationship to each other and be dependent on each other, although this may well happen in the modern world (p. 100).

If we are to understand the dependencies and interdependencies that bind people together, and which span the abyss that is the “fundamental break” in the process of mass communications, then we have to use our sociological imaginations. We have to craft studies that “bring out more graphically the processual character of relationships between interdependent people” (p. 80). This may mean treating sociology as an art form through which “paintings” of social landscapes are creatively generated, as Nisbet (1976) suggests. I attempt to produce such a painting in the following pages of this dissertation.
Patrons of a slasher film...know more or less what to expect well before the film rolls, and at least one horror director (William Friedkin) has suggested that their emotional engagement with the movie begins while they are standing in line—a proposition that acknowledges the profoundly formulaic nature of the enterprise (Clover, 1992, p. 9).

“Basically, sequels mean the same film,” observes director John Carpenter...that’s what people want to see. They want to see the same movie again.” Audiences may thrill to the killer’s particular shtick (his hockey mask or knife-fingers or whatever) or to the special effect that shows the bloody stump up close...but the structure, functions or subject positions, and narrative moves are as old as the hills (Clover, 1992, p. 10).

CHAPTER II

Introduction

The specific question I hope to answer within this chapter is: how is the film’s narrative organized, particularly in the terms of a “hero myth?” Here I draw heavily from the work of Carol J. Clover (1992), whose words that precede this chapter attest to the formulaic narratives of slasher films. Clover states that slasher films have a “hero plot, revolving around the main character’s struggle with, and eventual triumph over, evil (pp. 40-41). For Clover, that hero is the slasher film’s main female character who she deems The Final Girl. Of most importance for Clover is the primarily young, male audience of slasher films and their vicarious identification with the Final Girl who is:

introduced at the beginning and is the only character to be developed in any psychological detail. We understand immediately from the attention paid it that hers is the main story line (p. 44).

According to Clover, the Final Girl “is not a heroine...saved by someone else, but a hero, who rises to the occasion and defeats the adversary with his own wit and hands” (p. 59). Indeed, she is a rather “boyish” victim-hero who combines “the functions of suffering victim and avenging hero” (p. 17). Clover asserts that slasher films utilize the cinematic apparatus to switch their viewers’ sympathies, and shift their identifications, unto various characters throughout the course of their narratives. Yet,
Clover stresses that audience member’s sympathies “belong in the end to the Final Girl; there is no alternative” (p. 46).

I use template analysis to analyze the mythic structure of *Freddy vs Jason*, and to better understand the function of the film’s Final Girl character, Lori. I record minute by minute what elements of the various stages of the hero’s journey occur during the course of the film. I watch the film and record the codes for each of these elements on a code chart. After recording the codes, I peruse the code chart for patterns. A pattern takes the form of a grouping of codes from a particular stage of the hero’s journey. Vogler (1992) asserts that the stages of the hero’s journey “can be deleted, added to, and drastically shuffled without losing any of their power” (1992, p. 30). Therefore, after identifying emerging patterns on my code chart, I comprise a rough outline of the film’s story according to its presentation or ordering of the stages of the hero’s journey. I refine this rough outline by pinpointing key moments in the film that I believe signify: 1) the film’s prologue and epilogue sections, 2) transitions between the stages of the hero’s journey as they occur in the film, 3) transitions between the film’s three act structure, and 4) the start of the film’s crisis and climax sections. I use the digital timer on my DVD player to identify the approximate times, in hours, minutes and seconds, that these key moments take place during the course of the film.

I present my findings in a stage-by-stage format. I believe this format will provide readers of my dissertation, who may be unfamiliar with the film *Freddy vs Jason*, a better understanding of its characters and story. I anticipate that such an
understanding will aid the readers in contextualizing the comments made by the film’s producers and receivers within the later chapters. After presenting my findings, I discuss how the structure of *Freddy vs Jason* differs from the standard Hollywood film in terms of its sequencing of the Hero’s Journey and the duration of its three-act structure. I also identify any “links,” or intertextual references, to the many films comprising the *Nightmare* and *Friday* series. I conclude the chapter by examining the Final Girl status of the film’s hero, Lori. Within this conclusion section, I draw from William Paul’s (1994) work to suggest that a common characteristic of slasher films is their “playful” mode of address. The type of shifting character identification acknowledged by Clover (1992) is indeed a part of this address, but it does not overshadow the importance of the “game-like” performance enacted between audience and filmmaker.

Before moving on to the next section, I feel I must note that my intention to use my narrative analysis in this chapter as a means to acquaint the uninitiated to the fictitious universe of *Freddy vs Jason* speaks volumes in regards to film’s status as an interaction. *All* interactions involve “rules of relevancy” (Goffman, 1961), not just face-to-face interactions. Producers and receivers of any message, and indeed the users of any medium, have to be knowledgeable of such rules in order for their interaction to be successful. For instance, as McLuhan (1964) suggests, “movies assume a high level of literacy in their users and prove baffling to the nonliterate” (p. 249). Similarly, Radway’s (1984) work demonstrates that “the production process is itself governed by reading strategies and interpretive conventions that the reader has
learned to apply as a member of a particular interpretive community” (p. 11). In short, I am arguing that the producers inscribed the film with a mythic structure replete with genre-specific conventions and intertextual links; moreover, I interact with the producers by decoding this structure, as well as these conventions and links. I believe that McLuhan (1964) went too far in proclaiming, “the effect of the movie form is not related to its program content” (p. 32). I do not believe that form can be wholly divorced from content; they are just as integral to one another as the producers are to the receivers. Whereas McLuhan believed that the medium is the message, I believe that medium and message combine to create a “habitus” for their producers and receivers: “a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions” (Bourdieu, 1977/1998, pp. 82-82). By demonstrating my literacy as a “scholar-fan,” I hope to educate, and invite, the uninitiated to the world of Freddy vs Jason by decoding its content in this chapter (Hills, 2005b). By the end of the dissertation, I hope to have demonstrated how the film itself, its form and content, functions as the habitus of a social encounter between its producers and receivers.

Source of Available Data for the Analysis of the Film’s Narrative

I utilize the film’s DVD as a source of available data to answer the question concerning the film’s narrative. “DVD” is a widely used acronym standing for “digital video disc.” DVDs became publicly available in nineteen-ninety seven,
“marking a shift of film to digital formats” (Croteau and Hoynes, 2000, p. 11). As with other forms of new media technology, DVDs provide their users with increasing opportunities for interactivity and “control” over films. Whereas videocassettes changed their users’ relationship with films by, for example, allowing them to fast-forward, pause and rewind, DVD technology does these things and more. For purposes of this section, I focus on one specific feature of DVDs that provides users an increased amount of control over the film itself. The feature I am referring to is commonly called “scene selection.”

A DVD’s scene selection menu breaks the film down into smaller constitutive units. The user of the DVD is able to start the film at any one of those pre-inscribed units through the use of his or her remote control. The term “scene selection” is somewhat of a misnomer because the consecutive units that some DVDs demarcate oftentimes encompass a group of scenes rather than a single scene. Other DVDs use the phrase “chapter selection” or “chapter stop” in place of the phrase “scene selection.” The former phrases imply that a DVD can be demarcated in a manner similar to the way in which the narrative of a book is separated out by chapter headings. I use the phrase “scene selection” in this dissertation rather than “chapter selection” because that is the term used on the Freddy vs Jason DVD and its packaging materials.
Mapping the Film’s Narrative

The scene selection menu on the *Freddy vs Jason* DVD acts as a map of the film’s narrative, breaking it down into seventeen separate scenes. Each of these seventeen scenes has a label (see figure 1, below). Sometimes these labels take the form of a memorable quote uttered by one of film’s characters within its representative scene. Other times these phrases signify an important circumstance or action that takes place within its representative scene. The map of these seventeen separate scenes also comprises the skeletal structure of the film’s narrative. This skeletal structure provides the user with an initial interpretative frame: it functions to position the users’ intelligibility with regard to what takes place within the film. I

| 1) Freddy’s Children         |
| 2) Late Night Swim           |
| 3) Welcome to Elm Street     |
| 4) “Freddy’s Coming Back!”   |
| 5) Institutionalized         |
| 6) Back to School            |
| 7) Life and Death of the Party |
| 8) Sins of the Father        |
| 9) Brother’s Keeper          |
| 10) Two Killers              |
| 11) Back to Westin Hills     |
| 12) “Welcome to My Nightmare!”|
| 13) Return to Crystal Lake   |
| 14) Home Field Advantage     |
| 15) One on One               |
| 16) Final Blows              |
| 17) End Credits              |

Figure 1. The Scene Selection Menu of the *Freddy vs Jason* DVD.
undertake a narrative analysis to flesh out the storyline of that skeletal structure for the reader. I describe the method of my narrative analysis in what follows.

Method

The method I employ in this phase is template analysis. My units of analysis are the first sixteen scenes of *Freddy vs Jason*, as outlined by its scene selection menu.\(^{xxii}\) I draw heavily from the work of Vogler (1992) while constructing the *a priori* codes of my codebook. Vogler’s work is largely informed by the work of Joseph Campbell (1973). Some scholars may look down on or “snub” the production orientation of Vogler’s work, and therefore may not recognize it as a legitimate source. However, I intently draw on Volger’s work because he represents a “Hollywood insider.” Vogler\(^{xxiii}\) is a motion picture producer and the founder of STORYTECH,\(^{xxiv}\) a story consultation firm for major movie companies. Vogler was a teacher and lecturer at the UCLA Extension Writers Program prior to his founding of STORYTECH. He continues to conduct writing seminars and workshops all over the United States and is a current faculty member at the USC Animation Department in the School of Cinema-Television. Before writing his book *The Hero’s Journey: Mythic Structure for Storytellers & Screenwriters* (1992), Vogler became well known in the industry for composing “A Practical Guide to *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*,” which took the form of a seven-page memo that was heavily circulated
around Hollywood. In fact, the practical guide “soon became required reading for young executives in Hollywood” (STORYTECH, n.d.).

I believe that the knowledge gleaned from “insiders” such as Vogler is an indispensable tool for those researchers attempting to analyze the products of the Hollywood film industry and the intentions of its producers. For this reason, I draw on Vogler’s (1992) work rather than, for instance, Propp’s (1968) work. Similar to both Propp and Campbell, Vogler believes that all stories consist of a few common structural elements found universally in myths, fairy tales, dreams, and movies. Vogler identifies the collectivity of these structural elements as: “The Hero’s Journey” (p. 3).

Vogler (1992) conceives of the hero’s journey as a skeletal framework of twelve stages that is infinitely flexible and capable of endless variation because, as I stated earlier, he believes that the stages themselves “can be deleted, added to and drastically shuffled without losing any of their power” (p. 30). Coupled with the fact that there are more scenes to the film than there are stages to the hero’s journey (sixteen versus twelve, respectively), the “flexible” quality of these stages makes pinpointing their presence in the film’s narrative all the more difficult (for a brief outline of the twelve stages of the hero’s journey, see figure 2, on the next page). Therefore, I make use of template analysis to identify when particular stages of the hero’s journey take place within the film.

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(1) Ordinary World (7) Approach
(2) Call to Adventure (8) Supreme Ordeal
(3) Refusal of the Call (9) Reward
(4) Meeting With The Mentor (10) The Road Back
(5) Crossing The 1st Threshold (11) Resurrection
(6) Tests, Allies, Enemies (12) Return With Elixir

Figure 2. Twelve Stages of The Hero’s Journey (Vogler, 1992, p. 18).

Managing the Data

The *Freddy vs Jason* DVD allows its user to print out the film’s script through the use of a personal computer’s DVD ROM drive. The script acts as a transcript of the film, although I opt not to use it for a specific reason: some of the scenes that are present in the script have either been altered or deleted from the film altogether. It is true that I could conduct an additional transcription of those scenes from the film that are different in the script. However, in order to make the data more manageable, I decide to code the film itself using what I call a “code chart.”

My code chart allows me to more systematically record the stages of the hero’s journey as they occur, minute-by-minute, throughout the course of the film. The code chart has ninety-one rows and two columns. Each row represents a minute of the film’s run time. For instance, the first row is labeled “0 to 1” and it represents the first minute of the film that takes place from the film’s beginning to its one-minute mark. The first column of the chart lists all the ninety-seven labels for each row, starting with “0 to 1” and ending with “90 to 91.” The second column is
left blank. I print out the code chart in order to utilize it later on (see appendix F). I intend to record the codes from my codebook into the second column of the code chart while watching the film. I describe the manner in which I develop the codebook and its codes in the following section.

**Developing a Codebook**

I use the twelve stages of the hero’s journey as the *a priori* codes of my codebook. The “defining” of *a priori* codes is the first step of template analysis according to King (n.d.b). However, King (1998) suggests elsewhere that codes are simply descriptive, categorical labels rather than clear-cut definitions. For instance, he states: “Many codes will be more interpretive, and therefore harder to define clearly” (p. 119). The stages of the hero’s journey that I outlined in Figure 2 represent the categorical labels of my *a priori* codes.\(^{xxvii}\) I present a slightly more elaborate outline of the hero’s journey in appendix G. I adopt this outline from the forward Vogler wrote to Stuart Voytilla’s (1999) book *Myth and the Movies: Discovering the Mythic Structure of 50 Unforgettable Films.*\(^{xxviii}\) The definitions this outline provides are admittedly very vague. Therefore, I develop my codebook further by incorporating specific representative elements of each stage of the hero’s journey as “lower-order” codes.\(^{xxix}\) I outline each of the twelve\(^{xxx}\) stages and their representative elements, as identified by Vogler (1992), in what follows.
Vogler suggests that a prologue oftentimes precedes the first stage of the hero’s journey. Therefore, I incorporate a prologue stage into my codebook. The prologue has several possible functions. It may: (a) relate a vital piece of back-story, (b) introduce the villain or threat of the story, (c) attempt to disorient the audience, and/or (d) set a chain of events in motion (pp. 100-101).

The ordinary world is the first stage of the hero’s journey. It generally establishes the everyday, mundane world of the hero as a baseline for comparison of the “special world” that he or she will encounter later in the story. The several possible functions of the ordinary world stage include: (a) foreshadowing the hero’s battles and moral dilemmas, (b) raising the dramatic question of the story, (c) presenting an inner and outer problem of the hero, (d) introducing the hero to the audience by establishing a strong bond of sympathy, (e) giving the hero universal goals, drives, desires and needs that the audience can identify with, such as the need for recognition, affection, acceptance, or understanding, (f) identifying elements that the character is lacking, or something that has been taken away from him or her, (g) presenting a tragic flaw that puts the hero at odds with his or her destiny or (h) revealing a deep wound that scars the hero’s psyche (pp. 97-113).

The call to adventure is the second stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves to get the story rolling once the main characters have been introduced. The call to adventure may take one or more possible forms, including: (a) a string of accidents or coincidences, (b) a character performing the function of a herald, (c) an information gathering reconnaissance mission by the villain, (d) something that
causes an unsettling or *disorienting effect* on the hero, (e) a *loss* or subtraction from the hero’s life in the ordinary world, (f) a lack of options and/or (g) a *warning* (pp. 117-123).

*The refusal of the call* is the third stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves to indicate that the journey is not a frivolous undertaking but a risky endeavor in which the hero might lose his or her life. The refusal of the call may take one or more possible forms, including: (a) *avoidance* by the hero, (b) *excuses* made by the hero, (c) a *tragedy* or disaster as a result of the hero’s persistent refusal, (d) two *conflicting calls*, and/or (e) a *threshold guardian* who blocks the hero’s adventure before it begins (pp.127-135).

*The meeting with the mentor* is the fourth stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves to supply the hero with the knowledge and confidence needed to overcome his or her fear and commit to the adventure. The mentor may take one or more possible forms, including: (a) a *teacher* who trains the hero, (b) a *gift-giver* who aids the hero by giving him or her some gift, (c) an *inventor* who creates gadgets for the hero to aid him or her while undertaking the journey, (d) a *motivator* who helps the hero overcome his or her fear, (e) an *informant* who plants information or props for the hero to find, (f) a *dark mentor* who misleads the hero, obstructing his or her progress on the journey, (g) a *fallen mentor* who has failed at his or her own journey, providing the hero with an example of what not to do, (h) a wise-cracking, sarcastic *comic mentor*, (i) a *shaman* who acts as a healer, and/or (j) an *internalized code* or faith inherent to the hero character (pp. 51-60 & 137-146).
Crossing the first threshold is the fifth stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves to indicate that the hero has overcome his or her reluctance and is now committed to undertaking the adventure. Oftentimes, at this stage of the journey: (a) a threshold guardian appears, which is a character whose function is to block the progress of the hero; (b) this archetype also functions to test the hero in that he or she must find a way around the threshold guardian; (c) once the threshold guardian is traversed, the hero crosses from the “ordinary world” to the “special world” (pp. 149-155).

Tests, allies and enemies comprise the sixth stage of the hero’s journey. These things generally serve to display a marked difference between the hero’s ordinary world and the special world of act two. In this stage: (a) tests are difficult obstacles that are not quite as dire as the “supreme ordeal” that the hero will face later in the story, (b) allies take the form of a sidekick or a team of characters who were amassed throughout the previous stages, (c) enemies may include the villain or other antagonists who take the form of the shadow, trickster, threshold guardian or herald archetypes, (d) the hero must quickly learn the new rules of the special world, and to do so (e) he or she may wish to recuperate at a particular place before going on (pp. 157-165).

The Approach to the Inmost Cave is the seventh stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves to prepare the hero for his or her greatest challenge: the supreme ordeal. During the approach to the inmost cave, the hero may encounter more: (a) obstacles, (b) illusions, (c) threshold guardians and (d) warnings to turn back. Also,
the hero may try to: (e) get inside their opponent’s mind, or (f) reorganize their team in order to meet the opponent’s (g) heavy defenses head-on, before (h) breaking through the final ramparts of the innermost cave (pp. 167-179).

*The Supreme Ordeal* is the eighth stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves as the central crisis of the story: the moment the hero faces his or her greatest fear. During this crisis the hero “tastes death” by either: (a) appearing to die, (b) witnessing the death of another, (c) causing the death of another, or (d) facing the shadow or villain archetype, which may cause the shadow or villain to (e) die or (f) escape (pp. 181-201).

*The Reward* is the ninth stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves to demonstrate the consequences of the hero’s courage after having faced his or her greatest fear. During this stage, the hero may: (a) celebrate, (b) “seize the sword” or otherwise take possession of what he or she was seeking, (c) engage in lovemaking, (d) steal the “elixir,” or prize at the heart of the story, (e) see through deception, (f) achieve a moment of epiphany or (g) achieve a moment of self-realization (pp. 203-214).

*The Road Back* is the tenth stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves as yet another threshold crossing, marking a transition from act two to act three. While on the road back to the ordinary world, the hero may experience: (a) a retaliation in which his or her opponent (b) chases the hero down, during which time (c) the villain may escape and/or (d) the hero may experience a setback (pp. 217-225).
The Resurrection is the eleventh stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves as the climax of the film. During this climax, the hero: (a) experiences the biggest confrontation of the story, and (b) has to make a choice demonstrating whether or not he or she has changed dramatically, after which he or she is (c) cleansed or purged of death and destruction (pp. 227-244).

The Return with the Elixir is the twelfth and final stage of the hero’s journey. It generally serves to close the story, returning the hero to the ordinary world. This stage may take one of two forms: (a) close-ended or (b) open-ended. Having finished outlining the stages of the hero’s journey and their pertinent elements, I attach my developed codebook to the dissertation as appendix H.

Coding and Retrieving Text

I simultaneously record the codes on the code chart while viewing the film. I record the codes in shorthand using only the number corresponding to the stage of the hero’s journey. For instance, if a prologue to the film’s story takes place during the first minute of the film, I enter the code “0” in the column adjacent to row “0 to 1.” Here, “0” represents the code corresponding to the label “prologue” as indicated within the initial codebook (refer to appendix H).

I treat the codes as continuous entities. That is to say, the same theme represented by any one particular code could last for several consecutive or non-consecutive minutes. For instance, the prologue could occur during the first three
minutes of the film. If this were indeed the case, rows “0 to 1,” “1 to 2,” and “2 to 3” would contain the code “0.”

Some rows will contain more than one code. This occurs during those instances when a minute of film contains a transition from one stage to another, or where stages seem to overlap. For instance, the “prologue” and “ordinary world” stages could both occur between the second and third minute of the film. If this were the case, I would enter the codes “0” and “1” in row “2 to 3.”

I also record the lower-order codes in shorthand using letters to correspond to the specific elements pertinent to particular stages of the hero’s journey. For instance, if the hero is introduced in the first minute of the film, I enter the code “1-C” in the column adjacent to row “0 to 1.” Here, “1” represents the “ordinary world” stage, and “C” represents the “introduction of the hero” as seen in the codebook (see appendix H). I also treat these lower-order codes as continuous. For instance, if the theme “introduction of the hero” occurs during the first three minutes of the film, I place the code “1-C” within the rows “0 to 1,” “1 to 2,” and “2 to 3.” Note that I am not likely to find evidence of all of the themes in the codebook within the film.

Making Interpretations

I interpret the data in the following manner. I scrutinize the code chart and determine where each stage of the hero’s journey occurs within the context of the film (i.e., within and between which scenes). I use the titles of each stage of the hero’s
journey to organize my interpretation. I also note transitions occurring between the film's traditional three-act structure, and I indicate where each of these transitions lie within the framework of the hero's journey. I conclude my interpretation section by commenting on the "links" or intertextual references contained in *Freddy vs Jason*, as well as the hero status of Lori, the film's Final Girl.\^\textsuperscript{xxii}

Findings

Prologue

As Vogler (1992) suggests, some films begin with a prologue section, which "precedes the main body of the story, perhaps before the introduction of the main characters and their world" (p. 100). According to Vogler, a prologue can have several functions:

It may give an essential piece of backstory (sic), cue the audience to what kind of movie or story this is going to be, or start the story with a bang and let the audience settle into their seats (p. 100).

Vogler further suggests "some prologues introduce the villain or threat of the story before the hero appears" (p. 101). *Freddy vs Jason* contains a prologue section that fulfills all of these functions. It is easy to pinpoint the beginning and ending of the film's prologue section, as it takes place between the very start of the film and continues up to the film's opening title sequence, which commences at six minutes and thirty-four seconds into the film.
Freddy narrates the prologue through the use of a voice-over. This voice-over introduces the audience to Freddy while the film visually relays his back-story. We see him throw a child's doll into a furnace before sharpening his blades. We hear his gruff voice state: “My children. From the very beginning it was the children who gave me my power.” A little girl cowers in the boiler room with Freddy, having nowhere to run. Freddy continues: “The ‘Springwood Slasher.’ That’s what they called me.” His shadow envelops the little girl. The blades on his makeshift glove clink together. The scene cuts to a close-up of the doll burning in the furnace as we hear the little girl scream. Again, the scene changes to reveal Freddy adding a photograph of the little girl to a scrapbook containing pictures of, and newspaper articles about, his many victims. Freddy states matter-of-factly: “My reign of terror was legendary. Dozens of children would fall by my blades.” Outside, a mob throws Molotov cocktails through the windows of the boiler room, as Freddy explains: “Then the parents of Springwood came for me. Taking justice into their own hands.” A close-up of Freddy’s eyes, and the burnt flesh surrounding them, fills the screen as he declares: “When I was alive, I might have been a little naughty. But after they killed me, I became something much, much worse. The stuff nightmares are made out of.”

From this point, we are assaulted with a montage of clips from previous films in the Nightmare series. These clips depict Freddy’s gruesome slaughter of various teenagers. Freddy exults: “The children still feared me. And their fear gave me the power to invade their dreams. And that’s when the fun really began!” Then the montage changes, and we begin to see clips of teenagers fighting back. Freddy’s
elation rescinds into indignation: “Until they figured out a way to forget about me! To erase me completely! Being dead wasn’t a problem. But being forgotten—now, that’s a bitch!” Freddy booms: “I can’t come back if nobody remembers me! I can’t come back if nobody’s afraid!” The screen goes black. We hear Freddy off screen, a bit quieter now: “I had to search the bowels of hell.” Then Freddy’s pointed, bloodstained teeth fill the screen as he states: “But I found someone...someone who’ll make’em remember. The camera cuts away to Jason’s infamous hockey mask. Freddy proclaims: “He may get the blood, but I’ll get the glory. And that fear is my ticket home.”

The camera zooms into the eyehole of the hockey mask where we see a new scene unfolding. Freddy’s back-story has ceased, and this new scene serves to disorient the viewer. Vogler states that such disorienting effects inform the audience that the movie “is going to be about extraordinary events that may strain credibility” (p. 101). However, Vogler suggests that scriptwriters intently employ such disorienting effects because:

- getting the audience a little off-base and upsetting their normal perceptions can put them into a receptive mood. They begin to suspend their disbelief and enter more readily into a Special World of fantasy (p. 101).

The scene in question is one in which we watch Jason stalk a female camp counselor who we previously witnessed skinny-dipping in the lake. The camp counselor flees into the woods, but eventually stumbles to the ground. This allows Jason to catch up with her and pin her to a tree trunk with his machete. Up until this point, the scene
played out like any other in the *Friday the 13th* series in which Jason stalks and kills a helpless victim. However, soon afterward, something extraordinary happens.

The camp counselor, who is clearly dead, lifts her head and states: "I should've been watching them, not drinking. Not meeting a boy at the lake." Then suddenly, the female camp counselor morphs into a deceased male camp counselor who states: "I deserved to be punished"; then another morph takes place, and a new counselor attests to their guilt: "We all deserved to be punished." As if this was not disorienting enough, we suddenly hear the voice of Jason’s dead mother as he turns to see her: "Jason. My special, special boy. Do you know what your gift is? No matter what they do to you, you cannot die. You can never die. You’ve just been sleeping, honey."

Jason tilts his head. He seems to be just as disoriented as we are. He listens intently to his long-dead mother’s demand: "But now the time has come to wake up. Mommy has something she wants you to do. I need you to go to Elm Street." Then the camera slowly tilts to reveal a heavily decomposed corpse lying on the ground. We see and hear a heart begin to beat from within its ribcage while Jason’s mother continues: "The children have been very bad on Elm Street. Rise up, Jason!" We now know that it is Jason’s corpse lying on the ground, as we witness the lungs inflate with air. Jason’s mother grows louder: "Your work isn’t finished! Hear my voice and live again!" Jason’s one good eye opens in response. As Jason emerges from the earth, we begin to emerge from our haze. We hear Jason’s mother yet again, but we begin to suspect that it’s not Jason’s mother after all: "Make them remember

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me Jason. Make them remember what fear tastes like!'" Our suspicions are confirmed when the face of Jason’s mother morphs into Freddy’s face, as he laughs and states: “I’ve been away from my children for far too long.” The opening title sequence appears, and we are ready for the rest of the story to begin.

The Ordinary World (Act One Begins)

Right after the opening credits subside, we see Jason’s hulking shadow cast across the wet blacktop of Elm Street. The camera closes in on the house at 1428 Elm Street, and, once we enter its interior, the Ordinary World stage begins. Vogler states:

The Ordinary World is the most appropriate place to deal with exposition and...all the relevant information about a character’s history and background...Exposition is everything the audience needs to know to understand the hero and the story (pp. 110-111).

This exposition takes place as we listen to Lori, the film’s hero, chat with her friends Kia and Gibb. Then Gibb’s boyfriend Trey suddenly shows up unannounced with his friend Blake. A resentful Lori soon finds out that Gibb and Kia are attempting to set her up with Blake. Lori tells Kia in private: “He’s not my type.” Kia retorts: “Oh! Who is? No one’s ever gonna live up to the fuzzy memory of your first love, Lori. You were fucking fourteen, so get over it.” Lori sheepishly states: “Yeah, I know we were young, but what Will and I had was real.” Kia responds: “Well, correct me if I’m wrong, but didn’t Mr. Real just drop-kick your ass without so much as a goodbye
handshake? He ever even call or maybe even write you after he moved? Send you an email?” Lori reluctantly says: “No.”

This short dialogue divulges the “relevant information” of the hero’s backstory, which is one of lost love, but there is more to it than that. Vogler states:

For readers and viewers to be involved in the adventure, to care about the hero, they have to know at an early stage exactly what’s at stake. In other words, what does the hero stand to gain or lose in the adventure? What will be the consequences of the hero, society, and the world if the hero succeeds or fails” (p. 110)?

Later in the scene Kia questions Lori: “You’ve barely gone out since - -” Lori cuts her off: “Since what? Since my mom died? Yeah, well, you know what? My dad needs me. So I can’t just go out with guys all the time.” This exchange gives the audience more of Lori’s back-story, but also sets the stakes for her character: She must isolate herself for her father’s sake; to help him cope with the loss of his wife, but also for a deeper reason.

Vogler suggests, “the Ordinary World is the place to state the theme of your story...If you had to boil down its essence to a single word or phrase, what would it be” (p. 111)? I believe the theme of Freddy vs Jason is isolation or containment. The film began with Freddy’s isolation and containment in Hell. As we find out later, Lori’s isolation, particularly from her lost love Will, is of utmost importance. Their reunion might have dire consequences for all of Springwood, as it could aid in Freddy’s release from his eternal damnation.

Vogler states, “every hero needs both an inner and outer problem” (pp. 103-104). Lori’s inner problem (the restraint of her emotions) mirrors her outer problem
(her estrangement from others). This establishes Lori as a “wounded hero” who “may seem to be well-adjusted and in control, but that control masks a deep psychic wound” (p. 108). Heroes such as Lori are generally “lacking something, or something is taken away from them. Often they have just lost a family member” (p. 106). For Lori, that lack is not so much the loss of Will as it is the death of her mother, which occurred prior to the film’s beginning. As we shall see, Lori must confront this psychic wound (the circumstances surrounding her mother’s death) head on later in the film.

**Call to Adventure**

According to Vogler, The Call to Adventure is “the inciting or initiating incident, the catalyst, or the trigger...necessary to get a story rolling, once the work of introducing the main character is done” (p. 117). This call comes soon after we witness Gibb and Trey having sex in an upstairs bedroom. In fact, we witness their sex act from Jason’s point of view as he undertakes a “reconnaissance mission,” which is also part of the Call to Adventure stage according to Vogler (p. 120). Jason’s reconnaissance mission started earlier in the film when we saw him observing Lori, Gibb and Kia through a window while standing outside in the rain. Later, Blake finds the backdoor of the house wide open, implying to the viewer that Jason has entered. We hear the floorboards creak as Jason ascends the stairs and quietly rounds
the corner to peer in through the bedroom door where Gibb and Trey are copulating. Once they have finished, Gibb retires to the shower while Trey rests in bed.

Vogler suggests, “The Call to Adventure may come in the form of a message or a messenger. It may be a new event like a declaration of war, or the arrival of a telegram” (p. 118). Jason, as Freddy’s messenger, enacts just such a declaration of war through his horrendous slaughter of Trey. A flash of lightning reveals Jason standing over Trey. With the handle of his machete in both hands, and blade pointed downward, Jason drives it repeatedly through Trey’s back no fewer than eleven times. As Trey’s devastated body jitters on the mattress, Jason plants his machete in the floorboards before grabbing both ends of the bed. With unnatural strength, Jason lifts up on both ends of the bed, folding it in half. Trey is bent backwards in the process, sandwiched inside the mattress.

Gibb almost slips on Trey’s blood that is now flooding under the bathroom door. Upon opening the door, she becomes the first to see the message left by Jason in the form of Trey’s mutilated body. In this sense, Jason takes on the Herald archetype. As Vogler states, “Heralds provide motivation, offer the hero a challenge, and get the story rolling. They alert the hero (and the audience) that change and adventure are coming” (p. 70). In the wake of Jason’s carnage, Gibb, Lori, Kia and Blake flee the house screaming, and their adventure begins. However, Vogler also suggests that “since many stories operate on more than one level, a story can have more than one Call to Adventure,” and “reluctant heroes have to be called repeatedly
as they try to avoid responsibility” (p. 122 & 123). Indeed, Lori and her friends receive other calls to adventure before entering the Special World of act two.

When we see the authorities conducting their investigation at Lori’s house, they already secretly suspect that Freddy murdered Trey. This scene repeats the film’s main themes of containment and isolation. The Sheriff commands a fellow police officer: “We need to lock this down now. Keep it contained, you hear me?” The police officer responds: “Killed in bed. Jesus. It’s even the same damn house. 1428 Elm. It’s gotta be him, right? It’s gotta be Freddy Krueger.” The Sheriff abruptly silences the deputy: “Hey! Don’t even say that son of a bitch’s name out loud. Let’s just keep it together. We’ve been through too much to let this thing spread now.” The Sheriff gives the police officer specific instructions to take the kids to the police station and to keep them separate in an effort to bring both their fear, and gossip, under control. However, it is already too late. Lori overheard the police officer state Freddy’s name.

Lori receives her second call to adventure while isolated in an interrogation room at the police station. She places her head and arms on the table in front of her, struggling to remember the name that she overhead the officer say. Finally, she recalls the name and says it out loud: “Freddy.” She then lifts her head off the table and exits the interrogation room, finding the police station eerily empty. This peculiarity, as well as the film’s soundtrack, leads us to believe that she has unwittingly entered a dream. Upon following a trail of blood-drops, which appear out of thin-air, Lori discovers the little girl from opening scene of the film. The little girl
is splayed out on the floor sobbing with her back to Lori. Coming to her aid, Lori places her hand on the little girl’s shoulder and asks: “Are you ok?” The little girl turns her head to reveal that her eyes have been gouged, or rather stabbed, out. This time, it is the little girl that takes on the archetype of the Herald as she delivers the following message: “His name is Freddy Krueger. And he loves children, especially little girls. Freddy’s coming back. Soon he’ll be strong enough. It’s ok to be afraid. We were all afraid. Warn your friends. Warn everyone.”

In a sudden twist of dream logic, Lori finds herself outside a decrepit 1428 Elm Street where she witnesses three other little girls in white dresses playing jump rope. These characters have appeared in numerous installments of the Nightmare series, including the original. They too act as Heralds, relaying an important message through their spine-chilling jump rope song: “One, two, Freddy’s coming for you; three, four, better lock your door; five, six, grab your crucifix; seven, eight, gonna stay up late; nine, ten, never sleep again...” Freddy’s face suddenly appears from screen-right, effectively scaring both Lori and the audience through what is commonly known as a “jump-scare.” She wakes up in the interrogation room with a start.

Meeting the Mentor

According to Vogler, the meeting the mentor stage is when “the hero gains the supplies, knowledge, and confidence needed to overcome fear and commence the
adventure" (p. 137). However, the viewers meet the film’s mentor, Mark, long before Lori does. Mark is introduced at the same time as Lori’s long-lost love Will; the two are incarcerated at Westin Hills, the town’s psychiatric hospital. In this scene, the viewer gains background knowledge on these two characters through the heavy exposition that takes place between them. Yet again, this exposition reiterates the film’s theme of confinement and isolation.

While standing in line to take their meds, Will sees a news bulletin on the television and becomes agitated. He tells Mark: “That was Lori’s house. They said something about a murder. I gotta go to her. I got to go see if she’s ok.” Mark responds: “Back to Springwood? Do you want me to start having nightmares again?” Will states firmly: “Don’t start with that dream demon shit again. Ok? You know that’s all just in your head.” Mark retorts: “Yeah, yeah, and who are you, the poster boy for sanity? You’re the one that told the cops that Lori’s dad killed his wife.” Will asserts: “Yeah, right, and now it looks like someone else got killed in the same house. You think that’s a coincidence? Two murders in one house?” Mark reminds Will: “Look at us, Will. Look around you, man. We’re institutionalized. We’re stuck here. We’re not going anywhere.” Despite their dire outlook, later that night Mark and Will successfully breakout of Westin Hills. The next morning the Sheriff informs Lori’s father of Mark and Will’s escape, to which he responds: “Oh, Jesus. It’s all coming apart again.” The Sheriff assures him: “Don’t worry. We’ll find them. Keep this thing contained.”
Later, at school, Kia and Gibb tell Lori that Blake and his father were murdered. Regardless, their friends are still planning to have a rave later that night in a cornfield. When asked if she would like to go, Lori declines and says: “I didn’t get much sleep last night, and when I did sleep I had the most terrible nightmares.” Kia suggests that she would have had nightmares too if she had to spend the night in a police station like Lori did. More frantically, Lori insists: “No, no, no, it wasn’t like that. I mean, this was really real. I mean, there was this man, but he was more like a monster really, and they kept calling him Freddy, and he was so real.” The other kids in the crowded hallway begin to take notice of Lori’s frenzied behavior, which is consequently fulfilling Freddy’s goal. She is spreading both her knowledge and fear of Freddy amongst her peers. Gibb asks: “What did he look like?” Lori answers, almost hysterically: “He - - he had this dark brown hat, and his skin was terribly burnt, and on his right hand he had - - these razor fingers, and - -.” Both Kia and Gibb attempt to interrupt Lori in order to calm her down, but Lori continues unabated. Past hystericics now, Lori carries on: “...And then there were these little girls - - they were singing like this - - this song like - -”

Mark emerges from the crowd of kids gathered around Lori and finishes her sentence: “One, two, Freddy’s coming for you. You know why they sing that? Because that’s when he comes for you... in your dreams.” It is at this point that Mark, ever so briefly, takes on the archetype of the Mentor. As Vogler states: “Just as learning is an important function of the hero, teaching or training is a key function of the Mentor” (p. 52). When Lori asks nervously “Who is he,” Mark provides Lori,
as well as the rest of the kids in the hallway, with a brief synopsis of Freddy Krueger. 

Mark states: “He’s a child murderer that some parent’s from around here burned alive, but then he came back, back for revenge in our nightmares. Funny no one ever told us about him, huh?” Then in a very instructive manner, Mark says: “You want some free advice? Coffee. Make friends with it.” Will appears and interrupts Mark’s lesson. Lori faints upon meeting her long-lost love Will, but he and Mark cannot stay to help revive her. They flee the school once the principal is drawn to the commotion in the hallway.

Later that night, Lori and Will are reunited at the rave in the cornfield. It is here that Will adopts the Mentor archetype. He attempts to tell Lori that he believes her father murdered her mother. Undoubtedly, Will is hoping this revelation will motivate Lori to runaway with him. As Vogler suggests, motivation of the hero is an important function of the Mentor archetype: “the mentor shows the hero something or arranges things to motivate her to take action and commit to adventure” (p.55). Unfortunately, the two get sidetracked before Will has a chance to tell Lori what he knows of her father. Eventually, Will and Lori, along with their peers Kia, Linderman and Freeberg, flee the rave when Jason shows up and begins hacking his way through the teens in the cornfield.

After separating from Kia, Linderman and Freeberg, Will and Lori are finally able to talk without any interruptions. Sitting in a van outside of Lori’s house, Will tells Lori about her father. He states, “The reason I was sent to Westin is because I saw your dad kill your mom.” Stunned, Lori responds, “Will, my mom died in a car
accident.” Will insists, “No, that’s what he wanted you to believe, but I was there, Lori.” Will fulfils yet another function of the Mentor archetype by “planting” the following information that will become important later on in the film: “I was sneaking up to your room like I used to do. Only you weren’t there. I saw him kill her.” In a flashback sequence we see Will watch Lori’s father enter her mother’s bedroom and slump over her with a knife. This planted information is meant for the audience to note, but forget until a climatic moment toward the end of the film. Vogler suggests, “such constructions help tie the beginning and end of the story together, and show that . . . everything we learn from our Mentors comes in handy” (p. 55). Vogler also states: “It’s often the energy of the Mentor archetype that gets a hero past fear and sends her to the brink of . . . the First Threshold” (p. 146) Will’s retelling of what he witnessed effectively builds a great deal of tension and suspense, not just between his character and Lori, but between them and the audience as well.

Refusal of the Call

The scene’s tension is brought to a crescendo, and the pent up energy is released once Lori’s father knocks loudly on the window of the van, causing her and Will (and likely the audience as well) to jump in their seats. He demands that Lori get out of the van, as he pulls her out from the passenger side door. Will exits the van and comes between Lori and her father. Lori’s father tells her to “Get in the house.” Will urges Lori not to go with him and tells her that he was the one who had him
committed. Here we see Lori being confronted with two conflicting calls to adventure. Vogler suggests:

Heroes may have to choose between conflicting Calls from different levels of adventure. The Refusal of the Call is a time to articulate the hero's difficult choices (p. 129).

As Lori's father becomes frustrated, he begins to choke Will with one hand and states: "Damn it, Will! I am not gonna let you endanger my daughter again!" Lori yells repeatedly for the two of them to stop fighting. When they do not, she runs off alone, effectively refusing both of their calls to adventure, at least temporarily.

Lori runs inside her home with her father trailing close behind. Lori halts on the stairway and turns to face her father. She asks him, "Did mom die in a car accident?" Her father replies, "Yes, of course she did." Lori then asks him to prove it by showing her a death certificate or an autopsy report. She also demands to know why he has been lying to her about his role at Westin Hills. Throughout this scene, Lori's father functions as a Threshold Guardian, repeatedly blocking her progress. According to Vogler, the role of the Threshold Guardian is to "cluster around the doorways, gates and narrow passages of the threshold crossings" (p. 151). Yet, by calling the validity of her father's claims into question, she is challenging him as her (Threshold) Guardian. Her defiance on the stairway marks a "halt on the road before the journey has really started," which "serves an important dramatic function of signalling (sic) the audience that the adventure is risky" (p. 127). She turns and retreats to her bedroom, locking the door behind her. Her father continues to pursue her and demands that she let him inside. Lori refuses.
Crossing the First Threshold

In many respects, crossing the first threshold is less of a drawn out "stage" of the hero's journey than it is a particular moment. It is the moment in which:

The hero, having overcome fear, has decided to confront the problem and take action. She is now committed to the journey and there's no turning back (p. 22).

Vogler describes the crossing of the first threshold as "an act of will in which the hero commits whole-heartedly to the adventure" and "the turning point at which the adventure begins in earnest at the end of Act One" (pp. 149 & 154). Crossing the threshold takes a certain kind of courage that is equivalent to taking a leap of faith; "like jumping out of an airplane, the act is irrevocable" (p. 153). For Lori, that act occurs after she locks herself in her bedroom. With her father pounding on the bedroom door and screaming her name, Lori decides to exit out her bedroom window and leave her father, who she no longer trusts, behind. In this manner, she crosses over the first threshold and circumvents her father as the threshold guardian.

Tests, Allies, Enemies (Act Two Begins)

Vogler states, "Act Two is a long stretch for the writer and the audience, up to an hour in an average feature film" (p. 185). Lori begins that long stretch by taking off down Elm Street in the rain. She soon encounters Will, and the two of them leave in a van. While driving, they ponder the reason behind the town's cover-up of Freddy and what role Lori's father plays in it. Finding out the reason behind the cover-up
becomes their test: it is the question they have to answer. To solve the riddle of the
town's cover up, Will suggest: "We gotta get to Mark. He's the expert in all of this."
This labeling of Mark as "the expert" shifts the status of the Mentor archetype back
onto his character.\textsuperscript{xli}

As Will and Lori rush to meet Mark, he appears to be falling in and out of
sleep while reminiscing about his dead brother who had committed suicide. Once
Mark falls asleep and enters the dream world completely, Freddy manifests himself as
Mark's dead brother in a bathtub filled with blood.\textsuperscript{xlii} As Mark's brother, Freddy
asks: "Hey, Mark. You didn't forget about me, did you?" When Mark does not
respond directly to the question, the voice of Mark's brother changes to the voice of
Freddy, who booms: "Oh, that's right! Everyone forgot! That's why they weren't
afraid anymore! That's why I needed Jason to kill for me to get them to remember.
But now he just won't stop!" Meanwhile, Will and Lori reach Mark's house, but they
find themselves locked out. They spot Mark through a window sleeping at his desk.
In Mark's nightmare, Freddy tells him: "I need you to send a little message for me.
That's all, just a little message." When Mark refuses, Freddy states: "I'll have to
pass that message myself. Won't I, hmm? Through the window, Will and Lori watch
helplessly as Mark is set on fire, violently tossed around the room, lacerated across
the face, and emblazoned with the phrase "FREDDY'S BACK." This morbid
message marks yet another call to adventure.

Meanwhile, unbeknownst to them, Will and Lori are gaining an ally at the
police station. That ally is Deputy Stubbs, who is new to the area. On a hunch, he
has compiled information regarding Jason Voorhees, “The Crystal Lake Killer.” He believes that whoever is responsible for the recent spate of murders is copying Jason’s modus operandi. Stubbs’ takes this information to the Sheriff, who is in on the town’s cover up. To his surprise, the Sheriff informs Stubbs that “we” already know who did this. The scene that transpires not only allies Stubbs with Lori, Will and the other teens, but also effectively reiterates the film’s theme of containment.

Another deputy enters the sheriff’s office to inform him that school has been closed and a curfew established. The sheriff responds by saying, “Now I want twenty-four hour roadblocks set up. Nobody leaves town, nobody gets in. We’re going to contain this son of a bitch before he spreads any further.” When Stubbs suggests bringing in the F.B.I., the Sheriff snaps: “No outsiders, Stubbs. We can handle this. We’ve stopped him before.” When Stubbs asks whom the Sheriff is referring to, the Sheriff states: “We don’t say his name out loud. You’re not from around here. I don’t expect you to understand.” Stubbs interjects with his theory about a Jason Voorhees copycat killer. The Sheriff angrily replies: “You listen to me. We do things around here a certain way for a reason. . .So you either do your job and keep your mouth shut or, so help me God, I will lock you up! Do you understand me?” After receiving the Sheriff’s threat of confining him to a jail cell, Stubbs quietly and reluctantly assents to his authority, just as a teen would respond to a parent who threatens to ground them.
In the interim, Lori and Will have congregated with Kia, Linderman and Freeberg. This scene parallels the typical “watering hole” scene as described by Vogler. It consists of characters gathering together in order to:

“recuperate, pick up gossip, make friends, and confront Enemies (sic). They also allow us to observe people under pressure, when true character is revealed” (p. 162).

This gathering towards the beginning of Act Two allows the team to form, and creates the “opportunity for the team to make plans and rehearse a difficult operation” (p. 160). A good part of this plan is learning and adjusting to “the new rules of the Special World” (p. 161).

The camera slowly circles the room as we observe the teens gossiping around a table. Lori is set apart from the others, recuperating on a nearby couch. Soon, and to their surprise, Deputy Stubbs arrives and tells them: “I’m here to help you.” He informs them of Jason’s history and then suggests that they are dealing with a copycat killer. Linderman disagrees and says: “He’s not a copycat. I’ve seen what he can do. He’s the real Jason.” Deputy Stubbs objects, calling Linderman’s claim “impossible” because “Jason is dead.” At this point, the teens begin to acclimate Deputy Stubbs to the new rules of the Special World. For instance, after Deputy Stubbs voices his disapproval of Linderman’s claim, Freeberg states: “Yeah, well you’d better start thinking outside your little box, dude ‘cause somebody’s definitely breaking the fucking reality rules, ok?” Will interjects by suggesting that Freddy brought Jason back “because he was too weak to go after us on his own, so he used Jason. . .he

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knew that we'd think it was him, that we'd spread the fear again. And now that it's working... he can't shut Jason back down.”

Vogler states, “the new rules of the Special World must be learned quickly by the hero and the audience” (p. 161). This is achieved in part through the coaching of Deputy Stubbs, but also through what happens to Lori, who we see nodding off on the couch. Eventually, she confronts Freddy in a brief nightmare, but the group wakes her up before Freddy can harm her. Once awake, Lori finds herself holding Freddy’s ear, which she ripped off of his head during the short nightmare sequence. After she drops it to the floor, it turns into a pile of maggots, which are then crushed underfoot by Deputy Stubbs. Lori states: “I pulled that out of my dream,” to which Deputy Stubbs responds: “How is that possible?” Agitated, Freeberg utters the tersest version of the new rules of the Special World: “Anything is possible now!”

When Kia concludes that the group is “not safe awake or asleep,” Lori suggests, “it’s not the sleep that’s killing us, it’s our dreams.” This sparks an epiphany for Will, who realizes that he and Mark never had dreams at Westin Hills because they were given Hypnocil. When the group looks up the drug on the Internet, they find that it is used for the suppression of dreams, but has not yet been approved by the FDA. With this in mind, the newly forged team hatches a plan to break into Westin Hills and acquire enough of the drug for each of them in order to keep Freddy at bay. At this point in the story, the group takes up the Approach to the Inmost Cave.
The Approach to the Inmost Cave is the stage in which the hero prepares for a big change (p. 236). Vogler suggests that their preparation for this big change entails many things:

they may take time to make plans, do reconnaissance on the enemy, reorganize or thin out the group, fortify and arm themselves, and have a last laugh and final cigarette before going over the top into no-man’s land (p. 168).

All this takes place within the scene at hand, including, for one character, the partaking of a “final cigarette,” a marijuana cigarette to be exact. Once the group breaks into Westin Hills, they split into two groups of three. Freeberg pauses to take what he calls a “J-break” while the others scout for Hypnocil. This is an unwise choice by Freeberg because, as Vogler suggests, the heroes should be careful not to “be seduced by illusions and perfumes,” to “stay alert,” and to not “fall asleep on the march” (p. 169). Eventually, Freeberg does fall asleep while getting high, and not only is he seduced by Freddy in the form of a large hookah-smoking caterpillar; he is possessed by Freddy once the caterpillar rams itself down Freeberg’s throat.

Masquerading as Freeberg, Freddy locates large quantities of the Hypnocil. Deputy Stubbs and Linderman find Freeberg disposing of the Hypnocil by pouring it down a drain. Before they can stop him, they encounter Jason who takes the form of the Threshold Guardian for this stage (p. 170). As Jason keeps the two occupied, eventually killing Deputy Stubbs, Freddy loads some syringes with a
tranquilizing agent. Meanwhile, Linderman arms himself with Deputy Stubbs gun before running away.

Elsewhere, Lori, Will and Kia find the empty bottles of Hypnocil. Vogler would call this discovery the “disheartening setback” or “dramatic complication” that arises during the Approach to the Inmost Cave (p. 174). When Jason disrupts their search, they flee down a hallway and stop to witness Freeberg make a stand against Jason. None of them know that Freddy has possessed Freeberg.

Vogler suggests that the villain erects “heavy defenses” and protects his headquarters “with animal-like ferocity.” Similarly, Freddy uses the tranquilizers to protect his prey from Jason. He states: “These are my children, Jason. Go back where you belong!” He stabs the syringes into Jason’s neck with animal-like ferocity; like a snake biting its attacker, attempting to inject it with venom. Before the tranquilizers can take effect, Jason cuts Freeberg in half at the waist with his machete, but passes out soon afterward.

Now having been thinned out, the group must reorganize and fortify themselves against Freddy without the aid of Hypnocil. Vogler states: “Another function of the Approach stage is to up the stakes and rededicate the team to its mission” (p. 174). Furthermore, Vogler suggests, “As part of their Approach...heroes try to cook up a plan as they move closer to the gate” (p. 177). The plan the group concocts has two parts. First, they load Jason’s unconscious body into the back of their van and drive him to Crystal Lake. They hope that, when he wakes up, he will no longer follow them since, as Lori states, he will be “home, back where he
belongs.” Second, they plan to have Lori enter the dream world and pull Freddy out into the open, as happened earlier when Lori had a hold of Freddy’s ear while awaking from a nightmare. Once Freddy is in the real world, they assume Jason will attempt to kill him, as the two have become antagonistic toward one another.

After being injected with tranquilizer, Lori enters into Jason’s dream where he is currently doing battle with Freddy. In this regard, the heroes:

employ the device of ‘getting into the skin’ of the Threshold Guardians before them... This aspect of the approach teaches us that we must get into the minds of those who seem to stand in our way. If we understand or empathize with them, the job of getting past them or absorbing their energy is much easier (p. 177).

The viewer is set-up to empathize with Jason before Lori even enters his dream. We see Freddy manhandle Jason, throwing him around as though he were a ball in a pinball machine. Eventually, some pipes are burst open in the midst of their brawl, pouring water down from above them. When Jason acts adversely toward the water, Freddy states: “Ahh... so you are afraid of something after all, huh?” Upon learning of Jason’s fear of water, Freddy uses his dream power to unleash a cascade of water that encircles and traps Jason where he stands. The emotionless, indestructible hulk that is Jason transforms into a near naked, quivering and whimpering child.

Freddy chuckles as he bends down toward the Jason-child who is curled into the fetal position on the cold, metal grates. Freddy taunts, “Aww... how sweet.” Freddy rips the hockey mask off of Jason’s face to expose his deformed features. He calls Jason an “ugly little shit,” and suggests: “Now there’s a face only a mother could love!” As if to punctuate his sentence, Freddy conjures-up the severed head of
Jason’s mother and holds it aloft on a pike. Jason continues to whimper, shriek and contort as Freddy jeers: “Yeah! Now we’re getting somewhere. Let’s see what really scares you...and dig a little deeper.” He slowly thrusts the blade of his index finger into Jason’s malformed cranium. As the blade enters Jason’s temple, the viewers are thrust into Jason’s mind: nerves and neurons fill the screen, and synopses flash sporadically.

Supreme Ordeal

The Supreme Ordeal is the hero’s final attempt at making big change (p. 236). Vogler suggests that in this stage the Hero witnesses the death of another and appears to die herself (p. 188). At the start of this stage, Lori does indeed appear to die, at least symbolically. As stated, in order to enter the dream world, Lori has the others inject her with the tranquilizer. Before doing so, she states, “Just give me fifteen minutes, then wake me up. I’ll bring that bastard Freddy back through. Just make sure Jason’s waiting for him.” Lori is injected with the tranquilizer as she lies in the back of the van next to Jason, who is heavily sedated and bound securely. She sets the alarm on her wristwatch to go off in fifteen minutes and begins to recite the classic eighteenth century children’s prayer: “Now I lay me down to sleep...” Soon, her body goes limp. This marks her symbolic death “before she wakes.” As Vogler states: “The simple secret of the Supreme Ordeal is this: Heroes must die so that they
can be reborn” (p. 181). According to their plan, in fifteen minutes time, Lori will be reborn.

Before Lori can be reborn, she must find Freddy in order to bring him back with her. As she explores Jason’s dream version of Camp Crystal Lake, she will also bear witness to events leading up to his drowning. She observes a young Jason being chased and teased by the other children. They stone him while chanting: “Freak Show! Freak show!” They surround him and try placing a sack over his deformed head. Jason breaks free of the group and escapes to a dock. Concerned, Lori runs to find a camp counselor to help him. When she finds a male and female camp counselor fornicating on the porch of a cabin, she asks: “Aren’t you gonna help the kid?” To her dismay, it turns out to be Freddy engaging in necrophilia. When the children push Jason off of the dock, Lori runs to his aid only to find Freddy repeatedly dunking him.14

Meanwhile, in the van, the effects of the tranquilizers on Jason wear off, and he awakes violently. This startles Will, Linderman, and Kia, and causes Will to lose control of the vehicle. When the van careens over an inclined surface, it tumbles through the air, lands on its side, and spirals down the road. The centrifugal force sends Jason flying out of the back doors of the van. At that instant, Jason vanishes from the dream world, escaping Freddy’s underwater grasp. Freddy turns his attention toward Lori. The alarm on her wristwatch sounds as the two square off on the dock. However, despite having been severely jostled in the accident, Lori remains
under the effects of the tranquilizer. Gathering Lori up, Will, Lindreman and Kia head to Crystal Lake on foot.

The visage of the dream world changes from Camp Crystal Lake to Elm Street, as Lori finds herself standing outside of her home. Once inside the house, we watch as a familiar scene unfolds. That scene concerns the information that Will’s character planted in the viewer’s mind during the Meeting the Mentor stage. Now, along with Lori, we witness her father seemingly attack her mother with a knife. Recall that planted information is meant for the audience to note early in the film, but forget until a climatic moment toward the film’s conclusion (p. 55). However, because the planted information is being brought into play during the Supreme Ordeal section of the film, it is therefore enacted during the film’s “crisis” rather than its “climax.” To explain the placement of a film’s crisis in relation to the Supreme Ordeal, and to differentiate it from a film’s climax, Vogler states:

The ordeal is usually the central event of the story, or the main event of the second act. Let’s call it the crisis to differentiate it from the climax (the big moment of Act Three and the crowning event of the whole story) (pp. 182-183).

Moreover, a film’s crisis usually marks the midway point of the film, separating the story into two halves (p. 185). Since we are further along than midway through the film, it is clear that Freddy vs Jason contains a “delayed crisis,” which Vogler states: “comes near the end of Act Two, about two-thirds to three-quarters of the way into the story” (p. 184).

In this delayed crisis section of the film, Will, Linderman and Kia hole-up in a rec hall on the edge of Crystal Lake with Lori, who is still unconscious. In the dream
world, Lori witnesses the death of her mother at the hands of Freddy: it was he who killed her mother, not her father. Subsequently, Freddy pins Lori down and methodically cuts her chest. In the real world, Will sees the cuts appear on Lori, and he attempts to wake her up. Then Jason bursts into the rec hall and inadvertently sets the place on fire. As Linderman and Kia fend Jason off, Will attempts to drag Lori to safety.

Meanwhile, things are just as dire in the dream world. Vogler suggests that the crisis of a film is “the point. . .at which hostile forces are in the tensest state of opposition” (p. 183). He also suggests, that “the Supreme Ordeal is set up as a moment in which the hero is expected to die.” Surely, Lori is expected to die. Freddy gloats over her as she lies helplessly on the ground: “Welcome to my world, bitch.” Bringing his face closer to hers, he snarls: “I should warn you, princess, the first time tends to get a little. . .[his blades clink together]. . .messy.” He trails a blade up the length of her leg. She whimpers as he begins to raise her nightgown with his claws. However, as Volger indicates:

mythic heroes face certain death but survive where others have failed because they have wisely sought supernatural aid in the earlier stages (p. 192).

The supernatural aid that Lori sought, along with her peers, is none other than Jason himself. He will come to her aid on the Road Back, out of the dream world. Whereas the stage marking the Road Back generally occurs after The Reward stage, in Freddy vs Jason it occurs before The Reward stage, and it marks the beginning of act three.\textsuperscript{xlvii}
The Road Back

As with the Crossing the First Threshold, the Road Back is less of a drawn out “stage” of the hero’s journey than it is a particular moment. Vogler characterizes the Road Back as:

a turning point, another threshold crossing which marks the passage from Act Two to Act Three. Like crossing the First Threshold, it may cause a change in the aim of the story. . . . The Road Back causes the third act” (p. 219).

The moment constituting the road back occurs right after we see Will dragging Lori to safety in the burning rec hall. She slips from Will’s grasp and her hand and forearm land on a portion of the floorboards that have caught fire. In the dream world, she screams as her arm begins to sizzle, and she uses it to latch onto Freddy. It is at that moment that the tables have turned.

Resurrection (Act Three Begins)

The Resurrection takes place soon after Lori latches onto Freddy in the dream world. The scene cuts to a close-up of Lori’s face bathed in blue light. Suddenly, her eyes open quickly and she gasps for breath. The camera rapidly pulls back to reveal Freddy still hunched over on top of her; simultaneously, the color of the scene switches from blue to red. This color shift visually illustrates the transition from the dream world to the real world in which both Lori and Freddy are now resurrected. Freddy, claw poised to strike, is unaware that he has crossed over into the real world with Lori. He states: “Die, you little bitch,” before becoming startled by a loud crash.
originating from behind him. The crash is a result of Jason throwing a table out of his way, as he clears a path between himself and Freddy. Shock registers on Freddy’s face as he realizes what has transpired. His eyes widen. He brings his claw up to his mouth in a fretful manner. Freddy cautiously rises to his feet as Jason lumbers toward him. High-pitched heavy metal guitar and thunderous drums are heard on the soundtrack as the two villains square off.

Vogler asserts that the Resurrection signals the climax of the story in that “it has come to mean an explosive moment, the highest peak in energy, or the last big event in a work” (p. 232). Undoubtedly, that last big event is the showdown between these two characters, which the film is named after. Vogler further suggests that oftentimes “the Resurrection is expressed as the biggest confrontation and battle of the story, the showdown or shootout” (p. 230). The showdown between Freddy and Jason turns into an all-out brawl, which moves outside the rec hall and into the campground surrounding Crystal Lake. During this time, Linderman bleeds to death from a wound he sustained in the rec hall after Jason threw him against a wall bracket. Jason also kills Kia, who almost backs into him while diverting Freddy’s attention away from Will and Lori. Will attempts to escape with Lori as Jason occupies Freddy, but Lori refuses to leave. Pulling her arm free from Will’s grasp, she insists: “No, I’m staying!”

Lori’s character, her whole countenance and demeanor, changes with this declaration. The coarse tone of her voice punctuates the rigid stance that is articulated through her body language. Vogler states, “The Resurrection is the hero’s
final attempt to make a major change in attitude or behavior” (p. 327). Lori’s insistence on staying marks this significant change in her behavior. The reasons she is about to give for wanting to stay provide insight as to the type of inner “reward” her character is granted for entering the Special World and undertaking the Supreme Ordeal. In this regard, a bridge is built between the Resurrection stage and the Reward stage.

**Reward (Seizing the Sword)**

In this stage, the hero “is recognized or rewarded for having survived death or a great ordeal” (p. 203). Moreover, the reward stage demonstrates that “Heroes don’t just visit death and come home. They return changed, transformed” (p. 182). Will is astonished by the change in Lori’s character. He asks: “Are you crazy? You got what you wanted. You pulled Freddy out, and now he’s fighting Jason. Come on! What more do you want?” Lori responds in a rough voice: “He killed my mother, Will! It was Freddy. My dad covered it up to protect me. He didn’t do it.” Vogler suggests, “A hero may be granted a new insight or understanding of a mystery as her reward. She may see through deception” (p. 209). Lori’s reward is the revelation that Freddy is her mother’s murderer, not her father. As Lori relays that knowledge to Will, her arms begin to flail, punctuating the harshness in her voice: “Look, he has taken everything from us! He has ruined both of our pasts—and I am not leaving until I see him die!”
Along with Lori and Will, the audience witnesses Freddy and Jason’s knockdown, drag-out fight. Much blood is spilled. Arterial sprays are abundant amongst the endless hacking and slashing that ensues. A series of “rolling climaxes” occur, as both characters gain the upper hand at different points during the fight (p. 233). At first, Jason chops away at Freddy relentlessly with his trusty machete. A blow to the leg lands Freddy on his back. In a sudden twist of fate, Freddy cuts off Jason’s fingers, causing him to drop his machete. Freddy catches it in midair, and then, after climbing back to his feet, he repeatedly slices Jason with both weapons. Meanwhile, Lori hoses down the dock, and some adjacent propane tanks, with boat fuel. When Jason falls face down, Freddy rolls him over and buries two of his claws into Jason’s eye sockets, retracts them, and then buries them into his chest. His assault on Jason is interrupted when Lori, holding two lit torches, yells out: “Freddy! Go to hell!”

Now, as Lori takes control of the situation, the rolling climaxes have reached a crescendo forming the climax of the film, which plays out in semi-slow motion. Lori throws one of the torches onto the dock, setting it ablaze. Shortly thereafter, the orchestral score peaks as Jason rams his fingerless hand through Freddy’s midsection. Jason uses his other hand to tear off Freddy’s right arm, which bears his glove. With a fount of blood spewing from his mouth, Freddy uses his remaining hand to cram the long blade of the machete diagonally into Jason’s torso, burying it up to the hilt. Lori runs for cover with Will after she throws the other torch onto the propane tanks. They dive into the lake as the tanks explode. The explosion sends Freddy and Jason
flying through the air, engulfed in flames. They land in the lake as well. An aerial shot displays the magnitude of the blast, as multiple shockwaves surge forth. Vogler states: “A climax should provide the feeling of catharsis...a purifying emotional release, or an emotional breakthrough” (p. 234). The explosion fulfills the need for a catharsis more than adequately.\textsuperscript{xviii}

However, the battle is not over yet. Lori and Will climb out of the water and onto the remnants of the dock. As they hug one another, the smile that fills Lori’s face is soon replaced with shock. Awestruck, she screams as Freddy lumbers his way over to them with machete in hand. When he raises it to strike, his stomach suddenly bursts open. Jason appears behind him, having rammed Freddy’s own severed arm, claws-first, through his midsection. Jason collapses back into the water shortly thereafter. Meanwhile, Freddy drops down to his knees. The machete slips from his grasp. Its tip becomes embedded in the dock when it lands. Freddy is transfixed on his clawed hand, which is now protruding from his chest. His preoccupation allows Lori time enough to retrieve Jason’s machete, or otherwise “seize the sword.” Vogler also calls the Reward Stage “Seizing the Sword” in reference to mythical stories in which heroes battle dragons and take their treasure, amongst which may be a magical sword (p. 207).

Now, with “sword” in hand, Lori stands over a helpless Freddy. She screams, “Welcome to my world, bitch,” before decapitating him in slow motion. Freddy’s head lands in the lake, and his body falls in soon after. Lori stands at the edge of the dock. There she sees Jason’s body sink and disappear into the black depths of the lake.
lake. She tosses the machete into the water as Will joins her at her side. They leave the dock together. The orchestral score reaches a triumphant note before trailing off. The scene fades to black.

Epilogue

The Return with the Elixir stage is absent in *Freddy vs Jason*, and in its place is an epilogue, which is usually the final stage because it “follows the bulk of the story” (p. 256). In a Return with the Elixir stage, the hero is supposed to return from the Special World, “bringing something to share with others, or something with the power to heal a wounded land” (p. 247). However, *Freddy vs Jason* does not end with Lori and Will returning from the Special World. Instead, Jason is shown emerging from the lake. He is indeed bringing something powerful with him, but it is not restorative in nature. In one hand Jason is carrying his machete, and in the other hand he grasps Freddy’s severed head. The camera closes in on Freddy’s head as Jason slowly shambles out of the water. Soon we see Freddy’s eyes move. He winks at the camera, and his hideous cackle is heard on the soundtrack, though it does not emerge from his mouth. These peculiarities are perhaps indicators that what is taking place on the screen is actually occurring within the Dream World. Of course, it is also meant to indicate that the fight is not over yet. Vogler suggests that there are two ways to end a story: “the circular form in which there is a sense of closure,” or “the open-ended approach in which there is a sense of unanswered questions, ambiguities,
and unresolved conflicts” (p. 248). *Freddy vs Jason* features an unresolved conflict, which, as Freddy’s wink suggests, hints at the possibility of a sequel.

Discussion

The Journey

In *Freddy vs Jason*, the stages of its hero’s journey do not occur in the same sequence as the typical Hero’s Journey outlined by Vogler. However, please recall once again Vogler’s assertion that “the stages can be deleted, added to, and drastically shuffled without losing any of their power” (p. 30). I have found evidence of eleven stages of the Hero’s Journey, as well as prologue and epilogue stages, within the film’s storyline, through my use of template analysis.¹ Also, I have pinpointed key moments that demarcate when transitions occur between the stages of the film during its one hour, thirty minute and eight second runtime.

The creators of *Freddy vs Jason* did not adhere to the typical sequencing of the Hero’s Journey. Nor did they include all twelve of its stages. They did, however, rely on a traditional three-act structure to tell the tale of its hero, Lori, and her journey. Syd Field’s book *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* (1982) is often cited as the:

best-selling example of a text that has suggested to hundreds of thousands of screenwriting candidates the need to follow a script structure based on a tightly woven three-act narrative (Horton, 1994, p. 92)
In it, Field suggests that the standard screenplay is approximately one hundred and twenty pages long, and is measured one page per minute for a runtime of two hours (1982, p. 8). Vogler attempts to set the Hero’s Journey within these same parameters when he notes that the number of screenplay pages per act are as follows: thirty pages for act one, sixty pages for act two, and thirty more pages for act three (1992, p. 18). With these parameters in mind, I have created a visual representation of the three-act structure of a standard Hollywood film that exhibits the typical sequencing of the Hero’s Journey (see appendix J). I have also created a separate visual representation of the three-act structure for *Freddy vs Jason* and its sequencing of the Hero’s Journey (see appendix K).

Differences between *Freddy vs Jason* and the standard Hollywood film, in terms of the duration of their three-act structures, are clearly demonstrated through a comparison of appendix J and appendix K. *Freddy vs Jason* is roughly a half hour shorter than the standard Hollywood film. Also, whereas act one of *Freddy vs Jason* is approximately eleven minutes and thirty seconds longer than the standard Hollywood film, acts two and three are significantly shorter. Act two is shorter by approximately thirty minutes and fifty-eight seconds, while act three is shorter by approximately seventeen minutes and fifty-two seconds. Differences between *Freddy vs Jason* and the standard Hollywood film, in terms of the sequencing of the Hero’s Journey, are also evident. In what follows, I utilize the information presented in appendix J and appendix K to briefly recap the tale of *Freddy vs Jason*. I intend this recap to demonstrate that the film’s narrative is indeed organized in the terms of a
hero myth even though it does not strictly adhere to the typical sequencing of the Hero's Journey.

_Freddy vs Jason_ contains a prologue stage prior to act one. This stage introduces the audience to Freddy and Jason, and establishes Freddy's plan to escape the confines of hell by using Jason to spread fear amongst the citizens of Springwood. The prologue stage spans the first two scenes of the film, and lasts approximately six minutes and thirty-four seconds.

Act one is approximately forty-one minutes and thirty seconds in length. It occurs between scenes three and nine of the film and encompasses the following five stages: (1) The Ordinary World, (2) The Call to Adventure, (3) Meeting with the Mentor, (4) Refusal of the Call and (5) Crossing the First Threshold. The Ordinary World stage begins act one by introducing the audience to Lori and her friends. This stage is contained within scene three, starting with the film's opening title sequence, and lasts approximately six minutes and thirty-five seconds. The Call to Adventure stage functions to increase Lori's, and her friends', awareness of Freddy and, consequently, their fear of him. This stage begins toward the end of scene three and continues throughout scene four, lasting approximately seven minutes and twenty-one seconds. The stage is bookended with two kill scenes: (1) Jason's slaughter of Trey and (2) Jason's slaughter of Blake. The Meeting with the Mentor stage functions to teach Lori, her friends, and the audience about the town's cover-up. This stage begins at the start of scene five.
and continues through most of scene eight, lasting approximately twenty-five minutes and eighteen seconds. The Refusal of the Call stage occurs when Lori receives conflicting calls from Will and her father, and soon thereafter, she confronts her father on the stairwell. The Crossing the First Threshold stage takes place when Lori exits out her bedroom window. These two stages occur within scene eight, and together they last approximately two minutes and sixteen seconds.

Act two is approximately twenty-nine minutes and two seconds in length. It occurs between scenes nine and fourteen, and encompasses the following four stages: (1) Tests, Allies and Enemies, (2) Approach to the Inmost Cave, (3) The Supreme Ordeal, and (4) The Road Back. The Test, Allies and Enemies stage is where Lori and her friends begin their trek through the Special World of act two, learning its rules along the way. This stage starts soon after Lori exits her bedroom window at the end of scene eight and continues through the end of scene ten. It lasts about nine minutes and forty-three seconds. The Approach to the Inmost Cave stage starts at the beginning of scene eleven, when Lori and her friends enter Westin Hills in search of Hypnocil, and continues midway through scene thirteen. It lasts approximately twelve minutes and twenty-three seconds. The Supreme Ordeal stage occurs when Lori makes a final attempt at big change by purposefully entering the dream world in order to track down Freddy with the intent of bring him out into the real world. This stage comes to a close with the end of scene thirteen, lasting approximately six minutes and fifty-three seconds. The Supreme Ordeal stage also contains the film’s delayed crisis, in which Lori confronts Freddy and finds out the truth about her
mother’s death. The Road Back stage, lasting approximately three seconds, occurs in scene fourteen and marks the turning point of the film when Lori latches onto Freddy.

Act three is approximately twelve minutes and eight seconds in length. It occurs between scenes fourteen and sixteen, and encompasses the following two stages: (1) Resurrection and (2) Reward (Seizing the Sword). Soon after Lori latches onto Freddy, the two characters are resurrected from the dream world, marking the beginning of the Resurrection stage. This stage occurs within scene fourteen and lasts approximately three seconds. Once back in the real world, Lori shares her knowledge of what truly happened to her mother with Will. This marks the start of the Reward stage, in which the newly acquired information about her mother’s death represents a reward for Lori’s courage. The Reward stage begins at the end of scene fourteen and continues through the climax section of scene sixteen, lasting approximately twelve minutes and five seconds. During this time, Lori “seizes” Jason’s machete and uses it to decapitate Freddy.

An epilogue stage takes place after act three.iii This stage occurs at the end of scene sixteen when Jason emerges from the lake with Freddy’s head. The camera closes in on Freddy’s head as its eyes begin to move. We see Freddy wink into the camera and hear his laughter on the soundtrack, which hints at the possibility of a sequel. This epilogue stage lasts approximately fifty-four seconds. It essentially replaces the Return with the Elixir stage, which was indeed shot by the filmmakers, but cut from the film in postproduction after audiences in test screenings responding negatively to events that transpired therein.iii
Intertextual Links

There are a number of intertextual references in *Freddy vs Jason* that link it to some of the other films in both the * Nightmare* and *Friday* series. In a certain sense, these intertextual references are somewhat like footnotes. They point to things that exist outside of the film text at hand. In so doing, they divulge information and thereby expand upon both the meaning of the scene and the mythos of the story. However, these links are not as clearly demarcated or identifiable as footnotes in a manuscript. In a way, they work in reverse: you have to already know the history or the element that is being referenced in order to spot it. Without such knowledge, you are going in blind, and such allusions will pass you by. In this regard, intertextual references are “hidden” objects, and finding them is like engaging in an Easter egg hunt. If you fail to find, or spot, such references, then you clearly have not been paying attention. I elaborate upon the intertextual references that I spotted during my screening of *Freddy vs Jason* throughout the remainder of this section. My status and competence as a fan, as a part of that in-group, allows me to recognize the existence of these links planted by the filmmakers.

As stated, the first scene of *Freddy vs Jason* introduces the audience to Freddy by relaying some of his character’s back-story. The scene shows Freddy in a boiler room where the parents of Springwood hunt him down and burn him alive. This scenario is verbally referenced in most, if not all, of the * Nightmare* films. It is also visually referenced in *Freddy’s Dead: The Final Nightmare* through the use of a
flashback. However the footage used in Freddy's Dead is not the same as that used in Freddy vs Jason. The montage that follows depicts snippets of scenes from the first six films in the Nightmare series. Lastly, when Freddy suggests that he found someone who will make people remember and fear him once again, Jason's hockey mask is shown lying in the mud. This appears to be an intertextual reference to Jason Goes to Hell: The Final Friday, which ends on a shot of Jason's hockey mask lying on the ground. That film ends with Freddy's claw popping out of the ground and dragging Jason's hockey mask down under, setting the stage for the battle of these two villains back in 1993, a full decade before the release of Freddy vs Jason.

Scene two contains a very vague intertextual reference to the first film in the Friday series. Recall when Jason pins the skinny dipper to a tree with his machete. Shortly thereafter, she seemingly comes back to life and utters: “I should’ve been watching them, not drinking. Not meeting a boy at the lake.” This statement does indeed refer to the actions of the skinny dipping girl specifically. However, it is also reminiscent of statements made by Jason’s mother during her murderous rampage in Friday the 13th when she proclaimed: “The counselors weren’t paying any attention. They were making love while that young boy drowned. His name was Jason. . .Jason should have been watched, every minute!” To further suggest a connection between this specific character and Jason’s victims from previous films, the body of the skinny dipping girl morphs into two more anonymous camp counselors who state: “I deserve to be punished. . .we all deserve to be punished.” These additional dead counselors
are not returning characters from the other films in the Friday series. Nonetheless, they effectively represent such characters in a general fashion.

Of course, Freddy also takes the guise of Jason's mother in this scene, which is likely to result in some audience members making a mental connection to her character's appearance in the original Friday the 13th. At the very least, they may note how the visage of Jason's mother is altered. A different actress is playing her part, and she is now wearing a red sweater rather than the blue one she donned in Friday the 13th. The blue sweater also appeared in later installments of the Friday series as a part of a shrine Jason built for his dead mother. Thus, the blue sweater became somewhat of an iconic symbol that is synonymous with her character, just as Freddy's red and green striped sweater is synonymous with his character. This is evidenced by the fact that action figures of her character also sport the blue sweater. Therefore, when Jason's mother appears at the beginning of Freddy vs Jason, these slight alterations in her character signal to the "competent" viewers (i.e., the fans) that it is not Jason's mother after all, but rather Freddy playing a trick on Jason.

At the end of scene two, Jason's hand emerges from the earth as Freddy, in the guise of Jason's mother, demands: "Rise up, Jason!" Fans of these films may link the location of Jason's body to the spot where his mask was pulled underground in Jason Goes to Hell. However, I must admit that Jason's whereabouts in this scene are highly questionable. At times it appears that his remains are lying on top of the ground, but if that is the case, why does his hand emerge from underground? Also, it
appears that Jason's remains are located within a dense forest, which is not where he
was defeated at the end of *Jason Goes to Hell*.

At the start of scene three, Jason continues his reconnaissance mission on Elm
Street. He slowly approaches Lori's home, located on 1428 Elm Street. This house
has played a major part in the *Nightmare* series, and is therefore readily recognizable
to fans. In case the audience fails to make the link, or misses the significance of the
house, a police officer investigating Trey's murder spells it out for them by saying:
"Killed in bed. Jesus. It's even the same damn house. 1428 Elm. It's gotta be him,
right? It's gotta be Freddy Krueger." In the first film, the house belonged to Nancy,
that film's Final Girl, and her family. Nancy's parents participated in the killing of
Freddy, and they hid his glove in the basement of the house.

Die-hard fans are likely to notice that the door of 1428 Elm Street is a
different color from what it was in previous films. Whereas in the first film the door
is blue, and in later films it is red, in *Freddy vs Jason* the door is yellow. Of course, a
logical answer to this inconsistency is: people paint their doors from time to time.
However, in scene four, when Lori enters the dream world, we see the house in a
decrepit state with a red door. The varying states of the house, and colors of its door,
have sparked much debate. Some believe that the house featured in dream world
sequences throughout the *Nightmare* series is not 1428 Elm Street, but a different
house altogether, which belonged to Freddy when he was alive. Andy Mangels
(1992) outlines such a theory:

Nancy's and Freddy's houses were designed by the same designer,
as is often done in smaller cities. They lived several blocks apart
the houses looked similar enough that when we see one in daylight, in the fourth film, we are really looking at the Krueger house at 1665 Elm St., and we also see it in the sixth film. Nancy’s house is 1428 Elm St., and Freddy uses the structural similarities against her as a psychological weapon in the third film. In the dream world, where we usually never see the house number, we are looking at Freddy’s house, though he may sometimes use the house number of Nancy’s house for added psychological terror (p. 211).

Mangels states that the filmmakers: “have admitted that they started playing fast and loose with the continuity as of the third film” (p. 211). In an attempt to restore some semblance of continuity, Mangels creates a map of Springwood, Ohio, the supposed location of the Nightmare series even though, as many fans note, palm trees line Elm Street in the first film. Mangels’ map indicates the locations of the homes for various families in the different Nightmare films, and is found on page 210 of The Nightmare Never Ends.

Scene four contains the three little girls in white dresses playing jump rope and singing the dreaded jump rope song, which has become synonymous with the Nightmare series ever since it was featured in the first film. Robert Englund (RE) and Ken Kirzinger (KK) can be heard on the commentary track during this scene attesting to the associability of the jump rope song as the “signature melody” of the Nightmare series:

RE: And you know this little melody that goes with this song, you can whistle this in any supermarket in the world and somebody will turn around and look at you funny.

KK: They’ll know it.

RE: Yeah, it’s just a great signature melody.
As in the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, the little girls are filmed in slow motion to lend the scene a surreal, dream-like quality. The “signature melody” is played over the menu screen of the *Freddy vs Jason* DVD. This fact is one more piece of evidence for those fans of Jason and the *Friday* series who claim that *Freddy vs Jason* is really a “Freddy film” first and foremost.

Scene four also links itself to the *Nightmare* series during the segment in which Blake is lured away from the front porch of his home after hearing a noise in the bushes. Blake encounters a goat, which startles him, and shortly thereafter, Freddy attacks. Fans of the *Nightmare* series are likely to associate this scene with the opening sequence of the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street* in which the character Tina becomes startled by a sheep that she encounters in the boiler room. Shortly thereafter, Freddy attacks her. Again, the presence of these animals in such odd locations is meant to lend a surreal, dream-like quality to the scene at hand.

Westin Hills Psychiatric Hospital, although mentioned in an earlier scene, is first shown in scene five. Fans are likely to associate this location with *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors*. In that film, “the last of the Elm Street kids” are locked up in Westin Hills because, as the teenager Phillip from that film explains during a group psychiatry session, the kids suffer from “a group psychosis – sort of a mass hysteria.” Phillip also notes: “The fact that we all dreamt about this guy before we ever met doesn’t seem to impress anybody. So we go in circles making minimal progress with maximum effort.” The doctor informs Phillip: “You won’t make any progress until you recognize your dreams for what they are. . .the by-products of
guilt. Psychological scars stemming from moral conflicts and overt sexuality.” In *Freddy vs Jason*, the characters Will and Mark are confined to Westin Hills. They are first shown standing in line to take their medication, Hypnocil. We are told in a later scene that Hypnocil is an experimental dream suppressant, but fans of the *Nightmare* series will already know this information from *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors*.

Just as Will is about to take his medicine, he overhears a special report on the TV about a murder that took place in a Springwood home. He recognizes the home as Lori’s. The news channel’s call letters read: “KRGR.” Fans will recognize these call letters from the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street* during a scene in which Freddy kills Glenn, a character played by Johnny Depp in his motion picture debut. Glenn falls asleep on his bed with a portable TV sitting on his lap. The viewer hears an announcer on the TV state: “*It is now 12 midnight. This is station KRGR leaving the air.*” Shortly thereafter, Freddy’s arm pops through the bed, wraps itself around Glenn, and pulls him down. Glenn’s mother opens his bedroom door to discover a fount of blood erupting from the bed and flooding the ceiling.

Incidentally, the special report that Will’s character overhears interrupts the broadcast of a horror movie, which is rumored to be *Leatherface: Texas Chain Saw Massacre III*. This is a special kind of intertextual reference, called a homage, which expands outside the mythology of the series and links to horror culture more broadly. Such broad based intertextual references are evidence, not just of filmmakers attempting to interact with fans, but to make a comment toward, or about, other
filmmakers. For instance, in the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, a TV in Nancy’s bedroom plays a scene from the horror film *The Evil Dead*. On the commentary track for *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, Wes Craven states: “That movie was Sam Raimi’s, ah, I believe *Evil Dead*, because he had put a poster of one of my films in, ah, the basement of one of his films.” The poster in question is for Wes Craven’s film *The Hill’s Have Eyes*. Sam Raimi comments on the reasoning for including the poster in his film on the commentary track for the special collector’s edition of *The Evil Dead* put out by Elite Entertainment.\(^\text{16}\)

In scene six, when Will and Mark encounter Lori and her friends for the first time at school, Will and Mark flee the scene once the Principal shows up. Fans will notice that Robert Shaye, who is the Co-Chairman and Co-CEO of New Line Cinema, plays the part of the Principal. He also appears briefly as a teacher in *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master*, as a ticket seller in *Freddy’s Dead*, and as Don The Minister in the “Killer Instinct” episode of the short-lived *Freddy’s Nightmares* TV series.

Recall that Will and Mark abscond to the local library where they investigate the town’s history and piece together its plan to contain Freddy. They find that all mention of Freddy and his crimes, including the obituaries of his victims, are stricken from the record. Later, in scene ten, the Sheriff instructs a deputy to set up twenty-four hour roadblocks: “Nobody leaves town, nobody gets in. We’re gonna contain this son of a bitch before he spreads any further.” Deputy Stubbs questions the
Sheriff’s plan and suggests bring in the FBI. The Sheriff retorts: “No outsiders, Stubbs. We can handle this. We’ve stopped him before.”

Fans of the Nightmare series are likely to link these scenes to Freddy’s Dead for the following reason: at the start of Freddy’s Dead, a map of the United States is displayed, which indicates the location of Springwood, Ohio. The following words appear on the map: “Springwood, Ohio, ten years from now. Mysterious killings and suicides wipe out entire population of children and teenagers. Remaining adults are experiencing mass psychosis.” Here, we see that during the course of the Nightmare series, Freddy became much larger than the “private trouble” of the children whose parents had killed him. Indeed, he became a broader “public issue” in relation to Springwood as a whole.1x1 Undoubtedly, the town’s response to Freddy as a “public issue” was to cover him up and quarantine the kids who made contact with him.

Another, admittedly very vague, reference can be construed from the interaction between Deputy Stubbs and the Sheriff in scene ten. After the Sheriff insists that they handle the recent spate of killings without the aid of outsiders, Deputy Stubbs states: “With all due respect, Sheriff, I think we have a copycat of the old Jason Voorhees Crystal Lake Killer on our hands.” Fans of the Friday series may link this talk of a “copycat killer” to Friday the 13th: A New Beginning. In that film, an Emergency Medical Technician named Roy masquerades as Jason and stalks the patients of a halfway house, one of whom killed his son. Later in scene ten, Deputy Stubbs conveys his theory of a copycat killer to Lori and the other teens whom he
befriends. He also tells them about the Legend of Jason and his mother, which, of course, are general references to the Friday series as well.

As Deputy Stubbs and the teens discuss how best to deal with Freddy and Jason, Lori states: "Freddy died by fire, Jason by water. How can we use that?" This is another very vague, although important, reference to both series and their characters' back-stories. It comes up again during Freddy and Jason's first battle in scene twelve. Robert Englund acknowledges it on the film's commentary track when he states: "Something that fans might appreciate...the other really primal theme in this is fire and water. You know: the lake, the boiler room; Freddy hates fire, Jason hates water." Freddy uses Jason's fear of water to subdue him and delve deeper into his subconsciousness.1

Scene eleven contains a link that expands outside of the horror genre in the form of the "Freddy-Pillar." The Freddy-Pillar is a giant hookah-smoking caterpillar that the character Freeburg encounters in his dream. Various films in the Nightmare series contain references to the work of Lewis Carroll, specifically Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865) and its sequel Through the Looking Glass (1872). The most obvious reference in the series is the hero from parts four and five who is aptly named Alice. In A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master, Kristen is the very last of the Elm Street children. Freddy tricks her into using her power to pull Alice into the dream world. Upon Alice's entrance, Freddy states: "How sweet. Fresh meat...now no one sleeps!" Later in the film, Alice enters the dream world through the mirror on her dresser, and at their final confrontation Freddy quips: "Welcome to wonderland,
Alice.” Also, in scene fourteen of Freddy vs Jason, Freddy abandons his pursuit of Lori and Will in order to attack the African American character Kia while stating: “How sweet. Dark meat.” Undoubtedly, fans will link this to his “fresh meat” line from part four.

When Lori enters Jason dream in scene thirteen, there is another intertextual reference to the Friday series. In this scene, we witness a young, deformed Jason being taunted and teased by the other children at camp Crystal Lake. They chase him down while chanting, “Freak show! Freak show!” At one point, the children put a burlap sack over Jason’s head. Fans are likely to link this to Friday the 13th Part 2 in which the adult Jason uses a burlap sack to cover his head. Jason does not don his iconic hockey mask until Friday the 13th Part III.

Lastly, Freddy’s death scene contains two intertextual references. Recall that Jason drives Freddy’s own arm through his chest, and shortly thereafter Lori decapitates Freddy using Jason’s machete. On the commentary track for Freddy vs Jason, Robert Englund suggests that Jason’s use of Freddy’s glove and arm as a weapon is a reference to Freddy’s Dead because it is: “Another recall, another echo back to, ah, my daughter using the claw against me in part six, Freddy’s Dead. So, we’re respecting the mythology.” Similarly, fans are likely to parallel Freddy being decapitated with a machete in slow motion to Jason’s mother being decapitated with a machete in slow motion at the end of the original Friday the 13th.
Conclusion

The Final Girl

At its core, *Freddy vs Jason* does indeed contain a hero myth centered around the trials and tribulations, the journey, as it were, of a female victim-hero. We first encounter Lori in the *ordinary world* of her home on 1428 Elm Street. We quickly learn of her deep psychological wound stemming from the loss of her mother, and her desire to be reunited with Will. We witness Lori receiving several *calls to adventure*, including the dream of the little girl who tells her “*Freddy’s coming back.*” During the *meeting with the mentor* stage, we hear Mark inform Lori as to who Freddy is and how best to deal with her nightmares (“*You want some free advice? Coffee. Make friends with it*”). We see her receive conflicting calls between Will and her father, and shortly thereafter she enacts a *refusal* of her father’s call. We *cross the first threshold* with her, as she escapes out her bedroom window. We are at her side as she *allies* herself with Will and the others. With their aid, she unravels the town’s cover-up (thus passing one of many “*tests*”), and while doing so, encounters her *enemy*, Freddy. She suggests breaking into Westin Hills to steal Hypnocil, thus initiating the *approach to the inmost cave*. We witness her courageous attempt to make a big change by willfully entering into Jason’s dream and undertaking the *supreme ordeal*. We cross the second threshold with her on the *road back*, as she is *resurrected* with Freddy. As a *reward* for her courage, she gains the truth of her
mother’s death, *seizes* Jason’s machete and uses it to decapitate her mother’s true killer.

Clover notes that the gender of the Final Girl is often compromised from the start of a film due to her masculine interests, such as “her inevitable sexual reluctance,” and her “exercise of the ‘active investigating gaze’ normally reserved for males” (p. 48). This is true of Lori, who, at the film’s start, is continually harassed by the character Kia for not dating or showing any real interest in guys. At one point Kia states: “It’s time to leave the convent, Lori. You need to meet a guy.” Also, it is her investigative gaze we follow into the dream world during the call to adventure stage. As Lori’s journey progresses, she transforms from somewhat of a “masculine” victim into an even tougher figure. She becomes *not* a heroine, but a *hero*.

The results of this transformation are evident in both Lori’s voice and actions toward the end of the film. Recall that during the resurrection and reward stages she refuses to flee with Will, demanding in a rough voice: “No, I’m staying!” Afterward, in the film’s delayed climax section, Lori grabs hold of a gasoline hose and wields its nozzle manically. She sprays down the dock and adjacent propane tanks with boat fuel as though marking her territory. Next, she is depicted running in slow motion with burning pieces of wood that she retrieved from the blazing rec hall; meanwhile, on the DVD’s commentary track, Robert Englund refers to her character as the “warrior woman.” Yet, Lori does not become fully “masculinized” until she seizes Jason’s machete and uses it to decapitate Freddy, which is, again, an action that occurs in slow motion. Before doing so, she holds the machete aloft and verbally
emasculates Freddy by stating: "Welcome to my world, bitch!" I have no doubt that psychoanalysts would describe Freddy’s decapitation as a “castration,” both literally and figuratively, as Freddy’s bald head could be said to resemble a penis.\textsuperscript{lxiii}

While I believe it to be true that Lori is indeed the hero of \textit{Freddy vs Jason}, the audience’s point of view is undoubtedly “switched” or “shifted” onto various characters throughout the course of the film. Clover identifies this as a commonplace technique of slasher films, stating that such films offer their audience members a “fluidity of engaged perspective” and “cross-gender identification” (pg. 46). However, I believe the claim that Clover puts forth most assertively, that “we belong, in the end, to the Final Girl; there is no alternative,” is oftentimes incorrect, as is the case with \textit{Freddy vs Jason}. Lori is certainly the Final Girl of the film, but she is not the sole survivor. Will survives, although he is in a noticeably weakened state in comparison with Lori.\textsuperscript{lxiv} More importantly, both Freddy and Jason survive, as evidenced in the epilogue section of the film. With this in mind, I believe that the very end (i.e., the epilogue), as well as the very beginning (i.e., the prologue), of the film is of utmost importance. In many regards, prologues and epilogues not only encase or bookend a film, they are frayed ends that can minimize, or even undo, the importance of what happens in-between.
A prologue helps to set the agenda of a story, but that process is in motion even prior to the prologue. Vogler (1992) notes the importance of what happens “before the beginning” (pp. 98-99). Specifically, he concentrates upon a film’s title and its opening image. He suggests that a film’s title and the graphic design of its logo are important clues to the nature of the story. (p. 99). The title *Freddy vs Jason* clearly names the film’s two (anti) heroes; the abbreviated “vs” insignia, as well as the film’s tagline (“Winner Kills All”) marks the film’s status as an “event picture.” Vogler also suggests that the opening image:

> can be a powerful tool to create mood and suggest where the story will go. It can be a visual metaphor that, in a single shot or scene, conjures up the Special World of Act Two and the conflicts and dualities that will be confronted there (p. 99).

The opening image of *Freddy vs Jason* is that of a furnace. Freddy opens the grate of the furnace and tosses a doll into its lapping flames. Wes Craven’s commentary on the *Nightmare Encyclopedia* DVD indicates that when he initially conceived of Freddy, he placed the character in the labyrinth of a boiler room to evoke hell, or Hades on a mythological level. The furnace at the start of *Freddy vs Jason* is undoubtedly an extension of that imagery. The act of Freddy opening the grate of the furnace and tossing a doll inside symbolizes both his want to escape from hell, and his desire to send other, more innocent, people there.

However, in all actuality, the opening image of the film is New Line Cinema’s Logo. Of course, all films open with the logo of their respective studio. Yet, Freddy
is inextricably linked to, and almost synonymous with, New Line Cinema. The original *A Nightmare on Elm Street* was the studio's first commercially successful film, and it is thus commonplace to refer to New Line Cinema as “the house that Freddy built.” The prologue solidifies the emphasis on Freddy by detailing his backstory and outlining his plan to manipulate Jason, thus making Jason secondary: he is Freddy’s pawn. In fact, as the New Line Cinema logo comes into view, the opening strings from the score for *A Nightmare on Elm Street* are played on the soundtrack, though they are soon mingled with the iconic sounds of Jason’s theme music. Here again, Jason is secondary to Freddy.

Whereas the prologue sets the film's agenda in the form of Freddy’s plan, the epilogue lets the viewer know that the battle is not yet over. As suggested earlier, Freddy’s wink signals the possibility of a sequel. Recall that Freddy’s wink is immediately followed by his hideous cackle, which acknowledges the certainty of his return. Here, I would like to use insights from the text *Laughing Screaming* by William Paul (1994) as amendments to Colver’s thesis that there is no alternative to the Final Girl for the audience of slasher films. Clover argues that the distinguishing feature of slasher films is their “absence or untenability of alternative perspectives,” a feature which exposes their invitation of vicariousness to their male spectators with the Final Girl (p. 62). However, Clover seems to overlook the fact that, even in the films she analyzes, more often than not, the villains are never truly defeated by the Final Girl, and their return is eminent. Paul suggests, “we gain some satisfaction in the monster’s return” and “the vital resurgence of the monster remains one of the
most distinctive qualities of gross-out horror” (p.418). Slasher films undoubtedly qualify as gross-out horror. Robert Englund, on the DVD commentary track, describes Freddy and Jason’s blood-filled battle as being “like grand guignol. The French have this word where they go so far with the gore that it becomes something else. It has some strange aesthetic.”

Paul describes the gross-out aesthetic as both ambivalent and oxymoronic because, aesthetic means beautiful, and “gross-out explicitly acknowledges the attractive in the repellent, the beautiful in the ugly” (p. 419). Therefore, a gross-out film’s mode of presentation conflates humor and terror, pleasure and anxiety, and by seemingly moving in two directions at once, such films promise a “ceaseless festivity” (p. 419). The satisfaction derived through this ceaseless festivity becomes transcribed into the figure of the monster, who we come to see as a:

force that is worth celebrating as much as it is worth fearing, something we want to embrace and pull away from at the same time. The resistance to closure in these films keeps anarchy in a suspended state halfway between wish fulfillment and nightmare (pp. 418-419).

In this regard, gross-out films, such as the slasher film, enact a kind of playful game. As Paul suggests, these films “conclude much like the ending of a game; it can always start again, much as a monster can reassert his vitality” (p. 423).

As an example of the gross-out film’s playfulness, Paul cites Alfred Hitchcock’s comparison of his film Psycho (1960), the seminal slasher film, to a roller coaster ride. In order to capture the aptness of the roller coaster metaphor, I feel it necessary to quote Paul in length:

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As roller coasters make us both laugh and scream, these films present a constant shifting back and forth between extreme states and then mark their conclusion by ascending to the highest point and rushing into a vertiginous descent. Much as it is rooted in ambivalence, gross-out works by an ever-shifting concept as boundaries are drawn and redrawn. It may ultimately wear itself out as it begins to approach a sense of no boundaries – that truly anything is possible and all is permitted. (p. 423).

With this idea of shifting boundaries in mind, I believe that the kind of cross-gender identification celebrated by Clover as the defining feature of the slasher film, is simply a fragment of the subgenre’s more general mode of address. Clover believes that slasher films present audiences with an identification that shifts from character to character, but in the end, they are invited, if not forced, to identify with the Final Girl. I, on the other hand, believe that the producers of slasher films invite their audiences to join the “ceaseless festivity”: to partake in a game. Shifts in character identification are indeed a part of this game, but they are akin to the movements of pawns on a chessboard. What matters is the act of game play itself: the figuration, or interdependency, of audience and filmmaker; for the game “has no being, no existence independently of the players, as the word ‘game’ might suggest (Elias, 1978, p.130).
“Film needs theory like it needs a scratch on the negative.”
— Acclaimed Film Director, Alan Parker
(as quoted in Lapsley & Westlake, 1988, p. vi)
CHAPTER III

Introduction

There are two things that I enjoy quite immensely: (1) film and (2) theory. Imagine my surprise when, as an undergraduate majoring in film and video, the professor of my film theory course ended the semester with the above Alan Parker quote. What is worse, she did not attempt to explain or interpret Parker’s statement for us. All she said was, and I am paraphrasing here, “If you enjoyed this course, think about what Alan Parker has to say about theory . . .” Knowing that Alan Parker directed one of my all time favorite films, Pink Floyd: The Wall (1982), my knee-jerk reaction to the statement was one of astonishment. How could a person who directed such an incredibly artistic film, one brimming with meaning, have such a dislike for theory? I told myself, “Surely the professor is attributing the statement to the wrong person.” After my initial shock had subsided, I began to mull over the statement and think about its meaning in relation to Parker’s role as a director. I also thought about the meaning behind the film Pink Floyd: The Wall, and the album upon which it is based.

Feelings of alienation inspired Pink Floyd bassist Roger Waters to write the concept album The Wall. As the band Pink Floyd became more and more famous, their audiences grew in size, eventually filling stadiums. As an artist, Waters’ feelings of alienation grew in proportion to the size of his audiences, which were no
longer filled with like-minded individuals. Rather, as Waters' suggests in a BBC interview, the people in this new mass audience were:

only there for the beer, in big stadiums, and consequently it became rather an alienating experience doing the shows. I became very conscious of a wall between us and our audience and so this record started out as being an expression of those feelings (Waters, 1979b, para 1).\textsuperscript{lxv}

Waters expressed his feelings of alienation by incorporating the construction of a large wall on stage during the band’s live performances. Once complete, the wall would separate the band from the mass audience in the same manner that a movie screen acts as a fourth wall separating the film’s producers from its mass audience. The fourth wall is a concept referring to the suspension of disbelief required of an audience in order for them to escape into, or be drawn in by, the fictional world of a film’s narrative.

The producers and the mass audiences of films perform a game of make-believe on, or through, the fourth wall—the screen—of movie theaters and television sets throughout the global village. Theoretical insights, such as those gleaned through Metz’s (1977) application of psychoanalytic “mirror” theory to cinema, expose that game. In this sense, theory sheds light on the game in the same manner that a scratch in the film’s negative allows too much light to come through. It demystifies it, revealing its artificialness. For this reason, it is no surprise that a film director, such as Parker, would dislike theory. Most of the time, directors, and others involved in the film’s production, want the people in the audience to pretend like they do not know the manner in which “the fourth wall of the auditorium (the screen) is really
different from the other three” (Metz, p. 48). In order for the magic of movies to be successful, the producers and receivers of a film have to be willing participants in this game.

As an undergraduate film student with a sociological imagination, I developed a keen interest in this game of make-believe that film producers and audiences perform for one another. I was also, and still am, an avid fan of horror films, particularly *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and its character Freddy Krueger. My initial viewings of most of the lackluster installments of the *Nightmare* series took place in theatres. These disappointing experiences left me wanting to borrow Freddy’s glove in order to claw my way through the fourth wall and ask the producers one simple question: “Why?” Why would they take one of the most original film villains ever created and turn him into an ever-greater caricature with each passing sequel? Of course, I always recognized the fact that tearing the movie screen to shreds would not get me any closer to the producers, and my question would unfortunately remain unanswered.

**The Aim of the Chapter**

In this chapter, I aim to overcome the fourth wall yet again. This time I attempt to do so, not with Freddy’s clawed glove, but through the use of available data and theoretical insights gleaned from Goffman (1961). I am interested in examining *Freddy vs Jason* as a mediated encounter rendered by fans and filmmakers.
on the fourth wall. However, in this chapter, I am solely interested in the intentions of the producers as they play their part in rendering that encounter. With this in mind, let us recall the characteristics of encounters as outlined by Goffman.

Goffman presumes that the structure, or orderliness, of an encounter arises from the fulfillment of obligations and expectations between participants. More specifically, Goffman suggests that the orderliness of an encounter pertains to what is attended to, as well as what is disattended to, while the definition of the situation is being constructed (p. 19). With these characteristics of an encounter in mind, I seek to answer the following question: What obligations did the film's producers expressly attend to during their rendition of *Freddy vs Jason*?

I proceed in the following manner to answer the question at hand. First, I outline the *Freddy vs Jason* DVD as a source of available data, an inroad, as it were, to the collective mind of the film's producers. Within this outline, I construct a purposive sample of DVD special features that are likely to contain statements made by the film's producers. Second, I outline template analysis as the method that I employ in this chapter. Third, I conduct a preliminary and subsequent template analysis of the transcripts of my purposive sample. Fourth, I present my findings using the various category headings of my codebook to organize the section thematically. Lastly, I discuss the elements the producers identified as feeling obligated to attend to in terms of their perceived relevancy for the rendering of *Freddy vs Jason*.
The *Freddy vs Jason* DVD as a Source of Available Data

I utilize the film’s DVD as a source of available data to answer the above question. The creators of DVDs “are constantly trying to find new ways of utilizing the medium for presenting movies” (Barlow, 2005 p. 78). For instance, the inclusion of various special features on DVDs is “changing the way movies are viewed at home, increasing viewer options and, ultimately, viewer knowledge of movies” (p. 108). There are various types of special features increasingly found on DVDs, including: commentary tracks, technical information, historical information, interviews, “making of” documentaries, documents, games, quizzes, deleted scenes, alternate versions, soundtracks, cartoons, shorts, trailers, newsreels, and sometimes even additional movies (pp.79-83). I map out the numerous special features available on the *Freddy vs Jason* DVD in the next section.

Mapping DVD Special Features

The *Freddy vs Jason* DVD comes with two discs, both of which contain many special features. I outline the content of both discs separately. I also provide visual “maps” delineating: (a) Disc one, (b) DVD ROM Content, (c) The Official *Freddy vs Jason* website, and (d) Disc two. These graphic representations appear in Appendices L – O.
Disc One

The first disc breaks the film down into seventeen scenes, allowing the user to start or stop the film at the beginning of any particular scene. The disc allows the user to watch the film while listening to a commentary track featuring Ronny Yu (the film’s director), Robert Englund (the actor who plays “Freddy Krueger”), and Ken Kirzinger (the actor who plays “Jason Voorhees”). The disc contains a “Jump to a Death” menu option, which allows the user to: (a) pick amongst any of the film’s thirteen death scenes to view, (b) have the disc play a “Random Death” scene to view, or (c) choose the menu’s “Kill All” option to watch all thirteen death scenes one after the other. Disc one also contains DVD-ROM content. See appendix L for a visual “map” outlining disc one.

DVD-ROM Content

The user can access the DVD-ROM content on disc one by placing it in the DVD-ROM drive of a personal computer. Once installed in a DVD-ROM drive, disc one allows the user to: (a) watch the film on one side of the computer screen while the film’s script is displayed on the opposite side, or print out the script to read at his or her leisure, (b) watch the film on his or her computer screen while simultaneously playing an interactive trivia game about the film, (c) access a random “Hot Spot” on New Line Cinema’s website, (d) access the official Freddy vs Jason website, (e)
access New Line Cinema’s homepage, (f) access a help site to trouble-shoot problems with the DVD-ROM, and (g) play the film.

The second disc also contains DVD-ROM content. The user can access the DVD-ROM content on disc two by placing it in the DVD-ROM drive of a personal computer. Once installed in a DVD-ROM drive, disc two allows the user to: (a) listen to “Killer Sound Bites” from the movie, (b) edit a fight scene together using the “Cutting Room Floor Edit Activity,” (c) access a random “Hot Spot” on New Line Cinema’s website, (d) access the official *Freddy vs Jason* website, (e) access New Line Cinema’s website, (f) access a help site to trouble-shoot problems with the DVD-ROM, and (g) play the film’s special features found on disc two. See appendix M for a visual map outlining the DVD-ROM content.

The *Freddy vs Jason* Website

I consider the *Freddy vs Jason* website an extension of the available features found on the film’s DVD. The website’s menu displays five substantive sections titled: (1) The Legacy, (2) Film Facts, (3) Galleries, (4) Fanzone and (5) Downloads. The website breaks each of these sections down into smaller subsections. See appendix N for a visual map outlining the website’s menu sections, and a brief description of their content.
Disc Two

The DVD's second disc, comprised entirely of special features, also provides a wealth of available data. These special features include: (a) deleted and alternate scenes, (b) segments on the production of the film, as well as (c) segments on the publicity and promotion of the film. There are twenty deleted and alternate scenes total. These can be played separately or all at once with the option of continuous running commentary by director Ronny Yu and executive producer Douglas Curtis. The production segment includes: (a) five short production featurettes, (b) twelve short visual effects featurettes, (c) image galleries of production photos and storyboards and (d) a two-part Fangoria Magazine article. The publicity and promotion segment includes: (a) coverage of the pre-fight press conference at Bally’s casino in Las Vegas, (b) the original theatrical trailer, (c) eight TV spots, (d) a music video for one of the songs on the film’s soundtrack, and (e) a featurette titled “My Summer Vacation: A Visit to Camp Hacknslash.” Disc two also contains DVD-ROM content, as detailed above. See appendix O for a visual “map” outlining disc two’s special features. Having mapped out the content of both discs, I now turn to my method of analysis.
Method

Sampling Statements

The method I employ in this chapter is template analysis. My units of analysis are statements made by the film’s producers as found on the DVD’s special features. The Freddy vs Jason DVD contains numerous special features, as illustrated above. Therefore, I construct a purposive sample of the special features that are likely to contain statements made by the producers regarding the expectations that they felt obligated to attend to while producing the film. Not all of the DVD’s special features concern the film’s production. For instance, some of the publicity and promotion segments contain storyboards and movie stills that are unaccompanied by producer commentary, or they may contain very few statements uttered by the film’s producers. Therefore, I decide to include within my purposive sample only those special features that are likely to contain statements made by the producers of the film. Upon reexamining the special features, I find that six of the DVD’s special features contain such statements: (1) the DVD’s commentary found on disc one, (2) “Behind the Bloodbath,” a subcategory of “The Legacy” section of The Official Freddy vs Jason website, and on disc two: (3) the two-part Fangoria magazine article, (4) the deleted and alternative scenes with running commentary, (5) the five short production featurettes, and (6) the twelve short visual effects featurettes. These six
special features contain my purposive sample of statements made by the film's producers.

Managing the Data

I hired a transcriber to provide a typed record of the audio tracks for all the special feature segments in my purposive sample except the two-part Fangoria magazine article. I gave the transcriber a copy of the DVD and a list detailing the following information: (a) the titles of each special feature segment to transcribe, (b) the names of the producers featured in each segment, and (c) the approximate length of each segment. See appendix P for a duplication of the listed DVD transcription information. I asked the transcriber to enter the data into Microsoft Word in order to make it more manageable. I also asked the transcriber to e-mail me the transcripts as attachments once they were completed.

I created a file folder titled “Transcripts” in the “My Documents” section of my computer. I saved the transcripts in this file folder upon receiving them in my e-mail. I labeled each transcript with the title of its respective special feature, as found on the DVD. I created two backups of the “Transcripts” file folder and its contents, one on a CD and the other on a USB drive. I also printed out each transcript, and placed the hardcopies within manila file folders. I gave these manila file folders the same labels as their computer counterparts, and stored them within a file cabinet.
Developing a Codebook

Crabtree and Miller (1992) suggest that a codebook is a data management tool used to group segments of similar or related text together in order to facilitate interpretation (p. 99). They also suggest that the amount of detail reflected in the codebook is dependant upon the number and breadth of categories generated by the researcher. The broader the categories, the more detail they are likely to capture, which can be either an advantage or a disadvantage depending on the needs and desires of the researcher (p. 99). Categories that are too broad may capture unwanted detail, whereas categories that are too narrow may overlook details that the researcher does want. Therefore, I will follow a particular strategy outlined by Crabtree and Miller: (1) first, I will code the text using broad preliminary codes, (2) second, I will retrieve and read these segments, and (3) third, I will develop refined subcodes based on these larger segments of the text (p. 100). The basic idea is to start with a handful of *a priori* codes, and then to make any necessary modifications to the codebook after a preliminary run through of the transcripts.

I have decided to incorporate the first-level code titled “audience” into my codebook. I intend this code to capture segments of the transcripts in which the producers of *Freddy vs Jason* state or imply that they felt obligated to attend to the wants and needs of the film’s audience, or to the audiences of the two franchises it encompasses. I have also decided to attach a second-level code onto this broader first-level code titled: “fans.” I intend this code to capture segments of transcripts in
which the producers of *Freddy vs Jason* state or imply that they felt obligated to attend to the wants and needs of the film’s fans, or to the fans of the two franchises it encompasses. I labeled the fan category a “second-level” code to imply that it is an intrinsic element of the “first-level” audience code. That is to say, fans of *Freddy vs Jason* are intrinsic to the broader audience.

*Freddy vs Jason* brings together two very popular film franchises, each with their own anti-heroes. Both of these anti-heroes have very elaborate, and oftentimes convoluted, histories. With this in mind, I have decided to use two very broad first-level codes in my initial codebook: 1) “Nightmare on Elm Street elements,” and 2) “Friday the 13th elements.” I intend these first-level codes to capture segments of transcripts in which the producers of *Freddy vs Jason* state or imply that they felt obligated to attend to particular elements of both franchises. Keep in mind that there are a couple of key words or phrases inherent to these codes that will act as “triggers” for me during the coding process. For example, when producers use phrases like “had to” or “needed to” while discussing the incorporation of certain elements from either franchise, it “triggers” or signals to me that the producers felt it was necessary for them to attend to those elements in particular.

I have also decided to include two second-level codes within my initial codebook. I attach the second-level code “Freddy” onto the broader first-level code “Nightmare on Elm Street elements,” as well as the second-level code “Jason” onto the broader first-level code “Friday the 13th elements.” I intend these second-level codes to capture segments of transcripts in which the producers of *Freddy vs Jason*
state or imply that they felt obligated to attend to specific facets of both characters.

The same types of triggers inherent to the first-level codes apply to these second-level
codes as well. I labeled these categories "second-level" codes to imply that they are
intrinsic elements of the "first-level" codes. That is to say, for example, the character
Freddy is an intrinsic element of the *Nightmare* film series. See figure 3 (below) for a
duplication of my initial codebook.

(1) Audiences
   (a) Fans
(2) Nightmare on Elm Street Elements
   (a) Freddy
(3) Friday the 13th Elements
   (a) Jason

Figure 3. Initial Codebook for Analyzing Producer Statements.

Preliminary Coding

I undertake a preliminary coding of all the transcripts using my initial
codebook. In pencil, I place parenthesis around those segments of text that
correspond to either of my initial first-level codes and their representative second-
level codes. Crabtree and Miller (1992) state that whenever a researcher undertakes
coding, he or she should be:

   making 'memos' in the text margins or on file cards of interpretive
   insights that come about from being closely involved with the data.
The researcher should be open also to the potential for codebook modifications that might emerge as these ‘memos’ take on more focused meaning (p. 103). Therefore, I also make memos in the margins next to the segments that I enclose in parenthesis. The memos indicate any interpretative insights that arise during the process of coding, as well as to which first-level or second-level code the material corresponds. I also take notes on those segments of text which seem pertinent to the subject at hand, but which are not captured by the initial codebook. After my preliminary analysis is complete, I make adjustments to my codebook as necessary and conduct a subsequent coding of the transcripts.

**Codebook Adjustments**

I make the following adjustments to my codebook after undertaking the preliminary analysis. First, I eliminate the first-level “Friday the 13th elements” code due to a lack of evidence suggesting that the producers felt obligated to attend to any particular elements of that franchise other than the character Jason. Second, I find it appropriate to change the remaining second-level codes into broader first-level codes due to the abundance of evidence relating to each remaining code of the codebook.

I also find it necessary to add a new first-level code titled “Horror Genre Elements” into the codebook due to the abundance of evidence I found relating to this topic during my preliminary analysis. I intend this first-level code to capture segments of transcripts in which the producers of *Freddy vs Jason* state or imply that
they felt obligated to attend to particular elements of the horror genre. My revised codebook contains six first-level codes. See figure 4 (below) for my revised codebook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Audience</th>
<th>(2) Fans</th>
<th>(3) Nightmare on Elm Street elements</th>
<th>(4) Freddy</th>
<th>(5) Jason</th>
<th>(6) Horror Genre Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Figure 4. Revised Codebook for Analyzing Producer Statements.

**Subsequent Coding**

I conduct a subsequent coding of the transcripts after completing the adjustments to my codebook. Crabtree and Miller (1992) suggest that there are various ways the researcher can precede in his or her analysis. For instance, the researcher can highlight recurrent themes with different colored pens, or cut salient themes out of the transcripts and sort them into groups (p. 106).

I proceed in the following manner: First, I use a cutting board to cut out each of the statements made by the individual filmmakers. Second, upon investigating the memos that I previously wrote in the left-hand margins, I place the statements into one of seven piles. Six of these piles correspond to each of the first-level codes of my revised codebook. The seventh pile is a designated “out” pile in which I place those statements that are of no discernable use. Third, after placing all of the
filmmakers' statements into one of these seven piles, I fasten them together using binder clips, and I place each of the seven piles into separate, large zip-lock bags. I label each of these bags before storing them in an empty drawer of a file cabinet. Later, I retrieve these bags one at a time, and reread all of the statements they contain. I make further notations, this time in the right-hand margin of each statement, during the process of rereading. Once my subsequent coding is complete, I make further adjustments to my codebook based on the memos that I have written in the right-hand margin. This process of making further codebook adjustments is described in the next section.

**Further Codebook Adjustments**

I make the following adjustments to my codebook after undertaking the rereading and recoding of each filmmaker statement. First, I add the second-level "Premier/Test Screening" code onto the first-level "Audience" code due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that the filmmakers felt obligated to attend to the wants and needs of the film's audience at those particular venues. I also add another second-level code called "Other Forms of Response" onto this first level-code due to evidence suggesting that the filmmakers were aware of audience responses outside of the film's premier and test screening.

Second, I add four second-level codes onto the "Fans" code. I title these codes "Caring Enough to Get it Right," "Recalls," "Knowing Fans," and "Addressing
& Thanking Fans.” The titles of these codes reflect the evidence I uncovered, which suggests that the filmmakers felt obligated to: (a) get the film right, for the fans, (b) inscribe references, or “recalls,” into the film that the fans would notice, (c) know who the fans are and what they want, and lastly, (d) address and thank the fans specifically.

Third, I add the second-level code “Dream Logic” onto the first-level code “Nightmare on Elm Street Elements” because of the evidence suggesting that the filmmakers felt obligated to adhere to the logic of dream sequences demonstrated in previous films of the Nightmare series.

Fourth, I add the second-level codes “The Cruel Clown” and “Signature Moves” onto the first-level code “Freddy” due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that the filmmakers felt obligated to attend to specific traits of Freddy’s character. These traits include Freddy’s sadistic sense of humor and his distinctive body language, respectively.

Fifth, I add the second-level codes “The Killing Machine,” “Jason’s Slowness,” and “Jason’s Secret Fear of Water” onto the first-level code “Jason” due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that the filmmakers felt obligated to attend to specific traits of Jason’s character. These traits include Jason’s automaton-like nature, his physical and mental slowness, as well as his water phobia, respectively.

Sixth, I add three second-level codes onto the first-level code “Horror Genre Elements.” I added a second-level code called “Emulating the Classics” because of the filmmakers’ repeated acknowledgement of classic horror films that pitted one
monster or villain character against another. I added the second-level code called “Back to the Basics” due to the director’s frequent suggestion that he felt obligated to return to the “rawness” of older horror films, as opposed to the more polished feel of contemporary horror films. Lastly, I added the second-level code called “Bad Teens” due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that the filmmakers felt obligated to “kill off” or “punish” those characters who engage in drug use and fornication, as is common in horror films. Please see figure 5 (below) for a graphic outline of the final template I use for interpreting the filmmakers’ statements.

(1) Audience
   (a) Premier/Test Screening
   (b) Other Forms of Response
(2) Fans
   (a) Caring Enough to Get it Right
   (b) Recalls
   (c) Knowing Fans
   (d) Addressing & Thanking Fans
(3) Nightmare on Elm Street Elements
   (a) Dream Logic
(4) Freddy
   (a) The Cruel Clown
   (b) Signature Moves
(5) Jason
   (a) The Killing Machine
   (b) Jason’s Slowness
   (c) Jason’s Secret Fear of Water
(6) Horror Genre Elements
   (a) Emulating the Classics
   (b) Back to the Basics
   (c) Bad Teens

Figure 5. Final Template for Interpreting Filmmaker Statements.
After completing the adjustments to my codebook, I retrieve each of the large zip-lock bags one at a time. I sort through the posts within these bags and, according to the memos in the right-hand margin, place them into various piles corresponding to the appropriate second-level codes of the final codebook. For instance, I organize the posts in the large zip-lock back labeled “Audience” into two piles that correspond to each of its representative second-level codes. Once all of the posts from this bag are sorted out, I fasten the posts together using paper clips and place each of the piles into separate, small zip-lock bags. I label these smaller bags “Premier/Test Screening” and “Other Forms of Response” before putting them back into the larger zip-lock bag labeled “Audience.” Afterward, I place them back in the file cabinet drawer for storage. I repeat this process for the contents of the other five large zip-lock bags. Later, I consult the contents of each large zip-lock bag that are now codified through the use of template analysis, and interpret the themes found therein. These themes are presented in the section that follows.

Findings

Audience

I found evidence suggesting that the producers of *Freddy vs Jason* felt obligated to attend to the wants and needs of the film’s audience. This evidence took the form of two predominant themes occurring within and/or between the various
special feature segments that comprise my purposive sample. I titled the first theme “Premier/Test Screening,” because it concerns the changes that the producers made to the film in light of audience responses garnered at the film’s premier or test screening. I titled the second theme “Other Forms of Response,” because it concerns forms of audience response, cited by the producers, which occurred outside of, or apart from, the film’s premier or test screening.

Premier/Test Screening

As one would expect, various statements made by the producers indicated that they paid close attention to how audiences responded to the film at both its test screening and premier. Such statements took the form of off-hand comments heard on the film’s commentary track, as well as on the commentary track for the film’s deleted and alternate scenes. For instance, on the film’s commentary track, Ken Kirzinger (“Jason”) comments, prior to the death of the character Trey, “Everyone was so glad that this guy died.” Presumably, “everyone” means everyone at the test screening. If this seems like too far of a reach, the comments made by Robert Englund (“Freddy”) undoubtedly refer to the reactions of the audience. For instance, in reference to the scene in which Freddy cuts off a character’s nose, Englund states:

Boy, did this scene work great. I’ve seen it with two audiences now. This scene always works. . .it worked great at the premiere. And that also worked great at the test screening in Austin, too.
Later on the commentary track Englund is also heard rejoicing because “they” (presumably the ratings board) allowed Director Ronny Yu to keep a scene in the film in which Freddy makes a lewd hand gesture:

Oh, they let you keep it in! They let you keep the jerk-off in... Thank God. That got a huge laugh in Austin.

Such statements demonstrate, again, as one would expect, that the film’s producers do pay attention to how audience members respond at test screenings.

Statements made by Director Ronny Yu and Executive Producer Douglas Curtis on the commentary track for the film’s deleted and alternate scenes suggest that they, not always willingly, made deletions and alterations to the film at the behest of the audiences at the premier and/or test screening. For instance, in the deleted scene titled “A Promise,” Douglas Curtis comments, “the audience almost booed this off the screen” because it was “too hokey.” Also, consider the exchange between Curtis and Yu during the scene involving the skinny dipping girl at the start of the film:

Yu: Yeah, remember, like, in my cut, there wasn’t that much, like, bare breasts and all that, and after the first test screening people were demanding sex.

Curtis: I know. Gotta put it back.

Yu: “Oh, we want to see more nudity.” So, I had to put it back in.

Yu at times compared his opinion to that of the audience, which tended to differ. In fact, a couple of statements made by Yu suggest that, as the film’s director, he experienced a kind of “double-bind.”
For example, Yu expressed that he sometimes felt that a scene belonged in the movie, yet he had to change or delete it in order to fit the wants and needs of the audience. This is evidenced in the commentary track for the deleted scene titled “Kiss from Kia,” when Yu states:

I think there's a whole interesting thing about this test screening. As a filmmaker you try to, like, you know, you always try to fight, but the movie is for the audience though, and they know nothing about it. They went in cold, and then they see something they don't like, they just, ya know: instant response.

In a similar scenario, on the commentary track for the deleted scene titled “Place Your Bets,” Yu states:

Yeah, I mean, this is again, this is, this is the test screening reaction that they don’t like her saying that line, “place your bets,” but I kind of like that one.

These two examples demonstrate that the director’s decisions are not only influenced, but, to an extent, dictated by the wants and needs of the audience. Yu’s statement in the first example, “the movie is for the audience,” suggests that when audience members see something they don’t like, the director is obligated to cater to them. It is interesting to note that the scene in which the character Lori utters the line “place your bets” appeared in the film’s theatrical trailer even though it was removed from the film. Perhaps this is an indication that the film was edited “under-the-wire,” as it were, based on the responses of the audiences at the test screening and the film’s premier.

There was ample evidence that the audience at the test screening influenced the producers’ decision as to how to end the film. Damian Shannon, the film’s Co-
Scriptwriter, indicates in the Fangoria magazine article that David Goyer was brought in by New Line to polish the script. Shannon states that one of the things Goyer did was change the film’s original ending, which involved:

a sex scene where one of the characters turned into Freddy, but it wasn’t received favorably by test audiences and was cut.

Englund speculates, on the film’s commentary track, why he thought the fans disliked the original ending:

I think that the fans thought that meant there was going to be “Son of Freddy” instead of just interpreting it as Freddy’s evil still existing, or Freddy’s essence just sort of manifesting itself. I think the fans thought that New Line Cinema was going to have to sign Jason Ritter for another dozen sequels.

Yu and Curtis also discuss the decision to cut this scene on the commentary track for the film’s “original ending.” Interestingly enough, this is one instance in which Yu actually agreed with the audience:

Yu: And this is, this is the ending, original ending that I thought, you know, maybe a bit off the mark, because...it didn’t end on Freddy and Jason, [it] ended on two teenagers...  

Curtis: And the audience didn’t know what to make of it. 

Yu: Mm-hm. 

Curtis: They weren’t scared. And I don’t think they wanted to see him become Freddy. 

... 

Yu: For this, I’m glad for the test screening experience because it sort of, like, reinforced my argument that it just doesn’t... 

Curtis: You had to end on Freddy and Jason. 

Yu: Yeah. This just doesn’t work.
Here we can see that not only is Yu in agreement with the audience at the test screening, but he almost seems grateful for the fact that the audience “reinforced” his argument that the ending “just doesn’t work” because it “didn’t end on Freddy and Jason.”

**Other Forms of Response**

I also found some evidence that the producers received, or were at least aware of, other types of audience response not associated with the premier or test screening. For instance, toward the beginning of the film’s commentary track, Englund states:

> You know, this is amazing. Sitting here doing the DVD, right now, people are lined up, you know, to see *Freddy vs Jason* for the first time. And we’re sitting in here, you know, in the air conditioning, you know, and a cup of coffee. But, right down the street it’s playing, and I saw a line on the way over here. And I talked to a friend down in my hometown. They tried to see it yesterday twice at a theater near where I live and they couldn’t get in. It was sold out.

Ticket sales are the form of response implied in Englund’s statement. Since people are “lined up” to see the film, and tickets are sold out, these things indicate a positive audience response. Englund cites another type of successful audience response on the commentary track toward the end of the film, when he asks Yu if New Line Cinema signed him to direct the film’s sequel “when they saw the cover of *Variety*?” *Variety* is a weekly magazine for the entertainment industry that details box-office information. The implication in Englund’s statement is that, after seeing the film’s success noted in *Variety*, New Line will want to have Yu helm the sequel to *Freddy*
vs Jason. Also on the commentary track, Englund indicates receiving yet another type of audience response in the form of an e-mail from a “kid” who asked him if the film’s ending meant that Freddy and Jason “were in, like, a weird heaven...because of the clouds” in the background of the last scene.

Fans

I found evidence suggesting that the producers of Freddy vs Jason felt obligated to attend to the wants and needs of the fans of the previous films. This evidence took the form of three predominant themes occurring within the various special features segments that comprise my purposive sample. I titled the first theme “Caring Enough to get it Right,” because it concerns claims made by the producers, which suggest that part of the reason New Line Cinema took so long to create Freddy vs Jason is because they wanted to “get it right” out of respect for the characters as well as the fans. Getting it right also meant finding the right crewmembers, those who also cared about the characters, the fans, and the genre in general. I titled the second theme “Recalls,” because it concerns the producers’ intentional encoding of intertextual elements into the film in order to share an in-joke with hardcore fans who would be able to recall and identify such elements. I titled the third theme “Knowing Fans,” because it concerns statements made by Robert Englund, which suggest that he had an acute awareness of the fans and their speculations regarding Freddy vs Jason.
Caring Enough to Get it Right

The producers often commented on why it took so long for them to make *Freddy vs Jason*. The Producer Sean Cunningham states in the Fangoria article: “There was the belief that we had 17 [previous] movies and we didn’t want to screw that up.” In that same Fangoria article, Mark Swift, the film’s Co-Scriptwriter, emphasized that those working at New Line Cinema took the time to make the film “right” precisely because of their commitment to horror fans. Consider the following statements by Swift:

Honestly, New Line did it right. . .They’re one of the few studios that listens to or cares about horror fans. They weren’t going to make this movie until they had it the way it should be.

New Line did it right. They weren’t going to make this film until they had it right, and they put more money behind it than they have into any installment of any previous franchise.

This notion of “caring” enough for the fans to get the film right meant finding producers who cared for the film as well. In the production featurette *Genesis: Development Hell*, Robert Shaye, Co-Chairman and Co-CEO of New Line Cinema, stated that *Freddy vs Jason* “languished because it was difficult to find a production executive. . .who cared a lot about it.” He continues to state that, eventually, New Line found “this wonderful woman, Stokely Chaffin, who likes the genre and could really jump in.”

Chaffin’s admiration for the genre became evident through her statements in the production featurette *Genesis: Development Hell*. In this featurette, Chaffin, who
is now New Line’s Senior Vice President of Production, exhibits not only her status
as a fan of the genre (“I loved horror movies”), but also of the two characters. Like
most fans of Freddy and Jason, she too eagerly awaited their cinematic duel year after
year: “Seven years ago I heard the idea and I was like, Genius! Like, that’s perfect.
Like, what a great event picture.” As the film’s executive producer, Chaffin’s
admiration for the genre became an integral part of getting the film right. Chaffin
painstakingly looked for that same admiration in potential directors, as evidenced by
the following statements:

I had made the sort of foolish...proposition to every agency that
anybody who wanted to come in and meet, I would take the meeting
with. So, I probably took 60 meetings with directors. We went to,
you know, Wes Craven, and...the top people in...making horror
films.

What was hard to find is there were people who loved the characters
...who knew everything about them and had seen every movie
fifteen times, but didn’t have the experience. And then there were
people who had more experience, but kind of were like, ‘oh yeah, I
think I saw one back in the theater, way back when.’ And we were
like, ‘what are you doing here?’ Like, why, why, why would you
wanna take this on if you don’t care about these characters?

As these quotes suggest, caring about the characters became a requirement of those
Chaffin would hire to work on the film. Also, as suggested earlier, caring about the
characters meant simultaneously exhibiting a concern for the fans. This dual concern
was demonstrated most clearly in statements regarding getting the right script for the
film.

In the production featurette *Genesis: Development Hell*, Robert Shaye
suggests that New Line was “stymied by trying to get a script together that really kind
of made some sort of quality narrative sense.” In this same featurette, Stokely Chaffin indicates that the process for finding the right script was just as arduous as the process for finding the right director: “There had been a million drafts before. I mean, literally, I think 17, done by 12 writers.” On the film’s commentary track, Robert Englund relays why these drafts were so problematic:

New Line kept getting a lot of drafts where they didn’t take the back-story of either Friday the 13th or Nightmare on Elm Street quite seriously enough. Which means, they really weren’t respecting the fans and the mythology of both of these franchises. And you have to do that, and I know there was a couple of sort of far-fetched scripts [that] were actually really imaginative, but they sort of destroyed the story of prior films, and you can’t really do that, either. Because in a strange way, that does insult a percentage of the fans and it took them awhile to get the right draft.

Eventually, Damian Shannon and Mark Swift would write a script that respected both franchises, and in turn, the fans as well. As the following statements made by Shannon and Swift on the Genesis: Development Hell featurette suggest, they “came at it a little bit differently” than the other script writers:

Swift: We didn’t really change [the] history of the characters, and that kind of thing. So we wanted to do both histories and both characters as they were in the movies and then start from there. . . That was sort of, you know, our original take.

Shannon: Keep it all intact. Make it all count. Don’t discount the other movies, and the fans will love you for it.

Swift reiterates these concerns in the Fangoria magazine article, suggesting that they had two goals in mind while writing the script. First, they “didn’t want to change the mythology of the characters at all.” Rather, they “wanted to stick to the rules that were set down in the early films of each franchise.” Secondly, they “didn’t want to
say to fans, ‘Hey, the storylines you’ve come to believe in these films weren’t really real.’” These two goals clearly demonstrate how a respect for the characters was intricately interwoven with a respect for the fans.

Recalls

Shannon and Swift showed their respect to the fans in another way. They inscribed the film’s script with a number of “recalls” or “in-jokes” that only true fans would identify. Robert Englund enthusiastically points out a number of these in-jokes on the film’s commentary track by making such statements as:

That last bit with Katharine there, with the wall, where Freddy’s face comes in the wall, that’s a really nice thing that the screen writers did which is a recall back to Nightmare on Elm Street part one where I lean in the wall with the crucifix over Heather Langenkamp. I also do another recall on the ‘How sweet, fresh meat’ line.

Did you see that, on the TV? Did you see the call letters for the [station]? It’s K, it’s Krueger... For all the fans out there who want to roll back, pause and check out the station call numbers on the little TV. It’s an in-joke.

Killed with his own arm. Which is also again, another recall. Again, another echo back to my daughter using the claw against me in part six, Freddy’s Dead, so we’re respecting the mythology.

On top of these examples, Englund also suggests that the film’s subplot involving Hypnocil is a “Nightmare on Elm Street mythology plot that we use over and over again in these movies,” and he notes that it “first appeared in Nightmare on Elm Street part three.” Englund further notes that Freddy vs Jason contains a “subtle
thing…for all the hard-core fans.” According to Englund, that thing “is what we call ‘The Demon Freddy.’” The Demon Freddy is an exaggerated make-up effect used to suggest: “This is Freddy really pissed off.”

Knowing Fans

On the film’s commentary track, Robert Englund also continuously demonstrated his knowledge of who the fans of these films were, and what they speculated about. He stated that the fans of the original _Nightmare on Elm Street_ belonged to a particular subculture or “subset of speed metal, heavy metal, early punk rock, early American punk rock.” He further suggested that these fans were attracted to the film because:

It wasn’t their parents’ horror movie. It wasn’t Rosemary’s Baby, ya know. It wasn’t something that their parents would like.

Aside from their musical tastes, Englund also identified the fans of these films as being adolescent males, as evidenced in the following statement:

I actually heard the Freddy vs. Jason match-up mentioned by a fan back in eighty-four or eighty-five. Fans just were curious. It’s just that sort of, you know, male adolescent curiosity. It’s just something fans do. But they never asked me if I was gonna fight Michael [Myers]. They never asked me if I was gonna fight Leatherface. They always brought up Jason, and I think it’s because we sort of have always had the same kind of victims. Both Freddy and Jason kind of have a similar victim profile.

These examples demonstrate Englund’s awareness of fan speculation. It seems as though he has made it a point to know who the fans would like to see Freddy fight.
Also, at the end of the film’s commentary track, when Englund notes another potential adversary for *Freddy vs Jason*, as discussed by fans on the internet: “there has been some internet gossip and speculation regarding...the Bruce Campbell character Ash from *The Evil Dead* films.”

**Addressing and Thanking Fans**

On the film’s commentary track, Robert Englund oftentimes stopped his conversations with his fellow producers to address the fans specifically. This demonstrates the unspoken presumption that things like commentary tracks are indeed made for the fans—who else would listen to them? At one point Englund states: “To all the fans, I just want to say, this is not a set. This house is actually there, in Vancouver.” The intent of this statement seems to be to provide avid fans with enough information to track down and visit the actual house used in the film.

Englund later notes that the house featured in the first *Nightmare on Elm Street* is:

On one of the [sight-seeing] tours in LA. It’s behind the old Screen Actors Guild on the Sunset and people drive by it all the time. Drive the people that live there nuts.

Enguld also addresses the fans in an attempt to explain the awkward dialog uttered by the character Mark:

See, you people watching this, you don’t realize this is hard. Every actor in one of these movies sort of has to reiterate the plot again and it’s hard stuff to sell. We know that you guys, most of you know it, but for the new fans, somebody has to kind of spell it out again, and you know people don’t talk like that in real life, so you’ve got to usually find an action or something to sell it with.
It is interesting to note that here Englund is making a distinction between the fans who already understand the plot, and those “new fans” who have to have to plot spelled out for them. Elsewhere, Englund further suggests the character Mark also functions to “push plot” on the uninitiated audience members: “He’s always got plot that he’s got to explain to the audience.”

At times, the producers took time to stop and thank the fans directly. For instance, at the end of the film’s commentary track, Englund states: “Thank you. I hope the fans had fun!” Also at the end of the commentary track, Ronny Yu notes that the film is doing well and “exceeding all expectations” before stating his thank-you to the “hard-core” fans:

I have to thank the hardcore fans. They really make this happen, you know. Without them... I don’t think we would have this sort of... result.

Similarly, in the Fangoria article, Mark Swift suggests that:

Honestly, I hope other people like it, but I really hope the fans like it because that’s who we were working for... they’ve had to wait around for ten years. I hope they’re satisfied.

All of the above material suggests that the producers felt obligated to attend to the wants and needs of both the audience at large as well as the fans. Accommodating both parties is indeed a tough task. An essential part of that task is knowing what elements of the previous films fans will expect to encounter, as well as what aspects of the previous films need “tweaking” for the sensibilities of the broader audience. I found evidence that the producers felt obligated to attend to: (1) particular aspects of the Nightmare series, (2) particular characteristics of the character Freddy
(3) particular characteristics of the character Jason, as well as (4) particular elements that are representative of the horror genre in general.

Nightmare on Elm Street Elements

I found evidence suggesting that the producers of Freddy vs Jason felt obligated to attend to a particular plot device of the Nightmare on Elm Street series. I have titled the theme or device “Dream Logic.” This device concerns two things: (1) the “rules” regarding what can and cannot take place within a dream sequence, and (2) how to best indicate to the viewer when a dream sequence has begun. Keep in mind that the producers are making themselves conscious of this “dream logic” and its rules for purposes of continuity; to remain true to the mythology of the previous films, and in turn, to remain true to the fans and their expectations.

Dream Logic

Dream sequences are an important element to Freddy vs Jason because, according to the mythology of the Nightmare film series, the character Freddy has made a pact with dream demons. These dream demons have given Freddy the power to invade the dreams of the children whose parents burned him alive. Freddy also possesses the power to shape shift and manipulate matter inside the dream world. However, Freddy loses these powers if he is brought outside of the dream world and into the “real world.” In the “Behind the Bloodbath” documentary, we can see the
director’s awareness of this dream logic in relation to the context of Freddy fighting Jason:

You have one situation where Jason got sucked into Freddy’s dream world. Now, in a dream world, anything goes. Anything Freddy can think of, it becomes a weapon. It becomes a killing situation. In the real world, Freddy is the underdog. Now Jason has the upper hand. So, Freddy has to... use real world... props... to fight Jason.

The storyline of _Freddy vs Jason_ somewhat complicates the dream logic because, at the start of the film, Freddy is in a very weakened state and cannot affect things in the dream world the way that he normally could. This plot contrivance provided a challenge for the crew working on the film’s visual effects, as Visual Effects Producer Kevin Elam and Visual Effects Supervisor Ariel Velasco-Shaw attest to in various visual effects featurettes. Elam suggests that he and Velasco-Shaw would bicker about the extent of Freddy’s ability to affect things in the dream world when he states: “Then we’d get in arguments: ‘Ariel, it doesn’t matter – it’s a dream!’ It’s like: ‘No, that matters!’”

One dream sequence in particular proved difficult for the visual effects team to create because of the limitations placed upon Freddy in his weakened state. The sequence in question involves Freddy’s shadow attacking the character Blake. Velasco-Shaw indicates that the sequence originally had Freddy’s shadow using its claw to puncture Blake’s foot, but that was decidedly beyond the bounds of Freddy’s power at that time. Instead, they decided to “just have the shadow-claw go up and scare Blake.” In order to appear believable, Velasco-Shaw suggests that the effect had to visually demonstrate why Blake’s character was scared enough to run away:
We were actually going to hit [Blake] with air or something so we could move him – *no* – you know, nothing that Freddy does can affect Blake.

Velasco-Shaw states that the producers eventually decided to break the new dream logic rule. Yet, interestingly enough, he simultaneously attempts to legitimize or explain-a-way this inconsistency:

> We actually broke the rule that we had originally, which was Freddy can’t really affect anything, but we needed to motivate Blake moving. So, as Freddy’s shadow comes at him, leaves kind of part. Now, you can argue: ‘Well, those leaves are getting blown by a rogue wind,’ or something. Or a breeze or something.

These passages demonstrate the extent to which the producers’ went in their attempts to not break the “rules” of the film. The point is: even though they did eventually break the rule, the fact that leaves moved *mattered* to the producers. It mattered to them because they felt it would matter to the fans – who else is going to notice, *or care*, whether or not Freddy’s shadow affected some leaves when, according to the rules of dream logic, it should not have?

Another rule of dream logic that concerned the producers was demonstrating to the audience, or concealing from them, the fact that a dream sequence had begun. Dream sequences are a primary ingredient of the *Nightmare* series. Whereas uninitiated viewers experience a rush after being tricked for the first time by the vague or undefined beginning of a dream sequence, seasoned fans of the *Nightmare* films get a thrill simply by attempting to spot when such sequences begin. They know that not only is Freddy going to trick the teen characters in the film; the
sequence itself is going to trick the amateur viewers in the audience as well—and eventually startle them with a well choreographed “jump-scare.”

Robert Englund himself seems to have a great deal of fun on the film’s commentary track performing the part of a *Nightmare* veteran spotting when dream sequences begin. Consider the following statement Englund makes during a dream sequence in which the character Lori falls asleep in the police station:

If you didn’t know she was in the dream, when she looks down and puts her head on her hands at the table - that sort of sells it. That’s a great thing in all of the *Nightmare* movies, and this one too. Where we don’t quite know when they’re asleep, when the dream has begun. And it slowly gets more surreal.

Perhaps the best example of Englund having fun spotting a dream sequence is the following exchange he has with Ronny Yu during one scene in particular:

Englund: Again, this is one of those scenes that has the great, ‘when does the dream actually start’ moment in there. I’ll show you where I think the dream starts. Let’s see, I think it’s a shot of Monica, right Ronny?

Yu: Um-hmm.

Englund: Yeah, there’s a little give away shot of Monica, I think, coming up... *That’s it*, right?

Yu: Um-hmm.

Englund: The dream’s starting now.

Yu: She’s tired.

Englund: Yeah. That’s all you need.

Aside from demonstrating Englund’s enthusiasm for spotting dream sequences, this exchange implicates the director, Yu, in the process of intentionally inscribing such
sequences into the film. Proof of his complicity in this practice is heard on the commentary track for the deleted and alternate scenes when Yu makes the following statement: “The reason I cut [this scene] out is because I don’t want people to immediately know that he’s in a dream.” This statement clearly shows that Yu is structuring such scenes with the intent of provoking a particular audience response: He wants the viewers to be surprised.

Freddy

The character Freddy is perhaps the main element from the Nightmare series that concerned the producers of Freddy vs Jason. Therefore, it is interesting to note what aspects of his persona they felt obligated to attend to. I found evidence of two aspects, or themes, in particular. I title the first theme “The Cruel Clown” because it concerns the “comedic” or “clown-like” aspect of Freddy’s personality that the producers felt obligated to attend to. I title the second theme “Signature Moves” because it concerns the typical gesticulations of Freddy’s character that the producers also felt obligated to attend to.

The Cruel Clown

In the Fangoria article, Mark Swift expresses having difficulty making Freddy frightening again due to his actions in previous films. Swift cites one instance from a previous film in particular:
It was difficult trying to make Freddy frightening after he had killed somebody with a Nintendo Power Glove... So we had to go back to the dark Freddy and return to the roots of who he was and his reason for being.

Here again, we see Swift going back to the mythology of the films in an attempt to remain true to the characters, and, as he emphasized earlier, the fans. He felt the need “to go back,” to return to the roots of “the dark Freddy,” because that is what the fans would want. It is also interesting to note Swift’s mention of Freddy killing someone with a Nintendo Power Glove as being emblematic of just how un-frightening Freddy had become. The incident in question took place in the sixth Nightmare film titled Freddy’s Dead. On the feature length commentary track, Robert Englund also discusses Freddy’s Dead as the pinnacle of Freddy’s comedic persona:

In Nightmare on Elm Street part six, although it was intentional, Rachel Talalay and I sort of decided to kind of go “Warner Brothers” with a couple of sequences. Nevertheless, we probably pushed the Freddy personality a little too far. He kind of got like a stand-up comic. I know Wes is a little upset that we went as far as we did with it. But no, it was always there. If you look back at the original Nightmare on Elm Street, Freddy’s cutting his fingers off and cracking jokes...a lot of them were visual, but they were still jokey. You know, his arms stretched, you know, he cut a girl’s face off and put it on and imitated her voice. He stuck his tongue out of a phone and French-kissed Heather Langencamp. Freddy’s always been a kind of cruel clown and he likes to take the teenage sort of culture and vernacular and kind of jam it back down their throats.

Here we see Englund consulting the mythology of the series to find out what did not work, noting that although Freddy always had a bit of the “cruel clown” in him, his comedic persona had been pushed too far. Again, what did not work is precisely what did not work for the fans and the broader audience. Englund notes that Wes
Craven, the creator of Freddy and the Nightmare series, became upset because he and Talaly turned Freddy into “stand-up comic.” Here Craven is no longer the Director, but rather a part of the broader audience, and it is the approval of the audience that Englund and the producers’ are seeking.

**Signature Moves**

To play a fictional child murderer and have that persona appeal to real children takes some fancy footwork. Englund’s suggestion that Freddy likes to take-up the culture and vernacular of the teen-audience at large and “jam it back down their throats,” is telling. As Freddy, and as a producer, he is the one taking-up these aspects of the film’s target audience in an attempt to gain a fan-base or following, not unlike the Pied Piper. To ensure Freddy’s appeal, Englund had to extract some signature moves from the repertoire of gesticulations he built over the course of the Nightmare series. Yu’s comment at the end of the film’s commentary track suggests that such signature moves are hard to duplicate by anyone other than Englund:

“Nobody can play Freddy [other] than you, Robert.” In fact, at one point, Freddy possesses the character Freeburg via the “Freddy-pillar,” and Englund had to coach the actor who plays Freeburg, teaching him how to mimic Freddy’s body language. Evidence of this is found on the commentary track when Englund states that Yu had the actor sent to his trailer and “we had him practice tilting his chin down like me, and standing like I stand, and everything.”
Key gesticulations in Englund’s repertoire include Freddy’s “swagger,” as well as particular “looks” or facial expressions. For instance, at one point on the commentary track, Yu asks Englund: “Robert, remember, you were...out on the second unit? So, I had to have the stand-in dress as you.” Englund responds, only partially tongue-in-cheek: “But he’s not as sexy, Ronny. He doesn’t have quite the swagger.” On the commentary track for the visual effects featurettes, Velasco-Shaw discusses the visual effects team’s attempt to transfer some of Englund’s signature moves onto the “Freddy-pillar”:

We really wanted to put some of Robert Englund’s signature into it, some of his swaggers, and the looks that he’d tried to do. So we looked at his tape, and said, ‘look, this is Robert. This is Freddy.’ Even though he’s in the shape of a caterpillar, you’ve got to be able to transfer that caricature in movement to the caterpillar.

Whereas the visual effects team tried to capture Englund’s signature swagger and looks, Englund suggests, on the film’s commentary, track that Yu was already considering his signature looks when casting actors whose characters morph into Freddy during particular scenes in the film:

Englund: It’s interesting...both this guy, Ronny, and the woman that plays Jason’s mother – their faces, there is enough similarity – that I knew you were already, when you cast them, were you already thinking about the morph shots?

Yu: Yes, oh yes.

However, the fact that their faces are similar to Englund’s is not enough. The actors also had to be able to mimic, or “do,” Freddy’s looks and signature facial contortions. Englund suggests this at one point on the film’s commentary track in reference to the
actress playing Freddy disguised as Jason’s mother: “Ronny’s got the Freddy Krueger lens on her...She’s doing a great Freddy” (emphasis mine).

Jason

Other than a generic profile of his victims as “naked girls,” Jason is the only element from the Friday series that is discussed at length within the special features of the Freddy vs Jason DVD. In fact, it at times appeared as though the producers’ knowledge of the Friday series was derived from the following equation: Jason + naked girls = Friday the 13th. For instance, consider the scene involving the skinny-dipping girl, when Englund states on the film’s commentary track: “This is so Friday the 13th...Sex in jeopardy...Whenever there’s naked girls, Jason shows up.” Later on the commentary track, when we see inside the closet containing Jason’s victims, Englund states: “Look at all his victims, and notice, they’re all topless.” Velasco-Shaw, discussing Jason’s dream on the visual effects commentary track, also seems aware of the connection between Jason and naked girls:

In his sleep, he’s always dreaming about what he does, and what he does best, which is kill scantily-clad, usually very beautiful camp counselors.

The scope of this “sex in jeopardy” equation seems very limited when considering the fact that Jason has more films under his belt than Freddy. Of course, Freddy uses the guise of Jason’s mother to trick him, but there is little discussion of her character. Besides, Jason’s mother only appeared in the original Friday the 13th – there were
nine other films in the series. I will find it interesting to see what elements of the 
Friday series the fans expected to see, or felt that the producers overlooked.

With that said, I did find evidence suggesting that the producers of Freddy vs 
Jason felt obligated to attend to specific aspects of Jason’s persona. Three aspects, or 
themes, stood out in particular. I title the first theme “The Killing Machine” because 
it concerns the producers’ attention to Jason’s brutal and emotionless character. I title 
the second theme “Jason’s Slowness” because it concerns the producers’ description 
of Jason’s physical and mental capabilities. I title the third theme “Jason’s Secret 
Fear of Water” because it concerns a specific weakness that producers attributed to 
his character.

The Killing Machine

Whereas Freddy, the cruel clown, has a predilection for cracking one-liners 
while slicing-and-dicing, the voiceless Jason has no sense of humor. He hacks-and-
slashes through his victims while his hockey mask remains a blank, blood and dirt 
stained slate. In reference to the cornfield scene in which Jason kills two ravers, 
Englund states on the film’s commentary track:

See, if it was Freddy, I could hum the Beverly Hillbillies theme 
there and get a second laugh. But you gotta play “straight-man,” 
Ken.

Englund’s comment sums-up well the primary distinction between Freddy and Jason: 
Jason has to be played “straight.” That is what his fans will expect him to be: a

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merciless killing machine. The producers know this, and you can see it again and again in their descriptions of Jason:

Yu: He’s such a killing machine. He has no fear. Nothing can stop him. And if he wants to kill somebody, he can do it. He can deliver.\textsuperscript{xxx}

Englund: Jason is a killing machine. Jason’s like Jaws; he’s this shark.\textsuperscript{xxii}

Swift: Jason is an unstoppable force of nature. . . He’s a shark and he can’t be controlled, and that is what’s going to spark the conflict.\textsuperscript{xxiii}

In order to remain faithful to the \textit{Friday} series, to respect Jason’s character, and again, by implication, his fans, the producers of \textit{Freddy vs Jason} would have to attentively construct his persona as this “killing machine.” I found that the main aspect of Jason’s persona they attended to was his “slowness,” especially in regards to his walk and his mental state.

\textbf{Jason’s Slowness}

There is a lot of talk on the film’s commentary track between Englund, Yu and Kirzinger about Jason’s walk. Yu labels Jason’s gait: “The Frankenstein walk.” This moniker refers to Jason’s speed more than anything, which Kirzinger characterizes as: “Agonizingly slow. It even felt slower than it looked.” However, while commenting to Kirzinger, Englund notes: “you move slow, but every once in awhile you move real fast.” Kirzinger replies: “It just accentuates the movements so much more when you move slowly and then, \textit{boom}!” Yu intended the speed of
Jason’s gait to punctuate his emotions, as suggested in his following statement to Kirzinger:

Remember, Ken, you asked me, ‘This time, Jason can walk fast, can dash forward?’ I said: ‘Yes, because he’s mad. He’s enraged.’

Here, it is interesting to note the manner in which Yu links the speed of Jason’s physical movements to his mental state. In this manner, it seemed as though Yu’s tendency to have Jason walk slow mirrored his judgments or beliefs regarding Jason’s cognitive capabilities as a relatively slow or mindless automaton.

In the Behind the Bloodbath documentary on the film’s official website, Yu characterizes Jason as being mentally slow, or otherwise “disabled.” Consider Yu’s following statements as examples:

I find [him] sympathetic. Going back to his history, you know, I don’t think he’s given a choice. You know, because he’s a little bit disabled and all that...what he does is wrong, but I don’t think he even knows what is right and wrong. Nobody told him.

He hated teenagers having sex. Because looking back at his history, that he was like, born with [a] disability. And he’s got this rage in him. And he has this one track mind to kill people.

What is significant here is the fact that Yu is looking back at Jason’s “history” (i.e., the prior films in the Friday series) in an attempt to do his character justice, and yet again, by implication, the fans as well. If Yu’s statements are any indication of the producers’ understanding of Jason, they consider him to be seemingly “disabled” and therefore “sympathetic,” but nonetheless a brutal killer and indeed something to be feared. Swift echoes Yu’s sentiments in the Fangoria article:

We did not want to make Jason any less scary. He’s still a brutal killer. In all the prior drafts, Jason was basically a hero, driving
around in a Camaro in one script, and they're giving him commands like, 'Hey, Jason, pick this up' in another. We never wanted to put them in a situation where Jason is a hero.

Here we see that the producers have rejected scripts that portrayed Jason acting out of character, that is, out of sync with how he behaved in previous films. Jason has never driven a vehicle. He has never worked in concert with anyone. Most assuredly, he is not, nor has he ever been, a hero. It is a safe bet that the fans would not appreciate it if Jason exhibited such qualities, and therefore the producers have made a concerted effort to steer clear of them.\textsuperscript{xxvi}

\textbf{Jason's "Secret Fear" of Water}

One thing the producers did think the fans would appreciate is the "Achilles' Heal" they attributed to the killing machine that is Jason: his fear of water. Englund suggests as much on the film's commentary track when he states:

\begin{quote}
Something the fans might appreciate. . .the other really primal theme in this is: fire and water. Ya know, the lake, the boiler room, Freddy hates fire, Jason hates water.
\end{quote}

Similarly, in the art direction portion of the production featurettes, Production Designer John Willet suggests that he incorporated watercolors in the design of Jason's dream world because water is Jason's "secret fear." It is important to note that the producers are basing the idea of Jason's secret fear on the history of his character, particularly the fact that he drowned as a child.
In the visual effects featurettes, Kevin Elam and Ariel Velasco-Shaw discuss un-filmed segments of a scene where Jason exhibits his fear of water. Nonetheless, their discussion of these un-filmed segments proves insightful. The scene in question involves Jason’s nightmare in which he opens his closet door to find the bodies of his victims floating underwater. Elam and Velasco-Shaw had this to say about the segments that were never filmed:

Velasco-Shaw: Originally we wanted to go into the closet, literally turn around from underwater, you know, in the closet, go back to Jason, and now see Jason underwater, but not Jason as Jason, but Jason as a little kid, sitting there screaming.

Elam: Yeah, struggling underwater.

Velasco-Shaw: Cause that’s how he dies, and that’s his nightmare.

Here we clearly see the producers attempting to be faithful the history of Jason’s character. They felt that Jason would understandably have a fear of water because, “as a little kid,” “that’s how he dies.” I think they also felt that the fans would understand their reasoning, and therefore, they felt safe in attributing this phobia to Jason regardless of the fact that he never exhibited a fear of water in any of the nine Friday films.

**Horror Genre Elements**

The producers also attended to many readily discernable or traditionally recognizable elements of the horror genre. Again, the fact that these are
representative elements of the horror genre signals, at a very basic level, the producers’ attempt to “speak the language,” as it were, of the broader horror community. I found evidence of three themes relating to this code. I title the first theme “Emulating the Classics” because it concerns the producers’ attention to the “classic” or “old Hollywood” monster films of yesteryear, particularly the “versus” types of films that have monsters squaring-off against one another. I title the second theme “Back to the Basics” because it concerns the producers’ attention to the “root” characteristics of both franchises. I title the third theme “Bad Teens” because it concerns the producers’ attention toward characters in the film that break the “rules” of the horror genre.

**Emulating the Classics**

In the *Genesis: Development Hell* featurette, Englund suggests that the concept of a versus film is not new, and that “New Line took it and said, ‘Let’s do the contemporary version of the meeting of two ultra-villains.’” Englund reiterates this notion of the core concept of *Freddy vs Jason* being “not new” at the end of the film’s commentary track by stating:

People forget...this isn’t something new. Ya know, again, as I’ve said before, this goes all the way back to the late ‘30s in film-making with *Frankenstein Meets the Werewolf,* and...all the way up to *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein.*

Here we see Englund begin naming the titles of classic horror movies in an attempt to lend credence to the very idea of putting two popular villain characters against one
another in the same film.\textsuperscript{lxvii} By stating, "people forget," Englund is suggesting to the viewers, who are likely fans of Freddy and/or Jason, that there is a tradition in "our" genre, in "our" community, of doing this sort of thing.

Similarly, in the "Making the Match" segment of the \textit{Behind the Booldbath} documentary, Yu suggests that he grew up watching a lot of "old Hollywood monster movies." What is interesting is that he does not use any specific film titles the way Englund does. Rather, he "name drops" or "lumps" a bunch of classic horror villains together as though he were concocting a primordial stew:

Like, you know, Vampire and Frankenstein versus Wolfman, or The Swamp Thing, you know. \textit{All that.} And I just thought, 'this movie has to go back to the basics.' From then on...my vision is like a Samurai: 'Okay, this is it; this is the only way to make this movie.'

Yu speaks the above comments in a kind of giddy banter, and although he refers to his vision as being "like a Samurai," it comes across more like the ravings of a lunatic, or a mad scientist, if you will. In this regard, Yu is comparable to Dr. Frankenstein, and by and large \textit{Freddy vs Jason} is his Frankenstein's monster. Yu crafted \textit{Freddy vs Jason} with an eye toward getting "back to the basics;" by approaching it, and attending to it, as though it were one big shambling homage. He intently sutured bits and pieces of iconic horror elements together in order to give birth to his hideous creation.
Back to the Basics

For Yu, getting “back to the basics” meant going back to the roots of both franchises and seeing what worked. Take, for instance, the following statement from Yu found in the On Location: Springwood Revisited segment of the production featurettes:

I go back to the first, original Friday the 13th, and the first, original Nightmare, you know, [and] I said: ‘Oh, this is the key.’

The key element Yu discovered upon investigating the original films of both franchises was blood, and lots of it. In the “Blow by Blow” segment of the Behind the Bloodbath documentary, Yu relates the following anecdote in which a member of the visual effects team asks him how much blood they should order to prepare for filming in Canada:

It’s not easy, because we shoot in Canada; it’s not easy to ship blood. And...you immediately want blood. And then I was sitting there. I said: ‘Oh my God, how can I tell him how much blood?’ He said: ‘Well, you can tell me in terms of gallons, in terms of buckets, or in terms of, like, those gasoline-like barrels.’ So I said: ‘Gasoline barrels.’

Being such an important element of the film, blood was referenced again and again in the producers’ statements, especially in the visual effects featurettes. In fact, at one point Velasco-Shaw called attention to the producers’ “graphically gross” comments about blood and gore. Take, for example, the following statements made by Velasco-Shaw himself:

It’s like ‘ew.’ We get into discussions about ‘is that meaty enough,’ or ‘is that stuff hanging,’ ‘do you want to put more
blood,' you know.

We needed to get blood drops the size of baseballs or grapefruits. And that's big. And so we had big hoses just dropping, you know, like big elephant poops of blood. It was just horrifying.

We wanted, you know, the blood to be scary. For it to be creepy. And, uh, that was pretty much uh, one of our big challenges throughout the whole film. You know: it had to be scary, it had to be creepy, or it had to be gross. We had to play off of one of those things, somehow.

Here we see the producers going to great lengths to attend to, not only the quantity of the blood, but its quality as well. It was not enough simply to have a lot of blood in the film. The blood itself had to be shaped and molded: it had to be made scary, creepy or gross.

For the producers, getting “back to the basics” meant returning to traditional, hands-on visual effects like those championed in the splatter films of the late seventies and early eighties, including the original Friday and Nightmare films. It meant quite literally getting their hands dirty in, albeit fake, viscera rather than relying on the commonplace computer generated image (CGI) effects of the day to reproduce such unpleasantries. Sometimes, getting back to the basics even meant expanding beyond the horror genre in order to incorporate the raw imagery of other popular culture texts. I find it necessary to quote Yu at length, from his commentary in the Genesis: Development Hell featurette, in order to convey exactly what the complex notion of getting “back to the basics” meant:

I just thought: ‘this movie has to go back to the basics.’ Because we see so many of this, like, ‘CGI movie’ now, and one thing that [I kept] in my mind when I was shooting the movie... is the film called Rocky. When I first saw Rocky, the scene that really hit me,
is the scene at the end. The final fight, when Apollo beat the crap out of Rocky... but Rocky had the spirit to fight back. Even though his eye is all swollen and all that, he [told] the trainer, 'Cut it open, cut it open,' and... 'EEEWWWWW,' you know. And then, actually, they cut it open and the blood just spurts out, ya know, and that, for me, is raw... It's not like all this uh, now, you have all this wire work now, everybody is copying everybody, like, you know, jumping everywhere, flying everywhere. So I said: 'Oh, now you have these two monsters together now, in the ring.' It's almost like a WWF thing, you know, a wrestler thing. So I said: 'I should go back to that rawness,' you know, to that, like I said, 'tear your eyes out, tear your livers out,' you know, 'damage your kidneys,' you know. And the machete, chopping your head off, chopping the fingers off, you know. That's all rawness, ya know. I think, and, less of those like, quick cuts... every time we can do a action sequence, it's quick cut, cut, cut, cut, cut. First of all, you don't know where they are. And then you lose the dynamic. So this time, I just put the camera there. I told the second unit director, I said: 'Just put a camera there and let them chop each other up.' Like a chopping board, you know—go, go, go—and the blood going everywhere, you know.

Here we see Yu attempt to explain what rawness is: lingering on the image of people beating, tearing and shredding each other to bloody pulps, as demonstrated by the film Rocky or WWF wrestling. Yu also attempts to explain what rawness is not: high-flying stunts that necessitate wire work, fancy editing and CGI.

More than anything, getting back to the basics meant returning to the histories of both franchises. In the Assembling the Pieces segment of the Behind the Bloodbath documentary, Yu states that, above all else, Freddy vs Jason “has to follow the basic rule(s) of these two franchises.” In 1996, Wes Craven, the creator of Freddy and the Nightmare franchise, directed yet another blockbuster horror movie titled: Scream. Scream started a trend in horror: it became known for having its heavily self-referential narrative expose “the rules” of the genre. A case in point is the
character Randy, who is a teenager that happens to be obsessed with horror films. At one point in *Scream*, Randy relays to his friends, and to the audience, the following rules of horror films:

There are certain RULES that one must abide by in order to successfully survive a horror movie. For instance, number one: you can never have sex. BIG NO-NO! BIG NO-NO! Sex equals death, okay? Number two: you can never drink or do drugs. The sin factor! It's a sin. It's an extension of number one. And number three: never, ever, ever under any circumstances say, "I'll be right back." Because you won't be back.

In examining the statements made on the commentary track for *Freddy vs Jason*, it is readily apparent that the producers took these rules to heart, especially rule number one (no sex) and rule number two (no drinking or doing drugs). In *Freddy vs Jason*, these two rules were repeatedly broken by "bad teens" that were consequently killed for their transgressions.

**Bad Teens**

All the evidence for this particular theme came in the form of blanket statements on the film's commentary track. I call these "blanket statements" because, although they refer to various specific scenes, they repeatedly describe the same actions over-and-over again in very brief snippets. For this reason, I find it most logical to simply layout these snippets and let the weight of their redundancy speak volumes:

Englund: What I love is that you know he's gonna die. He insults one of our stars. He's gonna have sex with her. He's
gonna die. . . They’re bad teens. Bad teens must die. See that flask? You know he’s going to go.

Englund: I just saw somebody having sex. I know they’re about to die.
Kirzinger: We can’t have that.

Englund: You’re gonna die, Gibb. You drink, you fuck and you smoke.
Kirzinger: Yeah, she’s first on the list.

Kirzinger: Of course, they have to die too, you know.
Englund: Oh yeah. Smoke dope? You must die.

Kirzinger: Smoking, drinking. Those guys never get laid, but you know, they gotta die anyway.

Englund: See, you grow up and go to raves, whatever you do, do not try to have sex with an unconscious girl. Not only is it illegal, but you’re going to piss somebody large off.

Kirzinger: You’ve been drinking. You’ve been having sex.
Englund: You must die. You must die.

Englund: Smoke dope, you must die. I know, ya know. Doobie equals . . .
Kirzinger: Death.

Despite this emphasis on killing “bad teens,” in actuality, the producers of Freddy vs Jason did have a more elaborate set of rules in mind. In fact, as stated in the Fangoria article, co-scriptwriters Swift and Shannon “prepared a mission statement of rules they weren’t going to break.” The article indicates that the mission statement was “designed both for them as writers and for the buffs they didn’t want to disappoint.” The article presents an abridged version of that mission statement, citing eight “golden rules” in particular. I have included these eight golden rules in appendix Q.

It is important to note that these rules reflect the producers’ beliefs of what the fans
expected and wanted out of the film. At one point the rules state: “Fans want a story
about Freddy and Jason, and one that is real . . . not a dream within a dream.” The
rules also demonstrate clearly that the producers felt obligated to “strive for
BALANCE” in order to “keep the incredibly partisan fans of both series happy.”

Discussion

The above six codes and their combined fourteen themes detail certain
elements that the producers of Freddy vs Jason felt obligated to attend to. This
attention to detail on the part of the producers was largely an attempt to please
audience members, but especially to satisfy the fans of Freddy and/or Jason and their
representative franchises. I am not attempting to claim that these are the only
elements to which the producers felt obligated to attend. However, I do believe the
producers felt these were relevant elements that needed their attention in order for the
proper rendering of Freddy vs Jason to occur. That is to say, the producers felt these
were relevant elements precisely because they thought the elements in question were
ones that the fans would expect to see. That is not to say these were the only
elements the fans expected to see; it is quite possible the fans will feel that producers
misjudged certain elements as being irrelevant to the rendering of Freddy vs Jason.

Recall that Goffman (1961) suggests the orderliness of encounters pertains to
both what is attended to, as well as what is disattended to, and that asking what the
definition of the situation excludes is equally as important as asking what it includes
In this regard, the producers’ inattention to detail becomes just as important as what they paid attention to while rendering *Freddy vs Jason*. We saw that the producers repeatedly stressed the importance of respecting the fans, which they attempted to achieve by respecting the histories of the two characters. This is no easy task considering the long and convoluted histories of both Freddy and Jason. Recall Sean Cunningham’s statement in the Fangoria article: “There was the belief that we had 17 [previous] movies and we didn’t want to screw that up.” I failed to mention that Cunningham followed up this statement with a seemingly glib or hypocritical comment:

On the other hand, you can look at these films and say, ‘they never had stories before, so why should we give this one a story now?’ It will just confuse audiences.

This off-hand comment suggests that the very idea of a story, a logical progression of events, is irrelevant for the rendition of *Freddy vs Jason* because the previous films “never had stories before.” However, I think there is ample evidence that the producers *did indeed feel* a story was necessary, as demonstrated by the number of scripts New Line Cinema commissioned, as well as the fact that they brought in someone to “polish” the chosen script co-written by Shannon and Swift.

Shannon and Swift’s comments also clearly demonstrate that the producers did consider the stories of the previous films, and felt that those stories were indeed relevant to the rendition of *Freddy vs Jason*. In the Fangoria article, Shannon even suggests that, in order to prepare for writing the film’s script, he and Swift “watched all the movies, and talked for days and days.” This preparation led them to write the
mission statement regarding the relevant rules of both franchises that they were determined not to break. In fact, rule two of the mission statement reads: “the original bibles of both series should not be violated.” However, if you glance over the other seven “golden rules” laid out by Shannon and Swift (in appendix Q), it becomes apparent that the producers felt that certain story elements, and even certain films, were irrelevant to the “bibles” of the their respective series, and therefore irrelevant to the rendition of *Freddy vs Jason* as well. Two of the eight golden rules stick out in particular.

The first rule to stand out is rule number one: “This movie will take place in the FICTIONAL UNIVERSE, not the real world of *Wes Craven’s New Nightmare.*” Here we see that the film *Wes Craven’s New Nightmare* is not considered “canon,” and it is therefore deemed irrelevant to the rendition of *Freddy vs Jason*. This snubbing of *Wes Craven’s New Nightmare* is interesting to me in relation to the idea of the films being games of make-believe played upon the fourth wall. Essentially, the argument the scriptwriters are making is that, since *New Nightmare* takes place in the “real world,” it changes the shape of the fourth wall as a “game board,” if you will. Therefore, it is perhaps easier to consider the events of *New Nightmare* irrelevant in order to continue the game of make-believe performed by the fans and filmmakers during the course of the first six films.

*Wes Craven did intend to make New Nightmare more “real” and less “escapist” than the previous films (Robb, 1998, p. 162). Aside from a writing credit for part three, Craven had distanced himself from the series, stating: “I didn’t make*
Freddy like that. . .I’ve see New Line’s internal notes. . .they want to make Freddy cute” (p. 87). However, New Line eventually asked Craven to direct a seventh film. Craven was “aware that fans of the Freddy movies had become discontented with the direction” New Line Cinema had taken the series (p. 162). He therefore agreed to direct a seventh film, and his central aim with *New Nightmare* was to:

reduce the series of six New Line Freddy movies to mere fodder for his own final Freddy film set in the real world of horror movie making: ‘The simple way to put it is, what if New Line stopped making the Nightmare series and unintentionally released the spirit of Freddy to go where he will, and he decides to cross over into our reality (Robb, 1998, p. 159)

Here we see that Craven attempted to render the rest of the series, parts one through six, irrelevant by having Freddy’s spirit essentially break the fourth wall. In this regard, *New Nightmare* was Craven’s attempt to “shatter his audience’s suspended disbelief by bringing Freddy into the ‘real world’ of the production of the Nightmare movies” (p. 159). Once in the “real world,” Craven intended to have Freddy’s spirit attack himself, Heather Langenkamp (who played Nancy in parts one and three), and even Robert Englund, among others associated with the franchise. By featuring the real producers themselves as Freddy’s victims, *New Nightmare* exposed their role in creating the Nightmare series—placing them in front of the camera instead of behind it, or behind the guise of a fictitious character.

Interestingly enough, part of Craven’s inspiration for having Freddy stalk himself and the other “real” producers came from a very real incident. After starring in the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, Heather Langenkamp:

had been stalked by an obsessive fan over several years. She’d
gone on to star in a cult TV series called *Just the Ten of Us*, but the harassment had continued. ‘There were letters and phone calls,’ Langenkamp remembered. ‘You never know what a sick mind is going to focus on’ (Robb, 1998, p. 156).

Here we see an obsessive fan’s attempt to get beyond the fourth wall in order to get close to one of the film’s producers. Thus, with *New Nightmare*, we have a clear-cut example of an artist (Craven) intentionally using his art (the film) to imitate life (the stalking of Langenkamp). Craven also attempted to have his art imitate life in yet another way. By having Nancy play the role of a mother in *New Nightmare*, Craven tried to address the audience of the original *Nightmare* film who would “have been fifteen or eighteen at the time, and now it’s ten years later, so they might well have children” (p. 159).

The fifth golden rule states: “The characters other than Freddy and Jason will be NEW TEENAGERS, in the spirit of their respective series.” According to this rule, Shannon and Swift consider the teen characters from both franchises to be irrelevant for the rendition of *Freddy vs Jason*. Their suggestion, that new teenage characters are emblematic of (“in the spirit of”) both franchises, is not true. Both the *Friday* series and the *Nightmare* series have teenage characters that survived their tussles with Freddy and Jason, and therefore could have been featured in the new film. Moreover, both franchises have at least one teenage survivor who appeared in more than one installment: Tommy Jarvis (*Friday* parts four through six) and Alice Johnson (*Nightmare* parts four and five). It will be interesting to see how fans react to the absence of such characters.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to use theoretical insights from Goffman, as well as the method of template analysis, in order to "see" past, or through, the fourth wall of cinema in order to shed light on the intentions of those who produced the film *Freddy vs Jason*. My own intent was to pull back the curtain on the producers in much the same way Toto pulled back the curtain on the "great and powerful" Wizard of Oz. In so doing, I hoped to expose, or "demystify," their role in the creation of a mediated encounter with the mass audiences of the film and its subsequent DVD incarnation.

I purposely wish to evoke Marxist connotations through my language of demystification and my emphasis on intent. From the very start, I was inspired by Raymond Williams' (1980) suggestion that it is not enough to see a social totality in terms of a set of "miscellaneous and contemporaneous practices," but rather to emphasize the notion of intentions, because intentions "in all our experience have been the rule of a particular class" (p. 411). However, admitting such Marxist inclinations does not mean that I am somehow biased against the producers or that I wish to misrepresent them. Recall that, when Dorothy finally encounters the Wizard of Oz after her long and arduous journey down the Yellow Brick Road, she reprimands him for being a "very bad man." The Wizard responds: "Oh, no, my dear. I'm a very good man. I'm just a very bad wizard." I never expected to find "bad" men and women hiding behind the curtain of the fourth wall. What I did
expect to find was a bunch of men and women toiling very hard to be good wizards. That is indeed what I found.

Yet, the fact remains that the producers' actions and intentions are embedded in a broader power structure. They create the film through a process in which consumers—both fans and other audience members alike—have a very limited capacity to provide input during, or even after, that process is complete. When such opportunities do arise, they often take the form of test screenings in which the producers allow a select few to preview the film. Nonetheless, it must be said that the producers of *Freddy vs Jason* attempted to take the wants and needs of both the fans and the broader audience at large into account. Largely, this occurred "retrospectively," by considering the positive and negative responses to elements of the previous film, by getting "back to the basics," and finding out what worked in the past.
"But Aquaman, you cannot marry a woman without gills, you're from two different worlds! Oh, I've wasted my life."

CHAPTER IV

Introduction

“Comic Book Guy” is a character from the popular television show *The Simpsons*. He is portrayed as the stereotypical fan: an overweight, forty-something male with a receding hairline and a ponytail who has “wasted his life” memorizing the minutia of his favorite medium: comic books. In one particular episode, Comic Book Guy utters the lines I quoted at the start of this chapter while “speaking to the comic book he reads and then realizing he’s about to be struck by a neutron bomb” (Groening, 1999, p. 14). It is not until he sees the missile in the distance signaling his impending doom that he confesses to wasting his life on such trivialities. I often hear the claim that all stereotypes contain a grain of truth. Putting aside the physical attributes of Comic Book Guy, his fondness for what others might consider frivolous is indeed a characteristic of the fan. For instance, in the last chapter, we witnessed producers agonizing over part of a scene that lasted a fraction of a second in which Freddy’s shadow affects a few, practically indiscernible, leaves. I argued that the producers attended to such miniscule details precisely because they knew that fans would notice. In other words, they felt obligated to fulfill the fans’ expectations regarding the limitations of Freddy’s character in his weakened state.

Both the *Nightmare* and *Friday* franchises, and their respective iconographic villains, harbor their own legion of fans. In fact, in the late eighties, “Freddy
Krueger's fan club had more members than U2's," and "Rolling Stone observed that Freddy "is perhaps as familiar a pop icon as any rock star of the day." (Conrich, in Silver and Ursini, 2000, p. 231). Similarly, Jason and the Friday the 13th franchise have a rather large fan-base as evidenced by the heavily trafficked Friday the 13th: The Website, as well as the website's message forum where many of these fans gather to converse with one another.

Message forums, like Friday the 13th: The Forum, are commonly called "electronic bulletin boards" or "message boards," which are web-based applications that allow people to exchange messages via the Internet. Such exchanges start when one person composes an initial message, often called a "post" because its author posts it on the forum for others to read and to respond. The "poster" gives his or her post a title in a subject line to indicate the post's topic. Those interested in this topic may respond by posting their own comments. The composition of an initial post and its corresponding comment, or "reply," posts is generally called a "thread."

I became a registered user of Friday the 13th: The Forum on June 4, 2003. I stumbled upon the forum as a fan seeking out information about the then unreleased film Freddy vs Jason using the search engine Google. Back then, Friday the 13th: The Forum temporarily had adopted the moniker: "The Freddy vs Jason Forum." For this reason, my Google searches for the phrase "Freddy vs Jason" led me to it. As of this writing, on April 26, 2006, a subsection of my user profile titled "total time spent on forum" notifies me that I have spent a total of two weeks and fifteen hours of my life on this forum. I repeat: two weeks and fifteen hours! I felt an overbearing,
guilt-ridden, existentialist dread upon reading that. The ghost of Ben Franklin chided me from the pages of my FranklinCovey planner: “Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that’s the stuff life is made of.” I too seem to have “wasted my life,” having fallen prey to the same “fanboy” trappings as Comic Book Guy. However, after my initial shock subsided, I came to realize that the time I spent on the forum was not a waste. Much of it was spent conducting research for this chapter, and the rest was spent making invaluable connections with other fans of Freddy, Jason, and horror culture more broadly.

I made one such invaluable connection with Brenna O’Brien, who co-administers the website and its forum with her husband Blake Washer. I have in common with O’Brien not only the fact that she is a fan of horror films, but also that she is a Ph.D. student currently working on her dissertation. O’Brien attends the University of Kentucky where she majors in Gifted Education, with a minor in Communication Studies that focuses on new technology and the Internet. Such scholarly interests have led her to conduct studies on *Friday the 13th: The Forum* as an Internet community, and she often shares her research papers with the users of the forum by posting them as thread topics.

I have learned from one of O’Brien’s (2004) papers that around the time *Freddy vs Jason* was about to hit theaters in 2003, there were, “on average 344,090 hits per day on the main site, and 181,596 hits per day on the forum (p. 6).” O’Brien also states that the majority of the forum’s users “are Caucasian males, with ages ranging from 14 up to some in their early 50s” (p. 6). Moreover, the forum’s

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statistics show that its users are from the following countries: “United States (71.41%), Unknown (16.01%), England (3.74%), Canada (2.44%), and Germany (2.30%)” (p. 6). Also, in November of 2006, Nancy Baym, co-founder of the Association of Internet Researchers, posted a two-part interview with O’Brien on her website Online Fandom. In this interview, O’Brien attributes the growth of the forum to its domain name, noting that “when people type ‘Friday the 13th’ into google,” a link to the forum is the number one result, “and that keeps a steady stream of new fans visiting” (O’Brien, in Baym, 2006a, para. 4). At the time of the interview, this steady stream of fans consisted of:

8,211 registered members, with about 2,200 who have been active in the past two weeks. That number fluctuates and is definitely higher around Halloween and Friday the 13th, and... when a new movie in the series is released, most recently in 2003 with Freddy vs Jason (O’Brien, in Baym, 2006a, para. 3)

O’Brien suggests that some users develop friendships on the forum, which carry over into the real world: “We have had two Friday the 13th Camps, where people came from all over North America and Europe,” and she further notes, “one of our friends we met through the forum was even a groomsman in our wedding” (O’Brien, in Baym, 2006b, para. 4). With O’Brien’s permission, I have decided to analyze the messages regarding *Freddy vs Jason* that fans posted within *Friday the 13th: The Forum*. 

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The Aim of the Chapter

In this chapter, I continue my examination of *Freddy vs Jason* as a mediated encounter rendered by fans and filmmakers. In the last chapter, I was solely interested in intentions and obligations of the producers as they played their part in rendering an encounter with both the fans and the “mass” audience at large. In this chapter, my focus is on the expectations of the fans. Once again, I draw from Goffman (1961) who states, “an encounter exhibits sanctioned orderliness arising from obligations fulfilled and expectations realized, and that therein lies its structure” (p. 19). With this description of an encounter in mind, I seek to answer the following question: What expectations did the fans have of the filmmakers in relation to the rendition of *Freddy vs Jason*?

However, just as it is difficult to gain access to the producers of a film, due in no small part to the barrier posed by the fourth wall, it is equally difficult to study fans and audience members in darkened theaters or secluded living rooms. Therefore, I proceed in the following manner to answer the question at hand. First, I outline *Friday the 13th: The Forum* as a source of available data; an inroad, as it were, to the collective mind of the fans of Freddy and Jason. Within this outline, I construct a purposive sample of threads and posts that are likely to contain statements of the fans’ expectations. Second, I outline template analysis as the method that I employ in this chapter. Third, I conduct a preliminary and subsequent template analysis of the threads in my purposive sample. Fourth, I present my findings using the various
category headings of my codebook to organize the section thematically. Lastly, I
discuss the elements to which the fans expected the filmmakers to attend.

*Friday the 13th: The Forum as a Source of Available Data*

I utilize *Friday the 13th: The Forum* as a source of available data to answer the
question: What expectations did the fans have of the filmmakers in relation to the
rendition of *Freddy vs Jason*? When the administrators inherited *Friday the 13th: The
Website* on December 13th, 1998, it was primarily an informational resource about the
films comprising the *Friday the 13th* film series. The administrators added a message
forum onto their website using a software program called StarBlvd in April 1999, in
order to incorporate an element of interactivity between themselves and other fans of
the film series (O’Brien, 2004, p.6). The administrators later upgraded the system
using a program called UBB (“Ultimate Bulletin Board”), which allowed for the
message forum to have multiple sections devoted to various discussion topics, as well
as a member registration screen. The administrators also added moderators to the
board to help maintain the flourishing virtual community (O’Brien, p. 7). O’Brien
states: “A moderator is a person who has the responsibility of maintaining the rules
and regulations of the forum.” She continues: “They have the power to edit, delete,
move, and close any messages produced by regular users” (p. 7). Currently, the board
lists a total of thirty-four moderators along with its three administrators.
Mapping the Forum

During the forum’s history, various sections were created in response to specific discussion topics on which members regularly posted. For instance, O’Brien states:

the Bush vs. Kerry debates brought out a lot of political passion that had not been present before on the forum... there were so many political arguments in the personal discussion area that a new section was created just for this purpose (O’Brien, p. 11).

Similarly, with the impending release of Freddy vs Jason on August 11th, 2003, a subforum specifically dedicated to discussions of the film was created to accommodate the massive influx of people to the board. According to O’Brien, “the amount of people who joined during this time almost doubled the registered users on the message board,” and it became “apparent that a new generation of horror fans was flooding the Internet” (p. 10). The “Freddy vs Jason Forum” is part of the larger forum, which itself is broken down into two sections titled: (1) Community, and (2) Discussion. I outline the content of both of these sections below in order to give those readers who are unfamiliar with Internet message forums an example of what one is like.

The Community Section

The community section is largely devoted to discussions pertaining to things other than horror films, or films in general. The community section is broken down
into five subsections, including: (1) First Aid Shack, (2) The Campfire, (3) Crystal Lake Gazette, (4) The Party Cabin, and (5) Forrest Green Jail. The “First Aid Shack” is a subsection where new members can introduce themselves and ask for help while learning how to use the forum. “The Campfire” is a subsection where members can share their personal stories. The “Crystal Lake Gazette” is a subsection where members can discuss more serious (i.e., “political”) topics. “The Party Cabin” is a subsection where members can discuss various forms of media entertainment other than horror films. The “Forrest Green Jail” is a subsection where the forum’s moderators send members who break the rules. See appendix R for a visual “map” outlining the forum’s community section.

The Discussion Section

The discussion section is largely devoted to discussions pertaining to films, particularly horror films. The discussion section is broken down into five subsections, including: (1) Friday the 13th and Horror Topics, (2) Freddy vs Jason Forum, (3) Recent and Upcoming Films, (4) Polls, Lists and Games, and the (5) Foreign Language Forum. “Friday the 13th and Horror Topics” is a subsection where the forum’s members can discuss the Friday the 13th film series, and the horror genre in general. The “Freddy vs Jason Forum” is a subsection where members can discuss that film specifically. “Recent and Upcoming Films” is a subsection where members can discuss films rumored to be in production and those that have recently been
released in the theater. “Polls, Lists and Games” is a subsection where members can compare one another’s tastes by constructing polls and lists on various topics and discuss their choices. The “Foreign Language Forum” is a subsection where International members of Friday the 13th: The Forum can converse with one another in languages other than English. See appendix S for a visual “map” outlining the forum’s discussion section. Having outlined the substantive sections of Friday the 13th: The Forum, I now turn to my method of analysis.

Method

Sampling Statements

The method I employ in this chapter is template analysis. My units of analysis are statements made by fans on Friday the 13th: The Forum. The forum contains over 12,000 threads within its ten subsections. I decide to construct a purposive sample of threads from the site’s “Freddy vs Jason Forum.” The “Freddy vs Jason Forum” contains a total of 107 threads and 12,216 posts composed by 1,087 different members. Overall, these 12,216 posts span roughly four years: the first post in the subforum is dated July 27, 2001, and the last post is dated August 2, 2005. I decide to construct my purposive sample from this subforum because it is specifically devoted to discussions of the film Freddy vs Jason, and it is therefore likely to contain statements made by the fans regarding: (a) the film itself, (b) its
creators, and (c) its fans. These are the three subjects most pertinent to my dissertation.

However, not all of these threads and their posts pertain to these three pertinent subjects listed above. Some threads pertain to speculation regarding *Freddy vs Jason 2*, and the subjects of other threads are connected to the film in a more secondary or peripheral fashion. Therefore, I decide to refine my purposive sample of statements in the following manner. First, I operationally define a “tangential subject” as being one that does not center upon: (a) the film, (b) the filmmakers, or (c) the fans. Second, I place the 107 threads in order according to their total number of posts, starting with the thread that has the most posts. Third, I discern the topic of each thread based upon its subject line. In those instances where the subject line of a thread is too vague to determine its specific topic, I investigate the initial post of the thread to get a better idea of its subject matter. Fourth, after conducting this investigation, I remove 35 threads and their accompanying 2,373 posts from the sample due to their tangential subject matter. This leaves me with 72 threads and 9,843 posts, which I determine are still too many posts to wade through for purposes of this dissertation. Therefore, I decide to try another data reduction strategy to establish a more manageable purposive sample.

I consider using only those of the 72 remaining threads that contain posts dated both before and after the film’s release on August 15, 2003. My thinking is that these particular threads will allow me capture “temporal shifts” in regards to how the thoughts and opinions of the fans either change or stay the same once the film was
released. However, I decide against this approach for particular reasons. First, this "temporal shift" approach is not consistent with the manner in which I approached the data in the last chapter. In some instances, it was obvious when a special feature on the film's DVD was created in relation to the film's release, but in other instances this was not so obvious. Therefore, it was not possible to track temporal shifts in regards to the data concerning the filmmakers. Second, I found that the organizing principle of template analysis, in which the researcher organizes chunks of data according to themes that crop up from time to time, is counterintuitive to organizing the data according to some inherent time scale. Lastly, I did conduct a preliminary investigation of data, sorting the threads into three camps: (1) threads containing posts dated after the film’s release, (2) threads containing posts dated before the film’s release, and (3) threads containing posts dated both before and after the film’s release. I found that, not only did this approach succeed in perhaps reducing the data too far, but also, it became clear that this approach is unlikely to accomplish the stated task of capturing temporal shifts in the data. This is due to the fact that, even though these threads contain posts dated both before and after the film’s release, the majority of the posts in these threads are heavily weighted in one of these two temporal directions (i.e., either before or after the film’s release). For these reasons, I determine a different data reduction strategy is needed.

I decide to use the “popularity” of the threads as the criterion for constructing a more manageable, purposive sample. In particular, I aim to analyze those threads that proved to be the “most popular” amongst the 72 relevant threads. I operationally
define the “most popular” threads as being those threads containing a total number of posts that is more than three standard deviations away from the mean number of posts for the combined 72 threads. I utilize the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to generate these numbers. I find that the 72 threads have a mean of 136.71 posts, and a standard deviation of 532.29 posts. Therefore, I determine that, for a thread to be three standard deviations above the mean, \((532.29 \times 3) + 136.71\) it has to have a total of 1,734 posts. I consider those threads as being the “most popular” if they have at least one more post than this number (i.e., 1,735 posts or more). Only one of the 72 threads has more than this number. That thread is titled “FvJ Discussion 1,” and it contains 4,420 posts. Therefore, in essence, this particular data reduction strategy allows me to reduce my purposive sample from 72 threads totaling 9,843 posts to one thread that totals 4,420 posts, which is a net loss of 71 threads and 5,423 posts. However, considering that the 4,420 posts of this one thread constitute roughly 1,245 pages of data, it is clear that I still need to reduce the data even further. To do so, I decide to analyze only those posts within this particular thread that are written by “hardcore fans.”

I operationally define “hardcore fans” similar to the manner in which I define the “most popular” threads. That is to say, I operationally define a “hardcore fan” as being: a poster who composes a total number of posts that is more than three standard deviations away from the mean number of posts in the “most popular” thread, which I identified above (i.e., “FvJ Discussion 1”). Once again, I utilize SPSS in order to generate these numbers. I find that the 342 posters who posted in “FvJ Discussion 1”
have posted a mean number of 12.92 times in that particular thread. These same posters have a standard deviation of 27.65 posts. Therefore, I determine that, for a poster to be three standard deviations above the mean, [(27.65 x 3) +12.92] he or she has to have a total of 96 posts in the thread “FvJ Discussion 1.”

I consider a poster a “hardcore fan” if he or she has at least one more post than this number (i.e., 97 posts or more). Only 11 posters have more posts than this number. I compile a list of information about these 11 posters in appendix U and review that information in the following paragraph.

I gathered the information for appendix U from each poster’s user profile on September 24, 2006, except for the “# OF POSTS IN SAMPLE,” which I gathered on the initial date of data collection on August 2, 2005. This column shows that the 11 hardcore fans posted a total of 1,583 posts within “FvJ Discussion 1” (an average of 144 posts per fan). These 1,583 posts comprise the entirety of my purposive sample for this chapter. Posters do not always fill out their user profiles completely. Therefore, I use an asterisk (*) in appendix U to indicate missing data. Sans the missing data for the poster “movielover,” the column “# OF POSTS IN FORUM” shows that the remaining 10 hardcore fans posted a total of 13,443 posts within the forum (an average of 1,344 posts per fan). The rest of the columns in appendix U show that, overall, these hardcore fans are males in their twenties, most of whom have been members of the forum since 2001. Lastly, I indicate the location of the posters, in appendix U, if they have included such information in their user
I now describe how to best handle the data in the following section.

Managing the Data

I proceed in the following manner in order to make the data more manageable by entering and saving it in Microsoft Word. I click on the “Archive” link located in the lower right-hand corner of the main webpage for *Friday the 13th: The Forum*. I go into the Forum’s Archive view purposively to save and secure a backup of the data. Once in the site’s archive, I click on the link for the “Freddy vs Jason Forum,” and from there I click on the link for the “FvJ Discussion 1” thread. The archive view strips away many of the pictures from the thread, leaving only the text behind. I save this archived view of the thread as a text file by using the “save as” feature found under the “File” menu of the tool bar. I also save the thread on the desktop of my personal computer within a file titled “RECEPTION.” I make a backup copy of the “RECEPTION” file by saving it onto a portable flash drive. I also print out a hardcopy of the thread and put it in a manila folder titled “FvJ Discussion 1,” which I then store within a filing cabinet.

After securing the data through the process described above, I open the text file for “FvJ Discussion 1” and make yet another copy of it in a separate blank Word document. I save this new document as “FvJ Discussion 1 – purposive sample” within the “RECEPTION” folder. Next, I systematically go through each post in

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“FvJ Discussion 1 – purposive sample” and delete those posts that were not made by the 11 hardcore fans. Once this process is complete, I print out a hardcopy of what is left and put it in a manila folder titled “FvJ Discussion 1 – purposive sample,” which I then store within a filing cabinet. In the following section, I describe the process through which I develop a codebook to apply to the purposive sample of data housed in this document.

Developing a Codebook

Recall Crabtree and Miller’s (1992) suggestion that a codebook is a data management tool used to group segments of similar or related text together in order to facilitate interpretation, and that the amount of detail reflected in the codebook is dependant upon the number and breadth of categories generated by the researcher. (p. 99). As I stated in the previous chapter, categories that are too broad may capture unwanted detail, whereas categories that are too narrow may overlook details that the researcher does want. Also recall that the basic idea of template analysis is to start with a handful of a priori codes, and to then make any necessary modifications to the codebook after conducting a preliminary run through of the transcripts. For purposes of this chapter, I once again follow a particular strategy for developing a codebook as outlined by Crabtree and Miller (1992). First, I code the text using broad preliminary codes. Second, I retrieve and read these segments of the text. Lastly, I develop refined subcodes based on my rereading of these segments (p. 100).
I decide to incorporate the first-level code titled “New Line Cinema” into my codebook. I intend this code to capture segments of the posts in which the hardcore fans relay their expectations regarding New Line Cinema and its obligations toward *Freddy vs Jason*, its characters, and its fans. I also decide to attach a second-level code onto this broader first-level code titled: “filmmakers.” I intend this code to capture segments of the posts in which the fans relay their expectations regarding specific filmmaker’s obligations toward *Freddy vs Jason*, its characters, and its fans. I label the “filmmakers” category a second-level code to imply that it is an intrinsic element of the first-level “New Line Cinema” code. That is to say, the individual filmmakers work for, and are therefore intrinsic to, New Line Cinema.

I decide to incorporate two first-level codes that I utilized in my initial codebook of the producer transcripts, and apply them to the hardcore fans’ posts. These codes regard the two franchises that are brought together by the advent of *Freddy vs Jason*: (1) “Nightmare on Elm Street elements,” and (2) “Friday the 13th elements.” I intend these first-level codes to capture segments of the posts in which the hardcore fans relay those particular elements of both franchises they expect the filmmakers to contend with in order to successfully render *Freddy vs Jason*. I also attach the same second-level codes onto these broader first-level codes, as I did with my initial codebook for the analysis of the producer’s statements. I attach the second-level code “Freddy” onto the broader first-level code “Nightmare on Elm Street elements,” as well as the second-level code “Jason” onto the broader first-level code “Friday the 13th elements.” I intend these second-level codes to capture segments of
the posts in which the fans relay their expectations regarding specific facets of both characters. I labeled these categories “second-level” codes to imply that they are intrinsic elements of their representative “first-level” codes. That is to say, for example, the character Freddy is an intrinsic element of the *Nightmare* film series. See figure 6 (below) for my initial codebook.

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(1) New Line Cinema  
(a) Filmmakers  
(2) Nightmare on Elm Street elements  
(a) Freddy  
(3) Friday the 13th elements  
(a) Jason

---

Figure 6. Initial Codebook for Analyzing Fan Statements.

Preliminary Coding

I undertake a preliminary coding of “FvJ Discussion 1 – purposive sample” using my initial codebook. In pencil, I place parenthesis around those segments of posts that correspond to the first-level codes or their representative second-level codes. In this regard, the first and second level codes, as well as key words and phrases associated with them, act as “triggers” that alert my attention to certain statements in the data.\textsuperscript{cviii} Recall Crabtree and Miller’s (1992) statement that whenever a researcher undertakes coding, he or she should be:

making ‘memos’ in the text margins or on file cards of interpretive insights that come about from being closely involved with the data. The researcher should be open also to the potential for codebook modifications that might emerge as these ‘memos’ take on more
focused meaning (p. 103).

Therefore, when a code, or one of its keywords or phrases occurs, I make memos in the left-hand margins next to the segments of the posts that I encase within parentheses. These memos indicate any interpretative insights that arise during the process of coding. I also take notes on those segments of the posts which seem pertinent to the subject at hand, but which are not captured by the initial codes of my codebook. After my preliminary analysis is complete, I make adjustments to my codebook as necessary and conduct a subsequent coding of the posts comprising “FvJ Discussion 1 – purposive sample.” These steps follow.

Codebook Adjustments

I make the following adjustments to my codebook after undertaking the preliminary analysis. First, I find it appropriate to change the second-level code, “Filmmakers,” into a broader first-level code due to the abundance of statements the fans made about particular filmmakers. Second, I eliminate both the first-level codes “Nightmare on Elm Street Elements” and “Friday the 13th Elements” due to a lack of evidence suggesting that the fans expected the producers to attend to specific elements of either franchise other than their anti-heroes, Freddy and Jason. Third, after eliminating these two codes, I find it appropriate to change their second-level codes, “Freddy” and “Jason,” into two separate first-level codes. Lastly, I add a new first-level code titled “Other Elements” into the codebook due to the abundance of

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evidence suggesting that fans felt the producers were obliged to attend to a variety of additional elements not covered in my initial codebook. I anticipate ascertaining the exact subject matter of these additional elements in my subsequent coding of the posts, which is the topic of the next section. Before moving on to this section, please see figure 7 (below) for the graphic outline of my revised codebook.

| (1) New Line Cinema                  |
| (2) Filmmakers                      |
| (3) Freddy                          |
| (4) Jason                           |
| (5) Other Elements                  |

Figure 7. Revised Codebook for Analyzing Fan Statements.

Subsequent Coding

I conduct a subsequent coding of “FvJ Discussion 1 – purposive sample” after completing the adjustments to my codebook. To do so, I proceed in a manner similar to how I conducted my subsequent coding of filmmaker statements. First, I use a cutting board to cut out each of the 1,583 posts made by 11 hardcore fans. Second, upon investigating the memos that I previously wrote in the left-hand margins, I place the posts into one of six piles. Five of these piles correspond to each of the first-level codes of my revised codebook. The sixth pile is a designated “out” pile in which I place those posts that are of no discernable use. Third, after placing all of the 1,583 posts into one of these six piles, I fasten them together using binder
clips, and I place each of the six piles into separate, large zip-lock bags. I label each of these bags before storing them in an empty drawer of a file cabinet. Later, I retrieve these bags one at a time, and reread all of the posts they contain. I make further notations, this time in the right-hand margin of each post, during the process of rereading. Once my subsequent coding is complete, I make further adjustments to my codebook based on the memos that I have written in the right-hand margin. This process of making further codebook adjustments is described in the next section.

Further Codebook Adjustments

I make the following adjustments to my codebook after undertaking the rereading and recoding of each post. First, I add the second-level “Marketing Strategy” code onto the first-level “New Line Cinema” code due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that the hardcore fans expected the producers at New Line Cinema to attend to a suitable marketing campaign for the film. I also add three third-level codes onto this second-level code, titled “Hyping the Film,” “Test Screening,” and “Proper Release Date,” due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that fans felt these were integral elements of a suitable marketing campaign for the film. Second, I add two more second-level codes to the first-level “New Line Cinema” code. I title these codes “Plans for Future Installments” and “Responding to Fans” due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that the fans expect the producers at New Line Cinema to engage in both of these activities. Third, I add one second-
level code to the first-level code “Filmmakers.” This second-level code represents a specific filmmaker about whom the hardcore fans voiced particular expectations. I label this second-level code after the name of the actress it represents: Kelly Rowland. Fourth, I add the second-level code “The Cruel Clown Revisited” to the first-level “Freddy” code, because the hardcore fans expressed their expectations of Freddy in language similar to that of the filmmakers: i.e., that he should be both scary and funny. Fifth, I add two more second-level codes to the first-level “Jason” code. I titled these codes “Jason’s Look” and “Jason’s Location” due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that the hardcore fans expect the filmmakers to make changes to Jason’s look and location. Lastly, I add two second-level codes onto the first-level code “Other Elements” due to the abundance of evidence suggesting that hardcore fans felt the producers were obliged to attend to the following two specific elements: (1) Continuity & References, and (2) Sounds & Songs. Please see figure 8 (on the next page) for the graphic outline of the final template I use for interpreting the fans’ posts.

After completing the adjustments to my codebook, I retrieve each of the large zip-lock bags one at a time. I sort through the posts within these bags and, according to the memos in the right-hand margin, place them into various piles corresponding to the appropriate second and third-level codes of the final codebook. For instance, I organize the posts in the large zip-lock bag labeled “Jason” into two piles that correspond to each of its representative second-level codes. Once all of the posts from this bag are sorted out, I fasten the posts together using paper clips and place
(1) New Line Cinema
   (a) Marketing Strategy:
      (i) Hyping the Film
      (ii) Test Screening
      (iii) Proper Release Date
   (b) Plans for Future Installments
   (c) Responding to Fans
(2) Filmmakers
   (a) Kelly Rowland
(3) Freddy
   (a) The Cruel Clown Revisited
(4) Jason
   (a) Jason’s Look
   (b) Jason’s Location
(5) Other Elements
   (a) Continuity & References
   (b) Sounds & Songs

Figure 8. Final Template for Interpreting Fan Posts.

each of the piles into separate, small zip-lock bags. I label these smaller bags “Jason’s
Look” and “Jason’s Location” before putting them back into the larger zip-lock bag
labeled “Jason.” Afterward, I place them back in the file cabinet drawer for storage. I
repeat this process for the contents of the other four large zip-lock bags. Later, I
consult the contents of each large zip-lock bag that are now codified through the use
of template analysis, and interpret the themes found therein. These themes are
presented in the section that follows.
Findings

New Line Cinema

I found evidence suggesting that the hardcore fans of Freddy vs Jason expected the producers at New Line Cinema to market the film in such a way as to ensure its success. This evidence took the form of three predominant themes. I title the first theme “Marketing Strategy: Hyping the Film,” because it concerns the hardcore fans’ expectations upon New Line Cinema to generate a general knowledge of, and excitement for, the upcoming release of the film amongst the movie-going public at large. The hardcore fans also found the film’s trailer to be an integral part of its success; they expected New Line Cinema to release the film’s trailer in a timely fashion, and to ensure its placement in front of big budget films so as to generate hype amongst the movie going public at large. I title the second theme “Marketing Strategy: Test Screening,” because it concerns the hardcore fans’ expectations upon New Line Cinema to test screen the film. This theme also concerns the hardcore fans’ expectations upon New Line Cinema to interpret the results of the test screening in such a way so as to not make unnecessary changes to the film that would upset its fan base. I title the third theme “Marketing Strategy: Proper Release Date,” because it concerns the hardcore fans’ expectation upon New Line Cinema to release the film during a weekend that has the potential to draw the largest possible audience.
I also found evidence of two themes expressing the hardcore fans' expectations of New Line Cinema that were not linked to the film's marketing strategy. I label the first theme "New Line's Plans for the Future," because it involves the hardcore fans' expectations regarding New Line's plans for future films featuring Freddy and/or Jason. The second theme, which I labeled "New Line's Response to the Hardcore Fans," involves the hardcore fans' expectations that New Line Cinema would, or should, respond to the questions and concerns that they submit via e-mail.

**Marketing Strategy: Hyping the Film**

"New Line needs to craft a slick marketing campaign, which we all know they're capable of," states the poster DedKid, and by-and-large the hardcore fans agree with his assessment. What is harder to come to agreement on, however, is exactly what a "slick marketing campaign" entails. For instance, the poster WesReviews believes that New Line Cinema should consider a "Super Bowl teaser," which he admits would be expensive, but it "could generate a solid buzz if done right." He continues: "New Line really needs to play up the whole 'fight' thing," because he believes that that element of the film gives it "a LOT more potential for mainstream crossover than your average sequel." The poster Freddyisring suggests that a "good campaign" would include three teasers and a trailer: "a teaser, a Freddy themed teaser, a Jason themed teaser, and then the final theatrical trailer." Despite
the various marketing strategies that the hardcore fans suggest, they are in agreement on one thing: it is expected that New Line Cinema market the film early so as to generate hype. Posting in March 2003, TheGhost articulates a general worry of the hardcore fans: “If they don’t start marketing *Freddy vs Jason* soon, I’m afraid it won’t do as well as it might if they market it much later.”

As the days and months wore on, the hardcore fans’ worries turned into frustration, and even hostility towards those at New Line. Take, for instance, the following temporal succession of posts as an example:

Freddyisking 01-25-2003:
[There] is ZERO info on New Line’s site about FvJ...could we at least get a few more pics? I mean, I know its (sic) early but surely some promotion now wouldn’t hurt.

WesReviews 01-26-2003:
I too believe that New Line is allowing key opportunities to attach a teaser to something that’ll gain attention slip away...New Line sure isn’t doing a good job of marketing it as an “event” or we would’ve seen at least a teaser already. Looks like they’re planning on marketing it as “just another horror flick.”

DedKid 03-21-2003:
I don’t think it’d be premature of New Line to throw us a teaser...a quick lil’something just to give everyone a heads up that it’s coming seems a reasonable enough expectation.

Nick Michalank 04-15-2003:
“FvJ” comes out in EXACTLY four months, and still no trailer...I find it rather enraged that New Line & [Warner Bros.] are being so passive with their marketing of “Freddy vs. Jason”...it won’t be as big as it should or it could be if they don’t let the world know about it 'cause the general public doesn’t read Fangoria or visit Bloody Disgusting & Creature Corner for their daily movie news...I guess I’m ranting on def ears 'cause none of us here can do anything to change things over at NLC or WB.
From the above statements, it becomes apparent that the hardcore fans' find early hype essential to the film's success, and so they expect New Line to deliver the goods: "a few more pics," "a teaser...a quick lil' something"; something to "let the world know about it." The poster Movielover offers further insight as to why the hardcore fans find such passive marketing worrisome: "[M]ovies that get their trailer only a month before release are movies [that] studios are expecting to bomb!!!"

However, as WesReviews' above comment suggests, what film a trailer is attached to is perhaps equally as important.

In order to market *Freddy* vs *Jason* properly (i.e., as an "event" film) and ensure its success at the box office, the hardcore fans' expected New Line Cinema to attach its trailer not just to other horror films, but to big-budget blockbusters as well.

For instance, the poster Movielover states:

I really hope that New Line markets this trailer properly. I hope they don't just put it on another horror movie like House of 1000 Corpses and then that's it...Chances are anyone seeing something like 1000 corpses knows already about this movie...They need to market this to a bigger audience being an event film.

Movielover goes on to suggest some "excellent" movies to attach the film's trailer to, including: *Matrix 2*, *Terminator 3*, *Identity*, and *A Man Apart*. However, as these films came and went without having the trailer for *Freddy* vs *Jason* attached to them, the hardcore fans grew despondent.

Yet, the hardcore fans looked to one summer blockbuster as a ray of hope: New Line Cinema's own *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. As the poster WesReivews suggests: "If New Line wants the film to be as successful as possible, it
needs the exposure of a teaser on [Lord of the Rings].” But alas, rumors began to spread that the Freddy vs Jason trailer would appear before New Line Cinema’s horror film Final Destination 2 rather than Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers. The poster S-10 expresses his disappointment regarding this rumor by stating the following:

Final Destination 2 will tank. I really don’t know what New Line is thinking here. Big mistake. . .[Lord of the Rings 2] is the big push [Freddy vs Jason] needs, but it looks like [New Line] is going to screw that up. I guess that will mean no more Freddy or Jason after this. . .nice move. 

WesReviews echoes S-10’s sentiments:

[By] only placing a trailer before Final Destination 2, New Line seems to only be targeting horror geeks. While that audience is important, it isn’t enough to ensure success. A [Lord of the Rings] teaser would’ve been a great way to gain mainstream awareness, but alas, they seem to be choosing to market it as your average genre picture, in stead (sic) of a genre EVENT.

To borrow WesReviews expression, New Line cinema targeted “horror geeks” when they finally released the film’s trailer at the Weekend of Horrors, an annual horror convention put on by America’s premier horror film magazine, Fangoria.

A few of the forum’s members were lucky enough to attend the Weekend of Horrors convention, as the poster Cody states: “There was a small group of posters planning to go to the [Weekend of Horrors]. Just waiting for them to get home and report.” Once these posters did “get home,” they “reported” extremely positive reviews of the trailer, which excited the hardcore fans even more. For instance, the poster Thac states: “[J]ust the peer reviews of this trailer got me pumped. . .hearing the descriptions by fans confirms earlier beliefs that this is going to KICK ASS.”
Other posters, such as Freddyisking, who were not lucky enough make it to the Weekend of Horrors, demanded that New Line Cinema make the trailer accessible on the Internet: “All I wanna know is why can’t they digitize it. . .something this big has no business being exclusive to a select few. . .get it on the net ASAP!!!!!!!” It appears that New Line Cinema’s marketing strategy was to first excite the fans, or “rally the base,” as it were, before releasing the trailer to the unsuspecting masses. This type of excitement would be repeated when a few other lucky forum members were able to attend the film’s test screening and report back to their peers, which is the subject of the next section.

**Marketing Strategy: Test Screening**

There is evidence that the hardcore fans are acutely aware of the practice of test screenings, and by and large they hold negative opinions on the practice for various reasons. It seems that the hardcore fans expect the producers at New Line Cinema to listen to what the audience at a test screening has to say, and to make changes accordingly; but that is by no means a good thing. The poster Freddyisking summarizes the problem as follows:

[T]he problem is. . .the people they usually get at test screenings make them make bad changes to the movie. . .they usually want something changed that the majority of fans prolly (sic) would have liked. . .I ’ve seen various deleted scenes on DVDs that were deleted because the test audience thought it didn’t work, when in actually, it should have been in the movie, because it in fact DID work.
Here we see Freddyisking drawing on his past experiences with the DVDs of other films to back up his conclusion that test screenings are bad because of the type of people who attend them. These non-fans often times suggest changing elements of the film that the fans actually want to see. The poster Movielover makes a similar observation: "[W]hat if this movie has a great ending... but it's an ending the general public doesn't like? They might change it." However, to be fair, not all the hardcore fans held such a negative opinion of test screenings, particularly S-10 who believed otherwise. S-10 continually tried to reassure the others that New Line Cinema would only take into account the target audience at the test screening: "If they see on the paper that... the guy was 60 years old and a PTA member, then they'll just ignore it."

However, when the members of the forum learned that a couple of their peers would be in attendance at the test screening, the tenor of the discussion shifted. Movielover was now "looking forward" to hearing back from one such peer, stating: "It's good to know that a fan will be at the screening." Indeed, having these peers at the test screening, "on the frontline" as it were, gave the members of the forum hope in the form of a voice to counteract the less-than-favorable suggestions of the non-fans in attendance. TheGhost, a hardcore fan about to attended the test screening, stated that if he and his fellow peers:

are the ones who have an effect on the makers of this movie, I'm going to express my opinions in laughter and applause. Nothing will hold me back. I've waited too damn long.

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PobodysNerfect, another hardcore fan who is somewhat of a veteran test screener, also planned on attending the *Freddy vs Jason* test screening. He assured the members of the forum that he would “try and stay for the focus group” taking place after the test screening so that he could “fully understand what the audience’s reaction was.” By “the audience’s reaction,” PobodysNerfect is of course referring to the reaction of the non-fans at the test screening who pose a threat to the purity of the filmmaker’s original vision, and thus, the authenticity of the film. PobodysNerfect also promised the other members that he would report back to them after attending the test screening, stating: “I’ll let you guys know.”

The hardcore fans expressed another reason for not liking test screenings: due to the potential leaking of “spoilers” on the Internet. For instance, the poster WesReviews feared: “Everything will be spoiled by a test screening.” However, to this he quickly added: “Unless of course, they can somehow find a room full of people who have zero access to the Internet.” There are two things I find interesting in WesReviews’ statements. First, he realizes that the Internet, the tool through which he communicates with other fans, also harbors the negative, latent function of perpetuating spoilers. Other fans voiced similar opinions, such as the hardcore fan movielover who stated:

One thing I hate about the Internet... It is way too easy to find out everything about any movie before it comes out. That is just no fun... What happened to the days of mystery where you didn’t even know a movie existed till you saw it’s trailer???

The second thing I find interesting in WesReviews’ statement is his inferred expectation placed upon New Line Cinema: that “they” could, or should, do
something to counteract the potential leaking of spoilers. The action he suggests is filling the test screening “full of people who have zero access to the Internet.”

It may seem as though I am reading too much into WesReviews’ statement. However, many of the fans expressed similar expectations of New Line Cinema. They placed the responsibility of stopping spoilers upon the studio’s shoulders. Take, for instance, the statement by the hardcore fan, Thac, in regards to New Line Cinema: “It’s up to them to keep the lid tight on this one.” Thac continues:

It depends on how seriously they take this film—and considering it’s been something they’ve wanted to do for over a decade, I’m hoping they take it deadly serious.

While letting his peers know how the test screening went, PobodysNerfect assured them that “security was VERY tight.” He stated: “all bags were checked, and everyone had that ‘Metal Detecting Wand’ passed over their bodies.” TheGhost confirmed this by saying: “Man, the security at the theater was nuts.” He continues: “You couldn’t get your car keys past the metal detectors let alone a camcorder, don’t worry about bootlegs.” PobodysNerfect also mentioned: “They even checked people’s cell phones to see if they were capable of taking pictures!” Nonetheless, some hardcore fans were still anxious about the leaking of potential spoilers. For instance, Movielover believed that New Line should not risk screening the film a second time because it “stops potential bootlegs.” Movielover also added: “Hopefully New Line is keeping close tabs on this movie so someone within the company doesn’t bootleg it.” Others see a second test screening as a sign that the
studio made unnecessary cuts to the film based upon the response to the first test screening, to appease the mainstream audience.

New Line Cinema did hold a second test screening of the film. However, word on the street, or rather, on the Internet, was that New Line primarily wanted to test an audience’s reaction to a different ending for the film. The fans did not see this as such a bad idea, because the members who attended the first test screening felt that the ending was one of the film’s few weak points. For instance, PobodysNerfect suggested: “the original ending wasn’t terrible,” however, he admitted talking “to some people who didn’t care for it,” and he realized that “it was kind of cheesy.” PobodysNerfect also stated in a previous post:

If the studio does have any input, I DO have faith in Bob Shaye not to fuck it up. It’s a good movie, so they can only make it better. They obviously know what they’re doing.

Here, we begin to see the fans’ faith in those at New Line Cinema being restored. Even Movielover, who was at first anxious about the second test screening, stated: “I kind of like the fact that they will be testing a different ending” because “everyone thought the ending could be better. That is an important part of the film.” However, some hardcore fans continued to fear that a second test screening would result in spoilers being leaked on the Internet. Nonetheless, Thac reminded everyone: “you know one place that the spoilers won’t be in plain sight.” He continued: “I hope they’ve got together a similar crowd for this test screening as they did for the previous.” Thac also hoped that “fans will be the only ones to submit reviews online (to prevent major spoilers, not negative reviews).” Fans may be more apt to write
proper reviews online. However, they too, at times, are guilty of helping to spread misinformation via the Internet, as we will see in the next section with regard to the film’s release date.

**Marketing Strategy: Proper Release Date**

The fan’s expectations of New Line Cinema regarding the issuing of a release date for the film is a topic that was discussed in the thread prior to the discussion concerning the film’s test screening. However, as with the discussion of the film’s test screening, the discussion of the film’s release date was marred by rumor and speculation. Such frenzied talk made it appear as though New Line Cinema was playing, in the words of some fans, “musical release dates.” The following statement by the hardcore fan Cody demonstrates how talk of the film’s release date become confusing after awhile:

> At one point New Line said to be looking at either an August or November release date. Then the June 13th date came up, though I'm not sure where it came from originally.

Yet, some hardcore fans, such as TheGhost, insisted that “[N]ew line never played any games, there was just alot of speculation.” He continues: “[T]he only release date that was ever truly given by new line was august 15.” Similarly, Movielover stated: “The truth is it was never pushed back even once. The June 13th date was nothing more than a rumor.”
However, it was too late: the Internet's rumor mill succeeded in afflicting its damage upon New Line Cinema in the eyes of some fans. When a studio appears to continually shift the release date for one of its films, fans begin to expect that the studio is hesitant to release it because it has no faith in the quality of its product. Thus, for some fans, the appearance of shifting release dates was just one more nail in the coffin, which led them to make comparisons between *Freddy vs Jason* and the not-so-successful film *Jason X*. Take, for example, the hardcore fan Nick Michalak's statement:

I am still miffed by the ousting of Kane Hodder, and have vowed NOT to see the film unless New Line gives me a trailer that blows me the FUCK away. Yet, I am even MORE miffed about shifting the release dates around. As everyone has stated, it feels like the start of 'JASON X' all over again.

Yet, other hardcore fans were quick to point out the differences between the situation with *Jason X* and what was happening with *Freddy vs Jason*. For instance, the hardcore fan Thac states:

I think the 'musical release dates' for FvsJ is different from Jason X's situation. . .[Freddy vs Jason is] a moneymaker, something they've worked at for MANY years, and they want it to kick ultimate ass. With Jason X the hesitation seemed to arise from a lack of confidence in the 9th sequel that New Line initially gave no thought to making. . .it would be jumping to a conclusion at this point to assume they have no faith in FvsJ.

Other hardcore fans, such as Freddyisking, took positions similar to Thac, stating: “They won't put this one off as long as JX. . .for FvJ is a guaranteed money maker.” Thus, while some expected New Line Cinema to “shelf” the film indefinitely due to lack of confidence, others, such as Thac, who was “willing to wait for whatever date
will give FvsJ the most success,” expected New Line to pick what they believed was the “right” release date.

Plans for the Future Installments

Most of the hardcore fans agreed that *Freddy vs Jason* would not be the last of either character. In the words of S-10: “They’ve tried ending both series many times before, and it didn’t work then. Why would it now?” Yet, others felt that future appearances by the characters were dependant on how well *Freddy vs Jason* faired at the box-office. For instance, Cody suggests: “If it bombs I’m sure New Line won’t make any more [Friday the Thirteenths].” Dedkid also linked the future of Freddy and Jason to money:

There’s still Jason stories to tell & still Freddy stories to tell & no reason not to tell them unless the stars stop making money. . .New Line knows this. . .Jason & Freddy are our Frankenstein’s monster & Dracula – monsters that have transcended generations.

However, WesReviews pointed out a crucial distinction between the situation of Freddy and Jason to the situation of Dracula and Frankenstein:

Dracula and Frankenstein are public domain, though. Their original copyrights have expired. Anybody can pretty much make a movie about them. . .Freddy and Jason’s copyrights are still fresh and currently only New Line can use them. If FvJ tanks (and I don’t think it will) I wouldn’t expect to see another Freddy or Jason movie by anybody other than New Line until all of us are long dead and buried.

Nevertheless, most, if not all, of the hardcore fans really did not expect *Freddy vs Jason* to “tank,” as demonstrated by WesRevies’ parenthetical notation in the above
They expected New Line Cinema to do something to keep the two characters alive and killing, and by and large that something was to make *Freddy vs Jason* its own franchise with sequels to follow.

When I say the hardcore fans expected New Line to turn *Freddy vs Jason* into its own franchise, I am not claiming that this is what the hardcore fans wanted. On the contrary, the hardcore fans were largely against the idea of New Line making a sequel to *Freddy vs Jason*. It seems most hardcore fans would rather see additional sequels to each of the two individual franchises. To demonstrate the overwhelming opinion on this matter, I quote various hardcore fans at length below:

**S-10:**
*FVJ...2? I sure as hell hope not. More Nightmare/Friday movies are great, but no more FVJ films.*

**Thac:**
[T]his movie should be totally stand-alone. FvsJ should be a horror milestone but then return the characters to their respective franchises to capitalize on any success it may have. None of this with Freddy shaking his claws yelling, “I’ll get you next time, Voorhees...in Freddy vs Jason 5.”

**Nick Michalak:**
“FREDDY vs.JASON” is a horror movie event. It is our “Episode 1” (in terms of anticipation), and if they just went ahead and did it again, it wouldn’t be as big. I’d rather see separate, individual sequels to each franchise.

**Cecil:**
I support this movie fully. Sequels I would not support, they don’t need to happen. Godzilla didn’t fight the same people over and over, neither have Freddy or Jason for the most part. Let them go back to their stomping grounds separately and do what they do best.

**Movielover:**
This movie should be a stand alone film...This is an event film that should be a part of history. Do it once, remember it, and then leave
it alone.

Cody:
F vs. J is special. F vs. J 2 would cause it to lose its specialness.

As evidenced above, the hardcore fans have spoken, and despite the success or failure of *Freddy vs Jason*, it appears that they do not want to see a *Freddy vs Jason 2*.

Whether or not New Line Cinema will listen to them is another story. Given their emphasis on “caring about fans” (see previous chapter), it seems as though they would be willing to do so. Moreover, to an extent, it can be said that the hardcore fans not only expect New Line to listen to their questions and concerns, but to respond to them as well, which is the subject of the next section.

**Responding to Fans**

At times, when the hardcore fans had questions or wished to express a worry about some aspect of the film, they turned to e-mail and expected to get a response from New Line Cinema. For instance, the hardcore fan Cecil e-mailed New Line with questions regarding the debut of the film’s trailer, and he received a response. Similarly, WesReviews e-mailed New Line “asking if and when the teaser poster would be available for purchase, and he received a response as well. However, Nick Michalak did not have the same experience:

[I] can’t believe this. I wrote an email to New Line back in JANUARY about a few, non-probing general question, and they NEVER got back to me. Now they’re sending personal email replies to everyone. All I asked was about the trailer, the one-sheet,
the soundtrack, who was scoring the film, and what Sean S. Cunningham’s involvement is. Now most of that has been answered. . .but still I know ZILCH about the soundtrack or who’s scoring the film. Maybe I’ll try again, but I doubt I’ll get crap. Perhaps I shouldn’t tell them that I’m a horror fan webmaster. I keep doing that & I get no replies.

Clearly, Nick Michalak was expecting New Line to respond to his “non-probing” questions. When they failed to respond, he became somewhat irate in a few separate posts. Nick Michalak did try to e-mail New Line again, and this time he did get a response.

Nonetheless, some thought better of e-mailing New Line because, even though people were getting responses, they were not from New Line’s “higher-ups.” Moreover, there was a feeling that New Line may get annoyed and stop responding.

The hardcore fan Movielover put forth such an argument:

People really should stop emailing New Line. . .Most of the people emailing you back don’t know themselves. They are not in the marketing department. They don’t even know till they receive official word from the New Line higher up’s. All that is going to happen if you keep emailing New Line is that they will get pissed and then stop answering the emails.

Yet, it did not seem that the hardcore fans needed or wanted a response from New Line’s “higher-ups.” If the response came from somewhere within New Line itself, that appeared to be good enough. It was better than relying on the Internet’s rumor mill. Still, some hardcore fans chose not to seek a response from New Line. Instead, they e-mailed people loosely associated with the film. For instance, TheGhost e-mailed Robert Engulnd’s wife Nancy to inquire about the film’s release date. He too received a response. In the end, it seems that those persistent enough to seek some
sort of response received one, although perhaps not one from New Line’s “higher-ups” as Movielover pointed out.

Filmmakers

The fans discussed plenty of filmmakers within the confines of the “FvJ Discussion 1” thread. These filmmakers include actual cast and crewmembers, as well as potential cast and crewmembers who did not actually work on the film. The fans ruminated on two things in particular. First, they wondered why the producers at New Line chose Ken Kirzinger to play Jason rather than Kane Hodder. In fact, this angered many fans who felt an allegiance to Kane Hodder because of his devotion to the role. However, some fans welcomed a change to the character, and thus a debate ensued that was largely contained within a separate thread titled: “Kane Controversy Discussion Archive.” Second, many fans also questioned the New Line’s choice of director, Ronny Yu, because, as he admitted in interviews, he had not seen any of the previous Friday or Nightmare films. Yu believed New Line chose him to direct the film because “the studio was looking for somebody who could come in with a fresh take and some new ideas” (Bracke, 2005, p. 272). However, the idea that a “newcomer” would be handling the fans’ beloved icons made them nervous, to say the least. Nonetheless, the fans’ worries were mollified by the knowledge that, unlike Yu, the film’s co-scriptwriters, Shannon and Swift, were indeed fans. For instance, one poster stated: “Yu might not be a hardcore fan, but at least he was
working from a screenplay that was written by fans.” Another poster summarized the situation this way: “Shannon and Swift supply the bullets, Yu just needs to close his eyes and pull the trigger.” Although Kane, Yu and many other filmmakers were discussed by the fans in general, I only found evidence that the hardcore fans held certain expectations of a specific cast member: Kelly Rowland. Therefore, she is the only filmmaker I discuss at length in this section.

Kelly Rowland

Kelly Rowland is one of the three singers in the female R&B group Destiny’s Child. By and large the fans did not want Kelly Rowland in the film because they saw her as part of an unwanted trend in recent horror films. That trend involves studios giving pop-music stars, with little or no acting experience, starring roles in horror films. In fact, the fans expressed their expectations of Rowland’s acting ability by comparing her with the rap artist Busta Rhymes’ highly panned role in Halloween: Resurrection (2002). However, while the fans were not too pleased with Rowland being attached to the film, the hardcore fans were willing to give her a chance. They recognized that the studio was using her to draw in the mainstream audience, as evidenced in the following statements:

Thac:
Kelly is certainly the big draw for mainstream audiences.

Movielover:
Kelly Rowland will help this film out too as well. She is popular right now. She seems to be very popular in the UK as well. She
has also had a single be number 1 on the charts.

S-10:
I agree. I DOUBT [she] will hurt the film. She can't be worse than any other Friday the 13th actor, and she's famous...I was VERY happy when they announced her in the film.

However, these quotes tell us nothing about why the hardcore fans felt it was important to draw in the mainstream audience, a function they expected Rowland to fulfill. Quotes by yet another hardcore fan, Cecil, will give us greater insight into their reasoning.

The hardcore fans felt that if Freddy vs Jason became a box office success, New Line might take notice, and the fans might witness a resurgence or rebirth of both characters and their representative franchises. Kelly Rowland's presence in the film might be a nuisance, but it could aid in this endeavor. For instance, consider the following post by the hardcore fan Cecil:

People say that having her in the movie is a bad thing but to me, whatever works. She brings an element of recognition that will make people who wouldn't have wanted to see the movie see it because she's in it. I don't care who goes to see the movie, the more the better. More people=more money=happier New Line. If we get all kinds of teenage girls going to see it simply because of Kelly, New Line will be happy with the success and hopefully give us another sequel.

However, it is important to note that the above quote by Cecil does not contradict my earlier finding that the fans do not want to see a sequel to Freddy vs Jason. As Cecil explains in a different post, Kelly gives non-horror fans a reason to see Freddy vs Jason, “just like LL Cool J gave all my friends a reason to go see [Halloween H20] in 6th grade.” He continues: “If this movie is popular enough to warrant new sequels for
both series,” then mainstream interest in the characters “will be renewed and people will not need to necessarily know someone in the movie to want to see it.” As we can see in this statement, Cecil wants to see “new sequels for both series,” not a sequel to *Freddy vs Jason* itself.

I must stress that, although the hardcore fans were willing to give Rowland a chance, it was under the premise that she would likely aid in the resurgence of both characters and their respective franchises. Clearly they did not find her appealing. One hardcore fan, TheGhost, feared that if *Freddy vs Jason* did indeed become successful, New Line might:

Feel as though only Kelly is drawing in the crowd and just cast her in more movies. . .I shudder at that thought but I don’t think new line is that stupid.

Moreover, while the hardcore fans expected Rowland to help attract the mainstream, they also expected one other thing from her, or rather, from her character: that she dies a horrible death. Take, for example, the following statements:

**Movielover:**
I just personally hope after her quality performance I am sure we will be getting that she meets a grisly end.

**Cecil:**
[Kelly Rowland] doesn’t need to act, just to die bloodily enough to satisfy us who feel there is no reason for her to be in this movie in the first place.

**TheGhost:**
I don’t think any of us really WANT Kelly in this film. . .I don’t care if Kelly is in the film, I just hope she dies. . .it would be great to see her die considering she is the most annoying Destiny’s Child girl.
Recall that TheGhost was one of the forum’s members who attended the test screening. Also recall his sentiment that, if he and other fans at the test screening would be the ones to “have an effect on the makers of this movie,” then: “I’m going to express my opinions in laughter and applause. Nothing will hold me back.” Indeed, as PobodysNerfect indicates, TheGhost booed Kelly Rowland “right when she came on screen, she hadn’t even said anything yet.”

Upon hearing this, the other fans began asking how those from New Line, who were in attendance at the test screening, reacted to TheGhost’s outburst. TheGhost replied:

The execs all thought it was funny when I blurted such rude comments as “cut this sentimental bullshit out and get to [the] death . . . they all thought it was funny . . . but when I booed Kelly the only people who seemed to mind were the two black women in front of me.

According to PobodysNerfect, TheGhost’s behavior even became a topic of the focus group’s discussion. WesReviews’ wanted to know if TheGhost’s behavior “prompted anyone in the focus group to say something about . . . the whole pop stars in horror movies thing?” PobodysNerfect indicated: “nobody really mentioned the pop star thing.” He also stated: “Kelly does have a few lines that are stinkers, but this was a test screening.” He assured the others: “Maybe the lines could get cut,” and, overall, Kelly “doesn’t suck.”
The fans discussed various traits and features of Freddy’s character. Unsurprisingly, his glove was a focal point of discussion; the fact that the film’s poster displayed Freddy wearing it on the wrong hand generated some criticism. They also commented upon his trademark dirty red and green sweater, as one hardcore fan, TheGhost, noted: “Freddy without his sweater is like Jason without his mask.” Freddyisking wanted to know if Freddy would keep his “deep growl,” while others commented on his newly acquired pointy teeth. However, I only found evidence that the hardcore fans held certain expectations concerning the tone of Freddy’s character. Most hardcore fans wanted Freddy to return to his “darker” persona from the first Nightmare film, yet they also have come to expect comic relief out of his character. I title the predominant theme of Freddy’s character “The Cruel Clown Revisited” to evoke the similar terminology used by the filmmakers as demonstrated in the previous chapter.

The Cruel Clown Revisited

By now the hardcore fans expected Freddy to walk a fine line between being sadistic and comedic. For instance, while ruminating on one of the first released pictures of Freddy in the film, Thac states:

That particular pic is flamboyant and comical to me—it’s to be expected, and I still anticipate big scares and laughs from Freddy.
The two forum members who attended the test screening assured the others that Freddy indeed delivered both scares and laughs. PobodysNerfect stated: “Freddy is great...he has kick ass one liners,” while TheGhost declared: “Freddy is dark as fuck.” Some hardcore fans, such as S-10, believe that “Freddy without the one-liners just wouldn’t be Freddy. They’ve always been there, especially in [part] 1.” He continues to suggest that the one-liners “can’t be taken away from Freddy, because [they are] too much a part of the character.” Yet, most hardcore fans dislike Freddy’s overly comedic side, as Freddyisking suggests: “The only complaints about Freddy being a comedian I ever see are from the die hard fans.”

At a certain point before the film’s test screening, the fans became aware that the filmmakers were indeed attempting to give not just Freddy, but the entire film, a darker feel. For instance, Freddyisking stated:

[I]f you go by what’s been said by Robert Englund and Ronny Yu, expect this to be the darkest film in a while for BOTH franchises... Freddy is gonna get his quips in there, cause he’s Freddy, but Englund stated Freddy is at his utmost evilest in this flick.

Similarly, Nick Michalak indicated his belief that New Line Cinema wants “to go back to a darker, more evil Freddy.” Therefore, this is what the hardcore fans expected: a darker Freddy with just a tinge of the comedian for good measure.

When reading the hardcore fan’s comments, it also became apparent that the filmmakers were attempting to make Freddy darker, not just in tone, but in appearance as well. For instance, while ruminating over another newly released picture of Freddy, Thac comments: “Freddy certainly looks a bit different, most notably the open sores...I still like it. It’s more demonic.” Others, such as
movielover, started calling Freddy's open sores "black spots," and wondered what "could happen in the movie to give him those spots[?]" WesReviews voiced his satisfaction with Freddy's new make-up:

I like how he doesn't quite look like the usual Freddy. I mean, we all got used to that look by the end of the series and he really wasn't all that scary-looking. . . The new, more unfamiliar makeup job, with the right lighting, could actually make Freddy scary again.

DedKid echoed WesReviews' sentiments: "Freddy's make up reminds me a lot of Elm St. 1, definitely an improvement over the last three Elm St. flicks." So, it was through the careful balance of dark make-up and one-liners that New Line attempted to revisit the original cruel clown, as the hardcore fans expected of them.

Jason

The hardcore fans discussed two aspects of Jason: (1) changes to his look and (2) changes in his whereabouts or location. Therefore, I use the headings "Jason's Look" and "Jason's Location" as the titles of the two predominant themes in this section. Jason's look evolved over the course of the Friday series. He went from a deformed hillbilly with long hair and overalls to a bald and shackled zombie whose flesh and clothes decayed even further with each passing sequel. With this precedent of change set forth in the earlier films, the hardcore fans expected Jason's look to evolve yet again. However, different hardcore fans were more accepting of certain changes to Jason's look than others. Changes in Jason's location also took place during the course of the series. Although the earlier films in the series depict Jason
stalking the campgrounds around Crystal Lake where he drowned, later installments have him leaving the forest for Manhattan (part 8), Hell (part 9) and outer space (part 10). As such, the hardcore fans expected Jason to head to the suburbs of Elm Street for *Freddy vs Jason*.

**Jason’s Look**

By and large, the hardcore fans liked Jason’s new look in *Freddy vs Jason*. Cecil called it: “The best Jason we’ve seen in a while.” WesReviews’ posts concur: “I didn’t think they could do it, but somehow they did. They’ve actually made Jason look SCARY again.” WesReviews continues his praise in a different post: “He’s intimidating for the first time in a long, long, while. He needs that.” Cody even went as far as to say that the *Freddy vs Jason* look: “[I]s very close to having my #1 favorite Jason look. I love the clothes, the build, and the mask.”

For the most part, what the hardcore fans appreciated about Jason’s new look was that it tied itself to the previous films, particularly the earlier installments, by incorporating specific “vintage” or “old school” aspects. For instance, as Dedkid asserts, the *Freddy vs Jason* look has its “own unique aspects, but it also [has] elements reminiscent of old school Jason that [the later films] lacked.” Dedkid suggests in another post that Jason has “more of a vintage thing going” in *Freddy vs Jason*. Similarly, Movielover states that the *Freddy vs Jason* look actually “looks better than in the last few movies and closer to the Paramount Classic Jason.”

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One specific feature of Jason’s new look that is reminiscent of the earlier Friday films is his hair. Jason’s character was bald for some of the films comprising the midsection of the Friday series, but it started to reappear in the later installments, particularly those films “handled” or purchased as “negative pickups” by New Line Cinema from Sean Cunningham’s production company. Some hardcore fans, such as Thac and WesReviews, liked the way Jason’s hair looked in Freddy vs Jason:

Thac:
That [stock] of hair Jason is sporting looks nice – as if the guy left his body for awhile and it grew out like a regular corpse.

WesReviews:
Jason’s hair looks more along the lines of how his hair looked in the earlier movies. Thankfully not the “perm” he had in Jason X.

However, other hardcore fans, such as Movielover, disliked Jason’s new tufts of hair and wondered why New Line added it in:

Movielover:
I just don’t like the strands of hair. They should have ditched the hair idea. But all of the New Line Jason looks have had hair. Did they do that to change his appearance from the Paramount Jason for some reason? Is he not allowed to look exactly like a Paramount Jason for legal reasons?

Here we see the hardcore fan Movielover ponder if changes in Jason’s character are linked to behind the scenes business transactions and issues of ownership and legality. However, no matter what the reason is behind such changes, the fans clearly expect Jason’s look to be altered or “tweaked” from time to time.

Another aspect of Jason’s character that changes every so often is his clothing. In fact, Jason sports a new jacket in Freddy vs Jason, which, as Dedkid suggests, is “not radically different from what we’re used to, but a cool tweak nonetheless.”
While noting Jason’s new jacket, Freddyisking comments on Jason’s evolving wardrobe:

[H]is appearance didn’t really match all the way through [except] for 3-6, with the green shirt and the tan pants. Then he wore all black, then the blue boiler suit from [Jason Goes to Hell], then the blue/grey boiler suit and tattered straightjacket from [Jason X]. So, I think this is the coolest look of [them] all actually.

Such “tweaks” to Jason’s character amount to what Thac calls a “[N]ewer, fresher version of the same old Jason.” Yet, some changes can push the limits and go too far. For instance, as Thac also points out, in some press release photos of Jason, “the left eye (Jason’s right) is fake” or otherwise gone due to injuries he sustained in earlier films, while in other press release photos both eyes are present. In light of such inconsistencies that occur from time to time, the fans either have to accept them or explain them away by, for example, deferring to Jason’s seeming supernatural powers of regeneration. For instance, Thac states: “As for both eyes being present, I’d call it regeneration too, but I wonder why they did that[?]” As we will see in the next section, at times the fans also have to explain away inconsistencies in Jason’s location.

**Jason’s Location**

As mentioned previously, the later films of the *Friday* series featured Jason “out of his element.” In these films, Jason stalked the streets of Manhattan and the corridors of a futuristic spaceship. By comparison, the *Nightmare* films did not set a precedent of having Freddy leave the setting of Elm Street. Therefore, most of the
fans expected Jason to travel to Elm Street at some point in *Freddy vs Jason*. In fact, some hardcore fans, such as Thac and DedKid, looked forward to it:

Thac:
I think New Line is brave for getting behind the Jason films that deviated from the standard formula. Yes, they were the least successful. Fans rip on [Jason Goes to Hell] and [Jason X]. . .but I liked them and the way they expanded upon the [Friday the 13th] universe. . .Jason has always evolved and changed and I’m open to the idea of leaving Crystal Lake.

DedKid:
I can’t wait to see the destruction & carnage he leaves in his wake in Springwood. . .I’ve always wanted to see him pay the ‘burbs a visit. Having that wish granted. . .has got me more psyched for this movie than I’ve been since 1994.

However, Jason’s visit to Elm Street, which the *Nightmare* films establish as being located in Springwood, Ohio, had the latent effect of calling into question the whereabouts of Crystal Lake, which was not well established in the *Friday* films.

Therefore, the location of Jason’s home turf became a point of debate amongst the fans, and some would attempt to explain it away in the same fashion as Jason’s seemingly regenerated eyeball. Take, for instance, the posts made by Freddyisking and Cody in which they try to pinpoint the location of Crystal Lake by referring to previous films:

Freddyisking:
[If you go with [Jason Takes Manhattan], it would have to be in New Jersey wouldn’t it. . .however I don’t know if there is any actual mention of what state it’s in. Of course, in the books by David Morse, they list it as in Massachusetts. . .but as is the case with all movies, only film is canon, and literary adaptations are not.

Cody:
[In Jason Goes to Hell] it’s the “Federal Morgue in Youngstown,
Ohio, where Jason's remains are flown.” But since they were flown there, Crystal Lake could have been anywhere, and if I remember right it takes Jason a good while to get home. . .My personal belief is that Crystal Lake is in Connecticut.

Some fans asked the members of the forum who attended the test screening if the film disclosed the location of Crystal Lake. Unfortunately, TheGhost informed them: “I don’t think thay (sic) actually mentioned how far it was from springwood (sic) in the movie. . .but they did drive [there] if that helps[?]” Here, TheGhost is referring to the fact that the characters drive Jason, who is unconscious after being injected with tranquilizers, from Elm Street to Crystal Lake during the course of one night in *Freddy vs Jason*. This scene would become the focus of a separate thread titled “How far is Crystal Lake from Springwood.” Nonetheless, it is largely assumed that Crystal Lake is in New Jersey, since that is the state license plate commonly glimpsed on vehicles in early installments of the *Friday* series.

**Other Elements**

I found evidence that the hardcore fans expected *Freddy vs Jason* to contain two other elements that are more general in character. I call these other elements “general” because they do not necessarily pertain to the *Nightmare* series or the *Friday* series specifically. Rather, these elements are either common to both series, or the hardcore fans often times discussed particular elements from one series in relation to, or in tandem with, particular elements from the other series. Therefore, rather than force these elements under the “Nightmare on Elm Street Elements” code
or the “Friday the 13th Elements” code of my initial codebook, the fans’ intertwining use of these elements has led me to construct this additional first-level code: “Other Elements.” I label the first main theme “Continuity & References” because it concerns the fans’ expectations upon the filmmakers to make references to past events in both series, and to stay true to the continuity or mythos of both series. I label the second main theme “Sounds & Songs” because it concerns the idea that the hardcore fans expected to hear signature sounds and songs relating to both characters and their respective franchises.

Continuity & References

“As far as I know, from a script review, [Freddy vs Jason] picks up continuity wise after both [Freddy’s Dead] and [Jason Goes to Hell],” stated the hardcore fan Freddyisking. This is what most other fans expected as well. That is, until interviews with certain filmmakers, particularly Ronny Yu, began to suggest otherwise. The hardcore fan S-10 posted an excerpt from one of these interviews in which Ronny Yu states: “We’re kind of forgetting everything that’s happened before and starting from scratch.” S-10 capitalizes all the letters in the following statement from Ronny Yu for emphasis:

WE WANNA MAKE A FILM FOR THE MASSES, NOT REALLY THE HARDCORE FANS WHO MIGHT REMEMBER SOME DETAIL FROM A SEQUEL 10 YEARS AGO.

To follow up this quote from Ronny Yu, S-10 stated:
Geez. That's just extreme lazyness (sic) on their part, if true. So, they are taking a cue from H20? I've spent years watching all the Nightmares and Fridays and now they never happened? Wonderful.

However, other hardcore fans, such as Cody, were not alarmed. Cody reminded the others that those who went to the test screening “assured us numerous times that the film is set after Freddy’s Dead and Jason Goes to Hell, with acknowledgements to both.” Cody continues: “F vs J is not going to ignore the past sequels H20-style.”

Here, as well as in S-10’s comment, “H20” is a reference to the seventh entry in yet another long-running horror franchise, Halloween. As Cody suggests, that particular film ignored the continuity of the films that came before it, making the possibility of the same type of thing happening in Freddy vs Jason a worry for some fans.

It did not help matters that some press-images showed Freddy dunking a young Jason in the waters of Crystal Lake. Some fans took this as a sign that the filmmakers were going to tinker with Jason’s history, particularly the events surrounding his initial death. According to the mythos of the Friday series, Jason drowned in Crystal Lake because the camp counselors were having sex instead of watching over him and the other children. Yet, the press-images for Freddy vs Jason seemed to tell another story. The hardcore fan Movielover disliked the idea of Freddy drowning Jason because:

[T]hat turns Jason into a victim of Freddy. This puts Freddy at a higher ranking. Then people forever will always remember Jason as being just another one of Freddy’s victims. This means that Freddy clear out wins.

However, the press-image of Freddy drowning the young Jason may not link the two characters’ pasts together after all, as Freddyisking suggests:
As for the whole putting their pasts together...so far there is nothing to indicate that. If you read the descriptions of the Fango trailer, you would know that pic...is in all likelihood not a flashback of 'what really happened.'

Yet, the fans held differing opinions on whether or not the two characters' pasts should be linked together. Take, for instance, the following statements by Nick Michalak and Thac:

Nick Michalak:
"[I]t doesn’t matter that they add Freddy to Jason’s past as long as it’s done without forgetting about all the past Jason movies and somehow fitting it into the existing world that was created.

Thac:
I think that trying to intertwine the early days of Freddy & Jason...is damaging to both characters, and at this point...it's more unappealing than ever.

The hardcore fan S-10 even went as far as to suggest that the filmmakers should not attempt to force a connection between Freddy and Jason. Rather, he suggests that the two characters should come upon one another randomly: "It should happen almost by accident." In a separate post, S-10 suggested that the film does not need a plot consisting of such messy contrivances. Instead, the plot should be: "Freddy and Jason fight. That IS the whole story. Anything else would be a waste of time."

Nonetheless, most of the other hardcore fans did want things like references to the other films. Such references took the form of the sounds and songs that are representative of both series.
Just as the fans expected the filmmakers to respect both character’s histories and the mythos of their representative franchises, they also expected the filmmakers to work both of the character’s signature sounds into the film. This is best demonstrated by Freddyisking’s statement suggesting that he crosses his fingers “hopin (sic) we get an excellent mix of the Elm Street theme with Jason’s signature ‘Ch, ch, ch, ch’.” WesReviews commented that Harry Manfredini “no longer owns the ‘Jason’s voice’ sound of ‘Ch-ch-ch, ma-ma-ma,’” and he suggested, “New Line could just go to whoever owns it now and pay them to let them use it for FvJ.” He continues: “That’s what they did for Jason X.” Once the test screening had come and gone, the fans repeatedly asked the members who attended it if this sound was indeed included in the film. PobodysNerfect assured them: “Yes, the Ch, Ch, Ch was there,” and in a different post he confirmed that the music was: “a mixture of Nightmare On Elm Street music, and Friday music from parts, 3, 9, and a few others.” WesReviews also wanted to know about “the nursery rhyme/jump-rope girls,” that are a common feature of the Nightmare films. Again, PobodysNerfect assured him: “They are briefly in the film.”

The fans had varying opinions as to what type of music should be included on the soundtrack. Some fans listed contemporary songs and bands of the death metal genre, but others, such as WesReviews, disagreed:

[T]hey should play good old-fashioned rock n’ roll from the era when Freddy and Jason were in their prime. . .This modern death
metal crap just doesn’t suit them at all.
TheGhost agreed with WesReviews: [M]etal is kind of lame. . .they should just stick with orchestral.” DedKid had a different concern knowing that pop-star Kelly Rowland was in the film: “The one thing that worries me. . .is the possibility of a Destiny’s Child song on the movie’s soundtrack.” Cecil concurred: “If I EVER saw a Destiny’s Child video featuring Jason, I would cry and then burn all my Friday the 13th movies.” These statements demonstrate that the fans expected certain types of sounds and songs to be included on the film’s soundtrack, because they set the mood or tone for the film.

Discussion

The above five codes and their combined twelve subcodes detail certain elements to which the hardcore fans of Freddy vs Jason expected the producers of New Line Cinema to attend. I am not attempting to claim that these are the only elements to which the hardcore fans expected the producers to attend. However, perhaps the most interesting finding of this chapter is that that majority of these elements did not pertain to the internal structure of the film as text. Instead, the hardcore fans seemed more concerned with elements external to the film’s narrative, such as its marketing, its release date and its test screening. The hardcore fans found these elements to be extremely important in regards to ensuring the film’s success with the mainstream audience at large. Pleasing the mainstream audience was
important to them because, in the words of the hardcore fan Cecil: “more people=more money=happier New Line,” and if New Line is happy, then they will “hopefully give us another sequel.” My interpretation of this logic is that the film’s success would not only ensure further renderings of Freddy and Jason’s mythos through the creation of yet another sequel, but, in essence, that it ensures the game’s continuation. It almost guarantees that the fans and filmmakers will encounter one another on the fourth wall at a later date.

It is interesting to recall, from the last chapter, the reason the producers gave for changing the film’s original ending that involved a sex scene in which one of the characters turns into Freddy. Director Ronny Yu and Executive Producer Douglas Curtis stressed the fact that the problem with the original ending was that it did not end on Freddy and Jason. As it stood, the original ending only telegraphed Freddy’s eventual return, whereas the revised ending insured that both characters would return. .. eventually. There is a saying, a sort of catch phrase, that the administrators of Friday the 13th: The Website use in reference to Jason and the Friday franchise: “Nothing this evil ever dies.” Stephen King, perhaps the horror genre’s most famous author, echoed this same sentiment in an article he wrote about Freddy vs Jason titled: “Always, They Come Back” (2003).\textsuperscript{11} In this article, King ponders:

So why do these pictures keep on appearing for a week or so at the local 10-plex on their way to Blockbuster and Hollywood Video? The answer is simple: because schmucks like me keep going to see them. And why? Because the fear generated by a good horror picture is a drug, and as any junkie will tell you, you go on chasing the high long after the high is gone (para. 12-13).
The hardcore fans' wish for yet another sequel, for the game's perpetuation, is not unlike a junkie chasing a high. At first, the hardcore fans were pessimistic about the quality of New Line Cinema's product, as was King: "Everyone who goes will be like me, forking over for the ticket while knowing that the very idea is ludicrous" (para. 15). Yet, the hardcore fans returned to "pay the piper," as did King, with a budding hopefulness: "[Y]et. . .Maybe it'll be good. . .no matter who wins, it'll be a good fight (para. 15-17)."

King's "junkie" metaphor is an apt descriptor of the players of a game or the spectators of a sporting event. After all, people can "get high" off of, and addicted to, such games. The hardcore fans wanted the film marketed as something special: as an "event" rather than just another horror film. Indeed, New Line Cinema marketed it as a sporting event: the film's marketing campaign included a pre-fight press conference at Bally's Casino in Las Vegas. There the official odds were announced: "Jason is a two to three favorite over Freddy who is seven to five as an underdog." The film's tag line became: "Place your bets!" Recall that, in attempting to get "back to the basics," Yu evoked the rawness of the film Rocky. In a certain regard, Freddy and Jason become the Rocky Balboa and Appolo Creed of their time: the heavy-weight champions of the silver screen.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to use theoretical insights from Goffman (1961), as well as the method of template analysis to, yet again, “see” past or through the fourth wall of cinema, this time in order to shed light on the expectations of Freddy and Jason’s hardcore fans. I am pleased to say that the combination of this theory and method exceed my own expectations with regard to this endeavor. I assumed that the hardcore fans would have expressed expectations regarding elements that were intrinsic to the film as text; elements that the filmmakers stressed wanting to get right in order to please, or rather “respect,” the fans through the use of intertextual references and other “in jokes” on which they would pick up. However, I found the opposite to be true: the majority of the elements the hardcore fans expressed expectations of regarded elements that were outside the film as text. Now, I am left to interpret this discrepancy.

There are a couple possible explanations that come to mind. First, it is important to remember that I only analyzed posts made by “hardcore fans” in the “most popular” thread. While it is true that the hardcore fans did not express many expectations regarding elements intrinsic to the film as text, perhaps the fans, in general, did; in that thread or in others. In fact, looking back at the subject lines for the other threads in the “Freddy vs Jason” Forum, it becomes apparent that some of them do indeed concern elements intrinsic to the film as text. Second, in the early planning stages of my dissertation, Friday the 13th: The Forum experienced a
database corruption and, according to a post made by Brenna O’Brien, “over 5,000 threads and 9,000 posts” went missing. There is no way to know how many of these threads and posts were in the “Freddy vs Jason Forum.” It is quite possible that the thread “FvJ Discussion 1” was not the “most popular” thread in the “Freddy vs Jason Forum,” but rather, a thread that remained missing once the site was restored may have been “most popular.” However, missing data is a problem that plagues any researcher who utilizes available data: I can only analyze and report on the data that are present, and note when data are absent. Nonetheless, if a different thread was indeed the “most popular,” it is quite possible that it would have generated similar findings. In a way, it makes sense for hardcore fans to have high expectations regarding matters “outside” the film, as it were. Like players in a game of chess, both the fans and the filmmakers were attempting to anticipate one another’s thoughts ahead of time. They were both projecting future scenarios and acting upon them, as do the expert players of any game. Why should this game be any different?
What shall we use to fill the empty
Spaces where we used to talk
How shall I fill the final places
How shall I complete the wall

—Empty Spaces (Waters, 1979a)
CHAPTER V

Introduction

In this dissertation, I crafted a case study of the motion picture *Freddy vs Jason* as a social encounter that took place, and continues to take place, between its producers and receivers. In the first chapter, I argued that the literature on motion pictures, and other types of mass media, tends to focus on either their production or reception, but not both. I speculated that this dichotomy between micro and macro approaches to media research is, in part, the result of the fundamental break in the communicative chain identified by Thompson (1990), or, more pointedly, it is the result of the researchers’ inability to grapple with this break apart from a face-to-face context. I stated that researchers seemed content to study the “interaction,” or what they deem the “performance,” that occurs between a media text and its audience. Therefore, it appears to me that these researchers lack the sociological imagination it takes to understand how the structure of a motion picture, as a social encounter, arises through the microprocesses of its producers and receivers. What we are left with is the maw of fundamental break itself—that great abyss—staring back at us.

Yet, I am determined to fill this empty space. I am determined to finish painting this social landscape—to complete a holistic view of the wall—that fourth wall of the auditorium (the screen), which, again, as Metz (1977) points out, “is really different from the other three” (p. 48). For it is on this wall that the filmmakers and
fans encounter one another and fabricate the game that is *Freddy vs Jason*. In the focused gathering of their quasi-mediated interaction, the typifications of the filmmakers and hardcore fans can develop at least relatively consistent meanings. When this occurs, the encounter exhibits the sanctioned orderliness arising from the filmmakers fulfilling their obligations, and the hardcore fans having their expectations realized. When this does not occur, it signifies that one group, intentionally or not, “breaks frame” by trying to “assert one perspective when another was expected to hold sway” (Goffman, 1961, p. 20). In short, what is relevant for one group may not seem relevant to the other.

**The Aim of this Chapter**

Having conducted separate template analyses of statements made by the filmmakers and hardcore fans of *Freddy vs Jason*, in chapters four and five, respectively, I compare and contrast their typificatory schemes in this chapter. I found evidence of five typificatory schemes in particular that were discussed by both the filmmakers and hardcore fans as being relevant to the film in some fashion. The filmmakers expressed certain obligations in relation to these five typifications, whereas the hardcore fans expressed certain expectations in relation to them. Moreover, each group discussed certain typificatory schemes as being relevant that the other group did not discuss. For instance, whereas the filmmakers discussed “Dream Logic” as a relevant element of the *Nightmare* series, the hardcore fans
discussed the filmmaker Kelly Rowland as an unwanted, though relevant cast member because they thought she could draw a broader audience to the film. However, in this chapter, I will only discuss the five typifications that both groups found relevant.

Recall Griswold's (1987) suggestion that those engaged in the fabrication of cultural meaning share a set of presuppositions constructed by the group’s historical experiences (p. 1081). I assume that by comparing the five typifications that both the filmmakers and the hardcore fans found relevant, I may be able to understand how a fusing of horizons takes place between them; of how the institution that is *Freddy vs Jason* “hangs together” through their shared relevancies (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p. 63). However, just because the filmmakers and hardcore fans happen to discuss the same five typifications as being relevant to the film, it does not mean that they will attribute the same meanings to these typifications. If this latter scenario is the case, then the typifications of the filmmakers and hardcore fans might tend toward “at least minimal consistency” (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p. 63 & 64). The five typifications that filmmakers and hardcore fans discussed include: (1) the film’s test screening, (2) listening to, responding to, and caring about fans, (3) the character Freddy, (4) the character Jason, and (5) continuity, references and recalls. In what follows I will: (a) compare the separate views of the filmmakers and hardcore fans on the five typifications, (b) discuss the consistency or inconsistency of these views, as well as a few limitations of my study, and (c) conclude the dissertation.
The hardcore fans largely harbored negative expectations of the test screening for two reasons. First, the majority of hardcore fans believed that it is largely non-fans who attend test screenings, and therefore, it is the opinions of these non-fans that adversely influence the producers. As one hardcore fan put it, these non-fans “usually want something changed that the majority of fans prolly (sic) would have liked.” To demonstrate that this belief of theirs is not unfounded, the hardcore fans point to the deleted scenes of other horror movies that were changed due to the reaction of non-fans at test screenings. However, the hardcore fans’ worries abated when they learned that a few of their peers would be in attendance at the test screening. Second, the hardcore fans also expressed the expectation that test screenings heighten the potential for bootlegs and the leaking of spoilers on the Internet. Moreover, they expected the producers at New Line Cinema to stop the leaking of spoilers, and to crack down on bootleggers as well. Here too, their fears subsided when their peers in attendance at the test screening attested to the fact that “security was VERY tight,” and they reassured them that they did not have to “worry about bootlegs.”

As expected, the producers paid close attention to the reactions of the test screening audience. More pointedly, they felt obligated to delete and alter those scenes that tested negatively, even when they disagreed with the test audience. For instance, the Director, Ronny Yu, suggested that the test audience did not like a
particular line (i.e., “place your bets”), which was ultimately removed from the film, yet he stated with regards to that particular line: “but I kind of like that one.” He also stated that he “had” to put more nudity in the film at the behest of the test audience, and he noted that the test audience also demanded more sex scenes. Yu acknowledged that, “as a filmmaker...you always try to fight, but the movie is for the audience,” indicating his obligation to their wants and needs. However, the producers did not always disagree with the reaction of the test audience. For instance, Yu was “glad” that the test audience “reinforced” his argument that the ending just did not work as originally envisioned.

I found the two groups’ views on test screening to be roughly consistent. The hardcore fans insisted that the producers would make changes to the film that the test audience suggested. Indeed, this is what the producers did. The producers indicated that they had an obligation to make such changes because, as Ronny Yu suggested, “the movie is for the audience.” However, the hardcore fans overwhelmingly felt that audiences at test screenings “make them make bad changes to the movie.” Interestingly enough, the producers rarely mentioned the fans during their discussions of the test screening (with the exception of Robert Englund’s comment about the “fans” disliking the ending). Instead, they referred to the “audience” more broadly (e.g., “the audience almost booed this off the screen.”). To me, this seems inconsistent with the producers’ emphasis on respecting fans, or caring enough for the fans to get it right, as evidenced by Mark Swift’s suggestion that New Line Cinema is “one of the only studios that listens to or cares about horror fans.” Therefore, it
seems like New Line Cinema would have wanted to make sure that the fans were aptly represented at the film’s test screening so that their voices would be heard.

Listening to/Responding to/Caring About Fans

I do not believe that the filmmakers’ lack of talk regarding fans, in relation to the test screening, meant that they disregard the wants and needs of the fans altogether. There is too much evidence to suggest that those at New Line cared enough for the fans to try to “get it right.” After all, it took ten years for the film to be made while they tried to “get a script together that... made some sort of quality narrative sense,” in the words of Robert Shaye. I have heard many fans commend New Line for their patience while noting that any other studio would have tried to cash in on the gimmick as quickly as possible, quality of the product be damned. New Line even went as far as to seek out a production executive (i.e., Stokely Chaffin) and scriptwriters (i.e., Damian Shannon and Mark Swift) who were admittedly devout fans of horror films and who “cared” about the characters. However, while such actions are admirable, I do think it is possible that the “higher-ups” at New Line perhaps over relied on these individuals as “insiders” or “mouthpieces” who could speak for the fans.

Comments made by the hardcore fans spoke to their own perceived status and agency, or rather, lack thereof. For instance, statements made by the hardcore fans suggested that they relied on Mark Swift and Damien Shannon, New Line’s
"insiders," to act on their behalf. This is especially true in regards to the hardcore fans’ concerns regarding the film’s director, Ronny Yu, who lacked knowledge of either series. Recall one hardcore fan’s statement: “Yu might not be a hardcore fan, but at least he was working from a screenplay that was written by fans.” To this, another hardcore fan responded: “Shannon and Swift supply the bullets, Yu just needs to close his eyes and pull the trigger.” I think such statements are telling in relation to how the fans regard their status and agency: they’re not the ones “pulling the trigger” (i.e., shooting the film). They are quite aware that they exist outside of the production process that takes place within the confines of New Line Cinema. This was most apparent in relation to the hostility the hardcore fans expressed toward New Line for not marketing the film properly. For example, one hardcore fan stated that it would not “be premature of New Line to throw us a teaser...a quick little something. ...seems a reasonable enough expectation.” Another hardcore fan who found New Line’s “passive” marketing “enraging” concluded: “I guess I’m ranting on def (sic) ears ‘cause none of us can do anything to change things over at NLC.”

Nonetheless, some hardcore fans turned to email to express their concerns and attempt to get their questions answered. In fact, two of the hardcore fans who emailed New Line did in fact receive responses. Yet, a third hardcore fan did not receive a response to his first email, and he lashed out rather vehemently:

We ask so many questions, and they can’t even answer one of them. People call the front desk, they don’t know anything. You email them, they don’t reply. You ask the Englunds, they’re uninformed...They just ignore the questions and keep to themselves. THAT is why we jump on everything because until New Line comes out of their Hollywood hole to answer us, we have nothing to go on.
except “the word on the ‘net.”

This idea of New Line being confined or hidden away in their “Hollywood hole” demonstrates how segregated and out of the loop this particular hardcore fan felt in relation to the film’s production. A fourth hardcore fan feared that emailing New Line was not such a good idea because they might “get pissed and then stop answering the emails.” This same hardcore fan suggested that those responding would not be able to answer the fans’ questions adequately because, they are “not in the marketing department,” and they would not know anything until they received “official word from the New Line higher up’s (sic).”

Yet, most of the hardcore fans seemed content with any word that came from within the confines of New Line Cinema; that alone made it “official.” This was deemed better than relying on the Internet’s rumor mill. When such official confirmation was not given, other hardcore fans emailed people loosely associated with the film (e.g., Robert Englund’s wife) in an attempt to confirm the truth or falsity of rumors on the Internet, such as the film’s release date.

Therefore, I find the degree to which the filmmakers perceived themselves as caring for the wants and needs of the fans to, at times, be inconsistent with the hardcore fan’s perception, especially in the film’s initial stages (e.g., marketing and test screening). More pointedly, in their efforts to be “good wizards,” I think those at New Line would do well to listen more directly to the fans as a whole rather than relying on “insiders” to speak for the fans.
Freddy

The hardcore fans expected the producers to return Freddy to the "darker" persona he exhibited in the first *Nightmare* film. This expectation stemmed from comments made by the producers themselves. For instance, recall the following statement by one poster:

[I]f you go by what’s been said by Robert Englund and Ronny Yu, expect this to be the darkest film in a while for BOTH franchies. . . Freddy is gonna get his quips in there, cause he’s Freddy, but Englund stated Freddy is at his utmost evillest in this flick (italics mine).

However, the hardcore fans have also come to expect a bit of comic relief out of Freddy’s character based on their knowledge of, and experience with, the previous *Nightmare* films. For instance, as demonstrated in the above quote, comedy has become an integral part of Freddy’s character ("Freddy is gonna get his quips in there, cause he’s Freddy"). Both of these expectations were strengthened when a few of their peers came back from the test screening and reported that “Freddy is dark as fuck,” and he “has kick ass one liners.”

Similarly, the producers were well aware of how comedic Freddy’s character had become. Recall, Mark Swift’s suggestion that “it was difficult trying to make Freddy frightening after he had killed somebody with a Nintendo Power Glove” in *Freddy’s Dead*. Robert Englund referred to this same film while admitting that he and Rachel Talalay pushed Freddy’s comical “personality a little too far,” noting that Freddy got to be “like a stand-up comic.” Therefore, the producers felt obligated to
“go back to the dark Freddy,” as Swift suggests, and “return to the roots of who he was and his reason for being.” The producers also spoke of having to inscribe key gesticulations or signature moves into Freddy’s character, such as his “swagger” and particular “looks.”

Despite the fact that the hardcore fans did not speak to Freddy’s signature moves the way that the producers did, I found their views on Freddy to be quite consistent. In fact, the language of the producers and fans tended to echo or mirror one another at times. For instance, when Robert Englund admitted that he and Rachel Talalay took Freddy’s comical personality too far, he tried to legitimize their actions by suggesting that Freddy’s tendency to joke “was always there,” and that if you “look back at the original Nightmare on Elm Street,” you will see that Freddy has “always been kind of a cruel clown.” In comparison, one hardcore fan suggested that Freddy’s one-liners have “always been there, especially in [part] 1.” The hardcore fan continued to suggest that the one-liners “can’t be taken away from Freddy, because [they are] too much a part of the character.” However, aside from Englund’s comments about why Freddy became “like a stand-up comic,” the producers spoke more directly about their obligation to return to a darker Freddy. Indeed, the hardcore fans expected them to return to a darker version of Freddy, yet, in the words of one hardcore fan, they expected both “big scares and laughs from Freddy.” It can be said that Freddy did in fact exhibit both scares and laughs in the film, but the producers tended to focus more directly on their obligation to make Freddy frightening once again.
The hardcore fans expected the producers to take some liberties with Jason’s character, especially in regards to his look and his location. These expectations stemmed from images of Jason seen in press release photos for Freddy vs Jason, as well as the hardcore fans’ experience with previous films in the Friday series, especially the later films produced by New Line Cinema. For instance, the hardcore fans commented on Jason’s newly acquired strands of hair, which looked “more along the lines of how his hair looked in the earlier movies.” One hardcore fan noted that: “all of the New Line Jason looks have had hair,” and he pondered if the filmmakers at New Line added the hair to “change his appearance from the Paramount Jason for some reason?” The hardcore fans also noted how Jason’s clothing tended to change throughout the series, and they commented on his new jacket. One hardcore fan suggested that the new jacket was “not radically different from what we’re used to, but a cool tweak nonetheless.” Moreover, in comparison to Freddy who rarely leaves the confines of Elm Street, the hardcore fans also expected to see Jason venture far from his stomping grounds, as he did in Jason Goes to Hell and Jason X.

Conversely, the filmmakers did not speak to the same seemingly relevant aspects of Jason that the hardcore fans did, and in that regard their views on Jason were inconsistent. Furthermore, whereas the hardcore fans tended to cite the films in order to back up their interpretations, the filmmakers, more often than not, spoke
vaguely of Jason’s “history” in regards to certain aspects of his character that they felt obligated to attend to. These aspects of Jason’s character included his physical and mental “slowness,” as well as his “fear of water.” For instance, Ronny Yu, while referring “back to [Jason’s] history,” stated that Jason is “a little bit disabled and . . . I don’t think he even knows what is right and wrong.” Yu states elsewhere of Jason, “looking back at his history . . . he was like, born with [a] disability,” and “this rage in him,” which leads to a “one track mind to kill people.” What I find interesting in Yu’s interpretation is that I do not recall any reference in the Friday series of Jason having, let alone being born with, a disability. True, Jason has always been featured with a disfigured face and head, but is that enough to constitute a mental disability, as Yu is implying? Moreover, where is the evidence that he was born with this disability, or even his disfigurement? Could he not have been disfigured as a young boy, which is how we first see him in the original Friday the 13th during his mother’s flashback to his childhood drowning? Of course, none of this addresses how Yu impertinently attributes Jason’s violent behavior to his seeming mental disability. I find such a disability to be more a part of Yu’s artistic license than the history of Jason’s character.

The filmmakers take similar liberties when attributing a “secret fear” of water to Jason’s character. To be fair, it does not seem like a huge leap in logic to suggest that someone who almost drowned (or, in Jason’s case, someone who did drown) would be afraid of water. In order to make such a connection, the filmmakers again refer to Jason’s “history.” However, this time they specifically cite his childhood
drowning to legitimate this fear. For example, recall Velasco-Shaw’s suggestion that in one planned (yet, never filmed) sequence, Jason has a nightmare in which we “see Jason underwater, but not Jason as Jason, but Jason as a little kid, sitting there screaming,” he continues: “cause that’s how he dies, and that’s his nightmare.” Nevertheless, throughout the film series, Jason spends a good amount of time wading through the waters of Crystal Lake. Jason is even submerged in the lake at the end of Friday the 13th Part VI: Jason Lives when Tommy chains him to a rock, and he remains there until Tina accidentally raises him with her telekinetic powers in Friday the 13th Part VII: The New Blood (Note: according to the fan timeline on Friday the 13th: The Website, these two events occur between May 1988 and August 1993, indicating that Jason spent over four years submerged in Crystal Lake). Yet, as I mentioned in chapter four, Jason has never exhibited a fear of water in any of the previous films.

As previously discussed, the filmmakers talked a good deal about being obligated to respect the histories of the characters so as to not, in the words of Mark Swift, “say to fans, ‘Hey, the storylines you’ve come to believe in these films weren’t really real.’” However, it does appear to me that the filmmakers participated in a revisionist history of Jason’s character by attributing a largely unfounded disability and fear to him. Recall one hardcore fan’s suggestion that, in certain Friday the 13th books Crystal Lake is in Massachusetts, but “only film is cannon (sic), and literary adaptations are not.” If we apply this logic to Freddy vs Jason, then it stands to reason that by giving these new attributes to Jason’s character, the filmmakers have
indeed rewritten the canon of the *Friday* films. Therefore, fans of the *Friday* series are left once again with the job of explaining away these new attributes, just as in the past they have had to account for continuity errors in regards to his location and apparent regenerative capabilities.\textsuperscript{cxxxv}

**Continuity, Reference and Recalls**

I found evidence that suggested the hardcore fans expected the filmmakers to inscribe the film with references to the previous films of both series. Indeed, the hardcore fans who attended the film’s test screening assured their peers numerous times that the film is set “after Freddy’s Dead and Jason Goes to Hell, with acknowledgements to both.” One such acknowledgement took the form of familiar sounds from both film series. For example, these hardcore fans attested to the fact that the film contained Jason’s signature sound (“Ch-ch-ch, ma-ma-ma”), as well as the nursery rhyme sung by the jump-rope girls from the *Nightmare* series. One of the hardcore fans who attended the test screening also stated that *Freddy vs Jason* contained “a mixture of Nightmare On Elm Street music, and Friday music from parts, 3, 9, and a few others.” Therefore, the hardcore fans did expect to see references to prior films from both series in *Freddy vs Jason*. However, recall that the following statement made by Ronny Yu in an interview shook the confidence of some of the hardcore fans:

**WE WANNA MAKE A FILM FOR THE MASSES, NOT REALLY THE HARDCORE FANS WHO MIGHT REMEMBER**

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The hardcore fan who posted this quote expressed his displeasure by stating that he “spent years watching all Nightmares and Fridays and now they never happened? Wonderful.” Whereas Yu’s comment suggested that the filmmakers were going to ignore the histories of the characters, a press-image of Freddy dunking a young Jason in the waters of Crystal Lake suggested something much, much worse to other hardcore fans.

Some hardcore fans thought that the image of Freddy dunking young Jason implied that the histories of the two characters would not be ignored, but rewritten. For instance, one hardcore fan stated that trying to intertwine the histories of Freddy and Jason is “damaging to both characters.” Another hardcore fan thought that their histories could be intertwined, “as long as it’s done without forgetting about all the past Jason movies.” A third hardcore fan thought that the press-image suggested that Freddy drowned Jason, which would indeed contradict the mythos of the Friday series. This fan expressed his displeasure by suggesting that if Freddy is depicted in the film as the person who drowned Jason, then “people will always remember Jason as being just another one of Freddy’s victims.” He continues: “This means that Freddy clear out wins.” Yet, one hardcore fan kept his head and suggested to the others that the image of Freddy drowning Jason “is in all likelihood not a flashback of ‘what really happened.’” He was right—this image was not a flashback to Jason’s “real” or original drowning, but rather a nightmare. Nonetheless, there was a festering expectation amongst the fans that the fight would be fixed, and although
Freddy might not win, New Line would favor their original icon over Jason in some fashion.\textsuperscript{exxvii}

All of the "recalls" that emerged from the filmmakers' final template took the form of statements made by Robert Englund while he identified references to the \textit{Nightmare} series. However, as a fan, I was able to spot what I thought were a few intertextual links to the \textit{Friday} series in my textual analysis of film. Still, I must admit that these references seemed less substantial than the links to the \textit{Nightmare} series. I repeatedly used the phrase "very vague" when identifying the links to the \textit{Friday} series. Furthermore, even though Jason is featured carrying Freddy's severed head out of the water at the end of the film, Freddy is literally given the last laugh after the camera zooms in on his face so he can disclose a wink to the audience. This wink possibly suggests that Jason is once again in the dream world where Freddy is about to have his way with him. Regardless of the fact that the filmmakers demonstrated a tendency to favor Freddy over Jason, I am not claiming that they set out from the very beginning to overtly, or even covertly, "bias" the movie. I do think it is possible that, in trying over the course of ten years to get the script to make "some sort of quality narrative sense," that this is how things just played out; this is what made the most sense to the filmmakers. Nonetheless, the filmmakers did fulfill the fans' expectation of inscribing the film with references or "recalls," and in that regard their views were consistent.
I must admit that I am surprised by how mismatched the views of the filmmakers and hardcore fans tended to be in regards to the five typifications. For instance, even though the views of the filmmakers and hardcore fans where consistent with regards to the film’s test screening, the filmmakers’ expressed obligations and the hardcore fans’ expressed expectations were nevertheless negatively related. That is to say, the hardcore fans expected the filmmakers to make any changes that the test audience suggested, and indeed the filmmakers acted in accordance. However, just because the hardcore fans expected the filmmakers to behave in this manner does not mean that is what they wanted. Also, I found the degree to which the filmmakers perceived themselves as caring for the fans to be inconsistent with the hardcore fans’ perception. Clearly the hardcore fans would have appreciated being listened to more directly. Furthermore, the filmmakers not only discussed aspects of Jason’s character (i.e., his fear of water and his mental disability) that were different from those discussed by the hardcore fans, they broke frame by falsely attributing these aspects to his character. Since, by their own standard, caring for the fans meant simultaneously caring for the histories of the two characters, this is another instance in which the filmmakers slighted the fans. The views of the filmmakers and hardcore fans seemed most consistent with regard to the character Freddy. Yet, the filmmakers tended to focus on making Freddy frightening once again, whereas the fans expected both scares and laughs from his character. Lastly, the filmmakers did fulfill the fans’
expectation of inscribing the film with references to both films, although there is evidence that these references tended to favor Freddy over Jason.

On the face of it, it appears that the filmmakers and hardcore fans tended towards a very minimal consistency. In fact, a side-by-side comparison of the final templates for both the filmmakers and hardcore fans suggests that the fabrication of Freddy vs Jason "hung together" by some very thin strings over the vast expanse of the fundamental break (see appendix X). I am suddenly reminded of Jonathan Edward's Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God (1741/1992). In Edward's rather ghastly sermon, a sinner has as much chance to keep him or herself from plunging into the pit of hell, as "a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock" (p. 56). Similarly, how is it that such weak ties stopped the agents in this encounter from plunging into the abyss of the fundamental break—or, in other words, how was it possible for them to communicate successfully with such inconsistent views? A logical answer to this question is that the five typifications I was able to identify were not the only typifications that the filmmakers and hardcore fans shared. Surely there were many more typifications than five, or at least that's what I assume. If that is indeed the case, then why was I only able to identify five typifications? The answer to this question has to do with the various limitations of my study. I discuss a few of these limitations in what follows.
Limitations of the Study

It just so happens that I was only able to uncover five typifications using the available data at my disposal. A common problem with using available data is that gaps often appear within the dataset, and data go missing. Recall that *Friday the 13th*: *The Forum* experienced a database corruption before I gathered my data, and that many of the forum's threads and posts were unrecoverable. I have no way of knowing how many of these threads and posts were in the "Freddy vs Jason Forum." Had I begun my data collection earlier and saved the threads and posts in the "Freddy vs Jason Forum" before they vanished, the results of my template analysis in chapter five could have been much different: I might not have found "FvJ Discussion 1" to be the "most popular" thread, and, likewise, I could have deemed a different set of posters to be the "hardcore fans."

Nonetheless, I still had many more pages of data for my purposive sample of statements made by the hardcore fans than I did for the transcripts of the filmmakers' statements, which is another limitation. Both datasets were single spaced in Times New Roman, size 12, with an extra space occurring after the end of each individual's comment. The transcripts containing the filmmakers' statements totaled 102 pages in length. In comparison, recall that before I reduced the data for the thread "F v J Discussion 1" by extracting only those statements made by the 11 hardcore fans, it constituted 4,420 post and roughly 1,245 pages of data. Sadly, I do not have the exact page count for the dataset after I reduced it to the statements made by the 11 hardcore fans.
fans. It seems that in my eagerness to delve into the template analysis, I cut apart the 1,583 posts of the 11 hardcore fans like a crazed slasher before noting the page count. However, if the original thread contained roughly 3.55 posts per page (4,420/1,245=3.55) before I excised the hardcore fans’ statements from it, it is perhaps safe to assume that 1,583 posts would have covered roughly 446 pages of data (1,583/3.55=445.92). Therefore, according to this rough estimate, I analyzed more than four times as much data for hardcore fans than I did for the filmmakers. I acknowledge that this imbalance between the two datasets could have skewed the results in some fashion. Yet, strangely enough, I ended up with more typificatory schemes in the filmmakers’ final template than I did for the hardcore fans’ final template.

Of course, it must also be noted that I was the sole coder or “interpreter” of both datasets. Therefore, it is also possible that my status as a fan biased the results. I must admit that, as a fan, I was largely disappointed in Freddy vs Jason. After waiting ten long years, I found the film to be average at best. Then again, I am primarily a fan of the original films in both the Nightmare and Friday series—their sequels have always tended to disappoint me, with only a few exceptions. Still, regardless of my efforts to be systematic, my dissertation could have benefited from some of the “quality checks” suggested by Nigel King (n.d.a) on his “Template Analysis” website hosted by the School of Human & Health Sciences at the University of Huddersfield. One such quality check includes the use of a research team, or an outside expert, to code a separate sample of the data in an attempt to
achieve something akin to inter-coder reliability in quantitative studies. Another kind of quality check is the use of respondent feedback, or asking participants to comment on the codebook and its codes. Noting how hard it was for the hardcore fans to contact the “higher-ups” at New Line Cinema, I assume it would have been just as difficult for me to get their opinion on my producer codebook. While it is true that I could have asked some of the hardcore fans to comment on my receiver codebook, this would have exposed my role as a researcher and compromised the unobtrusiveness of the data. These are but a few of the limitations that I confronted while attempting to uncover the typificatory schemes of the filmmakers and hardcore fans.

Conclusion

As I suggested in the introductory chapter, it was never my aim to produce an objective account backed by positivistic notions of proof and verification, but rather a subjective rendition of a motion picture as a social encounter. I believe I fulfilled that aim. Moreover, I talked of viewing my dissertation as more of an “artistic” endeavor than a scientific one. Nonetheless, I believe the organizing principle of template analysis allowed me to retain some degree of systematic rigor—enough anyway to demonstrate that, through the use of available data and a stretching of one’s sociological imagination, interactions occurring between producers and receivers in a mass communicative context can be studied methodically. Indeed, this is no easy
task. Yet, one does not have to reduce such a complicated social interaction to that of a “simple interaction” occurring between a reader and a text (Radway, 1984, p. 20). Myriads of people are linked together through their fabrication of cultural meanings. Like so many spiders spinning webs, they hang together through their shared typifications—through their interdependencies and interweavings. As Elias (1978) suggests, even the case of:

violent enemies locked in a life-and-death struggle is a process of interweaving. The sequence of moves on either side can only be understood and explained in terms of the immanent dynamics of their interdependencies. If the sequence of actions of either side were studied in isolation, it would appear without rhyme or reason (p. 80).

While it is true that I studied the filmmakers and the hardcore fans in isolated chapters, I brought them together here, in this chapter, to close the gap—to fill the empty space, as it were. In so doing, I believe I have finished painting my holistic vision of the wall—holistic not in the sense that it is “complete,” as though it ever could be, but in the sense that it stretches across the fundamental break rather than coming to rest at its precipice…I can only hope more researchers will endeavor to take their studies across that great divide.
ENDNOTES

1 Nisbet's text *Sociology as an Art Form* (1976) provided a great deal of inspiration in this regard. In it he notes that sociology and art are closely linked in that both often deal with similar themes and experience changing "styles." Nisbet also points out that the work of both artists and scientists *represent* reality through the "painting" of landscapes:

What Tocqueville and Marx, and then Toennies, Weber, Durkheim, and Simmel, give us in their greatest works, ranging from *Democracy in America* and *Capital* to Toennies on *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* or Simmel on *Metropolis*, is a series of landscapes, each as distinctive and compelling as any to be found among the greater novels or paintings of their age (p. 7).

I do not believe for a moment that the "landscape" I paint within this dissertation will be as influential as the masterpieces noted above. However, following in shadows of such "strong poets," I do aspire to express the same conviction for my work of art as they expressed in theirs.

2 Researchers who adopt a performative approach are interested in understanding how things are done with words. To achieve this understanding, such researchers draw from J. L. Austin's (1976) distinction between the "performative" and the "constative." Performatives are considered "acts" of speech that *do* something; they *achieve* something and *make* something happen (e.g., the act of saying one's wedding vows commits that person to the solemn promises they outline). In contrast, they consider constatives to be mere descriptions that report on some state of affairs or state some fact. However, as Hills (2005a) points out, even Austin recognized that descriptions are also performances as evidenced in the following statement:

> when we state something or describe something or report something, we do perform an act which is every bit as much an act as an act of ordering or warning (Austin, as quoted in Hills, p. 3).

However, I adopt a *hermeneutic*-phenomenological approach, specifically a re-envisioning of Thompson's (1990) depth hermeneutical framework, because I believe it allows researchers a degree of artfulness in the process of interpretation as opposed to the seemingly mechanical description of a text's objective characteristics or the structures of agent's subjective orientation. I describe my re-envisioning of the depth hermeneutical framework toward the end of this chapter.
Hills (2005b) provides a good example of this when he states:

This book . . . enacts a form of textual agency. That is, it constructs my agency (as a scholar-fan) by doing things with texts . . . rather than reflecting my pre-existent or allegedly essential ‘agency’ as a fan-consumer, the following pages work together to constitute an implicit performative by constructing, performing and displaying claims to authorial agency (p. xiii).

Here we see Hills bequeath his agency to a text that he wrote. To me, this stance seems in danger of becoming a trap in which the producer of a text is absolved of his intended meanings. That is to say, such a stance disallows any relationship between the producer and the representation that he created. Therefore, the receivers are left to “uptake” the meaning performed by the text. The author is nowhere to be found. The author is dead: he has killed himself.

The Encyclopedia of Exhibition is published annually as a membership service of the National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO), and is available for sale at the NATO website (www.natoonline.org) for $100.00 per copy.

In this survey, “teenagers” refer to those between the ages of twelve and seventeen, and “adults” refer to those age eighteen and older.

Denzin (1995) starts his text by stating the following:

The postmodern is a visual, cinematic age; it knows itself in part through the reflections that flow from the camera’s eye. The voyeur is the iconic, postmodern self. Adrift in a sea of symbols, we find ourselves, voyeurs all, products of the cinematic gaze (p. 1).

I quote Denzin to yet again show the death of the author/producer in this postmodern worldview. All that matters is that the receiver/voyer takes up the camera’s gaze. Yet, even the viewer becomes unimportant to Denzin, as he concerns himself in the rest of his book with the voyeuristic activities of the fictional characters featured in various Hollywood films. And this counts as sociology!

I derived this figure by adding the grosses for each film in each series as reported by the Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com), accessed on February 4th, 2005. See appendix A for a breakdown of each film’s gross.

While characterizing filmmakers as automatons who work off of instinct and formula rather than conscious intellect, Clover (1992) had this to say of Alfred Hitchcock:
So bewildered was Hitchcock by the unprecedented success of *Psycho* that he approached the Stanford Research Institute about doing a study of the phenomenon (p. 11).

To me, this shows intellectual prowess on the part of Hitchcock rather than bewilderment. Moreover, Hitchcock confirmed his intellectual prowess when, after hearing that the Stanford Research Institute wanted $75,000 to conduct the study, he replied: "I wasn't *that* curious" (Hitchcock in Spoto, as quoted by Clover, p. 11). Let it also be noted that others credit Bob Clark's Canadian film *Black Christmas* (1974) as the first true slasher film.

The specific address is located here: http://www.webster.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=artificial

Thompson describes this idea of the "mediazation of modern culture" as:

> the general process by which the transmission of symbolic forms becomes increasingly mediated by the technological and institutional apparatuses of the media industries (pp. 3-4).

In *The Media and Modernity* (1995), Thompson clarifies the distinguishing characteristics of mediated quasi-interaction by comparing it to two other types of interaction. The other two types of interaction include face-to-face interaction and mediated interaction. Furthermore, Thompson bases his comparison on four separate interaction characteristics, including: (1) space-time constitution [its context], (2) range of symbolic cues [wide or narrow], (3) action orientation [towards either specific or many nonspecific others], and (4) its dialogical or monological character. Through this comparison Thompson demonstrates that the major differences in mediated quasi-interaction, in comparison with the other two types of interaction, are its monological character and its orientation towards an indefinite range of potential recipients (pp. 81-87). For a graphic summation of these forms and their characteristics, see appendix B.

I believe the following quote provides the best, or perhaps the most intriguing, example of Freddy crossing over into reality in an effort to come face-to-face with a fan:

An eight-year-old girl in America dying of leukemia had a final wish to meet Freddy before she died. This was met with Robert Englund, the actor who plays Freddy, appearing in his "costume" at her bedside. The young girl was not interested in meeting the actor who played Freddy, nor was she interested in meeting a more
traditional children’s idol. Instead, she, a dying girl, desired to meet Freddy Krueger himself, the killer of children (Conrich, 2000, p.232).

I should also note that, as mediated quasi-interactions, successful films do not always result in “bonds of friendship, affection or loyalty” between producers and receivers (Thompson, 1991, p. 228). For instance, The Exorcist (1973), though highly successful, tended to have a disconcerting effect on some audience members:

Across America, people left screenings in a distressed condition. Heart attacks and at least one miscarriage were reported, while in Berkeley, California, a man attacked the screen attempting to kill the demon. The number of people seeking psychiatric help increased, church attendance began to rise dramatically, and violence broke out at many screenings (Barker, 1996, p. 41).

As we will see in the next section, John B. Thompson (1990) also utilizes a tripartite approach. However, his is not oriented to the study of any one specific type of text (e.g., the romance novel or horror films), but rather it is meant as a methodological framework for studying mediate quasi-interaction involving any type of mass communicative text.

To be fair, Griswold (1994) has made great strides in expanding her investigations of the various elements surrounding cultural phenomena, and the links between them, with her notion of a “cultural diamond.” However, her model of a cultural diamond appears too cumbersome to me, involving four elements (creators, cultural objects, recipients and the social world) and six links that connect them.

Other mass media researchers have used concepts derived from Goffman’s work on interpersonal or face-to-face interaction in their studies. For instance, Meyrowitz (1985) integrates the “medium theory” of McLuhan with the “situationism” of Goffman (p. 7). Specifically, he adapts Goffman’s model of backstage and front stage behaviors to the new situations and behaviors that are brought about by new media (p.46).

Please note that I intend to outline my methodological framework in this section, not the specific methods used in each chapter. I outline the details of the particular methods in the respective chapters within which they occur.

Please note that while I do not officially include the results of the formal analysis chapter (Chapter 2) in this comparison, they are integrated nonetheless. I assume that the producers will state what formal elements they felt obligated to include in the film, and receivers will state what formal elements they expected to see. With this in mind, I view the formal analysis chapter as a means to provide those readers who are

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unfamiliar with *Freddy vs Jason* an overview of its narrative structure and elements. This overview will no doubt come in handy when considering the statements the producers and receivers make about the film.

Clover elaborates upon the Final Girl’s “boyish” quality by stating:

> Just as the killer is not fully masculine, she is not fully feminine—
> not, in any case, feminine in the ways of her friends. Her smartness,
> gravity, competence in mechanical and other practical matters, and
> sexual reluctance set her apart from the other girls and ally her,
> ironically, with the very boys she fears or rejects, not to speak of
> the killer himself. Lest we miss the point, it is spelled out in her
> name: Stevie, Marti, Terry, Laurie, Stetch, Will, Joey, Max”
> (p. 40).

Of course, a working knowledge of the previous films in both series would help contextualize the comments made by the film’s producers and receivers within the later chapters. To aid in this endeavor, I duplicate the synopses given on the back of the DVD cases for each film in each series, as well as for *Freddy vs Jason*. Appendix C contains the synopses for the films in the *Friday* series. Appendix D contains the synopses for the films in the *Nightmare* series. Appendix E contains the synopsis of *Freddy vs Jason*.

The acronym “DVD” is also commonly used to represent the phrase “digital versatile disc.” To my knowledge, this phrase is often used in opposition to the phrase “digital video disc,” in order to indicate the medium’s seemingly superior qualities and potential uses over that of videocassette technology.

However, just because a DVD can be demarcated in this fashion does not mean that it should be. In fact, some filmmakers are opposed to having their DVD releases “cut-up” in this manner. David Lynch, a well-known director of avant-garde cinema, “forbids even for chapter stops to be included on his feature DVD releases, as he believes his films must be experienced from start to finish or not at all” (DVD Breakdown.com, 2000-2006).

I do not consider the seventeenth scene as a unit of analysis because it is not a scene per se, but rather the end credits of the film.

The following biographical information about Christopher Vogler is largely taking from this webpage, which I accessed on January 24, 2006: http://www.thewritersjourney.com/employeebios.html

STORYTECH’s homepage is found at the following web address: http://www.thewritersjourney.com/generic7.html
An adapted version of this memo can be found at the following web address: http://writehand.org/index.php7/archives/11-A-Practical-Guide-to-The-Hero-with-a-Thousand-Faces.html

It is true that Propp’s work is applicable to things other than folktales. For instance, Radway (1984) utilized Propp in her analysis of romance novels. Nonetheless, I prefer Vogler’s work because it addresses film more specifically. Also, I am admittedly more familiar with it. As an undergraduate, I majored in both Sociology and Communications with an emphasis in Film and Video and a concentration in “writing for media” at Grand Valley State University. While there, I became a McNair Scholar and conducted research on the mythic structure of “biracial buddy films” using Vogler’s work as a framework for analysis, which resulted in the following publication: Ritualized Myth: An Analysis of Biracial Male Buddy Films (Rapelje, 1998).

I also include the label “prologue” as one of my a priori codes. Vogler (1992) states: “Some stories begin with a prologue section that precedes the main body of the story, perhaps before the introduction of the main characters and their world” (p. 100).

Vogler’s (1999) forward does not include a description for the prologue. However, Vogler (1992) states in his earlier work that a prologue may: “give an essential piece of backstory, cue the audience to what kind of movie or story this is going to be, or start the story with a bang and let the audience settle into their seats” (p. 100). Vogler also suggests that “some prologues introduce the villain or threat of the story before the hero appears” (p. 101).

King (1998) suggests that the codes of a template can be organized hierarchically into both broad higher order codes and specific lower order codes that allow for fine distinctions to be made during the coding process (pp. 119-120). He further states: “There can be as many levels of coding as the researcher finds useful,” and that “most templates fall within the two to four level range” (p. 120).

Rather, I should say, thirteen stages including the prologue.

Vogler (1992) indicates that a film’s “climax,” which occurs during the resurrection stage, is different from its “central crisis,” which generally takes place during the supreme ordeal stage (p. 227).

Lori is indeed the Final Girl of Freddy vs Jason, as she is the only female teenager amongst the main characters left alive at the film’s conclusion. However, she may or may not be the film’s “hero” depending on how the stages of the hero’s journey transpire.
I counted Jason bringing the machete down at least eleven times while playing the scene in slow-motion, but it could possibly have been more. Interestingly enough, similar to the famous *Psycho* (1960) shower scene, we never actually see the blade enter the victim. However, in cutaways, we do see the tip of the machete exit through the bottom of the bed along with massive amounts of blood and gore.

This action we do witness unflinchingly, from a side view. When it is over, Trey’s body resembles a “V.” He is bent backwards at the waist, and the heels of his feet are resting inches away from the tops of his shoulders.

Soon after this scene, we witness Blake on the porch of his own home ruminating on Freddy’s name as well. He too falls asleep and encounters Freddy, who attempts to kill him. However, Freddy finds that he is unable to harm Blake as he states: “Not strong enough yet. Well, I will be soon enough. Until then...” (laughs) “I’ll let Jason have some fun.” Blake wakes with a start to find his father killed on the porch next to him. Soon after, he too falls prey to Jason and his machete. Their deaths mark yet another call to adventure.

In Vogler’s outline of the Heroes Journey, this stage actually comes after the Refusal of the Call. However, in *Freddy vs Jason*, these two stages switch places. As I mentioned previously, Vogler suggests, “the stages can be deleted, added to, and drastically shuffled without losing any of their power” (p. 30).

At least twice in this scene, Mark takes on the more specific archetype of the “comic mentor” (Vogler, p. 58). At one point he taunts a guard and then tells another inmate: “Kurt, how many times do I have to tell you, man? I don’t do checkers. I’m an Uno guy, all right? So, go grab the fucking Uno deck and we’ll play, ok?”

Mark and Will flee to the local library where they both act as mentors for the audience, investigating the town’s history and piecing together its plan to contain Freddy. They find all mention of Freddy and his crimes, including the obituaries of his victims, stricken from the record. Mark concludes: “They covered him up, Will. They never told us about Freddy because that’s how they decided to beat him. They treated him like he was a fucking disease, and they locked up all the kids who made contact with him so they wouldn’t infect the others.”

Vogler states, “a hero may be trained by a series of Mentors who teach specific skills,” and that “multiple mentors may be needed to express different functions of the archetype” (p. 57).

Gibb is one of the people killed in this scene. She wanders away from the rave when she inexplicitly sees her dead boyfriend Trey. As it turns out, Gibb is
dreaming. She is passed out drunk in the cornfield, and Freddy is playing mind
games with her. As Freddy stalks her in the dream world, a fellow “raver” crawls on
top of Gibb in the real world and attempts to take advantage of her while she is
incapacitated. Just before Freddy is ready to deliver a deathblow to Gibb in the
dream world, Jason drives a pole through the raver’s back in the real world, which
also enters Gibb’s chest, killing both teens. This infuriates Freddy, who missed his
opportunity to kill Gibb because of Jason’s interference. Freddy screams: “No!
She’s mine! Mine! Mine!”

As Vogler suggests, characters can start the story while performing the functions of
a specific archetype, but switch to fulfilling the functions of a different archetype. In
this regard, archetypes can be considered masks “worn by the characters temporarily
as they are needed to advance the story” (p. 34).

Blood is spraying out of wrists of Mark’s brother, suggesting how he killed
himself.

In a certain sense, Jason “replaces” the actual Threshold Guardian, Westin Hill’s
security guard, who he crushed under a door earlier in the scene.

Indeed, Freddy acts as though he is playing pinball while telekinetically throwing
Jason around the boiler room in which the dream takes place. In fact, pinball sound
effects are heard on the soundtrack as Jason’s body is slammed from one corner of
the boiler room to another. When Jason’s body finally loses its momentum and
begins to free-fall, Freddy quips: “Ohh...tilt.”

Lori does not realize that the boy being tormented by the other children is Jason
until she tries to save him from drowning. Once she realizes that it is Jason, surprise
registers on her face. Her surprise could be in regards to her empathy for him as a
result of “getting into his skin,” as it were.

In fact, the Reward stage does not occur until after the Resurrection stage. Recall
once again Vogler’s suggestion that the stages of The Hero’s Journey “can be deleted,
added to, and drastically shuffled without losing any of their power” (p. 30).

In Vogler’s outline, the climax generally takes place in the Resurrection stage (p.
232). However, I believe that the film’s delayed crisis “bottlenecked” the flow of the
story, causing its climax to be delayed as well, which is why it occurs during the
Reward stage.

Having viewed Freddy vs Jason twice in crowded theaters during its opening
weekend, the audience reaction to the explosion is my most vivid memory. Both
times, people cheered, clapped and whistled during the climax.
The Dream World theory would help explain how Jason is able to grip Freddy’s head in his right hand even though his fingers are partially severed.

I purposely separate the prologue section from the three-act structure of the story. Vogler first introduces the idea of a prologue within his discussion of the Ordinary World stage, which begins act one. However, he suggests that if a story begins with a prologue, the prologue will come before the main body of the story, preceding the introduction of the hero character who we encounter afterward in The Ordinary World stage (p. 100-101).

I purposely separate the epilogue section from the three-act structure of the story. Vogler first introduces the idea of an epilogue within his discussion of the Return with the Elixir stage, which ends act three. However, he suggests that if a story ends with an epilogue, the epilogue will come after the body of the story, serving as a “postscript” (p. 256).

Here I am drawing from information presented on the commentary track for the deleted scene titled “Original Ending.” It is my contention that the original ending is indeed the film’s Return with the Elixir stage, as it contains elements that are representative of that stage. For instance, the focus of the scene returns to the original dramatic question raised in act one and tested in act two: Will Lori be reunited with her lost love Will? Indeed, the two do reunite, and their story seems to achieve the perfection of a happy ending, as they are about to consummate their reunion in Lori’s bedroom. Thus, the film appears to take on a circular form since it is ending where act one began (i.e., in Lori’s house). However, a surprise occurs when, in the midst of their lovemaking, Freddy’s claws emerge from the tips of Will’s fingers. Now, not only does their elixir of love change to an elixir of tragedy, but also the story ends with Freddy’s triumph, which is punctuated by: his laughter, Lori’s scream, and the up tempo music on the soundtrack.

It is possible that I have overlooked some intertextual links that are present in Freddy vs Jason. However, being a fan of these films, I included the links that are readily apparent to me.

Incidentally, an “Easter egg” is also the name given to hidden features that are “planted” somewhere within the various menu screens of some DVDs. Film and DVD aficionados take pleasure in finding and accessing these hidden features through the use of their remote control. While such Easter eggs are not unique to the DVDs for horror films, they are by no means uncommon to them. In fact, there are some Easter eggs found on the Freddy vs Jason DVD. Easter eggs are just one more
way through which the filmmakers and fans can extend the game enacted between them.

In *Freddy's Dead*, we see the shadows of the vigilante parents gathering outside the boiler room. We witness one of the parents throw a Molotov cocktail through the window of the boiler room. We also see Freddy make a pact with dream demons as the boiler room burns down around him. In *Freddy vs Jason*, we see Freddy adding a picture to his scrapbook of victims when the parents of Springwood surround the boiler room. We witness two of the parents throw Molotov cocktails through the windows of the boiler room, after which all the parents watch as it becomes engulfed in flames. The first episode of the short-lived television series *Freddy's Nightmares*, titled *No More Mr. Nice Guy* (1988), also depicts the vigilantism of the parents in a different manner. In it, the angry mob of parents tracks Freddy down to his boiler room, and he laughs maniacally as a character named Lt. Blocker pours gasoline all over him and sets him on fire.

These scenes include: (from part one) a frightened Tina awaking from a nightmare, Glenn being sucked into his waterbed, which then erupts into a fountain of blood, and Nancy screaming; (from part two) Freddy ripping his skull off and showing his brain to Jesse, Jesse's chest being sliced open while Freddy emerges from within his carcass, and Freddy's immolation; (from part three) the death of Phillip, the faces of Freddy's victims displayed in the burnt flesh of his chest, the snake-like Freddy attempting to devour Kristen whole, Jennifer having her head smashed through a television set, the incident in the hall of mirrors, and Freddy's defeat; (from part four) Freddy drowning Joey in his waterbed, and Freddy's defeat; (from part five) Alice shoving a metal rod through Freddy's mouth; and (from part six) Maggie, Tracy and Doc fighting back, striking Freddy with various objects.

I suppose it can be said with utmost certainty that Jason is in the dream world where Freddy can manipulate him. This fact, no matter how tenuous, accounts for any apparent confoundedness as to the location of Jason's remains in this scene.

The website "The Nightmare on Elm Street Companion" hosts Mangel's map at the following address: http://nightmareonelmstreetfilms.com/mapmain.html. It is also interesting to note that the webmaster of this site refutes Mangels' theory (in the website's FAQ section). The webmaster cites an image of the house said to belong to Freddy in *Freddy's Dead*, which clearly shows the address of the house to be 1428 Elm Street. This same website also hosts floor plans and photographs of the real house that was used during the filming of the series. It is located at 1428 Genesee Avenue, Hollywood, CA. The floor plans and photographs of the real house are found here: http://nightmareonelmstreetfilms.com/1428main.html.

The following is a quote from Sam Raimi's commentary track:
When we saw *The Hill’s Have Eyes*, Wes Craven’s great masterpiece of horror, we noticed within it that he had a *Jaws* poster that was ripped in half as though, ah, when the creatures that come into this trailer, that was one of the things that got torn asunder, and, ah, we thought it meant to say: ‘Folks, *Jaws* was just pop-horror — *this* is real terror.’ So, we put *The Hill’s Have Eyes* poster up on the wall and tore it in half...we wanted to say: ‘No, Wes, your picture’s just pop-horror — *this* is what it’s about.’

In *Freddy’s Dead*, we learn that Freddy himself parented a daughter, Catherine, who is slowly regaining memories of her childhood. When she confronts Freddy, he informs her: “You’re my blood...They took you away from me, but I made ‘em pay! I took all their children away from them, and now...time to start all over again...Every town has an Elm Street.”

Incidentally, this may also be the most controversial link in *Freddy vs Jason*. Many fans of the *Friday* series believe the claim that Jason is afraid of water to be unfounded and ludicrous. They point to numerous instances within the series where Jason is covered or submerged in water, and yet he does not appear to be afraid.

As a build up to his emasculation, Freddy was taunted earlier by the character Kia, in the Resurrection stage, when she states the following:

>`So you’re the one everyone’s afraid of? Tell me something. What kind of faggot runs around in a Christmas sweater? (Freddy hisses) I mean, come on. Get real. You’re not even scary...and let’s talk about the butter knives. What is with the butter knives? You trying to compensate for something? Maybe coming up a little short there between the legs, Mr. Krueger? I mean, you got these teensy-weensy little things, and Jason has got this big ‘ol thing...`

In fact, it is Lori who helps Will out of the lake after the explosion that takes place during the film’s delayed climax. She cradles him in her arms. She also supports him, holding him up as they leave the pier in the closing shot of the film.

The transcript of the BBC interview from which this quote originated is found at the website titled “The Most Complete Pink Floyd Page.” I accessed the transcript on April 9, 2006 at the following address:

[http://utopia.knoware.nl/users/ptr/pfloyd/interview/watw.html](http://utopia.knoware.nl/users/ptr/pfloyd/interview/watw.html)

To be fair, Barlow (2005) is outlining features that are commonly found on what he calls “special edition DVDs.” However, as will be apparent through the example of the DVD for *Freddy vs Jason*, such features are not found solely on special edition
Barlow does admit that although "certain features are becoming definable for inclusion as part of the special edition DVD," such features "have not gelled into an expected apparatus for the authoritative DVD version of a film," and "viewers are beginning to demand more than merely a film, a commentary, and a trailer" (p. 79). While viewers may "demand" or expect more features on their DVD releases, they are also becoming aware of companies practicing "DVD double-dipping," which is "an industry term for releasing multiple versions of the same movie on disc" (Chaney, 2004, December 12, para. 4). For example, New Line Cinema announced:

its double-dipping plans [for the *Lord of the Rings* Trilogy] before any of those films appeared on DVD. That way you could buy the two-disc version (essentially a DVD of what you saw in the theater with some bonus features) or wait a few months and spend about $10 more for the four-disc extended edition (a longer version of the movie with a whole new set of extras) (Chaney, 2004, December 12, para. 9).

This practice of "double-dipping" specifically targets movie lovers, or "hard-core fans," who would be willing to buy more than one version of the same film just to have the extra features (Chaney, 2004, December 12, para. 12-13). For example, New Line Cinema recently re-released an "infinifilm" version of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984/2006), the packaging of which beckons viewers to "go beyond the movie...with compelling features placing you in control of a unique experience." Infinifilm is a DVD brand designed by New Line Cinema. According to the brand's website, infinifilm DVDs allow their users to: "Explore. Escape. Interact. Take your movie-watching experience to a whole new level and discover the fascinating facts and intriguing stories surrounding your favorite films" (infinifilm, 2007)! Notice how the language used on both the website and packaging material evokes interaction and the viewers' desire to surpass the fourth wall, as it were: to "go beyond the movie." Barlow suggests, "more than just being a conveyance for movies, [DVDs are] becoming a whole new means of viewing films, of interacting with them, and learning about them" (p. 27). I suggest that, as with motion pictures and videocassette tapes, DVDs have become a new means for receivers to interact with producers.

The two-part Fangoria magazine article already provides a typed record, as the article is transcribed for the viewer on the television screen. The viewer accesses the separate "pages," or screens rather, of the article by using the arrow buttons on his or her remote control.

The person I hired to transcribe the DVD special features is a fellow Sociology graduate student at Western Michigan University named Lisa Thorn. Lisa is listed on Western Michigan University's Graduate College website as one of six independent...
contractors who provide editing and word processing services such as transcription. Upon contacting her, I found out that she now works for a company called Prima Proof that specializes in document formatting, editing and transcription. Prima Proof’s website is located here: http://www.primaproof.com/index.htm

lxix Statements that are of no discernable use are those that represent “noise.” For instance, the conversation occurring between Robert Englund, Ken Kirzinger and Ronny Yu during the filmmaker commentary might stray away from the intended subject matter (i.e., the film and various aspects associated with it). If this occurs, I will place such statements in the designated out pile, as they are of no discernable use.

lx Knowing the scene in question, I can attest to the fact that the rather inconspicuous leaves were featured briefly in a wide-angle shot, dotting the road that Freddy and Blake stood upon. After reviewing the scene once again, I found that the instance in which the leaves part occurs within the span of two seconds (19:42 – 19:44), and only for a fraction of that time do the leaves actually move (perhaps the length of a frame: one twenty-fourth of a second).

lx As stated in the “Why They Still Scare Us” section of the Behind the Bloodbath documentary on the film’s official website.

lxii As stated in the “Telling the Tale” section of the Behind the Bloodbath documentary on the film’s official website.

lxiii As stated in the Fangoria article found in the special features section of disc two.

lxiv As stated in the “Where They Came From” section of the Behind the Bloodbath documentary on the film’s official website.

lxv As stated in the “Why They Kill” section of the Behind the Bloodbath documentary on the film’s official website.

lxvi I must make a further note in regards to the “blasphemous” idea of having Jason drive a vehicle. This idea is so outlandish that, when discussing Jason’s slowness on the film’s commentary track, Englund jokes that Jason “only moves slow when he’s on camera, then I think he’s booking around town...in the ‘Jason mobile.’” Moreover, author Pat Cadigan took some heat from members of Friday the 13th: The Forum for having Jason drive in her novel. She, along with other authors of recent novels featuring Jason’s character, visited the forum to gauge fan response. The following is one of the posts she made in the forum:

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I lurked for a while before I let anyone know that I was here and it was an eye-opening experience—in a really good way. I loved the way the readers talked about the books, even when they were being critical of some choice I had made—e.g., Jason driving. (Gang, I hereby promise that I will never, ever have Jason drive a motor vehicle of any kind ever again—unless, to paraphrase Joe Bob Briggs, it is absolutely vital to the plot. *chuckle* No, really now, I won't do it. I'll get him a chauffeur instead. *chuckle*)

(Cadigan, 2005, March 26).

I checked Videohound’s Horror Show: 999 Hair-Raising, Hellish, and Humorous Movies (1998) and noticed that Englund has mistakenly labeled Frankenstein Meets the WolfMan as “Frankenstein Meets the Werewolf.” Englund is also incorrect to suggest that these films were released in the ‘30s. Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein was released in 1948, and Frankenstein Meets the WolfMan was released in 1942 (Mayo, pp. 2 & 139).

Currently, a Google search using the term “Friday the 13th” results in a link to Friday the 13th: The Website as its number one result.

Currently, a Google search using the term “Freddy vs Jason” results in a link to Friday the 13th: The Website as its number eleven result. However, it is important to note that the changing nature of the Internet effects Google’s search results. I seem to remember that when I searched for “Freddy vs Jason” back in 2003 the link to Friday the 13th: The Website ranked much higher in Google’s results, although how high in the results I cannot say for sure. It is also interesting to note that Matt Hills also references the website’s message forum in his text The Pleasures of Horror (2005). However, he refers to it as “the ‘Freddy vs. Jason’ message forum (www.fridaythel3thforum.com)” (p. 82).

O’Brien also sent me an Excel document containing the ages of the forum’s then 1,162 registered users. I derive from this document that he average age of the forum’s registered users at the time was twenty-four.

I accessed both parts of the interview on November 20, 2006, and they are found at the following web addresses:

A list of the administrators and moderators is located at the following web address:
http://www.fridaythe13thforum.com/showgroups.php?
Although it is a subforum of *Friday the 13th: The Forum*, it is labeled and referred to as the “Freddy vs Jason Forum.” Therefore, I will refer to it by this titled throughout the remainder of the dissertation.

The structure of *Friday the 13th: The Forum* changed again in November 2005. The forum is still divided into the two main sections: Community and Discussion. However, the subsections of these two main sections are no longer the same as those I outline and “map” in appendices R and S. Such changes reflect the continual fluctuating character of the Internet. The best way to know what the current structure of *Friday the 13th: The Forum* is, is to visit its homepage at the following web address:


These numbers were current at the time of data collection on August 2, 2005, but have grown since then, and continue to grow each day.

After investigating, I found that the 107 threads in the “Freddy vs Jason Forum” spanned a total of nine subjects: Forty threads (37%) involved “The Film” in general, or a specific element intrinsic to it as a textual narrative, such as its characters. Eighteen threads (17%) involved “The Fans” or their activities, such as their creation of *Freddy vs Jason* scripts and trailers. Fourteen threads (13%) involved “The Filmmakers,” such as its actors and director. Twelve threads (11%) involved “Other Media,” such as the film’s novel and, yet unreleased, video game. Eight threads (7%) involved discussions pertaining to the possibility of “Freddy vs Jason 2.” Five threads (5%) involved “Other Movies” such as *Alien vs Predator* and *State of Emergency*. Four threads (4%) involved Freddy or Jason “Masks,” one of which was an original mask from the film that reportedly sold for $2,200 on Ebay. Three threads (3%) involved the film’s DVD. Lastly, three threads (3%) involved the film’s advertising. See appendix T for a table listing the 107 threads in the Freddy vs Jason Forum. This table displays the following information: The threads’ subject matter, their start and end dates, the number of days the threads span, the total number of posts in each thread, and percentage of all posts that each thread contains.

The numbers for each of these categories are as follows: 44 threads contain (2,495) posts dated after the film’s release, 24 threads contain (6,864) posts dated before the film’s release, and four threads contain (484) posts that are dated both before and after the film’s release.

As stated in the previous footnote, reducing the data to those threads containing posts dated both before and after the film’s release resulted in a mere 484 posts for analysis.

For instance, the overwhelming majority of posts in three of these four threads are dated before the film’s release: thread #44 has 39 (95%) of its 41 posts dated
before the film’s release, thread #72 has 17 (94%) of its 18 posts dated before the film’s release, and thread #10 has 147 (79%) of its 39 posts dated before the film’s release. Also, thread #7 has 187 (78%) of its 239 posts dated after the film’s release.

xc This number is rounded up from 1,733.58.

xci I saved these 1,245 pages of data in eighteen separate Word documents. All posts are single-spaced within these documents, and there is a double-space occurring between each post. Also, the text font for each of these documents is Times New Roman size 12.

xcii This number is rounded up from 95.87.

xciii The profile, and apparently the entire account, for the user with the most posts in the purposive sample (“movielover”) were deleted from the forum’s database. This deletion is reflected in the amount of missing data for that particular poster. However, that person’s posts are still accessible on the forum, which is how I know how many post he or she made within the sample thread.

xciv The combined 13,443 posts of these “hardcore fans” represent 2% of the forum’s 627,143 total posts as of September 24, 2006.

xcv I determine the gender of the posters through the use of pronouns within posts referring to them, as well as the presence of any pictures in their user profiles. I also elicited the help of Brenna O’Brien, the forum’s Co-Administrator, in identify the gender of these members.

xcvi Note that, including those hardcore fans who gave fictitious answers in the location section of their user profile, half of them chose not to disclose their location. This does not count the missing data for “movielover” because there is no way of knowing if he or she included a description of his or her location before his or her account was deleted.

xcvii This is an important step because a lot of message forums allow their members to use such things as avatars (i.e., small images placed next to or under their user names) and emoticons (i.e., graphics of things like “smiley faces” that are used to convey emotion). The accumulation of these graphics can take up a tremendous amount of space when attempting to save a thread to the hard drive of one’s computer or on a portable electronic storage device.

xcviii Keywords and phrases include acronyms for words like New Line Cinema (NLC) or A Nightmare on Elm Street (NOES), as well as the first and/or last names of various filmmakers and characters. The titles of all the films in both series, and their abbreviated forms, also serve as keywords and phrases. Therefore, the “insider”
knowledge that comes with being a fan of these films is very helpful indeed. It allows me to recognize, for instance, the names of the many filmmakers and characters that are in some way associated with the seventeen films that make up the two combined franchises. Researchers without such insider knowledge would not be as adept at recognizing these triggers.

In regards to the *Nightmare* series, the hardcore fans did make a few statements pertaining to the house on Elm Street that is predominantly featured in the series, as well as the function of dream sequences to surprise or “trick” the audience. However, these statements are few and general in character. In regards to the *Friday* series, the hardcore fans did make statements regarding the film *Jason X*. However, the hardcore fans most often discussed New Line Cinema’s marketing of *Jason X* in comparison to their marketing of *Freddy vs Jason*. Therefore, I anticipate statements made by hardcore fans in regards to *Jason X* to appear within a theme subsumed under the “New Line Cinema” code.

Posts that are of no discernable use are posts that represent “noise.” The subject matter of these posts is not the intended subject of the thread (i.e., Freddy vs Jason), but rather some other tangential subject matter. As with all forms of conversation, the participants of a message board conversation can stray from the intended topic every now and then.

I quote from posts that hardcore fans composed in the “FvJ Discussion 1” thread throughout the following findings section. As is common with Internet message boards, proper grammar often times falls by the wayside. Therefore, I decide not to correct the hardcore fan’s grammar unless I feel it is particularly cumbersome for the reader to decipher. I include the original quoted material in an endnote for those instances where I “clean-up” a substantial portion of the quoted material.

As an aside, going into this section, I find it interesting to note the following piece of information relayed by Mark Swift (2003) in an interview that he granted the fans of the *Friday the 13th: The Forum*:

[I]t's amazing when you think that we didn't have a real big advertising campaign. Other movies this summer had marketing campaigns that cost more than *FvJ*'s production budget, and we opened bigger than a lot of them. I think *FvJ*'s box office says a lot about these characters, a lot about horror fans...and a lot about the power of the internet (para. 20).

The interview from which the above quote is taken happened on September 4th, 2003 and a transcript of it is found at the following address:
http://www.fridaythe13thfilms.com/saga/fvsj/shannonswift.html

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The Ghost’s original statement appeared as follows: “If they don’t start marketing FVJ soon I’m afraid it won’t do as well as it might if they market it much later.”

Movielover’s original statement appeared as follows: “I really hope that New Line markets this trailer property (sic). I hope they don’t just put it on another horror movie like House of 1000 corpses and then that’s it. . .Chances are anyone seeing something like 1000 corpses knows already about this movie. . .They need to market this to a bigger audience being an event film.”

WesReviews actually used the acronym LOTR in place of Lord of the Rings.

S-10 used the following acronyms for the words I placed in brackets within his statement I quoted: “LORT2” [Lord of the Rings 2], “FVJ” [Freddy vs Jason], and “NL” [New Line].

Movielover continues describing the negative effects of test screening by using examples of how the practice ruined many of the films in the horror franchise Halloween:

“Test screenings destroyed Halloween 6. . .Who knows what they did to Halloween 8. . .We still have not seen the original movie where Busta dies. . .Halloween 7 also had a better score and more character development before test screenings.”

The Ghost’s original statement appeared as follows:

Fuck it, if we are the ones who have an effect on the makers of this movie I’m going to express my opinions in laughter and applause. Nothing will hold me back, I’ve waited too damn long.

Earlier in the thread, PobodysNerfect suggested that he sees “quite a few test screenings, as does El Diablo, and we have people who give us tickets on a regular basis.” PobodysNerfect actually obtained tickets to the Freddy vs Jason test screening at another test screening (for the film Identity). His ability to attend test screenings peaked the interest of many of the forum’s members who wanted to know how they could do the same. In response, PobodysNerfect asked one member where he lived, stating:

I’m in Los Angeles. Every Friday and Saturday night, many NRG (National Research Group) employees hang out at theaters. . .and give tickets to anyone who walks by and looks interested when they ask if you want to see a free movie.
Later in the thread, PobodysNerfect describes what he expects the *Freddy vs Jason* test screening to be like based upon his prior experiences at test screenings for other films:

> [U]sually there are a bunch of seats taped off. These are for New Line execs, and for cast members who sneak in after the movie starts. . .before the movie starts, an employee of Movie View (the research group who hosts the test screenings) gets up and says “Thanks for coming out to see Freddy vs Jason, you’re the first audience to see it ever!” And everyone will applaud. He’ll explain that the music is temporary and that the effects aren’t complete. Then they’ll warn about recording devices (they also now have security guys scouring the theater during the show, thankfully, in case anyone is recording it).

PobodysNerfect made good on his promise to let the other members of the forum know how the test screening and focus group went. PobodysNerfect reported that there were only three guys in the focus group who did not like the film:

They said they weren’t fans, they thought that it was poorly acted, and they thought that it took way to (sic) long to get to the actual “Freddy vs. Jason” parts. Those were their complaints. The focus group guy said, “Well, does anyone else agree with them”? Nobody raised their hands. The guy who didn’t like it said jokingly, “Are you guys going to attack me on my way to my car?” There was a woman there who said she wasn’t a big horror fan but she rated the movie “good” and said that it was far better than she ever expected it to be.

In a later post, PobodysNerfect clarified that the three guys who did not like the film were:

black guys in their mid to late twenties and they were all sitting together. I think they all came to the movie together. They actually rated the movie “Fair,” but that is the second lowest rating you can give it on the score cards. They were really uncomfortable sitting in between everyone because everyone was saying “That was great!” . . .the guys were pretty much on their own in the way they were thinking. I don’t know why they even came if they weren’t fans.

In the broadest sense, “spoilers” refer to anything that reveals too much information about the film, particularly in regards to its ending and other key elements of its plot, to a person who has not yet seen it, thus spoiling it for him or her.

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"Bootlegs" (i.e., illegal recordings of a film distributed without consent) can also spoil or ruin a film via the Internet, because people who view such bootlegs sometimes post spoiler-riddled material on the World Wide Web where fans unwittingly stumble upon it, much to their dismay.

In fact, those attending the test screening were unsure exactly what they could say on the forum once they got back. For instance, PobodysNerfect, who promised to let everyone know how the test screening went, asked: "Should I not even mention the screening on Thursday after I see it? I mean, what EXACTLY can I say and not say?" Here are a few suggestions he received from other hardcore fans:

Cecil:
If it was up to me... I would say no plot spoilers. Mood, tone, setting, all that is fine. I personally do not want to know a THING about the actual script or what will unfold in the movie until August 15th. Even if it is in spoiler tags, I know I'll be tempted to read them even though I know I don't want to.

Movielover:
Don't post anything about the actual movie. No spoilers. Maybe don't even talk about setting incase (sic) some don't know where the movie will take place. But, I don't think it would be a problem if you posted what you thought of the movie, the tone (is it scary, darker, comedy), and maybe how long it is.

Cody:
Don't post spoilers like in-depth scene descriptions or give out plot points that aren't already known by pretty much everybody... a review would be fine if it were to cover things like your personal feelings about the film, how long it was, the tone, how Kirzinger was as Jason, etc.

In the end, those who did see the test screening opted to use "spoiler tags" on some of their statements. This meant that posters who wanted to read the potential spoilers had to highlight such statements with their cursor in order to see them. Eventually, even the practice of using spoiler tags was not enough, as Thac, a hardcore fan and one of the forum's moderators, stated:

I appreciate that you guys are using the spoiler tags but maybe such specific discussions between those who attended the screening are better off in e-mail or IM ("instant messaging").

A duplication of New Line's response to Cecil's e-mail follows:
The trailer will be coming out next week. Thanks for your question. See you at the movies! New Line Cinema

cxiv A duplication of New Line's response to WesReviews' e-mail follows:

Hello! Thank you for your interest in Freddy versus Jason! In regards to purchasing official teaser posters, keep checking back to our online store at www.newline.com. You will be able to purchase them as soon as they are available online! Thanks again and see you at the movies! New Line Cinema

cxv Take, for instance, this long-winded tirade:

The problem being is that New Line ISN'T telling us SHIT! That's why we clamour for every piece of news or rumor because we know next to nothing about the film. Robert Englund has given the same damn interview about six times now that describes the same two scenes OVER and OVER again. If New Line even had some acknowledgement of the film's existence on their website, that would be SOMETHING, but they don't. They won't tell us a "yes" or "no" concerning ONE question on this whole film.

When will it be released? When is www.freddy-vs-jason.com opening? What about posters or the trailer? Whose composing the score for the film? Who are the producers? Is Jason Bateman cast as Tommy Jarvis? Is Lisa Wilcox returning as Alice Johnson? Anybody else returning from previous films?

Have they answered even ONE of these questions? No. We ask so many questions, and they can't even answer one of them. People call the front desk, they don't know anything. You email them, they don't reply. You ask the Englunds, they're uninformed. I can understand running a tight ship, and trying to keep things under wraps, but these aren't probing questions. It's simply marketing & casting information. That's it, and they won't confirm or deny any of it. They just ignore the questions and keep to themselves. THAT is why we jump on everything because until New Line comes out of their Hollywood hole to answer us, we have nothing to go on except "the word on the 'net."

cxvi A duplication of New Line Cinema's response to Nick Michalak's e-mail follows:
Thank you for your interest in the film. At this point we are unable to confirm the final soundtrack, as the directors are still in the process of post production and finalizing the score. Some preliminary themes have included heavy metal and electronic dance tracks. Further information will be released as it becomes available on the official website. Thank (sic) for your interest! New Line Cinema

cxiv A duplication of Nancy Englund’s response to TheGhost’s e-mail follows:

The movie is completed, New Line would be foolish to release it as anything but a summer movie, but who knows. As far as we know, it is still intended for June 12, 2003. Nancy

cxviii A list of the actual cast and crewmembers discussed by the hardcore fans in the thread “FvJ Discussion 1” include: (a) Sean Cunningham, (b) Robert Englund, (c) Katharine Isabelle, (d) Monica Keena, (e) Ken Kirzinger, (f) Kelly Rowland, (g) Damian Shannon, (h) Bob Shaye, (i) Mark Swift, and (j) Ronny Yu. A list of potential cast and crewmembers discussed by the hardcore fans in the thread “FvJ Discussion 1” include: (a) Jason Bateman, (b) Wes Craven, (c) Don Davis, (d) Corey Feldman, (e) Danielle Harris, (f) Kane Hodder, (g) Harry Manfredini, (h) Betsy Palmer, and (i) Lisa Wilcox.

cxix The “WHERE ARE THEY NOW” section of Friday the 13th: The Website (1998-2007b) indicates that Hodder “is the only person to have played Jason Voorhees more than once - his 4th and final time was in the recent Jason X (para. 2).” The website also indicates that Hodder “is so devoted to the role of our machete killer that he had the word ‘KILL!’ tattooed to the inside of his lower lip (para. 2)” Hodder’s “WHERE ARE THEY NOW” page is located here: http://www.fridaythe13thfilms.com/saga/part7/kanehodder.html

Friday the 13th: The Website (1998-2007a) also provides a picture of the tattoo at the following address: http://www.fridaythe13thfilms.com/saga/part7/kanekill.jpg

cxx If you recall, during my process of selecting a purposive sample of statements to analyze, I noted that the “Kane Controversy Discussion Archive” was the second largest pertinent thread with a total of 1,045 posts. This perhaps gives some indication of how much of a “sore spot” the loss of Hodder was amongst the fans.

cxiii S-10’s original statement appeared as follows:

i agree i DOUBT it will hurt the film she cant be worse then anyother F13 actor and she’s famous. .I was VERY happy when they announced her in the film.
This finding surprises me because, as a fan, I do not care for Jason’s new look. I find it to be overly generic and unimaginative in comparison to some of the earlier versions of Jason, especially the zombie version seen in *Friday the 13th Part VII: The New Blood* (1988).

It is worth noting that, although most fans in this thread consider the drive time to be a major plot hole of *Freddy vs Jason*, it does not stop them from attempting to explain it away. In fact, they approach it much like a story problem one would find on the SAT, taking into account things like the dosage of tranquilizer Jason is injected with (based on the label of one of bottles of tranquilizer that is briefly glimpsed in the film), as well as how many times Jason is injected with it. With this information in mind, one fan suggests:

Less than 5 CC’s of that shit diluted would knock out a normal human being for 8 hours. For Jason, Freddy filled two 1000CC syringes and jammed them into his fucking neck. You do the math...plus they kept pumping the shit into him during the car ride.

Moreover, since it is largely assumed that Crystal Lake is in New Jersey, another fan even used Mapquest to gauge the distance between the state capitals in New Jersey and Ohio, which he reported to be an estimated distance of 501.87 miles, and an estimated travel time of 7 hours and 59 minutes.

Nudity is a third element that I considered placing under the “Other Elements” heading due to the number of times that the hardcore fans asked those who attended the test screening if it was featured in the film. However, since it was often phrased as a question rather than a statement expressing an expectation that nudity would be, or rather should be in the film, I chose not to include it as a theme. In general, the fans seemed to be most concerned with the following question: “Were there tits?” While some of the hardcore fans asked this same question, others suggested that nudity was not that important. For instance, Movielover suggested: “I don’t mind some nudity...I just don’t want it done to a point where it’s really trashy like the Jerry Springer show.” DedKid stated: “Personally, I wouldn’t care either way,” he continues, “a random set of bodacious tatas can be a nice shift in imagery, but pointless nudity can get annoying.” WesReviews simply had this to say: “Less sex, more fighting!”

I feel I should clarify something at the start of this section for the sake of those who are unfamiliar with the *Friday* series. The original *Friday the 13th* had a very distinctive sound effect, or riff, that represented Jason’s voice in his mother’s head during her crazed murder spree. Although the riff has a very distinctive sound, it takes on various different forms when people try to translate it to the written word. Oftentimes it is written as either: ki-ki-ki-ma-ma or ch-ch-ch-ma-ma-ma. The riff
was created by composer Harry Manfredini, and would later become heavily associated with both the Friday series and the Jason's character. Manfredini had this to say in regards to the riff he created:

I looked at Mrs. Voorhees as someone who heard voices that made her kill. At the end of the film you see Betsy Palmer mouthing the words, ‘Kill her, mommy’ which kind of reveals everything, and she’s using a child’s voice too. Really, ki-ki-ki-ma-ma-ma represents her saying ‘kill, mommy’ and I created the sound by talking into a microphone (Grove, p. 39).

I accessed this article on February 1, 2007 from the following web address: http://www.ew.com/ew/article/0,,476498,00.html

For instance, consider the following five subject lines as examples: (1) Where was Jason in the beginning of FvsJ, (2) Jason’s jacket, (3) Did You Notice? (References), (4) How far is Crystal Lake from Springwood, and (5) Special FX.

The database corruption occurred on January 16th, 2005. See appendix V for a copy of O’Brien’s post regarding the forum’s database corruption and the threads and posts that went missing as a result.

I feel I should mention that, had I not joined the forum until sometime after its database corruption on January 16th 2005, it is quite possible that I would have never known of its occurrence. This is assuming, of course, that I would have somehow missed O’Brien’s thread regarding what had happened, which is also quite possible since there are so many active posts and threads on the forum. Moreover, ironically, while searching for a link to O’Brien’s thread on February 5, 2007, for citation purposes, I could no longer find it. I emailed O’Brien to ask for help in locating the thread, but she had similar troubles finding it:

Hmmm... that is very strange. I looked around as well and couldn’t find mention of it. Sometimes threads do just disappear. I couldn’t even get to it through archive.org... [perhaps] use whatever notation you might have used before for “thread no longer exists” or something similar. Sorry I can’t be of more use, but I’m hoping that your committee will pay more attention to your stellar research and writing than a few citations (B. O’Brien, personal communication, February 5, 2007).

The lesson I have learned from this incident is that researchers relying on available data from on-line message boards, and other venues in the void of cyberspace where “[s]ometimes threads do just disappear,” should take every precaution to back up
their data. It can vanish in the blink of an eye. Luckily, I saved a copy of O’Brien’s letter, but I can no longer provide a link to it as it “no longer exists.”

Indeed, many hardcore fans expressed an interest in attending the test screening. If you recall, these same hardcore fans repeatedly asked their peer, who would be attending the test screening, how he obtained tickets. He informed them that he obtained the tickets at the test screening for the film *Identity*. Furthermore, he stated that he lives in “Los Angeles,” and that employees of the National Research Group:

hang out at theaters...and give tickets to anyone who walks by and looks interested when they ask if you want to see a free movie.

If this is a common method of generating an audience for a test screening, is it any wonder why fans often complain about the changes made to their favorite films at the behest of such a haphazardly assembled set of spectators? To be fair, I cannot be certain that this is how the audience for the test screening of *Freddy vs Jason* was selected. However, it is interesting to note that *Identity*, the film at which the hardcore fan obtained his tickets to the test screening of *Freddy vs Jason*, is owned by Columbia Pictures (a subsidiary of Sony Pictures Entertainment), not New Line Cinema (a subsidiary of Time Warner). This scenario causes me to wonder how involved these film production companies are in the selection of audiences for the test screening of their films? Is it possible that they leave such important decisions up to research groups that they hire, expecting the job to be done right? Regardless, the film’s test screening is just one form of audience response that the filmmakers received. I discuss other forms of response that the filmmakers were aware of in the next section.

I feel the need to remind readers that this particular hardcore fan sent a second email to New Line Cinema, to which they did in fact respond.

Judging by the e-mail responses that the hardcore fans received, this did in fact appear to be the case: those responding were not New Line “higher-ups,” and they did not always answer the questions adequately. For instance, in two of the three email responses to hardcore fans, the New Line representative stated that he or she could not confirm certain information. In one email, the New Line representative suggested that the hardcore fan should “keep checking back to our online store at www.newline.com.” Similarly, in the other email, the New Line representative suggested, “further information will be released as it becomes available on the official website.”

I feel I should also note Robert Englund’s statement on the film’s commentary track indicating that he received an email from a “kid” asking him a question about the film’s final scene. However, Englund never mentions whether or not he bothered to email the kid back.
New Line’s actions post-*Freddy vs Jason* suggest to me that they have yet to listen to the fans. For instance, Ronny Yu was asked, in an interview in September of 2006, if he would consider directing *Freddy vs Jason 2* if New Line decides to do the sequel? His response was as follows:

> Yeah, they've been talking about it, and they even talk about bringing Ash [from Sam Raimi's "Evil Dead" movies] into the equation, and I thought it's terrific. It's almost like an updated version of "The Good, The Bad and the Ugly." If they really want to do it and they want me to do it, I'd love to do it. It would be a lot of fun (Yu, as quoted in Douglas, 2006, September 18).

The above statement comes from an interview at ComingSoon.net titled “Exclusive: *Fearless* Director Ronny Yu.” I accessed this interview on January 20, 2007. It is located at the following web address:

If this project were to come to fruition, it would go against the wishes of the hardcore fans who are adamant that they do not want a sequel to *Freddy vs Jason*, but would rather “see separate, individual sequels to each franchise.” Perhaps more disturbing to fans of the *Friday* series is New Line’s plans to create a remake or re-imagining of the original *Friday the 13th*. This news led Blake Washer, Brenna O’Brien’s husband and Co-Administrator of *Friday the 13th: The Forum*, to post “An Open Letter to New Line Cinema, Platinum Dunes, and Friday the 13th Fans” on March 14th, 2006. In it, Washer argues that a remake is “the one thing that could finally kill Jason” and the *Friday* series, because “the series has a definite mythos and deconstructing Jason unravels that legend.” He further states: “It’s hard to see the purpose of rewriting twenty-five years of history.” Brenna O’Brien echoed her husband’s sentiments in one of the 593 messages that fans posted to Blake’s poignant letter:

> Even with JGTH, Jason X, and FvsJ it still had continuity. Everything flowed from one movie to the next, even if it took some wild turns. If there's a restart then there's no timeline, there's no history, it's just ignoring the story and the character that we know and love.

> If there's a remake, then we're done. Our site is about the *series* and the legacy of Jason. If they are going to restart the franchise, then someone else can restart another site. We'll just remain up for historical reference to the timeline that came before (O’Brien, 2006, March 15).
I attached a copy of Blake's letter for your consideration in appendix W. Its resultant thread of 593 posts (so far), which I accessed on January 20, 2007, can be found at the following web address:

In fact, I am aware of particular threads on *Friday the 13th: The Forum* in which the fans attempt to account for, or disprove, Jason's mental disability, as well as his fear of water. For instance, in a thread titled "Reasons why I think Jason isn't 'retarded' at all," the initial poster argues that "there is nothing canon, in the films, to say he is." Similarly, in a thread titled "Water-Phobia???," many posters have explained away Jason's fear of water as a wholly subconscious fear that Freddy was able to unlock in the dream world, which accounts for why Jason does not exhibit such a fear in the conscious, waking-world.

To be fair, the hardcore fan who posted this quote did not include a link or cite a source, so I cannot be sure if Yu actually made this comment, or if it is indeed a product of the Internet's rumor mill.

Recall that I did find evidence of the filmmakers' "favoritism" toward Freddy's character in my textual analysis of the film. This evidence included the manner in which the film's prologue details Freddy's back-story and outlines his plan to manipulate Jason. I argued that such an emphasis on Freddy's character made it his story from the very beginning, and situated Jason as merely Freddy's pawn.

However, many of these pages were only partially filled. Indeed, some pages contained only one or two paragraphs—particularly those transcripts from the mini-documentaries on the film's official website that were close to one minute in length.

One solution to this problem would have been to look for more sources of available data containing statements made by the filmmakers such as, for instance, more interviews with the filmmakers in magazines like Fangoria.

Perhaps the fact that my dataset of filmmaker statements originated from within six special feature segments, whereas my dataset of hardcore fan statements originated from within a single thread, had something to do with the number of typificatory schemes that I was able to generate from them. In other words, perhaps the filmmakers tended to discuss more topics over the course of six special features segments than the hardcore fans did over the course of one long thread. To offset this imbalance, I could have analyzed a set of shorter threads composed by the fans rather than focusing upon one of the longest.

I accessed this website on January 24, 2007. It is found at the following web address:
I will, however, engage in one quality check suggested by King, namely defending my "analytical decisions to a constructively critical 'expert panel,'" which to me is akin to a dissertation defense. I should also state that I did implicitly engage in yet another quality check identified by King called an "audit trail." As King suggests, template analysis lends itself to the creation of an audit trail because:

It is relatively straightforward to display successive versions of the template accompanied by commentary on what changes were made at each stage and why.

If you recall, in chapters three and four, I attempted to display the successive versions of my templates, and stated why I made the changes that I did at each stage. King’s quality checks are found at the following web address, which I accessed on January 24, 2007 to retrieve the wording of the above quotes:
http://www.hud.ac.uk/hhs/research/template_analysis/technique/qualityreflexivity.htm
Appendix A

Box Office Grosses for Each Film
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<tr>
<th>Box Office Grosses for the <em>Friday the 13th</em> Series</th>
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<td><em>Friday the 13th</em> (1980)</td>
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<td><em>Friday the 13th Part 3</em> (1982)</td>
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<td><em>Friday the 13th: The Final Chapter</em> (1984)</td>
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<td><em>Friday the 13th Part V: A New Beginning</em> (1985)</td>
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<td><em>Friday the 13th Part VI: Jason Lives</em> (1986)</td>
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<td><em>Friday the 13th Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan</em> (1989)</td>
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<td><em>Jason X</em> (2002)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL FRANCHISE GROSS</strong></td>
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<th>Box Office Grosses for the <em>Nightmare on Elm Street</em> Series</th>
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<td><em>A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors</em> (1987)</td>
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<td><em>A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master</em> (1988)</td>
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<td><em>A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child</em> (1989)</td>
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<td><em>Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare</em> (1991)</td>
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<td><em>Wes Caven's New Nightmare</em> (1994)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL FRANCHISE GROSS</strong></td>
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<th>Box office Gross for <em>Freddy vs Jason</em></th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Freddy vs Jason</em> (2003)</td>
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<th>Combined Grosses</th>
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<td><strong>COMBINED GROSS</strong> of the <em>Friday</em> and <em>Nightmare</em> Franchises**</td>
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<td><strong>COMBINED GROSS including</strong> <em>Freddy vs Jason</em></td>
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* This data was found on the Internet Movie Data Base <www.imdb.com>, accessed on February 4th, 2005.
Appendix B

Types of Interaction and Their Distinguishing Characteristics
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<tr>
<th>Interactional characteristics</th>
<th>Face-to-face interaction</th>
<th>Mediated interaction</th>
<th>Mediated quasi-interaction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Space-time constitution</td>
<td>Context of co-presence; shared spatial-temporal reference system</td>
<td>Separation of contexts; extended availability in time and space</td>
<td>Separation of contexts; extended availability in time and space</td>
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<td>Range of symbolic cues</td>
<td>Multiplicity of symbolic cues</td>
<td>Narrowing of the range of symbolic cues</td>
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<td>Action orientation</td>
<td>Oriented towards specific others</td>
<td>Oriented towards specific others</td>
<td>Oriented towards an indefinite range of potential recipients</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dialogical/monological</td>
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<td>Dialogical</td>
<td>Monological</td>
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(Adapted from Thompson, 1995, p. 85)
Appendix C

Synopses for Each Film in the *Friday the 13th* Series
Friday the 13th

Terror and suspense abound in this 24-hour nightmare of blood. Camp Crystal Lake has been shuttered for 20 years due to several vicious and unsolved murders. The camp's new owner and several young counselors are readying the property for reopening despite warnings of a "death curse" by local residents. The curse proves true on Friday the 13th as one by one each of the counselors is stalked by a violent killer. This film is widely acclaimed for its horrifying and creative murder sequences [Cunningham, S. (Producer), & Cunningham, S. (Director) (1980/2004)].

Friday the 13th Part 2

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to camp...here's even more heart-pounding terror. Five Years after the horrible bloodbath at Camp Crystal Lake, all that remains is the legend of Jason Voorhees and his demented mother, who had murdered seven camp counselors. At the nearby summer camp, the new counselors are unconcerned about the warnings to stay away from the infamous site. Carefree, the young people roam the area, no sensing the ominous lurking presence. One by one, they are attacked and brutally slaughtered. Suspense and screams abound in this compelling thriller [Miner, S. (Producer), & Miner, S. (Director). (1981/2004)].

Friday the 13th Part 3

An idyllic summer turns into a nightmare of unspeakable terror for yet another group of naïve counselors. Ignoring Camp Crystal Lake's bloody legacy, one by one they fall victim to the maniacal Jason who stalks them at every turn...Friday the 13th, Part 3 will have you frozen with fear, as Jason finds his way into your living room [Mancuso, F. (Producer), & Miner, S. (Director). (1982/2004)].

Friday the 13th: The Final Chapter

The body count continues in this vivid thriller, the fourth – but not final – story in the widely successful Friday the 13th series. Jason, Crystal Lake's least popular citizen returns to wreak havoc in Friday the 13th – The Final Chapter. After his revival in a hospital morgue, the hockey-masked murderer fixes his vengeful attention on the Jarvis family and a group of hitherto carefree teenagers. Young Tommy Jarvis is an aficionado of horror films with a special talent for masks and makeup. Has the diabolical Jason finally met his match [Mancuso, F. (Producer), & Zito, J. (Director). (1984/2004)]?
Friday the 13th Part V: A New Beginning

Jason is back, hockey mask and all. And he’s up to his old maniacal tricks in *Friday the 13th Part V – A New Beginning*. This time he seems to have set his sights on the young patients at a secluded halfway house. And more than a few of his teen targets end up in half, in quarters...you name it, Jason does it. This is the fifth scary installment in the *Friday the 13th* saga. If you liked the first four, and think you’re up to getting back on Jason’s bloody trail, you’ll love *Friday the 13th Part V – A New Beginning* [Silver, T. (Producer), & Steinmann, D. (Director). (1985/2004)].

Friday the 13th, Part VI: Jason Lives

As a child, Tommy Jarvis did what many others died trying to do. He killed Jason Voorhees, the mass murderer who terrorized the residents of Crystal Lake. But now, years later, Tommy is tormented by the fear that maybe Jason isn’t really dead. So, Tommy and a friend go to the cemetery to dig up Jason’s grave. Unfortunately for Tommy, (and very unfortunately for his friend), instead of finding a rotting corpse, they discover a well-rested Jason who comes back from the dead for another bloody rampage in *Friday the 13th, Part VI: Jason Lives* [Behrs, D. (Producer), & McLoughlin, T. (Director). (1986/2004)].

Friday the 13th Part VII: The New Blood

Ever since homicidal maniac Jason Voorhees got trapped in chains at the bottom of Crystal Lake, the nearby summer camp has operated without a hitch...without a murder. But one of this season’s happy campers has brought along a deadly secret. Tina Shepherd can see the future and levitate objects. Her doctor knows just how dangerous telekinesis can be, but he’s out to exploit her, not help her. And now it’s too late. Tina has accidentally unchained Jason from his watery grave – and the bloodbath is underway. Tina’s special powers are here only hope for survival. But what chance does a teenage girl have against an axe-wielding maniac [Paterson, I. (Producer), & Beuchler, J. C. (Director). (1988/2004)].

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Friday the 13th part VIII: Jason takes Manhattan

The Big Apple’s in big trouble, as indestructible psycho-fiend Jason Voorhees hits the road to New York City – and paints the town “red.” After a shocking return from beyond the grave, the diabolical Jason ships out aboard a teen-filled “love boat” bound for New York, which he soon transforms into the ultimate voyage of the damned. Then one of his terrified victims escapes into the nightmarish maze of Manhattan’s subways and sewers, only to confront Jason one final time [Cheveldave, R. (Producer), & Hedden, R. (Director). (1989/2004)].

Jason Goes to Hell

Jason Voorhees, the living, breathing essence of evil, is back for another fierce fling. Tracked down and blown to bits by a special FBI task force, everyone now assumes that he’s finally dead. But everybody assumes wrong. Jason has been reborn with the bone-chilling ability to assume the identity of anyone he touches. The terrifying truth is he could be anywhere. Or anybody. In this shocking, blood soaked installment to Jason’s carnage-ridden reign of terror, the secret of his unstoppable killing instinct is finally revealed. And once you know the chilling facts, you’ll see him in your nightmares. And he’ll see you in hell [Cunningham, S. (Producer), & Marcus, A. (Director). (1993/2002)]!

Jason X

If you’re looking for terror, here comes a perfect ten. In the year 2455, on a routine training mission, a team of students is about to learn a terrifying lesson. Through the years, Jason Voorhees has claimed over 200 victims. Now, the legendary killer from Crystal Lake is back, hurtling through space and hunting new prey. Jason X is a nerve-shredding thriller loaded with spectacular special effects, hi-tech weapons, and new ways to die [Cunningham, S. (Producer), & Isaac, J. (Director). (2002)].

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Appendix D

Synopses for Each Film in the *Nightmare on Elm Street* Series
A Nightmare on Elm Street

Nancy (Heather Langenkamp) is having grisly nightmares. Something monstrous wants to kill her. Meanwhile, her high school friends, who are having the very same dream, are being slaughtered in their sleep by the hideous fiend of their shared nightmare. When the police ignore her explanation, she herself must confront the killer in his shadowy realm [Shaye, R. (Producer), & Craven, W. (Director). (1984/1999)].

A Nightmare on Elm Street 2: Freddy’s Revenge

Five years have passed since Freddy Krueger (Robert Englund) was sent howling back to hell. But now, a new kid on Elm Street is being haunted every night by gruesome visions of the deadly dream stalker. And if his twisted soul takes possession of the boy’s body, Freddy will return from the dead to wreak blood murder and mayhem upon the entire town [Shaye, R. (Producer), & Sholder, J. (Director). (1985/1999)].

A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors

The last of the Elm Street kids are now at a psychiatric ward where Freddy haunts their dreams with unspeakable horrors. Their only hope is dream researcher and fellow survivor Nancy Thompson (Heather Langenkamp of the original Nightmare), who helps them battle the supernatural psycho on his own hellish turf [Shaye, R. (Producer), & Craven, W. (Director). (1987/1999)].

A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master

As her friends succumb one by one to Freddy’s wrath, telepathically gifted Kristen embarks on a desperate mission to destroy the satanic dream stalker and release the tortured souls of his victims one and for all [Shaye, R., & Harvey, R. (Producers), & Hopkins, S. (Director) (1988/1999)].
A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child

Unable to overpower the Dream Master who vanquished him in A Nightmare on Elm Street 4, Freddy (Robert Englund) haunt the innocent dreams of her unborn child and preys upon her friends with sheer horror. Will the Child be saved from becoming Freddy’s newest weapon or will the maniac again resurrect his legacy of evil [Shaye, R., & Talalay, R. (Producers), & Harlin, R. (Director). (1989/1999)]?

Freddy’s Dead: The Final Nightmare

Lisa Zane (Bad Influence) is a child psychologist tormented by recurring nightmares. But not until she meets a new patient with the same horrific dreams does her quest for answers lead to a certain house on Elm Street – where an evil that defies the grave is about to be unleashed upon the world [Shaye, R., & Warner, A. (Producers), & Talalay, R. (Director). (1991/1999)].
Appendix E

Synopsis for *Freddy vs Jason*
Freddy vs Jason

Freddy Krueger is in hell – literally! And like an inmate with a life sentence, Freddy’s been plotting a fantastic revenge...all he needs is a little help. In comes Jason Voorhees, the equally iconic madman and perfect means for Freddy to once again instill fear on Elm Street. As the bodies begin to pile up, it becomes clear that Jason isn’t willing to step aside. Now, with a terrified town in the middle, the two titans of terror enter into a horrifying and gruesome showdown. Winner kills all [Cunningham, S. (Producer), & Yu, R. (Director). (2003).]!
Appendix F

Code Chart
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Appendix G

The Hero's Journey

1. The Ordinary World, in which the audience meets the hero, discovers his or her ambitions and limitations, and forms a bond of identification and recognition.

2. The Call to Adventure, when the hero is challenged to undertake a quest or solve some problem.

3. Refusal of the Call, when the hero hesitates or expresses fear.

4. Meeting with the Mentor, where the hero contacts some source of reassurance, experience, or wisdom.

5. Crossing the Threshold, at which time the hero commits to the adventure and enters the Special World.

6. Tests, Allies and Enemies—situations and people that help the hero discover what’s special about the Special World.

7. The Approach, that phase when the hero prepares for a central battle of confrontation with the forces of failure, defeat, or death.

8. The Ordeal, the central crisis of the story in which the hero faces his or her greatest fear and tastes death.

9. The Reward, the moment in which the hero is reborn in some sense and enjoys the benefits of having confronted fear and death.

10. The Road Back, where the hero commits to finishing the adventure and leaves, or is chased out of, the Special World.

11. The Resurrection, a climatic test that purifies, redeems, and transforms the hero on the threshold of home.

12. Return with the Elixir, where the hero comes home and shares what has been gained on the quest, which benefits friends, family, community and the world.

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Appendix H

Developed Template of the Stages of the Hero’s Journey
(0) **Prologue**
   (a) back-story
   (b) introduction of villain/threat
   (c) attempt to disorient the audience
   (d) chain of events set in motion

(1) **Ordinary World**
   (a) foreshadowing
   (b) raising the dramatic question
   (c) introduction of the hero
   (d) presenting an inner or outer problem of the hero
   (e) presenting the universal goal/desire of the hero
   (f) presenting elements that the hero is lacking
   (g) presenting a tragic flaw of the hero
   (h) presenting the hero’s deep wound

(2) **Call to Adventure**
   (a) accidents or coincidences of the hero’s refusal
   (b) presence of a herald character
   (c) a reconnaissance mission by the villain
   (d) a disorienting effect on the hero
   (e) a loss or subtraction from the hero’s life takes place
   (f) a lack of options for the hero
   (g) a warning given to the hero

(3) **Refusal of the Call**
   (a) avoidance by the hero
   (b) excuses made by the hero
   (c) disaster/tragedy due to the hero’s persistent refusal
   (d) hero experiences conflicting calls
   (e) a threshold guardian blocks the hero

(4) **Meeting with the mentor**
   (a) mentor trains the hero
   (b) mentor gives gift to hero
   (c) mentor gives invention/gadget to hero
   (d) mentor motivates the hero
   (e) mentor plants information or prop
   (f) mentor misleads the hero
   (g) presentation of mentor’s negative back story
   (h) mentor is presented as a wise-cracking, sarcastic character
   (i) mentor is presented as a shaman/healer
   (j) mentor is presented as an internalized code/faith

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(5) Crossing the first threshold
   (a) threshold guardian blocks hero
   (b) threshold guardian tests hero
   (c) hero surpasses the threshold guardian/enters “special world”

(6) Tests, allies and enemies
   (a) presence of tests in the form of difficult obstacles
   (b) presence of a sidekick or a team of characters
   (c) presence of a villain character
   (d) presence of new rules for the special world
   (e) recuperation of hero

(7) Approach to the inmost cave
   (a) presence of obstacles
   (b) presence of illusions
   (c) presence of threshold guardians
   (d) hero receives warning to turn back
   (e) hero gets inside their opponent’s mind
   (f) hero reorganizes his or her team
   (g) enemy demonstrates heavy defenses
   (h) hero breaks through to the innermost cave

(8) Supreme ordeal
   (a) hero appears to die
   (b) hero witnessing the death of another
   (c) hero causing the death of another
   (d) hero faces the villain archetype
   (e) villain appears to die
   (f) villain escapes

(9) Reward
   (a) hero celebrates victory
   (b) hero “seizes the sword”
   (c) hero engages in lovemaking
   (d) hero steals the elixir
   (e) hero sees through deception
   (f) hero achieves an epiphany
   (g) hero achieves a self-realization

(10) The road back
    (a) villain retaliates
    (b) villain chases hero
    (c) villain escapes
    (d) hero experiences a setback
(11) Resurrection
   (a) hero confronts villain
   (b) hero makes a choice demonstrating a change to their character
   (c) hero is cleansed or purged

(12) Return with the elixir
   (a) open-ended shot
   (b) close-ended shot
Appendix I

Completed Code Chart
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Appendix J

Time Duration for the Hero’s Journey and Three-Act Structure of a Typical Film
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Appendix K

Time Duration for the Hero’s Journey and Three Act Structure of *Freddy vs Jason*
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Appendix L

Visual Map Outlining the Content of Disc One
1) Select a Scene:

A. 1 – 3:

1. Freddy's Children
2. Late Night Swim
3. Welcome to Elm Street

B. 4 – 6:

4. “Freddy’s Coming Back!”
5. Institutionalized
6. Back to School

C. 7 – 9:

7. Life and Death of the Party
8. Sins of the Father
9. Brother's Keeper

D. 10 – 12:

10. Two Killers
11. Back to Westin Hills
12. “Welcome to My Nightmare!”

E. 13 – 15:

13. Return to Crystal Lake
14. Home Field Advantage
15. One on One

F. 16 – 17:

16. Final Blows
17. End Credits
2) Special Features:

A. Filmmaker Commentary
B. Jump to a Death:
   I. Skinny Dipping Girl: By Machete
   II. Trey: By Bed
   III. Blake & Father: By Machete
   IV. Raver & Gibb: Impaled by Pipe
   V. Partier: By Neck/Head Injury
   VI. Partier: By Flaming Machete
   VII. Partiers: By Machete
   VIII. Mark: By Fred’s Blades & Fire
   IX. Security Guard: By Heavy Door
   X. Deputy Stubbs: By Electricity
   XI. Free Burg: By Machete
   XII. Linderman: By Wall Bracket
   XIII. Kia: By Machete & Tree
      a. Kill All
      b. Random Death

3) DVD-ROM/Online Features
Appendix M

Visual Map Outlining DVD-ROM Content
1) Disc One
   a. Script-to-Screen
   b. Enhanced Viewing Mode
      i. With Trivia On
      ii. With Triva Off
   c. Hot Spot
      i. WWW.NewLine.com
      ii. WWW.NewLineShop.com
   d. Freddy vs Jason Website
   e. NewLine.com
   f. Help
   g. Play Movie

2) Disc Two
   a. Killer Sound Bites
   b. Cutting Room Floor
   c. Hot Spot
      i. WWW.NewLine.com
      ii. WWW.NewLineShop.com
   d. Freddy vs Jason Website
   e. NewLine.com
   f. Help
   g. Play DVD Special Features
Appendix N

Visual Map Outlining The Official *Freddy vs Jason* Website
1) The Legacy:

B. "Showdown Countdown": A timeline of selected events from Freddy and Jason’s respective histories.
C. "Killer Quiz": A quiz testing the user’s knowledge of both film series.
D. "Tale of the Tape": A list of Freddy and Jason’s odds of winning as given by Bally’s Las Vegas Resort, Hotel and Casino.
E. "Slasher Cards": Information and images about six different characters from the film that the user “can send to a friend” via e-mail.

2) Film Facts:

A. "The Story": Information about the film’s story.
B. "Cast": Biographical information for nine of the film’s cast members.
C. "Filmmakers": Biographical information for five of the film’s crew members.
D. "Soundtrack": A list of twenty songs from the film’s soundtrack and visual depictions of the CD’s three variant covers.
E. "Trailer": The film’s theatrical trailer.

3) Galleries:

A. "The Film": Twelve still photos from the film that the user “can send to a friend” via e-mail.
B. "The Weigh In": Twelve images from Freddy and Jason’s "pre-fight weigh in and press conference" at Bally’s Las Vegas that the user “can send to a friend” via e-mail.
C. "Film Clips": Three different clips from the film that the user “can send to a friend” via e-mail.
4) Fanzone:

A. “Polls”: A current poll, and a listing of past polls taken by the website’s users.
B. “Fan Art”: A Gallery of Artwork sent in by fans.
C. “E-mail List”: A registration screen for users to be added to the website’s e-mail list.
D. “Official Shop”: A link to Freddy vs Jason items for sale at New Line Cinema’s Studio Store.
E. “Sweepstakes”: A registration page for the Freddy vs Jason sweepstakes.

5) Downloads:

A. “Desktops”: Three “official” desktops, three “fan art” desktops, and one template to create a “custom” made Freddy vs Jason desktop.
B. “Aim Icons”: Six America Online instant messenger icons depicting different characters from the film.
C. “Posters”: Two mini-versions of the film’s poster.
D. “Screensaver”: A downloadable screensaver featuring Freddy and Jason.
E. “E-Card”: A card featuring Freddy and Jason that users can “send to a friend” via e-mail.
Appendix O

Visual Map Outlining the Content of Disc Two
1) Deleted/Alternate Scenes:

A. Heather and Billy (Original Opening) (3:35)
B. Sheet Freak (:30)
C. Nobody Home (:20)
D. Taking Lori Home (:20)
E. At Death’s Door (:55)
F. More at School (:40)
G. Principal Shaye (:30)
H. Party to Forget (:15)
I. Party in the Corn (1:45)
J. Dead Trey Walking (:20)
K. Dream Signs (:45)
L. Eels (:15)
M. Splitting Up (:20)
N. Too Much Hypnocil (:40)
O. No More Medicine (:20)
P. Linderman’s Apology (:40)
Q. A Promise (:15)
R. Place Your Bets! (:45)
S. Kiss From Kia (:35)
T. Original Ending (1:40)

2) The Production:

A. Fangoria Magazine Articles:
   1. “Freddy & Jason Go to Development Hell,” Part 1
   2. “Slicing Toward Completion,” Part 2

B. Production Featurettes:
   1. Genesis: Development Hell
   2. On Location: Springwood Revisited
   3. Art Direction: Jason’s Decorating Tips
   4. Stunts: When Push Comes to Shove
   5. Make-Up Effects: Freddy’s Beauty Secrets
3) Visual Effects Featurettes:

A. Mommy Krueger/Counselor Morph
B. Blood Drops
C. Dead Eyed Girl
D. Wall Morph
E. Jump Rope
F. Shadow Claw
G. Nose Job
H. Dead Trey Walking
I. Freddypillar
J. Pinball Jason
K. Jason's World
L. Epilogue
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Appendix Q

The Scriptwriter’s Eight Golden Rules
1) This movie will take place in the FICTIONAL UNIVERSE, not the real world of Wes Craven’s New Nightmare.

2) The MYHOLOGIES of Freddy and Jason will remain true to the other movies. They should not be changed to suit a crossover. The original bibles of both series should not be violated.

3) The TONE of this movie will be scary and fun, not campy and absurd. Freddy and Jason should be scary once again, with the comedic relief coming from our teenage characters. Cheap gimmicks should be avoided and self-referential humor kept to a minimum.

4) The STORY STARTS where the last installments ended. Freddy and Jason are both dead and buried, in hell.

5) The characters other than Freddy and Jason will be NEW TEENAGERS, in the spirit of their respective series. Some characters should be in the spirit of the Freddy movies (strong-willed, independent, outsiders), while others should be in the vein of the Jason films (young, dumb and fun).

6) The PLOT will come from Freddy and Jason. Fans want a story about Freddy and Jason, and one that is real...not a dream within a dream.

7) The KILLINGS will be inventive, unexpected and satisfying. Some of them will be done in the style of the Friday the 13th series (brutal, shocking, bloody) while the rest will be done in the tradition of the Nightmare on Elm Street series (suspenseful, supernatural and character based).

8) The movie will strive for BALANCE we want to keep the incredibly partisan fans of both series happy. [It’s also] extremely important that Freddy and Jason fight both in the dream world and in the real world.

Shannon and Swift, as presented in Ferrante (2003).
Appendix R

Visual Map of the Community Section of *Friday the 13th: The Forum*
(1) Community Section:

(a) "First Aid Shack": New members introduce yourselves here, ask questions about the forum and website, and get help with computer problems.

(b) "The Campfire": Place for members to share your personal stories, get help with problems, and discuss forum gatherings. This forum is member access only.


(c) "Crystal Lake Gazette": This forum is where all of the serious debates can go on about such issues as politics, religion, and news around the world.

(d) "The Party Cabin": Forum to discuss, TV, music, non-horror movies, video games, sports, wrestling, celebrities, weird news, action figures, toys, and more!

   I. "TV & Movie Couch": Discuss non-horror movies and television shows.

   II. "Music Lounge": Talk about your favorite music or your own band.

   III. "Sports Den": The place for all kinds of sports, wrestling, and fantasy teams.

   IV. "Game Room": Video games, RPGs, board and tabletop games.

(e) "Forrest Green Jail": Where the bad users go to cool down... you can help with their rehabilitation by voting for them!
Appendix S

Visual Map of the Discussion Section of Friday the 13th: The Forum
1) Discussion:

(a) “Friday the 13th and Horror Topics”: Friday the 13th 1-VIII, Jason Goes to Hell, Jason X, as well as general horror topics, and fan art & fan fiction.

I. “Fan Fiction & Films Forum”: Share your sequel, crossover, remake, parody, and original ideas!

II. “Fan Art Forum”: All F13 and horror related art can be found in this forum. Includes figures/collectibles, sculptors, mask makers, FX & costumes!

(b) “Freddy vs. Jason Forum”: Discuss the long-awaited throwdown (sic) between these horror icons.

c) “Recent and Upcoming Films”: Discuss upcoming films awaiting release in the United States. Beware of spoilers!

(d) “Polls, Lists and Games”: Find the answers to everyone’s FAVORITE Friday the 13th, post a list of your DVD collection, or play a few games with your fellow members.

I. “Horror Polls”: Polls and rankings related to the Friday the 13th series and other horror movies in this forum!

II. “Other Polls”: Polls and rankings related to non-horror movies, TV shows, computer games, and any other crazy stuff here!

III. “Personal Lists and Games”: This is for lists of your favorite personal things as well as for ongoing forum games and stories. Come join the fun!

e) “Foreign Language Forum”: For our German/Dutch/French/Swedish to discuss in their own language.
Appendix T

Data for the 107 Threads in the “Freddy vs Jason Forum”
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Appendix U

Data Pertaining to the Hardcore Fans
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<th>AGE</th>
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Appendix V

Brenna O’Brien’s Post About the Forum’s Database Corruption
SUBJECT: What happened to the forum?!? (Threads missing)

Okay everybody, deep breath - the forum database has been irreparably damaged.

On the morning of January 16th, 2005, the forum experienced database corruption, as occurs with a heavily trafficked site such as this. We ran the repair program, which found large holes in the database. It closed those holes so that the forum was able to run again, but all of that data (hundreds of threads) that had occupied those holes was GONE.

We wrote to our server staff to ask that they restore from backup, as we'd done a couple times prior to our server switching hands (same server, different management). We would have lost the last day or two of posts, but most everything would be back in place. Unfortunately, they replied that since they have managed the server they have not backed it up ONCE. NEVER. Apparently they had a problem when they first tried to back it up and, believing it was a preexisting condition we were aware of, failed to inform us or take any steps to fix the situation. If we had known this we could have backed up the forum ourselves before there was a catastrophic failure.

There was a catastrophic failure. As best we can tell, **over 5,000 threads and 9,000 posts are GONE**. This was not just the most recent posts. The corruption seems to have been spread randomly throughout the database. Thus old threads as well as new are gone, including some of our largest and seemingly ALL of our "Important" threads.

At the moment, your post counts seem to have not been affected. Your total reflects the amount of posts you contributed, even if those posts no longer exist. Please let us know if you notice any other important information that has been affected. For example, I think some private messages may have been lost as well, and possibly individual journal entries (though most, if not all, journals seems to remain).

So that's that. A large chunk of our forum is gone. Goodbye, so long, farewell. But while the threads are gone, we're still here. This is Jason's forum, and if there's one thing Jason won't do it's lay down and stay dead. We'll restart the main discussion threads (Freddy vs. Jason 2 discussion, Crystal Lake Memories, etc.), so try not to rush to recreate your favorite threads. Remember, one new thread per forum per day. We'll come through all this new and improved. Our server is being upgraded in early February, and we'll be doing nightly backups ourselves so we'll never have this problem again.

**Nothing this evil ever dies.**

- Blake & Brenna
Appendix W

Blake Washer’s Post Titled: An Open Letter to New Line Cinema, Platinum Dunes, and Friday the 13th Fans
Jason junkies, cinema snobs and everyone in between, welcome to our corner of *Friday the 13th* fandom! For those of you living at the bottom of a lake, a month ago Variety reported that New Line enlisted Michael Bay’s Platinum Dunes to develop a remake of *Friday the 13th*, remixing elements of the first four films. This is your friendly, neighborhood webmaster Blake Washer, and for the last thirty days I’ve been listening to the reaction of fans, talking to friends and turning over my thoughts on this development. The one question I’ve inexorably returned to is “Why?”

In 1992, Jason jumped ship - and I don’t mean the boat in *Jason Takes Manhattan*. Sean Cunningham came back into the picture and brought Our Man Voorhees with him to New Line Cinema, home of fellow slasher icon Freddy Krueger. Though they had to wait another ten years, the pairing paid off. *Freddy vs. Jason* was the most successful film of both franchises and number one at the box office in the US for two weeks. Now just three years after, the *Friday the 13th* saga is being restarted. Remade. Reimagined. Why?

*Freddy vs. Jason* wasn’t New Line’s only 2003 horror hit. The Platinum Dunes-produced *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* inexpensively resurrected Leatherface and his kin to great success. The genesis of the *Friday the 13th* remake is obvious. The difference is, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was a dead franchise and never much of a series to begin with. Each of the sequels featured dramatically different takes on Leatherface and his family (including the last, a reboot attempt itself). So while many fans weren’t sold on the need for a remake, it wasn’t preventing something else from getting off the ground. Same situation with Platinum Dunes’s (non-New Line) second rehash, *The Amityville Horror*.

If the remake leaves Jason’s character largely unchanged, what’s the point of doing a remake at all? It would be just as easy and far more attractive to fans to do a proper sequel and fill in necessary backstory through flashbacks. Audiences would love a dark, definitive *Friday the 13th* sequel. If the reason for starting over is a dramatic change to the Voorhees legend (producer Brad Fuller says, “we will make it a distinctively different story”), what about the worldwide recognition of who and what Jason is? What about the audience that made *Freddy vs. Jason* a hit three years ago? The series has a definite mythos and deconstructing Jason unravels that legend as well as the licensing opportunities tied to it (books, comics, toys, etc.) It’s hard to see the purpose of rewriting twenty-five years of history.
So who am I to be second-guessing The House That Freddy Built? I don’t hide my admiration for New Line Cinema, and I’m not trying to give anyone a hard time. I’m not calling for a petition, or a boycott. I just want people, producers and fans, to understand where I’m coming from. I’ve been at this for nine years. So to spend all this time and effort carving out a place for Friday fans but keeping quiet when I see the one thing that could finally kill Jason coming to pass... well, I’d feel a bit of a fool not speaking up.

The question is “Why?” Why fix what isn’t broken? I don’t expect a satisfactory answer, but I have to ask.

Blake Washer
March 14, 2006
Appendix X

A Side-by-Side Comparison of the Final Templates for the Filmmakers and Hardcore Fans
# Filmmakers vs Hardcore Fans

## Audience
- Premier/Test Screening
- Other Forms of Response

## Fans
- Caring Enough to Get it Right
- Recalls
- Knowing Fans
- Addressing & Thanking Fans

## Nightmare on Elm Street Elements
- Dream Logic

## Freddy
- The Cruel Clown
- Signature Moves

## Jason
- The Killing Machine
- Jason's Slowness
- Jason's Secret Fear of Water

## Horror Genre Elements
- Emulating the Classics
- Back to the Basic
- Bad Teens

## New Line Cinema
- Marketing Strategy
  - Hyping the Film
  - Test Screening
  - Proper Release Date
- Plans for Future Installments
- Responding to Fans

## Filmmakers
- Kelly Rowland

## Freddy
- The Cruel Clown Revisited

## Jason
- Jason's Look
- Jason's Location

## Other Elements
- Continuity & References
- Sounds & Songs

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