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From Redfield To Redford: Hollywood and understandings of contemporary American community

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FROM REDFIELD TO REDFORD: HOLLYWOOD AND UNDERSTANDINGS OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN COMMUNITY

by

Sarah Sachiko Ono

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in Anthropology
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2010

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Laura Graham

ABSTRACT

This research investigates contemporary conceptual understandings of Hollywood and Community, seeking to understand how the two, independently and in relation to each other, are made real for the participants ("insiders") engaged in the American film and television industry. The ethnographic field research was conducted over a period of eighteen consecutive months and supplemented by return visits over three of the years that followed. Data collection took place in locations where "Hollywood" was performed, primarily in Los Angeles, California, but also in the State of Utah and Cannes, France. I used anthropological methods, such as interviews and participant-observation, as well as what I term a "working methodology" that required working in a variety of short-term jobs as a means to access the population of study. This working methodology provided unique insight into the critical element of positionality in Hollywood and situated me as an "insider" at times in my own research.

This exploratory research concentrates on "locating" Hollywood in a discussion that seeks to capture the invisible complexity of a map that is both literal and imagined: a "place" made up of social and economic networks, marked spaces, and historical connections to a literal landscape. The research suggests that Hollywood is perceived to be a community and, that community membership is defined by work and co-constructed through a dynamic of insider/outsider interaction. An individual's relationship to, and perception of, the Hollywood community is heavily influenced by her position as well by discursive tropes of Hollywood recognized by "insiders," The presentation of data is organized around examples that index Hollywood, in particular for "insiders": Hollywood-speak, time as it is perceived in the setting of Hollywood, and the material

culture that is locally called “S.W.A.G.” The idea of Hollywood -- whether as an industry, an institution, or a myth -- has proven its staying-power over time; so too has the idea of Community. Both may prove to be intangible with the specifics up for debate among scholars, but both can also be expected to remain in public discourse and popular imagination for a long time to come.

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Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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Sasha Waters

To Margery Wolf, who gave me reason to come to Iowa
and
Timothy K. Ford (1951-2007),
who gave me reason to go to Hollywood

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All errors, omissions, and misrepresentations are my responsibility.

ABSTRACT

This research investigates contemporary conceptual understandings of Hollywood and Community, seeking to understand how the two, independently and in relation to each other, are made real for the participants ("insiders") engaged in the American film and television industry. The ethnographic field research was conducted over a period of eighteen consecutive months and supplemented by return visits over three of the years that followed. Data collection took place in locations where "Hollywood" was performed, primarily in Los Angeles, California, but also in the State of Utah and Cannes, France. I used anthropological methods, such as interviews and participant-observation, as well as what I term a "working methodology" that required working in a variety of short-term jobs as a means to access the population of study. This working methodology provided unique insight into the critical element of positionality in Hollywood and situated me as an "insider" at times in my own research.

This exploratory research concentrates on "locating" Hollywood in a discussion that seeks to capture the invisible complexity of a map that is both literal and imagined: a "place" made up of social and economic networks, marked spaces, and historical connections to a literal landscape. The research suggests that Hollywood is perceived to be a community and, that community membership is defined by work and co-constructed through a dynamic of insider/outsider interaction. An individual's relationship to, and perception of, the Hollywood community is heavily influenced by her position as well by discursive tropes of Hollywood recognized by "insiders." The presentation of data is organized around examples that index Hollywood, in particular for "insiders":

Hollywood-speak, time as it is perceived in the setting of Hollywood, and the material culture that is locally called "S.W.A.G." The idea of Hollywood -- whether as an industry, an institution, or a myth -- has proven its staying-power over time; so too has the idea of Community. Both may prove to be intangible with the specifics up for debate among scholars, but both can also be expected to remain in public discourse and popular imagination for a long time to come.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCING "THE DREAM FACTORY"

> There is only one Hollywood in the world. Movies are made in London, Paris, Milan and Moscow, but the life of these cities is relatively uninfluenced by their production. Hollywood is a unique American phenomenon with a symbolism not limited to this country. It means many things to many people…. Rarely is it just a community where movies are made.
>
> Hortense Powdermaker (1950:16)

Objectives

Things are getting blurry. This is not a new development or " a reveal" (as they might say in Hollywood) of new information. Contemporary borders, whether used to define nations, states, or neighborhoods, are blurred by a myriad of "crossings" -- people, ideas, products -- that scholars have grappled with and written about for some time. The companies that make up an industry such as the American film industry, from here forward referred to as "The Industry" or "Hollywood," are multinational conglomerates with economic ties reaching far beyond the physical boundaries of the United States.

The boundary between ethnography and fiction is blurry, which has its problems and will be discussed later in this chapter, but more importantly this area of overlap or borrowing has the potential to enrich both genres. I see subjects of interdisciplinary exchange to have similar struggles as well as similar benefits. This could be a metaphor for global dynamics, or the global dynamics an analogy for academic tension. In this research I have grappled with how to talk about "Hollywood" and "community." It seems easy enough; these are words I can find on the pages of any newspaper I chose to open,

or encounter on daily news broadcasts. And still it is a struggle to use these terms whose meanings are both broad and specific at the same time.

I situate this research in anthropology, but my dilemmas are not limited to this discipline. In a volume edited by Burt Feintuch, Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture (2003), the goal of the contributors is to establish common ground for conversations about expressive culture in the form of keywords. In order to do this the scholarly legacy of the words themselves had to be interrogated. One reviewer summarized the process as follows, "authors delve into the history of a theoretical term while also exploring how it might be reconceptualized to fit such contemporary contexts as flexible accumulation, the movements of people, fraught identity politics, or the expressive potential of new technologies" (Narayan 2005:147). The keywords referenced in Feintuch's title are: group, art, genre, text, performance, context, tradition, and identity. Each of these is a term I have used, sometimes erased, and generally struggled with in writing about this research in Hollywood.

Feintuch's keywords-project grew out of a special issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* (1995). Folklore scholarship has an interdisciplinary nature and terms selected reflect a broad and cross-disciplinary usage in academic discourse, by public sector agencies, and in everyday conversation. I find that the list of keywords could only suit my personal needs better if "community" were among the keywords, but both "group" and "identity" are terms often substituted and equally problematized. In Dorothy Noyes's (2003) consideration of the term "group", she emphasizes the importance of community as an imagined, shifting construct that emerges partly from experiences of shared performance. This definition of community is very much in line with how I

choose to conceptualize the understanding of community as experienced in Hollywood. Laura Graham (1994, 1995) uses the example of the Xavante practice of performing "dream-songs" to show how social formations come into being and are reaffirmed or expressed through performance.

> In public performances, these same songs come to be emblems of a collectivity and, simultaneously public markers of the collective identity of the group's constituent members…. In performance and through the formal features of performance [the dream-songs] embody multiple potential meanings to represent the self as a complex, emergent, and many faceted cluster of identities (Graham 1994:723-724).

By engaging in the performance of Hollywood, for example The Oscars (as discussed in Chapter 5), bonds are formed between the performers who actively participate in the creation and maintenance of the social formation as well as securing the personal position of individual agents. "Performance extends the boundaries of the self to embrace the other members of the performing group. Through performance, the individual experience and identity are transformed into collective experience and identity" (Graham 1994:739). In a similar manner as discussed in Graham (1994, 1995), even though in a very different setting, performances instantiate the community of Hollywood by engendering a sense of social continuity, a history and a connection, within a group.

In the same volume in which Noyes tackles the slippery term "group" (Feintuch 2003), Roger Abrahams (2003) takes on "identity." In his discussion of "identity" Abrahams packs twenty, very dense, pages with examples of cross-disciplinary usage, historical contexts, and as understood in contemporary political conflicts. Along with encouraging scholars to be considerate of how market forces manipulate identity, as well

as our engagement with it in thinking and writing, he challenges the liberal tradition of perceiving identity as choice. While I think that Hollywood is an excellent source for evaluating the relationship between economic forces and identity, this was not a part of the study I conducted. The economics related to Hollywood are complicated, always evolving, and expansive. This is also an aspect of The Industry that has been well documented by other scholars (Bart 1999a, 1999b; Epstein 2005, 2010; Miller et al. 2003; Moul 2005; Squire 1983; Wasko 1982, 2003). Were I to return to Hollywood for future research, a focused consideration of economic forces would be central. However, that was not the lens I took with me when conducting the research at hand.

My objectives for the research at hand were to spend time there -- in Hollywood -- even if there is no "there" there. I sought to observe and question members of the population that make up Hollywood, whether they are self-defined as members or well known, with their membership asserted by the media. As it turned out, a major objective that emerged after I arrived in Los Angeles became working in Hollywood as a means to access physical spaces, industry-specific knowledge, and the people who do the work that sustains Hollywood. One objective, as I defined it early on in the research, was to collect as much data as possible, in as many forms, and from as many sources as I could access.

In addition to conducting the research on which this dissertation is based, my objective was to make sense of the data -- of aspects, traits, and behaviors definitive of Hollywood -- in ways useful to explain how Hollywood is "made real" in terms of its function as a community. I tasked myself with "locating" Hollywood in a discussion that sought to capture the invisible complexity of a map that is both literal and imagined: a "place" made up of social networks, economic and exchange networks, and historical

connections to a literal landscape. I chose the examples that index Hollywood, in particular for "insiders": Hollywood-speak, time as it is perceived in the setting of Hollywood, and the material culture that is S.W.A.G. Finally, I theorized that Hollywood is perceived to be a community defined by work and co-constructed through a dynamic of insider-outsider interaction.

I understand Hollywood to be a contemporary community characterized by a highly-mobile and shifting population. I consider Hollywood as a multi-dimensional, multi-sited community that is as much conceptual as concrete. Central to this work is the research question: under what conditions does Hollywood reify or deconstruct the notion of community? The dissertation shows that the characteristics of community in contemporary society are: a spatial location or "place" (allowing for multiple points of occurrence), a material cultural practice, and discursive instantiation in the forms of media discourse and/or micro-interactions.

My task in this research is to evaluate Hollywood as a "community." I argue that there are multiple Hollywoods, all conflated into "the Hollywood community." This usage is similar to "the culture of Hollywood," in that both imply a discrete group of people with specialized knowledge or insider-status. "The Hollywood community" is a discursive construct that circulates in media and conversations internally (among participants in Hollywood) and externally (among observers outside of Hollywood). The distinction between the two categories is a complicated grey-area because both groups consume media and perpetuate (as well as generate) interest in Hollywood. The analysis considers the degree to which what people say about Hollywood, in combination with

what they do in Hollywood, reifies or deconstructs popular notions of community on a theoretical level, and also in a local context.

I encounter the advertising of Hollywood no matter where in the world I go. Even years after the formal period of field research concluded, I run into my fieldsite in newspapers, on NPR, and in the pages of books that I read. On one recent occasion I turned to writer, Michael Chabon's non-fiction essays on manhood (2009) only to find him reflecting on his relationship with products of The Industry that is Hollywood. He effectively reiterates the feeling that motivated this research. His is another testimony to the power of what I continue to call Hollywood, to create a sense of connection through a shared experience of media.

> "For in playing, or writing, or drawing, or simply talking oneself deep into the world of a popular artwork that invites the regard of the amateur, the fan, one is seeking above all to *connect*, not only with the world of the show, the comic book, or film but with the encircling, embracing metaworld of all those who love it as much as you do (Chabon 2009; italics in original).

Whether or not this feeling, idea, or sense of connection constitutes a community is a conversation that I expect could continue indefinitely. For me, what is interesting is that the question still engages me even after years of thinking about it and talking to people about it. In the end it was the conversations about Hollywood and about community that drew me into a network of people who, having never met face-to-face, still claimed to have a connection.

I use two criteria to answer my question of whether or not Hollywood operates as a community. The first is that a community is conceptualized as a "place" (discussed in Chapter Three) and the second is that a community may demonstrate multiple

collectivities (as shown in Chapter Four). I use the term "collectivities" to talk about a set of collective understandings, or tacit knowledge, among the social actors who recognize and identify with these "collectivities" in the context of Hollywood. I argue that the structure and organization of what is called "community" continues to move away from clear-cut and concrete definitions. However, there is a widespread investment in the amorphous concept of community and, consequently, the term "community," is emotionally loaded, highly flexible, widely applicable, and offers a sense of comfort (Bauman 2001). In this work a central argument is that Hollywood is a "community" based on the conditions of place and collectivity.

There are three research objectives beyond showing that Hollywood constitutes a community. The first is to explore contemporary Hollywood from an ethnographic perspective. The second is to offer Hollywood as a case study for how an anthropologist might approach a complex, unbounded, urban fieldsite through work. Finally, the third objective is to problematize existing understandings of community as a population of "insiders" or "members" that is both distinct from and necessarily set against "outsiders" as a non-interactive foil.

An ethnographic perspective on Hollywood requires data collected from the perspective of a participant -- in my case, working within "the Industry" -- as well as information acquired as an outside observer. This project considers Hollywood over an extended period of time and is not an analysis of a single film project or an individual film festival or event. Rather, this work derives from immersion in an environment, initially for a period of eighteen consecutive months (2003-2004) and then supplemented by return visits over three of the years that followed (2007-2009). In this dissertation I

seek not just to consider Hollywood as a community, but also to examine "Hollywood" and "community" in a broad and complex context. One task of ethnography is to present the perspectives and knowledge of "insiders," while maintaining a position that contributes and applies an external analytic view. To date the only full-length ethnography of Hollywood is Hortense Powdermaker's, Hollywood, The Dream Factory: An Anthropologist Looks at the Movie-Makers (1950). Numerous aspects of Hollywood have persisted since the 1940s, when Powdermaker conducted her fieldwork, including certain clichés and particular expectations of the physical location. However, I argue that several of the structural aspects of Hollywood have changed, including the end of the formal studio system which was still intact when Powdermaker observed Hollywood, and the marketing strategies used to promote Hollywood as well as specific movies.

Fieldwork conducted in a complex, unbounded, urban "field" is increasingly common in contemporary ethnographic research. Hollywood is associated with the sprawling mega-city of Los Angeles, but it is a global force that is as much conceptual as concrete. This dissertation illustrates the need for creative approaches to conventional questions posed by anthropologists, such as the nature of "community," and addresses the methodologically problematic nature of an ethnographic subject such as Hollywood.

It is precisely because Hollywood is a problematic subject that it is an ideal case study to understand contemporary, un-bordered, mobile community. As a researcher nothing can or should be taken for granted or easily assumed. Additionally, due to Hollywood's complexities no single experience should be taken as metonymic or representative of the whole. Variation and pursuit of change are attributes of Hollywood that contribute to its strength as an industry and longevity as a cultural institution. This

makes Hollywood an especially good terrain in which to explore the creation, conceptualization, and endurance of community. After establishing that Hollywood is a community based on patterns found in my data, I argue that Hollywood and its participants rely every bit as much upon the culturally constructed and publicly circulating imagining of Hollywood as do spectators who are positioned outside of Hollywood.

Using a modified model from linguistic anthropology (cf. Bahktin 1981; Duranti and Goodwin 1992; Tedlock and Mannheim 1995), I illustrate the co-construction of Hollywood and the multi-directional flow of information that takes place between "insiders" and "outsiders." This pattern of co-creation and mutual influence illustrates the dialogic nature of Hollywood and will be presented in the context of The Academy Awards Ceremony (see Chapter Five). The Academy Awards, also referred to as The Oscars, is an iconic performance of Hollywood. Performance in this sense is "never for the first time. Yet, simultaneously, each new performance is itself a creative act; its essence lies in processes of decontextualization and recontextualization, in the dynamic tension between the 'readymade' and the emergent. Each instance of expressive performance therefore opens up the possibility for change" (Graham 1995:8). Hollywood as a setting for research is rich in large events and small moments where *the idea* of Hollywood is performed. It is a complicated group of people who actively perform membership in a community they may also deny belonging to when asked point-blank. Not only is Hollywood as a research site compelling and dynamic, but it also raises many questions, a trait that initially drew my anthropological lens in the direction of Hollywood.

Why Choose Hollywood?

In this dissertation I analyze the ways that Hollywood, understood to be a historically marked place, a globally significant industry, and a mythic social construction, is a community. This work charts a path that balances Baudrillardian deconstruction -- the notion that there is no "there" there in a literal sense[1] -- and the media-at-large image of Hollywood as a phenomenon that is made real to both participants and observers (from here on referred to as "insiders" and "outsiders"). This understanding of Hollywood as a culture-shaping phenomenon permeates every aspect of life in the media-saturated United States, influencing Americans' experience of the world, each other, and ourselves. This is not a dissertation about movies per se. Of course, one cannot talk about Hollywood without acknowledging the product that drives the machine so often referred to as "*The* Industry" or "*The* Business." In the chapters that follow, movies are always there, even if not at center stage. While the subject of this research is Hollywood, I continue in Hortense Powdermaker's tradition (1950), and accordingly spend more time looking "at the movie-makers" than at the films they produce.

What follows is a presentation of data, ideas, and questions, to explore the proposal that Hollywood is a community. The notion of "community" is of long-standing interest in social science and increasingly popular in public discourse as well, whether on the level of neighborhood organizing or national public policy. The community concept

[1] I was first introduced to the notion of "no there there" by Margery Wolf, in personal communications. The phrase can be traced back to Gertrude Stein (1973 [1937]) and is in reference to Oakland, California and her attempts to find a house that no longer exists. This phrase works well alongside Baudrillard's (1983, 1994) concepts of simulation and simulacra; "It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself" (Baudrillard 1983:4).

has long been employed by American scholars in the fields of sociology, social history, and geography to name a few. According to Gerald Creed (2006), an anthropologist known for his work in the Balkans who participated in the School for Advanced Research (SAR) seminar on community and edited the volume based on that seminar, the public currency of the concept *community* has expanded its use in social analysis. This expansion of use provokes some scholars to conclude that "interest in community is *a* major turn in current thinking, if not *the* turn" (Fowler 1991: ix). Community is a term that originated in a conceptual way (see Durkheim on *communitas* 1912), was then adopted for a functional purpose, and in contemporary usage struggles to remain meaningful. According to a School for Advanced Research (SAR, formerly School for American Research) seminar organized around the concept of community (2003), as communities reshape themselves in the twenty-first century, discourse and debate seem only to generate "the community conundrum" (Creed 2006: xi), creating more questions than answers in regard to the notion of contemporary community.

Hollywood offers unique and rich terrain in which to explore ideas of community. In the past, a Redfieldian notion of community as a distinct, discrete, generally small, and self-sufficient entity (Redfield 1955) prevailed. This ideal remained the pervasive model for community studies well into the 1970s, at which point a sea change took hold in the form of criticism and deconstruction of Redfield's "community" (Bauman 2001). What emerged in the contemporary technologically abled, and swiftly moving world are communities that are "intentional" and "virtual." Hollywood puts an additional angle on Benedict Anderson's "imagined community" (1983), not being a nation-state, but an industry-based community that depends on shared media and a common set of

meaningful symbols. Hollywood is well suited to be a case study of community in the early twenty-first cetnury because of its paradoxical nature. “Hollywood” is aptly named the Dream Factory and called Tinseltown because of the product it produces and the image created in public discourse. It is colloquially referred to as a “community,” with community being the word most commonly used to designate a group and imply a connection among members. The process of locating Hollywood and defining the population that it encompasses provides evidence for multiple Hollywoods, and illustrates how contemporary applications of community are understood, interpreted, and shifting.

Colloquial use of “the Hollywood community” by Industry participants, but more often by members of the media, is common and not a new occurrence. Hollywood also is referenced as a "culture" in public and popular discourse. The expectation that there exists “a Hollywood community” is a widespread assumption presented in the media as well as in micro-discourse (i.e., conversations between individuals about Hollywood). Through this exploration of Hollywood -- as an industry, a destination, and a myth -- the connection and relationship between culture and community as concepts and terms, used both by anthropologists and the public at large, will be considered.

Hollywood is itself a result of a dialectic between “observers” and the “observed.” Often the categories of *audience* and *public* are used to represent "outsiders" who are in fact crucial, if not essential, participants in the construction and maintenance of Hollywood. I argue that there is no clear divide in this seemingly simple dichotomy between “insiders” and “outsiders,” or “The Industry” and “the audience.” Characteristic of Industry participants is the trait of being observers themselves; observers not only of

each other, but also of what the public (non-Industry) see and say *about* Hollywood. Using a model inspired by Bakhtin (1981) for the creation of language, I illustrate the co-construction of Hollywood through a reciprocal and multidirectional exchange between "insiders" and "outsiders."

Imagine an Onion…Or a Rainbow When You Think About Hollywood

When trying to explain this research, I often referred to two similes -- an onion and a rainbow -- to help others understand Hollywood. I would say, "Hollywood is like an onion with its multitude of layers emerging upon closer and closer inspection." Often after I said this, I would realize that the onion comparison is limited in its ability to represent Hollywood and its complexities. There are indeed layers to Hollywood. There is the Hollywood that is the American film industry, either in its contemporary version or the "Old Hollywood" of lore. There is also Hollywood the neighborhood in Los Angeles County, an area undergoing a renaissance as it is actively being "cleaned up" and gentrified. Or again one can find the Hollywood that serves as a tourist destination, replete with iconic locations and maps that direct you to celebrity homes. The Hollywood I sought is even more "layered" and problematic. I strove to infuse my thinking about it with a time-depth and view that extended beyond the presupposed location of Los Angeles, California, on the southwestern edge of the United States. My research took place in "grey areas," for example, sites such as film festivals. These events are inextricably linked to Hollywood but still close enough to the borders to provide debate, contradictions, and evidence that the borders are more porous and less consistent than often assumed.

This Hollywood is a challenge to locate. Articulating it makes me think of a rainbow. We often have the idea that a rainbow's colors, in their predictable and iconic order, can be touched. However, anyone who has ever chased a rainbow knows that the closer one gets, the more a rainbow is forever just out of reach, imperceptibly beyond one's grasp. Ultimately, once one gets as close to a rainbow as humanly possible, inside the color so to speak, it becomes impossible to see the rainbow itself. Instead, there is a general sense of the color and a belief in the existence of the thing called "rainbow," but little confirmation that one has reached the proverbial rainbow's end.

Hollywood is like a rainbow. Say the word "Hollywood" and people have a mental image of what you are talking about. Whether the point is being made by Los Angeles City Councilman, Tom LaBonge (Grigsby Bates 2008), an Australian actor being interviewed in France, or the students in an *Introduction to Anthropology* section at the University of Iowa, there is a widespread and cross-cultural understanding -- however varied and differently valued -- of what is meant, inscribed, or implied by "Hollywood." Yet, were you to ask for definitions and explanations of rainbows, it quickly becomes clear that, beyond easily identified characteristics (such as colorful, arched, involving water and light) most people are hard pressed to provide an explanation of what a rainbow is with much depth or clarity. Hollywood is similar. It is widely known and accepted that "Hollywood" is synonymous with the American film industry, and often with Los Angeles as well, depending on the context. "Hollywood" also stands for celebrity and wealth, expanding beyond movies to include the related arenas of music, fashion, television, professional athletics, and the ever-expanding category of constructed

celebrity (e.g., "celebutantes") and fame not directly tied to any identifiable talent and, arguably, a direct result of wealth.

Hollywood is shifting, temporal, and contextual. It may be the closest thing to a global mirage to have ever existed. There is no "there" there. Los Angeles' location in what should be a desert makes this evocation of a mirage all the more appropriate. Hollywood is a reality that motivates individuals to make seemingly nonsensical choices and a "dream factory" that has persisted for a century. With Hollywood owning between 40 percent and 90 percent of the movies shown in most parts of the world (Miller et al. 2003:3), Hollywood and its products are a force that influences the world and creates images of life in the U.S. and abroad. It is an entity that, when the anthropologist seeks to calibrate it, slips through her fingers. While risk is involved in investigating Hollywood as an anthropologist, and challenges that are similar to any fieldwork conducted in a cosmopolitan and urban setting, an anthropologist is arguably well-equipped to study what has been called Tinseltown.

(Re)Introducing the Dream Factory

In a recent conversation I had with a colleague, she pointed out that Hollywood is potentially the most "thickly described subject out there." Her observation evokes Clifford Geertz's (1973) notion of "thick description," or the mark of ethnographic writing in which behaviors are depicted in a rich context that contributes to understandings of their meaning. What she offered as an off-hand remark actually gets to the heart of this research and what it can contribute to the discourse on Hollywood and understandings of community. A myriad of books and an endless flow of new media that depict, describe, and explain Hollywood already exist. In addition, film and television

representations, magazines devoted to the medium of film, and countless blogs and websites with their gaze squarely fixed on Hollywood generate a constant stream of Hollywood-driven "news" and imagery. Amidst all of this, what is absent is an analysis of why this deluge of description matters.

Anthropology may be known for its "thick description" (Geertz 1973), but its accompanying strength is the ability to construct analyses and insights based on a perspective that includes both the quotidian and the mundane. This work will present a Hollywood populated with social actors, the broad and general category of people who interact with (the largely conceptual notion of) "Hollywood" as a workplace, a destination, a legacy, and an American archetype. What follows is organized around the idea that Hollywood is a community, and that the findings presented here are only possible because of a methodology grounded in anthropology. This is not a text oriented toward voyeurs who want celebrity gossip, nor is it a "how-to" for working in Hollywood. Examples of both of these genres already exist in abundance (see for example Epstein 2005; Hilton 2009; Walls 2000; Wasko 2003). Instead, this work offers snapshots of moments selected from thousands of examples. No single moment is definitive of Hollywood, but taken together they offer insight into: how an anthropologist engages a field such as Hollywood; how Hollywood exists as a community; and how "Hollywood" is collectively constructed and maintained over time.

In Defense of Style: Making Choices About How to Write Ethnography

The task of writing ethnography and my consideration of the possible approaches to this task are central to this project. In the summer of 2003, in the months post-Cannes Film Festival and pre-arrival in Hollywood, California, I attended the Writing Culture Summer Institute at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. It was a week-long intensive writing workshop with anthropologist and author, Kirin Narayan, that explored, discussed, and debated the merits and short-comings of a range of ethnographic writing styles.

Ethnography has the potential to be a highly fluid genre, something that is both an asset and a liability to scholarship in anthropology. As with many key terms used in an academic and scholarly context (cf. Feintuch 2003), ethnography has come to refer to a range of texts embodying very different objectives. Deborah Kapchan's (2003) address and overview of the term "performance" includes ethnography as a performative act. The section that follows situates the choices I have made with regard to writing, in terms of representation and style. The choices were made deliberately and negotiated within a context of scholarship, fiction, creative non-fiction, autoethnography, and the feminist goals of an accessible anthropology.

Fiction and Ethnography

Fiction and ethnography are not the same thing.[2] In no circumstance would I argue that they are and in this I am very much an anthropologist. Kirin Narayan begins "Ethnography and Fiction: Mapping a Border?" (1999) by recounting exchanges she had with colleagues in other disciplines who mistakenly assumed that the two genres can be equated. In the retelling, Narayan's interest in the difference between ethnography and fiction is met with "the same general, only semijoking bite: 'Is there a difference?' 'Oh come on, we all know there's no difference,' or 'I thought it was proven by Clifford and the gang that it's the same thing'" (Narayan 1999:134). While Narayan sees the confusion over where ethnography ends and fiction begins as "playful equation," I question whether or not this misconception serves to fuel the resistance of some anthropologists to writing that is accessible and feels like fiction because it is easy, if not enjoyable, to read.

There is a tension within anthropology when it comes to writing. This tension may be nothing more than a debate over what an appropriate style is when it comes to scholarly or academic writing. However, statements such as the following by James Clifford in the introduction to Writing Culture (1986), may have contributed to the confusion (as seen in the previous Narayan quote) when encountered by interdisciplinary readers:

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[2] I borrow Narayan's disclaimer that the terms *ethnography* and *fiction* are "historically contingent categories, with shifting conventions and a range of styles" (see Narayan 1999:135) and I am using them with a full awareness that I am referring to ideal types and not specific works.

> Ethnographic writings can properly be called fictions in the sense of 'something made or fashioned,' the principle burden of the word's Latin root *fingere*. But it is important to preserve the meaning not merely of making, but also of making up, of inventing things not actually real (Clifford 1986:6).

Whether Clifford's words are used to equate ethnography with fiction in the sense of being fabrications (cf. Bruner 1993:6) or, as seen by Narayan, as "a reminder of the creative interpretation inherent to any representation of social life" (Narayan 1999:135), they highlight and reinforce a tension in anthropology when it comes to writing, that all truths are partial.

While my task here is not to argue for the place of fiction in anthropology, others have done this, in particular Kirin Narayan in her charting of ethnographic forays into fiction over the past hundred years that includes the likes of Elsie Clews Parsons (1922), Franz Boas (1922), Zora Neal Hurston (1934), Laura Bohannan (1954 under the pseudonym "Elenore Smith Bowen"), and Margery Wolf (1992) (Narayan 1999:136). In addition to constructing a history of anthropologists writing fiction, Narayan also highlights a number of instances since the 1980s when ethnography and fiction have intersected.

Among the bodies of theoretical and historical scholarship Narayan (1999:135) identifies are some that have influenced the choices I made when it came to writing about Hollywood. In particular, feminist scholars within and outside of anthropology have reclaimed the contributions of anthropology's female "ancestors" whose modes of writing are, at times experimental and, at times exploring the possibilities of fiction (Behar and Gordon 1995; Visweswaran 1994; Wolf 1992). Literary and postmodern scholars with an interest in anthropology have engaged ethnography as an order of

literature (Clifford 1986). In addition, I credit the work of anthropologists such as Lila Abu-Lughod (1991), Karen McCarthy Brown (1991), and Keith Basso (1996) for providing examples and models that expand the possibilities for writing about scholarly research. Lila Abu-Lughod, in the introduction to Writing Women's Worlds (1990:7), cites Michael Jackson's observation that, "the value and place of different discursive styles have to be decided by the situation we find ourselves in and the problems we address" (Jackson 1989:186).

In seminars and office visits, anthropologist, feminist, and writer, Margery Wolf has encouraged colleagues and students, myself among them, to as she says, "experiment with the methods used by fiction writers so as to improve their ethnographies without distracting from the seriousness of their work. Obviously, when fiction is used it must be clearly labeled as such" (Wolf n.d.:3). While I do not see the dissertation as a place for writing fiction, I do contend that it is an appropriate setting for experimentation, something encouraged of us as students.

Creative Non-Fiction vs. Autoethnography

I received a comment from readers of earlier versions of this dissertation that my style may fall too much on the side of autoethnography. While I am familiar with the term *autoethnography*, I was not entirely clear what the implication of the association was. Further investigation on my part has led me to conclude that what I am doing is not autoethnography. Instead, I argue that my approach is closer to a creative non-fiction approach to ethnography.

Who it was that coined the term "autoethnography" is debatable. Karl Heider is credited with having first used the term in 1975, to characterize Dani school children's accounts of what Dani do (Narayan 2007: 241). Others assert, as anthropologist Rebecca Dobkins does, that "Literary scholar Mary Louise Pratt has coined the term autoethnography to refer to cultural expressions in 'which colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that *engage* with the colonizer's own terms' (Pratt 1992:7, italics in original)" (Dobkins 2000:25). As I understand it, autoethnography (regardless of who called it such first) attempts to correct an imbalance between the author and the subject of the text.

> Pratt argues that autoethnography is the result of processes of exchange between subordinated and dominant groups. Both sides select and invent from materials transmitted to them from the other, although this process is characterized by asymmetrical power relations (Dobkins 2000: 25-26).

Dobkins's angle on autoethnography is unique as it moves out of the realm of writing as the primary form of expression and into the medium of visual art.

In contrast to autoethnography as a means to redress a power imbalance, scholars have also used the technique to infuse themselves into the text (cf. Behar 1993). For sociologist and communications scholar Carolyn Ellis, autoethnography is a transformative tool for knowing oneself and the world through close attention to one's own life. She characterizes autoethnography as "research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and political" (2004:xix). Ellis is invested in autoethnography's potential for making sense of experience. In anthropologist and author, Kirin Narayan's review of Ellis's "The Ethnographic I" (2004), she concludes that the work is a "brave experiment" (Narayan 2006:242).

Perhaps a more credible alternative to autoethnography is the broad category loosely termed creative non-fiction. Generally I think of creative non-fiction as the product of bestselling non-fiction, popular essayists, and some in-depth journalism. I do not automatically think of it as ethnography. In Writing Creative Nonfiction, author Theodor Rees Cheney states, "Creative nonfiction writers inform their readers by making the reading experience vivid, emotionally compelling, and enjoyable while sticking to the facts" (Cheney 2001:2).

Judith Barrington is a poet and memoirist who also led a sub-set of the Writing Culture Summer Institute I attended in 2003. To describe the dynamic of creative non-fiction she uses (by pure coincidence) "cinematic terms" to frame her discussion of the changing *depth of field* available in creative non-fiction. Barrington describes alternating between "the close-up, the camera zooming in through [a] window" to focus on vivid, detailed scenes and then "the long shot" which "pulls back to a great distance, embracing first the whole house, then the street, then the neighborhood, and then becoming an aerial shot, it takes in the whole city and maybe the surrounding mountains too" (Barrington 1992:81-82). The result is a combination of broad narrative summaries that allow for time to lapse and connections to be made across time and space, as well as moments of tight focus on an exchange between two people.

The suggestion that this might be a category of writing well-suited to the work I produced based on this Hollywood project was intriguing and encouraged me to take a closer look at what anthropologists say about creative non-fiction. Again this is an area where I encounter Kirin Narayan. In Narayan's words, "To weave together scene and summary while tautly pacing a larger narrative and embedding an ethnographic point

demands enormous skill" (Narayan 2007:138). In the same article, "Tools to Shape Texts: What Creative Nonfiction Can Offer Ethnography" she goes on to address the risk of including one's own voice in her writing:

> As ethnographers creating our personae, we have the choice to present ourselves as flat characters who strike a single recurring note: for example, perpetually astonished by the strange customs we encounter. It seems risky and even irrelevant to reveal ourselves as more complex characters (Narayan 2007:135).

The risk of including oneself in the text in a notable way is to run the risk of "navel-gazing." I am aware that my presence in this text may lead some readers to this conclusion. However, in order to access Hollywood as I did, it required more than the "deep hanging out" famously attributed to Clifford Geertz (1998, 2000; *see also* Wogan 2004). While I understand that all anthropologists participate while engaging in participant-observation, the extent to which I had to work *in order to* actively participate in the subject of study resulted in a situation where I became not only a collector of data, but also a data producer (see discussion of "work" in Chapter 2).

Telling Good Stories

Edith Turner (2007) tells us, "Storytelling is of high importance in anthropology" (Turner 2007:114), to which Margery Wolf adds, "The audiences for whom we write hold us accountable for accurate reportage as anthropologists and for a good story as novelists. And here of course is the rub" (Wolf n.d.:6). The possibilities for the form ethnography takes are great. This is something that I see as a strength of the genre. As students the emphasis is more on ideas and clear communication in writing than on style.

"As ethnographers, we are usually trained to set forth arguments, rather than to write narrative. We learn to use illustrative anecdotes, but not how to pace our representations of events to hold a reader's interest" (Narayan 2007:141).

Russell Leigh Sharman, in his essay "Style Matters: Ethnography as Method and Genre"(2007) quotes from anthropologist Keith Basso (1996) and goes on to comment,

> As ethnographers, we are "place-makers" fashioning possible worlds from the vagaries of fieldwork, summoning it with words, hopefully giving it dramatic form so as to *produce* an experience in which others can participate. At its best, ethnography is revelatory in its evocation of experience, tying it to the landscape through powerful and carefully crafted language (Sharman 2007:121).

Sharman concludes that style matters because, "how we communicate is as important as what we have to say. We must, as a discipline, face our fear of the aesthetic, and wade into experience as our only hope of making good on the promise of a more engaged anthropology" (Sharman 2007:128).

Engaged anthropology is something that I personally value. It is the promise of public engagement with anthropology -- however elusive -- that drew me back into the academy to pursue a graduate degree. In order for there to be engagement in anthropology, an audience beyond our peers and committee members is required. While I understand that the primary and most important audience for a dissertation is the committee, I am invested in producing work in which readability is a priority. Whether or not the text at hand succeeds in doing so, I subscribe to the goal of repositioning experience as central to the anthropological project of ethnographic writing (see Sharman 2007 for an expanded discussion).

In summary, I do not see the writing style I adopt as autoethnography or fiction. I am more comfortable with the category of creative non-fiction. However, ideally I would like to be able to say that I write humanistically, or produce ethnography in a style that is accessible to readers and enjoyable to read. I argue that the product can be as important as the methods that produced it. There is one category of writing that I chose not to pursue, but that I think does a good job of illustrating the principles Sharman (2007) argues for, as well as the stories sought by Narayan or Wolf. It is the life history as demonstrated by Sidney Mintz's Worker in the Cane (1960) and Heather Schacht Reisinger's Young and Thuggin': The Unresolved Life of a Young Hustler (2004).

The discipline of anthropology changes and will continue to change. In the future I may find myself writing in a style very different than the one presented in this research. Nonetheless, what I keep in mind when I sit down to write can be summed up in the following quote from Margery Wolf.

> Feminism is here to stay, but calmer now; postmodernism is passé; but ethnographic responsibility continues to be a concern to anthropologists. It comes up frequently in discussions of ethnographic methods. Perhaps this is because anthropologists are seen as slightly odd people who go to strange places and tell great stories at cocktail parties about their time "in the field" but too often end up writing boring books about their work (Wolf n.d.:2-3).

The insight that complements this sentiment is one of Sharman's, "If we pursued our fieldwork the way we often write our analyses -- with dry rhetoric and lifeless arguments -- we would never find anyone willing to talk to us" (Sharman 2007:119). Both of these statements are ones that resonate with me when I read them. The idea that in ethnography, "doing and writing are coterminous and mutually constituting -- one

informs the other and both are creative acts rooted in experience. That is precisely why style, as an evocation of experience, matters" (Sharman 2007:124).

Methodology: Engaging Work

In feminist anthropology considerable time is given to discussion of how we represent the people we write about and, ultimately, how we write. A goal of this research is to show how Hollywood is constructed through discourse. As a result, I am conscious and deliberate about the Hollywood that I present and how people are represented in this text. Because a quintessential part of Hollywood is the high-profile population and, since there is power in name recognition, writing about Hollywood requires a thoughtful consideration of how to represent the participants in this research. Writing about people who possess power and who are invested in the ways in which they are portrayed is something I am acutely aware of with this project. I realize that several of my informants believe they have a stake in what I write and, as I continue to interact as well as work with a number of these individuals in the post-fieldwork period, I am frequently reminded that they expect to read what I produce at some point.

I worked at nationally recognized, top-tier film festivals, including: the Sundance Film Festival in Utah (11/2003-2/2004); the American Film Institute's, AFI FEST (presented by Audi as of 2004) (10/2003-11/2004, and 8/2004-12/2004, and 7/2005-8/2005); Outfest: the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival (3/2004-7/2004, and 8/2005-11/2005), and the Los Angeles Film Festival (LAFF) (2004, 2005, 2008, 2009). This dissertation draws on data collected at the festivals where I worked in a formal capacity, as well as in film festival environments where my role was that of an attendee, such as the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, France (5/2003). The high-profile nature of

the festivals and the awards events I participated in and observed makes it difficult to disguise them so I refer to events by name. I also relate stories in which I create an unspecified festival that is something of an amalgam of more than one. For the most part I do not change names in the writing of this text. However, I provided the option for a pseudonym to those who I choose to name in the dissertation and this request has been honored where applicable. I omit names when an individual's title or social role can substitute for their name. For example, I might refer to an informant as: "an Oscar nominated actor," or, "an aspiring actress who has lived in Hollywood for four months." In particular I did this when identifying an individual might jeopardize his ability to get work in the future, or when a well-known name might distract from the point being made. When it was impossible to disguise a high profile individual I have used her name. When drawing on media sources, I use whatever the author or speaker used for the purposes of identification.

In this research film festivals function as a site-of-Hollywood; by this I mean a space in a moment when Hollywood is performed through the use of key signifiers marking something as "Hollywood" (e.g., Red Carpet and/or step-and-repeats) and the population present includes Hollywood participants (see Figure 1 and Figure 2 for examples of key signifiers). In film festivals hundreds of people, including volunteers, are brought together to produce and execute a multi-day spectacle. It is a spectacle not just because the event is about watching movies, but also because a goal of the film festivals I experienced is to be watched by The Industry, the media, and the public. My data are reflective of the fieldsite, a convenience sample developed in a connection-driven,

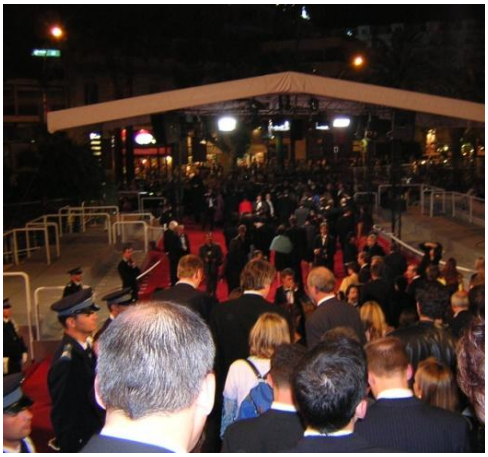

Figure 1: A view of the Red Carpet at the Cannes Film Festival's *Grand Palais* upon leaving the theater (photo by Sarah Ono).

Figure 2: The literal Red Carpet at the Cannes Film Festival's *Grand Palais* (photo by Sarah Ono).

"snowball" fashion (Bernard 1998). It is a snowball in that one connection led to another, and also in that once I started working in large-scale events, the number of my informants grew exponentially, much as a snowball does when depicted rolling down an incline in cartoons.

In the data presented below, I use a film festival as a case study to research the social roles, micro-interactions, and dynamics present among the complex network of players similar to that of Hollywood at-large and represented in similar sites-of-Hollywood. Film festivals are a good example of the type of community most commonly identified in Hollywood by "insiders." The community in Hollywood that they most readily agree on is identified as a production or activity-based community. Film festivals provided a way for me to conduct research in a clearly defined period of time, and to use

my experience of multiple autonomous festivals for the purpose of comparison. Taking jobs with festivals allowed me to inhabit a temporary community where the focus encompassed multiple aspects and interests of Hollywood. Films, of course, are the obvious product at center stage in a film festival setting but, as with Hollywood at large, there are many more agendas and objectives at work than just showing and watching movies. Film festivals bring together many of the matters at work in Hollywood, as broadly applied -- branding, marketing, sponsorship, deal-making, celebrities, press, movies, PR, parties -- for a limited period of time in a specific place, in effect creating a microcosm of Hollywood.

I adopted the strategy to cultivate breadth and depth in my data collection, so as to gain a perspective missing in other evaluations of Hollywood. In retrospect, I think my approach was naïve in the way that graduate students believe if they read everything ever written on a topic then they will finally be able to speak about it with authority. During the course of my investigation it became clear that Hollywood taken in its entirety is enormous, well beyond the scope of a dissertation. Given my "focus on Hollywood" and the massive theoretical interest in community outlined in my prospectus, the research objectives were ambitious and impractical, a fact that I have come to see and accept with greater distance and the passing of time. One could write a dissertation with less fieldwork, and less may have proven easier, more focused, and completed sooner, but part of my argument here is that some fields require more time, not just to collect data, but also to lay the groundwork that provides access to data. I would venture to guess that all fields benefit from more time, as I see this as an instance where more is more.

In the beginning and throughout much of the fieldwork period, I focused on what was in front of me. In other words, what I was able to access though a job or observe using a connection. I traded a rigid data collection design in favor of an approach that left me open to unforeseen opportunities and allowed for one point of access to lead to the next. I made choices, as we all do when we get out from under the wing of our institutional contexts and in "the field." Once there we are on our own and the immediate challenge is how to survive, closely followed by, "What do I do now?" I think it is a shared experience among anthropologists to worry about the choices they make. What if I look at the "wrong" things and talk to the "wrong" people? What if the really important stuff happens on the day I decide to leave town (or sleep in, or try to catch up on fieldnotes, etc.)? After years spent reading ethnographies and articles, an understanding develops that the weeks and months and, in some cases years, spent carefully participating and observing can be boiled down to a handful of clarifying events or activities. The belief is that these moments will then become the stuff about which great ethnographies are written.

While it is clear to me after having spent years in Los Angeles grappling with how to present Hollywood in all of its complexity that no single work can do it justice, I still struggle with the desire to take every tangent and include each story worthy of re-telling. I still struggle with Hollywood, both the literal environment that is the City of Los Angeles with its endless sunshine, and the mythic Hollywood that for many, anthropologists included, exists perpetually just beyond one's grasp. The power of Hollywood is that it is Hollywood.

A part of my writing strategy is that if someone else can say it better, let them. In the following, photographer Annie Leibovitz is able to articulate the experience of being a participant-observer of something powerful and consuming. While I did not carry a camera, I did carry a notebook and, like Leibovitz, that was enough of a reminder of why I was here to keep me from going completely "native."

> I learned about power on [the Rolling Stone's] tour…. I found that my proximity to them lent me power also. A new kind of status. It didn't have anything to do with my work. It was power by association…. I probably spent more time on [that tour] than on any other subject. For me, the story about the pictures is about almost losing myself, and coming back, and what it means to be deeply involved in a subject. You can get amazing work, but you've got to be careful. The thing that saved me was that I had my camera by my side. It was there to remind me who I was and what I did. It separated me from them (Leibovitz 2008).

One Moment in Three Cities: An Illustration of Hollywood's Transcendence of Time and Space

Hollywood is a series of moments. So it is not a surprise that fieldwork in Hollywood is made up of a series of moments. Some I determined to be significant, or was elbowed and encouraged to, "write this down. This is what Hollywood is all about," and recorded in detail in the moment. Others were committed to memory to be returned to when time allowed. Then there were the piles of moments that were written down for the sake of producing fieldnotes: the mundane, the quotidian, the things that will be forgotten with the passing of months and then years. During fieldwork I made lists; lists of observations, names, questions, tasks completed and tasks to-do. What follows is example of a moment that occurred in the first third of my fieldwork. It is a moment in the field.

For me, the field consisted largely of jobs, ranging from being a paid audience member to picking up a pop superstar's lunch, and each job was full of moments. In the moment that follows, I was near the end of a three-month position working for the Sundance Film Festival. While participating in Sundance, I wrote about my day, I wrote about what was happening, and I wrote to remember what I was thinking. When I read this now, I can see the seeds that have become the questions central to this dissertation. One night I was thinking about the location of Hollywood, the technology that allows us to bridge physical distances and re-imagine time, the connections that are generated through "Industry jobs," and how whether on the "inside" or the "outside" everyone seems to be watching the same thing on television. What follows is part fieldnote, part recollection written down in detail after the fact, and part collection of ponderings accumulated over the course of fieldwork. The block quotes are taken directly from fieldnotes (unless otherwise indicated) and the *italics* indicate my narrative voice reflecting from a distance: either in writings about that evening much later, paraphrasing other fieldnotes from the time when I was at Sundance to provide context, or as I remember the event while writing about it for this text.

Sunday, January 25, 2004: Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah

> The Sundance Film Festival is nearing the end of its twentieth festival, and this Sunday is Awards Night at the Racquet Club. It is common to have an event at the end of a film festival to acknowledge outstanding achievements. Festivals typically use juries as well as audience votes to determine award winners. At Sundance, Awards Night is a ticketed event, but the ceremony is simultaneously broadcast on the Sundance Channel [offered to supplemental cable subscribers] (Fieldnotes: January 25, 2004).

I moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, two months earlier to work in Registration for the festival. As a department, Registration was going into our third week of living in Park City. This particular evening my co-workers and I decided to order Chinese take-out and watch the awards show in the living room of the rental property that eight of us who were living together during the film festival called "home."

> One of our cohort from Registration was selected as the "Award Girl." Betsy's job in this role was to look beautiful while carrying awards on-stage and escorting winners off-stage. She was perfect for the job and after spending the afternoon getting ready she looks stunning.
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> We aren't even to the couches yet and the show is threatening to start. At last check, a cell phone call from Irene, my roommates were still in various states of napping, showering, and looking for forks in the rental kitchen we rarely inhabit, let alone cook in(!)
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> I was still in the temporary "on-site office" at the hotel where Registration was based when I received a phone call from a friend I've known since high school who was living in Portland, Oregon. [Her] excitement was evident as she screamed through the phone, "Oh my god! Are you watching Orion [my boyfriend who made the move West with me when I began fieldwork in Los Angeles] on TV?... We are! Right now!... He's on the Red Carpet at the Golden Globes!...I'm totally f--king serious….Wait. Why aren't you watching this?!" Why wasn't I watching it? Well, for starters I am in Utah at the moment, and have lost track of what day it was with respect to anything besides Sundance. On top of that, I was still working. We were sorting out Awards Night tickets for panicked patrons, trying to explain where the shuttles would be picking up from, and brainstorming what might be contributing to them not running on schedule even though the sign said every ten minutes (Fieldnotes: January 25, 2004).

It was January, so it had been dark outside for a while already, and I was generally out of touch with time. My clock was oriented around screening start times and the few parties I was committed to attending.

> I wake up and walk to "the office" in the dark, and I make my way home from wherever I end up, after the sun sets….It is

> better not to keep an eye on the clock or to keep track of the number of hours that have lapsed since waking (Fieldnotes: January 20, 2004).

The long hours we worked for the weeks prior to the festival were preparation for the string of days without a break, and a total loss of anything resembling a circadian rhythm. This being the case, when the call came I was not surprised that my first thought was, "What time is it?" followed by, "What day is it…besides Awards Day?"

The internal questions continued after the three-minute phone call ended and I resumed answering phones and Sundance-related inquiries. Among the non-Sundance related questions I pondered were:

> 1) How could it be sunny in Los Angeles when it was so cold and dark where I was?
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> 2) How did someone in Portland know what Orion was doing in L.A.?
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> 3) How did he get himself onto the Red Carpet at the [Golden] Globes? I know he mentioned working as a PA [Production Assistant] for [our friend and next-door neighbor who worked the event annually], but it never crossed my mind that he would end up on television.
>
> 4) What was he wearing?
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> Obviously I had no idea what he was doing (or what is happening in the rest of the world so far this year!) (Fieldnotes: January 26, 2004).

I still had my own "arrivals"[3] to sort out, and a completely different awards event to worry about before I could leave the office to go watch the Sundance Awards or the Golden Globes. While there was no arrival sequence being officially broadcast from the

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[3] "Arrivals" is a colloquial term that refers to the spectacle of celebrities and attendees literally arriving at an event. The arrival is often marked by the presence of a Red Carpet, public spectators, and photographers.

Sundance Awards Night, there was still the challenge of getting people into the building and seated for the ceremony, which was being televised, however to a presumably smaller audience. The Golden Globes is broadcast globally and viewed by an estimated 250 million people according to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) (Hollywood Foreign Press Association 2009).

At times like this my anthropologist's brain would kick in and I would take a step back from the immediate moment, trying to consider it from the perspective of a trained participant-observer. I would jot fieldnotes (really notes to myself to trigger my memory later when I had time to write in detail) on scraps of paper or in the small notebook I kept on me in case someone offered a profound insight or I got the chance to interview someone on the fly. These are some of the thoughts I transcribed from those scraps accumulated while working at Sundance on this particular night in January.

I was in the habit of calling my voicemail when I was unable to write notes (because I was driving, or too tired to hold a pen). I would leave myself messages that I could later transcribe. Given the circumstances it worked pretty well. My notes this night reflect a feeling of being pulled in various directions, and also being curious about things specific and general:

> Is the flow of information new, different, or just sped up because of developments in technology that shrink the rate of exchange to moments? With cellular phones, text messages, and Blackberries that deliver real-time emails, it is harder not to communicate these days when people can reach you anywhere at any time…. What is the significance or effect of having dispersed people watch the same event in real-time? It is perceived to be real-time, "live," but I know what I am watching has to be taped because it is already dark in Los Angeles and what I am watching is sunny. If I am saying that Hollywood is taking place in Utah based on a marked event (Sundance), but there is a bigger marked event happening at

> the same time in Beverly Hills, then where is Hollywood? (Fieldnotes: notes compiled on January 30, 2004).

There was never enough time when I was working a job to really sit with these ideas and mull them over. This night, a call from my mom interrupts my thinking as I pack up to head home.

> Mom wanted to tell me that Orion is on TV at the Golden Globes. I couldn't get to a TV to confirm any of the reports, but she says that there is no doubt it is Orion, since he is wearing sneakers on the Red Carpet (Fieldnotes: January 25, 2004).

The above moment is useful for understanding the manner in which this Hollywood project frequently felt disjointed and interconnected at the same time. Looking back over these entries, I am reconnected to a past self. As I wrote the Sundance entries, my hope was to record the information that would prove useful later on when I sat down to make sense of it all. At the time, in January 2004, I kept track of daily activities, as well as anything that I thought might lead to larger questions. Among the things I recorded was anything that struck me as out of the ordinary. For instance, I include the observation that Orion wore sneakers on the Red Carpet at the Golden Globes because it is something atypical. It is not that it doesn't happen, but it is a clothing choice that has a limited set of associations: indicating someone categorically novice (new to the Red Carpet environment, a child, etc.) or someone who has the power to transcend dress codes. It also struck me that this was something my mother found worthy of noting. When I asked her about this later she said, "Who else besides Orion would wear sneakers on a Red Carpet?" Whether or not it was Orion's intent, he assumed many of the characterizations that I did when wearing my anthropologist's hat: participating, but not

entirely a part of Hollywood, and able to transgress certain social codes because of this liminal status.

The field notebook these excerpts are taken from is one from early in the research and the pages are filled with more questions than insights. My interest was in recording evidence of how crazy the day-to-day felt, and in conveying how compounded everything felt. There were always multiple things taking place at once, a trait which accurately characterizes the general impression of Hollywood and the everyday experience of its participants.

Marking Out Territory: Relevant Literature

The notion of community is so naturalized in thinking and language that it is often presupposed without reflection or interrogation. However, this is changing. In order to understand why Hollywood is such a problematic and yet significant addition to the debate centered on the concept of community, it is helpful to trace out how anthropologists simply assumed community when doing fieldwork and the critique of this and other naturalized assumptions. Bronislaw Malinowski is often credited as a forefather of anthropology who introduced the notion of fieldwork as it has come to be understood in U. S. or Boazian anthropology. Since then, ethnographers have taken up the practice of living in communities as a way to learn the activities of daily life and the meaning of lived experience throughout the world. Images of the anthropologist's tent pitched in the center of a Trobriand village (e.g., Malinowski 1922) contribute to the powerful mental images of "culture" centering around a locus -- the village -- and as having an observable spatial practice of "dwelling," which neatly takes place in a bounded area called "the

field" (Clifford 1997:20).[4] Villages served as mappable centers for the community of "natives" and, by extension, "the culture," which served anthropologists as the early disciplinary "object" of investigation. Malinowski did not interrogate the notion of community; he presupposed it as a given.

Throughout the history of anthropology, anthropologists have produced ethnographic descriptions and theoretical observations on the function of community. Kimball and Arensberg (1965) developed the theory that community functions to create a bridge between "culture" and "society." Others have proposed that society is made up of communities in interaction (Wissler 1929) or that ultimately it is through communities that the individual belongs to society (cf. Cohen 1985). Whether one approaches a culture with the intent to theorize or describe, there is a necessary relationship with "the field," "that taken-for-granted space in which an 'Other' culture or society lies waiting to be observed" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997c:2). Classic anthropological studies focus on communities in fieldwork, whether called "band," "tribe," or "village." In the generalized tradition of anthropology that persisted through the first half of the twentieth-century intent on portraying and analyzing "local life," the world has been described as a "mosaic" (Hannerz 1998; Cohen 2000). The implication of this image is that "culture" presents itself neatly and as clearly defined. Thus, culture looks something like a snowglobe. While snowglobes can contain anything, they typically depict a representation of a place contained in a plastic dome that "snows" when shaken. These

[4] The concept of "dwelling" is most often attributed to Heidegger as discussed in Being and Time (1927:54).

collectables are how I imagine "culture" when it is --mistakenly -- taken to be discrete and presented side-by-side with other cultures, remaining untouched.

The study of so-called "intact" or "isolated" groups typically carried out though the first half of the twentieth century made the task of defining a population easier because anthropologists assumed that population is synonymous with the culture group (LeCompte and Schensul 1999:110). Examples of "community" in the ethnographic record serve to identify both a segment of a population and a population in its entirety. In order to obtain a population that can be studied, ethnographers undergo training to "operationally define" and then "bound" the object of investigation (*ibid*.:115). The boundaries that define populations are geographically determined by the landscape or constructed based on a criterion such as language (Leach 1977), but in both cases it can be argued that no boundaries are "naturally occurring."[5] A view of some anthropologists who saw the world as divided into discrete communities reverberates through the archives. It is a constant reminder of a period when the bounded community ("the culture") went unproblematized and the lens of observation only pointed to places far and away. This "bounding" of cultures has not gone unchallenged. As Philippe Bourgois says, "[p]art of the problem is rooted in anthropology's functionalist paradigm, which imposes order and community on its research subjects" (1995:14). The question becomes how to reconcile the legacy of anthropology's culture concept with the reality of people's lived experience.

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[5] The exception to this is the argument that islands represent a case where populations are dictated by naturally occurring boundaries (e.g., LeCompte and Schensul 1999:116). However, it can be argued that island-located populations are not "bound" to a specific geographic space, even though it may appear quite neat at first glance, but have always moved between spaces (cf. Marshall 2004).

Beginning in the 1960s, and continuing well into the 1980s, proposals for "new directions in anthropological theory and method" arrived in a steady stream (see Geertz 2002:9 for an extensive list). There is the sense that in the absence of a broadly accepted disciplinary frame or encompassing paradigm[6], the field may in fact be breaking into smaller and smaller fragments (Lewis 1998 in Geertz 2002). In Geertz's example of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), "associations" reflect the fragmentation into smaller and more specialized groups. Anthropology in the United States and the sense of community among members of the profession has paralleled changes in the conceptualization of field-communities. The discipline is no longer a group of a few hundred individuals, most of whom knew one another personally, as it had been in the 1950s (Geertz 2002). The end of the cold war brought the dissolution of what Geertz termed "the bipolar international system" (2002:13). In its place a reconfigured web of global interdependence emerged. Geertz is not alone in his observation that the organization of human groups throughout the world is changing, and consequently that existing conceptions of nation, state, country, society, and people will be rethought. Anthropologists reflect this recognition of change in the shift from descriptive, place-based research projects to problem-driven, multi-sited investigations (Marcus 1995, 1998).

6 Thomas Kuhn brought attention to this term with the publication of, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962).

Geertz's optimism in the face of a fast-changing discipline of anthropology was notable:

> the direction…in which the wider world is moving: toward fragmentation, dispersion, pluralism, disassembly, multi-, multi-, multi-. Anthropologists are going to have to work under conditions even less orderly, shapely, and predictable, and even less susceptible to moral and ideological reduction and political quick fixes…Interesting times and inconstant profession: I envy those about to inherit them (Geertz 2002:14).

Out of this inspiring mess -- or in response to it -- twentieth-century, in particular *late* twentieth-century, ethnography became increasingly wary of many localizing strategies in the construction and representation of "cultures" (Clifford & Marcus 1986; Marcus & Fischer 1986; cf. Gupta & Ferguson 1997a, 1997b).[7] One of James Clifford's aims in Routes (1997) is to engage questions concerning how anthropologists' involvement in cultural analysis constitutes their objects -- societies, communities, identities, etc. -- in spatial terms and through "spatial practices" (de Certeau 1984) of research (Clifford 1997:18). The critique of culture as discrete overlaps with and, at points is inseparable from, the critique of the community concept. Appadurai (1990, 1991, 1996) has made a substantial contribution to the critique of cultural discreteness by focusing attention on the inattention paid to regional and global interactions. Geertz clarified that anthropologists don't study villages, but rather they study *in* villages -- and increasingly they don't study in villages either, but have traded the village setting for hospitals, laboratories, and tourist hotels (italics in original, Clifford 1997:21)

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[7] It is generally hopeful, and considerably more encouraging to current graduate students than his presentation of the discipline and the challenges awaiting those coming up through graduate programs, or "the pre-unemployed" in Available Light (Geertz 2000:10).

The term "community" continues to be used prolifically, often as a stand-in for "culture" or as a catch-all term for any group of people or object of anthropological study. Community is a difficult term to replace and a term hard to avoid due to its multiple uses in public discourse and the emotional attachment felt for the concept. It is a word that may truly be unavoidable. Gerald Delanty talks about contemporary community as a product of modernity, "not a premodern traditional world," and argues that "highly individuated forms of community exist today, and…cannot be compared to the traditional communities of an earlier age" (Delanty 2000:189-190).

The idea of community in anthropology is changing. Anthropology is not necessarily dictating the change but, as a discipline, anthropology is positioned to make critical contributions to the changing discourse on community. This ongoing discussion impacts individuals on a local level as well as on a national, public policy level. The world has never been static, and the present is no exception. Perhaps the rate of change is increasing as a result of technological advances and, given adequate resources, our ability to shrink time and space continues to progress with the advent of instant messages, real-time blogging, and live-streaming images.

Anthropology is taking a cue from larger movements in the world, and micro-changes in our neighborhoods. The notion of community is riding out the critiques and its deconstruction (Creed 2006; Amit 2002; Joseph 2002; Putnam 2000), as well as the new visions for what community can look like (Anderson 1983; Urban 1996). There is no single, comprehensive model for community and there is no single Hollywood. Hollywood provides a new setting in which to think about and problematize a community that is not defined by the nation-state (Anderson 1983) or kinship. Hollywood is an

imagined community as defined by Benedict Anderson (1983) in that it is capitalist, media-driven, and mediated. It is a community whose participants are self-selecting and connected to each other through a shared interest. It exists in a state of flux, with a population that migrates around the world, typifying cosmopolitanism (cf. Breckenridge et al. 2002; Hannerz 1998; Pollock et al. 2000). For as closely linked as Hollywood is to Los Angeles, a case could be made that it is largely nomadic, or at least populated by nomads. Hollywood is rich and colorful, full of stories and all of the drama one comes to expect from the industry that generates Technicolor escapism.

Outline of Study: A Breakdown of Chapters

This chapter has introduced the central research question that guides this project: under what conditions does the idea of Hollywood reify or deconstruct the notion of community? It also identifies the specific objectives of the text that follows: exploring contemporary Hollywood from an ethnographic perspective; providing Hollywood as a case study for how an anthropologist can approach a complex, unbounded, often-mediated, urban fieldsite; and offering a model for the co-construction of Hollywood through the exchange between "insiders" and "outsiders."

Chapter Two outlines the methods used for data collection and discusses the methodological challenges encountered in undertaking this Hollywood project. In addition to "setting the scene" for fieldwork in Hollywood, Chapter Two plays with conventional (if not stereotypical) notions of fieldwork, such as "the arrival," a mainstay opener to many ethnographies in which the anthropologist presents herself "in the field." With the same objective of *play* in mind, this chapter shows how tropes of anthropology manifest in a decidedly un-field-like "field." Chapter Two introduces the importance of

working as a mode of data collection, and also considers a re-scaling of George Marcus' now well-established multi-sitedness (1995). I present a single site-of-Hollywood (a film festival) as a multi-sited field in itself. This re-imagining of multi-sitedness provides entrée to the complicated and engaging discussion of Hollywood as a place in Chapter Three.

Chapters Three and Four present data to support the conditions I use to identify a community. Chapter Three is an investigation of Hollywood as it relates to the notion of "place." The place-ing of Hollywood involves literal geography, constructed locations with historic connections, and a collectively imagined mythology (cf. Lefebvre 1991). The multiple interpretations of "Hollywood" problematize what should be a seemingly simple question: Where is Hollywood? The dilemma of locating Hollywood and the "imagining" of Hollywood as a "place" are central to Chapter Three. The existence of Hollywood's multiple collectivities is the basis for Chapter Four. This chapter builds the argument that Hollywood is inherently collective and social, bringing together self-selecting individuals based either on work, a shared interest, or both. Data considered in this chapter reinforce the presence and importance of "insiders" who share tacit knowledge.

Chapter Five explores the dynamic of co-construction that creates Hollywood. Hollywood is a product of interaction and exchange between "insiders" and "outsiders," generated and sustained through an ongoing dialectic that relies heavily on publicly circulating discourse and shared media. I use the example of the Academy Awards, commonly called The Oscars. I illustrate a site-of-Hollywood where objects-of-spectacle ("stars") and spectators ("the public") interact. This chapter shows that even if the

interaction in this setting is an indirect exchange (cf. Brenneis 1986), both categories of participants (i.e., the watcher and the watched) fulfill scripted expectations for the positions they occupy, and in doing this Hollywood itself is reproduced. It is easy for me to imagine that the images of Hollywood presented herein will reinforce existing ideas about Hollywood. That is fine. The goal here is not to reveal a never-before-seen side of Hollywood, nor is it to provide a counter to the expectations of the mythic and massive American film industry, the celebrity maker, or the Dream Factory. Lastly, I make a case for the importance of this type of exploratory anthropological research, the significance of the question of community in general, and the potential for Hollywood to offer interesting, intellectually engaging, and compelling ethnography.

CHAPTER 2: WORKING METHODOLOGY

> In Hollywood there were the great advantages of a well-documented history and of not having to learn a new language or work through an interpreter. The matter of a "sample" – selection of people to study – was more difficult. That problem had hardly existed in the South Seas, since there I lived in a village of about two hundred and fifty people and knew them well. In Hollywood this was obviously impossible.
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> Hortense Powdermaker (1950:4)

It is hot under the mid-afternoon sun. It is September in Los Angeles and my cheeks are pink with heat. I am wearing the requisite black suit and I can feel the beads of sweat running down my back. Behind me, across from where I am standing, and to both sides, people are yelling. Yelling names for the most part. Sometimes an arriving car is preceded by the screams of a crowd gathered on the street and this is my cue to pay particular attention to the approaching autos. In the second before the car door opens I think of the question I am frequently asked, "Did you see anyone famous?" In this moment there is time to smile to myself, and then it is back to the work of announcing names. These are the names of celebrities, the names that populate Hollywood, and the names that lend themselves to the intrigue of fieldwork in Hollywood.

"Felicity Huffman. David Letterman. Jon Stewart. Sally Field. Queen Latifah. David E. Kelley. America Ferrera. Mary-Louise Parker. Tina Fey. T.R. Knight. Edie Falco. Jim Broadbent. Tom Selleck. Robert Duvall. William H. Macy. Hugh Laurie. Helen Mirren. Doogie Howser…no…Doogie Howser, wait, I know this……Neil Patrick Harris." This is the running dialogue in my head. I have to keep track of what is in my mind, and what is coming out of my mouth, especially since whatever I say is being broadcast to unknown numbers of people connected to me via walkie-talkie. I am at the

59th Annual Emmy Awards, where my job is to recognize, to identify correctly, and to announce the arrival of nominees, presenters, and performers.

I am positioned at the top of the Red Carpet at the Shrine Auditorium [in Los Angeles, California], *so that I can see everyone as they exit their cars. This location is not entirely unfamiliar. During the course of field-research I have had the chance to work at and/or attend: the Academy Awards, the Cannes Film Festival, Sundance, numerous film festivals in Los Angeles, movie premieres, and now the Emmys. Through all of these experiences, the Red Carpet remains high energy, very stressful, and fast moving. Women in gorgeous gowns and men in designer tuxedos are walking past me, but there is no time to admire their attire or register my level of excitement at being within arm's reach of someone off the pages of Vanity Fair, Variety, or US Weekly. I am too busy trying to identify faces and match them with the correct names.*

An actor from the HBO series, "The Sopranos," is drawing a blank in my mind. I reach out and stop her only long enough to ask as politely as possible, "Excuse me, what was your name again?" I take her exasperated sighs and eye rolling as a fair trade for my having to ask. Some celebrities are gracious, others laugh it off—after all I must be joking, right? These "stars" assume that their fame precedes them. The cliché question, "Don't you know who I am?" goes unspoken, but is evident. The look I am given lets me know that my lack of knowledge is unacceptable and an embarrassment to us both. If I am lucky, one of the publicists corralled behind me in the "publicists' tent" will call out this actor's name and jog my memory.

On this day I am working with the Talent Department. My job is to alert everyone within the sound of my radio, referred to as my "walkie," which "talent" (nominees,

presenters, and celebrities of note) are on-site and headed in their direction. If I miss someone, there is the potential for it to set off a series of unfortunate events. Farther down the Carpet, the talent I missed might not get pulled for an on-camera interview as planned. This is a problem because the Red Carpet arrival segment is being broadcast "live." More likely, I'll have some disembodied voice yelling through my earpiece, "STEVE CARELL!! WHEN DID STEVE CARELL GET HERE??!! ISN'T ANYONE UP THERE PAYING ATTENTION?!" Before I can answer a call like this I need to look back at the lists I am holding, or at someone nearby if I missed Steve Carell. But that takes time–even if only seconds–and right now there are all these names to remember, and the limos just keep coming.

Throughout this dissertation, I will talk about my first-hand experiences working in Hollywood. I do this to make my presence in the research apparent, as well as to ground statements and observations that otherwise might be taken as clichés and overly familiar observations. I have made choices in the production of this dissertation; my objective is to provide a greater transparency than Hollywood typically affords, as well as to position myself in the research. With enormous events, such as the Emmy Awards, hinging on critical micro-movements, I often wondered why I, an anthropologist, would be entrusted with this kind of job. This broadcast event was after all (in case you forgot for one nano-second) live and being viewed by millions of people worldwide. This was not a comment on the talents of anthropologists; rather, in an industry where the number of individuals clamoring for access to any position far outnumbers the available spots–in particular paid ones–I continually questioned how I had arrived there. In this dissertation I trace the journey from the anthropology department at the University of Iowa to the Red

Carpet at the Emmy Awards. It is a story of setting out to find an elusive community as much as an investigation into the thing we call "Hollywood."

Arriving

It was common for people I met in Los Angeles to assume that as an anthropologist I must be there to conduct research at the La Brea Tar Pits, naturally occurring tar pits that have preserved flora and fauna dated to 38,000 years old: "one of the world's most famous fossil localities" (tarpits.org, accessed May 2009). "Where else would an anthropologist work in Los Angeles?" was a question I answered on more than one occasion.

My first "arrival" was in May 2000, the summer I conducted field-research for my Master's degree (Ono 2001). Therefore, my return to do doctoral fieldwork in 2003 was technically a "return to the field." Anthropologists often write of their return. The return is an event to document on film (e.g., Marshall 1971) and re-tell in second books and new editions of classic ethnographies. It is a significant event in the careers of many who have committed themselves to living for a period of time among an "other" with the expectation of understanding another culture. The return is especially significant because it is often not until one returns to a place, that she is able to recognize how familiar she has become with being "other" and that she too is now familiar to others and can be greeted as such. For those who have spent long months negotiating the feelings of being an embedded outsider, this return to somewhere now familiar confirms that a change has occurred.

My return, much like my arrival, does not resemble the classic anthropological rite so often depicted in ethnography. I argue that this rite is changing as the expectation

of what constitutes a fieldsite changes. I arrived in Los Angeles in August 2003, without welcome or fanfare, to continue research on the obvious yet elusive Hollywood. Figuring out where to start when the subject is multi-sited, hard to locate, and just plain diffuse is tough at first. In the United States and globally, the public tends to locate Hollywood in Southern California, specifically in Los Angeles. Therefore, this seemed to be a logical starting point.

Arriving in Los Angeles is more difficult than one might imagine. Big cities are not entirely new terrain for me, but Los Angeles is a unique example of urban, mega-sprawl (Davis 1990). Not only did no one greet me, offer to build me a house, or adopt me into a kin network, but I was back on one of the many myth-infused freeways with a 300-page map in hand. The freeways of Los Angeles are mythic in scale and in their ability to induce anxiety.

The freeways and moving through the city figure prominently in many anecdotes about Hollywood and life in Los Angeles. As with anecdotes generally, it is difficult to track this type of story to an original source; typically the anecdote is the result of multiple similar stories being told and re-told; in doing so the stories become conflated into one with variation in the details. For example, I know a young man, Charlie, who, nearing the end of his undergraduate education, spent a summer in Los Angeles working as an intern, locally called a "PA" or a production assistant, in a small, independent production company. As it was told to me, his supervisor sent him out on an errand, to pick something up across town, only to have him return several hours and the better part of the day later. Since this task is something one might expect to take an hour, at most, Charlie was asked, "What happened? Are you ok?"

"Yeah, I'm fine" Charlie replied.

"Well, what took you so long?"

"I don't know. I didn't make any other stops and I came right back."

"What freeway did you take? Not the 405, I hope."

"No. I didn't take any freeway."

Stunned silence.

This brief exchange is loaded with tacit knowledge specific to Los Angeles, and consequently Hollywood. Even when I lived and worked in Utah, people would still talk about the Los Angeles freeways as an indicator that they could demonstrate a knowledge of Hollywood markers, freeways being one of these. The exchange seems unremarkable, but the question ("What freeway did you take?") is a loaded question. It is being asked to assess Charlie's knowledge of Los Angeles geography. The fact that Charlie avoided freeways altogether indicates that he is likely new to the city, possibly fearful of the freeway system and, generally speaking, a novice to working in The Industry. It is possible that this anecdote was told to me as a warning of what not to do, or in recognition that I, like Charlie, was new to the area and learning the ropes of The Industry. The first time I heard this story was in regards to Charlie, someone I knew to be a real person and from a reliable source. Later, I would hear this same story with various details modified (which production company, the task to do, how long the PA was gone), but the same subtext: 1) if you live in Los Angeles you are going to have to drive on a freeway, and 2) production assistants, because this is often an entry-level position that allows for mistakes, are known for doing dumb things. As best as I could determine, no

one who told me a version of this anecdote knew the Charlie I knew. Still, they knew the story.

The freeways are only one aspect of living in Los Angeles that contribute to a collective sense of shared experience that serves to unite people working in "The Business" of Hollywood. Part of the collective understanding of Hollywood is that it is an industry in which participants typically re-locate to be a part of it (i.e., "I moved [to Los Angeles, California] to get into the Industry"), and that it is an industry where the social actors–the people who work in Hollywood–typically "work their way up." In the language of Hollywood, everyone has to "pay their dues." What this means is that there is an expectation that the people you are working with are familiar with the qualities of work in Hollywood: long hours, lots of waiting, "difficult" bosses, and unforeseen problems that demand on the spot changes. Along with honing my training as an anthropologist, I also became adept at managing work rich with these obstacles.

Finding "The Field" & Finding a Place to Live in Los Angeles

While this project began as MA research, and while I had refined my ability to *talk* about Hollywood as a complicated and problematic fieldsite, this did little to help me actually *live* there or locate my research population. Even after I re-arrived in Los Angeles, I still needed to set about finding my "field." I made the mistake of assuming that a fieldsite would have some obvious quality, or that at least I would know it when I saw it as I may have believed prior to getting there. In my previous experience conducting fieldwork abroad as an undergraduate, there was at least a contact who demonstrated a degree of responsibility for getting me sorted out once I got off the bus in

a Nepalese hill town. The critical difference is that the occurrence of a "stranger" getting off a bus in remote Nepal and needing a place to live is less common than it is in Hollywood. I had contacts in Los Angeles from my previous sojourns, but in the beginning, complete strangers in Nepal were more helpful than "friends" in Hollywood.

It is possible to meet a lot of people who work in The Industry that constitutes Hollywood, just by being in Los Angeles.[8] This is not because Los Angeles is a village full of face-to-face interactions, but because Los Angeles is an "Industry-town" (at least as far as those in "the biz" are concerned). When I use the term "Industry-town," the implication is that Los Angeles is a city where the dominant and most visible industry, in this case the film industry, touches all other aspects of living in Los Angeles, even if indirectly. Washington D.C. is another "Industry-town," where the industry is government and politics. Popular discourse draws parallels between Hollywood and Washington D.C. on the basis of this shared characteristic. One advantage of living in an area where most of the population is aware of, if not directly connected to, the primary industry is that just about everyone knows someone "on the inside." It is common practice in Hollywood to refer someone you meet to someone else you know, who might be able to help in some way (even if just to provide another connection). As this project will demonstrate, social networks are valuable, if not essential, in Hollywood and people use a number of strategies to grow their networks (see Chapter Four).

Where to live was only the first hurdle. If, as the anthropologist, I sought to live among Hollywood's social actors, I was hard pressed to find a critical mass of informants right off the bat, let alone a cheap apartment in the likely neighborhoods. Economics

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[8] See Agar (1996) on the function of personality and ethnography.

provides an additional challenge to finding affordable accommodation in areas that are directly associated with "Hollywood" such as the Hollywood Hills, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Bel Air, Malibu, or the Pacific Palisades. Given that, in part, the association of Hollywood with these areas is an effect of television shows and movie titles: BEVERLY HILLS COP (Brest 1984), *The Beverly Hillbillies* (Henning 1962-1971), *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* (Borowitz 1990-1996), MTV's *The Hills* (DiVello 2006-). The residential areas identified as "Hollywood" are also associated with wealth, a trait of Hollywood and not a trait of most graduate student anthropologists.

I considered finding housing in "the Valley" because it was more affordable. "The Valley" is the San Fernando Valley (and, some argue, the Simi Valley farther west), the area to the north of "the Hollywood hills" that is home to many who aspire to be in "The Business" (i.e., work in Hollywood). The tradeoff for less expensive rent would be greater distance between the place actually called Hollywood and me. This Hollywood, the named place and the formal neighborhood, is the Hollywood of historic icons and contemporary tourism. It is home to Hollywood Boulevard, Graumann's Chinese Theatre replete with celebrity handprints in the concrete, the Kodak Theater (current home to the Academy Awards), the Roosevelt Hotel (original home of the Academy Awards in 1929), and the Hollywood Walk of Fame–the literal stars in the sidewalk (see Figure 3 and Figure 4). Each of these "sites" is iconic of Hollywood and represents the century-long history of the area and the industry.

Figure 3: The sidewalk along Hollywood Boulevard is the Hollywood Walk of Fame (photo by Sarah Ono).

Figure 4: The Hollywood Walk of Fame is a series of stars, each with the name of an Industry "star"; actor Drew Barrymore's star (photo by Sarah Ono).

This Hollywood, the neighborhood that for decades vacillated between the iconic representation of movie star glamour and a seedier image characterized by sex workers and drugs, can be pointed to on any map of Los Angeles. This Hollywood is central to the areas where my fieldwork in Los Angeles took place. This, the most literal Hollywood, is where I chose to reside during my twenty months of fieldwork and in the years since. In order to pay the rent required to live in this area, I made a choice to work in "The Industry." While I tried out a number of different jobs -- dressing room assistant, paid audience member, film Extra, music video production assistant, talent escort -- the majority of my income was earned working for film festivals in a variety of positions. Before I introduce the jobs themselves, I want to contextualize the choice to work as a key part of my methodology.

A Methodology of Work: a Choice and a Necessity to Work in the Field

I began a series of interviews with an expanding collection of informants during my Master's research in 2000, and continued to expand my connections into my dissertation fieldwork. Over twenty-months I conducted formal and informal interviews in a variety of settings with a broad selection of people who are representative of numerous social roles and jobs. I spent over a year and a half talking with people positioned in and around Hollywood. We would typically meet at pre-arranged times or impromptu in the breaks between activities. We talked in formal and informal settings, as well as while working side-by-side. I observed my informants, social actors in what I broadly identify as Hollywood, in public and private settings. For twelve of my twenty months of fieldwork, I worked in a full-time capacity. For another two and a half months,

I worked in a part-time or less consistent capacity, either on single day events or on an as-needed basis. While I did not anticipate it in advance, the majority of my data collection took place while I worked within the industry. Residents of Los Angeles, regardless of profession or affiliation with Hollywood, call themselves "Angelenos." Throughout my fieldwork, I participated in life as a temporary "Angeleno," in and out of a work context.

Because it is difficult to delimit where Hollywood begins and ends, I sought to document social interactions in two principal environments where individuals might perform membership in the Hollywood community. First are "everyday" or unmarked events, both public and private (e.g., non-work-related activities, meals, leisure time). Second are "marked events" that are indicative of "Hollywood."[9] There are two categories of marked events: (a) *public events* that are accessible to the press and to general audiences via the media (e.g., premieres, award ceremonies, or film festivals), and (b) *business events* that are accessible exclusively to Hollywood "insiders" (e.g., on-set production, auditions, parties, or meetings).

I used participant-observation as the primary method to collect data. My objective was to notice behaviors that social actors employ in interactions with interlocutors to show membership in the Hollywood community in work and non-work contexts. Use of "Hollywood-speak" and identifiable forms of marked language (e.g., film jargon, marked slang, name-dropping), non-verbal semiotic indicators (e.g., in dress, physical adornment, what someone is eating), and what I call "atypical marked behavior" (e.g., wearing

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[9] The idea of markedness or markedness theory comes out of linguistics, specifically phonology. In this privative system the marked element stands out against an absence of marking. Markedness is highly context specific (Trubetskoy 1969, Battistlla 1996).

"casual" clothing somewhere that normally requires "formal" dress) are among the ways that "insiders" signal affiliation with The Business.

In the end, I relied heavily on fieldnotes and "headnotes" (Sanjek 1990). However, in the beginning I used as many strategies to collect data as I could. Because the subject of study, Hollywood, is massive and largely abstract, I collected "data" that captured Hollywood from a number of perspectives. Only through a process of considering Hollywood broadly was I able to find the edges and determine what modes of data collection proved most useful. I took notes wherever I was, jotting down quotes and poignant moments, later writing up more detailed fieldnotes. I inconsistently used digital and microcassettes to record interviews or ambient sound. When it was appropriate I videotaped or took still photographs so that I could return to moments later and review them for patterns and clues with a better sense of what I was looking for. I recorded televised broadcasts of awards shows and Hollywood events over a series of years, and watched media coverage of these and other events, in particular those I worked on, participated in, or attended. I monitored print media: trade publications (e.g., *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter*), popular press/magazines, and newspapers (local, national, and international when relevant). In much the same way that I experimented with multiple methods, I also set out to explore as many experiences of "work" as possible so I could understand how the pieces of Hollywood fit together.

An aspect of this study is to incorporate into a consideration of Hollywood the social actors or workers who exist outside of the spotlights. I seek to expand the public understanding of the range of jobs that constitute "working in the Industry," and to increase awareness of participants in "the Dream Factory" to include the many technical

and support roles that must become highly integrated in order to produce an economically successful and cohesive product. To accomplish this I selected individuals in both "above-the-line" roles and those positions categorized as "below-the-line." These terms are Hollywood jargon or Hollywood-speak. "Above-the-line" refers to the category of major expenditures incurred or negotiated before a film goes into production. It usually includes costs associated with producers, directors, writers, and "stars" (i.e., actors with significant "leverage" or assigned value). "Below-the-line" encompasses all of the technical crew roles, the remainder of the cast, and all of the support staff related to travel, locations, and the numerous departments required to produce a film. Where one falls relative to the proverbial "line" is generally understood based on social role, an example of tacit knowledge and "insider" language, but can also be observed as it plays out in who is included in which meetings, or whether or not you are in a role where meetings are part of your expectation. I include these terms because I use them later, but also to illustrate that there is an extensive "crew" involved in the production of Hollywood.

A few directors such as Gus Van Sant, who I was lucky enough to get to know during the course of this research, try to work with "the smallest crew possible" and often "independent" producers working with micro-budgets that do not allow for extensive crews, pare back the number of people involved as much as possible. I mention these outliers because of the popular expectation that Hollywood productions require huge crews and big budgets. The film and event productions I witnessed required many more social actors, who fulfill many more roles/jobs, than are represented in publicly circulating discourse that reports on "the workings of Hollywood." Watching the "behind

the scenes" glimpses of Hollywood that are broadcast on cable channels like E! Entertainment Network or television programs such as *Access Hollywood* (Lewis 1996-), it is possible to assume that Hollywood is populated exclusively by celebrities and a handful of well-known directors. One objective of this research is to show that the production of Hollywood, as well as Hollywood's products, rely heavily on a much greater number of participants and social roles than is generally recognized by the public.

With the goal of approaching Hollywood from as many perspectives as possible, I worked as: a paid audience member for television, background talent (an "extra") in film and television, a production assistant on television and music video shoots, a script reader, a film festival theater manager, a film festival registration and customer service coordinator, a film festival hospitality coordinator and filmmaker liaison, a supervisor for the Los Angeles County Arts Initiative (LACAI) intern program, and a film festival on-site producer.

Through these paid positions, as well as various other channels, I gained access to: directors, producers, actors, agents, managers, publicists, production designers, art directors, cinematographers, gaffers, editors, creative directors, event planners, boards of directors, writers, screenwriters, film critics, newspaper reporters, magazine writers, film school attendees, struggling actors, "wannabes" for everything imaginable, models, fans, photographers, mothers of talent, secretaries, drivers, doormen, dogs, security, electricians, casting agents, studio executives, production assistants, talent coordinators, production coordinators, line producers, lawyers, makeup artists, costumers, pop stars, rock stars, underground hip-hop artists, paparazzi, "autograph hounds," handlers, the Fire

Marshall for Hollywood, television "personalities," moguls, a wealth of assistants to any of the above, and everyone in any way related to film festivals.

As a result of beginning research with the expectation of a comprehensive study that included exposure to as many different roles, or jobs, in Hollywood as possible, I needed to address both ends of the spectrum: the objects of spectacle and the invisible participants. I wanted to cover the range of experience from unknown, unnamed, participants who fill seats and compose "background," to "celebrity" individuals who are household names and the objects of Red Carpet mania, the paparazzi, and fans. In addition to the active social roles I took, participating directly in Hollywood, I also sought to contextualize Hollywood in the city of Los Angeles. I embarked on an agenda that encompassed general knowledge of the city, again from a range of perspectives. For example, movement through Los Angeles is a preoccupying factor for anyone living or working in Hollywood. Much time is given to discussions of traffic, directions, and route choices that hold the potential to save time. While conducting research I made it a point to experience multiple modes of transport: walking, busing, the Metro train system, the ubiquitous driving one's self, as well as being driven by a "driver," whether in a taxi, a town car, or by an informant. In a physical landscape like Los Angeles, it is important to understand how negotiating the space impacts one's ability to work and live. The geography of Hollywood has shaped the image of Hollywood and in turn shapes the experience of the population residing there. I further explore the relationship between the City of Los Angeles and The Industry of Hollywood (in Chapter 3) in a discussion of "placing" Hollywood.

I include details of everyday life, such as how I traveled in the city, with two objectives in mind. My hope is that these quotidian inclusions will help to ground the data, which at times can seem to float away from experience, as something shared and believable, and also to provide transparency. Hollywood as an industry and a business lacks transparency even for those who participate in it. For all the How-To-Break-Into-The-Business guides, and the numerous books recounting how others have "made it," getting into Hollywood remains, as one informant put it, "one part talent, one part timing, and the rest is a craps shoot." The lack of clarity that shrouds The Industry is often intentional and contributes to the mystique associated with all things Hollywood. Conversations are cloaked in inference and Hollywood-speak sneaks into informal exchanges as well as trade publications. As an anthropologist, one of my hopes is to demystify my subject of study. In discussing methodology explicitly, I can address what was required in order to implement my methods: a means of support and access.

Taking on "Extra" Work

The project of studying Hollywood requires two critical pieces: access and a means to support oneself. The issues of funding and access are universal to anthropologists in every fieldsite but the process of acquiring support and access is not always made explicit. My thinking often returns to the statement credited to Oscar Levant: "Strip away the phony tinsel of Hollywood and you'll find the real tinsel underneath." When you look at Hollywood it is shiny and the sparkles can be distracting. Along the stretch of Hollywood Boulevard between La Brea and Vine Streets, the Hollywood Walk of Fame consists of inlaid stone that literally glitters in the sunlight. This is a good image for my thinking about fieldwork.

When you consider the idea of fieldwork in Hollywood, it is easy to be caught up in the expectation that it is exotic. With both Hollywood and fieldwork, there is opportunity to peel back layers of information to reveal still more information. Peeling does not necessarily get to a truth or an answer, but it can unveil more, and different, information. I include this section alongside methodology, because these are the pieces of my fieldwork puzzle that really shape what I did, and how I was able to do it. This section illustrates how my need to generate an income aided me in experiencing jobs that range from the lowest common denominator social roles in Hollywood to positions that provide access to more restricted areas. This access enabled me to get close enough to high-up and hard-to-reach social roles along with the masses at "cattle calls." A critical factor in the getting of both jobs and access is time. Time, as it is conceived in a Hollywood context, is discussed at greater length in Chapter Four.

In the 1940s, when Powdermaker conducted her field research she faced the same issues of funding and access. These are a challenge for all anthropologists who conduct fieldwork. Support for Powdermaker's study of Hollywood (1950) came from Paul Fejos, who provided both funding and an introduction that made her fieldwork in Hollywood possible. Fejos, who at the time was the head of the Viking Fund, precursor to the Wenner-Gren Foundation, had a background in film; he worked as a Hollywood motion picture director in the 1920s (Powdermaker 1966:210). Even with some funding and an introduction, Powdermaker found it impossible to immerse herself in the life of the community as she had done in other fieldsites. She attributes this to the scattered and amorphous shape of the physical landscape and community of Hollywood, and to the fact that she had limited access to people of high status (Powdermaker 1966).

Things have not changed very much. Support for graduate student research is not a given and it is a particular challenge when one's fieldsite is located in the United States. I knew that I would need to work in some kind of ongoing capacity during the period of fieldwork as I was without research funding. Before I left Iowa a mentor told me that, "funding for a Hollywood project is about as likely as getting money to go to Hawaii. It is nearly impossible to get [monetary] support for research that looks to be more fun than work." The irony in this observation is that *working* occupied much of my time in the field. Work often competed with being an anthropologist, but overall it tied in nicely with my interest in exploring the range of jobs available in Hollywood.

Ultimately, I, the anthropologist, became a participant in Hollywood through my position as a working member of The Industry and, through my work in Hollywood, I became a central character in the ethnographic re-telling of this fieldwork. This subtle shift from participant-observer to one who observes their participation (Tedlock 1991) applies to the research and reporting I present here. In an anthropological context, one might say that I "went native." Aside from the fact that this claim tends to carry a negative association, I do not dispute it. From what I can tell, based on my experience and what little I have heard from others who have attempted similar or complementary research in Hollywood, going native -- working in Hollywood as a means of access -- is par for the course (cf. David 2007).

A colleague pointed out to me that she always thought "going native" implied that the anthropologist decided that he preferred the culture of observation over his own, in effect staying on as a "local." This observation confronted *my* assumption that "going native" means an anthropologist loses sight of her scientific objectivity and adopts a less

reliable positionality. In the case of Hollywood, neither of these fits with my experience of assuming the role of "native" as a mode of field research; if anything, this was a necessary means to operate as an anthropologist in my circumstance. Taking jobs in Hollywood provided me with access to an otherwise closed community.[10] Working put me on the "inside" and as a result of this positioning the outcome of my research is different than if I had conducted participant-observation and interviews as an "outsider" interacting with reported data and media exclusively. In this case, and in many others I assume, the information is significantly different depending on where you are standing (figuratively) when you ask the questions and observe the actions.

In the next section, I present one of my explorations of working as an Extra in Hollywood as an example of my early engagement with Hollywood as a participant. Extra work in film and television is commonly a first-step for new arrivals to Hollywood, in large part because it does not require any special skills or training, it is available to everyone, and it is one of the easiest ways to make minimum wage in The Industry. Before arriving in Hollywood, I made a conscious choice to be clear, with others and myself, that I was not doing this research as a means to get into the business of Hollywood. Regardless of what I said, or how emphatically I denied this was the case, others still assumed I was trying to get a foot in the proverbial Hollywood door. The closest I came to acting was as an Extra. In my brief exposure to acting I was introduced to the fluidity of identity common in Hollywood, in particular to those who are in front of

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[10] There is an interpretation of the anthropologist as "native" which applies when the participant-observer actually *is* an insider (cf. Abu-Lughod 1991). Hollywood is an instance where arguably everyone who makes up the Hollywood community is an outsider who became an insider through the act of working in The Industry. With this in mind, I may have become a "native anthropologist" the moment I accepted my first job in Hollywood (cf. Narayan 1997).

the camera. I am still reminded by field colleagues that this "is the nature of acting, Sarah. And Hollywood is all about acting -- whether or not you are an actor." And so, I began where many of the pilgrims to Hollywood begin: by being told who I *could be* and aspiring to be in the background.

Into The Background: Blending In in a Place that is All About Standing Out

"Background talent" as it is called in The Industry is better known as "being an extra." Extra work can take multiple forms, ranging from paid audience work, where one literally sits in a seat and claps on cue, to featured-Extra work, which is only a semantic step from being an "actor" and may involve minimal speaking or directed action. Even seemingly simple functions, such as being an Extra, are taken seriously and laden with guidelines and protocols, the number of which increase if one gains entrance into the union, the Screen Actors' Guild (SAG). For example, Myung, an actor in his thirties who works for film festivals to fill space between acting jobs, was an Extra in Clint Eastwood's, LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA (2006). "As an Extra I wasn't allowed to take direction from Clint Eastwood. If he talked to me, told me what to do, it means that under union rules they would have to pay me more…It was Eastwood, and I could only take direction from an AD [assistant director]…[Eastwood] did talk to me once and I was so happy that I didn't even care about getting paid." A large part of what gets glossed over when people talk and think about Hollywood is the extensive bureaucracy embedded in any system as massive as the film industry.

To facilitate getting work as an Extra and to better understand the process involved, I listed myself with background talent agencies. Agents emerged following the

disarticulation of the Hollywood studio system after the Supreme Court ruling in 1948, and since then have taken on the role of representatives and go-betweens whose job it is to keep their clients working.[11] While the role of "agent" is not one to which Powdermaker (1950) gave much consideration, since mid-century agents have become increasingly important in Hollywood. For those in The Industry, it is said that if you want information about Hollywood, the best thing to do is have lunch with an agent. Agents are said to have all the inside information on both projects and individuals. This makes sense considering that agents are paid to know the details of what is going on and who is doing what in the business.

Timothy, a primary informant and guide during my Master's fieldwork, told me early on in my research that if I was interested in "getting into the business" of Hollywood, in particular beyond my tenure as an anthropologist, I should consider working as an agent's assistant at one of the big agencies (e.g., Creative Artists Agency (CAA), United Talent Agency (UTA), William Morris). He told me, "No one lasts very long [as an agent's assistant], a few, six months, at most. Everyone knows it is a revolving door, so they work you into the ground, but in the end you get to leave with a nice Rolodex." While the prospect of a "Rolodex," Hollywood-speak for a list of contacts, and of building a personal network of potentially useful connections was

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[11] American motion picture studios have existed in the Hollywood neighborhood in Los Angeles, California, since the early-1900s. The concept of a vertically integrated "studio system" is generally associated with Hollywood, but first emerged in France in 1910. Vertical integration was initiated in the U. S. in 1917 when the Paramount Film Corporation acquired a distribution company, thus giving an individual control of both production and distribution. Vertical integration in the movie business led to a monopoly that the U. S. Supreme Court put an end to with the Supreme Court-Paramount decision of 1948. The anti-trust action brought an end to the film industry's monopoly over exhibition and changed the structure of the industry (see Hayward 2000).

interesting, I knew the lore around being in this role and was not eager to pursue it at that time.

When it comes to Extra-work, agencies that deal specifically with background talent manage and assist thousands of people to connect with job opportunities. Unlike agents who represent actors, writers, or other social roles, background talent agencies are not highly selective. Whereas it is a challenge to acquire an agent if you are a writer, in most cases if you are willing to pay a monthly fee and do most of the legwork, you are "in" just by signing up with an Extras talent agency. Hollywood is full of path-not-taken stories, and those of an anthropologist are not so different. So, while I did not choose to work for an agent, nor did I acquire an agent of my own, I did go through the process of registering as an Extra with an agency. It was an insightful experience, if not an unsettling one.

As background talent, the emphasis is not on talent, or the ability to act, but on one's appearance; this is often referred to as one's "type" or "look." The registration process is reductive. Individuals are reduced to their most general and visual characteristics. In my case, I was told to list myself as "high school age." In Hollywood a premium is put on youth and I was repeatedly told that being able to pass for more than ten years younger than my actual age was an undeniable asset. At the extras casting agency where I registered, both of the young women working in the office agreed, "you should be really happy about looking that young. It opens a lot of doors…. Most people start out by taking at least a couple of years off of their real age."

While I found the age discrepancy a bit weird, it was nothing compared to being told that I could not pass as either "White" or "Asian," being that I am of Japanese and

European descent. Ethnicities in the realm of possibility for me, according to the staff at the casting agency, included: Hispanic, Mexican, Native American, Eskimo, Hawaiian, and "something island." In addition to a laundry-list of physical characteristics (e.g., tattoos, prosthetic limbs, etc.), there is a check-list of possible clothing, accessories, and costumes that you may already own. It can work in your favor if you already have a police uniform or a cheerleading outfit. Anne, an actor, describes going to an audition, "You walk in and it is a room full of women who are all about my age. The only difference is they were all wearing [medical] scrubs…. No, I didn't get that part."

As part of my "signing deal" the Extras' casting agency I registered with took digital photos of me and posted them online along with my biometric (phenotypic) information. Stubbornly, I listed myself as "Asian-American" against the advice of the woman who processed my paperwork, "Here's the thing, [casting agents] really want Asians who look *Asian*." In spite of evidently not looking Asian enough, I was notified of calls seeking "Asian of any type" on more than one occasion. Even after my membership lapsed, I still got calls for THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT (Lin 2006), which was being filmed in Long Beach, California. After the film's release, I brought this up when talking with Myung about his work in LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA (Eastwood 2006). "Oh yeah, *everyone* who could pass for Asian was called for that one" (personal communication, emphasis in original).

While marketing of oneself for purposes of work in Hollywood is not central to the dissertation, it is an area that I found interesting as a subject that deserves future research. A twist on Myung's participation in LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA is the fact that he is technically Korean but was able to make the casting cuts by suggesting that he

was part Japanese and a student of Japanese language. There is no evidence that either of these is true, but as Myung and others told me on more than one occasion, "If you can get away with it, then why not?" It is not my intent to single Myung out, as his efforts to secure work are not unique or even atypical. The compression of specific nationalities into broad categorical classifications (e.g., "Asian") was also demonstrated when my father, a Japanese-American physician, was cast as a Chinese librarian in Gus Van Sant's, ELEPHANT (2003). The disconnect between one's actual identity and phenotypic categories available in Hollywood is just another aspect of Hollywood that is changeable and unfixed. Perhaps, in part, it is the "magic" of Hollywood that allows for these kinds of adjustments and omissions. To question, let alone challenge, the motivation or ethics involved in "getting work" only draws looks askance, head shakes of dismissal, and shoulder shrugs. This brings me back to access, the second requirement for field-research in Hollywood.

Getting a Foot In the Door: Negotiating a Field You Cannot Just Walk Into

In a business that is rhetorically all about "getting in the door," the need for access as an anthropologist is critical and not given. I was fortunate to have serendipity on my side and what became a network of interesting, interested, and generous informants, co-workers, and friends. First and foremost, efforts to engage what Laura Nader (1969) termed "studying up" require a certain amount of supplemental groundwork beyond the disciplinary tasks required to attain ABD ("all but dissertation") status. Because access is such an obstacle generally in Hollywood, I was heavily reliant, especially early on, upon others who could introduce me and give me access until I was able to cultivate my own

access. While I cannot name everyone who allowed me to shadow them or enabled my "deep hanging out" (Geertz 1998), there are a couple of key individuals to whom I attribute my success in the field: Timothy Ford and Gus Van Sant. My ability to participate and observe Hollywood as an "insider" began with their aid. They lent me their credibility and, in vouching for me, opened doors. Their voices may not dominate this text but their influence is all over this work.

Timothy Ford, a writer and producer with a background in linguistics and "a soft-spot for intellectuals," was the first in a string of "key informants." We met prior to my conceptualizing a Hollywood project. I was traveling in Mexico and, by chance, we shared a bus ride long enough to sort out the (less than) six degrees that separated us at the point when we met. Ford aided me in establishing a network in Los Angeles and The Industry through introductions and extended periods of "tagging along" during the summer of my Master's research. My pre-existing personal connections, in combination with Ford's introductions, allowed me to meet Academy Award nominated director (GOOD WILL HUNTING (1997), MILK (2008)), Gus Van Sant. Van Sant lent credibility to the project and to me. He also made a decision that, while coincidental, became somewhat pivotal for me, when he cast my father, a previous non-actor, in his feature film ELEPHANT.

This single act led to my presence at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2003, where ELEPHANT went on to win the *Palme D'Or* award for Best Picture and the unprecedented dual honor for Van Sant of Best Director at that year's festival. The cliché goes that timing is everything and, in my case, this was very true. I made connections in Cannes, and knowledge gleaned through being there (through the generosity of Van Sant,

Dany Wolf, and HBO Films) eventually helped me to increase my access to events and individuals in Los Angeles. It has been proven to me time and again, through informant reporting and my own experience, that social networks lead to professional opportunities. This is not an observation that is limited to Hollywood or the film industry but is a belief that circulates in personal narratives, the public imagination, and in the saying, "The Industry is all about who you know." In retrospect I can say that I am thankful that circumstance led to my need to work in paid positions, because it was through working that I found a focus as well as the grounding I sought. While I often took jobs in the name of research that garnered me raised eyebrows, each job embedded me in webs of social networks that eventually became my own.

Besides the challenges of funding and access, there are additional factors that have limited anthropological study of Hollywood in the interim since Powdermaker's efforts. Hollywood presents a bind that influences opinions of whether or not it is a valid site for academic research. On the one hand, it cannot be taken seriously *because* it is Hollywood. Many people dismiss Hollywood out-of-hand as American "popular culture." Hollywood is saddled with the association of being frivolous, more about play than work. At the same time, there is a tendency, especially for the people who work in The Industry, to take themselves too seriously, and an overwhelmingly disproportionate gravity that I previously thought was reserved for crises in which lives are at stake. This too is part of the experience of Hollywood; it is often approached and negotiated as though lives are at stake. This melodramatic crisis-driven environment is explored further as a collective trait of Hollywood in Chapter Four.

I want to acknowledge that people who are in the business of Hollywood work hard, much harder than is widely presumed. For those individuals, whether a diligent, paid-with-peanuts production assistant, or an established and successful producer, movies and the Hollywood-related events that surround them are serious business. And well they should be. Film is touted to be one of the United States' most influential exports (cf. Miller et al. 2003) and, if influence isn't enough, it can also be argued that there is a lot of money riding on films, even before taking into account all of the tie-ins and cross-marketing that accompanies films domestically and globally.

Being There is the Only Place to Start

Working in Hollywood, I was explicit about my purpose and objective of conducting participant-observation as an anthropologist working on research for a Ph.D. dissertation. Whereas I anticipated hesitation or concern on the part of employers, I was more often met with interest, curiosity, and ambivalence. The only concerns raised during the hiring process related to my ability to fulfill the requirements of my position, and this not being a problem, the anthropology part was more or less dismissed with, "I'd be interested to read [the dissertation] when it is finished," or "Let me know what you find out."

For my part, I made sure that my work requirements came first. This was not difficult, as the intensity of production work tended to hold my attention. Since I repeatedly accepted jobs that were new to me, the learning curve was consistently steep. A fellow anthropologist and graduate school colleague, Jason, who came to work for me when I was a site producer on a film festival in Los Angeles, took to calling my fieldwork "sweatshop labor." His observation was not inaccurate. I worked long days, typically in

excess of twelve hours at a stretch without days off for weeks at a time, in positions where I often had to intuit my way along. In an environment where everyone is over-extended and stressed, "training" is minimal and the adage of sink-or-swim is a reality. Jason ended up leaving early, even before the festival had ended: "I thought living on an island in the South Pacific was tough. This Hollywood fieldwork is ri-dic-ulous!"

Even during the moments when I cursed my choices that landed me in difficult and challenging situations, I knew that I was lucky in the context of Hollywood and, in particular, as an anthropologist in Hollywood. I had a job and I was getting paid, and for many of the people I talked to this is the ultimate goal. It is often overlooked, if not entirely taken for granted, how many people provide their services, time, and energy for free to events such as film festivals in the name of "paying their dues" or "gaining experience." For some, volunteering reportedly provides a desired proximity to Hollywood. For others, there is the hope of breaking into "the biz," or making "the right connection" that will lead to something else, but in the meantime they are volunteers, no matter how over-educated or over-qualified they may be.

In my case I drew upon skills and knowledge long dormant while in graduate school and tackled new areas such as waste management and the installation of temporary electrical systems. I worked hard and often made it up as I went along. "Fake it 'til you make it" is one co-worker's favorite catch phrase. As discussed further in the next chapter, power was a transient and fluid commodity. My social role changed from job to job and with a change in title came a change in influence. My movement through multiple film festival departments is not typical. More often someone will stay in the social role that they initially work in, better able to move "up" in their department then

from one department to another. A man who worked in the box office phone room for a series of years lamented, "Once in box office, always in box office." I am thankful to the individuals who helped me string together jobs that allowed me to increasingly earn more, as well as to explore the inner-workings of large-scale event production.

If this were a movie instead of a dissertation, this is where I would put the "work montage." Composed of a series of clips and images of on-the-job action in the different social roles I occupied, such a montage could illustrate the range of circumstances I encountered while working in the field: the bombardment of camera flashes on a Red Carpet and the anti-glamour of changing trash bags. These images set side-by-side against a musical backdrop, might be able to convey the scope of tasks that made up my participant observation experience, more often called: "work."

"Have you thought about making your research into a film?" Someone suggests that I make this research into a documentary on an average of once a month. While I did record on video from time to time, when appropriate and permitted, I do not count video documentation among my primary methods. There is the need to convey the experience of working amid a film festival in a way that captures the messy can of worms that it so often is, in a visual way without the benefit of footage. To do this I turn to a piece written and delivered by a woman I worked both with and for at different times and at different film festivals.

Welcome to the Box Office: an Ethnographic Moment

As the box office manager at the Los Angeles Film Festival, Ann Jensen oversaw all things related to ticketing, credentials (a.k.a. badges), and in this case festival merchandise being sold through the box office. She was also looked to as the last word

when it came to changes in the schedule once the films and events were "locked" into a screening time by the programming department.

In order to understand the complex nature of a single position, or social role, in a film festival, I find it useful to consider Ann. She is the head of her department, box office, and is required to work with every other department to a greater or lesser extent. For example, she only works with the technical crew that oversees the projection of films if there is a problem that affects the schedule. At the first festival I worked for, the box office was referred to as "the heart of the festival." Later it was argued that more appropriately it should have been the "brain" since the programming department felt strongly that it had already staked its claim on the heart. In any case, the box office department of a film festival is central for the staff as well as anyone who hopes to attend a film festival. The public comes to the box office and the satellite locations to buy tickets, and invited guests come to pick up credentials. Everyone comes to the box office if they need information.

The piece that follows at the end of this section was written by Ann, in her role as box office manager, and read at the staff "wrap meeting." A wrap meeting takes place at the end of a film festival and, in order to understand the form of her presentation, it is helpful to have a bit of background on the setting in which she delivered it. Because so much of what takes place in "the world of the box office" is minutiae, it does not make sense to report specifics (e.g., how many tickets were sold to each demographic) in this large-group forum. Instead, Ann wanted to communicate the nature of working in the box office. In addition to being a hub for information, the box office is also where complaints and angry people congregate. It is not uncommon to see a box office "staffer" reduced to

tears after a loud, public, and unwarranted exchange with an angry patron. The box office is the customer service point of contact with the public, and bears the burdens of also being stationary and clearly marked. In an environment where everyone is caught up in his or her personal responsibilities, it is easy to overlook the way that the choices of one department affect another. Because of this, it is easy to write off the box office staff without understanding the position they are in, which was the point of this presentation.

In the wrap meeting, there is a series of long tables placed end-to-end to create a large rectangle around which the core staff, a group of about sixty people, sits facing each other. Until a few days prior to this wrap meeting, this room was a limited-access hospitality area with a bar, a DJ, and areas for dancing and sitting. Now, partially disassembled, the walls are lined with boxes and whatever furniture remains to be moved. The red of the walls now seems too bright under the fluorescent overhead lighting. This type of meeting, "the wrap meeting," is typically an all-day affair with lunch provided so as to keep everyone close. The representation of each department reflects the size of the department and is usually limited to staff whose contracted dates of work extend beyond the days of the festival itself.

When we reach box office on the wrap meeting agenda, all eyes turn to the three representatives who are sitting together. As the highest-ranking member of the box office hierarchy, Ann began by explaining that out of the thirty-three staff members in her department, twenty-five started working the week that the festival opened. What this means is that they learned their jobs while doing them. Even for returning staff members who worked in box office previously, the films are always different, ticket prices typically change from year to year, and undoubtedly there are new criteria and benefits

attached to the different passes available. There are upwards of two hundred films (features, shorts, and in this case music videos) to learn in order to answer even the most general questions. There are also dozens of events as part of a film festival that are not film screenings. Because film festivals are a bit like a professional conference or convention, depending on the festival, activities also include panels, talks, receptions, and parties. Even the most studious staff members have a hard time keeping it all straight, and that is before last- minute changes are factored into the equation. This was the point that Ann sought to make with the following, written in the voice of a box office employee:

"If you're looking for tickets for that thing with 'Guillermo What's-his-name'...I'm guessing that you might be interested in tickets for A Conversation with Guillermo Del Toro. *While all of our printed materials indicate that this event is at the Hammer Museum, it is actually (as of last Tuesday) at the Majestic Crest theatre. This event is free, and no tickets are required. Be aware that lines may form early. However, you might possibly be requesting tickets to Kodak Focus with featured guest Guillermo Navarro. This event is also free, but advance tickets are required and will be available in advance at the main box office or not in advance at the door beginning approximately one hour before showtime.*

Tickets for most events are $12, although you may qualify for a 2 for 1 discount to specific events (which change on a daily basis) if you're associated with any of the following groups: The Westwood Hills Homeowners Association, LAFTA, LACMA, Bruins Film Frenzy, if you've purchased $50 worth of groceries from Gelson's Market, or $10 worth of Smartwater ® from Bristol Farms Market (please bring us your receipt for proof of purchase). Free tickets may also be available to you for specific events

(which change on a daily basis) if you're a festival volunteer, a member of any of the groups previously mentioned, if you present us with a printout of an email from any relatively plausible source indicating that you are eligible for a free ticket, or by simply by saying the word "InfoList."

...except for tickets to the screening of The Art of Failure: Chuck Connelly. These tickets are free to anyone, whether you have an email printout or not, or whether or not you even actually want a ticket. Please, we're just trying to fill the seats.

Before you go, can I interest you in a festival t-shirt?"[12]

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12 LAFTA is Los Angeles Film Teachers Association and LACMA is the Los Angeles County Museum of Art

CHAPTER 3: PLACE AS EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITY

> Hollywood itself is not an exact geographical area, although there is such a postal district. It has commonly been described as a state of mind, and it exists wherever people connected with the movies live and work.
>
> Hortense Powdermaker (1950:18)

Using Place to Analyze Hollywood as a Community

This analysis of Hollywood as a community is based on two conditions, place and collectivities, with the idea that these concepts can be applied to other examples of contemporary community as well. This chapter explores how, and to what extent, Hollywood complies with the first condition: place. The following questions guide the inquiry: Is there a place, whether literal or imagined, associated with the community? If place is largely imagined, or there is a discrepancy between the literal place and the imagined place, is there a material component that serves to mark the group in a way that is recognized by both insiders and outsiders?

What follows is an exploration of the different understandings of Hollywood as each relates to a distinctly different place, either geographically or in the collective imagination. Once Hollywood as a literal location, a historic destination, and an imagined mythic place are each presented, the remainder of the chapter will consider a site-of-Hollywood as a place defined and identified through material culture and semiotic markings associated with a film festival.

This chapter situates discussions of *place* in anthropology, in particular as the concept relates to discussions of fieldwork and community to demonstrate that there are

no simple fieldsites. This is important because anthropologists often introduce ourselves in the context of *where* we work. Regardless of theoretical orientation, anthropologists begin ethnographic research by first identifying where our "field" is located. Locating Hollywood as a place is challenging because Hollywood is a conceptual construction as much as it is a geographically grounded entity. Through the process of locating Hollywood as a place, both the literal Hollywood defined by geography and the mythical Hollywood that is situated through collective imaginings, this chapter raises questions relevant to anthropological assumptions about place. Challenges to what constitutes a fieldsite in anthropology are not new, but the perceived need to justify a complex *where* as a valid "field," does tell us something about the discipline of anthropology and how slow the process of implementing change can be.

George Marcus (1995) initiated a dialogue on multi-sitedness over a decade ago, and yet many scholars still feel compelled to make a case for conducting multi-sited research. I see myself as part of this discussion. In fact, Hollywood provokes thinking about the negotiation of a dispersed fieldsite. I want to expand the terms of this discussion and suggest that we consider re-scaling a fieldsite. I consider the multiple locations of Hollywood to signal the complexity of Hollywood as a conglomerate of different interpretations and also want to explore the multi-sited aspect of a single site-of-Hollywood, as in the case of a film festival.

I use place as a condition that supports the notion of Hollywood as a contemporary American community. I am less interested in finding a single location for Hollywood that can be agreed upon by everyone. Instead, I argue that contemporary conceptualizations of community are not as reliant on a fixed locale that is common to

members of a group as might have been the case in the past or in other examples. With the advent of new technologies for communication individuals who participate in a common community no longer need to be in the same -- literal or geographic -- place. I can only assume that this trend will continue as the ways we communicate evolve. In the time since I started this research, the introduction of Skype, software providing an online telecommunication option, made video calling in real-time a mainstream reality. Whereas five years ago I wrote that online exchanges (e.g., email and chats) could not replace face-to-face interactions in community construction, this is no longer the case and accordingly I have changed my position.

How people connect to each other is changing, and so it is logical that the ways we conceptualize our connections is also going to change. Community as a concept is one that people in the United States continue to demonstrate an affinity for, whether it is in the discourse we create about our neighborhoods or national public policy (Creed 2006). For this reason alone there is a need to interrogate the applications of "community" in our discourse and our thinking. This chapter presents the range of scale that can be applied to the notion of multi-sited fieldwork, arguing for both a global location as a result of widely circulated popular discourse, and a micro-view of a multi-sited field. In doing this I draw upon the experience of working for film festivals as a mode of data collection and participant-observation.

The Changing Notion of Place: Movement From Maps to the Multi-Sited

In the tradition of early ethnography, as well as products of the not-so-distant-past, it is a convention of anthropology to include a map early on in the presentation of

the fieldwork "setting," often in the introduction, if not even before the table of contents (cf. Evans-Pritchard 1940; Leach 1977; Lee 1984; Weiner 1988).[13] A map can be a useful tool. Maps orient the reader in geographic space, and therefore locate and bound "cultures" and "communities" in space. However, it is naïve to look at a map and assume that the people represented by a defined space are confined to the shaded area within the lines (Appadurai 1991; Clifford 1997; Gupta & Ferguson 1997a, 1997c). Prior to the recognition that the objects of our research are not as neatly bounded as we would like (cf. Marshall 2004; Hannerz 2001; Gupta & Ferguson 1997b; Blu 1996), a considerable amount of energy was put towards locating the boundaries of culture and defining "community." I take the position that in spite of all of this effort, the concepts of culture and community are still slippery and their definitions up for debate among scholars.

The field can be viewed as both a methodological ideal and a concrete place of professional activity (Amit 2000; Clifford 1997). The idea of "the field" as a discrete, bounded geographical locale is proving to be increasingly outdated and untenable (Fox 1991; Gupta and Ferguson 1997a; Shore 1999; Wolf 1982). If we take Schensul et al.'s interpretation that the field "is a physical setting, the boundaries of which are defined by the researcher in terms of institutions and people of interest, as well as their associated activities in geographic space" (1999:70), then the definition of the anthropological "field" proves as fluid as community. The world is changing and the way that anthropologists think about the world is also changing. The discipline of anthropology

[13] Setting can be connected to "scene" if an analysis of performance is applied, or as used by MacIntyre (1984) to imply a history.

has changed. Therefore, fieldwork has changed and it is no longer place-based in the way it previously has been conceptualized (cf. Marcus 1998).

A fractal image taken from mathematics and chaos theory is being used by anthropologists critical of conventional images of culture, as a model to re-think the "shape" of culture (Appadurai 1990:20; Strathern 1991). Robert Brightman (1995) suggests that human populations cannot be segmented, whether by geographic territory, polities, or by self-defined social collectivities. James Clifford goes even further to propose a new understanding of "location" as "an itinerary rather than a bounded site – a series of encounters and translations" (1997:11). In this view of *un*-located bodies in motion, sites such as motels, airport terminals, and bus depots take on greater significance as sites where one's sense of self and belonging are negotiated (cf. Clifford 1997; Goffman 1959).

Needless to say, the field can no longer be taken to be a literal "laboratory," controlled and allowing for observation and experimentation, as in the twentieth-century (Clifford 1997:21). Marcus (1995) put forth what may prove to be the most useful proposal about locating community in the absence of the conventionally understood field. Marcus outlines a "multi-sited" approach to anthropological research and the project of ethnography. Using the highly successful work of Emily Martin (1994) as an example of a study that traces the movement of "the thing" within discourses and modes of thought, Marcus argues that the circulation of signs, symbols, and metaphors guide the design of ethnography (Marcus 1995). Even though the concept of multi-sited research is widely accepted and incorporated into fieldwork, it is striking the extent to which making a case for multi-sited projects continues to occupy anthropologists.

(Re)Thinking Community: the Ongoing Importance of Place and the Increasing Importance of Self-Selection

In the past anthropologists, along with other social scientists, typically defined community in terms of three criteria: place, kinship, and language. In a recent School for Advanced Research (SAR) seminar on community, three new criteria were identified: place, relationship, and group (Creed 2006). The difference between these two sets of criteria is subtle, but the new criteria reflect the significant adaptation of anthropological notions of community as they are being (re)defined and (re)understood. Both sets include place, which speaks to the importance of the notion when it comes to community.

The implication of "place" in both sets reflects the significance of the connection between community and a shared physical environment. This goes back to Redfieldian defined ideas that community is the result of close-knit connections and face-to-face interaction. Both new and old definitions assume that the population constituting a community occupies a common place. The notion of place is not radically reworked in contemporary thinking about community. However, the concept of place is continually undergoing scrutiny by academics that generate a discourse which effectively adapts and expands the term's meaning and applications (cf. Feld and Basso 1996). I explore the evolution of the notion of place, and the related category of space, in greater detail in the next section.

The other two long-standing criteria for community, *kinship* and *language*, suggested that in community membership there is something inherent, a quality often termed "natural" in literature of the twentieth-century. The shift to the more ambiguous qualities of *relationship* and *group* accurately reflect the trend toward communities of

self-selection, as opposed to ones that we are born into without choice in the matter. This shift towards communities of self-selection is the most marked change in contemporary understandings of community in the United States. In some areas of our lives we, as individuals (perhaps in particular as American individuals), have the power to determine some of the communities we belong to, and among all of our affiliations -- even those we cannot dictate, such as kinship -- which we give primacy and importance in the construction of our identities. The communities to which each of us belongs are no longer limited to what can be identified "objectively" or from an "etic" or outsider perspective, even that of the anthropologist. One's community memberships are no longer naturally occurring and imposed upon her (if they ever really were). Rather, the communities one chooses to affiliate with can be subjectively defined and interest-driven as opposed to kinship-based. Hollywood is an outstanding example of a community of self-selection. A goal of this chapter is to show the numerous ways that Hollywood transcends location in both its operation and in the public imagination.

Literal Geography Versus Place: Los Angeles Versus Hollywood

There is an assumption played upon in advertising campaigns promoting tourism in Los Angeles. The implication is that when one thinks about Hollywood it is unavoidable to also think about Los Angeles. The association between the two is hard to ignore. Take, for example, this advertising campaign for The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau (Figure 5 and Figure 6). The text in Figure 3.1 reads, "Meeting a Hollywood legend…That's so LA. Welcome to the city where dreams really do come true. What's your dream? Find out at discoverLosAngeles.com" and is alongside the

iconic image that represents *both* Hollywood and Los Angeles: the Hollywood sign. In this advertising campaign the city of Los Angeles adopts the imagery of Hollywood as a means to market itself. In another installation of this campaign (Figure 6) the text on the lighted sign reads, "A thrill of Universal proportions…That's so LA. Bringing the movies to life and magic to reality, LA's studio tours let you get behind-the-scenes. Plan your close-up at discoverLosAngeles.com" and if you look closely you find that the image is supposed to be one taken at Universal Studios. To promote Los Angeles, Hollywood's studios and language are assumed by the city.

Figure 5: This is example #1 of The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau advertising campaign that conflates Hollywood & L. A. using the HOLLYWOOD sign. This campaign was photographed at the LAX Airport (photo by Sarah Ono).

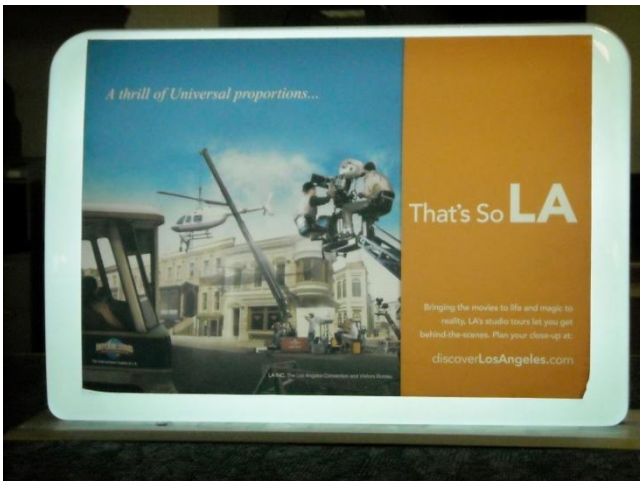

Figure 6: Example #2 of The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau advertising campaign that conflates Hollywood & L. A. using Universal Studios as indexical of the city. This campaign was photographed at the LAX Airport (photo by Sarah Ono).

Los Angeles has often been compared to a movie set, either because it has developed an association with the artificial, or because the physical landscape of Southern California has the quality of fantasy. Los Angeles was literally the intergalactic stop for the crew in "Star Trek." With its rocky landscape and strange foliage, the environment of Griffith Park in Los Angeles was cast as the "other worlds" where the Enterprise landed and used as the location for filming. Southern California is also home to the flora that inspired Dr. Seuss's otherworldly illustrations. The line between Hollywood and Los Angeles can get blurry, as does the line between the Hollywood that makes movies and the Hollywood that we see in movies. Hollywood has a population. Hollywood is also a place. However, neither is immediately obvious upon close

inspection and the fact that the two are not typically in alignment poses a dilemma that is central to this consideration of Hollywood's locale.

Los Angeles is a complicated mega-city with its own history, in which Hollywood is but a part. The role Los Angeles played in shaping modern Hollywood, and vice versa, is well documented by scholars, journalist, novelists, and filmmakers. To incorporate any serious analysis of Los Angeles as a city is well beyond the scope of this dissertation (cf. Villa and Sánchez 2004). It is often hard to tease apart where Los Angeles ends and Hollywood begins. There is a symbiosis that exists between the two mythic places, and a large part of the challenge inherent in locating Hollywood results from the perpetual conflation of the two.

Hollywood as Los Angeles, California

It is no coincidence that the early filmmakers who moved West and established what is now geographically recognized as Hollywood chose to settle in this area of Southern California. The sun-filled weather and micro-climates, unoccupied space with vast landscapes, and as much distance as possible between filmmakers and the watchful eye of the Edison Company that kept tabs on filmmaking in the East, are historical reasons why Southern California makes sense. More than anything, there is a quality of Southern California that imbues the area with a feeling that anything is possible. It cannot be said whether the early filmmakers who established what is now known as Hollywood were drawn to Los Angeles for this reason, or if Hollywood has produced this effect, infusing itself onto the landscape. Today The Industry sprawls in a manner analogous to the City of Los Angeles.

It is debatable whether the environment, with its particular quality of light, fragrances, and fair weather, drew the film industry to Southern California, or if the association of Hollywood with Los Angeles generates the mystique of the area. In either case, it is the way the hills look when the sun reaches the "golden hour" coupled with the towering palm trees and the smell of sunshine that allows you to believe that there is something uniquely special about this place, whether or not you believe in the movies (see Figure 7).[14] "The golden age of cinema is still alive [in Los Angeles], in the smell of jasmine at night and the beautiful weather" (Lynch 2006: 31).

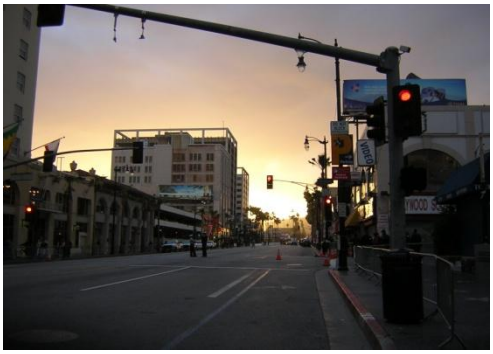

Figure 7: Hollywood Boulevard, facing west at sunset (photo by Sarah Ono).

People -- whether they are writers, filmmakers, or anyone just living in Los Angeles apart from The Industry -- talk about the light. The director, David Lynch, said

[14] The notion of a "golden hour" (also known as the "magic hour") is not exclusive to Hollywood or Southern California, but the term is frequently encountered there as it has come to be used as a technical term among cinematographers. It references the first and last hour of sunlight during the day, when the quality of light achieves a specific photographic effect. Light tends to be softer and warmer at this time of day, with long shadows and dramatic as well as flattering effect (Singleton and Conrad 2000).

"[The light] fills me with the feeling that all possibilities are available. I don't know why. It's different from the light in other places" (2006:31-32). Whether the quality of light brought the earliest filmmakers to Hollywood, or merely a desire to distance themselves from Edison and his patent police in New York, there is agreement that Hollywood, and by association Los Angeles, sustains as "the movie capital of the world" (Valentine 1994:xi).

Los Angeles, whether being directly associated with Hollywood or not, captures the attention of scholars and theorists in a variety of disciplines (Davis 1990, 1998; Dear et al. 1996; Klein 1997; Soja 1989). Los Angeles is an object of theoretical investigation because it is a complex "place" with a unique history of development, geography, and cultural landscape. The city of Los Angeles is made into a "community" in political rhetoric, while simultaneously divided into an undeterminable number of localized "communities" drawn along ethnic, industrial, economic, and geographically constructed lines. Los Angeles is known for the extensive number of "gated communities" (Davis 1990), a phenomenon that has taken the ideal of community to an extreme and literally built physical and enforced boundaries in an attempt to keep out all elements identified as "undesirable." Edward W. Soja (1989) calls Los Angeles the first "postmodern city" and uses the city as a terrain on which to map out the interaction of Marxist analysis and postmodern geographies.

Scholars inside and outside of anthropology are re-mapping communities in the context of transnationalism and multi-sited interactions and are also starting to work through questions related to community-as-construction made "real" through discourse and diffuse "connections" (cf. Agnew and Smith 2002; Lull 2001; Urban 1996). In

anthropology there is resistance to the disarticulation of people and place, or culture and the field. As anthropologists there is a considerable amount at stake if we dissolve our authority, or distance ourselves from the view that conceptual objects like "culture" and "community" are real and can be studied from a "scientific" perspective. As American anthropologists we have been reconsidering our discipline-defining object, "culture," for some time now (Kuper 1999; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Abu-Lughod 1991). Even so, it is fair to say that there is a lot at stake for anthropology to make this move away from central disciplinary tenets and tropes. Change, however constant and unavoidable, can seem slow when you are in the middle of it. For this reason, it is not surprising that Hollywood has largely avoided the lens of anthropologists for fifty years. Los Angeles, while being a microcosm of the world according to some (cf. Villa and Sánchez 2004), tends to draw the attention of anthropologists only to the marginal sub-cultures within the city (cf. Phillips 1999).

Hollywood, the Neighborhood and the Boulevard

Hollywood began with a single adobe structure in the mid-1800s, and has existed ever since (Pitt 1997). In the "Introduction" to his edited volume Hollywood (1998), Christopher Silvester writes that "[Hollywood] started as a mere village, so several of its early inhabitants have written, and in some respects it has remained one to this day" (Silvester 1998:ix). To support this notion of Hollywood as a "village" Silvester quotes Hortense Powdermaker (1950), who does in fact compare Hollywood to a village in her ethnography of the movie business. "As in villages, the same people are at the same parties, the same restaurants, the same clubs and the same week-end resorts"

(Powdermaker 1950:19). Today, Hollywood is a neighborhood within contemporary Los Angeles. Not to be confused with West Hollywood, which is an independent "city," a municipality nestled between Beverly Hills and Hollywood. Hollywood, the area, encompasses Little Armenia, Thai Town, and "Hollywood," the tourist mecca of urban Los Angeles. The population of this Hollywood is multi-lingual and represents all shades of the melatonin rainbow. It is also host to hoards of visitors who make the pilgrimage to see the film capital of the world first-hand.

Hollywood, the tourist destination, is located primarily in the neighborhood of Hollywood. This geographically identifiable area is defined by publicly displayed municipal and directional signage, freeway exits ("Hollywood"), and any number of businesses that capitalize on their proximity by including "Hollywood" in their name and advertising. As if all this is not indicator enough, the hillside above the geographically located Hollywood displays the name in 50-foot tall letters spelling out H-O-L-L-Y-W-O-O-D. This iconic image plays a defining role and serves as a point of intersection for: Los Angeles, the geographic and historic Hollywood, the industry called Hollywood, and the mythic Hollywood of popular imagination.[15]

The Hollywood of tourists, in the form of Grauman's Chinese Theatre and The Hollywood Walk of Fame, is literally located on Hollywood Boulevard. This is the Hollywood where I lived during fieldwork, the area of the city where the constant presence of tour buses and costumed characters who avail themselves to tourists for photographs is a common sight. Some days I negotiated the tour groups linked together

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[15] There is a great website that gives the complete history of the Hollywood sign -- http://www.hollywoodsign.org, accessed July 11, 2005.

by remote headsets and foreign language-speaking tour guides on my way to the Red Line subway station at the intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue. Other days, I would sit at the Coffee Bean storefront across the street from Grauman's Chinese Theatre and watch the crowd stream along the Boulevard, pausing to take pictures of each other with their hands and feet in the impressions left by the likes of Marilyn Monroe and R2D2.

This stretch of blocks–populated with souvenir shops and restaurants ranging from the renowned Musso and Frank's to the ubiquitous pizza counter–was undergoing a gentrification during my field research. National chains such as Virgin Music and American Eagle opened the door to H & M and Baja Fresh. The Hollywood identified in travel guides now even more explicitly caters to tourists than in past decades, striving to adopt a Times Square or Las Vegas model of having something for everyone. These nationally branded offerings are familiar and family-friendly, in contrast to the sex shops and the landmark lingerie dealer, Fredrick's of Hollywood. For the time being Ripley's Believe It Or Not Museum and the Hollywood Wax Museum remain. However there are signs indicating that a Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum is being constructed where once existed a parking lot and staging area for events such as the Academy Awards.

This Hollywood, rooted in the history of the film industry and targeting tourism, works to preserve the landmarks that signify Hollywood, but at the same time continues to change and develop as it has since the turn of the last century. A landmark since its opening in 1927, The Chinese Theatre in Hollywood is heralded as "the most famous movie theatre in the world" with millions of visitors flocking here each year (seeingstars.com, accessed August 2008). The Chinese Theatre got a face-lift in 2000, but

its status as a site-of-Hollywood has never been questioned. It is still used for movie premieres (see Figure 8 and Figure 9), with the Red Carpet rolled out,

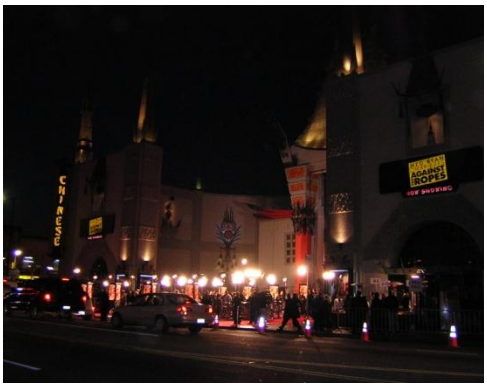

Figure 8: Movie premiere at the iconic Grauman's Chinese Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard (photo by Sarah Ono).

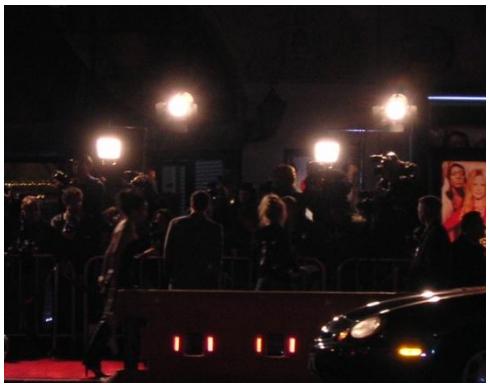

Figure 9: This event is indexed by the Red Carpet, the media's lighting, and a crowd of public spectators (photo by Sarah Ono).

step-and-repeats placed as a backdrop for the gathered photographers (official), and fans with cameras line the sidewalk on both sides of Hollywood Boulevard with the hope of catching a glimpse of someone famous.[16]

If I stand across the street from The Chinese Theatre, to my west is another Hollywood landmark, the Roosevelt Hotel. "The Roosevelt," as locals refer to it, was home to the first Academy Awards Ceremony in 1929, and now provides an "It spot" (a site designated as popular for the moment) for young Hollywood to socialize. To the east is the current venue for the Academy Awards Ceremony, the Kodak Theatre. Every year

[16] Step-and-repeats are the panels that serve as backdrops for photographs taken on Red Carpets or at event arrivals. They typically advertise the sponsors for an event in a repeating pattern.

in late winter, this street, Hollywood Boulevard, is closed so that the Red Carpet can be rolled out for the biggest award show in the world. While all eyes are on Hollywood for certain events such as The Oscars, on any given day you can walk along Hollywood Boulevard and encounter someone taking a picture of the stars embedded in the sidewalk, bearing the name of current and past celebrities.

Hollywood, the Movie Studios[17]

If Hollywood is literally the studio lots on which film and television programs are made, and home to numerous production offices, all of "the majors" (Paramount being the exception) are located elsewhere in areas not technically the geographically defined "Hollywood." This is a small technicality but, in fact, the major studios are housed in Burbank, Culver City, and the aptly named, Studio City. Film sets, the actual production sites where scenes are staged, performed and recorded, may be on these studio lots, but could just as likely be in New Mexico, Mississippi, or any number of provinces in Canada. These days, locations are largely determined by the physical appearance they can provide, but also by State-specific tax incentives, labor regulations, and the cost of

[17] While the process of locating Hollywood is complicated enough without adding to the list of possible places Hollywood can be found, there are two unlikely locations where "Hollywood" exists outside of Los Angeles. There is a Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida, and Universal Studios Japan in Osaka. I visited Universal Studios Japan in 2001, while writing up my Master's field research. This site is identical in many ways to the Universal Studios Hollywood – except in Osaka E.T. the Extraterrestrial speaks to visitors in Japanese. While I have not seen it, I understand that there is a new ride at Universal Studios Japan called 'Hollywood Dream – the Ride' that allows visitors to "fly" over Hollywood (http://www.usj.co.jp/e/, accessed February 2009). This idea of providing the experience of being in Hollywood is also available at a site closer to Los Angeles, the "Hollywood Back-lot" at Disney's California Adventure in Anaheim, California. I do not deal with these further in this work, but these instantiations of Hollywood invite future research in this area.

temporary residence during production. Playing host to film and television productions is big business and many states try to capitalize on what they have to offer Hollywood, whether it is natural beauty or a low cost of living, and increasingly provide incentives to bring in film productions.

Studios like Warner Brothers (in Burbank, California) offer "very exclusive" backstage tours to tourists and film fans, with the promise of a behind-the-scenes, "backlot" Hollywood experience. The Warner Brothers (WB) VIP Studio Tour not only offers "behind-the-scene" access, but "a rare look into the world of entertainment" and an opportunity to glimpse "'into-the-scenes' of your favorite shows and movies" (WarnerBros 2009). Sony Pictures Studios (in Culver City) encourages visitors to, "Call today to book your location on the Sony Lot" (Sony Pictures Studios 2009). The semantic play with "location" makes reference to the notion of location in filmmaking, and the cliché often adopted in Hollywood, that "location is everything."

For some, both insiders and outsiders, the studio lot is identified as the "real" Hollywood, with back-lots, sound stages, sets, and the craft shops where "the magic is made." It is also where the work of making the products of Hollywood takes place. The Universal Studios Hollywood tour claims that it will take visitors to witness "real Hollywood movie making," and asks if you are "ready to be a part of today's working Hollywood?" One of the key indicators of membership in the Hollywood community is, in fact, whether or not one is actually working. Perhaps the most significant factor in determining where Hollywood is comes down to where the work is being done; this can be anywhere.

Micro Multi-sited Places and Material Markers: Film Festival as Field Site

Hollywood is a multi-sited fieldsite, but at some point the designation of multi-sited becomes irrelevant. Instead of thinking about cultures and communities as ever existing in a well-defined and bounded fashion, we would do better to assume multi-sitedness and then work into an explanation of what multi-sited means in each given setting. If "Hollywood" is where the work is being done, Hollywood is temporarily situated in any given moment according to the project or event such as a film festival. Looking at Hollywood in all of its embodiments and instantiations presents an enormous sprawl of possibility without edges or borders. Just as the fieldsite of Hollywood can be taken as multi-sited, so can the smaller, dispersed sites that create this greater conglomerate.

A film festival is a good example of how social actors use communication and connection strategies to create a temporary community throughout the course of one specific event. A film festival is multi-sited within itself. I show this by the material culture that is used from one festival to the next, especially in communication devices used by staff members and via credentials (also referred to as badges and passes) that must be displayed by all festival participants, staff, and attendees. These objects, familiar in the context of a film festival, provide a consistency from event to event. Material culture illustrates the complexity of any given "site" and suggests that each can be read as multi-sited. As such, material culture reminds us that there are no "simple" fieldsites.

In a film festival context, "credentials" refers to the badges that identify festival attendees, participants, and staff. It was not until I had worked in a film festival box

office that I really understood the full complexity of a credential system. Typically the credentials given to festival attendees are the most basic. There is no photograph of the bearer, and in their simplicity these credentials are recognizable at a distance. In addition to providing access to screening and events based on the multiple codings credentials display, these same codes indicate to staff members who they are dealing with should there be a need or desire to interact.

What is a Film Festival?

As with all things related to Hollywood, when talking about film festivals, there are multiple explanations given to account for the vast diversity. A film festival programmer, the role responsible for coordinating the identification and selection of films in a festival, reported, "there are as many types of festivals as there are types of films or filmmakers…The number is growing all the time." First, the variability among film festivals is as great as the variability among universities, cities, or any broad categorical distinction. While there is variation among different festivals, and there are several types of festivals whose objectives range from raising community awareness to engaging international film markets, some traits are common to each film festival I encountered. The most defining characteristic of a film festival is that production is never a small task.

Planning begins months in advance. The spectacle seen by the public (e.g., a movie, a film festival, an awards ceremony) is a small part of everything involved in making it happen. The nuts and bolts of film festival production, as well as the how-to guide for festival attendance, have both been previously published (Gaydos 1998; Gore 1999; Holland 2008; Langer 2000). As with Hollywood generally, descriptions of film

festivals are abundant, whether you are looking for the personal experience of an individual attendee or tips from a seasoned veteran of the Hollywood scene. An Amazon search (2009) of books with the keyword(s) "film festival," returns over 19,300 possibilities, with the greatest number in the Amazon-defined categories of: entertainment and reference. Sundance, the most well-known U.S. film festival, has dozens of texts devoted just to it.

In 2004, I attended a reading where journalist and author Kenneth Turan read from his book, Sundance to Sarajevo: Film Festivals and the World They Made (2003). During the post-talk discussion it became apparent to me and co-workers from Sundance who also attended the reading, that an individual's experience of a film festival is highly dependent on her positionality, her social role in the event, and the objectives she has in being there. Knowledge within a film festival context is vast and accordingly it is divided up among departments and individuals. Programmers know the films and the details of who is affiliated with each. Film traffickers make arrangements to send and receive films, transport them to correct venues for screenings, and work with the technical crews who liaise with the union projectionists who get the films onto screens. Box office works with the programmers to make sure that tickets are being sold to the correct screening at the right venue. Press, the public, and "guests," all negotiate the program book (the schedule) to see as many films as they can.

As a film festival attendee one must make choices about which films to see. In addition to seeing films that are of personal interest, there are also always the films that generate "buzz" (the anticipation for a particular work that is generated by discourse) at a given film festival. Those films that generate discourse and, consequently, public interest

are called “hot tickets.” For example, in 2004, the year I was at Sundance, two films are memorable because if the “buzz” they created: NAPOLEON DYNAMITE (Hess 2004) and SUPER SIZE ME (Spurlock 2004). Prior to the festival, the head programmers (the individuals responsible for screening, selecting, and securing the films included in the festival) gathered the staff in a neighborhood soup restaurant near the office in Salt Lake City. While the staff ate and drank the sponsor-provided beer, the programmers went through the program to give us an idea of the films, those the programming staff anticipated would be sellouts, and those they wanted us to push once the public began to select tickets. I diligently paid attention and took notes.

My notes were based on whatever the presenting programmer said and, as the evening got later, my notes grew more concise. For NAPOLEON DYNAMITE I wrote “cult-classic type. First-time filmmaker is [Salt Lake City] local. Shot in Southern Idaho, most of budget went into the soundtrack. You will love it or hate it” (fieldnotes 12/18/2003). I also made a note that I should get tickets for Orion and me using my staff comp tickets. It was lucky that I did because by the time the first screening ended on January 17th, there were no tickets left to any of the five remaining screenings. The film was reportedly made for $400,000 and went on to gross $46,118,097 worldwide (Box Office Mojo 2007). Fox Searchlight distributed the film domestically, with international distribution by Paramount Pictures. For months after the festival I watched as NAPOLEON was released using what I considered to be a very smart marketing campaign. There were punch-cards that encouraged movie-goers to see the film multiple times; if you went three times they would send you a t-shirt.

The second example of a film that generated festival buzz is the documentary SUPER SIZE ME directed by Morgan Spurlock (2004). The film follows Spurlock on 30-days of an exclusively McDonald's diet. The only note I have for this film from the programmers' meeting is: "go see this doc! Sounds awesome" (fieldnotes 12/18/2003). I watched SUPER SIZE ME with members of the ticketing staff prior to the festival, so I missed out on the experience of seeing it in a packed theater. I knew it was doing well, that people were talking about it, wearing the buttons, and trying to get their hands on the "un-happy meals," one of the film's much sought after promotional items (see discussion of S.W.A.G. or "Shit We All Get" in Chapter 4). I was aware that tickets were scarce, but it was not until I encountered the stand-by line for the 9:30 a.m. screening on a Wednesday that I understood what the buzz really meant. There was a white tent in the parking lot outside of the Holiday Village Cinema and it was packed full of people in a line that snaked through a series of stanchions. It was cold, being January in the mountains, and people cupped their hands around coffee cups and moved from foot to foot to stay warm. My co-worker, another member of the registration team, asked a volunteer if any of these people were likely to get in to see the film. She shrugged and said it was doubtful, but that people had started lining up before it was light out, just in case. My co-worker turned to me and said, "Write that down in your notebook. That's what Sundance is all about."

SUPER SIZE ME went on to be distributed by Samuel Goldwyn Films and Roadside Attractions. It opened in the U.S. on May 7, 2004, and after being made for a budget reported to be $65,000, it went on to gross a total of $20,641,054 worldwide, making it the 10th highest-grossing documentary film of all time as of 2007 (Box Office

Mojo 2007). SUPER SIZE ME was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary, but lost to another Sundance 2004 film, BORN INTO BROTHELS (Briski and Kauffman 2004) about kids living in Calcutta's red light district that were given cameras and taught to document their lives by the filmmakers.

Whether or not a film has generated buzz or a screening is over-sold, year after year the same communication problems arise among staff members because of the complex nature of a film festival. Participant-observation at film festivals reveals the enormous amount of work and complex coordination that is required to pull off what one disgruntled festival attendee called, "showing movies…How hard can it be to flip a switch and get the film on the screen?" Film festivals would benefit from having an anthropologist on staff to aid in the coordination of knowledge and communication!

Film festivals are a "crisis-driven environment" (to be discussed at greater length in Chapter Four). To organize a film festival requires the work of year-round staff members, temporary staff hired for the duration of the event, volunteers, and vendors who work to put together and execute an "event". A festival is composed of dozens of film screenings and events such as talks, panels, receptions, and parties. Festivals typically last for a number of consecutive days. Duration is variable, but those I observed, attended, and worked for lasted between eleven and fourteen days. All used a similar format. Films are screened simultaneously in multiple theaters, also called "venues," during the day and at night. In addition to film screenings, festival events included: festival sponsored parties/receptions that all festival participants could attend, privately sponsored parties, panels and talks, question and answer sessions with filmmakers,

impromptu and scheduled performances of various types, award presentations, and activities targeted at particular audiences, such as a "Family Day."

Besides the production of events and film screenings, film festivals construct and maintain areas such as a box office, a hospitality area with limited access (VIP), and spaces for the press, volunteers, sponsors, members, filmmakers, and general information. There are also staging areas, event spaces, storage, and temporary production offices in addition to whatever permanent offices exist year-round. A film festival is no small task.

Scale Matters, Especially if You Are Walking

Film festivals get talked about as being "in Los Angeles" or "in Park City" (Utah). While this is correct, there is a level at which this designation is only useful from a distance. Let me offer an example to better explain what I mean. A juror for a festival in Los Angeles came to me in my role as hospitality coordinator and filmmaker liaison. Shaking her head, she shared her frustration and showed me her blisters. This woman, who I'll call Miriam, is affiliated with a prominent Brazilian film festival and was in Los Angeles as an invited member of the jury that awards prizes to films selected from those being screened during the festival.

Miriam traveled to California from South America, and got a crash-course in navigating Los Angeles, largely without the aid of a car. This was a major, internationally recognized community festival headquartered at the Directors' Guild of America (DGA) on Sunset Boulevard at the border between the neighborhoods of Hollywood and West Hollywood. This festival used nine different venues for screenings. Venues were spread

from downtown Los Angeles to Santa Monica, technically a different city within the boundary of Los Angeles County (a distance of approximately 16 miles that in a car can take over an hour to travel depending on traffic conditions). This film festival also used several times this many locations for parties, receptions, and related events held in different parts of the city. In Los Angeles distances can be deceptively greater than one might think and, unlike a city such as New York or San Francisco, Los Angeles is not a "walking town." Moreover its public transportation system is not known for its ease or usefulness.

Miriam expressed her dismay at being expected to view screenings at multiple venues (in her role as a juror), especially when there was not time between the end of one film and the start of another to drive between venues, let alone sort out alternative forms of transportation. Her expectation was that a "festival" would be designed so that one could walk to everything.

> When [Miriam] and I were talking this afternoon I felt bad because she was upset and it was valid, but I don't have the resources to fix it. I tried getting a driver to come and pick her up, but I guess there was a problem with that plan yesterday and she wasn't too hot on the idea of trying again. I think she has been taking cabs and I need to follow up on getting her petty cash. I was thinking about her and how this fits into the problem of space/place/location in a place like Los Angeles, let alone Hollywood. [Miriam's] experience made me realize that until you get here, or until you try to walk from one venue to another, you do not always have an adequate understanding of how "multi-sited" a single "event" can be (Fieldnotes: July 11, 2004).

In actuality, it is common for a film festival to cover a considerable physical area.

Hollywood Out of Place: Sundance is in Utah

The Sundance Film Festival is another festival I worked for as part of fieldwork, and it is located in Park City, Utah. Park City is a small resort town at its busiest in the winter when it is full of skiers and film festival attendees. While the town itself is nowhere near the size of Los Angeles, it is still an environment where moving from one venue to another takes effort, energy, and planning. The festival organizers make every effort to aid in the movement of moviegoers and festival participants, from one end of town to the other, on free shuttles. This helps, but typically it is below freezing and often snowing, not to mention crowded with people. In addition to everyone involved with or attending Sundance, there are also multiple smaller festivals that have positioned themselves adjacent to Sundance in hopes of capitalizing on the population drawn by the better-known festival.

When I imagined an event like Sundance prior to arriving in Utah, there was a certain neatness about it. Writing my research proposal in Iowa City, Iowa, it was easy to consider a film festival as a single site in which to conduct research. Here was a site-of-Hollywood that would have representatives from the wide variety of social roles that I hoped to examine in this research. I expected that all of these representatives would be in the same place, at a common time, and for a set duration. When I was in Los Angeles, I imagined Park City to be a more manageable space; if nothing else it was a smaller and less populated area than my neighborhood in Hollywood. Sundance seemed perfect. When I "moved" along with the rest of the Sundance staff up to Park City from Salt Lake City, I found myself having to negotiate the logistics of moving around in snow and wind while trying to find specific individuals in a sea of black ski hats. Only then did I fully

understand the complexity of what I had previously proposed to be a "single site-of-Hollywood." Along with conceptualizing Hollywood as multi-sited, I found that multi-sitedness can exist in *any* given Hollywood event, such as a film festival, if multi-sitedness is re-scaled. The idea of re-scaling multi-sitedness develops the proposal that there are no simple fieldsites, and that even those often taken to be "simple" are potentially more complex than a researcher may initially acknowledge.

"Can You Hear Me Now?"

Even events that are considered "small" take up considerable space. In the case of a film festival, space can vary from a multi-level theater and adjoining courtyards, to three venues spread out over five city blocks or, in a setting like Sundance, the festival occupies an entire ski-town, taking over not just Main Street, but the greater Park City area. As a site-producer for a film festival in Los Angeles, I stood in the empty, unoccupied commercial space, literally a giant, vacant concrete room without lighting, phone lines, or a useable power source. For the duration of the film festival this space would be transformed through the construction of temporary walls and a maze of pipe-and-drape (curtains hung as mutable and permeable "walls") to create multiple bars, a box office, a hospitality area, a VIP gifting lounge, a photo gallery, a staging area, a storage area, and production offices. My job was to manage and coordinate the transformation. I tried to imagine how it was all going to fit. Even with over 2,000 square feet, the task was daunting. The greater challenge ended up being the task of communicating from one end of the space to the other after all of the requisite areas were constructed and populated with festival staff, attendees, sponsors, volunteers, and

vendors. In a giant space that is empty you can talk in a loud voice and be heard pretty much everywhere. For a couple of weeks I could call from the loading dock that opened onto the street at the back of the space, “Hey, Susan, where do you want them to put all of this ticket stock?” And Susan, from a hundred feet away could reply, “anywhere.”

A few weeks later when all the temporary walls were in place, it was no longer possible to walk in a straight line from one end of the space to the other. Communication grew increasingly more challenging. Not only did sound no longer carry across the exposed and echoing concrete, but navigating the paths available to move from point A to point B required greater knowledge and planning. Also, as more people began working in the space, “on-site”, entry into particular areas required credentials to enter, even if one was simply passing through on the way to somewhere else. These boundaries, created to regulate access, are needed because as staff members move into a “festival space” so do their computers and personal belongings. Also, large amounts of sponsor materials (magazines, promotional items, gift bag items, food and alcohol) accumulate leading up to the start of the festival. In a setting that introduces a hundred volunteers in a single day, it is impossible to know or recognize all of them. Therefore a system to regulate access from public spaces into restricted ones is essential.

At the point when the physical space of an event gets crowded and the number of film festival or event staff grows exponentially, staff members become increasingly more reliant on communication devices that form an invisible web of contact. In the staff training session for my department at The Oscars we were told,

> It may seem like a manageable space right now [two days before the event], but when three o’clock hits and this carpet is wall-to-wall bodies and all you can hear is yelling, you might be five feet away from the person you need to talk to, and it

> will be impossible (personal communication from Talent Coordinator).

This proved to be true. The farther apart a site sprawls and as more people are involved, the greater the need to re-conceptualize space and cultivate modes of aided communication.

Film festival organizers depend on multiple communication devices within a festival site. Once the proverbial doors open, things move really fast and this is the main reason communication devices, such as walkie-talkies, cellular phones, and Nextels (which can function as two-way radios and phones), are necessary during an event. Film festival workers speak of "everyone constantly running around." This expression signifies that it can be nearly impossible to locate someone without the assistance of a tool for communication. Prior to the official start of an event, staff members and key volunteers rely heavily on email as a means of communication and update. However, once a film festival begins, even checking email falls by the wayside in favor of whatever is (literally) in front of you. This has changed to some extent because of the increasing use of Blackberries and iPhones, hand-held phones capable of receiving email in real-time. Additionally, most staff members cease to work from their desk (assuming they had one to begin with), so mobile forms of communication become essential. Even when the site occupied by an event is relatively small, being out of sight of co-workers or members of your support staff, can be incredibly isolating.

Because communication technology changes so rapidly, I expect that the technologies that were used during the period of my research will be outmoded and replaced by the time I finish typing a thought. In revisiting my fieldnotes I have updated from cellular phones and PDAs to Blackberries. I still refer to "cell phones" even though

multiple readers of my earlier drafts have pointed out that most phones are no longer cellular. One device that so far has proved to be essential is the walkie-talkie. The man who was in charge of "all things technical" at several of the film festivals I worked for explained to me that "walkies will last because of the frequency…it doesn't screw up other frequencies…and they are relatively cheap." I like "walkies" because I know how to use them, and because walkie-talkies, as an object of material culture, are frequently included in depictions of Hollywood. For example, Peter Bart describes Michael Bay, director of big budget action films such as ARMAGEDDON, as a "temperamental young director who presided over the [set] like a relentless tyrant, barking orders into his walkie-talkie" (Bart 1999a:1).

Staff members, typically people who work for a film festival in a paid capacity, perceive a real need to be accessible. One must be in constant communication with key individuals and departments connected to whatever it is one is responsible for overseeing. For example, when I worked as a theater manager for my first festival in Los Angeles, I had to talk to the box office about the number of tickets sold, number of empty seats, and number of people standing in a wait-line somewhere in a different building, for any given screening. This is a juggling act even in a single theater. In the case of AFI Fest or Sundance, there were six to eight theaters showing films simultaneously, often without the aid of staggered start times. In my role as a theater manager, the first job I held with a film festival during the period of research, I was also in communication with the projection booths, the three other theater managers, the festival programmers who introduce films and lead question and answer discussions following films, filmmaker escorts, and the volunteer coordinator. I also talked to staff regarding supplies, surprises

(e.g., the film breaks, there is a technical problem, over-sold theaters, members of the audience having a health crisis, etc.), and the protocol for "celebrities" who would arrive announced, unannounced, and often with a cloud of press or photographers in tow.

In this example of communication devices used in the production of film festivals, the material culture, the objects themselves (e.g., the walkie-talkies) represent authority, knowledge, and the possibility of access into restricted areas -- both physical spaces and exchanges of information. Film festival staff members do not always identify these as functions of their walkie-talkies, in part, because this kind of work does not allow much time for reflection, but also because, as I found, power can be subtle and overlooked. This is especially true when one is busy, stressed, and in the middle of the melee.

A Radio is More than a Radio When it Proves You Are Part of a Community

Something happens among the festival staff when the walkie-talkies and related gear get distributed in the days leading up to the start of a film festival. This distribution of "goods" is an indicator that the actual event is getting close. Since they are expensive to rent, and typically many devices are required, the amount of time individuals have them in hand is kept as short as possible. Passing out the walkie-talkies is also a performance of assigning authority. Initially, obtaining a communication device is an indicator that you are really a part of the festival, a member of the community for as long as it lasts. This also indexes your role in the festival's production or as someone in an important position. Communication devices supplement the badges with names and, in some cases, photos worn by both staff and festival attendees. While the color-coding, holographic details, and types of badges may not be widely understood or meaningful to

the public, use of a walkie-talkie indexes someone as having official authority in the festival or event context (see Figure 10). This becomes of particular importance in an environment where members of the Hollywood community attending a film festival (i.e., non-festival staff) bring a sense of entitlement and inherent authority to an event and are prone to make demands whether reasonable or not.

Figure 10: A film festival will-call on Opening Night; the headset and walkie-talkie indicate that the woman to the right of center is a member of the box office staff (photo by Sarah Ono).

The more responsibilities one has, or the more central one's role to the working-side of production, the more bells and whistles -- i.e., communication devices -- one receives. In my experience I found this to generally hold true, but it was pointed out by a senior programmer that, "unless of course you are really important, like [festival director] who never carries anything, not even his keys." For the rest of those who are working, there are walkie-talkies, some with headsets, some with ear-pieces, some with nothing so the wearer just has to use her hands. There are Nextels, which operate as cellular phones

as well as the money-saving function of a two-way radio. However, two-way radios do not replace walkie-talkies because chances are one will inevitably need to communicate with people who have walkie-talkies, but not Nextels, or vice versa (however, it is rare to get a Nextel and not a walkie-talkie). These are in addition to any personal communication devices that one may have brought to the job and is also likely using for personal communication until the festival-funded gear arrives. Personal communication devices are also used to keep in touch with anyone not designated as a formal staff member (e.g., vendors or volunteers) who is not issued a walkie-talkie. Besides aiding communication, all of these material accoutrements help unify a group of people who may not have known each other a week before. This sense of belonging is reinforced by what people say to each other. "See, now you are official. Finally a real member of the staff," was the festival's volunteer coordinator's vote of confidence to a first-time theater manager who was formerly a volunteer before moving into a paid position.

In the same way that athletic teams wear uniforms that help them easily identify each other on a fast-moving field of play, accessories and material markers indicate who else is part of "the team" in a film festival setting. At a large festival like Sundance, I may not know the assistant programmer's name, but if she is wearing a credential that tells me she is part of the programming department and is a staff member ranked high enough to have a fancy headset attached to her walkie-talkie, then I know I can ask her for help in a pinch or let her into a restricted area without hassle.

Communication devices index who has power, power in this case being knowledge or information. These devices bestow authority upon a staff member when she signs out her gear. There is power that comes with knowing how to use these

different communication tools. In my case I tended to be a learn-as-you-go and need-to-know user of most technology. I bought my first cell phone when I embarked on my Master's degree fieldwork, and I upgraded for the first time when I returned three years later to conduct my dissertation research. Even though my new phone had photo options, access to email, and built in games, I was really only striving to learn how to make calls and check messages. The assumption that I had a working knowledge of all things Motorola to be in my festival position was markedly off base, particularly when I began working in production.[18]

In addition to stamina, a levelheaded disposition, and a lot of participation, film festivals require staff members to manage an incredible amount of communication and coordination. In my experience, they also require a belt. In one instance, I had to send someone to find me a belt. I had reached the point where I had so many things clipped onto me that I couldn't walk or stand without losing my pants -- literally. Using a hand to keep my pants up prevented me from getting whatever communication devices I needed close enough to my head to be useful. I needed my hands to push all necessary buttons to make use of the headsets and earpieces that were attached to my above-the-waist body. Ultimately, the circumstances required a belt.

I had sufficient authority in my position as the on-site producer to be able to send someone, a production assistant or volunteer, to get something like a belt for me. At the time I didn't think about the particulars of the action, or how it fit into power dynamics or the larger patterns of my research. It was just part of what needed to happen so that I

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[18] This assumption was almost as off-base as the recurrent presumption that my Ph.D. candidate status implied an ability to fix computer viruses and copy machines.

could do my job. Later, I recognized that at previous festivals I had been the person directed to go buy, borrow, or construct the said belt, and odds were good that I would be that person again in my next job. Status in Hollywood and Hollywood-adjacent sites is not fixed. Again and again in my research and reported stories it was demonstrated that status is shifting, insecure, and always relative (cf. de Vany 2004). In a research site prone to abstraction, rapid-change, and an aura of never really being grounded, observation of material culture, the objects that are threads of consistency from one site to the next, provides another avenue to analyze the pieces that in combination create "Hollywood."

Seeing Hollywood --- Everywhere

As a place held in the collective imagination of populations geographically removed from each of the Hollywoods considered in this chapter, Hollywood is not unique: the Hollywood equated with Los Angeles; the iconic tourist sites; the film industry and film and television studios. In addition to these structural incarnations of Hollywood, there is also a myriad of events and temporary sites-of-Hollywood where Hollywood is evoked and performed, whether through the use of a Red Carpet to mark a venue's entrance or in a crowd of paparazzi perched outside a coffee shop waiting for a celebrity to exit. Ultimately it sounds like an exaggeration, but anything is possible in Hollywood. For example, it is possible to head out to get a cup of coffee on a weekday morning and find a cow getting its make-up touched up in a photo shoot on the corner of a busy intersection (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: A live cow being used in a "shoot" with David Lynch, on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and La Brea Avenue, one block from the author's apartment (photo by Sarah Ono).

When director Robert Wise says, as quoted to me by a production designer, "In Hollywood you make your own geography," Wise is speaking about the art of set design. Besides the contextual truth in the statement, this quote reflects a theme in my data: an individual is believed to have the power to create Hollywood, whether it be a story or a career, and the responsibility to make one's own outcome. This exemplifies the kind of collective thinking and assumption of possibilities that marks Hollywood as Hollywood, an idea I explore more fully in the next chapter. Even in the 1940s, Powdermaker (1950) observed that many communities have a symbolic character, and the geographical location always has an important social implication for any community. This is true in the case of Hollywood, most notably in Los Angeles. Popular discourse contributes to the

image of Hollywood as being everywhere in Los Angeles. This may contribute to a re-thinking of how anthropological "sites" are defined, and through a close consideration of the material culture used in multiple sites I hope to have shed some light on larger dynamics of social organization, mobility, and circumstantial power in Hollywood, film festivals, and the communities created.

CHAPTER 4: EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITY?

> Some form of in-group-out-group division prevails in all societies. Naturally, most people want to belong to the in-group, and each society has its own ways of becoming a member of it.
>
> Hortense Powdermaker (1950:114)

Regardless of how we choose to define a community, I want to argue that a critical aspect of community is that members have a shared interest—something that brings them into interaction and holds them together. Aside from how we may characterize the modes of interaction among members (e.g., discursive, virtual, face-to-face, etc.), I argue that recognition of something shared (a common interest as well as behaviors) is the glue that holds groups together along with collaboration on shared endeavors. These shared bits are what I call "collectivities." Collectivities connect members of a community, and at the same time, collectivities result from common experiences and interpretations of specific practices.

Collectivities are the second condition I see as determining whether or not a group, in this case Hollywood, is a community. I will examine the presence of things that are shared to reinforce the existence of a community. By "collectivity," I reference a practice or the understanding of a practice, *not* the group itself. A collectivity may be based on shared ideology, style, language, tacit knowledge or coded behavior. Any number of behaviors can demonstrate the existence of collectivities and as a result support the notion that Hollywood is a community. In this chapter I consider three different ways collectivity is demonstrated in Hollywood. These are shared discursive strategies, a common conceptualization of time, and a tacit understanding of material

culture, specifically items known as S.W.A.G. ("Shit We All Get"). Taken together, these expressions, which I have culled from textual sources and everyday interactions, exemplify "insider" knowledge that, when exchanged, reinforces a sense of a collective Hollywood community.

Community requires a social aspect, or the social engagement of participants. The position I take as a prerequisite of this research is that a single person cannot constitute a community. This is critical. *Social* does not have to take the form of face-to-face interactions, but at its root community is about interaction and social exchange (i.e., there cannot be a community composed of a single individual). Socially patterned interactions and exchanges communicate membership in a community and are largely discursive and semiotic. In Hollywood interactions take place among insiders, between insiders and outsiders, and between media and *both* insiders and outsiders. Before we can look at the relationship between "insiders" and "outsiders," we first need to establish that shared understandings and tacit knowledge circulate among "insiders," the social actors in Hollywood, and help to identify and unify members of this community.

Coded Language: Speech that Indicates Insider Knowledge

> The atmosphere of Hollywood both resembles that of a village and differs from it. There is the same extroverted cordiality, but more stress on status as determined by income and power. This is reflected in the use of first names.
>
> Hortense Powdermaker (1950:19)

Some years ago, at the start of my Hollywood research, I read numerous memoirs written by Hollywood "insiders" (Dunne 1969, 1997; Linson 2002; Lumet 1995; Obst 1996; Rodriguez 1995; Vachon with Bunn 2006; Vachon with Edelstein 1998). The

Hollywood memoir as a genre is entertaining, engaging, easy to read, and the events depicted often seem unbelievable to a reader "outside" of Hollywood. Depictions of Hollywood tend to strike "outsiders" as unbelievable because what seem like exaggerated claims are often *not being exaggerated* at all in the retelling. Hollywood as it exists in the popular imagination is marked as "out of the ordinary" and the excesses of Hollywood (everything from film production budgets to the substance abuse or spending habits of celebrities) strike many people as hard to fathom. According to the book jackets on many Hollywood memoirs, these works of non-fiction "tell-all" and provide a "behind-the-scene look" at this mythic "business of Hollywood." While I recognized early on that there were patterns in the (re)telling of the Hollywood experience, often evoking stereotypic expectations of Hollywood, I was determined to find the *real* Hollywood that I was sure had to be different from the "Hollywood" presented in popular discourse.

Through the course of this project I keep returning to the clichés and the discursively constructed expectations of Hollywood. Each of the categories that follows can also be seen as reinforcing a Hollywood truism. Often those I interviewed did not engage in discursive practices that enabled them to explain, or talk about, the easily recognized and stereotypic behaviors that are marked as referencing "Hollywood." The people who *are* good at presenting the ways-of-being that connect "insiders" and reinforce an underlying collectivity in the community constructed around Hollywood are the authors of Hollywood memoirs. This makes sense. After all, these authors have worked with editors to hone their presentations of working in The Industry. They are also individuals who have attained a level of success that affords them the option of publishing books about themselves. The producers, managers, and writers who are in a

position to write about their experiences are also in a position to say many of the things that people at earlier stages in their careers, or with less power, may not be as comfortable talking about, let alone telling to an anthropologist. Therefore, I draw upon already documented narratives, typically presented as Hollywood memoirs, to illustrate or illuminate, aspects of Hollywood that contribute to the collective knowledge that those in The Industry share. I combine these examples from memoirs with my own data in the discussion that follows.

Hollywood-Speak

Hollywood is characterized by distinct discursive strategies or verbal performances that those in The Industry call "Hollywood-speak" (Linson 2002). The ability to recognize and perform these verbal indicators of the Hollywood community is a key marker of membership and a critical practice that demonstrates the collectivity of Hollywood-speak in which "insiders" engage (see Goffman 1959). Use of Hollywood-speak indicates membership in the Hollywood community. Hollywood-speak is marked by its extensive use of colloquialisms, jargon, patterned exchanges, and hyperbole. Hollywood-speak can be understood as a privileged dialect or particular "register" (Agha 2000; Finegan 1999; Irvine 1990) recognized by and performed by members of the Hollywood community.

"[In Hollywood] there's a language they use when they talk to each other" (Levinson 2008). This is the observation of director, Barry Levinson, in his commentary on a film that is *about* Hollywood, in this case WHAT JUST HAPPENED? (Levinson 2008). The (self-) depiction of Hollywood in film affirms the essential accuracy of stereotypes and assumptions about what it is like to work in Hollywood (another

commonly cited example is Robert Altman's THE PLAYER (1992). The presentation of Hollywood as a subject in films also contributes to the construction of the mythic Hollywood to be discussed in Chapter Five.

Even the most successful professionals in The Industry tend to dissolve into obliqueness and ambiguity when attempting to explain how Hollywood functions or what exactly goes on in Hollywood (Brillstein and Rensin 2004). When "insiders" talk about Hollywood, they tend to presuppose that there is a universal understanding of what is being referenced. In Hollywood, it is taken for granted that Hollywood-speak is common knowledge. The presumption is that Hollywood is a community and clear communication depends on the interlocutors' tacit knowledge of Hollywood-speak. Two salient characteristics of Hollywood-speak are the use of cliché and hyperbole.

Clichés and Hyperbole

There is an "old" joke in Hollywood. It goes: "'Good morning,' he lied."

That's the whole joke. It is not funny if you are not privy to the hyperbolic shorthand that is a trademark of Hollywood-speak. In the process of reading memoirs I frequently ran across this joke, or allusions to it (cf. Brillstein and Rensin 2004; Obst 1996). It is a classic Hollywood cliché, so much so that the origin no longer matters. Like many jokes, this one depends on insider-knowledge. English-speakers who are not members of the Hollywood community may understand the words, but individuals who are not versed in Hollywood-speak usually do not "get it." "'Good Morning,' he lied" is a nod, or a wink, to other members of the Hollywood community.

This joke is an example of "in-group" humor. The humor does not make much sense unless one has heard this joke (or a variation) previously. However, in Hollywood, it is the context that makes it funny. The joke needs to be contextualized to reference the cliché that, in Hollywood, "everyone lies," and lying is constant and compulsive.[19] Literally, the joke states that any time someone in Hollywood speaks, he is lying and it does not matter what is being said. The meaning and the humor depend on one's recognition that the joke is a comment both on Hollywood *and* the clichéd expectation that in Hollywood everyone lies. The language of Hollywood is coded so that the joke only has a punch-line if the listener can recognize it as Hollywood-speak. In other words, the joke cannot be understood *as a joke* by someone unfamiliar with Hollywood-speak and the reference to an assumption of being lied to that makes it funny. Another level of meaning embedded in this joke is that the joke itself mocks the coded insider language. Ultimately, it is a joke about a joke about a cliché. Understanding a joke that is funny to "insiders" indexes participation in the film industry.

Like this "joke," many Hollywood-specific clichés circulate within the Hollywood community's discourse. Speech that is full of overused and trite -- but familiar -- language is a mark of Hollywood-speak. While Hollywood-speak is not particularly complicated, it is heavily coded with layers of reference to films, Hollywood's history, and the common experience familiar to Industry participants. Other common Hollywood clichés are: everyone in Hollywood wants to be an actor, is

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[19] Perhaps it is not surprising that this trait of lying is associated with Hollywood. The notion of lying does not necessarily imply mean-spiritedness (however, it most certainly can, especially because Hollywood is notoriously competitive). After all, it is an environment where much of the community is explicit about being an actor (in the thespian sense) and the notion that "all the world's a stage" is taken literally.

"working on" a screenplay (if it is not "in their back-pocket"), or both, that "every waiter is really an actor or a screenwriter waiting for 'a break' into The Industry," and "all it takes is meeting the 'right' person to make it in 'the Biz' of Hollywood." The circulation of these stories along with personal experience, reinforces the stereotypes of Hollywood among members of the Hollywood community. These clichés are affirmed as truisms every time someone meets the predicted expectation. For example, many film festival staff and volunteers I met *are* also aspiring actors, and the majority of my neighbors *are* working on screenplays, and many aspiring actors *are* waiters.

This example is taken from an informal interview I conducted with a Film Festival Volunteer (FFV) who helped me sort tickets in the box office of a Los Angeles-based film festival. We discussed the path that brought her to Los Angeles and her position as a festival volunteer.

SO: So, what do you do when you aren't volunteering for a film festival?

FFV: Um, I'm actually an actor (pause) so I do that.

SO: What does that look like? What do you do as an actor?

FFV: You mean, like act?

SO: Well, sure, act. But when you aren't acting what do you do? Do you take class or go to auditions?

FFV: Yeah. I go to auditions sometimes. And I work for my cousin sometimes.

SO: Is he in The Industry?

FFV: No, he's a dentist.

This discursive exchange shows the way that Hollywood clichés are performed in everyday discursive exchanges. It is very common for people in Hollywood to hold

multiple jobs and typically the one that provides a steady income is not in The Industry. The exchange supports the stereotypical expectation that everyone you meet is an aspiring actor. Often people volunteer for a film festival because it puts them in proximity to The Industry in a way that working in a dental office does not.

A colorful exchange that demonstrates multiple clichés at once is producer Art Linson's account of a conversation between Jeff, a waiter, and Jerry, a former "studio head" (an executive in charge of running a motion picture studio; a position that is high-stress, high-profile, and turns over with some regularity).

> "Oh, gosh, welcome back, sir." The waiter blanched, then genuflected, when he realized that was *the* Jerry. "It's been years, sir, hasn't it?" The waiter's expression of doubt mixed with awe said it all. He assumed that Jerry was 'dead,' but just in case Jerry could spin some kind of showbiz voodoo reincarnation and actually make a comeback, a little anal massage couldn't hurt. Everyone in town was in on the game.
>
> "Well, thank you, Jeff. Did you ever finish that screenplay?" Jerry's question was generic. It didn't require an answer. Who wasn't finishing a script in this place? It was as meaningless as asking about one's health or the weather (Linson 2002: 22).[20]

This anecdote about Jerry and Jeff is another example of the Hollywood cliché that "every waiter is really an actor or a screenwriter waiting for 'a break' into 'the Biz' of Hollywood." In this brief exchange we see that in Hollywood-speak, asking about a

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[20] This exchange, recounted by Linson in his autobiography (2002), took place at the Ivy at the Shore, a tony restaurant in Santa Monica on a wide street lined with the ubiquitous palm trees and with a view of the Pacific Ocean. There are two Ivy restaurants in Los Angeles. Both are marked as a Hollywood "it" spot (i.e., a location marked as a popular destination for Hollywood-types) where the expectation of "seeing someone" (i.e., someone who works in the film industry, presumably famous enough to be recognized) is more likely to be realized than at other restaurants. The Ivy on Robertson is better known for the white picket fence out front, the crowd of valets waiting to meet arriving cars, and the paparazzi that frequently photograph dining celebrities from across the street. The Ivy at the Shore is generally taken to be more low-key than the Ivy on Robertson.

script or a project is similar to generic topics such as the weather or one's health. We also see the use of hyperbole in language such as "awe" and the assumption that someone is "dead." Besides offering examples of Hollywood-speak, the encounter illustrates the importance of maintaining "connections" or social and professional networks. There is another Hollywood cliché that says, "a man out of a job is usually a man out of friends" (Powdermaker 1950).

Most people I talked to about the truth in clichés tended to shrug, nod, and give me the, "well…yeah" look. Apparently I was the only one surprised when clichés proved true. I was not surprised when I encountered an anecdote offered by director, David Lynch (2006). While shooting the pilot for the television series *Twin Peaks* (1990), Lynch got a mental image of his set dresser, Frank. Even though Frank was working as a set dresser at the time, Lynch recounts asking him,

> "Are you an actor?" And he said, "Well, yes, I happen to be," because everyone in L.A. is an actor. And maybe everyone in the world. So I said, "Frank, you're going to be in this scene" (Lynch 2006:77).

Frank ended up with a recurring role on the show and reinforced the expectation that everyone in Hollywood is looking to act (and every actor wants to direct, and every director wants to produce, and so on) and can do so, if given the opportunity.

Hollywood is Localized and Mythologized through Talk

As Peter Theroux noted in his memoir, Translating LA: A Tour of the Rainbow City, Hollywood and Los Angeles are both known for "the storied vapidity of the place" and, "Tinseltown, this ethereally stupid lotus land" (1994:11). Theroux, an author and

translator, characterizes life in Los Angeles, "[annually there are] dramatic new troubles, sociopathic and seismic -- an endless round of Armageddon and Armageddon-outta-here" (1994:13). Powdermaker (1950) may have been able to fit Hollywood into the conceptual box that she took into the field with her in the 1940s, but I find it is hard to argue that Los Angeles is "a village." Los Angeles is a hugely diverse and often factionalized city. As far as I can determine the only people who attempt to claim that Los Angeles writ large is a "community" are politicians.

Hollywood-speak does two specific things related to the stereotyped image of Hollywood as a place where people are assumed to understand each other and the semiotic nuances used to communicate in a kind of shorthand. Part of this shorthand about Hollywood is a self-deprecation that assumes a shallowness as well as a tendency towards melodrama. First, the discursive strategy of Hollywood-speak localizes Hollywood, it cultivates a sense of the "local." In effect, Hollywood (and by association Los Angeles) is presented as a "town," the implication being that both the city itself and Hollywood, in particular, are smaller than either actually is. At the same time, a second effect is that Hollywood-speak reinforces the idea of the exclusivity that shrouds Hollywood. In large part the myth of Hollywood has to do with access. The mythic status of Hollywood is connected to the perception that access to Hollywood and sites-of-Hollywood is limited to a select and special population. The language used by studios to promote tours is the same as that found in the publicly circulating media that generates popular discourse about Hollywood. This language has been coded for Hollywood and is reinforced when "insiders" talk about themselves and to each other.

Hollywood gets called a "town" in a variety of contexts. In everyday speech and print media it is referred to as an "industry town." When working on the construction of a film festival site, the electrician I was working with told me, "If you can figure out what makes this town tick, be sure to let me know." When you visit the Warner Brothers (WB) VIP Studio Tour website, the Looney Tunes signature soundtrack begins to play, and then a male voice begins speaking, "Hey, nice of you to drop by, I'm Dean, one of the guides who will lead you on one of these amazing Warner Brother VIP Tours…I'll tell you, this tour is the best kept secret in town" (Warner Brothers 2009). The Warner Brothers tour illustrates two ideas: first it minimizes Los Angeles from a massive city to a "town" and it also reinforces the idea that Hollywood is expected to cater to VIPs with an implied exclusivity.

Discourse that shrinks Los Angeles to a "town" references an "old Hollywood" or the classic period of The Industry. This is an idealized era when Hollywood really was a town located in undeveloped coastal-desert hills full of scrub plants, eucalyptus trees, and men carrying film around on horseback circa 1915. From the studio perspective, classic Hollywood is also the era of glamour when movie stars were viewed as "screen idols." Hollywood offered unimagined worlds that audiences could escape to on a Saturday afternoon at the nickelodeon. Studio tours that target tourists, such as the one Warner Brothers offers, employ two marketing strategies. They offer a chance to go back to a historic Hollywood and/or to take participants "behind-the-scenes" to see Hollywood spaces that are otherwise inaccessible to the general public. Sony Pictures Studio offers the promise of revisiting classic Hollywood: "Take the Sony Pictures Studios Tour and step back into a legendary time. Located on one of the world's most famous studio lots,

our walking tour gives you a rare glimpse of old Hollywood's glory days and an insider's view of a state-of-the-art motion picture studio" (Sony Pictures Studio 2009).

The alternative approach emphasizes access to restricted areas and a Hollywood-style "VIP experience." Universal Studios uses this tactic to promote its tours. On the Universal Studio Tours visitors "go to the front of the line" and "go behind the scenes" (Universal Studios Hollywood 2009). Universal Studios and Warner Brothers both offer VIP options for an additional fee. The general admission for Universal Studios is $67 per person. However, $239, the price for VIP Access, allows you to "follow in the footsteps of celebrities" and gain access to areas "not open to the general public" (Universal Studios Hollywood 2009). The additional cost allows VIP visitors to "Listen to stories only Hollywood insiders hear," and, "Just like a true celebrity your guide will escort you to the front-of-line access areas" (Universal Studios Hollywood 2009).

In these examples of Hollywood marketing, studios target public expectations of Hollywood that are generated in popular media and the discourse of celebrity (e.g., *US Weekly*, *TMZ*, *Access Hollywood*, *The Insider*, etc.), through the use of semiotic indicators of exclusivity. To make sure visitors who are able to pay for VIP status get the full experience of what is constructed to be "star treatment," every detail is tailored to this expectation, including: "Valet Parking - Drive up and hand over your keys just like the Hollywood heavyweights do" (Universal Studios Hollywood 2009).

Names

When observing and participating in conversations taking place in Hollywood, one becomes attuned to the fact that names get dropped all the time. To the "outsider"

these names mean little, if anything. Part of understanding Hollywood-speak is having a working knowledge of who's who in The Industry, past and present. This includes knowing names. Names of prominent actors become familiar on a household level, and along with knowing someone's name comes a unique sense of access to that individual. This is not a phenomenon exclusive to Hollywood. In an exchange I had with anthropologist Mac Marshall, he wrote, "This is similar to working in a small community like Namoluk where knowing peoples' names marks you as an insider, someone with local knowledge" (personal communication, June 2009). Anthropologist Keith Basso presents a similar practice in his ethnography of place-making among the Western Apache, Wisdom Sits in Place (1996). In Basso's account, insider-status is demonstrated by a knowledge of place names and stories connected to these locations.

Whether at an awards event or a movie premiere, as celebrities make their "arrival," walking the Red Carpet from car to venue entrance, photographers and fans can be heard calling out first names: "Cameron! Cameron! Over here, Cameron!" or "Leo! I love you, Leo!" There is no, "Pardon me, Ms. Diaz, is it? We haven't met, but can I take your picture?" or "Mr. DiCaprio? Excuse me, sir." On one occasion, I was eating in a restaurant next to Jorge Garcia, an actor most widely recognized for his work on the television series *Lost* (Abrams 2004-2010). A fan who spotted him evidently felt comfortable with him, because he came up to the actor's table and, interrupting the conversation said, "Hey, Hugo! Man, I love your show. Can I get a picture?" The actor was gracious enough to smile for a mobile phone photograph, already being snapped, before he nodded, quietly saying what sounded like, "Uh, yeah. Thanks. No problem. Cool." In this case I was struck by the fact that the fan did not even refer to the actor by

his name, but rather, by the name of a character he sometimes plays on television. In Hollywood, it appears that knowing someone's name implies a connection, even if the connection is entirely imagined.

Micro-exchanges (i.e., conversations) take place all the time in which the interlocutors discuss "Angelina" and "Brad," even going so far as to use a nickname like "Brangelina" (or other popular, well-known actors at the moment) in a manner that implies a relationship. This may be the case even if the speaker's only connection to the actors is through the pages of entertainment magazines. Naming is powerful. There is an extensive anthropological literature related to the power of naming and naming as it relates to kinship. Laura Graham (personal communication) has pointed out that the Xavante in Brazil use kin terms because names are not only powerful, but also spiritual or "secret," As in Namoluk or among the Xavante, knowing names is a strategy used in the Hollywood community to imply or create a connection. A deep knowledge of Hollywood history may not be pervasive among all members of the Hollywood community, but a catalogue of names can prove invaluable.

One way that I learned names was through the process of making credentials (badges with names and coding for level of access) for film festivals. As I moved from festival to festival the names became familiar and, as I watched movies, I would recognize these and connect them to social roles. On one particularly long night leading up to the Sundance Film Festival, with badges spread across the floor of an entire room and equally as many FedEx envelopes that I needed to find the names to match, I called in reinforcements to help. For hours I sat with a long-time producer who was both generous and happened to be in the area, having moved his family to Utah from Los

Angeles some years earlier. As we called names back and forth he would comment on the names as we read them off of the credentials; "He is a good guy…she is tough to work with…I had a project in development with him in the eighties," and so on. By learning names and professional associations I came to realize that while Hollywood, taken in its broadest sense, encompasses countless numbers of people, within each social role or specialization, as in any community, there is a much tighter network of participants who consistently work with, and around, each other.

In a similar way, being a part of the ELEPHANT (Van Sant 2003) entourage while at the Cannes Film Festival and for the U. S. premiere in Portland, Oregon, contributed to a working knowledge of names that is very much part of the tacit knowledge in Hollywood. Beyond the A-list celebrities featured in popular media, there is a network of names that pass through conversations as indicators of the interlocutors' professional networks, experience, and access.

Film References, Hollywood History, and Evidence of a "Working" Knowledge

In Hollywood, having formal training or education is not necessarily a requirement to get a particular position. Most skills are learned on the job in a trial-by-fire manner. Powdermaker (1950) briefly addresses this characteristic of Hollywood, and on my first paid position with a film festival, a veteran co-worker told me over our "dinner" of caramel corn that "training is minimal and the adage of sink-or-swim is a reality here." This lack of formal or preparatory training is also recounted in stories about The Industry. As the classic anecdote goes, Hollywood veteran, Hal Roach, got his first directing job and feared that his technical staff would laugh at his inexperience. He was

particularly worried about Fred Jackman, his cameraman, who "looked as though he had grown up in the business" (Hay 1990:29). On his first morning, Roach copied Jackman's gestures and was careful "to speak in the most technical jargon" (Hay 1990:30). The two worked side-by-side shooting a scene in which the actor was rolling down a steep rocky incline. Watching the "rushes" (film footage rushed through processing so the director can see what he got on film) the next morning, the shot looked like he was on level ground. Use of the wrong camera angle meant the whole sequence would have to be shot again. Roach took his cameraman aside to confess,

> "Fred," he said meekly, "I have a confession to make. I've never directed a picture before."
>
> Fred Jackman looked him manfully in the eye. After pausing for a second or two, he said: "Hal, I've a confession to make, too. I never worked on a camera before yesterday" (Hay 1990:30).

Almost a full year from the day of my own first sink-or-swim-exchange at AFI Fest 2003, I found myself in the role of site producer for the 2004 AFI Fest presented by Audi in Los Angeles. My advancement through film festival jobs had been steady and my learning curve steep. This producer position was decidedly the biggest incremental increase I experienced professionally while taking jobs in Hollywood. My general knowledge and problem solving skills were tested on a daily basis. I acted like I knew what a "four-cam drop electrical system" was when I needed to convey confidence and authority, and I flipped switches on a generator five times my size daily. I also cried a lot during this period and, at one point, my Mormon box office manager took it upon herself to pray for me, if that is any indication of how out-of-my-depth I felt at times.

My job was to oversee the planning and construction of the festival's physical site. It was not uncommon for deliveries to arrive unannounced and my staff and I did our best to take whatever showed up at our loading dock in stride. Then there was the day a deliveryman arrived and handed me the key to a scissor-lift. A scissor-lift is a large piece of machinery, a mobile platform that moves up and down while being driven backward and forward. It is the kind of thing used in construction and by firefighters, and this one was effectively mine for the next month. I called to the deliveryman, who was already walking away from me, "Hey, do I get some instruction on this?"

"Like what?" he asked me back.

Trying to steady my voice, and fearful of being stuck with a giant and costly piece of machinery that I could not use, I shot back, "I don't know. I've never used one of these. Don't you think some training might be a good idea?"

Hearing this exchange a production assistant within earshot offered, "Training. We don't need no stinkin' training." He affected a poor Mexican accent[21] because his interjection was a modified quotation from THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE (Huston 1948): "Badges? We ain't got no badges! We don't need no badges. I don't have to show you any stinkin' badges!" This line has a legacy of being spoofed and intentionally misquoted, as in Mel Brooks' BLAZING SADDLES (1974): "Badges! We don't need no stinkin' badges!" The misquote and its endless variations were popular among film festival staffs, especially those in the box office who were generally responsible for the production of badges.

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[21] See Hill (1993, 1998) for discussion of "mock Spanish" and racism in language.

This example illustrates how films, Hollywood's primary product, are referenced subtly and continually to affirm an "insider's" knowledge. Not everyone knows films and film history. A writer who I first met in 1998 and then saw on a regular basis to talk with informally about my Hollywood project while in Los Angeles, speculates that, "There are two kinds of people who work in Hollywood. The people who are here because they love films and know everything about them; the ones who went to film school and took film studies classes. And then the rest are all the guys who work the technical, skill jobs and don't care a lick about movies. They don't even go see the ones they work on. For them it is just a job and maybe they will end up liking something they are working on."

Whether or not my writer friend is correct, and whether or not the people I worked with knew film quotes or not, the statement about Hollywood offering minimal training in advance of having to perform a job proved to be true. My encounter with a scissor-lift is only one example from my field experience where my responsibilities exceeded my knowledge and training. A reason for this is that training takes time, and the collective belief is that there is never enough time in Hollywood.

Time and Timing = Success

> Always there is a fear of being outdistanced by competitors. Lewis Carroll in Alice in Wonderland might have been describing Hollywood executives: it takes all the running you can do to stay in the same place.
>
> Hortense Powdermaker (1950: 99)

There is no magic formula for success in Hollywood. Upon learning of my research, more than one person expressed hope that I would uncover an answer or a formula scientifically tested and guaranteed to produce success in "The Biz." Alas, this

was not my objective, nor my finding. This expectation reflects a belief that somewhere, shrouded in the mystery and mystique of Hollywood, there is a formula for success, or an answer to the puzzle that is Hollywood. A "key" that will open closed doors, like Charlie's golden ticket to the Chocolate Factory. Even though the possibilities provided by Hollywood are perceived to be equally accessible to all, there is a companion assumption that it is possible to improve one's odds of success, whether by taking the right class, meeting the right people, or reading the right "insiders' guide" or "how-to" book. The other widely shared assumption is that if you give it the right amount of time, success will happen.

The collective sense of time in Hollywood is not only marked by the expectation of the proverbial "15 minutes of fame" articulated by artist Andy Warhol, but also by media-reinforced pressure that you are only as good as your last job. Whether you are physically in Hollywood or an ocean away, those attuned to the media-provided moment-by-moment drama of The Industry can easily get swept up in the breakneck pace at which this Hollywood world changes. In Hollywood, as in life, time is a daily worry. Time is intensified in Hollywood because so much preparation is involved in creating single moments, whether on film or in the setting of a live event. Months (and sometimes years) go into planning for events that last for a few hours. Hundreds and thousands of people may find themselves waiting for "the light" to be just-so, or for a single individual who is, as they say, "holding up the show." In Hollywood one competes against time and the struggle is to remain "current." What is at stake may be money, youth or good looks, or an opportunity for which only one shot is given.

A Crisis-Filled Life

Hollywood is a stressful environment. I argue that it is constructed as such in the narratives that circulate, for example iconic stories of starting in an Hollywood agency mailroom as a way to get a foot in the door (Rensin 2003). My co-workers describe film festivals as "a crisis-driven environment" and changes during events are frequently responded to on the level of a "crisis." Even when I worked as an Extra in what would seem to be a low-stress social role, the adage of "hurry up and wait" was prevalent. In day-to-day exchanges with co-workers, the talk was about "fighting the clock" and anxiety was expressed about "missing the window of opportunity." As such, people understand that it takes time to establish oneself in Hollywood, time is collectively imagined to be an invisible threat.

When I compare my findings to those of Powdermaker (1950), the daily cues that undermine one's ideas of "normal" progress are similar. In relation to the pressure time imposes, it is no surprise that in Powdermaker's assessment Hollywood is an "industry of addicts," a territory littered with the depressed, disillusioned, and discouraged. Even in my brief foray into Hollywood I came to know the intensity of the cycle of highs and lows that characterizes The Industry. A fashion consultant I shared a trailer-office with summed it up thusly, "the only thing for sure is that it is going to end." The "it" he spoke about is a career in Hollywood. It could just as easily have been a particular job in The Industry or a moment in the spotlight. The up-side to the temporary nature of Hollywood is that it is always changing. In the words of a film festival volunteer, "It's a good thing Hollywood's attention span is short, otherwise poor Lindsey Lohan!" I cannot make a scientific case that time passes any faster in Hollywood, regardless of what my box office

cohort might have concluded, but in Hollywood value is placed on youth and beauty -- "and that value is only surpassed by power!" according to Derek, a key film festival informant who was always quick with a witty retort -- qualities that are linked to the passing of time. The challenge is to wade through the rhetoric and, ultimately, to last in an industry acutely aware of time passing, "getting old," and becoming passé.

"The World is Leaving Me Behind"

Of all the ways that the collective, or shared, Hollywood mentality can infiltrate expectations of power, money, and success, one of the lesser recognized and equally insidious ones is related to expectations and anxieties based on time. Time is a less explicit element than money, yet it influences and shapes the collective perception of living and working as part of Hollywood equally as much. Not only is the battle waged against time in the form of Botox and cosmetic "enhancements," but also in the construction of an invisible pressure that was described by a twenty-something who had moved to Hollywood straight out of college as "a window that you know is closing a little bit every day." I experienced a tension with time throughout my contact with Hollywood. For me, the tension changed depending on the circumstance, but the pressure presented by time passing was never alleviated entirely. For me it was a pressure to complete research and synthesize findings before the data *felt* outdated. It was not the case that the data would actually grow too old to be usable, rather, it was an anxiety generated by exchange with others in Hollywood who articulated without reservation "this research is taking forever…will it even matter anymore by the time you finish it?"

An example of how time can negatively impact someone with a well-established and respected career, David Lynch, the director of BLUE VELVET (1986) and more recently, INLAND EMPIRE (2006), characterizes his sense of time as experienced in Hollywood when working on a film early in his career.

> When I was making ERASERHEAD, which took five years, I thought I was dead. I thought the world would be so different before it was over. I told myself, *Here I am, locked in this thing. I can't finish it. The world is leaving me behind.* I had stopped listening to music, and I never watched TV anyway. I didn't want to hear stories about what was going on, because hearing these things felt like dying (2006:35, italics in original).

Orson Welles is credited with saying, "The trouble with a movie is that it's old before it's released. It's no accident that it comes in a can." Hollywood is a place where the collective perception is that the pace is fast, the future is always on your heels, and it is easy to fall behind. There is a shared anxiety that is arguably not unique to Hollywood. A forty-eight year old producer reported that, "I am old by Hollywood standards. You go into an agency these days and everyone looks about fifteen. A twenty year old is calling the shots…It isn't only in Hollywood, any artist feels an internal battle against the clock."

While the issue surrounding time is something I discussed with informants, it was also something that influenced my work and my sense of "progress." Not having years of experience in Hollywood under my belt, I admit to falling prey to the hamster wheel of Hollywood. By the time I concluded my official period of fieldwork, the feeling that my data were already outdated was already bothering me. My notes on traveling to Cannes with ELEPHANT in May 2003, seemed like old news as the media coverage for the 2005 Cannes Film Festival reached me in Iowa. I found myself writing up my research,

knowing that I was still a distance from the end of a lengthy dissertation research and writing process. At the same time I discovered that someone else had already made may of the observations I was making, someone on a faster publication track (i.e., journalists and critics). In 2005, I had no idea what lay ahead in the next few years and in this way my experience was similar to those who allowed me to follow their progress in Hollywood.

In Hollywood time provided insight into the progression of careers and experience of participants, much in the way an investment of time on the part of the anthropologist is integral to successful fieldwork and "studying-up." Complex subjects of investigation, whether we call them cultures or communities, are not easily understood, or even immediately visible. The progression of *seeing* Hollywood in a grounded way takes time, guidance, chance, and duration. In 2000, I could not have accurately said where the individuals I followed would be in 2007. I could not have worked at Sundance or The Oscars without first paying my dues right along with everyone else trying to break into these high profile events where individuals prove themselves and, in doing so, ensure future work. When individuals in Hollywood talk about "paying dues," the implication is that one must do less-desirable jobs to progress in the industry, but it is also a discourse about time.

How Long Does It Take To Get Into Hollywood?
"Give It Seven Years."

The composition of the Hollywood community is in constant flux; participants come and go all the time. The social roles stay the same, but the individuals who fill these roles perpetually change. Time is a critical factor in this ebb and flow of individuals to

and from Hollywood. In my effort to find a pattern in the relationship between time and becoming a part of the Hollywood community, I will return to one of my earliest conversations about working in The Industry.

Ellen, a woman about my age who had been building a career in Hollywood for just over five years at the time we met, articulated a timeline for paying-dues that she had seen play out among a network of friends. Ellen's timeline held up under scrutiny and consultation with others, and upon reflection I can see that my own path was not far off from the expectation she presented in our first interview. She explained to me that many of those who make the pilgrimage to Hollywood return to where they came from within the first year due to perceived failure or total lack of funds. Ambition runs high in the first year, and so does discouragement.

According to Ellen, if one survives the trials of the first year it can be predicted that he will last until year three, when a second exodus occurs. Frustration, depression, or both, typically predict departure at this time. After three years, one has committed a significant amount of time to reaching goals and in those cases where individuals have not yet attained fame, fortune, or a steady income with health care, they tend to "cut their losses" and move on. Should one make it through the first three years in Hollywood without becoming financially ruined or spiritually depleted, she may anticipate that she will continue to work more or less steadily and begin to see the niche that she has scratched out for herself. Ellen made these observations based on watching the rise toward success, and in some cases the failures of members of her cohort over a period of almost five years.

For a small percentage of those who arrive in Hollywood seeking riches and recognition, there is a career to be made. After three years of scraping together jobs and hustling to make rent, if someone stays in Hollywood it indicates that she has found a way to sustain herself, and accepted the reality that for the vast majority of Industry participants "making it" takes years. The turning point is said to arrive at around seven years. If one stays, pays her dues, and finds a way to maintain faith, then by year seven the jobs should be finding her and the income ought to be less of a daily concern. After seven years individuals start to see that they are doing what they want to be doing, are able to make their own decisions and expect continued advancement. Rather than the never-ending scramble to ensure the next job, sending out resumes and waiting for unreturned calls, at this point the phone should be ringing with job offers. It is an incredible turn of events and, as quickly as hope was lost, faith can be renewed. "I was ready to give up and move home and then the phone rang" is how a neighbor who pieced together "gigs" and "jobs" described her experience.

Aaron's Seven Year Stretch

When I first heard about this belief in year markers, the 7-year threshold struck me as arbitrary. As it turned out, I remained in Hollywood long enough to observe that there is truth in this timeline and, more often than not, I saw the experiences of individuals I tracked conform to the expectation. Along with Ellen's career, three neighbors and a handful of acquaintances all followed the prescribed trajectory. To support the seven-year expectation, I can point to one of the actors who I met in 2000. Aaron was on the fringe of what I called "the young male actors network" that frequented

the gym daily, orbited around "A-listers," like Leo DiCaprio to watch basketball playoff games, went to auditions, and waited for a big break.

The term "A-List" is a part of Hollywood-speak that has been adopted in public discourse. It refers to actors who are identified as the "top" or "biggest," based on criteria such as how much they are paid per film, box office returns on films they star in, or a general perception of popularity. The idea of an A-List is the basis for comedy like Kathy Griffin's Emmy Award winning series, "Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List," in which she positions herself as *not* on the A-List, allowing her to find the humor of being a lesser-celebrity, or a foil for the most well-known of Hollywood talents. Of course, there is an irony in a D-List celebrity winning an Emmy.

While I was living in Los Angeles during the summer of 2000, I recorded Aaron's professional ups and downs. He attracted attention in small parts and television pilots, strung along for a while, and then most often his role or the project he was involved in fell through. Unfortunately, this was also the case with the film project I was following through development that summer. Within a year of my return to Iowa to write up my findings and complete the Master's degree, Aaron was cast in a prime-time television show on a major network. This particular primetime medical drama sustained for a season and then went the way of so many other programs before and since: it went to DVD. For the next couple of years his name didn't come up in the media, but I got updates from afar and heard that he was on the cusp of "making it big." When I moved to Hollywood in August 2003, the group of young actors that I remembered from the summer of 2000, had "grown up" and moved in various directions. A couple had married, and two of the three from the small sample that was central in my Master's research had

increased their status as actors in the community and were putting together steady work, mainly in television. They had not yet become superheroes on the big screen, as some of their cohort had, but they were working as actors and this was their primary goal.

In 2007, seven years from the time I started research, both actors are now known faces beamed into American homes weekly; their names are recognizable in the tabloids and as part of the category of "Celebrity." Both of these men have television shows that anchor the prime-time lineups of their respective networks and are getting local and national media exposure. Were I to seek an introduction (as an anthropologist) to these men now, it would likely not happen. The timing was right seven years ago, supporting Ellen's timeline for carving out a niche in the Hollywood community. As the cliché goes, so much of Hollywood comes down to timing. Does this mean I have concluded that anyone who moves to Hollywood and sticks it out for seven years will find the success they deserve? No, absolutely not. But, there is always a possibility. It is Hollywood after all–"the Dream Factory" (Powdermaker 1950).

Whether talking about Hollywood or elsewhere, time is an abstract notion. I argue that the way time is conceptualized in Hollywood is shared, and that this reinforces Hollywood as a community. Material culture, tangible objects that can be held, or worn, forms a third category of collectivity by which Hollywood can be expressed. The next section of this chapter shows how members of the Hollywood community share, understand, and use promotional items, typically considered "gifts," that also function as markers of community membership.

The Multiple Functions of S.W.A.G.

A final collectivity, or shared attribute, of Hollywood that I want to introduce -- and a favorite of many -- comes in the form and uses of material culture that functions on a number of different levels and fulfills multiple objectives: S.W.A.G., an acronym for Stuff (or Shit) We All Get. S.W.A.G. is the phenomenon of giving away promotional materials, whether in the form of a hat, a bottle of water, or a pair of jeans. Hollywood as an industry is not unique in the presence of S.W.A.G. as it is a common mode of advertising and promotion. Film-related S.W.A.G., however, is more "dressed up." S.W.A.G. is used to indicate membership in The Industry or as a participant at a given event. For example, when I arrived at a new job, one of the things I learned to look for were the markings of other participants' previous experience in the form of hats, jackets, or t-shirts that indicated past jobs on television or film productions. In particular I learned that at a film festival, when presented with a group of volunteers I had never met before, I could identify returning volunteers because they inevitably wore something from a previous year to signal their past experience. In addition to indicating membership, or belonging, S.W.A.G. embodies Thorstein Veblen's (1912) notion of "invidious distinction," a unifying characteristic of Hollywood.

Veblen (1912) coined the phrase "invidious distinction" to refer to a phenomenon that can be considered another sign of collectivity in the Hollywood community. Invidious distinction describes the consumption of luxury items, things not available to everyone, as a way to distinguish oneself. While not everyone in Hollywood shares the same degree of wealth or privilege, most members aware of invidious distinction and consciously attempt to cultivate the appearance of wealth and entitlement, whether they

possess these traits or not. The suntan offers a classic example and is well suited to Hollywood's Southern California setting, as tanned bodies are pervasive in Los Angeles. A suntan suggests that to be tan you must have the time required to lay out in the sun, an activity generally taken to be a leisure activity. Of course, now one can purchase a tan that takes only minutes to apply, but even this requires the means to acquire it and the knowledge that it is an option. In the case of Hollywood, there is emphasis on what one can purchase to indicate status, but Veblen's notion is taken to another level when the status implies an entitlement to "gifts" (i.e., free stuff for the wealthiest).

S.W.A.G. as a Semiotic Indicator

Accumulating S.W.A.G. is one of the most direct ways to express and fortify a claim to being part of the Hollywood community. It is typically free, given away (with the intent that you will in fact use it and in doing so promote whatever item or the brand that is displayed for marketing purposes). This makes S.W.A.G. especially appealing to the individual who earns a paltry income, not to mention volunteers who work for free.

S.W.A.G. can be delivered in different manners, each indicating a relative "value." It can be:

1) Given in the form of a gift bag to attendees of a particular event. Here the value is determined by who has access to the event.

2) Given away in a space such as a VIP area, a gifting area, or a Green Room (traditionally a holding area for talent and participants before a performance). Access to these areas is most restricted, even limiting which "talents" have access. These areas are commonly associated with awards

shows, high-profile film festivals, and special events drawing a large number of celebrities.

3) Handed out to anyone who needs S.W.A.G. for the purposes of working access or to demonstrate an official authority and membership for the duration of an event of production. This kind of S.W.A.G., such as a jacket, t-shirts, caps, or anything else frequently worn by individuals working in production roles, even after a project has "wrapped" (finished), as an ongoing indicator of membership in the Hollywood community.

4) Handed out to the general public for promotional purposes; things such as keychains or buttons.

Film productions and television series often provide what looks like a "letterman" jacket with the logo for the production embroidered prominently. Baseball-type caps are also very popular. Both of these items might be given as a "thank you gift" from the producer(s) to staff.

There are at least two categories of event-specific S.W.A.G. that I encountered during fieldwork. Using the example of a film festival, a pre-determined set of official outerwear was provided to the staff at Sundance. In my year this consisted of a "shell" (coat), a vest made of the same material, and a knit hat with the Sundance logo for 2004. A woman in my department who worked for Sundance over a period of years said, "I have a closet full of the festival coats. Every year it is different, and some of them I actually use…but I can't imagine getting rid of any of them." While she may not have wanted to part with her coats, we would periodically check eBay to see what Sundance "gear" from the present and past years was going for. It became apparent which coats are

still in use from previous years; the black fleece is still in heavy circulation, whereas the bright orange puffy-down parka from a few years back is less frequently seen. In 2004, Kenneth Cole (a well-known name in fashion and accessory design) designed the outerwear. Mid-way through the festival word made it to my department that, "they [the staff] are all wearing it wrong." According to a Kenneth Cole representative, I was told third-hand, the vest is meant to be worn *over* the shell, on the outside, as opposed to closer to the body as one might assume if thinking in terms of layering for warmth instead of dressing for fashion. "Well I guess that explains why everyone's vest was so dang big" was my co-worker, Mandy's, response to the news.

The other, much more common item of staff S.W.A.G. is the volunteer t-shirt. In an environment where there is a need for lots (hundreds) of volunteers, a t-shirt has proven to be the most cost-effective way to easily identify volunteers as well as offer them a souvenir. T-shirts also serve as a means to identify staff and volunteers at a distance and in crowds; this contributes to the fact that volunteer t-shirts are often a bright color that are less likely to be worn by members of the general public.

The last category of S.W.A.G. is composed of items given out to anyone and everyone, usually a blatantly promotional object such as a button or a knit hat with a film's title embroidered on it. These items are not generally handed out in restricted areas; on the contrary, the goal of giving these items away is to get as many into use as possible and generate a "buzz," or talk about a project or product. A couple of things can happen with these items. If you attend a party that is open to everyone at a film festival and a mesh trucker-style hat (popular at the time) promoting a car company is given out, you may find trash cans full of these hats at the end of the evening. If you are at a film

festival and a small, previously unknown film gives out unique promotional items, for example the "Un-Happy Meal" distributed in conjunction with the documentary SUPER SIZE ME (2004), this item may become highly in demand and collectable. Most of the time the S.W.A.G. in this category falls somewhere in the middle, between throw-away and collectable. There are lots of buttons and keychains made to promote films at film festivals. Every once in a while a film and its S.W.A.G. will find success, as seen in the case of NAPOLEON DYNAMITE (2004), where the film was purchased for distribution at Sundance and the clever (and originally produced for promotional purposes only) t-shirts went on to be sold in novelty stores found in malls nationwide.

"I Didn't Even See You There!": an Ethnographic Moment

The efficacy of S.W.A.G. to mark someone as an occupant of a certain social role (e.g., volunteer) was proven one day when a co-worker spilled coffee on himself while working at a film festival in Los Angeles. My co-worker, Chris, and I had a job that positioned us so that we were in contact with all of the other festival departments. Chris and I had been working together for almost two months at the time of this incident. The coffee was spilled, and being without a change of shirt, Chris grabbed one of the extra volunteer t-shirts. Chris donned the bright blue t-shirt promoting not only the festival but also a particular brand of bottled water. A couple of hours passed and we returned to working without giving the wardrobe change much thought. It was only later when Warren, a staff member working to make arrangements for the filmmakers, approached us at our usual conjoined desks and completely ignored Chris that we came to understand the effect of the volunteer t-shirt. The exchange went as follows:

Warren and I talk for a few minutes about something he wants me to help him with. It seems a bit odd since it is a request Chris was working on already and Chris appears to be as available to talk with Warren as I am. Warren leaves and Chris leans in to talk to me,

CHRIS: "What was that about?! He totally ignored me. Did I do something?"

SO: "I have no idea. Don't worry about it. You know his mind is on a million things."

A few minutes later Warren walks back around the partition that marks out the "office" Chris and I occupy. He peeks his head around first, as if checking to see if anyone is there. Seeing Chris, Warren starts a bit and then drops his head. Shaking his head he starts to laugh before saying,

WARREN: "Oh man, Chris, I'm sorry. I didn't even see you there. I mean, I *saw* you, but I didn't think it was you. I just saw the t-shirt, you know, and I assumed it was someone else… I walked right up to you, looked at you, and thought you were a volunteer! … Why are you wearing that shirt?!"

For some time after this exchange Chris and I joked that if we didn't want people to be able to find us, if we wanted to avoid having to answer questions, we should just put on a volunteer t-shirt, rendering ourselves "invisible." This scene makes two points: one, is that the S.W.A.G., in this case a t-shirt, used to mark someone as an occupant of a particular social role (e.g., a volunteer) works to fulfill this function; two, there is a process of "reading" each other based on semiotic indicators, such as dress, that takes place in Hollywood. "Reading" someone's dress happens almost unconsciously. Warren made a judgment based on Chris' dress, in this case a blue t-shirt.

Gift Bags: S.W.A.G. and the Expectation of Gifts

"The best part is the gift bag." Going through my notes I find that I wrote this statement on more than one occasion. In fact the topic of gift bags is a regular feature of my fieldnotes. For a while I was listing the contents of each gift bag I received. I debate whether this says more about me, or the prevalence of gift bags in Hollywood and, consequently, my research. Similar to the Red Carpet, gift bags act as indicators of "Hollywood events." S.W.A.G. suggests the essential sponsorship used at all Hollywood events, and provides PR (or advertising) opportunities for companies providing financial support for lavish events. The contents of gift bags are generally referred to as S.W.A.G. However, this S.W.A.G. may have less value as a semiotic indicator than the sanctioned S.W.A.G. discussed previously (e.g., staff outerwear). In this case, the gift bag itself indicates access, participation, and privilege. Reminiscent of childhood birthday party favors, at first the allure of the gift bag is just that, allure of getting something as a gift, for free, a treat. There is the anticipation of what will be inside and the hope that it will be something of value, something you would never think of spending money on, or at least something that you actually want. Gift bags are a part of marketing, advertising literally wrapped up and presented as a present.

If you are not accustomed to having someone hand you a bag full of goodies, the experience is kind of shocking for non-Hollywood members, but normal to "insiders" accustomed to getting "freebies" just for showing up at an event. I once presented a particularly generous bag to a friend who had provided me with a place to write and work. To this day when I visit her I encounter elements of that bag: CDs she would never

have bought, a water bottle promoting a gay bicycling organization she has no affiliation with, the bag itself with a tasteful HBO logo now full of yoga gear in the backseat of her car.

Months earlier in my role as hospitality coordinator for an international film festival, I offered the same bag to a Thai filmmaker with whom I was familiar through arranging his travel to Los Angeles. The filmmaker's shock was evident, his eyes wide and his mouth slightly agape as if he ceased making sound mid-word. I knew him to be conversant in English, but when he again began to speak, he struggled for words. "This bag is too much … no, no … not necessary." He eventually explained that the gift bag was bigger than the luggage he was traveling with; this fact made him laugh and me blush. The following is taken from the fieldnotes I wrote following our encounter.

> It had not occurred to me that a gift bag could ever be "too much," and [he] stopped just short of saying it was ridiculous. I suggested he could take it home as a carry-on item, to which he shook his head as though he were dealing with a child who could not understand. In spite of this reaction I made him take the bag. I knew it was too much and the whole concept of "gift bag" was not translating well, but in my role as HC [Hospitality Coordinator] I felt like I had to make him take it… I encouraged him that he should look through it – who couldn't use a bottle of water? – and leave the rest for the maids at his hotel (Fieldnotes July 12, 2004).

That gift bag must have weighed about 15 pounds. It was the size of a small piece of luggage and contained multiple DVDs, CDs, a picture frame, multiple hair products, a mirror, several magazines, pens, stickers, lanyards, three shirts, an acupuncture coupon, a bottled beverage, and more. A Canadian filmmaker told me that for the foreign filmmakers in particular, it was a symbol of "American excess and extravagance."

Like much of Hollywood, gift bags are used to make people feel special. In fact the contents are primarily promotional and, while offensive to "green" sensibilities, disposable. Gift bags can engender conflicting feelings. They represent an unspoken fear of missing out, the promise of unsolicited reward, and in essence the privilege of Hollywood. The anxiety about not getting a gift bag comes from the same place that the phrase "limited resources" targets. My own gift bag anxiety would only intensify as I saw it reflected in others. Someone would say, "Way more people showed up than were expected. I hope they don't run out of gift bags before I leave," and the next thing you know people were discussing going home. I once confessed to a co-worker my shame of keeping one eye on the exit and the shrinking pile of gift bags on the table next to the door. She smiled and said, "That's nothing. Just wait until you find yourself pawing through them looking for one with more stuff in it than the rest." She had a point. On multiple occasions my job entailed either assembling and/or moving gift bags, and it is true that some bags end up being "heavier" than others, even at a single event. The contents are donated and often the amounts sent are based on estimates that vary. Or the company just sends what it deems appropriate and then their items go to as many recipients as possible before they run out.

Even if they do not really want, let alone need the contents, people covet gift bags and their contents. During the period of my research the public became more aware of the existence of gift bags and their excessiveness; Hollywood (and the IRS) had to stay a step ahead. Once the "gift bags" -- more often trunks -- for celebrity presenters at high profile awards shows gained public attention, the idea of taxing them as income was introduced in 2006. This step to implement a tax may have changed gift bags forever. In some cases

the practice of "gifting" was discontinued (e.g., the Golden Globes as of 2007), but not before the Golden Globes "gift box" presented in 2006 had exceeded $20,000 and included a gym membership, diamond pendant, expensive watch, latest fancy phone, MP3 player, and a handbag to carry it all in. Celebrities began donating their gift bags to charity, an act that some hoped would balance out the imbalance of the wealthy, or those marked by the assumption of wealth, getting more free stuff. The presence of S.W.A.G. whether in the form of a t-shirt or a 5-night stay in the Dominican Republic is an indicator of the Hollywood community. Members of the Hollywood community have come to expect these "gifts" as an entitlement of Hollywood membership.

In the wake of shocked public opinion and constant media monitoring, marketing became more targeted and gifting lounges–ultra VIP areas that trumped the cache of gift bags–became more prevalent. This created yet another restricted space *within* restricted space where who gained access (to both the space and the goods) could be tightly controlled, monitored, and recorded. Although this research is not centrally concerned with marketing techniques, it is impossible to think or talk about Hollywood without some acknowledgement that this aspect of The Industry warrants further investigation. I have come to see gift bags as a novelty, a perk of The Industry, and a product of hardworking Development departments (cf. Appadurai 1996).

I must admit that the longer I worked in Hollywood the more I *expected* to get something. Having said that, my expectation of a "really good" gift bag might include a pound of coffee beans, a DVD I would watch, or a candle that was too expensive for me to consider buying for myself. This is very different from the celebrity expectation and

experience. The following is an excerpt from a *Vanity Fair* piece, "The S.W.A.G. Dance at Sundance" (Flint 2009), published during the most recent Sundance Film Festival.

> It was when I saw Paris Hilton grab a handful of Pas Comme Les Moutons headbands from the Owl's Lab boutique in the Sephora lounge at the Sundance Film Festival that I started to feel seriously grossed out by the gifting suite greediness in Park City, Utah. That's before I heard that the heiress ended up walking away with approximately ten bags full of free stuff from Owl Lab – four handbags, cashmere scarves, jewelry, jeans, and tees, which added up to about $7000. Later in the evening, I saw Paris conspicuously sporting one of her new $85 headbands (Flint 2009).

This excerpt articulates a tension being vocalized more frequently, not just by spectators and critics of Hollywood, but by insider-participants as well. At what point is it too much? The rise of environmental concerns in Hollywood is leading to a growing discourse about excess consumption and waste. This is another sub-topic of Hollywood that I hope to explore in the future, as I expect it to become of increasing importance. The amount of material waste generated by Hollywood events and productions is shocking. This is not surprising since Hollywood's image is one of lavish over-consumption; nevertheless, at times it was shocking. I benefited in useful ways though. For example, this penny-pinching anthropologist did not have to buy toilet paper for over six months, as I was given the "left-over product" (i.e., a six-month supply of toilet paper) used to outfit celebrity dressing rooms on a television shoot. Had I not taken it, this along with unused towels and travel-sized toiletries would have been thrown out.

Still, no matter how much I didn't need the contents, I never turned down a gift bag when exiting an event.[22] This was so even if I knew that it contained only a really

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[22] To conclude my story of S.W.A.G, after a while gift bags littered my small apartment, even after I'd used or given away as much of the contents as possible. One woman who I worked with

heavy magazine, a gift certificate for Lasik surgery (one eye), and a box of Altoids mints. Maybe the desire came from working long hours knowing that the compensation would be less than deserved when the check arrived. But more than anything, I think it had to do with having something in hand when I left. Walking away from an event or the closing night party of a job, I knew that this was something to take with me; it was evidence that I was a part of Hollywood for at least a moment. I was not alone in this feeling; as a co-worker and I left an Opening Night gala she remarked to me, "There is nothing in here that I need, or want probably, but it just seems wrong not to get one. Not to get something. Doesn't it?"

Hollywood Is Collective

This chapter has offered examples to support my contention that collective signifiers are present within and indicators of the Hollywood community. Coupled with "place" (Chapter Three), they serve to define and affirm Hollywood as a community. While the population of Hollywood is highly-mobile and shifting, and Hollywood itself is multi-dimensional, multi-sited, and more conceptual than concrete, there is evidence that it is a community. The "glue" that holds it together is a shared set of knowledge that is related to the industry of filmmaking, as well as the city of Los Angeles. The coded language described as Hollywood-speak indexes participation in Hollywood, as does a tacit understanding of appropriate and particular social codes. It is in these shared

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on two different film festivals confessed to having an entire closet devoted to storing the gift bags and S.W.A.G. she received. I didn't have this luxury and instead much of the S.W.A.G. I collected was given away. If you got a Christmas gift from me during fieldwork it was likely the content of a gift bag: film festival t-shirt, black stocking cap promoting an "indie" film, Starbucks sponsored CD, coasters from the Montana Film Commission, luggage tags from Idaho's tourism bureau, or a messenger bag courtesy of the State of Mississippi.

categories and expressions of knowledge, the collectivities discussed in this chapter, that Hollywood can claim to be a community.

To locate Hollywood one must look beyond a map of the landscape to identify shared understandings and tacit knowledge, shown here to be the use of Hollywood-speak, a common conceptualization of time, and a pervasive use of and expectations about material goods or S.W.A.G. Each of these cultural elements is recognized as "Hollywood" in particular and distinct ways. This recognition of marked speech or dress is only attained by being *in* Hollywood -- wherever that may be -- and amidst the Hollywood community. One learns much the way an anthropologist does, through an extended period of participant-observation, or observed participation.

Much of the knowledge that defines Hollywood is tacit because it is learned through doing and being. Attempts are made to "learn" Hollywood through how-to books and trade-specific training seminars, but these strategies are themselves marked as the tools of "outsiders" or the newly arrived. In a setting that is ambiguous and lacks clear, agreed-upon indicators to mark membership, the recognition of collective or shared knowledge becomes critical. While one may not know everything about Hollywood's history or the technical aspects of a filmmaking production, one reaches a point where it becomes possible to say, "That is Hollywood" with conviction. When one feels confident in saying this, then one knows she is on the right track.

In Chapter Two I addressed my need to work as a means of survival and to gain access to both places and people, this characteristic of working in Hollywood bears repeating. As I explained in the discussion of methods and, as is evidenced in many of the ethnographic examples this dissertation relies upon, I, the anthropologist, became a

participant in Hollywood through my position as a working member of The Industry. In anthropology it might be said that I "went native" and, aside from the fact that this claim tends to carry a negative association, I do not argue against the observation. From what I can tell, based on my experience and what little I have heard from others who have attempted similar, related, and complementary research in Hollywood, going native is par for the course when working "at home" (cf. Ortner 1995; Narayan 1997; di Leonardo 1998) and in particular when working in Hollywood (cf. David 2007).

As will be discussed in Chapter Five, the boundary (a term I use very lightly) of Hollywood is porous and shifting, but the fact remains that the distinction between "insiders" and "outsiders" is critical to the maintenance of Hollywood. Audiences populated with "outsiders" consume the products of Hollywood; "outsiders" are crucial to Hollywood's existence. The next chapter investigates the Hollywood border and suggests that it is transparent and porous while at the same time highly effective at creating a division between "insiders" and "outsiders."

CHAPTER 5: THE CO-CONSTRUCTION OF HOLLYWOOD, A PROBLEMATIC COMMUNITY

An Encounter in Cannes

The Cannes Film Festival takes place annually in May, in the south of France and, even if nothing out of the ordinary is going on, it is beautiful. When the "grandfather" of all film festivals is happening it is a spectacle not unlike Hollywood on Oscar Weekend. In 2003, I attended Cannes as a guest of the film ELEPHANT (Van Sant 2003), which I was following as part of my research. Mid-way through the twelve-day event, I was at a party honoring the films showcased by HBO Films at that year's festival. It had been a long evening, in the way that a meal in France can be, and the sun had set some hours before. The event was winding down and attendees had begun to wander down the wooden walkway, stretching out onto the adjacent beach where, once away from the lights, you could hear the Mediterranean Sea punctuated by neighboring revelries.

It was early in my fieldwork and I was still tentative in my role as "anthropologist," but despite this I approached a well-known and widely recognized Academy Award-winning actor. I introduced myself and explained my presence as an anthropologist following another film and generally interested in Hollywood. I began by posing the most basic question of my research as I envisioned it at that nascent stage: "Do you think Hollywood is a community?" It was in this exchange that I encountered one of the first problematizing responses to this deceptively simple yes/no question. His response to the question I posed was, "Sure Hollywood is a community…but not mine." Assuming I had misunderstood, I tried again, "You don't consider yourself part of the Hollywood community?" He laughed his way to an emphatic, "No." We continued in this

way, with me rephrasing my question and he continuing to distance himself from Hollywood—and after a short time, me as well. He maintained that as an individual of Australian origin it was impossible for him to be part of Hollywood. Hollywood, he explained, implied American, and he, for certain, was not that!

At the time this troubled me. How could an actor who was known by U. S. and international audiences alike, who received American accolades, and who was in France promoting an American film made by a company located in California and New York, claim such a distance from all-things-Hollywood? This was my first encounter with the view that Hollywood is inherently "American," – "[Hollywood] can be nothing but American" was this actor's conclusion. While I did not encounter anyone else who used national affiliation specifically to distance himself from belonging to Hollywood, it was common for individuals to distance themselves from the collectively agreed upon community of Hollywood. I had not considered until well into my data collection whether it was possible to have a community that "insiders" felt unconnected to or denied connection to, and at the same time "outsiders" committed time to keeping track of and participating in *as outsiders*. This encounter on the beach at Cannes was an early indicator that Hollywood, taken to be a community, is a problematic case to study.

Problematizing Hollywood as a Community

Just as it is difficult to define the location of Hollywood as an undisputed place, it is equally hard to identify the population that constitutes Hollywood. Hollywood itself, and its inter-contextual, adopted, and referential self, permeates everything. It seeps into popular culture, the formation of an "American" identity, geography, language, and our common base of knowledge. During the period of my data collection, and subsequently, I

am continually struck by how often I encounter "Hollywood," not just the industry associated with filmmaking, but the Hollywood of our collective imagination. References to Hollywood and allusions taken from the products of Hollywood are abundant, and in no way limited to media and texts relating to the film industry, or even relegated to popular culture.

There is a significant grey area when trying to locate the spatially-defined Hollywood (see Chapter Three) let alone a social border of Hollywood. In cases of geography and physical space, a line can be drawn or a fencepost placed to mark a border, but the placement is essentially arbitrary. Drawing a line to delimit a social border is equally constructed, subjective, and changeable. When considering something taken to be "real" and arguably constructed, I think of the U. S. census and the social categories of race; as guidelines change, so does the population that is defined (cf. Dominguez 1986).

I initially thought that the challenge was in defining the population that constitutes the Hollywood community. Exclusivity is an organizing principle in Hollywood, and in this one could assume that those with the most access and the most visible participation in The Industry are members. I did not prepare for the outcome that the most undisputed members of the population identified as "Hollywood" would reject this affiliation outright. As if this was not challenge enough, the same individuals who reject membership in the Hollywood community, affirm the existence of the Hollywood community. Is it possible to have a widely agreed upon community that is practiced in discursive exchange, instantiated in speech, and performed in expectations, that is effectively unpopulated?

"Yes…and No": If the Stars Aren't Hollywood, Then Who Is?

Since the start of this project I have flip-flopped and repositioned my argument regarding the answer to my most basic question, at times changing my position multiple times in a single day. As soon as I find myself saying with conviction that Hollywood *is* a community, I encounter someone who says, "Of course it is, but…" A challenge in evaluating Hollywood as a community is that even once guidelines for identifying a community are in place and reports that support Hollywood as a community are provided, a lingering doubt persists. This doubt is a challenge, and is inherent in the nature of Hollywood as an insecure (and mythic) environment.

There are two factors central to this internal conflict regarding Hollywood as a community. The first is problematic because of its contrary nature. In Hollywood, an indicator of membership is the denial of membership that indexes membership. It is a pattern that is similar to the denial of fame by the famous and the rejection of media attention in the context of an interview. There is a town in Northern California, Bolinas, with a population of less than 2,000 people. The way the story was told to me while traveling with informants on an impromptu road trip to "scout" locations for a future film project, is that the town has a legacy of being characterized as reclusive and intensely private. Inhabitants make a point of taking down all directional signs and identifying markers put up by the state or county. I think of Bolinas when I think of Hollywood's community. How do you discuss a place that the inhabitants deny exists?

The second factor that problematizes discussion of Hollywood as a community is a direct result of shifting positionality. In part this relativity results from a system in which status is not always based on concrete factors. Fame and celebrity are fleeting and

as an aspiring actress selling tickets at a film festival confided, “when you are getting parts you hate to jinx yourself by saying you are a working actress.” A moment that crystallized this phenomenon of position was in 2003, when actor Derek Luke won the Independent Spirit Award for Best Actor. As part of his acceptance speech he confessed, “four years ago I was waiting tables. Here. At the Spirit Awards.” And with that he literally jumped for joy.

Hollywood, like the contemporary concept of community, is complicated. Both are largely conceptual and simultaneously weighted down and elevated to unrealistic expectations as a result of the myriad associations and assumptions attached to each. Hollywood is a useful case-study for the shape, function, and challenges of contemporary American community because it casts dilemmas related to the community concept into relief. While a case can be made that Hollywood is a community, the data also reflect contrary information that cannot be ignored. It is common for someone to concur that Hollywood is a community, but also to assert that they personally do not affiliate with it, or some similar exception challenges their agreement. There is something interesting in this response. Either informants do not want to be affiliated with Hollywood or there is a disconnect between their awareness of community and their personal connection to it.

“Communities Should Feel Small”

I propose a possible explanation for this contrary finding. When a community becomes too large and/or too abstract, it is hard for individuals to negotiate their own affiliation. While there are more obvious in-group markers available to some, such as union or guild membership, this -- as a requirement for membership -- fails to account for

participants without formal representation or affiliation (arguably a large segment of Hollywood's population). While on jury duty I met a costumer, Marlene, who worked on a long-running television drama. Her response to my questions about whether or not Hollywood is a community was, "Yes, Hollywood is a community. But I guess it depends on what you mean by community…I work in Hollywood, but my community is really the show…not Hollywood…. I'm not sure what Hollywood means." When I encouraged Marlene to explain her sense of personal distance from Hollywood, she said, "It's not like you know everyone in Hollywood. You know the people you work with. That is really what I think you would call community." Scale is an important factor when it comes to perceptions of community. Regardless of how well we theorize community, the publicly circulating use and association of the term as referencing something "small" persists.

Thinking about how communities are organized is not so different from kinship studies in anthropology. One's view of his or her strongest connections is largely determined by positionality, and position in a setting that is primarily work-related has the potential to shift and change as time passes or as a direct result of any number of factors. Scale emerges as an important factor when it comes to perceptions of community. A pattern that emerged in talking to Industry participants is that the strongest affiliation with what one imagines as constitutive of a community is most often identified as a project-based group (e.g., a television show, a feature film, or an event). To a lesser extent informants identified a sense of affiliation with others in a common social role or job (e.g., Production Designers or Editors), but because of the competitive nature of The Industry, this varies among individuals. Informants also identified a company as their "community," especially if they held a consistent position with a specific company. I

suggest that this is consistent with other industries and work-based communities. Smaller groups, for example, a department within a film festival or the crew of a television show, were typically easier for informants to claim as communities. When a project-based group grows too big, internal associations begin to sub-divide into departments or some other small, more closely affiliated group. What might be called sub-communities emerge as the "communities" of personal connection, or the ones people claim to belong to, whereas Hollywood remains as the community to which no one claims belonging.

Hollywood is the basis for community—both "real" *and* imagined. In fact, Hollywood provides a base for multiple communities. I came to realize that while Hollywood, taken in its broadest sense, encompasses countless numbers of people, within each social role or specialization there is a much tighter network of participants who consistently work with, and around, each other. I do not see communities as being akin to cultures or sub-cultures, but I do envision larger communities encompassing smaller sub-communities. If we imagine communities as circles, then some are concentric– forming subsets akin to sub-cultures (Hebdige 1979) or micro-communities that are temporary and project based–and others may intersect in a Venn diagram. Because individuals can occupy multiple communities simultaneously, these conceptual arrangements are increasingly important because it gets more and more difficult to visualize what social organization looks like. As a child what constituted a "family" was an easy enough question, whereas today I have a hard time articulating the kinship relation that constitutes my own household. Communities, like "cultures," cannot be presumed to exist as isolated or discrete bubbles that float in a space that is disconnected from interactions. Rather, whether the bubbles are conceived to be communities or cultures they exist in a

finite space that forces them to bump into each other, sometimes joining to form bigger bubbles, and other times fragmenting into smaller units. It is possible for a bubble to form within another bubble, making the metaphor of a bubble an accurate and useful tool for visualizing communities in interaction.

A Shared View of Hollywood

I argue that Hollywood comes into being through a process of co-construction. It takes place in discourse, performance, and through the collective imagining of "insiders" and "outsiders" alike. The Hollywood community is actively performed at specific sites and events that ground the public imagination of Hollywood *and* Hollywood's imagining of itself. The performance of Hollywood spans a continuum from public spectacles (events) viewed by a "global" audience, to micro-level everyday interactions that communicate information and affirm connections among social actors in the "local" Hollywood community (Goffman 1959). The presentation of Hollywood as viewed by both "insiders" and "outsiders" reinforces the expectations of Hollywood by both. The experience of Hollywood as constructed via media and the collective imagining of a mythic Hollywood are essentially the same, and the best place I can think to explore this is at the most visible of Hollywood events: The Oscars.

The Oscars & the Co-Construction of Hollywood

Introducing Oscar: the History of "the Biggest Night in Hollywood"

Oscar is the name given to the golden statue that is the physical award bestowed upon members of the Hollywood community by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) at The Academy Awards Ceremony, held annually in "Hollywood" (see Figure 12 for example of a literally larger-than-life Oscar). The Oscar is the mark of

Figure 12: One of the extra-large Oscars waiting for his paint to dry before being placed on the stage of The Kodak Theatre (photo by Sarah Ono).

outstanding achievement in film. It began as an industry honor and now functions as a publicly recognized mark of a superior film or an exceptional performance. To the lay population of moviegoers, the Oscar is an indicator that a film is noteworthy, typically of a certain type (i.e., Oscar winning films tend to be dramas, often of the epic variety). As a result of this public recognition a greater number of people go to see films that win

Oscars. The award carries a high value for those who work in Hollywood as well as the general public who recognize the clout that accompanies this designation of being the "Best" in a given year.

The Oscars are iconic of Hollywood and a recognizable part of the continuous history of Hollywood as an American institution. Established in January 1927, by three-dozen of "the most influential men and women in the motion picture industry at the time," the Academy is an honorary membership organization whose ranks now include more than 6,000 artists and professionals (AMPAS 2008). The first Academy Awards ceremony was held on May 16, 1929, at the Roosevelt Hotel on Hollywood Boulevard. It was a comparatively small affair in which the 270 participants were invited to attend a black-tie dinner where fifteen golden statues were presented in a dozen categories.[23] Affirming the adage that, "The show must go on," the Academy Awards ceremony is an institution that has been sustained through the highs and lows of American history.[24]

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[23] The following year, the twelve categories were reduced to seven: two for acting and one each for Outstanding Picture, Directing, Writing, Cinematography and Art Direction. Since then, the number of awards has slowly increased.

[24] The Academy Awards failed to take place as scheduled only three times in its more than eighty-year history. First in 1938, when massive flooding in Los Angeles delayed the ceremony by a week and, in 1968, the ceremony was postponed for two days in April in observation of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral. The last time The Academy Awards ceremony was postponed was in 1981, because of the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. In 2003, U. S. forces invaded Iraq on the Thursday before the telecast, and the show went on as scheduled. That year, the Red Carpet was limited to the area immediately in front of the theater entrance, the Red Carpet bleachers were eliminated, and the majority of the world's press disinvited. The following year, the Red Carpet "was back in full force, with all its glamour and sizzle" (AMPAS 2008).

Everyone is Watching and We See the Expectation

Like most people, my first experience of The Oscars was watching the broadcast on television. Growing up, it was one of the rare occasions when I was allowed to eat dinner while watching television, signifying to me that it was an important event. The Oscars is broadcast live globally to 200 countries and has an estimated audience of 70 million viewers. The Super Bowl draws a larger number of viewers in the United States on average, but The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science (AMPAS) reports The Oscars telecast to be "the most-watched television show in the world annually," with people all over the world tuning in to watch the ceremony (seeing-stars.com, accessed February 2009). Each year as I sit down to watch The Oscars, I do so with an expectation of what I am going to see: past winners and current celebrities reading categories and a list of nominees, the opening of "the envelope" which holds the winner's name, acceptance speeches full of thank yous and names that circulate in the Hollywood community, musical numbers and film montages.

There are many expectations of Hollywood. Expectations are generated and engaged by both insiders and outsiders and expectations often dictate "reality" in Hollywood. In preparation for a lecture I gave in an introductory anthropology class at the University of Iowa, I polled students in two of the sections for which I was a teaching assistant at the time. Out of the eighteen students who completed the survey, all were able to describe what Hollywood looks like, even though only two claimed to have ever "been there." One person wrote, "I've been close enough to see the Hollywood sign, but I wouldn't say I've been there, just driven by." The most common associations given to describe Hollywood were: movies (n=11), wealth or money (n=12), movie

stars/celebrities/famous people (n=18). Following these were palm trees, sunshine, and the Hollywood sign. In response to the open-ended question "how do you know what Hollywood looks like?" one student wrote, "I'm from Missouri and everyone knows that Hollywood is in California. You don't have to go there to know what it looks like because you see it everywhere."

The publicly circulating expectations of an imagined Hollywood are often stronger than the quotidian experience of the actual place. For example, there is an expectation that the weather in Hollywood is always sunny. The process of unpacking this statement gives insight into how Hollywood itself has become a powerful fiction. Yes, sunny skies are a part of the literal image of Hollywood, especially when it is imagined as located in Los Angeles, California. This picture of Hollywood is reinforced and sustained by photographs circulated in the media and discourse about Southern California. *People* magazine does not show celebrities walking down Robertson Boulevard in the rain, nor do the Red Carpets look squishy and wet on the broadcast of The Oscars. In the movies, the sky over Los Angeles is blue and if it is raining, the assumption is that the rain is either fake or the production was actually shooting in Canada for this desired effect. The line between "real" and "Hollywood" is blurry when it comes to the statement: The weather in Hollywood is always sunny. External perception *is* internal perception, especially when I found that people agreed with the previous statement, even when it was actively raining in Hollywood. Sometimes the clichés are true regardless of what is actually happening.

Fans: The Watchers

> Hollywood knows that it is a sex symbol for the world and does its best to live up to the reputation.
>
> Hortense Powdermaker (1950: 237)

Fans, short for fanatics, are outspoken spectators who commit time, energy, and resources to following the objects of their adoration (cf. Barbas 2002; Schickel 2000). Fans offer a useful example of what I call "grey-area-populations" (GAP). GAPs are people who are *outside* of Hollywood, and I submit they are essential for the construction of Hollywood as a community. Fans and spectators, "the audience," are essential to Hollywood, not just as a foil, because without a population of watchers Hollywood would not exist. From an economic standpoint, the primary products of Hollywood rely on, and are determined by, the choices of viewers. If no one goes to a movie and no money is made, the production of movies will change. If there ceases to be public interest in the lives and wardrobes of celebrities, then the production of paparazzi-driven publications will change. This theory is yet to be tested, but feedback from audiences continually tests Hollywood productions. The Industry is highly responsive to the information offered by the public, whether in the form of test-screening evaluations or box office numbers.

The construction of Hollywood and the dynamics that sustain it are complex. The central idea in this chapter is that mediated exchange is essential to Hollywood. Hollywood, in its most mythic incarnation, is something that individuals use to define themselves *against*. As an abstract concept with lots of meanings attached to it, Hollywood is what a vast majority of people are not. The ratio of Hollywood ("insiders") to not-Hollywood ("outsiders") contributes to the perceptions, external and internal, that

the Hollywood community is limited, exclusive, and special. Hollywood is not available to everyone. If it were, it would cease to have the mythic caché. This is not to say that movies would cease to be made, The Industry may very well continue even if the Red Carpets and tabloid coverage were to vanish. Rather, if filmmaking were to have the same cultural capital as, say, auto manufacturing, the public perception of Hollywood would change, becoming something closer to Detroit than Xanadu.

Watching The Oscars

In the days leading up to The Oscars, "[t]he most important annual celebrity event in Show Biz" (Seeing-Stars 2007), the area around the Kodak Theatre complex is transformed into the ultimate iconic performance of Hollywood glamour and glitz. The block that is occupied by The Chinese Theatre, the Kodak Theatre, and the Hollywood & Highland complex becomes progressively more restricted in the weeks before the event. This transformation is a production that to uninvolved onlookers seems to take about a week to install. This perception is largely based on how long Hollywood Boulevard is closed to through-traffic, the first significant public disruption caused by the event. Bleachers are constructed to hold the 300 individuals who have been randomly selected to "attend" the Red Carpet arrivals and occupy the only semi-public "seats" available for the event. These bleacher-seats provide no access to the Awards ceremony itself or to the parties that follow the ceremony but, in the case of The Oscars, the Red Carpet portion of the "evening"—it is actually mid-afternoon on the West Coast when the event begins, so that it can be broadcast in primetime on the East Coast—is arguably the greater spectacle. One of the countless websites that contributes to the news as it relates to Hollywood takes

the position that, “The greatest excitement on Oscar night isn't found inside the luxurious Kodak Theatre but outside with the Stars walking down the Red Carpet” (eHow 2007).

Up until 2002, when The Oscars event was held at the Shrine Auditorium near the University of Southern California campus, hopeful spectators would annually camp out on neighboring sidewalks for days waiting for the first-come, first-served opportunity to gain access to the bleachers that line the famed Red Carpet. The move to the Kodak Theatre in 2002, ended this tradition. Reasons given for the change include that the area around the Hollywood & Highland complex is not conducive for this kind of “camp-out” and that security changed significantly following 9/11 in 2001. At this time the lottery system and assigned seating in the bleachers was introduced. The lucky 300-400 (accounts vary) people are randomly selected from a drawing typically held five or six months prior to the event. The competition to be among “Stargazers seeking an up-close glimpse of Hollywood’s royalty” is fierce (Associated Press 2008). Estimates claim that 20,000 people apply for the chance to occupy these coveted seats. And who can blame them? The Oscars are touted to be a moment when “the eyes of the world focus on Hollywood” and “virtually everyone who is anyone in Hollywood comes to the Academy Awards show” (Seeing-Stars 2008). In case you are not selected for this privileged perch, there is an endless supply of websites that offer tips on how to “see” The Oscars.

Watching the Watchers

The first time I was in Hollywood when The Oscars took place, I had nothing to do with the event. It was early in my research and, because I lived only a couple of blocks from the Kodak Theatre, I walked down to Hollywood Boulevard to see what there was

to see. Once Hollywood Boulevard is closed to traffic, the Red Carpet is laid in the street. The Carpet extends some 500 feet, from the entrance of the theatre to the corner of Hollywood and Highland where guests exit their cars (see Figure 13). Lining the 500 feet of Red Carpet annually are over 100 photographers representing both U.S. and international media outlets (see Figure 15), the bleachers are full of fans lucky enough to have been awarded access (in Figure 14 the "fan bleacher" is along the Red Carpet), micro-stages for the biggest broadcasters to interview the celebrities as they arrive, and a "set" dressed with shrubs, step-and-repeats with The Oscars' logo (moveable wooden walls that serve as a background for photographs), and 24-foot tall golden Oscar statues (see Figure 16). Looking down from above, a raised walkway stretches across Hollywood Boulevard, built to accommodate the growing number of cable channels that cover the event live (see Figure 17).

Figure 13: Multiple city blocks in all directions surrounding the site of The Oscars are closed to allow for the Red Carpet arrivals. Cars dropping off attendees line up for a process that takes hours (photo by Sarah Ono).

Figure 14: Hours before attendees are scheduled to arrive at The Oscars, the Red Carpet is already busy with media reporting on the preparations (photo by Sarah Ono).

Figure 15: Print photographers are grouped together in the hope of getting the best "shot" of celebrity attire (photo by Sarah Ono).

Figure 16: A two-story tall Oscar is installed at the entrance to the Kodak Theatre in preparation for the big event (photo by Sarah Ono).

Figure 17: The staging area for The Oscars' Red Carpet is set up on Hollywood Boulevard (photo by Sarah Ono).

Beyond the bleachers, the stanchions, the back-up of cars waiting to drop off attendees, and the opaque security tent everyone attending must pass through, the sidewalks are lined with spectators three or four rows deep (see Figure 19 and Figure 20 on page 182). Even armed with binoculars and telephoto lenses it is hard to see more than the flurry of activity and traffic that forms a perimeter around the event (see Figure 13 on page 174). Whether working on the carpet or two blocks away, the best indicator that someone famous has arrived is the collective scream that goes up from the crowd when they spot a recognizable face exiting a town car. In my experience working on the Red Carpet (see Chapter Two), it was most helpful to me in my task of identifying stars as they arrived if the crowd of spectators and photographers angling for shots called out the name of whoever has arrived, as seeing any single individual at a distance of more than five feet is almost impossible.

If the goal of fans is to see their favorite "stars," celebrities' objective in making the trip down the Red Carpet is to be seen. This is a celebrity's moment to perform membership in Hollywood and show that she is a part of the most high-profile event in The Industry. The audience is there to see the celebrity, and the celebrity needs to be seen by spectators who are present, as well as by those watching the telecast from afar. This is the mutuality that permeates an event such as The Oscars, where the interaction between the population performing Hollywood and the population of spectators co-constructs the mythic Hollywood in the collective imagination.

The Space Fulfills/Creates the Expectation

By the time I found my way to The Oscars as a member of the Talent Department, responsible for assisting one of three "talents" who were hosting the Official Red Carpet Arrivals Pre-Show Broadcast, the event was located at the Kodak Theatre at Hollywood and Highland, its home since 2002.[25] The space was designed with The Oscars in mind, and the goal of returning the premiere Hollywood event to what promotional materials for the Kodak Theatre refer to as "the geographic and destination Hollywood" (Kodak Theatre 2005). The "Kodak Theatre experience," according to the Theatre's website, begins on Hollywood Boulevard, where "a towering portal serves as the grand entrance to the theatre" (*ibid*.). There is a permanent two-story *Awards Walk*, lined with plaques for the Oscar-winning "Best Picture" from each year. This leads up a broad staircase "carpeted" with red mosaic tile, a permanent simulation of the Red Carpet that is emblematic of Hollywood and the Academy Awards' arrival procession. It is a grand entrance to what is effectively a shopping mall and tourist destination most days of the year.

This highly stylized presentation of Hollywood has several effects. When entering the Kodak Theatre's public outer area, the space itself underscores the majesty of Hollywood in the use of monumental stone columns, bright white and metallic tiled mosaics, and gold accents. The grand staircase is a popular place for visitors to stop and take pictures on the permanent "Red Carpet" that can be seen in the background of Figure

[25] A "talent" is the general term given to a celebrity, in this case ones who were hosting the Official Red Carpet Arrivals Pre-Show Broadcast.

18. The Hollywood and Highland complex that houses the Kodak Theatre is designed to accommodate shopping and spectating up until the day of an event.

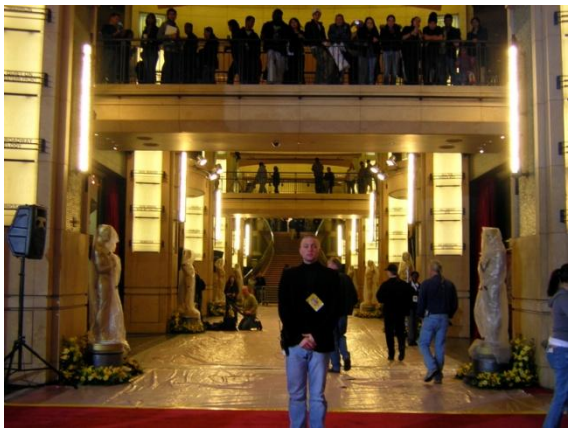

Figure 18: A co-worker stands at the entrance to the Kodak Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard as preparations for The Oscars attract the attention of visitors (photo by Sarah Ono).

The physical space reinforces the performance of Hollywood and the glamour of The Academy Awards, even when the event itself is not taking place. The notion generated by insiders and outsiders of a Hollywood fantasy that is accessible to everyone becomes accessible in this public space. The space itself is also understood to be the site of an exclusive and iconic Hollywood event. It is compelling that, at times, this is a highly restricted area. The rest of the year the space functions as a shopping mall, one of the most public and accessible spaces in American understandings.

Producing Hollywood: Working The Oscars

Working at The Oscars is unlike any other job in Hollywood, because it is *The Oscars*, an event where no amount of hyperbole can be considered excessive. Working The Oscars was, however, similar to other event production jobs I experienced. I point out the perceived significance because, if the mythic Hollywood is taken to be powerful, then The Oscars is the event where this power is performed by and for both insiders and outsiders after months of preparation. For participants it is a one-day event. It is a three-hour television broadcast for spectators. The influence, reverberation, and meaning of the event, however, reach farther and last longer than the ceremony or the high-profile parties that follow it. Winners of the Best Picture award are literally engraved on the pillars lining the grand staircase in the Hollywood and Highland complex. Almost immediately following the annual ceremony anticipation for the next year's Oscars begins. This event is unique in that it is a topic of Industry and popular discourse year-round. The Oscars shows how quickly attention can shift once the envelopes have revealed the winners.

Similar to filmmaking, the temporal events that enact Hollywood (movie premieres, film festivals, award ceremonies) require extensive crews; the production staff size is related to visibility and complexity of an event. Film festival staffs are large and supplemented by an even greater number of volunteers because of the number of events being produced simultaneously and over a period of consecutive days (see Chapter Three). Award shows are single day events, but demand huge crews because of the complexity involved in a live broadcast production. Staff at The Oscars is more rigorously regulated than at a film festival and volunteers are not distinguished from the

rest of the staff. Credentials in this setting are a non-negotiable requirement used to control access and limit movement *of* staff. The Oscars is also a unique event because, as was pointed out to me by a member of the pre-show production staff, "this is the best people working in TV putting on an event that is all about films."

The Oscars is the flagship event of Hollywood. For this reason the performance of Hollywood is even more formalized and "classic," demonstrated in the mandatory black tie wardrobe, even for people who never leave the trailer where they are working. Because this is the most widely viewed of Hollywood events, The Oscars is a significant site where the power in the spectacle exists. The interplay on The Oscar's Red Carpet is clearly bidirectional, as is the exchange of information about Hollywood. Not only is Hollywood being produced from the "inside" when The Oscars is staged as an event, but it is also (re)produced as a spectacle as a result of equally "scripted" viewer responses. For example, the crowds gather to watch (see Figure 19 and Figure 20) and do the things expected of observers (screaming, taking pictures, asking for autographs), in effect making the audience participants in Hollywood, arguably a part of the Hollywood community, even if only briefly and as a necessary foil for the celebrities.

Figure 19: Onlookers arrive early for the best view of cars arriving at The Oscars (photo by Sarah Ono).

Figure 20: Spectators crowd the streets near the intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue, hoping to catch a glimpse of the celebrity arrivals at The Oscars (photo by Sarah Ono).

Celebrities: The Watched

> Certainly no folk hero or god has ever been known so intimately by his admirers as are the movie stars. But of course none of the ancient gods had publicity departments.
>
> Hortense Powdermaker (1950: 249)

In Los Angeles it is common to cross paths with celebrity; the concentration of stars is greater here than in most other places in the country. I use "celebrity" as a way to talk generally about the category of individuals who are most likely to be recognized by total strangers or pursued by a flock of photographers. Although celebrities are not the focus of this research, celebrity is an irrefutable part of Hollywood. It is one of the most public elements of The Industry (cf. Dyer 1979; Gledhill 1991; Rojek 2001; Schickel 2000). Celebrity has been an aspect of Hollywood from its inception but, whereas "Hollywood" as it is conceptualized and mythologized endures, the faces of "celebrity" change. Celebrity is a rare state to attain and a difficult thing to maintain. This is not something that goes unrecognized by the select few who occupy the public's attention for their proverbial 15 minutes of fame. According to one of the actresses recognized at the 2006 Young Hollywood Awards, "celebrity is only good for two things: charity and getting a table at a restaurant." It is no wonder that the attention paid to the stars is bittersweet.

For the stars of Hollywood, visibility or "being seen" is an identifiable objective, even if it is discursively contested when celebrities pretend to "blend in." When I conducted my Master's research in Hollywood, I recorded encounters with individuals negotiating their personal visibility. In one instance a woman arrived for dinner at an expensive restaurant in West Hollywood wearing cut-off jeans and a halter-top, with flip-

flops and sunglasses. The murmur that circulated was audible, and it was not because she was inappropriately attired for the setting, but instead it was her explicit violation of expected dress code that implied she was someone famous. The murmur was speculation about who she was.

While I was unable to ask this actress directly what her objective was when she selected her outfit, I did confer with one of my companions who is also an actor. He surmised that, of course, she knew what she was doing. While it is common for celebrities to claim to want to blend in, they are aware of their visibility always being observed, and they want to be noticed. For the highly visible, there is a tension around being noticed. Most commonly this is a "problem" of actors, since theirs is the social role most publicly recognized. It is rare that a cinematographer is stopped on the street for a picture. Although not impossible, especially in Los Angeles, it's about as rare as being stopped for a photo op because you are an anthropologist.

The tension lies amidst an internal conflict for celebrities. On the one hand, being recognized–being visible–is regarded as a compromise of one's privacy. In recent years the publicly stated wish for privacy has been coupled with concerns for safety, as paparazzi pursuit of celebrities may lead to car accidents, physical confrontations and, in the extreme and widely publicized case of Princess Diana, death. On the other hand, there is often the *expectation* of being recognized, and to then *not* be recognized can be a blow to already fragile egos. As in all things, there are exceptions. It makes a difference whether or not celebrities choose to go to sites marked as "Hollywood." There are restaurants and coffee shops where you can anticipate "spotting" someone notable – a "celebrity sighting" – and then there is the everywhere else in the city. In regard to a

young actress's complaint of harassment by photographers, an Industry writer I was interviewing put it this way: "If you don't want to be mobbed then don't go to The Ivy *every* day. There are lots of famous people who have figured this out."

While I agree with this writer's point, I find that celebrity is a difficult thing to really understand and maybe the reticence of some celebrities to embrace their fame is related to the tendency of Industry professionals to distance themselves from "Hollywood." I argue that Hollywood does not spontaneously or organically emerge. Instead it is carefully crafted and highly attuned to its own construction, much like celebrity. Both Hollywood and celebrity are orchestrated, through the production of events such as The Oscars and film festivals, to achieve a desired effect whether it is promotion of a product or an individual. In spite of this deliberate effort, Hollywood is beyond the control of any single individual. In this there is a lack of direct connection between the practice of the Hollywood community and *Hollywood* as it is imagined.

Making Hollywood: A Pattern Of Co-Construction

An Assumption of Boundaries

Watching The Oscars, as well as being watched at The Oscars, reinforces the popular expectation of Hollywood that access is restricted to "insiders." The areas for people attending the event and the areas where the public can observe the event from a distance are clearly defined and oppositional. The public or "outsiders" are literally restricted to a space behind a chain-link fence or police barriers. In the popular imagination Hollywood embodies an exclusivity constructed and reinforced in the form of areas designated for "VIPs" and spaces not perceived to be public. For example, access

in (and to) Hollywood is regulated through the implementation of Red Carpets, velvet ropes, credentials, security guards and stoic doormen that constitute the widely recognized semiotics of boundaries. Even if these boundaries are not difficult to transgress, the "outsider" perception is that they are, or that they should be. Driving by a club in Hollywood I often saw a line of people outside waiting to be allowed to enter. This image of restricted access is intimidating because it communicates to the observer that there is a possibility of being excluded. The tension was described to me as follows, "The problem is in the expectation. You think you should be allowed in, right up until the moment when you are denied."

Regulated boundaries contradict a popular assumption that Hollywood holds the possibility for *any* individual to "make it." Fueled by stories of actresses discovered at lunch counters as in the case of Lana Turner, or a young man from Iowa ending up as an "A-List" celebrity after being "discovered" at a Midwestern mall (actor Ashton Kutcher), the belief persists that Hollywood is a closed-door community --- with lots of keys to be found. The possibility of "making it" in Hollywood is collectively imagined and discursively constructed every time one of these "success stories" is (re)told as part of an *E! True Hollywood Story*. The function of boundaries, in relation to Hollywood, provides the *something* to be overcome in the "making it."

Boundaries separate those who are "in" and those who are not. These boundaries are not fixed or static, they can change on a whim. There was a club on Sunset Boulevard near my apartment in Hollywood that was known for this kind of unreliable access. A friend once refused to meet me there on the grounds that "there is no guarantee I'll be able to get in. I was there for a birthday party and I thought it was cool. Then the next

time I went I couldn't even get up the stairs [leading to the entrance]. I hate that." In my role as an anthropologist this kind of inconsistency made it difficult to know whether or not I'd be able to get into events, even if I was "invited" by a participant in my research. There is a practice of being "put on the list" as a way to gain access to restricted spaces or events, but it is not a fail-proof system. On the way to a film festival party that was privately hosted, a co-worker opted to go home instead, saying "I'd rather not go, than try to get in and get turned away because [film producer] forgot to put me on the list." I did not consider myself an "insider" in Hollywood and as a result I did not assume access to restricted spaces unless I was working or had a "hard invitation" to an event in hand. In the words of model and television host, Heidi Klum, "One day you are in, and the next day you are out."

Insiders & Outsiders: Hollywood Needs Them Both

M. M. Bakhtin could have been talking about Hollywood when he described the importance of the response in verbal exchanges. He wrote, "primacy belongs to the response, as the activating principle: it creates the ground for understanding…understanding comes to fruition only in the response" (1981[1934]:282). Hollywood is a responsive environment. I say that Hollywood is a responsive environment because the producers of The Industry's primary products -- film and television programming – actively seek to respond to economic feedback (e.g., opening weekend box office numbers, formulaic sequels based on how much money predecessors made, etc.). When there is deviation from the Industry expectation, Hollywood takes notice. Author Peter Bart (1999a), writes about the summer of 1998, in which the studios

produced summer blockbusters that failed to do as well as the lesser-known and less-expensive-to-make "indies" as an example of such deviation.

The construction of Hollywood and the consumption of The Industry's products is not unidirectional. Hollywood "insiders" watch the same movies and television shows, read the same magazines, and follow celebrity gossip just as "outsiders" living in Midwestern states do. Hollywood "insiders" and "outsiders" consume and respond to the same products. Hollywood as an industry is responsive to both groups. Put another way, Hollywood responds to itself. It uses the same modes of evaluation as the public. For example, following The Oscars telecast, the evaluation of the show (e.g., too long, good opening sequence, too many musical numbers, etc.) is the same whether generated in production trailers, at *Vanity Fair's* Oscar Party, in living rooms, or around non-Industry water coolers.

A co-construction of belonging generates a collectively imagined Hollywood. This joint conceptualization constantly affirms the traits and elements that belong to Hollywood as well as who belongs. Those who see themselves as part of The Industry, as well as those who regard their position as decidedly *not* part of Hollywood, as seen in the conversation at Cannes that began this chapter, define themselves in relation to the mythic conceptualization of Hollywood. If communities define themselves based on what is shared or held to be common among members, then in doing so the community also defines itself by what it is not. My position is that Hollywood would cease to exist as anything aside from a historic icon, without both "insiders" and "outsiders." There is no spectacle if no one is watching and nothing to watch without performance.

Wanting a Piece of Hollywood

Hollywood, like language, is in a state of constant negotiation and renegotiation. It is also something entirely unto itself. Unique as an industry in a business context it is problematic as a community, as this chapter shows. The products of Hollywood are globally recognized and influential American exports. I have shown things in the previous chapters that create a shared understanding and demonstrate collectivity among "insiders," and how Hollywood relies upon the involvement of "outsiders." Hollywood poses challenges to the notion of community, even as its existence is posited. It is possible that "the Hollywood community" is an entity as mythic and largely conceptual as "Hollywood" itself.

I am not surprised that Powdermaker (1950) experienced Hollywood as unique from her other fieldsites, and I empathize with her struggle to fit Hollywood into an anthropological framework in the 1940s (cf. Powdermaker 1966). As we enter this new millennium, the potential for new anthropological frameworks to emerge is being realized and I expect that we will find these by wrestling with "fields" that are similar to Hollywood; problematic fieldsites may raise more questions than they successfully answer. A moment recorded in my fieldnotes expresses the power of Hollywood even when faced with the reality of the myth up close. This is not a glamorous Oscars moment, but it is a moment that stuck with me and that I repeatedly return to in my thinking about "Hollywood." The moment demonstrates that even those who gain access to "the inside" and are close enough to see that the Red Carpet isn't truly red, still respond to the power of Hollywood by wanting proof that they were "there."

Fieldnotes: Sunday, February 25, 2007, Hollywood

At The Oscars, the carpet is really maroon. It looks red on television, but it's not.

I spent a lot of time looking at the Red Carpet today—the day of The Oscars. It was hard not to. I found myself amid a sea of "red" and a great amount of attention went towards keeping it pristine. Covered in plastic sheets for as long as possible to prevent it looking like it was ever walked on before this moment. If any scrap of construction material were left in the wake of foot-traffic and set assembly, at least a half-dozen people would notice and the debris would not last long [before someone took it as a souvenir].

I was not the only one who was paying attention to the literal Red Carpet. Throughout the day different people would come up to this piece of carpet scrap draped on the edge of a planter that helped define the area I had staked out for myself between a giant golden Oscar statue, a shrub, and a cameraman. These weren't people I knew, they weren't people from my department, and I could only assume that they should be on the carpet to begin with based on their visible credentials. There was a pattern to our interaction. First, someone would approach the piece of carpet and just touch it–casually. Then if eye contact was made–and I made sure it was–they would indirectly ask if I knew whether or not it was being used for anything. It was not my carpet remnant to give away and so each time a person walked away empty handed. [My co-worker and I] *would acknowledge that the asking for a scrap of carpet is typically odd, and in some cases* [we would] *laugh, roll our eyes, or just smile knowingly to each other.*

I thought about this series of exchanges and the speculation as to what one might do with a piece of maroon carpet remnant once the night was over and Hollywood

Boulevard returned to its everyday self. Would they frame it, put it in a box, sell it on eBay. I asked one woman what she thought people might do with it and she said, "I don't know, but it is a piece of history."

I kept my eye on this piece of carpet all morning. When I came back from lunch, the carpet was gone.

What If Hollywood is a Community No One is "In"?

It is in the complex interaction between those who strive to steal the literal Red Carpet and those who walk the Red Carpets of myth at The Oscars, where the tension that sustains Hollywood as an elusive and enigmatic entity resides. The prestige of Hollywood is so close you can touch pieces of it (as in the story involving the carpet) and yet far enough out of reach to maintain the feeling of something mythic (you are not allowed to attend the actual show). For those who work on the Carpet, it is a liminal space that locates one on the "inside" but with limited mobility and access. You are there, but not there; you are a part of the event, but only to a point. This, like many things I encountered during the course of research, is what constitutes "belonging." But, in Hollywood, "belonging" consists of a series of relative degrees; you…

… are at the event, but in the stands as a spectator, not on the carpet;

… are on the carpet, but not "all access";

… have access, but not an invitation to the party;

… can get into the party, but are alone with no one to talk to while you are there.

Nothing can feel more lonely than getting into a space you sought and finding that it is not all you imagined it to be. The frustration one experiences in response to this shifting

sense of belonging is related to this ongoing sense of "getting close," but not close enough to ever feel justified in claiming to be a member of the Hollywood "community."[26]

There is a paradox of Hollywood; Hollywood is a community, which "insiders" and "outsiders" both say exists, but surprisingly few claim membership in it without reservation. With every step closer to the mythic presumption of membership in Hollywood, with greater and greater access into the perceived "inner-circles," another door, or barrier, or velvet rope presents itself. The more one invests in being included or gaining access, the greater the frustration one experiences when the proverbial carrot of "belonging" seems to always be just out of reach.

Even within the Hollywood of "insiders," there is a blurry line that forever maintains the *mythic* Hollywood from a Hollywood that is populated with those who express membership. One of my early guides in Hollywood tried to explain this to me on more than one occasion. "Basically it comes down to this: no matter how famous someone is, how much money or power they have, he is still insecure. Even the most arrogant loud-mouth [person] calling the shots still thinks there is someone out there with more than him…That's why no one in Hollywood is ever really happy." The imagined Hollywood may manifest itself as an event such as The Oscars, with an historic link to the romanticized Hollywood of the past. The mythic Hollywood is critically linked to the publicly circulating discourse of images that represents Hollywood on the pages of publications such as *US Weekly* or *Vanity Fair*. Even the social actors who are very much

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[26] While the Middle East is a very different setting, anthropologist Virginia Dominguez, presents a review article of six books that all take a related, but still distinct, angle on the dynamics of complex identity (Dominguez 2008).

a part of the working Industry, whether as cinematographers or background talent, engage these public images of "Hollywood." I liken the encounter with the mythic Hollywood to being at an event and having your picture taken next to someone "famous"; you are in the media's shot, but cropped out of the photograph that goes to print. You are there, but effectively, not there in the public perception. It is a strange and difficult position to be there and not be there at the same time.

As an anthropologist I could tell myself that the goal was never to be *a part of* Hollywood. But in my exposure to working in the Industry and listening to the personal stories of others, I have come to understand the emotional highs and lows that accompany being allowed *in* and then at the same time kept *out* as a result of changing circumstance and shifting positionality. The fact that the boundaries are blurry does nothing to ease the sting of being reminded that you are on the wrong side of the velvet rope, nor does it clarify at what point one has "made it" into Hollywood.

There is the Groucho Marx story about his not wanting to be a member of any club that would have him as a member. This is quintessential Hollywood-type logic. I began this chapter with an anecdote of an encounter at Cannes. It illustrates that insiders resist being identified with the inside. For individuals who are arguably most obviously a part of the Hollywood community, one way that this status is demonstrated is in the denial of belonging. It is ironic that being an "insider" allows one to distance himself or herself from the belonging desired by so many. It is a mean irony fitting to a "place" so often characterized as having no "there" there.

As confounding as this research was at times, being there, at The Oscars, renewed my love of this project and my fondness for Hollywood. The old and new are held

together by the threads of tradition and idealism, of glamour incarnate, all reinforced through a collective belief in The Dream Factory. I was as "in" as I ever hoped to be when I set about doing this research. I could also appreciate Hollywood for what it is -- a social construct that has the power to generate a palpable energy and excitement anywhere on the planet. The Oscars are emblematic of Hollywood, representative of its elaborate process and prodigious scale. When else do you need 8,000 people to produce a three-hour television special that is just about films? At The Oscars people really do yell themselves hoarse and the air really does sparkle. Hollywood is a problematic community as much as it is a problematic place. But for a moment even a tired anthropologist can believe in the magic of Hollywood.

CHAPTER 6: DIRECTOR'S CUT

The Hollywood term "Director's Cut" is interesting because its meaning has changed over time. This is not a unique occurrence, as the nature of language is to evolve and change through use and as needed to accommodate new developments. In contemporary usage, a Director's Cut is an alternative version of a film than what gets released to theaters. It is presumed to be the film the way the director envisioned it, as opposed to the film that is modified through the collaborative and often corporatized process of audience testing and studio editing in response to marketing strategies or the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) rating guidelines. It is hard to say whether or not this is always the case since reissuing a "director's cut" along with the DVD release is also used as a marketing tool to offer something "new" and encourage consumers to buy something that may have already seen. Director's Cut versions of films are now available to viewing publics with the introduction and expansion of DVDs offering bonus features such as outtakes, behind-the-scenes "looks," and with increasing frequency, an alternative version of a film, that is typically longer. This longer version is generally called the Director's Cut.[27]

The term "cut" refers to the process of film editing as well as an edited version of a film. A film may go through several versions before being released for public viewing. A "rough cut" refers to an early edit or a "rough draft" version of a film, to use metaphor from writing. "Final cut" is the authority to ultimately make a final decision. "This means that the director ultimately has the say in what is shown in cinemas. However, even if the

[27] Typically this term refers to a film, and less often TV series, music video, commercials, comic book or video games.

director thinks they have final cut, a studio may still decide to cut down the film or to add certain scenes" (Wisegeek 2009). Who gets final cut is often a point of negotiation between parties involved in making a film, along with who gets what profits (if there are any) and who "owns" the rights to a finished product. A self-proclaimed "independent filmmaker" who I asked about the decision-making process a film goes through had this to say: "Unless you are paying for it yourself and distributing it yourself, you can't expect to actually end up with the final cut you want."

As defined on wisegeek.com, "The director's cut is supposedly the version that the filmmaker thinks is the most true to the film he or she intended to make" (Wisegeek 2009). There is also another possible meaning. "Traditionally, the 'director's cut' is not, by definition, the director's ideal or preferred cut" (Wikipedia 2009). According to the *Origin of the Phrase* provided on Wikipedia, the director's cut may include unsatisfactory takes, a preliminary soundtrack, or lack footage desired by the director. In other words, it can also refer to a version that the director would *not* like to be shown. I chose this term as the title for the final chapter because it leaves room for interpretation, as well as possibility.

In the past, film had to be edited by hand, a labor-intensive process of cutting and splicing celluloid. Advancements in technology now allow for editing to be done digitally using computers. This means that more changes can be made and multiple versions preserved through a process that is faster and less costly. Some film festivals have begun to include in their programming a version of a film that is still considered a rough cut or only partially cut. For example, the 2003 AFI Fest in Hollywood featured a program billed as "a conversation" with director Anthony Minghella and twenty minutes of

footage from the yet to be released and much anticipated film COLD MOUNTAIN (Minghella 2003). In this case the program offered what amounted to more than a trailer: a collection of decontextualized scenes that were still in the editing process. The editing that takes place in post-production is as significant in determining the end product as the actual shooting of scenes. Sometimes a film will undergo additional editing before being released for a wider audience after it has been screened at a film festival and, then again after being purchased by a studio. This process may be related to market-testing when a version of a film is screened for a volunteer audience. Revisions are then made based on how the audience rates aspects of the version they watch and audience response that is observed by marketers.

Making a film, like writing, is a process. It can change. The work produced by a director or a writer can evolve as vision develops, skills become more refined, or as a result of external influences. It is for this reason that "Director's Cut" seems a fitting title for the final chapter of a dissertation. Like a film, this text is the product of a collaboration among multiple people, each with distinct and varied expectations and hopes for the eventual outcome. I also know that, like Hollywood itself, anything written about The Industry will change over time as a result of new technologies, the latest "buzz," socio-political or economic influences, and trends, whether local or global. Just as the idea of "Hollywood" -- whether used to reference an industry, an institution, or a myth -- has proven its staying-power over time, so has the idea of community. Both concepts may prove to be intangible, and their specific characteristics may remain up for debate among scholars, but I am counting on both to remain in public discourse and popular imagination for a long time to come.

In recent reading I encountered an anthropologist, James Young, who was researching a controversial medical condition. The author made the claim that the job of the anthropologist-ethnographer is not to deny the reality of the subject of study, but to explain how "the condition" is *made real*, "to describe the mechanisms through which these phenomena penetrate people's life worlds" (Young 1995:5-6). "Hollywood," like a medical condition, is a moving target, subject to shifting definition and evolving use by affiliated professionals as well as the public. Similar to a medical condition, the specifics of how individuals understand, relate to, and experience Hollywood is at least partly subjective, fluid, and highly variable. Positionality is a key factor in how any given individual "knows" Hollywood.

I appreciate Young's insight because it reminded me that it has not been my task to prove Hollywood exists or to definitively say whether it is or is not a community. My task was to spend time there -- even if there is no *definitive* "there" there. I sought to observe and question members of the population that make up Hollywood, whether self-defined as members or well-known, with their membership asserted by the media. My task became working in Hollywood as a means to access physical spaces, industry-specific knowledge, and the people who do the work that sustains Hollywood. My task, as I defined it early on in the research, was to collect as much data as possible, in as many forms, and from as many sources as I could access. Hollywood is a massive, ever-expanding industry and an enormous conceptual construct.

In addition to conducting the research on which this dissertation is based, my task has been to try and make sense of the data -- of aspects, traits, speech, and behaviors that define Hollywood -- in ways that I view as useful in explaining how Hollywood is "made

real." I tasked myself with "locating" Hollywood in a discussion that sought to capture the invisible complexity of a map that is both literal and imagined: A "place" made up of social networks, economic networks, and historical connections to a literal landscape. I chose the examples that index Hollywood, in particular for "insiders": Hollywood-speak, time as it is perceived in the setting of Hollywood, and the material culture that is S.W.A.G. Finally, I theorized that people in different subject positions perceive Hollywood as a community. This community is defined by work and co-constructed through a dynamic of insider-outsider interaction. I am the first to say that there is more work to be done in this area. The possibilities for future research related to both Hollywood and American understanding of "community" are limitless and there is still much to be learned from this unique cultural construct.

APPENDIX A: FILMS AND TELEVISION PROGRAMS REFERENCED*

Access Hollywood (Lewis 1996-)

ARMAGGEDON (Bay 1998)

The Beverly Hillbillies (Henning 1962-1971)

BEVERLY HILLS COP (Brest 1984)

BITTER MELONS (Marshall 1971)

BLAZING SADDLES (Brooks 1974)

BLUE VELVET (Lynch 1986)

BORN INTO BROTHELS (Briski and Kauffman 2004)

COLD MOUNTAIN (Minghella 2003)

E! True Hollywood Story (1996-2009)

ELEPHANT (Van Sant 2003)

ERASERHEAD (Lynch 1977)

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT (Lin 2006)

The Fresh Prince of Bel Air (Borowitz 1990-1996)

GOOD WILL HUNTING (Van Sant 1997)

The Hills (DiVello 2006-2009)

INLAND EMPIRE (Lynch 2006)

Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List (Blaine 2005-2009)

LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA (Eastwood 2006)

Lost (Abrams 2004-2010)

MILK (Van Sant 2008)

NAPOLEON DYNAMITE (Hess 2004)

THE PLAYER (Altman1992).

SUPER SIZE ME (Spurlock 2004)

THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE (Huston 1948)

Twin Peaks (Lynch 1990-1991)

WHAT JUST HAPPENED? (Levinson 2008)

* Films are in ALL CAPITALS and television program titles are in *italics*.

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