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particularly of the decade of the 1960's, is the question of identity: the problem of trying to put together a perceived sense of psychological wholeness, of finding answers to questions like who am I?, what can I be and do?, and where do I fit in with some larger scheme of things?

The work and writing of noted psychologist Erik Erikson pioneered and popularized the problem of identity crisis in our country as a post-World War II phenomenon, a pathology of such significance that, to Erikson and many others, it has displaced the Victorian concern with Freudian sexuality to become the resident obsession not only of American society but perhaps the world over. Anthropologist Margaret Mead argues, for example, that youthful turmoil—reflective of a groping for or realignment of identity, either on a personal or collective level—is a universal phenomenon without historical precedent. A cursory glance at what is being talked about, written about, and studied—at "what is happening now"—reveals an almost endless list of persons, groups, organizations, subgroups and subcultures, coalesced around practically every conceivable kind of ethnic, economic, genetic, political, social, or geographic norm. Added to the list are discontented youth who, in the last decade or so, have visibly and often turbulently demonstrated an ambiguous, insufficient, or unacceptable sense of identity, a feeling of being cheated out of something vaguely believed to be rightfully or lawfully theirs.
3) encouragement of role flexibility
4) meaningful occupational opportunities
5) sensible sexual mores
6) consistency between professed principle and actual behavior

The lack of some such coherent ideological system leads to a sense of disgust and despair, the former often functioning as a smoke-screen for the latter. The adolescent whose own resources are insufficient to resolve a confusing array of ideological messages often becomes bitter toward particular people and institutions, a bitterness which, when not moderated by some hope in a better life, often mirrors the contempt he has for himself.

**Severe Identity Confusion**

The young person unable to define himself during adolescence may react in a number of ways. He may choose to go it alone to solve his problems or he may decide to journey with others to search together for solutions to identity pressures. He may feel that the conflicts facing him and the world are insoluble and drop out of the system. His moratorium may result in catatonic immobility or it may be characterized by passionate commitments to charismatic leaders or utopian causes which appear to have the right kind of answers. At the extremes, he may feel totally alienated or wholly a part of some kind of universal entity. Any combination of behaviors may be employed to further
his mood, attitudes, or beliefs.

In terms of his epigenetic construction of identity, Erikson approaches identity dislocations from several points of view: biographic, genetic, societal, and pathographic. For purposes of this study, we are nominating the latter as the most suitable and insightful way to view the chronic and extreme forms of estrangement of motorcycle gangs as portrayed in the films studied.

Erikson labels the pathographic pattern "severe identity confusion," and it encompasses a number of conflicts contained in the categories in the epigenetic identity model in Figure 5. Severe identity confusion appears when a young person is faced with the arduous task of resolving a number of pressing conflicts which manifest themselves simultaneously. The adolescent's inability to solve temporal discontinuities, when coupled with a corresponding failure to settle upon a meaningful career and enter into intimate relationships, often precipitates a kind of moratorium which allows him to avoid any and all commitments and adult responsibilities.

A state of acute identity confusion usually becomes manifest at a time when the young individual finds himself exposed to a combination of experiences which demand his simultaneous commitment to physical intimacy (not by any means always overtly sexual), to decisive occupational choice, to energetic competition, and to psychosocial self-definition...The social function of the state of paralysis which ensues is that of maintaining a state of minimal actual choice and commitment.39

The young person in such a quandry, who mistrusts
time to the extent that he feels drained of all useful potentials or somehow cheated out of them, demonstrates an almost total incapacity for mutuality or industriousness. Uncertain of his own identity and suspicious of others, he fears that fusion with another—indeed, any engagement or involvement—will amount to identity loss. The operative disposition for such an isolated individual Erikson calls "distantiation," the counterpart of intimacy: "the readiness to repudiate, ignore, or destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to one's own."40

Regarding the dislocations of industry, the severely disturbed young person cannot find a place in the economic structure of society. Consequently, he will not be able to derive those inner, ego satisfactions that result from the pursuit of tangible, socially useful, work goals. His diffused sense of industry tends to manifest itself either in his inability to concentrate or apply himself to tasks or in self-destructive preoccupation with one-sided activities.

As recourse to such a dilemma, the individual will frequently reject all the roles and goals sanctioned by his family, community, and/or society. Instead of striving where he cannot hope to succeed, he chooses a "negative identity," "an identity perversely based on all those identifications and roles which, at critical stages of development, had been presented...as most undesirable or
dangerous and yet also most real." 41

The choice of a negative identity is dictated by the necessity of finding and defending a place of one's own against those excessive ideals and expectations demanded by others. It is an attempt to regain mastery in an otherwise hopeless situation: it is easier for the frustrated young person to derive a sense of identity through total identification with that which he is least supposed to be than to struggle for success in acceptable roles which are unattainable. The adolescent who chooses a negative identity in the face of persistent conflicts and failure is saying that he "would rather be nobody or somebody totally bad or, indeed, dead—and this by free choice—than be not-quite-somebody." 42


8 Dinitz et al., *Deviance*, p. 3.

9 *ibid*.

10 ibid., pp. 8-9.

11 ibid., p. 13.


13 Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, p. 65.

14 ibid., p. 66.

16. Ibid., p. 93.
18. Ibid., p. 270.
20. Ibid., p. 271.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p. 251.
26. Ibid., p. 122.
27. Ibid., p. 124.
30. Ibid., p. 115.
31. Ibid., p. 105.
34. Ibid., p. 22.
35. Ibid., p. 23.
36. Ibid., p. 94.
37. Ibid., p. 157.
38. Ibid., pp. 187-188.
40 ibid., p. 168.
41 ibid., p. 174.
42 ibid., p. 176.
CHAPTER III
EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Sampling and Screening Procedure

The method used to collect data from the motion picture sample consisted of three phases:

1. Preparation of an identity grid for content analysis (see Figure 6).

2. Utilization of the Steenbeck Viewing facility at the Library of Congress as the technical means allowing for item analysis.

3. Interviewing production personnel in Hollywood who function as "gatekeepers" in regard to the making of some of the films (See Chapter IV and Appendix).

The construction of the grid followed a selected review and analysis of other content analyses of motion pictures. Some of these studies, cited in the Bibliography, include: Edgar Dale's study for the Payne Fund, Content of Motion Pictures; Wolfenstein and Leites' Movies: A Psychological Study; Dorothy Jones' Quantitative Analysis of Motion Picture Content; and Siegfried Kracauer's From Caligari to Hitler and "The Challenge of Qualitative Analysis."

A review of these studies puts into perspective some
of the fundamental theories and objectives, strengths and weaknesses, of quantitative and qualitative approaches to motion picture analysis.

Where this study and others like it depart, is in the chronology of recording and interpreting data. Data were recorded on the grid during the viewing of the films, not afterwards, and they were not subjected to statistical analysis after viewing. As the planning and actual research progressed, the writer became more and more aware that the material was not quantifiable, or rather that the attempted approach to the films strongly suggested refinement of what began as a strictly quantitative study.

This awareness was precipitated by the sampling procedure and the technology for viewing the film. The sampling procedure used here was not random, but rather highly selective, because specific inquiries were directed toward a specific type and group of film. Random samples, strictly speaking, are not totally non-selective; there must always be some kind of criteria, however general, which determine things like where, what, and how the random selection is to be taken. In this study, the criteria used to get at the portrayal of themes and configurations of identity crisis in motion pictures precluded random sampling. Consequently, many of the usual quantifiable variables such as age, sex,
occupation, place, time, were unimportant because of lack of variance. Because these variables remained relatively constant across the categories of dramatic films dealing with adolescent types during the 1960's, the aspects of content—the style, treatment, and pattern of identity crisis—emerged as the most relevant components of the films.

The impact of the technology was significant, perhaps revolutionary. The Steenbeck Viewing Machine allows scene-by-scene, even shot-to-shot and frame-to-frame analysis of film content, a much smaller unit of measurement rarely utilized in film studies.

The most intriguing feature of the Steenbeck is its speed control: stop-start, forward-reverse, slow-forward, slow-reverse and single-frame capability. After some experimentation with this equipment the identity grid was designed to capitalize upon these features: the scene/sequence emerged as the basic unit of measurement. The actual mechanics of the marking procedure will be discussed shortly, but in terms of the effect upon handling data, the atomization of the films into small units did not appreciably clarify manifest content, aspects of films which usually comprise quantitative schedules and which are marked after uninterrupted viewing.
The subject of this study is the way in which the American theatrical film industry ("Hollywood") has portrayed the issue of this identity crisis in the decade, 1960-1969. Certain general guidelines have been employed to limit what would otherwise be an enormous undertaking beyond the author's allowable resources of time and money. All of the films selected for analysis are theatrical or feature films made in the 1960's about the 1960's and are dramatic fiction films whose specific focus is on young people, not because young people have a monopoly in this area, but because conditions in our society seem to prolong and aggravate identity problems of our country's youth in special ways. Moreover, the films which will receive primary emphasis comprise, as a group, part of the motorcycle, or "Wheeler", genre of films. The reasons for this selection and narrowing will be made apparent in Chapter I. However, the reader should not anticipate unilateral emphasis, for this study is as much sociological, historical, and critical as it is behavioral-science oriented. This approach is consistent with the multidisciplinary approach to film and communication study encouraged at The Ohio State University.

This analysis of motorcycle films in the light of a body of sound theoretical work is based on a fundamental assumption which has motivated every scholarly film study since the Payne Fund Studies in the 1930's. This assumption is that popular media, particularly visual media, affect
Somewhat unexpectedly, the Steenbeck forced confrontation with non-manifest content of the films. Manifest aspects of content became less important because it was a simple procedure to look at any film any number of times. The task of interpreting and integrating stylistic patterns of imagery and composition and structural motifs, which arose due to the mechanics of data collection, replaced the task of collecting "what" was in a film after a viewing. In most American films, and especially in "B" films like the motorcycle pictures, literal meaning is generally obvious. Even determination of theme in film "classics" is rarely the most challenging aspect of analysis. Pauline Kael, for example, in her comprehensive study of Citizen Kane, argues that the film's complexity and stature lie in its style and form, not in its theme. Quantitative scheduling deals with issues of meaning by compartmentalization of content into categories suitable for frequency distribution. Qualitative studies, on the other hand, are the Gestalt of film analysis: the problem of meaning becomes an exercise in process analysis; the "how" of meaning. In sum, the methodology employed here began as a quantitative instrument and ended up as a guide for qualitative analysis. After consideration of the data from various points of view, this seemed the best approach.
Figure 6 illustrates the three basic components of the grid which were used to collect data from the films. Above the matrix proper, provision is made for descriptive and identifying notations, such as movie title, scene number, number of characters involved, and so on. The basic "grammar" of film construction consists of the shot, scene, and sequence. These units are roughly analogous to the word, sentence, and paragraph of English composition. These fundamental film units may be defined as follows:

1. A shot is a single image from the time the camera begins running to the time it stops. The composition of the image may change if the camera moves, but it is still a shot as long as no other shot is spliced to it.

2. A scene is a unified action occurring at a single time and place. It may consist of a single shot, but usually it is a group of shots.

3. A sequence is a group of scenes comprising an entire dramatic segment of the film.

A film is comprised of these basic elements. Shots are "assembled to form coherent scenes designed to contribute something to the whole. Scenes are placed in order to form sequences, which in turn make up an entire film. There is no rule as to how long or short each of these units can run, and no rule as to order." Prior to actual use of the grid,
### MOVIE TITLE

Person Involved:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Temporal</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Role Experience</th>
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<td>Denouement</td>
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<td>Trust</td>
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<td>Complication</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
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**Location/Description:**
- Role Expectation
- Role Expiration
- Role Appearance
- Role Disappearance
- Role Inhibition
- Role Identification
- Role Incapacity
it was believed that the film scene would be the exclusive unit of measurement, a decision which was subsequently modified. In most cases, the arbitrary isolation of scenes from their sequential context did not jeopardize meaningful scene-by-scene analysis. In other instances, however, it became apparent that some scenes were clearly subordinate in meaning to larger sequences. The beginnings of many films demonstrated this pattern as opening sequences functioned to provide introductory material which framed basic conflicts and themes in the films. In those situations, it was not profitable to analyze individual scenes. As a result, the film sequence became the basic unit of measurement, and some sequence analysis supplemented the generally consistent strategy of systematic scene-by-scene analysis.

The matrix was designed to measure the incidence and strength of identity components and their relationship as they appeared in the films. The boxes along the horizontal axis correspond to Erikson's theory of epigenetic identity growth: the identity constructs used in the grid should be understood as being identical in meaning to the theoretical framework as discussed in Chapter II.

There are two other important features of the horizontal axis. The first is that each of the identity constructs consists of bi-polar nouns, which means that markings on the
grid could indicate either positive (healthy) or negative (unhealthy) manifestations of a particular variable. Each bi-polar cluster includes terminology Erikson used to describe various crises both in their early stages (infancy, childhood) and later stages (adolescence). The second important feature is that categories along the horizontal axis form a left-to-right continuum which reflects the developmental pattern of identity growth as Erikson conceptualized it. Identity crisis during adolescence begins with a re-manifestation of anxieties centered around the capacity to trust and to be trusted, and ends with the commitment of youthful fervor to more adult-like beliefs and goals. The horizontal continuum reflects this kind of development.

The vertical axis plots the phases of traditional dramatic composition, which by nature lend themselves to time categorization. The conventions of most dramatic film scenarios are more than familiar to us; we know the formulas almost by second nature. Each of the film genres—motorcycle, western, gangster, science fiction, and so on—is arranged on the basis of a number of well-worn, easily recognizable "stock" conventions and narrative devices. These kinds of story treatments are characterized by exaggerated emphasis on action and conflict at the expense of plausible
or intricate narrative development, theme and/or character-ization. The narrative of the genre unfolds in a rather simple, straightforward, efficient way. The good guys and the heavies are recognized and clash almost as soon as they make their respective initial screen appearances. The plot pits protagonists and antagonists against each other in a series of increasingly serious—and often contrived—encounters: a major crisis or a point of no return ensues after which the loose threads of the plot and the conflict are untangled, a sequence of events which finally ends with a hasty resolution or epilogue. These kinds of stories are almost totally plot oriented: what happens—the events, actions, conflicts, struggles, fights, chases, escapes, show-downs, and so on—takes precedence over characterization and motivation. Plot dominance leads to character stereotyping and development of motives in simplistic, superficial terms.

The Introduction

The Introduction functions to introduce major characters, themes, and conflicts, and to provide geographical and chronological staging for the actions of the main characters and the unfolding of the central conflict. This phase ends immediately after the conflict becomes "activated" or established for the audience.

Brief reference to the structure of Devil's Angels
will illustrate the nature and function of the Introduction and the other narrative sequences. The film begins with a split-screen effect. On screen left, a motorcycle zooms down the road toward the camera past a sprawling bomber field on screen right. A wire fence, framed so that it splits the middle of the screen, separates the gang from the big, gleaming jets. As the gang rides by, a portion of the air field where obsolete propellor driven wrecks lie rusting in the sun, the scene shifts to a gang member asleep in one of the planes. Apparently awakened by the roar of the bike engines, he drops out of the underbelly of one of the planes with a bottle of whiskey in his hand. He proceeds to unwrap his motorcycle, shining and gleaming like the bombers, then throws his bottle to an older man, a drifter sitting in the cockpit of another plane.

As this member rides away, the scene shifts to the gang en masse, riding through the city streets. Citizens stare and gawk at them. They are interrogated by motorcycle police at intersections. Then, one gang member crashes into a man standing in the middle of the road buying milk from a delivery man. Police arrive quickly and shoot at the fleeing hit-and-run biker.

The film then cuts to a gang hideout where a party is
in progress. Nazi emblems, posters, and paraphernalia, and red wall banners decorate the interior. Some club members, similarly costumed in varying parts of Nazi military uniforms, and their girlfriends, dance to loud rock 'n roll music blasting from a record player. Some of the girls gyrate in their bras (black, of course). Others lounge around the perimeter of the dance area drinking beer or passing marijuana cigarettes. Then the gang leaders enter, turn off the record player, and announce to the rest that the "heat" is on again.

The Introduction ends at this point, because three things have happened. First, basic expository material has been put forward: characters and settings have been introduced, themes have been suggested, and the conflict has been established. The development of the action can now begin. In the case of this particular film, enough information has been given to identify the film as a "wheeler" genre picture. True to form, the main characters are "outlaw" motorcycle gangs and police, the conflict pits lawlessness against the forces of societal order, and the theme already begins to tread the ambiguous line between glamorizing crime while at the same time supporting widely held social attitudes against such behavior, which requires punishment.
The second important function of the Introduction is to reveal the goals and motivation of the main characters and adversaries, and to indicate their relationship. Basically, characters may either like or dislike each other, and want the same or opposite things. Characters may be motivated by countless reasons, but usually by one of the major human drives: hate, insecurity, revenge, passion, love, etc. In Devil's Angels, it is clear that the Skulls and the cops are enemies, that they both want the same thing—to be left alone—and that they are motivated by mutual fear and mistrust.

The third function of the Introduction is to shatter whatever state of equilibrium had existed up to that point. In most conventional screenplays, nothing really happens until the expository material is out of the way, though some stories plunge right into the middle of the action and save this exposition for later. Usually, however, the exposition comes first, and while it is going on, a state of tranquility exists between the characters and their motivations and goals. Lovers are together, enemies are apart, and so on. Then, with the inevitable advent of conflict, the tenuous balance is upset, the Introduction ends, and the Complication, the second stage, begins. The hit-and-run accident is the trigger which shatters the uneasy truce between Skulls and police
behavior, values, and attitudes, sometimes indirectly through a nexus of mediating influences, sometimes directly. It is not always possible to separate the specific effect attributable to media influence from other influences or to predict accurately behavior or attitude change before exposure to media, but it is apparent that visual media do reflect or "mirror" social phenomena, as well as help to "create" or at least affect certain kinds of events. Indeed, as many critics and would-be censors point out, the possibilities of the undesirable effects of visual media are much in evidence.

Three specific objectives, in rank order, follow from the selection of theory (identity crisis), content (motorcycle films), and method (behavioral-science/communication model):

1. a descriptive and critical analysis of the treatment of identity crisis in the context of twenty-two films of the 1960's, with emphasis on five motorcycle films included in the sample.

2. an examination of the motion picture in the portrayal of identity crisis from a behavioral-science (communication theory) perspective, with particular emphasis upon the role of producing agents' functioning as "gatekeepers" responsible for production of the
The primary function of the Complication is development, mostly of plot and conflict. Once the preliminaries are out of the way, things can begin to happen. Conflict intensification is generally accomplished by manipulating the element or elements that have upset the brief state of equilibrium presented in the Introduction. For example, the Complication in a love story may present lovers who have been together with situations which serve to keep them apart, or it may allow the lovers to come together only to show that one or the other or both unexpectedly desire different things. Whatever the manner of development, the Complication builds the complexity of the plot, intensifies the action and conflict, and leads inexorably toward a high point of action, conflict, suspense, drama, or what have you.

In addition to action and conflict development, the Complication functions to flesh in characterization and deepen thematic focus. We usually find out much more about the characters, their histories, environment, reasons for their beliefs and behaviors, and their aspirations. As we gain knowledge about these matters, we begin to see more clearly and substantially what the movie is about thematically.
As indicated, the status quo which exists in the Introduction of Devil's Angels consists of an uneasy truce between members of the Skulls motorcycle gang and the police. The hate each group entertains for the other is manifest; each is battle-scarred, weary, and anxious about past warnings. In spite of this—or perhaps because of it—they have learned to coexist after a fashion. The police will not harass the Skulls if they stay where they belong and don't cause any trouble for "average" citizens. They can riot amongst themselves so long as they contain their mayhem. The balance, then, consists of sworn enemies who, at least in one respect, share a common goal, to maintain the peace between them, and are motivated by mutual fear and hate to avoid all possible contact.

Before the accident, there was no conflict because the "distance" between the two groups served to neutralize an otherwise explosive situation. The accident, of course, ended the Introduction and initiated the first in a series of increasingly flammable encounters between the police and the gang which form the substance of the Complication phase. These encounters—which include such things as the gang's breaking a friend out of jail in an attempt to flee the city and the police, looting a grocery store, disrupting a small
town's annual picnic, and rumored rape—end with the arrest of the Skull's leader and expulsion of the gang from the town. In terms of the narrative development of this film, then, the significance of the accident and the other lawless behavior lies not in their uniqueness or their diabolical quality, but in their appropriateness: in order to develop a story about enemies separated from one another, they must be brought or forced together. And while the Complication alters the spatial relationship between them, it also substantiates goal and motivational changes. The Skulls cannot accept a piecemeal truce; they desire permanent security in the form of an impregnable hideout in the country somewhere. The police and other authority figures, of course, have no choice but to forego the relative tranquility of the truce to punish the gang, and in so doing, express a new motive—ominous in its implications—through their efforts to hold the gang accountable: revenge.

The Crisis

The third stage in the structure of conventional narrative consists of the Crisis phase, which operationally can be defined as consisting of those situations and actions which the Complication has made inevitable. The Complication
builds toward something, and that "something" is the Crisis. All of the stages of dramatic composition are related by a kind of anticipatory logic which means that, once a conflict arises, we expect it to reach a decisive, critical stage, something akin to a point of no return. The Complication does not resolve anything, it anticipates, and sandwiched between anticipation and resolution is the Crisis, that phase of the action which reveals, decisively, the result of the conflict. The reason this stage is decisive is because protagonists and antagonists take a stand from which they cannot retract in relation to the issues dividing them. Often, as an added bit of complication, events conspire to usurp individual decision-making prerogatives, but no matter how decisions arise, the existence of irrevocable commitment, be it wilfully or situationally determined, constitutes a state of crisis and a foreshadowing of final resolutions.

As used here, the Crisis is not to be confused with the Climax, commonly understood as the high point of action. There are several differences between the two.

The Crisis constitutes a distinct structural phase, whereas the Climax is only part of another phase which follows the Crisis: the Denouement or unravelling stage. For-
mally speaking, there can be no climax without an antecedent Crisis, no high point of action without its proper motivation. The Climax, as typically defined, is the major action moment—the big gunfight, fist fight, car chase, showdown, and the like. It does not represent a fundamental turning point in the action, but rather a final foreclosure of action alternatives. It completes the kind of action precipitated during the Crisis, in much the same way as the Crisis itself "resolves" actions which unravel during the Complication.

The Crisis, on the other hand, is the dramatic high point in a narrative for reasons already discussed. Its power derives from the goals and motivations it intensifies and the consequences which these irreconcilable and intractable intensifications imply. What this means is that the Climax may come off as a more sustained and heightened sequence than the Crisis, but the latter is structurally more significant because it serves to motivate the Climax and final resolution.

These two elements usually share a disproportionate amount of actual screen time. Except for the final resolution, the Crisis is the shortest segment in screen story development, lasting frequently no more than a few scenes. The Climax, on the other hand, often consumes much more screen
time, encompassing as it does the last big action sequence in the kind of films discussed in this study. This is an instance when we should not assume that the "biggest" or "longest" or "most exciting" sequences are the most significant, for without proper motivation, even the most exciting or gruesome climax falls short structurally. The movie version of reality is that Crisis is acute: there is a moment of crisis, not an ongoing or sustained period. The Crisis state for the main character is brief, sometimes low-key, and is followed by a prolonged period of arduous adjustment or coping with the conflicts which can no longer be avoided, only to be capped by a Climax, a final settlement with crisis conflicts and an expurgation of underlying emotional anxieties.

The Crisis in Devil's Angels lasts only two scenes only a few minutes in length. After the rumors of rape spread through town, the Brookville police and a cadre of furious citizens bust up the beach party where the girl was supposed to have been assaulted, arrest Coody, the gang leader, and escort the rest of the gang out of town. In this tense, but brief and low-key sequence, a number of issues are brought to a head. The police and the townspeople must act to punish the gang, if not by legal means, as the sheriff wants, then by the vigilante justice of the outraged townspeople. For
these people the crisis is that they must act to confront the gang, and hold them accountable—the very thing their conciliatory response to the gang's disruptiveness was designed to forestall.

For the gang, the arrest is less disturbing in impact than the false accusations which precipitate it. The Skulls have experienced considerable harassment before, which they bitterly resent, but they are not naive as to why the police and most sectors of the normal populace persecute and prosecute them. Very early in the film we witness the gang's reaction to a crime committed by one of its members. They do not attempt to falsify the facts of their involvement by pretending the hit-and-run never happened; they recognize the accident as a stupid mistake, which they lament; but they also accept their guilt and run, as any "lawless" gang would. In Brookville, they are forced to take a stand, but not for the obvious reasons. If it had been a legitimate arrest, the Skulls would not have contacted the Stompers, all two hundred strong, to help them raze the town. What is significant about the situation in Brookville is the fact that Coody and the Skulls have been unjustly accused; the girl admits to the Sheriff and the most hostile townspeople that she was not assaulted just prior to the police raid on the
party. For the Skulls then, the crisis is not the arrest, but the effrontery of the false rape charges. Because they have nothing but collective pride, the gang cannot tolerate insults or slurs directed toward even one club member. The charge of rape was incidental to the Skull's decision to attack the town. Any blow to gang honor, however small or unintentional, would have constituted a crisis situation.

The Denouement and Resolution

The close relationship between the final two items of narrative development which appear in the matrix requires a joint discussion of their function and distinctions. The Denouement represents the unravelling of the conflict, the outcome of the entanglements and confrontations of the Complication. The Denouement almost answers questions such as: What finally happened? What is the final result? How did it end? One must say almost answers because the matrix used here includes a final phase, the Resolution, which explains how the complex narrative themes, issues, and conflicts are settled. The Denouement in this study is defined as functioning to unravel the plot, and to distinguish the difference between "unravelling" and "resolving."
In a film, every shot is important, so we can truthfully say that a picture is not over, the outcome is not clear, until the last bit of information is provided. These final bits and pieces often provide crucial commentary on the way in which the issues in a film seem to be resolved, or reverse the pattern of resolution entirely. In many cases, of course, the last few scenes of a movie are thematically and dramatically consistent with our expectations of how the movie will or should end, given the nature of the conflict, the characters, and so on. Whether a film ends plausibly or ironically, rightly or wrongly, however, is no matter; the scenes which constitute the resolution of a film are important enough in their own right as structural elements. The Resolution "locks in" the meaning of a film in much the same way that the Introduction "frames" the broad outlines of theme and conflict.

The Denouement in Devil's Angels consists almost entirely of a climactic, violent attack upon the inhabitants and the city of Brookville by the vengeful Skulls and their bike allies, the Stompers. To atone for their feelings of unjust prosecution and repair the slur upon their pride, the gangs "capture" most of the townspeople and question them at a mock trial in one of the town's taverns. The gang finds the principal antagonists, and the entire town, guilty of
prejudice and duplicity, and in the ensuing furor, the gangs sack and loot the town. Clearly, the means which the gang uses to resolve its conflicts are as significant as the conflicts themselves, and more will be said in later chapters about motorcycle gangs and their instrumental use of force and violence.

For the most part, Devil's Angels is a film about the escapades of a wild motorcycle gang, but it ends by focusing on the solitary tragedy of the gang's leader, who severs all ties with the only meaningful thing in life for him, his gang.

In the two final scenes, as the gangs pillage Brookville in the background, Coody fights with one of his trusted lieutenants for having falsely motivated their search for an ideal sanctuary, breaks off with his girlfriend, throws his "colors" in the dirt, and rides off alone on his motorcycle as police close in on the rioters rampaging in Brookville. The major narrative thrust in this film has centered upon the cat-and-mouse struggle between the gang and the police, but the focus on Coody at the end does not come as a complete surprise, because a number of earlier sequences have prepared the audience for his personal downfall. The locking scenes resolve the major conflict by implying that,
films.

3. an assessment of the film's methodology as an instrument of film content analysis.

A number of hypotheses follow from these general goals:

a. The film portrayal of the identity quest of motorcycle gangs is consistent with the broad configurations of the theoretical constructs of identity crisis, but emphasizes particular experiences attending the general pattern to a disproportionate degree. Film images and theory will approximate each other in overall patterns, but will differ in detail, treatment, and tone. This is to say that the film portrayal of motorcycle gangs will show extreme dislocations of identity components and will at the same time reveal specific problems central to their unsuccessful attempts to resolve identity pressures.

b. Production personnel are aware of and sympathetic to the implications of the identity theme in their films, but their concern for realistic treatment tends to become diluted by the limits of their social perception and by commercial motives; consequently, the film portrayal of motorcycle gangs tends to glamorize and sensationalize aspects of motorcycle
while the gang has won this particular battle, it is about to lose the war. The final image of Coody racing away with police sirens wailing in the distance adds a deeper, ironic note of pessimism to the entire action: for bikers like Coody and the rest of the Skulls, there is no escape because there is no place to go.

In sum, the matrix was designed to measure the frequency, duration and relationship of identity constructs in terms of film time. Because time is an integral part of both axes, the matrix makes it hypothetically feasible to examine not only questions relevant to each axis, but also to uncover relationships which might exist between the two axes. The purposes of the grid are two-fold:

1. To identify configurations of identity crisis in the sample films (longitudinal scale) and

2. To identify relationships between thematic content and filmic structure (diagonal scale).

Analytical Procedure--The Steenbeck Viewing Machine

Analytic procedure consisted of operating the Steenbeck Viewing Machine, a console model (horizontal deck type) with varying forward and reverse speed controls plus single frame stop-action. The viewing screen also has a switch for wide screen projection. Sound may be played via regular room amp-
lifier, or by headphone inputs. The Steenbeck also has an additional input terminal which was used by the writer to dub dialogue onto tape cassettes. These tapes were later typed out so that for scenes with dialogue it was possible to obtain a record of both visuals (grid) and sound.

At the end of each relevant scene the machine and tape recorder were stopped and a separate grid sheet was marked. The qualifier "relevant" means that scenes which dealt with non-adolescent characters, themes, or conflicts were not marked. The motorcycle film group dealt exclusively with "adolescent" problems, but others contained sub-plots about adult relationships, problems, and so on.

The intellectual task in the marking process was to determine where a scene belonged on the matrix. Judgements had to be made concerning what a scene was about and when it took place, to facilitate placement of the scene on the grid. It was soon apparent that the scenes often demonstrated flexibility along the horizontal, but not along the vertical axis. Most scenes "fit" in more than one horizontal category but only in one vertical because the context of any given scene depends upon multiple pictorial elements and sound elements whose combined meanings often transcend the literal intent of the scene. Narrative structure, on the other hand, is fairly
well determined by convention so that it is possible, though often not easy, to identify the functional properties (vertical placement) of a scene.

The criteria used to determine scenic content were:

1. Verbally explicit content
2. Verbally implicit content
3. Pictorially explicit content
4. Pictorially implicit content
5. Combinations of the above.

These criteria reflect dispositions about the meaning of filmic content. A basic distinction is that between verbal and non-verbal film elements. In this study, verbal elements include dialogue or music with words—anything spoken or communicated verbally either via the sound track or in the visuals. All other elements formed the pictorial or non-verbal category: sound effects, music, settings, appearances of characters, gestures. This category also included more intricate filmic elements such as composition, lighting, camera usage, editing, and style.

A second and finer distinction concerns the explicitness of the elements in each category. If a scene contained conversation, statements, confessions, or any other combination of verbally expressive material which related specifically
and clearly to one of the identity problems, the content of the scene was judged to be "verbally explicit." If the literary elements in a scene implied relatedness to one or more identity crises, without specific verbal identification, the content was judged to be "verbally implicit."

The same implicit-explicit standard was applied to pictorial elements as well. If the images or actions in a scene clearly defined what was happening, or represented nothing beyond generally recognized and comprehensible associations, the visual content of the scene was judged to be "pictorially explicit." By the same token, if the visuals were used in a symbolic way, if they suggested multiple meanings to be sorted out imaginatively, or if they implied certain meanings without completely revealing or identifying them, these visual elements were judged "pictorially implicit."

Verbally Explicit Content

Figure 7 illustrates a verbally explicit scene from *Angels from Hell*. Gang leader, Mike, incensed over police harassment and torture of one of his subordinates, confronts Captain Bingham in the latter's office. Their conversation is reproduced below:

Mike: I want those bastards' names.
Bingham: Listen here, sonny, I told you this is the first
I heard of it. Now cool it, and I'll look into it.

Mike: Cool it? Like your stormtroopers did with Speed?
Bingham: All right. Shut up. Now I can hear you. I don't need all this noise. I've heard about all the screaming I need tonight.

Mike: In case you should forget, Captain, the law is just as much for us as it is for your righteous citizens. And there is a procedure for arrest, which does not include working someone over in the back seat of a patrol car before you've even booked him.

Bingham: I'm fully aware there are members of this police department that aren't exactly in love with your boys.

Mike: That's your hangup, Bingham.
Bingham: Well, we haven't had a serious beef with your club for the last two or three years.

Mike: Of course you haven't had a beef. Your goons have been leaning on my boys so much they're afraid to open up their mouths. Why, you'd bust them for spreading germs.

Bingham: Well, here's the way I see it, Pres. Big George knew how to keep these boys in line. And that's something you don't quite know how to do.

Mike: We're not talking about my club. We're talking about your cops. If that's the way you want to play the game, o.k.

Bingham: Now listen, Connery, you weren't even there. Now if you'll give me a chance, I'll investigate this thing.

Mike: Investigate it. Oh, yeah. Well, you investigate it. (He walks out.)

Bingham: Sergeant, who were those two officers who answered that call over at the Go-Go Club on Union Street?

The general thrust of their conversation refers to equal application of the law to everyone, even previous lawbreakers. Clearly, it relates to the issue of autonomy: who is responsible for what, how far each side can go, threats in regard
TABLE VIII: Explicit Dialogue Scene

**MOVIE TITLE**: Angels from Hell

**Persons Involved**: Bigham, Mike

|------------|------------|--------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------|

41. Clash of authorities. Who is responsible.

42.

Fig. 7—Verbally explicit content
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENE 14</th>
<th>Location/Description: Bigham's office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**41. Clash of authorities. Who is responsible.**

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**Sexual Fixation**
- Initial—Inhibition
- Polarization—Paralysis
- Sexual—Stereotyping
- Sexual—Identity—Isolation
- Sexual—Love—Loneliness
- Sexual—Integration—Degradation
- Sexual—Intimacy—Inferiority
- Sexual—Inadequacy—Incompetence
- Sexual—Competence

**Ideological Confusion of Values**
- Initial—Inhibition
- Polarization—Paralysis
- Ideological—Stereotyping
- Ideological—Identity—Isolation
- Ideological—Love—Loneliness
- Ideological—Integration—Degradation
- Ideological—Intimacy—Inferiority
- Ideological—Inadequacy—Incompetence
- Ideological—Competence

**Role Task Identification**
- Initial—Inhibition
- Polarization—Paralysis
- Role—Stereotyping
- Role—Identity—Isolation
- Role—Love—Loneliness
- Role—Integration—Degradation
- Role—Intimacy—Inferiority
- Role—Inadequacy—Incompetence
- Role—Competence

**Identity**
- Initial—Inhibition
- Polarization—Paralysis
- Identity—Stereotyping
- Identity—Identity—Isolation
- Identity—Love—Loneliness
- Identity—Integration—Degradation
- Identity—Intimacy—Inferiority
- Identity—Inadequacy—Incompetence
- Identity—Competence

**Confusion of Values**
- Initial—Inhibition
- Polarization—Paralysis
- Confusion—Stereotyping
- Confusion—Identity—Isolation
- Confusion—Love—Loneliness
- Confusion—Integration—Degradation
- Confusion—Intimacy—Inferiority
- Confusion—Inadequacy—Incompetence
- Confusion—Competence

**Integration**
- Initial—Inhibition
- Polarization—Paralysis
- Integration—Stereotyping
- Integration—Identity—Isolation
- Integration—Love—Loneliness
- Integration—Integration—Degradation
- Integration—Intimacy—Inferiority
- Integration—Inadequacy—Incompetence
- Integration—Competence
to the redress of grievances, domains of power, and so on. The language used here is almost identical to the way in which Erikson discusses the problem of acute self-consciousness during adolescence. This scene, then, which takes place during the Complication of the movie, was placed in the box indicated in the table because the substance of the dialogue expressly relates to the limits of autonomous functioning. Pictorial elements, which consist of already revealed functional office furnishings and the attire of the two principals, do not appreciably alter the substance of the dialogue.

Verbally Implicit Content

Figure 8 illustrates a scene whose paramount meaning goes beyond overt expressiveness. The scene is from the Denouement in *The Wild Angels*. Gang leader Blues and his girlfriend, Mike, talk about the effects of the Loser's death, Blues' best friend.

Blues: I blew the whole thing.
Mike: That's crazy.
Blues: Yeah.
Mike: (After a pause) You still love me?
Blues: I don't know. (She walks away, turns on radio on board ship, then turns it off.) What's the matter?
Mike: Nothing.
Blues: See much? (Referring to her looking into his eyes).
Mike: Not a lot.
Blues: You think I ought to go up there, huh?
Mike: I don't think.
Blues: O.K.
**MOVIE TITLE: WILD ANGELS**

Persons Involved: Mike & Blues

Blues is at fault—not so much basic self-doubt as it is guilt at his own irresponsibility.

---

**Fig. 8—Verbally implicit content**
Values is at fault—not so much basic self-doubt as it is guilt at his own irresponsibility (49)  

They talk of love—he's not sure (45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 12</th>
<th>Location/Description: Medic's Boat</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
gang life, and tends to exploit prevailing rumors and half-truths about them—about what the public at large thinks they are, or, more importantly, about what the gatekeepers think they are—so as to enlarge upon the myth of the "outlaw" motorcyclist.

c. The methodology for content analysis of the films will yield statistically significant results. A grid for item analysis was prepared (see Chapter III) which contained variables of identity crisis (Erikson's) along its horizontal axis and elements of film construction (narrative development) along its vertical axis. Statistical handling of the frequency distributions obtained from the matrices was expected to yield significant correlations. The confirmation of this hypothesis should make it possible to draw inferences and make predictions about content development (themes) in terms of time (narrative phraseology). These predictions would not include the potential effects of extrinsic factors of film production.
Mike: I only think you've changed, Blues, since the Loser died, I mean. Like you've gone with him or something.

Blues: What are you talking about?

Mike: Oh, I don't know. Look, I know he was your friend and all, but what about me? What if I died? Oh, I wish we could sail off, just take off. Blues, is it still you and me?

Blues: I don't know, Mike. I'm going. Gonna make it?

Mike: Why not?

The literal meaning of this scene points to the growing distanciation between Blues and Mike: he has changed, she doubts his love, they are both tentative and unsure. At this level, this is a "love" scene which relates to its proper category of male-female relationships.

The implications of their awkward communication, however, outweigh the literal significance of the scene and suggest a more revealing categorization in terms of role confusion. They key line is Blues' "I blew the whole thing." The real problem between them is not waning affection, but Blues' guilt at his inability to function as a gang leader. He feels responsible for the Loser's death. The latter's death forces Blues to re-evaluate his entire role as a leader, as well as his relationship with Mike. His emotional withdrawal from her is symptomatic of mounting role confusion, so that while the explicit frame of reference in the scene dwells upon the love relationship, the extended meanings indicate that the quarrel only mirrors the more deep-seated problem of guilt and the
erosion of individual initiative. In sum, the meaning of this scene includes both explicit and implicit dimensions, with the latter emerging as more relevant.

**Pictorially Explicit Content**

Figure 9 illustrates explicit imagery. In this example, the action speaks for itself. There is nothing symbolic about the action, nothing hidden or ironic in the images and compositions, and nothing implied in regard to the consequential dimensions of the behaviors, which is to say that the consequences of what's going on, though not directly a part of the action, are clear, nonetheless. "Meaning," in examples like the following, rests, to an overwhelming degree, on the surface; it is obvious and direct. A kind of one-to-one relationship exists in such scenes; the content or meaning of the action (here including all of the pictorial elements in addition to just "action" in a limited sense) is the action.

Figure 9 is a party sequence from *The Wild Angels*. The party is partly spontaneous, partly celebration of a somewhat diluted battle victory over some Mexicans who apparently have stolen a gang member's "chopper." The party appears wild and uninhibited, but there are portentous undertones due to the fact that the Loser stole a police


### TABLE VII: EXPLICIT IMAGERY SEQUENCE

**MOVIE TITLE**: Wild Angels  
**Persons Involved**: Gang

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Intro/Expo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22. Shameless dancing, exposure, exhibitionism.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23. Genital excitability, rabbit chase.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Exhibitionism (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 9**—Pictorially explicit content
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Expression</th>
<th>Fixation of Role</th>
<th>Role Identification</th>
<th>Role Inhibition</th>
<th>Role Inversion</th>
<th>Role Competence</th>
<th>Role Incompetence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Identity</td>
<td>Sexual Polarization</td>
<td>Sexual Confusion</td>
<td>Sexual Disorganization</td>
<td>Sexual Integration</td>
<td>Sexual Disintegration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Identity</td>
<td>Ideological Polarization</td>
<td>Ideological Confusion</td>
<td>Ideological Disorganization</td>
<td>Ideological Integration</td>
<td>Ideological Disintegration</td>
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**SEQUENCE 4.**

**Location/Description:**

- **SUN.**
- **Canyon.**
- **Party:**
  - Dancing & Rabbit Chase

**Genital excitability:**

- Rabbit chase.
motorcycle when the gang was forced to flee the scene of the brawl with the Mexicans. Gang members dance and make out, "rabbit-chase" each other on motorcycles, conduct a mock bullfight with their bikes, and joust with each other with large palm leaves, again on their bikes, while all the while the police oversee from a canyon rim overhead. A fight ensues between drunken and stoned gang members, and the police come down to break it up. As can be seen from Figure 9, the content of this action sequence embraced two categories equally. The party actions: drinking, horsing around, competitive testing, fighting, seemed clearly to denote role appropriate behaviors, while at the same time, these actions took on the added dimensions of shameless exposure and exhibitionism, because in part they were "staged" for the predictable shock effect on the police guardians watching from above. The content of this sequence visually presented socially significant male-female behaviors in the gang, as well as presenting, primarily through spatial composition, the issue of how much of this kind of brazen activity the police (as guardians, chaperones, parental figures), would tolerate.

Pictorially Implicit Content

Referring again to The Wild Angels, Figure 10 illustrates a scene rife with examples of the way in which images func-
**TABLE 3: IMPLICIT IMAGERY**

**MOVIE TITLE: Wild Angels**

**Persons Involved: Preacher, Angels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>46. Mock funeral - disrespect, disobedience, rebellion against customs. Minister referred to as &quot;Mother.&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denouement</td>
<td>Nothing to hope for or to believe in? Blue's speech to minister treats him as authority figure rather than spokesman for religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complication</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Intro/Expo</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Elements**

1. Mock funeral (R)
   - Temporal: Time
   - Perspective: Confusion
   - Mutual: Autistic
   - Recognition: Isolation
   - Trust: Histrust
   - Faith: Faithlessness
   - Role Experience: Role Apprentice
   - Role: Fixation
   - Anticipation: Role Task Identification
   - Initiative: Guilt

2. Blues Minister (A)
   - Temporal: Time
   - Perspective: Confusion
   - Mutual: Autistic
   - Recognition: Isolation
   - Trust: Histrust
   - Faith: Faithlessness
   - Role Experience: Role Apprentice
   - Role: Fixation
   - Anticipation: Role Task Identification
   - Initiative: Guilt

---

**Fig. 10—Pictorially implicit content**
**Scene 13**

**Location/Description:** Sequoia Grove Funeral Home - Loser's Funeral Service.

| Role Experience | Role Anticipation | Fixation | Paralysis | Polarization | Confusion | Commitment | Values | Ideological | Confusion of
|-----------------|-------------------|----------|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|--------|-------------| Fixation of
| Role Anticipation | Role Anticipation | Fixation | Paralysis | Polarization | Confusion | Commitment | Values | Ideological | Confusion of
| Role Anticipation | Role Anticipation | Fixation | Paralysis | Polarization | Confusion | Commitment | Values | Ideological | Confusion of
| Role Anticipation | Role Anticipation | Fixation | Paralysis | Polarization | Confusion | Commitment | Values | Ideological | Confusion of
| Role Anticipation | Role Anticipation | Fixation | Paralysis | Polarization | Confusion | Commitment | Values | Ideological | Confusion of

47. to as "Mother."

48.
tion implicitly in the context of films by transcending familiar frames of reference developed during earlier phases of the film's unfolding. In this Denouement scene, the Angels have gathered en mass at the Sequoia Grove Funeral Home to "mourn" the death of the Loser, who has died of complications resulting from a gunshot wound suffered earlier in the film. Details clearly familiar in the context of the group's appearance and accoutrements take on additional significance in the context of this mock funeral service. We have come to recognize the gang's Nazi insignia, paraphernalia, and leather-jacketed costuming as "signs" of gang (role) identification and self-conscious defiance (authority conflict) which in the presence of this staid and conventional religious setting assume the broader dimensions of fundamental value conflict. In a very real sense, the essence of Hell's Angels types of gangs, such as that portrayed in The Wild Angels is their costuming and motorcycle hardware. We instantly "know" about such gangs the minute we see them because the signs of their life-style are so familiar. Motorcycle genre films exploit the familiar trappings of the stereotyped motorcycle culture.

In situations like the one referred to here, the common signs are removed from their universal context and are
placed in a specific setting which enables them to function more dramatically and allusively in terms of the film's themes. The juxtaposition of gang insignia and religious furnishings brings into ironic visual counterpoint two entirely different ways of life and value systems. The whole texture of the imagery in this scene portends a cataclysmic saturnalian reversal of all commonly ascribed-to moral, social, and especially religious principles. The fact that in the next sequences the gang desecrates the church and assaults the minister during a wild, vindictive orgy in the church, testifies to the ominous implications contained in the combination of disparate, explosive imagery. Perhaps more than any other visual scene in the film, this scene suggests the almost laughable, but ultimately tragic, rage and disillusionment of those who have lost their faith in conventional value systems.

**Combination of Verbal/Pictorial Content**

Figure 11 is an example of a sequence whose significant content is both verbal and pictorial, a situation which exists in the vast majority of cases. Few scenes fit easily into either a verbal or a non-verbal category. The material in the table consists of the opening credit sequence from *Angels From Hell*. Prior to the credits Mike, a returned
### TABLE XI: VERBAL-, PICTORIAL SEQUENCE

**MOVIE TITLE:** Angels from Hell

**Persons Involved:** Mike, Cop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Denouement</th>
<th>Crisis</th>
<th>Complication</th>
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</table>

**Intro/Expo**

1. Cop - no communication

**Elements**

2. Cycle credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Role Experience</th>
<th>Role Apprentice</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perspective</td>
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<td>Self</td>
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<td>Onself</td>
<td>Doubt</td>
<td>of Roles</td>
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<td>Shame</td>
<td>Doubt</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Faithlessness</td>
<td>Will</td>
<td>&quot;over&quot;</td>
<td>Purposiveness</td>
<td>Competence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. "No communication is bulk of conversation. Mike blows cop a kiss, rides off."

5. Cop as tyrant.

6. Images of bike.

**Fig. 11—Combination verbal/pictorial content**


SEQUENCE 1-C - Credits & Cop Sequence

SCENE 1: Bakersfield

Location/Description: Mike works with cycle. Is watched by cops.

6. Images of bike.

Role Experience: Apprentice—Work

Sexual—Bisexual

Ideological Confusion of

Role Expectation: Fixation—Paralysis

Polarization Confusion—Commitment Values

Anticipation: Task Identity—Futility

Intimacy—Isolation

Integrity—Despair

Role of Roles: Inhibition—Identification

Love—Loneliness

Integration—Disgust

Initiative—Guilt

Inferiority

Wisdom—Narrowness

Purposefulness—Competence—Incompetence

(over)
Viet Nam veteran, has just had a rendezvous with his old bike pal, Smiley. They briefly discuss a plan for Mike to depose the present leaders of Mike's old gang, then Smiley rides off to gather the old clan. As Mike watches him ride away, the opening credits and the theme song begin, the first stanza of which is as follows:

No communication
No communication
No communication
No communication is the bulk of conversation
As our hero gives his chopper gentle stroking.
Now we see the constable
It's obvious he wants to pull
The Angel from his halo made of smoke rings.
But no one says a word, and the truth goes unheard.
No communication
No communication

This sequence contains three more or less distinct motifs: the theme song; grotesque, cartoon-like actions of the policeman in the song who is watching Mike attend to his motorcycle; and drawings of a voluptuous female whose body assumes the shape of a motorcycle. The drawings of the cop and the female are intercut as quick flashes into the main continuity during the presentation of credits and theme song.

Each of these motifs corresponds to one of the identity categories. The theme song, with its emphasis on mutual lack of communication between gangs and police, underscores
the problem of mistrust which appears throughout the film and is responsible for the hatred these groups entertain for each other. The ever-suspicious police authority figure, plus his caricatures with their derogatory identifying badges, seem to stand implicitly for those issues central to the second identity construct: namely, freedom versus confinement, definition of the perimeters of autonomous functioning, and the need in some cases to rebel against authority as a means of self-discovery. The motorcycle-as-sex symbol, the drawings of the fanged, naked woman, suggest the nature of gang role behavior and because of the masculine features of the woman and her inverted sexual position, implies the perverted nature of motorcycle gang norms.

The Questionnaire for Taped Interviews With Film Producers

Procedures and findings appear in Chapter IV.

2ibid., pp. 31-32.
CHAPTER IV
THE FILM PRODUCERS: THE GATEKEEPER'S ROLE

Background

To support the content analysis of films at the Library of Congress, the researcher's original intention was to interview key production personnel: producers, directors, and writers primarily responsible for making the "top" film in each of the five categories of youth identity films pertinent to the study. While any list of "most influential" films always invites debate, the following seemed clearly the top films of each category in terms of the central concerns of this study:

1. Blacks — Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
2. Small town — Hud
3. Hard-core — The Wild Angels
4. Regulars — The Graduate or Goodbye, Columbus
5. Middle-class dropouts — Easy Rider or Alice's Restaurant

The persons listed below were interviewed in Hollywood between January 13 and January 21, 1972. As can be seen, the ratio of persons desired to persons actually
interviewed is four out of five, an amazingly high percentage considering the busy schedules of these men and the very limited time the researcher spent in Hollywood. No one from either Easy Rider or Alice's Restaurant was interviewed, but this omission was more than offset by screenwriter Tom Mankiewicz, who graciously talked for close to an hour about The Sweet Ride, another of the pictures in that category. All of the following gentlemen, with the exception of Sam Katzman, agreed to tape recorded interviews.

Roger Corman, director - The Wild Angels
Stanley Kramer, producer/director - Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
Martin Ritt, director - Hud
Larry Peerce, director - Goodbye, Columbus
Larry Turman, producer - The Graduate
Tom Mankiewicz, writer - The Sweet Ride
Sam Katzman, producer - The Love-Ins and Riot on Sunset Strip

Procedure

Not knowing the treatment to expect from some of Hollywood's most prestigious film-makers, the researcher prepared a list of five basic questions to ask each interviewee. As per some forewarning on the part of my advisor, it turned
out that once these people began talking, the problem was not to rush to squeeze in the prepared questions, but to interrupt lengthy and interesting, but not altogether relevant digressions. Corman and Kramer, for example, after announcing that they could only talk for fifteen minutes or so, ended up talking twice as long. Mankiewicz, as mentioned, talked for nearly an hour. And Larry Peerce, once he was able to break away from a hectic dubbing session, talked even longer. In these interviews, it seemed more important to explore issues as they came up and to use the list of prepared questions more as an outline than as an all-inclusive schedule. Out of necessity, in other interviews the list was a helpful crutch for survival. In the case of Katzman, who required note-taking, and Turman, who was brusque and preoccupied, the list functioned to generate a relatively smooth flowing and brief interview.

**Purpose**

The basic purpose of the interviews was to explore the middle ground in the process or chain of creative communication, in this case visual communication through the mass medium of film. This chain begins with "processed" reality, the mass produced, highly technological, creative and created product: the film about the real experience. The link between the two, the original and its mediated
reconstruction, is, on a creative level, the film industry and in particular, the personnel who assume responsibility for the production of the films. Collectively and individually, these persons function as "gatekeepers" in the jargon of social science, and it was deemed important to assess gatekeeper influence on the content of the films. The purpose of the interviews, therefore, was to complement the study of film content by tracing it back to sources in production. Clearly the selection of producers, directors and writers, as opposed to actors, art directors, and cameramen reflects the assumption that the former exert a more direct influence on final product than the latter. In short, the interviews were an effort to better examine questions of "meaning" by relating external sources of evidence about why the films were made to an interpretation of the content of the completed film.  

The prepared questions were designed to secure information pertinent to the role each interviewee played in the production of the film or films in question and about their influence in terms of the content of the end product. Generally, the questions focussed on the aims and goals of making the film: special beliefs and values which motivated or otherwise affected the production of the film;
unique knowledge or experience which contributed directly or indirectly to the treatment of the subject matter; and any unusual or relevant circumstance, particularly social, which influenced the production.

The specific focus, of course, was upon the theme of youthful identity crisis as portrayed in the films, upon the way in which these extrinsic variables influenced both the conceptual or formal properties of the films as well as their purely narrative or thematic levels. It might be added that the aims and methods of this interview inquiry were compatible with established sociological goals and procedures. 3

Findings

On the next page is a graphic distillation of the interview material. (See appendix for transcripts of complete interviews.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AIMS</th>
<th>BELIEFS</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>CIRCUMSTANCES</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ritt</strong></td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>direct/</td>
<td>McCarthyism,</td>
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<td>American materialism,</td>
<td>values, &quot;pick up the tab&quot;</td>
<td>indirect</td>
<td>working class</td>
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<td><strong>Turman</strong></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Purist approach</td>
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<td>Middle-class affluence,</td>
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<td>emotional truth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Front page realism</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>vicarious</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Viet Nam war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kramer</strong></td>
<td>Miscegenation &quot;fairy tale&quot;</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>direct/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>didacticism</td>
<td>values: love, family, position</td>
<td>indirect liberalism, working class</td>
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<td>Class determinism, fantasy fulfillment</td>
<td>direct</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>pressure</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Man-</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Vegetable Soup&quot; product for the summer, realism</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>direct</td>
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<tr>
<td>kiewicz</td>
<td></td>
<td>values: honesty, responsibility</td>
<td>Youth rebellion in film industry, studio pressure, upper middle class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 12.—Summation of interviews, R. Corman excepted.

The phrases in the rows and columns are shorthand notations of key concepts for each person interviewed. The rows should be read as follows in order to get a brief "interview profile." For example, Martin Ritt's aims in producing Hud were to make a realistic picture about what
CHAPTER I

ISSUES, CONTENT, SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Origins of the Study

Ten "pilot" films were selected for viewing from the approximately 250 films at the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C., which, on the basis of story synopsis review, were judged by the writer to relate to some degree to the theme of youthful identity groping in the 1960's. These "pilot" films, viewed in Washington in September, 1971, were: Goodbye, Columbus and Medium Cool (1969), Wild in the Streets (1968), The Trip (1967), Beach Party and The Wild Angels (1966), The Young Lovers (1964), Parrish (1961), and Home from the Hill and A Summer Place (1960).

On the basis of a pilot study of these films, a group of twenty-two films was selected for final data collection and analysis. These films were divided into five categories designed to represent varying styles of identity-searching characteristic of different economic, geographic, and social class groups of young people. These categories, plus the films in each group, are presented below. All but two of the films were viewed at the Library of Congress between November and December, 1971.
has come to be called "the new West," the contemporary West stripped of all its romantic gloss and nostalgia. He wanted to use this story to expose what he termed the "voracious and rapacious" nature of middle-class materialism. He expressed a fundamental belief in traditional values which centered around the assumption of individual responsibility. During the interview, he spent quite a bit of time analyzing characters in the movie in regards to who would or would not, in his words, "pick up the tab," who would be responsible, accountable for the consequences of his behavior. Ritt's knowledge about the people and environment portrayed in the film was indirect, but his indictment of middle-class values originated from personal experience. He was blacklisted for five years during the McCarthy era for refusing to cooperate with Congressional investigations into un-American activities in the film industry. This, plus his working-class background, constituted important circumstances relevant to the production of Hud. He discusses this point in response to a question about why he became interested in the novel in the first place:

McCarthyism. I was blacklisted for five years, and I had a couple of friends in those days who, I think, surrendered totally to appetite and became informers
and friendly witnesses. I'd been looking for a piece of material directly related to that and hadn't found one. And here one came along that somehow said more or less the same thing about the American scene that I wanted to say. So, obviously, I was very attracted to it for that reason.4

The phrases in quotes are taken directly from the taped interviews. Stanley Kramer, for example, wanted to make Guess Who's Coming to Dinner a "fairy tale" about black-white intermarriage. He wanted to make the sole issue of the film the black man's color, which he did by making all of the principals perfect people: the only reason for objecting to the marriage, consequently, had to be skin color.

Stylistically, Larry Peerce saw Goodbye, Columbus as "early Ronson lighter"—commercially slick, pretty, camp.

The Sweet Ride was conceived, according to Tom Man-kiewicz, as "vegetable soup"—a low budget youth product for the summer, with bits and pieces of every imaginable entertainment value thrown in: glamour, sex, violence, gang rape, surfboarding, outdoor panorama, motorcycle gangs, and so on. As interesting as these tidbits are, however, our concern here must necessarily be with the columns, with generalizations and conclusions.
Aims of the producers

Given the nature of the Hollywood motion picture business, a frequently expressed goal is to make a commercially successful film. This obvious fact requires some elaboration, however, because it relates to key issues pertaining to what and why a story is or is not produced. This common desire for commercial success, for net profit, raises some fundamental questions about content, about selectivity, about new inputs into the film system, about the kinds of compromises that are made to facilitate commercial ends. The film industry is periodically blasted for misrepresentation, redundancy, stereotyping, story bias, and a host of other alleged sins of excess or omission: too few stories about one subject, too many about something else, unrealistic portrayals, excessively explicit portrayals, and so on. As Ritt pointed out, Hud was caught on the horns of this dilemma: some praised its realism, others damned its pseudo-realistic pretentiousness. The judgements producers make regarding "commercial viability" and the inescapable compromises which attend their judgements seem central to understanding the decision-making process at a high gatekeeper level.

"Commercial viability" seems to be largely dependent
on subjective points of view, on aesthetic and emotional sensibilities. Its ingredients appear to be unspecified doses of hunch, intuition, emotional "truth," business savvy, and luck, in rather unpredictable combinations. The genesis of all the films was essentially the same for each person interviewed. Each found a piece of material or one was brought to his attention—in most cases a novel, in one case newspaper headlines—which provoked an immediate, compelling personal response. Turman could well have been speaking for the entire group when he said about The Graduate: "It's no more, no less different than any film I've done. I read a book, and I fly by the seat of my pants. I like it and I've got to do it."5

Sometime soon after the initial stage of euphoria (about the time when financing alternatives assume top priority) generalized convictions about viability have to be translated into concrete filmic form. From this point on through final production, compromise becomes and continues to be a tangible presence. Obviously, viability to one man is box-office disaster to another. Over the years in Hollywood, producers and directors have been known to disagree. Some of these men, either through proven abilities or experience or clout, seemed able to anticipate
script difficulties or likely objections from studio brass. Ritt, for example, was shrewd enough to elevate a minor character in the novel to major character status in the film, thereby strengthening the dramatic scope and interest of *Hud*. He was also prescient enough to know that the mass audience of 1962, let alone Paramount executives, would not accept a black Alma, the housemaid whom Hud tries to rape. And Stanley Kramer, probably on the strength of his own proven "track record" as an independent producer, maintained full control over the controversial *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* in spite of his financial ties to Columbia.

Other interviewees spoke about considerable "hassle" from studio bosses. Larry Peerce fought successfully for some changes to make the Roth novel more filmic, but he compromised over perhaps the most important issue, the style of the film. Paramount vetoed his desire to make *Goodbye, Columbus* a camp film about the 1950's. They persuaded him to update the novel to fit the late 1960's; they did not believe "early Ronson lighter" would be the most viable filmic approach to take.

Of all the interviewees, Tom Mankiewicz provided the most descriptive account of compromise during production. Of all those interviewed, he probably had the least
amount of influence. He wrote the screenplay for *The Sweet Ride*, which put him a notch below the director and producer. Moreover, it was his first Hollywood assignment. Even though Mankiewicz had some impressive television credits in his favor, plus youth (he was hired because executives at Twentieth Century-Fox believed he could articulate what the "youth revolution" was all about) he was hardly in a position to throw his weight around. His account is biased, of course, but it does provide an interesting and stereotyped record of how Hollywood can compromise, in the worst sense of the word. Only to someone like Joe Pasternak, producer of *The Sweet Ride* and czar of the saccharine "youth films" of the 1950's, is there a viable difference between a single rape and a gang bang. For whatever reasons, he accepted the former, but not the latter. He also happened to choose an action completely inconsistent with character motivation and story development in the film.

To summarize briefly at this point, the unanimous aim or intention is voiced in the interviews first, to entertain and secondarily, to make some kind of meaningful personal statement. These persons, at least, would abandon or foreclose an un-commercially viable property, in spite of their own predilections, primarily because of the high profit-and-loss economics of film making. Hollywood, of
course, because of its private enterprise nature, cannot
subsidize film-makers with no strings attached, as is the
case in some film centers outside the United States. It's
ironic, however, that the strongest anti-establishment
aims and intentions were voiced by the most skillful and
successful members of the film industry system.

A second generalization which seems reasonably ac­
curate concerns the consequences of compromise. Compromise
is generally at the expense of the very things these men
wanted to communicate: honesty, integrity, a part of the
truth. People like Peerce and Mankiewicz, who had direct
knowledge and experience about what they were trying to do,
were often pressured into abandoning an idea altogether or
modifying a concept at the expense of loss of impact and
believability. Because "compromise" connotes just such an
unpleasant situation, it is often legitimized as an effort
to make the material more "viable," more dramatic or more
filmic. Obviously, battles have to be lost in order to
win future wars. Moreover, it is fruitless to speculate
upon what Hud would have been like with a black housemaid,
or what Goodbye, Columbus would have been like as 100%
camp, or what The Sweet Ride would have been like as broth
instead of stew, but what we can profitably speculate upon,
it seems, are alternatives to the subordination of personal
aspirations to corporate profits.

In the area of content, all expressed or implied a desire to make a realistic film critical of middle-class values, customs, and institutions. Considering the differences in subject matter, styles, and circumstances of production, this anti-establishment viewpoint came as a surprise. On the one hand, it would be reasonable to expect critical viewpoints from films in this group that are clearly about the middle-class, films like The Graduate, Goodbye, Columbus, or The Sweet Ride. Turman, for example, in a rare moment of reflection said, "All right, how do you best tell this story about a kid, perhaps drowning in affluence, seemingly without a purpose, and against his parents' values?" He later remembered a remark director Mike Nichols made, "It's a story of a boy who saves himself through madness." 6

On the other hand, all the interviews include examples of how these men tried to translate anti-establishment beliefs into the structure of their films. Katzman, Mankiewicz, and Peerce spoke in detached philosophical terms about their intentions to expose middle-class pretensions, through front-page sensationalism, satire, or hyperbole. Ritt and Kramer were more outspoken and defensive, particularly Kramer. Ironically, both these men saw them-
selves as basically positive and optimistic, yet both blasted pseudo-intellectuals, critics, self-seeking liberals, social do-gooders, apologists for the system, negativists, uncommitted youth, and a vast array of persons, young and old, dedicated to the preservation of their own status and self-interest. In short, they took a swipe at just about everyone, especially those with money, education, status, and influence: in short, the upper-middle-class. Ritt's interview, for example, is spiced with colorful gustatory and masticatory imagery. He saw the character Hud as the archetype of an amoral and mercenary middle-class. He and the co-authors developed the character along just those lines. At one point he launched into a venomous explanation of Hud's controversial reception as a "new Western" by claiming the movie was bound to have an impact because it countered generations of lies fed to us through our history books.

I think any evaluation of American History, honest evaluation, is going to make for some really exciting films because we have been—the whole scene has been so sugar-coated and so lied about and so used to justify our own rapaciousness....You don't have to go to the contemporary West, you can go to the old West, you can go anyplace you want to....and you're bound to come up with an interesting story because ....the history books were controlled by rich people and written for rich people and written to protect
rich people and written to protect our image of ourselves in the West. We were absolutely voracious and rapacious.7

The implication of this common desire to produce realistic films critical of the middle-class seems to point to a hand-and-glove relationship: you can’t have one without the other. This is to say that any realistic portrayal of the middle-class, by definition, is likely to be negative. In regard to the films these men made, "realism" seems more related to a sense of honesty or fidelity toward portraying basic aims than it does to style of approach.

Their beliefs

With the exception of Larry Turman, who was not in the mood to talk about—as he put it—"meanings with a capital M," all those interviewed talked in their own way about a fundamental belief in traditional values. Ritt and Mankiewicz spoke about the need to be responsible, to "pick up the tab," to give a damn. Katzman ruminated about how the decline of family ties, religion and morality was behind the drug and hippie movements, and Peerce talked about the necessity of being true to one's past and traditions. A comment by Stanley Kramer typifies this basic belief and provides a composite view of the ingredients.
Blacks:  
- Take a Giant Step, 1960
- A Raisin in the Sun, 1961
- Up the Down Staircase, 1967
- Guess Who's Coming to Dinner, 1967
- Uptight, 1968

Small town/Country:  
- A Summer Place, 1960
- Parrish, 1961
- All Fall Down, 1962
- Hud, 1963

College Dropouts:  
- Riot on Sunset Strip, 1967
- The Love-Ins, 1967
- The Sweet Ride, 1968
- Alice's Restaurant, 1969
- Easy Rider, 1969

College "Regulars":  
- The Young Lovers, 1964
- The Graduate, 1967
- Goodbye, Columbus, 1969
- The Sterile Cuckoo, 1969

Motorcycle Gangs:  
- The Wild Angels, 1966
- Devil's Angels, 1967
- The Born Losers, 1967
- Angels from Hell, 1968
- Hell's Belles, 1969

Because of the large amount of data which was collected, it became apparent that the writer would not be able to deal with all of the available examples and themes identified above. Therefore, because data analysis and writing had already commenced on the motorcycle group of films, it was decided to both expand and deepen the treatment of those films.

The procedure and technique for collecting data from all the films were identical, but the decision to delete four of the film categories necessarily altered not only the design of the project but also the underlying assumptions contained
I have been more directly involved with the black on the American scene in film than anyone, and what does it all amount to now? Now, you ask a question about Guess Who's Coming To Dinner several years after the fact, and what do I believe in today? What do you believe in today? I believe in what the picture says, although I might tell it differently...What does it say? It says, 'I love you'—I believe in that. After all the years of fighting the battle, and making no progress, I believe in love and the positive approach to the damned inadequacies of the society in which I live. A positive approach. I'm tired of the negation.

Oddly enough, the approach taken in the films, including Kramer's, and in spite of what he says, is quite negative. The young people in these films grow up in the company of adults who believe the opposite of these values, or who, if they do subscribe to them, are portrayed as fatuous, inhumane, or ineffectual. Some of the response to Hud is a case in point here. Many letters written to Ritt by young people defending Hud as the most honest character in the film. The Grandfather, the custodian of the values Ritt admired, was dismissed as a 'stuffed shirt' and a 'pain in the ass.'

Environments are presented, literally and symbolically, as desolate, deterministic, and void of sustaining emotional reinforcements. The composite world-wide view portrayed in these films, it seems, is of a world run amok, managed by adults who have lost contact with growth and managed by adults who have lost contact with growth and managed by adults who have lost contact with growth and managed by adults who have lost contact with growth and...
maturity. Even the positive resolution of *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* rings hollow because Kramer not only peoples his film with perfect, infallible characters, but also systematically tears to shreds the racial platitudes of the liberal whites and exposes them as the pretensions they really are.

It might be more fair to the men involved to describe the approach in the films as "indirect" rather than "negative." In terms of dramatic structure, a case can be made for presenting characters and situations in an unattractive fashion to heighten emotional or narrative impact, thereby calling indirect attention to those positive beliefs and values neglected or obscured in the treatment. Understandably, stories about human foibles, suffering or trauma are more attractive commercially than stories without these elements. Conflict, after all, is the essence of good drama, and we may learn more, in an emotional and perceptive sense, if we are forced to integrate disturbing screen experiences into our own personal frames of experience.

Not only is the concept of traditional values important *in absentia*, as it were: it appears to be a classless entity as well. In terms of the films discussed during the interviews, no group of individuals, or class of people, is portrayed as living consistently according to moral,
social, and religious imperatives of a "traditional" na­
ture. There are one or two individuals, like the grand­
father in Hud, who behave in this fashion, but he is an
anachronism, and eccentric, a barely living relic of some
obsolete, useless time-past. He is indeed the kind of
person we're likely to envision when we think nostalgically
about the old pioneer days of rugged individualism, as if
modern society and modern man were incapable of learning
from his dignified, rugged way of life or of emulating it.

It would be a mistake to assume that the middle-class,
or indeed any class, embodies these beliefs. In terms of
screen portrayals, they seem as foreign to the contemporary
middle-class ethic as they do to upper- or working-classes.
In any event, the concept of traditional values as a living
tradition in the present would seem to have run its course
when only a few elderly individuals live by these principles
in the films (or indeed, in life). There is no reason to
doubt the sincerity of the beliefs these men voiced, but in
view of the absence of strong screen characters molded along
these lines, there is reason to ponder the reasons why these
professed beliefs could not be expressed on the screen.

Their knowledgeability

By "knowledgeability" is meant the extent to which
these men had direct experience or familiarity with the subject matter they were attempting to render on the screen. By "direct" experience is meant an almost one-to-one relationship between personal experience and film content. It could almost be said, in this case, that the film was somewhat autobiographical, or at least it would suggest autobiographical parallels to those familiar with the background of the film-maker. Peerce and Mankiewicz, for example, discussed in detail aspects of their own lives relevant to the production of Goodbye, Columbus and The Sweet Ride.

"Indirect" knowledge is something short of autobiography but substantially more than vague familiarity or general acquaintance. While there were no direct similarities between his past experiences and film content, the film-maker nevertheless could identify strongly with aspects of the content and/or themes. As Fig. 12 indicates, Ritt and Kramer had both direct and indirect knowledge pertinent to the productions of Hud and Guess Who's Coming to Dinner. Because of his ordeal during the McCarthy era, Ritt had some direct knowledge relevant to the anti-establishment thrust in Hud, but only indirect knowledge of life and customs in the Southwest, the setting in the picture. He
empathized strongly with conditions in that part of the country, however, on the basis of his own rather bleak and difficult growing up experiences. Kramer had direct experience with some of the racial issues in Guess Who's Coming to Dinner due to his own involvement in the civil rights movement. He had no direct, personal experience with interracial marriage.

A brief note seems to be in order in regard to Katzman, whose knowledge pertinent to The Love-Ins and Riot on Sunset Strip is labeled "vicarious." As far as could be discerned during a brief interview, his interest in and relationship to the content of these films seemed to be vicarious, for lack of a better word. Doubtlessly he exercised an active role in production, but his overall interest in the specific topics in the films remained at a detached and philosophical level. He did not confess any directly relevant experiences and none could be assumed.

The results in this area point to insignificant conclusions. The personal backgrounds of these men are interesting and it is reasonable to assume that the experiences they talked about and many others that they didn't mention had some kind of influence on some phases of production.

On the basis of the limited amount and kind of information
collected, it would be hazardous to generalize beyond specific cases. Considering the films in light of the interviews, there seemed to be some rough correlation between qualitative differences in the films traceable to the extent of personal experience, but the nature of this difference is not fixed and is closely related to many other production variables.

**Industry and social circumstances**

"Circumstances" are general factors, especially social, which influence production decisions or which serve to make those decisions more relevant because they refer to the social, economic, and political context of a film's production. The following, then, seemed to be operative circumstances, with brief examples of each:

1. **Personal**: McCarthyism to Ritt, Viet Nam War malaise to Katzman, New Deal liberalism to Kramer, and so on.

2. **Class**: working-class to Ritt, upper-middle-class to Mankiewicz and Peerce.

3. **Internal pressure** from within the film industry: production codes, standards of acceptability, compromises and differences of opinion, extent of responsibility, commercial limitations, and so on.

4. **Social unrest** in the 1960's: "Youth revolution," moral and ethical softening, political unrest, drugs, generation conflict, and so on.
As with the "knowledge" category, these general kinds and types of circumstances do not lend themselves to easy generalizations. Depending upon one's point of view, for example, "personal knowledge" and "personal experience" may be regarded as identical concepts or as two closely related, but significantly different categories. Ritt had direct, personal knowledge about McCarthyism, but does its status as a distinct historical epoch make it more important as a circumstance of Hud's production—as a framework or backdrop? The writer prefers the circumstantial classification, but perhaps in reality the difference is academic. In any event, it is clear that personal circumstances do play a role in decision-making processes in the film industry, although more information is needed to reveal the characteristics and dynamics of this influence.

The impact of social class background is also difficult to estimate. Several of the interviewees discussed this influence and its role in their productions. Their remarks may have had more to do with the kinds of questions that were asked, however, than with any legitimate circumstances, and some of those not discussed may have minimized the role of social status.

A number of nagging questions remain unanswered. Is one's class background "knowledge" or "circumstance?" What
does it mean if one has only "indirect" knowledge? Does it make a difference?

A case in point: Larry Peerce and *Goodbye, Columbus*. Nobody in the costume department at Paramount could dress Richard Benjamin appropriately, so Peerce took him to Brooks Brothers and bought him outfits like he, Peerce, used to wear. Direct knowledge, indebtedness to class background, yes, but was socio-economic background an important circumstance behind Peerce's entire philosophical and stylistic approach to the film? Had someone else from a different background made a different version of *Goodbye, Columbus* at the same time, could differences due to status be isolated in the two films?

A second case: Stanley Kramer and *Guess Who's Coming To Dinner*. He is white, yet he attempted to render some experiences common only to blacks. Regardless of his sympathies, past experiences, or liberal predispositions, his knowledge of the black experience can only be indirect. Is lack of direct knowledge and circumstance a fatal liability, or can distance provide valuable perspectives and vantage points, as he himself suggests in his interview? Were a black to make the film now, could we isolate differences due to race in the two treatments?
In terms of the present research, these questions must remain unanswered, but at least the data indicate the need for further study in a number of important related areas.

The circumstances of social unrest in the 1960's are perhaps the most interesting set of circumstances in terms of this paper's focus on youth films and identity crises. Had these men said nothing about this phenomenon, evidence of a concern about youth related problems would still be fairly obvious through an analysis of the themes and characters in the films they made. A comparative study of youth films of the late 1950's and late 1960's would certainly reflect a change in attitudes and portrayals of young people. Even a study of the films of the 1960's, such as this investigation, reveals a marked shift in emphasis of the screen behaviors, goals, and social concerns of young people.

Generalizations from the data in this category must remain tentative. On the basis of a few interviews, there is no way of accurately estimating how representative these opinions are of the entire industry's attitude and response toward young people. Moreover, the data that do exist here are "contaminated" because these men were making films about contemporary young people and experiences. Film-
makers with other concerns might not concur with the statements made here.

If Mankiewicz' and Ritt's candidly critical appraisal of the disdain studio brass entertain for "long hairs," Hippies, flower children, dropouts," etc. is accurate and typical, then there would be grounds to examine this trend carefully. In the absence of corroborating testimony, one can only take note of its possible existence and influence.

Another issue Mankiewicz raises, which does have applicability for "product" pictures like The Sweet Ride and the Katzman films, is the issue of authenticity. By some strange process, product pictures about youth— invariably defined and advertised as "realistic" portrayals of contemporary youth— usually wind up on the screen as somebody's fantasy projection about young people and their behaviors which is very far from real or truthful. Mankiewicz is probably correct in tracing the source of these misconceptions to studio executives who have little or no accurate understanding about the situations they are attempting to portray on the screen. Joe Pasternak, who apparently didn't know one end of a "joint" from another, was hardly the most qualified person to make realistic assessments of the Malibu dropout scene portrayed in The Sweet Ride. Similarly, Sam Katzman, perusing the newspapers
in the design itself. The original plan was essentially a cross-category study; an attempt to identify varying portrayals of identity search and to relate their similarities and differences to each other over a ten-year period of time, time itself functioning as a large, though fixed, constant.

The revised design is primarily a single-category study; an in-depth intra-unit elaboration of patterns of relationship and dissimilarity as they exist in separate items within the motorcycle film category. In this instance, the category itself is the constant. Time is not as important as a vantage point from which to view change.

The shift in focus from multi to single category analysis raises the vital question of significance—that is, what now are the advantages of a study which may yield significant and abundant specific insights but which also may have questionable general significance both in terms of content and method?

These questions, because of their fundamental nature, are considered in this first chapter for discussion and resolution: 1) Why this issue? What is the significance of identity crisis as a problem of our age, especially for youth? 2) Why these films? What is the significance of this selection of particular motorcycle films in terms of the project's basic goals? 3) What does it mean? What significance might this research have—the identity issue, the motorcycle film content, the method of data collection and
for stories or looking out his window at "runaways" thum­bing rides along Formosa Avenue, would hardly seem in the best position to treat the youth-oriented subjects of his films in a realistic manner. His position as ultimate decision-maker might also serve to minimize the inputs of subordinates who have more realistic, first-hand knowledg­ability. The result of this kind of distantiation, pre­dictably, is a ludicrous combination of cliche, stereotype, contrivance, and pretentiousness.

The net influence of this variable and the extent of pandering to the special indulgences of contemporary youth are related to a host of factors, one important one being the aim or purpose of the film. This final point brings us full circle back to where we began this final analysis several pages ago. In genre youth pictures and other films which imitate successful formats, contemporary social situ­ations become a more important circumstance of production. Perhaps because of an over-zealous attempt to "cash in" on timely subjects, these types of films seem especially susceptible to stereotyping and misrepresentation. In other situations where timeliness is not as important and the target audience is not exclusively bound to the youth age bracket, other circumstances can and do surface to
influence production.

The Roger Corman Interview

The Corman interview merits special attention because the prime focus in this paper is on motorcycle films, and Corman happened to direct the most seminal motorcycle film of the 1960's, *The Wild Angels*. His statements which concur with or depart from generalizations already discussed will be emphasized. Corman's remarks are summarized in figure form below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Circumstances</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;product&quot; picture, realism, art house.</td>
<td>inferential</td>
<td>indirect/ academic</td>
<td>American mystique, esp. cowboy myth, social unrest, industry considerations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 13-- Summation of R. Corman interview

His Aims

Corman met with AMI executives during the winter to plan a product picture for the summer drive-in circuit, and after some deliberation Corman decided to do a picture about the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang who, in Corman's words, "were very much in the headlines."  

Corman initiated a number of activities prior to the production of the film in order to compensate for his own lack of knowledge about the Angels. He had read an article
in an English journal about lower-class social patterns which he used to construct the rationale for the film. He met with a group of San Bernadino Angels and, after exchanging beer and pot with them in some kind of "peace" ritual, used their experiences in developing the narrative structure of the film. He also studied the classic motorcycle film, The Wild Ones, starring Marlon Brando and Lee Marvin, in an attempt to avoid imitation.

The purpose of these preparatory tasks was to give the film a realistic and authentic quality. He liked some of the performances in The Wild Ones, but the movie as a whole was not, in Corman's estimation, a realistic representation. He wanted to make a realistic product picture about contemporary youth, and he also aimed for "art house" appeal, an off-beat film with a controversial message.

As he says:

It was an attempt to do an action film that would appeal to a drive-in audience, yet at the same time I was hoping to make a statement beyond that of just an action film. So I was trying to ride two horses, attract two types of audience, that it could play art houses and it could play drive-ins. I think the best American commercial films do move in that direction, that they are successful both in the commercial and the artistic level. I was trying to get both, and I partially succeeded.10

Corman's intentions were not different in kind from the goals of the other people interviewed; he was, to use
his own imagery, a better horseman than some of them, better able to rise above commercial considerations. By his own testimony the film is flawed—the unwanted element of romanticism about the Angels' way of life bothered Corman—but the rash of imitations it spawned makes it one of a kind as a product picture. Considering the nature of some of the circumstances of production (discussed later), the extent of Corman's achievement is impressive. This achievement probably has less to do with the film's intrinsic realism than with the film's function as a creative outlet or expression of certain aspects of social unrest at the time the movie was made.

His Beliefs

Corman said very little that could be construed as an expression of his own personal beliefs or values. He believed in the sociological and philosophical rationale behind the film, but he did not translate it into subjective terms. He did not explicitly state, and only vaguely implied, beliefs of his own relevant to the production of The Wild Angels. Unlike most of the others interviewed, whose basic beliefs were identifiable and traceable in their films, Corman was rather detached from his material—curious about the Angels, yes, intellectually intrigued
to an extent—but he did not regard them as an extension or metaphor of any of his fundamental convictions or all-consuming involvements. In all fairness to Corman, his busy schedule probably made him reluctant to get into these issues.

In terms of his general attitude toward the Angels and what they seemed to represent, he was rather explicit. He saw the Angels as examples of the types of lower-class youth discussed in the *Economist* article, uneducated young people from broken homes with marginal skills, who are forced to drop out economically and socially due to the spread of technology. In terms of his own thinking at the time, he said:

And I felt I was involved in my own thinking at the time in various aspects of dropping out of society. I thought about the $50,000 a year advertising executive who says, ‘I give up. I drop out. I don't like this. How much easier it is for a $150.00-a-week garage mechanic! They say, this isn't for me, and they drop out. So I thought of the Hell's Angels as essentially people who were dropping out of the lowest level of American society, and attempting to form a society of their own which, although it was different in many respects from American society, inevitably mirrored the society from which they had dropped out, because they were born in that society.11

His Knowledgeability

As only about one hundred people claimed to be Hell's Angels in 1966, it is safe to assume that Corman's know-
ledge about them is indirect. His actual contacts with them were limited to the barroom session with the Berdoo Angels prior to filming and directing some of them as extras during production. Moreover, his experience with the "dropout syndrome" of the mid-1960's seemed more vicarious than substantive.

Corman's indirect knowledge of the Angels and rather academic interest in what he believed they represented helps to explain some of the stylistic inconsistencies in the film. We have already discussed "knowledge" in the context of a desire for filmic realism, truthfulness of representation, and authenticity. The Wild Angels was conceived and intended as raw, unfiltered realism, but was perceived by many as a glamorous, romantic portrayal of certain types of rebel-outcasts. As we have seen, Corman admits to this unintentional element in the film, but he rationalizes it by defining reality to include fantasy or myth.

I was looking for a picture of excitement. I thought, if I'm doing a picture about the Hell's Angels, it must have something to do with the image and the truths of the Angels, which is one of a powerful, almost sexual--I shouldn't even say 'almost'--obviously sexual sublimation through the concept of the motorcycle. The subject matter itself, just a photograph of a motorcycle, a chopper, roaring down the road, brings a certain feeling to mind.12

Part of reality to Corman, is the image which sur-
rounds reality, reality itself being a composite of personal perceptions and collective myths. Filmic reality, it could even be said, being completely representational, must be intrinsically imagistic. How would an African aborigine react to The Wild Angels? The motorcycle image is indigenous to our society; whatever common qualities and meanings it possesses derive from our social context. To repeat a familiar question, had the president of the Berdoo Chapter made The Wild Angels would the film be more real, just because of his personal experience? Or is Corman's version of the truth—with its excitement, romanticism, sex-sublimation and the like—more valid because he thematizes and interprets and experience? The conclusion seems to be that these men use "reality" rather loosely as a kind of umbrella concept when they are really dealing with "images." Images possess realistic dimensions, but the two concepts cannot be used interchangeably to refer to the same thing.

Industry and Social Circumstances

Corman discussed three more or less distinct circumstances relevant to the production of The Wild Angels.

a) American myths, especially the myth of the nomadic frontier cowboy. This is the unforeseen element which took over where Corman left off to gla-
morize and romanticize the life-styles and characters in the film. Retrospectively, Corman saw direct parallels between the archetypal cowboy of the old West--alone, rootless, uncommitted, and undomesticated, feared and unwanted, yet compellingly attractive--and the stereotyped version of the present-day biker. Corman believed the activization of this fantasy mystique accounted for the film's elevation beyond the ordinary product status to cult status.

b) Social unrest: the film mirrored the dropout phenomenon of certain segments of society--technologically displaced groups of uncommitted, directionless young people craving excitement and adventure in the absence of goals and causes worth fighting for; vengeful for being cheated out of these opportunities.

c) Industry factors: the film was conceived and executed as a low-budget product picture for summer drive-in audiences, presumably youth. It was shot in three weeks with a budget of $350,000. Until Easy Rider (1969) The Wild Angels was the biggest grossing low budget picture ever produced in America.

Looking at the interviews as a whole, circumstances and intentions appear to be umbilically connected: a relationship of mutual reciprocity exists between them. In some cases intentions define circumstances, and in other instances circumstances dictate the operative purposes out of all those that could be chosen. Moreover, as Corman's remarks about myths indicate, there frequently seems to be one or two unforeseen circumstances which affect production, usually at the receiving end when audiences gather in theatres to absorb the film's messages and feelings and pass their judgements upon the "product." Audience unpredictability always looms
as an important, but uncontrollable circumstance. Audiences can transform what should have been an ordinary action/adventure film like *The Wild Angels* into a significant film with profound social implications. They can just as easily make flops of high-budget major productions that look on the drawing boards like sure-fire winners. Perhaps the key is the myth factor Corman speaks of. Films are essentially expressions or portrayals of collective experiences, so that if a film treats universal human themes with appropriate and compelling visual images, audiences will respond favorably regardless of whatever else might be said of the film critically or aesthetically.

Every film has its own economic, physical, and creative limitations, but unfortunately they fail to obey any consistent or governable laws. In many cases the "success" or "failure" of a film might be predicted from the nature of financing, production, personnel, talent, and story involved. But as indicated in these interviews, in an important number of exceptions these variables do not add up the way one might anticipate. There will always be limiting circumstances which define the rough perimeters of what can be done, but there are also a number of intangibles relating to creative
input and audience variables which affect success or failure apart from the context of knowable restrictions. The problem in film production, as in film research, is one of multiple factor analysis.
The Significance of Identity Crisis

As a Problem of Our Age, Especially for Youth

Adolescence and adolescents have been written and talked about and studied to such an extent in recent years that the verb "juvenilize" has been invented to explain the process by which immature behavior is induced or prolonged in persons organically capable of participating in adult affairs.1 Young people today share many problems commonly associated with the "storm and stress" years of "growing up" into adulthood, but for a variety of factors, many people in our society—young as well as old—are having to face unprecedented pressures as part of their growing up experiences. Not too long ago the "rites of passage" from adolescence to adulthood were fairly clear and acceptable: train for success so as to join others in the pursuit of material goods, luxuries, and economic advantage; the "Great American Success Formula." There were a few bohemians, rebels, and misfits who did not subscribe to this formula, of course, but for most of the sons of Depression fathers living in the midst of post World War II economic boom, there was seemingly no need to challenge the gilt-edged way of life opened up by the atomic age.

The youthful discontent and rebellion which characterized the 1960's seemed to catch most everybody by surprise,

2 Ibid., pp. 29-34, for a discussion of the issue of internal interpretation versus external interpretation.

3 Ibid., pp. 50-56.

4 See Appendix E.

5 See Appendix D.

6 Ibid.

7 See Appendix E.

8 See Appendix B.


California-based Hell's Angels were indeed very much in the news in 1965 stemming from widespread public outrage and media coverage of the infamous Monterey Labor Day rape case of 1964 in which a number of frenzied Angels allegedly dragged two girls off into the sand dunes and raped them repeatedly. This scandal led then California Attorney General T. C. Lynch to launch an official investigation into Angel activities, a report whose lurid but unsubstantiated details were published in March, 1965. Newspapers and magazines across the country gave considerable attention to the findings of the Lynch report and related stories about the Angels. See for example William Murray's "Hell's Angels" in The Saturday Evening Post, 238: 32-9, Nov. 2, 1965; Hunter Thompson's The Hell's Angels: A Strange and Terrifying Saga, New York: Random House, 1967, a free-lance journalist's account of his year riding with the Angels; and the auto-
biographical account of the Angels by Freewheelin' Frank in Frank Reynolds' *Freewheelin' Frank, Secretary of the Angels*, as told to Michael McClure, New York: Grove Press, 1967.

10 See Appendix A.


CHAPTER V

VIOLENCE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY

Violence

Perhaps the most frightening characteristic of gang living is the extent to which violence pervades every sphere of activity regardless of persons involved, place, or occasion. No one and nothing is exempt from possible assault by a gang member and often by masses of members. Violence is a shared experience in the gang world, for except under unusual circumstances—such as when a gang leader deliberately restrains the rest of the gang—an invitation for violence to one is an invitation to all. Gang violence is most often directed against society though it also applies to various forms of self-destructive behavior and intra-group conflict. As far as society is concerned, assaults upon property and institutions are as likely as those upon persons, though attacks upon the latter are more numerous. The venting of rage undoubtedly has a direct, physical satisfaction, but there is a definite symbolic element to the expression of gang violence for victims are frequently innocent of any specific wrongdoing or provocation.
Self-Destructiveness

Self-destructiveness typifies the total disregard gang members demonstrate for their own safety and well-being, and various kinds of self-indulgence designed to test "how much one can take" before suffering complete physical collapse. Intra-group violence inevitably arises when group norms are violated.

Self-destructiveness, not in the totalistic sense of complete abandonment of care for self but in the limited sense of wanton self-indulgence, forms one end of a continuum of violence in the films which stretches from self-abuse to wholesale riot. For motorcycle gang members, self-indulgence always takes the form of excess physical intake—liquor, dope, sex, roughhousing and gaming—of ravenous physical consumption and expenditure. There is a decided depressive tone to most of what motorcycle gangs do, so it is both sad and illuminating to note that they seem to be happiest when they are in a state of frenzied sensory awareness bent on gluttonous satiation of physical appetites.

Self-destructiveness is frequently combined with other kinds of violence and criminal behavior, such as property damage when the gang in The Wild Angels destroys the church in Sequoia Falls during their orgy there, or when the Born Losers rape town girls during their mayhem in the town of Big Rock, but in general the gang party represents the most unadulterated form of self-abuse. Below are some impressionistic notes
taken during viewing describing the first party sequence in *Devil's Angels*. The setting is the Skulls' hangout and the time is shortly after Gage has left the scene of an accident, having killed a citizen while riding on his bike.

Coody and LeRoy come into the hideout, they greet other members, music in the background, one of the guys gets a beer, Gage is smoking a joint, people dancing, a cutaway shows a guy stoned, shot of a girl in a loose black bra, straps off, dancing, shots of her ass, cutaways of a guy smoking, Nazi emblems, coats, red wall banners, cutaways to both men and women watching the action.

Parties can erupt anywhere: in gang hideouts (*Born Losers, Devil's Angels, Angels from Hell*) on beaches (*Devil's Angels*), on the desert (*Wild Angels, Hell's Belles*), in church (*Wild Angels*), by the side of a road (*Angels from Hell*), in bars (*Angels from Hell* and *Born Losers*), in the city, in small towns, in the middle of nowhere. Parties can be held for just about any reason: for special occasions (election of gang president in *Angels from Hell*, initiation of a mamma in *Born Losers*, spontaneously (*Wild Angels*), or as a kind of on-going activity that doesn't have a formal beginning and end but just sort of accompanies gang behavior as a matter of course (*Born Losers, Devil's Angels*).

The "all-or-nothing" attitude

The kind of violent self-punishment that typifies gang behavior at their parties suggests several interpretations. For one thing, it represents an "all-or-nothing" attitude
characteristic of all of their endeavors. At a party, one does not just have a couple of beers and sit quietly in a corner making out with a girl. Rather, one consumes voraciously whatever is available: as much beer as one can hold, marijuana and pills if they are available, as many women as one "can get it on" with, dancing until the music stops, and cavorting on one's cycle as long as the rabbit chase or mock-bull fight (*Wild Angels*) lasts. Second, self-abasement and torture function as mechanisms for gang members to achieve status and approval within the group. Group norms require proof of one's courage and fearlessness; special status and renown are accorded to those who attend new highs—or lows—of self-depredation.

**The desire for community respect**

Self-indulgence and self-punishment also serve to earn for gang members a dubious manifestation of the human need for respect from other elements in society. Motorcycle gang delinquents, like other adolescent groups, want respect for recognition not only from their peers but also from adults. Unfortunately, however, they are singularly ill-equipped to compete for these social rewards on an equal footing with other more class-privileged youth, so they overcompensate by adopting the most shocking and shameful behavior they can in order to win by default the status normally denied to persons of their status. The way in which adults and middle-class
youth watch, with an uneasy but fascinated glare, the rude and "shocking" antics of the gangs attests to this interpretation. In The Wild Angels the police watch from the rim of a canyon the wild partying and love-making in the valley below, and in Devil's Angels and Born Losers the gang's revelry attracts both the wrathful indignation and young women of whole communities.

Self-hate and hopelessness

Another interpretation is that self-destructiveness is a projection of self-hate and hopelessness. Members of motorcycle gangs are "born losers" and they know it, as witness the movie titles and some of their names: The Loser, Blues, Crabs, Speechless, Gangrene, Nutty. They are worthless, evil, scum. They are not "fit" for society, and as Captain Bingham tells Mike and the Bakersfield Angels in Angels from Hell, ". . . you guys have had it. There's no place left for you. No place. I don't even think the zoos would want you." In an environment which constantly confirms their worthlessness, hope turns to despair, and despair hardens into hate, disgust at life and hate of others and of themselves. Physical abuse of one's body in the form of relentless testing of the body's systems or of compulsive and strenuous activity expresses the ego's wish to be caught, punished, and put to death for its offenses to humanity. As Coody tells the Skulls after Gage's accident, their obvious and clumsy behavior con-
Assault

Assault upon other persons and property is another form of violence which characterizes the behavior of motorcycle gangs. As indicated earlier, assault upon persons can be divided into a number of sub-categories: intra-group assault, inter-group assault, "signal" assault (assault enacted as a response to a direct and immediate threat or provocation), and symbolic assault (assault levied upon persons innocent of specific offense to the motorcycle gang). Practically all destruction of property is symbolic in nature because inanimate structures do not present any clear and present danger to motorcycle gangs. In some cases direct and symbolic assault merge, such as when a specific person or persons—who are direct threats—also represent or "stand for" symbolically repressive institutions. In Angels from Hell, Captain Bingham is a direct threat to Mike and the rest of the Bakersfield Angels, but because Bingham is also an institutionalized enemy, both he and the entire police establishment must be destroyed.

In almost all cases of assault, however, the same "all-or-nothing" law that applied to self-destructive violence applies here as well. A gang's response to a provocation is not moderated by a consideration of the intent or degree of the offenses; indeed, their response is not tempered at all.
Examples of this method of warfare abound in the films, but two examples should suffice here. In *Born Losers* a youth curses gang leader Danny and is mercilessly beaten by the entire gang, and in *Devil's Angels* Coody's reasonableness only temporarily prevents the Skulls from destroying the entire town of Brookville for insults suffered at the hands of town citizens.

**Intra and inter-group assault**

Intra-group violence usually arises when a gang leader is compelled to levy sanctions against other members who have violated group norms. The exact nature of these norms will be examined in more detail in the next section. In this context it is significant that violence is the lone form of punishment for severe breaches of gang codes. In some cases the leader must enforce compliance to his own arbitrary rules, such as when Blues fights with Horse during the canyon party in *The Wild Angels* for smoking pot ordered off-limits by Blues. In other instances, the leader, as the duly authorized agent, cannot tolerate flaunting of inviolable codes, such as group loyalty, which apply equally to all. In *Angels from Hell*, shortly after Bingham has warned the gang to stay off the streets, Dennis is caught stealing parts from one of the bikes at Ginger's, owner of the gang's hide out. After smashing him, Mike says, "Don't burn your own people, Dennis. Only punks do that, and we don't have any punks in this gang."
So get on your scooter and fade, man. And leave your colors."

Inter-group assault of the signal variety (assault aimed at a person or persons not belonging to the gang who constitute a perceived immediate and direct danger to the gang) is undertaken either to defend the honor of the gang or to hold one's ground in a showdown. The films show that, in the majority of cases, violence to atone for imagined or real provocation is reactionary, not initiatory. At the same time, however, a gang honor is very sensitive so that even the smallest aggravation is often mistaken for a serious, deliberate, unforgiveable affront. The mob-beating of the unarmed, skinny boy in *The Born Losers*, cited in a different context, applies here as well. In *The Wild Angels*, the gang crosses the border to pummel a ragged lot of Mexican garage mechanics accused, upon practically no evidence, of stealing the Loser's bike.

The desire for vengeance unleashed in the wake of real or imagined slurs upon the gang's integrity is seemingly limitless. (It must be remembered that any individual slur automatically becomes an affront to the entire gang, according to the "all-or-nothing" ethic.) In *Devil's Angels*, *Angels From Hell*, and to a lesser extent in *The Born Losers*, a bruised sense of gang pride vents itself in paranoic mob behavior aimed at reducing entire communities to rubble.

Gang members will not fight one-to-one with someone else unless they are so ordered to do so by the gang leader or un-
MASON, John Lenard, 1943-
The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1973
Mass Communications

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

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for the young people of the 1950's who appeared so intent and committed to the pursuit of affluence gave way in the 1960's to young people visibly and violently opposed to the goals and values of middle-class living. The rebellion was doubly confounding because most of the protest came from an unexpected source. Large numbers of middle-class youth, themselves direct heirs to the fruits of the system, joined in protest with those who were obviously the most disenfranchised and alienated from "the system." A common theme ran throughout the various forms and poses of protest. This theme had to do with transcending ethical, philosophical, and spiritual—in a broad non-sectarian sense—issues: the meaning of self; the purpose of life; the value of values; the significance of beliefs and credos; the implications of concepts such as love, freedom, society, commitment. Persons attempting to resolve these issues by dropping out, fervent activism, or any in-between mode found themselves with a classic case of identity crisis, a fundamental issue of our age.

The popularity of identity crisis is not to be confused with its seriousness as a clinical problem for psychologists and psychiatrists, but the two are closely related. Regarding the popularity of identity crisis, sociologist Orrin Klapp observes:

Though the thread of identity runs through all man's concerns and enterprises, leaving its signature on everything he does, there is today a new pre-occupation with identity; people are worrying about it. Identity is like wealth; when you have it you do not need it,
less they are cornered without the rest of the gang for support. The major reason they do not fight singly is because an attack upon one is an attack upon the entire gang. The bond of group solidarity, the "all-for-one-and-one-for-all" ethic, makes it mandatory for them to come to the aid of an endangered member. And once he fights, the motorcycle youth knows no rules of fairness or mercy. Even when vastly outnumbering an opponent, anything goes. In The Born Losers, for example, Billy Jack is clubbed from behind with a lug wrench after he challenges the whole gang to fight. In Hell's Belles gang leader Tampa goads Carl into a fight for possession of a new motorcycle which Carl has just stolen from Dan. No sooner is the challenge accepted than Gippo, the gang neanderthal, knocks Carl senseless. Late that night in the desert, Dan attempts to recapture his stolen property but is knocked off his bike by Tampa brandishing a log. Dan is subsequently held and beaten by various gang members and kicked and stomped while on the ground. Toward the end of the film, his gang deserts him and Tampa is forced to fight Dan alone in the desert in a showdown for possession of the bike and Cathy, the gang moll given to Dan by Tampa in a "swap" for his bike. The fight, however, will be on Tampa's terms, a no-holds-barred, no mercy given rush at each other on bikes with bike chains for weapons.

Rape

In the films studied, rape is presented as the most egreg-
ious and intolerable act of assault committed by motorcycle
gangs upon society even though far fewer specific instances
of rape occur in the films than other kinds of anti-social
behavior. Rape of girls not associated with motorcycle gangs,
inter-group assault, appears in only two films, Devil's
Angels and The Born Losers. There is only one instance of
intra-group rape, and that occurs in The Wild Angels when
Daish, the Loser's girlfriend, is raped by other gang members
on the altar of the church when the funeral service for the
Loser degenerates into a wild orgy.

In the films, the context of rape is marked by a degree
of hysteria, distortion, and deadly vindictiveness not found
in the context of other gang felonies. In contrast to the
usually cautious and restrained way in which society dis-
patches most gang delinquency, its responses to those believed
guilty of rape, either by fact of accusation or heresay, is
swift and irrational. The citizens of Brookville begrudgingly
tolerate the disruption of their annual town picnic day
festivities by the rowdy Skulls, but arm in vigilante-like
self-defense when rumor spreads of gang rape. Similarly, in
The Born Losers, the townspeople of Big Rock fearfully permit
the gang to "take over" the main street on their bikes and to
harass the populace, but assemble in a murderous force of
combined local and state police in the aftermath of television
reports of gang rape of three local teenage girls and one out-
of-town teenage girl. In both of these films, the alleged rapes constitute the culmination of the gang's conflict with society into the major crisis phase of the films.

Rape is a form of symbolic assault for its meaning, always for society and often for the gangs, transcends its literal, legal scope. In one sense, all "crime against society" symbolizes resentment or displaced rage, but in view of rape's associative flexibility—its capacity to activate numerous negative emotional states and to trigger various kinds of irrational behavior—it is unique in the category of anti-social behavior.

While it is fairly easy to assign rape to the category just described, it is less easy to determine exactly what it is that rape symbolizes in the films. We might begin to investigate this problem by attempting to determine causality. Why are the towns sacked and women raped? Who is responsible? Who is guilty and deserves punishment? These questions require a consideration of the violated communities and of the motorcycle gangs to determine if inherent characteristics of either or both contributed to the problem. Is rape an outrage "suffered by" "innocent victims," or does it constitute just punishment for societal offenses? By the same token, do motorcycle gang members rape and pillage wantonly, or do they defile because they have been provoked.

Initial evidence seems to corroborate the view that motorcycle gang members are wantonly cruel and depraved.
Certainly neither Brookville nor Big Rock asks to have the gangs show up in their towns. Neither town welcomes the gangs, and, of course, neither wants the kind of trouble which invariably seems to accompany them. And so, unsuspecting and unprepared both communities are invaded by packs of motorcycle hoodlums who swoop down upon them like rats heralding the plague. Almost immediately, the gangs take over some strategically located establishment (barn beach house in *The Born Losers*; beach campgrounds in *Devil's Angels*) and proceed to terrorize the towns by riding, disorderly and *en masse* through their main streets (*Born Losers*); drinking and carousing in full view of large groups of local citizens who have typically gathered to watch them (both films); taunting and mocking citizens, officials, or activities (both films); and, in the words of Sheriff Henderson in *Devil's Angels*, generally "disturbing the peace" and "do(ing) everything possible to antagonize and frighten the general public." The gangs appear to go out of their way to earn the justifiable contempt and indignation of the townspeople expressed by Royce, a Brookville civic leader: "Those are the Skulls. Adult delinquents. They steal things, they smell bad, they use foul language. They have a hobby of wrecking small towns. They've already wrecked our party."

A belief in the basic anti-social nature of the gang receives seemingly irreversible confirmation in the eyes of the town's citizenry when the premonitions of serious trouble
materialize in the form of rumors of gang rape of a town girl in Devil’s Angels and in the shocking expose of the repeated assault of three local girls and one out-of-town girl by the motorcycle gang in The Born Losers. Civic outrage is heightened in view of the flagrantly ungrateful way in which the gangs abuse community attempts to accommodate them. Even after the Skulls ruin Brookville’s Town Picnic Day, Sheriff Henderson allows them to camp on the beach south of town, and in The Born Losers the gang is permitted practically every license. A community can tolerate only so much, however, so in rape’s aftermath the towns—armed to the teeth with justifiable self-righteousness—act arbitrarily and menacingly to punish the gangs. Brookville police summarily arrest Coody, the Skull’s leader and escort the rest of the gang out of town; while in The Born Losers well-armed state and local police finally trap the gang in their beach house.

From this point of view, the scenario of rape suggests that motorcycle gangs are in fact "animals" and delinquents. Trouble stalks them as buzzards wait for a stricken body to die. When serious trouble does break out, foreshadowed as it always is by minor mischief, the presumption of gang guilt follows axiomatically. Any part of a crime is taken as evidence of its complete enactment for which gang members shoulder full responsibility. Being considered basically sub-human, the commitment of felonious assault and other acts
of violence sustains and nourishes the diabolical "nature" of delinquent motorcycle gangs in perverse parody of the way in which the pursuit of socially acceptable behavior motivates civilized men. There is no question of guilt or innocence. The establishment needs simply to wait for motorcycle gang members to reveal their true natures which they demonstrate most tragically and shockingly by raping innocent girls.

In both films, however, the sense of inhumanity and barbarism which surrounds the act of rape rests, ironically within society, not within the motorcycle gangs. Of the five rapes depicted or implied in the films, only one represents a clear-cut case of gang assault upon an innocent female, this being the rape of Vicky in *The Born Losers*. In three of the other instances, the three town girls sexually abused in *The Born Losers* willfully sought out the gang and enticed various members. One of the girls, Linda Prang, had been to the gang beach house before and returned there after the supposed rapes and prior to the start of the rape trials. The other girls, Jodell Shorn and LuAnne Crawford, became hysterical and wanted to quit after the partying began. The town girl in *Devil's Angels* was not raped at all. She, too, voluntarily infiltrated the Skulls' beach party to find out if "all you guys do is race around, raise hell, and have fun," and became hysterical, after some pot and liquor, when some of the Skulls began teasing her. If any of the rape charges had come to court, it is extremely unlikely that convictions would have
been obtained against any of the gang members, except in Vicky's case.

The townspeople in both Brookville and Big Rock prejudge the gangs and act as if they are totally responsible for whatever trouble occurs in spite of mitigating circumstances. The Skulls do not disrupt the Brookville picnic because it is their natural style of entry into a new town, but because they have been arbitrarily denied permission to stay overnight in campgrounds proper to the city. As we have come to expect by now, their response to this minor slight exceeded the degree of its stimulus, but the town's initial and unprovoked rejection of them motivates their subsequent rowdy behavior. The Born-to-Lose gang's attack upon the teenage boy whose car rammed into the rear of the leader's bike is less easy to pardon, but Daniel was willing to forget about the accident until the boy cursed him. Again the gang retaliates excessively, but their violence was not unprovoked and it was more sustained than it should have been had not citizen spectators, like Linda Prang's parents, chosen not to get involved.

As far as rape is concerned, community aversion to the gangs' presence in their towns is so intense that they are judged guilty regardless of the fact that most of the girls got exactly what they were looking for or in spite of other mitigating circumstances which a more reasoned response to the situation might yield. Royce and the mayor, in Devil's
Angels, regard the girl's testimony that she was not raped as a "technicality" better kept from Sheriff Henderson until after the gang is taken care of, and in The Born Losers, the district attorney's entire case dissolves when Linda Prang finally reveals what the district attorney himself probably could have uncovered during an objective investigation. He is left holding an empty bag of hastily-drawn indictments to appease community furor. While rape scandal initially corroborates a seemingly justifiable belief in gang bestiality, the resolution of the rape scenario ultimately symbolizes latent inhumanity and irrationality present in society itself.

The presence of overtly violent and lustful "outlaws" in the midst of tranquil middle-class communities serves as a catalyst to expose the smug virtues and facade of respectability built into the sensibility of middle-American towns like Brookville and Big Rock. This clash of a system built upon inflated virtue and self-aggrandizing respectability with advocates of opposing values creates an atmosphere of wild hysteria and paranoic fear and leads to situations bordering on a saturnalian reversal of all modalities. Perhaps the most startling consequences of this confrontation is the ease and extent to which communities like Brookville and Big Rock—bastions of the old, incorruptible virtues—crumble when besieged by small bands of bike riders and allow themselves to be raped by the sexual abuse of their women and by terrorism, vandalism, or massive property damage. The district attorney's
lament in The Born Losers after Linda Prang’s confession provides a poignant description of the system's upheaval.

DA: That’s it. Just like that, my case collapses, and I have to let them go. Suddenly the whole system is turned upside down; I have no choice but to open the gates and let the animals of the world take over. Where did we go wrong, Harvey? Where did the whole goddam system go wrong?

Society’s inability to protect itself and its possessions--i.e., the virginity of its young women and the integrity of its young men--is closely connected to that system’s rigidity which turns social energies destructively inward. When intolerance and fear crystallize around collective stereotypes; when codes of dress, behavior, and morality harden into inflexible mandates; and when civic pride depends upon adoption of narrow proscriptions--as happens to the people in Brookville and Big Rock--then a community becomes defensive and its values and integrity become jeopardized by any group of persons who happen to subscribe to other values.

The gangs defile Brookville and Big Rock in spite of, and because of, the very sanctions which these villages invoke to deter the gangs. In Devil’s Angels, police and civic leaders adopt a "hard line" approach to the Skulls. Their disruption of the town picnic is quickly stopped, and Sheriff Henderson follows strict police procedures to defuse what he perceives to be a potential riot situation by banishing the Skulls to a camp area outside town, an action which backfires to bring
about the violence it was expressly designed to prevent. In *The Born Losers*, civic and police responses are very nearly contradictory. The entire community, following the lead of the Prangs, refuses to become involved in stopping the gang's terrorism, so that by the time the reinforced local police department moves to intervene, the gang has created a vice-like ring of terrorism around the entire town.

In both cases, then, the result is the same: the towns are torn apart and women are raped, or are assumed to be. It doesn't make any difference what tack a town takes, it will still become victimized. The restrictiveness of Brookville begets destruction; Big Rock's permissiveness invites conquest. If the rape scenario has a symbolic message, it is that a town will get what it deserves. As Billy Jack says to an immobilized group of Big Rock's finest: "Whatever they've done to your women, you deserve it." The towns are "victimized and brutalized," in the words of Royce, but not by a few punks on motorcycles. As bad as they are, and for as much trouble as they could commit if not expected to live up to their unholy reputations, they do not warrant the degree of hate of "respectable" persons whose fear condemns them for crimes they did not commit, persons who believe themselves victimized by rapists when in fact they have not been. The rape scenario—with its reversals, distortions, and ironies—symbolizes the "system" gone wrong; it depicts the justifiable agony of society victimized by its own intolerance and fear.
but when it is gone, you know you do not have it. There has been a curious shift in concern in the last fifty years, from 'making one's way'...to finding oneself. The urgent question of the twentieth century, in its looming age of leisure, is not What can I do? but Who can I be? 'Who' questions are now becoming more important than 'what' questions. And a new right has been defined—to be what one pleases.

Klapp continues to discuss the popularity of identity crisis by listing several recent best-selling books: Modern Man in Search of a Soul, The Divided Self, The Supreme Identity, and The Magic Power of Self Image Psychology, which "show the concern of the public with finding itself." He goes on to state that:

Identity is a fashionable topic for conversation in intellectual, artistic, and religious circles. We are more aware of a difference between our role and our true self—whatever that is. We present ourselves; put on faces, and play roles with great facility, not regarding ourselves as hypocritical, as the older generation would. As a result, "Who are you?" is not just a televised game for celebrities—it is coming to be a fair question that might be asked of a housewife, an auto worker, a businessman. Indeed, in our society, it is more fashionable to have an identity problem than a sexual neurosis.

Young people today are faced with a number of concerns, such as threat of atomic war, apparent erosion of our political process, and alienation produced by our vast, impersonal systems of technology that heighten the problems of adolescence which are becoming increasingly interchangeable and synonymous with identity crisis.

Addressing himself to the "popularity" of this issue, Yale psychologist Kenneth Keniston writes that, particularly for today's more aware students, "the statement, 'I'm having
**Wholesale destruction**

There seems to be some truth, at least in terms of the films, to Royce's opinion that motorcycle gangs have a hobby of wrecking small towns, if not in fact then by abortive design. Gangs in four out of the five films studied mount wholesale assaults upon towns, and in two of these instances the confrontation between gang and society leads to significant property damage. The gang in *The Wild Angels* completely destroys the church in Sequoia Falls during the frenzied funeral party for the Loser, and as we have seen, the Skulls unite with the Stompers in the *Devil's Angels* to pillage and raze Brookville. Big Rock is under a state of siege by the gang in *The Born Losers*, though no major property damage is done to the town. In *Angels From Hell*, the Bakersfield gang plans for the biggest showdown of all, by exploiting media coverage of a funeral procession for one of their members to provide a riot. The plans fail, however, for immediately after Mike's conversation with Ginger, the police surround the gang hideout and order them out of town.

What we have said before about the motivation and nature of gang violence helps in an analysis of these kinds of behavior as well. For one thing, we see the same pattern of dubiously justified provocation, total retaliation, and total destruction. A man just bumps one of the gang's bikes, but instead of the bike owner riding after the man to secure pay-
ment for damages or perhaps to punch him in the nose, the whole gang tracks the man down and completely destroys his camper. If one gang member is singled out for unfair harrassment, as Coody is in *Devil's Angels*, the entire gang unites behind him in a show of force to protest his illegal arrest. And if one entire gang suffers what it considers unfair treatment, as the Bakersfield Angels do in *Angels From Hell*, then the gang unites with many other gangs to plan the destruction of the town in revenge.

**Death**

Death, a mixed form of literal and symbolic violence, appears in all of the films and stands as the most extreme type of aggressive gang behavior. With but one exception—a citizen unintentionally killed in a bike accident in *Devil's Angels*—all of those killed are gang members. With the exception of Gippo, who is killed by rattlesnakes in *Hell's Belles*, the instrument of death is the gun, and in a majority of the deaths police are the agents of the killing. In one instance, in *The Born Losers*, a citizen is responsible for shooting a gang member.

Gang members are not equally vulnerable to death. No women are killed, and only one lower ranked male member is shot. In all other cases, death strikes higher echelon gang members who are all males. Gang leaders Mike (*Angels From Hell*) and Daniel (*The Born Losers*) are shot, while next-in-
command members are killed in two other films: the Loser in The Wild Angels is shot, and Gippo in Hell's Belles is bitten by rattlesnakes as mentioned before. Exposure, visibility, and unusual daring seem to be factors determining who is likely to die. Gang leaders, of course, as the most "exposed" and "visible" gang members, assume full responsibility for everyone else's conduct. Captain Bingham holds Mike personally responsible for "keeping his boys in line" after Speed's death, and when Billy Jack demands action to take Vicky to the hospital, his gun is leveled at gang leader Daniel. In addition, gang leaders appear to be more intellectually gifted and ambitious than rank-and-file members, and these attributes often lead to provocative activity for which the leaders are genuinely responsible. Mike's plan for Speed's funeral procession is a case in point. Next-in-command members are killed because they expose themselves, often unwisely, to great risk, or possess some kind of special attribute that makes them unusually vulnerable. Loser's stealing of a police motorcycle after the fight with the Mexicans is as reckless as it is daring, and Gippo's great strength and stupidity, when allowed to go unregulated by Tampa, provide a sure formula for his destruction.

Most of the killing is done in self-defense or to enforce the law. In The Born Losers, Billy Jack justifies shooting Daniel in the head on the grounds of self-defense. Even though the gang is unarmed, he is greatly outnumbered
in their beach house hangout, and his life has been threatened. Daniel vows, "I'm going to cut your bowels out," then orders the gang to move in on Billy. In *Hell's Belles*, Gippo, too, is killed in self-defense. With a knife at Cathy's throat, he attempts to take Dan back to the gang's camp where Tampa would surely kill him. Dan goads Gippo into a fight, however, and Gippo is killed when he falls into a nest of rattlesnakes. As far as law enforcement is concerned, police shoot and kill Speed for allegedly resisting arrest, in *Angels From Hell*, and they shoot the Loser in *The Wild Angels* for leaving the scene of an assault by stealing a police motorcycle. He later dies in the gang's hideout after the gang breaks him out of the hospital where he is being treated.

In other instances, there is evidence to suggest that police killings of gang members are unwarranted and constitute excessive use of force. Both of the killings in *Angels From Hell* support this interpretation. Speed is apparently killed while resisting police attempts to search and arrest him for possession of drugs, but the circumstances surrounding his death imply that rookie policemen acted precipitously in dealing with a routine police matter. The circumstances attending Mike's death go beyond the mere implication of police brutality. Fearing possible trouble in the wake of Speed's death, a host of armed Bakersfield police surprise the gang at their hangout in the middle of the night. They are lined up against the side of the house and searched, and
then Captain Bingham gives them an ultimatum to get out of the county by noon the next day or go to jail. Mike protests this vigilante-like action. In a fit of rage he grabs Bingham's gun and demands to be allowed to go free. Bingham permits him to get his bike, and as Mike rides away, one of Bingham's deputies shoots Mike off his bike.

The meaning of death depends upon when it occurs in the films. All deaths of gang members occur either in the Crises or Denoument/Resolution phases of the films. (The accidental death of the pedestrian in Devil's Angels initiates plot complication.) In general, when death functions as a crisis experience, it represents the high point of conflict between gang and adversary and brings about a fundamental turning point in the action by forcing the gang to resolve once and for all intolerable conditions in their life-style and in their environment. It constitutes the last in a series of either real or imagined provocations which carry the gang beyond the point of no return in its dealings with society to more extreme behaviors aimed to resolve external and internal stress. Obviously, death acknowledges the presence of a very real external threat to the gang's survival in the form of the police. "Survival" is not always to be equated with actual physical existence, however. It may apply to the desire for autonomy (The Wild Angels), for equal justice—"getting a fair deal"—(The Wild Angels, Angels From Hell) as well as to the desire to avoid constant harrassment and incarceration (Devil's
Angela). In whatever form the survival instinct takes, though, gangs perceive an increased danger to their integrity and unity when gang members are killed by police.

Not quite so noticeably, death to gang members exposes significant internal threats to group existence. For one thing; the gangs suffer the loss of something approximating a spiritual essence, or at least a kind of sustaining force. The death of the Loser in *The Wild Angels*, the most free spirited gang member, constitutes a staggering blow to a gang deeply committed to autonomy as the goal in life. Similarly, Speed's murder in *Angels From Hell* makes the gang despair of ever securing equal treatment under law. Speed did nothing to provoke the police, and by nature he was a pacifist who would not harm the proverbial fly. If the police conspire to kill an innocent such as Speed, equality for more hardened disreputables appears virtually impossible.

Furthermore, death contributes to the weakening of group structure by challenging the efficacy of group norms and codes. Rank-and-file members respond to death with diffuse anger or agony, but gang leaders are forced to consider the injury suffered by them from the point of view of their own leadership responsibility and general workability of gang codes. Introspection of this kind leads Blues to confess to Mike, "I blew the whole thing for the Loser," and his subsequent moody withdrawal from her and the rest of the gang weakens the gang's internal order by increasing dissention among
members. Mike does not hold himself accountable for the death of his friend to the extent that Blues does, but he clearly recognizes the inadequacy of his approach in dealing with the law. By planning to trigger Speed's funeral into a riot, he changes their tack from passive resistance to manifest confrontation. His sudden policy of "brinksmanship" sparks the revolt of two of his closest supporters, his best friend Smiley and his girl friend Ginger.

Revenge

When death of gang members occurs toward the end of the films, when it accompanies efforts made by gang members to resolve internal and external conflicts, it stands as a metaphor for purgation, regeneration, and defeat. In spite of whatever sympathetic treatment motorcycle gangs receive in earlier phases of the films, their deaths testify to the efficacy of a rigid, dispassionate moral law which requires punishment for those who defy society by rejecting its proscriptions. The slogan for this law is the Old Testament admonition, "An eye for an eye," which also happens to be Mike's last words before police shoot him off his motorcycle.

The occurrences of death are not unpatterned. Deaths to lower echelon members during the crisis portend inevitable death, mutilation, or abandonment of gang leaders as the system works to expel and destroy its enemies. No gang leader escapes some form of avenging punishment. Mike and Daniel are
shot; Tampa is left near death after a fight; and he, Blues, and Coody are abandoned by or abandon their gangs. While society acts to punish gang leaders with unusually extreme forms of defeat or estrangement, police act as agents of society to interrupt or end accepted gang activity in a less extreme fashion. Police close in on the leaderless gangs in The Wild Angels and Devil's Angels, and after their leaders have been killed, armed police surround the gangs in The Born Losers and Angels From Hell. The gang in Hell's Belles vanishes into the Arizona desert in open rebellion against their leader.

From the point of view of the motorcycle youth, the acts of aggression and alienation which end these films mask a deep-seated sense of disgust and despair in the face of what, for them, is certain defeat. This sense of the futility of life for them is contained in statements like the one Blues makes to Mike in answer to her urgings to ride away before police arrive to break up the fight with Sequoia Falls citizens: "There's no place to go." The same resigned sense of defeat is written on Coody's face as, after dropping his colors in the dust, he rides away from Brookville just before police arrive to break up the riot. No gang goals are accomplished; in fact, their very opposites are confirmed: freedom begets restriction, honor merits insult, and justice spawns anarchy.

Motorcycle gangs are punished and defeated because they
have violated proscriptions for conduct and morality. Crime begets punishment—an eye for an eye—though we may be seduced into identifying with the "deviate" for most of a film. Their crime, essentially, is non-conformity: all specific acts of delinquency and serious criminality fulfill details of a perverse scenario composed of mutual expectations which takes on a self-prophesizing quality. All acts of gang violence are matched and, in some instances, surpassed by acts of aggression committed by society. By implication, the justification for these acts rests upon the need for society to purge itself, once and for all, of undesirable anti-social elements and thereby to rejuvenate itself. Justification becomes more tenuous, however, in light of the self-prophesizing violence scenario. In the end, it is less clear whether society is genuinely purged by its punishments of known disreputables, or whether society commits acts of self-mutilation by punishing only those who reflect what is present in society to begin with.

Provocation

As useful as it is to observe the totalistic nature of gang violence as a reaction to provocation, it is necessary to examine what constitutes provocation in order to get at the symbolic implications of the violence. Once we are clear about the nature of the provocation, we can better understand the purpose of the violence and its goals. Contrary to what
one might expect of delinquent persons, gang members never destroy or abuse property because they enjoy the act of destruction. A great deal of orgiastic activity might accompany the process of destruction once it begins, but the partying does not celebrate the thrill of destroying per se. Gang destructiveness is expressive or— is symbolic of— other issues.

Wholesale destruction represents a gang's final, futile, resolution of its conflict with society. It is not surprising, therefore, that the films end with these actions or planned actions. Catastrophic violence breaks out after a point of no return has been reached. As the films unfold, we watch as the gangs receive insult after insult until they cannot tolerate any more. They have taken enough; they have been backed into a corner; all possible means of accommodation or escape have been exhausted; the situation is hopeless; they can either give in without a whimper— like Eliot's hollow men— or fight. In either case, however, they know they will lose in the end.

The destruction of the church in *The Wild Angels* is "provoked" when the gang finally and fully realizes the extent of its imprisonment by society. The central theme of the movie is about the gang's quest for freedom, and it is expressly and defiantly stated by Blues to the minister:

Minister: How art thou fallen from Heaven, on Lucifer? Woe be unto them who call
an identity crisis has become a kind of verbal badge of honor, a notch in the gun, a scalp in the belt—it points to fundamental issues of adolescents in all societies that are particularly heightened in our society. Since academic pursuits, on the whole, tell the student so little about life's ultimate purposes, students are turned back upon their own resources to answer questions such as, 'What does life mean? What kind of person am I? Where am I going? Where do I come from? What really matters?''

The clinical significance of identity crisis, especially in terms of young people, has been well documented in the literature, as well as its "popularity" or "stylishness." Eminent Harvard psychologist Erik Erikson first used the term "ego identity" in connection with his treatment of World War II veterans at Mt. Zion Veterans' Rehabilitation Clinic who, though suffering no physical injury as a result of combat, "had through the exigencies of war lost a sense of personal sameness and historical continuity." By the time of the publication of his seminal work, *Childhood and Society* in 1950, Erikson was able to conclude that the study of identity had become as "strategic" an issue in our time "as the study of sexuality was in Freud's time." As he phrased it, "To condense it into a formula: the patient of today suffers most under the problem of what he should believe in and who he should--or indeed, might--be or become..."
evil good and good evil! Thus said Isaiah.

Blues: (mockingly) Thus said Isaiah. Hey, man, did you ever say anything on your own?

Ugly: We just want to be left alone, dude.

Blues: Yea, we don't want anyone telling us what to do. We don't want nobody pushing us around. (cheers)

Minister: I apologize. But tell me, just what is it that you want to do?

Blues: Well, we want to be free, we want to be free to do what we want to do. We want to be free to ride our machines without being hassled by the Man. And we want to get loaded (loud cheers), and we want to have a good time (lower assents), and that's what we're gonna do. We're gonna have a good time. We're gonna have a party. (Wild cheers).

The whole tone of Blues' remarks belies his superficial arrogance, for the film documents the extent to which the gang is not and can never be free. When at last the minister offers him empty cliches as a formula for living, Blues finally becomes aware of how isolated and entrapped they are. The minister illuminates the nature of this reality and so "provokes" Blues to fatal awareness. His call for violence is a desperate attempt to deny the truth.

The Skulls are particularly sensitive when it comes to matters of pride, and the destruction of Brookville stems directly from provocative insults suffered by the Skulls at the hands of police and townspeople.

To LeRoy, the gang lost face when Coody agreed to Sheriff Henderson's order to camp outside of town and promised to prevent trouble. He urged Coody to break his promise and "go into town and fix the Man;" and get the "nice, safe people
out of their nice, safe homes." When Coody is unfairly accused of rape, gang honor and pride are irreparably damaged. The thought of seeking revenge upon the town becomes "a righteous idea"—it's a matter of honor, of principle. When Coody addresses the Sheriff in the gang's mock-trial of Brookville's citizens, deliberate, unfair, insult seems to constitute the town's most serious offense toward the gang.

Sheriff: You boys are digging a deep hole.
Coody: Maybe. No, you stand up and you keep right on standing. You know we came into this burg in a peaceable manner, but all you nice citizens did was insult us, rough us up, and throw us out of here like a pack of mad dogs. Now don't you think you owe us something for that?

Spokesman for the town respond antagonistically, and the gang sacks the town. The town owes the gang an apology for treating them like "mad dogs," an attitude that would insult anyone with even a shred of pride and especially those, like the Skulls, keenly defensive about their own worth. Intolerable insult provokes the Skulls to violence, while the violence itself is pathetically intended to show Brookville how wrong it was. As LeRoy says, "We're gonna show 'em we're beautiful people, too, Coody."

The Bakersfield Angels are similarly provoked beyond endurance to the point where only violence seems to be the means to settle the differences between them and society. The key issue to them is "fairness," though they are also concerned about autonomy and their own integrity. Their approach
is probably the most realistic of the three gangs: they don't expect complete freedom but they do expect, and are willing to live with, a certain measure of harrassment and insult. What they do expect, however, is fair treatment: equal rights under the law. Largely through its leader Mike, the gang exhausts all means to secure this right. When gang member Speed is roughed up by the police, Mike "works through the system" to protest what happens: "In case you should forget, Captain, the law is just as much for us as it is for your righteous citizens. And there is a procedure for arrest which does not include working someone over in the back seat of a patrol car before you've even booked him."

Conflict between the gang and Bakersfield police reached a climax when Speed is killed in a sloppy police interrogation episode. Police claim he was killed while resisting arrest, but the gang considered this action real evidence of anarchy. Ironically, they feel themselves victimized by police lawlessness: their rights and safety are threatened by the very persons charged with protecting and guaranteeing these rights. Awareness of their vulnerability in the wake of selective law enforcement "provokes" the gang to adopt violent measures for its own self-defense. Mike's plan to bring 500 bikes into Bakersfield to riot is indeed paranoid, but to him, the times seem to demand violence as the only means of survival.
The Struggle for Autonomy

"Authority" constitutes any person, place, or thing—generalized or specific—that attempts to confine, isolate or pressure gang members. In gang vernacular, "mother" is the most degrading epithet for an authority figure; it no doubt refers contemptuously to conditions of their childhood when their own mothers, archetypes for all subsequent authorities, over-protected or over-punished them. Police, the "Man," are their most common persecutors, but in the films almost every other type of authority figure, from minister to employer to Joe Citizen, appears. Their most odious impersonal antagonist is their lower class socio-economic environment which confines them, seemingly permanently, to a world of zero profit and maximum exploitation. All authorities are to be resisted. Again in the vernacular, nobody "hassles" them.

Battlelines solidfy around conflicting concepts of freedom. Motorcycle gangs approach the issue from the point of view of their rights, privileges, and "freedom to"—license. Freedom has no arbitrary limits. Their position is deceptively old fashioned: initially it appears radical, but is in reality distinctly conservative. Like many of their other orientations, their stance here is an antediluvian throwback to the days of unfettered laissez-faire economic and philosophical opportunism. Authorities who stand in opposition to them espouse the more modern—and hence less traditional and
orthodox—understandings of this concept. Instead of rights, they emphasize obligations, limitations instead of privileges, and "freedom from"—responsibility—in lieu of license.

A number of these issues are compressed filmically in the form of visual framing sequences which introduce two of the films, The Wild Angels and Angels From Hell. Using the former as an example, The Wild Angels begins in Venice, California, a Bohemian section of Los Angeles. Through the bars of a wooden fence in the foreground, the camera shows two little boys confined to their yard, with one boy riding a tricycle, the other in a playpen. The older boy rides out of the yard on his tricycle down the sidewalk in front of his house and is hotly pursued by his mother. The boy bumps into the front end of Blues' motorcycle just as his mother catches him. She shakes him and yells at him, "No, no, no, no!", then takes him to her bosom and kisses him. As the mother turns him around to lead him back to the yard, she looks up and the camera pans up and over to Blues. The mother returns with the child to confine him to the play area. The boy gets off his bike and stands alone.

The framing sequence, if not a direct revelation of the nature of Blues' growing up experience, symbolizes its essential features. Narrative point of view is on Blues; his facial reaction to what he witnesses—disgust tinged with resignation—elevates the ordinary episode in child management to arche-
typal significance. The scene is almost a perfect filmic corollary to identity crisis based upon unresolved autonomy conflict based upon over-protective mother management. The fence around the yard defines the child's restricted physical environment, and his emotional bondage is insured by his confusion and plausible inability to decipher his mother's mixed messages of anger, love, and guilt. Blues is the little boy grown up: his wooden fence playground becomes the iron bars of the Sequoia Falls cemetery surrounding Blues' final defeat. The overly-protective mother forms the rudimentary prototype for repressive or arbitrary authorities who rub shoulders with the gang, like the boss man who fires the Loser for talking to Blues instead of working and the minister who (inadvertently) mocks their grief, and the sullen boy becomes the defiant Hell's Angels delinquent.

The resolution of this theme in the films, like the other themes discussed so far, brings no appreciable gain in the collective identity growth of motorcycle gangs. If this conflict were to be resolved in a more positive fashion, we would expect to observe less pathological defiance of all authority by the gangs. They would tend to be less sensitive about their appearance, less defensive about their self-esteem, less disdainful of the judgments of others, less defiant in the face of criticism, more confident in their self-images, more tolerant of the judgments and opinions of others, and
more hopeful about the genuine opportunity for independent living. Predictably, the very opposite of these integrations occurs.

As the analysis of the introductory framing devices indicated, the motorcycle films begin in medias res as far as this theme is concerned. It develops on the basis of aggravations and provocations between the parties involved to the point where, in the resolution, gangs and authorities are completely polarized over the issue of freedom. Motorcycle gangs lose out in the struggle for the issue shifts subtly during the course of the films' development from how much freedom is permissible to devising schemes to foreclose all autonomous behavior. Four of the five films end with police in actual or imminent armed dominance over the gangs. In the fifth film, *Hell's Belles*, there are no police, but the gang's freedoms are completely curtailed by Dan whose relentless pursuit of the gang to recover the motorcycle stolen from him assumes great moral and ethical weight. He is only acting as an executor of a revenge-oriented legal code.

The development and resolution of the crisis of autonomy in *Angels From Hell* merits closer analysis because of the central position of this theme both in this particular film and in the entire group of motorcycle films. A detailed examination will enable us to focus upon the typical way in which this theme's issues are delineated to punish defiant
willfullness and to deprive gangs of legitimate rights. A case can be made for interpreting police behavior in this film as atypical which, one would hope, it is, but the extreme example better illuminates broad features of the problem which is our concern here.

From the point of view of the theme of autonomy, then, these are the major plot incidents in *Angels From Hell*: 1) the opening sequence during which Mike becomes suspect by a passing police officer, 2) Captain Bingham and Mike's first meeting at the gang's farm hangout after Mike has been sworn in as club president, 3) gang members tease and embarrass a rookie cop at the Go-Go Club, 4) police beat Speed up in the back seat of a squad car, 5) gang members retaliate by staging a fake kidnap at an all-night burger place—a policeman is thrown from his bike, chained to a post, and injured while attempting to help the abducted girl, 6) Bingham delivers an ultimatum to the gang to stay off the streets, 7) police shoot and kill Speed for allegedly resisting being stopped for "routine questioning," 8) the gang meets a group of hippies along the road on their winter run, 9) Mike announces his plans to turn Speed's funeral into a vindictive riot, and 10) Bingham and other police corner the gang at their hangout—Mike is shot attempting to escape.

Thematically, the plot unfolds in several directions. One of these is to show the police living up to the cari-
capture of them presented during opening credits and theme song. These notes have been presented in Figure 11 in Chapter III.

Subsequent police actions substantiate this highly offensive and derogatory image. Police beat Speed up only to avenge the harmless razzing of the rookie cop, hardly legitimate justification for such action. Even after mild reprimands by Captain Bingham, members of the police force, particularly the inexperienced patrolmen, persist in inexcusable acts of atrocity. Speed was not stopped for routine questioning; police planted marijuana on his bike to frame him on a drug rap, and if his murder was not shameful enough, Bingham does nothing to investigate the crime and punish the guilty officers for their unlawful conduct. This incident foreshadows the only logical conclusion to the film: Mike has to be shot because he is the real instigator of all the provocation. Gang members, presumably, are only agents of his grand strategy to foment trouble and terrorize the countryside. This act of purgation is relatively easy to enact because the police, ironically, are shown to operate totally beyond the lawful limits of their authority.

As shocking as this portrayal is, of more immediate concern here is the effect police lawlessness has upon the attempt of members of the motorcycle gang to delineate the proper scope of their own independence and extent of their
rights as citizens. Mike is obsessed with this task; it is his point of inquiry in every confrontation with Bingham. After Speed is beaten up, Mike focuses on the real issue before demanding an investigation, "in case you should forget, Captain, the law is just as much for us as it is for your righteous citizens. And there is a procedure for arrest which does not include working someone over in the back seat of a patrol car before you've even booked him."

Mike returns to this issue after Speed's death for, though the specific event is different, the same basic principle is involved: their rights as citizens. He finds a kindred spirit in the leader of the hippie commune:

Hippie: It's always a gas getting away from sick city. Man, we can't even walk down the street without getting hassled about our hair or our rags.

Mike: Squares don't like anything different.

Hippie: Yea, it's like we want to hurt them or something, huh? I mean, like all we want to do is to be left alone to do our thing. You know, I'd like to take my people and split this whole scene.

Mike: Then why don't you?

Hippie: To where, man? It's the same sick bag no matter where you go. Hey, everyone's uptight over property rights. What ever happened to civil rights?

Mike: You're hip, man. That's because squares run the scene. Trick is to show them you've got the same kind of rights as they do. We don't want them to love us, just leave us alone.

In the end, Mike's obsession turns to paranoia because the incidents of unchecked police brutality finally awaken him to the realities of his quest for equal rights under the law.
In 1968, in *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, Erikson's subsequent studies convinced him that the "strategic" issue of identity crisis had particular relevance to a general, more comprehensive approach to the study of adolescence, that the symptoms of identity crisis manifested in patients with severe disturbances were more typical, if less extreme, of basic conflicts and experiences attending the phase of adolescence in American society. Erikson expresses the significance of identity crisis to adolescence in this way:

And as has always been the case in the history of psychoanalytic psychiatry, what was first recognized as the common dynamic pattern of a group of severe disturbances (such as the hysterics of the turn of the century) revealed itself later to be a pathological aggravation, an undue prolongation of, or a regression to, a normative crisis "belonging" to a particular stage of individual development. Thus, we have learned to ascribe a normative "identity crisis" to the age of adolescence and young adulthood.10

The tangible and visible evidence of identity crisis, the strategic and normative (for young people) issue of our age, is abundant. About the college scene of the last decade, for example, volumes have been written tracing the origins and development of student rebellion and relating the phenomena of campus protest to significant mass expressions of a quest for identity.11 Studies have been made about the sources of student protest, typologies of student protesters, value themes characteristic of student protest movements, endemic conditions of higher education conducive to protest, and aspects of industrial society which contribute
there are no abstract, constitutionally ordained, rights and freedoms to which "people like himself" are entitled. They are provided, or withheld, at the discretion of society and the truth is that unless they fight for them—unless they take the law into their own hands—they will not be "given" any privileges. Even Bingham himself dimly perceives the danger involved in allowing those assigned to enforce the law to presume legislative and judicial functions as well: "Now when it becomes a crime riding a motorcycle down the street, it's a bad day for all of us."

Ironically, Mike and his gang become threatened by agents of the very social mechanisms responsible for protecting their existence as autonomous beings. The alternative to rational principles of law and order, of course, is the law of the jungle. With the high beams of police squad cars shining at them out of the darkness and surrounded by a cordon of armed police, Mike chooses this alternative as the only means of survival in what appears to be total, stark, anarchy.

Bing: All right. This is it. Now I want you to pack up and get out of here. And I mean out of the county. Now if I catch one of you guys hanging around after the noon hour tomorrow, then you're going to jail. And you're going for a long, long time. Because you guys have had it. There's no place left for you. No place. I don't even think the zoos would want ya.

Mike: Hey, just what the hell are you putting down? You can't do this to us. What'd we do? What's the charge? You know we're citizens. We have rights. You know the law was designed just to protect the squares, it was designed to protect
us, too. All right, damn it! (he has gotten Bingham's gun) It's no kick, is it? That the way you want to play the game? Ok, we'll play it that way, because I've taken all the crap from you I can swallow Bingham! Now we are splitting, you dig?

Bing: Yea, so why don't you leave? Nobody's going to stop you. Now hear me. Put them down. (he's telling his boys to put their guns down) He's free to leave. That goes for your friends, too.

Mike: Yea, it's a free country. You can't tell us what to do.

Bing: You're free to go Connery. But don't you think you ought to button up your shirt before you go?

Mike: You're damn right we're free to go. Smiley, get my bike, we're splitting. Smiley, get the bike. We're splitting!

Bing: Get his bike.

Mike: Got a big surprise for you, Bingo. (waving gun in his face) One of your Gestapo killed an innocent citizen, Speed. And when we come back to the funeral, I'm gonna bring 500 choppers in through your town, and there's nothing you're going to do about it. The whole world's going to know. Bingo. TV and the movie people. They'll all be at the funeral. An eye for an eye. (he is shot off his bike as he rides away)
CHAPTER VI

ROLE AND ROLE DISCONTINUITY

Role Analysis of Motorcycle Gangs

The Instrumental Use of Violence

It should be obvious from the previous chapter that most motorcycle gang delinquency is based upon violence. Violence not only governs most gang activity but also provides the primary identifying and organizing element of the motorcycle subculture. We have already noted the ubiquity of violent gang activity. It characterizes both intra-group behavior and inter-group relationships, especially the latter. We have also discussed how gang members carry out violent acts. In situations which call for aggressive action, all gang members are equally obliged to respond to their aggressor with the intention of complete annihilation. Finally, some of the uses and meanings of violence for motorcycle gangs have been discussed: protection and defense in direct threat situations; punishment for gang members who violate group norms; symbolic expression of despair and self-hate; an autistic means of conflict resolution; retaliation
for attacks upon gang honor. While each of these instrumental uses of violence has implications in terms of the conflict pattern of delinquency, the manipulation of force or the threat of force to earn the respect of peers and the fearful deference from the adult community is of particular relevance to a role oriented approach to gang use of violence.

When Mike punishes Dennis for stealing bike parts belonging to other club members in Angels From Hell, his use of force preserves respect both for what the gang stands for and for himself as leader. He could not permit Dennis' act to go unnoticed without suffering a loss of respect for his leadership ability, and by the same token, any punishment short of force would have damaged his reputation for toughness. The obnoxious behavior of the Skulls in Devil's Angels and of the gang in The Born Losers is also partially role motivated. The Skulls disrupt the Brookville festivities to try to "force" the townspeople to go beyond their unreasoning hate, or in LeRoy's terms, to accept them as beautiful people, too. Their intentions could be summarized by the hypothetical question: "What do we have to do to get you people to accept us as human beings and not animals?" The gang in The Born Losers is isolated by community indifference and fearful avoidance. Though there are occasional citizen
and police altercations, the basic community attitude seems to be that the gang will go away if nobody pays any attention to them. Part of the gang's strategy for violence, then, seems to be to coerce recognition and attention from the Big Rock populace by force or the threat of force. Their goal might be stated: "What do we have to do to get you people to acknowledge our existence and recognize that we are not invisible creatures?"

These examples, plus others that could be cited from the other films, illustrate the central position of violence in the motorcycle subculture from the viewpoint of a role. All other gang codes crystallize around or are in some way related to the norms pertaining to the use of violence. Norms not only define role positions within the gang and gang activities, but also determine group organization and the way in which a society or subsociety can be differentiated from other societies organized around other proscriptions. Violence, therefore, functions as the primary identifying and organizing element of the motorcycle subculture.

PLATE I

TWO OPPOSING CYCLE GROUPS IN A WILD MELEE IN HELLS BELLES
PLEASE NOTE:

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Group Characteristics of Motorcycle Groups

Totalitarianism

The structure of motorcycle groups is predominantly totalitarian, complete with well-defined positions of authority and subservience; privileges, responsibilities, and sanctions; special insignia, costuming and jargon; and various discriminatory and brutal initiation ceremonies. Of the above mentioned items, the most visible— and shocking to non-gang persons— evidence of gang identity is their appearance. In every film but Hell's Belles, the initial appearance of the gang in a conventional setting triggers immediate revulsion, hostility, or fear. In The Wild Angels, a worker notices Blues talking to the Loser and, after ordering the Loser back to work, reacts strongly to Blues' costume:

Worker:  What's the iron cross? You one of those dumb Devils?
Blues:  Yeah, what's it to ya?
Worker:  Well, if you guys had been at Anzio you'd know what that junk means. You wouldn't be running around with iron crosses and swastikas hanging all over ya.

We have already mentioned the reaction to the Skull's appearance by civic leaders in Brookville in Devil's Angels. Sheriff Henderson aptly speaks for the entire community when he vents his disgust at the way the gang looks:

Sheriff:  What do you want here, trouble?
Coody: Oh, no sir. We're just looking for some place we can flake out.
Sheriff: We don't want you here.
Coody: Why not?
Sheriff: Why would anybody want a pack of junkies with filthy clothes plastered with emblems, who constitute a mobile disturbance of the peace and who do everything to antagonize and frighten the general public?

In the other two films, non-verbal and visual sequences replace overt expressions of alarm at the gang's appearance. Townspeople literally run in terror from the gang in The Born Losers—except for the unfortunate boy who foolishly swore at them—and a policeman in a squad car immediately puts Mike under surveillance when he starts to work on his motorcycle in Angels From Hell.

Most average persons are extremely offended by the appearance of motorcycle gangs because of their pseudo-Nazi costuming and filthy demeanor. Formally organized bike clubs have a basic membership insignia design which they attach to the back of a leather or denim-type jacket, usually sleeveless. The emblem for the Born-to-Lose gang, for example, consists of a naked woman nailed to a cross with a spear, bearing a swastika on one end, through her ribs. Many gang members ornament the basic costume and emblem with other Nazi artifacts—goggles, helmets, pilot hats, wings and other
military insignia—or other outlandish accessories such as weird sunglasses or jewelry. Motorcycle gang members often appear to be physically unkempt, unwashed, and due to a general sense of overwhelming raw physicality, decidedly depraved. Usually the combination of erotic physicality and Nazi-like costuming is enough to provoke an image of a gang's brutal, sadistic, totalitarian nature. If not, the addition of other highly visible features of gang life, such as the motorcycle and specialized jargon, would more than likely convince even the most skeptical observer as to the nature of gang society.

Persons or types
Within the gang itself, there is a clear pecking order or hierarchy based upon power and/or expedience.

The leader
There is one dictator-leader who has the final say in matters of group conduct, though he may solicit advice and opinions from other gang members. The leader's decisions may be challenged but he is usually strong enough or intelligent enough to back up what he says. In some cases, he might be able to personally beat his challengers in a fight, as Mike does by beating then-gang leader Big George in Angels.
From Hell, or lacking superior strength himself, he may have access to it. In Hell's Belles, Tampa is in a position of incontestable leadership because he has the unwavering devotion of his best friend, Gippo, who also happens to be a mindless brute. In still other situations, leaders are able to defend their decisions on the basis of clearly superior intelligence. When leaders can convince their members that their decisions are the smartest—i.e., that they will get more or come under less danger—consensus usually follows.

It must be added that while leaders shoulder the frequently hazardous responsibility of directing and disciplining their gangs they are also entitled to enjoy the fruits of their labors and conquests. The leader's special obligations are matched by special privileges, including first choice of whatever women are available. Invariably, gang leaders are in possession of the most attractive—i.e., sexiest—girls who hang around with or are members of the gang or seek out the most desirable women as spoils of their conquests. In Hell's Belles, Tampa enjoys an apparently uncontested right to sexual intimacy with whatever gang woman he chooses. He originally chose Cathy, the film's heroine, but expelled her from his favor and the gang when a jealous girl friend accused her of cheating on Tampa. Tampa then "made" her
to and aggravate campus unrest. Keniston differentiates between the political activist and the alienated dropout, and Bennett Berger writes of the "new students"—ghetto youth, middle-class radicals, and identity seekers—who are "preoccupied...with 'identity problems' and moral protest," and who "when their numbers are large enough to enable them to turn to each other for mutual support...collectively turn against the system of criteria which derogates them and, in a manner not unanalogous to the 'reaction formation' of slum delinquents who develop a subculture in opposition to middle-class school norms which judge them inadequate, develop an anti-academic viewpoint which defies abstraction, logical order, detachment, objectivity and systematic thinking as the cognitive armory of a repressive society, productive of alienation, personal rigidity and truncated capacity for living."13

The focus of protest goes beyond rejection of particular educational practices or institutions to include a more important and sweeping revulsion against the values implicit in middle-class life: conformity, anti-aestheticism, materialism. Students of the 1960's did not invent the disgust for these aspects of bourgeois society which, so Keniston tells us, goes back at least to the writing of Melville and has flourished in various bohemian subcultures in some of our large cities since the turn of the century.14

What is important about the present student manifes-
become the gang "mamma"—available for sex at any time with any gang member who happened to be in the mood. Ginger (Angels From Hell) and Vicky (Born Losers) are examples of beautiful women possessed by right of conquest. After Mike defeats Big George, his election to the presidency of the Bakersfield Angels functions as his entre into Ginger's bedroom. The film implies that her voluptuous pleasures are only available to whomever happens to be the club leader. In The Born Losers, Daniel is the one who notices the revealingly attired Vicky and makes her the prize for the first one who catches her. It is not clear in the film whether he ever assaults her sexually, but it is clear that he is extremely aroused by her and that the attacks made upon her by others are done only with his permission.

The "right hand man"

Next in rank after the leader are male members of the gang who enjoy special favoritism with the gang leader. In all the films, the gang leader has one trusted friend and confidant with whom he identifies very strongly. This friend functions as the leader's staunchest supporter and admirer. He is the typical "right hand man." These characters are easily identified in the films: The Loser in The Wild Angels, LeRoy in Devil's Angels, Smiley in Angels From Hell, Gippo
in *Hell's Belles*, and Child in *The Born Losers*. Except for occasional overt statements of mutual affection, the films do not dwell on the exact nature of the close bond between leader and sidekick, although it sometimes appears to be related to a leader's desire to compensate for a lack of certain physical or mental traits. As example, the Loser seems to embody a rarefied sense of free spirit lacking in Blues, and Gippo possesses an abundance of strength which Tampa finds admirable and expedient. This is not a consistent pattern, however.

As far as the totalitarian structure of the gang is concerned, these characters provide the blind loyalty and submissiveness without which the gang leader could not function effectively. Their loyalty and devotion comprise the backbone of group solidarity for they speak for the rank-and-file member. The group literally cannot continue to exist without this kind of grass roots support. Motorcycle societies, like other authoritarian organizations, depend upon a delicate balance between autocratic leadership and a willingness to be led. It is the old story that no matter how arbitrary and cruel a leader is, he still needs followers willing to tolerate and even support these methods of governing. When the willingness to be dominated disappears,
authoritarian societies crumble because leadership is deprived of the source of its power to command.

The bond between leader and closest ally clearly substantiates this characteristic of totalitarian subsocieties. In all but one case, a fracture of the bond precipitates the end of the gang. We have already noted the consequences of the Loser’s death upon Blues and the gang in The Wild Angels. When Gippo’s body is dumped before Tampa, the rest of the gang disperses and he eulogizes over the body of his best friend before the fatal battle with Dan for the bike:

Well, Gip, it looks like just me and you again. Just like always. Hey, remember that time last year in San Angelia when we got drunk and blasted up that joint? While you were holding them off, I cleaned out the till and the cops arrested one of them waitresses and blamed her for it. Those were good times. You can’t hear me, can you? I’m sorry, Gip. I’m really sorry, man.

In two other cases, best friends successfully defy orders or plans of their commanders. In Devil’s Angels, LeRoy overrides Coody’s desire to forget about their grudge with Brookville and continue looking for hole-in-the-wall, a fictitious sanctuary for outlaws; and in Angels From Hell, Smiley rejects Mike’s plan for Speed’s funeral. LeRoy wants to ride into Brookville and settle the score, while Smiley wants to settle down in Bakersfield and hang up his colors. In both instances, rebellion in the ranks foreshadows the ultimate internal collapse of the gang.
The "rank-and-file"

Rank-and-file members come next in the hierarchy, and their small measure of fame rests upon their claim to some kind of unique physical trait, personality idiosyncrasy, or a kind of congenital character disposition. We may cite as an example here a scene from *The Born Losers* where gang members are introduced to Vicky as part of her initiation ceremony.

Child: Let's do it official. They call me Child, after Christ child, because of my compassion and gentle nature. (The gang laughs.)

Vicky: Vicky.

Child: You like Danny, huh? He's something else. But when he gets mad, he goes crazy. Wow! Clear out, man, clear out.

Daniel: Oh, but Child, here, he's the real mother. Fight at the drop of a hat. Took on four of our best one night, and at the next meeting we made him vice-president.

Vicky: Why not? Wouldn't any club?

Daniel: Oh, and Cue-ball here, he's another punch-out artist. And Speechless here, he's a dummy. Shake hands here. Stepfather cut his tongue out when he was a kid. Go ahead. (Speechless opens his mouth and grunts in Vicky's face.) Drink a beer, go on. And Gangrene here, he's the biggest mother of them all, man. He can lift a car without a jack. We call him our diseased King Kong. (They roar with laughter.)

These group members are useful in a fight and fun to be with at a party, but they are a liability in many ways. They are easily led, which usually makes it easy for the leader, but it also makes them susceptible to the influence
of any strong person or to unwise counsel. They lack the self-discipline and loyalty of the leader and his next-in-command, which makes them more prone to disregard group rules to satisfy their own desires and to cause senseless trouble. In some cases they are also treacherous, as when Billy contradicts Coody's deal to keep the Stompers in line and provokes them to riot in Brookville.

Women

Women are at the bottom of the gang hierarchy. The three kinds of women associated with motorcycle gangs are: "old ladies" are women who belong to one gang member, "mamas" are gang prostitutes, and "broads" are all non-gang females who happen to come into contact with the gang. With one exception, all of the women who belong to the gangs or associate with them choose to do so. Broads, as we have seen, respond to the gang's overt sexuality and want some temporary excitement or sexual experience free from parental constraint. Old ladies and mammas too, choose to affiliate with gangs, and in this context it will be instructive to provide an illustration of how a girl becomes a gang mamma. The following example of initiation into a club as a mamma comes from The Born Losers. The gang explains the procedures to Vicky, who is the one exception referred to above whose
contact with the gang is involuntary. Presumably, however, the ritual is the same for women who choose to become mammas.

Girl: She looks o.k. I think she'd like to become legal.
Dan: Would you like that, chick?
Vicky: Like what.
Dan: To become legal, become one of us.
Vicky: I don't know. Depends on how expensive your dues are.
Animal: Not very expensive. All you have to do is turn out a little.
Vicky: Turn out to be what?

(Later at the beach house, after gang members are introduced)
Well, does that complete my initiation?
Child: Not if you want to be a mamma. You want to be a mamma?
Vicky: Oh, I'm sure. What's a mamma?
Crabs: Oh, you want to be a mamma. Anytime a loser gets lonesome or needs a little, he just goes to a mamma and she takes care of him. Anytime at all.
Gangreen: I'm gonna like having you for a mamma.
Vicky: And just how is a mamma initiated?
Dan: By getting it from everybody.
Vicky: Neato. All at once or just one at a time?

As a whole, the films are noticeably negligent in motivating the allegiance of females to motorcycle gangs. At first glance, the films seem to imply that they, like the broads, want sexual excitement and experience, only on a full-time basis. They are young, beautiful, buxom, available, and, as in this example from *Hell's Belles*, frequently persist.

PLATE II

JOCELYN LANE AS 'CATHY' IN *HELL'S BELLES*
in their demands for love-making:

Cherry: Tampa, how long are you going to play with that dumb old thing? (referring to the motorcycle he has just stolen) Tampa!

Tampa: Cherry, baby, it ain't even broke in yet.

Cherry: Well, neither am I. Besides, you'd have a hard time making love to it. I'd be much nicer.

Tampa: Oh, let's get it done with.

From the point of view of their frankness about their desire for sex; their aggressiveness and willingness to accept degrading, sadistic sex rituals and behavior; and the lack of traditional courtship and marriage commitments as goals of their sexual behavior, the motivations of females in regard to their relationships with gang men are intended to be unconventional, almost shockingly so, leading to the conclusion that motorcycle women are as depraved as the men. How else could one justify their voluntary association with gangs notorious for acts of delinquency and depravity?

Beyond these impressionistic conclusions based upon wild party orgies, sex talk in crude motorcycle vernacular, or occasional bedroom intimacies, other evidence suggests that even in unorthodox motorcycle society women play traditional roles based upon the exploitation of their sexual attractiveness to satisfy basic needs for love, affection, and security. In The Wild Angels, both Mike and Daish are strongly attached to their respective boyfriends, Blues and
the Loser. Mike even goes so far as to talk about their love for each other when their relationship is threatened by Blues' reaction to the Loser's death. Both women react to their emotional crises in fairly conventional ways. Daish assumes the role typical of the girl-in-mourning and Mike plays the familiar part of the love-struck girl pining away for her lover who no longer loves her.

In *Hell's Belles*, Cathy reveals that she accepted being a mamma because the gang provided her with a basic sense of security. She stayed with the gang after losing favor with Tampa because she preferred the known degradation of the gang to the anxiety produced by the thought of having to make it on her own.

Cathy: For the last two years, they were the closest thing to family I ever had.
Dan: What happened?
Cathy: I was accused of cheating on my man.
Dan: Tampa? Were you?
Cathy: No! I had the feeling he was cooling off, so I messed around with another guy to make him jealous. We got caught....we weren't doing anything--but that lying bitch Cherry swore different. The guy got beat up and run off, and I was thrown to the wolves, up for grabs....anyone....anytime....
Dan: Made any plans yet?
Cathy: Well, it looks like I can't go back.
Dan: You mean you'd want to after all they've done to you? You still feel for him?
Cathy: Oh, I can see you've never felt that strong about anyone.
Dan: Well, I have the good sense to know when to walk away from a bad bargain.
Cathy: It's not always that easy.
None of the gang women occupy positions of leadership, none exercises any authority, and none has any real independence. They are completely dependent upon their boyfriends of the moment for whatever respect and status they have. In fact, as Cathy demonstrates, gang women fear independence above all else. When Tampa trades her off to Dan in a swap for the motorcycle, she simply is unable to leave Dan, whom she claims to hate, even though she has many opportunities to begin a new life on her own. Ultimately, as we might expect, she becomes serious about Dan— it is doubtful that she has fallen genuinely in love with him— and wants to go away with him to start a new life.

The point is that Cathy's clinging dependency typifies the behavior of motorcycle gang women. Whatever they have is given to them by male members of the gang. In return for security, attention and affection (largely centering around sexual activities) gang women are expected to be uncompromisingly loyal and sympathetic to their boyfriend, or the club as a whole if they are mammas. They are also expected never to refuse sex when their boyfriends are in the mood. Women fight to achieve and maintain their relationships with all of the conventional weapons of female warfare: jealousy, possessiveness, duplicity, aggressiveness, seductiveness,
and so on. In essence, gang females occupy low-status positions, assume traditional roles of inferiority and dependence upon men, and perform in a variety of feminine and sexual ways to satisfy basic emotional needs usually attributed to women. A woman's place and function in a gang is determined entirely by sex-role characteristics.

**Role Discontinuity**

**Rites of Passage**

As an adjunct to maturation, the individual passes from one stage of development to another. He "grows out" of one phase and "into" another. The process of transfer entails both great risk and great opportunity. The individual discovers that his previous attitudinal and behavioral patterns of adjustment are inadequate in the face of new tasks and challenges. His entry into an unfamiliar stage is characterized by perceptions or actions which imply greater strength, more complex mental and emotional response, and generally more substantial capability. By the same token, however, his more integrated development makes him vulnerable in new ways. Not only does he demand more of himself, but he is also confronted with new role prerogatives for which his previous training may have been insufficient. As the
tation of opposition to the premises of industrial/technological society is that it is growing and seems to be headed toward what Keniston labels "an internationalization of identity." Keniston and others have pointed out that student protest was not the dominant form of student activity during the 1960's nor are today's young people, on the whole, any more radical, liberal, or politically involved when compared to older persons. Moreover, the future of the youth movement beyond the 1960's was by no means certain, for its growth and intensification appeared linked to a number of critical factors, among them being the presence, during any given protest, of protest-prone personalities, and a protest-promoting institution, cultural milieu, and historical situation.

However, one reason why the student movement is important for study, despite the fact that as of the end of the last decade it encompassed only a small proportion of the total student population, is that it "is a symptom of social and psychological strains experienced by a larger segment of youth--strains not well understood or anticipated heretofore by social science." Allowing for the perpetuation of critical institutional, social, and cultural factors, we can indeed anticipate a global concern about identity problems, at least among young people.

Hastened by modern communications and consolidated by the world-wide threat of nuclear warfare, this
individual matures, he possesses expanded abilities, but he may lack preparation to assume new roles and to execute their proscriptions.

Society takes over at this point to assuage whatever anxiety and uncertainty accompany the role transfer process. Through various institutions and creeds, society presents ceremonies or rituals to lessen the trauma associated with the movement from one status position to another. Rites of passage render time meaningful by formally acknowledging the end of one phase of life and the beginning of another. Similarly, rites of passage avoid anxiety produced by ambiguous status by ceremonializing specific role prototypes and by providing linkage between the initiate's new capacity and a coherent social and cultural ethos. Crisis imperils the psychic identity of an individual in transit between stages of development by jeopardizing his status and his ability to relate to others and to his society on more complex levels. Rites of passage ameliorate uncertainty by neutralizing the effects of role discontinuity and by formalizing the dutiful acceptance of more mature obligations they permit the individual to relate in a more purposeful way to society and its ideology.

The more definite the ceremonies accompanying the
hazardous journey from position to position, the more role continuity, while greater indefiniteness of rites increases the likelihood of role discontinuity. Role discontinuity is a way of expressing what happens to an individual confronted with change. He does not know who or what he is and he doesn't know what to do because he doesn't know what is expected of him. In short, he arrives at an existential roadblock: life is absurd and meaningless. It has changed, but he is left in the dark as to why and for what purpose. Deprived of these larger understandings which would allow him to carry on effectively, he is apt to feel confused, anxious, isolated, and threatened. Individuals suffering from role discontinuity and feeling abandoned or betrayed by social mechanisms otherwise expected to shelter them from anxiety are apt to react pathologically or violently.

Motorcycle gangs experience discontinuity in every major area of identity formation. When their histories are plugged into the continuity model, the read-out never varies: crisis leads to role discontinuity. In some cases, discontinuity arises because they have lacked sustained contact with social mechanisms which facilitate resolution of the problems they face.
Work paralysis

The category of occupational choice is a case in point. Almost total work paralysis is one of the outstanding givens of life for motorcycle gangs. Their extreme alienation from any kind of productive work ethic is highlighted by the virtual absence of any overt or implicit treatment of this theme in the motorcycle films. It is not included as a motif in any degree in two of the five films, and it receives only cursory attention in the three others. The Loser, in The Wild Angels, is the only full-time gang character out of the twenty or so major and minor characters in all the films who has a job, but he is fired from it—his fourth job in five months—immediately after the film's opening credits.

It is indeed ironic that motorcycle gang members can jest about their inability to provide for their own support, as seen in this example from Angels From Hell.

Ginger: ....What about you? Planning on taking a job at the packing house next....
Mike: Packing house? That's for slobs. When I get settled I'm going to re-open my law practice.
Ginger: Are you a lawyer?
Mike: Yeah, and a brain surgeon. Me work in a packing house? I can get a job working any place.

From this example, their position as hard-core unemployables carries with it a certain amount of dubious status. It functions as a kind of badge which testifies to their special
niche on the bottom of the economic ladder. By the same token, however, there is more than just a kernel of truth behind Mike's braggadocio. There is no reason why many, if not most, gang members could not find adequate employment. They are not geniuses, but neither are they unintelligent. Moreover, they appear to have substantial mechanical aptitude, at least in regard to bike mechanics. A partial explanation of this situation is that they seemingly have chosen not to work in conventional jobs. Seemingly, they would rather do nothing than work at jobs which only provide financial security without opportunities for special non-mone­tary rewards or accomplishments. This attitude is a curious one, coming as it does from persons ostensibly the least qualified and able to contribute to society.

For whatever combination of reasons, motorcycle gangs have practically no contact with social institutions—educational programs, vocational training, skill development, apprenticeship or internship programs—that could help resolve their inability to find mutually acceptable work roles in society.

**Lack of faith, hope, and trust**

Religion is another institution which fails in its attempt to provide motorcycle gangs with a modicum of rever-
ence and respect for the meaning of life. Faith buttresses all of man's other needs and relationships. With faith, man is able to reach out and expand; he is able to believe that life means something basically good for him. Without faith, man is lost; if he cannot believe that life itself is essentially worthwhile, he cannot believe in the meaningfulness of his own existence.

Motorcycle gangs have very little contact with formalized religion. Their style of life has a decided kind of neo-Epicurean "live for today, the hell with tomorrow" self-indulgent quality. Indeed, the very names of their clubs testify to their religious bent. They would probably profess belief in some type of diabolical mysticism, Satan worship, black magic, or the like, if not blatant atheism.

Like the theme of industry, the theme of temporal perspective--the crisis of faith--appears in the films in a strangely modulated guise. A search for people or things to believe in surfaces in only two films, The Wild Angels and Devil's Angels. As we have seen, the death of the Loser leads to the fateful funeral sequence in the church in Sequoia Falls where Blues, speaking for the entire gang, uncharacteristically ponders the meaning of life: "The Lord never gave nothing for the Loser. What's all this stuff
about the Lord gave and the Lord taketh away?" In Devil's Angels, Coody pulls up roots to search for a present-day equivalent of Hole-in-the-Wall, a quasi-historical outlaw sanctuary:

LeRoy: We take one drink and there's the Man. We hop on our cycles and the Man is on our tails. The Man is out there and he's gonna bust us all.

Coody: Joe, Joe. Ah, you want to tell them the story of Butch Cassidy you told me?

Joe: Cassidy was an outlaw. He had maybe 400 men under him, and they had their own town, a place called Hole-in-the-Wall. They had a canyon up in the pass and the whole cavalry tried to catch them and couldn't. Like they was home free. Never did get caught.

Coody: Well, I've decided we're gonna split from this pad. We're gonna pick up our old ladies and whatever little we have and we're gonna put on our colors and we're gonna roll. And neither man nor beast is going to stop us until we find a place where we can blow our own piece. And we're going to love each other. I love ya, LeRoy.

Coody's and the Skulls' fervent longing to regain a "lost paradise" where they can be free from all external dangers and where their emotions can run rampant is a typical symptom of significant temporal discontinuity.

While these two examples exhaust the manifest instances of this theme, a fundamental lack of faith is implicit in virtually everything motorcycle gangs do in all of the films. The most deepseated conflict these young delinquents have is that they have no faith in anyone or anything, including themselves. With no faith, they cannot trust themselves or
others, obligate themselves to others or to worthwhile causes, or enter into mutually satisfying relationships with persons who do not belong to their gang.

Because it is basic to the process of identity formation, resolution of time discontinuities stands as the most difficult task members of motorcycle gangs must make. It is complicated by the uniform confirmation of their worthlessness as human beings. Gang members and members of the larger social community feed on each other's fears and exploit mutual potentials for mistrust and violence in a deadly showdown aimed at displacing latent societal vices by outlawing certain types of people and styles of life. Negative confirmation of this sort functions as a self-perpetuating stigmatizing device whereby, once an individual is branded as some kind of social "deviant," less and less evidence is needed in subsequent situations to elicit the same kind of confirmation.

The general configurations of temporal perspective in the films point to unresolved discontinuity. We are already familiar with the circumstances which prevent the Skulls from continuing their search for Hole-in-the-Wall, but we find out in the end that their odyssey was doomed to futility from the beginning. Coody achieves the exact opposite of everything he wanted: he wanted permanence—he rides off
aimlessly into the uncertain future; he wanted to go with
his colors on—he drops them into the dust before he leaves;
he wanted to love his friends—he rides off alone; he wanted
security—he leaves Brookville with the wail of police sirens
in his ears. The burning ruins of Brookville emerge as a
perverse image of his ideal utopian hideaway.

The resolution of The Wild Angels reveals the travesty
of religious authority when applied to the experiences of
members of motorcycle gangs. The minister's attempt to ex-
plain the spiritual significance of the Loser's pathetic
life and violent death is full of condescending bombast,
vacuous cliché, and pretended sympathy (dialogue presented
in Chapter V). Were it not for the serious implications of
the scene, it would stand as the comic high point in the movi
The total incongruity of a stereotyped small-town minister
mouthing biblical platitudes over an unshaven corpse dressed
in motorcycle garb, complete with swastikas and other Nazi
accessories, to a congregation of similarly attired mourners
slouched in the pews is indeed mind-boggling.

The travesty points to the fact, however, that religious
doggerel of the kind espoused by the minister cannot lessen
the immediate crisis of death and its generalized relative,
the crisis of faith. The minister literally speaks in a
foreign language when he talks about the Loser being "just like the rest of us," his opportunities, and his kinship with all of humanity ("Everyman is part of the continent," etc.). The experience of Blues and the rest of the Angels confirms exactly the opposite. They are loathsome outcasts, they have no opportunities, they do not belong anywhere; in approaching the minister with a legitimate spiritual crisis, they are not looking for cheap advice, meaningless platitudes, or gratuitous sympathy, but rather for some insight to make their burden of isolation and despair more palatable. The minister's council only serves to aggravate their anxieties and frustrations.

The films conclude that it is impossible for members of motorcycle gangs to resolve time discontinuities and to achieve a less chaotic and menacing understanding of the future. Motorcycle gangs have no outlets for hope or dedication, though they do not lack the raw elements of commitment--passion, loyalty, courage. They lack belief--in themselves, in significant others, in the system. Under these circumstances, time and the future take on threatening and inscrutable features of chaos. The persistence of time discontinuities raises fundamental questions as to whether society can afford to deprive some of its members of a sense
of the future and, indeed, whether it can withstand the upheaval bred by such deprivation.

Role Models

Identity crisis for members of motorcycle gangs also stems from their inability to identify with adult role models which would provide scope and direction to their initiatives and facilitate cooperative alliance between young adults and elders. Their inability to identify meaningfully with persons other than gang member peers--i.e., to accept the proscriptions of roles which carry the badge of adult status--produces severe role discontinuities which have the effect of institutionalizing their marginal status as full-fledged members of society.

Taken as a whole, almost all basic adult role categories are "presented" to motorcycle gangs in the film for potential emulation. The implied ideal message behind all adult role prototypes is, "if you would just do what I tell you to do, everything will turn out all right." From a practical point of view, the latent admonition is, "don't do as I do, do as I say." Sheriff Henderson in Devil's Angels comes the closest to actually verbalizing unstated role imperatives when he offers this piece of unsolicited advice to the Skulls after
trend involves (the internationalization of identity), in vanguard groups in many nations, a loosening of parochial and national allegiances in favor of a more inclusive sense of affinity with one's peers (and non-peers) from all nations. In this respect, American student activists are both participants and leaders in the reorganization of psychological identity and ideology that is gradually emerging from the unique historical conditions of the twentieth century.\(^{19}\)

There are those, like Orrin Klapp, who believe that the world-wide explosion in identity crisis was well under way by the late 1960's. His book, *Collective Search for Identity*, elaborates his view which is, briefly, that the decade of the 60's gave birth to a number of mass, collective movements aimed at restoring or finding a new identity. These mass movements are characterized by ego-screaming, costume and self-ornamentation, style, emotional gesturing rather than practical behavior, hero worship, and cultism.\(^{20}\)

Man is a symbol-making and a symbol-using animal: he also needs a certain critical balance between discursive and nondiscursive symbolic activity to feel psychologically satisfied. Most of the trappings of affluent society short-change people in the kinds of "psychological payoffs" contained in nondiscursive symbolic activities, rituals, fads, fashions, myths, mystiques, and so on. Modern social systems tend to upset the delicate psychological equilibrium necessary for the consolidation of a firm sense of identity by generating feelings of inner emptiness in the face of external
telling them they aren't allowed to camp in Brookville: "Life might not be beautiful if you cooperate with the law, but it will be a lot simpler."

The parental model

The composite parental image reflects various inconsistencies and contradictions. At the extremes, some parents are portrayed as permissive and indifferent (Vicky's father in *The Born Losers*) while others are strict and overly-protective (LuAnne Crawford's father in *The Born Losers*). Most parental characterizations reflect an inconsistent and ambivalent blend of tolerance and intolerance, love and hate, concern and indifference (the mother in *The Wild Angels*, Linda Prang's parents and Jodell Shorn's mother in *The Born Losers*). There is only one portrayal of a gang member's parents. In *The Born Losers*, gang leader Daniel's father is shown beating up Daniel's younger brother in front of the police station. Unspecified disobedience is the implied justification for the thrashing; it leads to Jerry's break from family ties, such as they are, by joining the gang.

The predominant methods of parental control are either force or the threat of force or the exploitation of sibling guilt: "If you don't do as I say, I'll knock your block off," or
"If you don't do as I say, I (mommy or daddy) will be hurt and will not love you as much any more." While motorcycle gang members do not witness most parent-child encounters—and, indeed, most have rejected their own parents long ago—these portrayals provide for the film viewer some evidence as to why gang members have renounced parental guidance.

In general, the prime proscription of the parental role encompasses all "guidance" functions which when put into practice become "regulatory" devices. In any event, the role of parent seems plagued by anxiety, conflict, and mutual emotional drainage.

**Occupational prototypes**

Occupational prototypes are similarly characterized by the lack of promise which they extend to members of motorcycle gangs for the satisfaction of their potentials. Manual labor offers the promise of low-status and red-neck bigotry (*The Wild Angels, Angels From Hell*), business jobs offer smug respectability based upon callous self-seeking (*Devil's Angels, Angels From Hell*), social welfare types have nothing to offer lower-class losers (*The Wild Angels*), and of course the career of law enforcement stands as anathema to everything they consider worth living for. In no
instances are there illustrations of desirable work roles from the standpoint of motorcycle gangs for the reason that, by definition, all "work" roles demand subservience to duties, obligations, procedures, responsibilities, time schedules, and the like. To gang members, to commit themselves to something that "has to" be done eight hours every day according to the way some "boss" wants it done solely for the money would be to compromise all their freedoms, especially the freedom of choice—to do or not to do what they please. By the same token, work roles presented in the films are repugnant to the gang members not only because they require the forfeiture of essential freedoms, but also because of the type of person attracted to the various jobs. We see smug businessmen (Linda Prang's father in The Born Losers), ineffectual ministers (The Wild Angels), and a wide variety of disreputable police types (defensive in Devil's Angels, vindictive in Angels From Hell, cowering in The Born Losers). It is a moot question whether the role degrades the man or vice-versa. Of ultimate significance is that neither jobs nor men are worthy enough to attract the loyalties of motorcycle gang members.

The Negative Identity

There are no persuasive positive models of effective
interrelationship or of citizenship. Identification with compelling role models in these areas would foster engagement in relationships of genuine intimacy and discovery of a meaningful ideological climate. Members of motorcycle gangs fail to identify with them because of familiar deficiencies in both the role models and the role performers. They choose instead a negative identity based on offensive and dangerous roles and identifications which society has endeavored to derogate or avoid.

All of their orientations, preferences, and behaviors are diametrically opposed to conventional norms: dress (idiosyncratic vs. bland), behavior (violent vs. rational), manners (offensive vs. considerate), politics (authoritarian vs. democratic), economics (socialistic vs. capitalistic), morality (hedonistic vs. puritanical), and religion (infidel vs. Christian).

Polarization between the role constructs of motorcycle subsociety and roles of society can be plotted along a continuum measuring overall social and personal freedom. The continuum could be graphically represented by a line connecting terminal points labeled "individualistic" and "conforming." Other adjectives such as "flexible," "open," and "permissive" might cluster around the "individualistic" pole.
while adjectives like "inflexible," "closed," and "ordered" might cluster around the other pole. On the basis of non-qualitative film evidence, motorcycle roles group around the "individualistic" pole while those of society crystallize around the "conforming" pole. This observation reveals the extent to which individuality, as a code of life, has fallen into disfavor and disuse by the majority of society. Ironi-cally, the negative roles of motorcycle subsociety appear to contain the last vestiges of the kind of "rugged individuality" once so central to the beliefs and behaviors of Americans. We may continue to pay lip-service to this creed, but the man who is truly "his own man," a man with no ties or obligations, has now become a liability in a machine-age civilization.

By formalizing the differences between them, the choice of a negative identity permits those belonging to motorcycle gangs to live "freely" according to their own dictates to the extent social pressures allow. It necessitates finding, and in some cases defending, a niche of their own against excessive or hollow role ideals demanded by various spokesmen for society. Expressions of a wistful nostalgia for a protected sanctuary is related to the theme of temporal perspective (see the discussion of this theme vis-a-vis Devil's
Angels) and occasionally surfaces in their folklore, as for example, in the theme song of Devil's Angels:

No place of their own
No place they can be alone
No where they can go
Where the people don't know
That they're Devil's Angels.

In Angels From Hell, Smiley sings a song as part of the celebration following Mike's election to the presidency. The song, apparently titled "Someday," echoes the gang's hope that things will be better following the fortuitous change in command. The song's plea is to "shake off labels and chains" and to "take off the chains of all the isms. No more war, greed, big bombs, no busts, taxes, prisons, bigotry." Civilization, again, is the mortal enemy of man's freedoms; the negative identity is an attempt to immunize against its effects.

Another of the functions of the negative identity is that it allows members of motorcycle gangs to regain some semblance of control in a situation in which all available means of contact with society preempt their initiatives and erode their capacity for self-sufficient functioning. As we have seen, they are less willing to become passive cogs in the well-oiled machinery of society. "Passivity" politely describes the dubious status one achieves by relinquishing
all rights and prerogatives; security and stability are gained at the expense of active mastery over one's life. Presumably, they derive more satisfaction along these lines by totally identifying with what they are least supposed to be than by struggling to fit the mold of acceptable roles which limit self-actualizing possibilities.
CHAPTER VII

INTIMACY: RECIPROCAL NEGATION

The theme of intimacy pertains primarily to relationship patterns in the films. It refers to those relationships of a genuinely "intimate" nature, sexual as well as non-sexual but, like other characteristics of motorcycle gangs, more will be said about the lack of intimate affiliations and the implications of its absence in terms of identity growth.

Ample film evidence reveals that motorcycle gang members abortively resolve situations which confront them with intimacy as an alternative means of determining a relationship. This theme appears in all of the films, but in order to assess its true significance in the total scheme of the motorcycle dramas we need to remember that intimacy refers to a broad range of identifications and partnerships. The importance of this distinction is that, while sex plays a very visible role in the context of the films, other types of relationships mirror an almost total affective isolation of which sex is but a part. Commonalities in film treatment of this theme reinforce this view. With the qualified exception of the relationship between Dan and Cathy in Hell's Belles, no "sex affair" functions as a unifying plot.
or thematic element. Sex incidents, such as the outrages in *The Born Losers* and various party sequences in all of the films, receive colorful but fragmentary narrative focus. On the other hand, the style of interaction, not only between motorcycle gang members and their sex partners but also with other segments of society, often adds a deeper level to their behavior not fully discernable in their sexual activities.

**Sex Patterns**

One of the invariant features of gang life is the bond that exists between the gang leader and the girl who "rides" with him. In the films these pairings are: *The Wild Angels*—Blues and Mike, *Devil's Angels*—Coody and his unnamed Old Lady, *Angels From Hell*—Mike and Ginger, *Hell's Belles*—Tampa and Cherry, and *The Born Losers*—Daniel and his un-named Old Lady. Of these twosomes, Daniel and his Old Lady are the only married couple and the only ones with offspring. Apparently, however, parenthood carries with it negative status for as Daniel's Old Lady cautions Vicky after acknowledging the fact that they are married and have a son, "Don't tell anyone; it might ruin his reputation."

Consistent with the norms of the negative role to which they subscribe, the criterion which determines the nature of these relationships is not the desire to communicate honestly but to avoid the demands of true genitality. These relationships are highly tentative; in no case does
a girlfriend remain loyal to a leader through a series of crises. In four out of five cases, the girlfriend abandons her boyfriend, presumably to enter into similar tentative identifications with some other gang member. The absence of deep emotional attachment in these relationships is made possible by minimal efforts to communicate meaningfully about problems. None of the women is humanized by complex characterization; as noted earlier they are motivated by basic love, security, and status needs. While their boyfriends often have more substantial problems, the girls invariably discuss these issues in self-centered terms.

For example, in the scene between Mike and Blues on Medic's boat in The Wild Angles (dialogue contained in Figure 8 in Chapter III), Mike has the opportunity to expiate the guilt Blues feels for having caused the Loser's death. To accomplish this, she needs to know Blues and understand the real issues facing them. By adding to his guilt by emphasizing how she has been affected by his moroseness, she reveals the kind of typical communicative exchange between male and female gang members.

Limited commitment, shallow emotionality, minimal substantive communication, and self-centeredness constitute the main features of male-female stereotyping in the motorcycle films. Void of substantive content, these relationships operate upon formalized rituals. Gang codes determine sexual attitudes and behaviors in much the same way they define rank and privilege within the group. Because sexual
abundance, boredom from mechanization and technology, loss of traditions and places, shallow and transient relationships, meaningless role requirements, tentativeness regarding basic social concepts, weakening of a sense of individual worth in the face of the conformity, accumulation of predominantly abstract information, and personal estrangement from communal realities through the disuse of rituals and myth.

The effect of such trends, expressed by feelings of extreme self-consciousness, alienation, lost potential, or despair, motivates collective gropings for new activities and symbols to restore the sense of personal identity. Klapp expresses his view this way:

The idea is that collective behavior is not just expressive, nor is it merely practical, but it is an effort, more or less successful, to create symbols which give meaning to oneself, hence, on the larger scale, to restore symbolic balance to society...there is a disturbance of symbolic balance—a loss of nondiscursive symbolism—behind the identity problem of modern times. This is an important reason why it may be said that society "cheats" in being unable to "pay off" emotionally...if man is a symbolic animal, then when things go wrong with him, it is likely that his symbols will also go wrong—cause, effect, or both. Identity, as I see it, is a symbolic matter—a meaning attached to a person which he is able to attach to himself, with the help of the responses of others...

During the 1960's, five more or less distinct forms of rebellion surfaced in our society and converged around the identity issue. These forms of protest, still going on today to some degree, were: ghetto violence, new left activism (SDS, FSM, SNCC, ADA), radical right extremism,
relationships between male and female gang members are identical throughout the entire group of films, the pattern and nature of interaction are predictable. The man is the boss and acts in stereotyped masculine-aggressive ways. The girl is the clear underling: devoted, submissive, fearful of her leader-master. As Cherry warns a girl who expresses sympathy for Cathy, the girl ostracized from the gang by Tampa, she may be the next "swap" if she is not more discreet.

The network of interpersonal communication between gang members "going together" does not operate on a person-to-person level, but rather their interaction is predicated upon familiar situational and contextual cueing. By this is meant that the conditions of the relationship are imposed formalistically by a kind of rough, but recognizable, scenario which governs how couples relate. As long as the conditions fit the script (partying, love-making, bike riding, bike runs, minor scrapes with the law, gang fights, and so on), the relationships are fairly stable and couples can relate superficially on these "activity" levels. In the face of genuine crisis, however, these relationships crumble because there is no provision in the script for true devotion, sustained emotional support, or compromise. The inability to communicate which is revealed during moments of crisis only exposes the overall incapacity for intimate exchange. Couples literally have nothing or very little to say to one another when the need is greatest for the sharing of problems and mutual emotional support.
These stereotyped behaviors obviously impede the development of genuine intimacy which requires the full fusion of sexual as well as non-sexual aspects of personality, ego, and character. This style of interaction is not accidental nor do gang members seem to wish it otherwise. Formalized, tentative methods of interpersonal communication function to protect individuals uncertain about their identity who fear a total obliteration of self through true engagement with others. By falling back upon familiar rituals, cues, and gestures in situations which threaten self-abandon, they are able to guard an inner core of feelings by keeping others at a distance. The bond between couples in motorcycle gangs may be strong, but the source of that strength depends upon role prescriptions. Fear of loss of identity through romantic commitment, of having one’s vital essences absorbed by another or of having them exposed during abandonment, motivates the typical motorcycle gang member to isolate himself by participating only in formalized interpersonal relationships.

Even in the one film where a romantic affair is developed from beginning to end, the sexual consummation of the relationship does not celebrate genuine intimacy but rather a kind of promiscuous dalliance without true fusion or real self-abandon. The relationship—between Dan, a straight, hard-working cowboy in the Southwest and Cathy, a long-time gang moll—takes place in *Hell's Belles*. Their fates inad-
vertently cross when Dan is caught by the gang trying to recover a motorcycle they have stolen from him. Gang leader Tampa uses this fortuitous event to expell Cathy from the gang for disloyalty to him. Tampa swaps her for the motorcycle, and she is forced to accompany Dan as he pursues the gang across the desert to Mexico to regain possession of his bike.

As a by-product of the chase-and-run adventure, Dan and Cathy overcome initial animosity, get to know each other, have sex, and plan tentatively to live together after the bike business is settled. Cathy's attraction to Dan seems to represent a totally new kind of identification with a man and a background foreign to her frame of reference. He is industrious, hard-working, self-employed, apparently forgiving and understanding, and he has roots and a sense of direction: he plans to use the bike he won in the contest as a mortgage payment on his ranch.

On the other hand, Dan also exhibits many aggressive traits similar to those demonstrated by Tampa in his relationship with Cathy and Cherry, his latest girlfriend. Dan orders her around, manhandles her, gets jealous of her, and ultimately fights for her. In the end, his character develops close to full circle so that he is not unlike Tampa, except for the fact that he has begun to take hold of his life to some degree. As Dan himself confesses to Cathy, he doesn't hate her friends because he knows "the other side
of the coin": he, too, was going nowhere until he bought his ranch.

From Cathy's point of view, her relationship with Dan appears motivated more by curiosity than by the arousal of legitimate personal feeling or by a serious desire to change her way of life. In the end, Dan defeats Tampa and is heir to both the motorcycle and Cathy, but she chooses to go back to Tampa. In another context, Cathy's decision was explained by stating that she preferred the known certainties of gang life, degrading as they are, to the uncertainties posed by the possibility of living with Dan.

In this context, her affair with Dan is tentative and conditional. It represents a hasty, and somewhat desperate, attempt to find herself, to start life all over again. Her despair, coupled with her unrealistic involvement with an improbable partner, testify to her basic sense of bewilderment about who or what she is, what she wants, and where she belongs. What she finds in Dan is part mirror image of herself and Tampa and part unfamiliar premonitions. By abruptly committing herself to Dan, and by just as abruptly rejecting him when all obstacles inhibiting their complete union disappear, she reestablishes contact with familiar identity components and renounces new alternatives. She demonstrates an incapacity, stemming from unresolved insecurity, to abandon herself in a total fusion with another person whose different way of life ultimately threatens her with continued
anxiety. The closing theme song metaphorically expresses the ego's quest to find stability in the plaintive cry of the lonesome drifter returning home:

Goin' home now
Well, I'm headed home now
Goin' home now
Yes, I'm gettin' home.
I been traveling
But I'm headin' home now
I been travelin' babe
But I'm headin' home now.

Isolation

This example brings into focus the essential characteristic of the pattern of interpersonal relationships within gang society: isolation. Whether in formalized or stereotyped engagements or in the desperate affiliation with unlikely partners, basic motivations and functions remain the same. Gang members are so unsure about themselves that they are unable to withstand the pressure of intimate commitment. Psychologically, this "pressure" is a fear that intimacy will lead to the extinction of one's own personality, to the extent that it is recognized. The varieties of interpersonal communication are defense mechanisms which serve to isolate gang members emotionally while allowing them more time to resolve or forestall consolidation of a firmer sense of identity.

Severe estrangement and isolation characterize non-sexual relationships between motorcycle gangs and adults as well. They have no close non-gang friendships to speak of,
no leaders to inspire deep loyalty, no teachers to guide them in meaningful directions. Quite to the contrary, contacts between gang members and adults is marked by distan-
tiation, the very opposite of intimacy.

Sufficient material from the films has been presented thus far to indicate the extent to which distan-
tiation applies to the overall relationships of motorcycle gangs. The motorcycle subculture is distinct from the larger middle-
class milieu: one is "bastard," the other "legitimate;" one is "free," the other "regimented." Advocates of the motor-
cycle life style prefer isolation to intimacy. They want nothing from society except what they believe they are entit-
ted to by right. The boundaries between the "square" con-
ventional world and their own are sharply and cruelly del-
ineated. There is no "no man's land," no safe intermediary space, no truce zone: the two worlds are mutually exclusive. Gang members react violently to thwart any unwarranted vio-
lations of their territorial rights.

The two worlds share distanitation, a mutual capacity for polarizing mistrust, hostility, and vengeful repudiation. When the films are taken as a whole, distanititating remarks and behaviors made by members of motorcycle gangs balance with similar kinds of statements and actions of members of society. Below, several examples of dialogue are purposely rearranged to suggest the pattern of mutual distanitation.

**Repudiation:** Gangs--"I wouldn't come back to this burg if you handed it to me." (Coody, Devil's Angels)
"It's always good to get away from sick city." (hippie leader, Angels From Hell)
"My one mistake was moving to this town. It stinks." (Funky, Devil's Angels)

Society—"What are you, one of them dumb Angels?" (worker, The Wild Angels)
"Those are the Skulls. Adult delinquents." (Royce, Devil's Angels)
"Why would anybody want a pack of junkies with filthy clothes plastered with emblems?" (Henderson, Devil's Angels)

Mistrust: Gangs—"Hassled my mind, man. You don't never get a straight deal around here." (Loser, The Wild Angels)
"We take one drink and there's the Man. We hop on our cycles and the Man is on our tails. The Man is out there and he's gonna bust us all." (LeRoy, Devil's Angels)

Society—"They've raped before and they'll do it again." (Royce, Devil's Angels)
"Yea, those dummies are just stupid enough to try something." (Bingham, Angels From Hell)
"What do you want here, trouble?" (Henderson, Devil's Angels)

Isolation: Gangs—"There's no place to go." (Blues, The Wild Angels)
"There's nothing out there for us." (Coody, Devil's Angels)
"To where, man? It's the same sick bag no matter where you go." (hippie leader, Angels From Hell)

Society—"All right, Kerns. You're through. And get your friend down from there. And don't come back." (boss, The Wild Angels)
"Because you guys have had it. There's no place left for you. No place." (Bingham, Angels From Hell)
"We don't want you here." (Henderson, Devil's Angels)

Hostility: Gangs—"I'm going to cut your bowels out." (Daniel, The Born Losers)
"Gippo, 'When we get him, I'm going to tear his head off with my bare
hands.' Tampa, 'No you won't, Gip, because he's all mine.'" (Hell's Belles)
"One of your Gestapo killed an innocent citizen, Speed. And when we come back to the funeral, I'm gonna bring 500 choppers in through your town, and there's nothing you're going to do about it." (Mike, Angels From Hell)

"No matter how wrong you are, you're right because you've got to win. You think we raped a girl and right away we're sentenced to conviction. You're not going to get away with it this time. You say we raped a girl, then I say we've got a rape coming to us." (Joe, Devil's Angels)
"You're boys have been leaning on us so much they're afraid to open their mouths. Why, you'd bust them for spreading germs." (Mike, Angels From Hell)

Society—"Vandals. Filth." (the mayor, Devil's Angels)

"Now if I catch one of you guys hanging around after noon tomorrow, then you're going to go to jail. And you're going for a long, long time." (Bingham, Angels From Hell)
"If I ever see any one of you in town again I'll see to it that you're put away for twenty years." (Henderson, Devil's Angels)

"I'll tell you what, faggot. You come down to the jail to visit me sometime, alone. And we'll lock ourselves in the cell together and see who comes out with the key." (Deputy Fred, The Born Losers)

Mutuality is the missing element in relationship patterns based on distantiation. Mutuality makes it possible for an individual to perceive the hospitality of others and the place he occupies in the personal and social world of others. The individual in turn becomes hospitable toward the existence of others and opens or expands his world to
include them. Members of motorcycle gangs and members of society repudiate each other, however, and exclude the other group from their own scheme of things. The turning away from intimacy toward distantiation leads motorcycle gangs into overall relationships with society based upon reciprocal negation.
CHAPTER VIII

IDEOLOGY: DEVOTION TO DEVIANCE

Ideology speaks loudest to those most uncertain about themselves and about the roles they are to play in the future; despair is the outcome of alienation from ideological imperatives. Those unable to identify with society through its ideology become obsessive in their search for someone or something to believe in, to be true to, to become devoted to, a search often mirrored in provocative testings of one sort or another or in brazen denunciations.

In its broadest sense, this theme takes the film form of "man against society," and from this point of view it defines the major thematic thrust in four of the five motorcycle films. This, admittedly, is a kind of "catch-all" that makes it possible to talk about individual expressions of alienation as thematic wholes. Sufficient specific citations have been presented to document motorcycle gangs' ideological alienation and their consequent exploration of new identifications as evidenced in the films, but this motif reverberates throughout the films--almost literally--as a function of pacing and symbolism more than as gross discontentedness and restlessness.

Locomotion is perhaps the most significant of these
style rebellion, and alienated dropouts—especially "Hippies." These groups had distinguishing features of class, ethnic makeup, tactics, and philosophy. Hippies, for example, mostly affluent whites, opted for drugs and passive resistance, and ghetto youth, mainly black, chose guns for violent, "mindless" protest.

Apart from their differences, however, these rebel groups displayed a number of fundamental common features: rejection of the existing order, suspicion and hostility toward "progress," revulsion directed against affluence and middle-class norms (except in the ghetto), and the absence of a genuinely sustaining ideology. In short, "all these movements have shown, and perceived themselves, that they have no place to go within the sensible alternatives of radical or conservative political and economic action...our society is generating rebellion which has no place to go..."22

We may therefore conclude that the significance of identity crisis in our time is an issue of manifest importance. For individual protesters—young and old, black and white, men and women, radicals and conservatives, long-hairs and short-hairs, establishment types and "freaks"—the paramount issue is the same: the search for an identity, a Grail-like quest for symbols and myths beyond those present in society which will lead to an expression or communication of identity leading to a transcendent sense of self-fulfillment and inner peace. And the mass
supportive thematic patterns both in terms of general rootlessness, roaming, shiftlessness and the like, and in terms of specific activities (movements)—such as dancing, partying, fighting, "plotting," and so on—that propel them away from or directly into persons or forces that relate to their search for a better or more comfortable way of life. The motorcycle, of course, along with its sexual connotations, represents the concrete objectification of throbbing, compulsive wanderlust. It symbolizes a style of life based on tentativeness and variability. It institutionalizes their reluctance or inability to commit themselves to any lasting principle, except the freedom born of constant movement.

Mutuality operates in the ideological area as well as in all facets of life, for just as society confirms what it finds philosophically and practically intolerable about the life style of motorcycle gangs, the gangs provide feedback about what they view as contradictory and demeaning in the ideology of the middle-class. In this context, we have already noted that members of motorcycle gangs are unable to identify with middle-class traditions because they lack respect for what its advocates stand for. Their experiences with adults have exposed them to persons who epitomize qualities the exact opposite of those which would inspire emulation. They do not find adult models who represent fairness in dealing with others, truth in assessments of reality, professionalism in occupational activities, or genuineness in interpersonal relations.
The Conflict of Values

The beliefs and values to which adults subscribe come across antipathetically in and of themselves. By assigning various ideologically significant statements and images in the films to several basic value categories, the extent to which ideology functions to confuse and exclude members of motorcycle gangs can be approximated.

Religious Values

The minister's sermon in The Wild Angels endorses a conventional belief in unlimited human enterprise based upon deep religious (Christian) conviction. It implies a moral orientation toward all human endeavor: one who ignores his "calling" becomes somewhat less worthy in the eyes of God. It is wasteful—sinful—to forfeit the "gift" of life. The fact of its being given carries with it a moral obligation to "use" it productively—to repay God through a life of "rightful deeds" for His generosity. A subtle contradiction emerges: one is free to do as he pleases yet at the same time he is obliged to work in the service of God. "To make of himself what he will" becomes a religious imperative to make oneself worthy in the eyes of God, not man.

Work Values

We are forced to approach work values circumspectly for, as has been noted, the theme of workmanship is practically the most invisible theme in the motorcycle films. Gang members themselves "do" nothing in a formal work sense.
Their general attitude toward work is that, like any commitment, it leads to the loss of freedom and the draining of vital potentials, but to go very far beyond the generalities would be to wade into territory not thoroughly substantiated by film evidence. There are numerous adults in the films who do work, and they tend to fulfill their appointed tasks in a dutiful, mostly ineffectual, joyless fashion. It would be hazardous to speculate, however, whether members of motorcycle gangs, if given the opportunity, would become as routinized or as mercenary as workers portrayed in these films.

It seems reasonable to conclude, however, that motorcycle gangs elevate work paralysis to a fundamental virtue attending their life style. Somewhere along the line, they repudiated a work ethic which defines an individual's worth by how hard he tries to become successful, how much effort he puts into achieving his career goals, how much he sacrifices along the way to accomplish his objectives, how thrifty he has been, how much he earns, or by accumulated affluence. These values, of course, are the economic canons of the American middle-class. Subscription to these values is rewarded by fame and success, the pot of riches at the end of the rainbow. Work paralysis is as much a rejection of these principles of economic opportunism by motorcycle gangs as it a rejection of their skills and aptitudes by persons and institutions which encourage this work credo.
Political Values

Political values vascillate between a "high" level of religious and lawfully ordained principles and a "low" level of expedient imperatives which, when acted upon, erode both the spirit and the letter of the law. We are already familiar with three specific situations in the films in which expressions of lofty political ideals become corrupted by expedient actions based largely upon exhorbitant fear. These fundamental political canons are: innocence until proof of guilt (Devil's Angels), equal rights under the law (Angels From Hell), and respect for duly constituted authority (The Born Losers).

In the area of its political proclamations, society acts upon a vastly different code that the one it professes belief it. Noble political values are set aside or forgotten in order to justify actions which take place on the fringes of the law or beyond it altogether. Political values become corrupted because pernicious civic interference upsets valid legal procedure. Vascillation between ideals and expedients undermines whatever respect for its political values society might otherwise hope to secure from members of motorcycle gangs, and it creates an atmosphere of hypocrisy particularly detrimental to resolution of conflicts of autonomy.
Social Values

Social values are perhaps the most odious of all to members of motorcycle gangs. They are told in no uncertain terms and in numerous ways that their social habits are unacceptable: their style of dress and appearance is indecent and unpatriotic (Nazi costumes), their actions are uncivilized, their manners are offensive, and their very presence in a civilized community constitutes a menace to the public at large. They are not welcomed into any community, and if they can't be driven out they are confined to specific areas where they can be controlled.

Social values presented in the films cluster around a number of inflexible mandates: get along, fit in, cooperate, stay in place, don't cause trouble, conform, don't question authority, settle down, get a job, get married, keep your nose to the grindstone. Society reinforces conformity and domestication and punishes waywardness and rootlessness. The clash between these social values of society and their opposites in motorcycle society accounts for much of the strain between the two groups because the respective social codes to which they adhere totally contradict each other. A physical law holds that a system's instability increases as elements within the system move away from its center to its extremities; so too does the social system depicted in the films become more unstable--more wasteful of human potentials, more violent, less reasonable--as communities and
gangs consolidate around polarized social values.

Gang members reject the kind of social values presented to them not only because they tie a man down to empty routines and sedentary roles but also because they stifle a human potential for contrariness under a cloak of pseudo chumminess and neighborliness. The explicit attitudes and behaviors of adults in the films imply that it is natural for everyone to like each other and to cooperate in homespun Golden Rule friendliness. Conversely, it is unnatural and abnormal for people to desire anything less than a family feeling for all humanity. Film characters fall all over themselves exposing this shibboleth. Not only do they hatefully and intolerantly exclude all those foreign by way of appearance or behavior, but they also demonstrate an appalling lack of goodwill when their own self-interest is involved. As with other discrepancies between beliefs and actions, gang members feel vaguely cheated out of a certainty promised to them, a certainty implicit in the ideological suppositions of society.

Moral Values

If social values are the most odious to gang members in terms of a style of life, moral values presented to them in the films of this type studied here appear to be most damaging in terms of the quality of life. As an extension of its essential religious and social beliefs, society adds the element of moral judgment to its method of classifying
persons and behaviors. Society goes beyond the systematic banishment of motorcycle gangs by attaching moral significance to these acts of purgation, the moral issues themselves justifying the actions to begin with.

Moral labels seem to possess an inherent danger which is that the labels themselves create the reality or the offense the labels describe, whether they exist or not, and require punishment over other forms of corrective response. Motorcycle gangs are not just iconoclastic, bizarre, independent; their differences are proof in and of themselves that gang members are also evil, bad, wrong. By branding motorcycle gangs evil, society proceeds to act as if they were evil to punish them for being evil. From this point of view, the motorcycle films resemble crude morality dramas for the broad sweep of action encompasses the inexorable pursuit, capture, and punishment of "known felons."

The quality of life is also defined by any given system of moral values. A sense of morality dignifies life by defining how and in what ways life itself is worthwhile. Moral principles reveal what a society genuinely cares for, the degree of respect it attaches to what it professes to stand for. Even the eye-for-an-eye sense of morality—the kind practiced by society in the films—would derive to provide social institutions and values a measure of integrity if it were truly believed to be the best way to regulate human relations in the best interests of individual and com-
munity goals.

Society, however, by the way in which it systematically exploits, avoids, or repudiates the very ideals and values to which it presumes fidelity, demonstrates a lack of respect and affection for its institutions and principles. Adults depicted in the films seem to operate in a kind of moral abyss, rejecting "others" outright through intolerance and themselves indirectly through hypocrisy. The lesson for members of motorcycle gangs is clear: they must reject society's moral principles in order not to abandon completely a search for codes of life which truly dignify existence.

Severe Identity Confusion

There is only one way of life—the Hell's Angels way—or the way of some other outlaw motorcycle club which, by definition, precludes pressure to choose a lasting career, the need for intimacy beyond sex, or to question the purpose of life.

Motorcycle gangs exhibit all of the symptoms of severe identity confusion: paralysis of function and minimal choice and commitment, except to the gang itself. The dilemma presented in the films is one of an entire adolescent sub-society self-consciously and defiantly exhibiting the most traumatic symptoms of identity confusion without an in-depth portrayal of the determinants of the symptoms.

For an unkempt biker on a stripped down Harley Davidson "hog" there is no alternative life style; hence, no need to
choose a way of life. Identity confusion is not a passing, though difficult, crisis: it is an unavoidable fact of life determined in part by their membership in a migratory, rootless lower-class. It is cliche to say that we are products of our environment, and the fate of the typical biker testifies to the most negative consequences of environmental determinism. Their identity crisis does not begin with a gradual awareness of specific troublesome decisions that have to be made but with a fatal recognition of "what the score really is" for marginals like themselves. What to most are normative problems in adjustment, are expressions of primitive survival urges for them. Occupational choice becomes the necessity to beg, borrow, or steal enough to survive without getting caught; intimate relationships are non-existent for people who harbor fundamental suspicions of everybody; and self-definition is impossible when their worthlessness is confirmed endlessly by society.

Regardless of place, circumstance, or behavior—or more to the point, because of these conditions and situations—the basic laws which govern exploitive, violent existence in the motorcycle world will not permit its members to go beyond these harsh realities. Motorcycle gangs share with many other lower-class "losers" an antisocial tradition centered around values which conflict with the codes of the larger social system. With so much against them—lack of education, limited skills and training, and an in-grained "negative" attitude—they can't expect to win any decisive
battles, but they can choose their way of defeat. Unlike most other outcasts who simply resign in the face of certain defeat, the motorcycle gangs in the films choose to go out in style with their "colors" on and their fists flying. Their violent protest at the hopelessness of life frequently leads to incarceration, dispersal, or death at the hands of those whom they have no choice but to victimize.
movements of our time, regardless of their prime motive and particular \textit{summum bonum}, are essentially "streams of the same river":

From this standpoint, individual pursuits such as philosophy and theology, and collective ones such as fashion, recreation, religion, and mass movements are \textit{streams of the same river}. They are part of a search for identity going on all the time—not only among disappointed and alienated people, but among many squares who feel meaninglessness. From the standpoint of the Establishment...the modern social system deprives many people of identity (cheats) in varying degrees, which have little relationship to economic rewards: that is, those who are well paid may feel emptiness. Such people are the first to become alienated, feel outside; the first to turn to rebellion, fads, poses, "kicks," or cults for meaning; and most likely to look outside for exotic, eccentric, non-square—-it may be deviant—opportunities.23

To bridge the discussion between the general comments about identity crisis in our society and more specific issues which relate to the life-style and experience of motorcycle gangs, we might offer as a postscript to the review of Klapp two additional ideas of his which focus directly on the identity problems of motorcycle gangs, one of which has to do with the nature of identity quest of social "deviants" and the other with aspects of style which have implications for their identity problems.

Motorcycle gangs are commonly lumped together with that class of hard-core delinquents, perverts, and social misfits known as "deviants." Klapp contends that, because of unusually severe identity deprivation, the deviant has a special claim, a "right" to deviate. Being outside the
CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary

We are just beginning to understand the complex dynamics which exist between messages generated by the mass media and the publics which receive and respond to media content. Through the social sciences we are also beginning to understand, or at least examine, the kinds of issues, values, and sensibilities mediated through the organs and messages of the mass media. Technological societies, especially our own, seem increasingly dependent upon media not only for information and entertainment but also as a conduit through and by which society mediates and reinforces itself. The controversy between libertarians and conservatives about "social responsibility" reflects the social context in which mass media have always operated, but in light of an emerging body of contemporary theory, we can no longer abide by narrow presumptions that the influences of mass media pertain only and exclusively to specific situations, issues, or audiences. It now seems more likely that the influences of media reverberate through more pervasive and significant social and cultural levels than heretofore thought. Speaking metaphorically about media message systems as "ballads" of contem-
porary society, George Gerbner suggests that:

The ballads of our age are powerful myths depicting its visions of the invisible forces of life, society, and the universe. They are blends of fact and fiction designed to reveal how things are or ought to be. They compel attention for their own sake. They inform as they entertain. They make entertainment—the celebration of conventional morality—the only collective drill in which most members of a culture engage with pleasure. Today's popular entertainment in news, drama and fiction has become the universal source of public acculturation.

Noted psychologist Erik Erikson and a number of other academicians have indicated the centrality of "identity crisis" as a post-World War II clinical problem, a phenomenon which seemed to spread pervasively into the mainstream of public consciousness since then and to reach its cultural zenith during the decade of the 1960's. The social and cultural afflictions of this era—political and "life style" revolutions, social strife, generational conflict, technological and economic displacement—represented symptoms of broadly similar mass movements to define, re-examine, create or destroy an inadequate sense of ego wholeness, a firm sense of identity.

This study is an attempt to explore relationships between these mass identity movements, from a theoretical point of view, and reflections of these movements in Hollywood feature films produced during the 1960's. Two basic theoretical and methodological constructs were employed: 1) Erik Erikson's model of the epigenesis of identity was used to devise a matrix for content analysis of filmic imagery, and 2) George Gerbner's Perception/Means and
Control communication model was utilized to examine corporate variables relevant to the production of the films, to broaden and deepen the analysis of the films by focusing on "gatekeeper" sensibilities and decision-making which functioned to mediate and control the content of the films.

A Steenbeck Viewing facility served as an indispensable tool for data collection, while an interview schedule was the primary device for the examination of institutional factors.

Aims of the Study

This research was motivated by three basic aims:

a) To make a descriptive and critical analysis of the screen portrayals of the theme 'identity crisis' in a selected sample of twenty-two American theatrical films produced and exhibited during the decade of the 1960's.

The main characters in all of these films were young people, "adolescents" in a sociological sense. Five motorcycle films made in the latter half of the 60's received major emphasis in the study.

b) To evaluate the role of producers and directors primarily responsible for the creation, planning, and production of these films.

The individual and collective functions of the "gatekeeper" were examined in order to relate the analysis of the films to communication theory and models—to focus upon the exercise of individual initiatives within the
restrictions of corporate structure and to examine potential philosophical and/or value systems of decision makers at a high production level.

c) To design an experimental method and procedure for film content analysis.

A review of methodologies of other film studies presented a limited choice of alternatives: either quantification (statistical) or non-quantification (qualitative data handling). The nature of the proposed research suggested a modification of past methodologies as a more appropriate strategy for analysis of the issues relevant to the proposed study as well as for future studies involving content analysis of feature films.

General and Specific Hypotheses

a) The design and execution of the research plan was conducted on the basis of one fundamental, underlying, assumption: the viability of a social science approach to film study.

Past studies and a growing body of contemporary theory substantiate the validity of sociological inquiry into film. From this point of view, films are social documents, records, which may be seriously studied as well as enjoyed and appreciated. The motion picture is not only an entertainment medium, it is also an institution with features, roles, and functions much like (in kind, but not necessarily degree) other social institutions. Because of the industry's social
context and function, therefore, a number of significant questions may be raised not only about the documents but also about who makes films and why, who sees films and why, and about how and upon what basis films may be evaluated.

It was also believed that, consistent with communication theory, other valid assumptions could be made from the research objectives of the present study. It is generally agreed that media reflect values systems, arouse and/or satisfy needs and desires, and in some cases create beliefs and wants. Moreover, it is reasonable to assume that media content contains meanings, consequential properties, and implications not readily apparent which overshadow the announced or immediate objectives of any particular film or its specific set of influences. As complex symbolic message systems which reach large masses of people, film images collectively perform one of society's basic functions: indoctrination of norms and customs and the preservation, through positive reinforcement, of the existing social order. Communication theory may be a way of formalizing an approach to some of these latent and manifest issues.

The study's specific hypotheses were:

b) Different patterns of identity are present in the screen portrayals of the various groups (film categories) of young people.

These differences in screen portrayals would have less to do with specific underlying causes of identity crisis than with effects and responses to problems common to the
characters in all groups. Moreover, it was believed that in addition to being able to define generally different configurations, it would be possible to identify more specific issues (themes) within each group which would be central to a particular pattern of identity quest. It was hypothesized that the screen portrayal of adolescent gangs in the motorcycle films would reflect severe identity dislocation, arrest, or disharmony. The films would reflect problems and circumstances which make successful identity formation difficult or even impossible.

c) The role of the gatekeepers is essentially self-fulfilling: the screen portrayal of identity crisis is largely the gatekeeper's version of this phenomenon.

Out of all the possible inputs into the production of a film, it was assumed that producers and directors had the clearest and most immediate responsibility for the production of the films and that it would be possible to identify and evaluate biographical, historical, and circumstantial factors relevant to goals and results of the films studied. Even though decisions about what the film-going audience wants or is ready to accept are often arbitrarily made, it was believed that producers and directors would see themselves as "spokesmen," as arbiters of a presumed mass audience "sensitized" to the theme of identity crisis. However, given the way in which individual, creative ambitions are often constrained by the economic realities of Hollywood
production, this aspect of the research was expected to reveal considerable conflict between individual and corporate goals.

d) A statistically significant correlation exists between matrix axes.

It was believed that the thematic identity variables along the horizontal axis of the matrix would be meaningfully and measurably related to the phases of narrative development along the vertical axis. Because both axes reflected movement through phaseology and sensibility—from simple (introductory, basic) to complex (culmination, resolution)—it was hypothesized that thematic development is related to film structure. This is to say, the Introduction of each film would be "about" mistrust of time, the Crisis "about" sex polarization, and the Resolution "about" ideology. On the basis of such a formalized relationship, one could make certain theoretical assumptions about compositional and thematic variables useful for further studies, and perhaps to the future production of films.

e) An essentially positive, conservative view of society is implied in the films taken as a whole.

It has already been suggested that film symbols, as collective myths, contain literal as well as hidden "meanings." These meanings pertain to what society is, its values and customs, and its concepts about what it tolerates and rejects. In regard to these extended meanings, it was
hypothesized that the film imagery would function to reinforce accepted, conventional strictures, that their impact would be reactionary rather than revolutionary.

Procedures

The procedures for executing the study were three-fold:

a) Pre-planning and design.

Ten pilot films from a total sample of approximately 250 films at the Library of Congress dealing with youth and identity crisis in the 1960's were viewed both for content and for use with the Erikson model for content analysis. From this preliminary investigation 22 films were selected from the total sample as sufficiently representative of those films made in the 60's which attempted to portray youth problems in a serious, realistic manner. From a review of story synopses, these 22 films were put into five categories based on geographical and socio-economic characteristics of the young people in the films, as well as style or type of identity crisis. A viewing matrix was designed for item analysis and data collection, consisting of a vertical axis, based upon conventional phases of narrative film composition, and a horizontal, thematic axis, based on Erikson's formulations of identity crisis. Because of the unique stop-start features of the Steenbeck viewing bench, the film scene was selected as the basic unit of item analysis.
b) The matrix was used to collect data from the films which were screened using a Steenbeck viewing machine at the Library of Congress.

After each scene, the Steenbeck was stopped and a separate grid sheet was marked. Dialogue from the films was taped concurrently with viewing.

c) The Gerbner communication model was employed to structure an approach for examining relationships between the message systems (film content) and institutional process (the Hollywood system responsible for manufacturing the content).

In this connection an interview schedule was prepared to focus on the motives of key production personnel, their beliefs and experiences, and larger social circumstances relevant to the production of the films made by each of the persons interviewed. Consistent with some of the provisions and dynamics of Gerbner's model, these extrinsic factors led logically to an examination of potential circumstantial influences on film content and to implicit issues attending the total decision-making process at the gatekeeper level.

d) Interviews with a total of seven gatekeepers were conducted in Hollywood a month or so after the films were screened.

Gatekeepers from the most important film(s) in each category were given top priority, although it was not possible in all cases to contact the desired people.
Conclusions

Representations of Identity Crisis and Youth

The data revealed significant differences in general representations of identity crisis for different types of young people and different specific issues (themes) relevant to each group. While data from films other than the 22 specifically investigated were not presented systematically, they did indicate the following trends:

Blacks

Of all the thematic categories of the Erikson model, black youth seemed preoccupied with discovering or creating a sustaining sense of ideological wholeness. This quest for a sustaining ideology was pursued partially in terms of racial traditions. It was, ultimately, a search for an ideology broader in historical scope and in human terms inclusive of race. Conflict in these black films centered around differences between what society promised—in material and human terms—and what it actually delivered. The black quest for identity was essentially an attempt to reconcile broken ethical and humanitarian promises of white society.

Rural youth

The identity quest of young people in this category was reflected largely in terms of the theme of role identification. The young people in these films were preoccupied with finding a "place" in adult society by searching for and
THE IDENTITY CRISIS THEME IN AMERICAN FEATURE FILMS, 1960-1969

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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Department of Photography and Cinema
system, the deviant is unable to experiment with behaviors and symbols acceptable to "the system," so he must turn to unacceptable and offensive "kicks" to find a purpose in life. As Klapp puts it: "An identity-deprived person takes kicks much more seriously than does someone who is satisfied with identity--what to the latter is merely fun is to the former his big moment."\(^{24}\) The deviant's rationale for justifying his "right" to defy and assault society could go as follows: "If the social order denies me a feeling of integrity as a person, something is wrong with it; therefore I have a right to go outside its codes to the extent necessary to find myself."\(^{25}\) As we shall see later, this kind of "claim" is echoed by various members of motorcycle gangs in the films.

A second, and far more visible "claim" motorcycle gangs make concerns their style of behavior--that is, their preference for outlandish uniforms and costumes which attend, accentuate, and mirror their particular kind of identity search. Style rebellion is a "symbolic protest against the social order and its styles, a turning away, accompanied by an unmistakable element of aggression."\(^{26}\) But style rebellion, far from being totally negative, espouses a cause: "It asserts another way of life. It claims the right to be something that convention has heretofore said one has no right to be. It is by spiritual example, not political action, a bomb against the social order."\(^{27}\)
emulating worthwhile and inspiring adult role models. The actions of these adult prototypes often contradicted their professed beliefs and values so that conflict in these films for young persons entailed resolving antithetical loyalties, peer pressures, and their own insecure judgments about who was "right" or what they thought they "ought" to do. The problem of discerning someone or something worthy of their fealty was a paramount dilemma for young persons from rural backgrounds regardless of socio-economic class.

**Middle-class "regulars"**

Middle-class young people who displayed symptoms of identity crisis short of actually "dropping out" of society tended to find and use others like themselves as recourse to their identity struggles. The theme of sex identification appeared as the strongest variable for both males and females in this category of films. As direct heirs to their parents' abundant collection of possessions and material things which they perceived lacking in spiritual substance, it is small wonder that these adolescents in these films turned from things to persons to replenish a sense of identity defined primarily in materialistic terms. These young persons were strongly motivated by intangible goals: love, security, happiness, togetherness, bliss, and so on. The emotional bond between male-female couples frequently led to physical sex as a consummate expressive act of their love, but more often than not intimacy led to disillusionment because,
ironically, it shattered the illusion of true, ideal love. This ultimate act of commitment often led or forced couples to become aware that their relationship was essentially a mutually selfish, but perhaps necessary, attempt at self-understanding, not a true fusing of separately mature personalities.

**Middle-class "dropouts"**

The film portrayals of middle-class youth who "dropped out" of society because of some gross disillusionment seemed most afflicted by a fundamental loss of faith in the "system" they rejected and which came to reject them. Lack of trust, the first of Erikson's ego qualities, functioned as the major theme in these films. The hypocrisy, trivia, and lack of redeeming human values of middle-class society appeared to affect some kinds of young people, particularly males, to a greater extent than middle-class "regulars" who protested but stopped short of complete dis-affiliation. The difference in degree of rebellion manifested by these two groups may be attributable to the presence or lack of basic trust. Those able to maintain a modicum of faith in the system and in middle-class traditions stopped short of total rebellion; those without sustaining faith appeared forced to sever class ties—as a matter of principle—and had to search for new codes and values worthy of their trust. In these films, the journey motif frequently appears as a metaphor for this kind of identity quest.
Representations of Motorcycle Gangs

As far as the motorcycle film themes are concerned, the data indicated a clear pattern of severe identity confusion consistent with the theoretical prognosis. In terms of Erikson's constructs, as utilized in the grid, these are the findings:

**Autonomy and role rigidity**

The themes of autonomy and role rigidity emerged as the strongest motifs in these films. The theme of autonomy was almost exclusively rendered in terms of an instrumental use of force or the threat of violence plus numerous forms of provocative behavior aimed at securing the attention, dubious respect, and limits of power of various adult authority figures. The theme of role inflexibility was reflected in the nature and structure of the gangs themselves: their totalitarian norms, rigid and depraved ritual, sadistic behavior, and outlandish but functional style of dress.

**Work paralysis**

The theme of work paralysis appeared as the weakest explicit motif in these films. Nowhere are any members of motorcycle gangs portrayed as gainfully employed or as having or participating in any kind of training or apprenticeship program. Except for implied mechanical abilities of a limited nature (they operate and service their motorcycles) there is little evidence that these types of young persons possess any socially useful aptitudes, skills, or
employable aspirations. The films raise the question, but fail to provide a satisfactory answer, as to just how gangs with upwards of a dozen or-so members each support themselves. They appear to be economic parasites who either "sponge" off their more well-to-do friends or contacts or steal what they need to survive.

Sex polarization

Sex polarization appeared with enough frequency and consistency to suggest a pattern of mutual distastiation between male and female gang members and between gang members and adults. Relationships were based on fear, rank in the gang pecking order, territorial rights, stereotypes, blind loyalty, jealousy, and the apparent desire for bizarre and frequent forms of sexual gratification. Relationships based upon these criteria provided temporary, superficial satisfactions but ultimately served to support the isolation of these individuals and their inability to establish genuinely fulfilling contact with other persons.

Mutual mistrust and ideological conflict

Mutual mistrust and ideological conflict were pervasive, but generally implicit, aspects of the two strongest themes. Lack of faith in anything but themselves and their gang produced a state of voluntary paralysis and potentially explosive withdrawal from society which made them incapable of either the desire or the act of initiating any but the most minimal rapport with society outside the gang world.
In the film portrayals, motorcycle gangs rejected all ideological affirmations except their own bizarre gang codes. Except for adherence to gang values, the basic philosophical position of motorcycle clubs excluded the notion or even the possibility of any efficacious ideology on the grounds that society, almost by definition, stands for everything unalterably opposed to individuality and freedom of spirit.

Composite screen image of motorcycle gangs

Most of the serious attempts to evaluate the motorcycle myth in film dwell upon correspondences between the film myth and native American myths, such as Corman's emphasis on the cowboy legend. The writer has no quarrel with this level of analysis but it fails to go far enough. The motorcycle myth can be universalized as an archetypal myth of irony and satire, a parody of comedy and romance. The mythos of Winter consists of the "mythical patterns which give form to the shifting ambiguities and complexities of unidealized existence."²

Sparaqmos, or the sense that "heroism and effective action are absent, disorganized, or foredoomed to defeat, and that confusion and anarchy reign over the world,"³ is the overriding thematic principle in these films. They present an abundance of daemonic imagery: prisons; ugly urban sprawl; hostile cities; barrooms; courthouses; police stations; flophouses; wastelands; vehicles and instruments of torture, death, persecution. The motorcycle films
are littered with a vast array of alizons (pretenders, "false kings")—sheriffs, wardens, judges, dictatorial parents, pompous civic leaders—who cling passionately and desperately to conventional dogmas; narrow ethical codes; rigid and inflexible laws and proscriptions; and to an endless number of rules, cliches, and pontifical beliefs.

Into these closed societies ride the motorcycle gangs, the erions (self-deprecators, legitimate "heroes") who subscribe to antithetical codes and values.

The inevitable clash between alizons and erions—and their respective hosts of followers, schemers, buffoons, foils, traitors, and temptresses—serves to break up stereotypes, fossilized canons, biases, superstitions, and daily routines that stand in the way of openness, honesty, freedom of movement, and genuine expressiveness. Common-sense codes and social expedients are exposed as somehow indecent, and for a while hedionism and saturnalia triumph over practicality and tradition.

In the end, however, evil and delirium do not herald the apocalypse but produce a daemonic epiphany characterized by futility and absurdity. The erions are ultimately crushed, expelled, or dispersed, driven from society as scapegoats. Whatever wisdom and rejuvenating energy unleashed during their mayhem is banished (repressed) with them. Man is still best governed, so the films seem to imply, by conventional standards. The wisdom of the epiphany is a vain and ironic
awareness "of the goal of the quest that isn't there." 4

The Film Producers

Data collected during the interview stage substantiated the hypothesis of the self-fulfilling role of film producers or "gatekeepers." The findings relating to the interviews are as follows:

Their motives

The persons interviewed seemed motivated by three basic drives: to make commercially successful films; to make "realistic" films; and to make "statements" critical of various aspects of middle-class society. These statements tended to take the form of exposes or denunciations of middle-class ideology: democratic institutions, humanitarian creeds, libertarianism, and so on. Attacks were also directed toward moral and ethical rigidity, hypocrisy, and aggrandisment. "Realism" tended to become synonymous with "negativism" or the desire to criticize through innuendo and omission (of themes, positive symbols, positive resolutions, and so on). The desire to make realistic portrayals of the middle-class led invariably to negative thematic and narrative strategies. The data do not clarify the extent of compatibility between anti-social themes in the films and the personal beliefs of the persons interviewed. Commercial pressures exerted a strong pull toward producing material with built-in anti-social biases; moreover, the findings in the next category suggest a considerable difference
between commercial motives and personal beliefs.

**Their beliefs**

The most consistent chorus of interviewee responses was in terms of an abiding faith in traditional American values based upon democratic and Christian principles. As indicated above, these professed beliefs clashed with the anti-establishment slant in the films they made. Commercial demands, which tended to tip decisions in favor of dramatic concerns over personal beliefs, partially accounts for some of this discrepancy. It is also understandable, it seems, in terms of a genuine nostalgic yearning implied in the interviews for "traditional" humanitarian and spiritual values absent in modern American society. It may be a truism that most of our beliefs incorporate antithetical components, so these men could understandably profess allegiance to fundamental values and yet make pictures celebrating contradictions of the same values.

**Their knowledgeability**

The data did not indicate any generalizable trends in terms of types or degrees of knowledge relevant to the themes central to the films the interviewees made. Specific types (class consciousness, social situations, political activity, etc.) and degrees of information (personal, secondary, vicarious) appeared significant in individual cases, but it is not possible, in terms of the data collected, to generalize about the influence of "knowledge" upon gate-
keeper decision-making or upon relationships between "knowledge" and filmic authenticity, realism, or quality.

The industry context

Industry pressure, market place considerations, and other professional experience appeared to be the most significant production circumstances. However, contrary to a popular misconception that film-makers don't care about their work, or are only "in it for the money," the data indicated that these men respected their medium and were involved in their work on a very deep personal level. In those situations where personal preferences about content, treatment, or style clashed with studio pressures, predictions of audience receptivity or timeliness, the latter were usually given top priority, except in those instances where a producer or director had ultimate control over his own production.

In any event, it is hazardous to make facile conclusions about complex corporate decision-making. The line between the personal preferences of a director and audience acceptability is not easily drawn because a director often sees himself as representing the tastes and desires of his target audience: he is just trying to "give the public what it wants" which, as it often turns out, is what he basically wants as well. Compromise occurs when other executives or creative personnel exert their authority or are allowed to pass judgment on these same issues. Then, audience accep-
tability and quality of the film become defined in terms of the power and status of the contesting spokesmen.

In the days when the Hollywood studio system prevailed, it was frequently possible to identify a film by theme and treatment prior to its release just by knowing the studio in which it was to be produced. MGM, for example, had the reputation for "wholesome," big-budgeted, "glossy" productions including ornate costumes, lavish sets, large numbers of highly-paid actors, and other "production values." While a few producers and directors were able to rise above the system to produce films with distinct styles—men like Frank Capra, Alfred Hitchcock, David O. Selznick, and Darryl F. Zanuk—most producers and directors assumed assembly line roles. Their functions were specialized and narrowly defined. Directors "directed," period. Their main duties were to work with actors on interpretation and blocking during actual filming. It was not unusual for a director to finish one assignment and begin another immediately after with little or no knowledge of the script. Directors were often called in "cold" to replace others who quit or were fired. Generally, directors were not responsible for securing filmable material, scripting, editing, financing, selecting talent, or arranging for distribution and exhibition.

Ample evidence in the literature, trade periodicals, and the growth of independent productions indicates that the old days of studio supremacy have passed. One of the
The specific style of rebellion employed by motorcycle gangs like the Hell's Angels and others of their ilk is what Klapp labels "barbarism," including costumes which "shock and antagonize the squares." Not only are their insignia and basic costume intrinsically significant, but they also collaborate to define a purposeful group style of life and encounter with their "square-world" adversaries:

(group style) is plainly not just to identify members to one another as a uniform, but to create a barbarian image to defy and shock the squares. There is pride in this repulsive image—"We want to be what we are, and there ain't nobody going to change us,"--unlike fashion, uncouth and barbarian styles do not symbolize success and "in"-ness--rather, they announce "outside-ness." Everybody can see that we are failures"; and offbeatness: "Everyone can see that we are not in step, and proud of it." Besides repelling the squares and announcing outsideness, such styles rally the outcasts with a sense of common war against the squares (a society which has "cheated" them), acting rather like a banner.

Origins of Identity Crisis

Up to this point we have been discussing the issue of adolescence and identity crisis as if it had a long historical precedent. The fact is, however, that from the standpoint of history, both adolescence and the identity problem are of amazingly recent origin. If Erikson can say that identity crisis is the normative experience of adolescence, he can do so only because there are large subcultures of young people, adolescents, who have a hard time breaking away from their youthful past and fitting into
consequences of the breakup of the studio system seems to be expanded role prerogatives for producers and directors who formerly worked with a considerable amount of responsibility but with negligible creative controls. Most of the men interviewed in this study found the material; worked on the screenplay; contracted major talent; and sold the entire package to a studio with intricate financial, distribution, and exhibition clauses. In short, they assumed the responsibilities formerly executed by studio administrators and department heads.

It is important not to overestimate this relatively new phenomenon, for as one industry spokesman put it, Hollywood is still basically the "same old game." Regardless of the method of production, many of the traditional variables are operative: the economics of the market place, the influence of talent, fickle desires of audiences, and luck. Hollywood is, and always has been, imitative, not innovative.

The rules for playing the "same old game" have changed, however, and these new rules provide a useful contemporary framework for evaluation of the expanded, more complex roles of producing agents. Self-fulfilling roles do not appear to have a significant impact on quality or artistry in today's films; they do seem, however, to provide greater opportunities for producing agents to use the film medium to express and reflect personal beliefs or experiences.
The Gerbner Model

The Gerbner model provided a useful approach to the context of film production—and to an assessment of significant characteristics and influences of the designers of filmic images and messages.

In retrospect the writer is aware that, while the structured interview schedule provided helpful insights into some aspects of the Hollywood motion picture industry and the role of producing agents, it did not by any means exhaust the dynamics or procedures of the Gerbner approach to mass communications study. Within the limits of this investigation little attention could be given to the "reality" dimension of content analysis or to the relationships between fictional screen portrayals of motorcycle gangs and their real-life counterparts; in short, to the effects of these films upon specific persons or mass audiences. Completion of this step would provide a sound basis for adding to theoretical concepts and models of content analysis. This deficiency is regrettable, but perhaps understandable in terms of this study's primary emphasis upon developing an instrument for content analysis.

The Matrix: Erikson's Model

No statistically significant correlation was found to exist between the matrix axes. The relationship between thematic development and phases of film structure or narrative, as hypothesized, is unwarranted in terms of this
research.

Chi square tests were conducted with some of the data with inconsistent, negative results at the .05 level of significance. In addition, frequency distributions from the grid sheets were subjected to a character analysis schedule with similarly inconclusive results.

Although the matrix failed as a quantitative instrument, it did provide an abundance of highly detailed information. This feature of the grid—an advantage in so far as providing an accurate and complete record of the films—was, interestingly, also one of its disadvantages. Abundance tended to become over-abundance: the sheer amount of data obtained from the grid presented obstacles to efficient manageability of the data and to precision of analysis. Moreover, much of the data was overly descriptive, a situation which presented some difficulty for meaning-centered analysis. On the other hand, the Erikson model, as a behavioral science tool, proved to be a precise instrument for film content analysis. As indicated, the theoretical concepts about identity crisis were similar to the general configurations of the screen portrayals of identity crisis.

The Steenbeck Viewing Facility

The unique stop-start, reverse speed, and "instant replay" features of the Steenbeck effectively implemented the systematic analysis of screen imagery. Clearly, this is not the way audiences view films nor is it the way films
have been studied in the past, yet such facilities present the opportunity for careful scrutiny of basic film units, frame-by-frame if necessary and appropriate. This kind of analysis is linked to the possible discovery of important bits of evidence about the precise structure of the moving image which may otherwise escape the observer's attention.

Social Function of the Motorcycle Films

This presentation of findings may be concluded with a note about how these collective film symbols seem to relate to larger social systems and issues.

It was hypothesized, in this study, that composite film messages function in a supportive capacity to portray, define, or corroborate conventional dogmas, goals, and ideologies. The data imply, however, a more revolutionary than reactionary impact. Rather than reflecting convincing and meaningful images of conventional norms, they provide compelling and romantic portrayals of "losers" and "outsiders" who subscribe to contrary norms, values, and ideologies. The status quo ultimately prevails—the outsider is rejected and his way of life derogated—but the methods and consequences of the rebel's expurgation are accompanied at the price of a fatal loss of credibility in social institutions and lack of compassion for those affiliated with the instruments and policies of repression. Consistent with the underlying myths of irony and satire discussed earlier, these films testify to a disturbing existential dilemma: con-
ventional society rules, but its methods and justifications for coercing conformity appear ruthless and absurd.

**Suggestions for Further Research**

This study's emphasis on the composition of selected film symbols (messages) and the corporate "packaging" of this information implies a definition of "communication" as "interaction through messages bearing man's notions of existence, priorities, values, and relations." This social science understanding of mass communications suggests related fields of research including, for example, the packaging of information; the composition of messages; and the distribution of information to mass, multifarious publics. Briefly, then, here are some recommendations for further research along these lines.

**Institutional Processes**

In order for information to reach its intended audience and to produce its intended effects, it must first be selected, processed, packaged, and disseminated. Who controls the packaging? How is the dissemination of information regulated? How do gatekeepers learn and perform their assigned functions in the face of apparent conflict between their own personal desires and market-place demands? As this study has indicated, the roles of producing agents in Hollywood today seem to be in a state of flux and transformation. The "old game" of commercial film-making may still be the same, but new rules are altering important features of the
film industry. Change in the industry implies change not only of the institution itself and its supporting technologies but also in the marketplace as well. The nature and consequences of these changes in the film (and television) industry need to be analyzed in terms of a reliable communications model.

Symbolic Function of Message Systems

What is the nature and social function of film message systems? How do they fit in with, reinforce, or alter existing social trends? What ideological viewpoints are implied? How do contemporary functions contrast with those in other eras and cultures? What are the recurrent themes and character portrayals? What are the differences between actual and presumed "meanings" of film messages? What, for example, does this study's findings about the ambivalent screen image of the rebel hero in the late 1960's have to do with actual leaders and currents of social unrest? As another example, what impact has the "new wave" of black films had on the perceptions and socialization experience of urban black audiences?

Effects Analysis

What perspectives on life and society do film messages express and cultivate in the minds and feelings of the mass publics who absorb and integrate these messages? What consequences are implied in the complex symbolic exchange process between audiences and messages? What common assumptions
about man and society are cultivated in viewing audiences by screen images, themes, and character portrayals? How are collective myths changed? How are society's values presented, perpetuated, and inculcated through widespread dissemination of film imagery? How do film symbols express, assuage, or aggravate public concerns and policy? As a case in point, this research has concluded that the screen images studied here seem to prolong the anxieties of identity crisis by failing to present credible resolutions of this theme. Pending further research into correspondences between these fictional portrayals and social realities, it would seem that these images might function to accentuate identity crisis as a generative issue of our age.

It is hoped that the methodology utilized in the present study may provide useful guidelines in the pursuit of answers to some of these suggested questions for further research.

Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (New York: Atheneum Press, 1969), p. 223. In this seminal work, Frye discusses four basic mythoi which reverberate through world literature and other creative modes. These mythoi relate to—indeed they are symbolic expressions of—seasonal and cyclic rhythms. The mythos of Spring is the myth of Comedy: rebirth, assimilation, regeneration. The mythos of Summer is the myth of Romance: adventure, quest, wish-fulfillment. The mythoi of Autumn and Winter are the myths of Irony and Satire: failure, tragedy, death, disharmony. These four mythoi relate to archetypal, cyclic movements: ascent to Innocence, fall from innocence, ascent from experience, descent into experience. As Frye puts it, "The downward movement is the tragic movement, the wheels of fortune falling from innocence to hamartia and from hamartia to catastrophe. The upward movement is the Comic movement, from threatening complications to a happy ending and a general assumption of post-dated innocence in which everyone lives happily ever after." p. 162.

The operative archetypal theme of Comedy is agon or conflict between alizons (impostors) and erions (heroes); pathos is the mythical theme in tragedy; anagonosis or rebirth the archetypal theme of Romance; and sparaqmos or chaos and futility the theme of Satire and Irony.

ibid., p. 192.

ibid., p. 239.


Dorothy B. Jones, "Quantitative Analysis of Motion Picture Content," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, VI (Fall, 1942), pp. 411-428. Jones' schedule for character analysis contained categories such as occupation, economic class, social class, death, and value analysis and description.

Gerbner, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
A. Interview with Roger Corman

JM: Would you describe the circumstances which led you to produce The Wild Angels? How did the idea come to you? What influenced you to make a cycle picture? Were there any unusual persons or occurrences connected with the origination of the project?

RC: The circumstances which led to it were primarily within the motion picture industry. That is, I had made a number of pictures successfully with American-International, for whom I made The Wild Angels, and I had left American-International about a year earlier, and had signed a contract with Columbia Pictures on the basis that I was going to have the opportunity to do bigger pictures. Columbia, immediately after getting me under contract, offered me a series of low budget pictures, and I turned them all down, and I was getting somewhat frustrated at Columbia when Sam Arkoff and Jim Nicholson, the men who run AIP, called me, suggested we have lunch, and stated that they thought they could get me a leave of absence from Columbia if I would like to come back and make a picture for them--this was in the winter and they wanted a picture shot in the spring to come out for the summer drive-in season. I had lunch with them and it was one of those ideas that we all more or less came up with. I said yes, I'd like to come back and do a picture. They first asked if I'd like to do a horror film and certain other types I'd done before and I said no, I wanted to do a contemporary film about young people today and I wanted to shoot it all on natural location. We discussed various aspects of what was going on in the country at the time, and I mentioned that the Hell's Angels were very much in the headlines--this was when they first came into national prominence--and we jointly decided that I would do a picture on the Hell's Angels.

Now, as to how I actually did it, I contracted the San Bernadino Hell's Angels from an article I'd read in the L.A. Times saying that they hung out at the Blue Blaze Cafe in Fontana. I called the Blue Blaze Cafe and there were no Hell's Angels there, but I spoke to the manager and I told him what I was going to do and said I'd like to talk with them, not only about doing a picture about
them, but about having them in the picture. I got a call back a couple of days later, saying that they could meet us either at the Blue Blaze or at a place called the Gunk Shop in Hawthorne, where they also hung out, and Hawthorne was closer than Fontana, so Chuck Griffith, a good friend of mine whom I hired to write the picture, and I went down to the Gunk Shop and met with them. They agreed they wanted to be in the picture and I said I wanted it to be as close as possible to their actual experiences. So they just started telling us stories of things they had done, and we sat around drinking beer and smoking a little pot and talking about the whole concept of being Hell's Angels and we based the script to a large extent on what they told us. Almost every event that took place in the picture actually happened to Hell's Angels, and what we did was to put them together in one unit. The breakout of the Loser from the hospital had actually taken place south of the border. One of their men had been arrested and was put in a hospital in Tiajuana, and they sprung him out and brought him back across the border, and it was a big thing for them that they had done this. I didn't want to get involved in a Mexican shooting and I felt that made my story line a little bit too loose, so I put it in the desert in Mecca, and constructed a story line, as I say, based on what they had actually told us.

I had a theme in mind that came to be based upon what they told me and upon what I'd read in the Economist, an economic and political science magazine, in which they had pointed out some of the destructiveness of lower-class American youth and said that similar things had taken place on the docks in Hamburg and in some of the industrial cities of the Soviet Union, and it was the theme of the Economist that showed this unrest among young people, particularly among unemployed, under-employed, or employed with great dissatisfaction. It went beyond capitalism and socialism and was a factor of modern civilization as we go into more of a technologically oriented society. Those people who formerly held jobs at the bottom of society no longer have a job or existence available to them which gives them even a modicum of pride in what they do, and they become essentially dispossessed. And I felt that this was good analysis of the Hell's Angels--these were the guys on the bottom. Having talked with them, they were not highly intelligent, they came, to a large extent, from broken homes, and in general they had very little schooling. And I felt I was involved in my own thinking at the time in various aspects of dropping out of society. I thought about the $50,000-a-year advertising executive
a larger social and cultural milieu.

"Adolescence," in the modern social-psychological sense, refers to this process of estrangement and incorporation, the process of becoming "weaned" from childhood and incorporated into adulthood. This view of adolescence which focuses upon the process of change in individuals rather than upon a more or less arbitrary age delimitation of the stage of adolescence is useful for talking about the members of motorcycle gangs, many of whom are in their late twenties and thirties. We have already mentioned several types of adolescent subcultures—activists, dropouts, violent malcontents, and style-non-conformists, for example—and have indicated that the emergence of these subcultures the world over is not an accident or faddish imitation but rather a phenomenon stemming from basic characteristics in the social structure and cultural ideologies of many modern nations. As sociologist Hans Sebald puts it, "the development of adolescence is basically due (1) to a finely-divided division of labor, which produces a very technical and complex social structure; and (2) to the failure of a culture to provide its members with a convincing and compelling ideation, which would result in a strong identity and a feeling of purpose." The combination of a complex social structure and a weak and non-specific cultural ethos creates a hazardous and discontinuous "no-man's-land" between childhood and adulthood which motivates an often desperate and
who says, "I give up. I drop out. I don't like this; how much easier it is for a $150-a-week garage mechanic." They say this isn't for me, and they drop out. So I thought of the Hell's Angels as essentially people who were dropping out of the lowest level of American society and attempting to form a society of their own, which, although it was different in many respects from American society, inevitably mirrored the society from which they had dropped out, because they were born in that society.

JM: Two things I would like to ask you then, to kind of follow up on that—one deals with the opening sequence of the movie, and the second, the end of the movie. To me, the opening sequence—where a little kid rides out of his yard and bumps into Blues' bike, and his mother spanks him or scolds him and takes him back in the yard—seemed to be a frame for the entire movie. From that point on, the gang encountered—well, the movie was about breaking away from various maternal figures and authority figures just like this young kid attempted to do.

RC: Right.

JM: ...which is what I wanted to ask you: if that was a key to the viewing.

RC: Yes, that was one of the keys. The picture, I would hope, has some complexity to it, but that at least is one approach to the picture. As a matter of fact, you know I shot the picture five years ago, so I can't remember it exactly, but as I recall I shot the opening shot of the picture through some vertical wooden fence stakes which I wanted to give a slight prison effect—like, you reached for this, if nobody else picks up that it's a prison, okay—but in the back of my mind was the fact that we were shooting through bars of the cemetery to see Blues at the grave of the Loser—so that was a framework, and it was part of the theme.

JM: I saw a basis for interpreting the ending of the picture two ways: one, pessimistically. The gang leaves Blues, the police close in on him—and the cycle of crime and punishment seems likely to continue. About the last thing he says is, "There is no place." Mike wants him to go and he says, "Go where?" There simply is no place where they can avoid this kind of encounter with police and parents and ministers—the people they want to get away from. Yet on the other hand, he stays to
kind of face the music. Does this mean he has grown, that there is a way, any way out, or is it just a statement of complete abandonment....

RC: He has grown, but it's not optimistically. He has grown enough to see the futility of the existence he's been leading. But he had not grown to the point where he can see any truly constructive answer. The only thing he knows is there's no particular point in continuing to run. By standing, he may learn something; he may change I myself would not be particularly optimistic about his chances. I would simply say that he has progressed one step up a very long ladder.

JM: Why is Loser's death such a calamity for him? I know it ultimately leads to his estrangement from the gang and kind of its destruction. Is it that his loyalties have been tested, does he feel responsible for Loser's death or is it just a growing sense of futility as their way of life?

RC: It's a combination of all three; and let me say now that, as I said before, I shot the picture five years ago and I've done a number of pictures since, and a lot of these pictures fade somewhat in my mind. But the points I was working with there were pretty much what you said. One, as leader of the gang he is responsible for what happens to everybody within the gang. At the same time the member of the gang that he is closest to is the Loser, so he not only feels a sense of responsibility, but he has a great sense of loyalty to the Loser. It's also involved with the growing sense of the futility of what they're doing, and I think there's an additional point. That is, the Loser probably being the freest spirit in the gang represents something special. If they're moving from this society and they're in various steps on the road of moving away, the Loser has probably progressed the furthest.

JM: May I ask you a couple of related questions in your role of producer? One is—how did you envision the picture when you began it? What was your original thinking as far as budget, and what kind of audience were you shooting after? Where did you plan to distribute and exhibit the picture?

RC: All right--first, budget. Budget was about $350,000, and it was shot on a three week schedule, which makes it a low budget film. And the fact that I shot it with a full union crew—the same $350,000 non-union could have bought me a seven-week schedule—so I prefer to think in
terms of schedule, rather than budget, because the most important thing is time. So as a three week picture, it was a very fast, low budget film. It was an attempt to do an action film that would appeal to drive-in audiences, yet at the same time, I was hoping to make a statement beyond just that of an action film. I was trying to ride two horses, attract two types of audience, that it would play at art houses and it could at drive-ins. I think the best American films move in that direction, that they are successful in both the commercial and artistic levels. I was trying to get both, and I partially succeeded. By no means a perfect film, but as you know, it won a few awards. It was on a couple of ten best of the world lists of that year, it was the opening night film, which is something of a honor, at the Venice Film Festival. It was beaten, and beaten deservedly, by The Battle of Algiers, which, when I saw The Battle of Algiers, I said I'm not hanging around for the awards of this festival, that's obviously a better picture than The Wild Angels. But still, it did get quite a bit of critical acclaim, and until Easy Rider, it was the highest grossing low budget picture ever made in the United States.

JM: Some problems you've had as a director, how much creative freedom did you have? You mentioned Griffith who wrote the script—did you follow it pretty much as he wrote it, did you compromise during the shooting of it, did you add things to it?

RC: I did all of those. I worked with Chuck on the script, so the script itself is something of a collaboration. And then I did make changes during the shooting. Peter Bogdanovich, who has recently done The Last Picture Show, which is a very good picture, was working as my assistant at that time. Peter and I rewrote several sections as we went along, and then as the director I worked, as I always do, which is to use the script simply as the starting point. And I did add in changes, although the basic line followed the original script.

JM: How about working with the actual Hell's Angels.... did that present any particular problems for you as a director rather than working with trained actors?

RC: Surprisingly few. I determined in advance what my approach to the Angels would be and then followed it and it worked. I felt that I was in no position to give them orders and try to push them around, yet at the same time, if I appeared weak and tried to ask them too much to come and work in the picture they would push me around. So I adopted a somewhat objective stance to the Angels,
which is not a stance I would take with trained or professional actors, but it worked with them. Which is simply to treat them as equals and say, all right, fellows, this is the shot, you are on the bikes here, you will go around that corner, you do this, and just tell them specifically what the problem was and then have them solve the problem.

JM: As you mentioned, this film kind of reached the status of a cult film. Did you expect that this might happen, did you anticipate that making a cycle picture would start a new direction even though in the fifties there was one....

RC: There was one. Marlon Brando in the fifties, about 15 years earlier, had done The Wild One. We saw The Wild One, because we didn't want to copy it and I remembered having seen it when it came out, and I do remember it very well. I remember being impressed by it. And so Chuck Griffith and I screened The Wild One just to make sure that we didn't inadvertently copy something because that's been known to happen. You have a completely original idea and it's based upon something you saw so long ago you've forgotten it. And The Wild One is a strange picture. When we saw it, I didn't like The Wild One the second time I saw it. But I was tremendously impressed with the acting. Looking at The Wild One again, it's got nothing to do with this, but if you want a quick criticism, I thought it was not a particularly good picture. But it was redeemed by two brilliant performances, Marlon Brando and Lee Marvin, who were both outstanding, and they were what made the picture go the first time out. I would say our picture was much, much closer to the truthful way of looking at the Hell's Angels. But also, we did not have any performances that were really as good as Brando or Marvin.

JM: The content of the picture, in terms of the middle 1960's was rather original. The style of the picture, too, seems rather unique, at least in relation to many of the other films I've studied. Did the style just kind of emerge from the form of the picture itself, the content of the picture, or did you want to do some experimental things technically...stylistically?

RC: Again, many things went into it. One is the way in which I work on any picture. Any director brings something of himself in. Most of my pictures have had a certain energy and generally a fairly fast pace to them, no matter what subject. I just work that way. Second, I was looking for a picture of excitement. I thought, if I'm
doing a picture about the Hell's Angels, it must have something to do with the image and the truths of the Angels, which is one of the powerful, almost sexual— I shouldn't even say almost— obviously sexual sublimation through the concept of the motorcycle. The subject matter itself, just a photograph of a motorcycle, a chopper, roaring down a road, brings a certain feeling to mind. Plus I used a rock music score, which is one of the first pictures to use contemporary music against the natural background. As a matter of fact, the blues theme from it became for a little while the number one record in the country, and they took the actual mixed track out of the picture, so that you heard the music and you heard the roaring of the motorcycles behind it.

JM: A couple of last questions about the concept of the Angels as you saw it, and the kind of truth you were after. Can you elaborate a little bit about that, particularly to what extent you feel your concept matched what you understood about the Angels themselves, and how it came across in your film.

RC: Well, I thought we went into it in a variety of ways. One, as dropouts who did not fit within this society, because frankly, the society had gone beyond what they were capable of— what job they might perform within the society. And two, having dropped out, I saw them as the modern equivalent of the cowboy; that is, the cowboy on his horse drifting through the West with no roots. The Hell's Angel is almost the same thing: he drifts through the West on his horse, with no roots. I think there's something within the American Mystique that created the cowboy in the 19th century and the Hell's Angel in the mid-twentieth century. And I think in both areas this mystique of the cowboy and the biker is composed partially of the truth of their lives and partially of the wishful thinking of other people who imposed their fantasies upon the life of the cowboy, so that the image that's presented of both the Hell's Angel and the cowboy is partially true and partially fantasy. I would say with the Hell's Angel it's closer to the truth than the cowboy because the Hell's Angel may be acting out the fantasy he himself has created of the cowboy.

JM: The film tends, it seems to me, to glamorize the Angel way of life, his violence and his decadence. As frenzied as it is, both to himself and to other people, there's still a glamour and a romance to it. Were you aware of this—or do you think that it's a valid criticism?
R.C.: I think it's a valid criticism, and I was not working for that. I was trying to be very accurate and very truthful, and I think you're right, there is a feeling of glamour about their way of life, and it was unintended. I didn't mean to look at it that way. I think what may have happened, I may have been swept up in their stories, and gotten, as I shot the picture, a little involved and a little excited about their way of life, because I know I look at them a little bit differently now than I did at that time, and I look at them with... a little bit less... of an admiring eye.

JM: About society itself—it seems also that in spite of all the senseless violence inflicted on society, that in a curious way much of the violence seems justified, that the gang is never really doing anything, but is always under some kind of surveillance, especially by police, and that this kind of assumed guilt does indeed precipitate some tragedy or trouble of some sort. But it is not until they are almost judged guilty beforehand that something happens. And I was just wondering if perhaps this is part of the element of sympathy that enters into it.

RC: It may be, because as we were shooting the picture we had the San Bernadino Sheriff's Department, the California State Highway Police, and I think several local cities sent their policemen out to keep us under guard at all times, and I felt this was a little out of hand, and I explained it to one of the guys from the San Bernadino Sheriff's Department—he wanted to arrest some of them on some charges they had—I said, hey look, these guys are just doing a job. As a matter of fact, for some of them, for the first time in their lives, they are getting paid to do a job and do what they want to do. They're riding their bikes, having fun, being out in the desert and getting paid—what do you want to bust them for? And at that time my sympathies did start to go a little bit to them for that reason. They were, in many respects being unjustly hassled by the law.
B. Interview with Stanley Kramer

JM: Would you describe the circumstances which led you to produce Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? How did the idea come to you? What influenced you to make this picture? Were there any unusual persons or circumstances connected with the making of the film?

SK: Well, I think it is always very difficult to say what persuaded a film-maker to make a film. The times he lives in, the product of his environment, the way he grew up, the pressures, what he believes. I'm laughingly described as the discarded liberal. You might as well be a black reactionary. The reason why I was a bleeding heart for so many years and promised so much in film, like, what with the atomic war and the black man in the American scene, and The Home of the Brave and The Defiant Ones way before Guess Who's Coming to Dinner... I'm a product of the Roosevelt years. I carried that same flag and belief and feeling, and we didn't get too far. The only thing I can tell you—I just came back from a fifteen university tour, which is my first tour since my tour of five years ago, and I find that most of the young people in the so-called revolution are in exactly the same position that I'm in. They promised much; they had a rebellion, theoretically, but it really wasn't—never happened, because what did they rebel against? What did they demonstrate against? The war? Well, Mr. Nixon's pulled some troops out of Viet Nam, but what's going on in Laos and Cambodia, any decent newspaper reporter will tell you is much more. The Ghettos? They're still there, in Chicago and Los Angeles and Harlem and all big cities. Pollution? Well, the auto companies mutter something about 1978, and they all pay lip service, and nothing happens. You see, you've all become part of the establishment. You've all become discarded liberals. I feel sorry for you.

So that when Guess Who's Coming to Dinner came along, which is several years ago now, I felt I wanted to do, and to treat almost as a fairy tale a subject which the bulbous intellectuals do not realize people are not caught up in as yet, which was the idea of intermarriage......miscegenation on the American scene. So I treated it by taking perfect people—the mother and father were perfect liberals, their daughter had been raised as a perfect daughter with fine progressive tendencies and no prejudices whatever. The black man had it made, he was perfect, he was good looking, he was successful, he didn't need this; he even told the parents, I don't
need this if you object. So that the point of this parable was that when we reach the end of the story, even if in fact the marriage was not consummated, it could only be because he was black. The point of the film—it was a little too naive for some of the more sophisticated—but it reached a tremendous audience.

In terms of the action, as to why I made it, mainly because there was nothing really wrong with what's called in university circles, "supernigger." There's nothing wrong with that. We've got superman, superwife, and I suppose superbowl. It's high time, I mean we've made great strides, we've arrived at "supernigger" now.

I have to laugh at the accusations and deprivations piled upon Sidney Poitier, who carried a bad image for so many years, who was called Uncle Tom finally. Why? Because he was successful, and that was convenient for all the black leadership, which is nowhere. That same leadership referred to Martin Luther King as Uncle Tom. And I saw Poitier and M.L.K., because I was there. It was one of the most exciting things that happened in my life. I saw them teach people how to be lifted into a patrol wagon without moving a muscle. That was history, man, and that's not Uncle Tom. That's the people who made history, all of these things coming together.

Sometimes we lose our sense of humor. Most of the way that film was a comedy...it was meant to be a fairy tale, so that all the things that were said about it...they said, why wasn't Sidney Poitier a garbage man or a truck driver or something like that? Well, because had that character been a white man that was a garbage man or truck driver, it wouldn't have worked with this story. That family was not made for a truck driver or garbage man; they were made for a very superior kind of guy...so that's why. No comment about criticism or oversimplification, that's the way I saw it, that's the way I believed it. Of course, there was a good deal of objection. I don't know what made me make it, except that I'm interested in seeing that, you know, things happen, and they have. I think that's old hat now. Now it's outdated, perhaps, but it was five years ahead of its time to the mass. It is now as far behind with the masses as it was with the intellectual fringe at the time that it was released.

JM: That's the second question I was going to ask. From the point of view of half a dozen years later, how would you evaluate what you were trying to do then?
SK: Well, I never make an evaluation myself. That's fraught with danger. I don't know...somebody like Pauline Kael said if I hadn't been born, I would have had to be invented. I don't know what that means; I know it's a dirty crack, though. At any rate, I don't indulge myself in trying to evaluate it, whether it be Inherit the Wind or Judgment at Nurenbarg or On the Beach or The Defiant Ones or Guess Who's Coming to Dinner or Ship of Fools or any of the others taken together. I don't know what twenty years from now they'll represent. I don't know five years after the date what it represents or they represent. To me it's a matter of feeling. I felt certain things then, I might do it entirely differently now, but I don't know where or how I'd look back on them because, first of all, it really is not fair, and I'm much more critical than the critics of myself. There's something wrong with all those films—every time you make a film which purports to be about something in which you really want to state a viewpoint, your own, nobody else's. The idea of being critical of it by one's self is very severe because those things are much more prone to criticism in terms of being outdated, or not quite ringing the bell, or not being quite true; finding a whole truth is very difficult these days. There is no such thing. You find part of the truth, and the danger is that some of the biggest lies in the world are part of the truth. I happen to be aware of that, and being aware of it, I stay away from the self-appraisals because, you know, you have to do your own truth. At that time, that's the way I saw it. Now perhaps it would be quite different.

JM: Even though Dr. Prentice, Poitier's character in the film, is established professionally, I see his experience as relevant to adolescents looking for identity. Could you comment about aspects of this film, in terms of its content or treatment, in reference to this issue?

SK: Well, I can comment about it, but I'll be much more careful and less arrogant than you might suspect. Commenting upon what the black man wants is unfair from two standpoints, from my own situation. First of all, I'm not a black man. I have a feeling that every picture I made about black men in the American fabric should have been made by a black man. Well, when we have arrived at the point where there are black film-makers, that will be done. On the other hand, does the black man, or the black film-maker, simply because he's black, really know where he fits into the entire social and industrial pattern—where he belongs or what he wants? What has happened to black leadership? What has happened to the intellectual?
The writer? The revolutionary? All of them are somewhere embedded into the woodwork.

In terms of youth and what they want, and the rebellion, who stands as the monument, who stands as the rallying point but Martin Luther King? He survived better than them all. It's true that he died, which martyred him, and that they were calling him Uncle Tom, but the fact is that he survived better in death than they had in life. Because where are they? Does Cleaver speak from Africa as to what the black man needs? Or wants, or aspires to? Not at all. There's a whole new group. This is the collegiate white group or total group, and I don't like to differentiate, but just as the collegiate group, young black, white, or indifferent, has joined the establishment, so has the black man. I wonder what's the problem? The problem is that the establishment had better damn well give us a choice. We may not have one in the next election, which is worrisome, but they'd better give us a choice. But then, everybody is in the establishment, and if youth and the rebellion of the black man don't participate in the election by saying, I don't want to vote, I'm not interested, which I hear a lot of them say, they're damn fools. They'd better be interested, because that's where the control is, that's where they can do it, that's why, having called attention to what's going on, they now can implement it. And I think there's a lot of good in the establishment, although I've been fighting the establishment now for forty years, and I don't know, I don't really know what the hell it is. I said that at Stanford one day and one fellow got up and said, maybe it's because of you. Well, possibly. If so, let me tell you that I am growing from within.

JM: You work with a script dominated by dialogue and interior location, much like a stage play. How did these factors affect your stylistic approach to the film? Was this a typical Kramer film? Or do you vary style according to subject matter?

SK: Well, I hope I vary it, and I don't know what style is, I don't know whether I have a style. Many of my critics say I do not. Today the style cart is pulling the movie horse, the art horse if you will. Style covers a multitude of sins. If covers motivation or lack of it, it covers performances, it covers construction, story construction, everything. One can literally get away with murder, if it's fast enough, with enough zoom, with enough out-of-focus, change of focus, kind of a soft photography, whatever. So that's a sensitive point with me. I insist that the young film-maker, however much he
despairing search for meaning, status, and identity—fraught with frustration, eccentric behavior, and/or violence—characteristic of adolescent subcultures in our society.32

Motorcycle gangs belong to that subculture which Cloward and Ohlin have defined as the "conflict pattern," urban city youth who turn to violence and totalitarian forms of organization to find their niche and purpose in life.33 In order, therefore, to set the stage for the film analysis to come, it is necessary and helpful to sketch the kind of urban environment which entraps young people like motorcycle gangs and which exerts enormous negative pressure on their ability to achieve and communicate a meaningful sense of identity.

Many conditions of affluent society produce severe dislocations of human identity which are especially extreme for the underprivileged who live in impoverished urban settings. Haphazard urbanization, racial discrimination, ecological disfigurement, and exaggerated expectations of luxurious living rampant in our mass media generate serious internal imbalances in persons living in urban environments and burden them with an almost irresistible set of influences which lure many toward crime and violence. The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence describes the "pull" toward violence in this way:

When poverty, dilapidated housing, high unemployment, poor education, overpopulation and broken homes are
participates in the new art form, style, where it's not what it is, but what you feel, or think.

I still insist that if we are to accomplish very much in this whole new approach to art, the young film-makers are going to have to say, and only they can say, because they're living through it and feeling it, they have to say what the problem is, what they believe should be done about it, how they feel about it, how strongly they feel, and really, how they are out to take a point of view. I cannot any longer tolerate to myself this idea of not wishing to make a commitment to a point of view, to letting it happen, as it were. Baloney. These are tenuous times, and if the military is keeping us in Viet Nam, or the air stinks, somebody ought to say so, and somebody ought to say we either throw these assholes out or we do something about them, or we attack en masse, but do something. Because we will do nothing if we kind of bathe in the bathos of our own abstractions. It's annoying at times.

JM: A question concerning the resolution of the film at the end of the movie, Matt blesses the marriage by saying the only thing that matters is what they feel, and how much they feel. Has this "answer" to the race problem soured in the light of the King and Kennedy assassinations and other violent race confrontations in the late sixties? I guess what I am asking is, in terms of the film portrayal of the black experience in the sixties, how would Guess Who's Coming to Dinner stand in a decade that began with the cautiously optimistic Raisin in the Sun and ended with the bitter, hateful Uptight.

SK: Well, it didn't begin with Raisin in the Sun. I think Home of the Brave, which is a film I produced in 1946, was really a first. I think it was brought to another conclusion a decade later by The Defiant Ones, which I produced and directed. I have been more directly involved with the black on the American scene in film than anyone, and what does it all amount to now?

Now, you ask a question about Guess Who's Coming to Dinner several years after the fact, and what I believe in today. What do you believe in today? I believe in what the picture says, although I might tell it differently. What does it say? It says I love you...and I believe in that. After all the years of fighting in the battle and making negotiations, I believe in family, I believe in love, and I believe in some positive approach to the damned inadequacies of the society in which I live...a positive approach. I'm tired of the negation. And I intend to
proceed along those lines.

What *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* said at the end of the film was, now look, you two want to get married, and there are going to be a lot of people that hate that idea, and they are going to make a lot of trouble for you. Maybe the majority of the population. But if you are in love, then you ought to get married...and screw all those people. And it said that in no uncertain language. I feel, five years later, and I'll feel fifty years later, that if everybody who objected on the basis of what they objected to in that film in terms of interracial marriage...if they don't like it, screw them. That's the way I felt then, and I'll feel that way twenty-five years from now. So from that standpoint, it is contemporary and up to date, and who else said it so clearly? I wanna know who else said it so clearly? Some people say I said it with a broad-sword. All right, who said it with a stiletto? I think that there was a picture that I liked very much called *One Potato, Two Potato*; it reached three people. Fine, I admire them, and I would like to do a job as good as that, but I want to tell you that I'm...oh, well, you know what I'm trying to say, and I haven't raised my voice to say it in quite a while. I think people who make films should let the film say it. Nobody is in doubt about how I feel about the atom bomb and the use of it or how I feel about a teacher teaching in a classroom, or a black on the American scene, or a million other subjects.

This pontification doesn't set well with me. Even the tinkling sound of my own voice doesn't intrigue me on the subject any more. I feel that it is there for what it is. People write reviews of films now, and hark back to *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* as a film which seems to be either sentimental or too obvious or part of that same syndrome. But they're going to have to answer the question of what are you doing? Where do people understand it? Where do people take a side and take a position? --unless they are provoked into it and understand it. I don't want to be a simpleton and I don't want to be overly simple because I have a responsibility to myself. I find that if I've been less an artist it's because I chose, as part of my heritage and the times in which I live, to be a disgruntled goof-off. And that's what happened.

**JM:** Just one last question; getting back to the style issue--and you've probably heard this. It's not meant as a criticism, but in this film there was perhaps more talk about the experiences and emotions these people
were going through, and in fact the emotion was
carried largely through the dialogue. It is fashionable
now in universities to talk about rendering these ex-
periences in film language, i.e., in nonverbal ways.
Was there anything you could have done in Guess Who’s
coming to Dinner to change the style a little bit. Per-
haps another way of asking this question is were there
experiences that could not be rendered in any way other
than by words?

SK: I don’t really know the answer to that. If in the large
sense what you are saying is could I have made it better,
of course! If in a different sense you are not accepting
the fact that it was a talk piece, even written as a talk
piece, that’s what it is. It was satirical and humorous,
and poked fun at itself and everybody. I mean, it was a
talk piece...it was a play on words.

JM: Did you collaborate on writing the script?

SK: Yeah, sure. Bill Rose wrote the script, but you know,
I was the film-maker involved, and I was with him all
the time and we made the film as we saw it. I think
some of it is...hilarious comedy, actually. Everybody
takes themselves much too seriously, not only the people
in the film but all the people watching it. On an in-
tellectual basis they said, oh he said it, he didn’t
need to say that, we understand that. Well, that’s the
point. You take something and you satirize it, that’s
really what it is. It isn’t until the hair gets very
short at the end, when the father’s got to say, well,
do I believe this or don’t I? And will I go with it or
won’t I?

We all take ourselves too seriously. You know, it’s a
film, it’s a film about a phase in American life. Whether
its virtues or its faults may register one hundred on the
meter or forty, it is, in the light of the times, one
other contribution, even on a critical basis, to the
whole thing. The fact of the matter is, it has its
shortcomings. The fact of the matter is also that it
was the most important film for a mass audience ever
presented on: inter-marriage— a black man and a white
woman. And what is more important, it was accepted all
over the world, because I was there—by a mass audience
who wanted it to happen, in South Africa, in Brazil, in
Turkey, in the Islands, in San Francisco, and in Dayton.

So I don’t know what else to tell you. I mean, today it
represents one of the perhaps ten films to have reached
the number of people it reached. It is in the top ten
reaching that number of people...if the emphasis is on the light of the onrush of revolution, and we live in the eye of revolution. I just don't know when it started, or whether it's over, or whether it hasn't started at all. But since we live in these kinds of times, everything is going to be not enough, not sufficiently sophisticated, not sufficiently progressive, not too much one the nose, too little of this, too much of that, everything is going to be open for that. But that's what makes the ball game, that's what's interesting about it. You know, I've spoken with many people, I've addressed hundreds of people and been on television, panels, and been in front of university audiences about this until I'm dry in the throat. Is everybody taking themselves too seriously?
C. Interview with Sam Katzman

In regard to the first question about circumstances which led him to produce The Love-Ins and Riot on Sunset Strip, Mr. Katzman said that he just went to the front page newspaper headlines for his material. Love-ins and riots were actual happenings. His motto was that while it's hot, sell it. He did not seem motivated by any particular personal axe to grind or any unusual interest. The material was timely, current, and he felt films based on this material would make more money. They did not operate with any fixed budget because as the script evolved he found that there were things which he wanted to include. For instance, there were actual "love-ins" and related youth phenomena going on in Los Angeles and San Francisco, so he sent film crews to San Francisco to shoot footage in the Haight Asbury district which he incorporated with other footage shot in Los Angeles.

In regard to Katzman's concept of the films, he definitely felt that the films portrayed true-to-life events, not fictional situations. In regard to his film The Young Runaways, he said the situation depicted in the film was definitely true and "terrible;" all one had to do was pick up the papers and read about many, many young people running away from home. He mentioned that he could look out his studio office window and see young girls thumbing for rides.

Concerning the question of unique environmental factors that made it difficult for young people to come of age, Katzman made a perplexing reference to a new religious element which had cropped up. The "hippies" of 1968-69 are now church kids with their own preachers, their own ministers, their own churches. This "back to Christ" movement is happening all over the United States, in small towns and large cities. He felt there are too many spoiled towns and large cities. He felt there are too many spoiled kids and that the spoiled ones with money in their pockets have become "one person" and have behaved "modishly." What these kinds basically want is to live and exist, to live and sleep, and that's about it. They want to get away from the troubles of the big city. Some want kicks, but most just don't want to be hassled by the problems of life. He did not think money or mobility were central causal factors.

Katzman was asked a question about sexuality, the fact that parents and other authorities seemed to want to keep their children dependent for fear that liberation might lead to promiscuity, rape, or illegitimacy. He dismissed these concerns because of the wide availability of contraceptives,
especially birth control pills. What parents are really concerned about, he speculated, is disease. He quoted some statistics: one out of two young people is diseased—with what he didn’t say. Because parents are basically selfish and want to live their own lives, they’re not as strict, not as domineering as they were twenty years ago. Parents don’t care about their children. To Katzman, this lack of concern, of caring, was mutual. Children don’t care about their parents; they just want to get out of the home as fast as possible. Moreover, parents are just doing what their kids are doing anyway, so he didn’t feel there was any real split. Again he repeated that the only thing that bothered parents was the embarrassment of disease: eighty-five per cent of high school kids, both male and female, are diseased.

There is no double standard to him: kids eat, sleep, and live with each other as to grown-ups. (He mentioned specifically public high school teachers who "shack up.") No one wants to live at home any more; the family unit is crumbling. Fathers cheat, kids cheat, parents cheat on their kids, kids cheat on parents. This situation points to a revolution which eventually will lead to kids running the country. The crumbling family unit was symptomatic of a general malaise stemming from the Viet Nam war. A general "I don’t care" attitude, and a pervasive feeling that things were going wrong could be traceable to our country’s involvement in the Southeast Asian conflict: ninety-five per cent of the "problem" was the war. Nobody seems to give a damn any more. A young person can be drafted without being able to voice any objections. As he said, "you’re our slave, go!"

Katzman had very little to say about the style of the films he made in relation to message content. All of his films have a certain amount of production values, but the content was the significant element.

Concerning the statement made in his films about resolutions of identity crisis, Katzman said, "Wake up everybody, to life, to reality, no put-ons, no bossing." People should try to do some good instead of conforming with everybody else. He didn’t believe the situation had changed much since he made The Love-Ins and Riot on Sunset Strip, except the religious movement he mentioned earlier. In conclusion, he stated that this movement was a big "cop out" anyway.
Interview with Larry Turman

JM: Would you describe the circumstances which led you to produce The Graduate? How did the project come to you? What influenced you to produce the movie? Were there any unusual persons or occurrences connected with the production of the movie?

LT: Take a week, I could answer it all except the last one. I read a review of the book in the New York Times. It sounded interesting to me, I bought the book, read it, couldn't put it down, had a strong emotional reaction to it and liked it a lot, put up my own money and acquired the motion picture rights. Optioned the motion picture rights. I then struggled to get financing—every studio turned it down. Embassy, Joe Levine, was the last stop on the line, and they said yes. I brought Mike Nichols early into it, very early on. He had only done one Broadway play at that time, Barefoot in the Park, but based on that, which was just oozing good direction, and the quality of his mind and humor and observations of the stuff he threw Elaine May, I thought he's be ideal for it, and indeed he proved to be so; and we worked together to make it into a movie. As far as any unusual things, every movie has all kinds of unusual—has its own unusual and special situations and events, and I'd take forever to detail on that kind of lead, to remember anyone that stands out as being that unique.

JM: Let me ask, then, you said you had a very emotional reaction to the novel when you read it. What was there about yourself or about it, that influenced you to do a picture about this kind of story?

LT: It's no more, no less, no different than any other film I've done. I read a book, and I fly by the seat of my pants. I like it, and I've got to do it. In this case, I guess you could say that I felt that I was connected emotionally to the central character. But indeed, so did Nichols, and so did the writer, maybe Dusty Hoffman, too. I don't mean to be general, but that's....

JM: The second question is: The Graduate deals with the relationship between two upper middle-class young people from Los Angeles. What was your concept of those young people? What did the movie attempt to say about their background, their goals in life, and particularly about their search for individual identities? And was your concept largely fictionalized, or do you believe it
actually portrayed the life styles of kids from these environments in 1967?

LT: Oh, wow! I don't know how to answer that question. I mean, the movie is up there on the screen. Whatever we tried to do, we did to the best of our ability; and the audience responds, and it works for them, as reflecting the emotional climate of those kids at that point in time, or it doesn't. I mean, I can't answer that. I mean, I'm not trying to make a picture to...I'm not making a didactic film. For every film I do, I like to reflect the emotional reality as I see it. As I perceive it. To articulate that, I would articulate it. I wouldn't make the movie. I don't mean I make the movie, I incept it, and cause it to be made, and help it to be made. And I influence it in many ways, I suppose, but I mean that's really an unanswerable question. You know, it's like asking, well, I started to say Picasso or someone, what he meant by painting. Now, that's a presumptuous analogy because that's a great artist, and here I'm just trying to make a movie. As a producer, in that case, sometimes as a director, sometimes both, sometimes one or the other but I can't...I mean I can't answer that. You do it by the work. I mean that's like trying to say, "What statement am I trying to make by how I live my life?" Life is a reflection of me. The clothes I have on right now, what I had to eat for lunch, that I decided to see you instead of not seeing you, my being rather brusque at this moment because of other things impinging on me. So it is with the film. I wanted to make it, I made it, I can't comment on that. I've said a lot, and said nothing. I'm sorry, but I can't answer that question. It's in the film, or it's not in the film.

JM: I guess what I'm trying to get at is, the film seems to make some comments about affluent middle-class people, about Benjamin's family, his parents, his background, his values. I was just wondering about the concepts, the rationale, what you were trying to get at, along these lines. I believe the film makes some of those statements.

IT: If it makes 'em, it makes 'em. Someone gets, derives something from it, fine. I mean, if they're entertained by it, great. If they get a particular social view, value view, great. It reflects our view, but when I say our view, I mean, after all, it began with Charles Webb. That film's very close to the book.

JM: Then there's another question—the problem of adapting that novel into a film. Could you elaborate a little
more about how closely the film followed the novel, or were there certain changes you....

LT: Always is. It's always difficult to adapt any novel into a film. The novelist has the advantages of getting you inside a character's head, which a film can do, but it's a little harder. Specifically, in the case of The Graduate, we stayed very close to the book. I think we made the central character a little more sympathetic; he was a little more smart-ass in the book. And in the film I think that made him a little more sympathetic. Also, the casting of Dustin Hoffman helped because he has very attractive, sympathetic qualities. Other than that, I think one always makes changes, and even without making changes, the question of selectivity and choice, choosing one scene over another. I'm giving you bum answers, but I mean—you can't--I don't know, why do people buy a Chevy instead of a Ford? Most of them don't sit and go through Motor Training, and say, "I see this has a better this, and a better that." You kind of go and make your judgment. And you work on a movie, and you make your judgment. I mean, obviously you take an intellectual over-look of it. You say, "All right, how do you best tell this story about a kid, perhaps drowning in alluence, seemingly without purpose, and in opposition to his parent's values?". I'm inadvertently answering the question you asked me before.

JM: Did The Graduate establish the precedent for the obligatory climactic marriage scene? In films portraying young people, in just about any film after that, or seemingly so, there was a big marriage scene.

LT: I don't agree with you. Right away I come to Midnight Cowboy, Easy Rider, and Bonnie and Clyde. I don't think they got married. I mean, where did they...what's the obligatory marriage scene you're talking about?

JM: I was thinking about Little Murders for one, which was a little more recent.

LT: Is that a youth film?

JM: Goodbye, Columbus.

LT: Goodbye, Columbus—they didn't get married in Goodbye, Columbus either, did they? It ended unhappily, a brief affair, over.

JM: Well, the brother got married.
LT: Someone got married, okay. I don't call that an obligatory scene; I think it's defined by John Howard Lawson, in a book called *The Theory and Practice of Screen Writing*: "Is that scene, which the audience is unconsciously looking forward to." And if you don't put it in the movie, the audience will feel unsatisfied. It makes it obligatory to put it in the film. And I don't think the brother's getting married in *Goodbye, Columbus* is what I'd call an obligatory scene. It was highly theatrical, and I guess very effective and maybe very good, and that was a good movie, but I don't think that's an obligatory scene.

JM: Let me finish the question; just forget that I asked that question, perhaps. The question is, could you discuss—maybe this is going to be difficult—the thematic meaning of the abortive marriage sequence in *The Graduate* and the whole pattern of sexual involvements. From the point of view of Benjamin and Elaine's growth as individuals, was there anything special in the whole treatment of sex in the film, in the various kinds of sexual relationships?

LT: You have very complex, tough questions. I mean, I can't answer that question. I don't know, you could answer it as well as I could. You saw the movie, obviously, and you decide what you feel about the sex relationship. My only comment is I can't think of an American film at that point in time which portrayed a young man having an affair with the older wife of a family friend. I guess that's a unique thing in and of itself. Whether it's good unique or bad unique, you can decide and all the others can decide. It created conflict in the story, and that moved the drama along, and it was theatrical and dramatic, but I really don't know what you're asking me. I mean, what I'm saying is, I'm sounding rude, I don't like what I'm saying, but you're asking me philosophy. And I guess one can examine it philosophically. Nichols and I saw some critic who said that in the church Benjamin was standing with his arms upraised in a Christ-like pose. Well, that was news to us. I mean, Dusty went in the scene, and that was where his hands were. I guess his hands were put there by Mike so the camera could see what was going on underneath, the church downstairs. You know, sometimes was it Freud or someone contrary to Freud—who said sometimes a snake is merely a snake and not a penis symbol. And you know, you're talking about meaning with a capital M, all kinds of heavy stuff. There it is, it's a movie. If we could have said it, we'd have written it down on a piece of paper. Well,
combined, an inter-related complex of powerful crimi-
nogenic forces is produced by the ghetto environment. These social forces for crime are intensified by the inferiority-inducing attitudes of the larger American society...the competitive road to success is accorded great emphasis in American life. Achievement often tends to be measured largely in material terms. Our consumer-oriented culture pressures us to desire goods and services and to feel successful if one obtains them, unsuccessful if one does not. The network of mass communication spreads a culture of consumer desires over a vast audience. Happiness, we are endlessly reminded, is obtaining and having things.\^34

Persons living in socially and culturally blighted urban areas, though they may be acutely aware of the expectations which motivate other people and their successes, recognize that they not only do not have an equal stake in the "system," but also that it seems to operate on different sets of rules for the "haves" and the "have-nots." An awareness of this kind of reality is especially influential for young people just beginning to organize their attitudes and energies around some kind of realistic life-goal. What they frequently see is that crime and violence "pay off" more in terms of tangible social and material rewards than behaviors conducted along more legitimate lines. The consequences of not having a stake in the system generate more than just frustration or random crime for acquisitive purposes, they also produce a "subculture within the dominant American middle-class culture in which aggressive violence tends to be accepted as 'normal' in everyday life, not necessarily illicit. In the contemporary American city we find the necessary conditions not only for the birth but also
this is what Webb did, Webb told his story. Now, he didn't have much description, and I'm wandering--I can't answer your question. I'm sorry.

JM: I guess my emphasis is philosophical and sociological, in the sense that my point of view is about these kids growing up as individuals, and their break from family, and their growing involvement with each other. Do they grow up or do they not grow up? And particularly, do your concepts or intentions or feelings coincide with these issues?

LT: My intention was to tell a story that interested me very much and very personally; to tell it as well, as entertainingly, as theatrically, as truly--emotionally true--as possible.

JM: Let me ask this next question, then. Could you comment about the stylistic quality or approach in the film, which centers around satiric, visual puns directed against the middle-class establishment and a kind of realistic treatment of the lover relationship? If you can speak for the director, Mike Nichols, and for Bob Surtees, who shot it, how did they, or you, or all of you together, see the film visually?

LT: Well, it's funny. Mike and I talked about it early on--well, early on in our first meetings, what would be the style of the film, and we hadn't quite found it then. And we talked, and we did agree on a concept that basically it was a subject told through the eyes of Benjamin Braddock. And as far as the visual style, I think there is that strong satiric thrust which is, what you're saying is, that the story element's not relating to the young people, some of it's not real. They were satirical to the point of not being real. I think that's what you're saying.

JM: Did the style contribute to the content, to the themes, in the film?

LT: I think they are tied together, style and content. What is it Frank Lloyd Wright said--form follows function. I think the style is dictated by the content, and attitude, and I think the attitude is a kind of, as I said before, a kind of drowning in materialism, and a deadening of the soul.

JM: Was this a....
LT: Wait—there was a phrase that Nichols once used in defining it for each other. It's a story of a boy who saves himself through madness.

JM: Was he largely responsible for coming up with a subjective approach—he and the photographer, Surtees?

LT: I don't think the photographer thought it at all. I think it really—you know, Surtees did a very good job of photographing the picture. But conceptually, the thing really sprang from Mike, and me, and I suppose really from Webb himself either subconsciously or inadvertently. It really is the boy's story; the writer's. All of sympathized through Mike. He was the catalyst in that, I would say.

JM: The last question, then. I have the feeling that you're going to protest because again it asks for a statement or a philosophy or an interpretation. The film ends as Ben and Elaine jump the bus to escape the enraged marriage party. He has abducted her before she has physically consummated her marriage to the establishment type choice of her parents. Again, from the point of view of these people growing up, do they mature? What concluding view or statement does the film make regarding their growing up and search for an identity?

LT: It makes whatever statement the people in the audience think it makes. I saw it with an audience a number of times, and I took it that the audience, certainly a young audience, took it as a triumphant ending, a happy ending, a satisfying ending. Whether that also means they now have maturity, I have no idea. I don't know if in reality that maturity is gained that quickly, or that easily. I don't know. I'm still looking for maturity myself, as I can't speak for fictional characters.
E. Interview with Martin Ritt

JM: Would you describe the circumstances which led you to produce Hud? How did the idea come to you? What influenced you to make this picture? Were there any unusual persons or occurrences connected with the making of this film?

MR: Well, two writers that I had worked with several times before, came to me with this novel, which I read, which I liked, but which I felt lacked something that would make the project viable on the commercial level. It was a book called Horseman Pass By. It was a story of an issue between a boy, a young boy growing up, and his grandfather. We sat down and we talked the material through and we came up with a character named Hud, who had been mentioned briefly in the novel as someone who lived in the town, who was not genuinely and organically a part of that novel. And we put the third generation in, and that whole thing about American materialism, and a kind of what I call a prick hero. I mean, Gable had always played that kind of part in the early American films, but then he turned out to be a nice guy in the end. And we decided to go all the way with that character, saying let's show a man's addicted appetite for the prick that he really is. And we did that, we put that character in the middle. They wrote, I thought, a very fine screen play. And I went to Paul with it, and I remember MCA who was his agent at the time, and they said hey, he can't play this guy, he's a son-of-a-bitch. And Paul liked the script, and we talked him into it, and that's how the picture got made. I don't think I'd have been able--I would have made the picture anyway, without Paul, but I wouldn't have made it at Paramount. I don't know where I would have made it, but I'd have found some place to make it.

JM: Was there something in your particular background, that sensitized you to this particular aspect of Hud, I mean, wanting to introduce the materialistic element?

MR: McCarthyism. I was blacklisted for five years, and I had a couple of my friends in those days who, I think, surrendered totally to appetite, and became informers and friendly witnesses. And I'd been looking for a piece of material directly related to that, and hadn't found one; and here one came along that somehow said more or less the same thing about the American scene that way. So, obviously, I was attracted to it for that reason.
JM: Part of Hud's distinctiveness is that it was about the first portrayal in the sixties of the new West. What concept or understanding motivated your treatment of this film? What were you trying to do, and how would you evaluate your success?

MR: Well, I think a lot of it is due to McMurtree, obviously, who wrote the novel, like he wrote the novel for The Last Picture Show. To look at the American West just honestly is a departure, even though it is fashionable now, and the critics in many ways will think us villains in this. The old genre film is fashionable; the old fashioned westerns of "men are men, women are women," and good vs. bad. Then they accuse the more serious of the American films because of pretentiousness. I think that any evaluation of American history, honest evaluation, is going to make for some really exciting films because the whole scene has been so sugar-coated and so lied about and so used to justify our own rapaciousness. You don't have to go to the contemporary West, you can go to the old West, you can go any place you want to, as Arthur Penn has tried occasionally, and you're bound to come up with an interesting story, because they never, the history books never told the truth. The history books were controlled by rich people and written for rich people and written to protect rich people. And written to protect our image of ourselves in the West. We were absolutely voracious and rapacious. And just, you know, telling it the way it was, is bound to make an original West.

JM: Was your concept, then, a fictionalized one, or do you believe it encompasses how, in Lon's case, a young person would grow up in a small town in the west today?

MR: Well, I think the novel is much more romantic than the film. And I think Lon is a trifle romantic, as I think the grandfather is a trifle more romantic in the film, as I look back at it now, I think that I could have done a couple of other things than what I did. I think Hud was the most honest person in the film because he represented to me what I consider the Great American middle-class, and their needs, their desires, and their willingness to do what they have to do to win. The character that Pat Neal played was a black in the novel. At that point, I don't think I could have gotten the film made if I'd made a black out of her and had Hud try to rape her. But so much has the scene changed that when I went to see The Last Picture Show, I kept thinking of how what trouble we'd had with the rape scene in Hud, you know, and I kept saying, Oh My God, you know. But
I feel that the boy was handled a little romantically, and I remember that most of the letters that I got at the time about the film defended Hud. From the kids, too! Which gave me a very bad feeling about that generation. You know, they defended Hud because they felt that he was the most truthful, and he was the most truthful. That was my fault, but it was also because he was their hero, and it shocked me the first time I got a letter and it said that the old man is a pain in the ass. Hud is right! And I said, Jesus Christ, I really missed the boat somewhere, and I did miss the boat somewhere in that picture because of that. Because I'm fundamentally, I think, an affirmative man, and I believe the boy was right, and I believe the old man was right, but maybe I did make them too romantic in Hud.

JM: Do you think this had something to do with Newman's personality, the fact that he just kind of ...

MR: Well, we cast it purposely, because I tried to hide the fact that he was a prick for at least half of the picture. You know, I could have cast it with Lancaster or Kirk Douglas or Mitchum and he'd have been a prick from the word go. But since I had this very handsome, beautiful man that all the girls love, nobody really believed--Oh No, he can't be that--therefore I felt the film would be more effective and meaningful. Otherwise, it would be too apparent and too obvious from the word go. I think Paul complicated the film for us that way.

JM: I am studying this film as one of a group of films portraying the problems of small town, country adolescents trying to grow up and find themselves, as we talked about before. From this point of view, are there unique factors about Lon's environment, ranch life in small town Texas, which affect his coming of age?

MR: Yes, there are unique factors, again as The Last Picture Show showed. That section of the country, I think, is tougher for a young person to contend with because it's more rigid, the morality is more Calvinistic and consequently more destructive, and a boy that shows any unusual things in his nature is bound to be isolated and picked on and ridiculed in some way. He's like the kid who plays right field on a baseball team, you know; he's the ninth man. And I think McMurtree must have felt that part of the poetry, you know, that he's been able to include in his novels: that sense of being isolated that blacks, that all minority groups, understand. From the first day that they begin to grow up they sense that they're not part of the so-called community. And it's
destructive, and it's also very helpful. It's not accidental that there's been that kind of splurge of talent in both athletics and in the arts, where, if you have the ability, you really can be—I mean, it's tough for a black to be president of a bank, but it's not tough for him to be a great halfback or a poet, you know, or a painter or an actor, because where the talents are undeniable, they're undeniable. But in the business community, it's much more controlled, much more—which is again that section of Texas: Baptist, hard-shell Baptist, churchgoing, hypocritical, destructive sexually, oh, a lot of things. So Lon has a different problem, say, than a Puerto Rican or a black kid in New York, obviously. Not that they aren't all adolescents, and some of the problems are similar, but emotionally they're not similar.

JM: Do you think this perhaps accounts in part for Hud's attractiveness, because the old man's morality was just so overbearing, that ....

MR: Yes, and also, part of that was Paul. Always, when you cast the leading part, it's a big part of directing, by the way, casting: to make a mistake in a serious, in a big part, you're finished! You'll never recover from it. But that kind of complication duality that an actor can give, if he's the right actor, which a director should understand—is very important, and very meaningful to a film. As I say, if he were unmasked immediately in that film, and he does terrible things—I mean, the first time you see him he's in there with another man's wife, and he comes out and lies to the guy, says it was his kid brother, and then cons his kid brother on the way home, then tells his old man. He does a lot of bad things, one after the other. So that immediate duality is what helped him get over that section of the film; that is his personality and the genuine feeling the audience had for him. I think that's very important. I'm trying to relate—what did you specifically ask? I think I wandered.

JM: Just about aspects of his environment that....

MR: Well, you know he, most businessmen operate that way. Well, you know, he said okay, but I'm not going to pick up this tab for these diseased cattle, fuck 'em! That's terrible! Let those people have 'em. I haven't done anything against the law. And that's the way the country still works. I mean whatever dent we made was of
such moderate impact that, you know, nothing really happened. It's tough to shake that establishment. And it's interesting, the revolution of this country, if there has been one, and I think there has, has been totally sexual.

**J.M.:** Sexual?

**M.R.:** Yes, I would think so. Nothing in the area of ideas--is any different from the young radicals when I was a young radical. Nothing! As a matter of fact, less! They've pulled back from that. But now, the kind of films that are made, the kind of freedom--I have a fourteen-year-old daughter, that, you know, she just astounds me. I can't believe what she says to me. And I know that's a helluva lot different. In the area of ideas, I don't think they were smarter than my generation. I don't really feel so, and now a lot of people argue with me about that. Nor as committed! I mean, when I didn't work for five years because of McCarthyism, I made a choice. I could have worked. All I had to do was go before a committee and say a lot of things I didn't believe and turn in some people who I knew were totally innocent of anything. So I made a choice unlike Hud's; and until I see kids do that, then I don't believe they're committed to anything except their own appetites. But sexually, I see a revolution. I see it's a lot different.

**J.M.:** Another element in the film which is of particular interest to me is the network of identification, of loyalties, within which and through which Lon attempts to find himself. Could you comment about these patterns of identification in the film? His relationships with Alma, with Hud, and with Homer?

**M.R.:** Well, I too felt, for instance, the old man was kind of a stuffed shirt. But the difference was, and I feel this too about that section of the country, by the way, and I have a lot of respect for it. The morality sometimes is as destructive as hell, emotionally it's destructive because they don't understand and are not prepared to deal with ex, psychology, drugs, or whatever. They just can't deal with it. The environment is so murderous in that area, they can't contend with anything that doesn't come out of the New Testament. But in the commitment to keeping their word, working hard, producing, feeling that if a man doesn't produce he has missed, somehow, one of his most important things in life, that I respect in him. I respected the old man
because I knew that if you came down to an ethical thing with the old man, he would do what was right. Now I don't think he understood a lot of things, and he might be a big bore and a pain in the ass to me if I had to contend with him, but I felt, unlike Hud, I felt if the old man had to do something right, he would do it. As I felt about the boy, or Alma, and as I knew that with Hud, that he'd do whatever he wanted to do, because he only followed his appetite, whether it was money, women, or whatever. And to me the ability— one of the most important things in life is the ability to pick up a tab for a mistake you made, and Hud would never pick up a tab. He just—you had to pay the tab for him all the time. And that's what the country's about. But even the people I don't agree with totally, such as Grandpa, I knew he would pick up a tab. I knew the kid would pick up a tab. I knew Alma would pick up a tab. And to me, on an ethical level, that's the single most important thing I could say about a person.

**JM:** What was the real nature, then, of Lon's awakening? What did it have to deal with, the conflict in loyalties between......

**MR:** It had to do with the rejection, totally, of the materialism of Hud.

**JM:** I was going to say was it his affection for Alma, his loyalty to Homer, or his sexual rivalry with Hud for Alma?

**MR:** All those things were there, but I would have to believe— as I would have to believe about the young today, in order to have any hope that what they're rejecting is something more important than that. That if the affection were there for Grandad, and Grandad behaved badly, the kid would reject him too.

**JM:** This kind of departs is a little from content, but could you comment about the stylistic qualities of the film? James Wong Howe won the Academy Award for best cinematography for the picture. How did you see this film stylistically and visually? Is the style of *Hud* a large part of its message?

**MR:** No, I don't think the style is a large part of the message. I decided very early, actually, that the film should be totally shot in back light. We chased light almost throughout the film, because I wanted a sense
of infinity in the landscape. And you only get that best when you're back lit so that you can see forever. I remember talking down there to...we had a hail storm in August, and I was talking to a cowboy down there and he said, "There ain't nothin' between here and the North Pole but a barbed wire fence." And that kind of dryness, and that kind of people who have struggled with the land, who've lived, and fought, and had to scrape a living out of it, have a marvelous flat realistic point of view of what it was; and I tried for that in the film. And we achieved it most of the time. It's tough to follow light all of the time, because of the economies of film-making. But we did it most of the time. Jimmy and I just went around with a camera on our own shoulders; set it up. I think the style was important to the film, but I'm not a director who feels that atmosphere and style are enough. And I don't. I'm not addicted to any McLuhanistic point of view, where I certainly don't feel the medium is the message. I feel what you have to say, and the perceptions you have humanly are what art is about. And the rest of it, like what you learned at that school you went to, are all learnable. If form, if a preoccupation with form would make films—form is learnable; content is really not learnable. Perceptions are highly personal, much more personal than taking pictures. And if you want to be a film-maker, your films should reflect something highly personal about you. And you'll only be able to make, I think, that personal statement through your perceptions of the same story. Now, anybody can shoot a film and back light it. I think it was the right way to shoot the film, but anybody can shoot it and back light. But not everybody would make the same perceptions about the people. I think that's the strength of any great film, even a good film.

JM: Your remarks about an over-concern with form is a comment about university film students, which I've heard before.

MR: Yes, yes, I think so, because you know, it's like they've just discovered that girls have bosoms and everything, and all the other equipment, and it's a world of wonder, and they confuse that. I mean, what the hell, there were directors before there were film schools, and well, you know we had very good directors. The film schools still have to prove that they're going to produce anybody, and I think they're very valuable, because I wish, frankly, when I started to direct films, when I made my first film, I didn't know which end of a camera to look into, truly. But I knew what I wanted, and somebody
around, people around to give it to me. I was at Ohio University last year, and I talked to several film students there. They were ludicrous to talk to because they were sure that the lens, and where they put the camera, that was the whole game. I said, wait a minute, fellows, you gotta tell a story. That's what films are about; otherwise, why don't you go out and make commercials? If form were the end, then everything would be a commercial, because that's the only place where form is the end. They've got nothing to sell when they sell Wheaties or one of those things, so they have to figure out a lot of ways to do it. But if you've got people to sell, or a story to sell, then you have to put the camera in the right place, and a good eye is very important; the knowledge of the lens is no less important. But if you can teach it in the university then you can't make an artist that way.

JM: I'd like to invite you to Ohio State to talk to the film students there. I think....

MR: Well, you know, a lot of them will reject it. I saw all of the films that they made at Ohio University, and if I didn't like a particular thing, the kids said, well, you don't understand it. I said, okay, that's the end of that discussion. If I don't understand it, who the hell is going to understand it? But that, you see, they need that. They need that assurance, because that assures them they're going to get in. But that, you see, they need that. They need that assurance, because that assures them they're going to get in. Well, that's not true, unfortunately—or unfortunately. Unfortunately for them, it's not true at all. And it has nothing to do with directing. A genuine knowledge of technique may help you say what you want to say better. But it doesn't give you anything to say.

JM: To get back to some stylistic considerations: the film was in black and white and Panavision. Were those considerations motivated by the same desires for expansiveness and....

MR: Yes, Panavision I'm very fond of, particularly in any outdoor film. You know, it's just—you have the best lenses and it's the best system, wide-screen. So I've always used it. I've just done a child's film, about a black sharecropper family in Louisiana in the 1930's, and I used Panavision. I just like it. It's a very good system; it's got the best lenses. It helps me say what I want to say better, which is the key to why you should choose any process. I saw The Last Picture Show and it
for the accelerated development of violent subcultures..."35

The function of violence in these kinds of subcultures goes beyond the purely practical expedient of acquiring goods and services denied them by other means. Violent response is an acceptable form of behavior in an environment that regards violence as a basic norm. Violence enables a young man to become a success, to prove his masculinity, "to be somebody." The patterns of aggressive behavior characteristic of the lower-class adult male—tough posturing, abuse of women, readiness to fight—have social and personal rather than practical objectives. Moreover, those who engage in violence frequently do so free from the nagging pangs of guilt because they believe their victims or aggressors are only agents of the same kind of violence which they themselves represent. Violent retribution is quickly legitimized when the source of provocation is recognized as familiar.36

The Significance of the Sample

Of Motorcycle Films

This section is devoted to a discussion of those factors which make the study of film, generally, and the study of the motorcycle genre of films specifically, relevant in terms of identity crisis in the 1960's. The discussion will proceed along three lines of analysis: 1) film as the relevant art form of our time, especially for the
looked very good in black and white. It's almost impossible to make a picture in black and white at a major studio. They run like thieves, you know. They don't want to touch it.

JM: Why so?

MR: Well, until recently they were selling all their films to television, and television insisted they wanted to sell color sets, so they want every film in color. So it all comes down, as you can well imagine, to the buck. Mind you, it's the same consideration at the university level, with the guy in the cinema school. He's looking to get in to make a buck! And by the way, I'm sure this kind of analysis has not really been taken seriously, but if you take those same kids five, six years later, in New York or Hollywood, struggling to get into the field, you're going to get a different point of view. From them, I mean. I remember my college years--I'm sure I was equally as arrogant, you know. And maybe that's the nature of the beast; maybe that's the way it has to be. Certainly if you're not to some degree arrogant, you're in the worst field in the world, because they'll kill you. I mean, this is about 50% talent, and 50% being able to take care of yourself in a street fight. If you don't have 'em both --I've known some gifted people who have never really emerged at all. Not too many, but I've known some. But I've never really known a real bum that made good films just because he was a hustler. But you need both qualities, you really do. A little hoodlum won't hurt any film director.

JM: This is my last question. I know I've kept you here a long time.....

MR: It's okay.

JM: It concerns the resolution of the film. At the end of the film, Alma leaves, Homes dies, and Lon breaks away from Hud. Now all of Lon's loyalties have been severed, but what has been resolved? Has he found himself, or is he just beginning to grow up? What concluding statement does the film make concerning Lon's search for an identity?

MR: Well, the film ended with Hud, as you remember, virtually saying, "fuck you," which is what the establishment finally says, I think. I know this happened between these student riots this last couple of years. They beat 'em up pretty good. And I think they beat 'em. I'll have
to wait and see how they turn out, and register, before I make any statement about the youth. So far it's been very discouraging. I gather only about 25% with all the people and all the shooting off their mouths, only 25% are registered to vote. I don't really care which way they vote, but I think that any guy that opens his mouth should get out and register to vote. I feel that Lon was just—Lon in rejection, Hud was able to make a beginning. Alma really was what the Germans call a Lumpen proletariat. She was a dame, touching very attractive, but nothing was going to happen with Alma. There'll be another guy in another town. But Lon could make something of himself, and Hud was not going to change. And in that sense, when the kids talk about revolution, nobody's going to change until you make 'em change. Certainly the status-quo is not going to change until you make it change. But the status-quo is available. It's totally available, and the best indication is the film business, because the people at the head of the film business hated the kids. They hate the long hair, they hate the music, they hate everything. But if they think they can make a buck, they will totally make those deals, and the kids too. I remember when I was a kid, you know, picketing and doing whatever was going on in those days—the political levels in those days—nobody ever listened to us, and for one very important reason. I didn't have a nickel in my pocket. Kids today have a lot of money and they spend it! Therefore they create the styles in film, clothing, and music. And you must, I'm sure you do understand, the status-quo hates all those things, but they'll do anything to make money. So they capitulate to the kids' taste. Now if the kids could use their power a little more decently, and respectfully, maybe something would happen in this country.

JM: Is Lon the kind of sensitive, romantic intellectual that has no place in modern society?

MR: I hope not. I think the verdict's out on that. I certainly hope not. Because though I was a big city kid, I had a lot of qualities that Lon didn't have. Which was I grew up in a very tough neighborhood and had to fight my way out, and into getting an education and everything else. That prepared me better. Also, I didn't have all those emotional hang-ups. I was not a white protestant, you know. I didn't have any of those problems. But I would hope that Lon was the beginning. McMurtree, having lived through it, was very bitter, as you could tell in The Last Picture Show.
And yet you notice all the ideas in that film are fundamentally sexual. Even the best moments, that very erotic moment when the girl walked into the kitchen and the guy reached down and grabbed her. I don't know that I ever believed the relationship between the old woman and the young boy in the picture. I think it's a superior film, but I do feel it did get a little soapy at times.
Interview with Larry Peerce

Would you discuss some of the things that influenced you to produce *Goodbye, Columbus*? How did the project come to you? What influenced you to direct the movie? Were there any unusual persons or occurrences connected with the making of the picture?

I had read *Goodbye, Columbus* and a collection of short stories long before that, and I had always very honestly dreamed of making a film out of the material, but as I explained before, the kind of material that it was, in essence, most of the studios would have turned away from it, very honestly. I had just finished making my second picture, which was a film for Twentieth Century-Fox called *The Incident*, a story about some kids on a subway holding up a bunch of people in New York, and I got a call from a guy at the hotel who said his name was Stanley Jaffe, and he'd been recommended—we had the same lawyer. I didn't know who he was; and in came this very young man I told you about. At the time, I guess he was twenty-seven, balding, looking much older than he was, tremendously aggressive. And he said that—he said on the phone to me, "Would you like to do *Goodbye, Columbus*?" He came up and we sat down and talked, and I can only tell you that in this business you meet people like that, with the same attitude, or can meet them twenty times a day, seven days a week. And he said that he had a first draft written by a man named Arnold Schulman, who was a playwright and a fairly well-known screen writer. He had a first draft and he didn't want to go any further, and he wanted me to direct the film, and would I read the screen play? I said sure, and he said okay, and he left it. I was involved in the opening, and this man was very persistent—Stanley is a very persistent kind of a guy—he kept calling, and finally I sat down and read it. And honestly, I did not like the screen play. For whatever my reasons were, I felt they had strayed too far from the original material, and so I called him up and told him what I felt, and he said that's fine, and we talked some more. I told him what my ideas were in terms of the screen play. And then I met with Arnold Schulman, and they asked would I be willing to sit down and do some work on the screen play? They couldn't afford to pay me anything for it, and I didn't care. I was glad to sit down and work on it. In a couple of weeks they said they'd come to California, because I was living in California. They arrived two weeks later and we sat down and did a complete rewrite on the script. No
studio had been approached, and we finished the screen play, and I was very satisfied with the screen play and said, yes, I'd do it. Then Stanley took the screen play and brought it to Paramount, and they bought it literally in three days. Why, I will never know, because they questioned it from that time until we finally opened the film—right through the previews when people go to see the film. Would the Jewishness of the story drive people away? Is the story a universal story? And so on and so on.

For me it was, of course, a very universal look at life in America in the fifties, which is again an interesting point in terms of yourself. We shot it present day—or at least supposedly we shot it present day. I remember the meeting very well, where I went in with Stanley to see Bob Evans, who was then the head of the studio and still is. I said to them—I surprised them a lot—that I would like to shoot the film as a period piece. Wouldn't it be a great piece of camp to shoot the film with newscast clips of the kids getting their heads bopped at Columbia and carious universities, and then in about ninety feet, or a minute of film, work your way back to a big smiling picture of Dwight David Eisenhower on the putting green. Then super over it "1954" and then start the film. The only change in the film would be cars and costumes, and those would be the only changes I would want, and I would shoot it as a period piece of fifteen years ago. I thought that young people would get a tremendous kick out of it, but they almost killed me, screaming and yelling and carrying on, and they finally said "no" and I said "okay." Well, I shot it as a fifties piece, no matter what. I remember meeting Roth and he asked me how I was going to shoot it, and I said that I was going to shoot it, in essence, in the style of early Ronson lighter. He laughed, and that's exactly what I did, with the exception of one scene in a country club and the crappy score, which I've always hated—the "now" kind of score that was put in. I really did shoot it as a piece in the fifties.

JM: You've strongly expressed your interest in doing Goodbye, Columbus. What was there about the material, about yourself, that made you really respond to it?

LP: What I responded to was that I knew the genre of the piece very well, because that is my background. The fifties are really my background. I graduated from college in '52, and that whole period is my life. I wanted a chance to speak about that period of my life that I felt I also knew very well. I felt I wanted to
make a period piece, and that was the hardest part of making the film, to make it in terms of present day. I wanted to make a piece that reflected the passivity of the fifties, or in essence, what went into making the madness of the sixties out of the passivity of the fifties. It was a very intriguing idea for me, and that's why I got into it. Because those same people, ten years later, that same middle-class bag of the fifties ten years later, was turning out the kids that were the hippies and the phased-out generation of the sixties. Out of the middle-class Jewish bag came the same kids.

JM: Goodbye, Columbus deals with the relationship between an upper middle-class girl and a working class boy, both of whom also happen to be Jewish. What was your concept of these young people? What were you trying to say about their background, their goals, and particularly about their search for individual identities? Was your concept largely fictionalized or do you believe it accurately portrayed lifestyles of these kids from these backgrounds?

LP: That's always been the contention of a lot of fighting in terms of the attitudes about the film, you know--people saying that in essence I was drawing one-line sketches, a satiric look at those people. That's very debatable. To me it's always been a very real look at those people, including the wedding sequence, which has caused the most trouble of all. Those people are my family. That girl's family is my family. I come from that upper middle-class Jewish background in Westchester. I was raised in a town called New Rochelle about twenty miles outside of New York. We moved there when I was ten years old and stayed there until I went off to college. That background is real, and those people are real--perhaps pushed a little over the line in terms of comedy--but the reality of those people is very much what I grew up in. And the reality of the relationship of that boy and that girl is very much what I grew up in. I grew up in terms of a community that went from the lowest economic strata through the upper middle-class, as represented by the Patimkin family, and the constant battle that went on with the kids from the lower economic strata battling to become a part of the upper middle-class strata of the town.

The society that existed there seemed to be one of the key motivational factors of our growing up period, as a result of my background, which is upper middle-class. It was saved in a sense only by the fact that my Dad's
work was out of the norm of the upper middle-class in terms of the fact that he was not a businessman but an artist. This gave me a funny kind of background in terms of growing up and having people come to the house for parties and dinners that were like the Patimkin family as portrayed in the film. I used the family of a young man who grew up with me as the model for that family in the film. I really did the film with love; I didn't do it out of a lot of anger. I did want to show them as they are, and feeling that that group is not really representative of Jewishness. It so happens that they are Jewish, but they are truly the middle-class of this country, or the upper middle-class of this country, a very deciding force in the country, in the overall pattern of our system.

JM: In this clash of economic groups, the lower working-class meeting with the upper-class, what is it exactly that Brenda wants, and what is it that Neil wants out of life? What are they searching or reaching for, or do they even know at that point?

LP: The class that is represented by Neil, in essence, seems to be the key, I feel, for a great many of the problems that exist and were later shown in the next generation of youth in this country in the sixties. That is the misguided attitude that what the people of the Patimkin family, Brenda's family, what they had, or what they seemed to be, was what everyone should dream about and desire to achieve in succeeding—the Horatio Alger myth in the United States. Well, what did you have? That was the key problem. Neil supposedly turned away from it. Neil is really more of a culprit, in essence, than Brenda, I feel, in his striving and yet his inability to realize himself what he really wanted. Yet he really did want that life.

What was really very important to him was and still is important to a large segment of the population of this country. I see the same thing occurring with blacks in this country, that great desire to get—what? Money, possessions, to achieve the upper middle-class life, and when you have it, what have you got? Father Patimkin may be overextended, but in essence, they've got shit, and that's what caused the big problem with me and with all the young people who thought that's what they wanted. You know, I found myself involved in the same kind of life, and I really said to myself, what the fuck are you doing? It's insanity, that what I want is a big house in Westchester, a big house in Beverly Hills, so I packed up and left, and I also found out it didn't do much good.
That kind of bullshit you can carry with you anywhere.

But I felt the key in the film and the book was in essence just that thing, that the boy, despite the fact that all through the film he puts it down, makes fun of it, puts her down, puts the family down, and yet secretly it's what he wanted. He wanted to be a member of the "have" group in this country.

JM: What does this make of Brenda, and girls like her, who never question where she's going and what's going to become of her.

LP: They are the kind of people in this country, or in any country or any system, who never seem to suffer from paranoia. There is no paranoia in that group—in terms of having. They have a great deal of paranoia in terms of the other ethnic groups in this country, their fear of blacks. I have a sister like that, you know, who fantasises that she is being followed down the street by black men and is going to be attacked and raped, and she is a grown woman who doesn't carry a lot of money on her because she knows she's going to be mugged, really. She doesn't let her husband carry any money. That kind of paranoia is one thing, but the sureness with which they live their lives, there is no doubt to those people. They get up in the morning and it is going to be a good day, because they are "haves." They've got it all, they've got the brass ring, they've got everything. It's an unfortunate thing that occurs with that kind of affluence and the kind of protection that the parental generation gives them out of the fears that they suffered themselves in their own youth. They want to cover these kids with a blanket of security which, in essence, takes away any drives they might have. It takes away the work ethic, as witness the next generation. Why does one have to work when Papa provides all? Why does one even have to think? When Papa provides all and says, don't think, don't do, just live— that is the menace of the situation.

JM: Perhaps you could elaborate a little bit about your concept of the film being more about the late fifties than about the sixties. It was released in the sixties and there were some things you did stylistically that made it seem more "now" and relevant. In your working with the novel and the film, what did you have to do to make the kind of film you were trying to make? What was in the novel that you had to change?

LP: It's been three years. The changing was really very
little, because those people who were here at the studio, who were running the studio, it was their generation—it was my generation. I guess that means Bob Evans and I were the same age, so he thought that it was right up there today. But he doesn't realize that he came from that same kind of background: his father was a dentist in New York, he came from a middle-class background and ended up in a family business that made a great deal of money. These were his people, so there was really very little that had to be done, except the boogaloo maybe, instead of the mambo, but it was really the same thing.

Now, that's the old game about the studios trying to make the "now" picture, the "today" picture, the picture about young people. Sure, they do, but they make it in their own mind's eyes—it's them, but twenty years before. Stanley was that strange mixture, he was in the middle, because he was really in the end of the generation of the fifties, into the generation of the sixties. He was some kind of a mutation that was halfway in between, but he still came out of my generation, even though he's ten years younger than I am. So they thought we were doing one of those, but we really weren't, we really weren't at all. That's the funniest part of all of it. By the way, that's the part of the script that Roth hated the most, the making it "today." Again, it's what my art director said to me and what I said to you before, how do you do a film about the passivity of the fifties in terms of the madness of the sixties? When really, it is about the passivity of the fifties and the results, what happens as a result of that kind of passivity. That whole life style that came out of the post war years, the affluent society that grew out of the war, is a completely different thing. But to those people it wasn't different because it was their lives, so we were able to get away with it, and there were really very few critics that were bothered by it. I guess I was more bothered by it than most of the others.

As I say, the only thing in terms of change that occurred was really the music—and the clothing, ridiculous! But even the clothing I was naughty about in those terms. I'm not talking about mini-skirts and any stuff like that, but in terms of the boy. I dressed him exactly as I dressed myself in my college years. I dressed that way until two years ago. The costume department couldn't do it, so I picked Richard Benjamin up one Friday and took him over to Brooks Brothers and across the street, whatever the hell it was, Chibs, I think, because he said he likes the clothes better, they fit
him better. So we went over there and for $500.00 I outfitted him with one whipcord jacket and three pairs of gray pants and a blue blazer, and some blue button-down shirts and black knit ties, which was the uniform of my age, especially of the Jewish kids trying to get away from the very ethnic group and background that was represented by the Patimkin family.

**JM:** I think the issue of sex in the movie might fit interestingly with the kind of ambivalences you are talking about. Central to the movie, or at least one of the major aspects, was the sexual relationship between Brenda and Neil and the parallel relationship between Ron and Harriett. What is the significance of these relationships in terms of Brenda's and Neil's growth as individuals? That is—to Brenda's attempt to break from her mother and Neil's attempt to kind of plan or order his life? Isn't his problem just "doing something" with his life? Their relationship is certainly very intimate and physical, and certainly Ron and Harriett's is just the opposite, very sterile and antiseptic. We see Brenda prancing around nude and swimming in her underwear. Was this to give the studio boys something that seems to be contemporary? What were your feelings about this whole sexual issue?

**LP:** In terms of the sexuality of the piece and in terms of the sexuality of the two couples, vis-a-vis Neil and Brenda and Ron and Harriett, you have to give first the definition of what the Ron character is, or what he is to me. The Ron character I can best describe by using a quote from a play by Arthur Koestler. I don't know if you have ever read anything by Arthur Koestler. There is a very interesting play called *Darkness at Noon*. Did you ever read it?

**JM:** I read the novel.

**LP:** In the novel and in the play, there is a scene between the old commandant of the prison, the old-guard communist who is a friend of Rubishoff. Rubishoff is a member of the old guard who is being purged, and they are discussing the young assistant warden, Lepkin. He is the one who finally purges the old commandant and takes over himself. The description of this young man by the old commandant of the prison to Rubishoff, he says: "When you see that old man, that cold, hard, inhuman, soulless beast, he is really the end product of our civilization. He is in essence the modern day, in terms of the Russian society. One might call him the Neanderthal man. In essence we have overbred him
"new generation" of youthful film addicts; 2) historical precedents for sociological film study; and 3) the development of the rebel hero in the American film. References will be made to films studied in this paper, to the motorcycle films, to characters in these movies, or to persons associated with their production.

Film as the Most Relevant Art of the 1960's

Evidence suggests that film is close to the top as the most important art form today, if not the undisputed leader. Part of this phenomenon can be accounted for in terms of the motion picture's direct appeal to our basic concerns and sensibilities, and about its ability to affect our feelings and emotions more directly than other art forms. Indeed, in recent times more controversy has surrounded the motion picture industry, particularly in regard to the effects of sex and violence on young people, than about any other medium, with the possible exception of television. Significantly, a growing body of scientific research generally substantiates what critics and philosophers have long maintained about film's effectiveness.

In a paper prepared for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, for example, Alberta Siegel concludes that film is the most credible medium because of film's vividness (appeal to senses) and fidelity (capacity to technically duplicate reality) and because it
and made the complete circle back to that." To me the
character of Ron Patimkin is just that. He is our own
Neanderthal man, the end result of so much inbreeding
and so much brainwashing that he is in essence our own
Neanderthal man. This simple slug who just inhaled all
of it and became the end product of our times in terms
of upper or middle-class twentieth century America. He
is completely imbued with radio and television adver-
tising, raised on it, weaned on it, loving it, enjoy­
ing the whole idea of his life, and living out the
fantasies that most people can not live out. That boy
lived them out; he had everything that he wanted, and
whether or not he was a dummy in terms of the fact that
he had a lower I.Q. is hard to say. He may have had a
very normal intelligence, but it was dulled and sated
by the life he was living. So in essence, he was very
able to live out that pattern, why should he change?
Why should he look for further adventures?

Therefore you get into his sexual relationship—why not
live out those fantasies? Live out his father's fan-
tasies: Life is good, life is great, why change? Why
fight it, just go. On the other hand, you find the girl,
Brenda had two things going for her; she had a standard
mother/daughter relationship—and you, as a parent I am
sure, are learning to see that—the closeness that is
then broken and the war that then occurs between the
two, the mother and the daughter, for whatever the
reason—Freudian or whatever you want to get into. But
that fight does occur, and it keeps, if nothing else, a
lot of the spirit alive. The spirit of independence is
certainly started at that moment when the child says I
want to break away.

JM: And was this caused by her sexual attraction....

LP: I think as a result she would further her own sexual
life, in essence, to say "fuck you" to her mother. It's
another way of saying "screw off and leave me alone.
I am my own boss and I am my own person." On the other
side, you still have a girl with a good mind, who was
struggling to keep something more going than she
thought she was going to have in the very end, even
though that is what she gave up and went back to. She
needed that to keep her spirit alive, I think, and she
used that to keep her spirit alive, and she used that
boy to keep her spirit alive. But when he said, "No,
we'll live on my terms," she said, "No, I don't need
that," and she pulled out, you know, left the diaphragm
so that her mother and father would find it. I mean,
one doesn't go off to school and leave one's diaphragm
in the drawer for mama to find.

Incidentally, that woman is a real person. I don't know if you know that or not, that whole family is real, the occurrences are real, the whole story is real, and it happened to Phil Roth. He even told us where the family lived in New Jersey. And when the book came out, the brother came to kill him. Obviously, it was so close a parallel. The daughter, I don't know whether she ever got married, but she is now the editor of The Paris Review. Brenda went on with a succession of lovers, this is the truth, always artists, writers, poets, painters. A very bright woman--a killer, but a bright woman.

So in essence, the decision is up to you, whether she failed and went back and became the docile woman that her mother was, or broke away. In essence, she did break away. She's never really had much of a life; obviously, she's never found the ability to make a relationship with a person, and whether one can blame that on her background or not, that is always hard to say. But that was all part of it, the looking, the striving at least she was trying. She failed. She failed in terms of the short story. In terms of the film she failed. But you have one thing on your side that you forget about. You do have youth on your side. At the age of twenty-one you do have a few years left before you give up and raise the hands and go back into that house.

That kind of sexuality, by the way, was never in my background. I was too early for that--that kind of daring, sneaking down hallways and banging some girl. Back in the late forties and early fifties that was really unheard of in my background. I mean, you could have been bullwhipped and God knows what else. They could have killed you. That was still literally a fantasy in terms of any sexual revolution in this country, in terms of my background and my generation. It was--0 my God--I remember as a kid in high school one of the girls in our group of friends became pregnant. Oh, it was unbelievable, the fact was horrifying, and she finally married this guy, the captain of the football team. He banged her, this nice Jewish girl, and they got married. I don't know if it lasted or not; I didn't keep in contact with any of those people, but that would be unheard of. Phil Roth is five or six years--he is between me and Stanley--so he must be around thirty-five. So it was changing, the change was already occurring in terms of any sexual revolution.
JM: Would you comment about the stylistic approach in the film? How did you see the film visually and technically? And how important is the style of the film to what you were trying to say?

LP: I think it was very important. First of all you have to discuss the casting of the piece, especially the casting of Ali McGraw who played Brenda. The producer and I spent months trying to find the characters. I had met Ali once and had rejected her. One reason was because she wasn't Jewish, and I wanted her to be Jewish. We went through thousands and ended up testing about ten girls and none of them worked. Then I arrived at another conclusion. We were in trouble, so we brought this girl back, and I must say the producer liked her very much. I honestly had been very hedgy about it because she wasn't Jewish. And then I said to myself, wait a minute. If I'm going to achieve what I want to achieve in terms of the character of Brenda, then maybe this girl is righter than I realized. What I was really trying to do was to make Brenda the fantasy image of her parents—that girl, out of that background, who had been thoroughly Americanized, with the nose job and the education and the whole thing. So that she really is the fantasy fixation of her own father, and once I arrived at that attitude, then I could talk to Ali in terms of that, and use her in just that way, which is exactly what we did. We tested her, and she was marvelous.

By the time we tested Ali, we had already chosen Dick Benjamin to play the other role, and so we tested them together and it just worked very well. The boy, Ron, I couldn't find a boy to play the role, and I met lots of young guys and they were no good. And finally I met this young boy. I bumped into him at the Plaza Hotel; I was there. We were going to shoot the wedding scene at the Plaza and I was there to see the banquet manager.

My Uncle Walter was marrying off a daughter at the Plaza at the same time. We were considering going in and using his wedding for the background of the film which, strangely enough, my Uncle Walter was very willing and ready to let us do. We decided not to use Uncle Walter, but anyway I was there waiting for the banquet manager and in walked this big galump of a kid with two other boys, to be at this wedding rehearsal as an usher. I was there with my assistant and he looked at me and said, "My God, that's the guy!" And then the problem was whether he could act or not. He was a student at a medical school; he had just started medical school in
the fall. And we met him and talked to him, and cast him, and went on from that point. In terms of going from that point, part of this guy was arrived at through the casting of those characters.

I have always been one who has believed in a very simple style of shooting. Every time I get out of it, I get myself in a lot of trouble. It's not my way, and it becomes an overlay of another kind of personality on myself, and I always find myself getting into trouble. The one thing I did want to do though, in terms of the shooting of the film, was I wanted a certain kind of slickness in certain parts of the film that would in essence virtually imitate the style that you see when you watch commercials on television, because I thought that was a very important influence on these people. In terms of Neil they were living out life—in his eyes the Patimkin family would really look like a Salem commercial—remember the Salem commercials? So that when he drove up to the Patimkin house the first time.... Again, I tried to do it and they fought me and I couldn't get clearance on it anyway—I wanted them to play the music from the Salem commercial every time we drove up to the Patimkin house. I would see this hazy beautiful thing.... And that's what I tried to do in the montages there of their love affair. Their walking and talking was really one vast television commercial. I understand it; I don't think anybody else did, and I was criticized for shooting imitation television commercials in certain parts of the film. So I guess I failed what I was trying to achieve there, but that had been a very important part of it for me. Against a very square, simple kind of photographic look at this kind of people, I tried to be as simplistic as I possibly could. I believe in that, anyway. I don't want the camera to get in the way of the story that I am trying to tell.

JM: You said that when you try to break from simplicity you get in all kinds of trouble. Could you give me an example of when you tried to do that in this film, where it didn't work out too well?

LP: In this film I tried to do it in those montage love moments of the two where we used that dreadful music. I hated it. It was funky and corny; but again I said, wow, it will play right into my hands, you know, because here I am trying to do those television commercial looks for literally a minute of the film at a time with this kind of music over it. And I thought, my God, it will be the campiest thing that ever was. But nobody saw it but me. The people who are of that group looked at it
and said, "Isn't it beautiful." And the people who weren't of that group said, 'What the hell is he trying to do--it's horrible!' So the camp in essence didn't work out, and that's what happened. I literally got the producer and said let's get the music and clear it, and he said no, that's it. Those people are living the Salem commercial.

JM: The last question deals with the resolution of the movie. When Brenda and Neil meet in Boston after their summer together, she discloses that she is apparently unwilling to commit herself to Neil in a mature relationship on his terms. She says, "How can I not go home? I have to go home." But she can't go home with him. What concluding statement does the film make concerning their growing up and their search for identity?

LP: One is the final capitulation of the girl to her background. The inability to deny one's own background unless one makes a total and complete break, which is very hard to do at the age of twenty-one or twenty-two. And if what I told you before is true, and it is, the girl never married and lives in Paris and is the editor of The Paris Review, she finally did say "fuck you" and walked out. But at that point she was not ready to do it. Not only that, but she wasn't sure she really wanted to do it.

If she had, she would have walked out, but she would not deny her background, even if she really wanted to deny it. I don't know too many--maybe Dr. Schweitzer who goes off into the jungle to help people--but most people don't do that at all.

The one change we did make in the ending of the film was I wanted hopefully for the audience to sort out just what you are asking me now. What we did is, we really eliminated two or three lines out of the scene that existed in the book. If you read the book carefully, you'll see that the scene ends short of where it really ended. I am very much against giving the audience the kind of catharsis that enables the audience to have, in essence, the good cry. I had done that before in One Potato, Two Potato and had been very dissatisfied with it as a result of giving them a chance to have that catharsis, because when they have the catharsis and the good cry, or the good laugh, they then don't have the good think afterwards. And I really wanted them to think and come out talking about it. The producer was in total accord with me on that, because what we took out of the film--we shot it and
then took it out—was Neil's final statement as he walks out of the room, when he says, "I loved you, so I cared," and she says, "I loved you, too. Why do you think I got the goddamned thing in the first place?" We took that out and just upcut it so that you were left sort of hanging and you walk out..... I felt they would never have verbalized it, and if they did verbalize it, it was a fantasy of Roth's, and therefore, I thought it was wrong. I thought the audience should have the problem of talking about it afterwards, and I took great joy in watching the audience walking out in this kind of confused light because there was no period at the end of the film..... which I am against in many ways. But I thought it was very important that the audience go out and discuss that question that you are asking now, and that's exactly what I tried to do.

Brenda capitulates, but what about Neil? You said before that he anticipates the sixties kind of aimless dropout, perhaps revolutionary, perhaps not, but as far as your thinking then, what could you say about Neil and his future, his growing up after that?

I think that Neil came to terms with himself, that Neil knew there was more that he wanted and needed out of life, that there was more that he was going to get. That when the uncle came to him at the wedding and said, "This can all be yours, and the next time I see you it will be your wedding." that there was more to him, and more that he would have gotten out of life than he would get in this situation. In essence, he had to walk away from it, and he had to destroy the relationship with Brenda, which he did, which is what they both did. They both satisfied their own ends very selfishly and very clearly and very nicely. They got exactly out of it what they wanted; they may have been sad for the moment, they may have been kind of happy; but one does not deny one's background. One does not deny one's heritage, and if you read the book you will see he went back to the Jewish holidays. He went back, he made the return, he made his piece and went on. If you wish to use Roth as the key, and that is always dangerous because anyone who writes today in the first person is automatically accused of being autobiographical. I am quoting Roth when I say that, but I am quoting him after the fact that he took us around and showed us where they lived, where he lived. But I get the funny feeling that the character felt that he could have his cake and eat it too. Going with her, and staying with her, would have been a whole different thing. It would
have been gorging himself, but with no satisfaction at all in terms of what he needed out of life, in terms of what he wanted to be. By breaking away he did maintain the work ethic that the later ones didn't.

JM: You say he did?

LP: I think he did, yeah. I really do, I think it made him very bitter, but I think he maintained it. He's still looking for the same girl. He went out and married the shiksa of his dream. Both went out and married the girl. Have you read any more Roth? You should read more Roth. You should read his novel, which is not a success—what the hell is it called?—he wrote the novel, he then went on to the University of Chicago and got the job teaching and met the shiksa of his dreams. You know what a shiksa is? A shiksa is a non-Jewish girl. Met her, fell in love with her, and married her, and she ate him alive. She ate him alive as much if not more than the Brenda character. Consumed him! Right? He then divorced her and wrote another novel called—Christ, I'm terrible with that. I can't remember—in which that character who was his wife was vicious and so evil she goes around killing, destroying men and women, a killer. He divorced her. They had a child, I think. And then one day she was killed in an accident in Central Park coming home in a taxi-cab or something, I think, about five o'clock in the morning from a party or whatever it was, and the cab rode into a tree and she was killed. Somebody said meaningfully that it gave Roth enough neurosis to write on for the next twenty-five years. One has to go out and answer one's own fantasies. I think that is the key to that character, that he had certain fantasies that he had to fulfill. He tasted one fantasy and it didn't fulfill him, and he walked away from it, and walked head on into the fantasy that he was really after. Not marrying the Brenda girl, but marrying the thing that is so far away from that, and getting it on with that person that is so far away from that, like day and night. And he did, and it is all the same, and that's what he found out—that male-female relationships are really all the same. For better or for worse, if you look for the same kind of woman, whether she's Jewish or not, your fantasy may be that if she is not your fantasy may be that if she is not Jewish it's going to be different, but that's all horseshit.

That's all part of the success of the film in terms of the fact that the people say, how can a film that is dealing with Jewish people who make up a miniscule
proportion of the United States be seen and enjoyed and understood by the vast majority that really knows nothing about them? Well, the answer is that they are all the same, and that the film does go into proving the sameness of man. The middle-class is the middle-class, whether it is Jewish or black or whatever, and that's really what the film is about.

We're talking about what goes into interpreting a piece of material, whether it is using a novel to make a film, or a novella—as in the case of Goodbye, Columbus. I'm a great believer in staying close to the material if the material is good. You always hear the funny stories about how they spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy a book and then keep nothing but the title. Sometimes it's true. Sometimes a great novel will make a terrible film, sometimes a terrible novel will make a great film, but most importantly the novel is one form and a film is obviously very much a different one, very much another. We had one very specific problem facing us in terms of interpreting Goodbye, Columbus for film, and that is the pivotal scene of the film, the last scene in Boston which is based on a letter. Now, you can't sit there and read a six page letter—you can, but it certainly isn't very filmic. We had a tremendous problem. How did we get that vital information, not only the vital information, but the vital style of the letter, including the misspellings and the capitalizations in the middle of sentences? The father being a complete ignoramus, he couldn't even write a letter, and signed the letter, "your father, Ben Patimkin." How do you do that? Well, we were really worried, and we pondered and pondered it. They had gone through this whole thing before I came into it, in the first draft.

Arnold didn't know what to do, so what he did is, he took them back to New Jersey, back to the parent's home, or in terms of the film, to Westchester. We wanted to shoot it in Newark, where the boy really lived, but the riots were going on. They had just finished, and the police said to us that it would be very dangerous to shoot there, and we were very annoyed about it. We said that it would bring income into the area, and they said, no, you don't understand, you come there and you set up a camera and the blacks will start throwing rocks because they'll think you are from a newsreel, and maybe you'll start another riot, so we'd rather you don't come. They told us not to come, and then they got angry because we didn't come. But Arnold had taken them back to where they confronted the parents in this dreadful confrontation scene, screaming and yelling, and finally
they got into the car and drove off and she was standing saying, it can't be. They've got to go to Boston, they've got to go someplace. They can be in Princeton, New Jersey, or in Seattle, Washington, but they must be alone together to settle what they have to settle—to have that confrontation. So we thought and thought about it and said, where can we verbalize that father's sentimental blather? Or honest sentiment and honest feeling, the love of a parent for a child, where do we do it?

The only place we found that we could do it, and this was Arnold Schulman, and I think it was brilliant, is before the fact. All right, we can't do it after the fact, obviously we can't do it immediately before, it would look too set up, it would look wrong. Arnold said, "Why not at the wedding? It would be the perfect place for a father half-stewed to get his daughter and sit her down to start to talk to her, to try and express his love and end up giving her three overcoats and a coat with a fur collar and whatever else he could give from him to her to express his love. That is where the scene came from. It was not in the book that the father sits down with the daughter at the wedding and they have that moment together. It was Arnold's idea, and it was marvelous, and he wrote part of the scene and Jack Klugman did an improvisation on it. We did it in one take, no coverage, and that was it. It worked out beautifully, because what we did then was supply all of that information so that when you went into the scene in Boston, and she said I got a letter from my father, well, you knew what he said. Then all you had to do was look at it and see—why does he capitalize in the middle of sentences and sign Ben Patimkin? That is all he had to do and the audience then knew.

But what that did was it created a terrible imbalance because the pivotal scene of the wedding in the book was the scene between Neil and that uncle. All that stuff about the light bulb salesman. We had done the scene, and done it very well, and it was very good, very sad, very touching, and we cut it and we left both scenes in and there was something wrong. I fought for that scene down to the day we opened the film, and Evans, the guy who was the head of the studio wanted me to cut it out. Stanley really did too, but I must say Stanley said if you believe in it that strongly, then that scene belongs in there. And so we fought and fought and they let us keep it in. And the day before we had our special preview in New York, I realized what was wrong.
You can't have two high points in one scene; you can't have one climax and drop off and start another climax, it just doesn't work dramatically. As soon as I realized that I just took it and lifted the scene out, and then shorthanded the uncle so you knew what he was saying and knew there was another "You'll be next." That's all he had to say—"The next time I see you, you'll be next." It was a beautiful scene, but I saw it, and I lifted the scene out between Brenda and her father and the other scene worked. But I realized it had to be an analysis of which was the more important to the story, and that was the big change that occurred.
contains significant, inherent elements of authenticity or believability. And while the alleged negative effects of screen pornography have been largely debunked by one commission, the fears about violence in visual media have been generally sustained by another: "A large body of research on observational learning by preschool children... confirms that children can and do learn aggressive behavior from what they see in a film or on a TV screen, and that they learn it equally from real life and fantasy (cartoon) models." Emphasizing television violence, the Commission report concludes that "television encourages violent forms of behavior and fosters moral and social values about violence in daily life which are unacceptable in a civilized society." The Commission notes in passing that motion pictures "often portray more extreme forms of violence, and we cannot ignore their potential for harm."

It is not the writer's intention here, or anywhere else in the paper, to wade into the area of the effects of screen sex and violence. The issue is raised merely to illustrate the centrality of motion pictures in the modern sensibility, in terms of scientific inquiry, public concern, and critical speculation. In a symposium held in 1968 by members of the National Society of Film Critics, Richard Schickel summarized the factors responsible for film's centrality today, representing a consensus view of the Society's membership:
G. Interview with Tom Mankiewicz

JM: Would you describe the circumstances which led you to write the screenplay for *The Sweet Ride*? How did the project come to you, what influenced you to write the screenplay, were there any unusual persons or occurrences connected with the writing of the script?

TM: Well, the book was bought by Joe Pasternak. I mean Fox bought it for Joe Pasternak, and Joe was a kind of legendary figure, you know, who discovered everybody. So Joe had just moved over to Fox from Metro where he's been for something like twenty or thirty years. And Fox got him specifically to make kid's pictures. I mean, Joe had a pretty good formula, with *Where the Boys Are* and *Viva Las Vegas*, and he made most of the Presley films, but you know, as rotten as they were, they all made money. And Joe got sick—I don't know what the circumstances were when he left Metro—but Fox got him really to make some kid's pictures, with the kind of thing where they used to say we need product for the summer. You know, invent something, that kind of thing. And here came *The Sweet Ride*, which Joe found, and it was, I think, a rather well-written book. And I found him William Murray, who writes a lot for the *L.A. Times*. He does pieces in magazines and so on, and he also lives here in Malibu somewhere, and I had just switched agents.

The reason I did the film, the influence that made me do the film was that I had never done a movie. It was my first movie, and my agent came to me one day and said Joe Pasternak's got a thing, and this was the time, as we were saying earlier, in '67 or '68, when Hollywood, I mean, everybody was getting a million dollars. Everybody was doing this. I mean everybody thought the parade was never going to stop, and suddenly at that point, if you were under twenty-five, under thirty, you were considered gold. I mean anybody—they would say, get me a writer, any writer, as long as he's under thirty, as long as he knows what, you know, what these young people want. It was the era of the fourteen-year-old director, and everybody was saying, God, they're so great, as long as we have a stable custodian on top. We'll hire that kid, it'll be terrific. And I had done some Chrysler Theatres, and I had done a couple of musical specials on television, one that won a couple of Emmys, and so they said, look, Gangbusters! What more do you want?
He comes from good show business stock, he's young, he's a good writer, call the Chrysler Theatre. And Joe said terrific, you know? So I read the book, and it wasn't something that, take today, I wouldn't burn myself out to do it. Matter of fact, I would turn it down today, but you start somewhere, and I also saw a opportunity in the book, an opportunity that was never really realized on screen, to do or say something with the picture over and above what the novel was talking about. The director of the film, who was then doing Peyton Place, a television series at Fox, was a very talented man named Harvey Hart, a Canadian director who never got treated right out here. Harvey started on two or three projects as a much ballyhooed director, and they all turned to sand. I mean Harvey's going to be heard from, very strongly, in the future. He's a very good director in terms of, especially in terms of aspirations. I mean the two of us wanted to do something with that picture that never came off, but we'll get into that later—why it didn't. Anyway, that's how I got it. I went over and I met Joe and told him my thoughts about the picture, I mean about the book, and how to do it. And we sort of hit it off and we started writing and I was tremendously excited. I think it took me about ten weeks, eight or ten weeks, and I came in with the first draft, and off we went.

JM: Perhaps you could explain the adaptation process. What did you think the novel was about, what did you and the director want to do with it, and what eventually happened with it?

TM: Well, when I read the book I thought it was pretty well-written. It was a tremendously down book and it showed, it tried to be seamy, but it was almost like—it's like all the books written about Hollywood by people who should know better, like The Oscar that Dick Sayle wrote. He's a screen writer and he knows that people don't knife each other for the Oscar. But he writes it and people read it and you know, I never understand why people who are in Hollywood with a capital H write books about Hollywood. They write what people would like to believe Hollywood is rather what it is. And Bill Murray wrote what he would like people to think is the seamy side of Malibu, and it wasn't, really.

It was a supporting character in the book named Colley, that Tony Franciosa played, that I thought was the most interesting character in the piece. I really made it
kind of Colley's movie. It's more about Colley, really, than anybody else, and he's the most interesting character. I really subordinated the two kids who the book really was about, so that they're just almost—the love story's there, but it's really a backboard, something for Colley to bounce off of. They're sort of young Mr. and young Miss Terrific, and you're not, you're never terribly interested in them. I mean, they have very classic hang-ups. The one hang-up I never wanted her to have was to be banged by the studio's head, but that was what everyone at the studio thought was so terrific, maybe because most of them at Fox were banging people all the time. They were absolutely—it seemed brutally real to them. In that sense, the art really did imitate life that time.

But I thought there were really a lot of interesting characters. The reasons why those characters never got to where they should've,--Joe was a tremendously decent man. His films about kids have always had an antiseptic quality about them, which in the 50's and 60's really appealed to people. It was one of their strong points. Kids had a fairly antiseptic quality about them in the 50's and even in the early 60's. Before the Kennedy assassination the kind of films Joe was making were eagerly received by people, because, I mean, the worst that could happen, every now and then a girl could get knocked up, but that was the whole climactic point of the movie. I mean, it wasn't an easy thing to have happen in a movie. Joe fought me quite a bit, and Harvey, about trying to make this a more real picture. He fought me, he fought us really on a dollars and cents proposition, and with this kind of picture, and especially when it was made, it was something that was supposed to do a great turnover in a couple of weeks and make some money. That's why they hired Joe Pasternak there as a producer. They didn't hire him to make a revolutionary statement about the mores of 1967 America. You were mentioning Goodbye, Columbus and The Graduate and so on. Those were made in the beginning, with the intention of making a really fine film, hopefully, making a fine film. This, The Sweet Ride, was started as a project to make money, to sell to kids, with no illusions that it either was going to be a work of art or that it was going to run any longer than ten days anywhere. But it was going to fill a lot of drive-ins, come in at a decent price, and make some money. It was something that has sort of gone by the wayside in the last five years, and it's been a long five years since 1967 in terms of what's happened to the movie business. It was something called a "product picture" which there are damned few
of today. I mean, there are today, they're made for 200,000 and they're called Kiss the Blood off Dracula's Dingus or something, and they're out quick and gone. But in those days--those days--and it really is that long ago, you could make a pretty decent picture that was a product picture, and try and shove it out in the summer. Nobody who makes a first-rate picture wants his film out in the summer, with very few exceptions. So theatres are screaming in the summer, and they're screaming for the kind of picture that kids can go out to see because everyone's out for school, and there it is, and that was The Sweet Ride. We tried very hard, I think, in many ways, to do good things with it. Tony, I think, gives a wonderful performance in it.

We got a group called the Moby Grape. I'll never forget they were very hot then. They were supposed to be very hot and they came into Joe Pasternak's office one day, and Joe just couldn't believe it. Joe had had an operation on his throat, and his mind was not very sharp at the time, and he kept calling them all "grape," all four of them, and he would say, "Hey, Grape." And they lit up a joint in his office, which Joe had no idea what the hell it was. He really didn't know. At the end of it, they left and stole all his ash trays and everything, and he just sat there. He was just so totally bewildered. They were all, finally, I think, arrested for raping a girl a year later. But they were the kind of thing that Harvey and I were trying to do with the picture--a Fox-Metro variety where people smoked grass. There was a scene where Tony and Bob were smoking grass and hash out of a pipe and stuff like that, without making a big hurrah out of it, which is done. It was the first picture ever made by Fox-Metro, that kind of kid's picture, where a guy played fag to get out of the draft. These were terribly daring things for Fox. I mean there were screaming fights--Dick Zanuck was then running the studio--as to whether we could do something like that, and get through a scene where a boy would dress in drag. The Viet Nam war was still pretty popular in 1967, I mean it wasn't with young people, but it certainly wasn't any kind of unpopular war with older people, at least the movie business wouldn't criticize it. The Green Berets would still out-gross anything else.

In order to get a scene like that through we had to hokey it up and show biz it up enough so that in the eyes of the people who made it on top, it was not offensive. They would say, don't look at the point of the scene, which is that a kid would play fag to get
out of the draft, just to go back to the beach and be a bum. Don't look at the point. Look how funny it is. That's the whole thing. It makes you laugh. So they would say it's okay as long as you don't do it seriously, as long as this scene is a comedy scene. I remember the discussion about this scene. I said I think the guy should play it straight, and so did Harvey. I mean to play a fag straight, just go in and do it. We wound up with a kind of Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca scene, with the silly hat and being dressed in women's clothes, because that was the only way we could get it through. Again, there was a self-limiting thing with that kind of picture in 1967 that there is not now, because they're not made now unless they're made seriously. If you make a film today like Speed is of the Essence, which was a bomb and everything else, but it was made seriously, you're going, as a matter of fact, to the other extreme. You're going all out for shock value, gut value, realism, even to the point of gratuitous realism. If someone even blows his nose, you know, let's see the snot. It's a complete 180° turn from when The Sweet Ride was made, what you were supposed to see and what you were not supposed to see.

JM: You're talking about the concept behind what you were trying to do. The Sweet Ride deals with aimless, affluent contemporary youth who have dropped out of the system, who, while trying to find themselves, look for fun and kicks. In your screenplay, what were you trying to say about today's young people? Today—1967. Their problems, experiences, aspirations, and particularly their search for an identity? Was the screenplay largely fictionalized or do you believe it portrayed actual middle-class adolescent life styles?

TM: Well, as President Nixon would say, that's an interesting question. I'm glad you asked that. The people in The Sweet Ride, in the book, were less affluent, somewhat, I tried to make them a little more affluent. It looked like a 20th Century-Fox house that they lived in, except it was a real house that we found, and we shot in it. That's one of the few things they gave in to Harvey Hart on. He insisted that we do that. I was finding myself in 1967, and I'm twenty-nine now, and I was twenty-four years old then. Most of the people I knew then were sort of around my age. I knew people that were older, but I found that affluent young people then dropped out much more. They had almost nothing to fight for, and you looked up into an incomprehensible system of a certain sort that you expected to get up into and fight for. At that time I think
the affluent young people were the leaders in the dropping out movement, because they were the ones who didn't have a chip on their shoulder or any kind of need that caused them to tackle that system head on and say, God damn it, I'm going to get up there and—in cliche terms—every limousine that ever went by and spilled water on my trousers, you know, I'll get 'em for that. I'll get my own limousine. There were kids who, potentially, could have lived, could've had their own limousines anyway, and had reverse fun, living like they have not—the "haves" who lived like the "have-nots."

Colley I found the most interesting character, because I think Colley was a character before his time. Colley exists today in Hollywood much more than when he was written. In 1967 I could go to parties here with the most famous people, and wonderful people, with a capital W, in the room, and if somebody smoked a joint, well it just didn't happen. Somebody might sneak upstairs to a bedroom with somebody and do it. Sort of around '69, '70 was when everybody seemed to delight in smoking joints openly and every party became a pot party and whoopie.... You saw people you thought were—I was at a party the other night where a studio head, who shall remain nameless, walked around stoned out of his head, and you say, God, this is a man who—I mean it's no worse than being drunk, but somehow, it looks different.

But I think that what struck me so incredibly was how in '67 when it really started to happen, every adult in the world started to imitate every kid, whether it was hair style or dress. Expensive shops started selling shirts with ruffled sleeves and Tom Jones things, and '67 was the time when hair stylists for men really started to blossom and every "straight" started to grow his side burns and to let it all hang out a little bit. Because of this tremendous release I think kids who are supposed to be carefree and kids who are supposed to be the ones who drop out and join communes and get stoned and whatever, lack responsibility. I think older people are completely tied up with their own sense of responsibility and it weighs heavily on them, and they are maybe unsure that ten years ago they made the right choice of career, even though they're stuck in it and they're going on that upward spiral in their office and whatever. They love to put on the trappings of kids, the adornment of that kind of freedom without actually being free themselves. They're terribly hung up in all of their ways and terribly trapped but they can look like they're not. See, their hair is long enough; see, their clothes are flashy enough; see, they do smoke a joint or two, and so God damn it, they're not hung up. They're
just showing you in every visible way they can that they're not hung up and they're trying hard. And that's why Colley was so interesting to me, because he was a fellow who never grew up. As long as he kept those kids together he was a God-head to them. He was in terrific shape, but if they started to leave for one reason or another his world fell apart, because among adults Colley was a kid. Among kids Colley was an adult and he lived in a kind of never-never land.

At the end of the picture, when Denny says to him, "I'm tired of seeing myself at forty," or whatever, it was a kind of on the nose statement to make, but that's the kind of picture it was; it was an on the nose picture. I mean, they were hoping they were going to get a lot of screwing and motorcycle riding and so on, and there was a point to the picture. If anything, it was a picture of affectation. Everybody was affected in it; even the motorcycle fellows were affected, everything was consciously done that way. It didn't turn out as effective as we thought, and I don't think Dick Zanuck and Joe even knew that Harvey and I were trying to do that at the time. They knew about the point of the film, certainly, but the kids were affected in that they weren't real people that had to drop out of society. They chose to, they were living that way for a certain reason. Colley was affected, because again he was not of their group, but he was doing it that way. The studio head was your cliche studio head. The motorcycle fellow, instead of having a totally real sort of guy walk down the beach who is very repulsive, poor Charlie Deerkopf, who was a very good actor, shaved his head, we put an earring on him. There was a thing, you know, the way they were supposed to be.

JM: You mentioned something about the kids not having to drop out but kind of chose to. For what reasons?

TM: I think for the same reasons that when people don't smoke pot they're chicken, that when people don't have enough freedom of spirit to move to a commune, or spit in a cop's eye, they're chicken in a certain way. I mean we've got a society where an affluent kid—and I grew up an affluent kid so I know what it means—where an affluent kid really feels in some ways that he's less than other kids. I mean, a certain part of him says, Gee, I wish I'd grown up with nothing, you know, and I could really be cool, because my mother takes me to buy my Levis at Brooks Brothers. You know, Shit, I wish I could have some real Levis like the other kids. My sneakers—you sit at home and put holes in them to make yourself look cool.
There's a romance, I think, about the motorcycle picture, the romance of the rebel, the guy who's spitting in society's eye. It was John Garfield before it was Jimmy Dean, but it's always there with young people. There's something about an affluent young person that absolutely mitigates against his being a rebel. I mean, he's a product of the system, and his parents are fat cats and they have Cadillacs, and he goes to the best schools. I went to prep school and then college, and I know that at Exeter, where I went to prep school, it's the thing with the town kids in Exeter to think that everybody who was at Exeter was a fag. Obviously, a rich fairy, you had to be a rich fairy, obviously. You came from a rich family, you were paying thousands of dollars to go to Exeter. There's a terrible resentment that you have against being brought up too rich and too whatever, and too.... That's why the girl who blows herself up in Greenwich Village making bombs, her father is a very wealthy fellow, and she is more attracted, I think to SDS than somebody who had nothing, who is fighting very hard to get something. I think SDS has got some very affluent members. I know the blacks—I know, for instance, because I know a lot of the Panthers out here very well—where 90% of the black money that comes to the Panthers comes from rich blacks who feel guilty that they've got something.

The only thing I wanted to add about why middle-class kids are more interesting to me, first of all, I know them a lot better. I think if you say we've got a rotten system, or there's just some things that are rotten about it, middle-class kids are more apt to see it quicker, having been part of the fruits of the system. Their parents are successful and wealthy and their parents are just as lousy as everybody else's parents—they fight just as much, and they're just as unhappy, and they're just as big drunks and just as ... whatever. They're already at the top, there where you're supposed to—they grow up in a house that you're supposed to work thirty or forty years to get—and they only see what the end result is, where all the fruit's lined up, where an individual can think. Well, when I make it, it'll be different. Like every young actor when he starts in, when I get a million dollars, I won't be an idiot like, you know, that Tony Curtis. I'm going to be good. I'm going to give half of my money to peace, and another 25% of it is going to go to drug rehabilitation, and this is going to mean I'm going to set up a foundation. But you know, most of them wind up doing the same thing.
I think the middle-class presents a more sickening perspective, and that's why I think the dropouts, the people dropping out in the beginning were more middle-class than poor. I think the middle-class kid runs the youth movement in this country in terms of buying records, going to the movies, making styles popular, clothing, making a rock-and-roll star popular. It's the people who can afford to buy the records that do it, and the middle-class seemed to be the place to go.

JM: Another element in the film of interest to me is the whole issue of sexuality. There seem to be four distinct groups who had divergent attitudes about sex and the conditions for sexual relationships. First there is Parker and Vicky's parents who uphold traditional values and label the kids sleeping together immoral and communist. Second the relationship of professional prostitution in Caswell and Vicky. Third, the freaks and Mr. Clean: sex is pure appetite to be gratified at will. And fourth, the sex codes of the kids themselves which, interestingly, seem very conventional. Could you comment about these issues in the film, particularly in regard to how sex, sex codes, and sexual experience relates to a young person's growing up?

TM: Yes, I think the differences between how I saw it and how you see it—obviously Parker's and Vicky's parents are the tried and true: "did you sleep with him, honey? Did he make you?" That's true. I think what I tried to do with the other people was that while Vicky, I guess, supposedly was a prostitute in terms of Caswell, at the same time it was something like, you know, the guy who's furthering her career—a certain kind of prostitute—and not necessarily leaving money on the dresser. It happens in life, certainly not in as heavy handed a way as it happens in the movie.

I guess that if Thumper and ChooChoo's relationship were done today, I'd be allowed to do it the way it is today. If that film were done today, it would be the kind of relationship—and I have a great many friends who have that kind of relationship—where people live together for a number of years, the kind of people who call each other "my old lady" and "my old man." It's an easy-going relationship where I don't think—obviously there is sex in it—but I don't think that it's a...... It's an unwed Ozzie and Harriet Nelson in a certain way. I mean, they're fine together and it's not really a question of they're really worried that someone else is going to come along and take one away from the other one. It's a sort of a set matched pair. I'm sure you know
people like that, too.

Denny is the only person in the piece, I think, who is the incurable romantic. I mean, Denny is a Cyrano without portfolio. Denny really does believe that there is such a thing as the special girl. I don't think ChooChoo believes in it, because ChooChoo's got his girl, and you know, that's it, and that's fine, and a chick is a chick, and he goes on.

Tony's character, Colley, represents to me everything that's wrong with sexual attitudes because I think that if Colley had met Vicky under normal circumstances, met her on the street, he would have tried for her, and if he'd missed, then he would have missed and he would have shrugged and went on and tried for the next one, although Vicky was a very good looking girl. He only really becomes upset with her because Denny's got her and in that sense, Colley has the conquest syndrome. I think he's the only person in there who does. I don't think Denny is really interested in making conquests as much as he is in getting love, and that's his undoing in the relationship because he loves her so much and she knows it and she can push him around, as it happens with most romantics when girls realize they're tied up with a romantic who really does believe that they're everything, and that they're Roxanne. They can push them around.

Colley is everything that I think is wrong about some kinds of sexual attitudes. The interesting sort of dichotomy in the relationship between Colley and Denny that I put in that is not in the book, was to show that Colley was completely dependent on Denny for his own self-esteem. He needed Denny, but when the chips were down, Colley would betray anybody, including the person that he needed, to keep his own self-esteem. He'd make a pass at Vicky as he does in Las Vegas after she and Denny had a big fight. Well, I mean, at the lowest ebb, Colley's finally gotten what he wants, which is to get her out of Denny's life. I mean, Colley didn't like her because she was moving in a little bit on that happy house and everything else, and she was a threat. Denny might go off with her; she was an instant threat. What he wanted to do by screwing her was first of all to maybe tell Denny about it if he had to—which is, "Hey listen. She's really terrible. She even fucked me, for Christ's sake." But more importantly, I think, is that scene in Vegas. What he really wanted to do was to get some for himself. After all, Colley had every right to think that he is twice as attractive to any girl. He
Film is clearly the most relevant art of our time; only television may be more relevant, but it isn't art. The relevance of film lies in its being more international and available than fiction (more easily translatable and ready for export); in its ability to convey the entire spectrum of human experience and imagination convincingly to people who have neither; in its having the means to make points with greater facility than any art except poetry—which, however, has fallen into disfavor, even in coffee houses. It is the art form patronized by the young, who have inherited the world and who love movies because of the ease with which they go down—like rock-'n'-roll or pills. 42

"The New Generation" refers to the explosion of patronage, study, and production in the film area by persons in the 16-29 age group, a trend supported by statistical and other observational data. In a survey conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation for the Motion Picture Association of America, it was found in 1969 that persons in the 16-29 age group comprised slightly less than 60% of the total movie audience, based on yearly movie admissions. 43 This figure is even more significant in view of the fact that this age group comprises only 29% of the total United States population.

Impressive patronage at the box office has been paralleled by equally impressive increases in student enrollments in film courses and a proliferation of programs and course offerings in the film area in college and university campuses across the country. In a study undertaken for Eastman Kodak Company, C. William Horrell of Southern Illinois University compiled the following statistics:
has been around twice as long and knows the ropes twice as much and should be more attractive. This was a girl that everybody was pretty sure was fucking somebody else on the side, so it wasn't like she was this marvelous pristine lady that came into the house. But I think Colley's the kind of fellow that to me is fascinating, because he is charming, marvelous, interesting, and he'll turn, he'll fuck you one way or the other, you know, back and forth. Colley, oddly enough, in a good business firm could be a terrific Sammy Glotz. He could be president if he put his mind to it.

JM: Did you intend to portray the sexual relationships or styles of the kids in a more realistic, i.e., less compulsive, hung up way, even though Colley himself had some of the other problems you were talking about that kind of dated him? It is talked about that young people have gotten beyond sex hangups, that they can accept a relationship that might involve sex, does involve sex, but that's it, like your wanting to include the smoking of a joint without all the hoopla and all the attention. Did you want the sexual thing also accepted in this way or.....?

TM: We ought to have had it done that way. Unfortunately, again you go back to the kind of film it was and who was making it. You see, we were not in doubt about the fact that we were not allowed to have two people in the same bed or anything like that, much less touching each other, actually in the same bed under the covers. Not a chance to have that. I mean, Joe would ask us, what is that in his pipe? You know, he's smoking dope. "It's okay, Joe. He's smoking dope." And then he would say, well, God, if you're going to put that in, please, don't say what it is. Great, that's how we'd like to do it. But sex, everybody knows about it, and all you could do in that scene was talk about it. Thumper and ChooChoo were obviously screwing each other and living together, but you couldn't see Thumper actually living in that house because that would be something different. Vicky also had to come in with groceries or something. You could talk about how she's been staying here for a while, since the house looked better, but you couldn't actually see her as somebody who in effect had a toothbrush in the bathroom. She didn't have a toothbrush, she was in and out of the kitchen, you saw her in the living room, and I guess she had one scene with Denny in the bedroom, but they weren't both undressed and so on at the same time; only one could be undressed at one time. In Vegas, obviously they were in the same room but again only when they were getting ready to leave, not getting ready to
go to bed.

It really was like that. It sounds so silly today, five years later. There wasn't even a rating system then but it was like that. For instance, we talked about the first thing in the picture when Vicky came up without her bra on. Joe had schlerosis on the set, he was so excited about it. I don't mean to put Joe down at all because he was a very, very nice man.

I tell you, I guess we made that picture in the last year that I knew you could make it. The first year that you couldn't make that kind of picture any more was a very crucial year. The thing that really burns me up about it is that I was happy, naturally, to have written a picture which I wanted to do, and I was proud of a few things in it that we tried to do. Oddly enough we got three or four terrific reviews from unbelievable places like the Saturday Review, Esquire, Cosmopolitan--sort of terrific. Everybody else killed it; they read it as an incredible piece of crap. Arthur Knight saw everything we were trying to do in the picture and wrote his review as if we'd done it, which made me feel great. But he was just as wrong, I think, as the people who wrote it off as a piece of crap. I don't think it was a piece of crap at all. It is, what it shows is a couple of people trying very hard to do something that doesn't come off, and the reason that it doesn't come off is because one never gets a chance to talk about it. You say, was it your intention to make sex explicit? Well sure It was, but you can't do it, so you might as well get up out of the chair and run head first into the wall as write the scene, because you cannot do it; you're not allowed to do it.

For instance, we were told by the studio that there is a scene--I forget even the scene in the picture--where all the motorcycle guys are on the beach and Mr. Clean takes Vicky. What I wrote was a very explicit gang bang where all of them had her and she was so wracked with guilt that she offered herself to all of them. In essence, the original scene was her saying, "Oh fuck it, one...forty...doesn't make any difference." In the original scene Mr. Clean said something to the effect of, "That's going to be mine, I mean, I get this." And she said, "You all get it." The logical end for this character was to say, hey listen, there's a part of me loves this kid who's a romantic, but I'm full of shit and so on. I've done this, and I can't live with it, and I won't, and fuck it, let everybody
screw me, what the hell. I mean, we might as well. And we were told in no uncertain terms by--it was not called the Hayes' office then and Jack Valenti hadn't taken over either, I forget what it was called. I guess it was still kind of the Hayes office--there were then things in pictures that said "adults only" or something like that--that if, and this was their reasoning, that if there was a gang bang our picture would be an "R". There would be nobody under eighteen allowed to see it. If Mr. Clean raped her, it was okay, as long as it was one person. It really got down to that and I'm completely and totally honest about that, and may God strike me dead. If he raped her, it was fine, but if it was thirty people then we were an "R". I mean the extra twenty-nine people vaulted us over the eighteen year old age limit under the theory that one rape's not so bad but not twenty-nine. We hit that all the way.

We had some really terrific people; Jackie Bisset had a ninety second part in a picture called Two for the Road. If you remember, when Audrey Hepburn first meets Albert Finney she's been traveling with a bunch of girls on a bus and they get the chicken pox. Jackie Bisset is the pretty girl that Albert Finney really likes, he sees her and wants to go off with her, and she comes down in the morning and she has the chicken pox and Audrey Hepburn goes cluck-cluck, cluck-cluck or whatever, and gets Albert Finney. Now, she'd only been on the screen for like ninety seconds, and I felt like Louis B. Mayer or Harry Cohn looking at this picture. I looked at this girl and thought this was the most beautiful girl I'd ever seen in my life. I was wondering if she'd been dubbed because her name was Audrey de Jacqueline Bisset and she was obviously some French girl who was sleeping with Stanley Donan or something and that was how she got in the picture. Yvette Mimieux was supposed to play the girl Vicky and she was holding us for a lot of money. She was then one of the great ingenues and a terrific lady and I wanted her to play it very much. I liked her, but she wanted a hundred and fifty thousand dollars and Fox wasn't willing to pay 150 thou for anybody to be in this picture. And I said there's a great girl in a Fox movie; I don't know if she can act or anything else, and I took Harvey down and we saw Two for the Road. We ran into the studio and we stopped the scene and ran it back and ran it again. He said, she's gorgeous, and we thought well, what the hell, if Vicky's English, we'll just say, "since you're new to this country," you know. That was easy. We called Don McClain who was then head of talent at Fox and said there's this
girl, Jackie Bisset, and he said, Who? And we said, she's in your picture, and he said, Oh? He checked and found out that she was under contract and he didn't even know it. Harvey and I prevailed on Joe and we hired her without ever having met her or anything else. She was signed to play the part and when she flew over from England she arrived cast. I had called Stanley Donan and asked him if she was any good, and he said how was he to know; she only did four lines, but she was enormously pretty, and I think she's okay. I don't know. I couldn't guarantee you, but I don't think she's terrible, I mean I don't think there's a chance that she's going to be really terrible.

She wasn't terribly good in the film. It was her first part and she was scared as hell. She looked like she'd eat Michael for breakfast, and of course they started a big romance on that picture which lasted, a personal romance, which is still going. She was miscast in that way, or rather Michael probably was. He had just done a film called *The Flim Flam Man* and was very hot. As a matter of fact, an odd thing was, we first wanted Ryan O'Neal and the studio wasn't sure. He was in *Peyton Place*, but the studio said nothing's ever going to happen to Ryan O'Neal anyway, so why don't you get a fresh kid. Ryan is, you know, he's stuck in *Peyton Place*, and you know, it's what the hell, forget him. You know? Forget him, we don't want him.

A girl named Michele Carey played Thumper. She's a terrific actress. Michele's done a lot of stuff since then. She's never really made it as big as I think she could; she's a very good actress, actually.

First choice for Colley was Jason Robards, who I thought would be terrific. Jason wanted to do it; it would have lifted the picture into a different category; and also Fox would have been much happier with all of the changes that Harvey and I wanted to make if they had Jason in it because they would think, well, we've got enough kids and surfing, and we can do more now because it's going to be an adult picture. They wouldn't go for him and my second choice, for all the wrong reasons, David Jansen, who had just finished *The Fugitive* in '67. I thought David looked very slick and would be terrifically out of place with the girls and be marvelous. He wanted to do it, but as a hot series star, Fox wouldn't pay his money. Tony came in and Tony gave, I think, a tremendous performance, better than David would have given—completely different than Jansen would have given.
Tony really believed he could actually play tennis, although he couldn't play tennis at all. I mean, the tennis game he plays took two days to film his hitting a backhand because he was really awful. But you believed him as somebody who was kind of athletic and did push-ups. All of that we added for Tony. Obviously, Jason would have a heart attack if he did push-ups. And that's something also where you change things for the character. Colley was much more of a world-wise fellow in the beginning. He never was going to be a Jason Robards or a David Jansen. Tony has got kind of a young thing—that twinkle in his eye and a kid thing about him. We toned—not toned Colley down, but changed the content of Colley quite a bit just in rewrites and little remarks and scenes and things, made him less of a reminiscer. Colley originally reminisced an awful lot, and the kids were kind of open-jawed listening to Colley. There'd be a thing where they'd just had a terrific thing with about five girls and Colley would tell about fifteen girls in Paris about twenty years ago. It was terrific. We couldn't really do that with Tony, although I think it is really one of the best performances he's ever given. I really do; I wish we could have done better for him.

JM: Could you comment about the stylistic approach in the film, which is largely structured around the flashback convention. As you wrote the script, how did you see the film visually and how important is the style of the film to what you were trying to get at?

TM: Well, we chopped this down into two parts: the style in which it was written, and the style in which it was sort of written to be photographed. And we had a film that was a story, basically trying to keep five oranges up in the air at the same time: trying to keep the characters going, trying to keep the focus going—that was very difficult on a forward, ongoing basis.

The reason for the flashback, and I must confess my father's used flashbacks a lot in pictures like All About Eve, Letter to Three Wives, and Barefoot Contessa. This is my first movie, and I'm used to the flashback convention, and I can confess that I thought that it would work very well, to start out with her death. It was her death at the beginning, wasn't it?

JM: She was beaten....

TM: Yeah, beaten and thrown in the room, because I remember
the shot with the ambulance; the car just missed her. To start to establish those people from the beginning by just opening up on the house where it happened, and so on, and have her come up out of the surf and keep going, seemed first of all duller, and also we were trying for suspense. I think it was really more Joe's thing than ours that there was some kind of suspense about who did it. That suspense was really lost in about—you knew who did it, pretty quick. There was the kind of original intention that we were going to have everything. We were going to have kids, surfers, motorcycle people, movie executives, suspense story. They were going to beat you up, we were going to feed the kids some violence, the parents were going to see some pot, we were going to—you know—all of that. It was enormous in the beginning, an enormous bowl of vegetable soup, I mean, you know, everything was in there.

As far as the style itself was concerned, it wouldn't make a difference. For instance, this past year, having done the Bond picture—a James Bond, or the Bond pictures, regardless of their artistic merit or non-artistic merit, are a very stylish film in the main. Bond is larger than life, and people go to see Bond because he is larger than life, and because they're really going to see some incredible gadgetry and the women are going to be beautiful, and Bond will get out of everything, and people go precisely for that escapism. I happen to think, forgetting Diamonds Are Forever, I happen to think that most of the early films were very stylish. I went to see most of them and really enjoyed them and couldn't wait till they opened. You know, when I heard that Goldfinger was opening next week, I would say, Oh God, I really want to see that.

What happened in this picture and almost every other picture made about kids up to that year, 1967, and again I think it's a very crucial year, is that pictures made about kids were also made larger than life, except we were trying to deal with real people and real things and real problems. It's fine when you say the secret agent's James Bond and his nemesis is Blow Job, master criminal, and the girl's name is either Pussy Galore or Tiffany Case. That's great, and people know what they're seeing. But when we make a film about real problems, a girl getting knocked up—a girl getting raped, this or that, these people are real kids, this is a real house, and they're actually at the beach.
And when you make it with the same style that you make a Bond picture, i.e., not stylishly, but separate from what life is, that's when you are in trouble, and those are the kinds of pictures that I don't think the public wanted to tolerate any more after 1967, especially the kids didn't want to tolerate. Hollywood, with a capital H again, went through another cycle. Getting Straight started the cycle of the college film and the drug film and most of them were so far removed from reality, and kids knew it, too. And everybody stayed away in droves, and they were all disasters because they weren't real. They were made like Bond films, except precisely the reason you went to Bond films was to get out of your normal humdrum life. It was precisely the reason people stay away from the other films, because they purport to be telling you a story about college kids taking over a campus or this or that, and they don't work for that reason.

Joe Pasternak was the master producer of those films, marvelous, marvelous films that I went to see in the fifties and loved, you know, with Connie Francis, and you knew that this was escapist fare, but you weren't concerned that they weren't real. I mean, you went to those films to kind of escape, but in the middle of the late sixties, I think that young people more than anybody resented those films. Maybe the parents would like to believe that that's what the kids were still like, but the young people who were the people that you counted on to buy the tickets, they didn't dig it any more. They didn't want to see Connie Francis and Jim Hutton. They simply refused to go to those films; that's why the films changed. And then when people got to make real films, they got to be so super real that kid audiences turned these down because they said, hey, wait a minute, that isn't real--it just isn't real. I think that the main fault of The Sweet Ride, why it doesn't work at all, is that there are some, I hope, more pretty provocative ideas or attempts in it, but they are made in that unbelievable styles. That's why I think some so-called critics, I mean you call people in the trade papers critics and things like that--got really sad at the film. A trade paper won't give a terrible review to any film in these days, especially about your people. So anyhow, here comes Joe Pasternak again and it's another thing. They actually got angry at that picture, and the reason they got angry was, I think, because of all the things that were very unpleasant about it that were stuck in there. At the same time there was that
overall veneer on top which is "here we go again, it's the Metro-Fox young people." But there were so many things in the picture that weren't. It was like clogging up your pores with some kind of awful oil or salve, and all of a sudden it's just covering it over, and saying "Listen, we are actually talking about this problem or that problem but don't worry about it because see, look at the house, and here's the girl, she's dressed nice, and so on. You're not going to see any fucking, don't worry, you won't see it. And the motorcycle guy, doesn't he look terrific, but you don't have to be really afraid of him because he's not real. Nobody would think that guy with the bald head and the earring really is going to do anything.

It was set in that style, and I think that's what the country rejected, and quite properly so. In that sense, if I'd seen The Sweet Ride then I'd have said about the film, as an audience, "Gee, I wish that four or five things that are in that film could have been explored or something done with them, instead of just letting them hang there as ideas." Things like affluent people dropping out, like the whole idea of Colley's character, like what happens to a girl at an early age when her sexual experience is such that she finds herself in her own mind incredibly cheapened. Let's say the difference between Vicky and Thumper is that Thumper could live with a guy very happily and just be sort of her sweet bopping Metro self, and Vicky took it all so fucking seriously. I guess she was the romantic who made that fatal.... you know, there are girls like that. I mean there are girls who say, hey listen, I've been screwing around for ten years, and I can't find anybody I like, and I'll keep going. And there are other people who have an affair and it is a disaster for them. Jackie was miscast in the sense that she looked too old and world-wise. I mean, you had the feeling that she was putting the whole house on—you know, she could do Tony up for breakfast.

**JM:** What does Denny reject about Colley at the end? The film ends with Denny leaving Colley and the beach to go back home and work, at least for a while. Vicky is recovering from her beating with hints as to a future, more mature relationship with Denny. Thumper and ChooChoo are married. What concluding statement does the film make concerning their growing up and search for an identity? Again, what has Denny rejected about Colley and his way of life?
Several of the rules under which the picture was made came into play there. In other words, I think the end would have been much better if Thumper and Choo-Choo hadn't got married and ChooChoo had just said, "Hey listen, I just want to live with her. I happen to like her a lot better that I do you, and she's a lot more fun, and she's softer and nicer and I'm just going to live with her." They had to get married under the rules. It wasn't so much studio-rules, although they were very happy about it, but Joe's rules. I mean you just couldn't leave people at the end of the picture just living together. I mean, they had to be pointing toward something. At the same time, it fit into the overall pattern, obviously, in the writing of it, which is that, one by one, everybody surrounding Colley grows up in a certain way and he doesn't. At the end of the picture when he walks down there and Parker jumps out again and so on, that last shot of his looking over the beach—I tried to steal a bit from Scott Fitzgerald at the end of *Tender is the Night* when Dick blesses the beach—I can't remember whether that's in the film or not, but in the original script, Colley blessed the beach while Parker was behind him. You know that Colley ain't going to change; it would have been a very depressing film if you didn't think any of the kids were going to change. I might have just as soon ended it that way, saying the kids aren't going to get together again. Joe wanted the audience to know that there was a chance.

There was at one point a very badly written scene that I did at Joe's instruction, where they get together at the end, and it was just disaster. In their climactic meeting, where she looks like Joe Frazier after the Ali fight, I wanted her to say, "Just get away. Fine, okay, you've made your apology, get the hell out." Poor Mike Wilding, he stumbled into that feet first; he still doesn't know what he did there. He came in for two hours, and he had no idea what the film was about. Norma Crane, who's now in *Fiddler*, playing Topol's wife, played the mother. Norma doesn't know what the picture is about either. They made the whole shot in Joe's house—that was Joe Pasternak's house—the budget was such that we couldn't get anybody else's house.

I wanted, obviously, to say that he was growing up and it's better, philosophically, because I believe that. It was not the end of the book at all; I think at the
end of the book, Denny actually kills Casewell or something and goes into jail, which was a kind of unsatisfactory ending. But the book really didn't have much to do with a philosophy of life and it was sort of like a suspense book in a certain way. He got sent off to jail and I thought that really doesn't help the situation that I want to write about at all. I didn't want to say anything about somebody being a convict or in rehabilitation or anything, because it isn't really anything about that. What I wanted to say originally was when Vicky would not get together with Denny, in the first draft when she did not, was that your life caves in on you and that which you think is most important in your life doesn't work out. Inevitably, unless you want to drown yourself in self-indulgence, you keep going. I mean, tomorrow is a new day. It's Albert Camus; it's the myth of Sisyphus. You keep pushing the rock up the hill, and even though you know it's going to get away from you before you get to the top of the hill—as it does in Sisyphus, who's condemned to Hades, to push that rock and every time he gets to the top it gets away from him and rolls down—you have to keep going. The only dignity that anybody has in life is to try and do something.

Denny, in a very Twentieth Century-Fox 1967 way, goes to work in the hardware store in Santa Monica. He's in his dad's hardware; you never met his parents, so you don't know them, but what he's doing is he's starting to be alive. In other words, Colley's dead; he's a walking dead person. Colley is a walking dead person by the fact that without the kids around him he is dead. There is a terrible desperation there, he cannot exist without those kids. Oh, Colley will find some more kids, but Colley himself is nothing; he's a straw man. He's a straw man very much like the vampire shielding his eyes from the cross, or whatever. He will shield his eyes from the hardware store in Santa Monica. I'm not, by the way, in favor of working in hardware stores in Santa Monica; I wish Denny had something more creative to do. I toyed with the idea of making him some kind of a painter, but I thought, well, that's really just awful, I mean, he's not going to be. It's like Golden Boy. I'm a boxer, but I'd really like to play the violin. Vicky could look at the painting and say this is very talented. You should really be, you know, doing this full time, and I thought Brady Caswell could buy one of Denny's paintings.

JM: In the hotel in Vegas, Colley makes a speech about responsibility. He says he's not responsible to anyone
1. 14,000 students were enrolled in photography (motion picture and still photography) in 1963; 26,000 in 1967-68.

2. 79,000 students were enrolled in motion picture, still photography, and/or graphic arts instruction courses in 1969-70, an increase of more than 560% in the last six years.

3. 440 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada offered one or more courses in photography in 1968; 627 offered such courses in 1970-71, an increase of 42%.44

Statistics compiled by the American Film Institute in 1970 for its annual survey of college film courses provide an additional indice as to the "revolution" in film-making and film study at the college level. Some of the general findings from the 1970/71 study are:

1. The budget for film programs increased on an average of 301% in the past five years among all schools surveyed. This spectacular increase is an indication of the growing commitment to film and of the number of new programs that have come into existence since the mid-sixties.

2. 3,015 students are majoring in film on the undergraduate level and 1,216 on the graduate level in the schools surveyed.

3. A total of 1,669 film courses are being offered during the 1970-71 academic year--1,026 on the undergraduate level, 346 on the graduate level, and 307 open to both graduate and undergraduate students.

4. In the schools surveyed, there is a total of 869 faculty members teaching film. Of these, 304 teach film full-time.45

While most of the expansion of film study in the late 1960's took place within existing departments including Speech, Art, Communication Arts, and English, the Institute's
for anything. Wasn't this what Denny rejected about Colley, his lack of feeling for other people?

TM: I'll tell you what the picture says really. I haven't been coping out in terms of the things we were forced to do in doing it. It is a tribute to my ineptness at the time and maybe even Harvey's, that we couldn't get the point across even under these circumstances. I ate dinner about four nights ago with Paddy Chayefsky; he's an old friend of mine, and I loved Hospital. The point of that whole picture at the end, after all the madness and the black comedy, the idiocy, is that George Scott turns around to Diana Rigg—when he's supposed to go off to Arizona with her to live on a Hopi Indian Reservation and everything, and he says—have you seen the picture? Well, George Scott is fifty years old, and he's impotent, and he's divorced his wife, and his kids are terrible: Maoists, failures, and he's going to quit. He's a brilliant doctor and he gets caught in this terrible nightmare in the hospital and he meets Diana Rigg whose father is dying in the hospital, and who is a man who woke up one day speaking Apache, fluent Apache, and they've moved to Arizona onto a Hopi Indian Reservation or something. And she says to Scott, "Go with me." They decide they're in love and he screws her and he finds out that he's not impotent one night and he's going to leave with her. He's going to leave all this incredible madness where people spend ten billion dollars on the sick and people are sicker than ever. You know, the wrong people get hysterectomies in the hospital.

At the end of it there's a scene where they're tearing down buildings in the slums in New York to make room for the new part of the hospital, and all the Chicanos and blacks, all the groups are protesting the tearing down. They storm the hospital and they come up to the hospital administrator in the hall and the administrator says, "You don't have to talk to me. Don't talk to me because I don't work here any more. I've just quit. You want the hospital? It's yours. You run it. You pay the bills, you fight the city, you fight medical costs, you do this, you do all that, because you've got it. It's your hospital. There are two thousand sick people in this hospital. It's up to you. You go get 'em well. You fight the Blue Cross. You fight the thing. Do it all." He leaves, and George Scott, who is also leaving, meets him outside. He's going to an ambulance which has Diana Rigg and her father in it, and he says, "I'm not going," and she says, "You're not?" He says, "God damn it, somebody's got to be responsible. Somebody has to be responsible." And he turns around and looks at the
administrator and the administrator looks at him and they go back into the hospital. It's a terrific ending and it works. George Scott can carry it off.

In effect, what The Sweet Ride is trying to say is that somebody has got to be responsible. I gave, I think, the best writing, if there is such a thing, in it, but the best writing in the picture is Colley's speech on responsibility, which Tony played very well. If the picture says anything, it is that somebody's got to be responsible. Everybody's heading for the picture, everybody's found complete inner peace because they don't need anything—you know, materialistic things—except when they decide they need them. Except when somebody is sick and you actually do need the doctor. Thank God the guy went to medical school and he was actually working there. Cops are abusive of their own power and enormous pigs until something's happening and you see one across the street and you scream, "For Christ's sake, help me," and he does. The fact that somebody actually manufactured a product or makes something does not make them intrinsically bad, or sellouts. It's possible to work and have dignity. Maybe it's a little too heavy for that picture, but that's really what it says, in essence.

You know, that's why I was so happy you called about The Sweet Ride. I was so astounded. I was twenty-four years old and very idealistic about the picture when it was being made. I mean, I'd grown up in the business. I knew all the things they were not letting us do, but somehow I thought, maybe I thought I was writing better than I was. Somehow I thought more would come through to more people about what the picture really was about than actually happened. Some people actually really enjoyed it, believe it or not. I mean, really understood what it was about and sort of looked over the faults which they knew obviously were going to be there anyway in a picture like that. Those people are just as unfair as the people who harp on it. The word "flawed" is not the word for the picture. At the same time, God damn it, we did try and say a couple of things, we just didn't do it very well. In its own way in a couple of scenes, not as a picture, but in a couple of scenes, I'd go mono-a-mono with Stanley Kramer saying I'd done more with young people than he has. Film-makers who set out to make a serious film have a chance at it, and we certainly didn't have a chance at it. This is a product picture for drive-ins, but young people are also not Catherine Outen and Sidney Poitier. Sidney was known at that time as Albert Schweitzer in that film because he was so
perfect, but that film is as distorted a portrait of young people as *The Sweet Ride*. More so, because those aren't young people, that isn't a black man. That's a black god walking into a house, and walking into god-like parents. I think the public really has rejected these kinds of distortions, but they will take and love a James Bond or something, where it is supposed to be that. Bond has always been a comic strip, and I would just like to see the movie business—if movies are a business, and they are, unfortunately—let comic strips be comic strips, and let pictures be pictures that tell you if you are going to see a farce or a style piece or a drawing room comedy or whatever. The theatre is quite honest about it, and if it purports to be real and turns out to be a kind of quasi-drawing-room comedy, it closes. It hasn't succeeded.

In films, what no one can get away from is that Twentieth Century-Fox has more in common with General Electric than it does with Fellini, which is a company made up of stock holders that invest money to make money. They're not in the charity business. The fact that you're a brilliant director doesn't mean squat to them if you can't make a film that makes any money. They put up the money and they want money back. They're on the big board in New York and they're worth maybe a hundred million. I think with just forty million dollars in films they've got to get something back otherwise they go out of business. Just like General Electric investing money in a new bulb, they've got to sell. That's the awful thing that disgruntled movie patrons and critics...I don't think they ever got straight. It's the curse of what's called the business with the capital thing, which is that it's a business! Look, you have a sensational script, and you're a sensationally talented director, right? You're the director-producer, and maybe it only costs five hundred thousand dollars to do, but you have to get half a million dollars from somebody, and the person who gives you the half a million wants his money back, inevitably. Most of them will give you the half a million because they want a whole lot more back. I mean they ask for fifty per cent of the profits and more, and if they don't get their money back, you can't go to them again. And you can't go to anybody again if you say I've made these last three films each for 500 thousand dollars and some of them made their money back. It's very tough going to make up for it. And so inevitably, you're judged first of all on talent—certainly by the right people you're judged by talent and judged on talent—but if you've never made a dime with any of your films, you're not going to get any money to make any films.
There are projects that I can do now that would offer an awful lot of stuff since the Bond picture, because I am connected with a hot picture because that film did thirty-six million dollars in thirty-one days. So people will say, remember the kid you wouldn't have lunch with eight months ago? Did you know that he really wrote *Diamonds are Forever*? You know that, don't you? And they say "Really? Well, have him over; where is he... 'cause we got this book."

I'm no better a writer or no worse, and certainly the reason that I'm such a hit has nothing to do with me; it has to do with the fact that there's a man named James Bond and another man named Sean Connery who's playing it for the first time in four or five years. But it doesn't matter. Everybody smells great coming off a hit; everybody smells lousy coming off a flop.

I wrote a pilot called *Travis Magee* about a detective. I was hired to write and paid an ungodly sum of money, right after the Bond picture, for one simple reason: if it didn't work out, the producer could turn to the stockholders and say, "Well, for Christ's sake, he wrote the Bond picture. What do you want?" I got somebody who just wrote a ten million dollar picture." Again it's defensive. You can turn around to people and say I couldn't get anything better for you. I mean, look, Sean Connery's gone back to playing James Bond again. Look who I got; I got the guy who wrote it to do television, for Chrissake. Well, if it's a lousy film, don't blame me, blame him. He's a lousy writer, but I did everything I could. And I think that's one of the things about *The Sweet Ride* which didn't work: listen, we've got Joe Pasternak. Nobody's ever made better pictures than that for kids, I mean more successful pictures. He's got a great track record. You got a young guy to write it. Hell, he's under twenty-five... what do you want? You know? We got a couple of new kids, we got Tony Franciosa to bolster it up. By the way, it was not a cheap picture; the picture cost over two million dollars. But again, you've got to be defensive. You've got to say, listen, it wasn't my fault. In the studio it's called being an executive, saying it was not my fault.
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FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Speech Communication


Studies in Film. Professors Robert Wagner and Ali Elgabri

Studies in Theater. Professor John Morrow
1970/71 study also noted a significant trend toward establishing autonomous programs and departments of film:

With the growing acceptance of film both as an art form and as a legitimate area of study, there has been an accompanying tendency for schools initiating a major film program to design autonomous departments of cinema or communications. This is a most encouraging development in film study.

Consistent with Hollywood's age-old propensity to capitalize upon anything even vaguely resembling a social trend, many of the most successful and popular films in the mid to late 60's reflected the paramount concerns of the New Generation: violence, alienation, and the youth subculture itself. These are some representative titles dealing with these issues which would have to be on any list of films important to the decade of the 60's and to young people:

Violence:
- The Wild Angels
- Bonnie and Clyde
- Mash
- Easy Rider
- Joe...

Alienation:
- The Graduate
- Midnight Cowboy
- Easy Rider
- Five Easy Pieces
- Tell Them Willie Boy Is Here
- Goodbye, Columbus

Youth Culture:
- Alice's Restaurant
- Woodstock
- Easy Rider
- Gimme Shelter

Most of these films were as important as indicators of new directions and changes in Hollywood as they were as
documents of the youth scene. To satisfy the faddish concern for naturalness, honesty, and realism, Hollywood opted for a quasi-documentary, quasi-cinema-verite style of production made possible by supporting independently-produced, low-budget pictures. Commenting about the "wonder" of Hollywood "backing this new and fresh exploration of our social and physical environment," critic Hollis Alpert observed, "What has made it all possible, of course, is a large, new, predominantly young, film-sophisticated audience, presumably ready and willing to welcome anything that does not have the look of the Hollywood pap of the past." 47

Historical Precedents for Sociological Approach to Film Study

The claim for film relevancy advanced here, for the decade of the 1960's and the New Generation, rests upon the crucial assumption of the sociological significance of film. The major sociological contention in this study is that the motorcycle films crystallized something in our society in the 60's. Movies have always been approached from the standpoint of their social implications and repercussions, sometimes with tolerance and insight, but more often, as the history of movie censorship shows, with unreasonable alarm and narrow-mindedness.

The Gangster Cycle

The fate of the gangster movie in the 1930's is a
case in point. The Depression burst the bubble of the American Dream and ushered in a decade of disenfranchise-ment and disillusionment. The escape from reality, the social irresponsibility, and the indulgence which characterized the 1920's were abandoned in the wake of new intellectual and social movements which attempted to explain reality in terms of despair and alienation. The economic chaos of the post-Depression period gave birth to a new awareness of the need for equality and fair treatment for all. The liberally-oriented New Deal philosophy endorsed government welfareism by the method of social and economic leveling. It was the obligation and responsibility of the "haves" to support the "have nots." Gone were the days of hardy individualism in which each man forged his own destiny and was entitled to the unrestricted use of the harvest of his efforts and dreams. The dawn of mass society and mass culture began. The old pioneering realities became relics of an outdated past; nagging notions of social injustice, crime, fear, and moral collapse threatened the social order.48

The revival of the gangster film in the early 1930's reflected some of the new experiences and attitudes created by the collapse of our economy. Depictions of American underworld violence first achieved mass exposure in the Sternberg films in the 20's, but there were a number of factors responsible for the reappearance of this genre in the early 1930's. The murder of Arnold Rothstein in 1928,
the St. Valentine's Day massacre in 1929, the indictment of Al Capone, and the general malaise stemming from the collapse were all relevant factors.49

The gangster became a popular hero, a symbolic testimonial to the fact that only outlaws could succeed in chaotic American society. One of the political priorities of democratic government is to provide a "better" and "happier" life for people. There are always forces, however, which oppose this goal, and the gangster genre became the embodiment of the tragedy of the 30's: the rejection of the individual. The essence of gangsterism as it was presented was its sado-masochistic, irrational brutality. Success and power were the results of the use of violence. The gangster genre suggested the mythical conflict between the institutionalized group (city) and the individual (gangster): the inevitable death of the gangster signified the triumph of failure and anonymity. In the world of the 30's every attempt at individuality was a crime.50

These films repudiated the earlier sex fantasies and romances and acknowledged a new world where values were relative and unstable. They admitted the inhumanity of man toward man, upheld the strong, daring, and ruthless, and leveled scorn at the weak and idealistic. They appealed to a public suddenly made aware of life's instability and the fact that it was essentially a desperate struggle for survival.51
Films of this type include *Little Caesar* (1930), which shows the relentless rise of a hero through violence and organized crime; *Quick Millions* (1931), which implied that only a fool goes into legitimate business; and *The Big House* (1930), which reveals prisons as breeding grounds for crime. Other films reflected the emerging belief that crime and the criminal were products of society and examined the causes and effects of criminality. *The Public Enemy* (1932) and *Scarface* (1932) implied that criminals are social evils which society must cope with. *The World Changes* (1933) blamed crime on easy money, and *The World Gone Mad* (1933) exposed the relationship between politics and crime.

The gangster revival was curtailed, however, due to a number of factors. The spectacular presence of crime in real life aroused much public agitation, particularly in the middle-class, against the continued exploitation of crime themes in films and the critical portrayals of American ideals, institutions, and traditions. The machine-gun killing of Vincent Coll in a New York City drugstore in 1932, the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby in 1932, and the million dollar robbery of Kick and Company in Chicago in 1932 contributed to the exhaustion of public tolerance of movie crime. The gangster cycle was to reappear in 1937, but the intervening social reform movement, spearheaded by the Catholic Legion of Decency, led to the establishment of the Production Code Administration and changed the
character and function of this genre.52

When the gangster cycle was reborn it had a different approach, one that was more acceptable and appropriate to the tone of the times. In the early 30's the gangster was a hero because he knew how to survive in a jungle world; the gangster of 1937 was an enemy of society. The titles of some films reveal his shift in emphasis: Crime Does Not Pay, The Wrong Road, Public Hero No. 1 (A G-man is the hero.).

Gangster films no longer glorified the exploits of the criminal, but focused on the causes of the crime problem and advocated understanding in the treatment of the criminal.

Dead End, Boys of the Streets noted the connection between crime and slums, Crime School treated the problems of reform schools, The Devil Is a Sissy blamed crime on an impoverished environment, and Angels With Dirty Faces showed the damaging social consequences of the crime ethic. San Quentin contended that criminals are products of society and You Only Live Once urges the rehabilitation of convicts. In short, the post-reform gangster films did not glamorize crime and violence. Criminals were regarded as social deviants who had to be reformed. Crime was not condoned nor was it portrayed as an inevitable and ineradicable element in American society. Crime and lawlessness were un-American and worked against the public welfare.53

There are, of course, numerous parallels in 1973 to
this pattern of screen censorship bred of social reform concern about the "health" of the movies. As this author has written elsewhere, the all-consuming concern of today's would-be censors is with screen "obscenity," excessive amounts of sex, violence, or both; films referred to as "smut," "skin flicks," "pornography," "sex-ploitation," or collectively as "the new pornography of violence." Like the social reform movement of the 30's, the pattern in the 60's gave birth to both "official" and "unofficial" forms of censorship. The former took the shape of the industry-sponsored movie rating system which went into effect in March, 1968, while the latter took the form of dubious legal battles aimed at stopping the showing of "obscene" films by threatening distributors with the prospect of lengthy and costly court trials. The Supreme Court obscenity ruling in June, 1973, which redefined the Roth stipulation of "national community standards" in terms of local standards, would decidedly appear to strengthen the legal positions of state and local agencies responsible for the control of "obscene" films.

The upshot of all this is to show that the proper context of movie censorship and its recurring themes—whether artistic, moral, political, or religious—are in-separably tied to a sociological approach to film. Motion pictures are closely tied to life, to its reflection, clarification, and even, we would hope on occasion, to its im-
The sociologically interesting feature about the motorcycle films is their close coincidence with the mood of alienation rampant in our society. Alienation, of course, is as old as civilization, but as this study attempts to show, its significance in the 60's rests upon its having influenced the minds and values of an entire generation, especially young people. The phenomenon seemed to reach its sociological and cinematic zenith with the occurrence of the Woodstock Music and Art Fair in 1969, billed as "An Aquarian Exposition" of music and peace, which resulted in a gathering of several hundred thousand young people on a farm in Bethel, New York. The event was ballyhooed by Time as perhaps "one of the significant political and sociological events of the age," and the resulting film was celebrated as documenting the birth of a new social reality: a nation of outsiders.

Teen-agers in the Andy Hardy movie tradition were insiders as long as they stayed in their place and learned that their parents' values were best for them. The sex-and-sand beach party potboilers represented a change from the Hardy approach, but became as narrowly limited as the world of the Doris Day-Rock Hudson movie. During the past few years young adults have seen the growth of films that mirror and express a new spirit more authentically their own than any before. The Beatles helped with Help! and A Hard Day's Night. The Graduate became a kind of visual manifesto of the generation gap. With Woodstock, a movie celebrated not only the individual outsider, but an entirely new culture, the outsider community.

The motorcycle films anchor one end of a continuum which stretches from the kind of self-indulgent middle-
class petulance found in films like *The Graduate* and *Goodbye, Columbus*, to the restless, but passive, angst of middle-class dropouts found in *Easy Rider* and *Alice's Restaurant*; to the rock bottom violent despair of the total outsider exemplified in the motorcycle films and recent films about ethnic minorities like *Up The Down Staircase*, *Uptight*, and *Medium Cool*.

**The rebel hero in American films**

In addition to general relevance and topicality, the motorcycle films are important for study because they relate to the long history (long in terms of film history) of the rebel hero in film. Aspects of the rebel hero appeared in characterizations by Cagney, Bogart, Muni, and Gable prior to the late 1930's, but the character played by John Garfield in *Four Daughters* in 1938 marked the full-fledged appearance of a new screen type, the rebel hero. "Garfield began a trend in which qualities of good and evil were not so clearly drawn; he was a complex individual who felt society had wronged him; there was a glimmer of hope for his reformation, but not a guarantee. He was the first hero (leading man) who fought forces both within and without."

There are three basic types of screen heroes: (1) the traditional hero who, like Cary Grant, Gary Cooper, or Errol Flynn, is debonair, warm, or swashbuckling, (2) the anti-hero, including some of the roles played by Gable and
Bogart, who are soulless cynics who endure and conquer in a corrupt world, and (3) the rebel hero—the uncommunicative malcontent, the oppressed loser, the perennial outsider.

The rebel hero is seldom a man of action. He has "dropped out" of society in one way or another and lets others be activists, although he is often a catalyst. He is a sensitive, often inarticulate character. He is usually filled with pathos and although sometimes uncommunicative he embodies in his personality not only sensitivity but virility and innate intelligence...the screen rebel usually lacks ambition, is a loner set apart from his companions, but has a streak of nobility, a great deal of personal pride, idealism, and individuality. He possesses Hamlet-like qualities and through his rebellion he often discovers his own insufficiencies, human failings, and corruptibility. He rebels against society but makes little attempt to change it. He seldom, if ever, rises above his problems.

Every ten years or so a few actors, frequently unknown screen personalities, burst upon the screen in rebel roles to gain immediate popularity with movie audiences. Marlon Brando, for example, a Broadway Method actor, in his first screen appearances—*A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951), *The Wild One* (1953), and *On the Waterfront* (1954)—established the style and mannerisms the rebel hero in the 1950's would follow: the mumbling, incoherent speech, sensual scratching, long pauses, and intense states; and James Dean, on the strength of only three screen appearances in rebel-type roles in three years—*East of Eden* (1954), *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), and *Giant* (1956)—became destined for screen immortality after his untimely car accident death in 1957.
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   Pictorially explicit content
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In the 60's an unknown actor named Dustin Hoffman created the role of Benjamin Braddock in *The Graduate* (1967), a rebel role which almost immediately came to be identified as an archetypal portrayal of youthful alienation from middle-class norms. The film was a tremendous popular success, grossing over 35 million at the box office after playing in only 350 theaters in this country. Some claimed it was a turning point in film history:

If *Blow-Up* was instrumental in attracting young people to film, the equivalent American landmark was Mike Nichols' *The Graduate*. Holden Caulfield, his worried future, identity crisis, and traumas fairly intact, found a close screen ally in the person of Benjamin Braddock as played by Dustin Hoffman. Both characters assert the same basic appeal, a nervy and youthful cry against hypocrisy and false values that are captured lucidly by one word: *plastics*. What seems to me to be vital about the movie is that it signifies a phenomena of rapport rather than a purely aesthetic triumph; that it functions as a sociological replacement for Salinger.  

John Garfield was the major film rebel in the 30's and 40's; Marlon Brando, Montgomery Clift, and James Dean in the 50's; Paul Newman and Warren Beatty in the late 50's and early 60's; and Dustin Hoffman, Peter Fonda, and Elliot Gould were among the most notable screen rebels in the late 60's. In the span of thirty years, the rebel cycle seems to have completed one full revolution from rebellion against poverty to rebellion against wealth. From the Garfield character, reared in the slums and eager to escape from it by grabbing a piece of the good life around him, the film rebel became increasingly symbolic of protest against the
evils of bourgeois society—a trend which culminated in Paul Newman's *Hud* (1963), a heel who epitomized all of the vices of crass, self-seeking materialism—to finally standing for alienation from and rejection of middle-class sensibilities, as seen, for example, in the Hoffman character in *The Graduate* and the roles played by Fonda and Dennis Hopper in *Easy Rider*.63

Film rebels credit their appeal to a variety of factors. Some may respond to the actor's off-beat, original style; to his charisma as a screen personality; to the forcefulness or artistry of the total film; or, as the emotional histronics of many a young woman have shown, to some kind of smouldering sensuality often referred to as "animal magnetism." As necessary as these qualities are in the repertoire of popular rebel characterizations, they alone are insufficient to explain the mass appeal of such types and their frequent assimilation into a culture's myths as figures of archetypal significance. Clearly, the immediate and sustained impact of many rebel characterizations points to more basic factors responsible for their mass adulation and emulation. Empathy and identification may be close to the center of this phenomenon. Film rebels appeal to people because they mirror discontent, frustration, and alienation in a society which, as we have seen, constitute the "condition" of youth today. Young people are attracted to rebel heroes not only because they can identify vicariously with the plight of the hero
but also because they can appreciate the rebel's solution to problems which the bond of empathy allows them to share. Each age—at least each modern age—confronts youth with particular problems and conflicts, but the underlying emotional distress and search for meaningful codes are fundamental responses which the rebel hero exploits in his own rebellious quest for individuality.

The rebel hero in the late 1960's underwent an erratic and transitional phase of development. The old models of alienation, intellectual withdrawal, and violence remained, but many new versions of the rebel scenario appeared: the heel or "prick" hero—Paul Newman in *Hud* (1963); the "existential" hero—Warren Beatty in *Mickey One* (1965); the "autonomous man" hero—Sean Connery in the James Bond films; the "persecuted" hero—Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper in *Easy Rider* (1969); the "cool, hang loose" hero—Arlo Guthrie in *Alice's Restaurant* (1969); the "catatonic" hero—Elliot Gould in *Move* and *Getting Straight* (1969); and the hero with "part of his social equipment missing"—Dustin Hoffman in *Midnight Cowboy* (1969).

Without proper historical perspective, it is difficult to fathom the significance of these permutations of the basic rebel prototype. Clearly, the rebel hero is in a transitional phase aimed at the refinement and extension of basic rebel themes, styles, mannerisms, and symbols. This phase is a
logical consequence of the popularity of rebellion and alienation in contemporary society and of their spread to new groups of malcontents, faddishly eager to proclaim their disenchantment, who must look for images to explain and clarify the nature and meaning of their dissent—possibly even prove its existence. In any event, the persistence of social unrest in our society seems to guarantee the survival of the rebel hero in our films in one form or another.

The motorcycle rebels

The motorcycle films of the 1960’s, beginning with The Wild Angels (1966), are the direct descendants of The Wild One (1953), the first of the entire genre. The latter film, which dealt with the take-over of a small town by a motorcycle gang, began the film myth about terrorist, outlaw motorcycle gangs; and Marlon Brando’s characterization of Johnny, the leader of the gangs, established the prototype of the motorcycle rebel:

Brando created an unforgettable portrait as the tough black-leather-jacketed leader of a motorcycle gang in this, one of the most controversial films ever made. The gang appropriately calls itself the Black Rebels. After being ordered out of a nearby motorcycle meet, the Black Rebel motorcycle "Club" wheels into the symbolic little American town of Wrightsville. The "club" is virtually an outlaw gang, and from the beginning they look for trouble. In the inadequately policed little town, it isn't long before a good deal of hell is being raised. When the town's citizens form a vigilante committee to retaliate, things become more volatile.65

The film script for The Wild One was based upon a short story, "The Cyclists' Raid" by Frank Rooney, which
in turn was based on an actual event in 1948 when large numbers of riotous motorcyclists allegedly "took over" the town of Hollister, California. Unlike the short story, which did not attempt to explain the psychological motivations behind such behavior, the movie presumed to be an honest effort to reveal the underlying social conditions responsible for producing these kinds of outcasts. However, the film gained its reputation more on the basis of its alarming portrayal of violence in our society than because of its sociological revelations. Even Brando was quoted as expressing displeasure at the film's ultimate impact: "We started out to explain the hipster psychology, but somewhere along the way we went off the track. The result was that instead of finding out why young people tend to bunch into groups that seek expression in violence, all we did was show the violence." 66

After thirteen years, the "Wheeler" genre was reborn with the production of The Wild Angels in 1966 and has continued into the 1970's. Like The Wild One, The Wild Angels presumed sociological significance. The foreword to the movie reads: "The picture you are about to see will shock and perhaps anger you. Although the events and characters are fictitious, the story is a reflection of our times." It created a storm of controversy. Newsweek, for example, called it "an ugly piece of trash," yet it was selected to open the 27th Venice International Film
Festival. In addition, though severely panned by some critics, the movie was a big box office success both in the United States and abroad.

Unlike The Wild One, The Wild Angels spawned a number of imitations "which formed a kind of underground folk literature for a certain segment of American youth. The films fabricated a myth to express what this group resented (order and the establishment) and what they yearned for (excitement, perhaps death)."68 And, while Brando defined the broad configurations of the motorcycle rebel, some of the rebel portrayals in the films of the 60's—including Fonda's in The Wild Angels and John Cassavetes' in Devil's Angels—were marked by a softer, less extreme style and sympathetic treatment which tended to make these characters less repulsive as screen types.

No one, of course, could surpass Brando's unique style. Fonda's performance, while less sensational in comparison to Brando's, is perhaps more true-to-life. In any event, the motorcycle film rebel of today is interesting because of the tension between the old impulsive aggressiveness and a new sensitivity, the effect being to color the basic motorcycle rebel prototype with intimations of genuine human suffering, unwarranted persecution, and understandable restlessness. In short, the motorcycle films are significant for study because of the intriguing possibility of more than just a rhetorical union between sociology and this
particular aspect of film history, the rebel hero.

The Significance of the Study
for Behavioral Science and
Communications Studies

In this section, a third claim will be advanced for the importance of the research in terms of compatibility between the goals and methods of the study and accepted canons of social science research. The discussion will rely heavily upon George Gerbner's thinking contained in his article "On Content Analysis and Critical Research in Mass Communication."69

![Diagram of Gerbner's communication model](image)

Fig. 1.—Graphic illustration of Gerbner's communication model.72
The graphic model which appears in Figure 1 makes provision for:

a) portraying the communicating agent in a dynamic role as both sender and receiver;

b) designating his relation with the world of events as the ultimate source of his perceptions and statements;

c) making the distinction between formal properties of the communication product, and other inferences about content;

d) specifically designating the study of consequences (aside from effectiveness in terms of overt intentions or objectives) as an area of research.

Its dynamics may be summarized as follows:

1) SOMEONE (the communicating agent or agency (M) engaged in an exchange with events of this world)

2) PERCEIVES AN EVENT (the exchange—primarily perceptual—between systems M and E; horizontal dimension of the graphic model leading from "event" E to "event as perceived" E; including such critical consideration as M's selection in a certain context from what is available for perception either directly or through the mediation of communicating events)

3) AND REACTS

4) IN A SITUATION (social and physical setting)

5) THROUGH SOME MEANS (communicative facilities, vehicles, controls, used to produce communication event; vertical dimension of graphic model)

6) TO MAKE AVAILABLE MATERIALS

7) IN SOME FORM (formal state of the communication event; signal system created by non-random use of means; conventionalized structure, representative or syntactic patterns; designated as the S-signal—portion of the communication events SE)

8) AND CONTEXT (field or sequence in which a communi-
cation event is perceived)

9) CONVEYING CONTENT (the social event portion of the communication SE; those references from content which reflect objective relationships independent of intentions, conventional meanings, conscious perceptions)

10) WITH SOME CONSEQUENCE (the actual role of the communication event in its further exchanges with other M's; objective outcomes as measured by criteria independent from intentions, overt perception, or "effectiveness" in terms of objectives of the communication; not represented by the graphic model)\(^1\)

Gerbner's model is useful not only because it represents a general kind of theoretical approach to content analysis but also because it illustrates crucial, specific features about this study which makes it relevant to behavioral science.

An Approach to Content Analysis

The basic approach to content analysis proposed here is not some arcane academic principle, but rather a fundamental method of inquiry which persuades the analyst to confront his material in a "proper" manner and to ask the "right" kinds of questions above and beyond those which he asks explicitly. While the scientific method pivots around the hard-core "scientific" activities of classification, measurement, and data collection, this phase of the analyst's work is preceded and followed by other important stages. The content analyst begins his investigation at some level of philosophical speculation. If the analyst
operates upon the assumption that media content has socially significant meaning, then the analyst must be aware that he, like the formally designated agents or agencies ostensibly responsible for the communicated event, is part of the process by and through which the event takes on those meanings. The fact that the analyst is as much a subject as he is a scientist implies the existence of a certain value-consciousness on the part of the analyst in regard to his study of content. The analyst's role as subject does not necessarily dilute the significance of what he might say in the name of scientific objectivity. He does not have to "try harder" as a scientist to compensate for contamination effects due to his own values, feelings, and experiences as an involved subject. The roles are not mutually exclusive; indeed, they are complementary, for the analyst's work becomes more meaningful and credible the extent to which he perceives, acknowledges, and incorporates an awareness of his value orientation into his research.

This development of awareness touches upon the philosophical stage of the analysts' work. Not only does philosophy enter into hypothesis formulation prior to data collection and into the development of generalizations which follows data collection, it also colors the content analyst's entire approach: "Self-conscious hypothesis-making brings into content analysis a concern with the correctness of the analyst's entire approach to his material, with his philo-
Combination of verbal/pictorial content
The Questionnaire for Taped Interviews With Film Producers

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sophical stand, with his appraisal of the process out of which the material emerged—in other words, with the validity of a critical social theory implied in his hypothesis.”

The second stage of the basic approach, related of course to the initial phase of philosophical accountability, is the stage of theory and hypothesis formulation. After the analyst has acknowledged his own particular value-stance in regard to the content of his study, he needs to transform this general awareness into a specific theoretical structure to define basic goals and perimeters and to consider the formulation of assumptions regarding the relationship of content to other variables, to other aspects of content, or to effectiveness and consequential meaning of content.

The third phase of the basic approach to content analysis is the pivotal union of theory and method, the systematic collection of data. In this stage, the analyst systematically classifies the material he is studying into (quantitatively or qualitatively) measurable units and categories for the purpose of description, evaluation, and eventual analysis. This final purpose—that of critically evaluating the collected data—constitutes the last stage of the basic approach to content analysis, the interpretive stage. Obviously, the analyst does not construct an elaborate theoretical structure just to collect information. He utilizes a scientific method to gather data to test the validity of his original inferences which, if consistent
with a schema such as Gerbner's focus upon underlying, unexpected, or unexamined consequential properties of the communication content. These, then, are likely to be some important interpretive tasks of the mass media analysis:

a) to scientifically gather and test inferences about content that may involve generally unrecognized or unanticipated consequences;

b) to isolate and investigate consequential properties of content which escape ordinary awareness and casual scrutiny;

c) to bring to awareness those hidden regularities of content which record and reflect objective mechanisms of a social order.

Relationship of the Present Study and the Gerbner Model

It is postulated that this study is consistent with the philosophical, theoretical, executive and interpretive phases of this approach to mass media content analysis, and it is at this point that the Gerbner Model is helpful to illustrate the ways in which this research is compatible with the principles of content analysis. Philosophically, this research is based upon the same underlying concept which supports Gerbner's work; namely, the belief in the social significance of content.

Referring back to his model in Figure 1, specific allowance is made for the study of the consequential properties of the communication product in provision (d). It is held that the study of content includes, but is not limited
to, the formal characteristics of media--such elements as the physical properties of media, the formal components of style, vocabulary, syntax, and so on. While formal elements may be of direct and profound significance, Gerbner maintains that "...the nature and consequences of these elements and characteristics can be understood best if content is viewed as bearing the imprint of social needs and uses." Content is viewed as a social event which, in a metaphor especially apropos to film study, presents an "image" of man in relation to society, of how he reacts to human experience. Consequential properties of content operate on both a personal and social level and, because film content is mass produced, the search for social determinants must also take into account institutional dynamics.

Philosophical notions of this kind entered the design of the present research from the very beginning. Acting first in a subjective capacity, the writer sensed that some of his interests in film and experiences as a film viewer had more than just private meanings. Many others, "growing up" in the decade of the 60's also seemed to be going to films for somewhat the same reasons, sharing similar expectations, and responding to the film experience in more or less common fashion. Moreover, increasing numbers of Hollywood films in the 60's were produced to appeal to the author's age group--a trend which reflected Hollywood's confidence in the existence of a lucrative youth market--
and were advertised in a way that pandered to fashionable conceptions of the so-called youth phenomena of that era. In short, while not underplaying his own personal involvement with film, it became apparent to the writer that his growing up in the 60's and the way in which he saw his experiences reflected in some of the popularly and critically acclaimed films of that time were connected to a pervasive social and cultural movement, a general discontent and search for personal meaning whose philosophical and sociological implications have been documented in preceding pages in this chapter.

It became the task of the author-as-scholar to translate these felt impressions and speculations into a more rigid theoretical framework for systematic research, an undertaking carried out in the spirit, if not the exact letter, of other provisions of the Gerbner model. The analysis of the motorcycle films, for example, incorporates the distinction made in provision (c); for while it is acknowledged that film style differentiates film categories and is inseparable from any given film's meaning, the focus in Chapter V is on non-formal aspects of the film content--themes if you will--that derive their fullest significance in the light of contemporary psychosocial understandings of identity crisis. Chapter IV, the discussion and analysis of interview material collected from persons largely responsible for the production of the key films in this study,
incorporates provisions (a) and (b), the dynamic role of the communicating agent as both sender and receiver and of his crucial orientation to the world of events, in particular his sensitivity to issues pertaining to identity dislocation and search. The larger questions Chapter IV raises are these:

1) What points of view about life and the world as M sees them are implied and facilitated?, and

2) What might be the consequences (aside from sales, likes and dislikes, conventional meanings, or "effectiveness" in terms of conscious objectives) of social relationships and points of view mediated through this content as a social event system?

Superimposed on a simplified Gerbner model, therefore, the goals of the present study may be graphically illustrated as follows:

![Diagram](image)

Fig. 2.—Goals and their rank order on Gerbner's Model


ibid., p 3

ibid., pp. 3-4.

Kakonis and Desmarais, America: Involvement or Escape, p. 131.

Kenneth Kenniston, "Drug Use and Student Values," in America, Involvement or Escape, p. 137.


ibid., p. 279.

Erikson, Identity, Youth and Crisis, p. 17.

See, for example, Kakonis and Desmarais, America: Involvement or Escape cited earlier and James McEvoy and Abraham Miller, eds., Black Power and Student Rebellion: Conflict on the American Campus. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1969.


Keniston, "The Sources of Student Dissent," p. 327.
15 ibid., p. 331
16 ibid., p. 310.
17 ibid., pp. 318-331.
19 Keniston, "The Sources of Student Dissent," p. 331.
21 ibid., vii.
22 ibid., p. 57.
23 ibid., pp. 40-41.
24 ibid., p. 319.
25 ibid., p. 319.
26 ibid., p. 87.
27 ibid., p. 87.
28 ibid., p. 92.
29 ibid., pp. 92-93.


32 ibid., pp. 11-12. Sebald defines the adolescent no-man's-land as the "crisis of status discontinuity."


35 ibid., p. 31.
36 ibid., p. 32.
38 The Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography (New York: Bantam Books, 1970), pp. 28-32. In regard to the effects from exposure to sexually explicit materials and conditions under which effects occur, the Commission collected empirical data in five areas of potential effect: 1) psychosexual stimulation, 2) sexual behavior, 3) attitudinal responses, 4) emotional and judgmental responses, and 5) criminal and delinquent behavior. The Commission's findings in regard to antisocial behavior are typical of the way in which empirical evidence failed to support widespread opinions about the negative moral, social, and emotional effects of exposure to sexually explicit materials: "In sum, empirical research designed to clarify the question has found no evidence to date that exposure to explicit sexual materials plays a significant role in the causation of delinquent or criminal behavior among youths or adults. The Commission cannot conclude that exposure to erotic materials is a factor in the causation of sex crime or sex delinquency." pp. 31-32.
40 ibid., p. 169.
41 ibid., p. 175.
46ibid., ii.


51Jacobs, The Rise of the American Film, pp. 509-10.

52ibid. pp. 510-516.

53ibid. pp. 514.

54John Mason, "Obscenity in Broadcasting and Motion Pictures," The Journal of the University Film Association, XXIII #2 (Spring, 1971), pp. 54-60.


56ibid., p. 81.


58ibid., p. 5.

59ibid., p. 58.

60Richard Schickel, Film 67/68, p. 117.

61Savary and Carrico, Contemporary Film and The New Generation, p. 89.

62ibid., p. 27.

63Morella and Epstein, Rebels, p. 6.

64Savary and Carrico, Contemporary Film and the New Generation, p. 116; and Epstein, Rebels, pp. 116-174.

65Morella and Epstein, Rebels, p. 72.
66ibid., pp. 72-73.
67ibid., p. 180.
68ibid., p. 182.
70ibid., p. 98.
71ibid., p. 93.
72ibid., p. 92.
73ibid., pp. 93-94.
74ibid., p. 91.
75ibid., p. 89.
76ibid., pp. 96-97.
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CHAPTER II

THE LIFE CYCLE AND THE EPIGENESIS OF IDENTITY

The analysis of the motorcycle films in this study from the perspective of identity crises is based primarily upon the theoretical formulations of Erik Erikson, the eminent Harvard psychologist who has undertaken pioneering work in the areas of child development and adolescence. His theory of adolescence is based upon an eight-stage model of human development which he labels the human "Life Cycle." Principles of Freudian infantile sexuality, in turn, support the organization and development of the eight-stage life cycle.

Before elaborating the life-cycle and the stage of adolescence, it will be necessary to summarize briefly two related areas of theoretical investigation. These areas are: 1) adolescence, and 2) delinquency/deviance. Other viewpoints were sought to increase this writer's general understanding of adolescence as a phenomenon in this country, to cover areas not fully examined by Erikson, and to provide "depth of field" to what has been taken from Erikson. The reasons for soliciting other scholarly work in the area of delinquency/deviance are essentially the same, with the
added purpose of increasing awareness and understanding about lower-class milieu in which or out of which "deviants" like motorcycle gang youth live or emerge. In some instances the insights gleaned from these general readings find their way into the film analysis directly in the form of foot-noted material which adds to, clarifies, or emphasizes, in a different way, aspects of Erikson's theory. In other instances supplementary reading material appears indirectly in the analysis in the shape of implicit, credible suppositions posited about motorcycle gangs or general statements made about their life-styles and experiences. The purpose of presenting these secondary sources, therefore, is to indicate sources in addition to Erikson which have contributed to the development of the theoretical structure in this paper and to summarize, briefly, some of the specific generative ideas which will surface, in either explicit or implicit forms.

**Adolescence**

Sources in this area contributed to an understanding of adolescence in three ways: first, by providing a definition of adolescence based upon modern social-psychological thought; second, by indicating conditions in the social and cultural structure of urban/industrial countries responsible for the emergence of adolescent subcultures; and third, by analyzing some of the effects these conditions have upon an adolescent's capacity for self-definition, his response
to his peers and adults, and his engagement with prevailing social and cultural norms. In terms of the first utility, sociologist Hans Sebald’s definition of adolescence as a period of status discontinuity has already been cited for its general usefulness, a view essentially consistent with Erikson’s concept of normative identity crises during adolescence. Ira Gordon’s transactional approach to human development and adolescence, which underscores self-actualization as the ongoing task of maturation, is similarly compatible with the tasks Erikson assigns to adolescence, and John Horrocks, in his discussion of the self-concept and adolescence, cites that empirical support exists for Erikson’s claim that the core conflict during adolescence is identity confusion. Aside from providing a general understanding of the nature of adolescence, these definitions have only limited immediate value in terms of the film analysis for the fairly obvious reason that the motorcycle films, as fictional works, have little to do with textbook definitions per se: textbooks tell whereas movies show. However, upon viewing the films it is possible to theorize about the nature of adolescence implicit in the theatrical portrayal, and in this respect the formal definitions are useful for purposes of comparison and contrast.

As regards the second utility of the general readings in adolescence, there seems to be consensus that the causes
for the emergence of adolescent subsocieties in modern industrial nations involve significant changes in social structure—industrialization, specialization, rapid social change and mobility, functional changes in family patterns of child rearing and work training, unprecedented affluence of young people—and weak and often perplexing contradictions in cultural norms and values. Sebald, it may be recalled from Chapter I, advocates such a view, and it is one supported by James Coleman as well. The value of these understandings regarding causation is that they compensate for inadequate or blurred treatment of causal factors in the films. In spite of the fact that several of the motorcycle films purport to be serious examinations of contemporary social phenomena, more often than not the films emphasize the responses made by motorcycle gangs to social conditions—mostly violent—as opposed to a more realistic, and perhaps less dramatic, examination of underlying causes. Therefore, those situations that have required the drawing of inferences concerning conditions responsible for behaviors or predicaments of motorcycle gangs in the absence of either clear explicit or implicit evidence from the films themselves, these understandings from the literature have proven useful.

In the area of effects, or how adolescents react to social and cultural forces which precipitate discontinuous psychic and social experience, the general readings have not been as useful, mainly because the authors write about
effects primarily in terms of "average" (psychologically normal) middle-class young people. If one accepts the claim of Sebald, Coleman, and others that our society has produced a number of adolescent subsocieties, then it follows that one of the differentiating characteristics between groups is how they respond to factors responsible for their origination in the first place. What this means is that, for example, whatever might be said about how middle-class young people are affected by affluence probably bears little resemblance to how lower-class "toughs" are affected by affluence, even though affluence presents a "problem" to both groups and in spite of the fact that they may experience identical emotional states such as anger, frustration, or anxiety in the process of attempting to deal with it.

**Delinquency/Deviance**

Sources in this area provided information essential to the construction of the theoretical approach used in the analysis of the motorcycle films. Very few would dispute the classification of "outlaw" motorcycle gangs, particularly those notorious in California, as deviants who, in the words of Dinitz et al., constitute "a real or perceived threat to the basic and core values of society." Erikson emphasizes the psychopathology of deviance—in terms of severe identity confusion—whereas other sources underscore the sociology of deviance. Both points of view were deemed necessary to
a behavioral science analysis of film content. It was found that psychology and sociology coexist rather well, that the analysis was strengthened in those situations in which a particular line of analysis based upon one could be amplified, clarified, or more fully illuminated by the other in terms of specific material or broadly relevant information.

For example, one of the key components of Erikson's theory is the concept of role, that part of the identity syndrome which pertains to the adolescent's being or becoming that which he imagines himself to be. This process usually involves the adolescent's more or less positive identification with adult role models which the young person attempts to emulate. When this is impossible or beset with agonizing and embarrassing failure, the frustrated young person often turns to others like himself to achieve collectively some semblance of status and role stability otherwise denied to him. Depending upon a number of factors, some of these peer group affiliations take the form of delinquent gangs organized around the expedient use of violence and/or the threat of force. In approaching motorcycle gangs in the films from this point of view, Biddle and Thomas' discussion of a basic role perspective, Ferdinand's description of a fighting typology characteristic of segments of lower-class youth, and Cloward and Ohlin's comparative analysis of delinquent subcultures have all been incorporated
in support of Erikson to illuminate the material.  

In addition to these specific incorporations, the sociological context of deviance defined by Dinitz et al runs throughout the analysis of the motorcycle films. The contention by Dinitz and his associates that deviance is normative is compatible with the patterns and motivations of gang activity as they operate in the films. The normative view holds that deviance is an inevitable by-product of all social systems; that "some persons act, at times at least, in so bizarre, eccentric, outlandish, abhorrent, dangerous, or merely unique and annoying a manner that they cannot readily be tolerated. Thus, every society must somehow deal with its saints and sinners, its kooks and clowns, and its dependent, disruptive, inadequate, and aberrant members." They go on to suggest that the causal factors discussed in terms of the use of adolescent subcultures have "developed a normative order and a social organization that facilitate deviance." In terms of the effects this disruption of a stable normative order has upon young people, they state:

The most meaningful, perhaps, is to note that the traditional status role of the adolescent has been shattered. That is, the cluster of norms that guides adolescent behavior no longer possesses clarity. Adolescence is no longer another state in the life process with clearly defined duties, privileges, and obligations. Today the adolescent is "freed" from traditional, family, neighborhood, and community ties...The norms that once provided the adolescent a context in which he was a
responsible and economically productive person, norms characterized by rigid parental discipline, filial piety, and stern sexual morality, with work and thrift as ultimate values, now seem "ancient" to contemporary adolescents. Under such circumstances of norm breakdown and the lack of clarity, delinquency and various other problems are hardly unexpected.10

The graphic illustration concerning the nature of deviance which Dimitz et al present11 makes it possible to plot the nature of motorcycle gang deviance. Of the five forms of deviance which they list—physical, religious, mental, legal, and social—motorcycle gang deviance consists largely of a combination of the latter two forms. The complete graphic representation appears below in Figure 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>NATURE OF NORMATIVE ORDER</th>
<th>NATURE OF DEVIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>Criminal</td>
<td>Murderer, burglar, addict, etc.</td>
<td>Legal Codes</td>
<td>Unlawful in action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Alienated</td>
<td>Bum, tramp, hippie, Bohemian</td>
<td>Cultural ends and/or means</td>
<td>Rejects dominant cultural values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3.—Graphic illustration of the nature of motorcycle gang deviance.

The Life Cycle and the Epigenesis of Identity

The Epigenetic Principle

Erikson conceptualizes all of human development—physical, social, and psychological—in terms of an epigenetic principle. He makes the analogy between foetal growth and post-natal development. In utero the human
organism develops according to an invariant biological timetable. Growth proceeds on a step-by-step basis in well-defined, though intricately complex and interrelated, stages. As Erikson states, "Whenever we try to understand growth, it is well to remember the epigenetic principle which is derived from the growth of organisms in utero. Somewhat generalized, this principle states that anything that grows has a ground plan, and that out of this ground plan the parts arise, each part having its time of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole."^12

Time permeates the whole process of epigenetic growth and constitutes the crucial fixed variable. Each organ has its own time of origin in the maturational scheme of foetal development which, if an organ fails to appear on time, results in its own impairment and functional loss to the total organism. Quoting C.H. Stockard in *The Physical Basis of Personality*, Erikson writes, "If the eye, for example, does not arise at the appointed time, it will never be able to express itself fully, since the moment for the rapid outgrowth of some other part will have arrived, and this will tend to dominate the less active region and suppress the belated tendency for eye expression."^13 Growth, therefore, proceeds according to a proper sequence of development whereby incipient appearance of an organ is followed by full biological ascendance of its functional capacities
which in turn is followed by incorporation of the autonomous organ into a more differentiated foetal entity. After the critical phase of development for one organ has been completed, the timetable moves on to other essential stages of growth.

After an organ has begun to arise at the right time, another factor (time, again) determines its critical rate of development which is as important to the proper function of the organ and to the overall health of the total organism as is the appearance of the organ at its right time. Either accelerated or retarded rate of organ development can disrupt the normal and natural tonus of the organism which depends upon a proper relationship of its constituent parts. Normal development, then, from an epigenetic point of view, depends upon the proper sequence and proper rate of growth.

The result of normal development is proper relationship of size and function among the body's organs: the liver adjusted in size to the stomach and intestine, the heart and lungs properly balanced, and the capacity of the vascular system accurately proportioned to the body as a whole. Through developmental arrest one or more organs may become disproportionately small; this upsets functional harmony and produces a defective person.

Epigenesis after birth extends into the uniquely human areas of personality and socialization. Psychic potentials accrue analogously to the incremental schedule of growth in utero in that the organism's increasing adaptation to itself and its environment and integration of these experiences leads to successive differentiation of critical
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ego qualities. Given a reasonable amount of suitable guidance, it is assumed "to obey inner laws of development, laws which create a succession of potentialities for significant interaction with those persons who tend and respond to him and those institutions which are ready for him." While these patterns of interaction vary across cultures, they invariably remain consistent with principles of proper rate and proper sequence which underlie all epigenesis. Personality, in sum, is considered to develop "according to steps predetermined in the human organism's readiness to be driven toward, to be aware of, and to interact with a widening radius of significant individuals and institutions."16

Erikson's Human Life Cycle

In Childhood and Society Erikson discussed the full implications of his theory of epigenetic development. From infancy on the human organism passes through a series of distinct but entwined psychosocial stages each of which contains a core or nuclear conflict important for growth and differentiation. These critical stages, the Eight Ages of Man, collectively comprise what he labeled the Human Life Cycle. Erikson's diagrammatic chart of the epigenetic Life Cycle is reproduced in Figure 4: the matrix formalizes a progression through time of a differentiation of parts. The vertical dimension represents the eight psychosocial stages while the diagonal lists the vital ego qualities which corres-
pond to each stage. The hypotheses supporting the matrix are:

1) that the human personality in principle develops according to steps predetermined in the growing person's readiness to be driven toward, to be aware of, and to interact with a widening social radius, and

2) that society, in principle, tends to be so constituted as to meet and invite this succession of potentialities for interaction and attempts to safeguard and to encourage the proper rate and proper sequence of their unfolding.18

With the "crisis" of identity in mind, there is a rough correspondence between the eight psychosocial stages and physiological age—the oral sensory stage, for example, encompasses the year or so of infancy, the muscular-anal stage to the early walking years from one to three, the locomotor-genital phase to the pre-school play years from three to five or six, and so on—the more salient features of the model for purposes here pertain to the boxes along the diagonal which represent both a sequence of stages and gradual development of component parts. This indicates:

1) that each critical item of psychosocial strength... is systematically related to all others, and that they all depend on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item; and

2) that each item exists in some form before its critical time normally arrives.20

What this means is that a positive balance of trust over mistrust is the first element of mental strength to develop in life, a positive balance of autonomy versus shame and doubt the second, and so on. This contention
### Erikson's Epigenetic Chart of the Human Life Cycle

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Fig. 4. -- Erikson's epigenetic chart of the human life cycle.
expresses a number of important relations between each step of psychosocial growth, as well as several significant aspects about each stage separately. Each of these core ego qualities arises, meets its crises, is resolved, and becomes integrated into the total personality during the stage assigned to it. All of the qualities of vital mental health, however, exist from the beginning in some form for, as Erikson points out, "every act calls for an integration of all." The infant, for example, may exhibit something resembling "autonomy" early in life by the way in which it struggles to free itself when tightly held but, under normal conditions, it is not until the child has begun to walk that "he begins to experience the whole critical opposition of being an autonomous creature and being a dependent one." Not until then is the child ready for what Erikson calls a "decisive encounter with his environment, an environment which, in turn, feels called upon to convey to him its particular ideas and concepts of autonomy and coercion in ways decisively contributing to the character and health of his personality in his culture." These decisive encounters, along with their appropriate crises, are central to an understanding of the stages or ages of the Life Cycle: the matrix plots the growth and crises of the human organism as a series of alternative fundamental attitudes.
Stage I: basic trust

During the first stage, a sense of basic trust arises out of the relationship between the almost totally dependent infant and those who care for it, the most important provider, of course, normally being the mother. As in the development of all the basic vital strengths, the relationship is mutual: the infant "trusts" that its needs will be satisfied while the mother in turn trusts her ability to provide satisfaction. To the extent that mutual expectancies are not fulfilled, a sense of mistrust emerges; the infant may "feel" or "sense"--in an experiential way--that it has somehow alarmed or angered its providers while the mother may doubt her capacity to execute basic maternal responsibilities.

Stage II: autonomy

Tremendous growth in motor coordination and verbal abilities push and pull the child toward the first, rudimentary emancipation from the family unit, particularly from the mother. During the second stage, the child begins to experience the pull of his own autonomy, and potentially explosive contradictory tendencies--like control and permissiveness, love and hate, stubbornness and cooperation--become important not only in terms of the child's personal behavior but in terms of how significant others react to the often "unmanageable" child. This is the
stage of "the terrible two's," an accurate description of the battle between parent and child which frequently ensues over the possible and permissible limits of autonomy. A healthy residue of this vital quality is left when the child's attempts to "stand on his own two feet" are supported by others, but not at the expense of the child's ability to control himself or at the sacrifice of the rights and prerogatives of others. Out of a sense of a loss of self-control and of repressive parental regulation emerges an unhealthy predisposition in the child for doubt and shame, doubt in himself and in the fairness and wisdom of those who manipulate him, and shame in having behaved foolishly or hastily.

Stage III: initiative

Three factors support the development of the third stage: 1) the child is able to move even more freely and rigorously than in the preceding stage so that he comes into contact with a much wider, seemingly limitless, range of opportunities and goals; 2) his language skills have accelerated sufficiently so that he is able to understand and misunderstand innumerable things; and 3) both of these expanded capacities allow him to imagine and contemplate an almost endless array of future roles. Out of all this the child must develop a sense of initiative as a basis for a realistic sense of ambition and purpose for the pursuit
of future goals and roles. This is the pre-school play stage. The child is apt to become curious about differences in size and kind in general, and sex and age differences in particular. Now that he is able, albeit vaguely, to imagine what he may do along with the knowledge of what he knows he can do, the child is able to contemplate adult roles or to imagine those roles worth imagining. Importantly, the child associates meaningfully with children his own age for the first time. He is eager to play and compete with others, to pursue goals, to "do" for the sheer pleasure of doing. This is also the phallic stage of infantile genitality or what Freud called the latency period of suppressed Oedipal desires, during which conscience—and the potential for guilt—develop. Again, mutuality and proper guidance are essential for the emergence of a favorable ratio of initiative over guilt. If the child becomes terrified by what he imagines or desires or if he is unable to identify meaningfully with adults who give scope to his initiatives, his sense of initiative and purpose is liable to become crystallized around a number of self-defeating roles. Similarly, if the child operates under an uncompromising and cruel conscience—if he cannot act naturally because of deep-seated inhibitions or acts more dutifully than even his parents would wish, or harbors bitter resentments against parents who do not live by the codes they foist upon him—then guilt is likely to replace
initiative as the child's regulator of action.

Stage IV: _industry_

After the play stage, the child goes to school and begins to receive systematic instruction necessary for the child's acceptance of future roles as a productive, independent adult. Educating and training the child is as important for the maintenance of society as it is for the development of the child's skills and aptitudes. Each benefits by the emergence of a positive sense of industry during the school age: the child learns to make and put things together while society stands to reap the long-range rewards of the child's budding mastery over the hardware, tools, and technology built into the goals, content, and methods of instruction. At no time is the child more willing to learn, share with others in task-oriented pursuits, shoulder responsibilities, and to achieve than after the stage of expansive imagination.²⁶ As Erikson points out, "he now learns to win recognition by producing things. He develops perseverance and adjusts himself to the inorganic laws of the tool world and can become an eager and absorbed unit of a productive situation."²⁷ The child attaches himself to teachers and other adults, eager to watch and imitate people who represent desirable occupations within his grasp. The danger at this stage is that the child might become to feel alienated from himself and his tasks and develop an in-
capacitating inferiority complex. He may not have resolved crises of preceding stages so that instead of being a "big" little boy at school he may regress to earlier patterns of dependency or continue to bully his schoolmates to "prove" his threatened sense of autonomy. His family may not have prepared him for school, or his school may fail to indicate to him the value of what he has learned so far. In any case, the child who is not able to develop a favorable ratio of industry over inferiority soon begins to feel out of place and exploited, or sense he is being "had" by the system.

**Stage V: identity**

During the next stage, the stage of adolescence, the young person is faced with a number of significant pressures, some old, some new, some inner and some outer. For the first time, he or she is confronted by the physiological storm of sexual maturation, and it is not unnatural for many young persons in the late school years to feel excessively anxious about their place in a future scheme of things. Many adolescents become greatly concerned about how they appear in the eyes of others and themselves and about how to integrate the roles and skills of childhood with adult images and ideologies. In the attempt to find meaning and establish worthwhile commitments, many adolescents have to fight some battles of earlier years all over again. This confluence of conflicts forces the
young person to ask fundamental questions about himself, society, and life's larger purposes, a process which characterizes the normative crisis of identity during the fifth stage.

If the Life Cycle chart presents a series of core conflicts, it is not to be inferred that all development depends upon crisis. Erikson's claim is only "that psycho-social development proceeds by critical steps—'critical' being a characteristic of turning points, of moments of decision between progress and regression, integration and retardation." Each stage is a potential crisis because development strengthens the human organism in new ways while rendering him vulnerable in other respects. The toddler who walks enjoys distinct physical and social advantages over the prone infant wholly dependent upon others, yet his new freedom of movement and autonomy increase the likelihood of friction with others who possess superior skills and wills. Again, "crisis" is not to be understood as a particular conflict, trauma, or catastrophe, but as a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential." In each stage and for each of the core conflicts, the task of the ego remains the same: to resolve the conflict so that the personality becomes stronger, more differentiated, and vital in a new way.

The criteria for the development of all the "senses"...
INTRODUCTION

Each age, semanticist and philosopher Suzanne Langer tells us, is characterized by certain vital preoccupations. Within the limits of what is knowable, each epoch becomes concerned with distinct philosophical ideas which generate their particular style of intellectual inquiry and the formulation and accumulation of knowledge which follows from the kind of inquiry the questions necessitate. As Langer puts it: "Every society meets a new idea with its own concepts, its own tacit, fundamental way of seeing things: that is to say, with its own questions, its peculiar curiosity." These questions go beyond the exigencies of day-to-day living and are superordinate to any of the myriad sectarian "issues" which compete for the minds and hearts of men to advance relatively short-range goals. Like the idea of reasoned inquiry in the Greco-Roman age or the concepts of sin and salvation in the age of Christianity or the centrality of symbolization attending technology in our age, the questions Langer raises are basic philosophical assumptions implicit in all cultural modes which determine and define the nature of the human encounter with time.

The primary hypothesis of this paper is that one of the major generative issues of the last thirty years, and
are the same: a crisis beset with some new estrangement is resolved in such a way that the child suddenly seems to be "more himself," more loving, more relaxed, and brighter in his judgment. Most of all, he seems to be more activated and activating; he is in the free possession of a certain surplus of energy which permits him to forget many failures rather quickly and to approach new areas that seem desirable, even if they also seem dangerous, with undiminished zest and some increased sense of direction. 30

The Life Cycle and Society

The additional factor that needs to be emphasized is that each ego quality is related to some social institution or institutionalized principle. To quote Erikson, "Each successive stage and crisis has a special relation to one of the basic institutionalized endeavors of man for the simple reason that the human life cycle and human institutions have evolved together." 31 The relationship between them is twofold: each age brings to these institutions a legacy of childlike needs and youthful vigor and receives from them, as long as the institutions remain vital, reinforcement of those basic infantile needs. Basic trust, appearing as it does in later life as an expression of or search for faith, is related to the various forms of institutionalized religion. Man's need to know the limits of his autonomy is connected to forms of political and legal organization which, in everyday life and in the courts, assigns to each his share of privileges and obligations, freedoms and restraints. The third stage, embracing as it does the sense of initiative which fuels
the child's imagination and the establishment of a moral sense which imposes restraints upon unfettered fantasies and wishes, finds its institutional corollary in the form of an economic ethos: ideal adults, recognizable by their uniforms and functions, begin to displace the heroes of fairytale and daydream. The sense of industry, as it appears in the fourth stage, involves among other things working beside and with others to make things work—a rudimentary form of division of labor and productive enterprise. This stage, therefore, is linked to a society's prevailing technological ethos whose configurations, procedures, and imperatives need to reach the child during this stage. As Erikson maintains, "it is the ideological outlook of a society that speaks most clearly to the adolescent who is eager to be affirmed by his peers, and is ready to be confirmed by rituals, creeds, and programs which at the same time define what is evil, uncanny, and inimical." In order not to become hopelessly or cynically alienated from their society, young people need to see that allegiance to their society's and culture's explicit or implicit ideals does in fact lead to a better, more meaningful life.

Identity Formation and Crisis

Erikson defines identity as "a subjective sense of an invigorating sameness and continuity." Identity
formation "deals with a process 'located' in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture...". It involves a continual process of change, integration and differentiation. "The process 'begins' somewhere in the first true 'meeting' of mother and baby as two persons who can touch and recognize each other, and it does not 'end' until a man's power of mutual affirmation wanes. As pointed out, however, the process has its normative crisis in adolescence, and is in many ways determined by what went before and determines much that follows.".

Characteristics of healthy identity growth include a person's increased mastery over his environment, unity of personality, and ability to perceive himself and others correctly. Each of the critical life stages, as we have seen, carries its own measure of potential identity strength because each new ego quality precipitates a crisis situation involving the possibility of further integration and development.

Identity formation reaches its normative crisis during adolescence. All samenesses and continuities relied on in the preceding stages are more or less questioned again because of rapid bodily growth generally, and genital maturity specifically. The young person, faced with the physiological revolution within him and pressures of adult functioning without, becomes primarily concerned with how he appears in the eyes of others as compared with what he
feels himself to be and with the problem of how to connect the roles and skills cultivated earlier with meaningful occupational and social prototypes.

Figure 5, an epigenetic diagram of identity formation, illustrates the relationship between the conflicts during the adolescent stage and their precursors in the infantile stages. The vertical and diagonal are identical in meaning to their function in the Life Cycle chart. They represent the psychosocial stages and the nuclear conflicts in each stage, respectively. The boxes along the horizontal V represent the nature of the core conflicts—the series of alternative basic attitudes—in adolescence. The diagonal signifies accrued ego development through time across stages while the horizontal in V represents development in time in a single stage. II, basic trust, is the antecedent of V1, time perspective; I2, autonomy, is the precursor of V2, self-certainty, and so on.

The "Crisis of Temporal Diffusion

What this relationship means is that each stage "bequeaths" to the adolescent stage a particular kind of crisis. For example, the first psychosocial stage bequeaths to the identity crisis a basic need for trust in oneself and others. It follows, then, that the adolescent searches fervently for men and ideas to have faith in, for persons and ideals in whose service he can prove himself trustworthy.
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Fig. 5.—Epigenetic chart of identity formation.
As it often happens, the adolescent lives at odds with time itself and views the world, and his own experience in the world, as lacking consistency, continuity, and predictability. He feels himself unable to cope with his own urges and considers himself untrustworthy in the eyes of others. He fears acting foolishly and making too-trusting commitments. Diffusion of time perspective consists of a sense of great urgency and also a marked disregard for time as a dimension of living. The young person may feel young—perhaps childlike—and old beyond rejuvenation at the same time. Symptoms of time diffusion frequently include the depressing certainty that life has passed by or that one has lost forever his potential and capacity for success. Adolescents in such a quandry regard every delay a deceit, every wait an experience of impotence, every hope a danger, every plan a catastrophe, and every provider a potential traitor. As recourse to this dilemma, the adolescent often embarks on fanatic experiments with different ways of life or invests unrealistically in some kind of utopian future that promises total satisfaction, harmony, and security.

The "Crisis" of Self-Consciousness

If the second childhood stage establishes the necessity of being defined by what one can do by and for himself and will freely, then the adolescent de-
sires to decide with free assent available or unavoidable avenues of duty and service. He seeks freedom of choice and self-expression, but tends to "do nothing" if he fears being pressured into activities or commitments which would expose him to ridicule or self-doubt. Self-consciousness during adolescence means that the young person is particularly sensitive to the discrepancy between his own self-esteem, his aggrandized self-image as an autonomous person, and his appearance in the eyes of others important to him. In some cases, this heightened sensitivity and defensive anxiety take the familiar forms of youthful stubbornness and arrogance: he derives some measure of satisfaction by disdainfully rejecting the judgments of others—especially if they are true—and by acting shamelessly in the pursuit of those goals he knows to be taboo.

The "Crisis" of Role Fixation

If the legacy of the play stage is the power to imagine what one might become, then it is clear that the adolescent is ready to consider committing himself to those peers and influential adults who appear likely to provide scope to his aspirations. By the same token, the adolescent will exhibit little realistic sense of initiative or purpose if his self-images are repudiated by adults or seem impossible to attain due to a lack of
attractive, encouraging role models. In such a quandry, the adolescent is apt to suspend his initiatives by not thinking about future roles, devaluing desirable ones, or by feigning satisfaction with a role he is forced to assume by default.

This quandry may be viewed as a kind of psychosocial moratorium, a stage during which the adolescent is able to postpone adult commitments while being free, at the same time, to experiment with various roles in order to find some kind of meaningful niche in life.

Erikson defines the psychosocial moratorium this way:

A moratorium is a period of delay granted to somebody who is not ready to meet an obligation or forced on somebody who should give himself time. By psychosocial moratorium, then, we mean a delay of adult commitments, and yet it is not only a delay. It is a period that is characterized by a selective permissiveness on the part of society and of provocative playfulness on the part of youth, and yet it also often leads to deep, often transitory, commitment on the part of youth, and ends in a more or less ceremonial combination of commitment on the part of society.

The implications of this concept help to explain the formation of adolescent subsocieties for often the only recourse an adolescent has who is either unable or unwilling to exchange childhood for adulthood is to join with others to garner some semblance of status and pride in the institutionalized—though not necessarily tolerated—free zone of the moratorium.

The "Crisis" of Work Paralysis

If the ability to put things together and make them
work well is the prime function of the school age, then the choice of an occupational career looms high among the problems facing the adolescent. Because of the intrinsic value in working well for its own sake, many adolescents would rather make tentative occupational commitments which they can easily back out of— or not work at all— than be pressured into occupations which promise financial gain at the expense of truly meaningful work. Due to unrealistic ego demands, poor training, or early competitive failures, an adolescent may develop a deep sense of inadequacy about his ability to perform and thereby become estranged from occupational prototypes and the technological ethos of his society.

The "Crisis" of Intimacy

An individual's accrued ego strength in any given stage can be measured by the risks he is willing to take with what was most vulnerable in the preceding stage. It follows, therefore, that the adolescent who has just emerged with a strong sense of his own identity is willing to risk his identity by merging it with another or others in true acts of intimacy; if he has over-calculated its firmness, he may "lose" it by committing himself deeply to another. Genuinely intimate relationships— be they between lovers, friends or inspired pairs— involve mutual affirmation and respect of each other's individuality.
Many adolescents, obviously, do not postpone intimate relationships until they "grow up." On the contrary, most are preoccupied with the issue of "sex" and matters of appropriate sex-role behavior. This does not mean, however, that adolescents are in fact intimate—as used here—when they appear to be. Most of these kinds of adolescent relationships are of an experimental nature whereby a self-image of the young person is projected useful for the clarification of the adolescent's sexual role. The youth, unsure of his own identity, will either shy away from acts of intimacy or throw himself into pseudo-intimate acts which, lacking true fusion and self-abandon, are actually promiscuous. The adolescent who is unable to enter into real intimate relationships is liable to fall back upon stereotyped interpersonal behaviors which mask isolation, the counterpart of intimacy.

The "Crisis" of Ideological Confusion

Ideology is the guardian of identity, and the system of ideals and values which our society presents to adolescents in explicit or implicit form contributes to identity formation or to its confusion. To play a positive role in identity formation, this country's Christian/democratic ideology should present young people of various backgrounds with ideals which can be shared and which offer:

1) trust in a coherent future

2) encouragement of self-sufficiency