THE

CARRY ON

FILMS

Steven Gerrard

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The Carry On films will always have a special place in my heart. I love and adore them. Therefore, as I raise a pint of Watney's at The Cock Inn, I dedicate this book to the greatest comedy team that Britain has ever produced:
Sid, Kenneth, Kenny, Charlie, Joan, Babs, Hattie, Jim, Bernie, Frankie, Leslie, Patsy, Gerald, Peter, Eric, Norman and, last but definitely not least, the brilliant Talbot … saluté!
But most of all … this book is dedicated to my Mum and Dad.
Ding Dong! Carry On!
Steve Gerrard
Carry On film fan

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on the back of a packet of John Player's cigarettes and was able to sit on Linda's lap. She gave me a kiss on the cheek and that was the beginning of my association with keeping my own British end up. I was eight years old. My eternal gratitude to them.

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About the Author

Dr Steven Gerrard is Lecturer of Film, Media and Visual Culture, and works for both The Northern Film School and University of Wales. He has written for *The Dark Side Magazine*, *Culture Unbound: The Journal of Current Cultural Research*, *We Belong Dead Publications*, and his work on the *Carry On* films has appeared as chapters in edited collections. He loves science fiction and horror cinema, and anything to do with British Low Culture. In his spare time he wishes to be either Status Quo's rhythm guitarist or Doctor Who – he'll have a long wait.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1958. The year the European Economic Community was founded. The year in which the Russian spacecraft *Sputnik 1* fell back to Earth. The year that saw the Munich air disaster. The year in which the first protest march for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament took place. The year in which a cinematic legend was born.

The unrelenting *Carry On* movies, loved and loathed as much today as when they were first released, were a series of 31 low-budget, ribald and innuendo-laden comedies that have remained at the cornerstone of British film comedy since the first film, *Carry On Sergeant*, marched into view in 1958. They spawned numerous spinoffs, including an original TV series and two compilation series, and a stage play; they have influenced British comedy; and they have led to countless merchandising opportunities ranging from CDs, DVDs and Blu-rays to Toby jugs, toy cars, pillow cases, mobile phone covers and even models of the cast spouting their most famous lines – and, in the case of one cast member, Sid James, his famous laugh.

As *Carry On* fan and chronicler Richard Webber argues, the films were not Oscar-winning material, but they have remained firmly lodged in the nation's affections due, in no small part, to the fact that they appeal to the masses.[1] From the late 1950s and well into the 1970s, cinemagoers flocked to see the latest *Carry On* film, no matter what it was about.

Attendance figures show that in the year of *Carry On Sergeant*'s cinema release, 755 million patrons visited British cinemas over the course of the year.[2] This was considerably down from the heights of the 1,635 million

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tickets sold in 1946. Television was seen as cinema's greatest threat, and one that exerted a hypnotic control over its audience, so much so that cinema declared war on TV. Films were presented in glorious Technicolor, Cinerama, Cinemascope, Super Technirama and even 3D to entice viewers back into the cinema. But films presented in these formats were mostly American productions, with their high-end production values and studios churning out product after product. Despite having a studio system, Britain could barely compete with Hollywood's mega-production base or its advancements in technology.

So what did it do to survive? It turned to stalwarts such as the war film, melodramas, the woman's film, costume dramas, Ealing's whimsical comedies, Hammer Films' grim and grisly horror outputs, and television for help. Television? The enemy? Yes. Cinema had borrowed talent from other media from its very beginnings: stage actors, music hall performers and radio stars regularly moved from one to another, and many productions were based on existing material. It was only a matter of time before TV actors and productions would make the swap too. Whilst one of the most famous and fondly remembered British films of the 1950s, *The Blue Lamp* (1950), became the long-running and incredibly influential police series *Dixon of Dock Green* (1955–76), many other TV productions made the reverse transition to cinema. Such TV programmes as *The Grove Family* (1954–57), *The Larkins* (1958–60) and *The Quatermass Experiment* (1953–1959) science fiction/horror hybrids all found a new lease of life in their cinematic versions.

The first major influence on the first *Carry On* film came from a TV sitcom, *The Army Game* (1957–61), in itself based on the incredibly successful American import *The Phil Silvers Show* (1955–59). This cosy black-and-white comedy saw a misfit group of conscription soldiers at Nether Hopping's Surplus Ordnance Department (SOD) battle against the rigours of army life, boredom and authority. The series was a huge hit, spawning both a film, *I Only Arsked* (1958), and a spinoff show, *Bootsie and Snudge* (1960–63). The importance of *The Army Game* to the *Carry On* series cannot be underestimated: *Sergeant* used its ideas and themes, and shared much of the same cast, including William Hartnell, Norman Rossington and Charles Hawtrey as its TV progenitor.

Carry On Sergeant was a box office sensation up and down the country. From its humble beginnings, it began the longest, most successful and arguably best-loved comedy series that British cinema ever produced. Over the course of the next 20 years, the team both in front of and behind the cameras of these 31 energetic, gloriously uproarious films kept on

making bawdy, smutty, innuendo-laden farces that became emblematic of the British face of comedy. Whilst some of the actors and technicians changed over the course of the series, the jokes certainly did not. They got progressively bluer in keeping with the times, but at their heart lay one thing: good, honest vulgarity. Despite the critical roasting that the films often received, the British public loved them.

The films never approached High Art, but rather revelled in the traditions of the past. They were not seen as approaching Shavian and Wildean plays of wit, drawing room comedies or even the Aldwych Farces. No. The movies wore their rollicking, barrel-scraping and pun-laden innuendo with pride firmly on their sleeves, in much the same way as Shakespeare had done with his comedies four centuries earlier. They had their origins in the music hall acts of Marie Lloyd, Max Miller, Gracie Fields and George Formby. They also became the living, breathing, joking and celebratory embodiment of Donald McGill's saucy seaside postcards. In other words, they *were* the working-class populace, those who drank beer, smoked fags, ate fish 'n' chips and wore Kiss Me Quick hats at the seaside.

The films arrived at the tail end of the 1950s, when Great Britain had virtually shaken off the austerity of the post-war years, with 1951's celebratory Festival of Britain demonstrating that the country was well on the road to recovery after being bruised, battered and dazed in the Second World War. There were huge celebrations across the nation as Queen Elizabeth II's coronation was beamed into people's living rooms in 1953. Food rationing had finally come to an end in 1954. Whilst the danger of nuclear annihilation remained a constant menace from the communist bloc, *Carry On Sergeant* blithely took pot shots at ideas about gender, sexuality, the nation, the dreaded threat of conscription into the armed forces and even Armageddon in its stride. As it swept into cinemas on a wave of outlandish publicity, its elements of farce, gentle innuendo and tales of love conquering all proved a winning box office combination. It was not long before a sequel, *Carry On Nurse* (1959), was announced and the series began in earnest.

If the 1950s came to represent a sense of austerity – and the first few films in the *Carry On* series do have a sense that change is slowly coming – the shift towards Swinging Sixties affluence proved that Britain was *the* place to be. The 1960s were seen as halcyon days, when The Beatles ruled the airwaves, the Mini was both fashionable cars and short skirts, England won the World Cup and Carnaby Street clothes were the talk of the fashionistas. During this period of social change, with Britain slowly

but surely coming out of its post-war malaise, films like the James Bond series and the Hammer Films horror canon reflected notions of Britishness. Bond was, to all intents and purposes, virtually single-handedly keeping the British Empire afloat, whilst Hammer's Van Helsing, despite his *mittel*-European name, ensured that a British stiff upper lip helped ward off foreign denizens like Dracula and his vampiric brides. Other popular films, notably the 'kitchen sink' movies, tackled themes of sex, rebellion and the fracturing of Britain's class structure head on. Films like *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960) and *This Sporting Life* (1963) were filmed in stark black and white on gritty council estates and rugby playing fields. Characters were motivated by the harsh realities of their world around them, a world of toiling in factories, where the only respite from tedium and hardship was either through venting anger or becoming lost in drink. On the one hand, there were the populist genre fare—Bond and Hammer—whilst on the other, there were the socio-realist films, but both demonstrated that there was a vibrant and often challenging film culture in Britain that reflected, through direct or indirect means, the 1960s.

When Norman Hudis left to pursue a career in America, *Carry On* scripting duties were taken over by Talbot Rothwell. His scripts usurped the cosiness of the first six outings and he broadened the basic fundamentals of the series. With less institutional targets to aim at, he attempted a two-pronged approach: his screenplays would parody and pastiche genre outings, whilst those films set in the 'real' world would critique British society directly. Therefore, the 1960s films were a mix of genre and realist outings: *Carry On Spying* (1964), which ridiculed James Bond; *Carry On Cleo* (1964) mocked the Burton-Taylor farrago of *Cleopatra* (1963); *Carry On Screaming!* (1966) out-hammered Hammer's horrors; and *Carry On Don't Lose Your Head* (1967) was a parody of Gainsborough's 1940s melodramas, which sat alongside *Carry On Doctor* (1967) and *Carry On Camping* (1969) and their attempts to be both 'hip' and 'swinging'.

The films were always popular at the box office. *Carry On Up the Khyber* and *Carry On Camping* held the top two positions at the British box office in 1969. It showed that the films were, despite their low budgets and often ramshackle appearances, incredibly popular on the domestic front. They competed alongside British prestige products such as *Battle of Britain* (1969) and *Oh! What a Lovely War* (1969), literary adaptations with *Women in Love* (UK 1969: Ken Russell) and *Royal Hunt of the Sun* (1969), and co-productions like *Monte Carlo or Bust* (1969). They clearly demonstrated that the British public wanted to watch these bawdy com-

edies, no matter whether they were in period costume (*Khyber*) or set in the modern day (*Camping*). It also proved that despite the stock situations, characters and lines, the films not only tapped into the peculiarly British traditions for innuendo, bawdiness and *double entendre*s, but that they provided laughter for the masses. That laughter may have come from blue jokes and outlandish situations, but it also took delight in forming critiques against those in positions of authority, where the utopian collective of the masses almost always conquered the stiff, sexually inept and socially awkward ruling classes.

But by the 1970s, all this began to change and the *Carry On* movies hardened in their examination of sexuality, gender and class. After the release of *Carry On Up the Khyber*, Rothwell's scripts begin to alter. The cosy and conservative playful rebellion of *Camping* does have a 'tail end' feel to the 1960s. As Charles Hawtrey's NHS-bespectacled character Charlie Muggins gets wheeled off with a bevy of young schoolgirls, the randy, older men (Sid James and Bernard Bresslaw) find themselves contained within the shackles of marriage. There is a genuine feeling that the proverbial wind of change is in the air.

This change became ever more apparent with the move into the 1970s. Any fun from the previous era became curtailed, with the films' realist approaches critiquing British society with more relentlessness than ever before. Films like *Carry On Loving* (1970) attacked the supposed sanctity of marriage, whilst *Carry On Abroad* (1972) relentlessly mocked and ridiculed the notion of the Brit abroad. Arguably the most unremitting of the 1970s outings was *Carry On Girls* (1973), which tackled the ideals of family, marriage, the seaside hotel, dragging up, small-town officialdom, Miss World and the Women's Liberation Movement.

The world of the *Carry On* films had always been one of nudging and winking, but it now turned towards more nudity and harder stereotyping. The British sex, or *glamour*, film had started out as 8mm films made for the burgeoning home market and private clubs up and down the country. Filmmakers like Harrison Marks, Stanley Long and Pete Walker made countless five to eight-minute 'loop' films that displayed a female undressing in particularly unsexy surroundings: a kitchen, living room or the garden. Despite these humble beginnings, such films as *Naked as Nature Intended* (1961) *Nudist Memories* (1961), *Take Off Your Clothes and Live!* (1962) and *London in the Raw* (1964) began to push back the boundaries of censorship. They may not have been shown nationwide, but many were passed for exhibition by local authorities. There was an increasing demand

for these films, and by the 1970s *The Wife Swappers* (1970), *Cool it Carol!* (1970), *Eskimo Nell* (1974) and many others were proving to be big box office successes (albeit made on miniscule budgets) that challenged the *Carry On* films and their perceived notions of sex.

By attempting to keep up with the bona fide British sex film and moving away from music hall gags and Donald McGill postcards towards the markets of Stanley Long's *Adventures of a Taxi Driver* (1975), Derek Ford's *What's Up Nurse!* (1977) and Harrison Marks' *Come Play With Me* (1977), the release of *Carry On Emmannuelle* (1978) signalled that the team were caught between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, it was a film that parodied the French erotic (and rather dull) art house film *Emmanuelle* (1974), whilst on the other, it was a film that fell between two stools: it was neither sexy nor funny. Audiences stayed away. The film series came to an inglorious end. Badly constructed and sloppily made, with awful back projection and a general air of desperation, the film tanked at the box office. The end of the *Carry On* films, at least for some 14 years, had come.

But it was not only the move towards a more adult-orientated audience that helped bring about the demise of the series. The 1970s is seen as a decade in which the stagnation and decline of fortune within the British film industry saw audience attendance fall dramatically away from its renaissance in the 1960s. Whereas cinemas were once huge leisure palaces, the increasing need for profit meant that cinema chains began to change their auditoriums into proto-multiplexes where screens were often rudimentarily split into two with a dividing wall separating theatres, to the detriment of viewing experiences, but turnouts of higher revenue. The withdrawal of American funding from UK film production was widely felt, and with the Hollywood Majors posting substantial losses (in 1969, MGM lost $35.4 million, whilst Warner Bros lost $42 million) and moving production back to the States, it was obvious that British filmmakers could not afford to directly compete with their transatlantic cousins. Co-productions with West Germany and France helped *The Day of the Jackal* (1973) and *The Odessa File* (1974) prove box office bonanzas, aided in no short way through their international casts and locations appealing to British sensibilities. Likewise, Britain's producers steadfastly clung to producing period and heritage dramas, with big-name casts and production values well in evidence. For example, EMI's Agatha Christie whodunnits *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974) and *Death on the Nile* (1978) sat alongside serious literary adaptations such as *Mary, Queen of Scots* (1971),

Ryan's Daughter (1971) and *Young Winston* (1972). All of these were box office successes, demonstrating that audiences wanted these prestige productions just as much as they wanted lower-budgeted genre fare.

For Hammer Films, once the proud bastions of the 1950s and 1960s new wave of horror cinema, both overproduction and overfamiliarity of subjects meant that audiences dwindled. Hammer could not keep up with the vicarious thrills of Michael Reeves' *Witchfinder General* (1968), George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (USA 1968: George A. Romero) or the big budget *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *The Exorcist* (1973), which to all intents and purposes were Hammer Films in disguise. Whilst Christopher Lee's *Dracula* (1958) had been at the height of suave, sophisticated monsterdom, his *Dracula A.D. 1972* (1972) and *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (1973) revealed that the Count was well and truly in need of a long rest. Even though Hammer changed tack with its tales of lesbian vampires, swashbuckling monster hunters, chop socky fistfights, demoniac outings and 1970s fashions, it was too little too late. Despite the success of their sitcom movies, including the million-pound bonanza of *On the Buses* (1971), what was once a name synonymous with horror at its very best had now become a studio on both the verge of financial and artistic bankruptcy.

Even though film production costs rose and audiences dwindled, the *Carry On* team followed their moniker and carried on regardless. The 1970s saw Thomas and Rogers release 12 films in the franchise and, in true keeping with form, tackled historical parodies, comedic realism and the sex film. With hindsight it is easy to see why the films were originally successful. They capitalised on the nostalgic feelings of warmth and fun from the music halls, reflected the McGill ethos of saucy stereotypes and were able (at least in the most part) to tap into the zeitgeist of the period. But another success was due to a winning combination of film, radio and TV actors who could perform comedy. The cast included variations of Bernard Bresslaw, Peter Butterworth, Kenneth Connor, Jim Dale, Charles Hawtrey, Hattie Jacques, Sid James, Joan Sims, Kenneth Williams and Barbara Windsor, who all helped form part of a utopian collective, where conservative anarchy was certainly freewheeling.

There was always a genuine sense of fondness for these actors that seems to transcend today's British movie stars. They were already established British cinema, TV and radio personalities. James had appeared in Ealing comedies, Williams and Jacques leant their talents to Tony Hancock on radio, and Hawtrey was an actor from the silent cinema. What they came

to represent is a reflection of the zeitgeist of the period, but given a certain British outlook to their roles. For example, Sean Connery's James Bond remains the epitome of suave, but violent sophistication. In *Carry On Spying* this becomes outrageously overturned when the spindly and bespectacled form of Charles Hawtrey's Agent Charlie Bind (aka 'Special Agent O…O…Oh') saves the day from the evil forces of Dr Crow. The role of women in the series remains as important as their male counterparts. The work of Sims, Jacques and Windsor all played a vital part in deconstructing the female as both symbols of conservatism and progression (or, indeed, regression) as the decades marched forward. Whereas the females of *Carry On Sergeant* remain steadfastly at their male's side, the later outings of *Carry On Loving* and *Carry On Girls* see them breaking free from the confines of married life. That the British public took them into their affections is testament to both the undeniable talent and skill these actors possessed, but also to that intangible feeling of warmth and familiarity that they gave to the audience. Why? Who knows? But they do. They remain an ingrained part of the nation's psyche, just as much as Queen Victoria, Winston Churchill and Jack the Ripper do.

The team behind the cameras were, obviously, just as important as the front-facing actors. The films' erstwhile producer and director team of Peter Rogers and Gerald Thomas were a genuinely lucky and winning combination of talents. Norman Hudis' original six scripts were gently anarchic comedies, but his successor Talbot Rothwell preferred to debunk realist and genre approaches. For Rothwell, like the American Mel Brooks, nothing was seemingly sacred as far as parodying films was concerned. But whereas Brooks did it with much more force, Rothwell provided distinctly *British* outlooks to his scripts. This makes them even more enjoyable. After all, whilst Brooks' *Blazing Saddles* (1974) parodies every Western cliché imaginable, *Carry On Cowboy*'s Wild West remains steadfastly British. Where else would an audience witness the possible collapse of the British Empire due to a soldier wearing silk pants underneath his kilt? Only in *Carry On Up The Khyber*.

The films remain as popular today as they ever did. However, this popularity does them an injustice. They were not just popular because they made people laugh. They were very much reflective of their time. Films like *Carry On Cabby* (1963) and *Carry On At Your Convenience* (1971) used themes that made them stand out as having distinctly 1960s and 1970s outlooks, with the former as part of the 'kitchen sink' movement and the latter reflecting a Britain that was in economic ruin, where every-

thing halcyon has become dirty, corrupted and horrible. However, they also revealed a long, comic and social heritage that helped both shape (and were in turn shaped by) their contextual inheritance. The filmmakers placed the films directly into part of a comedic past that included Ealing's whimsical 1950s movies, Rank's 'Doctor' comedies, and the older traditions of both the British music hall and Donald McGill's 'saucy' seaside postcards. The work of McGill is arguably *the* area in which the *Carry On* films remains most adroitly linked. His caricatures included drunken husbands, harridan wives, comedy vicars, blond and buxom young women, and naïve young brides, and the filmmakers often employed his work *directly* into their narratives. In *Carry On Again Doctor* (1969), Jim Dale's Dr Nookey lets out a 'Phwoar!' as Barbara Windsor's nearly naked Goldie Locks reveals her figure to him. Taken directly from McGill's postcard (although *his* work has the woman fully clothed in a figure-hugging dress), the films used these caricatures to create their own.

Yet it is almost intangibly difficult to ascertain just *why* the films were successful. The work of Ross, Webber and Andy Medhurst offer up ideas that the films were populist entertainment and that the series has proven itself to be a formidable part of the British canon of film. Webber seems to hit the nail upon the head. He argues that whilst the films may well have been cheap and cheerful, they have become ingrained into the British national psyche. The honest vulgarity of a bygone age has somehow seeped into a nation's consciousness, so that the dirty laugh of Sid James, Barbara Windsor's bra springing into life in *Carry On Camping* and Kenneth Williams shouting 'Infamy! Infamy! They've all got it in for me!' as the camp and effeminate Caesar in *Carry On Cleo* have become as much a part of Britain's comic heritage as the surreal work of Spike Milligan, the music hall approaches of The Two Ronnies or Peter Kay's old-fashioned warm and observational humour based on the everyday.

Critics have certainly disliked these films, often falling back on tried-and-trusted critiques of labelling them as crass, lowbrow and badly made. Indeed, both Alexander Walker and George Perry's accounts of British cinema history fail to mention the films at all. Penelope Gilliat seemingly championed the films, or at least the fact that they were enjoyable on a certain level, when she wrote that:

> The usual charge to make against the *Carry On* films is to say that they could be much better done. This is true enough. They look dreadful, they seem to be edited with a bacon slicer, the effects are perfunctory and the

> comic rhythm jerks along like a cat on a cold morning. But if all of these things were more elegant, I don't really think the films would be more enjoyable: the badness is part of the funniness.[3]

Yet the public loved and adored them. Whilst there are many theories put forward about comedy, notably Freud and Bergson looking at psychological and physical aspects of laughter, and attempts have been made to explain just *why* we laugh, perhaps Raymond Williams' notions of *structures of feeling* come into play here. Whilst the films were seen as Not Art and as primarily aimed at the populace, the fact that their longevity lasted for *31* films suggests that they were made for an appreciative audience that did not see them as anything but *funny*. They form a *structure of feeling*, whereby the films become important to the individual and to a collective psyche. This feeling means that, despite any best intentions, sometimes there is no definable element that one can point to in order to tell why a *Carry On* film is liked or why it is funny. It just is, at least for *some* audiences.

The films were originally seen through an idea of shared collective experiences, where they were made for the many. This *shared* culture meant that the films (in)directly reflected this *sharing* philosophy, either through jokes, situations, narratives or the actors who brought the innuendo-laden scripts to life. Their outlook was both defiantly British *and* working class. The jokes reflected the daily life of randy blokes chasing dolly birds, the battle of the sexes, and sticking two fingers up to authority. The saucy, *double entendre* innuendos often belied satirical and witty scripts that reflected the world and feelings of things *that mattered* to their original audience. Laden with both hidden and blatant meanings that appealed to the populace, the working-class audiences flocked in their millions to see them. This outlook formed the cornerstone to the films, which became clear when they not only entertained the majority but also began to comment upon British life.

Whilst the *Carry On* films remain locked away as part of a British psyche entrenched in smut and innuendo, one thing is certain: they wrote themselves into the very cultural fabric of the country itself. This fabric of a peculiar vulgarity in humour was old fashioned even when the films were being made, but its very familiarity meant that whereas the series had its tangential origins in television, so TV and film comedies have been influenced *by* them: sitcoms such as *Are You Being Served?*, *It Ain't Half Hot Mum*, and *On the Buses*, and later ones like *Hi-De-Hi!*, *The Brittas Empire*

and even the science-fiction comedy *Red Dwarf* have staple characters, stock situations and innuendoes that can all be traced back (however indirectly) to the films.

The films were made on low budgets and on very limited timescales. They may not have been outstanding examples of British cinema, but they have remained deeply held within the nation's affections. Whilst they may have had their time, and that time has now passed, one thing is certain: they remain an important part of Britain's comedy heritage, whilst providing a part of Britain's cultural tapestry. With that in mind, perhaps Leslie Phillips' immortal line should provide impetus for the reader to begin to look further into just how important these films are: 'Ding dong! *Carry On*!'

Notes

1. Webber (2008), p. 2.
2. www.launchingfilms.com/resarch-databank/uk-cinema-admissions (accessed 15 February 2016).
3. Gilliat (1964).

CHAPTER 2

Everything Has a Beginning

According to Robert Murphy, British cinematic comedy has not only had a long and rich history, but it was also primarily based on two forms: those films that relied on the writer or those that saw the star performer as the main draw for the audience.[1] The *Carry On* films used both of these approaches, and even though no one person was ever the *star* of the movies, the core team of Sid James, Kenneth Williams, Charles Hawtrey, Joan Sims, Hattie Jacques, Kenneth Connor, Jim Dale, Peter Butterworth and Barbara Windsor remained true to both the central ethos of the films whilst relying on the writing and directing team behind the camera.

The films were the low-budget creations of a handful of people: producer Peter Rogers, director Gerald Thomas, and two main writers Norman Hudis and Talbot Rothwell. Their narratives were simple: a group of motley characters have mildly sexual and innuendo-laden comic adventures whilst battling against the conservative forces of authority. They covered realist aspects of British life, ranging from patient and staff in the National Health Service (NHS) to post-war army recruitment, and the Trade Union and Women's Liberation movements of the 1970s. They parodied genre movies, ranging from stiff upper-lipped adventure films to louche cowboys in a hundred Westerns. They were not sophisticated comedies, focusing instead on the bawdy lewdness and camaraderie of the music hall and the Low Art traditions of Donald McGill, and had a footing in the history of British film comedy. They provided laughter at a time when Britain was undergoing rapid social change. They critiqued the nation, offered up ideas about toying with (or reinforcing) sexual roles

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and mocked conservative Britain's fading class system. And the majority of the public loved them. But the *Carry On* films, like everything, must have a beginning. It must be remembered that the films are very much part of a tradition: that tradition was one of ribald humour coupled with insightful links to its contextual surroundings. Nothing is really ever the past. It remains a constant. Therefore, the *Carry On* films, which survived an uninterrupted run over three decades, returned once and rumours abound that another attempt may be made, must have looked to its past heritage of film comedy, music hall and Donald McGill's work to fund its contextual placement.

The British music hall had its origins in the ale houses of the sixteenth century, but by the 1850s had escaped these trappings to become bona fide reputable pastimes for all classes to intermingle for an evening's entertainment.[2] Individuals like Charles Morton commoditised entertainment within their new leisure palaces. With names such as The Constellation, The Star, The Coliseum and The Parthenon promoting loftier and classical ideals, purpose-built halls were not only constructed to accommodate the music hall venue, but also lifted owners and patrons into the higher echelons of society.[3] As dramatic episodes were performed alongside more risqué acts, so their reputation as a place of utopian highbrow/lowbrow entertainment was assured:

> True music hall is a place of light and laughter, a place of good cheer, of freedom, of do-as-you-please, go-as-you-please, where everyone is 'jolly good company' and where the cigars, cigarettes and pipes add their tint of blueness to the air and the gurgle of drinks mingles with gusts of laughter. It is a place where pals meet, where jokes are cracked, where, for a while, the outside world is forgotten. That is – was – Music Hall.[4]

By the 1860s, the music hall was flourishing. There were 31 halls in London and 384 around the rest of the kingdom.[5] These halls were often grandiose affairs. Stylish, draped furnishings and tailored seating areas meant that patrons could intermingle in style. More elaborate productions were produced and following this came the standardization of a music hall 'product' that audiences would feel familiar and comfortable with. As Virginia Woolf stated, music hall had an indefinable 'something natural to the race' and that was its appeal to the majority of audiences.[6] This appeal came through familiar artistes and their songs, but especially through caricatured stereotypes (the skinny, bespectacled man, the buxom

maid, the harridan, the ridiculed figure of authority) and storylines that openly mocked and satirised British (and mostly English) government and ways of life. This is what Rothwell's scripts thrived on.

The halls provided a means of affordable escapism for many. The cost of attending an evening's performance was usually between 2d and 4 shillings. The halls were open to everyone and an edition of Manchester's *Morning Chronicle* recorded the average audience demographic as follows:

> two thirds might be men: the others were women – young and old – a few of them with children in their laps, and several with babies at their breasts. The class of the assembly was that of artisans and mill hands. Almost without exception, men and women were decently dressed, and it was quite evident that several of the groups formed family parties.[7]

They were a communal area of fun, frivolity and enjoyment, where the utopian collective could intermingle as one group. The impresario introduced acts through an exaggerated flourish of arm-waving and extravagant exclamations. Such acts included acrobats, 'coster' comedians, dancers, singers and jugglers. One of the most famous male music hall artists was Dan Leno, whose characters were based around exaggerated London stereotypes: the Beefeater, the Cockney washerwoman and the tramp (the latter provided a template for Charlie Chaplin's sympathetic character). Two women artistes were just as famous: Vesta Tilley was a male impersonator, most famous for her creation Burlington Bertie from Bow and as acting as the Great War's best drafting sergeant through her recruitment turns in the halls. Arguably *the* most famous of all music hall artistes was Marie Lloyd, whose career as 'Queen of the music hall' spanned over 40 years. Lloyd's sexually suggestive songs (including 'A Little Bit of What You Fancy Does You Good'), sang with a winning combination of both innocence and ribald innuendo, not only caused uproar with the bastions of moral upkeeping, but also had men and women of all classes rolling in the aisles. This meant that the link between the artiste and audience was sacrosanct, whilst those in authority were mocked. Her opening gambit, where she walked onto the stage with a parasol that steadfastly refused to open and, once it did, said 'Thank God! I haven't had it up for months!', could almost be seen as one of the cornerstones to the *Carry On* movies in their entirety.

The fortunes of the music halls fluctuated well into the twentieth century. They became recruitment halls for the army, held the first Royal

Variety Performance in 1912 and helped early silent cinema gain a foothold in the nation's affections. Music hall stars made the transition to this new medium and whilst the fortunes of the halls fell, British filmmakers looked towards employing talent taken directly from the provincial music hall. Artists like Max Miller starred in *The Good Companions* (1933), whilst Will Hay appeared in *Those Were the Days* (1934), which included music hall acts within the narrative. These were low-budget films, with limited narratives showcasing the talent on display, which was to be repeated in the *Carry On*s, where the story takes a backseat, whilst the performers were foregrounded.

Robert Murphy argues that the Gracie Fields, George Formby and Will Hay movies constitute a distinctive, vibrant cinema of national identity.[8] These three actors were proto-*Carry On* 'types' themselves. Fields' 'never say die' cheery optimism in *Sing As We Go* (1934) remains the forerunner to Joan Sims' character in *Convenience*, where she wants to return to work but is hindered by the men around her. Will Hay's seedy schoolmaster performance turns into Kenneth Williams' snide, nostril-flaring figures of authority. It is not difficult to imagine Formby appearing in an early *Carry On* outing, and such characters as Jim Dale's Dr Kilmore reflects Formby's persona as a likeable though sexually backward young man. Formby's link to the *Carry On* films is important. By looking at the camera in much the same way as Charles Hawtrey does in every one of his appearances, he creates a link between both audience and the character.

Within the context of *Carry On*, the withered looks of Charles Hawtrey constantly glancing towards the camera, most notably in *Carry On Jack*, cements the link between not only the actors and the audience but also the films themselves:

> *Scene:* Spanish countryside. Captain Fearless, Midshipman Albert Poop-Decker, Sally, and Walter Sweetley have tied up their cow, Emma to a bush so that she doesn't slow down their escape.
> *Fearless*: I don't like the thought of leaving Emma behind.
> *Albert*: That's alright, sir. Spain is full of bulls. She'll love it.
> *Fearless*: Love what?
> *Albert*: Bulls, sir.
> *Fearless*: I hope so.
> *Sweetley*: (Looking directly at the camera) She'd be a stupid cow if she didn't!

Talbot Rothwell cited music hall star Max Miller as an influence on his comedy writing style, with his scripts containing excruciating puns, exaggerated caricature names and no cohesive narrative structure. But just as important as this is the audience, who never strayed far in terms of what they wanted: risqué, *double entendre*'d, innuendo-laden humour. The *Carry On* audience remained loyal to the series for virtually its entire run. That the *Carry On* team took the music hall format of loose-narrative, sketch-like, bawdy humour as a starting point and then utilised familiar actors who had worked in its format shows just how important both were to Britain's longest-running film comedy series.

Donald McGill and Saucy Seaside Postcards

From its humble beginnings as a spa resort to the vast entertainment structures of the Victorian and Edwardian years, Britain's seaside remains a staple ingredient of British cultural life. Sticks of rock, fish and chips, Kiss Me Quick hats and amusement arcades still entice millions of people to the beaches every year. The seaside offers both a respite from the toils of labour and a place of utopian collectiveness, where all society can mingle together, and the British public loved it. As George Bernard Shaw wrote:

> Heaven, as conventionally conceived, is a place so inane, so dull, so useless, so miserable, that nobody has ever ventured to describe a whole day in heaven, though plenty of people have described it as a day at the seaside.[9]

People wanted to be entertained on their trips. The Punch and Judy show, *the* symbol of seaside entertainment, held sway for children, whilst other acts included Pierrot clowns, jugglers, music-box players, bell-ringers, accordionists and organ men, all vying for the public's attention. Such was the cacophony that Dickens wrote:

> Vagrant music is getting to that height here, and is so impossible to be escaped from, that I fear Broadstairs and I must part company in time to come. Unless it pours with rain, I cannot write half an hour without the most excruciating organs, fiddles, bells or glee singers. There is a violin of the most torturing kind under the box now (Time, ten in the morning) and an Italian box of music on the steps – both in full blast.[10]

It was only natural that people wished to record their holidays for posterity. In 1893, Germany sold 83 million postcards, Belgium sold 12 mil-

lion, Great Britain 14 million and France 8 million.[11] These were usually blank cards, but soon illustrative postcards appeared and early designs were of the resorts' main architecture, flora and fauna, and, of course, the beach. These staid cards were soon supplanted with cartoon postcards that mocked everyday foibles and people. *The* artist most synonymous with these 'saucy' postcards was Donald McGill (1875–1962).[12]

McGill started producing postcards in 1905. His original drawings featured cute puppies or doe-eyed children, and he even produced First World War propaganda cards to encourage conscription.[13] He caricatured the seaside and its visitors, with beautifully detailed drawings offering moments of powerful social observation. By concentrating on drunken middle-aged letches, nagging housewives, honeymooning couples, vicars, fat women and attractive young ladies, themes such as sex and escaping from marriage became, like the *Carry On* films, the main thrust of them.

George Orwell found the postcards to be of 'of overpowering vulgarity', but that they were also 'as traditional as Greek tragedy, a sort of subworld of smacked bottoms and scrawny mother-in-laws which is a part of Western European consciousness'. [14] He felt that some were 'genuinely witty, in a Max Miller-ish style' and that although the jokes never varied, the drawings were 'often a good deal funnier than the joke beneath it'.[15]

According to Orwell, sex became the significant factor for almost all jokes: illegitimate babies, newlyweds, nude statues and women in bathing costumes whilst trying to get their plumbing fixed were the mainstay of these cards.[16]

Marriage remained a constant target for both the films and postcards. *All* married men found no benefits in getting married, and whilst men plotted to seduce younger versions of their wives, these women wanted marriage. Once couples reached 25, they became the 'dirty old man' and 'harridan' of middle age. The films use this to great effect, with *Loving*'s young lovers Bertram Muffet and Sally Martin destined to become the arguing Sidney Bliss and Sophie Plummet. Henpecked husbands become the butt of jokes, with drunkenness almost their only retreat. This is seen in *Cabby*, when Charlie almost loses his business to his wife over a trivial argument. For McGill, the female remains the dominant authority throughout.

This domination is at its height within the domestic sphere. Women control the purse strings, clean, cook and rear children. Their role within the patriarchal structure of the *Carry On* films is complete: they run

the home, control the purse strings and outwit the men on numerous occasions. Whilst women may not show aptitude at any of these tasks on the odd occasion (for example, Patsy Rowland's dour-faced, cigarette-smoking, downtrodden Mildred Bumble in *Carry On Loving*), they do control the household. *Cabby*'s Peggy (Hattie Jacques) runs the marital home, controls the purse strings, and outwits and outmanoeuvres her husband in both the domestic sphere and in the way she runs her business.

Males are dominated by females in two ways. Whilst the Lubby-Dubby tribe of *Up the Jungle* may only require men for procreation, the 'real' world sees men constantly failing in their sexual duties. The ultimate example of this is in *Abroad* when, in two scenes, Stanley Blunt (Kenneth Connor) and his wife Evelyn (June Whitfield) exhibit more sexual repression than usual:

Location: Hotel dining room. Sidney and Evelyn Blunt (Kenneth Connor and June Whitfield) sit opposite Vic and Cora Flange (Sid James and Joan Sims) at one table.
(Wide shot of the two couples – the waiter brings a bottle of wine to Evelyn)
Waiter: A beautiful wine for a beautiful lady.
(Two-shot of Stanley and Evelyn)
Evelyn: Was that supposed to be a compliment?
Stanley: Better taste the wine first.
(Two-shot of Vic and Cora. Vic laughs)
Vic: Better watch it; he'll be pinching your bottom next.
(Wide shot of the two couples. Vic pours some wine)
Evelyn: Not for me thank you.
Vic: No? Don't drink?
Evelyn: No. I tried it once and didn't like it.
(Two-shot of Vic and Cora. Vic takes a cigarette out of its box)
Vic: Oh, have a smoke?
(Two-shot of Stanley and Evelyn)
Evelyn: No thank you. I tried that once and didn't like it.
(Two-shot of Vic and Cora. Vic turns to Cora)
Vic: Great.
(Two-shot of Stanley and Evelyn)
Evelyn: Not at all. My daughter is just the same.
(Two-shot of Vic and Cora)
Vic: Your *only* child I presume?
(Vic laughs. Two-shot of Stanley and Evelyn. Evelyn looks annoyed. Stanley sniggers)

Stanley's inept sexual prowess has been hinted at in this scene, but then becomes evident in a later one:

> *Location*: Hotel bedroom. Evelyn is in bed. She wears a revealing negligee. Stanley comes out of the bathroom, wearing yellow pyjamas. He moves towards the bed.
> *Stanley:* Stand by to repel boarders.
> *(Stanley makes a horse-whinnying sound and jumps onto the bed. He fumbles around, and Evelyn looks at him)*
> *Evelyn:* What is it dear?
> *Stanley:* (Looking crestfallen) I've forgotten what you do.

Sex has taken place, hence their daughter. However, once sex/reproduction has occurred, there is no need for the woman to have sex with the man again, unless it is for her own sexual gratification. With McGill's framework in place, the chase/capture of females has occurred, resulting in males being sutured into a life of domestic hell, resulting in his loss of sexual drives. This has no effect for Evelyn as she has been given a new sexual freedom through sexual intercourse with the hotel waiter earlier in the day.

Whilst men offer patriarchal variations (sober, drunk, boss, worker, vicar, policeman), they form the butt of the majority of the home life jokes. Both postcards and films offer a satirising of home and familial relationships, but at their core lies something more intrinsically complex. McGill and Rothwell's creations were comically reflecting/commenting upon individual and collective lives, offering conservative views of males and females in a British society that deemed to be 'set', whilst offering caricatured and extended versions too. It is this outlook of home life, both physically and metaphorically, that lies at the very core of the *Carry On* ethos.

Orwell suggested that the postcards are aimed at *Inter-Working-Class Snobbery,* and the 'better-off working class and poorer middle class'.[17] Whilst examining 'jokes turning on malapropisms, illiteracy, dropped aitches … draggled hags … tramps, beggars and criminals', he finds that 'there are no anti-trade union jokes'.[18] *Carry On At Your Convenience* failed at the box office, and its main subject matter was ridiculing the trade unions of the early 1970s. Perhaps the filmmakers should have heeded McGill's outlook and not bite the hands that fed them. McGill's work shows that those earning over £5 per week should become figures of fun.

Therefore, the rich and poor must rub shoulders, and whilst there are 'inequalities' in terms of money, they are joined in McGill's satirical eye. This is interesting when one of the main thrusts of the *Carry On* movies is class warfare, mostly seen in the characters of Kenneth Williams: in *Sergeant* and *Nurse* he plays an academic snob, whilst *Doctor* sees him in the same vein/persona a decade later. Running alongside him are working-class characters. In *Sergeant* Horace Strong (Kenneth Connor) suffers from every ailment, and later outings have Sid James portray the working-class hero.

McGill's work is replete with stock figures. They include tightwad Scotsmen, swindling lawyers, nervous vicars and the suffragette who appeared briefly when 'in vogue', only to reappear as a feminist or temperance leader later on.[19] A cursory glance at *any* of the movies will find these characters in the narratives. Some of the more outrageous include a hypochondriac doctor (*Matron*), a myopic sheriff (*Cowboy*) and archetypal interfering landladies (*Convenience*). All serve narrative functions and, despite any conservative negativity, they *are* a vital component of the series, enabling viewers to understand the type, motivations and the social background of that character.

Orwell sees the 'dirty joke' as mental rebellion where individuals 'break free' from societal taboos even for the briefest moment.[20] This view indicates that McGill's postcards are a harmless rebellion against virtue. The filmmakers took McGill's formula and exaggerated it into rebellious forms. Hudis' six films were anti-institution, with characters gently nudging at authority figures. Rothwell took pot shots at anything – Hollywood's Western, Epics, Hammer Films, the NHS, trade unions, the collapse of the British Empire and the battle of the sexes – and right at their heart was the Donald McGill postcard. Rothwell was a keen observer of McGill's work. So too were Rogers and Thomas, employing actors who were 'live-action' versions of their postcard counterparts: James is the lecherous middle-aged man, Williams the snob, Jacques the fat wife, Sims the harridan and Windsor the buxom young woman.

This went further, with the films parodying McGill's work directly. Whilst jokes may have passed from the cards into the films on numerous occasions (for example, Dr Nookie examining Goldie Locks in *Carry On Again, Doctor*), one example provides the quintessential example of the team utilising McGill's work directly. In *Carry On Camping*, Charlie Muggins (Charles Hawtrey) walks down a country lane. A young girl comes from a side road, pulling a cow behind her. Muggins approaches the girl,

asking if he is on the right road to Salisbury. He asks her what she is doing. She replies that she is taking the cow to the bull. When he asks her if her father could do that, she answers with: 'No, it has to be the bull.' The joke is obvious, made even more so by Muggins looking directly at the camera and tut-tutting. If this is compared to the actual Donald McGill postcard, then the link between the two is cemented.

Without a doubt, the Donald McGill saucy seaside postcard had a direct impact on the *Carry On* films. The seaside was the first place in Britain where *all* members of society could be seen to enjoy *en masse*, providing a totally classless chance for everyone to relax and enjoy themselves. The *Carry On* team used this ethos (especially in the Brighton sequence of *Convenience*) to promote the films. Despite the objections of puritans like those at McGill's obscenity trial in 1954[21] or the British Board of Film Censors asking for lewdness to be curtailed, both offered opportunities for *everyone* to laugh at caricatures of themselves. Orwell remarked that in every fat man, there is a thin man trying to get out, and in many ways this is how the films negotiated ideas of sexuality and class.[22] The films ensured that there would always be someone worse off than the viewer: someone clumsier, someone more drunk, someone fatter or thinner and someone more sexually naïve. This makes 'us' feel 'safe' in 'our' world. Rothwell used McGill's caricatures of the British 'ideal' to logical extremes, offering a world that audiences accepted as inverted mirror-images of themselves. The characters were not only part of a British tradition, but were also extensions of existing stereotypes that reinforced the audience's awareness of the same. Human fallibility was at the very core of the *Carry On* mentality. The adventures are anarchic in nature. The characters remain part of tradition, but are also caricatured extensions of the audience. It is this philosophy, where the audience and character are alike, that links the proletarian seaside to the works of McGill and the *Carry On* films.

A Brief Overview of British Film Comedy

People love to laugh. Early silent cinema provided much of that laughter, and wily entrepreneurs who were never short on the uptake used cinema as a quick and surefire way of making money. Much of early cinema found its outlet in music halls, and films like *Pimple and the Snake* (1912), *Pimple's Battle at Waterloo* (1913) and *Pimple's Charge of the Light Brigade* (1914) took swipes at historical, theatrical and cinematic works. These productions showed a growing sophistication, and whilst actors and producers

such as the Evans brothers had been brought up in the music hall and pantomime tradition, they toured the country to promote their films. Another important player, Winky, was employed by the film production company *and* postcard publisher Bamforth and Co., offering a glimpse into the importance of how some of the subjects dealt with contextual themes. Whilst many of the films are sadly lost, titles such as *Winky Goes to the Front* (1914), *Winky as a Suffragette* (1914), *Winky – Bigamist* (1914) and *Winky Causes a Small-Pox Panic* (1914) offer a tantalising glimpse into Edwardian life. With the coming of sound, performers showed off their comedic patter. Early film pioneers such as Gibbons and De Forest used artistes for their vocal abilities, demonstrating the possibilities (at least economically if not filmically) of the advances made with sound cinema. Music hall artistes, including Arthur Roberts in *Topsey Turvey* (1926), comic song purveyor Lesley Sarony in *Hot Water* (1927), and pantomime giants such as Herbert Campbell and Lupino Lane are amongst the main players to make the early transition to cinema.[23]

With their brand of risqué joke-telling, quick-fire patter, dance routines, theatricality and timing, music hall stars seemed a natural choice to appear in sound films, and well-established stars like George Formby, Gracie Fields, Will Hay and The Crazy Gang alternated between treading the boards on the theatrical stage and those on the sound stages. All these artistes formed proto-*Carry On* 'types', but The Crazy Gang's *O Kay for Sound* (1937), which mixed anarchic humour and sentiment, produced an ensemble utopian collective that found its home across the entire *Carry On* canon.

Music hall *itself* became a subject of film: *Those Were the Days* (1934) had Will Hay as its star; Alfred Hitchcock's *The Thirty Nine Steps* (1935) used the music hall for its tense finale; and *I Thank You* (1941) saw Arthur Askey play alongside Lily Morris. During the war years, when George Formby steered the nation to safety through comedic means, Cavalcanti's *Champagne Charlie* (1944) looked back fondly at the Victorian music hall as a 'golden age' away from war. This was an important point. With the 1930s Depression being followed by global conflict, comedy was testament to the resilience of the public in being able to laugh at the situation of the nation and helped to relieve any social anxieties that impacted on their lives.

As the move away from the cataclysms of the war years began, other important comedy exponents that mused and reflected upon British mores included the partnership of Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat. Their scripts for Hitchcock (*The Thirty Nine Steps* and *The Lady Vanishes*) had comedic elements amongst the thrills and spills, and they had written

some of Gainsborough's comedies of the 1930s. Their remarkable debut, *Millions Like Us* (1943), provided insight into family life during the war years, whilst *The Happiest Days of Your Life* (1950) starred the irrepressibly eccentric Margaret Rutherford and Alastair Sim. The film was a huge success, but they are probably best remembered for their five *St. Trinian's* films[24] based upon Ronald Searle's anarchic cartoons. The series, in which oversexed sixth-form schoolgirls woo foreign dignitaries, launder money, stop train robbers and play violent inter-school hockey matches, had great casts (Terry Thomas, Joyce Grenfell, George Cole, Richard Wattis, Rutherford, Eric Barker and future *Carry On* star Frankie Howerd) and narratives that were really extensions of the British farce tradition, in which comic characters revel in strongly comedic narratives.

The Boulting Brothers (John and Roy) also found considerable success in their homegrown comedies. Their satirical jabs were aimed at middle-class men blundering blindly into situations beyond their control. *Private's Progress* (1956), *Lucky Jim* (1957) and *I'm All Right Jack* (1959) are possible progenitors of *Sergeant*, *Teacher* and *At Your Convenience*, inasmuch as they deal with themes of army life in the barracks, a provincial university and trade unionism in the workplace. Their satirical work shares common ground with the *Carry On* films through the continued mocking of authority and it is no coincidence that the shop stewards in *Jack* and *Convenience* bear more than a passing resemblance to one another.

Arguably the most famous of Britain's film comedies were those that came from Michael Balcon's Ealing Studios.[25] Ealing's output whimsically reflected British life, and Balcon quickly saw the importance of Formby, Hay and Tommy Trinder adding to the wartime propagandist field. Ealing's output included thrillers like *The Four Just Men* (1939), war films with *Went the Day Well* (1942), social conscious movies such as *The Proud Valley* (1939), a portmanteau horror film, *Dead of Night* (1945), and Victorian melodramas, *Pink String and Sealing Wax* (1945). However, its comedies remain firmly entrenched in the British psyche as charming, gentle, almost-fantastical, whimsical movies that offer a genteel look at the British and their supposed outlook on life.

Themes of conflict between authority and the individual run throughout Ealing's comedies. *Hue and Cry* (1947), *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949), *Passport to Pimlico* (1949), *Whisky Galore!* (1949), *The Lavender Hill Mob* (1951), *The Man in the White Suit* (1951), *The Titfield Thunderbolt* (1953) and *The Ladykillers* (1955) all have themes of the underdog eventually winning out against those in authority. Whilst Ealing's

comedic output was almost one of whimsy, the realism of the *Carry On* films, although placed in the traditions of farce, remained linked but somehow disparate from Ealing's earlier productions. Hudis' work remains linked to Ealing's through a whimsical use of characters and situtation, but Rothwell removes this approach entirely. The realism of Rothwell is, whilst caricatured, much harder than Ealing's approaches. Therefore, whereas the Ealing characters are friendly shopkeepers, bumbling vicars, jovial policemen and a raft of eccentrics, for Rothwell they become the drunken husband, the moaning harridan and various vicious authority figures.

That is not to suggest that Ealing and the *Carry On* movies do not share a common theme. Ealing may have seen Britain from a middle-class and liberal perspective, but their themes included outsiders, non-conformists, and individuals and communities that both embrace ideas of Britain (and particularly, England). Whilst these comedies never fully embraced the music hall or McGill in such a blatant way as Rogers and Thomas did, they both shared the same ideals: that any maverick tendencies were 'allowed' out to play for a short while before being reined back into the norms of society.

Directly impacting on the *Carry On* films were the *Doctor* series of comic capers from the Rank Organisation.[26] The *Doctor* series were all produced by Betty Box (Peter Rogers' wife) and directed by Ralph Thomas (Gerald Thomas' brother). The seven-strong series began and ended with *Doctor in the House* (1954) and *Doctor in Trouble* (1970), and were adapted from Richard Gordon's books.[27] They centred on the life of medical students/doctors at St Swithin's Hospital, with the main protagonists being Dirk Bogarde (Simon Sparrow, student-cum-doctor) and James Robertson Justice (Sir Lancelot Spratt, chief surgeon).

The films were box office successes, and the *Carry On* films took the conservative blandness of Box's productions to produce four medical capers: *Nurse*, *Doctor*, *Again Doctor* and *Matron*. Both the *Doctor* series and the *Carry On* medical films used tried-and-trusted formula: raw recruits (student surgeons), authority figures (surgeon and matron), sexual and class battles, love interests, farce and the location/institution as their backdrop. Box's films invoked a genteel, conservative nostalgia even during their original releases. However, the *Carry On* films employed anarchic and episodic approaches that accentuated their antics more forcefully and arguably with more comedic success. In *Doctor in the House*, the major comedic 'antic' was the stealing of a stuffed gorilla during a varsity match; for *Doctor*, it was Dr Kilmore's attempt at rescuing Nurse

May from a rooftop, which ends up with another nurse's outfit ripped off as Kilmore smashes through a window and ends up sharing a bath with a nurse. Likewise, when Sparrow's eyebrows are raised when he sees a nurse's stockings, *Doctor*'s Nurse May causes ambulance men to shout 'Phwoar!', hospital porters to look on in amazement, doctors to crash into patients, one patient's blood pressure thermometer explodes and all gasp in awe at her blatant sex appeal.

From a character viewpoint, Sparrow's trajectory ends up as Jim Dale's Dr Jim Kilmore in *Doctor* and Jim Nookey of *Again Doctor*, where they both exhibit similar traits. The characters are accident-prone, clumsy, afraid of authority figures and sexually inexperienced. Unlike Sparrow's gentle anarchy, both Kilmore and Nookey remain steadfastly chaotic: in *Doctor* he crashes into patients, whilst in *Again Doctor* he blows up an x-ray department. Where Sparrow represents middle-class blandness incarnate, both Kilmore and Nookey with their sexual incompetence and chaotic/destructive persona are anarchy personified. Therefore, the 'safety' that Sparrow/Bogarde projects on to 1950s masculinity becomes the awkward, angular, chaotic, working-class hero of Dale/Kilmore/Nookey in the 1960s.

From an authority figure point of view, Sir Lancelot Spratt remains bombastic and bullying, but paternal to his students. However, Kenneth Williams' hospital surgeons are sexually starved, dictatorial, mean-spirited, vicious, middle-class despots who use their authority to rule over his staff and patients. Whilst *Carry On Doctor* has a portrait of Spratt hanging in the hospital's foyer (creating a direct filmic link between the two film series), the authority figures are poles apart. At the end of Bogarde's capers, Spratt remains in a position of power, with Sparrow remaining his junior. For Williams, his Chief Surgeon, Dr Tinkle is demoted (*Doctori*), catches chickenpox *(Again, Doctor*) and gets married *(Matron*). Whilst everything seemingly returns to normal, Rothwell *must* have a prod at authority. Whereas Sparrow and Spratt are definitely 'not us' due to their middle-class status, Kilmore is 'definitely us', whilst Tinkle has been reduced to being *like* yet *not like* us.

British film comedy up to (and slightly beyond) 1958 saw a trajectory emerging to which the *Carry On* films were merely a part. They took the slapstick of Winky, Pimples and Wisdom, linked them to the satirical themes of outsiders of the Boulting Brothers and Ealing, and employed the caricatures of McGill, whilst celebrating the utopian-collective themes of the music hall, to produce a series of films that acknowledged their

past lineage. The films also took the characters of the music hall into their fold. Will Hay's sniffy headmaster became Kenneth Williams' authoritarian characters; Max Miller becomes Sid James; Gracie Fields' optimism becomes Joan Sims' young teacher, Miss Alcock. By placing the films *into* part of a tradition, where the conventions of those customs have been assimilated, copied, admired or just ripped 'orf, the *Carry On* films become an intrinsic part of the British comedic landscape, at once being shaped by *and* simultaneously shaping those around them, either in terms of narrative construction or the characters within.

Notes

1. Murphy (2005) pp. 233–40.
2. Willson Disher (1938); Scott (1946); and Mander and Mitchenson (1965).
3. In 1861 Charles Morton had constructed the Canterbury Music Hall in Lambeth, and the Oxford Music Hall in London's West End – see ibid., p. x.
4. Walter (1950), pp.437–38.
5. *The Era Almanack* (date and publisher not known), quoted in ibid., p. x.
6. Virginia Woolf, *Diaries 1915–1918*, quoted in Selenick, Cheshire and Schneider (1981), p. 13.
7. Reach (1972), p. 81.
8. Murphy (1997), p. 198.
9. Shaw (2007), p. 49.
10. Charles Dickens, private letter to John Forster in Forster (1873), p. 10.
11. Calder-Marshall (1966) p. 22.
12. Palin (2006), pp. 7–9; Calder-Marshall (1966); Buckland (1984).
13. Calder-Marshall (1966), p. 62.
14. Orwell (1941).
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Buckland (1984), p. 95.

22. Orwell (1939), p. 27. The actual quote is: 'I'm fat, but I'm thin inside. Has it ever struck you that there's a thin man inside every fat man, just as they say there's a statue inside every block of stone?'
23. Byrony Dixon, www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1151483/index.html (accessed 1 August 2016).
24. *The Belles of St. Trinian's* (UK: Frank Launder, 1954), *Blue Murder at St. Trinian's* (UK: Frank Launder, 1957), *The Pure Hell of St. Trinian's* (UK: Frank Launder, 1960), *The Great St. Trinian's Train Robbery* (UK: Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat, 1966) and *The Wildcats of St. Trinian's* (UK: Frank Launder, 1980).
25. Barr (1977); Perry (1985); Harper and Porter (2005), pp. 57–73.
26. Harper and Porter (2005), pp. 35–56.
27. *Doctor in the House* was the No. 1 box office film of 1954. *Doctor at Sea* and *Doctor at Large* were the second biggest at the box office in their respective years. See *Kinematograph Weekly*, 16 December 1954, p. 9; *Kinematograph Weekly*, 15 December 1955, p. 9; and *Kinematograph Weekly*, 12 December 1957, p. 6 respectively.

CHAPTER 3

The *Carry On* Saga

As noted previously, the *Carry On* films were the work of talented individuals both in front of, and behind, the camera. They took their beginnings from the music halls, McGill's postcards and earlier British film comedies. By covering both the foibles of real life in post-war Britain and then turning to parodying film genres, the films critiqued the nation. This was done right from the very beginning with *Carry On Sergeant*.

Their story begins easily enough. Correspondence in the Rogers-Thomas archives indicate that in 1955, film producer Sydney Box approached the writer R.F. Delderfield for a film treatment entitled *National Service Story* that dealt with conscription in a post-war Britain. The writer began his treatment for the project on 22 August and, after working on it for a few months, during which time he delivered over 50 pages of treatments that culminated in a 14-page outline, found that his work had been rejected by Box, who felt it was unworkable as a film production. Box did return to Delderfield in January 1957, asking him to resubmit a new or alternate version of his original work, for which he would be paid £2,000, and that the new story was to be set within the National Service. Even though a script was developed, Box could not find the necessary backing to film the project and once again it was abandoned.

However, director Gerald Thomas and producer Peter Rogers, fresh from their successful picture *Circus Friends* (1956) and the taut thriller *Time Lock* (1957), approached Box and Delderfield to produce a new version of the treatment, now titled *The Bull Boys*. Despite writing duties being turned down by Erik Sykes, Spike Milligan and John Antrobus,

S. Gerrard, *The Carry On Films*,
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Rogers knew he was on to a good idea and turned to his old friend Norman Hudis to fashion a script that removed certain elements of Delderfield's work (the focus on ballet dancers) and instructed him that it should contain elements of both pathos and comedy, which would open up the film to a wider audience.

Hudis quickly delivered a new script, now titled *Carry On Sergeant*, which went into production between 24 March and 2 May 1958. The budget was £78,000.[1] Hudis kept Delderfield's original premise of a man getting called up for National Service on his wedding day, but then incorporated his own ideas of a group of incompetent misfits coming together in the face of authority and adversity. This was to form the basis for the majority of his six scripts in the Carry On series. As far as Hudis was concerned, he wanted to explore the tensions of his characters' situations that helped him realise his script. He felt that there was comedy mileage to be had in a bunch of raw recruits trying to make it through their six-week basic military training. These disparate recruits, from a variety of social backgrounds, come under the command of a tough sergeant (played by William Hartnell) and when they find out that they are to be his last platoon, they rally together to ensure that he wins a £50 wager he has placed with his fellow sergeants. As Hudis told Richard Webber: 'When they discover that he's put his rugged old heart into this, they decide to be terrific overnight and pass out as number-one platoon. It's all very sentimental.'[2] This sentimentality came to the fore in all of Hudis' scripts in the series.

Rogers knew that he had to find a good cast, and one that would fit neatly into a tight production schedule with the minimum of fuss. Rogers wanted William Hartnell as Sergeant Grimshawe from the outset, and records indicate that he also favoured George Cole as the main character, Charlie Sage. With the benefit of hindsight, Rogers assembled what would eventually become a repertory cast of familiar faces: the main star of the films, according to Rogers, was the *Carry On* moniker, but appearing in *Sergeant* were the popular star Bob Monkhouse and TV, radio and cinematic stalwarts Kenneth Williams, Charles Hawtrey, Kenneth Connor, Eric Barker, Norman Rossington, Hattie Jacques and Bill Owen. Whilst some of the personnel came and went over the years, and the settings certainly changed, Williams, Hawtrey, Connor and Jacques remained as virtually constant cast members who would later be aided and abetted by Sid James, Joan Sims, Jim Dale, Terry Scott, Peter Butterworth and Barbara Windsor.

Rogers felt that the film would make a modest profit on his investment, but was delighted when, following the film's release in September 1958, it topped the box office charts and went on to become one of the most successful British films of the year. The film was released on the continent, where in Denmark it was entitled *Attention Recruits*, while Germany's title became the terrific *Cheer Up, Chest Out!*, and in Belgium it was released as *Let's Go, Sergeant*.

Whilst the film was in production, Hudis was commissioned to work on a second script, *Carry On Nurse*. The script was finished in June, filming began on 3r November 1958 and wrapped on 12 December. Budgets were always frugal, with the final negative cost of *Nurse* recorded as £82,500.[3] The source of the second film was the play *Ring for Catty*, which was written by Patrick Cargill and Jack Beale. Both the Boulting Brothers and Sydney Box had shown interest in the play, and planned to adapt it for the big screen. However, nothing came of their plans, and its basic premise of life in a hospital ward showed promise for Rogers and Thomas. Feeling that *Sergeant* could be a box office winner, Rogers registered the title *Carry On Nurse* with the British Film Producers Association in May 1958.

As far as Hudis was concerned, the plot was straightforward. Yet again, another group of misfits find themselves in an enclosed situation and battling figures in authority, this time the NHS matron. Luckily for Hudis, his wife Rita was a nurse and she provided some of the inspiration and stories of life on the wards for the script. Also, Hudis was admitted to hospital whilst on writing duties and was hospitalised for ten days. During that time, he saw enough of the way in which the NHS was run to incorporate elements of it into his finished screenplay, despite having reservations about the actualities of the film's chief comedy sequence in which the patients attempt to operate on one of their fellow inmate's bunions.

The script was completed in ten days and was delivered to Rogers and Thomas on 18 June 1958. The finished article centred on the lives of men waiting for treatment at Haven Hospital. The characters and situations were similar to *Sergeant*: there was the intellectual Oliver Reckett (Kenneth Williams), the roguish Jack Bell (Leslie Phillips), the everyman Bernie Bishop (Kenneth Connor) and the effeminate Humphrey Hinton (Charles Hawtrey), whilst the women in authority were Nurses Dorothy Denton (Shirley Eaton) and Stella Dawson (Joan Sims), Sister (Joan Hickson) and Matron (Hattie Jacques). The men gently battle against Sister and Matron, although the final joke (and probably the film's best

one) is when troublesome patient 'The Colonel' (Wilfred Hyde White) has his temperature taken with a daffodil inserted into his bottom by Dawson.

This ending proved to have major consequences for the rest of the series. Robert Ross rightly points out to *Nurse* as being the touchstone of the whole series.[4] The premise was familiar, the jokes were corny, but the emphasis now became focused much more on the lavatorial. Even though Hudis wrote another four scripts for the series after *Nurse*, this was the genuine beginning of the films plumbing the lower depths of Low Art.

Before *Nurse* was released, the British Board of Film Censors (BBFC) asked for a shot to be removed. As the two nurses undress Kenneth Connor's character, Bernie Bishop, one nurse says, 'I've never known anyone make a fuss about such a little thing', to which Bishop smiles coyly and then with embarrassment. Rogers recalls the incident:

> Kenneth was supposed to smile, then look under the sheets somewhat dismayed. The censor was having none of that, of course. He said we could keep the gag as long as we took out the shot of Kenny looking under the sheets. I gave in. People got the gag anyway. So, we got one laugh when, perhaps, we could have had a pair.[5]

Rogers and Thomas knew they had hit upon a winning combination of risqué gags and farcical situations. The public flocked to see the movies, but Rogers always had to play a canny game with the BBFC to circumnavigate any problems with the censors:

> We would slip in a couple of jokes that we knew would distress the censor … nine times out of ten he picked the planted more obviously saucy gags – and we would then bargain with him. The censor's yardstick was, in fact, quite absurd. He was terrified that if a father watching the film laughed at a naughty joke, his kids would ask him what was so funny and force him into explaining the sexy connotations.[6]

Nurse was released in March 1959 and proved to be another box office smash. It topped the box office in the UK and was a huge hit in America, where it ran for two years. David Emanuel, the film's American distributor, promoted *Nurse* by issuing a plastic daffodil to each audience member, in celebration of the final scene of the film, and this marketing ploy soon helped spread word about the movie. Again released on the continent, the film's title changed: in Germany it became *41 Degrees of Love*,

whilst the cooling effects of *l'amour* meant that in Belgium (and South America) it dropped to *40 Degrees of Love*; Denmark asked the question *Isn't it Wonderful Doctor?*; Greece recognised the importance of the titular character and declared that *Nurse Does All the Work*, but probably the most direct change of moniker came with Finland's *Laughing Gas and Beautiful Girls.*

Rogers was already thinking ahead to other films for the series, and titles such as *Carry On Teacher* (1959), *Carry On Constable* (1960) and *Carry On Regardless* (1961) were trademarked accordingly. Rogers' winning formula had proved his critics wrong, and he knew that a familiar core team of actors and technicians could cement the popularity of future productions. Whilst the repertory feel of the company included Williams et al., there were always welcome additions to the cast. Very popular radio personality Ted Ray appeared as Mr Wakefield in *Carry On Teacher*, Phil Silvers was the magnificently named Sergeant Knocker in *Carry On Follow That Camel*, Frankie Howerd was a welcome addition as Francis Bigger (*Carry On Doctor*) and Professor Inigo Tinkle (*Carry On Up The Jungle*), and Elke Sommer was the intelligent and beautiful Professor Vooshka (*Carry On Behind*), whose fractured use of the English language caused great embarrassment to her peer, Professor Roland Crump (Kenneth Williams). However, it was with *Constable* that *the* face of the series joined the team: South African born actor Sidney (Sid) James appeared as Sergeant Frank Wilkins. When James joined the ranks, the major players in the *Carry On* ensemble were virtually assembled.

Hudis stuck to a formula of pathos and minor sexual by-play for his six institution-based *Carry On* films.[7] Their narratives were simple: an ill-assorted group of individuals have comedic adventures, which eventually end with a knockabout sequence that sees them all joining forces for a greater good. Whilst structurally basic, the films offered affectionate tributes to Hudis' targeted institutions. These early *Carry On* films gently mocked British life, and Hudis' screenplays exhibit much of the cosiness of the comedy of Ealing Studios. For example, the world of *Carry On Regardless*, with its tales of an employment agency's recruits, does not seem wholly removed from the streets of *Passport to Pimlico* (1949) with its jolly outlooks, stock stereotypes and gently knowing humour targeted at British sensibilities.

Hudis' *Carry On Cruising* (1962) was his last screenplay for the series, but the first in colour. The move to colour meant that Rogers had to

stretch the budget to £140,000.[8] Kenneth Williams thought that they were to film around the Mediterranean, but this was not the case. Stock footage was used for backgrounds and the cast never left Pinewood Studios. Budget frugality was part and parcel of the canon, although the film does have a polished look to it. For this outing, the film remains remarkably like a seafaring version of *Carry On Sergeant*: raw and hapless new recruits helping an old ship's captain; burgeoning love interests; a test for the recruits; and a happy and very sentimental ending. When Hudis hung up his *Carry On* boots, the *Crazy Gang* writer Talbot Rothwell took over the mantle of scripting the next 20 outings. Hudis, in retrospect, had seen that his time on the series was coming to an end: his script for *Carry On Spying* had been rejected and when he included a scene set at an anti-nuclear demonstration, Rogers told him that direct political messages were to be avoided at all costs. The writing was on the wall, and Hudis readily admitted that whilst there were plenty of other institutions to lampoon (Fleet Street, royalty and the pop music world), he felt that the Swinging Sixties was not quite his bag and that he didn't 'have the right anarchic touch and still don't. If it isn't real, I don't have the feel. That doesn't make me a superior writer, just a limited one'.[9]

Rothwell came up with the script for *Carry On Cabby* following an original idea by the writers S.C. Green and R.M. Hills. The return to black and white and its engaging battle of the sexes storyline meant that the film had a much grittier style than previous outings and reflected the contextual 'kitchen sink' drama in its narrative.[10] Films such as *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960) challenged the security of 1950s British cinema to present newer, realistic films through a *verité* style. The team took this approach and infused it with comedic overtones. With Talbot Rothwell also preferring a much more pun and innuendo-based approach compared to Hudis' pathos-led storylines, this new direction was sharply written, with performances that are exemplary. The narrative may have been fairly conventional, but it also had a foiled burglary, fistfights and a terrific car chase through the streets of London. A review at the time said that the film:

> presents its familiar cast, minus Kenneth Williams, in the predictable mixture of quick-fire bawdy and simple-minded slapstick … The plot is more solidly constructed … The results are very funny, though one might wish that the final chase had been briefer and more inventively scripted.[11]

The next film, *Carry On Jack* (1963), was a return to colour, and Rothwell's love of historical adventure stories begins to take hold of the series. Very loosely based on C.S. Forester's *Horatio Hornblower* adventures and parodying the bloated Hollywood 'epic' *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1962), the script started life as *Poopdecker R.N.* and underwent numerous title changes, including *Up the Armada* before becoming an official addition to the canon. Filmed between 2 September and 26 October 1963 on a budget of £152,000, the film was released by the end of the year. *Jack* was granted an 'A' Certificate by the BBFC, which meant that Rothwell's injection of more ribald jokes broadened the film's appeal and opened up new directions for the series.

Based on the Ian Fleming/Eon Productions *James Bond* phenomenon, the black and white *Carry On Spying* is the team's first bona fide attempt at parodying a contextual film icon. With Dr Crow's criminal organisation S.T.E.N.C.H. (Society of Total Extermination of Non-Conforming Humans) trying to ransom the world, only the British secret service can save the day. However, in typical *Carry On* fashion, all Britain's spies have colds and new recruits are used to foil the villains. Whilst the film saw bit-part actor and pop star Jim Dale take on a greater role as Agent Carstairs, *the* female icon of the series joined in the frivolity. The diminutive, blond, buxom and iconic Barbara Windsor played Daphne Honeybutt (aka Agent Brown Cow) and excelled as an example of female strength, courage and determination.[12] *Spying* marked a definite end to the 'old style' for the series, and whilst it had nods to Hudis (the raw recruits uniting to fight a common enemy), the next film in the series marking a definite turning point in the canon.

Returning to colour, boasting magnificent and expensive interior sets rented from part-time *Carry On* player Victor Maddern (who had bought the sets for a knock-down price from Twentieth Century Fox), *Carry On Cleo* parodied the story of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra *and* the troubled production of *Cleopatra* (1963), starring Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor.

The film is an assured comic triumph, with a style and inventiveness that can now be seen as the beginnings of a 'purple patch' for the series. Ross says that 'The earlier sense of development and construction had given way to a colourful confidence and feel-good innuendo with a practised and recognisable team'[13] and this 'confidence' fuels both narrative and performances with an energy that spread through the rest of the decade's productions. However, this confidence was almost stopped due to two

cases of legal litigation over the apparent infringement of copyrighted material in *Cleo*. Twentieth Century Fox, the distributors of *Cleopatra*, took umbrage over the *Carry On* team's almost-identical artwork for their poster campaign. Fox's poster-work, inspired by Howard Terpning's original painting of Cleopatra, had been directly parodied with Kenneth Williams, Sid James and Amanda Barrie caricaturing Burton, Harrison and Taylor. The matter was resolved with a new and playful poster showing James, Williams, Kenneth Connor and Charles Hawtrey riding on a merry-go-round. The second litigation came from the owners of Marks & Spencer, the Sieff family. Whilst they didn't complain about their company name being subverted to *Marcius et Spencius*, they complained about their trademark colours of purple and green being used. The litigation was soon curtailed and the company got free publicity for the next 50 years!

Cleo was a box office smash around the world, doing particularly well in Australia by taking more money than *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) and *El Cid* (1961).[14] With Rothwell debunking costume and literary drama, his next four consecutive scripts focused solely on historical parody, and *Cowboy*, *Screaming!*, *Don't Lose Your Head* and *Follow That Camel* proved box office successes on both their first and second run releases. As Nicholas Cull states, the gang were trying, and succeeded in, attempting to 'invade the territory that had been dominated by the forces of high British culture and million-dollar Hollywood budgets, and reassert lowbrow British humour'.[15]

After the release of *Carry On Screaming!*, the team's distributor Anglo Amalgamated decided to cut its ties with the series. According to Rogers, CEO Nat Cohen was suffering 'a touch of culture up his arse'.[16] Cohen wanted to concentrate on artistic or 'important' films, despite the *Carry On* films bolstering the company's finances. Rogers immediately struck a distribution deal with the Rank Organisation, under its proviso that his films would *not* be released with the *Carry On* moniker. The Rank executives felt their 'new' comedies should not be associated with their rivals and that Rank could be involved in some form of litigation over the *Carry On* titles. Rogers was the sole proprietor of that patented name, so future films *could* be released as part of the *Carry On* franchise. However, Rogers' first two films for his new distributor, *Don't Lose Your Head* (1966) and *Follow That Camel* (1967), were without the famous signature name, and box office receipts tailed off accordingly. For their re-release, the *Carry On* name was appended, to greater monetary rewards.

Rothwell looked back to Hudis' earlier work for inspiration and returned his next narrative to the realism of the medical wards. *Carry On Doctor*, which filmed between 11 September and 20 October 1967, saw the return of Sid James, whilst also marking the first of two appearances by the flamboyant and outrageous Frankie Howerd as Francis Bigger, a self-healer who offers alternative medicinal treatment, with 'Think Bigger!' as his sexually charged motto.[17] The return of the *Carry On* name, coupled with James and Howerd, ensured that the film was another box office smash. This confidence saw the next two films heading the top of the box office charts in their respective years of release. Despite being set in India, *Carry On Up The Khyber* (1968) never went further than the Welsh mountains of Snowdonia to capture what purports to be 'the Khyber Pass. The gateway to all India'. *Khyber* is the crowning achievement of the *Carry On* canon, becoming the only *Carry On* film on the BFI's *Top 100 British Films* poll.[18] With Rothwell delivering pot shots at the collapsing British Empire and films like *Zulu* (1964), and bolstered by superb production values and a cast confident with his inventive script, the film remains an assured comic triumph.[19]

Carry On Camping (1969) offered a conservative reaction against the tail end of the Swinging Sixties. With the full bloom of the decade now over, Rogers' own conservatism had taken hold of the text, as if reflecting the move into the 1970s. Whilst the film had the staple ingredients of McGill's postcards, there is a sense of bitterness to the climax of the film. Set in and around the world of rain-sodden campsites, Rothwell's narrative becomes a McGill postcard writ large. Caricatures of harridan housewives, leering middle-aged men and buxom schoolgirls flesh out a narrative that concentrated on the then-burgeoning cultural notions of sexual identities becoming more fluid as the Swinging Sixties progressed. However, there is a distinct feeling of both change and containment during the carefree proceedings. First, the middle-class banker Peter Potter, seduced by a young schoolgirl, returns to his sexually non-active wife Harriet and asserts his masculinity over her by taking her into his tent to have sex. The lighthearted approach to sex has changed to become much more conservative, with the male now dominating the female. Second, with the Establishment chasing away hippies, and the girls (the rebellious future of Britain) and Charles Hawtrey's peripheral character (the 'other') running off with them, the producers ground the film in a deeply conservative outlook. The attitudes of fun so prevalent in earlier productions had been replaced with a much more sombre outlook on sexuality for the

nation state. Whilst the remarkable *Performance* (1970) is sometimes seen as the 'end' of the Swinging Sixties in British cinema, perhaps *Camping* and its curtailment of the hippy festival is the beginning of that notion.

The film proved to be a milestone in the series for one main reason: Barbara Windsor. She returned to the series to play Babs, a sexually charged and carefree *St. Trinians*-esque schoolgirl who, during morning exercises, finds her bikini top catapulting itself across a field to hit her tutor, Dr Soaper (Kenneth Williams), in the face. As he screams 'Matron! Take them away!' and Matron grabs hold of Babs' arm, the girl's breasts are revealed. Even though they were quickly covered up, this is the first sign of female nudity of a main female cast member in the series (in *Constable* the hapless male recruits' posteriors are shown in a cold-shower sequence).[20] Once the censor passed this moment, Rothwell felt free to inject much ruder jokes and situations into the scenarios than he had been before, and Windsor's characters in both *Abroad* (1972) and *Dick* (1974) are naked. Whilst a standout sequence in the canon, and one of the most famous scenes in British film history, its acceptability at placing a naked schoolgirl—albeit played by an older actress—does remain a troubling one, made all the more so in a post-Operation Yewtree climate.

The next film, *Carry On Again Doctor* (1969), was Jim Dale's last in the series until *Columbus*. The film had undergone several script revisions by both Rothwell and Rogers, and this is arguably the reason why it is ramshackle at best, with a wandering narrative that incorporates medical malpractice, jaded relationships between a doctor and an actress (Dale and Windsor), in which he demands that she give up her career to be his wife, and a tacked-on tale of diet pills and cross-dressing. Despite it being the third hospital-based comedy, Williams found praise for both the film and his own narcissistic performance, stating:

> To the Metropole to see *Carry On Again, Doctor*. It was very good indeed, and should have got excellent reviews from the press. It moves along at a spanking pace, the cutting is excellent and the situations all hold.
>
> My performance as Carver, the surgeon, is remarkably authoritative and the incredibly banal lines I have to say are made quite acceptable by the sort of style and panache I bring to the role.[21]

The year 1969 saw the team attempt the first of their successful Christmas television specials. *Carry On Camping* was the most successful British film at the home box office market, and television producer Peter Eton

approached Rogers with a view to transferring the film team to a television format. Based loosely on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, *Carry On Christmas* was screened on Christmas Eve. It attracted an audience of 18 million viewers, becoming ITV's most watched festive programme. One player refused to appear: Kenneth Williams stated that his commitments to *The Kenneth Williams Show* kept him away from appearing in the special.

Despite breaking into the television market, the production team was relying too much on past glories. *Carry On Up The Jungle* (1970) found the cast in 'starkest Africa', Pinewood Studios-style.[22] Rothwell's *Jungle* celebrated/critiqued colonial epics like *Sanders of the River* (1934) and parodied Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan* stories and Johnny Weismuller's definitive portrayal of the character.[23] The narrative has a party of explorers searching for the mystical Oozalum Bird, whilst also trying to track down Lady Baggeley's lost infant. A deluge of stock footage, poor jungle sets, very rude jokes and the roster of stars portraying their known personas in front of the camera raised some laughs. However, Bernard Bresslaw's caricatured performance as the African guide Upsidasi could be criticised for its outrageous stereotyping, were it not for the idea that the film is actually critiquing and challenging stereotyped notions of how the Tarzan and other adventure series see 'the native'.

Times were changing. The Swinging Sixties were over and the dour 1970s were beginning. Rothwell wanted to reflect that change, and the chance to move away from the halcyon days of genre parodies provided an interesting script for *Carry On Loving* (1970), which was set amongst the world of pre-online dating agencies. Here Rothwell directly challenged notions of the disintegration of apparent moral standards, and this is foregrounded by the opening post-titles shot of a London double-decker bus with a slogan 'SEX – Everyone's having it!' emblazoned across it. Despite being a *Carry On* film, the censor was adamant that the public could not be subjected to such shenanigans and demanded the removal of numerous lines, including:

> During the misunderstanding in Sally's flat, the dialogue exchange between Sally and Muffin 'Well, come on, get it out', 'Get what out?' was removed.
>
> At the end of the reel, Bliss' remark to a couple necking in a lift 'Going … Up!' was removed.
>
> When Esme is kneeling and pressing herself against Snooper, her cry 'I can feel it' was removed.[24]

The film is very episodic and is based around the various comings and goings of numerous people looking for love and relationships. Interestingly, Sid James' and Hattie Jacques' characters run their bureau under the false pretence that they are married. This sham eventually ends up being exposed and they get married, but not before their younger clients (Terry Scott and Imogen Hassall, and Jacki Piper and Richard Callaghan, who are arguably younger versions of James and Jacques) have started their own relationships. As the final scenes at the wedding erupt into a massive custard pie fight, the younger couples look miserable and bored. In the *Carry On* world, marriage and relationships offer no fun whatsoever.

The next film takes this idea further. Based on *A Man for all Seasons* (1966) and *Anne of a Thousand Days* (1969), the team's *Carry On Henry* provided a genuinely ripe version of re-imagined Tudor history. In keeping with the earlier historical outings in the series, the film exploited audience/text familiarity by linking them in a bricolage-like fashion to other constructs. *Henry* begins with stock footage of Windsor Castle, an opening madrigal akin to Henry VIII's own composition, 'Greensleeves', and a title card purporting to tell the factual history of Henry VIII's missing two wives:

> This film is based on a recently discovered manuscript by William Cobbler that reveals the fact that Henry VIII did in fact have two more wives. Although it was first thought that Cromwell originated the story, it is now known to be definitely all Cobblers' … from beginning to end.

With *Carry On At Your Convenience* (1971), the team experienced their first commercial flop.[25] The setting of a modern-day toilet factory is apposite for a series of films that used toilet humour as its mainstay for laughs, but by critiquing the trade unions, and therefore those who went to watch the films, it quickly became apparent that the working-class audience realised *they* were the subjects being made fools of. Whereas pot shots had always been taken at those in positions of authority, the main target became the *Carry On* audience. As Ross puts it, 'the working-class, beer and chips audience who were the films' chief admirers were not so chuffed with the treatment of the unionists as bumbling, idiotic, mini-dictators with attitude problems'.[26] However, the film does have some pleasures:

> It is a culmination of the series' celebration of the ethos of British working-class culture, indicating that the seaside trip, however mundane, offers a

> respite from the toils of suburbia and work, and most importantly allows freewheeling anarchy to become the order of the day.[27]

It was also a return to realism, and the sequence of James and Sims walking home to their respective partners, yet clearly in love with one another:

> plants the film directly into the British realist tradition. Despite being critically neglected, this moment is as significant in the representation of the British working-classes as the melodramas of the 'kitchen sink' school of filmmaking.[28]

With their first failure out of the way, *Carry On Matron* (1972) saw the team running back to the safety of the medical wards. Recruiting Barbara Windsor after leaving her out of *Convenience* smacked of desperation in terms of trying to win back those who had deserted the previous film. As Williams points out, 'the hospital jokes are unending'.[29] Rothwell directly addresses such social developments as 'the Pill', but his characterisations of sexuality have hardened. Whilst Williams' and Hawtrey's characters were usually sexually ambiguous but always on the periphery of homosexuality, they had always been treated with a sense of genuine warmth.[30] However, here Hawtrey's *wife* is called Hamlet ('She thinks she's a Great Dane'), whereas Williams' character is convinced he is transforming into a woman. Whilst both actors are exemplary in their roles, the stereotyping does seem to be less sentimentally or emotionally adroit when compared to earlier efforts. They have hardened.

With package holidays becoming both increasingly popular, *Carry On Abroad* has the team visit the (fictional) Spanish resort of Elsbels. Filming began on 17 April and ended on 26 May 1972, and it remains one of the series' strongest later entries. Returning to the trusted ideas of Hudis and having a band of disparate characters forged into action, the film has a real:

> over-flowing collection of familiar team members, the finest cast of supporting performers in *Carry On* history and a guaranteed laugh-a-second screenplay, incorporating sight gags, knowing references, slapstick, pratfall, a rare touch of subtle satire and bucketfuls of prime innuendo.[31]

Abroad sees the team becoming increasingly caricatured in their concept of stereotyping. Vic and Cora are a bickering Eastend pub landlord and his wife; Stanely and Evelyn Blunt are a sexually deprived couple; Eustace Tuttle is an effeminate mummy's boy; Stuart Farquhar is a sexu-

ally ambivalent tour rep; and Sadie Tomkins is a dumb blond lusted after by the randy Scotsman Bert Conway. Even the foreigners, the hotel owners, exhibit a British-eyed view of the Spanish: Signor Pepe is a whirling dynamo of bluster; his wife, Floella remains tied to the kitchen stove, her arms waving in more and more wildly exaggerated gesticulations; and their son, Georgio is a smooth lothario. Stereotyping was no stranger in the series, but here ideas of the 'foreign' plays just as much an equal part in the narrative as their English counterparts and, indeed, the characters form a mirror image to them.

What the film also does is to showcase the increasingly ribald attempts of the team to deal with ideas of sexual repression. At one point, Signor Pepe (Peter Butterworth in full manic form) wants Stanley Blunt (Kenneth Connor) to help plug a leak in the kitchen. Pepe says 'We are doing it on the kitchen floor!', to which Blunt replies 'Steady on chaps, we are British you know. Oh, I don't know though!', indicating that there are limitations of sexual playfulness within the British reserve. It takes an aphrodisiac supplied by the local market traders to break down the sexually hindered British male to one who *might* actually be breaking free from the sexually frigid ideas of the past. With the collapse of their Spanish resort hotel being a metaphor for both the film series and the team's attempts at trying to shore up collapsing ideas of sexuality (although the 1970s does appear to eschew the more liberated freedoms towards sexuality of the Swinging Sixties), the holidaymakers can only find true solace in Vic and Cora's structurally sound, typical East End public house. It is as if anything *outside* that domain might not work. Furthermore, it became increasingly apparent that the films could only offer notions of Britishness that were no longer in tune with both a radically altering cultural landscape and the audience themselves.

The consequence of this alteration changes the tone of the *Carry On* films once more. Andrew Higson suggests that the British realist tradition offered 'a serious, committed, engaged cinema',[32] whilst Benedict Anderson's concept of nationhood becomes an 'imagined community'[33] and Leon Hunt suggests that the 1970s, despite being dubbed 'the decade that taste forgot', might be worthy of closer critical analysis. Hunt refers to Bart Moore-Gilbert's assessment as 'a crisis in the grand narrative of progressive, politically and aesthetically enlightened culture'.[34] Hunt offers a treatise on the 'permissive populism' of the 1970s, describing it in terms of a 'low' counterbalance to Moore-Gilbert's narrative of 'high' art achievement. Hunt sums the decade up as 'a particularly cruel parody of the 1960s' that is never more evident than in *Carry On Girls*.[35]

The only *Carry On* film of 1973, *Girls* was set in the fictional seaside resort of Fircombe and concerned a beauty competition run by Councillor Fiddler (played in full lecherous mode by Sid James). It is evident that the film is grounded in everyday believability. The repressed British view of sex from earlier decades had become playfully challenged, and in the *Carry On* films, sex is no longer alluded to. People have sex and they get married; this then becomes a dour commentary upon the probable real-life fate of the Donald McGill postcard caricatures of yesteryear. The opening shots sum up this attitude towards sex and the British holiday with adroit precision: it is raining, and a family sit huddled together in a broken-down pier's shelter. A sign behind them reads 'Come to Fabulous Fircombe', with graffiti commenting: 'What the hell for?' This sequence is followed by the downtrodden Mayor's wife, Mildred Bumble (Patsy Rowland), sitting in her house dressed in her nightie and dressing gown, smoking a fag, slopping her husband's tea out of the pot, listening to the radio and reading the paper. The halcyon days of the Swinging Sixties have gone for good, leaving behind a bittersweet reminder of the consequences of 'free love' and emancipation, and of its failure to really change people's lives. However, the film does deal with interesting themes: whilst it is firmly entrenched in the British seaside, it takes pot shots at Miss World and the burgeoning Women's Liberation movement. Whilst these targets were taken from the headlines, it is interesting to see that Rothwell *may* be trying to address a socially contextual issue. On the one hand, he celebrates the team's trip to its ancestral home of the British seaside and revels in creating exaggerated characters in the McGill tradition. However, his handling of the Women's Liberation movement, despite the characters being strong, clever and motivated in their clear political aims of overthrowing the beauty pageant, sits at odd with the utopian-collective ideals of the series. Whereas everyone joined together to fight the forces of authority, here the utopian collective remains completely disjointed. Likewise, the team do not quite know how to 'deal' with ideas of the 'other'. Whereas Williams' and Hawtrey's characters had usually been seen as sexually ambiguous, or at least frivolously indifferent, the notion of a gay female appears to be anathema to the team. The one lesbian character in the whole series dresses in men's trousers and a shirt, wears a tie, has a deep voice and smokes a pipe. It becomes apparent, then, that whilst stereotyping had always been used to usually good effect, here Rothwell takes it perhaps a tad too far and, as such, firmly places the character of Rosemary

(in itself a feminine name) too far into the realms of 'other' to be wholly successful in challenging notions of sexuality.

Despite attempts to broaden the scope of the franchise, Rothwell returned to historical parody to bolster the series' longevity. *Carry On Dick* (1974) is a rollickingly cheap, cheerful and very rude revamping of the Dick Turpin story. Filmed between early March to mid-April, and released in July 1974, it became a defining watershed for the series from which it never really recovered. Due to a bout of illness that rendered him unable to construct a script, Rothwell bowed out of the series.[36] More importantly for the audience, James made his last appearance in the series. His performance as the Reverend Flasher (aka Big Dick) is an assured comic triumph, but every member of the cast looks fatigued, as if they had 'run out of steam' and conviction for the series. The film is indicative of how the franchise had come to rely too much on recycling past subject matter. This is no more evident than in the three TV Christmas specials[37] and the 12-episode *Carry On Laughing* series that had been made in 1974, but was broadcast in 1975. Episodes were set in numerous eras, including Cromwellian and Arthurian Britain, and the trenches of the First World War. The series was produced in half-hour episodes and incorporated most of the film stars of the canon. Yet the low-budget nature of these episodes, plus a lack of Rothwell's structured plots and characterisations, meant that although they were ratings winners, and coupled with a 'laughter track' which enforced a complete artificiality to the productions, they will always remain a footnote to the film canon.

The year 1975 saw *Carry On Behind* in production. Basically *Carry On Camping Again*, the film saw Professor Roland Crump (Kenneth Williams) excavating Roman ruins at a caravan site run by Major Leap (Kenneth Connor). The film contained some well-observed and genuinely funny sequences, but failed in many critics' eyes to recapture the zest of the older movies.[38] However, all the players seem to be reinvigorated when given slightly different roles to play (for example, Bernard Bresslaw eventually plays a married man and Joan Sims becomes his mother-in-law) and provided a much-needed boost to the series, with the film moving at a pace through the tried-and-tested routines of both mistaken identities and sexual shenanigans. Sid James did not appear in the film as he was on tour with *The Mating Season*, and is replaced by the Welsh actor Windsor Davies, who was most famous for his role as the bombastic Sergeant Major in TV's popular sitcom, *It Ain't 'Alf Hot Mum*. Davies proved a worthy temporary replacement for James.

The cast were ageing, and in 1976 the team was dealt a major blow when Sid James, arguably *the* face of the series and its main embodiment of their working-class ethos, died. The loss to the series was all too evident. Whilst Hawtrey was dropped for his apparent drunkenness after *Abroad* and Williams was left out of the odd film here and there (due to other commitments or suffering a fit of pique at being offered a smaller role than normal), James could not be replaced on a long-term basis. Although the idea of James being substituted had been toyed with previously, Rogers realised that the actor was *so* emblematic of the series ethos that it was almost impossible to carry on without him. Whilst Windsor Davies does a more than adequate job in *Behind*, the audience stayed away from both it and the next production, *Carry On England* (1976).

In addition, Britain's film industry was changing. American money was withdrawn and the rising popularity of film spinoffs from television sitcoms meant that the audience could see their contemporary comedy heroes on the big screen.[39] The *Carry On* style was mostly one of gentle sexual innuendo, but the late 1960s and 1970s saw the rise of the British sex film. Movies like *Come Play With Me* (1977) and the *Confessions* films took advantage of eroding censorship, playing to large audiences around the country. These films usurped those of the cosy *Carry On* canon and were more than willing to present bare breasts, bums and even full-frontal female nudity. Whilst Barbara Windsor's bra had spectacularly sparked into life in *Camping* and her bottom was seen in *Abroad* ('You haven't got any soap on that bit' says James as the camera pans down, accompanied by a swanee whistle on the soundtrack), that was as far as the production team were usually willing to go.

However, when the production team *did* attempt to show nudity, it was often misjudged. *Carry On England* was a failed attempt to emulate the *Confessions* success whilst returning the series to its original locale. Set in a mixed army barracks during the height of the Second World War, the playfulness of the series has been completely replaced by a genuine sense of nastiness. Whilst authority had always been gently mocked, here Connor's Major S. Melly is both verbally and physically undone: at one point his uniform disintegrates as he wears it. Connor remained dignified throughout the proceedings, ably supported by Windsor Davies. However, Sims is given the briefest of supporting roles and actors who do not have the camaraderie spirit of Dale and Windsor have replaced the usual cast. Nudity seems gratuitous and out of place with the approach that the series had come to represent. Two scenes have female soldiers in

a state of undress: the first sees women in their bunks sitting up and their bed sheets falling to reveal their breasts; the second has all the troops come to the parade ground topless. Both add nothing to narrative or character development and seem grossly out of keeping with the mild suggestiveness that the series was famous and loved for. The film was re-edited, and records at the BBFC state:

> This is a curious case. The film would appear to have been classified 'AA' uncut on 29 June 1976. However, this category was a change to previous *Carry On*s, and proved, according to our *Monthly Bulletin* for 1977, 'difficult to accommodate at the box office'. The film was re-submitted to the BBFC in December 1976 for advice on cuts required to reclassify it to 'A'. It was re-classified 'A' on 11 January 1977, with the following cuts:
>
> Reel 6
>
> Joke about Heinkels and Bristols replaced with cover material which omits the utterance of 'Fokker'. Shots of bare-breasted women replaced by flash shots of bare breasts to establishment only.[40]

With another box office failure on their hands, the team issued a last-ditch attempt to resurrect the series with *That's Carry On!* (1977), which was based on the MGM compilations *That's Entertainment* (1974) and *That's Entertainment II* (1976). The film was cheaply produced on a budget of approximately £30,000 and purported to be a celebration of the finer moments of the series. Kenneth Williams and Barbara Windsor were recruited to create the linking material between the chosen clips that showcased just how good the 'old' series was, and filming took one day in a cinema projection booth. Unsurprisingly, the film made more money at the box office than the last entry, *Carry On England*, but even the newly filmed portions look tired. Both performers are engaging, but the attempt to wring out a profit was proving difficult, and the film was released on the lower half of a double bill to the Richard Harris thriller *Golden Rendezvous* (1977) to rapidly diminishing box office returns. Yet the final film in their remarkable run saw the *Carry On* team branching out into far more risqué territory, and one that *could* have provided impetus for further *Carry On* outings.

With their target audience becoming older and with the sex film still showing signs of life, *Carry On Emmannuelle* (1978) parodied Just Jaekin's French 1974 infamous and world-famous soft-core sex film. However, by the time of the film's release, the market for sex comedies

had virtually evaporated, with even the popular *Confessions* films running out of steam after just four outings. Even though old members of the gang had been recruited, the film was ramshackle at best, and the actors look embarrassed. The main fault lay with the production team who, in trying to keep up with the times, created a film that suffered from not being risqué enough for its new, or just older, target audience, whilst simultaneously offending those who expected to see the usual cosy farce. The *Carry On* films consequently came to an inglorious end, failing to adapt to the changing tastes of both audiences and film distributors. Coupled with a bad change in direction and incredibly poor production values, *Emmannuelle* was simply the wrong film at the wrong time. The entire face of the British film industry had altered. Not only had American money gone back to the US, but film production budgets had also begun to spiral due to sharp rises in inflation. A producer like Rogers, who had always had the safety net of a dedicated distribution base to fall back on, saw that that base was now being eroded, and the once-mighty Rank was beginning to feel the pinch. Whereas Rank was once concerned that the films reach the masses, it was now happy to show Rogers' AA-certificated films, provided there was a healthy box office return. Even *Emmannuelle*'s meagre budget of £328,000 was not recouped. With films that were simply not profitable and anachronistic, with the chances of full distribution now continually in doubt and with cinemas in a slow but steady decline in terms of both comfort and technology, the public stayed away from many homegrown products and focused instead on blockbusters like *Star Wars* (1977) and *Superman* (1978). Ross attempted to do justice to *Emmannuelle*, stating:

> Parts are so gloriously awful that they make you shudder, but the performances enhance the sub-Rothwellian innuendo with endearing characters and richly delivered dialogue. The audience knows it's in good company, gamefully playing the game for the last time and having a ball.[41]

But here Ross reveals the inadequacies of the film. He calls it 'gloriously awful' and 'sub-Rothwellian'. The problem becomes evident. Rothwell was *the* writer who knew how to successfully create a *Carry On* narrative. Whilst the audience who *did* go to see the film may have expected to have seen the team, what they got was a rapidly ageing one that now appeared clapped out and embarrassed. No one, in front of or behind the cameras, and indeed in the stalls watching *Carry On Emmannuelle*, was having a ball.

From a thematic perspective, the films had lost their way. They had also lost their way cinematically. *Carry On Emmannuelle* was shoddily made, but this was not always the case with the films. In their heyday, the likes of *Cleo* and *Up the Khyber* look remarkably polished, and the filmmaking skills of Gerald Thomas are apparent. He was a good filmmaker, and one who made economical and stylish movies. The speed of his filmmaking was often remarked upon, with even his producer stating:

> I nicknamed him Speedy Gonzales because he went through the schedule like the Ferrari he used to drive. After just two days shooting on a picture, people used to shout to him in the corridors at Pinewood. 'How many days ahead now, Gerald – how many weeks ahead?'[42]

Thomas was a confident director. He handled actors well, often coaxing strong performances from them. He described himself as a circus ringmaster, stating that:

> Everyone is enthusiastic because we like one another. My challenge is to keep the enthusiasm within the artist who've done the same thing time and time again – to infuse into them the same enthusiasm that I have for the subject.[43]

This enthusiasm is clearly evident. The shooting schedules held in the BFI archives clearly demonstrate just how skilled a filmmaker he was, and the following examples demonstrate this approach.[44] For *Carry On Regardless*, the shoot was to last for 35 days (28 November 1960 to 17 January 1961). There were 178 scenes, of which 85.15 minutes were allocated to Pinewood Studios, with another 6.45 minutes on location in and around Windsor. Day one of shooting saw *usable* footage of 3.07 minutes being shot at Pinewood B sound stage. There were *no* retakes. Day two had 4.44 minutes of usable footage and *no* retakes. The pattern continued, but two days (6 and 12 December 1960) fell behind schedule due to rain. On the second of these days, the crew returned to Pinewood. Seven scenes were scheduled, but 12 were shot between 1.30 pm and 5.30 pm.

Even the bigger budgeted *Don't Lose Your Head*, with more location footage, remained roughly the same. Day one (12 September 1966) saw seven scenes schedules, but only three shot, with a total of 3.08 minutes of usable footage for that day. The second day, filmed at the Paddock Tank, Pinewood Studios, which had been dressed as Guillotine Square, had four

scenes scheduled and shot. Shooting on 3 October was washed out, with only 1.16 minutes shot.

It is evident that Thomas and his crew could shoot economically. However, the BFI archives for *Carry On Emmannuelle* reveal a slightly different story. Whereas the archival sources for *Regardless* and *Head* were immaculately kept within one box of records each, *Emmanuelle* had three. Each one had little in regard to the meticulous records kept previously, but the scant records indicate that Thomas was still shooting on schedule, with a good *usable* ratio of footage captured of approximately 4 minutes per day. For example, day one (10 April 1978) saw six scenes scheduled, but seven were shot. From the boxes of information that focus on the legal wrangling of the production, it was obvious that the film seemed doomed from the outset. The records indicate that negotiations between various finance companies and the producer were continually on the verge of breaking down, with one notable spat of correspondence even criticising the marketing of the title song. The archives offer a tantalising glimpse of the numerous hurdles and conflicts that had to be overcome before, during and after production had ended, and perhaps the making of *Carry On Emmanuelle* would prove more interesting than the actual film itself.

For over a decade after *Emmannuelle* had sunk without trace, there were persistent rumours that a new film was to be made. Several scripts had been written, including a parody of the American soap opera *Dallas* (1978–91) that had Kenneth Williams as R.U Screwing and Barbara Windsor as his niece, Lucy, in *Carry On Texas*. Other projects included *Carry On Down Under* based upon the Australian soap opera *Neighbours* (1985–); *Carry On Again, Nurse* was written by George Layton and Jonathan Lynn and designed to be an X-rated sequel to the 1959 movie; and another *Carry On Again Nurse* saw Norman Hudis returning to scripting duties in a chance at rebooting the franchise. This last piece looked closest to actually being filmed, with studio time allotted at Pinewood Studios, but the deaths of Kenneth Williams and Charles Hawtrey ensured that production ended before it began.

In 1992, 14 years after *Emmannuelle* was yanked unceremoniously from cinemas, *Carry On Columbus* sailed into British picture houses to a rapturous thumbs down from critics and audiences alike. The new film, directed by Gerald Thomas but only executively produced by Rogers, saw the welcome return of Jim Dale to the *Carry On* fold. Notwithstanding a healthy budget of £2.5 million, a good advertising campaign and a roster of well-known stars, the movie tanked at the box office. Despite having a

whole new cast of 'alternative' television comedians such as Alexei Sayle, Julian Clary, Keith Allen and Rik Mayall to bolster fine supporting turns from old, recognisable bit-part stalwarts Leslie Phillips, June Whitfield, Jon Pertwee, Jack Douglas and Bernard Cribbins, the approach was out of keeping with what the contextual audience wanted. Whilst the new comics were used to capitalise on their then-current fame and the older comics to reassure audiences that they were watching a *Carry On* film, the outing was too hurriedly conceived, poorly constructed and simply out of step with the rest of the film comedy world of the early 1990s. It seemed anachronistic, and what should have been a welcome return that may have heralded more outings merely became another misguided attempt at extending the franchise.

Despite Gerald Thomas insisting that these new actors/comics 'worked in with us very well. The whole thing is a team from top to bottom and they have joined the team',[45] scriptwriter Dave Freeman concurs with the majority opinion that the new cast were weak, saying: 'I didn't like the film and thought a lot of it was miscast. We missed all the regulars.'[46] This was re-iterated by Derek Malcolm, who wrote that the film was:

> but a shadow of what might have been … *Columbus* conclusively shows that the modern generation of comics are totally unable to compete, at least on these particular terms, with those we know from the past and once sadly underrated.[47]

On 16 July 2003, the British tabloid newspaper *The Sun* printed a series of photographs under the characteristic headline 'Danni Gets Her Babs Out'.[48] These images of former *EastEnders* (UK 1985–) actress Danniella Westbrook masquerading as ex-*Carry On* (and also *EastEnders*) star Barbara Windsor in various states of undress were advertising *Carry On London*, which was to be filmed over the coming months. Almost three years later, on 16 May 2006, the same newspaper printed the headline 'Carry On Victoria'.[49] The photograph was of Swedish supermodel/actress Victoria Silvstedt preparing for *Carry On London*. In an interview with Peter Rogers in January 2007, he confirmed that: 'We are very close to starting shooting soon.'[50]

Despite the energy that Rogers brought to his *Carry On* empire and with DVD sales, CD recordings, numerous coffee-table books, fan and official websites all cashing in on the nostalgia-driven *need* to live in the past, it seems that only time will tell if another *Carry On* will ever be

made—let alone released—and be considered part of the canon that was so remarkably successful to survive an almost unbroken 20-year run. On 16 June 2009, the official *Carry On* website confirmed that a new *Carry On* film was in the pipeline:

> has exclusive access to the latest 'Carry On' film being scripted. *Carry On to a Degree* (working title) is set within a University & follows a media student studying the history of 'Carry On'. The proposed comedy adventure promises to feature original 'Carry On' characters, while introducing some fresh faces.
>
> This planned TV film is no way connected with the ill-fated 'Carry On London' project that launched in 2003 & finally went bust in 2007 without shooting a foot of film.[51]

Perhaps there was still life in the franchise, especially when both *St. Trinian's* (2007) had a successful cinema release to boost another popular British cinematic franchise from yesteryear and the second big-screen version of *Dad's Army* was released in 2016.[52] There was also a pilot episode made of *The Carryoons*, which, with the tagline 'All we've done is add an ooo!' that offered all the familiar faces of the past in cartoon form.[53] Today the films seem very innocent compared to such fare as *The Inbetweeners Movie* (2011). Their embroidered and blatant stereotyping remain far too exaggerated for them to be considered as anything but inoffensive, harmless entertainment. However, the fact that they lasted for 31 films, numerous television series, plus compilation programmes and theatrical productions is testament to the filmmakers' stamina. More importantly, the films used their characters, realism and genre to tackle class, sexuality and contextual nationhood. It is to these that the following chapters now turn.

Notes

1. Webber (2005), p. 15.
2. Ibid., p. 22.
3. Bright and Ross (2000, p. 87) state that: 'It was made for less than *Carry On Sergeant* (around £71,000).'
4. Ross (1996), p. 17.
5. Bright and Ross (2000), p. 86.
6. Ibid.

7. *Sergeant* is army-based; *Nurse* is in a hospital; *Teacher* is in a school; *Constable* is in the British constabulary; *Regardless* is in an employment exchange; and *Cruising* is on a cruise ship.
8. Bright and Ross (2000), p. 112.
9. Webber (2005), p. 75.
10. See Chapter 7 for an analysis of realism in the *Carry On* films.
11. *Monthly Film Bulletin*, No. 357, vol. 30 (October 1963), p. 145.
12. See Chapter 8 for an analysis of *Carry On Spying*.
13. Ross (1996), p. 46.
14. Webber (2005), p. 16.
15. Cull (2002), p. 94.
16. Peter Rogers, quoted in Bright and Ross (2000), p. 142.
17. James was recovering from a heart attack and the team decided that his entire role – bar the end sequence – would be shot with him in bed for the entire shoot.
18. www.bfi.org.uk
19. Peter Rogers, quoted in Bright and Ross (2000), p. 157.
20. The first piece of female nudity is in the spoof naturist documentary that Sid, Bernie, Anthea and Joan go to see at the cinema in the first sequence in the film. A girl, Sally, looks out of her tent and there is a camera edit to a point-of-view shot of nudists playing tennis, a man riding his bike, and a group of people sitting down chatting. The voiceover intones: 'How different from her past holidays in Bournemouth.'
21. Kenneth Williams, quoted in Davies (1994), p. 363.
22. The original title was *Carry On Jungle Boy* and was changed due to its inflammatory wording.
23. Most notably in the film *Tarzan and the Amazons* (USA: Kurt Neumann, 1945).
24. J.L. Green, Chief Assistant (Policy) British Board of Film Classification, personal correspondence dated 2 February 2007.
25. See Chapter 7.
26. Ross (1996), p. 96.
27. Gerrard (2008).
28. Ibid.
29. Davies (1994), p. 399.
30. Here one thinks of their cross-dressing scene in *Carry On Constable*.
31. Ross (1996), p. 103.
32. Higson (1997), p. 188.

33. Anderson (2006), p. 16.
34. Hunt (1998), p. 1; Moore-Gilbert (1994).
35. Hunt (1998), pp. 1–2.
36. Later writers include: Dave Freeman (*Behind* and *Columbus*), David Pursall and Jack Seddon (*England*), and Lance Peters (*Emmannuelle*).
37. *Carry On Christmas* (1969), *Carry On Again Christmas* (1970), *Carry On Christmas* (1972) and *Carry On Christmas* (1973) indicate that just by the titles alone, the team had run out of ideas for the specials.
38. The usually reserved Leslie Halliwell does give it a two-star rating, calling it one of the funniest the series produced: Halliwell (1982).
39. See Smith (2008, pp. 67–80) and Walker (1974/2002) for a detailed analysis of the economic collapse of British cinema in the 1970s.
40. J.L. Green (Chief Assistant on Policy at the BBFC), in personal correspondence with the author, 2 February 2007.
41. Ross (1996), p. 126.
42. Peter Rogers, quoted in Bright and Ross (2000), pp. 204–05.
43. Author not known, *Playboy*, July 1975.
44. *Regardless* – Boxes GT/24/3, GT24/4GT24/5; *Don't Lose Your Head* – Boxes GT14/5, GT14/6GT14/8; *Emmannuelle* – Boxes GT15/5, GT15/6, GT15/7, GT15/8, GT15/9, GT15/10, GT15/11, GT15/12.
45. Gerald Thomas, quoted in Webber (2005), p. 272.
46. Dave Freeman, quoted in ibid., p. 273.
47. Derek Malcolm, quoted in ibid., p. 272.
48. Anon. 'Danni Gets Her Babs Out' in *The Sun*, 16th July 2003.
49. Anon. 'Carry On Victoria' in *The Sun*, 16th July 2006.
50. Private interview conducted with Peter Rogers, January 2007.
51. (Author not known) www.carryongold.com
52. According to the Internet Movie Database, the film had an estimated budget of $13,500,000 and had box office receipts of £12,280,529 in the UK and $24,487,595 in America, with other similar box office success in New Zealand and Australia. See www.imdb.com/title/tt0964587/ (accessed 1 September 2016).
53. www.angelfire.com/bug/carryon/carryoon.htm (accessed 1 September 2016).

CHAPTER 4

'*Carry On, Sergeant!*'

For many people, three topics signalled and reflected the Britain of the 1950s: deference, respectability and caution.[1] Britain had emerged from the Second World War a battered and bruised nation. Thousands had lost their lives. Families, loved ones, streets, villages and whole communities had been tinged with the horrors of the conflict. Whilst Britannia had once ruled the waves and the Industrial Revolution meant that Britain's fortunes grew for over a century, the aftermath of the Second World War saw its decline, dwindle and collapse as a world power. The term 'Commonwealth' became frequently used. India's struggle and eventual independence in 1947 ensured that whilst Britain seemed to cling on to notions of a faded bygone era, the Empire was collapsing.

In 1956 another blow was dealt to British morale when the Suez Crisis was deemed a political failure. Britain's fading power on the world stage was exposed, and the political effect this had on the country cannot be underestimated. Prime Minister Anthony Eden resigned, to be replaced by Harold Macmillan. Macmillan accelerated the government's decolonisation programme, meaning that former colonies could gain independence away from sovereign rule.

On the home front, Britain was undergoing social change. With the immigration policies of Macmillan coming into effect, issues of race became a focus of violent tension. There were race riots in both the East Midlands city of Nottingham and the London suburb of Notting Hill, which erupted in violence in 1958, when white Teddy Boys racially and physically abused local black communities. This was only one problem

S. Gerrard, *The Carry On Films*,
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associated with the emergence of what could be considered as 'youth problems'. Unemployment was relatively low. Younger people had better work prospects, and this meant better wages and affluence for many. With money came leisure time, and whilst the rock 'n' roll phenomena, radio, TV and films catered more towards a youth-oriented culture, there was a general feeling that the rebellious teenager was exhibiting signs of both violence and sexual immorality.[2] This sexual 'immorality' was discussed through what were perceived as 'problems', including both prostitution and homosexuality.

With regard to the traditional family homestead, the war had meant that with the men away on active duty, women were prescribed to work in both the factories and the fields. Now that the conflict had ended, it was assumed that women would simply either return back to their domestic chores or would take part-time work. However, whilst many women combined both, those who gained employment found that it was often in low-paid and monotonously boring positions. As men came back from the conflict with both physical and mental scars as reminders of their time away from the family, so women found their positions within the family unit being tested to their limits. Their newfound freedom was often being curtailed and stifled. Even though they had better employment opportunities, they still came home to fractured relationships. It was feared that whereas great emphasis had been placed on the ideals of 'family', those ideals were now being eroded. As the birth rate fell in the post-war years, so divorce rates rose significantly. The traditional role of the family was one of steadfast unity, where roles were clearly delineated: father was the main breadwinner and in charge; mother was the holder of the domestic sphere; children were the future; and grandparents were the link to the nostalgia-laden past. However, times and attitudes were changing and, as Sarah Street notes:

> It is interesting to bear this context in mind when examining films of the 1950s which frequently allude to social problems, and which again and again reveal a crisis of masculinity. As a reflection of the male-dominated film industry it is not surprising that the foregrounding of a crisis in femininity was conspicuous by its absence.[3]

During the war, the roles of men and women were either clearly delineated or open to negotiation and manoeuvre. Men fought and women worked in factories and fields whilst still holding the keys to the domestic

sphere. According to Street, the 1950s saw more men on the screen than women, and when they were represented on screen, the female was placed firmly in both familial and marital situations, which she saw as a backdrop to the more overtly complex analysis of how the males' psychological, sexual, familial and generational problems were being dealt with during the decade.[4] With the decline in the traditional 'woman's film' being in evidence, with period costume dramas either too expensive to produce or not finding their audience, two genres rapidly gained prominence: comedy and the war film.

As has been discussed previously, Britain's filmic comedy output offered to serve not just as a microcosm of British society, but as a way to examine ideas of class, gender and sexuality. The studio outputs of Ealing and Rank, and the teamwork of both Launder and Gilliat and the Boulting Brothers all seemed to concentrate their subjects on the mistrust of bureaucracy, fears of state power, the collapsing of the social class system and a typically British preoccupation with sexual proclivities. Ealing's post-war output celebrated a very cosy middle-class outlook and nostalgia for the possibilities of a 'wartime community'; Rank's films concentrated on the individual working within an institution; and the Boulting Brothers were insistent upon dismantling those institutions. The most emblematic of these comedies was *The Happiest Days of Your Life* (1950). Set in Nutbourne College for Boys, Alastair Sim plays the headmaster, Mr Pond, who has an evacuated girls' school foisted upon him following a clerical error at the Ministry of Education. The film is replete with innuendo (the College's motto is 'Guard Thine Honour') and there are highly camp shenanigans throughout. These two approaches ensured that the institution, the family (both physical and metaphorical), the destruction of social classes and the battle of the sexes form a playground in which serious questions are asked about how British cinematic comedy was, and would be, shaped through both tradition and heritage and the need for laughter in the post-war years. This would, of course, take root in the *Carry On* films.

The war film's rise to prominence was inevitable during the conflict and, as such, has played a vital role in British cinema.[5] Movies like *Went the Day Well?* (1942), *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946), Ministry of Information shorts, Humphrey Jennings' documentary *Fires Were Started* (1943) reflected the ethos of community, class, sexuality and ethnicity at a time when the world was undergoing rapid social change during conflict. These films depicted acts of heroism, alleviating any contextual social

concerns whilst boosting public morale. Chapman argues that these patriotic films were the product of filmmakers acting under government legislation to promote a sense of unity through propagandist means.[6] This propaganda used comedy to good advantage: *The Goose Steps Out* (1942) sees Will Hay disguised as a Nazi lecturer who gets his students to give Hitler's portrait a two-fingered salute. The worth of this was priceless and was worth more as a propaganda tool than any amount of documentaries, Pathé newsreels or political speeches could hope to muster. Laughter was definitely an antidote to fear.

Robert Murphy suggests that the war films produced during the war years are now looked back on with a glowing sense of nostalgia.[7] Films such as *Millions Like Us* (1943) and *The Way Ahead* (1944) both represented and demonstrated a communal ethos and spirit of pulling together and sacrifice in the face of a common enemy. The majority of the war films displayed a cheery optimism that far belied the genuine horrors of the conflict. Most people had lost neighbours, loved ones, friends and colleagues, and had seen their homes, towns and communities destroyed. There was food rationing and petrol and clothing shortages, whilst those who lived through the Blitz were faced with the daily fear of being killed by a bombing raid or its fallout, a constant reminder of the terror of warfare.

The war film of the 1950s moved away from the resilience of the nation during its war years. Most 1950s war movies were concerned with real-life dramatisations, prison-escape movies, novel adaptations and fictional tributes to the armed services.[8] Films such as *The Cruel Sea* (1952), *The Colditz Story* (1954) and *The Dam Busters* (1955) were nostalgic attempts at portraying ordinary men in extraordinary circumstances. It was evident that Britain made war films that were thought-provoking, sentimental, hard-hitting, nostalgic and exciting. They constituted a genre within their own right, and whilst their occasional flag waving and stiff upper lippedness towards pomposity may now seem of its time and open to criticism (for example, Neil Rattigan calls this 'a reflection of the last ditch effort by the dominant class to maintain its hegemony by re-writing the history of the celluloid war in its own favour'),[9] they proved invaluable box office successes. *Reach for the Sky* (1956) topped the box office film chart in its year of release; *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957) was a multi-award-winning super-production. The war film was an undeniably important component of the British film industry, and whilst late 1950s outings like *Orders to Kill* (1958) and *Yesterday's Enemy* (1959) moved towards showing the ideals of war as unsure uncertainties in a post-Suez Crisis

environment, films such as *Ice Cold in Alex* (1958) reiterated the fact that in times of crisis, the British soldier was as important to the individual and the (metaphorical) family as it was to the nation.

Now arguably seen as a parody of the resolutely stiff upper-lipped *The Way Ahead* (1944) and pre-dating American conscription movies like *The Dirty Dozen* (1967), *Kelly's Heroes* (1970), *Private Benjamin* (1980) and *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), *Carry On Sergeant* is arguably the most important of the series. With its likeable characters, endearing comic situations and a script that reflected all the fallibilities of conscription, it set the template for the next five institution-based entries in the series.

Conscription had been re-introduced to the country in 1938, with National Service still in operation until 1963. It seemed only natural that cinema and television would use conscription for comedic purposes, with John Boulting's satirical *Private's Progress* (1956) having the upper-class buffoon Stanley Windrush (Ian Carmichael) drafted into the army before his university education is finished. The BBC screened *The Phil Silvers Show* (1955–59) shortly after its American airing. ITV's show *The Army Game* (1957–61) chronicled the lives of a group of army recruits at Hut 29, SOD (Surplus Ordnance Department), near the (fictional) village of Nether Hopping in Staffordshire. These workshy recruits dealt with the everyday running of their camp whilst trying to outwit fierce Sergeant Major Bullimore (William Hartnell).

Rogers and Thomas settled on wanting Norman Hudis to construct a screenplay that parodied National Service life. The finished script became *Carry On Sergeant*. Hudis was happy to write his first out-and-out comedy and whilst Rogers says 'There might have been a couple of things that trickled into the film', most notably 'Bob Monkhouse's character being called up on the day of his marriage and, deprived of his wedding-night consummation, smuggling his bride into the army camp', the main thrust of the story was Hudis' alone.[10]

A recognisable cast included William Hartnell as Sergeant Grimshawe, following his role in *The Army Game*. Rogers admitted that although Hartnell may not have fitted into the later movies, he was 'ideal for the job of sergeant – nobody else could have done it better'.[11] Well-known and well-liked actors Charles Hawtrey, Kenneth Williams and Kenneth Connor exhibited their usual character traits that cemented their *Carry On* personas, whilst Hattie Jacques, Bill Owen and Dora Bryan bulked out the cast. However, Rogers felt that the actor/light entertainer Bob Monkhouse, who had been employed at the behest of distribution com-

pany Anglo-Amalgamated, stood out as 'different' from the rest and would not have become part of the *Carry On* repertory company: 'he was very good and played his part well. It was simply because I think he stuck out too much as an individual to be part of a team'.[12] This was later reinforced when Rogers reiterated his attitude of 'the star' to the films he produced:

> I didn't particularly want high-flying characters; that wouldn't have been right because they wouldn't have fitted in. They had to be part of a team, with nobody above the title. Ever. The star of the film was *Carry On*. Everybody came underneath it.[13]

Carry On Sergeant's narrative is fairly standard. A group of misfits are conscripted into National Service. Sergeant Grimshawe wages a £50 bet with his colleagues that his final platoon will be the best of the year. Their first weeks are an absolute disaster, but once cod-psychology is applied to the group by the haughty Bailey (Williams), they transform into highly efficient military personnel who beat the other platoon in a series of training exercises. As Grimshawe picks up his bet and the men either leave for pastures new or return to civilian life, he is presented with a cigarette lighter 'from the boys.

Despite this simplicity, the film is worthy of analysis in four key aspects: historical contextuality linked to world events; the role of the male when linked to the battle between authority and the 'everyman'; the battle of the sexes; and, finally, how the film influenced the whole *Carry On* canon.

Marr argues that 'National Service mingled and disciplined much of a generation of post-war manhood and helped therefore set the tone of the times', reasoning that the 1950s was 'imaginatively gripped by the Second World War' and that whilst there was consensus in the air, National Service managed to keep the 'spirit' of the 1940s alive. Marr saw the Britain of the 1950s as a place where schoolboys wore caps, young women wore smocks, a moustache is a fashion-accessory statement and most women were still housewives.[14]

However, conscription ensured that the class system in Britain partially eroded. *All* classes were conscripted. The intermingling of working, middle and upper classes became commonplace, and everyone was *supposedly* the same in the army induction process. Whatever antagonism was felt between the classes could technically be wiped away. Marr saw this as having a positive effect on the country: with classes mixed, the sarcasm and anti-authority anger that arose from these clashes ensured that a sense of

authority for all had become the norm.[15] People could now be equals. This suggests that films could construct a debate whereby class was investigated directly. In terms of *Carry On Sergeant*, this idea of a nation losing its grip on world power may seem stretched too far, but the filmmakers are saying that Britain still had a part to play in military conflicts around the world and, in particular, in protecting notions of empire.

The film begins with a strident militaristic-style score playing over the main titles. The titles are written in blunt army font and on packing crates. The opening scene is of newlyweds at a wedding reception. The groom, Charlie Sage, receives his 'call-up' papers. His honeymoon is curtailed and this is the first time in the *Carry On* films that sexual failure, or rather the lack of having sex, is mentioned. The fact that the very first image of the whole canon is set in a wedding and of the wedding-night failed nuptials sets the tone of the series: the scene's connotations are of failure, and this resonates through all of the films that followed it.

Charlie travels by train to the barracks and *en route* he meets another conscriptee, Horace Strong, a hypochondriac. Here is the film's first word-by-play, with Strong and hypochondria as two sides of the character's psychological make-up. Later films use much more blatant signifiers of sexual or physical content – Daphne Honeybutt (*Spying*), Senna Pod (*Cleo*), Chief Big Heap (*Cowboy*), Gladstone Screwer (*Again Doctor*), WC Boggs (*At Your Convenience*) and Big Dick (*Dick*) – which emphasises two things: character style/traits and a link to Freudian emphasis on wordplay.

An important aspect of all the *Carry On* films is class warfare. It is in one of the opening scenes of *Carry On Sergeant* that this first occurs. A sports car pulls up to the barracks: in it are a young and beautiful woman dressed in a fur coat and her boyfriend, a tall, erudite man in his late twenties. Sergeant Grimshawe walks up to the car and salutes, asking if the young man would like him to take his suitcase towards the Officer's rooms. Miles Heywood replies with a clipped accent and aristocratic charm: 'Thank you, Sergeant.' Grimshawe takes the suitcase. Miles kisses his girlfriend goodbye. Once this is done, the two men set off in an army truck. When it reaches its destination, the two men disembark and Grimshawe points to the Officer's Mess. Heywood replies: 'And very nice it looks, too. But I happen to be a National Serviceman.' The sergeant does a comedic double take, shoves the suitcase into the man's midriff and screams at him to: 'Get in the back of that truck, will you, fast!' The message is twofold: the working-class sergeant has been duped by the middle-class man; and to

re-assert his authority, the sergeant can only shout at him, feeling superior once he has done so.

The next sequence sees all the major characters introduced. The Sergeant introduces himself and Corporal Copping to them. The set-up is in the army barracks, with two rows of beds and cupboards on the outer sides, with communal tables in the middle. Grimshawe walks along the line of conscripts and stops at some of them. One of the beds is empty. Grimshawe asks Copping who and where this man is. It is Peter Golightly (Charles Hawtrey). Golightly runs in a mincing fashion into the barracks, knocking over the corporal as he does so. Golightly apologises to the Sergeant and stands by his bed:

Grimshawe: Where have you been?
Golightly: Well, I, um, I got locked in somewhere. Have you hurt yourself?
(Golightly sees Copping rubbing his arms where Golightly hit him)
Horace: I've got some lotion 'ere.
Grimshawe: Quiet, the lot of you!

Another voice is heard off-screen. At the words 'Stop shouting, please', everyone turns around to see a new character reclining on his bed. Smartly dressed, with collar and tie, a pullover and a sports jacket, this character is James Bailey (Kenneth Williams). The sergeant moves towards him:

Grimshawe: You there!
Bailey: Is that remark addressed to me?
Grimshawe: Stand to attention when I am talking.
Bailey: Why?
Grimshawe:
Why? Don't ask why. Do as you're told. You're in the army.
(Bailey stands to confront the sergeant)
Bailey: Not quite. I'm still a civilian. With civilian rights. Don't shout.
(Bailey puts his hand to his ear)
Grimshawe: What is your name? (Pause) Please.
Bailey: Bailey. James Bailey. How do you do?
Grimshawe: Fine. Absolutely bloody fine. But I'll feel even better once you're in uniform.
Bailey: Thank you, sergeant.
(Grimshawe looks back at Bailey, tells the men to get ready for kit-collection and then leaves)

Whilst this scene introduces the main characters, class/social warfare is evident. In the army the soldiers/conscripts are all equal. However, the sequence is confirmation that class warfare *does* exist in the army and that the working-class Sergeant is confronted and beaten by both Miles outside the barracks and Bailey within it. The fact that Grimshawe has to say 'Please' to get Bailey to listen and answer him reveals his inadequacy towards his intellectually superior, though lesser-ranked colleague. The *Carry On* ethos of mocking authority figures had begun in earnest and was to remain a staple ingredient of each and every film in the canon.

Later, the soldiers are drill marching. They halt when their commanding officer, Captain Potts approaches. He inspects the platoon, stopping at certain individuals asking them their names and serial numbers. Strong says he can only think of blood—his blood; Sage thinks of his wife, Mary. Potts berates them all as inefficient. He then approaches Bailey.

Potts: You.
Bailey: Yes?
Potts: Who are you?
Bailey: Bailey, James. BSc. Economics.
Potts: Your number, man.
Bailey: I'm not proud of it, it was given to me. I earned my degree.
Potts: Your rank!
Bailey: Well, that's a matter of opinion.
(Potts points to his own military pips on his jacket)
Potts: Look at this, man.
Bailey: You've got nothing to complain of. Look at the suit they've given me. (Picks at his jacket and pulls at his beret) Look at this plumped on my head without even the pretence of fitting. As a good soldier I accepted it without complaint. As a good officer, what do you think?
Potts: Well, pride in appearance plus confidence in one's superiors equals good start. Fall out. Get yourself a new hat.
Bailey: Thank you. (He leaves the shot)
Potts: Of course. What?

The way in which this simple exchange of dialogue is filmed is interesting. Whilst economically made and with little fuss, most shots are in medium-wide shot positions, the camera placed to capture and emphasise the actor's words and not image. The two classes are seen as oppositional (they are facing each other) and similar inasmuch as they are given equal screen time and space. More importantly, it becomes apparent that Bailey is

either a working-class man who has risen through university life to become an academic scholar 'forced' into his incumbent situation, or that he was of middle-class standing and therefore conscripted army life becomes a 'chore' that must be done if he is to return to his life in academia.

It is only later in the film that Bailey realises he can help the platoon to become a single unit with one outlook. *He* cements the unit into that position towards the end of the film when he promotes teamwork to beat the other squads. Arguably Bailey is the most important character inasmuch as he gels the group unite a now-common-man with a common goal. Williams never played anything other than a character like Bailey. Rather than one who resisted authority, he became the establishment figure ripe for debasing.

As Potts moves down the parade line, he stops at Miles. The camera set-up is as before, with equal time and space given to both men, but it is in the wordage employed that Potts' re-addressing of the balance of power is made. He asks Heywood if he knows General Heywood ('My father, sir'), Rear-Admiral Heywood ('My grandfather, sir') and Air-Commodore Heywood ('My uncle, sir'). Potts' face lights up as he has now found officer material for his command. This is confirmed when Potts asks Heywood a question:

> *Potts*: What's the first thing that comes into your mind?
> *Heywood*: Women, sir.
> *Potts*: You're a soldier by tradition and instinct.

This is witnessed later on when Potts asks to see Heywood in his office. Potts tells him to sign a form that will enable Heywood to progress to the position of officer without the usual formalities, as if rank and 'superior' class instincts will enable this to happen. Heywood declines the offer, looked on with some admiration by Grimshawe, whilst Potts is incredulous, stating: 'The principle of hereditary is shattered.' He cannot believe Heywood is descended from military stock. But then Heywood asks of his background, to which he says: 'Potts, Potts, Potts. Chinaware manufacturers.' This proves a point to both men that it doesn't necessarily follow that a middle/upper-class background and its inherent 'privileges' actually 'mean' anything in 1950s British society. With the army primarily led by those with titles, the film obliquely critiques this stance, arguing that *all* should be equal. Again, this proletarian approach is brought out

in every *Carry On* film, whereby the conservative authority figure has to be a part of the nation-assembly if it is to survive.

Bailey represents the catalyst for the team to unite as a single entity and he brings this out in two ways. Private Herbert Brown is always excused duty due to his apparent worthlessness to the squad. He has various excuses not to attend parade and other duties. As he brings out these little paper chitties with excuses attached to them, Strong says 'You're just a heap of chits', which becomes the nadir of Brown's life in the army. However, Bailey sits with him, showing him how to dismantle, clean and re-assemble a rifle. Brown tackles this and succeeds, and then proceeds to learn how to complete his 'webbing' duties. These moments, emphasised through straightforward camerawork and editing, indicates how important both teamwork and individualism are for this society. With consensus still on the political agenda, the two men work side by side to accomplish a task. Whilst it could legitimately be argued that the filmmakers have imposed their own rigid class structure onto the film inasmuch as Bailey (middle class) is demonstrating his cultural 'superiority' over Herbert (working class), it could also be seen that this is an attempt at an egalitarian communism of sorts, where both men are now equals. On the one hand there is Bailey (bourgeois) and on the other there is Brown (proletariat). In the confines of this sequence, the two classes *have to* interact and are mutually beneficial to one another's survival.

This is never more evident than in the unit's final series of tests. Bailey gathers the men together, informing them that Grimshawe has tried to use psychology on the men in order to get the best out of them. Because of this, the men should try their best on the parade and battleground. Within seconds, they are transformed into a military machine, capable of swinging across ravines, shooting rifles with 100 per cent accuracy, charging with bayonets extended and hitting their targets with ease, and, above all else, marching with military discipline and precision. This cod-psychological approach by Bailey to turn the men from useless to useful seems to have both a masculine and historical aspect.

With regards to the historical approach, the men of the platoon are all linked in terms of one common goal: they are representing the nation state through the 'safety' of violence, cementing the idea that *British* soldiers are the best trained and equipped in the world. They are reflections of Britain trying to regain its footing on the world stage. Whereas the men are comedic and often seen as 'useless' (for example, Horace's whimpering

at his supposed ailments are figments of his imagination), they come to represent the male post-Suez Crisis, representative of a new fighting force that is at once traditional yet modern in its approach.

This approach is particularly evident in one scene. During a bout of training, the men take it in turns to bayonet a dummy swinging on a gibbet. Each man runs towards the dummy, stabs it and returns to the men. Horace drops his rifle and the bayonet sticks into the ground, narrowly missing Grimshawe's foot. The second man, guitar-playing Andy Galloway, can't remove his bayonet from the dummy. Charlie loses his bayonet in the dummy. Miles runs past the dummy and into the distance. Bailey charges at the dummy, hitting it with precision. He then turns and talks to Grimshawe:

> *Bailey*: Don't you think this is a trifle out of date, sergeant for a world bristling with H-Bombs?
> *(A scream rings out. The two men jump back as Private Golightly runs past them and hits the mannequin with incredible force. The bayonet sticks into the dummy and Golightly still tries to stab at it)*
> *Golightly*: Now then, you beast, peasant, commoner. Have at you! Varlet. Hand back that cup final ticket!
> *Grimshawe*: Private Bailey, in answer to your question, I'd back him against the H-Bomb any day.
> *Golightly*: You beast, peasant, commoner!
> *Grimshawe*: Well, don't just stand there, help me get him out!
> *(They both go to help Golightly, but he tries to shrug them off saying, 'Get off, it's my turn.'*

The H-Bomb was a real and pervasive threat during the Cold War. Britain's Operation Grapple (1956–58) had dropped nine atomic bombs into the atmosphere near to both Christmas Island and Malden Island in the Pacific Ocean as a show of strength. In the confines of *Carry On Sergeant*, the fact that H-Bombs are mentioned shows that breaking headlines and news made it into the film. Britain's own nuclear station, Windscale, had on 10 October 1957 released masses of radioactive contamination into the countryside only a year prior to the release of the film. It is no coincidence that *Sergeant* makes a reference to H-Bombs, and the film is just as important in using its comedy to suggest notions of a declining empire as films such as *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (1961), which uses nuclear catastrophe as its main narrative thrust.

Whilst the *Carry On* films use both historical and class warfare approaches, undoubtedly the core idea behind them is that of a sexual battle. When Talbot Rothwell took over the writing duties from Hudis, the battle became an exaggerated playground in which men and women were directly referenced from the world of Donald McGill and his postcards. Hudis did use this approach, but in a more muted way. The caricatures of McGill are there from the very beginning of *Sergeant*: the ineffectual husband; the weak-willed but ultimately virile man; the effeminate; and the educated 'snobbish' bookworm. Also, the two female characters, whilst occupying only minimal screen time, are a vital component of the narrative and prove just as interesting for study.

Mary Sage and Nora represent idealistic young/not-so-young love, but simultaneously come to represent the McGill caricatures. Mary is the young love interest. She is beautiful, chaste, but desperate to be loved; Nora is older and more experienced, but love has passed her by. She is willing to take any man who fulfils her innermost desire to be wanted. Whilst Mary has the young, good-looking Charlie, Nora sets her sights on Horace, despite his being terrified of her.

Whilst Mary and Charlie look lovingly at each other through a window, Nora's look of love for Horace is not returned and he stares terrified at her. On the one hand, there is Charlie and Mary, still yet to consummate their legitimate relationship and blissfully in love; at one point they attempt a kiss, only stopped by the intervening pane of glass. On the other hand, Horace is terrified of Nora. Whilst Mary and Charlie are married, Horace is not. When Horace first encounters Nora in the NAAFI, she smiles and asks: 'Anything I can do for you, soldier?' In a medium close-up shot, Horace looks genuinely frightened by her proposition and quickly runs out. Whilst Charlie and Mary accept their marriage has not got off to the best start, Horace tries desperately to avoid Nora, at one point running out of the canteen at speed past Grimshawe and Copping, to which the sergeant says: 'At least he can do something well.'

However, by the end of the film, Horace has undergone a series of tests (both medical and psychological) that prove his manliness. He realises that Nora is the woman for him, which is confirmed when he says: 'Nora … Phwoar!' He runs back to the NAAFI and swaggers into the canteen. With the jukebox playing, he pushes open the door. He enters and shoves two soldiers out of his way. He begins to walk from the back of the shot and into the foreground.

Horace: Come 'ere!
Nora: Whatever is the matter with you, Horace? Are you ill or something?
Horace: Ill? Me? Cor, your marbles must be loose.
Nora: Whatever's happened to you, Horace?
Horace: Answer the question, kid. Wanna be my doll?
Nora: Doll?
Horace: Yeah. But not the type that squeals 'mama' when I squeeze her. Okay?
Nora: I'll have to have time to think about it.
(Horace leaps over the counter and grabs her around her waist)
Horace: Okay, think. Time's up. Through there. Move.
Nora: Oh, Horace.

This change in Horace's outlook to Nora is not a logical conclusion to marriage in the McGill-Carry *On* oeuvre of later outings. Charlie and Mary want marriage. So does Nora. The only one to originally resist is Horace. By the end of the film, Horace has taken 'control' of his and Nora's destiny and it is assumed that they will, at first, be happily married. This was to change over the context of the entire series. Marriage is something some may want to achieve (although it would appear that in most instances, it is the 'chase' that counts for more than marriage itself), but once it has been done, the only existence one has is of tolerance towards the partner.

Therefore, it becomes noticeable that Horace and Nora are prototypes for such later *Carry On* couples as Caesar and Calpurnia (*Cleo*), Soper and Matron (*Camping*), Sidney and Emily Bung (*Screaming!*), Vic and Cora Flange *(Abroad*) and the ultimate married, squabbling, bored, frustrated couple, Mayor Frederick Bumble and his harridan wife Mildred in *Girls*. That the final shots of *Sergeant* see both couples in the back of an army truck is a 'rounded' end to all these characters within the narrative. All is content within their conservative world. Even Grimshawe feels proud of his last unit. They present him with a cigarette lighter, with a small note saying: 'For Sgt. Grimshawe. From the Boys.' As this image comes into focus, the music swells from a gentle repeat of the main theme to the more robust militaristic march heard at the beginning of the film. Grimshawe almost smiles and the truck trundles out of the compound.

Whilst this film may have only been conceived as a one-off production, it became apparent that a winning formula had been struck. British audiences liked their comedies to have a warmth and cosiness about them; the

first *Carry On* film has this in abundance. Whether this is easy to say with hindsight is open to debate, but whilst it does have an air of satire about it, most jokes are well worn and repeated from other films or TV series. Because of a familiar storyline that could be easily related to, and with recognisable and well-beloved actors, the film was an immediate financial success and *Carry On Nurse* was soon being planned, written and filmed.

Carry On Sergeant was released in August 1958. The film's press book cover bills it as 'The Funniest Film of the Year', whilst other banner headlines such as 'All laughter entertainment that all the family will love' and 'a great new British comedy with terrific appeal for all the family' appear throughout the book.[16]

The book suggested various tie-ins to help promote it, including shopkeepers displaying signs with: 'Shop … for the *bargains* of the year. For the *laughter* of the year, see *Carry On Sergeant* at the … cinema this week!' Cinema managers were encouraged to liaise with local army recruitment officers to plug the film with possible parades to emphasise: 'It's more fun today in the regular army—For *still more* fun, see *Carry On Sergeant* at the … Cinema this week!' There was also a suggestion that an army slang competition be done with the local 'Top Brass' to judge the winner; there is no evidence to suggest that *this* idea was taken up by cinema managers.[17]

Reviews were equal in both their praise and condemnation of the film. *Kinematograph Weekly* wrote that *Sergeant* was 'a bright and breezy Service extravaganza'[18] and *The Observer*'s film critic, Penelope Huston, labelled it as 'commendably brisk and played with great determination'.[19] Other favourable reviews claimed it was 'on parade for lots of laughs in a Service farce the way we like 'em. Cannot fail to hit the bull's-eye in popular houses'[20] and that 'every old sweat and every young sweat in the Service will revel in it'.[21] Some negative reviews concentrated on the staleness of the situations and the comedy. *Monthly Film Bulletin* poured faint praise onto the film, singling out Hawtrey and Hartnell for being able to 'provide some genuine laughs [whilst] … The rest of the humour is either overdone or half-baked'.[22] Other negative comments included 'a modest, unimportant film',[23] 'not terribly funny'[24] and, perhaps most damning of all, Campbell Dixon wrote that William Hartnell was 'a sad human being lost in a charade', whilst the rest of the cast were merely 'stock figures speaking lines rising from the smutty to the banal'.[25]

Despite this negativity, the public flocked to the film. Webber seems to sum up the appeal of the movie:

> It is clear that *Sergeant* has aged well, unlike so many other films from the same period. The warmth and subtle humour, which combined with fine performances and slick production, help retain the film's accessibility; watching it now is just as entertaining as it was for the millions who crammed into the cinemas up and down the country back in 1958.[26]

It was obvious that the team had a hit on their hands. Comedy was much sought-after in the post-war years for obvious reasons, and even though *Sergeant* was released 13 years after the conflict ended, it was still important inasmuch as it both helped to bring contextual notions of conflict (conscription and the Cold War threat of nuclear Armageddon) and feelings of nostalgia (either through communal comradeship or a genuine feeling of hatred towards the ideas of conscription) into the open.

The audience of the late 1950s was still used to the cosiness of earlier comedy and war films, and this one proved no different for them. It straddled both the comedy and war genres with aplomb, and was both funny and questioning. The film tapped into the 1950s and all its social and cultural foibles of deference. Added to this mix was the way in which the film tackled gender and its perceived role in British society. Whilst the roles of Mary and Nora were limited to fulfilling their positions within the domestic sphere (in this case the army canteen) in menial and low-paid jobs, they begin to achieve their McGillian roles as the objects of sexual desire, whilst Captain Clark's position of medical in authority paves the way for her role as Matron in later outings. With regards to the men's roles, they came to represent the mingling and mixing of both idealistic and realistic themes of Britain's rigid social class system being. From a class perspective, Bailey represented the middle classes through his degree in academia, his own haughtiness and in his attitudes towards the army. At the opposite end of the scale, Herbert Brown's lack of social grace, etiquette and inabilities at the most mundane tasks single him out, which the filmmakers see as distinctly working class. Whilst this may seem condescending, it does offer the idea that despite there being a rigid social division both within the film and the wider social sphere, conscription was a chance for *all* classes to become fused into one unit, for better or worse. That all the men leave together at the end of the film remains important: their utopian collective has endured, and this becomes passed from film to film.

With a smash hit on their hands, another comedy was called for and *Carry On Nurse* was released in 1959. Based on the play *Ring for Catty* and the real-life stories told to Hudis by his wife Rita, it concerned life

in a male general ward at a cottage hospital. Much of the same cast appeared and again there was a British institution ripe for demolition: the NHS. Such was the popularity of *Carry On Nurse* (it was the team's only bona fide box office hit in America) that more *Carry On*s were demanded for. And so the *Carry On* saga had begun. Over the next 20 years, they became a British institution capable of questioning the fabric of British society. *Carry On Sergeant*, despite lacking the more anarchic, pun-laden, sexually awakening and free-wheeling style of the later films, is without doubt the progenitor of the canon. That it is often overlooked is a shame. The film is both a comedy and a war film and comments upon a British society that was being eroded as the decade moved from the austerity and deference of the Fifties into the more liberated Swinging Sixties. Whilst it might not be as memorable as others in the series, the fact that it tackled important issues either obliquely or directly and was a direct influence on every other movie in the canon is an indication of how important this minor-budgeted film is.

Notes

1. See Murphy (2005) for an interesting look at the role of the war film in British cinema history.
2. Hill (1986), p. 13.
3. Street (2009), p. 75.
4. Ibid.
5. Mackenzie (2001).
6. Chapman (1998b).
7. Murphy (2005), p. 78.
8. Chapman (1998a).
9. Rattigan (1994) p. 150.
10. Chapman (1998a), p. 24.
11. Ibid., p. 26.
12. Ibid., p. 27.
13. Webber (2008), p. 26.
14. Marr (2007), p. 115.
15. Ibid., p. 117.
16. See Webber (2008), pp. 40–41 and the relevant trade releases/books housed at the British Film Institute library.
17. Press Book for *Carry On Sergeant* held at the British Film Institute library.

18. Review in *Kinematograph Weekly*, 7 August 1958.
19. Penelope Huston, *The Observer*, 21 September 1958.
20. Review in the *Daily Cinema*, 6 August 1958.
21. Review in the *News of the World*, 21 September 1958.
22. Review in *Monthly Film Bulletin*, September 1958.
23. Review in *Variety*, 24 September 1958.
24. Hollis Alpert, *Saturday Review*, 7 September 1958.
25. Campbell Dixon, *Daily Telegraph*, 20 September 1958.
26. Webber (2008), pp. 41–42.

CHAPTER 5

Heroes, Rogues and Fools: The *Carry On* Men

As has been demonstrated, the importance of the music hall, saucy postcards and the lineage of British film comedy were part and parcel of the *Carry On* films traditional heritage. Across 31 films, they held at their core the ethos of utopian collectiveness, of battling against conservative figures of authority and of having fun. They also remained steadfastly British in their outlook, often commenting on the contextual and filmic worlds around them. Even though the times were changing, the series blithely carried on taking pot shots at all and sundry. They used realist and genre traits and tropes in the films as part of their narrative backdrops, but it was through the filmic treatment of both men and women, how they interact with one another, how they reflect on the social mores of the period and what they *mean* that will be the focus of this chapter and the next chapter.

Norman Hudis preferred to create characters that remained both stock and gentle in their mocking of Britain's institutions. Whilst the characters of Kenneth Williams always remained haughty, supercilious and both gently teased and ridiculed in equal manner, they still continued as part of a tradition that went back to Will Hay's seedy schoolmaster of the 1930s and 1940s. Sid James, the lovable desk sergeant in *Carry On Constable* and the sentimental captain of *Carry On Cruising*, was genuinely affable, wanting to be a part of the utopian collective. But when Talbot Rothwell took over scripting duties, he took the series into much more ribald territory. Rothwell eschewed Hudis' approach of gentle comedy and looked back to the traditions of music hall and especially McGill's postcard creations for his own screenplays. From the outset, despite *Carry On Cabby*

S. Gerrard, *The Carry On Films*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-52005-0_5

being quietly gentle in its own way, there is a definite hardening of the characters that got steadily harder as the decades wore on.

Rothwell wanted innuendo rather than cosy farce, and by incorporating some elements of the postcards directly into his work, the team made McGillian characters come alive. This does not mean that the actors were not part of this process—they were, and the work of the entire team at fleshing out Rothwell's creations remains at the cornerstone of the series. This chapter will now turn towards a brief analysis of McGill's male creations and will use case studies to demonstrate how the actors transformed both Rothwell's work and McGill's postcards into their filmic versions.

In his work on Donald McGill, the British author George Orwell argued that despite their vulgarity, McGill's caricatures have an 'indefinable familiarity' that makes them appealing.[1] Whilst they were 'deliberately ugly, the faces grinning and vacuous, the woman monstrously parodied, with bottoms like Hottentots', they reminded him of traditions harking back to Greek tragedy, where the 'sub-world of smacked bottoms and scrawny mothers-in-law [form] part of Western European consciousness'[2] and the distortion of the human form create forms of representation that simultaneously celebrate yet critique the human body.

Males remained drunkards, slum dwellers, cheating and swindling lawyers, cheapskate Scotsmen, ill-advised clergymen, rogues and want away husbands. Once pre-marital sex occurred, marriage follows, resulting in the husband becoming the red-nosed, henpecked alcoholic. Females *want* stability through the commitments of marriage. Males want to break free from these commitments. For the man, marriage eventually curtails sex, suggesting that it only works as a form of social containment. It is this aspect of marriage that makes the husband's eyes rove to younger versions of their wives. For McGill and the Carry On crew, these younger versions offer a chance for escape, but the men usually either return to their wives or fear what these younger women will become: wives.

Rogers stated that the most important element of the films was the *Carry On* moniker itself. Yet the films would *not* have been the films they are *without* the core team of familiar faces appearing. The later *Columbus* had a strong cast of new comedians and older players, but these were *not* the familiar, much-loved and missed stars like Kenneth Williams and Sid James whom the public adored. Indeed, the public's perception of these actors became so ingrained in its consciousness that each actor served a definite purpose, resulting in roles being written with particular people in

mind: James was almost always the rogue; Bresslaw was a hulk; Williams was the pompous, effeminate authority figure.

That is not to say that their roles within the canon remained fixed; they were often fluid. For example, Kenneth Connor moved from likeable family man to bumbler. However, the basic constituent characters remained throughout *all* the films in one form or another and at this point it is worth briefly considering some basic tenets of male archetypes and stereotypes in the films.

Archetypes are the original pattern or model from which all others that follow *in likeness* are based. They are found primarily in nearly all forms of art, with their instantly recognisable motifs passed from one to another with variations. Plato argued that archetypes or *forms* are real and tangible objects in society (man, woman, dog), but whilst these structures were concrete, the original became representative of the form itself, forming the basis of all other patterns that emanated from it. These original forms could be read as perfection, with the original as immutable and everything else a copy, not exact and somehow different, with different meanings and tangibility.[3]

Carl Jung felt that these original templates could be passed down through the millennia to still be used contextually and to produce different meanings. The original may still be a 'man', but it could now be 'soldier', 'banker', 'clerk', etc.[4] From his work on archetypes, Jung saw that there were identical psychological structures common to everyone, which meant that ideas of Self, Persona, Shadow and Anima/Animus were not only inherited from our predecessors, but were mutually shared *now*.[5]

Jung saw that folklore provided the cornerstone to these archetypes.[6] By looking at literature, art and theatre, he saw that common archetypes included Child, Hero, Damsel in Distress, Trickster, Devil, Mentor, Sage, Great Mother and Martyr.[7] Whilst the team may not have used these directly, there is a definite link between Jung's work and the *Carry On* characterisations. Whilst the Devil remains in *all* the team, and none really exhibits the qualities found in either Mentor or Sage, the male archetypes are generally linked to the actors as follows: the Child is Charles Hawtrey; the Hero is Jim Dale, Roy Castle, Kenneth Connor or Sid James at different points in the canon; and the Trickster is Kenneth Williams or Sid James.

Marion Jordan argues that the films' use of stereotypes forms an intrinsic part of their structure:

> The choice of stereotyping as the focus has been made partly on the intrinsic grounds that it is a central feature of the films, partly on the extrinsic

> grounds that this allows a direct confrontation with those who would dismiss the films chiefly on the grounds that they are stereotyped—and are thereby rendered cheap, vulgar and beneath consideration.[8]

This argument confines the *Carry On* series to a wilderness of clichés that only appeals to lovers of Low Art. However, according to Vicki Eves, class in British cinema is made up almost entirely of stereotypes.[9] The comedies take these stereotypes and *exaggerate* them into comedic form. Jordan admitted that her attitude to the films was ambivalent due to the idea that the films promote stereotypes, but sees a sharp divide between males and females as individuals and within groups: 'male/female, married/single, working-class/middle-class—are treated as members of different species'.[10]

Jordan's negativity categorises actors into constituent groups and, once catalogued, it is virtually impossible for them to leave these groups. Jim Dale and Kenneth Connor were 'nice young men', Sid James and Bernard Bresslaw were 'randily single', Kenneth Williams and Charles Hawtrey were 'the effeminate', and Terry Scott became 'the castrated husband',[11] and they remained blatant signifiers for an undemanding audience.

Writing about the effeminate characters, Jordan says that 'homosexual scarcely seems the right word (though it is often used) for characters so bereft of sexuality [whereby they] are presented as sickly, or even mentally deficient'.[12] Jordan misses the point of the effeminate characters completely. These characters deconstruct the 'stereotypical' portrayals of effeminacy to produce new, positive meanings from the old negative ones. Until the passing of the Sexual Offences Act in 1967, male homosexual activity was illegal. Gay men were frequently imprisoned for having consensual sex with other men. Lesbianism was not illegal, but inspired public disapproval.

British cinema sensed a means of negotiating changing attitudes towards homosexuality. Basil Dearden's *Victim* (1961) saw Dirk Bogarde as a repressed, married homosexual who takes on the blackmailers who drove his partner to suicide. Murray Melvin's superb performance in *A Taste of Honey* (1961) was successful in showing how sensitive the subject of homosexuality was, and could be discussed. In *The Leather Boys* (1964), Dudley Sutton's biker boy Pete was gay; in *The Italian Job* (1969), Tony Beckley played Camp Freddie, who 'everybody knows'; and even whilst the James Bond films were purporting to be macho throughout, Charles Gray's hints of gay sexual proclivities in *You Only Live Twice* (1967) showed

that even in Bond's hyper-masculinised world, homosexuals existed. Even though Hawtrey and Williams *were* homosexual, they *never* played homosexual characters. They were either asexual (mostly Hawtrey), had been in a male-female relationship or were chased by women, succumbing to and entering domesticity. In a private interview, Peter Rogers stated that as far as he was concerned: 'Men were men. Women were women. That was it.' However, this only emphasises just how conservative the films were. They toyed with male sexuality, but did not want to stray too far into territory that may have alienated the majority of their audience. However, the fact that the team were prepared to—at least partially—explore ideas of sexuality remains important.

The Hero, Tough Guy and Rebel … Sid James[13]

In *Carry On Loving*, Sophie Plummet (Hattie Jacques) describes her partner Sidney Bliss as 'having all the features of a desiccated coconut'. Sidney Bliss *is* Sid James and this description of his facial features is remarkably accurate. The South African born James had become a welcome stalwart of British cinema during the 1940s and 1950s, appearing in all manner of genre fare ranging from thrillers to musicals, comedies (including Ealing's output), war films and science fiction. Whilst he was never the main box office star, audiences recognised his distinctive features and although he was usually given a supporting role, he commanded attention through his skill and versatility as an actor.

James made his first *Carry On* appearance as the lovable but much put-upon sergeant Frank Wilkins in *Carry On Constable*. He then appeared in almost every one of the corresponding entries in the series until his swansong in arguably his ultimate role as the highwayman Big Dick in *Carry On Dick*. James embodied the idea of 'traditional' masculinity in the series. He exhibited traits of the hero, tough guy and rebel, and whilst the parts also saw him conforming to stereotype, farcical elements both undermined and critiqued them. In *Carry On Don't Lose Your Head* he plays the roguish but effete Sir Rodney Ffing ('two ff's') who rescues French aristocrats from the guillotine, dances with Lord Darcy Pue after being told he always 'held magnificent balls' and dressed in peasant women's apparel. As the monarch Henry VIII in *Carry On Henry*, he remains constantly thwarted by his French wife's love of garlic, fails at bedding Lady Bettina of Bristol, gets doused in water, catapulted into the air and is left holding two melons in his hands as Bettina laughs at his ineptitude.

However, even though James falls into these categories, his roles and persona create their own archetypes within the films themselves. James as *man*, *star* or *persona* is replete with meanings depending on how these elements can be read. Whilst male audiences may project their fantasies onto the character, these projections mean that the individual becomes the character in front of them, playing out a fantasy role that allows the ego to break free for that limited time. The male audience is placed in a position where they can project their ideas and feelings onto or out of him. In the case of reading James as a character, this includes ideas of femininity where James often dressed in female attire and by doing so undermined the *traditional* masculinised form. Taken to its extremes, the female fantasy figure of the male is often masculine, heroic, fatherly, loving, tender, a hunter-gatherer and the patriarchal head of the household. James was seen as the character most often pressed into action through these masculine forms. He was the heroic Captain in *Cruising*, fatherly in *Convenience*, loving and roguish in *Up the Khyber* and was the hard-drinking hunter-gatherer Bill Boozy in *Up the Jungle*. It was because he seemed to personify all these figures, whilst still remaining both a McGill-esque randy rogue and the Sid James that the public adored, that he became the metaphorical head of the *Carry On* household.

James' persona was of a tough, smoking, gambling, sexually active *man*. Off-screen he was shown to be a family man. Therefore, he had two personas. His film personas divide him further. On the one hand, he is the cocksure male, but on the other hand, he dresses in women's clothing. It becomes apparent that whilst James' roles altered across the canon, where his 'Persona' is as the lecherous older man personified, the characters that he created are a mixture of Self (especially when symbiotically linked to the male audience's subconscious desire to become rogues like him), Persona (the mask is both reflected in James' appeal to the audience and James as a construction of the media), the Ego (which enables the audience to 'become' James), and demonstrates both anima and animus. This will be demonstrated through the analysis of three key scenes.

In *Carry On Cruising* James plays Captain Crowther of the *SS Happy Wanderer*. He is the authority figure and therefore is seen as a symbol of ridicule. During the course of the film, he is kind but assertive in the way that his ship is run. His authority is given either by him sitting at his desk with his minions in front of him, above them when looking down and giving them instructions, or alongside them, where his badge of office distances him from his crew. However, there is a gentle side to this

authority, which is indicated when he gently rebuffs a female passenger who has fallen in love with him. This infers that his authority cannot be undermined and he remains as part of the conservative status quo. When this incident occurs, the character becomes a bumbling fool, unable to deal with female dominance, which undermines both his authority and his standing as Hero.

At the end of the film, the Captain states he is on his final voyage. A surprise party has been laid on in his honour. He tucks into a special cake made for him to remind him of his travel.

> *Crowther*: Ladies and gentleman, thank you very much for this gratifying party … spaghetti? You certainly seem to like travelling with me, and I certainly like travelling with you. I'm afraid … Prunes? I'm afraid that this speech isn't much considering your generosity … Chop suey? But there isn't anything else to say except thank you, very much!
> *Marchbank*: My condolences, sir.
> *Crowther*: What for?
> *Marchbank*: It appears that you didn't get the captaincy of the transatlantic run.
> *Crowther*: Oh, but I did. I don't want it. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm not very good at making speeches as you've already heard.
> *Doctor*: Here, here!
> *Crowther*: But I do know the difference between ferrying passengers and running a cruise. Now there's a good feeling about looking after people who are out to enjoy themselves. I mean, on a trip like this we are all on the same boat. So, what else can I do but carry on cruising!
> *Doctor*: There's just one thing, Captain. Will you marry me? I mean, will you marry us?

Throughout this sequence, Crowther/James remains centre of the shot, and there are two possible readings of this one sequence. The first is that he is still the figure of authority, as seen in his dress code with its starched collar, bow tie, epaulettes and ironed shirt. Yet it is this authority that is undermined when he eats the cake. His contorted features ridicule his status. However, the Captain remains in a position of power at the end of this sequence. His minions have no sense of power and only function within the authoritative confines of the Captain's orders. The status quo has been maintained. That the authority figure is presented as *likeable* indicates that in the conservative philosophy of the *Carry On* films, the authority figure must always (however ridiculed) be seen as still occupying

that position of power. Unlike the later *Convenience*, here the authority figure is gently mocked, whilst still remaining a resonant part of the utopian-collective.

When James became an established member of the *Carry On* team, his roles visibly changed. For *Constable*, *Regardless*, *Cruising* and *Cabby*, he was a family man, albeit a metaphorical one who headed a team of hapless individuals. But in *Cleo*, James' tough guy persona, which had been seen in films like *The Small Back Room* (1949), demonstrated how he could move from lighter to heavier roles. James plays Mark Antony to Kenneth Williams' Caesar. He is a tough disciplinarian, fights, conquers and is prepared to remove Caesar from office, stating 'He has *got* to go!' when the Emperor is mocked by a partisan crowd.

Even though he is dressed in armour as Mark Antony, Sid James is still Sid James the actor and persona. In true *Carry On* tradition, the two become mixed. Therefore, James' persona of tough guy is evident, but simultaneously his 'authority' as Mark Antony makes him fallible and a target for ridicule. On the battlefield he complains about the weather and when he puts his helmet on, rainwater falls out of it, drenching him. This fallibility endears him to the audience: *we* feel *superior* to him, yet at the same time identification takes place between spectator and character through this pre-text knowledge of James *the myth*.

In the McGill world, he is the rogue at this point in the canon. He leers after slave-girls, pats them on their bottoms, is muscular, physically fit and uses his staff of office as a symbol of his manhood and virility. Yet when he meets Cleopatra for the first time, he crumbles when faced with the possibility of sex:

> *Scene*: Cleopatra's antechamber. Mark Antony and his Sergeant Major are waiting to see her.
> *Mark Antony*: Right, when we get in there, no messing about. She has got to go. And if she won't go quietly (He raises his sword from its scabbard)
> *Sgt Major*: Look, Sir. I've no stomach for this sort of thing. I've never made war on women.
> *Mark Antony*: Well, then, it's high time you started, mate. They're a dead menace. Anytime there's a bit of trouble you can bet your bottom sestertii there's a woman behind it.
> *Sgt Major*: Yeah, well I still don't like it.
> *Mark Antony*: You're too soft, that's your trouble. Leave it to me. I know how to handle this ambitious battleaxe. She's too big for her boots, that's her trouble.

The two men are filmed centre of screen, with alternating shots between them. They are both placed on an equal footing with one another, and the respect is there to see. The only time Mark Antony becomes the authority figure is when he is placed in a single shot and raises his arm in gesture. As he points, he discusses the 'dead menace' of women, indicating that even in the Roman world, the McGill ethos shines through. This is then demonstrated further in the following scene:

Scene: Cleopatra's chamber. She is bathing.
Mark Antony: Right, miss, I'll come straight to the point. I … um.
Cleopatra: Yes?
Cleopatra: Is there something I can do for you?
Sgt Major: Go on, tell her. You know. She's getting too big for her boots.
Mark Antony: Boots? What boots?
Sgt Major: Caesar's orders. She's got to go.
Mark Antony: Go?
Sgt Major: Go. Yeah. Gotta go.
Mark Antony: (Offers his hand to the Sergeant Major) Goodbye then.
Sgt Major: Not me. Her!
Mark Antony: Eh? Oh yes. Yes. Now look, I'm very sorry, miss, but I've had my orders. Madam, I (huge close up and leering laugh)
Cleopatra: Oh please don't apologise. I could forgive a handsome visitor.
Mark Antony: Eh? Who? What handsome visitor? Oh, me!
Sgt Major: I thought you knew how to handle women.
Mark Antony: Well, I do. It's all right. Now look, miss. I have come from Rome at Caesar's express bidding to get…
Cleopatra: Just one moment. If you are going to get cross with me, I'll just slip into something a little more comfortable. If you don't mind?
(She leaves her bath, wraps a bath towel around herself and turns back to the men)
Cleopatra: Now, that's better.
(The Sergeant Major looks at Mark Antony, who has collapsed on the floor. A muted horn plays a 'Wah! Wah!' on the soundtrack)

Evidently Mark Antony/Sid James undergoes a transformation. In the first instance the character discusses women as in the McGill tradition. By calling women 'a dead menace', he indicates that the female is a definite threat to the male. Calling the Sergeant Major 'mate' emphasises that they have to become a united force if they are to kill Cleopatra. Read from a male perspective, the female is emasculating through the threat or the

promise of sex. The Sergeant Major balks at this idea and Mark Antony assumes dominance/male alpha in this scene.

However, when confronted by Cleopatra's near-naked body, the soldiers both stop dead in their tracks. The crosscutting between Mark Antony and Cleopatra, where close-ups are employed alongside two shots of the men looking at her, plays out like a McGill postcard writ large. With minimal dialogue, emphasis is placed on the body and the face. That James gives out his trademark laugh (itself a signature tune for the whole series) reiterates the fact that the female is using her body as an alluring entrapment for the weak-willed male. In the *Carry On* world, where suggestiveness loomed around every corner, the emphasis on the promise of sex through 'the chase' is all-important at this point. Mark Antony becomes undone by his pursuit of Cleopatra before it has even started, and in a moment he faints. Whilst the music emphasises his fall, the important point for James at this point in the *Carry On* timeline is that although he may be seen as the alpha male and the rogue, he is seduced by a younger woman who places him in a position of inferiority to her. Whilst it may be the McGill male fantasy, whereby the rogue/older man lusts after the younger woman, the actual physical aspect of it is too much for the male form to bear. As such, his faint is the only logical outcome for the McGill older male.

The next scene sees her and Mark Antony some time after having sex. He leaves her bedroom and slumps against a wall. His immaculate uniform is now untidy, his hair a mess, and he has large grin on his face. In the McGill world, as in *Cleo*, it becomes apparent that once sex has been achieved, there is nothing left for the male to do now except remain both a redundant and spent force, with the female now assuming command. This command has taken place in two ways: Cleopatra has Antony kill for her and she has also conquered him in the bedroom. She has proved stronger than him and, as such, has reduced her lover to a gibbering, clapped-out, physical wreck.

Set in the world of the rain-drenched seaside resort of Fircombe, *Carry On Girls* saw an older Sid James play the crooked town councillor, Sid Fiddler. Despite having both domesticity and a middle-aged fiancé (Joan Sims), he yearns for his younger years and lusts after young women and freedom. There are mixed messages in his character and it becomes apparent that not only was James 'stuck' in this mould of lecherous, older (father?) figure, but also that his masculinity had become more emasculated than previously. This had been coming for some time. In *Convenience* he was

the older, settled husband within the domestic sphere. Despite *wanting* sex with his neighbour, the pull of domesticity and the threat to its disruption curtailed any *possible* engagement with sex outside the marital sphere. Here, however, he is constantly trying to break free from these confines, and the only way in which this can be attained is to chase and hopefully have sex with the younger female.

Domesticity represents the curtailment of Fiddler's freedom. In a scene where his fiancée Connie is talking to him in her office, his passivity becomes his dominant feature. He takes on a passive role, asking for her forgiveness for his involvement in organising a beauty pageant. He tries to placate her by saying that the contest 'was done for you, sweetheart' and that the publicity will result in more trade for the hotel and Fircombe. When he says he would do anything for her, she bluntly retorts: 'Anything except marriage.' Fiddler almost imperceptibly backs away from her. Marriage is something that women want and men avoid in the *Carry On* world.

Later on in the film, Hope Springs (Barbara Windsor) enters Sid's hotel bedroom.[14] Sid succeeds in getting her to sit on his bed. However, in true farcical tradition, Connie interrupts their canoodling. Hope hides in the bedroom closet. Connie walks straight to it and finds Hope wearing a trilby, jeans, an open waistcoat and a pair of braces but no shirt, thus emphasizing her breasts. James/Fiddler becomes the passive figure and his swagger deflates. Connie, as both holder and keeper of the domestic sphere, reinforces her authority to become the dominant character. As she leaves, Sid tries to follow her. As the door slams against his nose, a 'honk' is heard on the soundtrack. Like *Cleo* before it, the use of sound is important in emphasising his character's physical destruction. This incongruity helped accentuate the comedic situation in what is essentially a serious matter: the destruction of 'family'. Whereas Hope represents a form of freedom and emancipation for Fiddler inasmuch as the man is temporarily 'allowed' to escape from domesticity, he still *needs* to seek solace and comfort in the arms of the domestic holder. Again the female remains stronger than the male.

At the end of the film, however, the status quo is not maintained and ends in dislocated fracture for Sid, Hope and Connie. As Fiddler and Hope ride off into the distance, they seemingly escape from the clutches of both the law and domesticity. Yet this climax ends in narrative disturbance. In many of the *Carry On* films, James' character reverts back into traditional roles within the household where he re-assumes his position as both

provider of financial security (*Convenience* and *Abroad*) and as the figure of male dominance (*Up the Jungle* and *Dick*). Here, however, this has not occurred. By riding off with Hope and leaving all the money from the contest with Connie, the future is only one of uncertainty and destabilisation. The older man has fulfilled his fantasy by bedding a younger woman (this also occurs in his final role in *Dick*), but this fantasy can only lead to freedom for a limited time. Either the law will catch up with Fiddler or he will be 'forced' into the domestic sphere once again with Hope. Whilst his immediate future is 'safe', the long-term outlook for him is bleak.

Instability is the key to James' later roles, both in reflecting archetypal attributes and then overturning them. Across the range of films, Sid James is almost always invariably the *Carry On* Persona of Sid. Whilst the filmmakers do not readily attempt to alter his on-screen alter ego too much, his roles within the series do alter. Most fit into 'rogue' category, particularly in *Carry On Henry*, in which he plays Henry VIII as a bawdy, debauched monarch. However, whilst James may always *appear* to be James the alpha male, it becomes apparent that his comic creations range across the McGill catalogue and reflect/overturn Jung's archetypes.

When James began appearing in the series, his roles were softer, but as the series 'progressed' under Rothwell's scripts, his characters hardened. They were still playful and worked within the confines of both farce and McGill traditions, but as James got older and the series moved into the harsher 1970s and away from the 'playfulness' of the 1960s, the characters he played remained essentially the same: static. As such, when Fiddler is seen leering after young women in *Girls* and eventually bedding his fantasy figure of Barbara Windsor in his last outing, the laughter remains frozen on one's face. Gone is the frivolity of *Cleo* and in its place seems to be a caricatured version of James himself.

The Everyman and Hero Transformed … Jim Dale and Kenneth Connor

The archetypal story of the Hero is that he will break free from the constraints of childhood and adolescence by leaving home and embarking on an adventure that sees him transform into a mythical Hero figure. He will undertake a series of tasks that will eventually gain him status as Hero and attain some form of prize, usually in the form of a maiden or keys to a kingdom, to reflect that prestige. Whilst British cinema certainly had

its fair share of traditional heroes during the 1950s and into the 1960s, with the likes of Sean Connery's James Bond or Peter Cushing's Van Helsing as exemplars of saving the day, the *Carry On* films use their hero in a different way. They do exhibit signs of bravery (Albert Poop-Decker fights pirates in *Jack* and Constable Gorse saves the day in *Constable*), but then revert to cowardice or conformity at the end of the narrative. Whilst the traditional hero very rarely strayed from being the 'hero', those in the *Carry On* fold do. They see the Everyman transformed *into* the role of Hero.

Jim Dale

Dale appeared in 11 *Carry On* films and in almost all of them he played a Hero. Whether he was the bungling buffoon of *Carry On Cowboy* or the conniving trickster in *Carry On Again Doctor*, his angular body and chaotic mannerisms (usually when confronted by the female) both cements and overturns the classic archetypal Hero. Dale follows the traditional Hero trajectory with his character often overcoming a series of obstacles. For example, in *Carry On Doctor*, head surgeon Dr Tinkle becomes the monster who attempts to get Dr Kilmore sacked from his position as house doctor, whilst the objective is to get Kilmore reinstated to the hospital in order to achieve his goal. The 'goal' for Dale's Hero was usually domesticity. For example, in *Carry On Screaming!*, he finds comfort in the conservative world of marriage, but this becomes fractured. In *Carry On Follow That Camel*, he plays Bertram Oliphant (B.O.) West who marries Jane, his Damsel, only to raise Kommandant Burger's child as his own.[15]

Even though Dale was the main driving force in *Carry On Columbus* and almost single-handedly rescued the film from its own mediocrity, his role of Dr Kilmore remains his archetypal one and amply demonstrates his characters' foibles as both Everyman and Hero across his appearances in the canon. Kilmore is a doctor and therefore fulfils the role of Hero by saving the lives of his patients. However, he is constantly breaching the usual order of events that would cement his narrative status as Hero, so he becomes Everyman.

As Kilmore runs across the road and climbs onto the roof of the nursing home to rescue Nurse May, his angular physique is accentuated, becoming something mechanical living within a living creature.[16] When he climbs

out onto the roof, his vertigo kicks in, thus negating his status as Hero. This is accentuated when he slides down the roof to try and rescue Sandra, but she thinks he is a Peeping Tom, which becomes incongruous inasmuch as 'we' know Kilmore to be the (Jungian) Hero. Nurse Clarke helps Kilmore. She climbs down after him and tells him to 'climb up her' to safety. He grabs on to her skirt, which then rips and he slowly slides back down the roof. Luckily the material hooks onto a loose tile. Rather than be the liberator, he becomes the liberated, with Nurse Clarke usurping his masculinity by attempting to rescue *him*. The moment he falls off the roof, Kilmore breaks down the 'expected' Hero trajectory. He has no actual rescuing skills and transforms himself from Doctor/Hero through Rescuer/Hero, to the more farcical Accident-Prone Hero. This overturning of the normal order of events shows that the *Carry On* hero is far weaker than his female counterpart.

Kilmore slides to the side of the roof. He holds on to the guttering and jumps through a window. He lands on top of a nurse having a bath. *This* is where the laughter of this situation chiefly arises. Kilmore is safe and we can laugh at his and our release from apparent tension, whilst the acute body angles of Kilmore, coupled with his contorted face and strangulated attempts at justifying his entry into her bathroom, provoke laughter. Whereas Jung's archetypal hero may be strong and brave, in the world of *Carry On Doctor*, the Hero remains hapless, hopeless and helpless.

It is with his last role in the series, as Dr Jim Nookey in *Carry On Again Doctor* that the *Carry On* team have hardened his Hero character in keeping with both the end of the decade and of their Swinging Sixties halcyon period. The film is threadbare and appears to be made up of leftovers from previous scripts. The narrative has Dr Nookey (Dale) blackmailed into going to the Beatific Islands and, whilst there, he discovers a slimming potion that he brings back to the hospital.

Throughout the film, Dale goes through the usual comic patter of the buffoon Hero, but he does not have any of the feelings of warmth that he exhibited before. He is miserable, self-obsessed, gets drunk and at one point almost forces his lover, Maude Boggins (Barbara Windsor), into both curtailing her modelling career (as Goldie Locks) and having sex with him. Unlike Kilmore's rooftop antics in *Doctor*, when Nookey gets sloshed at a party, he jumps onto the patients' beds and throws himself onto a gurney, which careers down a flight of stairs and out of a window. His chaotic mannerisms, which seem more forced than natural, means that the laughter remains frozen on one's face. Whilst Dale could only work

with the material he had been given, here that material was ill-judged. Whilst the Hero of the *Carry On* films is usually contained within the domestic sphere, he remains so because it represents a form of conservative cosiness. In *Again Doctor*, that tradition has been challenged. Nookey wants, and almost forces himself on, his lover, so that he remains in control over her whilst retaining his position as dominant Hero. Whilst it may have worked in the world of Bond, this violence does not sit lightly with the *Carry On* series, and it reared its head in *At Your Convenience* three years later. Whilst *Cowboy* had cartoon violence and speeded-up fistfights, there is no place for 'real' violence in the *Carry On* world and it leaves a genuinely bittersweet taste in the mouth.

That is not to say that Dale is unlikeable. He played the role of the handsome Hero perfectly and his roles do alter to demonstrate the confidence in his and the team's ability to challenge 'traditional' modes of representation. In *Cowboy* he is the sheriff who cannot shoot straight. In *Cleo* he is the Briton capable of destroying Rome. But by the time in *Screaming!*, the roles push him further away from the traditional Hero and into an even more awkward and bumbling character. The Hero that he played from this point onwards was no longer dashing, but caricatured. As he left the series whilst still young, it is interesting to note that his roles are 'caught in time' by this fact. Unlike Connor who transformed from Hero to Villain, Dale offers a resilient reflection of the Jungian ideal. He remains constantly the audience's Everyman and, although always dysfunctional, he *is* the ultimate Hero of the *Carry On* films.

Kenneth Connor

With his small stature and air of incompetence either as a hapless Hero, a bumbling official or put-upon and henpecked husband, Kenneth Connor was a vital member of the *Carry On* team. In his first role as Horace Strong in *Sergeant*, he demonstrates the 'rebirth' of the Hero that Jung discusses. With no more than a bit of cod-psychology, Horace changes from a hypochondriac to a hyper-masculinised soldier who 'conquers' his fear of women through a set of medical tests that represent the fairytale tasks of yore. However, the role of Hero was only afforded to Connor twice in the series, with the filmmakers preferring to utilise his lack of stature to reflect the McGill ethos of 'the little man'. He was allowed one genuine romantic moment as Bernie Bishop in *Nurse* and became a

quasi-Hero figure in *Cleo* as the inept Briton-turned-Roman Centurion, Hengist Pod.

However, Connor was usually constrained to play ineffectual man-of-authority incompetents. Unlike Dale, who played the Hero throughout his *Carry On* career, Connor underwent a genuine transformation that at first reflected then undermined the Hero archetype, moving him from an Everyman to an old bumbler.

In *Carry On Nurse*, Connor plays Bernie Bishop, a small-time boxer admitted to hospital with a broken wrist. When he enters the hospital, he says 'I can't go in there. It's full of sick people', providing an immediate link to both his role as Horace in *Sergeant* and his fallibility as a boxer and *a man*. He is content to have his fractures massaged and return home to his wife and young son, which re-affirms his position of family man and part of the domestic sphere. As he walks towards his bed, two nurses ask him to strip off and put on his striped pyjamas. The nurses go to help him, but he refuses:

Nurse: Don't worry, we'll soon mend that hand provided you don't roll over on it in the night. Stand up, please.

(Bernie stands and the nurse begins to button up his pyjama top. Bernie smiles at this)

Nurse: Now… (she goes to take off his boxer shorts, but his hand moves down to 'protect' himself)

Bernie: Eh? What?

Nurse: You can't sleep in those.

Bernie: That's quite alright. I can take them off.

Nurse: With one hand?

Bernie: Yeah, yeah. I can manage. If you two ladies would turn your backs, please.

(There is a close-up on the main nurse signalling to the other. They both grab Bernie's shorts and pull them down off-camera. With one quick movement he is under the bed sheets)

Bernie: Cor, nurse, please! Cor, what a sauce!

Nurse: What a fuss over such a little thing.

(The nurse smiles and moves away. Bernie smiles at what she says then looks quizzically after her. He then brings his sprained wrist up to his chest. He assumes, by the look on his face, that she meant his injury)

This sequence is important in three respects. First, there is confirmation that the Hero has a home life and he wishes to be a part of that by refusing

to be in the hospital ward. He is happy with domesticity, unlike the other males in the *Carry On* world, who usually want to shy away from it. The nurses represent authority. As such, they should be mocked. However, they are the ones capable of mocking the male form. They emasculate Bernie by depriving him of the ability to undress himself, and his recoil away from the nurses emphasises his fallibility and the robbing of his masculinity. This is compounded when the nurse smiles and says: 'What a fuss over such a little thing.' This is the second point of importance in this sequence. The wordplay suggests that she is talking about his penis and, as such, renders the male as impotent. His smile indicates that he thinks his injury is the topic of the joke; however, it is really his penis. By moving from a smile to a frown, the expression of the Hero being ridiculed ensures that for the male in the audience, there is security in the knowledge that Bernie's penis is mocked and any fear that the male has about his own is allayed. For the female, the male fear/preoccupation of penis size and its connotations of masculinity in comparison with others are made ridiculous.
Later on in the film, Jane comes to see him. They discuss his boxing:

> *Bernie*: Janey. Supposing I couldn't ever fight again. Just suppose. Deep down would you really be pleased?
> *Jane*: I don't like you fighting. Sometimes I can hardly bear to look. But you're happy when you're pushing someone's face into the middle of next week. I like to see you happy. So you get that hand better and come out fighting.
> *Bernie*: (He turns to his wife, his eyes full of tears, and he moves to kiss her) I'm glad I married you, Jane.

This simple but effective scene shows how important the *idea* of 'family' is to the canon. Bernie is no McGill caricature here, but rather a doting family man who wants to be with his family. Whilst he is engaged in a violent sport, he remains a gentle man around his wife and son. He cries and admits that he loves her. That she responds by telling him that she must accept his boxing career because it makes him happy (and therefore *she* is happy) can be seen as Bernie re-asserting his masculinity, although not within the confines of the hospital, but rather in preparation for when he returns home. It would appear that their household is one of domestic happiness; yet, there does seem to be some form of underlying tension here. Jane hates her husband boxing, but is forced into a position whereby she has to accept that he is the dominant force. She has to remain

the keeper of domesticity whilst he is the 'breadwinner' or Hero. In this aspect, their roles are socially traditional.

By the time of the release of *Carry On Girls*, Connor has made the transition from Everyman/Hero to ineffectual authoritarian. Although a minor character in the plot, his role is pivotal for the male in offering another side to masculinity in the *Carry On* canon. In *Nurse*, Connor had entered into domesticity willingly. He holds his son in his arms at the end of the film, and he and his wife walk into the distance. Domestic bliss awaits him and his Hero's trajectory is complete. This is then parodied in *Carry On Cleo*, where his character, Hengist Pod, dislikes marriage, but ends up happily married and surrounded by numerous children and a doting wife, Senna.

By *Carry On Girls*, Connor's characters have become a victim of that domain. Frederick Bumble is henpecked, has a harridan wife and is ridiculed by a female town councillor whilst sitting in his bath. When he takes on the mantle of mayor, he is equally ridiculed. His trousers fall down or are ripped off at every given opportunity. This indicates that in the *Carry On* world, when a male reaches middle age, and therefore technically assumes a position of authority, not only has the love for his wife evaporated, it has also turned to feelings of intolerance and incompetence. Therefore, in the tradition of McGill, the married male has no real place within the marital home except as a figure of ridicule, whereby marriage has not only curtailed the male's 'freedom', but the female has achieved her aims of domesticity with a husband, resulting in neither party being happy, and the marital home becoming a prison rather than a place of happiness and comfort.

This is confirmed when local town councillor Augusta Prodworthy bursts in on Bumble, who plays with his toy ships whilst taking a bath:

Bumble: You have no right to be in here, Mrs. Prodworthy.
Prodworthy: Never mind that. Do you mean to tell me that in my absence the committee actually approved this disgusting idea?
Bumble: Mrs. Prodworthy. I hardly think this is the time and the place to discuss matters.
Prodworthy: Oh poppycock! (She hits him with the paper) I've seen men naked before, you know? Damn it, I've buried three husbands.
Bumble: I'm not surprised to hear it.
Son: Come along, mother.
Prodworthy: I want a straight answer. Was it, or was it not, approved?
Bumble: Mrs. Prodworthy, I refuse to discuss this in my bath.
Prodworthy: I am not in your bath, thank goodness. Now, was it or wasn't it?
Bumble: Yes, it was, but…
Prodworthy: Right. Well I warn you, I mean to fight this to the bitter end.

Bumble: Mrs. Prodworthy, I have a civic duty to support any…
Prodworthy: Oh, fiddlesticks! You are a weak-kneed ass. And as far as I can see, you are as poorly equipped to carry out your civic duties as your domestic ones.
(Bumble covers his genitals with a sponge. A swanee whistle plays)

The bathroom functions as a realistic narrative space in which the characters interact. The bath water looks dirty and there are bottles of shampoo on the windowsill. The bathroom's sparse walls reflect both Bumble's position and his fading sexual prowess. When he plays with his model ships, he becomes a man-boy. Augusta Prodworthy's mental and physical strength assumes authority over his. The roles of authority are reversed, although Prodworthy is only mocked when Bumble talks about her ability to 'see off' three husbands. This particular line of dialogue is a re-affirming of the sexual predator (or battleaxe) that Prodworthy is assumed to be. Whenever Bumble attempts to talk to her, he calls her by her prefix—*Mrs*—which becomes another sign that Prodworthy has the upper hand and greater authority. The last line brings into play Bumble's (lack of) sexual prowess. As Prodworthy has directly ridiculed his physique whilst simultaneously mocking his inability to function in public office, so his entire world comes crashing down. For the middle-aged male, masculinity is forever being downtrodden.

The domestic sphere holds no happiness for Bumble in any form either. The kitchen, traditionally seen as the matriarchal stronghold, becomes a battleground between the sexes. Neither Bumble nor his wife Mildred is happy, and tolerance is barely in evidence:

Mildred: You're up, then?
Bumble: Course I am. Didn't you hear me calling?
Mildred: I had the radio on.
Bumble: I know you had it on. I can't remember the last time you had it off.
Mildred: Neither can I.
Bumble: It's nine o'clock. I usually have tea at eight-thirty.
Mildred: Better late than never, I always say.
(Mildred gets up to make the tea. She pours it into the cup, slops some milk into it and then puts two tablespoons of sugar in)
Mildred: Enough sugar?
Bumble: Quite. And cigarette ash. Isn't it time you started to get dressed?
Mildred: Why? Am I missing something?
Bumble: Can't you remember what I told you last night in bed?

Mildred: Stop snoring?
Bumble: At ten o'clock we have a visit to the maternity hospital.
Mildred: Do I have to go?
Bumble: Of course. They're expecting you.
Mildred: But Frederick, I don't feel up to it.
Bumble: You have to go. You are the lady mayor. It is your duty. You should feel proud at standing alongside your husband.
(Mildred begins to chuckle)
Bumble: And what, may I ask, is so funny?
Mildred: You.

Gone is the sweetness that applied to the younger couple of *Nurse*, to be replaced by a much harsher view of married life. Bumble strives to maintain his patriarchal position, but is constantly undermined by his wife. He demands subservience with Mildred making him a cup of tea every morning at 9 am. However, Mildred is rebelling against patriarchy. When she says 'Neither can I', it is implied that it is *he* who is failing in this department, so Bumble's dominance is gone. The last line of dialogue shows that Mildred has finally realised what her husband is: a pompous, arrogant, narrow-minded individual who is in a position of authority but has no actual control over anyone, whereby he is both redundant in both his marital and his civic duties.

This is made even more clear outside the domestic sphere. When Bumble attends the unveiling of a new fire engine, he gets hooked up to the vehicle in order to demonstrate an important safety element. At that precise moment, a fire alarm rings and the engine roars off at great speed, taking Bumble's pinstriped trousers with it. He looks utterly crestfallen, but as he is still in the position of authority, tips his hat to the onlookers and walks off. This reflects the McGillian outlook where the very physicality of the male character can be undone through objects rather than individuals. By having Bumble walk off as others look on astounded at him, the joke is made more concrete due to the very nature of the spectacle of his authority being literally undone around him.

These elements are further explored at the climax of the film. As chaos erupts at the beauty pageant, Bumble attempts to be the brave, stoical, stiff-upper-lipped figure of power. Mildred sees him standing on the stage's trap door and decides that even she has had enough of him. She pulls the lever and he is unceremoniously lowered out of sight. That appears to be the ultimate betrayal of married life for the *Carry On* male: his wife has

not only assumed the most important position of authority in both the domestic and not-domestic spheres, she has also made him physically disappear forever. This must the ultimate degradation for any *Carry On* male. With pre-marriage filled with fun, hope and optimism at obtaining sex, the 'chase' assumes paramount importance. Once married, the chase is over until another woman comes on to the scene. This chase now changes to an escape from the confines of marriage, and the traditional Hero is no longer the Hero, but becomes, through Connor's exemplary portrayals, a downtrodden, browbeaten, sexually incompetent, demoralised bumbler.

The Effeminate: Child, Fool, Trickster and Pompous… Charles Hawtrey and Kenneth Williams[17]

In his work on archetypes, Jung argued that the Child remains a constant present in the individual, tucked away in the subconscious as part of our memories and experiences.[18] When the Child emerges, it aims to be liked, and exhibits both playful abandonment and a genuine sense of delight in the world around it. The Child wants to belong to a collective, but at the same time remains aloof or distanced from it, wanting to experience the world from an almost undeveloped viewpoint, unhindered by the complexities of adulthood. The *Carry On* films utilised this idea by presenting Charles Hawtrey as their version of the Child and the Fool archetypes, both innocent and knowing, individualistic and utopian-collective member, and Kenneth Williams as the pompous effeminate.

Charles Hawtrey

Charles Hawtrey is a true icon of British cinema. He was already a well-respected character actor before his *Carry On* appearances, but this was cemented by his status as a beloved comic actor. Whilst there was virtually no room for his various characters to grow within the canon, such roles as the drunken Big Heap in *Cowboy*, the French aristo Duc de Pomfritt in *Don't Lose Your Head* or as the Sage Seneca in *Cleo* were all imbued with a sense of a childlike knowing innocence. Throughout his 23 films, he always portrayed 'With his skinny, birdlike frame, National Health specs and prim, posh delivery' the Charles Hawtrey that the fans of the series loved.[19]

Throughout all his *Carry On* films, it became apparent that Hawtrey played a combination of Fool and Child. The Fool was a strategic device serving two narrative functions: to provide comic amusement and to comment on the narrative. He was often placed on the margins of these narratives, making odd comments and observations on the unfolding story. For example, in *Screaming!* he plays Dan Dan the Gardening Man, who works at the public convenience in Holcombe Wood. Dan gives the police clues as to who is kidnapping young ladies at night, fulfilling the Fool's criteria precisely. That he does so with a wink to the audience accentuates the childlike properties that Hawtrey brought to the role. With the Child archetype, Hawtrey plays upon the idea that this innocent remains on the outskirts of events, offering a childlike counterpoint to the narrative and its characters. Therefore, with the 'adults' around him offering critiques of sexuality and also engaging with the societal strictures of the eras, Hawtrey is trying to 'break into' the adult world. Whilst his creations are replete with ideas of sexuality themselves, he continues to see this adult world through a child's eyes. This is never more evident than in his role as Private Widdle in *Carry On Up the Khyber*, in which the horrors of war are glossed over. Private Ginger Hale lies dying and asks Widdle if he is going to live. Widdle bluntly replies: 'Of course not mate, how can you live when you've got a dozen dirty great big holes going through you?' Therefore, Hawtrey's contribution to the series is important because of these two strands.

In *Carry On Cowboy*, Hawtrey plays PC Timothy Gorse, a 'special constable' who is usually called into the police station when an emergency situation arises. As Sergeant Wilkins welcomes a group of new recruits to the police station, Gorse walks in, carrying a bunch of flowers and a budgerigar in a cage:

Gorse: Oh, hello!
Wilkins: Hello, Gorse.
Gorse: Sorry I'm late, Sergeant. But I couldn't leave home without picking something bright and gay from the garden for the poor, indisposed constables. So, it was off to my greenhouse and with a little snip here and a little snip there, snip snip! And here we are with my love.
(Gorse walks across to hand the Sergeant the bunch of flowers)
Gorse: Ooh! What have I said? With my very best floral greetings!
Wilkins: Thank you, Gorse. Now, as you weren't on duty at the scene of the crime, we'll forget it.

Gorse: (Close-up) A crime? Oh, goody! Where?
Wilkins: Forget about it. I want you to meet Special Constable Gorse. (He looks at the new recruits) Benson … *him* (looking at Constable Constable) … Potter.
Gorse: How do you do? And how do you do? And now you must all meet Bobby, my budgie. Say 'hello' Bobby.
Recruits: Hello, Bobby.
Gorse: (Chuckles) Isn't he the greatest thing? I just couldn't leave him behind.
Wilkins: Gorse is here to help out during the epidemic. You can all sleep together.
Benson: Charmed, I'm sure.

This simple introductory scene of Hawtrey/Gorse is important in setting up his character for the rest of the film. He is fey, polite and effeminate, and enjoys working as a *Special* Constable. Considering that the recruits are Everyman (Connor/Constable), Pompous (Williams/Benson) and Rogue (Phillips/Potter), the only other role left to make any impact would be the Fool or, from a Jungian perspective, the Child, which offers innocence, feelings of playfulness, spontaneity and change in the narrative.

Hawtrey's lack of traditional film masculinity provides genuine laughter. His skinny frame, leather gloves and NHS glasses provide a vessel through which masculinity is questioned. Whereas Stanley Baker's Inspector Harry Martineau was tough in *Hell is a City* (1960), Gorse remains the antithesis of the role of Tough Guy. Whilst the other constables have their own particular foibles, Gorse remains the most caricatured. He enters the action from outside and therefore is not one of the group. Despite working alongside them, he seems constantly at odds with the other men. His very 'special'-ness sets him apart from the rest.

However, for one moment, Gorse transforms into Hero. At the end of the film, he leads the recruits to a gang of vicious thugs and enters into the fray with gusto. Despite accidentally handcuffing himself to another officer during the climactic struggle, and notwithstanding his feminised appearance and mannerisms, Gorse magically transforms from Fool into Child-Hero. Even though male (a)sexuality *may* be questioned, the fact that he asserts his masculinity in a violent way means that he is now fully accepted as the alpha male leader of the group. This becomes apparent when they entrust him with all the stolen money when the thugs are arrested. However, at the last minute, Gorse laughs and looks at the cam-

era, reverting back to being the Fool again. With a 'knowing' look at the audience, he creates the direct link between both him as a character and the audience, and so the spectator is placed into a position whereby Gorse is recognised as the Fool. Hawtrey's creation is played with a childlike view of events and audience involvement with this character is cemented.

As the 1960s progressed, so Hawtrey's role in the films began to alter. Whilst he still remained Fool and Child, his role as the randy, woman-chasing Seneca in *Carry On Cleo*, a full-blooded male who tries to seduce a young slave-girl, showed there was room for manoeuvre in attempting to unravel the complexities of sexuality in the series. There is no indication at all that Seneca is gay, but merely effeminate, and his mincing was seen as playful within the narrative. Therefore, the situations where Seneca becomes a sex-mad character don't so much feel 'at odds' within the narrative, but actually appear to create more laughter due to this very 'oddness'.

When Caesar returns from his journeys abroad, Seneca approaches him to inform him of his impending death. Seneca has visions and he wishes to relay them to his son-in-law:

Seneca: Beware the Ides of March!
Caesar: Oh, shut up, you silly old faggot!
Calpurnia: Don't you dare speak to my daddy like that!
Caesar: Well, he gets on your nerves! I'm sorry my dear but I'm fed up of listening to all his omens and stuff.
Calpurnia: It is known throughout Rome that Seneca is known as a truly great sage.
Seneca: And I know my onions.
Caesar: I wish you'd been in Britain. They know what to do with sage and onions there.

In this scene the tradition of Fool becomes visible. Seneca relays information to Caesar, but becomes the butt of the joke. The wordplay at the end of the scene is *double-entendre*'d. The inference here is that Seneca should 'get stuffed'. Caesar calling Seneca a 'silly old faggot' places his sexuality in doubt. With *faggot* being slang for homosexual, so the filmmakers are deliberately provoking a reaction from their audience. The 1960s saw the role of men altering from the machismo of the Bond movies to questioning sexuality in more frivolous ways through films like *The Servant* (1963). Therefore, at this stage in the *Carry On* canon, Rothwell is attempting to open up debates about sexual frankness. The fact that the

role is played by Hawtrey as distinctly heterosexual, but audience awareness is of him as camp (but not gay), only heightens the incongruity of the entire scene. The actual sexual component of this scene can therefore be read as follows:

Hawtrey = camp/effeminate/gay
Seneca = straight/heterosexual
Williams = camp/effeminate/gay
Caesar = straight/heterosexual

With these permutations, the filmmakers are toying with the audience's sexual pre-conceptions. Caesar is traditionally seen as the masculine, all-conquering power. Yet here a gay man plays him. The same is seen with Seneca. Rothwell is moving away from the more gentle mocking of sexuality in *Constable* (at least in the actor Hawtrey's case) to produce a harsher, albeit questioning, version than before.

Throughout the rest of his *Carry On* career, Hawtrey continued to play both Fool and Child, although like other characters in the canon, the stereotype/archetype hardened over the years. In *Henry* he becomes a sex-mad advisor to the king, has sex with Queen Marie and sires a child with her. In *Matron* he ignores his patriarchal status by saying he is not interested in his wife. This hardening of the Fool becomes transformed to such a degree that through the passing of time, it has actually curtailed the sense of 'fun' that this character once had. This reaches its most potent form in *Abroad*, where Hawtrey's character, Eustace Tuttle, is continually drunk.[20] He chases young women around the hotel almost as a naughty schoolboy (Child) would. However, by only performing 'leapfrog' with them, there is no apparent sexual development or threat at all in the character. The fact that he can only 'leapfrog' suggests that he is both sexually incompetent and naïve or inexperienced as a child would be. However, by putting a love potion into the final night party's punchbowl, there must be some *wanting* of sex for this character, but even this is questioned. As Tuttle looks drunkenly on at Sadie (Barbara Windsor), her clothes disappear and she stands in front of him in her underwear. Tuttle looks horrified and drinks more of the love potion, and Sadie's clothes re-appear. As the hotel collapses around him, the last one sees of Tuttle at this point is of him holding up a pillar. Whilst couples have retired to their rooms, he is left alone. The friendliness of Other has become one that sits awkwardly within the heterosexual world of the series, where anything approaching

Other has to be removed. It is only at the very last moment of the film, when he makes an appearance in Sid James' pub, that he is immediately welcomed back into the *Carry On* world. His Otherness is forgiven and whilst he remains the Fool, he is no longer the outsider to society and Hawtrey/Tuttle finally becomes an accepted and welcome member of the utopian collective. Otherness becomes Sameness.

Kenneth Williams

With his flaring nostrils and nasal vocal delivery, Kenneth Williams is one of the mainstays of the *Carry On* films. Often seen as a pompous character full of self-importance and arrogance, roles such as Bailey (*Sergeant*), Edwin Milton (*Teacher*), Constable Benson (*Constable*) and the multilingual Francis Courtenay (*Regardless*) and Leonard Marjoribanks *(Cruising*) show a pre-occupation with insisting that there is a definite 'divide' between the working and middle classes. This comes to the fore in *Jack*, where he plays the doddering and incompetent Captain Fearless. During the Hudis era, Williams' characters often remained at odds with the working classes. For example, whilst he shares the same ward as the other men in *Nurse*, his training to be a nuclear physicist (therefore he is learned) means that he must remain distant towards them. It is only at the end of the narrative that he becomes one of the utopian collective because he has a *function* within it. He is reading a book about surgery and the others think that he could perform an operation on one of them. Here he is seen as the 'power' or 'authority' figure because of his cultural leanings.

When Talbot Rothwell took over the writing duties, Williams' persona remained, but in much more caricatured and exaggerated forms. His strangled vocalisms had made him a national favourite through his work with Tony Hancock and the *Beyond Our Ken* and *Round the Horne* team on radio. With his nostrils splaying and his voice at its most snide, characters such as Caesar (*Cleo*) and Citizen Camembert (*Don't Lose Your Head*) were played in ever more outrageously camp ways. Whilst Sid James became the series' archetype of the masculine male, Williams, despite always portraying heterosexual men, remains at its polar extreme: he is camp, behaves outrageously, and screams and shouts.

From a Jungian perspective, Williams becomes the Trickster, who overturns the normal rules of society and causes discomfort for others. This discomfort comes through his supercilious authoritarian poise and his characters subverting ideas of heterosexuality. In *Carry On Abroad* he kisses

Moira and begins a relationship with her, whilst in *Doctor* he is chased by both Matron and Nurse May. His role as WC Boggs in *Convenience* sees him as a father and a widower, whilst *Behind* has Professor Crump being seduced by fellow archaeologist Professor Anna Vooshka. In his final film, *Carry On Emmannuelle*, his French ambassador is both married and (possibly) the father of a child. Arguably the most Trickster-esque role Williams had was as the Khasi in *Khyber*, a character who was a father, monarch and war-mongering dictator. As father to Princess Jelhi, he is both benevolent and kind; as monarch, he is proud but fallible; and as a dictator, he remains ruthless and causes the rebellion against the British.

This implies that the filmmakers are playing with conventions of audience awareness within and outside these films, whilst pushing the boundaries of censorship further. Times were changing. In 1957, the Wolfenden Committee recommended that private homosexual acts between consenting adults should no longer be seen as a criminal offence. It took ten more years for these recommendations to be enacted into law. Whilst it would be difficult to assume that the filmmakers were being deliberately provocative in their treatment and handling of overtly gay themes, they were at least trying to bring these issues out, however indirectly, into the public arena. After all, Williams was a gay man using Polari in camp films, during an era in which sexuality was not only being investigated, but also where homosexuality had only recently been legalised. Whilst his roles in the series *pre*-Wolfenden are much more 'innocent' than in their *post-Wolfenden* outings, it was apparent that the team were toying with ideas of (homo)sexuality. The effeminate has a long theatrical and literary tradition stretching back as far back as Ancient Greece, with Plato writing of the truest sense of love as being between two men.[21] The films shy away from any homosexual couplings (although they are referred to by inference), leaving Williams in a position whereby he plays the straight character who is endowed with visual and vocal aspects of effeminacy. That is as far as the filmmakers were prepared to go: innuendo, cross-dressing, effeminate clothing, the mincing gait and narcissistic tendencies are held in check by the character that the whole team has created. Yet at the same time, these roles are written and performed with intent—whether that is to provoke laughter through incongruity or to actually ask 'us' to challenge notions about sexuality is open to debate. What is important is this: Williams' own persona was 'allowed' to shine through the script and, as such, it is *he* who becomes the major focal point of effeminacy within the canon.

Whilst Hawtrey is seen as fey, Williams is not and they provide two sides to the same coin. When the two are combined, the end result provides a fascinating insight into how sexuality was perceived within the conservative world of the filmmakers. On the left is James, the all-conquering alpha male; in the middle are Connor and Dale as the Hero/Everyman; on the right are Williams and Hawtrey as effeminate. In *Constable*, Williams and Hawtrey dress as women on the trail of thieves in a department store. The playfulness of swapping identities is given free rein in this sequence. They enjoy dressing up as women, with Gorse saying to Benson: 'If grandmother could see you now, she'd be so proud.' They even call themselves Agatha and Hortence, indicating just how far this cross-dressing and supplanting of sexuality can be taken in these films. This was not new to British film comedy, however, with Will Hay impersonating a nurse in *The Black Sheep of Whitehall* (1942) and Alastair Sim donning drag as the headmistress of St. Trinian's, but here shows the filmmakers as toying with convention.

Whereas James remained at the very centre of the idea of the working-class Hero, Williams resolutely remains on the periphery of this. Time and time again, he plays the outsider, looking in on the workers having their playtime, as his positions of authority negate him being one of 'us' in the utopian collective. However, on occasion he is 'allowed' (however temporarily) to become part of it. In *Abroad* he leaves his authoritative position as travel rep to become a barman in Sid James' pub. As he looks in on the collective in so many of the later films, so he becomes the butt of many of the jokes, and these jokes are often painful. In *Dick* he is placed into the stocks and bombarded with rotten tomatoes; in *Behind* he falls into a slurry pit; in *Henry* he is beheaded. This indicates that in the world of the *Carry On* film, Williams as both Other/Effeminate and as middle-class authority figure must have this power curtailed for the good of the working-class utopian collective. This will now be demonstrated in three key scenes from *Carry On Doctor*:

Scene 1: Hospital operating theatre.
Tinkle: Morning, Matron. How are you, this morning?
Matron: Very well, thank you. And you?
Tinkle: Fine, just fine. But let's not talk shop, eh? Anything come in during the night?
Matron: Only a man with an injured back. As you weren't here, I'm afraid Dr Kilmore had to treat him.

Tinkle: Never mind, perhaps we'll be able to save the poor chap yet!
Matron: I didn't know you were assisting Mr. Hardcastle this morning.
Tinkle: Well, you know how it is, Matron. These surgeons are alright for a slash and a quick grope around, but when it comes to cleaning up the mess, it's the doctor that's needed.
Matron: Oh, how right you are, Doctor. (voice-over) What a wonderful man you are. Oh, how I love you!
Tinkle: (Admiring himself in the mirror. Voice-over) Oh, how I love you!
Hardcastle: Well, I'll be off now, Doctor. Have you got the right time on you?
Tinkle: Yes, of course. Where's my watch?
Hardcastle: You took it off.
Tinkle: I remember having it on when I began to stitch … Oh no!
Hardcastle: Wheel the patient back.
Tinkle: And it was an alarm, too!

Williams plays Dr Tinkle as an egocentric, supercilious narcissist who delights in ridiculing his colleagues and his patients. His opening scene sees him exhibit the traits that cemented his character as the arrogant, patronising and belittling authority figure of the canon. When he laughs at the possibility that a patient might live, his ridicule and contempt of his peers becomes evident, but that is then overturned by his own incompetence.

However, when talking to Matron, Tinkle becomes friendly and responsive towards her. Their positioning within the frame is one of proactive (Tinkle) and passive (Matron), where he assumes the position of power. Whilst she is placed into a medium shot, Tinkle is further away from the camera. As the edits between the two become referent points in relation to their characters' authoritative position, it becomes clear that there are two opposing forces in operation here. The closer the camera gets to Matron indicates her emotional state, whilst Tinkle remains aloof and in the middle distance of the shot. With the inner monologue come Matron's thoughts about Tinkle. This glimpse into her private world means that the audience becomes her confidant. When it then cuts to Tinkle and *his* inner monologue, the feeling is not carried over because he is still 'distant' to the camera and therefore the audience. Whilst his position of authority is still held in Matron's eyes, he is ridiculed in the eyes of the audience. By Tinkle echoing Matron's thoughts, his narcissistic tendencies are foregrounded. As he strokes his hair and looks admiringly and longingly at himself in the mirror, this duality of persona comes into play. He is in authority, but at the same time, he is self-obsessed. Perhaps the two go hand-in-hand:

Scene 2: Dr Tinkle's private quarters. Tinkle has been doing his daily exercise routine, but is interrupted by Nurse May bursting in and declaring her love for him. Outside, Dr Kilmore and Matron listen in.
Tinkle: All I did was treat you for tonsillitis. It was nothing life threatening.
Sandra: You can't kid me. You came to my room every night for months afterwards.
Tinkle: That was just professional courtesy. You weren't in any danger.
Sandra: Then why did you used to give me the kiss of life every night?
Tinkle: Nowadays you get it for nothing. You don't have to pay for it.
Sandra: Well, what about those wonderful little things you used to say to me? All about my cute little tibia and about how I had beautifully enlarged glands!
(Kilmore and Matron fall through the door)
Matron: Dr Tinkle! I'd never have believed it!
Tinkle: Matron, let me explain. This girl is mad. She forced her way into my room and tried to attack me.
Sandra: That's not true. I would never hurt him. I love him.
Matron: Return to your room. I'll deal with you in the morning.
Sandra: I don't care what you do to me. Without him I don't want to go on living.
Tinkle: See what I mean, she's absolutely crazy.
Matron: Bluebeard!
Tinkle: Dr Kilmore, you'll back me up.
Kilmore: I was just wondering. What a cute little tibia you have.

Here the scene is played as out-and-out farce. Tinkle's self-obsession is obvious, as seen through his narcissistic exercise regime. However, once Nurse May comes into the room, his masculinity is doubted. He stumbles over his words and he falls over because of her. As they talk, it becomes apparent that Tinkle has taken on the role of father, with Sandra as his daughter. She looks up to him for comfort, acceptance and love. This taboo subject (father/daughter) is strongly indicated when Sandra talks about his bedside manner and that he was giving her the kiss of life. This would indicate two things: that the older authority figure is abusing his trust through his position of power; and that the return of the repressed, whereby the female instigates that repression, ensures that the male form of Dr Tinkle is completely undone.

When Matron enters the room, Tinkle attempts to re-assert his authority, but Matron is dominant. The position of power has now shifted to her. She is the stronger character, emphasised by Tinkle's attire of shorts and

vest compared to Matron's starched uniform. When Tinkle tries to close the door and thus prevent her from leaving, she stops it and stares at the doctor. Tinkle cowers from her. The emphasis on calling him Bluebeard reiterates the story of legend, and that here it takes on comic form, with Matron more than a match for Tinkle's cowardice:

> *Scene 3*: Dr Tinkle's bedroom. Matron has come into the room with a bottle of champagne, attempting to woo Tinkle into bed.
>
> Tinkle: Matron, please. I'm not that kind of doctor.
>
> *Matron*: Don't deny yourself, Kenneth. We've wasted so many years. This is our moment of fulfilment.
>
> *Tinkle*: But I don't want to feel full. I mean full feeled. I mean. You don't understand. This could ruin my whole training programme. It's my duty to keep fit and strong. You might find this hard to believe Matron, but I was once a weak man.
>
> *Matron*: Once a week's enough for any man!
>
> *(She puts her hands to his face, almost strangling him in the process)*
>
> *Matron*: Send me Kenneth, you don't know how hard it's been yearning to give you my all.
>
> *Tinkle. But I don't want your all. I don't even want a little bit.*
>
> *(Tinkle tries to escape her clutches, but she forces him back onto the bed, and lies on top of him)*
>
> *Matron*: I'm not letting you go. Not after all I've done for you.
>
> *Tinkle*: Matron, please. Your hand, what are you doing with your hand?

This final analysis of *Doctor* and Williams sees the female figure of authority become dominant. Matron has become the sexual predator of McGill's postcards. She *wants* Tinkle. She *will have* Tinkle. Because of this, the doctor has lost complete authority. Matron's physical presence looms over him, so much so that when she (wo)manhandles him, her stroking of his hair makes Tinkle *her* possession. When she counters his attempt to re-assert his manhood after he says 'I was once a weak man' with 'Once a week's enough for any man!', the incongruity of the scene and joke becomes overt. Tinkle is a physically small man, the 'small-minded man' of the McGill philosophy absorbed in his own world. Matron uses wordplay for *her* joke, ridiculing Tinkle by advocating that a male can *only* perform sex once a week and that anything more will result in his collapse. This cements Tinkle directly into the role of the sexually inadequate male of McGill's world.

Whilst the *Carry On* films have often been accused of blatant stereotyping, it becomes apparent just how the character 'arcs' of Williams and Hawtrey fit into the whole series. Both were there at the beginning of the saga and Williams remained until the end. Their roles very rarely shifted away from their original casting. Hawtrey was always the effeminate in all the films; Williams was a mainstay, but in a different way. He was both authority and Trickster figures. Yet both altered over the years in keeping with the changes in taste from one decade to another. In the late 1950sand into the early 1960s, Hawtrey was an imp-like character, commenting upon the action whilst never quite being a part of it. Williams went from being a prudish 'snob' to caricatured figures of authority. By the 1970s, their characters had visibly hardened. Hawtrey was still the Fool with elements of the Child, but became marginalised even further in the narrative. As such, what little screen time he is afforded often seems 'rushed' and not as knowingly playful as before. It all seems much more 'forced' as if Rothwell had simply run out of ideas of what to do with him.

In Williams' case, the pompous figure of authority becomes even more caricatured as time went on. His nostrils seem to flare further than they had before, his vocalisms became more strangulated and his physique was exploited much more as an instrument of comedy. Yet he always remained the authority figure. At the end of *Emmannuelle*, he is presented with his only child, as if the filmmakers were finally 'allowing' his character to have a human side. The authority figure is still in a position of power, but here the authority transforms into protection towards his family. Despite the poor reception of the film and the fact that it signalled the end of the 'true' *Carry On*s, it was a fitting coda to Williams' career as the pompous jackass that he is most fondly remembered for.

It becomes apparent that despite Marion Jordan's negative critiques of the characters in the series, the work of James, Dale, Connor, Hawtrey and Williams—as the main representatives of masculinity in the series—is incredibly important at delineating views of 'traditional' male heterosexually during a period when sexuality was being questioned. Whilst they never *directly* examined or tackled themes of homosexuality head on, due in no small part to the era in which these films were made, the fact that they were prepared, at least in some way or another, to actually bring about attempts to provoke and raise ideas of 'other' amongst 'normal' is indicative of the strength of these films.

They were strongly based in their traditions, but simultaneously offered new ways of presenting those traditions. Therefore, even though some

of the male characters remain steadfastly 'male', either through chasing women, drinking beer, being fathers or as the head of the household, it seemed perfectly natural that all the main male characters/actors were able to dress in women's clothes. Whilst this may seem 'odd' in the 'real' world, this was very much part of their traditional heritage. It was accepted, *provided* that the characters remained confined within the film's narrative. Perhaps the filmmakers could not, or would not, tackle the questioning of sexuality, machismo and effeminacy directly, but only indirectly through the traditions of their own comedic heritage.

Notes

1. Orwell (1941).
2. Ibid.
3. Plato (2007), various pages.
4. Jung (1916b), (1991); Read, Fordham and Adler (1953–78).
5. Jung, C.G. *The Collected Works Vol. 5: Symbols of Transformation*. Para. 259.
6. Campbell (1949), (1991), (2001).
7. Jung (2003).
8. Jordan (1983).
9. Eves (1969), quoted in ibid., p. 314.
10. Jordan (1983), p. 319.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ross (2000), (2009), (2011); Goodwin (2011).
14. Interestingly, her name—Hope Springs—wants to have 'eternal' at the end, which indicates to James that here she offers him a chance to 'escape' Fircombe and his fiancée Connie.
15. Dale's last appearance in the original run—*Carry On Again Doctor*—sees him battle and beat authority *and* get married to Barbara Windsor. Dale's hero has triumphed and his Jungian trajectory has been completed.
16. Bergson (1911).
17. Lewis (2001); Stevens (2010).
18. Jung (1991b).
19. Phillips (2006), p. 204.
20. This was the filmmaker actually critiquing Hawtrey, as he was almost always drunk on set. It was Hawtrey's final film in the series.
21. Plato (1873), p. 8.

CHAPTER 6

Hottentots and Harridans: The *Carry On* Women

If the 1950s is seen as a decade of black and white, where austerity and deference were its grey and drab, then the 1960s is most definitely the decade of bright and vivid colours. The nation had packed up its war troubles in its old kit bag and thrown both it and its contents into the river. After the destruction of the war years and the conservatism of the 1950s, London was swinging. There was a feeling of optimism, hope and freedom in the air. Anything seemed possible.

The 1960s was the first decade where there was a teenage generation who were free from conscription. Their parents had lived through the war and wanted their children to be free from its past. Music became *the* defining symbol of the era. Whilst rock 'n' roll had slowly been taking root in 1950s Britain, with the likes of Cliff Richard and The Shadows, Lonnie Donegan and Tommy Steele with their wholesome and squeaky clean images tempting teenagers into parting with their cash, it was not until the emergence of groups like The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and many others during the early 1960s that music really began to help shape a new, vibrant British identity.

This identity was also forged in other ways. The Greek designer Alec Issigonis created arguably *the* car of the 1960s: the Mini. Small, compact, nippy and stylish, the car revolutionised the motor industry in Britain. It was seen as hip and trendy, and was just as much at home when being driven through busy city streets as it was on the newly opened British motorways, the M1 and M6. But it was also cheap and cheerful enough to be affordable for most households. British icons of the 1960s such as Peter

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Sellers, Marianne Faithfull, The Beatles, Twiggy and Britt Ekland drove them. The American film stars Steve McQueen and James Garner bought them. Even Enzo Ferrari owned a Mini. The car's success was transferred onto the big screen. Now seen as one of the quintessential celebrations of British 1960s pop culture, *The Italian Job* (1969) bank heist, carried out in Turin by a gang of British criminals, use three Mini Cooper S models to escape from the city. The Mini becomes *the* symbol of a newfound freedom in British culture.

This freedom found its way into both male and female fashions. For men, trousers became tighter, the pea coat was popular, silk scarves were commonplace and hair grew longer. For women, the change in fashion was remarkable. Forties styles had been influenced by rationing and limited qualities of both fabrics and threads. The 1950s styles, despite sometimes bordering on austere, where smart grooming and a tailored look were often preferred, began to move away from this soberness. The rise in consumerist spending meant that fashions could now tailor for a multitude of pleats, beautiful and practical petticoats, new-style collars, leather, taffeta, nylon and rayon, and all rounded off with the brightest, boldest patterns, colours and styles. Five different types of dresses began to emerge, each one used for a definite purpose. There were outfits designed for housework or lounging, going out for business, maternity outfits, party and evening wear, and work uniforms. Whilst it is definitely a case of these outfits becoming a means to 'catalogue' women into their direct social roles, the fashions began to demonstrate a move *away* from the problems of the 1940s and an attempt to create an identity for women, however conservative and patriarchal that view may be.

Women wanted to feel more comfortable and fashionable. The 1960s saw London's Carnaby Street become *the* centre for fashion. Mary Quant's miniskirt was designed to allow women to 'run and jump' and to become liberated from the designs of the past. The higher hemlines and bold, geometric patterns gave women a new kind of femininity that would have been seen as completely outrageous only a decade before. It was not long before the skirt spread from being a simple high street fashion into a major and international trend. Fashion models like Twiggy and Jean Shrimpton seemed to epitomise this newfound sense of freedom and liberation.

Film stars like Julie Christie, Susannah York, Rita Tushingham and Vanessa Redgrave all possessed incredible acting talents, their roles opening up ideas about sexuality and femininity in this decade of change. Christie remains *the* symbol of this: her breakthrough role in *Billy Liar* (1963) saw

her as a strong, free and independent young woman unconstrained by the social mores of the age. Her part in *Darling* (1965) as a beautiful, bored young model won her an Academy Award for Best Actress. The rest of the decade saw her cement her status as a British film icon with starring roles in *Doctor Zhivago* (1965), *Fahrenheit 451* (1966), *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1967) and *Petulia* (1968). Susannah York appeared in the hip period comedy *Tom Jones* (1963), the psychedelic thriller *Kaleidoscope* (1966), *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), whilst her performance as the young Alice 'Childie' McNaught, seduced by the lesbian June Buckridge in *The Killing of Sister George* (1968) led to her Oscar-nominated performance as Alice LeBlanc in *They Shoot Horses, Don't They* (1969). Tushingham's performances were often low key. Her roles in *A Taste of Honey*, *The Leather Boys*, *The Knack … and How to Get It* (1965), *Doctor Zhivago*, *The Trap* (1966), *Smashing Time* (1967) and *The Bed-Sitting Room* (1969) amply demonstrated that she was at home in both starring and supporting roles, and her move between Swinging Sixties surrealism and realism movies, and comedy and adventure films was assured by strong performances. For Redgrave, it was her roles in the surreal comedy *Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment* (1966)—for which she was nominated for an Oscar—and as the enigmatic Jane in the counter-culture classic *Blow-Up* (1966) with which she will forever be associated.

All of these 1960s films were definitely 'of their time', both in terms of their themes and execution. They captured the zeitgeist of the period and showed that actresses were prepared to use their craft as a means of negotiating and reflecting cultural change through the decade. Such films as *Zhivago*, *Darling* and *Morgan* may seem disparate and often at odds with one another's ideologies, but at their heart remains the ideas that through well-defined characters and strong performances, there was ample room in cinema to offer both traditionally conservative *and* progressive roles that audiences could identify with. Would the *Carry On* films follow suit?

George Orwell saw McGill's females as angular and haughty Hottentot figures, whereby they offered caricatures of the Englishman's secret ideal. This suggests that there is juxtaposition between what *is* seen and what *wants* to be seen, where the cartoon-like qualities of the postcards are versioned caricatures of real people. For Orwell, the women of the postcards remain fictional exaggerations of the real thing, but when looked at become almost idealistic through their drawings and how they are perceived. The main female 'targets' are 'newlyweds, old maids, nude statues and women in bathing-dresses [and] nagging wives and tyrannous mothers-in-law'.[1]

Jordan sees the women's roles as caricatured 'nice young women' who are 'technically the heroines of a mild romance' representing 'sexually desirable' characters or 'obsolete wives', which seem to fall into McGill's types with ease.[2] There is no pornographic inference achieved by the character/actress, but rather a 'giggling sugariness' that forces a 'pretend' innocence on these sexually awakening characters. Jordan pushes forward the idea that even though the audience is supposed to laugh at the male form when it is nude (*Constable* sees the bare buttocks of the young police recruits), when it comes to nudity of the female form, it is usually non-sexual.[3] The female's naked form is always presented in a peepshow-style manner. Even though it is basing itself on the traditions of *What the Butler Saw* machines up and down the nation's piers, the naked female is not sexualised at all. The audience knows sex is only alluded to in these films (up to a point) and that there is more laughter to be had by *inferring* sex rather than *displaying* it. When Sid walks in on Babs taking a shower in *Carry On Abroad*, there is no sexual gratification at all for the viewer. The enjoyment of the scene comes from the swanee whistle on the soundtrack as the camera tilts down to her bare backside. Farce will always win out over sex in the *Carry On* world.

The *Carry On* films were never subtle. They used genre as a base for their narratives and employed stereotypes when constructing characters. In the *Carry On* world, the women were seen as copies of the McGill 'types': sexual predator, harridan and bombshell. Whilst earlier incarnations of the young female in the 1950s were seen as wholesome, fun loving and traditional, and where they were seen as girlfriend or wife, by the 1960s, the realist arm of the films saw the women having gained forms of independence, whilst still being tied to the strings of patriarchy.

The roles they had were usually professional (teacher, constable, nurse) and no genuine mention of family life was alluded to. Each one lived for her work. The parodies offered a similar view for the young female. They were independent (Annie Oakley in *Cowboy* and Lady Jane in *Follow That Camel*), but were 'removed' from the realist trait inasmuch as they were in period and historical costume. This does not mean that they did not the era in which they were made. For example, Annie is a 1960s woman with 1960s attitudes, but because of the period trappings, the message is sometimes lost amidst both the *mise en scène* and the trappings of the genre.

In the 1970s the *Carry On* women changed again. They used their newfound feelings of liberation, whilst access to 'the pill' became a way

in which they could enjoy a sexual life on their terms. Here one would think of Sally Martin in *Carry On Loving*, who is a model, earns a good wage and shares a modern and trendy flat with another like-minded female friend.

The first truly independent female characters in the series are Flo Castle and Gladys Trimble. In *Carry On Cruising* they go on holiday as friends *without men*. However, in keeping with the conservative approach of the filmmakers, these females eventually want (or *need*) to marry. They follow McGill's pattern of womanhood: independence and sexual freedom eventually leads to marriage, domesticity and loss of sexual freedom. By the end of the series' original run, Emmannuelle had become the series' ultimate sexual predator, a liberated woman who sleeps with numerous men whilst still within the confines of her marriage. In her world – and it is a *French* caricature at tha –, she has the best of *both* worlds: a loving husband and numerous lovers. She has domesticity *and* freedom.

Jung's women are either Damsels in Distress or Mother Figures. The Damsel in Distress is dealt with traditionally. Though they may behave foolishly on occasion, they also remain strong and independent. For example, in *Carry On Teacher*, both Miss Allcock and Miss Short (Joan Sims and Hattie Jacques) get covered in itching powder, yet they still display feminist thought and have radical discussions about the power of female teachers in the modern classroom. Barbara Windsor or Angela Douglas usually played the Damsel, but each one also sees them proving their mettle against the male figure. For example, in *Cowboy*, Douglas' Annie Oakley is a superior sharpshooter than all the men, while *Spying* has Windsor's Agent Honeybutt as the toughest new recruit at MI6. Due to the conservative nature of the films, there has to be a form of 'security' for the male when in contact with the female. Therefore, even though the Damsel has been saved, she often enters into domesticity at the sake of her own independence.

There were characters who wanted to be married (Joan Fussy in *Camping* surrenders her body to the Rogue in the hope that he will marry her) or those who wanted to be within a relationship but on their own terms (Jenny Grubb in *Loving* sees marriage as something curtailing her fun). For the older female, the transition towards sexual predators means a sense of desperation of *needing* marriage to somehow make their lives 'complete'. Such characters included Jacques' roles as Miss Haggerd in *Camping* and Sophie Bliss in *Loving*, whose very names suggest that love has either passed them by or is longed and yearned for.

However, once the couple marries, sex becomes a burden for the female and interpretations of the role change again. This time it takes on a distinct persona: the harridan or battleaxe. These characters stay at home, henpeck their husbands and curtail their fun. Notable examples in the canon include Emily Bung in *Screaming!*, Evelyn Blunt in *Abroad* and Mildred Bumble in *Girls*, and the joy of the chase and the obtaining of pre-marital sex for these characters has ended long before the narratives have begun. However, women were still seen as a strong character within her own right. Admittedly they fall into their McGill stereotypes inasmuch as they henpeck their husbands, but the husbands are weak anyway, which indicates just how weak the men are, and it is the women who still maintain the domestic sphere. Whilst the husbands are away from home trying to find a younger replacement, the wives still function as often hardworking characters themselves. For example, in *Abroad*, Cora runs the pub whilst her husband Sid goes on holiday, and in *Carry On Behind*, Sylvia Ramsden stays to look after her husband's butcher shop whilst he goes fishing with his friend, Ernie Bragg.

Interestingly, the same actresses are used time and again in these roles. Before her fame as a Bond Girl in *Goldfinger*, Shirley Eaton had become a familiar and very welcome face in British cinema. With her soft accent, slight build and air of posh sensibilities, she always portrayed the prim face of middle-class respectability. Despite her uncredited appearance as a saucy Sixth Former in *The Belles of St. Trinians*, Eaton was more than a match for *Three Men in a Boat* (1956) and was the blackmailed model Melissa Right in the black comedy *The Naked Truth* (1957). Her roles in some of the early *Carry On*s were no different. In *Sergeant* she played Charlie's wife Mary and in *Nurse* she was the professional Staff Nurse, Dorothy Denton, who ran the ward with efficiency. Even though reduced to a walk-on part in *Constable*, in which she plays Sally Barry, a newlywed, she still had the same character traits as her previous roles.

This gentle type of character then changed to become the sexually charged creations of Barbara Windsor. Over the course of ten appearances, her performances in the theatrical production of *Carry On London* (1973–75) and a return to treading the boards with *What a Carry On in Blackpool!* (1992), her trajectory moved from super-secret agent to saucy schoolgirl, black widow, beauty pageant model and highway robber with ease. By the time that Suzanne Danielle became the sex-mad Emmannuelle, it was obvious that the coy cosiness of the past had been completely usurped, and the nudges and winks of earlier films had become

wholly unravelled, producing instead a genuinely active sexual woman. Despite this move into the murkier depths of the British sex film, it was interesting that when *Carry On Columbus* arrived, the female lead reverts *back* to characters *pre*-Emmannuelle. Sara Crowe's performance as Fatima, the traditional Princess, is a potent mix of Shirley Eaton's sweet charm and Barbara Windsor's knowing sexual prowess. It was quite obvious that the filmmakers were trying to bring this last film back into the traditions of the past and, whilst not wholly successful, the fact that Crowe does an adequate job in her rather limited role suggests that had the series continued, perhaps she would have become one of its mainstays.

Whilst Windsor may have been the sexpot and Jacques the motherly matron, the actress most associated with the sexual predator role was the superb Joan Sims. She is at her most sexually alluring in *Cowboy*, where she plays Belle, the saloon owner. However, her character trajectory is an interesting case. She first appeared in *Carry On Nurse*, remained a virtual constant across 24 films in the series and appeared in the last of the original run. Across these movies, she ranged from playing an inexperienced professional (*Nurse*) and a young love interest (*Teacher* and *Constable*) to a nagging wife (*Cleo* and *Screaming!*) and a sexual predator (*Cowboy* and *Follow That Camel*), until she becomes the battleaxe (*Behind*). Interestingly, her last role is as the housekeeper Mrs Dangle at the French Embassy in *Emmannuelle*. Here she plays a traditional grandmother figure. She wears cardigans, knits and is in the kitchen preparing food.

However, the filmmakers do enable Sims' character to have one last 'throw of the dice' where a relationship is concerned. Mrs Dangle tells the other characters of her most rewarding sexual encounter. Rather than it being on the beach at St Tropez or being swept off her feet by the love of her life, it happens in a rundown launderette. As she puts her washing into the dryer, she catches the eye of an old man looking at her. Filmed in slow motion, Mrs Dangle and this stranger (with his hints of illicit sex) slowly reveal their dirty linen to one another; a sock, a pair of knickers, Y-fronts and a bra are brought out of their carrier bags. Eventually they embrace, slowly twirling around one another until they gently kiss. The scene fades. What makes this scene interesting is not the fact that it is badly shot and edited and smacks of desperation at trying to shoehorn in a sequence that serves no purpose within the narrative itself, but that it offers the idea that sex is *finally* not age-restrictive. In all the films there is evidence of 'the chase' and the older male is (in the main) chasing the younger female. Yet in this instance, the older female is given the opportunity to do the

chasing. Admittedly it is chasing someone of the same age, but the opportunity is presented. Of course, in typical *Carry On* fashion, the conventions of their own world are subverted: rather than this courtship being done on a beach or in a hotel, it is done in a launderette. Perhaps this is therefore the final word on sex for the older female in the series: domestic life and bliss revolves around fantasies of sex within the confines of the world of dirty laundry and the domestic sphere. If that is the case, then perhaps it is best left alone.

Barbara Windsor[4]

Scene: Ext. A campsite in Devon. A Headmaster and his Matron are leading an exercise class for his teenage female pupils. As he demonstrates the exercises, so they follow his lead. Barbara seems more keen than most to get the exercises right.

Dr Soaper: And fling and in, and fling and in. Now arms outstretched. And fling and in and fling and in! That's it, girls. Now let's see those chests really come out!

(The girls stretch their arms from side to side. Suddenly, Barbara's bra comes flying off and hits Dr Soaper squarely in the face. As he looks at the bra in disgust he realizes what has happened. Matron rushes to cover Barbara's blushes. She grabs her hand and pulls it away from Barbara. Her breast is revealed.)

Dr Soaper: Matron! Take them away!

Windsor is *the* female most associated with the *Carry On* films. Her roles are usually independent and sexually alluring characters who exhibit both innocence and knowing in equal measures. Characters such as Hope Springs (*Girls*) and Harriet (*Dick*) offer even more caricatured views of the female than McGill could ever hope to muster. Windsor is treated as the archetypal British blonde seaside postcard female writ large, with accentuated emphasis placed on both her physicality (her breasts, her 'wiggle' and her laugh) and her ability at showing men to be ineffectual incompetents.

Up until the exact moment of Windsor's bra flying off in *Camping*, female nudity of the main actresses had only ever been hinted at. Here, however, it was brought to life. From that moment on, the films would never quite be the same again. The innocent vulgarity that was the cornerstone of the films was now no longer a prerequisite. Flesh had been seen and there was now the 'threat' that it would always rear its head once

more. Windsor again appeared nude in the films (*Abroad* and *Dick*), but no other actress did until *Carry On England*, which substituted innocence for a much more blatant and crude presentation of female nudity. As far as the censor was concerned, nudity was definitely *not* part of the films' saucy approach to its subject matter, with *England*'s nude scenes being re-edited for a more family-oriented audience. It would seem that the British sex film could show nudity in art fare such as *Don't Look Now* (1973). Populist cinema like the *Carry On* films could not.

It was with two particular performances in the series that Windsor's roles remain both an important part of 1960s British Cinema and as a reminder of how far (or, indeed, how little) the *Carry On* team were prepared to go with their female characters. Whilst Windsor was usually 'static' inasmuch as her roles were specific 'types', they remained strong characters in their own rights. The first, as Agent Daphne Honeybutt in *Carry On Spying*, demonstrates how she is strong, independent and capable of outwitting men by using her brain; the second, as Nurse Sandra May in *Carry On Doctor*, sees her physical presence both physically and mentally destroy the numerous males she encounters.

The plot of *Carry On Spying* is straightforward. A group of untried MI6 agents set out to foil the dastardly plans of Dr Crow, head of STENCH. At this point in the narrative, Dr Crow has caught Daphne and her fellow agents. The men are taken away, whilst Daphne is tortured. Just before capture, she had used her photographic memory to remember a secret formula:

Scene: Int. Dr Crow's interrogation chamber. Daphne sits tied to a chair. Dr Crow and a henchman walk around her.
Dr Crow: You are completely hypnotized. You will do anything I tell you. Open your mouth. (She does) Now do you understand what you have to do? Right, now…
(Crow points at Daphne but Daphne bites her finger)
Daphne: Isn't that what you wanted me to do?
Dr Crow: You'll pay for this. Start the sonic device.
(A device is placed onto Daphne's head and she goes cross-eyed)
Dr Crow: Wake up! Now, you will repeat the formula, understand? Good. Now, start the tape recorder. Begin!
Daphne: Water.
Dr Crow: Guard, some water.
(Daphne is given a glass of water, takes a sip and spits it over Crow)
Daphne: That's better. What do we do now?

Dr Crow: I don't believe it. No one has ever survived the sonic device before.
Daphne: Well, I'm used to the noise. I used to sing with a rock and roll group.
Dr Crow: Guard, start the brain disintegrator!

It is obvious that Daphne is impervious to Crow's interrogation methods. All through the narrative, she has demonstrated her superiority to both her peers and her superiors, and overturns the traditional roles of Damsel in Distress and Princess. As the scene progresses, so Daphne's strength remains constant:

(Another device is lowered onto Daphne's head. The device lights up for a few moments and is then removed by the guard)

Dr Crow: You are completely in my power.
Daphne: I am completely in your power.
Dr Crow: You will answer all my questions.
Daphne: You will answer all my questions.
Dr Crow: No, you will answer my questions.
Daphne: No, you will answer my questions.
Dr Crow: What is your name?
Daphne: You are completely in my power.
Dr Crow: No, no! I am completely in your power.
Daphne: What is your name?
Dr Crow: My name is Dr Crow.
Daphne: What is your job?
Dr Crow: I am the head of STENCH, an organization designed to … What am I saying? You are supposed to be answering the questions.
Daphne: What do you want to know?
Dr Crow: That's better. What is the formula?
Daphne: You are completely in my power.
Dr Crow: Oh, I give up. I can do nothing with this monster?
Daphne: (Smiling) Can I go now, please? We should have another little chat some time.
(Daphne stands up, hits her head on the device and slumps back into the chair. She begins to repeat the formula)

Whereas *Goldfinger* with its impressive sets and beautiful use of colour remains the archetypal James Bond movie, *Carry On Spying* is filmed in expressionistic black and white. To emphasise the cheapness of *Carry On* production, and in direct comparison with Eon's, whereas Bond lay strapped to a table with a laser beam about to slice him in two, Honeybutt sits in a high-backed hairdressing chair (presumably it was too difficult

to film her lying down as it could be a censorship issue) with a hairdresser's blow-dryer placed on her head. Despite this apparent cheapness, the scene remains incredibly effective. It shows how important an actress like Windsor is to the series at this point. Gone is the naivety of Shirley Eaton and her performance in *Carry On Sergeant*, to be replaced by the much stronger characterisations of Windsor. Through the use of judicial close-ups, it becomes a testament to her portrayal of this character who, unlike Connery's Bond, who sweats and panics that he will be killed, appears to be impervious to torture and seems to actually relish it.

Throughout the sequence, Dr Crow remains in a position of authority and therefore, despite accentuating her danger to Daphne through looming close-ups and shadows, must be ridiculed. In comparison with this, Daphne is photographed through either mid- or shoulder shots. Despite her small stature, her forceful and rapid-fire delivery of the dialogue shows that she is neither weak nor defenceless. This strength destabilizes Crow. It is only through a comical error that Daphne gives away the formula, but this is a *deus ex machina* moment: she has to progress the narrative for the males to play the traditional role of rescuers to the Princess.

The power struggle between Daphne as an agent of the free world and Dr Crow as its nemesis again re-iterates the fact that this *British female* is a strong and vibrant force. If one puts Daphne into the context of the females around her, it becomes obvious that she remains the strongest. If one puts her in the canon of female characters, it shows that the team was prepared to use Windsor as a vehicle towards female empowerment. Nothing like this had been attempted before by the team. But this was only done during parts of the narrative. At the end of the film, Daphne says that she loves Harold and has reverted back into the traditional Damsel in Distress archetype, whereby she has returned to the 'safety' of conforming to patriarchal life. This is a shame. Whilst she exhibits traits of the dumb blonde, she is better equipped to deal with pressure than *any* of the males. Indeed, she would be a match for James Bond himself.

Four years later, Windsor returned for her second *Carry On* outing. Here she plays the peroxide blonde nurse Sandra May. May is undoubtedly a female Trickster at this point, when she becomes the catalyst for Dr Tinkle's downfall. Valerie Steele argues that nurses have long been fantasy figures in pornography and that through the adoption of two sexually fantasist guises:

> [The 'naughty nurse' helps] the patient 'feel better' by engaging in therapeutic intercourse. As soon as she enters the room, dressed in skimpy white

> uniform, her resemblance to the virgin and maid is obvious. Yet, as sadomasochistic pornography emphasizes, the nurse is also a uniformed authority figure who inflicts pain on the patient. The 'nasty nurse' is erect and standing, hypodermic or enema in hand, while her victim lies on the bed.[5]

Windsor/May's most important contribution to the deconstruction of the male and the cementing of female empowerment occurs when she walks from the nurses' accommodation to the hospital. The scene begins with May walking out of the block of flats. She wears a starched pink-and-white nurse's uniform, replete with black stockings with seams running up the back of her legs. May is the epitome of the ideal male fantasy figure. Over this sequence is a fast-paced jaunty tune matching the musical beat of her 'wiggle' walk.

As May heads towards the hospital, a cyclist passes by. He turns to look at her, rings his bell and she waves. Harry, an older male ambulance driver, looks at her, objectifies her immediately and says: 'What about *that* then?' When May walks past the men, she blows a kiss directly at the camera. For the male audience, the sexual link between character and spectator is immediately heightened. Through a series of quick edits, we see images of her kiss, stroll and legs as she walks into the hospital. Sam, the younger ambulance driver, moves out from under the vehicle. He utters one sound: 'Phwoar!'

As May walks down a hospital corridor, Dr Kilmore looks at her. Completely mesmerised, he backs into a gurney that knocks the faith healer Francis Bigger onto the floor. As she enters the male ward, the end patient who is dressed in bandages from head to foot tries to rise from the bed. She waves at him. Through a series of intercuts between her nearing the camera and the patients looking at her, she eventually reaches Charlie Roper's (Sid James') bed. He is having his blood pressure taken. He looks at her and growls in animalistic sexually at her. The camera cuts to her in mid-shot and she looks down at him in his bed. She says 'Hi!' and Roper's blood pressure monitor explodes.

Even though May remains completely objectified in this sequence inasmuch as she is almost always placed in the centre of the screen to become the main focal point as the men actively look *at* her, *she* is without doubt the strongest character through this entire sequence. By emphasising her sexuality through the figure-hugging male-fantasy outfit, she appears to transcend objectivity entirely. She becomes a force of nature and is both confident in her own abilities whilst exuding terrific sex appeal. The men

are symbolically castrated throughout these two minutes of screen time. They want to be with her, but they cannot. The older ambulance driver is interested in the chase, but has not got the physical stamina to fulfil it and so remains static. The younger driver puts his glasses on to see her. His glasses reveal his lack of 'manliness' and by doing so indicates that he is not sexually strong enough to be of use to her. By exclaiming 'Phwoar', his attraction to May is evident, but that he is only doing so on a guttural level infers that he is not articulate enough to enter her world. As her superior, Kilmore fares no better. He is emasculated the moment he sees her. His collapse onto the gurney can only be read one way: he is sexually incompetent. Francis Bigger does not see her at all and his emasculation is a byproduct of Kilmore's.

By merely walking through the ward and smiling at the patients, May again renders the male impotent. But in a way they are already weak. Mr Wigley, the figure bandaged from head to foot, turns out to be invisible; Charles Hawtrey's character is Mr Barren, who is suffering from a phantom pregnancy; Bernard Bresslaw's Ken Biddle has a broken leg, metaphorically substituted for his lack of sexual prowess; Peter Butterworth's Mr Smith has 'a lump' which is never explained; and Charlie (Sid James) suffers with high blood pressure. They are all physically incapable of making love to May. Apart from Mr Barren, who says 'Oh no, not today', they all *think* they can have sex with her (and that she would want to have sex with them) because of their reactions, but the fact of the matter is that they *cannot*. The only one who attempts this is Charlie. When his monitor explodes, it is his only way of showing his sexuality at this point in the proceedings. The monitor's explosion, with the liquid blasting out of the top of it at the moment when intercourse *should* be taking place within his fantasy world, has all too obvious connotations.

This whole sequence is fascinating. It reveals the way in which the female is objectified on a purely sexual level, whilst also deliberately emphasising that females are *the* stronger sex in the films. If Steele's arguments about the two types of nurses is accepted, then May is a combination of both 'naughty' and 'nasty' nurse. She is capable of making patients 'feel better', but then emasculates them. The fact that May renders every man incapable of functioning on even the most basic level is indicative not only of her sexual prowess as the 'ultimate' *Carry On* fantasy figure, but also stresses how weak the male is. From this moment on, despite nudity featuring in later movies in the series and *Emmannuelle* being a parody of the softcore French movie, this is arguably the *ulti-*

mate sexually charged *Carry On* moment. It encapsulates *all* the sexual inadequacies of *all* the males up to this point, whilst hammering home the point that the young, sexually attractive female is incredibly strong. Because of this, virtually every other film that came after *Doctor* remains trying (with varying degrees of success) to contain the female. As such, Sandra May with her wiggle and her cheeky smile is potentially *the* most sexually potent challenge to both male dominance and female domesticity that the team produced.

Hattie Jacques[6]

Hattie Jacques was an accomplished comedic actress before joining the *Carry On* series. She was a mainstay of British TV and cinema, and directors often used her large frame as a means of producing both comedy and sympathy. For Thomas and his team, Jacques often conformed to Jung's Mother archetype. In *Cabby* she played Peggy as a gentle, caring, wise, loving woman who wants to be a successful career woman, a loving wife and a doting mother.[7] However, she also becomes the metaphorical Mother in the majority of her other outings in the series. She appeared in *Sergeant* as the Chief Medical Officer looking after the physical wellbeing of the platoon. In *Constable* her kindly sergeant looks after both the police station and Sergeant Wilkins. Her role as Sophie Bliss in *Carry On Loving* has her as both wife to Sidney, despite her and his constant quarrelling, and Mother to her customers at the Wedded Bliss Agency. When she appears as the flamboyant Floella in *Carry On Abroad*, she is kept apart from much of the action, and her attempts at cooking are her only link to being the Mother figure. For her final outing in *Carry On Dick*, as the much put-upon Miss Hoggett, the Reverend Flasher's loyal spinster housekeeper, she offers guidance to both him and his flock.

However, it is in her role as Matron that she is forever remembered. The Matron in the hospital films is as strict as a mother would be with unruly children. The same attempts are less than successful when she tries to look after her sexually active wards of her public school, Chayste Place, in *Carry On Camping*. But what is important is this: Jacques' physical stature promoted ideas of Mother across the series: warm-hearted, loving, nurturing and kind. Therefore, in the world of the *Carry On* films, she served numerous functions: first, as the McGill-style fat lady of the postcard tradition; second, as keeper of the domestic sphere; third, as sexually

inexperienced; and, finally, as the Mother who attempts to care for others. These aspects will now be examined in three key scenes in *Carry On Camping*:

Scene 1: Dr Soaper's office.
Haggerd: I was wondering if this camping trip was a good idea?
Soaper: May I remind you, it was my idea?
Haggerd: Of course. But I was wondering if they might find it a trifle Spartan. Here I can keep control over them. Outside anything could happen.
Soaper: You are coming with us. Surely you and I can keep suitable control.
Haggerd: I was thinking about the girls.
Soaper: So was I.
Haggerd: But don't you see it raises the question of sex.
Soaper: I wouldn't dream of bothering you in that way.
Haggerd: I meant with the girls. They're liable to come into contact with boys.
Soaper: Oh yes, but I don't think that'll be a problem. It's been my experience that once young people experience the country life and the wonders of nature, they can't get enough of it!
Haggerd: Exactly.
Soaper: I was thinking of the girls.
Haggerd: So was I.
Soaper: You could mention the birds and the bees with some reference to the behaviour of monkeys. If any of them feel any unnatural urges, just send them to me.
Haggerd: I was thinking of the girls.
Soaper: So was I!

When Miss Haggerd enters the male domain of Dr Soaper's office, her position of security within the school alters slightly. She is enamoured of Soaper and seeks his approval over her plans for the school trip. When she talks to Soaper, she moves in closer to him, re-iterating her need and wanting to be desired. During the conversation, she indicates that her authority might be undermined, but Soaper sees this from a sexual aspect. When this happens, she moves in closer to the Doctor, seeing him as a sexual companion. As she is placed left of screen, so she is placed into a position of passivity, receptive to Soaper's ideas. However, with a change of camera angle, she now becomes the larger figure in the shot, and so Dr Soaper's position is now one of masculine-under-threat. He becomes noticeably more animated, trying to move away from her. The final moment sees a

sense of tension between the two characters: sex has been mentioned, but here it is the sense of illicit and taboo sex, where the relationship between headmaster and the schoolgirls makes them laugh uneasily:

Scene 2: Hostel corridor.
Haggerd: I owe you an apology.
Soaper: Nonsense, you weren't to know I was in the wrong room.
Haggerd: Please. I have been thinking about it. I should never have screamed out like that. Most immature.
Soaper: I wouldn't say that. What?
Haggerd: I've always led a very sheltered life. And before this, no man has ever forced his attentions on me.
Soaper: I can well believe it.
Haggerd: But I am not a child and I am aware that a man has these uncontrollable urges from time to time.
Soaper: Only at Christmas and Bank Holidays.
Haggerd: I did feel very flattered that you wanted to release them on me.
Soaper: Oh, but I don't Matron. I assure you.
Haggerd: Of course, I realize it was the sight of me in the shower that aroused your slumbering manhood.
Soaper: Oh but it wasn't slumbering. It was only half-co…
Haggerd: No, don't say anymore. Just be patient with me. Remember that I am inexperienced in such things. Don't rush me. I think you'll find it's worth waiting for.
Soaper: So's Christmas, but you won't find me stuffing your turkey.
(A hooter plays on the soundtrack)

Scene 2 is a transition scene in their relationship. The balance of power noticeably shifts from Dr Soaper to Miss Haggerd. As she comes down the hostel staircase, she looms over him, with her on-screen placement, as always, above him. The dialogue begins coyly with the embarrassment of the previous night still on their minds. Miss Haggerd again seeks Dr Soaper's approval by offering him an apology. She indicates that she is virginal but knows about sex. At this moment, Soaper in his active role as authority figure becomes passive. When she walks down the stairs, the emphasis of character placement within the shot is placed on the incongruity between the two characters' *physical* size to one another. In the McGill tradition, she remains the larger woman, the wife to Soaper's henpecked husband. Their clothes also reflect the social and professional standing of the characters. Miss Haggerd's t-shirt, with the badge of 'Chayste Place'

emblazoned on it, emphasises the fact that she is a virgin. Soaper's vertical stripes on his blazer come to represent the 'stuffiness' of repression, as if they are containing him within his jacket.

When Miss Haggerd places her hand gently on that of Dr Soaper, the physical distance between the two has now ended. Soaper looks with disdain at this, his middle-class sensibilities shocked that the female has taken the initiative in courtship. Haggerd remains situated above Soaper on the staircase and, as such, his masculinity is constantly undermined by her sheer physicality. This is also accentuated by her ignoring his words. This means that once again, the dominant female places the male's virility under threat. When Haggerd leaves Soaper to board the coach, his masculinity is restored: he becomes taller in the shot and takes centre stage. However, his words are spoken when she has left the shot, indicating that she cannot hear them. It can also be read that he is too afraid of her to tell her to her directly, for fear of losing his dominance:

Scene 3: Int/Ext of Dr Soaper's tent.
Soaper: What is it, Matron?
Haggerd: I must see you on a personal matter. If you won't come out, I'll come in!
Soaper: No! (Soaper attempts to leave via the back of the tent)
Haggerd: Oh no you don't!
Soaper: I was taking a short cut.
Haggerd: I have a feeling you're trying to avoid me.
Soaper: No, whatever gave you that idea? Think of the girls.
Haggerd: To hell with the girls!
Soaper: To hell with … Matron!
Haggerd: It's not fair to ignore a woman once you've aroused her dormant passion.
Soaper: I've not aroused your doormat ration. Your dormant passion.
Haggerd: Oh but you have. All my life I've been like an unused clockwork toy! That night in the hostel you wound me up! Now you must have me!
Soaper: Oh, but I might bust your spring.
Haggerd: Before the school I worked at a hospital. There was a doctor there. He was brilliant. He looked just like you! I worshipped him but he ignored it. Why when I show interest in a man do they ignore it? Why? Haven't I got appeal?
Soaper: So's a banana and I don't even want that!
Haggerd: I feel you're different, Doctor. Don't you feel something?
Soaper: No, I believe in keeping my hands to myself!

Haggerd: But you showed me your true feelings. Now let me show you mine!
Soaper: But I don't want to see yours!
Haggerd: Don't fight it!
Soaper: Oh, help, someone! HELP!
(Commotion from outside)
Haggerd: Whatever's that?
Soaper: I don't know, but thank heavens for it!

Miss Haggerd's character trajectory is complete. In the first scene she is afraid to embrace country life, but now, as if to echo Dr Soaper's words, she 'can't get enough of it!' In this scene the audience is presented with two worlds: the outer world of Miss Haggerd in the field and the inner world of Dr Soaper's tent. With its flimsy construction, the tent becomes a metaphor for Dr Soaper himself. When she enters into *his* domain, she becomes the completely aggressive and dominant force. Soaper tries to escape her clutches, but she remains his physical superior. She manhandles him, stroking him as if he was a possession, and then pushes him back onto the bed and assumes sexual dominance over him. Here Haggerd remains in total command of this relationship, forcing Soaper to accede any power that he might once have had over her. A second reading is that she wants to become inveigled within the confines of married life. She enters Soaper's tent of her own free will and is prepared to accept that she will become part of the patriarchal world. It is only at the last moment that this is curtailed. She looks away in anger, whilst Soaper looks relieved. She now reverts back to her position as authority-led rather than authority-lead.

Jacques is superb in this role and projects both an air of command and subservience where the role demands it. Interestingly, she had undergone a transformation within the series, as both Windsor and Joan Sims had done. Jacques was originally the stern army doctor in *Sergeant*, but by *Constable* had become a kinder more homely figure, as if blatantly emphasising that her size and weight must see her as such. Her size was always an issue for her and it became a matter of concern for the film's backers and their insurers. Yet without her the films are missing the most blatant element of the McGill caricature: the fat lady. Jacques was an accomplished actress who could perform comic roles brilliantly. She *fits* the 'fat lady' persona perfectly due to her comic timing, acting and, above all else, reassurance that she always gave a good performance. She was given as much

'freedom' as the younger and thinner characters, and it is perhaps testament to her role as Miss Haggerd, forever chasing but hardly ever catching her love, that she is so fondly remembered.

Without a doubt, the *Carry On* films rely on both archetypes and stereotypes. The team took the basic templates for men and women and placed them into their narratives via McGill's caricatures and the genre formula. Each one of these characters was traditionally conservative, with all of them exhibiting the traits associated with their 'type'. However, on closer inspection, it becomes readily apparent that Hudis and, in particular, Rothwell have taken these 'types' and given them a particular *Carry On* twist to both accentuate and critique their characters' manners.

The *Carry On* women both mirror and comment upon the McGill caricatures of tradition. Joan Sims passes from naïve young professional to middle-aged woman and then on to the old lady reminiscing about her younger years. Whilst her characters are usually conservative, she remained the one actor whose character trajectory follows the most likely path of an individual, albeit seen through *Carry On* traditions. Windsor's naughty but nice sexy nurse remains the epitome of the series' perceived attitude towards young, blonde and buxom women, but in reality she remains a potent form that challenges male dominance at every turn. Whilst Jacques remains, at heart, the McGill fat lady of his postcards, her roles experiment with tradition. As Peggy in *Cabby*, she is an entrepreneur who stays at home to look after he husband and wants motherhood (although hopefully there is room for her and Charlie's rival firms to coexist), whilst as Matron she questioned authority and as Miss Haggerd, despite her Dickensian moniker, she portrayed a woman with strong sexual desires.

It becomes apparent then that despite Jordan's negative critiques of the characters in the series, they do actually have much more potent force than might at first have been realised. Even though the film roles of Christie, Tushingham, York and Redgrave clearly demonstrated a new and vibrant way of articulating female positions in a socially changing landscape, and, as such, have been justly celebrated elsewhere, it remains an undeniable fact that the *Carry On* films were both regressive and progressive in their portrayal of women.

Whilst many of the female characters remained firmly entrenched in their McGill 'types', they did offer scope for some form of negotiation. Whilst Jacques seemed to be forever contained within the conservative world of the *Carry On* films, she does attempt to break free from this on occasion. As Matron, she remains professional. As Miss Haggerd, her

sexual awakening remains a potent force. With feminism forming an influential ideology during the 1960s, women could begin to move away from home life towards independency on their own terms. Whilst the contraceptive pill had been available via NHS prescription to married women since 1961, it was legalised for all women in 1967. This gave them the right to broaden both their hopes and dreams outside the traditional areas of marriage and motherhood. For Matron, she remains *wanting* to be a part of traditional family unit: man and wife. That Miss Haggerd arrived at a time when women had freedom over their use of contraception is no coincidence. The pill had been available to all women for two years prior to *Camping*'s 1969 release. Whilst Miss Haggard only jumped a small distance onto Soaper, the women of the *Carry On* films took a giant leap forward. The era of free love had finally hit the *Carry On* films. Even though Miss Haggard's future remains steadfastly linked to that of Dr Soaper, the fact that *she* is the one who instigates sex—and *uninhibited* sex at that—shows how important Jacques was to the entire series.

Even though the roles of Windsor show that she moved from a physically and mentally strong woman in *Spying* to a strong but caricatured version of herself in *Carry On Dick*, her small stature accentuated her characters' strengths. Even though she was often seen as an object of desire and remained the archetypal blonde, she was always stronger than the men around her. That she moved into domesticity in her last two roles in *Girls* and *Dick* does not seem to matter. The men (Sid Fiddler and Big Dick) may have finally been awarded their Princess, but it has been on her terms and, as such, it is *she* who has the upper hand.

Hindsight is tremendous. To look back at the *Carry On* films from such a distance reveals them to be preserved in their own eras, much in the same way that gherkins are pickled in a jar. The films have certainly had their detractors, and critics such as Marion Jordan have readily emphasised her perceived notions of the films' negative portrayals of women. However, the films were always seen as part of a strong comedic heritage, and one that emphasised women as strong entities within their own rights. Whilst the characters that Windsor, Jacques and Sims portrayed had their progenitors in the British music hall and the postcards of Donald McGill, they were also linked to their contextual filmic world. Whilst much praise has been heaped—and rightly so—on the works of Julie Christie et al., the women in the *Carry On* world are often lambasted. But critics are missing the point of these roles. They were strongly based in tradition. However, they also offered new ways of presenting those traditions. That they did

so with such affection remains a testament to both the team behind the camera and, more importantly, those in front of it.

Notes

1. Orwell (1941).
2. Jordan (1983), p. 320.
3. Ibid., pp. 320–21.
4. Windsor (1991); Windsor and McGibbon (2000).
5. Steele (2001), p. 79.
6. Merriman (2007).
7. At the end of *Cabby*, she becomes the Damsel in Distress who is rescued by Charlie, but reverts back to Mother when she discovers she is pregnant.

CHAPTER 7

Room at the Bottom

Realism is regarded as a vital component of British cinematic history. Whilst much of the interpretation and investigation into what constitutes 'realism' is open to debate, academic work has usually concentrated on notable areas of study. Such areas included the work of John Grierson's work and the Empire Marketing Board, the 'Free Cinema' movement of the 1950s, and especially the New Wave or 'kitchen sink' dramas of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Grierson's work is perceived as having a genuinely engaging aesthetic and they are an important social document of Britain during the 1930s. The New Wave films relied on realistic but narrative fictions and engaging characters to tell their stories. This engagement with realism passed on into later films and, whilst it moved into television, with prime examples being *Cathy Come Home* (1966) and *Abigail's Party* (1977), saw a cinematic re-emergence in the 1980s and 1990s through films such as *Riff Raff* (1991), *This is England* (1996) and *The Full Monty* (1997).

For 1960s realist filmmakers such as Lindsay Anderson, Tony Richardson and Karel Reisz, it was important to realise that they felt they had a 'belief in freedom, the importance of people and the significance of the everyday', which suggests that there was a committed engagement with cinema that aimed to reflect the 'real' British political/social/sexual landscape away from examples within the more artistic or even genre-led areas of the British film canon.[1]

S. Gerrard, *The Carry On Films*,
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This newfound approach to realism within the New Wave movement included the films *Room at the Top* (1958), *Look Back in Anger* (1959), *The Entertainer* (1960), *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), *A Taste of Honey* (1961), *A Kind of Loving* (1962), *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1962), *This Sporting Life* (1963), *Billy Liar* (1963), and *Darling* (1965). These films mostly concentrated on the everyday lives of the working classes and the tensions found within both their work and their play. The films were usually set in the industrial North and normally focused on the male protagonist.[2] Characters like Arthur Seaton in *Saturday Night* and Frank Machin in *This Sporting Life* became known as rebellious 'Angry Young Men', both in keeping with the times and the constraints of 1960s society. As a female-centred alternative, *A Taste of Honey* revolved around Jo and charted a young, pregnant girl's journey into womanhood. Similarly, *The L-Shaped Room* (1962) offered a realistic portrayal of life in a London tenement, with Jane (Leslie Caron) coming to terms with her pregnancy.

Whilst the films are considered as part of the New Wave, there were other movies both before and after that either proved to be progenitors or extenders and continuers of the movement. A film like the Stanley Baker vehicle *Hell Drivers* (1957) demonstrated not only males in conflict in a Suez Crisis Britain, but also juxtaposed scenes of shop life in a Welsh town, the brashness of city life and exciting truck-driving scenes, fistfights and violence meted out on a regular basis within its narrative. Directly realist it may not have been, but there are realist elements there. Crime and police dramas such as *Hell is a City* (1960) used these realist elements in their narratives. Shots of police cars careering around the fog-enshrouded city streets, busy pubs with sexy and saucy barmaids, small-time crooks, smoky rooms and even children playing games in the street may seem clichéd, but they remain ingrained in the memory and proved the impetus for the realistic move into television, and in particular the long-running *Z Cars* (1962–78). Indeed, a film like *The League of Gentlemen* (1960) took this approach further: a group of disparate and disgraced ex-soldiers form an alliance to rob a bank. Whilst the narrative offers a real sense of pure escapism, especially when the men are ruthless but very likeable (they include such recognisably familiar stalwarts as Jack Hawkins, Richard Attenborough, Bryan Forbes and Terence Longdon), and the touches of sardonic black comedy are suitably waspish, the actual robbery, filmed in both steady and handheld ways in and around the streets of London, show a moment both frozen in time (through fashions,

cars and newspaper vendors' headlines) and one that offers these Angry 'not so young' Men a chance to be both part of a utopian collective (inasmuch as they have a genuine liking for one another) and to re-assert their masculinity in a post-Suez Britain.

Between 1967 and 1974, a perceived relaxation of censorship led to a noted and rapid rise in sex, nudity and horror from Britain's filmmakers. Hammer was still *the* name in horror, but its crown as the King of Terror was quickly looking jaded and in danger of toppling. The success of its *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957) spearheaded a horror revival, but canny filmmakers like Amicus used omnibus horror films, compiled of starkly ghoulish stories with a nasty sting in the tale, to tempt punters into the cinema. Amicus' films, with titles such as *Dr Terror's House of Horrors* (1966) and *Torture Garden* (1967), were filmed in the everyday, but with grimly fiendish overtones. There were literate horror films like *The Innocents* (1960), *The Haunting* (1963) and the elegantly genteel and sinister *Séance on a Wet Afternoon* (1964). These were beautifully filmed, well-acted and engrossing character studies of sexual repression. Hammer Films' *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* series were beginning to look jaded, but hidden within *Frankenstein Created Woman* (1966), its sequel *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1969) and *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (1969), there were discernible elements of 1960s teenage rebellion within the nineteenth-century milieu. On a purely aesthetic level, *Dracula A.D. 1972* (1972), *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (1973) and pseudo-*Psycho* melodramas like *Straight On 'til Morning* (1972) were filmed in the modern era in and around the suburbs of London. The exploitation horror film naturally exploited this newfound aesthetic approach. Rather than spend money on huge sets and elaborate costumes, films like *The Sorcerers* (1967), *Trog* (1970) and *The House of Whipcord* (1974) focused their narratives on the grimy streets of the capital, where this sense of grimness and a collapse of moral values found an appreciative audience. But these were not new approaches: the Sadean trilogy of *Horrors of the Black Museum*, *Circus of Horrors* (both 1959) and *Peeping Tom* (1960) proved that horrors in the real world were just as potent and powerful as those in Hammer's fantastical *mittel*-Europe.

Even the British sex comedy/drama films moved towards a realistic trope. Whereas the nudie cuties of Harrison Marks were coy, bashful and definitely tapped into both exploitation areas and slowly wilting censorship by showing bums, boobs and thighs as *Naked as Nature Intended* (1960), films such as *Alfie* (1966), despite its protagonist making asides

directly to the camera, and *Cool it Carol!* (1970) showed just how dreary, seedy and dangerous the capital actually was. This dreariness found its way into the suburbs and Pornotopia in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. The British sex comedy was noticeably tawdry in its construction, with badly fashioned narratives, poor performances from either over-the-hill actors or up-and-coming ones looking to break into cinema, and no real titillation for its audience. Whilst films like *Suburban Housewives* (1972) and *Commuter Husbands* (1973) purported to tell the true stories of what went on behind closed doors and in offices up and down the country, they remained completely unrealistic in both construction and conviction. The Robin Askwith character of Timmy Lea found an appreciative audience with four *Confessions of…* movies, but these were really suburban sitcoms with recognisable faces competing with copious nudity in apparently comic episodes. What made many of the British sex films 'realistic' is not the narratives or the characters, but the fact that they were filmed on location in and around towns like Maidenhead and Slough. This aesthetic, with its High Street, cars, people crossing the road, shop fronts, busy shoppers and litter everywhere, showed Britain for what it was: ordinary. That the films' sex sequences were usually comedic, speeded-up and accompanied by some form of interruption (for example, the husband returning home from work early) meant that a juxtaposition of realist and comic was, as usual, the only way that British cinema could deal with sex, and that Michael Caine's *Alfie* was really, despite its immense success, arguably a fluke.

The bona fide New Wave movement was short-lived. Sir John Davis of the Rank Organisation saw that they were dreary, depressing and did not appeal to the public:

> We cannot, as a consistent policy, play films which are unacceptable to the public as entertainment. This would lead to disaster for everyone. I do feel that independent producers should take note of public demand and make films of entertainment value. The public has clearly shown that it does not want the dreary kitchen sink dramas.[3]

However, the films offered a realistic portrayal of post-war Britain, capturing the essence of a feeling of conformist rebellion within them. With *Room at the Top* being released the same year as *Carry On Sergeant*, there is a definite link between this 'realist' tradition and the *Carry On* film. The first six *Carry On* comedies were institution-based: the army, NHS

hospital, school, the police force, employment exchange and cruise ship. The filmmakers used real locations and institutions as backdrops to their narratives, and the films tackled ideas of class, gender and sexual issues.[4] Such locations included Queen's Barracks, Stoughton near Guildford, local streets around Iver Heath, Drayton Gardens in West Ealing, Lothair Road, The Avenue and Manor Road, all in Ealing, and numerous locations in Windsor, Maidenhead and in and around the grounds of Pinewood Studios. By using real locations, the films have grounded themselves in a reality of sorts, which is then backed up by a highly artificial narrative that sutured the audience into it. Films like *Carry On Sergeant*, with its themes of conscription, provided contextual audiences with a concrete footing that they could readily identify with, not just through location but also through the main narrative theme.

The later *Carry On* films all used some forms of this identity to help these narratives. For the genre costume parodies, the films used the tried-and-tested iconography of their component genres as an instantly recognisable setting for their narratives. Despite being set in the past, these films remain resolutely recognisable through the sets, settings, costumes and trappings of the genre being parodied, whilst being somehow *British* in attitudes. Whilst they were lampoons, their grounding was in the 'real' world of the genre movie.

All of the *Carry On* period farces use staple ingredients which may seem clichéd, but ensured that the product is both conservative and familiar whilst simultaneously parodying the genre. That realism (in the New Wave tradition) is taken away from these genre movies doesn't detract from the parodies. They create worlds in which the clichéd becomes 'real'. For example, the outdoors of *Carry On Jack* have cobbled streets, *HMS Venus* and the costumes of the sailors to give trappings of authenticity. Likewise, in the film's pub interior scene, clothes, lighting, décor and composition are all captured in medium wide shots in order to engage the viewer's eye for detail. Whilst the narrative is purely farce, the period trappings and settings indicate a false reality, but a reality nonetheless.

The team take this false reality further. In the genteel world of polite Edwardian society, *Carry On Follow That Camel*'s distinct visual styles are given to the film's different locations. The décor of Lady Jane's Edwardian house suggests wealth, opulence and the rigid formulism of upper-class society; Kommandant Burger's sparse office is in keeping with both his and the garrison's regimented lifestyle; the importance of Sheikh Abdul Abulbul is emphasised by his banqueting feast and the colourful clothes

he and his tribesmen wear; whilst a surreal element sees Abulbul taking umbrage at being made a fool of when he finds a gramophone record playing a record of soldiers marching as he prepares to attack Fort Soixante-Neuf. Even though the visual elements are different, they remain in place to create a 'real' world within the confines of the narrative. This reaches its height with the French Revolution parody *Carry On Don't Lose Your Head*, which has a huge set of a town square with guillotine, shots in and around the gardens of Clandon Park House, Surrey and Waddesdon Manor near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, which doubled as a French chateau. These locations, coupled with beautiful costumes, give the films a solidity that belies their budgets. Whilst the sets may have been pre-existing and the costumes taken from stock, without historical trappings, costumes or music scores to invoke 'period', the genre parodies would be redundant. As it is, they are a vital part of the whole canon.

For those movies set in the contextual present, the filmmakers used location footage for their backdrops. One of the best examples of this is *Carry On Abroad*, where its opening scene is set in the cosy, conservative utopian collective of the small English pub. Crates of beer are stacked up, crisps and nuts are displayed, beer mats are on the bar, optic bottles are half-empty and Watney's Red Ale is drunk. During this sequence, there are a mix of one or two character shots; medium close-ups on husband and wife Vic and Cora, plus Sadie (Vic's 'bit on the side'). Sadie wears a low-cut top and her cleavage is on show. Vic cannot stop staring at her bosom:

Vic: How about the other half? (Looking down at Sadie's cleavage)
Sadie: Eh?
Vic: Another one of those. (Lifts up a bottle of stout)
Sadie: Oh, ta. Have you got a large one?
Vic: I've had no complaints so far.
Sadie: Seeing is believing.
Vic: You won't need a magnifying glass. (Pours the stout) No, no, have it on me, if you know what I mean.
Sadie: You don't have to draw me any diagrams.
Vic: Pity, I was just going to get my ballpoint out.
Sadie: And write your name with it in the froth I suppose. (She lifts the glass) Bottoms up.
Vic: (Looking at Sadie's breasts) Is that what they are? You could've fooled me.

From the dialogue extract, the innuendo traditions are evident, but what makes them more potent is that they are filmed in a realistic setting, and one that the audience would know well.

Later on in the film, as the main characters assemble on their *Wundatours* coach, Slough's High Street with its parked cars, traffic, shops and litter ensures that everyday believability is evident. A wideshot encompasses the street, the location, and Vic and Cora Flange (Sid James and Joan Sims) walking towards the coach. The sequence is grounded in the commonplace, humdrum existence of daily routine. However, once inside the coach, realism turns to farce when Stanley and Evelyn Blunt (Kenneth Connor and June Whitfield) take their seats. Stuart Farquahar (Kenneth Williams) asks them for their tickets. As Stanley struggles with the suitcases, his wife rummages around in his trouser pockets trying to locate the tickets. Stanley giggles in almost-orgasmic relief. After a moment, he tells her they are in his *back* pocket. This element is purely comedic, lifting it out of the mundanities of coach travel. Stanley's delight at having his genitalia fondled is obvious, yet Evelyn sees nothing to delight in: she is focusing on retrieving the tickets. Reality in the *Carry On* world must have farce too.

There is another important strand of 'realism' that should be examined to illustrate the realist mode of reproduction. 'Realism' is and should be filmed in the 'real world', but the canon does venture into genre territory. *Carry On Jack*, *Carry On Follow That Camel* and *Carry On Don't Lose Your Head* are genre movies. This may take the form of narrative and character types, but, just as importantly, it is the *look* of the film that gives it a feeling of solidity.

Whilst genre movies have staple ingredients within framed shots (*Cowboy* has the typical Western frontier town), the filmmakers employed clichéd imagery, either through scenery or costumes, ensuring that the product would be both conservative and familiar whilst simultaneously parodying the genre. That realism (in the New Wave tradition) is taken away from these genre movies doesn't detract from the parodies. They create worlds in which the clichéd becomes 'real'. For example, *Follow That Camel*, set in the genteel world of Edwardian English society, outposts of the French Foreign Legion or the sun-baked deserts of Northern Africa, uses *mise en scène* (everything that is seen within the frame) as a bona fide, vital part of the film's construction. Without historical trappings, costumes or music scores to invoke 'period', the genre movies would be redundant. As it is, they are a vital part of the whole canon.

There is no tangible sense of 'development' in the classical, linear approach to narratives in the *Carry On* world, resulting in an episodic approach to the storylines. If the theory of *bildungsroman* is juxtaposed with the picaresque all characters grow through the accumulation of experience via a linear narrative.[5] However, the *Carry On* characters don't do this. Whilst a character 'arc' may alter slightly over the narrative, the beginning of the story is given an explanation for, and this is followed by a series of loosely connected events, culminating in a predictable outcome of triumph over adversity. Arguably the films *are* weak in their narrative construction, opting for a series of comic set pieces to showcase the talent. The only connecting device is this thin overarching story plus recurring character types.[6] Within the remit of each 'character', there is a definite feature of 'them' and 'us', ranging from the supercilious figures of authority ('them') to the working-class consciousness ('us'). This 'difference' between authority and officialdom and the workers is one of the main focuses of the series. Workers unite to form a utopian collective, whereby workers become superior to those in authority. For example, *Sergeant* sees individuals becoming a unit, *Teacher*'s staff and students unite against the governors, the raw police recruits in *Constable* foil a robbery and *England*'s sex-mad battalion shoot down an enemy plane.

From another perspective, authority figure(s) and institutions are humanised and show human fallibility. *Constable*'s police chief and *England*'s battalion commander remain steadfastly incompetent, but their 'unit' becomes the collective, whereby the utopian society is created where the social strata erodes, so all classes become one unified and cohesive whole structure. It is this cohesive whole that began to fracture when the *Carry On* team attempted to take this engagement with realism too far away from the cosy world of farce. *Carry On Cabby* was filmed at the tail end of the New Wave movement and at the heart of the Swinging Sixties, so there is a genuine sense of fun, frivolity and *joie de vivre* in it. *Carry On At Your Convenience* was made eight years later, during a period of instability within Britain's social, political and sexual arenas. Both films used realist traits in their comedy, but whereas the joyous feelings of camaraderie were abundant in *Cabby*, *Convenience* delved too deeply in reflecting the contextual world around it. This harder-edged approach to realism, in keeping with the dour decade of the 1970s, indicated that the filmmakers were losing their way.

Carry On Cabby

Carry On Cabby is the team's first attempt at delivering a genuine 'kitchen sink'-style comedy/drama that reflected the lives of the working classes who went to see the films. The film's plot is straightforward. Charlie Hawkins (Sid James) owns *Speedee Taxis*, with his wife Peggy (Hattie Jacques) completing the paperwork. Charlie's best friend Ted Watson (Kenneth Connor) is the main mechanic, and his girlfriend Sally (also called Sal) (Liz Fraser) runs the company's on-site café. The taxi headquarters are in a back street and the mechanics and drivers are demobbed ex-army personnel. One is Terry 'Pintpot' Tankard (Charles Hawtrey), an effete, clumsy, bespectacled, one-man-disaster area who cannot drive, but who wants to be a taxi driver.

Charlie avoids the marital home (a flat above the headquarters), but Peggy wants children and a small cottage where they can settle down. Out on a fare, Charlie misses his fifteenth wedding anniversary. Peggy decides, with the help of Sally and Flo Sims (Esma Cannon), to set up a rival firm, *GlamCabs*. She doesn't tell Charlie, staying away from the flat to run her business. Charlie's domestic chores pile up, and dirty dishes and clothes soon overrun the flat.

Peggy buys a fleet of shiny new Mark 1 Ford Cortinas and employs young and glamorous women as drivers. More customers use *GlamCabs* and Charlie's company begins to lose money, with a bitter rivalry ensuing. However, Peggy and Sal's taxi is hijacked. Ingeniously using the taxi's radio to summon help from *Speedee Taxis,* a frantic chase ensues. The hijackers steal Pintpot's cab, pursued by Charlie's men into the countryside. The fleet of black taxis surrounds the villains, and Charlie and Ted jump on the hijackers, knocking them to the ground. The police arrive and arrest the hoodlums. Pintpot turns up on his scooter and causes Charlie to crash his taxi into a tree. Peggy faints, but Sal says that this is not surprising for 'a woman in her condition'. Peggy is pregnant. Charlie is elated. Pintpot runs off into the distance, trying to hail them a taxi.

If one follows Propp's work on characters, Charlie is the recognisable 'Hero', Peggy is his 'Princess', Ted becomes the hero's 'Helper', Sally is a combination of Friend/Helper and Pintpot becomes the 'Fool'. These basic character traits are fleshed out with some sympathy. Charlie is hard-working, smokes and drinks, but unlike future incarnations of this character in the series, he is not workshy.[7] Peggy reflects the traditional domestic figure that 'needs' rescuing at the end of the narrative, thus becoming the 'prize' for

Charlie, which is then made evident with news of her pregnancy at the end of the story. Ted's Helper aids Charlie in his quest in numerous ways: he repairs cars and helps Charlie during the chase. Most importantly, he proves his friendship when he sees Charlie upset and alone in the flat. 'Kitchen sink' melodramas didn't readily lend themselves to using friendship as a signifier of events; rather, the male protagonist rarely has male (or any) friends, only colleagues or neighbours. The kitchen sink 'hero' is a loner, but needs females for sexual gratification and as a tug towards domesticity. The relationship between Charlie and Ted is not homoerotic, but suggests that males need like-minded company for friendship, whereas females are there for companionship *after* the male friendship has momentarily halted. Charlie and Ted are great friends with a mutual respect and love for one another that ends when females enter into the arena, only for that friendship to be re-asserted once the female has gone or is no longer seen as a 'threat' to the male.

Ted is loyal, obedient and subservient to Charlie. In the opening sequence, Ted 'covers' Charlie's tracks by telling Peggy he's in the office working when he's actually out in his taxi. Ted later impersonates a female *GlamCabs* driver to infiltrate the rival company. Using the tradition of pantomime, the male become female and friendship takes on feelings of extra-dimensionality. Ted is loyal, but foregoes his manliness in order for the male to remain 'superior' to the female. When forced to undress in front of the females of *GlamCabs*, his resilience crumbles. His manliness is called into question by the very nature of him 'dragging up' and not being able to 'survive' in a female-dominated area.

Pintpot offers being a summation of Hawtrey's roles up to this point in the series. The character exhibits feminine traits in his walk and voice, but his army career and leather biker boy outfit are distinctly masculine. Like Gorse in *Constable*, his function is as 'outsider'/'other' to the 'normal' heterosexual masculinised roles in the narrative. Pintpot becomes masculinity *in reverse*: he is not gay, but tends towards femininity. His leather clothes are incredibly neat and tidy. Yet he exhibits the most anarchic and destructive elements of the film by knocking over buckets and causing crashes, and brings about the destruction of Charlie's prize taxi (Peg 1) at the film's climax. But most importantly is this: *Pintpot looks directly at the camera*. By breaking down the 'Fourth Wall' of cinema and producing the Berthold Brecht effect of distantiation, this links *him* to the *audience*. The audience is familiar with Hawtrey's persona within his character, which allows for playful connections between role and audience to be made. The

spectator sees Pintpot as a merry fool in a similar vein to *Twelfth Night*'s Feste or *Martin Chuzzelwit*'s Tom Pinch. Pintpot remains a major component of the narrative, providing not just comic relief but also offering the audience a feeling of superiority to him.

The movie uses females in two distinct ways. One is as the holders and controllers of the domestic sphere. Peggy runs both house and office with equal efficiency. She is business-like, clean and tidy, and has direct rule over everything that makes Charlie's life run efficiently. However, the domestic sphere becomes a double-edged sword. Peggy wants a family and a cottage in the country, but Charlie does not. He sexualises Peggy by buying her a fur coat; she buys him a smoking jacket, slippers and a pipe, indicating domesticity. When Peggy creates *GlamCabs*, the alternate side to her character is shown: she is a ruthless, driven businesswoman. It is quite obvious that Rothwell's inventive script has used both tradition and the prevailing emancipation of females in the post-war years at its most evident here: the female is empowered, the male emasculated. However, the conservatism of the *Carry On* films means that the status quo must be preserved. Racked with guilt, Peggy wants to reconcile with Charlie. When he refuses, her world collapses. Like Doreen in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, early *Carry On* outings only seem to accept that women are truly resilient whilst living within the family, at once supportive and being supported by the male.

This outlook changed dramatically over the course of the series, with female characters finding the time to run households, be successful businesswomen and partaking in the fun and games. If *Carry On Loving* is taken as an example, the women remain strong, independent and able to stand on their own two feet: Esme Crowfoot runs a small fashion business, Sally Martin is a successful model and Sophie Bliss is the brains behind the dating agency. Despite their sexual and familial desires/need to be with men, they remain strong characters in their own right and easily reduce the male to a gibbering wreck. Yet the canon's 'need' for women to return to domesticity shows how conservatively based the team were. Whilst the films were farces, they did reflect the world of contextual Britain. The realities of the labour market in the UK saw significant growth in those women returning to work. The percentage of women of working age in the labour force rose steadily throughout the 1950s and beyond. In 1955, 45.9 per cent of women worked, 51 per cent worked in 1965 and 55.1 per cent worked in 1975. The films take a conservative note of this note of this, but the fact that many of their female characters are striving to be

independent is at least partially successful. Arguably the ultimate 'breaking free' of the female is in *Carry On Girls*, when Mildred Bumble becomes part of the Women's Liberation movement and burns her bra in the process. She becomes a 'freedom fighter' in this cause, helping to destroy the town's beauty pageant and her husband's reputation as mayor.

The second aspect of the treatment of women is in the role(s) of the *GlamCabs* taxi drivers. These are young, beautiful women who use their sexuality to succeed. They wear short skirts and low-cut blouses, and exhibit all the traits of the stereotypical McGill sexbomb. When asked how to get a taxi fare, Peggy tells them to 'Flash your headlamps at them', whilst looking down at their breasts. The connotations are obvious. Sex, the 'chase' and the (possible) attainment of it will get you your fare. There are numerous scenes when the women drivers dominate the men. In a drivers' café, a middle-class city gent asks for an available taxi. Whilst Charlie and Pintpot tell him they are free, the *GlamCabs* driver says that she is available. The man looks wide-eyed at her and jumps into her cab rather than theirs. Despite ruthless tactics such as sabotaging their rival's taxis, the men are again undone. Another *GlamCabs* driver's fare changes her wheel whilst she sits on the bonnet of the car polishing her nails. In another, a *Speedee Taxi* manages to win a fare, but a *GlamCabs* taxi pulls up and the passenger disembarks from one and alights into the other. The women are triumphant through their very sexualised approach to domineering the limp male.

Following tradition, the women are treated as sexual objects, but ones that are both simultaneously alluring and frightening for (and towards) the males. If these exaggerated, sexually charged characters are placed into the 'traditional' kitchen sink drama, they offer a genuine 'threat' to male stability. Whilst scantily clad taxi drivers are not found in the New Wave films, other female characters are—girlfriend, wife, lover, mother—and, as such, they exhibit sexual traits as well as domestic influence. Whilst the narratives are usually focused around men, the role of women in the *Carry On* films is equally as powerful as the female protagonists found in the New Wave canon. Therefore, if one takes *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* as a comparison, the roles of girlfriend (Doreen), lover (Brenda) and Aunt (Ada) become caricatured into the forms of Peggy, Sally and Flo Sims.

Carry On Cabby does, albeit tangentially, form a sense of realism within the frame. There is location shooting, and whilst not as romantic as Higson's 'That Long Shot of Our Town from That Hill', the film has a tangible solidity to it. Like the New Wave films around it, *Cabby* has been shot in black and white, which gives the film a definite rawness to

it. This is especially noticeable when the chase through town and country propels the film towards its climax, and the use of place becomes vital to the understanding and motivations of the characters. Locations emphasise solidity within *Cabby*'s world. The Speedee Taxi garage has cars, petrol pumps, jerry cans, and oily rags, whilst the air is filled with the sound of engines being constantly turned over. When Peggy and Sally buy their own garage, the images are originally of decay, yet they do represent a form of Britain striving to overcome the stagnation of the 1950s to create something new, and the wonderful shot of the new and shiny Glamcabs leaving the garage to the accompaniment of Eric Rogers' terrifically upbeat jazzy theme ensures that whilst *Cabby* may not be at the forefront of the Swinging Sixties, something shiny, splendid and new is seen to be arising from the decay of the past.

The female-oriented domains play an equally important role within the story. Peggy and Charlie's flat serve two functions. For Charlie, it offers a respite from work; for Peggy, it becomes entrapment. She wants a small cottage in the countryside to raise a family, thus becoming the 'idealised' female that both accepts and rejects her familial role within the domestic sphere inasmuch as she can be both a shrewd businesswoman and wife/mother simultaneously. In her absence, the flat becomes a mess. With her present, it is warm and homely. She has Sally to stay over and drinks with her, which all exhibits a form of social interaction. Charlie almost destroys the kitchen and only has Ted there at Ted's insistence.

The 'outside' and therefore 'threatening' world of streets, the town, the leafy suburbs, country lanes and the countryside itself remain realistic. The taxis weave their way around the streets, but it is only when the crime element of the story occurs that they actually become important *to* the narrative, rather than serving as a backdrop through which the storyline progesses. When Peggy and Sally are kidnapped, *Speedee Taxis*' radio operator gives out names of the streets and instructions on how to catch up with the assailants. Like *Hell is a City* before it, the streets become much more menacing, with car tyres screeching around a mix of busy and suburban streets.[8] The speed of the sequence becomes evident. With rapid intercutting, the film contrasts between the streets, taxi office, assailants, heroines and Charlie's taxis. Accompanied by a fast-paced score, the film jettisons its aims at realism to provide one of narrative thrills. There are close-ups of the characters, long shots and dramatic zooms of the cars. From the confines and tight-shots of the city, wide-shots of the countryside give a grander scale to the events, which is par-

ticularly true when the line of taxis comes into view as they hurtle around the country lanes. Eventually, the villains are surrounded and captured. However, unlike classical Hollywood films' copious close-ups to emphasise the dramatic nature of the scene, the fisticuffs are done in long shot, as if to de-dramatise the events.[9]

At this point, the film ends with a real sense of the utopian collective and a joyous celebration of the communal spirit. Whilst the narrative closes with domesticity promised for Charlie and Peggy, with Sally and Ted to be married, and Pintpot running into the distance in search of a taxi to help them get home, the utopian collective has been achieved. The family unit, either directly in the case of Charlie and Peggy or indirectly as a symbolic family (the taxi drivers), is safe. All has been resolved. Individuality has given way to the ethos of working together for the common good: the delivery from villainy, the prospect of a bright future for both businesses, and the chance of parenthood for Charlie and Peggy.

Whilst it is true that the mainstay of the kitchen sink films is one of character over narrative and of individualist survival rather than societal 'calm', *Cabby* embraced traditions of the New Wave, with its emasculation of men, female empowerment, the battle of the sexes, and a genuine sense of warmth and affection which is missing from other films in the New Wave tradition. Two reviews picked up on this, paying attention to both the traditional and newer elements of the film penned by 'new boy' Talbot Rothwell. These indicate that whilst the films were still part of the ribald tradition of 'Low Art', they had begun to embrace a new style that reflected both the sexual politics and cinema of the era:

> More merry *Carry On* larks, brightly plotted and smartly handled, with a full quota of typical jokes … In nearly every essential the formula's much as before … But the plot's more enterprising—and more in evidence—than in many of the *Carry On* capers.[10]
>
> Slapstick and audacious dialogue of vulgar but honest type of innuendo, especially along sexy lines is generously laced throughout the film.[11]

In the period between *Cabby* and the next case study, *Carry On At Your Convenience*, the series entered a definite 'purple patch', with the films being both creatively stimulating and cementing their box office appeal. Rothwell began to move the team away from the realist approaches (though these would return later in the series). Preferring genre parody to realism, the team's mid- to late 1960s outings used populist film genres to take pot

shots at spy capers, Westerns, horror films and historical epics, and all with a gleeful and nodding wink to the audience. These films included *Spying*, *Cleo*, *Cowboy*, *Screaming!*, *Don't Lose Your Head*, *Follow That Camel* and *Up the Khyber*. Despite this move 'away' from the realism seen in *Cabby*, each remained true to the bawdy formula that the series were known for, but inside the 'trappings' of genre conventions.

However, Rogers and Thomas also realised the importance of setting their comedies in familiar milieu. As the 1960s turned into the 1970s, the crew had a choice: they could either keep on producing expensive costume dramas such as the £500,000 budget *Carry On Henry* or make films on location and without the need for expensive scenery, props and costumes. With the purse strings always held tightly, the latter option seemed the more fiscally sound, despite good box office returns on *Up the Jungle*, *Henry* and *Dick*.

Interestingly, if one looks at the ratio of realist to genre films, a trend emerges: the 1950s saw three realist and no genre outings, the 1960s was a closer mix of seven realist to eight genre films and the 1970s sees a return to the realist fare, with seven compared to three, but interestingly, with the Thatcherite years ending in 1990, it is perhaps surprising that the *Carry On* team's return to the big screen was not a satire of the nation state, but *Carry On Columbus*, in keeping with parodying the two big-budget releases of *Christopher Columbus: The Discovery* and *1492* (all 1992).

With the return towards realism in the 1970s, perhaps production costs on their genre parodies were rising too much for the team to consider returning to time and time again as had been the norm during the Sixties. Arguably, Rothwell was rapidly beginning to run out of genres to parody. Whilst he never attempted a science fiction film, it was not through a lack of inventiveness, but the producer simply would not pay for expensive special effects. Whilst *Up the Jungle*, *Henry* and *Dick* used costume parodies to good effect, the aim to return to realism showed that the team could tackle society's strictures head on. Therefore, with the grounding of *Matron*'s plot revolving around the stealing of birth control pills, *Girls* set in and around a beauty pageant, and both *Abroad* and *Behind* providing comic insight into the burgeoning overseas holiday market and a return to the campsite of the traditional family holiday, the filmmakers returned to caricaturing the New Wave (and their own) approach of earlier years for their impetus. It was only apt and probably natural that *Carry On At Your Convenience* was set in the industrial world of toilet manufacturing.

Carry On At Your Convenience

Carry On at Your Convenience started out life with the distinctly communist slanted working title of *Carry On Comrade*. Set in the world of W.C. Boggs and Son, the toilet factory is in financial trouble, with the owner (Kenneth Williams) unable to adapt to the modernisation of his industry. His sexually naïve son Lewis (Richard O'Callaghan), the effeminate designer Charles Coote (Charles Hawtrey) and cardigan-wearing works foreman Sid Plummer (Sid James) see an opportunity to keep the factory going if W.C. can alter his position on expanding the range of toilet ware to include bidets.

Vic Spanner, a militant trade unionist, brings the workers out on strike over the smallest matter. When he calls a halt to production following a case of restrictive practice over the usage of the factory's toilet facilities, his fellow workers label him a 'miserable little leader'. They dislike the strike, but he demands that the workers 'do as your union bloody tells you to'. The strike lasts for weeks and the factory heads towards closure.

During the strike, Vic's mother and Mr Coote strike up a friendship, which sees Charles getting fed steak and kidney pie, whilst Vic makes do with bangers 'n' mash. As Mrs Spanner and Coote spend their afternoons playing strip poker, Vic's attempts at wooing canteen girl Myrtle Plummer fail, and she starts an uneasy relationship with Lewis. Lewis' attempts at seducing Myrtle go spectacularly wrong after taking her to see *The Sweet Glory of Love*, a sex film pastiche. Meanwhile, in the Plummer household, Sid's wife Beattie has found out that their budgerigar, Joey, can predict the winners of every racehorse by chirping at a particular name read out to him from the newspaper. Soon Sid has made a small fortune at his bookmaker's.

To W.C.'s surprise, the workers return to the factory. However, they are only there to board the coach taking them on their annual works' outing to Brighton. Boggs decides to join them. Vic is tricked into believing that Myrtle wants him, not Lewis. When the coach party arrives at their Brighton restaurant, they find that the staff are on strike and Spanner complains about this attitude, to everyone's incredulous looks.

The day-trippers split into two distinct groups: older members get drunk and destroy a shooting gallery, while the youngsters ride the helter skelter and the dodgems. Lewis and Vic end up in a fight on the Ghost Train, with Boggs Junior triumphant. Myrtle and Lewis get married with 'a special marriage licence'. The remaining trippers stop at numerous pubs

on the way home and all go to the toilet in the woods: the men in one direction, the women in the other. Eventually, Sid and neighbour Chloe Moore (Joan Sims) get back to their suburban houses. Both have feelings for one another, but cannot consummate that love, worrying about their neighbours. W.C. wakes up naked in his secretary's bed. When asked by Boggs: 'Did we do anything?', Miss Hortence Withering looks mischievously at him, stating: 'That is something we will never know.'

With the factory on the verge of closing, Sid makes one final bet and he gives his winnings to Boggs to stave off closure. As Spanner and Bernie lead a picket line, their girlfriends and wives appear, spearheaded by Mrs Spanner and Beattie. Mrs Spanner puts Vic across her knee and smacks his bottom. Everyone returns to work, including Beattie, who to the dismay of Chloe and Sid gets a full-time job in the factory. Spanner tries to resist returning to work until the beautiful and fashionable canteen girl walks past him. Vic takes her into the factory and returns to the workshop floor. Bernie comes out of the men's lavatory complaining that there is no toilet paper. Spanner looks as if he is about to complain. Instead, he takes out a pound note, gives it to Bernie and tells him to 'nip out and buy a few rolls'. As the rest of the workers, W.C. and Sid (who has been made a member of the board) look on, Spanner turns and says: 'Come on, you lot. Carry On working!'

It was quite obvious from the outset that the production team wanted to make a direct critique of the workers who readily supported their films. Whilst the earlier *Cabby* had lovingly and gently mocked their 'realist' characters, *Convenience* saw this approach and the characters harden. They remained within their usual roles, where Kenneth Williams continued as the authority figure, James as the rogue, Charles Hawtrey as 'other' and interestingly Joan Sims both the usual object of desire outside marriage and wife within it, whilst Hattie Jacques' role softened to become the homely wife.[12]

W.C. Boggs is the authoritarian figure resigned to his 'lot' in life. His empire is crumbling and despite having a son, he alludes to being sexual innocent. When he wakes in Miss Withering's bed, he asks who undressed him. She replies it was she, and that she had seen men naked before, although 'you aren't all that different', This ridiculing of Bogg's sexual potency is given extra emphasis when Boggs looks down at his own frail body covered by the duvet. Boggs is ashamed of his own lack of sexuality and Hortence is the dominant force in the relationship. Kenneth Williams' public persona was that of gay, but within the canon it was always one of heterosexuality: his characters were often married or had women lusting

after him. This 'play' on persona and character is at the very heart of his performances, and the filmmakers obviously knew this when casting him in these roles.

However, there is something more complex than this reading of the character. The film was made when the power of trade unions in Britain was reaching its peak. Boggs is a conservative capitalist who stands against the strike, yet cannot take direct action against it, revealing his impotence in liaising with his workforce. This is directly reflected in the wider social context. Britain was undergoing a series of strikes, with the result that Britain was reduced to a three-day week. There were power cuts, and numerous 'battles' between the picketers, the strike breakers and authority were becoming increasingly commonplace. Boggs does not stand against the picketers, but decides to join them on their Brighton sojourn. In the first two-thirds of the film, he is contained within his work sphere, afraid of the workers he employs. At the seaside, he becomes a completely different person: he has decided to join in the workers' playtime.

Boggs buys the first drinks at the bar and gets drunk very quickly. This drunkenness leads to his anarchic behaviour at a shooting gallery, where he demands they go to the pub for more beer (they stop at a pub selling Courage beer, which Boggs needs if he is to keep both his factory and his status intact). Miss Withering cajoles him into having his fortune told. Sid dresses in drag and impersonates a fortune-teller, informing Boggs that he will fall in love with Hortence and have: 'One … two … three … fourteen children.' Boggs screams in terror and runs away. This is the ultimate 'threat' to his masculinity: Boggs spending his life with Hortence means that he, in both the McGillian and New Wave traditions, has to forgo a life of independence to live a life of 'apparent' wedded bliss. If Boggs represents a stagnant middle-class force, then he can only become 'free' as part of the utopian collective. He doesn't want to give up this feeling of *joie de vivre*. Rather, he runs away from the domestic threat and into the safe, working-class haven of the pub. Again the McGillian message is obvious: women *need* to be married and men feel that they are *imprisoned* by it.

At the end of the film, Boggs is on the factory floor for the first time. With his sleeves rolled up and willing to take part in manual labour, rather than being the 'outsider' to the workers, he wishes to be one of them. Since being sexually 'awakened' by Hortence, he becomes a 'new man' who is more confident in his own sexuality. This then spills out in his attempts to show to the workers that he is united in *their* 'struggles' and wishes to be seen as one of *their* 'kind'. However, as the owner of the factory and

its capital, he exploits his workforce. The filmmakers' conservative views through this approach means that Boggs is *still* the dominant force and he 'dupes' the workforce into working for him. The status quo has remained significantly the same. The workers, despite their joyous time spent at the seaside *away* from the strictures of the factory, are now resigned to the fact that they have their 'superior' working alongside them, with the overriding feeling that he is still their 'better'.

Sid Plummer is a family man who enjoys the work ethos. He likes the factory and the people who work there. He is in a position of authority as works foreman, but considers himself to be the same as those on the shop floor: a worker. He is the conduit and voice of reason between the two cultures of management and employee, as demonstrated when he attempts to quell the first strike and then saves the factory through his gambling activities. Unlike his roles leading up to this film, in which he was almost always the womaniser, Sid James takes on a gentler role in line with his earlier persona of Charlie in *Cabby* and with his successful TV sitcom, *Bless This House* (1971–76). He is a fairly happily married man, looks after his wife and home, and is prepared to work hard to provide a good family life. Yet, fundamentally, Sid has no friends. It appears that metaphorical family units have been done away with, and there is a greater emphasis on individuality within the narrative.[13]

Unlike his roles in *Cowboy*, *Khyber* and *Henry*, where Sid lusts after younger 'dolly-birds', he is in love with his neighbour, the middle-aged Chloe. Here his character cannot be the womanising rogue of previous outings, but begins to show signs of a more gentle persona of suburban father, friend and confidant.[14] However, he cannot control the traditional domestic sphere: Myrtle pays no attention to him; Beattie neglects her housework and prefers to talk to her budgerigar, Joey. She criticises Sid about his poor betting prowess as a veiled attack on his sexuality, but she also knows that he still has elements of roguishness about him and gets a job at the factory to curtail his 'fun' with Chloe.

Interesting aspects of Sid's character emerge late in the film. During the seaside sequence, he becomes the instigator of mayhem. In the shooting gallery he picks up a rifle and shoots four plastic ducks on the range. The gun becomes a phallic symbol and echoes his sexual power, whilst the plastic ducks become his sexual conquests. That he is a 'crack shot' does not go unnoticed. Chloe stays at his side for the remainder of the sequence, including when he drags up as the fortune-teller. She is privy to his disguise and pops the balloons under his blouse that turns him from man to woman to re-affirm his status as the alpha male of the group.

When the coach drops Sid and Chloe off in their Pornotopian suburban street, the camera frames them in a two-shot.[15] The two talk euphemistically about 'having a cup of tea'. Both *want* to have an affair, but it is curtailed for fear of upsetting their worlds of comparative 'safety' where suburbia restricts their sexual proclivities. In a moment of genuine pathos the camera focuses on Sid in close-up and he says to himself 'Bloody neighbours', emphasising suburbia as both a place of security (the home) and a place from which one has to escape in order to become sexually free. If one compares this to Seaton's terraced house in *Saturday Night*, the *Carry On* films seem to be just as conservative in their outlook of suburbia. Whilst Chloe and Sid are a part of its constraints, Seaton tries to break free from it by moving to a new housing estate. This is something that the film series could not or would not attempt to do. Their inherent conservativeness, where the world reverts to a level of equilibrium, meant that anything other than that would alienate their audience.

Hawtrey plays the effete and promiscuous fool. Unlike Pintpot's imp-like qualities, Coote is different. He is middle class and not 'one of the team', but an outsider to both camps: Boggs and Plummer do not like his designs, whilst he threatens the stability of Vic's home life. It is in the domestic sphere that Coote is genuinely contained. Whilst a free-wheeling spirit in the seaside sequence, drinking and behaving flamboyantly, he returns to home life at the boarding house, with Mrs Spanner dragging him in from the doorstep:

Mrs Spanner: Get in the house at once! You've been drinking, haven't you?
Mr Coote: Well, you see, Agatha I had some rather bad news.
Mrs Spanner: I don't give a damn about that. And I may as well tell you straight away, Charles Coote, that I married one drunk and I am not going to marry another one!
Mr Coote: Well, that was the bad news Agatha. I'm afraid we won't be able to get married now.
Mrs Spanner: What do you mean? What are you talking about?
Mr Coote: Mr Boggs is going to close down the works. That means I am out of a job.
Mrs Spanner: Close down the works? Why?
Mr Coote: Because of the strike.
Mrs Spanner: I knew it. It's that little sod Victor's fault. He's at the back of all this. And I tell you something else, I'm not going to let that bloody swine ruin my bloody life!

This scene is important for Charles. Originally both he and Mrs Spanner flirt and play strip poker, but here Charles is cancelling his marriage plans so that he may escape his commitments to marrying the McGill landlady. He takes no part in curtailing the strike and is not looking for alternative employment. Like Arthur Seaton before him, both want to avoid marriage, but seem to be cajoled into it. The fun of free, uninhibited sex is curtailed by containment. In this respect, Coote, despite his flamboyant 'otherness', *is* the henpecked husband.

Mrs Spanner's exhibits the fundamental aspects of McGill's seaside boarding house landlady. Bad-tempered, violent, 'seeing off' one husband whilst wanting to remain in the marital sphere by 'capturing' Coote, she really is a formidable force. She verbally abuses her son and hates her neighbours, despite saying that she lives in a respectful neighbourhood after screaming: 'And don't you bloody forget it!' The forcefulness of her actions in ridiculing Vic in front of his peers leaves a bitter image in the series. Mockery of individuals was commonplace, but here it takes on a sense of nastiness far removed from the playfulness of earlier efforts. She infers that her son is illegitimate, taking him across her knee and smacking him like a spoilt child. This infantilisation of Spanner and his utter collapse of masculinity to the older female is important for all the males in the series. First, the mother figure is always dominant; second, 1970s masculinity had been completely contained by the central female. Even though Vic overcomes his embarrassment by chatting up the new canteen girl, Rothwell critiques him and the unions further by making them a spent force.

The two main female characters in the film are direct extensions of those in *Cabby*. Whilst Beattie may appear to be the stay-at-home and seemingly contented wife, unlike Peggy, she is slovenly, doesn't do housework, leaves her underwear hanging in the kitchen and is pre-occupied with her budgerigar becoming her surrogate second child. Within the McGill tradition, she is the plump wife that the husband wants to escape from. Sid is not henpecked, but he seeks solace outside the family home, although he is ultimately 'imprisoned' within it. In the final sequence Beattie becomes the curtailer of fun. She gets a job in the factory and comes to represent conformist stability over Chloe's danger. With Beattie now disrupting the fun and games of the factory's status quo, she becomes the threatening force curtailing the collective spirit of sexual frivolity within the factory. She becomes the voice of conservativeness and she offers up a deliberate attempt to revert her husband's role to a traditional one: husband.

Chloe is Beattie's antithesis. Happily married to Fred, Chloe enjoys an active sex life with him (albeit once a week on a Friday night), wears figure-hugging dresses and white, knee-length, high-heeled boots to become the image of fashion modernity. She toys with men, notably in the workers canteen where, in answer to a statement about the management prodding at the very vitals of the workers' individual freedom, she says 'I haven't noticed anyone prodding at my vitals!':

Mr Lewis: Whilst I have been working here I have conducted a time and motion study.
Chloe: I know what that means, Mr Lewis. And if you've got the time, I've certainly got the motions.
(Everyone laughs)
Mr Lewis: And don't think I haven't noticed, Mrs Moore. Especially in your main production department.
Chloe: Ooh, you cheeky devil.
Mr Lewis: Anyway, I'd like to show you how it works.
Sid: She knows how it works, I promise you!
(Everybody laughs. Chloe looks on with a slightly disapproving air)
Vic: Mr Lewis. We are avoiding the issue. Are we, or are we not, going to get what we want?
Sid: That depends on Mrs Moore.
(Everybody laughs)
Vic: I mean on the factory floor.
Chloe: Not ruddy likely!
(Uproarious laughter)
Mr Lewis: Alright, that's enough fun. Now let's get down to business.
Chloe: Sounds just like my old man!

Two things become readily clear. First, the managerial Mr Lewis is attempting to curtail the workers' fun. Second, Chloe is a sexually liberated character *in the workplace*. However, this changes in the next sequence when talking with her husband Fred at the kitchen table. Fred is worried that Plummer is chasing after Chloe:

Fred: Not that I blame him. You ask for it. Flashing your legs and things all over the place.
Chloe: What?
Fred: I mean, look at them (her breasts). It's like looking at two bald-headed convicts trying to escape from prison.
Chloe: You're jealous.

Fred: Me? I wouldn't be seen dead with a couple of things like that.
Chloe: I mean Sid.
Fred: At that age a bloke will try anything.
Chloe: Thank you very much.
Fred: I didn't mean that. I just get very worried about being away so much.
Chloe: Do you honestly think that I want to play around with anyone else when I've got a smashing bloke like you to play around with?
Fred: I know women. When there's no prime beef around, they'll do with any old scrag end.
Chloe: You'd better make sure there's plenty of prime beef around when I need it.
(She sits on his lap, at the kitchen table)
Fred: Steady on, I've just pressed these trousers.
Chloe: Take them off.
Fred: In the middle of the day?
Chloe: I've got the rest of the day off.
Fred: There's a time and a place for everything.
Chloe: If you've got the time, I've got the place.
Fred: What? Before tea?

This exchange gives a different view of Chloe. Here she feigns being the doting wife. When confronted by Fred's suspicions of an affair, she immediately becomes defensive. She moves towards him and attempts to seduce him. He has offended her and she uses this to her advantage. He feels guilty at his words. She puts her arms around him, talking to him from behind. This becomes her masquerade. She wants to have sex with Sid, but now feels forced into having sex with Fred in order to alleviate his fears of her infidelity. Her seduction of Fred is the only option open to her if she is to remain in a position of authority over him. This action also opens up the door for her and Sid to have sex, but their only attempt at getting close to consummating their friendship is brought down to earth by the chance of them being caught out by their nosey, suburban neighbours. Up to this point in the cosy, conservative world of the *Carry On* films, nobody gets away with extra-marital affairs. The production team backs McGill's conservativeness towards sexual proclivity: the characters want sex, but there is hardly any evidence to suggest that pre-marital and marital sex occurs directly.

Sid, Beattie and Myrtle are the traditional family unit. The father figure provides financial support, Beattie is the bored, suburban housewife, and Myrtle is the young, sexually aware woman who remains apart from the

family domain. In the one instance when she is seen to be somewhere in the house, Beattie says to Sid that Myrtle 'mentioned something about a strike and she's going out for the afternoon'. Beattie takes no interest in her family unless its stability is threatened, whilst Myrtle cannot wait to escape its confines.

The street is a suburban cul-de-sac. With its wide road and avenue of manicured lawns, the traditional view of middle-class, white-collar workers is evident. When the shot of suburbia is deconstructed, an interesting point can be made. Sid's old, battered and lopsided car becomes representative of his character. The car becomes a status symbol for his approach to both his looks and his work ethic. On the right of the shot is Fred, Chloe's husband, who is a sales representative for the factory. His Ford Cortina (Mark 2), the epitome of 1970s 'suburban chic', is shiny and new, and he cleans it with vigour and pride.

Sid and Beattie's house becomes comparable to Charlie and Peggy's flat in *Cabby*. The kitchen is dirty and strewn with dirty dishes, and half-cleaned clothes lie draped over an old-fashioned mangle. As he walks into the kitchen, Sid's face smacks into a pair of Beattie's bloomers and a twanging sound plays on the soundtrack. He approaches the sink with trepidation, picks up a plate and promptly drops it back in, disgusted at what he has handled. The clutter of the kitchen seems to represent Beattie as a housewife who has got bored with her situation and therefore does not care about the actual state of the house or her marriage (until it is threatened), whilst Sid's view is that even though he *could* make food, his wife *should* undertake these duties. Men work, while women look after the men and the house. This is the typical view of the male in the kitchen sink drama.

If this kitchen is juxtaposed with that of Fred and Chloe, an emphasis on the *behaviour* of the characters rather than the *mise en scène* becomes apparent. The kitchen is functional but messy, presumably because both characters work and little time is given to cleaning. Yet the two sit down together to eat their food, whereas Sid eats his on his own and in the confines of his own lounge. Fred and Chloe's relationship is on more of an even keel. Even though Chloe looks on in disgust at Fred's eating habits, she knows her money helps keep the household afloat. Her fashion magazine indicates she takes pride in her appearance, hence the fashionable boots she wears. Most importantly, the functionality of the kitchen becomes a Pornotopic playground where sex *can* occur. Chloe seduces Fred after he's had his lunch. Therefore, sex in the suburbs becomes non-

traditional. This would be taken to its extremes in the film *Confessions of a Window Cleaner* when the bored housewife seduces the young buck over, on and under the kitchen table. Suburbia has become Pornotopia.

Beattie's untidy lounge is her domain. Whilst she is usually placed at the back of the shot, it is quite obvious that here she feels most comfortable as the dominant character in this area of the household. The cosy, familial living room sequences see her take on two distinct characteristics: as the surreal component within the real world, she talks to her budgerigar as if he is an actual person; as a form of female superiority over male dominance, she ridicules Sid's knack of picking losers rather than winning horses. If the room becomes a direct representation of her, then it appears to be the opposite of Chloe. Chloe is tidy, Beattie is not; Chloe is functional, Beattie is dysfunctional. The filmmakers' message is clear: if you stay at home, only subservience and domestic boredom awaits. This is why Chloe seeks out Sid's attentions, whilst Beattie wishes to escape to the factory as a means of ridding herself of the trappings of domesticity.

Following Sid's gambling success, Beattie's lounge changes to reflect their new wealth. With an over-abundance of clutter, including the budgie having a new and highly ornate cage, the 'trappings' of suburbia become apparent for Beattie. She has become trapped in a gilded world, where money may buy possessions but not happiness. Yet when the old and new rooms are compared, one message remains: Beattie is *still* the controller of this domain and there is a pull between class actuality and class 'wish fulfilment'. In their 'old' house, their surroundings reflected their outlook. However, *after* their windfalls, the house becomes less homely and Beattie's attempt to move up the social ladder becomes visualised through the new décor. That Beattie and Sid still exhibit exactly the same traits as before indicates that money does not affect their status on an 'inner' level, but that it forces them to attempt to break free from one level of society and enter another. Even though they have the money, and a chance to go on holiday abroad, Sid still goes to work in the factory, thus negating the lifestyle that he can now present to Beattie.

This negativity can be taken further. At the end of the story, Sid has been promoted into middle management, a role that he has tried to shy away from, but becomes gradually seduced by. What was once a character who was 'with' the workers is now decidedly sided with the management. Sid has turned his back on the workforce and it is little wonder that the working-class audiences, the beer-and-chips brigade that made these

films so successful, turned their backs on the film: they were being directly ridiculed.

In contrast to Sid and Beattie's house, the Spanner household remains distinctly Victorian in both its look and its inhabitants' outlook. The width of its street indicates some past glories, but by the 1970s, that glory has definitely faded. The street is in disrepair, there is rubbish on the pavement and the corner pub looks derelict. The whole neighbourhood seems virtually abandoned, although two people are glimpsed in the far distance. A man wearing a suit looks like he works in the city, and there is a young woman in fashionable purple hot pants and black, knee-length boots walking with her shopping swinging by her side, as if her Mary Quant fashions are crossing over from the 1960s and into the 1970s. Perhaps the both of them are just passing through.

To round off the characters of Spanner's street, and in true McGill style, Agatha Spanner becomes the seaside landlord of the saucy postcard writ large. Mean-spirited, loud, uncouth and foul-mouthed, she dishes out meagre portions of food to her son, is sexually frustrated and hates her neighbour, Mrs Spragg, who she tells to 'Mind your own bloody business!' Despite her not making the trip to the seaside, her importance to the narrative remains. She berates her son, tries to seduce Charles Coote, and leads the women back to work at the factory.

The sexual encounters there provide an alternative outlook to the suburban world of the Plummers and the Moores. Agatha plays strip poker with Coote and they have sex. There is no shame for the two of them, which is in direct contract to Fred, who attempts to fend off his seductress wife, and Sid, who, when confronted by the line 'You wouldn't call a man a cockman, would you', replies 'Chance would be a bloody fine thing'. There are interlocked layers of generational attitudes towards sex at play here. Agatha and Charles are 'freewheeling' sexual 'Friends with Benefits', who see sex as fun and liberating, with themselves as purveyors of free love. Fred and Chloe use sex as manipulation. Sid and Beattie have had sex at least one, with Myrtle being both the result and curtailment of it. From a McGill and Rothwell standpoint, the younger characters of Lewis, Vic and Myrtle chase and have sex, seeing it as a game; the middle-aged see sex still as a chase, but also as a means to an end or a danger that curtails their fun; the older generation either revert back to thinking of themselves as the younger generation (possibly in jealousy), or that they are no longer inhibited.

Convenience finally enables what every other *Carry On* film failed to do: it managed to takes the whole *Carry On* team to McGill's saucy seaside.

During this sequence, the film attempts to move *away* from the realistic mode. Filmed on location at Brighton, the narrative becomes imbued with a genuine sense of freewheeling anarchy mixed with surrealism. Virtually the whole sequence offers up a celebration of the typical English seaside resort, becoming a culmination of the series' revelling in the ethos of British working-class culture, indicating that the seaside trip offered a genuine respite from the toils of suburbia and work, where carefree chaos becomes the order of the day. As Vic and Lewis fight for Myrtle's attention, the older generation ignore the wider endorsement of class division. Fun becomes their priority. Sid, W.C., Charles, Hortence and Chloe embark on a chaotic destruction of a hotel, the promenade, the pier and a shooting gallery. As they shoot everything but the plastic ducks, the owner looks on dismayed, calling them 'Ruddy anarchists!' as they leave.

However, the filmmakers ruin this chaotic fun by replacing frivolity with violence. Vic and Lewis end up fighting on the Ghost Train. Lewis eventually wins. Again the management has triumphed over the worker. This sequence is at odds with the rest of the film. When Lewis attempts to woo Myrtle, her struggles indicate that he is about to rape her. He is forceful, demanding and aggressive: gone is the playfulness of the relationships between sexes in the 1960s, to be replaced by a more violent approach to seduction. Whilst Hortence chases W.C. around the pier, the younger generation has become distanced from that carefree approach. This sits awkwardly within the narrative and for future characters, and leaves a genuinely bittersweet taste in the mouth. This is further compounded when only a few moments after their struggle, Lewis presents Myrtle with a 'special marriage licence' and she agrees to marry him. It is as if Myrtle *must* be conquered, either by violence or by legitimacy if she is to have any future happiness, and happiness within the middle-class sphere rather than her working-class one at that. The seaside, it would seem, is not the halcyon resort that McGill would have us believe.

Whilst Boggs' office, with its wooden panelling and large desk, indicate wealth, the factory floor chronicles the routine, humdrum lives of the workers. It is here that the portrayal of realism and the conservative approach to the striking union is seen at its worst. Earlier in the film, the workers have come out on strike due to a combined tap and flush system being produced for a bidet. Spanner demands that the design be redone so as to stop two men doing one job, or two men doing two jobs in half the time. This bizarre sense of logic causes the factory to go out on strike despite the workers being willing to carry on. Spanner becomes a despot,

and the contextual audience is almost forced into a situation where, for once, sympathy lies with the authority figures. The filmmakers' intentions become obvious. The workers are situated *en masse* behind the wooden table. Spanner is in front. This gives him a position of authority *over* his equals and he does not pander to their requests or see that his union should be left in a position of less power. Plummer is alongside him on an equal footing, but despite his voice of reason (at this point, he is not one of the senior management team), in attempting to placate both 'sides', he fails. The strike is called. From a contextual viewpoint, the working-class audience would have been outraged at this action. *They* were the audience the film was aimed at; by provoking them through this negative portrayal, the film fails in its celebration of a worker's 'right'.

From a contextual position, *Convenience* came at a time when strike action was a daily occurrence in the UK. In 1970, a small-scale strike at the Pilkington Glass factory occurred where industrial action lasted for seven weeks and concerned disputes over pay. The following year saw the General Post Office workers go on strike for almost two months over pay rises. In 1972, just after *Convenience* was released, the miners went on strike for the first time since 1926. Whilst Vic and his workers return to work because women are threatening to take their jobs, the mining unions were fighting for a fair wage for their workforce. For the audience watching *Convenience*, to be ridiculed was tantamount to blasphemy.[16]

In the last scene, with the workers now *in situ*, the film takes on an even more controversial slant. The senior management team, which now includes Sid, work *alongside* the workers in an uneasy solidarity. Spanner is a redundant figure, his union powerless. Both he and it have succumbed to the bourgeois middle classes. When he offers money to Bernie to collect some toilet paper and then points at the team, telling them to carry on with their work, it becomes blatantly obvious that the filmmakers have used his failure to provide a laugh that actually backfired on them. The once cosy and familiar family unit of the earlier films, where authority is mocked, ridiculed and seen as inferior to the individual/group collective of the utopian ideal, has been overturned. The management has won and with Sid now part of that management structure, the destabilisation of the workers (and therefore the working classes who went to see the film) has been made.

This negative portrayal of the unions and the workers was picked up by the press. Nina Hibbin wrote of this 'betrayal' of the working classes, stating:

> All sympathies are angled for the poor, downtrodden boss who faces ruin, until the women, headed by Hattie Jacques and Renee Houston break the two man blockade and lead their menfolk back to the lavatory pans.
>
> I have always had a soft spot for the 'Carry Ons' … But now it has turned round and bitten the hand that has been feeding it all these years. It has betrayed its own roots.[17]

Other reviews were equally scathing. Derek Malcolm called the film's anti-union stance 'a ghastly flash in the pan'.[18] Another stated that :'There follows some anti-union satire so devastating that I am amazed there wasn't a mass walk-out at Pinewood Studios, and that Equity doesn't discipline its members.'[19] Two of the most telling statements come from George Melly writing in *The Observer* and John Coleman in *The New Statesman*:

> I didn't laugh much at a very sour attack on the principle of trade unionism. That no doubt sounds very pompous, but it's true and all the jokes failed to overcome my mounting irritation. In one respect there is an improvement on most 'Carry On' films; there is more quiet domestic comedy. But the political bias predominates. It should be retitled 'The Angry Snigger.'[20]
>
> The joke is hopefully directed against the idiocy of shop stewards. This is workers' playtime gone rancid.[21]

These stinging comments are not without warrant. The filmmakers have attacked the trade unions and also their target audiences. The press book overlooks this, placing emphasis on the familiarity of the cast, the newcomers to the team and that the film is going to its ancestral home, the seaside. Yet whilst there is a definite feeling of the publicity agents trying to calm the cinema-going audience, there is a genuine sense that the film has gone badly awry in their eyes:

> It's laughs before 'labour' troubles when Britain's favourite team of modern mirth-makers combine to send up such contemporary institutions as trade unionism and unofficial strikes. When the 'Carry On' workers down tools it's a clear case of 'Everybody Out' … for Laughter.[22]

It becomes clear that the press agents are uncertain as to how to 'handle' the delicate situation that this film inhabits. On the one hand, it is dealing with a raw and emotional subject, but at the same time it is actually part of a well-loved film series. The press book then belies its intentions:

> There are no messages to be gained from a 'Carry On' film—except for audiences to let down their hair, cast off their inhibitions and enjoy themselves. The only titillation comes from the often saucy titles and a deep-rooted desire to smash down the snobbishness of British social class barriers—and this they do regularly and ruthlessly, as their barbed arrows fly home.[23]

There *are* messages to be gleaned from the films. Rothwell, Thomas and Rogers knew their audience and had provided staple entertainment for them across three decades. But unlike the realist strand that provides a backdrop to *Cabby*, with its jazz score, likeable characters and sense of exuberance, *Convenience* stands apart from the rest. It is too linked to its contextual world. Whereas others had used institutions as a backdrop to their shenanigans, the adventures set in the world of W.C. Boggs fell at the feet of an audience who were merciless in their condemnation of the film. It would appear that the targets were simply too close to home for the audience. They showed their disapproval in a way that directly affected the team: they did not turn up at the cinemas.

The next in the series, *Carry On Matron*, saw the team returning to the hospital wards. Despite Williams writing in his diary that 'the hospital jokes are unending',[24] it had become blatantly obvious that a return to the 'safe' world of the hospital, with its recurring characters and situations, was the only way that the producers could return to their 'winning formula'. That is not to say that in hindsight *Convenience* is a 'bad' film. It does have sequences that are genuinely funny: Sid and Beattie discovering their budgie can predict the winning horses; Boggs being seduced by Hortence; the very funny and adroitly contextual sex film sequence which lampooned the British sex film, and Brighton's utopian collective remains the film's chief pleasure. There is also a genuine sense of emotional tension in the film. Yet, even today the film does not fit easily within the canon. There is something miscalculated in its attempts to ridicule either the wrong target or by forcing us to sympathise with the authority figure that is there to be mocked. Unlike *Cabby*, which revels and celebrates in its attempt at kitchen sink realism, *Convenience* is trying to be *too real*. As such, it fails.

Notes

1. 'Free Cinema' manifesto, BFI DVD booklet, 2006.
2. Higson (1996b); Hill (1986b); Krisch (1963).

3. Sir John Davis, quoted in Husra (1964), p. 31.
4. Webber (2005, pp. 154–56) gives a breakdown of most of the locations used across the range of films.
5. Davies (1978/79), pp. 59–60.
6. For case studies of these character 'types', please see chapters 5 and 6.
7. Sidney Fiddler in *Carry On Girls* sees Sid James as a money-grabbing swindler.
8. One is here reminded of both Ealing's *The Lavender Hill Mob* and *The Ladykillers*.
9. Perhaps the filmmakers shy away from this tension so as to avoid censor problems over violence.
10. Review in the *Daily Cinema*, 28 August 1963, p. 7.
11. Review in *Variety*, 28 August 1963.
12. Even though Sims was not in *Cabby*, it becomes obvious that Liz Fraser plays a 'prototype' Joan Sims character. Williams was not in the 1963 film, but his other roles echo the authoritarian stance he played across the range of films. James forever played the rogue. Williams was always authority ridiculed. Hawtrey remained on the periphery of the proceedings as 'Other' throughout the canon.
13. The only genuine friends are Vic and Bernie, who go to the football together.
14. This is probably down to the fact that Sid James was appearing as a harassed father in *Bless This House* (ITV 1971–76). James soon returned to the 'old' roles from the next film onwards.
15. Here one is reminded of the concept of Pornotopia in Marcus (1966), p. 272.
16. Harman (1970). For the General Post Office Strike, see www.gbps.org.uk/displays/1971-postal-strike/index.php (accessed 1 September 2016); Phillips (2006).
17. Nina Hibbin, *Morning Star*, 17 December 1971.
18. Derek Malcom, *The Guardian*, 16 December 1971.
19. Felix Barker, *Evening News*, 17 December 1971.
20. George Melly, *The Observer*, 19 December 1971.
21. John Coleman, *New Statesman*, 24 December 1971.
22. Press book released by Rank Film Distributors. The press book can be seen in the BFI archives.
23. Press book in the BFI archives.
24. Kenneth Williams, quoted in Davies (1994), p. 399.

CHAPTER 8

Spies and Screamers!

The word 'genre' is one that does not pop up in casual, everyday conversation, yet it remains at the cornerstone of what cinema means to the average filmgoer. Movies belong to genres and the classic bedrock ones—the musical, the Western, horror, war films, gangster flicks and science fiction—all have their own codes, conventions and iconography that make them instantly recognisable.[1]

Genre has been widely discussed elsewhere, but its fundamentals remain the same. The philosopher Aristotle argued that epic poetry, tragedy, comedy and music were the beginnings of 'genre'. Despite their differences, some elements were copied from one to another and although they may have slightly altered over time, so the original work became part of a growing collection of types and styles that could be labelled as of the same: genre. This (re-)categorisation meant that individual works remained both separate from and with roots in earlier forms, and they could change over time to present new, alternative and vibrant forms away from the original source material.[2]

Vladimir Propp and Ferdinand de Saussure focused much of their work on genre. Propp's analysis of Russian folktales found that they rarely strayed from a basic framework, where recurring 'stock' characters and 'types' weaved traditional tales.[3] He felt that each 'part' was almost always identical to others, and his 31-point of reference system set out the dynamics of both story and characters.[4] The usual narrative trajectory included the basic tenets of storytelling (equilibrium—disequilibrium—new equilibrium) and that through the passing of time and generations were often prone to

S. Gerrard, *The Carry On Films*,
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misinterpretation and alteration. However, characters such as the Hero, the Princess, the Villain, the Helper, the Donor, the False Hero and the Father Figure remained (mostly) constant. Ferdinand de Saussure's deconstruction of language found that common themes, known as *langue* and *parole*, meant that despite obvious linguistic differences, words remained inherently the same. This meant that if language was similar, storytelling could be similar. Claude Levi-Strauss explained why storytelling and myths from all across the globe seemed similar to one another.[5] His arguments can be summarised as follows: language and storytelling remain approximately the same the world over. Whilst they may have their own 'languages' (both verbal and structured), this similarity means that genres exist as a language in their own right. These conventions can be paraphrased, précised, reduced, translated, expanded and manipulated, but without losing their intrinsic shape and merits. Both these shapes and merits constitute the fundamentals of 'genre'.

It is generally agreed that the first *recognisable* genre movie was *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), which followed the basic literary traditions of the Wild West: cowboys, gunfights, the outdoors and horses. These became the staple tropes of the Western throughout its entire history. Due to genre films having similar conventions, including settings, *mise en scène*, and actors and directors, studios and filmmakers could keep down production costs and predict how the audience's could easily be entertained. Therefore, genre cinema depended on regular and similar productions, and an audience attuned to genre products—in other words, *fans*. These fans remained fully aware that characters, narratives, settings, iconography, music and other cues were passed from film to film. They were prepared to 'enjoy genre films' capricious, violent, or licentious behaviour onscreen, which they might disapprove of in 'real life', provided the genre conventions were never strayed from too far.[6]

As time marched on, so cinematic genres developed and mutated. The Western, war film, horror, comedy, science fiction and fantasy all began to be formulated into their recognisable components. With the coming of sound, musicals became one of the principal genre successes of the 1930s. Each genre had regular sets of conventions and codes that it adhered to, at least in some form, but were all different in some way or another so that audience interest remained piqued. Genre films found a ready-made audience that liked watching these genre products. Audiences may not have been too interested in any messages to be taken from the film, but rather they liked the actors, costumes, scenery and narratives associated with the

genre. In other words, the genre film appealed to the masses, and therefore box office success was usually guaranteed.

It is at this point that the *Carry On* films are brought into the argument. The team took genre 'elements' and gave them a quintessentially *British* 'twist' that appealed to their home-grown audience. Rogers knew that with Rothwell on scripting duties, the *Carry On* films would be taken down a different avenue than before. Whereas Norman Hudis' work was sentimentally inclined, Rothwell jettisoned sentimentality completely, and whilst he still retained the ethos of utopian collectiveness, so his material got steadily bluer. This new direction may have been pre-determined, because in 1962, Rothwell submitted a script—*Up the Armada*—to Peter Rogers. The script met with a favourable response and Rogers took out an option on it. Before Rogers requested a full screenplay, he asked Rothwell to submit a new script based on ideas found in R.M. Hills and S.C. Green's treatment for *Call Me a Cab*. Come January 1963, Rothwell had delivered the full script for a sum of £1,750, which eventually became *Carry On Cabby*.

The success of this script meant that Rogers returned to *Up the Armada* and, through numerous title changes, *Carry On Jack* sailed into cinemas in February 1964. The film was set in the days of Nelson and, as a result of a dearth of competent sailors, the Admiralty has to rely on a set of new recruits to defend Britain. This is very Hudis-orientated, but Rothwell does inject some risqué humour into proceedings. However, despite the décor, *mise en scène*, costumes and the Jolly Rogering of the sailors, the film was a tad too far removed to be considered a true *Carry On*. Much of the usual cast seen in the films up to this point were missing: whilst Kenneth Williams and Charles Hawtrey were in the film, Hattie Jacques, Joan Sims, Kenneth Connor were not. Whilst their replacements, Juliet Mills, Donald Houston and Cecil Parker, did an adequate job in their respective roles, they were not seen as part of the core team.

The critics' views were mixed. Whilst the reviewer in *The Times* felt that the film series would be on firmer ground in the present and not the past, David Robinson of the *Financial Times* felt that the realist aspects were due for a change and that the film's setting was a welcome diversion.[7] Censorship had always remained a bugbear for Rogers, and with Rothwell's slyly rude jokes testing even the most jaded of censors, when the film was awarded an 'A' certificate from the BBFC, Rothwell knew he could now inject far more risqué jokes into his loosely strung together narratives, which in turn began to 'open out' the narratives to directly question the era in which they were made.

However, even though the risqué jokes were never-ending, the *Carry On* films began to move away from total realism, as in the Hudis era, and more into genre territory. Rothwell wrote 20 of the *Carry On* films, of which 11 were genre parodies and nine were set in the 'real' world. The first historical parody, *Carry On Jack*, led in turn to the team debunking such genre fare as Rome and Egypt in *Cleo*, the French Foreign Legion in *Follow That Camel*, the Johnny Weismuller *Tarzan* features in *Up the Jungle* and even the Gainsborough melodramas of the 1940s in *Dick*. Each film took swipes at both the traditions of its source material, whilst each was imbued with this sense of Britishness. What is interesting to note here is that the team produced parodies that gently and, on occasion, lovingly mocked their targets, and even though the films may have been set in the past, they remain both refreshingly contextual—by commenting on events and using popular culture references (for example, the *Z Cars* theme tune in *Carry On Screaming!*) in the 1960s and 1970s—and cemented in their filmic heritage. They took pot shots at American genres (*Carry On Cowboy*), debunked the historical epic *(Carry On Up The Khyber*) and, above all, did it with a genuine sense of fun.

With all these factors in mind, two specifically *British* genres came under the gaze of the *Carry On* team. It is to these two cinematic phenomena that this chapter will now turn.

Carry On Spying

Ian Fleming's *James Bond* novels began in 1953 with the publication of *Casino Royale* and were an immediate success. Bond was the violent, ruthless and sardonic British secret agent who fought for queen and country against despots, cartels, mysterious organisations and his own inner demons. Appealing to a post-war Britain gripped with austerity, the novels removed their readers from the bleakness of an almost black-and-white British landscape to the colourful exotic locations of Eastern European capitals, the West Indies, South America, Japan and America. In 1961, producers Harry Saltzman and Albert 'Cubby' Broccoli's Eon Productions purchased the rights to the character and began adapting the novel *Dr No* for the cinema.[8] The finished film was a heady mix of exoticism, violence and genuine charm, and proved an instant box office hit.[9] The casting of Scotsman Sean Connery as Bond helped this. Lithe, handsome, sardonic and sadistic, Connery's Bond was an attempt at recapturing and strengthening British masculinity after the Suez debacle of the 1950s. He could

kill an assailant with a swift punch followed by a pun, and bed the most beautiful women in the world with just a look, smile and a knowing wink that proved he could keep the British end up.

By 1963, the Bond phenomenon had become so successful with *From Russia With Love* (1963) and *Goldfinger* (1964) that it paved the way for other numerous 'spy' adventures. Films and television programmes like *L'Homme de Rio* (1964), the Dean Martin 'Matt Helm' adventures, *Our Man Flint* (1966), *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1964–68), *The Avengers* (1961–1969), *The Ipcress File* (1965) and *Mission: Impossible* (1966–73) all echoed the world of Bondian espionage. Whilst times and tastes changed, Bond remained a constant in British cinematic history, running parallel with the *Carry On* films until 1978 and, when Bond returned after a hiatus of six years in 1995, *Carry On Columbus* had 'beaten' it to a return. It would appear that both franchises were virtually linked together in time and in the audience's affections. Always seeing an eye for a quick profit, Peter Rogers approached Rothwell to produce a James Bond parody and, with the help of Sid Colin, *Carry On Spying*, with a plot so outrageous it could easily be a Bond movie itself, was ready to go before the cameras on 8 February 1964.

A top-secret formula is stolen from a research laboratory in Bilkington. The thief Milchmann is responsible and wishes to sell this formula to Dr Crow. Crow and her organisation STENCH (Society for Total Extermination of Non-Conforming Humans) aim to use the formula to extort funds from the British. At Britain's top-secret Security Operations, the Chief receives a message from Carstairs, his agent abroad. He says that Milchmann has arrived at Vienna with the secret formula. The Chief sends a team of untried and untested agents to Vienna. They are Daphne Honeybutt, Harold Crump, Charlie Bind and their incompetent leader, Desmond Simkins.

The agents arrive in Vienna separately so as to avoid any suspicion. Each one is approached by Carstairs, who wears a variety of disguises, including a railway porter, airport official, blind match seller and French prostitute. He tells them all to meet at the Cafe Mozart at ten o'clock that evening. As Honeybutt, Crump and Bind sit at their table trying to spot Milchmann and his contact the Fat Man, Carstairs follows Milchmann into the toilets to kill him and take back the stolen formula. As he is about to strangle his rival, Simkins opens a toilet cubicle door, which knocks Carstairs unconscious. Simkins looks down at Carstairs and says: 'I'd give it a minute if I were you.'

Dr Crow gives the Fat Man a message telling him to obtain the formula and kill Milchmann at a dockside warehouse. The message is accidentally passed to Simkins, who believes it is from Carstairs, informing him to meet at the warehouse. The only person they meet is Milchmann, who tells the spies that they must go to Algiers to find the Fat Man. Daphne tracks him down to the brothel, Hakim's Fun House. Disguised as harem girls, Daphne and Harold infiltrate the brothel. When the Fat Man sees Harold, he becomes much more interested in him than in Daphne. After a speeded-up comic chase, the two secret agents retrieve the formula. The spies board a train for Britain. Daphne memorises the formula with the aid of her photographic memory. The formula is ripped up, put into their soup and eaten.

The team are caught and taken to Dr Crow's underground lair. Her army of black-clad, machine gun-toting men and women escort the three men to a cell. Daphne is taken to Crow and tortured. However, she proves resistant to all forms of punishment. Simkins, Crump and Bind escape and rescue Daphne. They end up on an automated conveyor belt, hurtling along a series of buzz saws, large crushing and washing rollers, and clamps that dangle them over boiling acid. Double-agent Lila reverses this process and they are saved. They capture Crow and when they take the lift out of the underground warren of metallic corridors, they find themselves emerging from the Chief's metal cabinet in his office.

Whilst most of *Carry On* parodies alluded to elements in narrative and character traits, here the inspiration/target source is *directly* parodied and the film's narrative plays out like the Bond movies. There is an explosive beginning to the story; the *deus ex machina* of the stolen formula is put into place;[10] characters are given orders by an authority figure; clues are followed; the heroes defeat the villain in an underground lair; and the utopian collective remains intact. But the film's homage and parody goes further than this. The train chase sequence is lifted directly out of *From Russia with Love*, but also pays homage to earlier British thrillers such as *The Lady Vanishes* (1938), *Night Train to Munich* (1940), and *Terror by Night* (1946), where the cramped locations of the dining car and compartments represent danger. Whilst *Spying* is an affectionate 'nod' to those previous pictures, it simultaneously entertains its audience by replacing Bond's violence with slapstick and farce. For example, when Simkins escapes Lila's clutches, he climbs along the outside of the train carriage. His braces loop over a door handle, stretch until snapped and smack him on his bottom.

Whilst Charlie Bind is clearly an effeminate James Bond, other genre mimicry helps cement this parody's success, including the Fat Man clearly paying homage to Sydney Greenstreet in *Casablanca* (1942). The film is also an affectionate tribute to Carol Reed's *The Third Man* (1949), on which Gerald Thomas worked as Assistant Editor. There are little nods and winks to Reed's work throughout the Vienna sequence, including the sound of a cuckoo clock echoing Harry Lime's famous speech about the Swiss. It is when the British secret agent Carstairs arranges to meet Crump in a Vienna avenue that this loving homage really hits home.

In a darkly lit street, a beggar with a white cane walks away from the camera. A black cat crosses his path. The camera pans slowly left. A drain cover rises and Crump looks furtively about before climbing out into the street. He sees the beggar. There is a point-of-view shot of Carstairs. The shot returns to Crump and the camera follows him walking across the street in mid-shot. He stops at Carstairs:

Crump: I'd like a box of filter-tipped matches, please.
Carstairs: I'm sorry, I only have filter-tipped boot laces.
Crump: I cannot smoke those. They make me deaf.
Carstairs: Cafe Mozart. Ten o'clock.
(Carstairs exits to screen left whilst Crump looks on after him)

Eric Rogers' wonderfully evocative score parodies Anton Karas' 'Harry Lime' theme and produces an element of *exotique* amongst the broken windows and rain-soaked cobbles. It helps to create a remarkably atmospheric world that never really existed, but was 'lodged' within the audience's consciousness due to the success of Reed's movie. To reinforce this, the dialogue becomes absurdist. Filter-tipped matches and bootlaces are ridiculous, yet they 'fit' the supposed image of spies and code words. Even Crump's codename 'Bluebottle' references radio's popular absurdist comedy *The Goon Show*.

Whilst the film incorporates elements of Bondian tradition throughout the narrative, it is in the latter stages of *Spying* that the reinforcement of those traits becomes more dynamic. Dr Crow's underground lair is metallic and gleaming, modern and totalitarian. The black-garbed henchmen suggest Cold War collective conformity whereby all non-conformers are liquidated. The utopian collective of the *Carry On* series was here treated as a double-edged sword. To conform means survival, but the price of this is to surrender one's freedom. This freedom comes to a head when the

male agents are imprisoned in a stark, angular cell. In *Goldfinger*, Bond easily tricks a guard into opening his cell door. The framing and hemming in of *Spying*'s three incompetent agents trapped within their cell's angular lines suggests that they are in a state of both physical imprisonment and mental collapse. The men are inept. When Crump digs an escape tunnel only to emerge in the cell he was trying to escape from, it becomes obvious that the men do not have the mental capabilities to actually escape, which is in keeping with Simkins locking himself in the Chief's cabinet earlier in the film.

Whereas Bond's women were usually placed into his world as sexualised figures and ripe for conquest by the alpha male, Daphne remains *Spying*'s strongest character. The traditional Bond girl was the love interest for Bond. Daphne occupies this position by falling in love with Harold. However, when interrogated by Dr Crow, her strength, resourcefulness and courage prove as strong-willed and as physical as Bond himself.[11] In response to this, Dr Crow becomes an amalgamation of Bond villains up to that point: her name reflects that of the first film Bond villain; she has an underground lair; she is asexual, though her Rosa Klebb-like lesbian inferences indicate she wants to destroy men but not women; and she has the screen presence of Goldfinger. Judith Furse's on-screen presence is undeniable and her dialogue reflects the Bond villain ideals to such an extent that Dr Crow could sit easily within the two franchises.

The climactic chase through Dr Crow's's underground lair becomes both homage to Bond's escapes and also a reference to older silent slapstick. The conveyor belt acts as a transport between narrative spaces, taking the heroes through escapades bordering on the ludicrous. But that is the point. It is comedic. The audience *knows* that they will not come to any harm, and this is emphasised through these 'clowning' elements. For example, they fall down a chute with their clothes on, and then they get stripped down to their underwear. The team then reflects the incongruity of *Goldfinger*'s laser gun sequence by having them sit astride a giant log cut into pieces by a buzz saw. There is no danger element within this scene at all, but a 'knowing' wink at the audience to expect comedy rather than thrills. The Bond films do present the hero in incredible amounts of danger, but they too play with conventions of the spy genre. Audiences know Bond will come to no harm. As such, the thrills that he 'endures' are purely for entertainment purposes, and this is repeated for the *Carry On* spies too.

The film seems keen on keeping the Hudis ethos of debunking authority alive. The Chief is ridiculed when Crow gives him enough clues to work out who Milchmann is, but his own incompetence means that he fails to recognise that Milchmann is the *milkman* who blew up the laboratory. That the Chief employs Simkins and his team indicates that this authority figure does not have any control over his staff. Like Inspector Mills in *Carry On Constable*, the Chief is forced into using new recruits, despite the devastating consequences that might result.[12] Authority is undermined.

Right from the outset, Simkins' authority is constantly prone to ridicule. When entering the Cafe Mozart, his disguise of cape, top hat and false beard is so dreadful that it provokes laughter through its very incongruity. When he thinks he is attacking Milchmann, he hits a post and his gun barrel bends suggestively upwards, calling his sexuality into question. Whilst Harold attempts to escape from the prison, Simkins sits passively complaining about him breaking part of a door saying: 'Ooh, I bet they make us pay for that.' His incompetence is evident, which suggests that unlike the world of James Bond, where the audience can believe that he could save the British Empire, Simkins would probably add to its demise.

At the end of the film, authority is once again ridiculed. Dr Crow's headquarters are directly below the Chief's offices. The escape lift comes out in his cabinet. Authority's position as *elite* has been rampantly mocked. However, this final sequence does show there is room for negotiation within this ridiculing. The team ensures that the utopian collective has triumphed. Dr Crow is vanquished. Carstairs has been recovered from Cafe Mozart's toilets. Bind and Lila guard Crow. Daphne and Harold are in love. Order has been restored and whilst authority has been teased, the working classes have become unified as one force alongside positions of authority. The bourgeois and the proletariat are linked, whereas in the world of Bond, he is a component of the bourgeois and as such remains separate from the working classes.

Like the Bond films, the *Carry On* films always dealt with sexuality in an interesting way. In *Spying* all male characters are incompetent, but Daphne is incredibly resourceful, as if Rothwell is debunking ideas of Connery's machismo to present his own McGill version of espionage. When the spies are introduced to Simkins, he asks them for their name and number:

Crump: Trainee agent Harold Crump, sir.
Simkins: Number?

Crump: 0433, sir.
Simkins: You look like the kind of man who could look after himself in a fight. You done any judo?
Crump: Why yes, as a matter of fact I have, Mr Simkins. I was Southern Counties champion for four years running,
Simkins: Really?
Crump: Yes, and I always use my own little counters. Red they are, and I just shake those dice …
Simkins: No! I said judo, not Ludo you fool!
(Simkins moves down the line)
Simkins: Name and number?
Daphne: Agent Daphne Honeybutt, sir. Number 38 22 35.
Simkins: No, your number (looks down at her chest) not your vital thingamajigs.
Daphne: Oh, sorry sir, I forgot where I was for a moment. Actually it's 4711.
Simkins: Have you had any experience?
Daphne: Oh, yes, sir, a little.
(They both laugh suggestively. Simkins moves down the line)
Bind: Oh, hello. Agent Bind.
Simkins: James?
Bind: No, Charlie.
Simkins: Number?
Bind: Double-O, O.
Simkins: O-what?
Bind: I don't know. When they saw me they went Oh, Oh … Oh.
Simkins: I see what they mean.

Rothwell's characters become 'types' within the farce tradition, and here become the antithesis of Bond. Whereas Bond remains the epitome of 1960s iconic 'cool', these are opposites. Crump plays children's games, Daphne ensures that sex is her strong point and Bind is asexual. When they are given their code words, the absurdity of espionage is highlighted. Simkins becomes 'Red Admiral', Crump's *non de plume* is 'Bluebottle', Bind's moniker is 'Yellow Peril', whilst Daphne becomes 'Brown Cow'. The delivery by Honeybutt of her code name in a broad Cockney accent coupled with the incongruity of her sobriquet provokes laughter. Yet Daphne displays skills that separate her from the rest: she has a photographic memory. Unlike Bond, who has to use machinery to record enemy plans, she employs her own mental processes to help her and the team.

This move 'away' from the Bond formula is interesting. Rothwell has made Daphne more resourceful than any other Bond heroine up to (and arguably after) that point. She is on the same 'level' as Bond in terms of actually being a competent spy, and uses her sexuality as a means to achieve an end. She dresses as a harem girl to seduce the Fat Man and is prepared to use sex as a weapon. That the Fat Man is not interested in her but in Crump (who has cross-dressed) is an 'obvious' component of theatrical tradition, and audiences expected this from their characters, however incongruous and shoehorned into the film's narrative it might be.

Dr Crow is the most unusual of all Rothwell's creations. She employs men, but the female guards take charge of the prisoners, stating: 'We will take the three men to room ten. And, I warn you, do not try to resist.' Thus, STENCH's positions of authority are only given to females, whereas in Bond's world, they remain decorative devices. The fetishisation of the female guards, in their skin-tight, figure-hugging black catsuits, is in direct opposition to Crow's physical appearance. Crow uses the sexualised female form as a means of empowerment, a show of strength against the traditionally masculine world of Bondian espionage. When speaking to Daphne, her true nature is revealed:

Crow: Hello, Miss Honeybutt. Or may I call you Brown Cow? I am Dr Crow. Are you surprised?
Daphne: Yes I am. I expected you to be a man (cut to a close-up of Dr Crow) or a woman.
Crow: I am both. The first of a new super race with the mental and physical endowments of both men and women.
Daphne: You must have great difficulty with your clothes.

Unlike Dr No's asexual traits or Rosa Klebb with her lesbian overtones, Dr Crow is an artificially created hermaphrodite. This gender melding is in some ways indicative of the era's dealing with sexuality. As the decade progressed, so the avenues of 'acceptability' in the sexual arena were broadened. Laws on homosexuality were relaxed later on in the decade and the Women's Liberation movement gathered momentum. Cinema still employed men and women in 'traditional' roles, but the *Carry On* films always showed women to be strong characters, and men (even though it is in keeping with theatrical tradition) do dress up as women. Whilst they are conservative and revert back to societal 'norms', the fact that these comedies constantly investigated areas of sexuality, especially through characters

such as Dr Crow, show that they were prepared to tackle such ideas head on. According to Rogers when asked about sexuality in his films: 'In my films men are men and women are women. And that is it.'[13] If this were the case, where would Dr Crow fit into his rather spurious argument?

Carstairs is the closest that *Spying* comes to producing a 'typical' Bond spy. He is a master of disguise, and wearing women's clothing reinforces his chameleonic qualities despite putting his masculinity into doubt. He remains straight-faced, determined and ruthless when attempting to kill Milchmann with a wristwatch razor wire. However, when he is knocked unconscious by Simkins whilst attempting to carry out his duty is important: Carstairs' role within the narrative is essential inasmuch as he becomes a counterpoint to the bumbling Englishness of the recruits. Whereas they constantly fail in their duties, he does not until he is actually undone by his own kind.

If taken in the context of Propp's arguments, Crump becomes the nominal hero of the film. He fights for his princess (Daphne) and his colleagues are Helpers. Yet Rothwell uses Crump to overturn this idea of Hero to present a bumbling, inexperienced anti-Bond creation most evident when Harold helps Daphne put her gun holster on. As she stands still, Crump fumbles in his schoolboy ways of putting it on her properly. Her breasts appear to get in his way and he becomes confused about how she can holster a weapon. Condescendingly, he tells her to put the pistol in her handbag. He is put into a position of inferiority, whilst she is securely placed within the confines of womanhood: only a handbag can help her.

When Daphne faints at the Cafe Mozart, Crump takes her back to her room. He struggles to carry her, dropping her onto the bed and begins to undo the top button of her blouse so that she can breathe properly. In an instance, the whole blouse comes off in his hands and Daphne wakes up:

Crump: Let me see. First aid. Keep patient warm at all costs and loosen clothing.
Daphne: Harold, what are you doing?
Crump: It's alright, Daphne I'm just loosening your clothing.
Daphne: Oh, that's al… What?
Crump: You've had a very nasty shock, you see. There was something in your drink.
Daphne: Oh yes, I remember now. We just got that message to be at that warehouse at midnight. We'd better go.
(She attempts to get up, but Harold puts his arms around her trying to make her lie still)

Crump: No, dear, you must stay here and keep loose.
(Daphne looks amazed)
Crump: I mean, um, that, um, you must stay here and um, well keep warm. I mean the others will go, they'll be alright.
Daphne: But say something's happened to them?
Crump: I suppose I'd better go then.
(Harold begins to get up)
Daphne: Yes, I suppose you had better go.
(Daphne puts her arms around Harold and the two embarrassingly embrace. She tries to get him onto the bed)
Daphne: Thanks for looking after me, Harold.
Crump: It's alright Daphne, nothing really.
(Harold is now lying virtually on top of Daphne)
Crump: I'd better go. I'd better go, Daphne. (He runs for the door) I'm coming, chief!

Here McGill's saucy postcard characters come sharply into focus. Although Harold is Hero and has rescued his Princess from the Villain, he has been confronted by his fears. The 'chase' tradition of the seaside postcard has resulted in Harold being caught. Positions of authority are reversed, with Daphne in the position of sexual power. Whilst he has the chance to have sex with Daphne and she actively encourages this by revealing her cleavage, his sense of repression rushes to the surface. He cannot consummate his relationship with her and removes himself by going to aid his *male* colleagues. His last words suggest two things: that Crump cannot confront his fears, whilst he has actually had an orgasm from his encounter with Daphne. The filmmakers may not have deliberately intended this, with their preferred reading being that he wishes to find solace with his male colleagues, but the inference is still there.

If one considers that this sequence is all about seduction, it is played out mainly for laughs. There is an innocent joviality about it, not least from the feeling that the actors have wholeheartedly entered into the spirit of their comic creations. When one compares it to Lewis attempting to seduce Myrtle in the Ghost Train in *At Your Convenience*, the two could not be further apart in terms of success. Daphne and Harold are inexperienced and the audience has empathy with them. By the time of *Convenience*, the characters have altered considerably. There is no sense of love, only a hint of violent sex between Lewis and Myrtle. The joy and fun felt at Daphne and Harold's inexperience gives the audience not only a feeling of superiority, but also one of genuine warmth, unlike *Convenience*, where the

characters do not evoke anything approaching that; rather, they provoke feelings of *un*empathy.

This (un)empathy is expelled through the use of Hawtrey/Bind as Propp's Fool. His foolishness is demonstrated from the outset, where his 'Oh Oh Oh' not only ridicules Bond's own 007 moniker, but creates a direct link with all of Hawtrey's other characters in the series, where he always says 'Oh hello' on his first entrance in the film. Audiences would have linked Bind to Bond directly, and this is reinforced when Simkins asks if his first name is James, only to be told it is Charlie. This creates even more laughter as Charles Hawtrey is given his own name, in much the same way as Sid James was almost always Sid and Barbara Windsor was often Babs.

Bind's sexuality is never called into question. His effete manner and impish qualities ensure that one automatically assumes that he is either gay or asexual. This approach means that Bind can begin to question masculinity within the movie. Whereas Connery's Bond had cat-like qualities, which hid a brutish interior, Bind's blithely impish qualities seem to mask nothing except a desire to play at being a spy. This playfulness sees itself manifest in individual scenes. When he tries to holster his gun, he wraps it around his leg, causing him to limp along in a castrated way. During the Cafe Mozart sequence, his French gendarme outfit looks incongruous. Playing and masquerade are most definitely the order of the day here and, when he meets Carstairs, the very incongruousness of the character comes to the fore. He arrives in Vienna on a racing bike, as if he had taken part in the Tour de France cycle race, with his sinewy frame just able to propel the bike along the cobbled streets. He gets off and waits for Carstairs. After a few moments, a woman (Carstairs in drag) sidles up to him:

Charlie: Now, let's see. First of all I have to wait here. And then I've got to…
(The woman leans in towards him)
Woman: Hello, darling. Would you like to come home and see my fine, old Viennese etchings?
Charlie: Beg your pardon?
Woman: Would you like to come home and see my fine, old Viennese etchings?
Charlie: Ooh, I'm afraid I cannot because I have broken my looking glasses in two different places.
Woman: About time. Cafe Mozart, ten o'clock.
Charlie: 'Ere, wait a minute. Where's Carstairs?
Woman: I am Carstairs!

Bind becomes a vehicle for amusement, which underpins the seriousness of the agents' situation. That he is dressed so inappropriately is not to be ignored. His spindly frame re-iterates the fact that in amongst the spies' adventures, the way that he has been employed to save the British Empire brings out incongruity. He fails to recognise Carstairs donned in a pencil skirt, tight sweater, beret and blond wig. His incompetence ensures that audiences laugh alongside him, not at him. Charles Hawtrey always played the Fool and audiences expected him to be there as an almost-safety valve whose appearance would 'allow' the audience to remember that they were watching a film. At the beginning of this sequence, Bind looks at the camera directly before beginning his talk. This effect of distancing the audience from the text ensured that viewers knew both they and Bind are in on the joke. Whilst other characters take on the main thrust of the plot, Bind is there to serve as a bond between audience and film. Consequently, whilst we feel 'superior' to Bind, the fact that he is seen as both the direct opposite of Bond and as a comic creation ensures that the narrative is helped along by this approach.

The publicity material did not draw upon the playful inventiveness of Rothwell's script, nor did it pay much attention to the fact that *Spying* was a James Bond parody.[14] Eon Productions had voiced its disapproval at Rogers and his team ridiculing its franchise. Legal difficulties had arisen over the use of any Bond terminology and when Charlie Bind's name was originally Charlie Bond, Agent 001½, Bond's producers insisted that this should be altered, which was done.[15]

The publicity material does pay great attention to Jim Dale's minor character Carstairs. It has six photographs of the actor and an interview about his time on the set, in which he stated:

> I love dressing up. The difficulty was in projecting my main character through the disguises. On at least two occasions I am facially totally unrecognisable, but to keep the storyline, it was important that the audience would not think an entirely new character had been introduced to the plot. I only hope that I succeeded. I liked all the roles except the pick-up girl. The padding I didn't mind, but wearing those high-heeled shoes, my feet were killing me![16]

Dale's interview for the film's press book indicates how important he was to the team. Unlike Bernard Cribbins' buffoonish Crump, Dale's Carstairs offers a much more handsome alternative. His next character was the all-

conquering hero in *Carry On Cleo*, but he would revert back to the sexually naïve character personified by Cribbins in later outings such as *Carry On Doctor*, which indicates that he was an all-round character actor in the series.[17] Barbara Windsor's first appearance also garners an interview in the publicity material. She talks about the price of fame and, under the headline of 'True Cockney daughter of London's East End', she discusses the making of the film.[18] The press book even has a 'bubble caption' competition, with the four spies sitting in the Cafe Mozart, where the story told in ten pictures, coded messages from Charlie Bind and numerous advertising posters.

The main advertising poster for the film is striking. Almost slavishly copying *From Russia With Love*'s image of Connery posing with his gun and surrounded by beautiful women, *Spying* sees Kenneth Williams takes centre stage, donning a fez, wearing a dark suit, white shirt and black tie, his gun barrel bent sexually upwards and a mean look on his face. This poster emphasises two things: first, that the film is an obvious parody of the James Bond films; and, second, how important Kenneth Williams was to the *Carry On* phenomena. The emphatic placement of him makes Williams the star persona within the film.

The movie was filmed between 8th February and 13th March 1964, being released in the July of that year. Kenneth Williams was acerbic in his own thoughts of the film, with his diaries revealing that: 'The script of *Carry On Spying* is so bad that I'm really beginning to wonder. I've changed one or two things, but the witless vacuity of it all remains.'[19] As usual for a *Carry On*, there was a mix of positive and negative reviews. Patrick Gibbs said it was 'in a series that is beginning to look and sound remarkably tired'.[20] Yet, in the main, it was greeted with faint praise. The reviewer in *The Times* called it: 'A return to form for the "Carry On" team after their last unfortunate tangle with the costume extravaganza'.[21] John Coleman thought 'The point about this egregious manner of domestic product is that it can comfortably afford to look critics in the mouth and teeth', whilst 'it couples vulgarity with some pleasant indulgences in true comedy'.[22] Tom Cameron seemed to really grasp the spirit and the ethos of the series, arguing that whilst the film may lack subtlety, it 'avoids the weedy refinement that passed for it in Ealing comedies'.[23] Cameron suggested that *Spying* should be seen with a large audience if it was to be truly appreciated: it is as if the utopian collective is within the audience itself. He did not see the film as a parody, but more in the American tradition of burlesque, and that because of this, the script is given more emphasis when placed into the hands of Windsor and Williams, saying: 'And that

is how it should be.'[24] For Robert Ross, he found that from a modern perspective:

> *Spying* is what the great *Carry On*s are all about: jam packed with spirited performances from everyone involved; a subtle music score; directorial touches that enhance the less-than-subtle jokes, moments of real tension and a script of grease-lightning wit and fun that leaves the audience gasping! Vintage.[25]

What *Carry On Spying* brings to the oeuvre is this. It bridges the gap between the cosy world of Hudis gently mocking authority and playing with sexual conventions, and the fully blown caricatures that Rothwell wanted the series to become. Rothwell took the conventions of the thriller and used the Bond phenomena as a 'hook' on which to hang his narrative. That the narrative is fully laden with innuendo, *entendres* and the mocking of institutions (and in this respect the Bond films had already become an institution) indicated just how galvanised the production team had become in their ability to successfully offer pastiches of populist cinema.

Just as importantly, whilst Connery offered arguably the definitive portrayal of Bond as a suave, erudite, sexual character that attempted to 'bring back into the fold' ideas of masculinity in an era where British males were 'under attack', *Spying* successfully subverts this idea. Daphne Honeybutt is the *Carry On* version of Bond: resourceful, tough and able to withstand torture, the character sweeps men aside in her cock(ne)y cheerfulness. As an antidote to the Bond formula, she is arguably the most important female character of the entire series. Whether or not the team read this situation is open to debate, but from today's viewpoint, over 40 years later, *Spying* and Honeybutt offer an emancipated view of female sexuality that is just as important as any other British female film character of the era.

Carry On Screaming!

Britain has a rich heritage of Gothic literature. Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), with its fantastical tale of revenge, disease and forbidden sexual desires, proved a huge success for sensation-seeking audiences. Other works such as *The Monk* (1796) and *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus* (1818) helped to pave the way for romantic fiction such as

Jane Eyre (1847) and *the Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848), which eschewed cerebral stimulation for emotional sensations. These stories, with their tropes of madness and familial tale, and settings of wild moorlands and crepuscular castles were both successful and influential in shaping what eventually became the horror genre.

Cinema used horror from its outset, with the films of Melies and others using the new medium as a conjuring trick, where sleight of hand created horrors untold. Unlike the German expressionist films of the 1910s and 1920s, where films like *Das Kabinett des Doktor Caligari* (1920) and *Nosferatu* (1922) reflected the German contextual state, and the Universal Studios *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* series, Britain never really had a bona fide horror film industry until the late 1950s. There were numerous horror films made during the silent era and up to the 1940s, but nothing that suggested—as the Western had in America—that Britain's horror films were a staple ingredient of British cinema. And then that changed almost overnight.

In 1957 Hammer Films released *The Curse of Frankenstein*. The film was an enormous box office success, aimed at lovers of ghoulish entertainment and the burgeoning teen market. Fired up by its achievements, the company launched into a gamut of horror movies bolstered by its factory-line production methods of using the same cast members (usually Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee), the same production personnel (Terence Fisher as director and Jimmy Sangster as scriptwriter) and sets re-used by the in-house team of experts. This approach kept costs down, and the films had vicarious thrills for the contextual audience that reflected (however tangentially) the contextual British world.

Unlike Universal's horror cycle of the 1930s and 1940s, which eschewed violence for a more fairytale-like approach to the subject matter, or Val Lewton's Freudian nightmare scenarios, Hammer insisted upon using two direct weapons in its horror arsenal. Its lurid Eastman Color process meant that screen blood was darkest red. Its second approach was sex. Universal's heroines were virginal, chaste or sexually frigid. Hammer's women were a combination of these *or* through 'transformation' they became hyper-sexualised, all-conquering creatures.[26] The company's biggest production, *Dracula* (1958), saw Van Helsing as a proto-*James Bond* figure, wholly rational in his pursuit of his nemesis, Count Dracula. Dracula was a sexual magnet and women fell at his feet, whilst the males (apart from Van Helsing) were weak-willed and unable to respond to this 'foreign' invader. Other films included *The Mummy* (1959), *The Reptile* and *Plague of the*

Zombies (both 1966), which examined ideas about post-colonial Britain following the Suez Crisis, and a series of psycho-melodramas set against realistic backdrops.[27] As Pirie points out, Britain's horror boom led the way in reviving the genre:

> It certainly seems arguable on commercial, historical and artistic grounds that the horror genre, as it had been developed in this country by Hammer and its rivals, remains the only staple cinematic myth, which Britain can properly claim as its own, and which relates to it in the same way as the Western relates to America.[28]

Audiences flocked to see Hammer's productions and the company's success helped bring horror movies into the 'modern' cinematic world, influencing British studios like Amicus, which produced portmanteau movies such as *Dr Terror's House of Horrors* (1965), and American films such as Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960), and Roger Corman's Edgar Allen Poe adaptations, including *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1960) and *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1961). The films also led to copycat European horrors, with both Mario Bava's *Black Sunday* (1960) and Antonio Margheriti's *The Long Hair of Death* (1964) standing out amongst the many Italian imitators. The success of Hammer's films in America indirectly led to earlier horror films finding success on television. There were repeat screenings of Universal's 1930s chillers on TV, and two popular series lovingly parodied them, with *The Addams Family* and *The Munsters* (both 1965–66) leading to big-screen treatments and numerous reprisals. It was obvious that the *Carry On* team, fresh from debunking the American Western, should tackle the horror genre. This resulted in *Carry On Screaming!*, which remains one of the most popular entries in the canon.

The film is set in and around Holcombe Wood (pronounced 'hokum'). A young courting couple, Albert Potter and Doris Mann, are taking a stroll through the area when Doris thinks she sees something horrible moving in the foliage and Albert investigates. Whilst he is gone, Oddbod, a giant hairy, monster, kidnaps Doris. Albert reports her disappearance to the inept Detective Sergeant Bung and his subordinate, Constable Slowbotham (pronounced 'slow bottom') at New Scotland Yard. Albert shows them a hirsute finger that he found where Doris had been sitting, and the trio search the woods before finding the Bide-a-Wee Rest Home.

After the somnambulistic butler Socket says that his dead master, Dr Orlando Watt, will see the officers and Albert, his voluptuous mis-

tress Valeria revivifies her brother from the dead using electrical currents applied directly to his temples. Insufficiently charged-up, Watt begins and then curtails his talk with the police as he begins to disappear in front of their eyes. Plugging him back into the house's electrical current revives him, much to the amazement and fright of Bung, Slowbotham and Potter, who run out of the house terrified.

Police scientist Dr Fettle successfully duplicates the monster out of the DNA of the finger found by Potter. This new monster kills him and makes its way back to Bide-a-Wee. Watt names him Oddbod Junior. After receiving a cryptic note about the kidnapping, Bung visits Dan Dan 'the gardening man', an ex-employee of Watt who now works at the gentleman's toilets on the edge of Holcombe Wood. Watt, Valeria and Oddbod Senior follow them. During a discussion to find out more about Watt, Oddbod kills Dan by drowning him in a toilet.

At Bide-a-Wee, Watt dips Doris' body into a viscous substance that vitrifies her into a shop dummy. Albert spots Doris' dummy in a milliner's shop and attempts to steal it, but is arrested by Bung. Besotted by Valeria, Bung returns to the manor. She turns him into a werewolf and he steals Doris' dummy to take back to Watt. Wolfman-Bung then makes his way back his wife Emily, who beats him, complaining that he is drunk. He wakes up in the bath the following morning, unable to remember anything of the incident.

Back at the station, Bung forces Slowbotham to dress in women's clothing and slip into the woods as a lure for the kidnapper. Whilst the men sit together on a blanket, Emily sees them through the foliage. Oddbod kidnaps her, causing mayhem in the process. Oddbod also kidnaps Slowbotham. Bung and Potter visit Bide-a-Wee to tell Valeria to remain vigilant. She tells them to stay the night and, as the two men try to get to sleep in the same bed, she drops a snake into their chambers. During their escape, they fall through a hidden chamber and into the cellar. There they find Slowbotham and revive Doris by reversing the vitrification process. Mrs Bung has been turned into a dummy.

As they attempt their escape, Watt, Valeria and the two monsters stop them. During a frantic chase, Potter grabs a decanter and drinks whisky from it, not realising it is Valeria's transformation potion. As the two monsters crash into the room, Potter transforms into another werewolf, throws Junior across the room and Senior out through the window. A lightning strike hits the mummified remains of the Egyptian Pharaoh Rubbatiti. The re-animated corpse stumbles out of its sarcophagus, fixes its stare at Watt

and lumbers after him into the cellar. The mummy grabs him and hurls the two of them into the vitrifying vat. As Watt burns in agony, he rises from the gloop and screams 'Frying tonight!', before succumbing to the liquid.

A few weeks later, Doris and Albert visit Bung and his new wife, Valeria, to announce their marriage. Albert sees the mannequin of Emily in the corner. When questioned about reversing the vitrifying process, Bung says they are connected to gas, not electricity. As Potter looks at Emily, Bung states 'I know, horrible isn't it?', but unknown to them, Emily is very much alive and winks at the camera, ensuring that she will get her revenge on Bung.

Carry On Screaming! is a joyous celebration of British horror. Whilst the clichés come thick and fast, the look of the film, the characters and the narrative capture the mood and style of Hammer's productions with a genuine sense of ghoulish enjoyment. The archetypes and stereotypes of Hero, Heroine, Helper and Villain run amok amongst the gentilities of Edwardian society with a genuinely joyous sense of fun amidst the ghoulish horror associated with the genre, whilst Rothwell's linear approach to storytelling is well in evidence. This linear approach, where the genre's limitations remain open to inspection, comes under scrutiny at the film's climax, where Mrs Bung disrupts the new equilibrium of apparent peace and tranquillity in the Bung household. Nonetheless, for the horror canon, many of its vital elements are there for the audience's enjoyment: the ghoulish narrative, the stock characters and the decaying mansion representing the vital elements needed to both confirm the genre and to open it up to new interpretations.

Following on from the work of Mary Ann Doane, Bide-a-Wee becomes a representation of its owners. The outer walls suggest coldness with its gargoyle-topped gateway and enveloping mist. In juxtaposition to this, the living room is plush and luxurious, representing feelings of desire for both male and female characters. Doane sees the haunted house becoming 'the analogue of the human body, its parts fetishized by textual operations, its erogenous zones metamorphosed by a morbid anxiety attached to sexuality'.[29]

Therefore, the trappings of the living room, ranging from the painting of a naked Valeria through to the velvet-covered chaise longue, become sexualised through a link between them as objects and the *femme fatale* as subject. When Valeria seduces Bung, this sexualisation becomes manifest through both the period trappings and her character. When she lies down on the chaise longue and entices Bung into having sex with her, her tight red dress and heaving bosom emphasises her sexuality. This becomes even

more accentuated when she asks Bung if she can smoke, and it begins to pour out of her. As Bung says 'I was trying to give it up', he moves towards Valeria, enamoured by her beauty, her sex and the fact that this extra-marital affair offers an alternative to his own purely functional home life with Emily.

Taking Doane's arguments further, the *mise en scène* of Watt's revivification process becomes *so* fetishised that it almost overtakes the film's comedic elements. The mainstays of any mad scientist's experiments remain both his misguided actions and his laboratory. Rothwell's knowledge of narrative conventions in the genre outings of the series would certainly not be lost on audiences echoing both Universal's numerous *Frankenstein* movies and the mad sculptor Ivan Igor's schemes in *Mystery of the Wax Museum* (1933). Such an emphasis is placed upon the resurrection and vitrifying processes, the bubbling beakers, test tubes, vats of grey liquid, shroud-covered corpses and panels of humming machinery that the narrative is lost amidst the spectacular look of the cellar itself. Whilst the storyline is straightforward, the actual *look* of the film is so compelling that the storyline itself is not that important. The comedic situations are placed *into* the narrative, whilst the locale *assumes* paramount importance. In their genre outings, the look of the film is just as important as the situations themselves.

By returning to arguments about character archetypes, *Screaming!*'s characters all serve a vital function within the narrative. Whilst some characters such as Dan Dan are written as a *deus ex machina* bridging the gaps between sequences and to fill any narrative, Bung, Watt and the other characters provide the focal point that moves the story forward. From an archetype perspective, the Hero is simultaneously Bung and Potter, representing reasoned experience or emotional inexperience. However, Bung's position of authority means that he must be ridiculed, and his incompetence is compounded by Potter's resourcefulness at saving the day. This would indicate that even in this horror parody, the destabilisation of 'authority' is a key area of the canon.

This feeling of destabilisation is taken further in relation to the film's characters. Whereas Bung and Potter remain held within the confines of their archetypes, the others move fluidly from one to another with ease. The Helper is Slowbotham, but he is rescued *as a woman*, and so he becomes a Princess like Doris and Emily; the Villains are Orlando, Valeria and even Emily, who threatens Bung's chance of a sexually active life. Whereas the traditional Princess is Doris, the other two female characters provide two alternatives. Valeria becomes the Villain who kidnaps, vitrifies and sells women. She seduces and drugs Bung, drops a snake onto him,

and tries to help Watt overcome the heroes at the film's climax. But her traditional role is overturned when Bung rescues her. If Freud's ideas of the female causing male anxiety through castration are taken to its ultimate end, Bung has 'contained' Valeria by taking her away from her own world and supplanting it with one of his own. This approach seems to be stating that females *should* and *must* revert back to their 'traditional' roles if the male is to remain dominant.

However, Emily provides an interesting juxtaposition to Valeria. Like her younger love rival, she is a Princess and *should* be rescued from the Villain. But she is not, with Bung leaving her in a state of limbo both as an ornament and a macabre reminder of his past life. Whereas she is both a part of Propp's and Jung's archetypal system of character, she is securely entrenched in the McGill tradition. On McGill's terms, she *is* the harridan battleaxe, constantly niggling away at her husband's esteem. Bung's rebellion at insisting Emily cannot be returned to her living-self means she cannot return to human form. This rebellion remains short-lived and she remains alive. It would appear that in the *Carry On* films, where men are almost always placed in a position of power and the status quo is preserved, the ultimate monstrosity against men will always be their housewives.

Revelling in deconstructing the Heroes of nineteenth-century detective literature, Rothwell's Bung is a combination of Poe's C. Auguste Dupin and Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. Bung emulates Dupin's process of ratiocination where he tries to place himself into the mind of the Villain by writing all his available clues on a chalkboard. The links to Holmes are obvious: the trademark garb of deerstalker and cape assumes Bung's authority over the cloth-capped Potter and bowler-hatted Slowbotham. But whereas both Dupin and Holmes eschew family life, Bung wants a family life of sorts, despite Emily's constant henpecking. His position as head of the patriarchal household results in his inferiority. He is 'ruled' by Emily, who shouts, mocks and hits him over the head with a broom with equal vitriol. Once he steps over that threshold, he assumes the figure of authority and again he is mocked because of his position.

Bergson's *schadenfreude* positions Bung as superior, but because of his pratfalls, his inability to detect and his very name, *we* feel *superior* to *him*. This acts as a 'safety valve' through which the audience can enjoy their superiority over him. If Bergson's idea of the comic as a form of social interaction is read through Bung, then authority must be ridiculed through rebellious ways such as wordplay and physicality. Bung is handsome, but his mannerisms suggest an air of 'awkwardness' about him. He

stumbles, falls down chutes, gurns and transforms into a werewolf. His hirsute alter ego may be clumsy, but is far more sexual than his human form. If Bung has helped shape society through his authoritarian stance, then the fact that he changes his physical appearance is another factor for audiences to laugh at. Bung is 'different', so the spectator is placed into a position where laughter arises and because of his inefficiencies, no sympathy has arisen, only ridicule and laughter.

From a Freudian perspective, *Screaming!*'s taboos of pre-marital and even inter-species sex mean that the viewer's laughter arises through them being *afraid* of the subject matter. This does raise an interesting notion. Bung is authoritarian; he produces laughter through his incongruous actions. As the creature he is *not* funny, but becomes a sympathetic alter ego because 'he' cannot answer his wife and is spurned by Valeria. The 'monstrous id' that produced Bung as a sexual creature is curtailed, and the werewolf is not the all-conquering creature that he should be, but instead a pathetic doppelganger. This doppelganger reveals the true nature to the individual: the ego represses, the id liberates. But this liberation is cut short by both its return back into repression and with the knowledge that it is only through actions of others that this liberation could take place.

Potter's backstory is never mentioned. He is working class, as seen through his garb of cloth cap and hole-ridden tweed jacket. Despite being young, virile and handsome, he has not made love to Doris. He is sexually aware, but falls directly into McGill's young man of the seaside postcard, whereby his sexual failings express themselves through both comic vocalisms and movements. He wants sex, but society's constraints, coupled with his and Doris' lack of sexual experience, would indicate that if Freud's theories of aggressiveness and sexual urges are placed into the Potter/Doris 'situation', then sex is considered 'dangerous' before marriage. It is only through marriage that any 'urges' can be quelled. Potter's repressions are held in check by societal norms. Yet through marriage, any repressions will surface. At the end of the film, Potter and Doris are married and it is through marriage that these sexual urges will be apparently dealt with.

Watt is the archetypal Villain. Well-dressed, educated, cultured and sophisticated, he is Bung's polar opposite. Driven, rational and a cold-hearted empiricist, his asexuality when confronted with the naked form of Doris does not raise an eyebrow. This allows for playfulness on the part of Kenneth Williams, the filmmakers and the audience. The angular frame, the wordage employed and the known characteristics of the comic himself would all have to be taken into consideration when producing laughter.

Bergson argues that comedy is provided through abstract ideas linked to absurdity. When this is combined with Williams the *actor* and Watt the *creation*, the link becomes concrete.

When Watt visits Dan at the lavatory, he wears a full-comedy beard, provoking laughter as it is *outside* the norm of what we have seen. At the end of the film, when Watt sinks into the vat of vitrifying liquid, he screams 'Frying tonight!', which incites laughter through its very incongruity. This is at the very heart of Watt. His rational worldview is incongruous from the outset. He creates creatures to kidnap women, these women are turned into shop window dummies, and a rejuvenated Egyptian corpse destroys him. Rothwell has not only played with genre convention, but has taken absurdity into the very heart of the mad scientist genre. When linked to Williams' nostril-flaring performance, where his body acts as a vessel for ideas about (a)sexuality, Watt not only reflects the traditions of the cinematic mad scientist, but also reinforces them to absurdist ends.

As with the majority of the *Carry On* films, the Hero needs a Helper. For Bung, it remains Slowbotham, who acts as both Fool and a narrative device. Slowbotham comments upon actions taken, repeating what has been said to emphasise that particular part of the story. He aids Bung and attempts to be loyal. However, he also tries to usurp Bung's superiority by sitting in his chair and by mimicking his commanding officer when walking behind him in an attempt to be like him. Here Bung's authority is being ridiculed from within its own structure. In the tradition of the Fool, Slowbotham is clumsy, stupid and full of his own self-importance. Whilst he may be seen as a comic cipher, his main aspect is that he is the character most associated with incongruity. In linking itself back to the traditions of pantomime and music hall, the dim-witted officer dresses in women's clothing, repeating both the tradition of farce and commenting upon contextual masculine values. During the 1960s, masculinity was either being strengthened when seen through characters such as James Bond and football players like Bobby Moore or 'weakened' by the female form through liberation and 'the pill', where 'traditional' values of patriarchy were being undermined. This will now be analysed in three sequences:

Scene 1: Bung and Slowbotham investigate the stealing of Doris' dummy from
the milliner's shop.
Bung: We can't use a real woman. Something might go wrong.
(Bung adjusts his bow tie. Slowbotham mimics him)

Slowbotham: I get the point, Sergeant.
Bung: So, we will get someone who looks like he is a woman.
Slowbotham: What a brilliant idea, Sergeant. Ho, ho! Who did you have in mind, then?
(Bung looks at Slowbotham, Slowbotham looks horrified at this idea. Fade out. Slowbotham coming out of the changing room dressed in ladies' apparel. He approaches Bung and taps him on the shoulder. Bung turns and taps 'Slowbotham' on the behind)
Bung: Come on then.
(Slowbotham turns and looks at Bung disapprovingly)
Bung: Madam. I am sorry. Um, I, um, I thought that, um. Is he ready yet?
(Slowbotham taps him with a handbag)
Slowbotham: How about it?
Bung: Some other time, I'd avail myself, madam. Is he ready yet?
Slowbotham: Sarge, it's me. Slowbotham. Ha ha!
(Bung looks shocked)
Assistant: This is the best I could do, Mr Davies, but even I have my limitations.
Bung: Yes, well, it's a nice dark night.
(Bung grabs Slowbotham under the arm and exits)

Here the laughter is twofold. Slowbotham has been duped by Bung and authority has won. Yet at the end of the sequence, the Fool has triumphed. Whilst Slowbotham steadfastly remains a man in female attire, Bung is the idiot and therefore audiences laugh at both men's incongruity. The comic situation arises not just from this absurdness, but the fact that it was a functioning and recognisable part of the comic tradition that a man in the *Carry On* films will often be seen in drag, with no pretence at being female at all. The audience expected this element, and seeing Slowbotham in female clothing is both funny and reassuring. That the actor/character could *never* be really recognised as a female adds to this absurdity and again laughter is produced:

Scene 2: Holcombe Wood
(Bung and Slowbotham drive to Holcombe Wood. The Z Cars TV theme tune is heard. Slowbotham is in drag)
Slowbotham: Ooh, ow!
Bung: Shh! Ladies don't swear.
Slowbotham: They would if they had these corsets on. Cor, it didn't 'arf catch me.
Bung: Come on!

Slowbotham: Sorry, Sergeant. I hope there's no one looking.
(Slowbotham sits on the car horn. It honks and Slowbotham recoils)
Slowbotham: Ooh, right on the hooter.
(Bung raises his arm as if to hit him)
Slowbotham: You should never hit a woman.
Bung: Give me your hand.
Slowbotham: Eh?
Bung: We've got to make this look convincing.
Slowbotham: You're not going to kiss me, are you Sergeant?
(As they walk into the woods, Emily spies on them)
Bung: Right, get down.
Slowbotham: What for?
(Slowbotham raises his parasol to stop Bung coming nearer)
Bung: That's what Doris Mann was doing when she copped it.
Slowbotham: Yeah, well, I'm not copping it!
Bung: Get down here.
(Bung and Slowbotham sit on the ground. A ripping sound is heard. Slowbotham's knicker elastic has snapped. Both men laugh)
Slowbotham: What's so funny?
Bung: I was just thinking. Supposing my wife could see me now!

This sequence uses Slowbotham and Bung as incongruous elements. Their authority is constantly undermined by their incumbent situation. Within the context of the narrative, it makes sense, yet because of its farcical elements, laughter takes on two aspects. Two heterosexual men are acting as a heterosexual couple and, from a Freudian perspective, the fact that Slowbotham's gender has been altered creates taboo, resulting in natural laughter. It is the strangeness and absurdity of Slowbotham dressed as a woman and being able to dupe his superior that also creates laughter.

In both instances visual comedy is aided by both word and sound play. The 'honk' of the car's horn when Slowbotham sits on it, coupled with him looking shocked as if *he* has made the noise, forms a very basic joke. But it is not. It reveals a complex relationship between both inert and active elements, and when incongruously placed into the same cinematic plane, the 'obvious' joke arises. It is both this obviousness and the incongruity of image/sound linked together that create the dynamics of laughter. This is taken further when Slowbotham says 'Right on the hooter', which creates a verbal and visual link between his backside and the car horn. With 'hooter' being a substitute for 'nose', de Saussure's *langue* and *parole* work is played with: the utterance of

the sound is not directly linked with the *actual* meaning of the word. What was a simple but effective joke has now become something much more complex.

When Slowbotham says 'You're not going to kiss me, are you Sergeant?' and 'Yeah, well, I'm not copping it!', the inference is that here we have two men in authority about to kiss. Sexuality is called into question and Slowbotham looks genuinely taken aback by Bung's instruction to sit on the grass. They are simultaneously conforming to the conventions of farce and theatrical tradition whilst becoming 'outsiders to the norm'. It has to be remembered that homosexuality was still considered a 'taboo' subject and one that was being debated as *Screaming!* (its title has a homosexual inference) was being filmed. Kenneth Williams' diary entry for Friday 11 February 1966 says that 'The result of the debate on Homosexuality in the Commons is a victory for the supporters of the private member's bill advocating freedom for consenting male adults' and that: 'It certainly surprised me. I would never have dreamed it would get by in a country like this.'[30] In the conservative nature of the *Carry On* films, gay actors such as Kenneth Williams and Charles Hawtrey *always* played heterosexual or asexual characters. The films would appear to only be confident in 'dealing' with gay men or topics related to gay themes through the traditions of farce. By placing the actors into farcical situations and apparel, the 'situations' actually have more depth to them than the filmmakers may have originally conceived.

Scene 3 sees Slowbotham wake from being kidnapped and helping Bung and Potter revive Emily and Doris. Slowbotham remains dressed as his female persona, but exhibits elements of the traditional constable when he bends his knees and clasps his hands behind his back in an 'Evening all' action. From this male action and his female guise, Slowbotham has become an exaggerated conduit through which messages of 'archetype', 'sameness' and 'otherness' are entwined. He is a male and exhibits the stereotypical traits and actions of a police constable. Despite this, he remains dressed in women's underwear and appears completely at ease in this new guise. Therefore, the absurdity of his situation becomes obvious and the audience can only laugh at his predicament. Later on in the scene, when the two monsters move to kill Bung and Potter, Slowbotham and Doris faint. Doris falls into the arms of Potter, whilst Slowbotham (still in his female guise) is caught by Bung. Propp's Princess has become traditional (Doris) but also challenged. The Princess, despite the narrative suggesting that it *should* be Doris (or Valeria and Emily), is actually Slowbotham.

The cross-dressed character has altered Propp's work to provide a new model, or at least one that can sit, however uncomfortably, alongside the traditional role of Princess. Arguably he is now a man-woman, and whilst the filmmakers did not purport to use this as a statement of intent on how they dealt with sexuality in the 1960s, Slowbotham comes to represent both a traditional and more modern take on gender erosion. If taken in the context of Hammer's horror outings, whereas Peter Cushing played both Van Helsing and Victor Frankenstein as rationalist, cold-hearted and distinctly heterosexual characters, Slowbotham remains forever on the sidelines to this: both a man *and* happy as a woman.

Carry On Screaming! is a much-loved entry in the series, often appearing in Top Ten lists on the numerous websites devoted to the canon. The team looked back to the traditions of the past through Universal Studios' treatment of monster and scientist, and old dark house mysteries, and coupled it with the visual style of Hammer's films to create a gently mocking parody of them. The plot is straightforward and has the essential ingredients that are key to the genre's success. Propp's now-hybridised characters reflect the stability of the genre, whilst offering alternatives for it to pursue. It was testament to the filmmakers that they offered their own inimitable 'version' of a horror film. The production is handsomely mounted and the *mise en scène* becomes as important as the narrative itself.

Whilst the film does have its own elements of horror, it still remains part of the comic and theatrical tradition. The narrative takes the genre's conventions and subverts them so that any generic staple ingredients are now so clichéd that they have turned into comedic elements with apparent ease. By having contextual elements such as the themes from *Steptoe and Son* and *Z Cars* as incongruous elements within the filmic space, so a definite link between texts, audience appreciation and incongruity is created.

As in all the *Carry On* films, authority is mercilessly ridiculed and sexuality is constantly being undermined. This last point is at the crux of this film and arguably the entire series. Whilst the end of this outing sees the conservative world restored, with Doris and Potter married and Bung and Valeria living together in sin, Emily remains a threatening force to destabilise their happiness. In the world of the *Carry On* films, with their inherent cosiness and 'safety' where the male is almost always dominant, there is room to show that this is not the case. Slowbotham seems at his most comfortable when he is in women's clothing and McGill's harridan wife is a constant threat to masculine stability within the domestic sphere. The

contextual broadsheet critics were hostile towards the movie,[31] the most acerbic of which is the following review from *The Times*:

> One of the cardinal rules of farce, surely, is that however fantastic the events in which the characters are involved may be, the players must always behave as though they are entirely believable and to be taken with the utmost seriousness. The trouble with *Carry On Screaming!* is that apart from Fenella Fielding nobody seems to behave as though this is a real world they are living in, everyone else plays self-conscientiously, with one eye on the audience and seems to be just going through the motions[32]

Despite this, at least one reviewer liked the finished product. Nina Hibbins wrote:

> This is one of the better Carry Ons, bright and breezy with an earthy vulgarity. This unpretentious sort of clowning isn't exactly scintillating cinema. But it makes a change from the false sophistication and over-elaborate staging of all those extravagant spy and thriller spoofs we've been subjected to recently.[33]

It is through the passing of time that the film has taken on new and bold meanings in dealing with sexuality in the traditions of genre. The team have not only used formulaic *British* genre conventions and employed them to create loving parodies, they have taken McGill's caricatures to their extremes, and by doing so have questioned the role of men and women as incongruous characters within a narrative. In that way, both *Carry On Spying* and *Carry On Screaming!* remain important tropes in 1960s British cinema. Bond and Hammer were performing well at the box office and reflected attitudes about Britain. Despite their exotic locales, they remained *British*. The *Carry On* filmmakers were always on the lookout for work to parody. That Bond and Hammer were popular meant that the team could easily parody that work. Yet, the parodies had to remain effective to fully accentuate this approach. *Spying* takes the accoutrements of the Bond canon (and others) and cheerfully deconstructs it. For *Screaming!*, the style of Hammer was taken in order to present something new and equally as ghoulish. This is why these two films both reflect and celebrate their heritage. And this is why they are successful.

Notes

1. Jameson (1994), p. ix.
2. Aristotle (1983), p. 4.
3. Propp (1968).
4. Ibid., pp. 9–11.
5. Levi-Strauss (1963b).
6. Altman (1996), p. 279.
7. Review in *The Times*, 20 February 1964; David Robinson, *Financial Times*, 21 February 1964.
8. Chapman (1999).
9. According to the IMDB website, *Dr No* cost $1.2million but recouped $59.6million at the box office: www.imdb.com/title/tt0055928/business (accessed 1 September 2016).
10. The Milchmann episode is repeated with spectacular success in the later Bond outing *The Living Daylights* (UK 1987: John Glen).
11. The sequence is analysed in Chapter 6.
12. Interestingly, he was played by the same actor, Eric Barker, indicating that the production team have done this deliberately to evoke memories of the previous film.
13. Peter Rogers, interviewed by Steven Gerrard, January 2007.
14. See the *Carry On Spying* press book held in the BFI archives.
15. See Bright and Ross (2000b), pp. 130–31.
16. *Carry On Spying* press book.
17. See Chapter 7.
18. *Carry On Spying* press book.
19. Kenneth Williams, quoted in Davies (1994), diary entry 20 February 1964, p. 229.
20. Patrick Gibbs, review in the *Daily Telegraph*, 31 July 1964.
21. *The Times*, 30 July 1964.
22. John Coleman, *New Statesman*, 31 July 1964.
23. Tom Cameron, *The Spectator*, 7 August 1964.
24. Ibid.
25. Ross (1996), p. 43.
26. Arguably the best example of this is in Terence Fisher's perverse *Frankenstein Created Woman* (UK 1967).
27. Hutchings (1993).
28. Pirie (1973), p. 4.
29. Doane (1987), pp. 72–73.

30. See Davies (1994), p. 273.
31. For negative reviews of *Screaming!*, see Alexander Walker in the *Evening Standard*, 18 August 1966; Eric Shorter in the *Daily Telegraph*, 19 August 1966; Penelope Gilliat in *The Observer*, 21 August 1966; *Monthly Film Bulletin* no. 392, vol. 33 (September 1966), p. 141.
32. Review in *The Times*, 18 August 1966.
33. Nina Hibbin, *Morning Star*, 20 August 1966.

CHAPTER 9

Cowboys and Khasis

By the time that arguably the team's most successful genre parody, *Carry On Up the Khyber*, was released in 1968, the *Carry On* team had made 15 films in ten years. Nine were set in the contextual present and six were set in the past. Rothwell's approach meant that he could still keep McGill's caricatures and the music hall patter in his narratives, whilst parodying his beloved genres. As such, the series moved the team into new directions whilst still keeping in touch with the traditions of the past.

The team's first bona fide historical hysterical was *Carry On Jack*, which was discussed in the previous chapter. It was a box office success, and even some of the critics liked it. What made it important to the canon was simply that it clearly demonstrated that the *past* could be made into films of the *present*. Rothwell's script was both inventive and clichéd, relying on the tropes of the genre, and countless movies that sat within it. The sailors and pirates were all jolly rogering, the Union Jack flag at the top of the mast flapped in the breeze, and innuendo amongst the brave derring dos of the heroes remained both stiff and funny. With that success out of the way, Rogers and Thomas knew that Rothwell could move the series into genre parody. Nothing was to be sacred, and so the *Carry On* films began to look back to past films *and* current ones to create their own stories. Clichéd they may have been, but the genre parodies were successful and, in the main, looked good. What was also interesting was that they debunked the past whilst mocking contextual ideas of their time: sexuality, gender and class were all ripe targets for the team, but so were the genres they wanted to parody.

S. Gerrard, *The Carry On Films*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-52005-0_9

Carry On Cleo mercilessly mocked the previous year's Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton farrago of *Cleopatra*. The film was shot between 13 July and 28 August 1964. Whereas the Hollywood epic's troubled production ran millions of dollars over budget, Rogers' penny-pinching frugality and *Cleo*'s relatively low budget of £170,000 meant that if money could be saved, then it should be. Rogers used some of the beautiful sets from the 'epic' Hollywood production so that he could remain within budget, and actually rented them from *Carry On* actor Victor Maddern, who had bought the sets from Twentieth Century Fox!

With the genre parodies came higher costs, and designer Julie Harris informed Richard Webber that 'There was a terrible lack of money, a very tight budget' where 'one always kept the period in mind, although there was some inventions'.[1] These inventions helped the parodies look authentic, and so indirectly helped the film's box office appeal. The first public screening was on 17 December 1964. By February 1965, the film had seen box office receipts of £100,000 in London alone, which was indicative of just how much the team's outings were now appreciated by the populace. This was, in no mean feat, helped by the look of the production, the luxury of colour cinematography and the fact that the cast had zest and an obvious confidence in their script.

The *Daily Express* saw the film as one of the better entries, noting: 'It is all done with enormous gusto, every joke is bludgeoned home with a leer and a nudge in elaborately splendid Roman and Alexandrine settings.'[2] Ian Wright's article in *The Guardian* saw him discuss the film as a social document 'in its own right, with "Made in Britain" stamped on every frame'.[3] This attitude of mocking genres, but through British sensibilities and downright rudeness, remained the cornerstone of the team's parodies.

Cleo was the first in an unbroken run of five historically based movies. Whilst the formula for bawdy humour remained intact, the locale did not: hence, these five films were set in Ancient Rome (*Cleo*), the Wild West (*Cowboy*), Victorian London (*Screaming!*), the French Revolution (*Don't Lose Your Head*) and the French Foreign Legion (*Follow That Camel*). Each of these films took their genre components and used them as backdrops for the barrel-scraping puns, characters and situations of Rothwell's inventiveness. There was a myopic sheriff, the undead roamed around London's foggy streets, French aristos were rescued by dragged-up English lords, and an American sergeant avoided his duties in the French Foreign Legion. Each one of the films was a box office success, but both *Don't Lose*

Your Head and *Follow That Camel* were originally released under Rank's stable without the '*Carry On*' moniker, to lower returns than expected. This was soon rectified, the moniker was added and the films were reissued to healthier box office returns.

The run of five (six if *Spying* is included) unbroken parodies came to its end in 1968 with *Carry On Doctor*. The new film saw the team return to the hospital wards after a gap of 12 films. Despite the box office success of *Doctor*, the team saw a return to debunking notions of Britishness from the 'safety' of the Indian Raj in 1895 with arguably the most polished of all their films, *Carry On Up the Khyber*.

Throughout the remainder of the series, the team alternated between realism and genre parody. The contextual world of the tail end of the 1960s and tipping into the 1970s began with *Carry On Camping* and *Carry On Again Doctor*. However, the genre parody still had life in its slowly buckling legs: *Carry On Up the Jungle* was a retelling of the Johnny Weissmuller *Tarzan* movies, with much use of stock footage of 'Starkest Africa' and looking as cheap as chips on the soundstages at Pinewood Studio; the love life of Henry VIII saw location footage at Windsor Castle interspersed with the gardens at Pinewood in *Carry On Henry;* the Gainsborough melodramas, most notably *The Wicked Lady* (1945) was overturned by *Carry On Dick*, in which Sid James played the notorious highwayman Dick Turpin; and *Carry On England* returned the team back to the beginnings of the series, with its narrative set at an army barracks.

When the series was revived, and with the 500-year anniversary of the discovery of America sailing into view, *Carry On Columbus* seemed an odd, though apposite choice to relaunch the series. With its new cast of alternative comedians such as Alexei Sayle, Julian Clary, Nigel Planer and Rik Mayall working alongside older hands like Jim Dale, Jack Douglas and Bernard Cribbins, hopes for the film's success were high. It was not to be, with *Columbus* being seen by many critics as one of the worst films of 1992. Despite the fondness for the films of the past, the audience stayed away. There were hardly any of the original players in it, it simply was not funny and everything has its day – and the *Carry On*s had had theirs. It brought the series to an inglorious end.

However, the importance of these genre parodies cannot be underestimated. British film comedy was usually set in the modern world. Whilst Ealing Studios' *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949) revelled in Edwardian manners and etiquette, the majority of their comedic muscles

were flexed in the imaginary world of the 1940s and 1950s. With the Boulting Brothers, Launder and Gilliat, and the Rank 'Doctor' comedies, the 1950s through to the 1970s were where they trod their comedy footsteps. But the *Carry On* films straddled both parody and contextual areas, which make them both costume comedies and 'realist' ones. Whereas the team's costume comedies were set in a distinct historical moment in time (for example, *Don't Lose Your Head* is set during the French Revolution), which was accentuated by use of costumes and sets, they did not purport to deal with bygone events directly: the narrative played 'within' the setting whilst tackling contextual ideas of sexuality, gender and class. Removing them to the past meant that these themes could be dealt with 'safely' through the passing of time. Therefore, even though entries such as *Follow That Camel* may be removed to the Sahara Desert, it examines burgeoning themes of class (the warfare between Bo West and Sergeant Knocker), race (Kommandant Burger as the quintessential German commander) and sex outside marriage (Lady Jane does not complain at having her ticket punched and her porthole checked during her journey to the Fort).

The films usurped the big-budgeted historical/costume dramas with their notions of High Art by replacing them with lewd and bawdy jokes and situations. When audiences saw Sid James in *Henry* parodying Richard Burton's role in *Anne of a Thousand Days* (1969), the laughs become evident. Therefore, each actor played out not just historical figures but also brought to these films their own personas *within* the setting. Nicholas J. Cull argues that these actors cause 'disruption' within the narrative and its conventions *because* of the intrusive personalities of the actors and the fact that 'each film unfolded with a cascade of sight gags, slapstick and punning dialogue with numerous sexual *double entendres*'. The settings, the costumes, the sumptuousness and the earnestness of the traditional costume dramas are 'disrupted' when placed within the *Carry On* remit and, despite them sometimes being placed abroad, Rothwell's low comedy meant that the national self-image had invaded whatever the team's chosen genre was.[4]

The films revelled in poking fun at the conventions of the costume/historical movie. *Carry On Cleo* used the much-respected voice of Gaumont-British News, E.V.H. Emmett, to lend gravitas to the proceedings. His sepulchral tones, coupled with an inter-title that says the film was 'based on an original idea by William Shakespeare', give the film a feeling of

gravitas that the audience knows is not actually there. Their confidence was so strong that, as Chapter 3 showed, the team even played with convention further by saying the story of Henry VIII having two extra wives was known to be the work of William Cobbler, and as such was cobblers from beginning to end.

Despite the playfulness of the films towards their subject matter, they do actually have an element of respect for their target genre. As Cull maintains:

> The *Carry On* histories strained but never broke the boundaries of their chosen genre(s). Indeed, by subverting the stuffier screen versions of the past, they maintained an alternative tradition of British historical filmmaking [ ] the *Carry On*s used the past as a zone of escape in which rich costumes added a level of pleasure. In *Carry On* the past became once again an exotic territory in which fantasy could be indulged.[5]

This *fantasy* is most defiantly British in its outlook. Themes of British Empire 'superiority' runs throughout the historical costume parades. In *Up the Jungle*, Professor Inigo Tinkle shows exasperation when he is about to be eaten by African cannibals, saying: 'They can't possibly do this, after all we are British subjects!' In *Don't Lose Your Head*, the emphasis on Britain and being British was placed on Sir Rodney Ffing and his effete friend Lord Darcy de Pue's shoulders, whereby only they as members of the English aristocracy can save the fallen French aristocrats.

Another important factor to take into consideration is that the series delighted in employing theatrical traditions of farce and 'dragging up' as a means to generate laughter and to explore matters of sexuality. In *Cleo*, Hengist and Horsa seek refuge in the Temple of the Vestal Virgins. They dress up as daughters of Vesta to escape the clutches of Caesar's army. When Caesar knocks on the Temple door to be greeted by Hengist in women's clothing, he asks 'Are you *really* a Vestal Virgin?', to which the answer is: 'Sorry, Vestal Virgins are 'orf today.' In this instance, Hengist asserts his male authority over Caesar by pretending to be a Vestal Virgin. Later in the same sequence, Hengist and Horsa have to fight Caesar's men, beating them in the process. This would indicate that as they are dressed as women, only women could beat the masculine world of Caesar's legions. For *Carry On Dick*, the team played with the conventions of drag even further. The Reverend Flasher (Sid James) uses two disguises: highway-

man Big Dick wears his tri-cornered hat, cape and eye mask; and an old crone who ridicules the fey Captain Desmond Fancy (Kenneth Williams). In both films, the audience is well aware that the actor is blatantly *not* female. Yet within the film's world, these characters almost always fool their enemies (or at least for a moment) due to the ineptitude of the authority figure. Barbara Windsor's role in *Carry On Dick* takes these ideas of cross-dressing further. As Flasher's helper, Harriet wears a loose low-cut blouse that exposes her cleavage; as Big Dick's highwayman accomplice, she gallops her horse and cocks her flintlock as well as any man. Whilst the previous chapter dealt with the *Carry On* films debunking two contextual and iconic British film institutions, namely James Bond and Hammer horrors, this chapter will now examine how the team tackled a genre that will forever remain *not* British, and one that British cinema attempted all too infrequently: the Western and the Epic.

Carry On Cowboy

The Western, with its instantly recognisable iconography of parched deserts, the rocky outcrops of Monument Valley, saloons, dusty frontier towns, barroom brawls, horses and cowboys wearing ten-gallon Stetsons, is American cinema's most popular and long-lasting genre, and one it can rightly claim as its own. With film-producing in its infancy, they were cheap to produce, had a great climate to film in, and with their themes of free enterprise and good versus evil, they were the perfect movies to cement America's growing importance as the major cinema producing country. As Lenhian suggests:

> By World War Two the Western had become a widely recognised fictional formula. Dime novels, pulp magazines, comic books, Wild West shows, radio and especially the motion picture had created in the Western an idealised representation of a small segment of American history and a source of innumerable sagas about individual heroism and social progress. Beginning with *The Great Train Robbery* in 1903, a newly developing motion picture industry found the Western to be an ideal format for conveying the kind of visual excitement and grandeur that distinguished film from other media.[6]

According to Buscombe, the Western's generic components remained consistent across the years, ensuring that the canon remained intact.[7] He catalogues some 3,500 Westerns produced in the sound era and, at the

height of the genre's popularity, up to 100 Westerns were produced per year.[8] Langford saw Westerns as being defined and limited to an historical setting, and so narratives remained relatively unchanged, where the cowboys were seen as a (mostly) moral force for good at a time when the American Dream was beginning in earnest.[9]

Much has been written about the Western, but a standard history of the genre begins with *The Great Train Robbery* (1903). Lasting a fast-paced eight minutes, the movie's title sums up the narrative precisely. The film's last image saw the villain turn, point and shoot his pistol directly at the camera. By 1905, the Western was flourishing. With outdoor filming and a sunny climate, it was always seen as a cheap and virtually relatively trouble-free production. Economically, it was an ideal product for audience consumption. As cinema moved into the sound era, the Western remained popular, appearing as either B-movies or serials and chapter plays. In 1939 *Stagecoach* (John Ford) afforded the genre A-feature status. It had a big budget, a strong cast and superb direction to enhance a rudimentary narrative: motley characters board a stagecoach, which is attacked *en route* by Native Americans. Whilst the genre remained fairly constant in popularity and scope, bigger-budgeted Westerns such as John Ford's *My Darling Clementine* (1946) and his 'Cavalry trilogy' of *Fort Apache* (1948), *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1950) and *Rio Grande* (1951), or Howard Hawks' *Red River* (1948) and *Rio Bravo* (1958) became 'star vehicles' where names such as John Wayne became cemented within the genre's landscape.

However, the Western did mutate into different forms. Post-war Western Heroes were often flawed, and allegories like Anthony Mann's *Winchester '73* (1950) and Fred Zinnemann's *High Noon* (1952) used the politics of the era to both shape their heroes and narratives into newer forms, where overshadowing skies reflected the fragmented and broken mind of the film's protagonist. The Western also tackled racism in Delmer Davies' *Broken Arrow* (1950) and *The Searchers* (1956), and whilst not wholly successful in this aspect, they did bring this burgeoning area out into a public space. The wide-open plains of *The Magnificent Seven* (1960) and *How the West Was Won* (1962) extended the 'physical' scope of the genre by using widescreen vistas, big stars and vivid colour to showcase the Western as a spectacle with realist elements, giving them the presence that they were 'epic' in construction.

By the 1960s, the popularity of the Western had waned and it moved into television. Long-running series like *Rawhide* (1959–66),

Champion the Wonder Horse (1955–56), *Bonanza* (1959–73) and *The High Chaparral* (1967–71) emphasised the homestead and family life. However, other 1960s cinematic Westerns began to signal the end of the genre as a chronicler of the Wild West. David Miller's *Lonely Are the Brave* (1962) updated the Western to early 1960s mid-America. Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962) showed that the hero was no longer needed. Sam Peckinpah's *Ride the High Country* (1962) begins with a chase involving a policeman, a car and a camel in a Western frontier town. By juxtaposing both conventional and non-conventional elements into a process of change whereby 'progress' usurps 'tradition', the Wild West of the 1960s had been tamed and resigned to the history books.

However, the cowboy remained virtually constant. He was flawed, but his fundamentals remained the same. The West was there to be tamed, and law and order was to be maintained. Only the cowboy could do this, even though Ethan Edwards in *The Searchers* and The Man With No Name in *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964) operated as individuals hindered and hampered by society. For some cowboys, society held no place at the town's square dance for them. They were loners, cast out of society, whilst that very society still needed them for protection. Clint Eastwood's character in *A Fistful of Dollars* opened up the cowboy to new directions. His amorality has no codes or conventions to hinder him. Under Sergio Leone's assured direction, the Western and its hero became ironic statements both celebrating and undercutting the values of more traditional genre fare. Leone deliberately celebrated yet challenged tradition, providing new forms of genre hybridity: the 'spaghetti' Western. This parody approach revitalised the field, and the film was a box office success. It led to two sequels and a slew of Italian/Spanish 'spaghetti' and German 'sauerkraut' Westerns based on Karl May's work. American stars like Henry Fonda and Charles Bronson crossed over to these co-productions and the cycle lasted for over a decade. Whilst *Dollars* parodied the American genre, later entries became parodies of parodies. The cowboys in these films were not traditionalists: they were unscrupulous, excessively violent, ugly, dirty, cynical and dishonest. It was only natural for the *Carry On* team to parody the Western when it was undergoing its most radical transformation.

Carry On Cowboy begins with the black-clad Johnny Finger riding into Stodge City on his white horse. As he dismounts, three men approach him from the other end of the street. A gunfight ensues and the three visitors drop down dead. As the camera cuts to a close-up of Finger (aka The Rumpo Kid), he says 'I wonder what those fellas wanted?', gets a piece of

chalk, crosses out the number 204 on the town's Population Board and replaces it with 201.

Rumpo enters the saloon and orders a drink. Judge Burke says Stodge City is 'fully temperance'. Rumpo replies: 'I don't care if you're fully flatulent, I'm having a drink.' As he takes a slug of whisky, the saloon owner Belle shoots his glass to pieces. As she walks towards him, the sexual attraction between the two of them is electric. He looks at her and growls, whilst she compliments him on the size of his pistol. Before long, Rumpo is *in situ* running the bar, turning it into a gambling den of iniquity, where busty dancers perform the Can Can and cowboys play poker and have fistfights.

Nobody confronts Rumpo. Burke asks the town's myopic and deaf Sheriff Oakley to protect them, but Rumpo shoots him. As he lies dying, he says that his death should be avenged. His daughter Annie heads for the frontier town. Meanwhile, because of a mix-up in the government records, Marshall P. Knut, an English sanitation expert, is mistakenly given the title of Marshal and is sent on the same stagecoach as Annie. Marshall assumes his job is to clean the town's drains.

Big Heap's tribe of Native Americans, led by his son Little, encircle Annie and Marshall's stagecoach. They have been bribed by Rumpo to intercept the coach, with whisky and rifles as payment. During the attack, Marshall accidentally knocks the coach driver unconscious. Marshall climbs on top of the stagecoach and shoots in the general direction of his assailants. From the cabin, Annie shoots numerous assailants. The Braves withdraw and the stagecoach arrives in Stodge City. Marshall is sworn in as Sheriff, and Annie rooms at the saloon. Rumpo informs Marshall that cattle rustlers are nearby. Marshall attempts to get a posse together made up of Rumpo's own men. Arriving at Sam's Ranch, Marshall is mistaken for a rustler and finds himself with a hangman's noose wrapped around his neck. Annie rescues him.

The following day, Annie entices Rumpo up to her room in an attempt to kill him. Charlie the barman opens her door instead and is shot in the process. Burke lets slip that Marshall is not a marshal and Rumpo vows to kill him. At night, Belle visits Marshall to warn him of Johnny's plan, but during her attempts at seduction, she hides under his bed after hearing Annie arrive at the jail. As Annie and Marshall get closer, Belle interrupts their talk. The two women fight over Marshall's affections, but then another enters the room and attempts to seduce him. All three women end up in a fight, with Marshall ejecting Belle and the girl. Annie vows to train Marshall to become a crack shot by High Noon.

The following morning, Marshall eventually succeeds in shooting straight and devises a plan to outsmart Rumpo. At High Noon, whilst the town's undertaker busies himself making coffins, Rumpo and his men ride into town. Marshall hides in the drains under their feet. When the men walk past the drain cover, Marshall lifts the cover and shoots them in turn until only Rumpo remains. The sheriff lifts up the drain cover with Johnny standing on it. Rumpo hits the floor and Marshall stands over him, saying that he will make sure that he hangs for his crimes. As Rumpo pleads his innocence, Belle rides down the street shouting his name. He jumps onto the back of her horse and they ride off. Annie embraces Marshall and says she loves him. When he puts his gun back in its holster, he shoots himself in the foot. As the undertaker comes out to measure up the dead bodies for their coffins and Annie stands looking at her love, Marshall hobbles off into the distance.

The narrative is fundamentally a generic Western: the Villain (Rumpo) rides into town, takes over, and only the law (Hero) and its Helper (Annie) can stop the Villain. By using the work of Levi-Strauss, Propp and de Sauzzure, it becomes apparent that the narrative and characters can be seen from past, present or future perspectives. This conventional Western has become part of its *myth*ical structure, and *Cowboy* has both historically specific components and ahistorical aspects that render the overall story timeless. Rothwell's script uses conventional narrative structure and applies traditional elements to fashion a screenplay that is both (American) Western and *Carry On* film with most of *its* elements intact, whilst positioning it within a part of the *myth* of the Western's overall history.

Three Westerns form the basis of the narrative: *The Sheriff of Fractured Jaw* (1958) has Kenneth Moore's English butler in the Wild West becoming the basis for Marshall; *The Paleface* (1948) sees Bob Hope's coward riding in a coach with Calamity Jane, and she uses her gun skills to kill the attacking Braves; and *Cowboy*'s finale is a comic reworking of *High Noon*. With villains riding into town, Burke tells Marshall that he has until High Noon to come up with a plan to thwart them. Marshall asks him why that time in particular. Burke says 'I know, I told them it's a most unoriginal time for that sort of thing', which makes the audience laugh through its obvious poke at a cliché. As in *High Noon*, the townsfolk desert the sheriff. Whilst the cuckoo clock in *High Noon* acts as a reminder that the hero's fate is nearing, Marshall shoots his cuckoo clock to prove his sharpshooting skills and virile masculinity.

As in all Westerns, the *mise en scène* remains important as a backdrop to the narrative. The prairie, the dusty town, the saloon bar with swinging doors, the honky-tonk piano, the town jail, the boardwalks, the blacksmith's and a ranch all formalise the film into its respective genre. However, it becomes apparent that *this* is *not* the typical Western backdrop, but the English countryside. To save money Rogers' team used Black Park near Pinewood Studios and Cobham Common in Surrey for filming. As Rumpo and his men ride along a dusty track, pine trees appear—these are not part of the traditional Western backdrop. This backdrop also stood in for numerous horror films from Hammer, where they form part of a mythical *mittel*-Europe. This does not detract from the visual style of the film because the cowboys dominate the image.

The town looks historically accurate, but with one noticeable difference: the end of the street has a bend in it rather than the wide-open wilderness that one would expect to see. Rogers says 'We even had a totally convincing Western settlement, built on the back lot at Pinewood', but admits that:

> Our film was the only time a Western town had a right-hand turnoff when the buildings were finished. Usually, you would see a great expanse of uncivilized landscape. If we had revealed what was behind that last house, you would probably have seen the Pinewood canteen![10]

The characters' outfits are genre-specific. Until 1946, when Jane Russell was promoted as a sexualised female in *The Outlaw*, most female roles in Westerns were seen as being on the periphery of the genre. The Western was fundamentally male-oriented: the cowboy was a man of action and a loner who leaves the female behind in civilisation whilst he continues to tame the wilderness. Women were stereotypes: bar room floozies or virginal schoolteachers. The woman were also treated in both negative and positive lights: female empowerment leads women to use sexuality as a weapon; however, sex comes at a price when they are enslaved within the confines of degrading work or are shot for flaunting their sexuality whilst trying to protect the hero.

Annie's character flaunts her sexuality whilst representing civilisation through law and order. Her first appearance, in a stiff, high-collared, floor-length yellow and white dress and matching hat, renders her demure. The starch outfit reflects her character at this point, and she waves a fan in front of her to reinforce this image. She becomes the embodiment of *all*

the clichéd female character traits in the genre. She is virginal but over the course of the film proves stronger than the males. When she first encounters Rumpo, she is sitting in her bath; he is reduced to a gibbering wreck just by the sight of her leg sticking out of the soapsuds. Later she becomes the saloon singer flaunting her sexuality in a pink, feathered outfit whilst singing the seductive 'Tonight is the Night for Love'. When she visits Marshall at the jailhouse, she is dressed as a combination of characters: she is at once the schoolteacher and the prostitute, with her cleavage on show, but her arms covered up as an allurement for Marshall.

By the end of the film, Annie becomes a cowgirl. Tough and mean, she trains Marshall to shoot his gun straight. She breaks free from the traditionally conservative role of the Western female at this point to become an aggressive dominant, which then returns to convention by 'allowing' Marshall to face Rumpo alone. Unlike Joan Crawford's Vienna in *Johnny Guitar* (1954) where she clears the town of a lynch mob, Annie reverts back to 'allowing' her protégé to take centre stage, enabling him to *become a man*. The *Carry* On films cannot/will not flout convention *too* far. Annie remains dressed in male attire at the film's closure. This cross-dressing aspect becomes an embodiment of female empowerment and independence *away* from the male form. For the female spectator, even though Annie gives up her independence, she is still an incredibly strong character within her own right. She becomes a commanding, pleasurable identification of empowerment for the female. If melodrama is primarily a female audience's equivalent to the male-dominated Western, Annie becomes the female equivalent to John Wayne's clean-cut heroes.

Belle is the Western's capitalist entrepreneur, able to exploit weak-willed men through the allurement of sex and the promise of cheap whisky. She uses her body as a means to an end in order to make Rumpo her business partner. When Rumpo sees her for the first time, he growls in sexual anticipation. But later on in the film, his sexual attentions turn to the younger Annie. With McGill's female character types being sexually active and older predator or younger and naïve girl/woman, so Belle's authority and position becomes undermined and the younger Annie represents a major threat for her status and security. Therefore, when Belle visits Marshall a man of the law, her femininity undermines his authority as lawman and reinforces her position of matriarchal dominance. However, when Annie arrives, Belle hides under the bed, and only emerges when the threat of the younger woman becomes apparent. This 'threat' results in violence when Belle and Annie catfight over their 'prize'. When the third

woman arrives, the two previously opposed women become partners in ousting her. That Marshall stands there in his long johns with his sheriff's badge lodged firmly in place adds to the incongruity of the scene. It amply demonstrates that the male, despite his inadequacies, is 'superior' to his female counterpart, but only at this point in the narrative. He looks on while they fight over him. The male's ego is satisfied.

If one is to read and accept McGill's characters, Belle remains in a position of dominance over the male. She becomes both the McGill harridan who looks on with disdain at her partner's ogling of younger women, and the sexually aroused housewife who uses her sexuality to contain Rumpo as part of her domestic sphere. Belle's McGill 'types' come to their natural conclusion when she rescues Rumpo at the film's climax. She rides her horse with skill and picks Rumpo up off the floor as she goes past. Belle becomes the dominant in the relationship and with her black outfit indicating she has now become a female equivalent to Rumpo, so the threat of her return remains. Perhaps the filmmakers are suggesting that the younger generation of the 1960s were seen as a threat to the older, arguably more conservative generation.

The cowboy is traditionally seen as constantly operating between two ideological values. On the one hand, he helps preserve the homestead and the town as symbols of civilisation. Yet he remains true to his 'mythical' status as wanderer amongst the wilderness. He cannot accept civilisation and refuses to give up his individuality and freedom. The wilderness remains a space where new frontiers are almost always arising. Lands must be conquered and, once done, the cowboy can move on. Therefore, the cowboy is mythologised. This mythical creation was primarily seen in early dime novels that celebrated/heroicised real-life people like Jesse James. When Westerns used characters and exploits taken from the dime novel, so this mythology grew. Audiences' expectations demanded that the Wild West and its characters became a myth. Archetypes were formed and when cinema embraced the Western, so real-life cowboys became early Western stars. These included Tom Mix with his highly stylised outfits, Buck Jones, Tim McCoy, Ken Maynard and Hoot Gibson. Between them, they created the stereotypical image of the cowboy: the villain in black, the hero in white.

Rumpo remains the archetypal swaggering Western Villain. Dressed in black, his Stetson cocked at an angle and his sneer enough to frighten off any amount of attacking Braves, his sexual prowess is not in doubt. When Belle admires his pistol, saying 'My but you've got a big one', his reply

of 'I'm from Texas, ma'am. We've all got big ones down there' makes him both sexually assured and part of the Western's traditions of a strong male villain. This tradition took into account attitudes towards the cowboy's ultimate love: that he loves his horse more than any woman and puts the steed in his bed to sleep at night. Yet Rumpo is, like all the best villains, fundamentally flawed. When he sets up home in the saloon, he moves away from *frontier* life to *domestic* life. Despite him riding out on to the range during the narrative, the saloon symbolises his containment within the domestic sphere. He has been conquered by domestic life and is willing to accept it. He has no need to move away from the town until Marshall arrives and threatens his masculinity. As with Belle, it is the idea of the younger generation taking the place of the elder that forges the battle between the two male protagonists.

The Villain was always seen as part of the ritualistic nature of the Western, where his role in the narrative was to provide both disequilibrium and control. The loss of control equated to a loss of character identity. Rumpo is a repeated motif of the genre and is part of its syntax. The character does not have any room or scope to expand out of the clichés that the 'type' had become. Even though Sid James stated that Rumpo was arguably his favourite roles where 'It was like going back to the type of parts I used to play before I started this light comedy stuff', the actual role itself, whilst allowing him to use his own persona, is too restricted by the narrative to be anything other than what it is: a set of clichés from both McGill's work and the Western's back catalogue.[11]

Marshall is a much more intriguing character. He is the 'outsider' and antithesis to the cowboy's overriding ideology. Rather than longing for wide-open spaces, he embraces the town, seeing it as a chance to 'clean up the West'. He wishes to remain with Annie in domesticity, and this containment into the domestic sphere and the utopian collective remains anathema to the myth of the Western Hero. Yet Marshall takes up the mantle of Propp's Hero when confronted by the Villain during the climactic shootout, indicating that a form of transformation has taken place 'within' the hero.

This transformation occurs in two ways. Physically Marshall's clothes change. Gone are the incongruous ill-fitting grey suit and bowler hat of the city. In their place comes the traditional cowboy outfit of tight trousers, loose shirt, jacket and waistcoat, gun slung low to his hips and the sheriff's badge pinned to his chest as a representation of moral right and authority (authority that will be mocked). With his physical appearance changed, so

his outlook alters. He becomes confident due to his position of authority as sheriff. When dressed in long johns, his masculinity becomes stronger. This is particularly redolent when he holds his gun as a phallic symbol of might within the male milieu. However, in typical *Carry On* fashion, farce has its say and Marshall's power and position of authority is completely undone when he unknowingly locks himself in the jail's cell. Nevertheless, when confronted by the three women in his bedroom, he holds a blanket around himself and folds his arms. It would appear that even though his gun serves as a sexually potent weapon that he is not afraid to brandish, the weapon is actually useless and leads to emasculation.

Marshall thinks he can beat Rumpo, but only with Annie's help, which demonstrates his reliance on the female to both confirm his masculinity and contain the Villain. Marshall and Annie dress similarly, suggesting that some form of identity transference has taken place, where *her* power becomes *his* power. When Marshall shoots the cuckoo clock in his office, he holds his gun aloft and both he and Annie embrace. The gun has become an extension of his penis and, because of this, his future with Annie is secured. The gun/penis represents death/life for Rumpo and Annie respectively. At the end of the gunfight, Marshall stands over Rumpo, brandishing his pistol and flaunting its power in front of his face. These homoerotic overtones indicate that the younger, more potent male has vanquished the older one, and Marshall's sexual potency is greater than the tired, withered, older cowboy. Marshall stands erect whilst Rumpo remains limp on the ground. It is only when Belle comes to his aid that he manages to get to his feet. In that moment, Belle has reasserted Rumpo's masculinity and even though *she* rescues *him*, his potency remains in force whilst Marshall shoots himself in the foot. Marshall's sexual energy is vanquished and when he hobbles off into the distance, Annie is left alone in the town. Through his own fallibility and actions, Marshall has distanced himself from the civilisation he wishes to be part of. Whilst this last scene is played for comedy, the inference is that Annie will become the sheriff and that Marshall is now sexually redundant. In the *Carry On* world, the team have shown how they can take a quintessentially un-British genre and turned it on its head to provide a genuinely engaging romp that opens up areas of negotiation into both sexuality and genre construction.

The film opened to fair reviews. David Robinson argued that the series had 'become sloppier and sloppier. The writing has [become] desperate' and that 'Gerald Thomas' direction seems almost wilfully to waste the potential of his artist material'.[12] In contrast, Cecil Wilson wrote: 'The

dialogue bristles, as ever, with puns, name gags, double meanings, which seem to grow more and more singular, and japes in general which positively rejoice in their age.'[13] The *Sunday Times* columnist felt it was 'not only the best of the bunch but a corker of a comedy by any standards'.[14] Felix Barker saw that its clear genre lineage made it a strong entry in the canon.[15] The reviewer for *The Times* called the film 'easily the best of their parodies, mainly because the target is larger'[16] and Ian Christie followed this by suggesting that whilst the plot *is* simplistic, it served as a framework that enables the comedy to be pushed to the fore.[17]

The film is only partially successful in its achievements. The movie *is* a successful parody of the Western and its generic components. The *mise en scène* serves the production well, providing solidity and authenticity to the finished production. The characters are traditionally embedded within the limitations of the genre and the actors perform well, again with the McGill types and broad comedy conventions in evidence. Kenneth Williams' appreciation of the film was obvious;

> To Studio One, to see the Trade show of *Carry On Cowboy*: it was marvellous. It's the first good British comedy in years, the first time a British Western has ever been done, and the first 'Carry On' to be a success on every level. It's got laughs, and pathos, some lovely people and ugly people. Mind you, it's an alarming thought that they'll never top this one.[18]

However, it could be argued that there is a tension throughout the film where the American genre is simply *too* American to be parodied wholly successfully by the British (English) *Carry On* team. Perhaps the targets were too large and the film becomes slightly unfocused in coupling generic conventions with the cosy world of conservative saucy humour. Whilst Rothwell, Rogers and Thomas made a valiant attempt at a caricatured British version of *the* quintessential American genre, it took an American to fully exploit the subject. Mel Brooks' *Blazing Saddles* gleefully piled cliché upon cliché with merry abandonment, and because he used his source material in such incongruous ways (the townsfolk discuss Tom Mix, and the appearance of Count Basie is taken as a given), the film deconstructs the Western with more potency than *Carry On Cowboy*. This is not to say that *Cowboy* is a failure. It plays with the conventions of the genre in both subtle and non-subtle ways. Sexuality is continually toyed with, and the team see the younger generation of the 1960s as a threat to their traditional elders. This is where *Carry On Cowboy* is at its most successful. The genre merely serves as a backdrop to the gang's usual shenanigans. It is

within the film that the movie clearly demonstrates just how important genre productions were to the team, not only from a box office viewpoint, but also in their treatment of such burgeoning themes as utopian collectiveness, sexuality and gender. On those merits alone, despite its limitations, *Carry On Cowboy* is clearly an important work in chronicling not just Britain's attitudes to the American genre, but also its outlook towards itself and its future productions.

Carry On Up the Khyber

The setting is India in 1895. Sir Sidney Ruff-Diamond is the governor of the province, and he and his wife Lady Joan lead a life of luxury. At their command are the 3rd Foot and Mouth Garrison, known as the Devils in Skirts. The local tribesmen are terrified of the soldiers wearing nothing under their kilts.

The effeminate Private Widdle stands guarding the Khyber Pass. A fierce warrior, Bunghit Din, shows his scimitar to Widdle, who faints in terror. Din lifts up the man's kilt and says: 'Now we know.' Widdle returns to the Residency and tells Captain Keene. Major Shorthouse and Sir Sidney what has happened.

Realising that the Empire could collapse because of this and that his job is in danger, Sir Sidney, Keene and Major MacNutt pay a visit to the Khasi to quell rumours that all the men wear underwear. This backfires when the two soldiers are revealed to be wearing silk, embroidered underwear. When they return to the Residency, Sir Sidney orders all the men to be lined up to have an immediate inspection, and the whole garrison is brought to attention in the compound. When MacNutt tells them to grab their kilts and raise their arms to the level of the shoulder, they all reveal they are wearing underwear. Lady Joan takes a photograph of this incident and steals away to the Khasi to exchange the photograph for his love. He tells Lady Joan that he is planning an uprising and will use the photographs to incite the local tribesmen in the area, the Burpas and the Arsey-Tarseys. The Khasi's daughter hears of his plans and rushes to tell Captain Keene and Sir Sidney. Captain Keene reports that Lady Joan is in cahoots with the Khasi:

Scene: Daytime. Int. Sir Sidney's office
Sir Sidney: Who's responsible for this? Who took that photograph? I'll have them nailed to the flagpole in the compound.

Keene: I'm afraid, sir, it was Lady Ruff-Diamond.
Sir Sidney: The Mem? I don't believe it.
Keene: It's true, sir. The Khasi has taken her and the photograph to Jacksi.
Sir Sidney: Jacksi?
Keene: Yes, sir. It's a hill town just across the border. Stronghold of Bunghit Din and his Burpas.
Sir Sidney: Well, I suppose we'd better go and rescue her.
Keene: I regret to inform you sir that Her Ladyship did not go unwillingly.
Sir Sidney: Captain Keene, Her Ladyship always does things unwillingly. After all, I should know.
Keene: Sir, you must prepare yourself for a shock. According to the princess, Her Ladyship is enamoured of the Khasi.
Sir Sidney: (Falling back into his chair, his hand wipes his sweating brow) Oh no, not that!
Keene: Try to keep a stiff upper lip, sir.
Sir Sidney: I'm trying, Captain Keene. I just can't help it. The thought of them together. Her lying in his arms, slobbering all over him. I can't help feeling sorry for the poor berk!

A plan is quickly drawn up to recover both the photograph and underpants. Keene and MacNutt blackmail the sex-mad missionary Brother Belcher into acting as their guide who takes them to the Khasi's palace. They gain access to the palace by pretending to be Arsey-Tarsey tribesmen and wearing goats'-hair beards and dressing up in tribal clothes. Rather than look for the photograph and rescue Lady Joan, they succumb to what Brother Belcher calls 'a simple little orgy', but the real tribesmen arrive and Bunghit Din captures the Englishmen and has them thrown into a dungeon.

Princess Jelhi and Lady Joan rescue the men. Escaping from the palace, they come across a battlefield littered with soldiers from the regiment. The Khasi and his men run down the mountain path towards them. Belcher, Jelhi, Keene and Lady Joan head for the Residency, leaving Widdle and MacNutt to defend the pass. However, all the rifles have been bent in half and when Widdle and MacNutt attempt to use the Maxim field gun, it only plays records, whilst the cannon has been blocked up with a bung. The two men flee.

As the upper lips of the English remain resolutely stiff, the Khasi and his minions attack the Residency. With shells exploding around them and the Residency on the verge of collapse, Sir Sidney and Captain Keene enter into the battle. Brother Belcher hides under the dining table. Out

amongst the fighting, Sir Sidney tells everyone to halt. The soldiers disengage from the enemy and form a straight line. As the Khasi's men slowly advance, Sir Sidney orders his men to raise their kilts. The Khasi, Bunghit Din and his tribesmen scream in terror and run away. As the Residency gates fall off their hinges, Sir Sidney tells them to leave the cleaning up until the morning. As they turn to go into the house, Belcher sees a Union Jack flying high above the Residency: on it is emblazoned the words: 'I'm Backing Britain.' He turns to the camera and says 'Of course, they're all mad you know!' before returning to the safety of the mansion.

Through Rothwell's barrage of *double entendres* and innuendo, the film celebrates its deconstruction of various contextual elements. *Up the Khyber* directly parodied Cy Endfield's 1964 epic *Zulu* where the representation of exoticism in both films saw the employment of foreign locations as a negotiation tool to argue about British attitudes to the nation state. By placing the very familiar casts of both into alien locations meant that there was a feeling of contextual incongruity for both. For example, the solitary outsider, Private Widdle, mans the Khyber Pass. On the gate hangs a sign stating 'Please shut the gate', which immediately opens up the notion of the Pass to ridicule through the sheer cheek of it. In contrast to this, *Zulu*'s attitudes to the horrors of violence are signified through one single shot of a compound gate swinging open, thus allowing the invading 'foreign' forces onto what is now *British* land.

With brilliantly executed battle sequences *Zulu* emphasises colonial attitudes and the 'right' to violence, but one that ultimately sees this violence as achieving nothing. The same can be said of *Up the Khyber*. When Keene, Widdle, Belcher, MacNutt, Jelhi and Lady Joan have escaped from the Khasi's palace, they come across a massacre at the Pass. As the camera pans very slowly past the corpses, it rests on the incongruous sight of the four men and two women dressed in saris. Whilst the party seem totally out of place, with even Widdle, Keene and MacNutt looking genuinely shocked, a mournful score plays over the soundtrack. In *Carry on* fashion, the only way to treat this massacre with any respect is through comedy:

Lady Ruff-Diamond: Oh, how awful. What can have happened?
Captain Keene: I don't like making guesses but I wouldn't be at all surprised if there hadn't been a spot of foul play here.
Brother Belcher: Foul play? Look at 'em. Lying around like a load of unwanted cocktail snacks!

With the realistic visuals being overlaid with comedic dialogue, this sequence fits rather awkwardly in the film. Even though attempts at historical accuracy are visualised through costumes, guns and locations, the fact that this was the first time that war and its consequences were dealt with *directly* is an important point in the canon. The destruction of war in *Up the Khyber* is constantly ridiculed, unlike in *Sergeant*, where it is celebrated. The dreadful consequences of conflict had to be made comedic so that an audience could see its futility. This is given more credence when focused on the individual and not the collective. Widdle's friend, Private Ginger Hale, lies dying from his wounds. Widdle and MacNutt try to comfort him, but the soldier dies. MacNutt looks at Widdle and shakes his head, only for Hale to sit bolt upright and then expire in a 'comedy' gasp for air. For one moment only, the *Carry On* films directly dealt seriously with a serious theme. For that one moment, there is no laughter—that is, until Rothwell then pulls the carpet out from under the audience's feet to return the world to laughter. Despite this last moment of frivolity, it is a genuinely affecting scene because it is played completely 'straight' and with utter conviction.

Throughout the entire sequence, Rothwell critiques the tiered class structure of Britain's (immediate) past. Lady Joan would not see a battlefield. Keene uses the words 'foul play', which de-horrifies their situation. For him, soldiers are merely tools in his army career, there to be used by him for the greater good of the British Empire. Belcher remains horrified, but can only deal with it in comedic terms. If Freud's point of making a joke at a referent that provokes fright/horror is true, then this is a superb example of Rothwell aiming to do just that.

With Burpas running towards them, the ladies, Belcher, Keene, Lady Ruff-Diamond and Princess Jelhi flee the lower-classed soldiers who are left to defend the Pass. In an outrageous gag, the British etiquette of 'fair play' during wartime and the expertise of the British forces of *Zulu are both mercilessly mocked and ridiculed*. All the garrison's rifle barrels are bent suggestively upwards. Widdle is given orders to prime and load the Maxim field gun. MacNutt aims it at the oncoming Burpas and cranks the machine gun. Rather than spraying bullets at the enemy, it plays an old 78 rpm record. MacNutt cranks the handle *twice* to emphasise both his and Widdle's bewilderment. Finally, their cannon blows up in their faces due to a barrel-blocking bung. The projectile flies backwards through the air and explodes near to the escaping Lady Joan and Brother Belcher. If this is compared to the vividly executed battle sequences of *Zulu*, then the

parody becomes obvious. Whereas the director of *Zulu* used its themes to convey ideas about colonialism and genocide, the team take the same subject and supplanted the horrors of war with outrageous, incongruous comedy.

This incongruity becomes even more manifest in the character of the working-class, workshy Brother Belcher, who offers direct comparison to *Zulu*'s Reverend Otto Witt (Jack Hawkins). Belcher is the Fool of Shakespeare and Dickens. Dressed in stark black and white and carrying (but never opening) his black umbrella in the boiling heat of the sun, he assumes himself to have paramount importance in his world, but represents an outsider to the Raj and its rigid class hierarchy. This is seen when he tries to talk his way out of taking the men to Khalibar and by attempting to leave the Residency as the Khasi's men begin their attack. When Witt goes to the regiment to warn of impending attacks, he is lambasted for his views, whilst Belcher scoffs at British imperialism when asked to keep a stiff upper lip:

Scene: Daytime. Int. Prison cell
Belcher: Charming. Join the army and see the next world! It's all your fault. (He points at Widdle)
Widdle: Why, what have I done?
Belcher: What have you done? You can't even take part in a simple little orgy without going raving mad. Chasing women round the room, diving into pools after them!
Widdle: I didn't ask to come on this job and I don't know why he picked me.
MacNutt: I chose you, Widdle, because in case anything was to go wrong, I couldn't think of anyone else I'd rather it go wrong to!
Keene: Now, now, now. Steady chaps. Just try and keep calm. We've been in tighter spots than this.
Belcher: Here we go. He's going to tell us to keep a stiff upper lip next.
Keene: I was about to say remember we're British.
Belcher: I beg your pardon, Captain. (Belcher makes a mock-salute)
Keene: Then I was going to say keep a stiff upper lip.
Belcher: Well, I'm not standing around here waiting for mine to stiffen!

This brings Rothwell's debunking of class directly to the fore. Belcher represents an effective questioning of the working-class attitudes towards the middle and upper classes as seen through his mocking of the British attitudes of displaying fortitude in the face of adversity. In *Up the Khyber*,

the upper classes are arrogant and out of touch with their incumbent situation. This manifests itself in the dining room sequence at the end of the film.

When Keene tells them to remember that they are British, the scene then reveals its much deeper meanings for the contextual viewer. British colonialism was fast becoming a faded memory and with the rise of the cinematic working-class hero most profoundly noticeable in the 1960s, Rothwell was directly mocking not only those who were not working class, but also the society in which they found themselves. With the independence of India from Great Britain in 1947 and the Suez Crisis still fresh in the public's memory, *Up the Khyber* demolishes notions of imperialism even further. This manifests itself in the justifiably famous end sequence, becoming *the* key moment of the entire 31-strong series. As the Khasi and his minions attack the residency, so Sir Sidney sits at the head of a dinner party. The Khasi looks on in amazement at the temerity of Ruff-Diamond hosting this party during battle, saying that he 'spits at their British phlegm, with their stiff upper lips!' Inside the Residency, and completely blasé about the cataclysmic destruction around them, the upper classes of polite society nonchalantly display their ignorance at their eroding imperial power.

During the breathtakingly edited climax, the scene cuts between three stratums of British society: the Khasi fights from outside, representing an upper-class ruler bound by the constraints of the British who simultaneously wants to be both independent of and yet live within British society; the Residency compound forms an area of negotiation between cultures and classes, whereby the Indian and British soldiers are both 'foreign' working class, whilst their rulers are strictly upper class; and the dining room becomes a bastion of upper-class stoicism. This is personified by Lady Joan, who gets hit on the head by a piece of falling ceiling and casually states: 'Oh dear. I appear to have got a little plastered.'

Arthur Marwick argues that in relation to Indian autonomy, 'the official line was one of self-congratulation that Britain once more was leading the way in granting independence to former colonial peoples'.[19] With former British colonies both striving for and achieving independence, whilst former colony members became integrated into British society, the film directly critiques this 'official line'. Arguing that the white British must stay inside the Residency (Empire) whilst the Khasi (colony) is considered as 'other' and therefore has to be 'contained' within British society's rules but outside its social sphere, *Up the Khyber* uses one direct contextual

incident to mock attitudes of those parties not wanting integration. Local British councils wanted to ban Sikh bus drivers from wearing turbans. Din shouts 'That'll teach them to ban turbans on the passes', which in the internal context of the film is meaningless, but contextually would have remained resonant. This was made even more so when Sikh busmen were finally allowed to wear turbans, following legislative measures taken by Wolverhampton Town Council.

At the film's climax, Ruff-Diamond tells his troops to face the enemy. On a given command, they grab and raise their kilts, revealing…? The sequence ends with the Khasi's followers fleeing at some terrifying sight. As the Burpas scream in terror and then flee, the Khasi shouts: 'Come back, there is nothing to be afraid of here!' When he looks back at the raised kilts, he changes him mind, saying in Kenneth Williams' own strangled vocalisms 'Ooh, I don't know though!', and he and Bunghit Din run away.

It becomes apparent that there is more than one reading here. Male sexuality is again brought into play. The male is placed into a position of vulnerability when faced with seeing his own gender *nude*. Whilst characters may cross-dress and infer about sexual difference, when confronted by the prospect of seeing what remains elusively hidden underneath the soldiers' kilts, it simply becomes too much for the 'foreign' to bear. Therefore, the Khasi has no alternative but to run away. It could be argued that from a colonial perspective, white supremacy 'rules' because it is seen as 'different' or 'other' and therefore frightening. The Khalibarians flee because of this 'difference' as they are simply too scared to face up to dealing with this matter head on.

The final moments see Ruff-Diamond and the remaining upper classes retiring to the Residency. Interestingly, Princess Jelhi is to marry Captain Keene, showing how contextually tolerant towards 'otherness' Rothwell's script is. As a Union Jack flies over the residency with the words 'I'm Backing Britain' proudly displayed, it becomes obvious that the film was not only made to celebrate 1960s Britain, which had The Beatles and the miniskirt, but also wore this celebration with pride:

> If one flag deserves to fly over the hot pot of the Sixties, no doubt that it should be the Union Jack. That England which the continentals imagine to be always corseted and controlled by Victorian principles.[20]

These 'Victorian principles' lie at the heart of Rothwell's terrific script. With Belcher re-affirming what the audience must think of the upper

classes, where "they're all mad, you know?", so this eveals the true and detailed extent to which Rothwell has taken (pre-)1960s attitudes towards class in Britain and has subverted them for comedic purposes. The upper classes of Victoriana will always remain stagnant, unaware of their eroding powers. Belcher's representation of a 1960s working-class man ends up with the final word on the subject. By calling them mad and by using 'you know' to mean 'we', the audience knows too, so *Up the Khyber* becomes a celebration of the working-class hero, and Belcher's satirical 'edge' emphasises that the *Carry On* films are more than simple comedies. They are traditional. They are subversive. They reflect the pre-occupations of the nation state. They emphasise the culturally familiar, but cipher through them important messages debunking Britain's rigid social strata. Above all else, they gave their audience the ability to laugh at themselves and the world around them.

Whilst the parodies might not have been so prevalent during the 1970s (possibly due to rising costs in production), the realist element that began the series was brought back to examine contextual Britain. Such films as *Carry On Girls* and *Carry On Matron* investigated ideas of the British seaside and female emancipation as an antidote to the earlier parodies. However, the last two of the canon, *Carry On Emmannuelle* and *Carry On Columbus*, do offer the audience a return to the parody and pastiche. The first spoofed the erotic French box office success of 1974; the second was the team's attempt at parodying both *1492: The Conquest of Paradise* (1992) and *Christopher Columbus—The Discovery* (1992). Neither of the *Carry On* films was successful either at the box office or with critics, although *Columbus* apparently made more money than its bigger-budgeted cousins.

Perhaps the *Carry On* films had had their day. However, the fact that they used genre films to open up and examine such areas as both male and female sexuality, to investigate ideas about class, to create metatexts which were pre-post-modern in their construction or to critique notions of empire and the nation state, it was obvious that the team were not only prepared to tackle these areas, but that they would be able to do them from the relative safety of a genre parody. This removal meant that they could get to the very heart of the parody *and* the very heart of themselves and the nation they so lovingly mocked.

Notes

1. Webber (2008), p. 88.
2. *Daily Express*, 13 December 1964.
3. Ian Wright, *The Guardian*, 11 December 1964.
4. Cull (2002), p. 95.
5. Ibid., p. 98.
6. Lenihan (1985), p. 10.
7. Buscombe (1988), pp. 15–16.
8. Ibid., pp. 426–27.
9. Langford (2006), p. 55.
10. Peter Rogers, quoted in Bright and Ross (2000b), p. 137.
11. Sid James, quoted in Ross (1996), p. 52.
12. David Robinson, *Financial Times*, 25 March 1966.
13. Cecil Wilson, *Daily Mail*, 25 March 1966.
14. Margaret Hirkman, *Sunday Times*, 27 March 1966.
15. Felix Barker, *Evening News*, 24 March 1966.
16. *The Times*, 24 March 1966.
17. Ian Christie, *Daily Express*, 25 March 1966.
18. Kenneth Williams, quoted in Davies (1994), p. 273.
19. Marwick (1982), p. 107.
20. Winnock (1987), p. 103, cited in Marwick (1998), p. 456.

CHAPTER 10

Conclusion: *Carry On* Concluding

In the introduction to this book, the claim was made that the *Carry On* films had placed themselves into the nation's affections by being both culturally specific and by sewing themselves into the very cultural fabric of Britain itself. They lasted an incredible run of 31 films, covered four decades of change, and remained resolutely linked to ideas of comedic tradition and heritage, whilst outrageously mocking attitudes towards class, gender and sexuality.

With the passing of time, the films have become encrusted with both the meanings and trappings of their period. They reflect either directly or indirectly certain moments that occurred at the time. The Suez Crisis, Britain's fading power on the world stage, the threat of nuclear Armageddon and fading notions of 'traditional' masculinity were alluded to in *Carry On Sergeant*. A later entry like *Carry On Loving* deconstructed notions and ideals of married life, whilst simultaneously celebrating Free Love for one and all. Therefore, even though the narratives may appear to be simple homespun farces, they reveal more to their audience than at first appears. When it comes to lines such as 'That'll teach them to ban turbans on the passes' from *Carry On Up the Khyber*, they may seem odd to the modern viewer, but they remain redolent with meaning for their contextual audience.

The films had their feet firmly planted in three areas of popular British culture: British filmic comedy, the music hall and Donald McGill's saucy seaside postcards. The first six movies in the series were gently mocking comedies that leant towards the whimsy and tradition of Ealing Studios,

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whilst also becoming part of the more realist traits of the Boulting Brothers and others. They combined sentimentality with laughter and were a genuinely engaging attempt at showing Britain as part of a post-war utopian collectiveness, which set the template for the rest of the canon. However, when Talbot Rothwell took over scripting duties for the next 20 films, his push towards the lewder, bluer and much more anarchic structures of music hall routines, patter and their stock characters became evident. His jokes were from the Max Miller scrapbook and, as the decades wore on, so the scripts became more and more ribald with each outing.

Their humour was defiantly aimed at the working classes who came to watch and celebrate these films that were, like the music hall before them, *theirs* to celebrate. This celebration of *looking at oneself* through the films reveals that the scripts began to tackle burgeoning themes: contraception and the 'pill'; the Women's Liberation movement; the collapse of British imperialism; the sanctities of marriage; 'otherness'—all were tackled in the stride of the *Carry On* series and nothing seemed impervious to ridicule.

However, as the Swinging Sixties made way for the Dour Seventies, there was a distinct tonal shift in the films. The genre parodies still took successful swipes at their targets, but the move towards a more social realist mode, with much more insistence on sex than ever before, saw the films attempt to move towards areas that were the domain of the British sex comedy. Films like *Confessions of a Window Cleaner* and *Adventures of a Taxi Driver* were comparatively large box office successes, and the *Carry On* team tried to follow these by introducing just a bit more flesh than before. This approach was not successful. On the one hand, they were not sexy or rude enough, whilst on the other hand, they alienated their original audience. Therefore, the last two entries of *Carry On England* and *Carry On Emmannuelle* do not work on any level other than crude farce, whereas the earlier films celebrate the oddities of the human body through comedic means (swanee whistles, honking horns, etc. emphasise these oddities). This is never more the case than when comparing two short scenes of Barbara Windsor in *Carry On Doctor* and *Carry On Again Doctor*. In the former, she is the super-confident Nurse May, who walks across the hospital grounds knowingly ridiculing the men who ogle at her. As such, it remains a key point in the series. Her poise and confidence reflected such other contextual icons as Julie Christie in *Billy Liar*, but it reveals just how strong her character is and how weak, feeble and ineffectual the males around her are. By *Carry On Again Doctor*, that happy-go-lucky confidence seems to have evaporated. As Goldie Locks,

she remains confident. But, as Dr Nookey's love interest, Maud Boggins, she becomes trapped in a marriage that curtails both her modelling career and her genuine sense of freewheeling fun. In keeping with the change of the decade's tastes and mores, so the caricatures had hardened.

Whilst the jokes got steadily bluer, the traditions of the seaside postcard remained in evidence throughout the films. McGill's caricatures became British stereotypes: the henpecked and boozed-up husband, the harridan wife, the young floozy, the virginal bride, the drunken vicar, the laughing policeman, doctors and nurses, the workshy man and the pregnant single woman were all easy targets. However, McGill had tapped into the foibles of the seaside with genuine aplomb. His illustrations proved so popular that their jokes ended up in the films. Even though the postcards may look different from their cinematic versions, the jokes remained intact. For example, one postcard sees itself being lifted directly into *Carry On Matron*:

> *Doctor*: I have some wonderful news for you, Mrs Smethurst.
> *Patient*: *Miss* Smethurst.
> *Doctor*: I have some bad news for you, *Miss* Smethurst.

The joke is evident, but was a joke worth telling inasmuch as it reveals the attitudes towards motherhood having remained—at least in the *Carry On* world—in direct keeping with that of McGill in the 1920s.

The films follow in a long tradition of British film comedy. Ealing's comedies were whimsical, the Boulting Brothers' produced satirical sideswipes towards Britain's social strata, whilst Rank attempted to be realistic tropes with comedic elements. The *St. Trinians* movies were anarchic extensions of all three. The realistic approach undertaken in the earlier Hudis movies certainly helped the popularity of the *Carry On* films, at least by setting them in realistic settings such as the army barracks and the hospital ward, whilst also incorporating location footage in and around the streets of London and its burroughs. For Rothwell, films like *Cabby* and *At Your Convenience* employed humour that was interlaced with some of the realistic tropes of the British 'kitchen sink' tradition. Both dealt directly with contextual issues, but whereas the 'kitchen sink' films did it with serious commitment in addressing social problems, the Carry On films did it through comedic ways. However, by trying to keep their realstic films relevant, so the characters within them became less playful than before. As the decades changed, so these caricatures hardened. This was not so direct as with the genre parodies, which lovingly re-created the sheen of the Western, the horror film,

the spy genre and the historical epic with gusto. Each one of these was bolstered by bigger sets and set pieces to remind the audience of the genre being mocked. The fact that the audience was also seeing the stalwarts of the series made the joke/s even more incongruous and the results of such films as *Spying*, *Up the Khyber*, *Cowboy* and *Screaming!* are apparent in the various chapters devoted to their meanings.

Of course, the major draw of the films remained the stars. Their faces adorned the posters and press books, they conducted television interviews, and each actor became readily identifiable with a particular 'type'. Whilst it is again doubtful that the team used the works of Jung, Klapp and de Sauzzure, almost all of the main *Carry On* characters either confirmed or broke free from their archetypes and stereotypes to create new forms. McGill's caricatures may have remained caricatures, and Rothwell certainly used them in his narratives, but it is interesting to see that the characters remained resolutely unchanged because of the actors playing these roles, in which there was little room for manoeuvre. An interesting point here is that Sid James was always the Rogue, but by the end of the series, it had become so cynical that he began to become a caricature of a caricature and his last role as Big Dick Turpin leaves nothing but a feeling of distaste for the character. Charles Hawtrey's hybridity of Jung's 'Fool' and 'Child' archetypes was a comic device. Kenneth Williams' nostril-flaring authority figures were ridiculed, but he becomes a Trickster who overturns the norms of society to present something new for the audience. Williams was gay, but his characters were not, and whilst his roles included bachelors and single fathers, he was also chased and bedded by women. The filmmakers deliberately toyed with the audience's awareness of Williams' persona whilst simultaneously placing his characters often near the centre of the narrative, where he could cause the most destruction. Kenneth Connor and Jim Dale represented the Everyman, although Connor's trajectory through the series sees him change from the likeable and dependable chap next door to the incompetent little man of authority. For Dale, his boyish good looks, charm and naïve optimism meant that he remained the goofy, solid, likeable young man. Perhaps if Dale had carried on in the series, his character trajectory would have seen him become a new Sid James. As it was, despite *Carry On Again Doctor*'s acrid taste, Dale remains forever young in the *Carry On* canon, and even when he made top billing in *Columbus*, this outlook never changed.

The females also reflected McGill's postcard creations and the attitudes of the era. The characters in the 1950s were young and professional (with

no family life) or slightly older and 'tied down' to married life. Any roll towards becoming independent were usually found in the genre parodies of the 1960s, thus removing them from a contextual present and de-emphasising the filmmakers' attempts at mocking/challenging the status quo. By the 1970s, these caricatures had coarsened and become less sympathetic, resulting in them being more akin to McGill's harridans. What does remain a constant in the films is one overriding message: women want to be a part of the family unit and, as such, will chase men to achieve to that goal. Joan Sims' portrayals change the most. Her characters move from one area to another with ease: she is a professional (*Nurse*), independent (*Cowboy*), harridan (*Cleo*), and finally a metaphorical Mother figure (*Emmannuelle*), thus ensuring that her character trajectory allowed her to alter with both her age and the passing of time, as if they were logically showing how individuals change over the years.

Barbara Windsor was always the bubbly and buxom blonde who was lusted after by older men. This McGill creation became so embroidered into the fabric of the films that whenever she didn't appear, her presence was genuinely missed. Despite the cartoonish qualities of Nurse May, with her wiggle and walk destroying any man in her path, Windsor's role as Agent Honeybutt both reinforced and overturned this stereotype. She exhibited all the traits of the 'dizzy blonde', but is also the film's female equivalent of James Bond. Therefore, at the beginning of her *Carry On* career, Windsor was afforded the opportunity to break free from the stereotype, but was then 'contained' within it as the years went on.

Hattie Jacques will forever be remembered as the Matron or Mother archetype. She served numerous functions in the narratives: she kept the domestic sphere, was almost always sexually inexperienced as the matronly figure and was McGill's Fat Lady. She becomes the sexual aggressor to Williams' snide authority figure, offering a female counterpoint to his sexual clumsiness. She was often given as much freedom as the younger women to pursue Williams, and she was also seen as strong and independent. Her most important role was as Peggy in *Cabby*, where she proves herself to be much more competent than her husband, Sid. That she is remembered only for the Matron roles is a shame, for her performances *do* reflect McGill's ethos, whilst simultaneously both attempting to break free from them *and* celebrating their caricatured representations.

This begs the following question: should the films be celebrated? They are very much of their time. The whole series was based around two main areas of popular British culture, but had its roots within the older institu-

tions of comedy and archetypes. With the *Carry On* movies being a part of the British tradition of Low Art, perhaps they are to be considered as *yesterday* and not today. Even during their construction, they often seemed out of tune with events surrounding them. When asked if the *Carry On* films 'matter', they do. They are important because they are still a recognised part of British culture and society. When one hears a 'Yuk! Yuk!' laugh, Sid James immediately springs to mind. When someone says something rude, we think of Kenneth Williams screaming 'Ooh! Matron!', and when it comes to matters of showing sex in the cinema or on television, the iconic image of Barbara Windsor's bra shooting across the widescreen canvas remains as potent as ever. Their contribution to British cinema cannot be underestimated. The films had an unbroken run of 20 years that witnessed huge changes in society. The austerity of the 1950s became the joyousness of the 1960s. With the 1970s came IRA bombing, the three-day week and a collapsing British film industry that seemed to reflect a sense that everything was stagnating. The return of the series in the 1990s was trumpeted, but even though the fanfare was assured, the resulting film most certainly was not. Everything has its time, and the *Carry On* films had seen their time ended.

Across the whole range of films, they tackled such themes as the Women's Liberation movement, the power of the unions, masculinity under threat, female sexuality in both the home and the workplace and the class structure of the UK, and, above all else, they offered the viewer a sense of anarchic fun that removed them from the toil of their work. They examined the idea of cinema as a construction whereby a genre or a character could be taken and subverted for comedy's sake. They also remained steadfastly conservative in their approach to certain subjects: homosexuality was only ever alluded to, despite two gay men appearing in virtually most of them; the idea of the utopian collective that vanquished authority and let the working classes have freedom was often the main outcome for the characters; and the failings of Britain's class system were ruthlessly examined and deconstructed.

Yet their original run ended in 1978 and, apart from *Columbus* in 1992, it is not hard to see why. Times were changing and the mood of Britain under the last years of James Callaghan's Labour government was one of ugliness. There were riots, high inflation and industrial action. American blockbusters filled the theatres and there was little room for the *Carry On* films to be shown. The cast were ageing and there were no suitable replacements for them. The *Carry On* saga had ended. Where they had

once celebrated British life during the 1950s and 1960s, by the 1970s, there was a definite decline in the idea of 'identity' and 'community' in Britain. The *Carry On* films had these two ideas at their very centre: Britain is British and the community is the utopian collective. When these began to fragment and break up in the *real* world, the *Carry On* movies, which celebrated these philosophies, looked increasingly tired and outdated. Where they were seen as bastions of bad taste but cultural purveyors of Low Art tradition, they now just seemed exhausted.

Or were they? On 5 November 2015, Nigel Gordon-Stewart, the managing director of the *Carry On* films trust, announced that a new movie was to be written, filmed and in the can ready for distribution in 2017. This was nothing new for the *Carry On* aficionado. On 16 July 2003, a newspaper headline entitled 'Danni Gets Her Babs Out' indicated that a new production, *Carry On London*, was about to start filming. Former *EastEnders* actress Daniella Westbrook dressed up as Nurse Sandra May to promote the film, and other actors apparently lined up included Shane Ritchie, Westbrook and ex-Wimbledon footballer Vinnie Jones. On 16 May 2006, another headline appeared stating '*Carry On* Victoria', which was another attempt to launch *Carry On London*. The Swedish supermodel and actress Victoria Silvstedt had apparently been lined up to play the love interest. Peter Rogers told the author of this book that: 'We are very close to shooting soon.' Then, in 2009, the official *Carry On* website announced that a script was under way entitled *Carry On to a Degree*. Set in and around the world of academia, it concentrated on the amorous exploits of a student writing his PhD about the *Carry On* films. To date, neither *Carry On London* nor *Carry On to a Degree* has materialised. Will this new announcement go the same way?

For better or worse, the *Carry On* series relied on the fact that they were seen as both part of many traditions whilst simultaneously just wanting to produce *fun*. The jokes were rude, but remain relatively harmless. The characters were ridiculous caricatures. The narratives were an excuse to keep the wolves of the real world at bay for an hour and a half, enabling the populace to go and play at being incompetent failures who always remain true to the utopian collective. The *Carry On* films have something intrinsically *British* about them that is so easily definable yet also indefinable. The narratives, artists and even the excruciating and well-telegraphed jokes form a reciprocal relationship between the films and their audience and, as such, can be clearly delineated as part of a long British tradition of both high camp and low comedy. There is a social concept to the films:

they were popular because they reflected the ideals of their working-class target audience. Whilst Britain produced Shakespeare, Wilde and Shaw, it also produced Hudis and Rothwell. After all, whilst Shakespeare wrote *Julius Caesar*, Rothwell wrote *Carry On Cleo*. The filmmakers took stock characters into stock narratives and gave them stock jokes to poke fun at everyday life. Any attempt to alter the expected storylines and characters would not work. The critics who missed those older movies they so disliked on first release met *Carry On Columbus* with disdain. The same was said from most of the audience. Times had changed. The politically correct brigade and the alternative comedian artists who ridiculed the *Carry On* films and individual artists like Benny Hill had ensured that the *Carry On* films had had their time, despite those new comedians wanting to become part of *Carry On* history by appearing in *Columbus.*

Without a shadow of a doubt, the *Carry On* films remains part and parcel of British culture. Whilst the films were often at odds with the very audience that had embraced them with such loving warmth, they are still loved to this day. They vacillated between attempts at reflecting changing attitudes whilst trying to keep their instinctive desires to remain virtually unchanged across the whole 31-strong series. The films engaged with their audience for 20 years, and one can only wait with bated breath at the apparent return of the series in 2017. What a modern audience will make of the saucy shenanigans of a bygone era remain tantalisingly unanswered as this book was being written. But what is important to remember is this: the films remain forever an important part of British history *and* British cinema history. That is why they should be celebrated. Ding dong, *Carry On*!

Filmography

1492: The Conquest of Paradise (USA 1992: Ridely Scott)
Above Us the Waves (UK 1955: Ralph Thomas)
Adventures of a Taxi Driver (UK 1975: Stanley Long)
Alfie (UK 1966: Lewis Gilbert)
Anne of a Thousand Days (UK 1969: Charles Jarrot)
The Battle of Britain (UK 1969: Guy Hamilton)
The Bed Sitting Room (UK 1969: Richard Lester)
The Belles of St. Trinian's (UK 1954: Frank Launder)
Billy Liar (UK 1963: John Schlesinger)
The Black Sheep of Whitehall (UK 1942: Will Hay & Basil Dearden)
Black Sunday (Italy 1960: Mario Bava)
Blazing Saddles (USA 1974: Mel Brooks)
The Blue Lamp (UK 1950: Basil Dearden)
Blue Murder at St. Trinian's (UK 1957: Frank Launder)
Blow-Up (UK 1966: Michelangelo Antonioni)
The Bridge on the River Kwai (UK 1957: David Lean)
Broken Arrow (USA 1950: Delmer Davies)
Carry On Abroad (UK 1972: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Again Doctor (UK 1969: Gerald Thomas)
Carry on At Your Convenience (UK 1971: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Behind (UK 1975: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Cabby (UK 1963: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Camping (UK 1969: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Cleo (UK 1964: Gerald Thomas)

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Carry On Columbus (UK 1992: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Constable (UK 1960: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Cowboy (UK 1965: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Cruising (UK 1962: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Dick (UK 1974: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Doctor (UK 1967: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Don't Lose Your Head (UK 1967: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Emmannuelle (UK 1978: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On England (UK 1976: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Follow That Camel (UK 1967: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Girls (UK 1973: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Henry (UK 1971: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Jack (UK 1963: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Loving (UK 1970: Gerald Thomas)
Carry on Matron (UK 1972: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Nurse (UK 1959: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Regardless (UK 1961: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Screaming! (UK 1966: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Sergeant (UK 1958: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Spying (UK 1964: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Teacher (UK 1959: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Up the Jungle (UK 1970: Gerald Thomas)
Carry On Up the Khyber (UK 1968: Gerald Thomas)
Casablanca (USA 1942: Michael Curtiz)
Champagne Charlie (UK 1944: Alberto Cavalcanti)
Cheers Boys, Cheer (UK1939: Walter Forde)
Christopher Columbus – The Discovery (USA 1992: John Glen)
Circus Friends (1956: Gerald Thomas)
Circus of Horrors (UK 1959: Sidney Hayers)
Cleopatra (USA 1963: Joseph L. Mankiewicz)
The Colditz Story (UK, 1954: Guy Hamilton)
Come Play With Me (UK 1977: Harrison Marks)
Commuter Husbands (UK 1973: Derek Ford)
Confessions from a Holiday Camp (UK 1977: Norman Cohen)
Confessions of a Driving Instructor (UK 1976: Norman Cohen)
Confessions of a Pop Performer (UK 1975: Norman Cohen)
Confessions of a Window Cleaner (UK 1974: Val Guest)
Cool it Carol! (UK 1970: Pete Walker)
The Cruel Sea (UK, 1952: Charles Frend)

The Curse of Frankenstein (UK 1957: Terence Fisher)
Dad's Army (UK 2016: Oliver Parker)
The Dam Busters (UK 1955: Michael Anderson)
Darling (UK 1965: John Schlesinger)
Das Kabinett des Doktor Caligari (Germany 1920: Robert Wiene)
Day of the Jackal (UK/Fr. 1973: Fred Zinnemman)
The Day the Earth Caught Fire (UK 1961: Val Guest)
Dead of Night (UK 1945: Alberto Cavalcanti, Charles Crichton, Basil Dearden and Robert Hamer)
Death on the Nile (UK 1978: John Guillerman)
The Devils (UK 1971: Ken Russell)
The Dirty Dozen (USA, 1967: Robert Aldrich)
Doctor at Large (UK 1957: Ralph Thomas)
Doctor at Sea (UK 1955: Ralph Thomas)
Doctor in Distress (UK 1963: Ralph Thomas)
Doctor in the House (UK 1954: Ralph Thomas)
Doctor in Trouble (UK 1970: Ralph Thomas)
Doctor Zhivago (UK 1965: David Lean)
Don't Look Now (UK 1973: Nicolas Roeg)
Doctor Terror's House of Horrors (UK 1965: Freddie Francis)
Dr No (UK 1962: Terence Young)
Dracula (UK 1958: Terence Fisher)
Dracula A.D. 1972 (UK 1972: Alan Gibson)
The Early Bird (UK 1965: Robert Asher)
El Cid (USA/Italy 1961: Anthony Mann)
Emmanuelle (France 1974: Just Jaekin)
The Entertainer (UK 1960: Tony Richardson)
Eskimo Nell (UK 1974: Martin Campbell)
The Exorcist (USA 1973: William Friedkin)
The Fall of the House of Usher (USA 1960: Roger Corman)
Fahrenheit 451 (UK 1966: Francois Truffaut)
Far From the Madding Crowd (UK 1967: John Schlesinger)
Fires Were Started (UK 1943: Humphrey Jennings)
A Fistful of Dollars (USA/Spain 1964: Sergio Leone)
Fort Apache (USA 1948: John Ford)
The Four Just Men (UK 1939: Walter Forde)
Frankenstein Created Woman (UK 1967: Terence Fisher)
Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed (UK 1969: Terence Fisher)
From Russia With Love (UK 1963: Terence Young)

Full Metal Jacket (UK/USA 1987: Stanley Kubrick)
The Full Monty (UK 1997: Peter Cattaneo)
Genevieve (UK 1953: Henry Cornelius)
Golden Rendezvous (UK 1977: Freddie Francis & Ashley Lazarus)
Goldfinger (UK 1964: Guy Hamilton)
The Good Companions (UK 1933: Victor Saville)
The Goose Steps Out (UK 1942: Basil Dearden and Will Hay)
The Great St. Trinian's Train Robbery UK 1966: Sidney Gilliat and Frank Launder)
The Great Train Robbery (USA 1903: Edwin S. Porter)
Hamlet (UK 1948: Laurence Olivier)
The Happiest Days of Your Life (UK 1950: Frank Launder)
The Haunting (UK 1963: Robert Wise)
Hell Drivers (UK 1957: Cy Enfield)
Hell is a City (UK 1960: Val Guest)
High Noon (USA 1952: Fred Zimmerman)
Horrors of the Black Museum (UK 1959: Arthur Crabtree)
Hot Water (UK 1927: Dir. n/k)
The House of Whipcord (UK 1974: Pete Walker)
How the West Was Won (USA 1962: John Ford, Henry Hathaway)
Hue and Cry (UK 1947: Charles Crichton)
I Only Arsked (UK 1958: Montgomery Tully)
I Thank You (UK 1941: Marcel Varnel)
Ice Cold in Alex (UK 1958: J. Lee Thomson)
I'm All Right, Jack (UK 1959: John Boulting)
The Inbetweeners Movie (UK 2011: Ben Palmer)
The Innocents (UK 1960: Jack Clayton)
The Ipcress File (UK 1965: Sidney J. Furie)
The Italian Job (UK 1969: Peter Collinson)
Johnny Guitar (USA 1954: Nicholas Ray)
Kaleidescope (UK 1966: Jack Smight)
Kelly's Heroes (USA 1970: Brian G. Hutton)
The Killing of Sister George (UK 1968: Robert Aldrich)
Kind Hearts and Coronets (UK 1949: Robert Hamer)
A Kind of Loving (UK 1962: John Schlesinger)
The Knack … and How to Get It (UK 1965: Richard Lester)
The L-Shaped Room (UK 1962: Bryan Forbes)
The Lady Vanishes (UK 1938: Alfred Hitchcock)
The Ladykillers (UK 1955: Alexander MacKendrick)

Last Tango in Paris (Fr/It: 1972: Bernardo Bertolucci)
The Lavender Hill Mob (UK 1951: Charles Crichton)
Lawrence of Arabia (UK 1962: David Lean)
The Leather Boys (UK 1964: Sidney J. Furie)
The League of Gentlemen (UK 1960: Basil Dearden)
Let George Do It! (UK 1940: Marcel Varnel)
L'Homme de Rio (France 1964: Phillipe de Broca)
The Living Daylights (UK 1987: John Glen)
London in the Raw (UK 1964: Arnold Louis Miller and Norman Cohen)
The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner (UK 1962: Tony Richardson)
Lonely Are the Brave (UK 1962: David Miller)
The Long Hair of Death (Italy 1964: Antonio Margheriti)
Look Back in Anger (UK 1959: Tony Richardson)
Lucky Jim (UK, 1957: Boulting Brothers)
The Magnificent Seven (USA 1960: John Sturges)
A Man for All Seasons (UK 1966: Fred Zinnemann)
The Man in the White Suit (UK 1951: Alexandra MacKendrick)
The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance (USA 1962: John Ford)
Mary, Queen of Scots (UK 1971: Charles Jarrott)
The Masque of the Red Death (USA 1964: Roger Corman)
A Matter of Life and Death (UK 1946: Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger)
Millions Like Us (UK 1943: Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat)
Monte Carlo or Bust (UK/It. 1969: Ken Annakin)
Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment (UK 1966: Karel Reisz)
The Mummy, (UK 1959: Terence Fisher)
Murder on the Orient Express (UK 1974: Sidney Lumet)
Mutiny on the Bounty (USA 1962: Lewis Milestone)
My Darling Clementine (USA 1946: John Ford)
Mystery of the Wax Museum (USA 1933: Michael Curtiz)
Naked as Nature Intended (UK 1961: Harrison Marks)
The Naked Truth (UK 1957: Mario Zampi)
Nearest and Dearest (UK 1972: John Robins)
Night of the Living Dead (USA 1968: George A. Romero)
Night Train to Munich (UK 1940: Carol Reed)
Northwest Frontier (UK 1958: J. Lee Thompson)
Nosferatu (Ger. 1922: F.W. Murnau)
Nudist Memories (UK 1961: Harrison Marks)
O Kay for Sound (UK 1937: Marcel Varnel)

The October Man (UK 1947: Roy Ward Baker)
The Odessa File (UK/West Ger. 1974: Ronald Neame)
Oh, Mr Porter! (UK 1936: Marvel Varnel)
Oh! What a Lovely War (UK 1969: Richard Attenborough)
On the Buses (UK 1971: Harry Booth)
One Good Turn (UK 1955: John Paddy Carstairs)
Orders to Kill (UK 1958: Anthony Asquith)
Our Man Flint (USA 1966: Daniel Mann)
The Paleface (USA 1948: Norman Z. McLeod)
Passport to Pimlico (UK 1949: Henry Cornelius)
Peeping Tom (UK 1960: Michael Powell)
Performance (UK, 1970: Donald Cammell and Nicolas Roeg)
Petulia (UK/USA 1968: Richard Lester)
Pimple and the Snake (UK 1912: W.P. Kellino)
Pimple's Battle at Waterloo (UK 1913: Fred Evans & Joe Evans)
Pimple's Charge of the Light Brigade (UK 1914: Fred Evans & Joe Evans)
Pink String and Sealing Wax (UK 1945: Robert Hamer)
The Pit and the Pendulum (USA 1961: Roger Corman)
Plague of the Zombies (UK 1966: John Gilling)
Private Benjamin (USA 1980: Howard Zieff)
Private's Progress (UK 1956: John Boulting)
The Proud Valley (UK 1939: Penrose Tennyson)
Psycho (USA 1960: Alfred Hitchcock)
The Pure Hell of St. Trinian's (UK 1960: Frank Launder)
Reach for the Sky (UK 1956: Lewis Gilbert)
Red River (USA 1948: Howard Hawks)
Ride the High Country (USA 1962: Sam Peckinpah)
Riff Raff (UK 1991: Ken Loach)
Rio Bravo (USA 1958: Howard Hawks)
Rio Grande (USA 1951: John Ford)
Room at the Top (UK 1958: Jack Clayton)
Rosemary's Baby (USA 1968: Roman Polanski)
Royal Hunt of the Sun (UK 1969: Peter Hall)
Ryan's Daughter (UK 1971: David Lean)
Sanders of the River (UK 1934: Zoltan Korda)
The Satanic Rites of Dracula (UK 1973: Alan Gibson)
Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (UK 1960: Karel Reisz)
Séance on a Wet Afternoon (UK 1964: Bryan Forbes)
The Searchers (USA 1956: John Ford)

The Servant (UK 1963: Joseph Losey)
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon (USA 1950: John Ford)
The Sheriff of Fractured Jaw (USA 1958: Raoul Walsh)
Sing As We Go (UK 1934: Basil Dean)
The Small Back Room (UK 1949: Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger)
Smashing Time (UK 1967: Desmond Davis)
The Sorcerers (UK 1967: Michael Reeves)
The Square Peg (UK 1959: John Paddy Carstairs)
St. Trinian's (UK 2007: Oliver Parker and Barnaby Thompson)
Stagecoach (USA 1939: John Ford)
Star Wars (USA 1977: George Lucas)
Straight On 'Til Morning (UK 1972: Peter Collinson)
Suburban Housewives (UK 1972: Derek Ford)
Superman (USA 1978: Richard Donner)
Take off Your Clothes and Live! (UK 1962: Arnold Louis Miller)
Tarzan and the Amazons (USA 1945: Kurt Neumann)
Taste the Blood of Dracula (UK 1969: Peter Sasdy)
A Taste of Honey (UK 1961: Tony Richardson)
Terror by Night (UK 1946: Roy William Neill)
That's Carry On! (UK 1977: Gerald Thomas)
That's Entertainment (USA 1974: Jack Haley Jnr.)
That's Entertainment Part II (USA 1976: Gene Kelly)
They Shoot Horses, Don't They (USA 1969: Sydney Pollack)
The Third Man (UK 1949: Carol Reed)
The Thirty Nine Steps (UK 1935: Alfred Hitchcock)
This is England (UK 1996: Shane Meadows)
This Sporting Life (UK 1963: Lindsay Anderson)
Those Were the Days (UK 1934: Thomas Bentley)
Three Men in a Boat (UK 1956: Ken Annakin)
The Titfield Thunderbolt (UK 1953: Charles Crichton)
Time Lock (UK 1957: Gerald Thomas)
Tom Jones (UK 1963: Tony Richardson)
Topsey Turvey (UK 1926: Dir. n/k)
Torture Garden (UK 1967: Freddie Francis)
The Trap (UK 1966: Sidney Hayers)
Trog (UK 1970: Freddie Francis)
Trouble in Store (UK 1954: John Paddy Carstairs)
Vertigo (USA 1956: Alfred Hitchcock)
Victim (UK 1961: Basil Dearden)

The Way Ahead (UK 1944: Carol Reed)
Went the Day Well? (UK, 1942: Alberto Cavalcanti)
What's Good for the Goose (UK 1969: Menahem Golan)
What's Up, Nurse! (UK 1977: Derek Ford)
Whisky Galore! (UK 1949: Alexander MacKendrick)
The Wicked Lady (UK 1945: Leslie Arliss)
The Wife Swappers (UK 1970: Stanley Long)
The Wildcats of St. Trinian's (UK 1980: Frank Launder)
Winchester '73 (USA 1950: Anthony Mann)
Winky as a Suffragette (UK 1914: Cecil Birch)
Winky – Bigamist (UK 1914: Cecil Birch)
Winky Causes a Small Pox Panic (UK 1914: Cecil Birch)
Winky Goes to the Front (UK 1914: dir. n/k)
Witchfinder General (UK 1968: Michael Reeves)
Women in Love (UK 1969: Ken Russell)
Yesterday's Enemy (UK 1959: Val Guest)
You Only Live Twice (UK 1967: Lewis Gilbert)
Young Winston (UK 1972: Richard Attenborough)
Zulu (UK 1964: Cy Enfield)

TV Series

Abigail's Party (UK 1977)
The Addams Family (USA 1965–66)
Are You Being Served? (UK 1972–85)
The Army Game (UK 1957–61)
The Avengers (UK 1961–69)
Bless This House (UK 1971–1976)
Bonanza (USA 1959–73)
Bootsie and Snudge (UK 1960–63)
The Brittas Empire (UK1991-97)
Cathy Come Home (UK 1966)
Champion the Wonder Horse (USA 1955–56)
Dallas (USA 1978–91)
Dixon of Dock Green (UK 1955–1976)
EastEnders (UK 1985–)
Hi-de-Hi! (UK1980-88)
High Chapparal, The (USA 1967–71)
It Ain't 'Alf Hot Mum (UK1974-81)

The Man from U.N.C.L.E. (USA 1964–68)
Mission: Impossible (USA 1966–73)
The Munsters (USA 1965–66)
Neighbours (Aus 1985-)
The Phil Silvers Show (USA 1955–59)
The Quatermass Experiment (UK 1953)
Rawhide (USA 1959–66)
Red Dwarf (UK 1988-)
Steptoe and Son (UK 1962–74)
Z Cars (UK 1962–78)

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