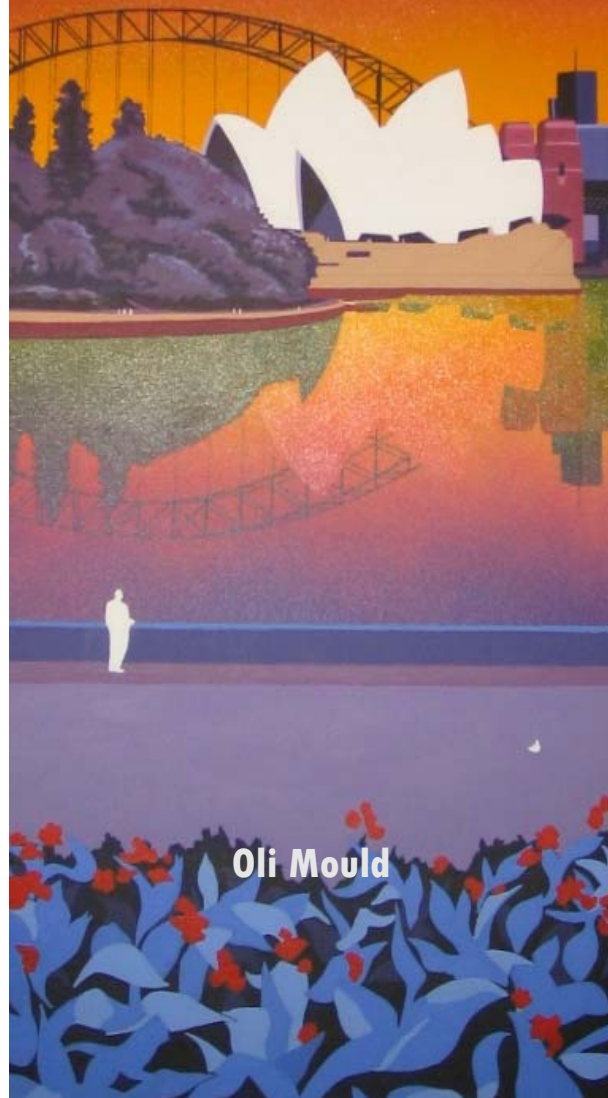


**SYDNEY:**  
**Brought to you by world city**  
**& cultural industry actor—**  
**networks**



**Oli Mould**



**University of**  
**Leicester**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY**

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## **Abstract**

There have been recent contributions to the world city literature and the new economic geography literature that have focused on city connectivity and practice-based research, through concepts such as city actor-networks, relational geographies and project-led enquiries. As this literature is developing, this thesis aims to analyse and contribute to it by providing an empirical focus in two main themes that have so far been marginalised in these literatures – the city of Sydney, and the cultural industries. An alternative conceptualisation of world cities, namely 'new urbanism', which employs Actor-Network Theory, will be utilised in this thesis to ask the question, what are the actants of Sydney's cultural industries (specifically the film and TV production industry), and how are they enrolled to create the spacing and timing of Sydney's actor-networks? By answering this question, this thesis will contribute to the knowledge in three ways: theoretically, by adding weight to the alternative concepts of new urbanism and relational economic geographies; empirically, by studying two themes that have been hitherto underdeveloped in the existing literature; and methodologically, through new developing empirical agendas that cover the quantification of Sydney's world city network and ANT-inspired ethnographic, 'project-based' enquiry.

**Key Words:** World cities, Sydney, cultural industries, film and television production industry, relational economic geographies, Actor-Network theory.

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## **Published Articles**

A part of this thesis has been published in the following journal:

Mould, O (2007) 'Mission Impossible? Reconsidering the research into Sydney's film industry'. Studies in Australasian Cinema 1(1):47-60.

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## List of Abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ADR	Analogue Digital Recording
AFC	Australian Film Commission
AFTRS	Australian Film, Television and Radio School
ANT	Actor-Network Theory
ASDA	Australian Screen Directors Association
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CRC	Cinema Release Calendar
CRT	Creative Review Tool
DCMS	Department for Culture Media and Sport
DoP	Director of Photography
GaWC	Globalisation and World Cities Group
ITV	Independent Television Network
LWT	London Weekend Television
MNC	Multinational Company
NSW	New South Wales
NSW FTO	New South Wales Film and Television Office
SBS	Special Broadcasting Corporation
SPAA	Screen Producers Association of Australia
TNC	Transnational Company



“Cities are increasingly at the centre of global flows of people, capital, culture and information”.

(Tate Modern ‘Global Cities’ Exhibition Promotional Material, 2007: 3)

“Student: I can’t imagine one single topic to which ANT would apply!

Professor: Beautiful, you are so right, that’s exactly what I think.

Student: That was not meant to be a compliment...”

(Latour, 2005: 156)

At the Tate Modern in London during their recent ‘Global Cities’ exhibition, there were a number of inspiring works of photography and abstract art that attempted to visualise the sheer overwhelming immensity of the global city. With exhibitions detailing the size, speed, form, density and diversity of a handful of global cities, I could not fail to feel that cities are becoming an increasingly crucial area of intellectual, governmental and societal importance, as more and more people flock to the cities and metropolises of the world. Some of the exhibitions were more successful than others, but it was evident that the city, with all its complexities, nuances, multiplicities, involutions, cannot be easily ‘captured’, artistically at least. Whilst the Tate Modern proclaims in its promotional material (in first the quote above) something which has been obvious to urban geographers (as well as sociologists, anthropologists, economists, cultural historians cartographers, planners and many other disciplines which have studied the urban) for decades now, it remains just that

– promotional, and therefore superficial, unilateral, linear, comparative, mundane. Much of the more pressing issues for theorising about the city are not alluded to – here I refer to world city networks – which have occupied the interests of urban geographers in more recent debates in the global and world city literature.

This thesis is concerned with the role of Sydney in the network of world cities with regards to cultural industries, specifically, the film and television production industry. It will contribute to the growing collection of data sets on world cities by analysing and describing the connections and the networks of cultural industries, paying particular attention to the enrolment of (human and nonhuman) actants<sup>1</sup>. More than that, it will contribute to the emerging ‘new urbanism’<sup>2</sup> (Amin & Thrift, 2002, 2007) ethos shaping some of the world city literature, thereby adding to this new theoretical discourse for world city research. Actor-Network Theory (ANT) will also be a major contributing factor in this thesis, with the theories and ideologies of ANT driving the empirical agenda. As the second quote which opens this thesis displays, ANT can be a counter-intuitive (Law and Hetherington, 2000) and at some times, confusing, but necessary in order to obtain the relevant information. In other words, by the very definition of ANT (if indeed it has one – the discussion of which is detailed in later chapters), socio-technical actor-networks cannot be ‘captured’ by one particular study (or thesis) as heterogeneous relations are endless (Noe & Alrøe, 2006). This thesis will be a narrative of my encounter with the actor-networks of Sydney’s cultural industries and thereby act as a ‘frame’ that *transforms*, not *informs* (Latour, 2005).

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<sup>1</sup> Understanding the concepts of ‘enrolment’ and ‘actants’ (as well as other terms associated with a poststructural stance on world cities) is crucial to the theoretical and empirical direction of this thesis and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>2</sup> Not to be confused with an urban design term of the same name. Throughout this thesis, the term new urbanism will be used to refer to the geographical concept that was coined by Amin and Thrift (2002), and not ‘New Urbanism’ which is an architectural and urban planning movement originating in the US. This is discussed more in section 3.1.

In the following section, the aims, objectives and research question of the thesis will be outlined, with the other section detailing what is to come in the rest of this thesis by providing brief synopses of each chapter.

## 1.1 Direction

### 1.1.1 Aims

This thesis has three aims;

**A1** (Theoretical): To show how 'new urbanism' thought in world city literature has become an alternative view on the processes involved in the formation and power-relations of world cities.

**A2** (Empirical): To contribute to this growing literature by studying two themes that have hitherto been under-developed in the literature, namely the city of Sydney and the cultural industries.

**A3** (Methodological): To employ cutting-edge research methods (inspired by ANT) that align with new urbanism (and relational economic geography) in order to produce the relevant datasets needed to contribute to these literatures.

### 1.1.2 Objectives and Research Question

From the aims above it is therefore possible to delineate four generic objectives:

**O1:** Highlight the lack of attention afforded to Sydney and the cultural industries within current geography literature and outline their importance.

**O2:** Quantify Sydney's inter-city connections in the cultural industries.

**O3:** Use ANT-inspired methods to produce a relational dataset of the actions and performances of the humans and nonhumans of Sydney's world city actor networks.

**O4:** Relate the empirical findings of this thesis back to the new urbanism and new economic geography literature.

Therefore, from the aims and objectives that have been outlined, this thesis asks, **what are the actants of Sydney's cultural industries (specifically the film and TV production industry), and how are they enrolled to create the spacing and timing of Sydney's actor-networks?**

## 1.2 Context

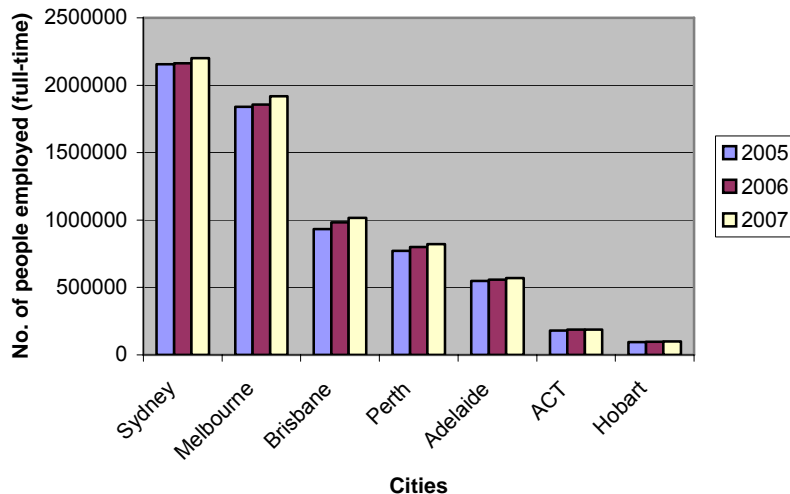
Having outlined the aims and objectives on this thesis, the next step is to situate the research undertaken, highlighting the reasoning for choosing Sydney and its cultural industries. This section will therefore highlight the context for the empirical study in this thesis, and while the academic literature of Sydney and the cultural industries is discussed in detail in section 2.3, this section will position the study more generally.

Sydney is a prominent city on the Pacific Rim, a gateway to the Southeast Asia region and a popular tourist destination for many people from different countries of the globe. Its colonial past intensifies the links between itself and the UK, and while it is geographically a relatively remote city, it is culturally and economically linked to UK cities, and through language, North American cities. Its primacy in Australia is evident demographically (Table 1.1), in terms of employment figures (Figure 1.1) and location of firms, with Sydney housing 54 firm headquarters and Melbourne housing 33 (O'Connor, 2001).

**Table 1.1: Rank of Australian Cities by Population**

City	Population
Sydney	3,502,301
Melbourne	3,160,171
Brisbane	1,508,161
Perth	1,176,542
Adelaide	1,002,127
Gold Coast	421,557
Canberra	339,727
Newcastle	279,975
Gosford	255,429
Wollongong	228,846
Sunshine Coast	169,931

**Source: ABS (2007)**



**Figure 1.1: Employment figures 2005 - 2007 for Australian Capital Cities**

(Source: [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au), accessed Jan 2008).

Regionally, Sydney is a gateway city into the Australasian and (increasingly) the Southeast Asia world regions, and along with Hong Kong and Singapore, form a triad of cities in which growing multinational and transnational companies look to locate in order to set up regional headquarter offices (Stein, 2003).

The City of Sydney (the local government for the CBD of Sydney) in the 'Living City' ten-year plan (which aimed to upgrade Sydney's shopping districts, cultural quarters and cultural industries, and started in 1995) has had an active cultural policy in part relating to building on the success of the capture of the 2000 Olympic Games (City of Sydney Corporation, 2000). During the 1990s, the main-stay priority of the Australian federal government was to gain effective management and production of cultural and leisure orientated industries, and with the announcement of the 2000 Olympiad in Sydney, this ossified Sydney's cultural ambitions (Short & Kim, 1999). This was in part due to the relatively high level of cultural industry activity in the city and the goal to build on the success of the cultural icons including the Sydney Opera House, Darling Harbour redevelopment, the Powerhouse Museum and the recent



construction of the Fox Studios complex May 1998. The importance of the cultural industries globally has been widely recognised (Cunningham, 2001; Florida, 2002; Pratt, 2004), with the UK government (via its Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)) being among the first to recognise the potential of the cultural industries by outlining two mapping documents (1998, 2001) in which 13 sub-sectors were outlined. Many other countries adopted these sub-sectors across the globe, including Australia, and while many of the world's largest cultural industry firms (in terms of financial capital) reside in New York, Los Angeles or London (Scott, 2005), Sydney continues to show signs of contributing to this global trend by seeing an increase in its cultural industry activity (Searle, 1998; Connell, 2000). The importance of the film and television industry to Sydney is shown in Table 1.2 below, which lists industries' contribution to Australia of NSW<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 1.2: Percentage of different NSW industries contribution to Australia**

Industry	% of Australian Economy
Finance & Insurance	46
Property and Business Services	39
<b>Film and TV industry</b>	<b>50</b>
Communications	33
Manufacturing	33

**Source: [www.business.nsw.gov.au](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au), accessed 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2008.**

As can be seen from these statistics, the film and TV industry (highlighted) of NSW contributes more to the national economy than any other sector, and given the primacy of Sydney in the state of NSW, it shows how Sydney is the hub of film and TV in Australia. Other cultural activities have a high presence in Sydney include museums, publishing firms and the music scene (Gibson, 2002), but as is shown

---

<sup>3</sup> Throughout this thesis, the dearth of literature on a city (Sydney) level and an over-reliance on state level (NSW) data will be highlighted.

quantitatively in section 5.1 of this thesis, the film and television industry is the most prominent of the cultural industries in Sydney.

The main reason for its prominence is that it has had nearly a century of sunk investment from all levels of government, including the 'boom' of the 1910s which saw Australia become one of the most productive film centres of the world, with 51 feature films made in 1911, the most anywhere in the world at that point<sup>4</sup>. Throughout the twentieth century, Sydney, like every other city that had a feature film industry suffered at the hands of the expansion of Hollywood and it was in the 1970s and 1980s that the federal government of Australia, coupled with state government created film offices for each state, and film finance for local indigenous filmmakers. The box office success of *Crocodile Dundee I and II*, the cult success of *Mad Max* and television series of *Neighbours*, *Home and Away*, *Blue Heelers* and *The Secret Life of Us*, all showcased Australian talent and promoted Sydney-based filmmakers around the world. This encouraged local filmmakers and with the opening of the national film school on the Macquarie University campus in Western Sydney, the quantity and quality of Sydney feature films increased. The construction of Fox Studios, coinciding with the introduction of tax credits for foreign (mainly US) based feature film production created an arena for high-budget filmmaking, which further increased Sydney's infrastructure of the cultural industries.

This narrative will be developed further in the empirical chapters through the stories of the ethnographies and production networks.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Interview with Malcolm Long, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

## **1.3 Synopsis of Chapters**

### Chapter 2: Literature Review

This thesis makes three major contributions to knowledge; the theoretical contribution, the empirical contribution and the contribution to the end-user audiences. The most prominent of these is the empirical contribution, hence the relatively longer discussions dedicated to the empirical chapters. This chapter discusses existing literatures on world cities, new economic geography, Sydney, cultural industries and the film and television industry; specifically outlining material that is relevant to this thesis, which will in turn highlight how the empirics of this thesis contributes to this literature.

### Chapter 3: Theoretical Review

This chapter discusses the thesis' theoretical approach, particularly new urbanism and poststructuralism, and detail how it will contribute to this emerging approach to world cities. ANT will also be discussed fully in this chapter as it is informing the formulation of the empirical agenda. Because the main contribution of this thesis is it's empirical material, the explanation into the formulation of the methodology is crucial, and therefore, the inspirations of ANT will be detailed, as well as a review of the literature of the major contributing authors, such as Bruno Latour, John Law and Jonathan Murdoch.

### Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter is delineated into the three different stages of data collection. The first section deals with the first phase (PI), which was designed to collect the quantitative

relational data and will argue for a critical engagement with quantitative methodologies of world city research. The second section discusses the second phase (PII), which obtained qualitative data through interviews. This section discusses the ways in which using an ANT-inspired methodology drives the empirics of this thesis to align with its theoretical ethos. The third section deals with phase three (PIII), which is the ethnographic phase of the methodology. Again, a discussion of ANT will highlight the reasoning for doing ethnographies and case study research. The final section outlines potential limitations and critiques of using such a methodology and ways in which they can be addressed.

#### Chapter 5: Lights... Setting the Scene

This chapter will focus on the initial part of the empirical agenda of this thesis, namely the quantitative relational data. This type of data is important as it provides the initial statistical data to which the qualitative data of subsequent chapters can be attached and furthered, and so, much of the data in this chapter will be presented in a similar way to GaWC data (e.g. Taylor, 2004b – as much of it so far has been of a quantitative relational approach). It shows how Sydney connects to the world city network via its cultural industries by using quantifiable relational data, and then specifically focus on the television production industry and film production industry in turn, again using quantifiable relational data. The data will be presented in such a way as to be usable and comparable with GaWC-related world city work.

#### Chapter 6: Camera... Focusing on the Divides

This chapter is structured so as to dispel some of the dualist thinking that is indicative of previous political economic conceptualisations of world cities (e.g. Castells, 1996; Sassen, 2001). By focusing on the practices and behaviour of the actants being

studied, the binary 'spaces' of global and local and the dualist thinking of human and nonhuman will be shown as constructed by-products. The chapter is set out into sections of global/local and human/nonhuman, therefore allowing for specific narratives and examples of how these dualisms can be dispelled through an ANT approach. The third section of this chapter will deal with another dualism that is specific to the industry, namely that of an Australian film industry versus a film industry in Australia. This is a 'divide' which many industry personnel purport to and is a current debate throughout the city of Sydney and the wider industry as a whole. In the section, the processes of the actants in the industry will again highlight how this particular dualist thinking can be critiqued, and this debate can be bypassed in favour of a more relational approach to studying the industry.

#### Chapter 7: Action... Actant-Networks

This qualitative chapter will highlight four particular case studies of productions that took place during my fieldwork period in Sydney and detail the processes of the various people, firms, institutions and things involved, and how they go about creating the actant-networks. By studying the workings and practices of the people and the things involved, the narrative of each individual ethnographic case study will describe the topological spatial formation of the production. The four case studies are designed to showcase the differing forms of production in Sydney – the first section deals with the Hollywood production of *Superman Returns*, the second is a London-Sydney television co-production *Mary Bryant*, and the final section uses two productions made by Sydney-based firms, that of *Three Dollars* and *Footy Legends*. These productions were chosen primarily because of their accessibility, but they are also indicative of the various types of production that takes place throughout Sydney, and by focusing again on the practices of those involved in each of the productions, the chapter will show how these productions can be viewed as *horizontalised*

topological spatial formations, and not compartmentalised bounded production zones – thereby adding exemplified data to the new urbanism ideals of the world city network.

#### Chapter 8: Cut... Reviewing the Action

Having displayed the data (both quantitative and qualitative), in the preceding three chapters, this chapter sets out to relate the data back to the aims and objectives set out in section 1.1. Through a discussion of ANT, this chapter will show how the data given throughout the thesis aligns with a poststructural/ANT approach to world cities. Examples will be given of how the data can be used to add a weight of evidence to new urbanism, and while no new empirical data will be given in this chapter, it is presented as a line of thinking which can be related to all the empirics in this thesis.

#### Chapter 9: Epilogue

To conclude a thesis that uses ANT is (as we shall find out during the course of this thesis) impertinent, but there needs to be a 'frame' somewhere and it is given in this final chapter. The chapter will detail the tangible outcomes of this thesis, describe the empirical and theoretical contributions, outline further uses of the thesis, explore potentials for other avenues of related research and generally 'frame' all which has gone before.

The world city is a crucial concept in urban geography. There are substantial literatures devoted to the topic that have been developed over the past four decades or so. This chapter will select the literature that is most relevant to this thesis and present it in such a way that will show how this thesis will contribute, and thereby further the knowledge of the world city concept.

### **2.1.Global and World City Literature**

Global and world cities have a long and comprehensive literature (such as Geddes (1949), Hall (1966)) yet the role of cities as command and control centres of the world economy was first articulated through authors such as Hymer (1972) and more Cohen (1981) and Freidmann (1986, 1995; with Wolff, 1982). Cohen devised a system which used the internationality of the Fortune 500 firms to produce what he termed 'international', 'national' and 'regional' cities. He subsequently reformulated Hall's (1966) list of global cities (which included London, Paris, Amsterdam-Rotterdam, the Rhine-Ruhr complex, Tokyo and Moscow) to just London, New York and Tokyo. Cohen's use of international banking and strategic corporate services in this classification (i.e. he used those firms in the Fortune 500) became a common practice for world city studies in the following decades (e.g. Sassen, 1991, 2001; Taylor, 2004b) as "only a place with a wide range of international business institutions can be truly called a world city" (Cohen, 1981: 302). Cohen however resonated an idea put forward by Heenan (some four years prior) in the Harvard Business Review in which he argued that globalisation is creating the need for global cities, and a need for them to portray global (as well as regional and national) leadership. Heenan's article remained largely absent from world city literature as the

contributions from Cohen (1981) and Friedmann and Wolff (1982) became the more widely cited studies on world city hierarchy formation. Friedmann (1986) then produced 'The World City Hypothesis' in which he produced seven inter-related hypotheses for world city formation (Table 2.1 summarises these below);

**Table 2.1: Seven inter-related hypotheses for World City Research**

<b>1</b>	Contemporary employment restructuring within cities is related to the form and extent of their <u>integration</u> with the <u>world economy</u> .
<b>2</b>	Key cities are used by international capital as <u>basing points</u> in the spatial organization and articulation of production and markets.
<b>3</b>	<u>Global control functions</u> can best be measured by the number of representative offices of <u>transnational corporations</u> .
<b>4</b>	World cities are theatres of concentration and accumulation of <u>international capital</u> .
<b>5</b>	World cities are points of destination for both domestic and international <u>migrants</u> .
<b>6</b>	World city formation brings spatial and <u>class polarization</u> .
<b>7</b>	World city growth generates <u>social costs</u> at rates that tend to exceed the fiscal capacity of the state.

**(Source: Friedmann, 1986: 72 – 73; my emphasis)**

What Friedmann achieved was to link the urbanization processes to the global economic forces of capitalism (specifically Castells (1972) and Harvey (1973)) and in doing so put forward a 'framework for research' (*ibid.*) in the form of seven hypotheses. However, with hindsight, there are some missing themes in his work. Foremost, as we can see from the list above in Table 2.1, his work was very economically and demographically inclined (key words are underlined in each hypothesis to reflect this inclination). In creating this rather single-faceted framework, he neglected other city processes, such as cultural and social. Also, his work was a comparative study of five key cities (London, Paris, Moscow, New York and Tokyo)



and two hybrid city-regions (Randstad-Holland and Rhine-Ruhr)<sup>5</sup>. Using World Systems Theory (Wallerstein, 1974), Friedmann (with Wolff, 1982) devised the notion of core, semi-periphery and periphery regions with little or no attention paid to the networks that cities have with other cities. With this data in mind, the need to theorise and conceptualise cities led to Friedmann concocting what he described as a ‘world city meta-narrative’.

Chronologically, following on from Friedmann was Sassen, who looked at advanced producer service firms (APS) (as opposed to Friedmann who used TNCs) and took a different approach by assigning the power to control the global economy to a select few cities – which she names with the title of her 1991 book *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*; which immediately is conducive of a sense of a triumvirate hierarchy of the three mentioned ‘global cities’<sup>6</sup>. Sassen focused on APS firms and argues that they are concentrated in a limited number of cities in order to play a key role in the current global control of the global economy. However, her world city theorisation was still reliant on a predominantly economic view of the city, with her later arguments (1996: 62) suggesting that “we need to examine the transformations in the world economy” if we are to understand the unparalleled shifts in the day to day functioning of city life. This economic view was based upon a power-relationship, i.e. cities had huge sway in the workings of the local, national and global economy, a power-relation which Sassen was keen to account for. She then goes on to argue, “it is not simply a matter of global coordination, but one of the production of global capacities” (Sassen, 2001: 349), which therefore necessitates clustering and agglomeration of APS in key global cities.

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<sup>5</sup> Note the similarities between this list of cities and city-regions, and Hall’s (1966) list.

<sup>6</sup> Note how these ‘global cities’ that Sassen identifies are the same cities identified by Cohen (1981).

Her insistence on the importance of place is evident throughout her works (1994, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001), in particular, her ‘new politics’ of the global city, in which she recognises that cities are “centres for the *servicing* and *financing* of international trade and headquarter operations<sup>7</sup>” (2001: 73, original emphasis) and as globalisation and the internationalisation of these firms continues, then so too does the need to control this growth and the networks forged by this growth. Her arguments centre on the importance of re-establishing urban *place* (and the relevance it has to the economics of the city) within hierarchical discourse, by “anchoring of multiple cross-border dynamics in a network of places” (2002: 8). Her insistence on place therefore relates to a scalar ontology. She argues that;

“...a focus on cities decomposes the nation-state into a variety of subnational components, some profoundly articulated with the global economy and others not. It signals the declining significance of the national economy as a unitary category in the global economy”.

(Sassen, 2001: 70)

It is possible to see here how reliant Sassen is on the narrative of the global/local dichotomy, and the scalar connotations embroiled within that (namely the nation state and the demise thereof). She goes on to argue that “recovering place in our analysis of globalisation allows us to see the multiplicity of economies and work cultures in which the global information economy is embedded” (*ibid.*: 70). Here, Sassen is rooting (or embedding) globalisation into place and emphasising the ontological importance of ‘recovering place’ to the economy. Sassen has many other arguments as to the creation, sustainability, operations and globality of global/world cities (for example, her social polarization thesis (1991) and the ‘new frontier zone’ (1999)), all

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<sup>7</sup> In relation to the themes of this thesis, note how the cultural aspect of cities has been marginalised throughout Sassen’s theorisation (along with the preceding authors discussed in this section).

of which have fostered debate within urban studies. Others have echoed this particular epistemology and see cities as command centres, arguing;

“World cities are nodal points that function as control centres for the interdependent skein of material, financial, and cultural flows which, together, support and sustain globalization. They also provide an interface between the global and the local, containing economic, sociocultural and institutional settings that facilitate the articulation of regional and metropolitan resources and impulses into globalizing processes while, conversely, mediating the impulses of globalization to local political economies”.

(Knox, 2002: 331)

The grounding of globalization in place stems partly from the veracity of ‘scale’. However, this is only one form of epistemology, with Thrift (1995: 33) suggesting that in fact “there is no such thing as scale”. It is the ‘nodal’, scalar or attributional epistemology that is resonant of Hall’s first coining of the phrase ‘world city’ which has been critiqued in some recent work on world cities in new urbanism, which will be discussed in Chapter 3. More importantly however, Sassen’s ontology of global control underdeveloped the actual characteristics of these centres, which is picked up on by later world city theorists<sup>8</sup>, in the formation of a ‘world city network’.

Taylor (2004b) argues that it is this world city network (or more specifically the relations between cities) that matters, and not the place-specific ontology put forward by Sassen (1991, 2001, 2002), Knox (2002) and others. Taylor’s work is linked to Castells’ (1996) ‘space of flows’ which is predominantly a neo-Marxist stance on

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<sup>8</sup> Most notably Taylor (2004b) as a single author, and with his GaWC colleges in Beaverstock et al. (1999, 2000) and Krätke and Taylor (2004).

globalisation and cities, with Castells stating that, “our society is constructed around flows: flows of capital, flows of information, flows of technology, flows of organizational interaction, flows of images, sounds, and symbols” (1996: 411-12). He goes on to suggest that therefore “networks have become the new social morphology of our societies” (*ibid.*: 469). This spawned more connectivity-based world city research with many empirical projects based upon Castells’ approach (see Jacobs, 2000; Taylor, 2001, 2004; Derudder et al., 2003 and Stein, 2003 on Sydney). However it is argued that Castells does well to say that the networks are there, but does not describe them in any depth, if at all. A direct critique of Castells’ neo-Marxist view of the networked society is provided by Doel and Hubbard (2002: 355);

“We remain sceptical about Castells’ structuralist interpretation of the creation of world cities in a global ‘space of flows’. First and foremost, it devotes insufficient attention to how the structure of capitalism is established and maintained: Castells takes informational capitalism as a given, rather than as an ongoing achievement; as axiomatic, rather than performative. We suggest instead that if there is to be a structure, it needs to be considered as an immanent and aleatory effect of contingent encounters. Insofar as it exists, global capitalism is created, sustained and attended to—not least by the ‘capitalocentric’ business discourses that propose the existence of a coherent global economy”.

Castells ontology is therefore contradictory in that he used attributional data to describe relational networks (Smith, 2003a). Taylor’s approach resonates that of Castells in part, but differs in his attempts to quantify the connectivity (i.e. produce

quantitative relational data<sup>9</sup>) of the world city network (which is discussed in detail in Section 4.1). His conclusions suggest that some cities (namely New York and London – which he labels as ‘mega’ global command centres) have taken command of the global economy.

Taylor’s work (along with the other authors who use quantitative relational data<sup>10</sup>) introduced relational empiricism into world city geography and while it has become the new trend, it is “a little like counting door knockers” (Smith, 2003a: 31) and we need to “go beyond counting” (*ibid.*). This can be reiterated as the need for *qualitative relational* data, as opposed to the more attributional data which has dominated world city research. The call for relational data is a by-product of the empirical shift (i.e., from looking at the nodes to looking at the connections) which is in turn mirrored by the conceptual shift that occurred, toward a more poststructurally induced view of world city research – and it is this type of relational data that will be collected and analysed in this thesis. A number of researchers and authors have progressed the global and world city literature with new urbanism (Dicken et al., 2001; Doel & Hubbard, 2002; Amin & Thrift, 2002, 2007; Smith, 2003a, 2003b, Smith and Doel, 2007) and it aligns itself with much of the poststructural thought, hence why this thesis is pursuing these lines of enquiry (more of which will be discussed in section 3.1). The following section however will deal with the specific literature on Sydney, highlighting the deficiencies in the literature, and showing how my thesis will contribute to the knowledge of this burgeoning world city.

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<sup>9</sup> This quantitative relational empiricism can be seen in some of the world city data that is currently circulating, in private and corporate policy as well as academic circles (see Derruder et al., 2003; Krätke, 2003; for an example on Sydney, see Searle, 1996, which is discussed in the next section).

<sup>10</sup> Most notably Beaverstock et al. (1999) which is discussed more in Section 3.1).

## 2.2 Sydney

Having covered some of the more prominent world city literature, it becomes clear that the lack of relational data is one of the main reasons for the focus of this thesis. By placing Sydney in the wider world city network and concentrating on the search for relational data, the results of this project will help to fill the gap which has been described as the “dirty little secret of world city research” (Short et al., 1996: 697). So seeing that relational data is a key issue, the next question is, why Sydney? This again relates to the lack of data regarding the cultural connections between Sydney and other cities. As discussed in section 1.2, Sydney is a prominent city of the Pacific Rim and also within the wider Asian market as a whole, but still has strong links with North American and European cities. Despite Sydney’s prominence in an increasingly competitive market, it remains significantly understudied in geographical literature. One such book to break that trend is *Sydney: The emergence of a World City* edited by John Connell (2000). The book provides an excellent overview of the differing academic areas of the city (physical geography, immigration, colonial history, planning, industrial change) however, for the purposes of this thesis, in its potential use as a relational data source, it is inappropriate as it is focused on the attributional data, and stops its analysis at the ‘borders’ of the city<sup>11</sup>. Searle (1996) writes much on other cities, potentially outlining some of the connections between them. Again, there is a lack of relational data, as much of the book is themed on planning, with much written on potential policies for Sydney. When it discusses the other cities (London, Paris, Tokyo, San Francisco, Frankfurt among others) it argues for a ‘copy-and-paste’ argument in that successful planning ventures (in various economic sectors including transport, government, industry and relevant to my thesis hence the excerpt below, culture) in these other cities should be applied to Sydney;

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<sup>11</sup> It is very useful however in gaining an insight into all the various geographical sectors of Sydney and provided excellent background information to the research agendas of this thesis.

“The experience of major overseas cities points to the emergence of the culture and entertainment sector, comprising of activities for which large cities are the focus as a key planning issue. These activities have economic growth potential both in themselves and as a magnet to global investment in other sources... Even more important is the public sector provision or financing of significant accommodation for culture, entertainment and related activities. These include museums, concert halls, cultural centres, and exhibition and convention centres and sports stadiums. European cities have emphasised cultural facilities while North American city governments have emphasised sports stadiums. Sydney has emphasised both in its recent planning while most cities (including Sydney) have been concentrated on the provision of major exhibition/convention space. Sydney has recently done much in this sector – overseas experience suggests that its various new facilities could generate much in terms of city image, tourism, and cultural and economic activity, and that further facilities will provide similar benefits”.

(Searle, 1996: 65-66)

This passage echoes the world city research literature discussed in the previous section, in that it is a *comparative* study, and does not focus on the links and connections between the studied cities.

There are a handful of reports however that touch briefly upon Sydney’s linkage, with Stein’s (2003) paper on Sydney being by far the most comprehensive in terms of its application to global and world city literatures. Here, Stein is alluding to the potential connectivity of Sydney Harbour;

“Among commercial uses shipping activities are an important factor [for Sydney Harbour]. These comprise about 80 shipping lines providing 150 regular services to destinations all over the world, 350 charter vessels carrying three million passengers per year, Sydney Ferries transporting 13 million passengers per year by 250 trips per day and a fishing fleet of 85 vessels. For international tourists visiting Sydney, the harbour is a prime attraction”.

(Stein, 2003: 54)

Here, Stein outlines some of the tourism links that Sydney has when he refers to cruise passenger numbers, yet he does not provide any relational data as there is no real explanation as to the destinations of these links. If this information was provided, it may have provided some idea as to Sydney’s tourist and cultural connections. In the same report, the ‘traffic’ of international telecommunications is alluded to;

“Sydney’s nodal role in telecommunication can be seen in its large shares of high speed data lines and international ‘traffic’ from Australia (cf. Newton et al. 1997). High speed data lines were heavily concentrated in NSW and Victoria, i.e. in metropolitan Sydney and Melbourne, accounting for about 44% and 33% respectively, of the total number of lines. In international business traffic, the shares of the cities diverge still stronger. Sydney’s share reached almost 50%, but Melbourne only 26%, with all other capital cities clearly less than 10% of the Australian total”.

(*ibid*: 55)

Once again the characteristics of this ‘traffic’ are not touched upon, which for a relational study on the globalisation of Sydney would have been imperative. While Stein’s report is comprehensive, its ultimate aim is to place Sydney into a hierarchy



based on differing industries and sectors, and not discuss the linkages and connections between Sydney and other cities with any detail.

Also, other authors' focus on comparing Sydney with other cities;

“L.A. and Sydney have highly distinctive paths of development because of the enduring effects of *place*. I am arguing that places are necessarily particular because practices and processes that unfold within global localities are different and the differences are significant in explaining the enduring power of place”

(Horvath, 2004: 112, original emphasis)

The emphasis on place and the locality and the similarities and differences of these is symptomatic of an attributional ontology of world cities – a relational viewpoint would analyse the connections between Los Angeles and Sydney. There are other Sydney-focused reports focusing on the economic (Yeates, 1997; Lepani, 1999) and the cultural (Carroll and Connell, 2000; Butcher, 2003; Gibson, 2003) prominence of Sydney in Australia and its comparative advantage over other Australian and regional cities, as well as planning and global governance issues (McGuirk and O’Neill, 2002; McGuirk, 2003, 2004; Searle, 2002). There has also been a proliferation of literature surrounding Sydney’s hosting of the 2000 Olympic Games, however again these focus on impacts of the Games on the city in terms of the social (Waitt, 2003), economic and cultural (Short and Kim, 1999) impacts. Also, city branding in Sydney, Hong Kong and Shanghai is the subject of a paper by Gammack and Donald (2006) yet continues a compare and contrast methodology that negates any relationality between the three studied cities. There have also been other research papers that have focused on the music industry of Sydney and New South Wales with Gibson (2002) arguing how the cultural industry of music has caused a transformation of the

urban and the rural areas; but although this satisfies both criteria of being related to Sydney and a cultural industry, it still does not present us with any relational data to call upon. In Stein's (2003) report although there is a lack of 'new' data he does identify a phenomenon that is addressed in this thesis;

“Major Australian firms in the media and entertainment business are located in Sydney and, in particular, many firms performing film and television program production now agglomerate in the region, in part performing specialized and post-production tasks for domestic and overseas producers. Although the digitalization of production in this sector opens new chances for international collaboration, limits to the development of indigenous firms are to be seen in the *lack of inter-firm networking* and in the insufficient access to and relatively high cost of high bandwidth telecommunication capacity”.

(Stein, 2003: 93; my emphasis)

It is interesting to note Stein's observation of a lack of inter-firm networking, as it is precisely this networking between firms that has been empirically analysed in this thesis. However, it becomes apparent from reviewing the literature on Sydney, that when it comes to relating it to the new urbanism literature<sup>12</sup>, there is none.

According to GaWC, Sydney is a beta world city and in the same category as Madrid, Toronto, Sao Paulo, Seoul, Zurich, Brussels, San Francisco, Moscow and Mexico City (Beaverstock et al., 1999; Taylor, 2001a). Figure 2.1 shows the connectivity ratio that has been assigned to Sydney using 'financial and business service flows'

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<sup>12</sup> In other words, research papers on Sydney that focus on the nature and characteristics of Sydney's urban connections, thereby being in line with the theorisation of Amin and Thrift (2002), Smith (2003a, 2003b) and so on.



GaWC studies focused on data from APS firms. Culture is important to the connectivity of cities as a city's cultural assets create a cultural milieu and city identity (see Zukin, 1995), yet these cultural meanings and idioms can flow between cities (Sklair, 2002a; 2002b) and many of the flows that make up the network of global cities are intangible and 'unseen' cultural connections (Amin and Thrift, 2002, 2007). What is more, it reminds us that what matters, as well as the financial and more recordable flows, might not be written down, but may be "non-cognitive, improvised or learned behaviour that is *as yet unrecorded*" (Smith, 2003b: 576, original emphasis). Knowing this, and realising that cultural connections are epitomized by this 'unrecorded' or intangible nature, these non-represented cultural connections are important to the topology of world cities and so the 'constantly evolving sketchbook' (as opposed to a 'big picture') needs another page (Thrift, 1996). The next section will concentrate on these cultural connections through the premise of the cultural industries and how important they are not only to this thesis and to Sydney, but to the literature of global and world cities and economic geography.

## 2.3 Cultural Industries

It has been suggested that few forms of globalisation can be observed or experienced so directly today as the circulation of symbols and images and the world-wide distribution of cultural forms, media formats and cultural commodities (Krätke, 2003). Some of the preliminary work conducted on the globalisation of culture focused on culture being understood as a set of cultural practices, i.e. something done by people (Hannerz, 1992; Bell, 1994). Other approaches suggest that it is a “superorganic system that existed above and beyond the wills and desires of [its] individual members” (Mitchell, 1995: 105). However, in this thesis, this rather structuralist approach to culture is discarded for a more nuanced debate on the connections and *practices* of actants, and specifically the cultural industries. As a result, this section will be split into two further subsections – the first will outline the cultural industry literature in relation to cultural globalisation and urban geography literature, specifying those authors and concepts to be of particular relevance to the development of the cultural industries as a concept, as well as the relevance to this thesis. The second section will outline the new economic geography literature, which in recent years has considered ‘the relational turn’ (Boggs and Rantisi, 2003). These literatures will be discussed as their ethos is in alignment with this study, and yet again, is an area of literature that could be developed by the introduction of work on the cultural industries.

### 2.3.1 Cultural Globalisation, the City and the Cultural Industries

The cultural industries were identified as a component of cultural globalisation by Hannerz (1996), and as an anthropologist, although focusing on human activity, he did describe the *processes* of the industries in contributing the construction of cultural

globalisation. Hannerz (1996) emphasised the roles of people in extenuating cultural flows, and “their cultural organization involves local as well as transnational relationships” (1996: 128). He goes on to identify four differing (but not completely separate) groups of people who are “physically present in world cities for some smaller or larger parts of their lives, but they also have strong ties to some other place in the world” (1996: 129). The four categories he outlines are transnational businesses, Third World populations, cultural industries and tourists. “The people involved in these four categories are ...engaged in the transnational flow of culture by being mobile themselves” (1996: 131)<sup>13</sup>. This mobilisation that Hannerz speaks of is germane to this thesis, as it takes into account the fact that it is their mobilisation that creates the ‘cultural flows’. It is worth noting at this point that the term ‘flows’ has been muted in recent literature in favour of other terms such as ‘connections’. This is primarily because ‘flow’ implies that there is a container, and the new urbanism literature steers away from the ontology of a static network that somehow ‘contains’ flows between cities.

Hannerz argued that “the world has become one network of social relationships, and between its different regions there is a flow of *meanings* as well as of people and goods” (1996: 237, my emphasis). To argue that these ‘flows’ create ‘one network’ is perhaps too leant toward a neo-Marxist language which is critiqued throughout this thesis, however the driving force behind the ‘organization of diversity’ is the city (Sassen, 2001), and the ‘flow of *meanings*’ (Hannerz, 1996) (which are so important here as they represent the intangible flows that are unarticulated as opposed to the recorded flows of goods and people) connects these cities together and so deserve recognition in the descriptive empirics of this thesis.

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<sup>13</sup> Note the lack of acknowledgement of nonhumans – something which would not happen with an ANT study as ANT demands equal focus on humans and nonhumans.

As we have seen with the help of Beaverstock et al. (1999), Taylor and Walker (2002), Smith and Timberlake (2001) and earlier Sassen (1991) the more economic side of the cities processes have been well documented. But to understand the relationship between cities more fully, there needs to be an empirical agenda into the relational aspect of the cultural industries as well as the other industrial sectors (such as APS (Sassen, 2001), air traffic (Smith and Timberlake, 2001) and telecommunications (Rutherford, 2004; 2005)). In other words, we need to analytically develop “how the mobilisation of materials, and practices of people, stitch-together the networks between cities” (Smith, 2003b: 39) - and this ‘stitching-together’ is just as much down to those cultural process that Hannerz eludes, as it is economic. Moreover, it is the practices that Hannerz does not elude to that will be the focus of this thesis, as it is precisely these practices that create the ‘meanings’ that have been contextualised as pre-given meta-narratives. So, by researching these practices, not only is this thesis purporting to the new urbanism ideal (outlined in the next chapter in detail), it is also redressing some of the cultural globalisation literature.

There is a difficulty, however, with the cultural practices and it lies in the fact that many of them are highly dynamic and difficult to empirically gauge as they remain intangible and problematic to record (Amin and Thrift, 2002). Thrift has been adamant in the importance of these types of connections, and the inception of his non-representational theory underlines this (see particularly 1997, 1999 and 2000). He has highlighted the importance of practice in the representation of meaning. Non-representational theory is not “a project concerned with representation and meaning, but with the performative “presentations”, “showings” and “manifestations” of everyday life” (Thrift, 1997: 126–27). Therefore, the unrecordable nature of these cultural connections and networks (Smith, 2003a) has meant that much of the global and world city literature that focuses on culture has tended to either focus on the

firms involved in the cultural industries (cf. Krätke, 2003) or related it to a particular medium, such as film, literature or music and used semiotics, textual or musical analysis, and relating that to the city (e.g. Carroll and Connell, 2000; Sheil and Fitzmaurice, 2001). Researching culture with this particular methodology tends to single out a particular city<sup>14</sup> (see also Clarke, 1996 for work on cinema and the city), and therefore deviates away from the importance of the connections. A particular case in point is an edited collection by Krause and Petro (2003) which discusses architecture and cinema in a digital age. It has a great deal of content on the cultural industries of individual cities (there is a particularly strong account of the ‘meanings inherent in the cinema of Hong Kong and what it means for Hong Kong’s ‘connections’), and eludes to a new urbanism style of thinking in its introduction;

“In deciphering the topographies of cities in cinema, architecture and urban space, this volume contributes to the larger effort of restoring richness and complexity to our understanding of globalisation. It also renders the heterogeneous and uneven landscapes of global cities more tangible, more dynamic and ultimately, more meaningful”.

(Krause and Petro, 2003: 11)

Their limitation stems from its ability to only provide incidental data as to these intangible cultural connections, and in some cases is rooted in scalar thinking as the work “relates to the interjection between the global and the local” (*ibid.*: 10). Abrahamson (2004) provides another recent study of the cultural industries in his book *Global Cities* by adding them to the data sets in constructing a hierarchy. He again roots his thinking in scale suggesting that global culture originates from global cities and then uses the information of culture to formulate hierarchies of cities which

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<sup>14</sup> While this thesis is focusing on one particular city; it is relating it to the world city network, and making its connections the focus of the study and not the bounded city itself.



(unsurprisingly) places New York, London, Tokyo and Paris at the top. This thesis will position itself in the area of cultural industries, but as it will be a relational study, it will depart from the more scalar work of Krause and Petro (2003) and the more hierarchical stance of Abrahamson (2004); instead add a relational data set to the world city literature focusing on *practices*.

Smith (2003a: 37) when referring to the work of Thrift suggest that “we need to be aware of practical intelligibility and inarticulate understanding, precisely because this is the background through which the representations we make become comprehensible”, hence the reasoning for a focus on such *practices*. He reached this conclusion through a detailed analysis of among others, Castells. One of the critiques that Thrift has of Castells’ neo-Marxist ‘space of flows’ (similar to that of Doel and Hubbard (2002)) is that it is too abstracted, and needs to be a more “partial and contingent affair, just like all other human enterprises, which is not abstract or abstracted but consists of social networks, often of a quite limited size even though they might span the globe” (Thrift, 1995: 34-35). There is a need for an ‘agency-orientated theory’ that connects the “macro-economic and geopolitical transformations to the micro-networks of social action that people create, move in and act upon in their daily lives” (Smith, 2001: 6). Thrift takes this need for agency a step further by adding that the embodied and performative characteristics of humans also constitutes agency and however uncapturable by linguistic expression these performances and practices may be, they are vital to the functioning of cities (Thrift, 2000; Smith, 2003b). However, paying attention to the agency of nonhumans is as important as the agency of humans. This is a key concept of ANT, which will be discussed in detail in section 3.2.

It is important to note, before discussing further theoretical views (particularly those in the next chapter) that the term ‘performance’ has a complex and problematic

definition. It is closely linked to Non-representational theory, which is not “a project concerned with representation and meaning, but with the performative “presentations”, “showings” and “manifestations” of everyday life” (Thrift, 1997: 126–27). However, (Mol, 2003: 32) suggests that there are pros and cons to the term; “the performance metaphor has some inappropriate connotations as well. It may be taken to suggest that there is a backstage, where the real reality is hiding. Or that something difficult is going on, that a successful accomplishment of a task is involved. [However], it may be taken to suggest that what is done here and now has effects beyond the mere moment – performative effects”. Non-representational theory has been employed by world city geographers (Smith, 2003a) and so to remain consistent, this thesis will align with Thrift’s view of performance linked to Non-representational theory, in that performance has ‘effects beyond the moment’ (Thrift, 1997).

Looking at Non-representational theory can aid in the study of world cities, particularly the cultural aspects, as it is the cultural processes of cities that contribute to the more human side of the human/nonhuman relationship in that they are concerned with the ‘peopling’ of the networks. This is not to say that it is a case that culture provides the human/agency/micro and economic and political processes form the nonhuman/structure/macro as this thesis steers away from dichotomies<sup>15</sup>. It would also be naive to assume that culture’s only concern was with agency; but the unarticulated nature of cultural connections lends itself to Thrift’s notions. Using the ideas such as the city networks as a continuum (Smith, 2003a) and taking on board Thrift’s Non-representational theory, we need to adjust our epistemology and ontology accordingly and that requires us to consider “humans and nonhumans to understand networks” (Smith, 2003b: 39), which act together to form a *hybrid collectif*

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<sup>15</sup> Murdoch (1997a, 1997b, 1998) argues for a rejection of boundaries and instead to ‘celebrate the in-betweenness’ (1997b: 332).

(Latour, 1993). We also need to indulge ourselves in the unrecorded and unarticulated in order to gain understanding of the complex and dynamic cultural connections that form the network of world cities.

To understand the importance of these cultural connections, it is useful to consider their entanglement and inextricability with the other tangible connections. Amin & Graham (1997) argue for a 'multiplex city' where the disentanglement of the differing strands of urban regeneration (social, political, economic and cultural) is becoming increasingly problematic as;

“The diverse space-time ordering of the city means that social actors and groups have very different abilities to engage in actor-networks that allow personal extensibility and so extend their time-space beyond their immediate corporeal environment”.

(Amin & Graham, 1997: 420).

A recent focus on the consumption patterns within society raised serious issues as to the distinctiveness between 'culture' and 'economic' within geography (du Gay & Pryke, 2002) and it has been argued that the two spheres have a lot to offer each other topically and epistemologically (Ettlinger, 2001). Many functional goods in the past have now been redesigned and repackaged to be stylised, with different styles of essentially the same product (in terms of its functionality) created for the broad range of incomes, tastes and cultures (Lawrence & Phillips, 2002). This inextricability of the culture from the function, and more broadly the cultural from the social, economic, political, financial and so on, is resonant of the linkage that the world cities share. Essentially, if we are adopting this poststructural stance, it seems logical to extend it to all areas of the study. The cultural connections are simply “no more than the undefined middle of a continuum” (Smith 2003b: 570), much like in the same way

we delineate London or Sydney from the rest of the continuum, I delineate cultural connections from the rest of the 'network'.

### 2.3.2. Relational Economic Geographies

The cultural industries were identified by Hannerz (1996) as one of the categories that constitute cultural globalisation, and since then have become synonymous with its development. Bourdieu (1986) first noted the trend when he referred to the outputs of certain sectors (namely those producing consumable goods and services) as having socially symbolic connotations. Scott (2004) then identifies these 'cultural-products' two-fold; with the "first service outputs that focus on entertainment, edification and information (e.g., motion pictures, recorded music, print media or museums)" (Scott 2004b: 462). His second set resonates more with Bourdieu and includes "manufactured products through which consumers construct distinctive forms of individuality, self-affirmation, and social display (e.g., fashion clothing or jewellery)" (*ibid.*). Other writers have written 'manuals' on how cities can harness the power and the creativity within the cultural industries to help cities configure themselves (Caves, 2000; Landry, 2000; Florida, 2002). Landry (2000: 9) noted culture's importance to the city;

"Culture provides insight and so has so many impacts; it is the prism through which urban development should be seen. The cultural industries, hotbeds of creativity, are significant economic sectors in their own right and employ between 3-5 per cent of the workforce in world cities such as London and New York or Milan and Berlin".

Some of the academics in this field are attracting major attention from city governments and acquiring almost a 'celebrity' status (Gibson & Klocker, 2004). This

is in part due to the importance of cultural industries to the city, which has increased with more funding being made available for projects and more post-graduate researchers (myself included) being drawn into the field. Recent work on film (see Coe, 2000; Scott, 2002, 2004b, Christopherson, 2006), music (for example Lovering, 1998; Leyshon, 2001 and specific to Sydney, Gibson, 2002), fashion (see Crewe, 1996, Weller, 2007), theatre (Sierz, 1997, Dempster, 2006) and new media (Christopherson, 2004; Searle and De Valence, 2005; Currah, 2006) has shed light onto the intricate workings of the industry and the details of the products to try and establish their role in the city and harness their creative power - yet little is known as to the inter-city connectivity of these industries. It is no secret that these industries have a tendency to cluster in certain city areas – Hollywood and Bollywood (film), Broadway (theatre), South Bank (art) – but what is not known is if, and to what extent, these industries contribute to the relational data of cultural networks between cities. Many of the world’s largest companies are considered to be ‘cultural industries’ – Disney, AOL Time Warner, Microsoft – and so their contribution to the global network of cities is substantial. Also, products of cultural industries and the activities that go on within the sector are of the “utmost cultural importance in that they function as agents of information, influence and persuasion or as vehicles of entertainment or social self-portrayal” (Kratke, 2003: 607). For the global economy too, their importance cannot be understated;

“Worldwide, the creative industries sector has been among the fastest growing sectors of the global economy. Several analysts, including the OECD (1998), the UK government’s Creative Industries Task Force (CITF, 2001), Jeremy Rifkin (2000) and John Howkins (2001), point to the crucial role that the creative industries play in the new economy, with growth rates better than twice those of advanced economies as a whole. Entertainment has displaced defence in the US as the driver of new

technology take-up and has overtaken defence and aerospace as the biggest sector of the southern Californian economy”.

(Cunningham, 2004: 110)

Despite this, there has been a surprisingly small amount of research undertaken on the cultural networks that these industries precipitate<sup>16</sup>.

The conspicuousness of the lack of cultural industry research is increasing in the field of new economic geography, with the ‘relational turn’ (Boogs and Rantisi, 2003) focusing on performance and practices within industries;

“Specifically, regional science [political economy] views space as a container which confines and determines economic action. It treats space as a separate entity which can be described independently from economic action. In contrast, a relational approach assumes that economic action transforms the localised material and institutional conditions for future economic action. Similar to Storper and Walker (1989), this approach emphasises that the economic actors themselves produce their own regional environments. The way in which spatial categories and regional artefacts have an impact on economic action can only be understood if the particular economic and social context of that action is analysed”.

(Bathlet and Glucker, 2003: 123)

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<sup>16</sup> For research that there has been, see Abrahamson (2004), Wang (2004) on MTV and AOL Time Warner in Beijing; Waitt (2003) on the social impacts of the Olympics; El-Khishin (2003) on Cairo and its attempt to lure cultural MNCs.

Here, the spatial construct of the region is being critiqued through an emphasis on analysing the action of economic agents. This 'relational turn' in economic geography (see also Yeung, 2005) has a great deal in common with the poststructurally inspired new urbanism (see next chapter), and these relational geographical thinking (in particular Jones, 2007, 2008 and Rifkin, 2005) can play an important role in the construction of the methodology, and therefore the data itself.

It has been argued however that it is important not to fetishize the *relationality* of space as it can lead to an indefinable notion of space that negates any empiricism (Markusen, 1999; Yeung, 2005a; Plummer and Sheppard, 2006). Instead, space has been thought of as a multiplicity (Serres and Latour, 1995) which Mol and Law (1994) argue has three demarcated types; 'Euclidian', 'networked' and 'fluid' space. This delineation of space into three separate categories is perhaps a little over-simplified given the more recent progression in relational geography (as well the critique Martson et al., (2005) have of Smith (2003b)), but the concept that there are 'stable' relational spaces allows for an element of spatial rigidity (Callon, 1991). As has been suggested, "while space is underpinned by relations, this does not mean space is only relational in nature; territorial integrity and unity can still emerge. Therefore... we need to combine notions of demarcated enclosed spaces with processes of emergence and becoming" (Murdoch, 2006: 100).

However, much of the empirics that justifies this relational literature is over-reliant on the economies of the established firm, with mainly transnational and multinational companies (TNCs and MNCs) the unit of calculation (Jones, 2002, 2005; Yeung, 2002, 2005a). Many different sectors have been researched, such as law firms (see Beaverstock, 2004; Falconbridge, 2004; Jones, 2007), the financial services (Hall, 2006), management consultancy (in particular Glücker and Armbruster, 2003; Glücker, 2006) among others; all using multinational firms in that particular industry

as the unit of calculation. This thesis therefore looked at the firm in detail, but also considered freelancers with equal weight. Focusing on, and researching these freelancers holds particular relevance to the cultural industries, as they tend to have a very large freelance population with much of the work that is undertaken project-based, with temporary, short-term and often part-time contracts (Grabher, 2004a, 2004b; Oakley, 2004; Rifkin, 2005; Christopherson, 2006; Davenport, 2006). The highly fluid, mobile and staccato nature of freelance work means that they are rarely captured by official statistics and industry bodies, and hence difficult to research quantitatively.

Instead, much of the new economic geography literature focuses on the firm, which has been viewed as the starting point of empirical enquiry, a seemingly single point or 'black-box' which should be the sole unit of calculation (Williamson, 1990). Grabher suggests that firms enjoy(ed) an "ontological and epistemological advantage", and "remain unproblematized as a unitary and coherent actor (Grabher, 2004: 105). Yeung (2005a: 308) provides an overview of the 'neoclassical' theorising of firms:

"Much neoclassical economic geography takes the firm as a self-contained and homogeneous "black-box" capable of producing economic outcomes in space. This conception of the firm is clearly evident in the "geographies of enterprise" approach that was pre-occupied with its locational and behavioural patterns in space. This approach viewed the firm as an unproblematic category".

However, this unproblematic view of the firm has been challenged by more recent economic geographers (see Taylor and Asheim, 2001; Yeung, 2005a, 2006; Glücker, 2006; Jones, 2007) who argue that the black-box needs to be opened and the



multiplicity of processes at work (social, political, cultural) need to be analysed. This has led some to adopt a network approach to firms in order to mirror the organisational shift in firms from traditional vertically integrated and hierarchical structures to inter-firm, project-based 'horizontal' organisations (Dicken et al., 2001; Hadjimichalis and Hudson, 2006).

Also, the theorisation of APS firms in cities, as was discussed earlier in this chapter, used inter-firm networks as the mechanism of global control (Sassen, 2001; Taylor, 2004), which again 'black-boxed' the firm, creating it as a single point or node in a global network of control and command (Castells, 1996). With this literature and that within relational economic geography, there is a lack of consideration of cultural industry firms in theorisations about the internationalisation of firm networks (notable exceptions include Krätke, 2003; Krause and Petro, 2003; Abrahamson, 2004; Scott, 2005). We also notice the absence of any empirical contribution, or indeed theoretical recognition of freelancers. This is slightly perplexing as many of the world's most 'experienced' industries (music, film, television, computer games, theatre, fashion and so on) operate around individual workers (musicians, film stars, directors, artists and so on), people who transcend particular cities or places and generate huge amounts of wealth and income not only for themselves but for the firms they work for (or the people they employ).

Other areas of interest in the new economic geography literature concerns social networking within firms. In it, the singularity of the firm is questioned and subsequently the 'black-box' of the firm is opened, researching the intra-firm networks, and the practices of the actants (both human and nonhuman) of the firm. It is argued that the networks of firms are built around social organisation, in that "different units of the firm... involve the participation and interaction of social actors, rather than merely formal rules" (Yeung, 2005a: 316). Yeung goes on to suggest that

“the firm is therefore a constellation of network relations governed by social actors at different organisational and geographical scales” (ibid.: 321). This sentiment is echoed by Pratt (2004: 124), who when specifically discussing the cultural industries, argues that “production/consumption dualisms are unhelpful; rather, it would be more useful to explore the constitution of products situated in and across places and social networks”.

The intra-firm (social) organisation alluded to here provides a contextualization of the processes within firms which until then, had remained *within* the confines of the firm. This is an important addition to the economic geography literature as the internal workings of a firm can have an effect on the issues that Sassen (and the other political economic viewpoints) theorise about – namely the command and control functions. Yeung (2006) argues that the ‘economic culture’ or the so-called ‘home country effect’ can shape their heterogeneous intra-firm networks and affect the international focus of the markets, production and spatial organisation of the firm. This creates problems for those wishing to practice the categorisation of firms as particularly ‘global’ or ‘local’, as they can be both, either and neither at different times. Taking account of the social networks that are being produced (or if we continue the metaphor – looking ‘inside’ the black-box) can question the rigidity of the firms’ boundaries and its association with scalar discourses. Subsequently, a more relational approach emerges which focuses on the practices and day-to-day activities of the people within the firm. As Jones (2002: 341, original emphasis) argues;

“It is not a matter of theorising social actors (senior managers) in place but as related to each other in a network of practice, the operation of which leads to the emergent property of organisational control. Social actors are clearly the focus of this control network but... power and control is a phenomenon that derives from the relational practices of

multiple actors in the network. It is not a property that individuals 'possess' in separation from others, nor is it practice that is contained in a place. This is not to suggest there is not a spatial or physical dimension to transnational social context, but the concept itself transcends space/place as a practice".

This theorisation of the firm is in contrast to that of Sassen in that the TNC or MNC (or APS) is considered relational and not a single bounded entity. In doing so it takes into account the connectivity of the firm, be that intra-connectivity within the firm or inter-connectivity between firms. Also, it has been suggested that social networking continues in arenas outside the firm, and contributes to their international focus. Indeed, Glücker (2006: 377) argues, "that social networks external to the firm are key to understanding the process of internationalization in knowledge intensive project-based businesses".

This links to the use of ANT by some of the relational advocates, as ANT prioritises networks of practice in the formulation of the firm (discussed in further detail in the following chapter). Indeed, Latour (2005: 179, original emphasis) provides an example of how ANT should be used to view Microsoft (which, incidentally can be considered a cultural industry);

"An organisation is certainly not 'bigger' than those it organizes. Since Bill Gates is not physically larger than all his Microsoft employees, Microsoft itself, as a corporate body, cannot be a vast building in which individual agents reside. Instead, there is a certain type of movement going through all of them, a few of which begin and end in Mr. Gates's office. It's because an organization is ...made only of movements, which are woven by the constant circulation of documents, stories, accounts,

goods, and passions. For an office to be traversed by longer, faster and more intense connections is not the same thing as being wider”.

The focus on practice within the firm has been the ‘new direction’ in economic geography (Amin, 2002; Jones, 2008), which empirically uses qualitative (descriptive) data to “explode the black-box concept” (Jones, 2005: 179) and thereby produce a new form of understanding that is based around the relationality of the firm, and not one based on output of the firm (which constitutes a scalar or hierarchical ontology). This is articulated by Amin and Thrift (2002: 65) who argue;

“The tools of the corporate knowledge management have expanded enormously, involving a varied geography, from one-off locations chosen to build consensus, to the movement of knowledge-bearers and the wired transmission of digitized information”.

This relational view of the firm, incorporating ANT (as well as other poststructurally inspired viewpoints – see Dicken et al. (2001)) therefore demands a focus on connectivity (Thrift, 2004). The cultural industries, which are becoming an increasingly important sector to national governments in wealth generation and urban redevelopment (see particularly Landry, 2000; Florida, 2002), have a vast freelance population that work around specific projects. Hence, if we are to continue to use the relational aspect to theorise about firms, there is a need to include all those other workers who contribute to the economic landscape. Moreover, the cultural industries are dominated by project-based labour (Christopherson, 2002, 2004, 2006; Grabher, 2004; Davenport, 2006) and so if we are to satisfactorily analyse the practices that construct these projects, then there is a need to rethink the focus of empirical enquiry – an enquiry which was enacted in this thesis through the use of ethnographies on particular projects (see section 4.3).

One concept in particular to come from this relational turn in economic geography that stays true to this notion of ‘combination of demarcated and process spaces’ (and is relevant to this thesis) is the notion of trust (Murphy, 2006). In the creative industries and the film industry in particular, trust is very important in the formation of working relationships (Blair, 2001; Rifkn, 2005), especially in Sydney where the number of freelance filmmakers are small compared to other filmmaking hubs such as Los Angeles or London. The issue of trust has, until the ‘relational turn’ in economic geography, remained largely a marginalised after thought, with the firm and the formal relationships inherent in them the major empirical factor (Murphy, 2006). However, recently the issue of trust as an important economic force has been integrated into the *relationality* of economic practices (see also Gibson and Kong, 2005);

“Trusting relationships and network connections are theorized... as ‘temporal-relational’ fields which emerge from within particular social, material, and political settings and which are maintained and transformed through the cognitions, symbolic exchanges, and performances of the agents in them. [...] These relational spaces may be ephemeral, mobile, and highly fluid in nature or they may be fixed, stabilized and embedded in particular territories, networks, locations, or spaces through markets, cultural systems, norms of participation, location-driven contingencies, or established ties between individuals”.

(Murphy, 2006: 440)

For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to think of trust as relational, or as Murphy suggests, ‘temporal-relational fields’ as well as stabilized spaces. It is these processes of trust that will be studied throughout the empirics of this thesis producing

seemingly stable, tangible phenomena – but at the same time remaining relational. Murphy goes on to relate ANT with the phenomenon of trust;

“ANT can thus contribute to our understanding of trust by providing a theoretical framework through which the materials, intermediaries, and agents that engender trust may be situated within the times, contexts, and spaces where interactions occur. In doing so, it may be possible to identify and catalogue some of the place-specific practices and elements that enable (or prevent) trust to (from) emerge (emerging) in a network”.

*(ibid.: 436-437)*

Therefore, to understand the way in which trust can influence the network formation, it is important to consider it with ANT, and the different ways in which actors can engineer networks.

Understanding cultural connections (which are of course of vital importance to this thesis) entails recording the intangible, which becomes a daunting yet necessary part of the research agenda. Cultural industries by their nature are ‘hybrid’ (Caves, 2000), as they are at once cultural, service-based – both wholesale and retail – R&D-based and part of the volunteer community sector as well (Cunningham, 2004). The hybridity of the firms and the intangible character of the products have caused problems that have besieged the cultural industries sector; because it is the stylised nature (originally noted by Bourdieu (1986)) of the product and the amalgamation of differing firm types which necessitates a different kind of management strategy that is currently in place for more traditional manufacturing firms. “Despite commercial production being an important and rapidly growing segment of the economy, current organization and management research has little to say regarding the distinctive

issues facing management in these [cultural] industries” (Lawrence & Phillips, 2002: 431). The nature of the products produced are dependent upon fashions and trends that are constantly changing, which makes the whole process of production, marketing, distribution risky as the time-lag period may mean that by the time the product is released, it is already out of fashion (Gibson and Kong, 2005) – it could be said that these products although being physical, the importance or the consumption of them are intangible (*ibid.*). This dynamism and intangibility of the products makes prediction a more important tool in commercial gain, and “although firms can participate to some degree in the development of tastes, they are largely reactive and dependent on trends and fads that are difficult to predict and even more difficult to manage” (Lawrence and Phillips, 2002: 438)<sup>17</sup>.

Much of the work that has already been conducted in the cultural industries and the cultural economy more generally, has the same epistemology of the political economy and neo-Marxist work on world cities, namely that of Castells, Sassen, Harvey and so on. Allen Scott has written extensively about the cultural industries, but with a political economy viewpoint. He ascribes the role of cities as master hubs of a new global economy (Scott, 1997) and they contribute to the ‘reassertion of place as a privileged locus of culture’ (p. 324). He concerns himself with the nexus between culture and economics and how the processes of globalisation are challenged with a seemingly localised production of culture and how it is finally outputted into the ‘extended networks of consumption’ (*ibid.*). Drawing upon Harvey (1989) and his ideas of the expansionary imperialistic realms of capitalism, he stresses that “place, culture and the economy are highly symbiotic with one another, and in modern capitalism this symbiosis is re-emerging in powerful new forms as

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<sup>17</sup> Crowdsourcing (Papagiannidis et al., 2006) is a recent adaptation of this idea whereby cultural firms consult their users and consumers in the production of the final product. An example from the film world would be *Snakes on a Plane* in 2007 where the film script was partially written by blog writers on the Internet ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com), accessed, 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2007).

expressed in the cultural economies of certain cities” (Scott, 1997: 325). Much of the later work on cultural industries has been grounded on Scott’s work which centred on the relationship culture has with place and the economy, but paid scant attention to the relationality of networks that constitute the industry. One such argument that differs however (and so may be relevant to this thesis) is that put forward by Henriques and Theil (2000) when they looked at audio-visual (AV) companies in Lisbon and Hamburg. In critiquing Scott (1997) they find that his idea of the ‘culture-economy nexus’ to be theoretically inaccurate, and they adopt a more non-linear and undualistic approach;

“The more products and services ‘are infused...with broadly aesthetic or semiotic attributes’ (Scott, 1997: 323), the more their consumption requires a process of ‘decoding’ which generally does not obey the same ‘meaning structures’ of the ‘encoding’ process of cultural production (Hall, 1980: 130). Globalisation as an increase of transnational interaction inevitably reinforces this asymmetry within the ‘communicative exchange’.

(Henriques & Theil, 2000: 265)

This ‘asymmetry’ which is inherent in their empirical research can be used to view the Hollywood film industry; its dominance in European and Australasian markets does not automatically ensue a paradigmatic example of Scott’s idea of a bipolar territorial logic of local production and global distribution (*ibid.*). The consumption within these areas may be starkly different because of the cultural background of the recipients. This is because the films that the Sydney-based production firms create, and their eventual consumption form part of the topology of the industry. So to implore some of the poststructural idioms to these cultural industries, it can be argued that much in the same way we can conceive a city and cultural connections as a continuum, this concept can indeed be stretched to the cultural industries. Scott (1997, 2000) argues



that cities are 'hubs' of cultural activity<sup>18</sup>, but this is ultimately placing ontological boundaries 'onto' the city. The activities of the actants involved with the industry, such as the directors and the locations and the films themselves, transcend previously conceived city and regional boundaries.

The cultural industries of Sydney are too wide a topic for one thesis to study in the required detail. The need to narrow-down and focus in was a necessity to gain useful empirical data, and so the decision was made to provide an overview of Sydney's cultural industries and then focus in one sub-sector. Therefore the following section will outline the justification for studying the chosen industry – the film and TV production industry.

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<sup>18</sup> In much the same way that Sassen (2001) argues that cities are command and control centres for the world economy – both authors using scale and the notion of place as a meta-narrative concept.

## 2.4. The Film and TV production industry

The film and television production industry, while being the most prominent of the cultural industries in Sydney, is still undergoing growth (Stein, 2003). A new multi-million dollar Fox Studios complex opened at Moore Park in May 1998 with a number of Hollywood blockbusters being filmed on site, such as the *Matrix* trilogy (1998, 2003, 2003) and the prequels to the *Star Wars* (2001, 2005) series. This was in part due to the financial attractiveness that Australia offered as the exchange rate was so favourable to the Americans (Herd, 2004). The global film industry is dominated by Hollywood, commanding over 66 per cent of the monetary value of total industry production; but compare that to the figure of a decade ago and it has fallen by some 20 per cent (Australian Film Commission (AFC), 2004). There are arguments that the film industry is showing signs of 'peripheralisation' or 'decentralisation', a move away from Hollywood to other film production locations (Storper and Christopherson, 1987; Scott, 2002; Goldsmith & O'Regan, 2003; Currah, 2006, Christopherson, 2006). Many of the reasons for moving to a particular location away from Los Angeles are financially motivated, with the Canadian and Australian federal and various state governments offering favourable exchange rates and tax incentives. Vancouver is a favoured location for many Hollywood majors, but Sydney attracts production, (NSW<sup>19</sup> accounts for 57 per cent of all film production and 44 per cent of all television production in Australia (AFC, 2002)) and is among the major recipients (Scott, 1997, 2004a) of so-called 'runaway production' (see Goldsmith and O'Regan, 2003; Herd, 2004, Christopherson, 2006). In the period from 1990 to 1998, the number of American film and television projects that have been shot outside the US for cost reasons alone has risen from 100 to 285, a rise of 185 per cent (Monitor, 1999). One such study that is relevant to this thesis looks into the so called runaway

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<sup>19</sup> The difficulty in extricating figures for Sydney as a city is apparent here, as the AFC only gives figures for NSW as a whole, which is another reason for the formulation of this thesis.

phenomenon, which is Hollywood film production firms shifting production from Los Angeles to more economically and culturally viable locations such as Sydney, Vancouver, Cape Town and some European cities (Herd, 2004, Christopherson, 2006). One such example, and major coup for the Sydney film industry, was the production of *The Matrix* and its subsequent sequels which were filmed entirely in Sydney with some of the postproduction being undertaken by Sydney based firms. It has been revealed that it was not financial matters alone that formulated this decision;

“Although when asked in 1999 why they had chosen to bring *The Matrix* to Australia, the Wachowski Brothers replied unambiguously ‘costs’, Andrew Mason, executive producer of the *Matrix* films has since suggested that the reasons were as much artistic as financial. He believes that the major influencing factor was that he, Mason and director Alex Proyas had made the Australian feature *Dark City* at Fox Studios Australia with a look and a style similar to what the creators were trying to achieve in *The Matrix*”.

(Herd, 2004: 27-28)

According to the Monitor Report (1999) (which was commissioned by the Director’s Guild of America), the number of US-initiated productions going off-shore for the actual process of production increased from 209 (27% of total number) to 399 (37%) between 1990 and 1998 (Herd, 2004). Also, the Centre for Entertainment Industry Data and Research (CEIDR) in 2002 concluded that gross production expenditures in the U.S. declined for the fourth straight year, dropping \$683 million (a fall of 17 per cent) from \$3.93 billion in 1999 to \$3.24 billion in 2001. This trend, although being forced by the increasing attractiveness of lower costs and the apparent attraction of creative quality, has been the need for more realistic outdoor locations, and with

major film titles being shot in Sydney, it is increasingly becoming a favourite among directors and set locators (George Lucas among the fan base). Although, since the Australian dollar has increased against the US dollar recently, the financial attraction is decreasing (Mitchell, 2003).

This 'peripheralisation' which Scott (2001) argues, coupled with the globality and competitive nature of the film industry, makes it a complex and dynamic industry to research;

"Cinema of course is an excellent means to an understanding of globalisation for a number of reasons. Since the early twentieth century, it has always operated through a sophisticated organization of film production, distribution, and exhibition internationally – and particularly radiating from Southern California and Hollywood to the rest of the world through the expansionist activities and vision not only of the major American film studios, but also of such agencies as the Motion Picture Association of America and the Motion Picture Export Association. Today, cinema exists as part of a much larger global entertainment industry and communications network, which includes older cultural forms such as music and television and newer forms of technology such as digital, the internet, and information technology".

(Sheil & Fitzmaurice, 2001: 10)

But what is also important is that the products that are produced, e.g. the motion pictures, the television documentaries or the adverts, are in themselves globally recognised, in many cases, much more so than an art gallery or a museum which are 'located'. Although some are world renowned, people have physically go to an art gallery or museum to 'consume' it – with film (increasingly so with the effects of

internet piracy), the products are instantly available all over the world. As is argued, “in today’s context, it isn’t that films or the Hollywood film industry *reflect* globalisation, but that films and the Hollywood film industry *effect* globalisation. Films *are* globalisation, not its after-effects” (*ibid.*: 11, original emphasis). In other words, these films are constitutive, not reflective of reality<sup>20</sup>. This argument can be levelled at the music industry (making it a viable industry to study), but within Sydney, as we saw in section 1.2 (Table 1.2), it is the film and television industry that is the most prominent in terms of employment and wealth-generation, with many smaller firms being forged from the location of the larger LA-based film studios. Also, some geographical work has been conducted already within the popular music industry in Sydney and New South Wales as a whole (see Gibson, 2002; 2003, Carroll and Connell, 2000). The Fox Studios at Moore Park houses over 60 independent service providers, i.e., smaller firms that provide the peripheral functions to a film such as sound effects, make-up, mixing and so on (Fox Corporation, 2003). With this large-scale production of jobs and firms, the film industry within Sydney provides ample opportunity to study the connections, collaborations and the networks, aided by their geographical proximity to each other. This clustered geographic configuration can be viewed as a response to the multiple collective benefits that comes from “the mutual proximity of many different but interrelated producers together with dependent pools of appropriately skilled and socialized workers” (Scott, 2004: 194). One of the advantages of the large-scale American film studios (for example Universal, Twentieth Century Fox, Columbia) is that they can fund a feature film from initial conception through to distribution (vertical integration (Scott, 2004; Currah, 2006; Christopherson, 2006)), due to the knowledge that an American block-buster will

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<sup>20</sup> This notion resonates with Smith’s (2003a, 2003b) conceptualisation of world cities and the ANT literature more generally (Law, 2004; Latour, 2005), in that it is the connections and networks which create the spacing and timing of world cities, or reality more generally.

make money (through merchandise as well as ticket sales) even if the quality of the film is debated. Indeed as Christopherson (2006: 745) notes;

“Media conglomerates are now able to limit the expensive, transaction-intensive process of competing for products from independent producers by producing products within their wholly owned subsidiaries”.

This production technique reduces risk and ultimately leads to increased profits. However, the film industry in many other film-productive cities works in a less integrated way;

“Every film production brings together a team of specialised production companies and independent contractors, each with its own expertise, along with the talent. Together, the parties constitute a short-lived network enterprise whose lifespan will be limited to the duration of the project”.

(Rifkin, 2005: 363)

As well as the processes Rifkin details above, the filmmakers, directors and producers have to gain money from a funding body and then once it is finished (which is not always a certainty), find a distribution company that will take it on and give the film as wide an audience as possible. Profit margins are not as large as they are with the Hollywood studios, but it can be argued that the films are of a higher artistic quality (Australian Film Commission, 2000; Herd, 2004) (but it can also be argued that they are not (Mills, 2001)).

This ontology of people networking together for particular filmic productions is particularly evident in the 'project-turn' in new economic geography. This project-based nature of employment in this industry is comprehensive, with very few large film producing firms, formulating what has been coined a 'cottage economy' (Long, 2005; Gornostaeva, 2008). In the UK for example, "the progressive fragmentation of the UK film industry and deregulation in the UK television industry has resulted in almost universal freelance working" (Davenport, 2006: 253), which increases risk and hence intensifies the proliferation of project-based, freelance employment (Dex et al., 2000).

As was alluded to in the previous section, this type of project-based work is fundamental not only to the film and television industry, but also to the creative industries as a whole, and indeed many other industries (e.g. construction (Grabher, 2004)). It has been suggested, "one thing international analysts of new media work agree on is that the work is project-based" (Christopherson, 2004: 545). The project-based method of production can be counter-intuitive and even (it has been argued) paradoxical as "even the most successful organizations are organized with their future dissolution in mind" (DeFillipi and Aurthur, 1998: 128). However, if we are to comprehend the 'project-turn' in employment focus, then this 'paradox' must be addressed. Grabher (2004) has championed 'project ecologies', and in doing so has outlined a "non-essentialist perspective of geographical enquiry" (Grabher, 2004: 104), which is in tune with the relational economic geography literature, i.e. "thinking about knowledge spaces topologically" (ibid.: 106, original emphasis). In his paper, Grabher outlines the functions of project ecologies, using empirical examples from the advertising industry in London and the software industry in Munich. Without revisiting his arguments in detail, he brings to recognition the non-linearity and connectivity within these project-based industries. He provides a framework of how the (cultural industry) firm organizes itself within the 'knowledge spaces' (pp 109-110), and importantly for this thesis, situates the firm in a wider "epistemic

community” (p 110). He then delineates the practices of this community into three different (but inter-connected) networking processes around communality, sociality and connectivity. Grabher’s work here is commendable as it highlights the complexities in theorizing about project based work, and also the rejection of a scalar ontology is commensurable with much of the relational economic geography idioms expressed in this thesis, as well as being commensurable with an ANT-inspired ontology in his description of an ‘epistemic community’. He outlines the characteristics and goals of such a community below;

“Within an epistemic community, agents are bound together by their commitment to enhance a specific type of knowledge. Individuals accumulate knowledge according to their own experience and validation is made according to the procedural authority: what is evaluated in the contribution of the agent to the cognitive goal with regard to the criteria set by the procedural authority”.

(Grabher, 2004: 111)

Grabher is making reference to the general community of a particular industry which includes firms and individuals; and by conducting work into both the general community of filmmakers in Sydney and following particular projects in tandem, the concept of these project ecologies are researched and highlighted through empirics of the day-to-day actions of the humans (and nonhumans involved).



Along with the literature on project ecologies, it may also be useful to consider the concepts of agglomeration factors. In the traditional concepts of locational agglomeration factors, the fundamental theories have been formulated by Porter (1998) and Storper (1997), the latter of which forwarded the notions of traded and untraded interdependencies, and increased competitiveness through clusters. Without revisiting a tried and tested concept here, traded interdependencies have become a characteristic of many manufacturing clusters and agglomerations (for example, technopoles (Castells and Hall, 1996)), whereas the knowledge economy (and therefore the cultural industries) is characterised by untraded interdependencies, which are more difficult to 'capture' and codify. Pinch and Henry (1999) in their work in Motor Sport Valley in the Southeast of England identified a typology of untraded interdependencies (knowledge dissemination) which include rapid turnover of staff, information 'leakage' through suppliers, high rates of new firm failure and start ups, informal collaboration, gossip and observation (Pinch and Henry, 1999: 823). In relation to the film and television industry, all but the first of these would be applicable (except in the large established firms) as the dissemination of knowledge in highly-creative industries is considered increasingly tacit (Oakley, 2004). For the cultural industries in particular, this knowledge exchange has been alternatively conceptualised as a relationship between creativity and place, with some arguing that a city's 'creative buzz' has a symbiotic relationship with cultural industry products, in that place can be 'translated' into products (Hall, 2000; Rantisi, 2004; Drake, 2003). Localised tacit knowledge or creative 'know-how' (Hansen et al., 2005) and 'buzz' with 'global pipelines' (Bathelt et al., 2004) are some of the conceptualisations that have been used in an attempt to describe the ephemeral and overall 'messy' communications that are indicative of the knowledge economies, including the cultural industries. Tacit knowledge has been considered localised or 'sticky' (Markusen, 1999), or even embedded in particular types of practices (Faulconbridge, 2004), however the primarily freelance nature of the

cultural industries workforce (Oakley, 2004; Creative and Cultural Skills, 2005) and the project-based nature of work organisation (Grabher, 2002, 2004) suggests that the film and television production industries have less localised and 'sticky' knowledge flows.

Having taken into account the relevant literature on world cities, Sydney, the cultural industries and the film and TV production industry, it is now possible to see how this thesis will situate within the literature, thereby fulfilling the aims and objectives set out in the previous chapter. There is a distinct gap that can be identified by reviewing the literature, and more than simply 'plugging' this gap in the literature, this thesis will contribute to the progression of new urbanism (Amin and Thrift, 2002) world city literature, as well as aiding to the works that inform the film and TV production industry in Sydney.

The products or the films themselves also become useful to study as they are embroiled into the networks of the firms and actors (i.e. project ecologies (Grabher, 2004)) and, as has been mentioned previously, they can be interpreted in many different ways by many different people depending on their cultural make-up and background (Lawrence and Phillips, 2002). But more than the consumption of the film, the production of a single film can embody a whole network of people<sup>21</sup>, money, machines and places into a single entity (the creation of a film requires the creation of a whole new 'world'; costumes, make-up, set-designers, special effects and so on are all needed to create a 'real' representation of the film-makers plan), which enforces the idea - and therefore necessitating empirical research - of relationality. In other words, the film industry provides us with a *topological* view of how the networks

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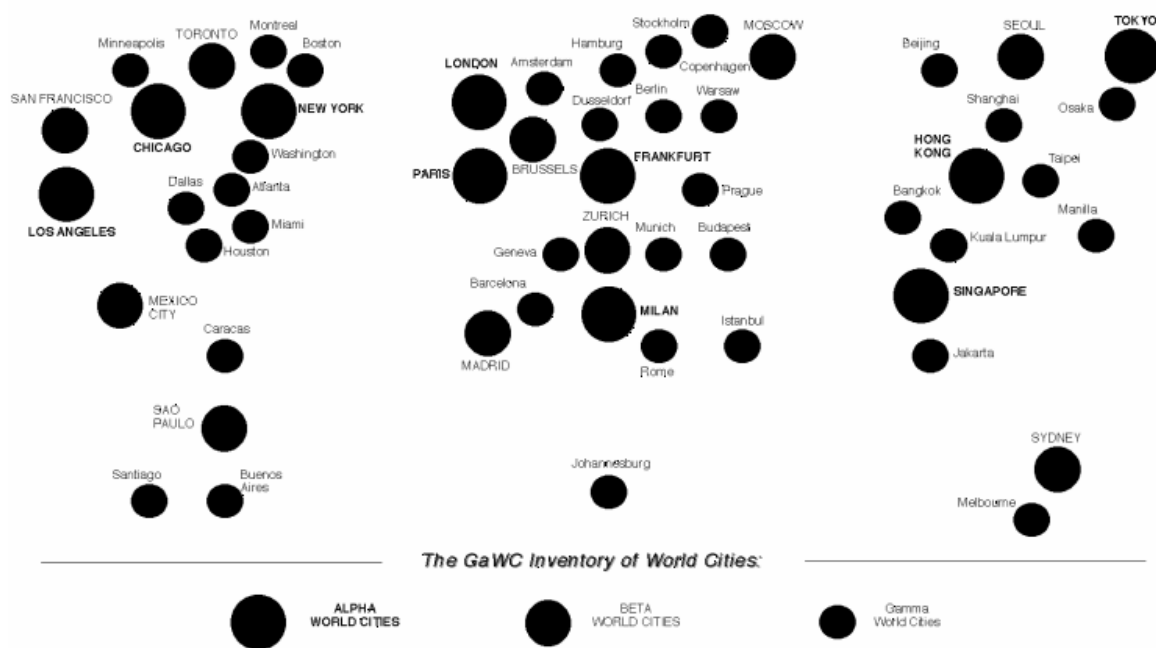
<sup>21</sup> Indeed, in the US, according to Christopherson (2004: 555), "The preferred mode through which new media work in the United States is carried out is by entrepreneurial independent contractors". This model of project-based work is being replicated in other film-productive cities.

incorporate a variety of people and things that have been previously thought (in terms of political economic and social constructionist thinking) to be geographically, socially and culturally far apart. To relate this back to poststructural theory, it seems pertinent to quote Doel when he argues that “for horizontal thinkers, one does indeed find folded surfaces everywhere. This is why we live in a scrumpled and disadujsted universe” (Doel, 2004: 163).

This chapter builds upon the literature review of the previous chapter by giving details of the way in which the literature of world cities and relational economic geography has come to incorporate poststructural ideals, and formulate a new epistemology and ontology for global urban studies. Having discussed the political economic theorisation of the city (Friedmann, 1986, 1995; Sassen, 2001; Castells, 1996) and how the use of scale and meta-narratives can produce one particular understanding of cities, the first section of this chapter will explain ‘new urbanism’ (Amin & Thrift, 2002) thinking, and explain how using this reconceptualisation of cities can aid in our greater understanding of the global urban networks. The second section will focus on ANT in terms of its history, theorisation and suitability to this thesis. The methodological techniques of ANT will be discussed in the next chapter.

### **3.1 New Urbanism and Poststructuralism**

Following on from the discussion in Section 2.1, it becomes pertinent to discuss one of the first papers published by the GaWC group (Beaverstock et al., 1999), which compiled a hierarchy of world cities based upon the connectivity of business service firms. Figure 3.1 below shows the hierarchy that they produced, which classified cities into alpha, beta and gamma groupings – with Sydney classified as a beta world city. This study was important because it was the first to rank cities upon *relational* data. In other words, it used the connectivity of firms (APS firms, not cultural industry firms) as the barometer for the hierarchy, not attributional data that had previously been adopted. Using data on the location of the headquarters of major business service firms, and the location of those firms’ subsidiary branches, the connectivity of each city was ranked, thereby creating this relational hierarchy:



**Figure 3.1: Inventory of World Cities (Beaverstock et al., 1999: 456)**

This paper became a seminal research paper spawning a number of similar research papers conducted into the connectivity of world cities (such as Taylor and Walker, 2001; Taylor, 2001). One such example that is relevant to this thesis is that of Krätke (2003) who produced a similar connectivity index, but this time based on media conglomerates, again using the headquarter locations and subsidiary branches as the basis of quantifying the connectivity (see Figure 3.2). There have been a plethora of studies that produce hierarchies of world cities, most notably including Gritsai (2004) on Moscow's position in global and regional hierarchies and Beaverstock et al. (2006) on London and Frankfurt in a hierarchy. The production of these quantitative relational empirics produced a preliminary visualisation of the world city network, and were the first empirical steps into a new conceptualisation of world cities.

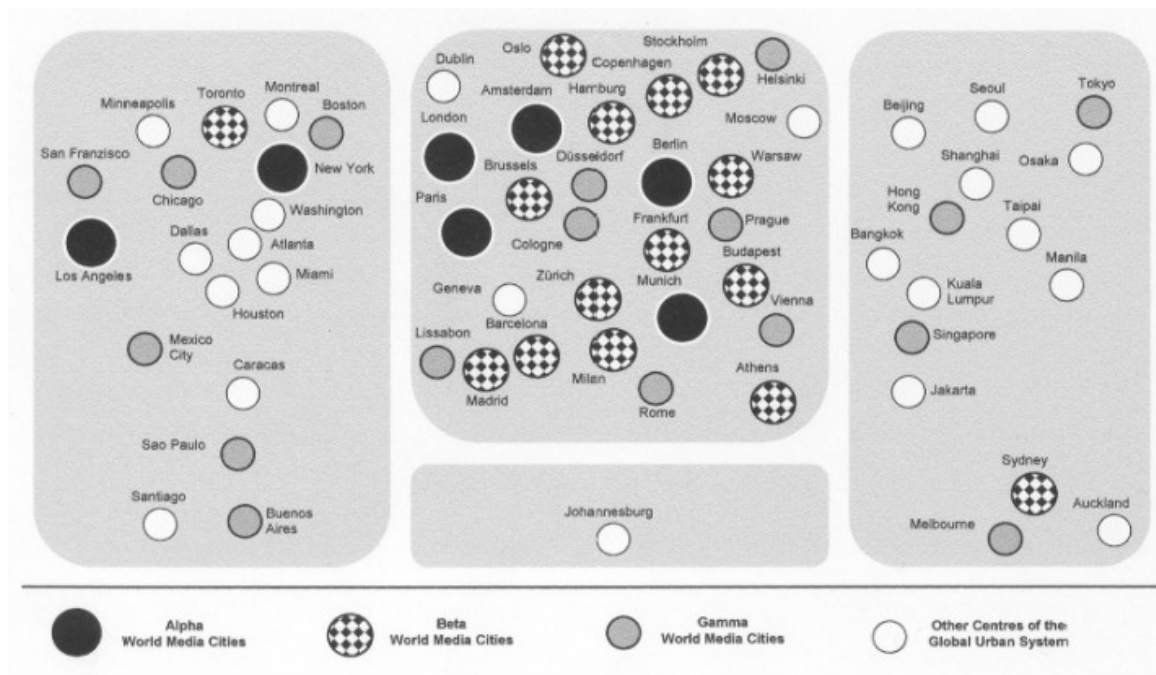


Figure 3.2: Inventory of World Media Cities (Krätke, 2003: 619)

One of the major pieces of work which brought about the reconceptualisation of cities was *Cities: Reimagining the Urban* by Amin and Thrift (2002) in which they use the term 'new urbanism'. This is not the same as the architectural and urban planning movement which originated in the US and started as a reaction to urban sprawl. That articulation of new urbanism began in the early 1990s and was concerned with designing urban neighbourhood spaces that were supposed to re-engage with the ethos of community and a move away from suburban sprawl and the decentralisation of urban living (Talen, 2005). This approach also aimed to restrict development of building on farmland by encouraging the regeneration of existing cities and their suburbs. Probably the most famous example of new urbanism is the township of Seaside in Florida, brought to worldwide attention when it formed the setting for the film *The Truman Show*<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Which, incidentally was directed by one of Sydney's most successful film directors – Peter Weir.

Amin and Thrift's (2002) articulation of new urbanism argues that the city has become a complex place, a place that cannot be bounded or captured by any one particular apparatus and as such the theorization of it becomes problematic;

"The city has no completeness, no centre, no fixed parts. Instead it is an amalgam of often disjointed processes and social heterogeneity, a place of near and far connections, a concatenation of rhythms; always edging in new directions".

(Amin & Thrift, 2002: 8)

The 'displacement' of the city has prompted some urban thinkers to consider the city as an organism, as a living entity, with a heart, lungs, veins, senses and the like (Jencks, 1996; Ackroyd, 2001) with the ability to grow and move. This analogy is pertinent on the surface as it personifies the fluidity and functionality of the city. However this analogy is inherently problematic as it assigns boundaries, areas and hierarchy to an overtly "unformed, unorganised and non-stratified" place (Smith, 2003b), which like neo-Marxist traditions (the empirics of Castells, Harvey, Sassen and so on), can be restrictive to the nature and characteristics of the city. New urbanism argues that the city, and its processes, actors and connections, are better viewed through the poststructural theoretical premise of Body without Organs (BwO) (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). Indeed, Smith (2003b: 573-574) tells us;

"..the BwO is best thought of as a way of visualizing the city as unformed, unorganized and non-stratified, as always in the process of formation and deformation and so eluding fixed categories, a transient nomad space-time that does not dissect the city into either segments and 'things'...or structures and process".

It is argued that viewing the city as a BwO allows it to be freed from the constraint of spatial scales and other compartmentalisation. It allows for a ‘horizontalisation’ ontology which negates all previously stated ‘structure’ and ‘scale’ and focuses on the raw processes<sup>23</sup> and uninterrupted network (Escobar, 2007). The BwO can be viewed as a plane of consistency or a continuum in which the actors’ actions power the network, or better yet, *are* the network which binds the city and cities together into a continuum with no set boundaries or borders, but a consistent string of actors, processes, relations, immutable mobiles. Smith’s (2003a, 2003b) theorisation of the city as fluid has been critiqued as a ‘festishization of spatial openness’ (Martson et al., 2005: 423). They suggest that “we sympathize with Smith’s reading insofar as it encourages the dissolution of scalar thinking. We take issue, however, with his reductive visualization of the world as simply awash in fluidities, ignoring the large variety of blockages, coagulations and assemblages” (*ibid.*). However, the idea of the city as a BwO is echoed by other world city authors such as Doel and Hubbard (2002: 357), who have a less (to use the same language) ‘festishized’ view on the city;

“From a poststructuralist perspective, it is the movement of heterogeneous materials that constitutes the global economy, a spatial assemblage that is a BwO, a figure held together by the forces that compose it, rather than by the functional imperatives of the organism as a whole. Doing away with distinctions of inside and outside (e.g. the idea that places are contained within a global system that shapes their destiny), this is an account in which the flow becomes all. To that extent, what is interesting about world cities is not their fixed position – both

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<sup>23</sup> The term processes is used by new urbanism theorists (Amin and Thrift, 2002 and Smith, 2003a in particular) to refer to the workings of the actants being studied. It is often used interchangeably with other similar terms such as ‘practice’, ‘workings’, ‘action’ and ‘behaviour’. The complexities of these terms will be discussed further in the following chapters.



spatially and functionally – within a structured global network that may be imploding, but the way they bring relations into being: the way flows drift in and drift out, speed up and slow down, contract and expand within them, folding and unfolding space”.

This poststructural stance of the city that these authors forward is attempting to forge a new vocabulary of socio-spatial construction and dynamism of the city;

“...a ‘mechanosphere’ [is] a set of constantly evolving systems or networks, machinic assemblages which intermix categories like the biological, technical, social, economic, and so on, with the boundaries of meaning and practice between the categories always shifting. This Deleuzo-Guattarian conception has a crucial consequence: the technical is not seen as separate from the social or the natural”.

(Amin & Thrift, 2002: 78)

The integration of these processes, for Amin and Thrift, does not produce a ubiquitous ‘messiness’ however. While this messiness is a more accurate portrayal of city mechanics, it requires a more nuanced perspective, as Amin and Thrift (2002: 81, original emphasis) argue;

“We certainly take circulation to be a central characteristic of the city, as... cities exist as means of movement, as means to engineer *encounters* through collection, transport and collation. They produce, thereby, a complex pattern of traces, a threadwork of intensities which antecedent to the sustained work of revealing the city minute on minute, hour on hour, day on day and so on. These forces are distinguished in four ways: by what they carry, by how they carry, by their stretch in

space and by their cyclicity. It follows that these forces are at once local and distributed, natural and artificial, objective and constructed, material and semiotic”.

The metaphor of ‘carrying’ and ‘cyclicity’ is a pertinent one that will be alluded to throughout this thesis as it provides tangible idiosyncrasies for the descriptive empirics to be attached to, reigning in ubiquitous complexity (and therefore description) to be aligned with a more nuanced and ‘personified’ perspective (Latour, 2005).

This ‘new vocabulary’ (*ibid.*: 78) is becoming more prevalent in the world city literature, and the network concepts laid down initially by Castells (1996) is reworked into a poststructurally induced topological formation which reflects more accurately the processes within the city;

“Our position is that networks are both *social structures* and *ongoing processes*, which are constituted, transformed and reproduced through asymmetrical and evolving power relations by intentional social actors and their intermediaries. This relational view of networks emphasizes the role of human agency and the ongoing formation of networks that produce empirical outcomes”.

(Dicken et al., 2001: 105, original emphasis)

Dicken et al (2001) use specific terminology to relate their ontology to ANT, which is a key component of this reconceptualisation of world cities as it is inherently poststructural (as will be discussed in the following section). Therefore, the actions of the actants (or the ‘doing’ of the humans and nonhumans – denoted by Amin and Thrift (2002) with their reluctance to extricate the technical from the social or the

natural, see quote above) propel the constant flux and dynamism of this continuum into a topological spatial formation that connects phenomena together into actor-networks.

One example of how this horizontalization (or relationality, if we are to relate back to Smith's (2003a, 2003b) initial vocabulary), as an empirically as well as ontologically viable phenomenon, is the emergence of a 'NY-LON lifestyle'. The connectivity between New York and London is perhaps the most prevalent of all the urban networks (see Beaverstock et al., 2000) due in part to the similar lifestyles of this 'Atlanticism' – which is the subject of one particular Newsweek article in 2000. In this article, the linkage between the two cities was not just highlighted, but indeed assimilated into “a place called NY-LON, a single city inconveniently separated by an ocean” (McGuire & Chan, 2000: 40). This article goes on to highlight some of the driving forces between the rise and conglomeration of these two metropolises and pinpoints the increase of international finance as the engine room. The world's two leading finance centres, Wall Street and The City are perhaps the most linked, being “drawn together by money, more of which churns through Wall Street and The City each day than though the rest of the world's financial centres combined” (2000: 41). This assertion casts doubt upon the original and traditional boundaries of the two cities with their geographical distance being swamped by their contextual 'togetherness'. Smith (2003b) argues that this is an example of the two cities being “no more than the undefined middle of a continuum” (*ibid.*: 570), a continuum that stretches beyond just these two cities<sup>24</sup>.

Along with this view of the NYLONS, other relational data has focused on airline passenger numbers (Smith and Timberlake, 2001; Choi et al., 2006), firm

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<sup>24</sup> This phenomenon was serialised in a (rather unsuccessful) Channel 4 drama, entitled *NY-LON* (2004), which just exemplifies the emergence of the NY-LON as a viable view of London and New York.

connectivity between world cities (Faulconbridge, 2004, Faulconbridge et al., 2007), telecommunications (Rutherford, 2004, 2005), research connectivity through co-authorship relations (Matthiessen et al., 2006) and connectivity matrices between global and world cities (see Taylor et al., 2002a, 2002b)<sup>25</sup>, however the amount of relational data remains relatively small. Within the premise of 'World City Relational Data', the GaWC group have ten data sets that help address the lack-of-relational-data problem, and in doing so have laid some important groundwork in the continuation of the search for reliable world city relational data. These data sets have been used by other prominent academics to forge other links between cities and collect some relational data (with their findings posted on the GaWC website as 'Research Bulletins').

Having started to consider ANT as a theoretical tool, as well as empirically evaluating the world city network in general; it is now pertinent to delve into the theorisation of ANT formally. Therefore, the following section will consider the theoretical influences and exponents of ANT, aligning it with what has gone before in this chapter (namely new urbanism) as well as what will come after (the methodology).

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<sup>25</sup> Some of the research agendas will be critically discussed in the following chapter.

### 3.2 Actor-Network Theory

Having discussed how cities are theorised as a continuum (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Smith 2003a, 2003b, 2005) it now becomes necessary to consider how best to approach such a complex and dynamic continuum or actor-network. Moving on to discuss ANT is a logical step to take when dealing with the background literature of this thesis as it is closely related to the ideas put forward by the BwO (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988), or post-structuralism as a whole (see Dicken et al., 2001; Doel and Hubbard, 2002; Smith, 2003a). Using ANT as the perspective<sup>26</sup> has many advantages to this thesis, and by the end of this section, it will become clear what they are – first though, some of the ideas and philosophies behind ANT will be clarified.

ANT is closely associated with Bruno Latour, John Law and Michel Callon (among others) who have been critical of the binary dualisms that are inherent in (social) science – structure/agency, objectivity/subjectivity, nature/culture and importantly to this thesis, local/global (see Latour, 1993, 2005; Law, 1994 and Murdoch 1997a, 1997b). Instead, ANT celebrates the ‘in between’;

“[ANT] claims to have escaped almost all such [binary] choices: it celebrates its powers of ‘in-betweenness’ and proclaims the end of ‘heres’ and ‘theres’; from now on, it says, we should concentrate on middles, links, chains, networks and associations”.

(Murdoch, 1997b: 332)

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<sup>26</sup> The term ‘perspective’ is used deliberately instead of theory, as ANT is not considered a ‘theory’ (Latour, 2005). See Section 4.3 for a more detailed discussion.

ANT is therefore fundamentally concerned with the relationships and associations that create the 'stabilized' and seemingly 'fixed' structures, networks, knowledge, economies and capitalism, which are not 'static' or 'structures' but heterogeneous actor-networks (James, 2006). Indeed, "an actor-network is simultaneously an actor whose activity is networking heterogeneous elements of humans and nonhumans, and a network that is able to redefine and transform what is it made of" (Callon, 1988: 93). Or to quote Latour, (2005: 177, original emphasis), "the macro is neither 'above' nor 'below' the interactions, but *added* to them as *another* of their connections, feeding them and feeding off them". Agency is important in an actor-network as it is the 'force' (Latour, 1993, 2005) which drives the continued creation of the actor-network. As is explained;

"In order for an actor successfully to enrol entities (human and non-human) within a network, their behaviour must be stabilized and channelled in the direction desired by the enrolling actor. This will entail redefining the roles of the actors and entities as they come into alignment, such that they come to gain new identities or attributes within the network".

(Murdoch, 1995: 747)

This process of enrolment is crucial to ANT as it is how the network lengthens. Actors (or actants – the term for both human and nonhuman actors) use their agency (which has many different terms) in two ways – as 'intermediaries' and 'mediators';

"An intermediary, in my vocabulary, is what transports meaning or force without transformation: defining its inputs is enough to define its outputs... Mediators, on the other hand, cannot be counted as just one; they might count for one, for nothing, for several, or for infinity. Their input

is never a good predictor of their output; their specificity has to be taken into account every time”.

(Latour, 2005: 39)

The terms intermediary and mediator are therefore terms for the ‘effectualness’ of actants. They can enrol other actants into their network, and this is how ‘power’ is therefore formed (Allen, 2004). Enrolling actants into the network is a form of ‘translation’, another ANT term that requires definition;

“The word ‘translation’ now takes on a somewhat specialised meaning: a relation that does not transport causality but induces two mediators into coexisting. If some causality appears to be transported in a predictable and routine way, then it’s the proof that other mediators have been put in place to render such a displacement smooth and predictable”.

(Latour, 2005: 108)

Translation is therefore the idiosyncrasy for power in the network (Allen, 2004) – it is the force of the actants (as well as mediators and intermediaries) that continually produce and stabilize, creating the actor-network. Other forms of translation include ‘problematization’ (Callon, 1986) which is the identification of the ‘goal’ of a network; and ‘interessement’ which is “the group of actions by which an entity ... attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of other actors it defines through problematization” (Callon, 1986: 208). These processes are the technical idioms of the intricacies of translation and therefore their use should be restricted to be in conjunction with a discussion of the neologisms of ANT. A more succinct explanation is offered by Murdoch (2006: 69, original emphasis);

“Thus, in an important sense the distinction between actors (those that *organize* the associations or networks) and intermediaries (those that are *organized* within networks) comes at the end of the construction process, when the former can take credit for the latter. However we should remember that it is only through the (translated) efforts of these associated others that the actor is able to grow in size and extend its reach over greater distances, becoming in effect, global”.

Focusing on the ‘inbetweenness’ (Murdoch, 1997b) and the networks of associations is therefore one reason why ANT has been incorporated into new urbanism (Smith, 2003a), as it leads the researcher to empirically evaluate what is actually moving in between cities and not what is simply ‘in’ them. The rejection of structure, scale and boundaries renders ANT comparable (though by no means identical) to poststructuralism (Dicken et al., 2001); yet as has been suggested, it is more descriptive and explained through the process of story-telling (Latour, 2005);

“The provenance of actor-network theory lies in poststructuralism: the vision is of many semiotic systems, many orderings jostling together to create the social. On the other hand, actor-network theory is more concerned with changing recursive processes than is usual in writing influenced by poststructuralism. It tends to tell stories, stories that have to do with the processes of ordering that generate effects such as technologies, stories about how actor-networks elaborate themselves, and stories which erode the distinction between micro- and macro-social”.

(Law, 1994: 18)

This sentiment can be summed up by arguing that “society is not what holds us together, it is what is held together” (Latour, 1986: 276). The use of ANT therefore is



imperative to the obtaining of relational data for world city networks as it precisely these processes that are creating the spacing and the timing of the world city network, yet they remain largely absent from the new urbanism literature. The established dualisms in human geography, i.e. global/local, can be dissected using ANT, which will be undertaken in the latter part of this section. But first, it is important to highlight one of the major thrusts of ANT, which is the emphasis it places on the nonhuman.

Latour (1993) brought to the fore the human/nonhuman divide in his definition of a 'purification process', which is a process that leads to two entirely distinct ontological zones, referring to humans and non-humans. This formulated or forced dualism has been a sticking point for Latour, as the hybridity of humans and non-humans and splicing of their (inter)actions is a complex and historical issue. Latour describes how humans in the pre-civilisation era were like a Baboon society, in that we did not use any tools. Baboon society is socially constructed as their interaction is total; there is no delegation to nonhuman actants (i.e. tools). As Latour describes:

“Humans for a few millions of years now have extended their social relations to other actants with which, with whom, they have swapped many properties, and with which, with whom, they form a collective. There is no sense in which the notion of a human can be disentangled from the nonhumans into whose fate it has woven more and more intimately over the ages”.

(Latour 1994a: 793)

As humans have continually used tools or nonhuman actants, it becomes impossible to extricate human actors from nonhuman actants. This has been contested, quite common sensibly with the notion that the human actors ultimately have the initiative

over the actants; after all, humans have the power of speech, rational thought, emotion and so on (Vandenberghe, 2002). Also, Kirsch and Mitchell (2004) find that the equivalence of humans and nonhumans cannot account for the social relations that drive network formation. However, it is vital to comprehend that network formation involves both human and nonhuman actants to the same degree, whether they are social, cultural, economic and so on. The power inherent in an article or an internet text can be just as forceful or power-inherent as a lecture from a professor (which would not be possible without inhuman actants, namely the lecture room, slides or microphone). Every action that is carried out by a human actor therefore 'ends up in the action of a nonhuman', thereby the responsibility of that action lies with both human and nonhuman actants (Latour, 1994).

The dualism therefore between humans and nonhumans has been critiqued by Latour, not by simply finding a middle ground between the two, but by-passing it all together. This is echoed by Jöns (2006: 573) who suggests that there is a "complex trinity of actants" that forms a continuum ranging from immaterial entities, through dynamic hybrids to material entities, which highlights the falsity of the human/nonhuman divide. Indeed, the aim of ANT is to move away from all binaries, dualisms and dichotomies (Murdoch, 1995, 1997a). The mentioning of these dualisms is problematic in two important ways. First, it cleaves the social sciences into two distinct camps, inevitably creating a search for the middle path, a harmony between the two, which causes highly unnecessary schisms and debate within and across scientific literature. The second, perhaps more damning way is that these terms are ultimately very misleading. Indeed;

"... the words 'local' and 'global' offer points of view on networks that are by nature neither local nor global, but are more or less long and more or less connected".

(Latour, 1993: 122)

The terms 'local' and 'global', as Latour suggests, are simply terms or words used to *frame* actions and processes into neat accessible boxes when, in reality these processes and actions transcend these 'terms' and create a network that can stretch across pre-given national borders or indeed individuals. These binary terms only serve as 'frames' (Latour, 2005) that limit the ongoing interaction between actants, when really it is their actions that are creating the continuums and networks. ANT can be counter-intuitive, and "go against the grain of common sense" (Law and Hetherington, 2000: 43), however it is important to realise that these binaries are *constructed*. For example, what is something when it is considered 'global'? Latour suggests an explanation;

"It does not require a deep understanding of topology to realise that the two [local and global] don't only differ by their end point, but also by the type of deformation they permit: when you put some local site 'inside' a larger framework, you are forced to *jump*. There is now a yawning break between what encloses and what is enclosed, between the more local and the more global. What would happen if we forbade any breaking or tearing and allowed only bending, stretching and squeezing? Could we then go *continuously* from the local interaction to the many delegating actors? The departure point and all the points recognised as its origin would now remain *side by side* and a connection, a fold would be visible".

(Latour, 2005: 173-174, original emphasis)

By conceptualising the terms 'local' and 'global' as frames, it is then possible to view these terms as if they are a snapshot of the network, a specific bounded area of the network which cuts off the connections that embroil it within the rest of the network.

This being the case, it becomes imperative to remove scale and dualisms as they ontologically obstruct the ongoing processes and interactions that create these extensive, complex and dynamic networks (Murdoch, 1998; Dicken et al., 2001). Instead, the 'in-betweenness' (Murdoch, 1997b) is celebrated, as Breslau (2000: 28) notes, "the space of relations defined as direct links between agents in a concrete interaction needs to be supplemented by relations defined in terms of similarity and difference, in a word, classification".

ANT reconstitutes the notion of geographical space. As Beslau noted, spaces of relations are not ontologically rigid, but are *relative*. ANT suggests that space is "relationally constituted by assemblages that pull certain places into proximity while pushing others in the distance" (Murdoch, 2006: 93). Differing spatial forms can therefore occupy the same territory;

"Each space is qualitatively different – they are not variations on one of them, but come about through vastly divergent processes. Each has a geohistory that must be engaged on its own terms. Each is territorialized in the landscape by means of human and nonhuman 'agents', guided by a certain set of instructions, tendencies, trajectories".

(Bonta & Protevi, 2004: 173)

Therefore, it would be "better to approach space as a verb rather than a noun" (Doel 2000: 125) as ANT takes us past the constraints of scale and hierarchies and views the world as a make-up of connections purged by the 'doing' or *practices* of actants, both human and non-human. The term 'practice' is problematic in the ANT literature. For example, whereas Murphy (2006) suggests practice is more stabilized and embedded in place, Allen (2004) suggests that practice can be considered heterogeneous and topological. For the purposes of this thesis, thinking of practice

as Allen (2004) does is in keeping with ANT and poststructural world city geographers discussed in previous sections. Amin (2004: 33) provides an explanation;

“In this emerging new order, spatial configurations and spatial boundaries are no longer necessarily or purposively territorial or scalar, since the social, economic, political and cultural inside and outside are constituted through the topologies of actor networks which are becoming increasingly dynamic and varied in spatial construction”.

This ‘spatial variation’ is what Serres and Latour (1995) visualise when they offer the analogy of the handkerchief; when spread out, you can see certain fixed distances, but when crumpled up these two distances are suddenly close, even superimposed. This ‘crumpling’ forms a mesh of networks (much like the production of a feature film). The production would incorporate many actants from differing locations, whose actions constitute the timing and spacing of the network, all folded in with the others to produce not simply one time and space, but a multitude of contemporaneous space-time topologies (Murdoch, 1998) or (to continue the language used previously) continuums. As Latour again suggests ‘place’ (or the ‘local’) is made up of a host of interactions; “what is acting at the same moment in any place is coming from many other places, many distant materials, and many faraway actors” (Latour, 2005: 200).

So, the term ‘place’ or ‘local’ then becomes as false as the term ‘global’. These ‘distanced networks’ (Thrift, 1999) only serve to create the notion of ‘place’ or ‘territoriality’ through the temporary placement of ever-moving materials immanent geographies, or as ‘hauntings’ of things that have moved on but left their mark – the sum of which “are cities and regions without prescribed or proscribed boundaries” (Amin, 2004: 34). In other words, the networks give the *illusion* of the local and place

through the mechanics of the network, and whilst they may seem like a point or node, they are continually in flux, which is why ANT can be considered counter-intuitive (Law and Hetherington, 1998) – indeed, “there’s nothing more unsettling than the continual movement of something that seems fixed” (Deleuze, 1995: 157).

The use of ANT as an empirical tool is not limited to the construction of space and the dispelling of scales and dualist thinking. The actor-networks comprise all previously conceived ‘structures’ including the human. As Murdoch (1998: 368) argues;

“At certain times and in certain places humans can be networks – compositions of various entities – with identities which derive from the relations established between these entities; on other occasions in other places, humans can be situated in networks as enclosed and discrete entities-in-themselves, with relatively fixed and coherent forms of being”.

In both cases, the human is connected to the rest of the actor-network through its associations, and the ‘boundary’ of the human should be dispelled in the same way as the ‘boundary’ between the local and the global.

This rejection of boundaries is also evident in the reconceptualisation of ‘culture’ (discussed in section 2.3), and indeed if we use ANT to research the processes involved in the cultural industries, then the usefulness of preconceived boundaries of ‘cultural globalisation’, ‘economic globalisation’ and ‘political globalisation’ become questionable. Indeed it has been suggested that the economic/cultural fault line is nothing more than the constructed compartmentalisation of the processes of production and consumption (Whatmore, 2002; Amin and Thrift, 2007). These meta-narratives then become simply processes of actants that create a topological spatial

formation that is free from any constriction into culture, economics or politics. This is why ANT and poststructuralism are often seen in close (theoretical) alignment, as the poststructural ideas of the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988), of multiplicities (Serres and Latour, 1995), of fluidity (Mol and Law, 1994), of messiness in the social sciences (Law, 2004) can be articulated through a reading of ANT theorisation. These ideas can and have been related to the city; as a BwO (Smith, 2003a, 2003b) and as 'fuzzy' concepts (Doel and Hubbard, 2002), which then renders ANT necessary to the studying of the complexities and dynamism of the city because of its usefulness in empirically evaluating these poststructural concepts.

Finally in this section, ANT can also force us to consider the notion of time. In the same way that space is seen as constructed through processes, then as too is time. Geographical thought can be overly concentrated on space, yet the theorisation of the timing of cities can equally be informed with an ANT approach. Latour suggests;

"Time is always folded. So the idea of any synchronic interaction where all ingredients will have the same age and the same pace is meaningless... Action has always been carried on thanks to shifting the burden of connection to longer- or shorter-lasting entities".

(Latour, 2005: 201)

The city has been theorised in new urbanism in a similar way with Amin and Thrift (2002: 22) arguing that "the spatial and temporal porosity of the city opens it to footprints from the past and contemporary links elsewhere... The city is full of footprints of simultaneity, loaded with spatiotemporal tramlines". The coming together of different times as interactions is something which an ANT study also necessitates. Therefore this thesis also references the construct of the *timing* of Sydney as a world

city, using the empirics to show how these timings have been constructed in conjunction with it's space.

This chapter has concentrated on the theoretical literature which has informed this thesis as well as discussed how it will contribute to the world city literature. It is now pertinent to discuss how this thesis will use the theoretical ideals, detailed throughout this chapter, in the formulation of a methodology, which is the subject of the following chapter.



The objectives set out in section 1.1.2 state clearly that this thesis is designed to produce a relational data set on Sydney's cultural industries, as well as to show how the practices of the various humans and nonhumans being studied create the spacing and timing of Sydney as a connected world city. The theoretical literature of ANT (discussed in section 3.2) is important to these objectives, and is equally important to the methodological techniques. This is because "simple clear descriptions don't work if what they are describing is itself not very coherent" (Law, 2004: 2). Law goes on to suggest that "the task is to imagine methods when they no longer seek the definite, the repeatable, the more or less stable. When they no longer assume that this is what they are after" (*ibid.*: 6). This means that there are no formulaic research methods (Hoggart, 2002; James, 2006) that can be 'cut-and-pasted' between projects.

Research in the realm of economic geography has been focused on the social relations of capitalism, with Herod (2002: 7) noting that "rather than simply thinking of industrial relations as 'playing out' over the economic landscape of capitalism in a uni-directional manner – the decision of industrial relations actors impact on how this uneven development subsequently unfolds". While seeming pertinent as a justification for research in new urbanism, Herod later attempts to 'embed' these relations by suggesting that "social life takes place in particular geographical configurations" (*ibid.*: 9). As ANT and the ethos of new urbanism thinks alternatively about these meta-narratives, there cannot be a suggestion that the processes being studied are 'embedded' in a particular scale. The discussion of ANT in section 3.2

suggested that the veracity of the 'real world', dualisms and a scalar ontology (or to use Herod's articulation – spatial configurations) are questioned, as they can be regarded as restrictive meta-narratives. Instead, the methodology should describe and take notes as "it's the only way there is to become slightly more objective" (Latour, 2005: 135) and thereby ignore these meta-narratives.

Therefore, this thesis will describe narratives and tell stories (*ibid.*) of Sydney's film and television production industry. However, in order to provide representative research, there needs to be a clear and methodological process outlined which justifies the selection of who (and what) to survey, interview and shadow. Therefore, the rest of this chapter will be delineated into three phases of the fieldwork. The first phase (PI) is concerned with the collection of quantitative relational data on Sydney's cultural industries that is commensurable with previous world city research (such as Krätke, 2003; Krätke and Taylor, 2004; Derudder and Taylor, 2005; Beaverstock et al., 2006). This section will outline a sample of the previous research that has used similar methodological techniques and assess the advantages and disadvantages of using such methods. PI is designed to be a precursor to phase two (PII), which is discussed in the second section. PII collected qualitative, descriptive data of the connections, which is important to the development of a data set that will align with the ideals of new urbanism that were discussed in section 3.1. This section will also provide some examples of other work which is of a similar ilk, and suggest how the empirics of this thesis can benefit from some of the methodological idioms used in those research agendas. The third section describes the third phase (PIII), which consists of the case studies of ethnographic work, and how this built upon the data collected in PII. The justification for using specific types of ethnographic data is outlined in this section, with the fourth and final section concluding with some of the critiques of ANT-inspired methodologies, and then subsequently showing how the methodological techniques of this thesis counters/answers those critiques.

#### 4.1 PI – Relational Quantitative Data

The history of research into global and world cities, and the theoretical consequences of this research have been well documented in the previous chapters. But, for the purposes of justifying the methodological techniques of this thesis, it is necessary to briefly revisit some of the key arguments.

A major factor of the world city research carried out by Friedmann (1986, 1995) and Sassen (1991, 1994) was the production of hierarchies with major metropolitan areas singled out as being at the ‘top’ of a hierarchy<sup>27</sup> as major command and control centres. These hierarchies were defined upon attributional data; in other words, what was *in* cities counted toward where they were placed in the hierarchy (Smith, 2003a). This form of hierarchical ontology has since been forwarded by, among others, the GaWC scholars who devised a hierarchical system based on relational data to ascertain world city inter-connectivity (seminal works include Beaverstock et al., 1999, 2000; Taylor, 2004). This form of relational hierarchy required a new type of data, hence there are a number of empirical agendas in world city research that can be called upon in order to shape the methodologies of this thesis<sup>28</sup>. As stated in the research aims and objectives, this thesis aims to contribute to the world city literature by providing a relational quantitative data set that is commensurable with other relational world city data. However, while PI will produce this relational quantitative data, it will stop short of formulating a hierarchy based on the connectivity of cities – to do so would be in conflict with the data presented in PII and PIII.

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<sup>27</sup> For example, Sassen’s (1991) book title *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* is conducive to a triumvirate hierarchy of cities. Other authors of note to create similar hierarchies of world cities include Thrift (1989) and Reed (1989), however “they had little appropriate empirical evidence on the linkages between cities that they imagined formed a hierarchy” (Smith, 2005: 174).

<sup>28</sup> Visit the research bulletins at [www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc) to see over 255 published and unpublished research papers.

The methodologies employed by some GaWC researchers are similar as they are working toward a common goal, namely producing a hierarchy of cities based on connectivity. Therefore, for the interests of clarity, I shall focus on one author, namely Peter Taylor (2004b) and his book *World City Network: A Global Urban Analysis*. This is a comprehensive piece of work which draws on the results and techniques of many of his, and his collaborators previous papers (chiefly Beaverstock et al., 1999, but also Taylor and Walker, 2001; Taylor, 2001a, 2001b; Derudder et al., 2003). The majority of the data collated is firm data obtained from websites and other available sources, specifically information about the cities in which the headquarters of international APS firms reside and their subsidiary branches. The data produced therefore makes an attempt to quantify the connectivity between world cities. However, by Taylor's own admission, this can obfuscate some of the information;

“In conversion from information to data there is always a tension between keeping as much of the original material as possible and creating a credible ordering that accommodates all degrees of information across cases”.

(Taylor, 2004b: 67)

Taylor is suggesting that the risk of losing some of the information which comes about through quantification is an occupational hazard for world city researchers, yet from the perspective of this thesis, by supplementing this with qualitative data that will be subsequently gathered in PII and PIII, that risk can be reduced. Moreover, ANT would suggest that the loss of this information comes about from attempts at a *subjectification* of the information (Law, 2004; Latour, 2005; Murdoch, 2006). The subjectification debate, within traditional ANT literature concerns itself with the human/nonhuman divide (see Bloor, 1999a, 1999b; Latour, 1999). However,

subjectification in this instance (and throughout this thesis) is meant as that which entails purporting the observed to a pre-conceived meta-narrative (Peck, 2003), i.e. subjectification is “form determining content” (Martson et al., 2005: 426).

This subjectification then becomes a problem if the thesis consisted of PI alone and it produced a hierarchical data set – it is the addition of PII and PIII, the objective descriptive methodologies that compliment PI. Taylor elaborates on the difficulty of using data from websites and other secondary sources;

“How credible are these data? They are far from perfect, largely dependent as they are on what information is available on websites. But the key issue is the subjectivity inherent in the process of this data creation: the resulting data do not have the key property of inter-subjectivity. That is to say, two people using the same information will not always decide on the same boundaries. Given the nature of the information this is inevitable. One fundamental question arises. Does this issue lead to so much uncertainty in the data that the exercise is irredeemably flawed? There are two answers to counter this concern. First, the means of scoring has been designed to be as simple as possible... Second the exercise is carried out over a large number of firms so that the particular differences will most likely be ironed out in the aggregate analyses that the data are designed for”.

(Taylor, 2004b: 67)

In PI, extensive website analysis was conducted (as well as other publicly available sources such as directories), so this concern was particularly acute and needed to be addressed.

Name of CEO/MD	<input type="text"/>
Company Name	<input type="text"/>
Main Products (e.g. feature films, tv dramas etc.)	<input type="text"/>
Total No. of employees	1-5 <input type="button" value="v"/>
Annual Turnover	\$0-\$24,999 <input type="button" value="v"/>
Headquarters Location	<input type="text"/>

Please list below, the other CITIES that you may have other offices in (either in Australia or abroad) and how many employees in each office:

City where other office located	No. of employees
1. <input type="text"/>	1-5 <input type="button" value="v"/>
2. <input type="text"/>	1-5 <input type="button" value="v"/>
3. <input type="text"/>	1-5 <input type="button" value="v"/>
4. <input type="text"/>	1-5 <input type="button" value="v"/>
5. <input type="text"/>	1-5 <input type="button" value="v"/>

In the box below please put any suggestions that may be useful to my further research. This can include publications that may be of use, or any websites that you can suggest, or simply put your name and e-mail if you would not mind being contacted in the future about follow-up research. Many thanks.

**Figure 4.1: Webform that was emailed to production companies**

Each production company that had a website was contacted initially via email with a web-form (Figure 4.1), with closed questions of a limited number to ensure maximum response rate. The questions were aimed at ascertaining the size (in terms of staff and turnover) and production capacity of these firms and to draw up an overview of the industry and it's 'major players'.

Initially, during the preliminary fieldwork phase (i.e. before visiting Sydney), a list was constructed of those production companies that had a website, however the response rate was poor (only five per cent). As they were simply emailed to the firms via their general email address, it seems probable that it was simply dismissed as junk mail. However, it also acted as a pilot study, in that it enabled the subsequent phone survey that was conducted in Sydney to be geared to collate more relevant data. In other words, the response rate and the answers that were given in the web-based questionnaire provided enough information for the questions in the phone survey to be altered so as to obtain the relevant data. For example, many of the respondents that did reply, declined to answer the question regarding the annual turnover of the company, so in order to increase the response rate of the phone survey, this question was omitted in order to reduce the chance of a respondent not wishing to take part. Figure 4.2 below shows the recording schedule for the questions that were asked.

Company Details									
Name of Firm									
Name of CEO/MD/Founder									
Background/Experience									
Overseas Offices		Yes/No	Locations						
No. of Staff			No. in 'Creative'						
Year Established									
What type of programming is your main output(s)?									
Feature Films	TV Films	TV Drama	TV miniseries	Children's TV	News	Sport	Docu-mentaries	Com-mercials	Other
Connectivity									
Main Competitors				In which products					
Main Collaborators				In which products					
Advisory personnel?				For what reasons?					
Does anybody contact you for advice?				For what reasons?					

**Figure 4.2: Recording mechanism for the phone survey (PI)**

In Sydney, I was able to obtain (through the AFC – one of the industry mediators) the most comprehensive industry directory, the Encore Directory 2004<sup>29</sup>. It lists all the various sub-sectors of filmmaking (directors, producers, postproduction, make-up artists costume designers and so on) with one sub-sector being 'production companies'. By conducting short (five to ten minutes) phone-based highly-structured

<sup>29</sup> When cross-referenced with other directories including the Yellow Pages, The Production Book and the AFI Yearbook, the Encore Directory 2004 listed all the companies in the other directories plus others, indicating it is the most comprehensive source for firms and freelancers in the industry.



interviews with the MD or CEO of each of the listed firms ( $n = 275$ ), the level of information required to complete this part of the research was gathered speedily and accurately. Also, the response rate was more favourable, with 75 of the 275 listed firms responding (27 per cent). One way in which this survey overcame the problems that Taylor (2004b) encountered with website research, was that it standardised definitions by contacting all the firms being surveyed and speaking to the CEO or MD directly – which for an industry the size of Sydney’s production industry was less time consuming. And as has been discussed, the qualitative data collected in this thesis (i.e. PII and PIII) adds to the quantitative data in that many of the connections that are ‘quantified’ in the initial data collection phase are ‘described’ in the second.

As Figure 4.2 shows, the questionnaire was divided into three parts, the first of which was designed to get the information on the size of the firm. Finding out the number of staff was important for ascertaining size – and with those firms with large numbers, a subsequent question was asked as to how many of those staff occupied creative roles (i.e. producer, director as opposed to an administrative or office assistant). The year of establishment was asked in conjunction with their background and experience, in order to establish the relative ‘weight’ that the firm would have in the industry. In order to collect relational quantitative data, the phone questionnaire not only had to determine the size, but also the inter-city connectivity of each particular firm. Therefore, the number and locations of subsidiary offices was asked so as to quantify the firms’ inter-city connectivity. This question is crucial to the objectives of this thesis as it equates with information that is gathered by Taylor (2004b) and the other relational quantitative data research papers (such as those discussed in section 3.1).

As well as quantitatively determining the connectivity by asking the question regarding subsidiary offices, it was decided to elaborate on this principle, which was the purpose of the third section of the survey. Porac et al. (1995), when studying the knitwear

producers of Scotland, employed a methodological technique which fits well with the aims and goals of this thesis. In their study, which was concerned with rivalry, they contacted the CEO or MD of each firm and asked a series of questions designed to outline who their main competitors were, and who they saw as their collaborators. This information was used primarily to formulate an idea of the 'structure' of the industry, in that although a firm may have only two or three employees it may be very productive and consider itself in competition with the larger firms<sup>30</sup>. Given the concern that Taylor has with losing material when converting 'information to data' (2004b: 67), attempts to quantify the data from this section of the questionnaire would have meant losing a lot of this information as it proved to be very 'messy' (Law, 2004), as well as time and place specific<sup>31</sup>. Therefore, the data was used as a guide to the overall organisation of the industry as well as providing some additional qualitative data for PII and PIII. So, using the ideas utilised by Porac et al. (1995) allowed an element of the firms' connectedness to be researched. Thus, PI was specifically designed to collect the *relational* quantitative (analysed in the next chapter) data, as well as to obtain a general overview of the workings, organization and connectivity of the industry, which would provide me with more knowledge of the industry and therefore be more informed and prepared for PII (Chapters 6 and 7).

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<sup>30</sup> For example, McElroy Television is run by Hal McElroy with two other employees, but he used to be an executive producer for Southern Star, a large established firm. So, once he created his own firm he still owned the rights to many of the most popular television shows in Australia, so considered himself in competition with Southern Star and the other larger firms. For other examples, see section 5.1.1.

<sup>31</sup> For example, many of the respondents stated that they considered all other freelance producers in their field to be competitors, yet when asked about collaborators they mentioned specific names, suggesting that they collaborate on some projects yet compete in others. This is reminiscent of a management theory issue of 'co-opetition' (Brandenburger and Nalebuff, 1996).

The other problem that has been highlighted by Taylor (2004b) is a lack of readily available information<sup>32</sup>. This is particularly acute in the cultural industries, as these sectors tend to have a heavier population of freelancers and part-time workers which can be omitted from official listings (Christopherson, 2002, 2004; Roodhouse, 2006). Also, Derudder et al. (2003)<sup>33</sup> used a numerical system of scoring the cities; the headquarters of a firm scored that city 5, with a sliding scale down to 1 for an 'ordinary office with something missing (e.g. no partners in a law office)' (*ibid.*: 878), and 0 for no office in that city. Given the scores for each city and each firm, a statistical matrix equation is then used to calculate the inter-connectivity of the world cities selected for study on which a hierarchy within a network is then constructed. This style of research is valuable in order to produce statistical data sets on world city connectivity, and if conducted regularly can provide data on how the connectivity can change over time. However, to produce these network hierarchies is only part of the aims and objectives of this thesis. The quantification of the relations can put ontological constraints on the connections of those world cities being studied (Smith, 2003a) and ultimately a hierarchy is still produced, albeit based on connectivity. Therefore, for this thesis to satisfy the objectives set out in section 1.1.2, it needs to focus on these relations and describe them as objectively as possible (Latour, 2005) in PII and PIII if it is to produce an empirical study that is not commensurable with a scalar ontology, but with a topological ontology.

As another example of a world city network methodological technique, I will briefly discuss Choi et al. (2006), who in their paper compare the connectivity of the air passenger networks and the 'internet backbone'. The air travel data used is from the

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<sup>32</sup> This concern is echoed in other world city research. Derudder et al. (2003: 878) state the criteria for selecting a firm to study was "purely practical – whether adequate information could be found on the firm's website".

<sup>33</sup> This paper, of which Taylor is co-author, is drawn upon in Taylor (2004b)

same source as other world city research papers<sup>34</sup>, and the internet connectivity is based on ISP bandwidth of pair links cities. Choi et al. (2006) compare the two differing networks and the hierarchies of cities produced in both of the networks. Introducing a different 'theme' to the world city network (i.e., that of the 'internet backbone') is commendable, yet the cities that occur toward the top of that hierarchy mirror those cities that are near the top of the hierarchies produced in similar studies of air travel;

"The findings of this study... illustrate that information and human flows are heavily concentrated in a handful of hub cities in Europe and the USA. Except for these core communication regions, most other regions remain peripheral".

(Choi et al., 2006: 95)

Fundamentally, it is a compare and contrast study, which does not pay attention to the characteristics of the 'in-betweenness'<sup>35</sup> of world city networks. The conclusion reached by the network analysis is compared with the political economic ethos of cities as core and peripheral regions (reminiscent of Friedmann's (1986) conception), which this thesis departs from. And as mentioned before, these hierarchical data sets, produced by statistical network analysis, stop short of providing qualitative data on the characteristics of the connections that they are quantifying. As a result, they do not contribute to a poststructuralist theorisation of world cities (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Doel

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<sup>34</sup> Most notably, Smith and Timberlake (2001). However, air travel data has been used extensively to formulate hierarchies of cities, with Long and Uris (1971) being among the first, with Cattán (1995) and Keeling (1995) bring air traffic into the realm of world city geography research. Also, Sassen (1998) incorporated air travel into her theorisation of world cities as command and control centres.

<sup>35</sup> The 'in-between' is a phrase that Murdoch (2006) uses when arguing for a topological spatial formation and while he was not directly referring to the concept of world cities, the idea of the 'in-between' resonates with calls from Smith (2003a, 2003b) to study the characteristics of the connections between world cities.

and Hubbard, 2002; Smith, 2005, 2006, 2007) and instead relate to a political economic language of world cities (akin to those previously discussed such as Friedmann, 1986, 1995; Sassen, 1999, 2001; Castells, 1996, as well as more recent pro-scale literature such as Mahon, 2006; Jonas, 2006 and Hadjimichalis and Hudson, 2006).

To create thematic hierarchies of cities provides incidental data and produces a simplified version of events; crystallising the information gathered in the study into a 'snapshot' which is to deny the complexity and heterogeneity of the connections (Thrift, 2005; Martson et al., 2005). A methodological approach needs to be undertaken that embraces the 'messiness' and unordered nature of what is being studied, not to sanitise it (Law, 2004). The quantitative data on Sydney's cultural industries produced by this thesis does create a 'snapshot' of Sydney's urban connections, but while the data in PI shows that there are some cities that are more connected than others, the thesis will not be producing a hierarchy of those connections as in those papers discussed throughout this section. Instead, it will develop data that highlights the fuzziness (Doel and Hubbard, 2002) and fluidity (Mol and Law, 1994; Smith, 2003a, 2003b) of Sydney's urban connectivity.

## 4.2 PII – Qualitative Interview Data

In some world city research projects (for example Rutherford's (2004, 2005) work on telecommunications networks between London and Paris), there are detailed qualitative empirics about the processes involved in world city networks which are needed in order to produce relational data sets, yet remain 'embedded'<sup>36</sup> in geographical scale. Rutherford, for instance remarks;

“The strategies of telecommunications operators are, therefore, increasingly shaped by the parallel influence of global logics and territorial specificities. By having to plan, construct, deploy and run integrated pan-European, national, regional and local infrastructure networks in and between cities such as Paris and London, it is clear that, for many telecommunications operators in Europe, the influence of multiply scaled and mutually constitutive territorialities on their activities and strategies is absolutely crucial”.

(Rutherford, 2005: 2402)

Rutherford's work deals very well with the qualitative narrative of the practices of pan-European telecommunication companies in providing a “backbone for the world city network” (Rutherford, 2005: 2391), yet the political economic language he uses provides a conceptualisation, an *interpretation* of the narrative, which is undesirable for a relational account of process (Jones, 2005). In other words, once the empirics have been described and the stories have been told, if there is then an attempt to interpret

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<sup>36</sup> The concept of 'embeddedness' has been questioned in recent economic geography literature with suggestions that there is an “overterritorialized concept of embeddedness” (Hess, 2004: 174), and that “in continuing to make an epistemological division between the economic and the social, embeddedness is blinding theorists to the key configurations of individual and collective social practices that need to be theorised to understand the nature of economic outcomes” (Jones, 2008: 75).

the results or begin a paradigmatic contextualisation, then we are adding to it, distorting the data to fit our objectives (Law, 2004; Latour, 2005; Martson et al., 2005). Conducting an ANT-inspired study means that as soon as the data is contextualised into 'global/local' or some other 'grand concept'<sup>37</sup>, then the interactions obtained become lost in a pre-conceived structure. Latour provides a useful analogy;

“Although there is indeed, in every interaction, a dotted line that leads to some virtual, total, and always pre-existing entity, this is just the track that should not be followed...Such a direction has been so solidly entrenched that it now appears as some mass migration along large freeways built at great expenses and guided by huge bright signposts on which is written: ‘Context, 15km, Next Stop’”.

(Latour, 2005: 167)

Steering away from this contextualisation of the empirics is vital as this can deny the relational aspect of the research. As we have discussed in the previous chapter, world cities are not bounded entities but have “no completeness, no centre, no fixed parts” (Amin and Thrift, 2002: 8). So the relational empirics *are* the city – the processes described in the narrative constitute the spacing and timing of the city, and to relate this to scale denies this. Indeed as Law notes, “method helps to produce realities” (2004: 143). Therefore, this thesis will not *interpret* the data into a spatial or scalar context, but allow the narrative of the empirics of Sydney’s cultural industry actor-networks to ‘tell the story’ (Latour, 2005: 148) and “re-craft realities and create new versions of the world” (Law, 2004: 143), or in this case, Sydney’s cultural industries.

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<sup>37</sup> A ‘grand concept’ can be defined as a ‘top-down’ approach to spatiality. They can include dualisms such as nature/society, culture/economy, as well as notions such as territoriality. For example, a grand concept is no more evident than when Newman (2006: 156) argues, “it is clear to all scholars of borders that we live in a hierarchical world of rigid ordering and that borders – be they territorial or aspatial – are very much part of our daily lives”.

So, there is a need to move away from the concept of scale if we are to relational data, as well as present qualitative data on the practices involved in the spacing and timing of world cities. One such research project is Morris (2005), who writes on the relational networks of the artistic movement of abstract expressionism from New York in the latter half of the twentieth century. I wish to highlight this research project here, as it is a very relevant example of a methodology that can be used in this thesis. Not only does it deal with the networks in a descriptive and qualitative style, but also deals with a cultural product (abstract art). In the paper, Morris talks of how the Atlantic Ocean provided the subject for much of the artistic content in the post-WWII era;

“In the circum-Atlantic context, by understanding the oceanic space in its constitutive sense, we are drawn to the cultural relations and movements rather than the points of settlement, closure and ‘ownership’ which have, in this case, long been associated with artistic production in New York and St Ives. By focusing on the Atlantic the understanding of the cultural geographies of post-war abstract art become articulated by ‘surrogation’ (Roach 1996) rather than ownership and points of closure take on a more conduital role. Claims made of cultural origins are replaced by the continued circulation of objects and ideas through the painters, critics, dealers and others that form the elements in this network”.

(Morris, 2005: 424)

We can see from this passage that the focus of Morris’ research is on the ‘relations and movements’ of the artist and the other affiliated actors (painters, critics, dealers, guilds, governing bodies and others; but more importantly he stresses that it is these relations and movements that create the space of New York, St. Ives and the ‘circum-



Atlantic'<sup>38</sup>. This (qualitative) style of research focuses directly on the characteristics of the networks and what constitutes the spacing and timing of world cities – in this case New York and the 'circum-Atlantic'. He argues this point by concluding that “the crossings of material objects, ‘ideas and terms’, ideologies, aesthetics and critical exchanges are also key to the formation of the circum-Atlantic world” (*ibid.*: 435), suggesting more of the myriad of actants enrolled in the network and the processes that they undertake<sup>39</sup>. Interviewing the mediators of the industry is also a technique that I will employ in this thesis to provide insights into the networks of the industry, as they are intensely connected with it (often sharing personnel and executive board members). As government bodies, guilds or associations, these institutions can shape the policies and direction of the industry networks, thereby making them influential actants in the networks.

In order for the empirics of this thesis to contribute novel empirical data, it will have to focus on the processes of the network, akin to Morris. Hence, ANT is utilised as it necessitates a focus on these processes. This is key, as the notion of scale (in this following quote, Jones uses the notion of place and physical locations) is recognised as being a restrictive concept, i.e. it is treated as a by-product of practice;

“To use physical locations as an epistemological framework for theorising command and control is to a large extent arbitrary and obfuscates the socially constituted complexity of managerial power within the transnational firm. Key decisions could, and no doubt are, often made in the meeting rooms increasingly provided at international

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<sup>38</sup> This resonates with the NY-LON lifestyle that Smith (2003a) refers to (see page 58), and moreover perhaps could be viewed a historical precursor to the theoretical ideas associated with NY-LON.

<sup>39</sup> Morris (2005) refers to actants such as ‘ideologies’ and ‘aesthetics’, yet due to their very nature they can not be considered neither human nor nonhuman. They could however be then considered ‘immaterial entities’ in Jöns (2006: 573) “complex trinity of actants”.

airport hotels or even – I was told by one respondent – in the first class cabin of a jet air-liner”.

(Jones, 2002: 343)

By researching the practices of management in major banking corporations through interviews, Jones has shown how the practices of those he studied constitute the notion of power in the city, and crucially, has not contextualised the narrative to a scalar ontology but instead focuses on process. This is a sentiment Jones advances in one of his subsequent papers relating to the topological formation of the firm. He argues “this nonscalar, topological approach to the TNC/global corporation debate therefore focuses on the *practices* of transnational business (which explodes the firm as a black-box concept) rather than the quantifiable measures of the outcomes of global business activity acting as a (poor) surrogate for the processes in question” (Jones, 2005: 179, original emphasis). Note that Jones uses the terms ‘practice’ and ‘process’ to refer to similar ideals.

As has been noted, “by making itself as ‘blank’ as it can, [ANT] prepares itself to record the discriminations that are performed and the boundaries that are constructed in the activities it studies” (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 392). Therefore, referring to ANT and its ‘blankness’ as the methodology of this thesis, I will be able to show how the processes that have been described, and the practices of the humans and nonhumans that were studied, constitute the spaces and the timings of the film and TV production industry of the world city of Sydney *all by themselves*. The data sets provided by Taylor (2004b) and Choi et al. (2006) are important as they provide detailed statistical data on the connectivity of world cities, and I will be collecting similar data for Sydney. However, it is important to further the empirics by providing qualitative data, that unlike that of Rutherford (2005), allows for the relational view of world cities, and like Morris

(2005) and Jones (2002), use ANT to align itself with the relational ontology that is fundamental to understanding the topological formation of world cities.

To highlight these practices, it is important that PII describes the 'messiness' (Law, 2004) of the connections being studied which lends itself to flexible, reflexive and open-ended questioning. This is in contrast to PI which was collecting quantitative relational data and so required a line of questioning that limited the amount of information that could be lost when analysing it. This is not an issue with PII as it looks to actively embrace the variety and complexity of the data through qualitative description. To achieve this, PII used interviews as the dominant form of data collection, which allowed for a qualitative account of the networks established in PI. PII thereby provides the qualitative data that is added with the statistical quantitative data collected in PI. Interviews are an established way of obtaining the information needed, yet are only one form of qualitative data collection (Peck, 2003). Knowing which methodological techniques generate which type of data is crucial to making the decision of how to continue with the data collection. Cloke et al. (2004: 127) suggest that there is "a range of social situations in research in which particular researcher/researched relationships signal different kinds of social construction of data". The first type is 'robotic', which consists of no interaction between the researcher and the researched which, in the case of this thesis, is the secondary sources (i.e., internet research that was conducted in PI before the period in Sydney; and whilst in Sydney, in libraries and other publicly available materials). The second type is 'remote', which has no face to face contact but could take the form of a web-based survey (see Figure 4.1, page 80). Cloke et al (2004) note that in this type of collection, while being useful to determine a sample size or to conduct a pilot study, there is no way to "determine a history" (p 128) so it can be

difficult to relate to the researched and obtain the relevant material<sup>40</sup>. The third type identified is 'interactive';

“Data are conconstructed as interviewer and interviewee work their way through questions which begin as the as the ‘property’ of the researcher but which become co-owned and co-shaped in the unfolding interactivity of questioning, answering, listening and conversing”.

(*ibid.*: 129)

This type of interview technique was commonly used throughout PII, as it gave the most amount of freedom to the interviewee to describe processes and tell stories, which for an ANT-inspired thesis, is crucial (Latour, 2005). The fourth type of collection is 'involved' in which questions are replaced by dialogue. This avoids treating people like objects and obtains their opinions, however, for the purposes of this thesis, it is data on practice that is needed, not opinions *per se*. Formulating a discussion or focus group necessitates the discussion of a particular topic or debate, and while this may have been a useful arena for filmmakers or government officials to debate a particular policy or legislation, this type of collection would only obtain limited data on everyday actions. Hence, interactive data collection is a more direct way of obtaining the information needed to satisfy the objectives of this thesis.

The sample for PII was extricated from the results of PI, with firms being qualitatively 'ranked'<sup>41</sup> and large firms ( $n = 5$ ), medium firms ( $n = 15$ ) and small firms ( $n = 35$ )

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<sup>40</sup> This problem relates back to the concerns Taylor (2004b) had with website research, discussed in the previous section.

<sup>41</sup> In terms of 'ranking', the hierarchy was based on staff numbers and if they had overseas offices or not. Getting actual turnover figures was difficult because while they were available for purchase, it was at a price that was beyond the resources of this thesis. Given the relative size of the industry (compared to LA or London) and the fact that it is a 'close-knit' industry with everyone knowing everyone else by a

contacted<sup>42</sup>. This sample size was in response to calls for more rigorous research processes – as has been suggested, “researchers need to be more explicit about the research process including the rationale(s) for, among other things, respondent selection, key changes in research direction and analytical procedures” (Baxter and Eyles, 1998: 521). The sample size was designed so as to provide sufficient data as to qualitatively establish the inter-firm connectivity between different sized firms, and also the characteristics of their connectivity to other world cities. It was also designed in this way so as to ‘capture’ the variance of firm-type in the industry. As mentioned in the review chapters, freelancers are crucial to the workings of the film and television production industry so gaining data on their practices was paramount. The collected interview data was transcribed and analysed. Also as part of the interview stage, like Morris (2005) a number of other economic agents and mediators (i.e. not film production agencies but government bodies, guilds, associations and firms that immediately serve the film industry) were interviewed so as to gain an understanding of their collaboration with other Sydney based economic agents, as well as the film and TV production firms. These interviews were also designed to retrieve information on these institutions’ inter-firm and inter-institution communications, and how they create the spacing and timing of Sydney’s film and TV production industry.

In terms of specific interview techniques, before the interview, web-based research was conducted on a firm or economic agent (and the individual being interviewed) to ascertain any information that related to the themes and objectives of this thesis, and if this information could be included in the interview. For example, any possible remarks the interviewee or associates made in the press and papers, reports, books or articles

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factor of at most 3, it was relatively easy to conduct a ranking of firms given the information obtained from the survey.

<sup>42</sup> There was a clear division in the data collected between the sizes of firms according to staff numbers. Only five firms had more than 10 staff members, with a further 15 firms having between 3 and 9 members. The rest of the firms had less than 3 and were considered small firms.

they may have written. As Elwood and Martin (2000: 656) argue, “reflections on the microgeographies of interviews is a process that starts before the actual interviewing begins, and continues throughout the research and analysis”. An ‘interactive’ approach (Cloke et al., 2004) or ‘interview guide approach’ (Punch, 2005) was adopted which allowed topics and issues to be specified in advance, but the interviewer could vary the wording of the questions and the sequence in which the questions were tackled. There are also different types of interviews, ranging from highly structured to loosely structured interviews with open-ended questions (Minichiello et al., 1990; Yeung, 2003). It was necessary in some cases to use unstructured interviews with open-ended questions to gain the qualitative data required if the web-based research did not reveal as much information as needed. In these instances, information obtained from previous interviews was used, either to formulate a question or ask for their role in the network. As the fieldwork progressed, signs of convergence occurred where there was repetition in the information given by multiple interviewees (Judd, 1986). Once these signs of convergence occurred within a particular line of questioning, it was removed in favour of another or was simply put to the interviewee in the form of a closed question such as “do you agree with the fact that...”.

From a reliability perspective, what may also be of use when conducting these questionnaires and interviews, is to initially use specific, not general or leading questions, which can be misinterpreted. Judd (1986) uses the example of a hypothetical television-based research agenda, arguing that it is better to ask “is your television on now? And what channel is it on?” as opposed to “what channels do you generally watch?” The other advantage of the former line of questioning is that it gives the *actual* results – if asked about general viewing habits then this allows the interviewee to historicize and generalise and thereby give a contextualised answer. Also, Judd (1986) argues that it is important not to assume characteristics about certain interviewees, for example asking, “are you working at the moment?” as

opposed to “what job do you have?” which can have ethical implications. The Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS) (which is situated on the outskirts of metropolitan Sydney) have released various publications on the best way to conduct interviews with members of the film industry, the most comprehensive being Middlemiss (1992). In it, the process is outlined from initial research to the best way to test the voice recording equipment. But on the aspect of formality;

“You know all those questions you carefully wrote down? Well, it is a good idea if you don’t use them yet [at the start]. If you sit with a list of questions in front of you, you are going to make the interview seem more like a formal rather than a relaxed occasion. Ideally the interview should seem like a normal conversation. If you totally direct the conversation on the basis of your questions, you are not going to give the person the opportunity to tell you things that fall outside the parameters of your direct line of enquiry”.

(Middlemiss, 1992: 85)

Here, she is advocating the open-ended question approach which is a more beneficial way of obtaining the information as it allows the interviewee to talk more and puts them at ease. It allows for flexibility of questioning and for specific lines of enquiry to be followed that may come up in the interviewee’s answers. Middlemiss then goes on to describe how to listen, advocating both analytical and program listening. Analytical listening is the process of listening for relationships or connections between what you already know and what the interviewee is telling you. Program listening is when you listen ‘to’ the story and ‘for’ the story (Middlemiss, 1992). It is important to listen for the story as this will form descriptive parts of the conclusions and also to analyse the data,

as it is potentially necessary to describe the other processes that may be at work<sup>43</sup>. It may also be necessary to change the type of interview to suit the accessibility of the interviewee (Sin, 2003). For example, in some cases, an in-depth semi-structured interview may put the interviewee in an uncomfortable position, and thus may not be willing to divulge such a large amount of qualitative data. As the interview types are very flexible and malleable (Punch, 2005), in such cases it became necessary to conduct a more structured interview, which then yielded the appropriate results for the objectives of this thesis.

PII constitutes the bulk of the data collection for this thesis as it is the most direct way of obtaining the relevant data from the interviewees. However, it was sometimes necessary to conduct follow-up phone calls or emails in order to clarify points brought up in the interview, but this was made easier by the fact that once the interview had taken place the interviewee felt much more at ease in conversing and, in many cases, two or three less formal meetings were arranged either at an alternative location (such as another office or in the postproduction lab), or for a breakfast, lunch or dinner meeting. This is where PII blurs into PIII as once a researcher begins to socialise or become intertwined with the interviewees' routine then it can be considered an ethnographic form of data collection (Middlemiss, 1992; Shurmer-Smith, 2002; Thrift, 2005). So, the following section will detail PIII and the nuances of that particular type of fieldwork.

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<sup>43</sup> Due to the problematic and complex definitions of actants (Latour, 1993; Bloor, 1999b; Jöns, 2006), an interviewee may not consider that some actants of their 'story' are important (such as nonhumans/immaterial entities) and so teasing these actants out of the interviewees responses is an important skill to master in program listening if the data of this thesis is to satisfy the research aims and objectives.



### 4.3 PIII – Ethnographies

PIII used ethnographic research techniques – precisely because ANT demands that networks are followed to obtain a better understanding of how they are made, unmade and remade. As Law (2004: 18 – 19) notes;

“Ethnography lets us see the relative messiness of practice. It looks behind the official accounts of method (which are often clean and reassuring) to try and understand the often ragged ways in which knowledge is produced in research”.

Using ethnographies as a methodological technique is crucial to the objectives of this thesis as it collects *first-hand* descriptive accounts of the practices of the actants of Sydney’s film and television industry. This is because ethnographies have a number of key attributes. First, “they undertake [research] collaboratively with and for the individuals, groups or communities who are its subject” (Pain, 2003: 653), which is essential for an ANT study as it is the knowledge and experience of the interviewees and their own interactions that will constitute the descriptions and narratives of the industry. Also, ethnographies allow for nonhuman actants and their role in the network to be accounted for, which is information that may not be obtained through a limited time open-ended interview. Second, ethnographic methodology is ‘immersive’ (Silverman, 2001); they have an inductive methodology allowing social narratives to be researched, which is crucial to ‘following the network’ (Murdoch, 1997b; Latour, 2005)<sup>44</sup>. Third, they are often eclectic but necessitate having an extended period of

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<sup>44</sup> ‘Following the network’ to go where it leads is not completely at the behest of the researcher. As Thrift (2005: 56) notes, the researched can play a role; “again, actor-network theory tells stories of continuous attempts to make networks longer, of the constant extension of material-semiotic feelers, so in that sense, and in line with actor-network theory’s ‘ethnographic’ principle of following the actors, the networks end where the actors say they do”.

'participant observation' research (Jackson, 1983; Pain, 2003) in order to obtain the amount of information required. Fourth, ethnographies research what people say and more importantly for this thesis, what they *do* (Yeung, 2003). As has been emphasised throughout this chapter, researching what humans (and nonhumans) do is crucial to obtaining the relevant data and, by conducting participant research, that this data is obtained first hand. Fifth, ethnographies can involve tricky negotiations between the researcher and the researched (Hoggart, 2002), which can involve ethical issues of confidentiality and sensitivity, so it is important to clarify these issues before the participant observation can begin (for example many film directors have a rule of no photography on set which needed to be clarified before conducting on-site visits). Lastly, the "principal tool of the ethnographic researcher is his or her ability to act out unfamiliar practices" (Cloke et al., 2004: 169). In other words, there is a need to be reflexive (Yeung, 2003) as conducting ethnographies will necessitate undertaking work or being in social situations (such as meetings, outings or gatherings) that are unfamiliar.

The six criteria for ethnographic work can be summed up neatly;

"The identification of key actors requires intimate knowledge of the network through intensive research methods (e.g., participant observations, focus groups, close dialogue, ethnography and action research). In other words, the researcher has to immerse in, and be enrolled into the network".

(Yeung, 2003: 450)

There are different types of ethnographic research outlined throughout this chapter, however shadowing was chosen here because it allowed me to experience first hand the practices of film and TV production with minimal amount of intrusion. Shadowing

particular people or performing on-site visits (of film and television productions being made) allows for identification of key actors, and also allows research into the actual performance of those involved in the creation of networks and what it is they *actually* do that produces the spacing and timing of the networks (Law, 2004). The data was recorded using field notebooks and linked to the interviews (see the appendices), allowing for particular sections of the data to be highlighted and thereby utilised in conjunction with the interview data in writing up the results. This method was also influenced by the research method of 'corporate autobiographies' (Schoenberger, 2001), which used the autobiographies written by leaders of multinational companies to analyse the workings of these types of firms. However, Schoenberger's work is conducted on secondary sources, whereas this thesis conducted shadowing, which formulated a primary source of relevant data. While not providing the historical analysis that is possible with corporate autobiographies, shadowing allows for the performances to be studied *first-hand*.

As with the sample of firms and mediators I interviewed in PII, there was a need to sample the ethnographic work which was undertaken in order to produce clear results. It was decided to conduct a number (four in total – see Chapter 6) of case studies, selecting particular projects and productions to describe. Given the resources of the fieldwork, the time available and the availability of projects being filmed at the time, four was deemed an acceptable level. The reasoning and selection of the particular projects is outlined at the beginning of Chapter 7, however they related to the results gathered in PI and PII.

Case study research (sometimes known as proximity research) is a methodological technique that has gained popularity in recent years;

“Proximity research’ represents much more than the idle musings of travel-averse researchers, but can be seen as one of the achieving case-study immersion and protracted engagement with subjects and issues, while also drawing on local... knowledge”.

(Peck, 2003: 737)

Peck goes on to suggest that case study research should include more than this; endeavouring to confront negative or awkward cases, be more transparent in the discussion, increase the use of multi-method approaches, and have an enhanced level of “autocritical reflection and methodological humility” (*ibid.*). Also, case study research has traditionally been considered only an ‘exploratory’ phase of research (Shavelson and Towne, 2002), but this critiqued as “a common misconception that the various research strategies are arrayed hierarchically” (Yin, 2003: 3). Instead, “a more appropriate view of these different strategies is an inclusive and pluristic one” (*ibid.*), for which case studies are ideal. Indeed, one of the most recent texts on the cultural industries (Lash and Lury, 2007) uses descriptive ethnographical case studies as its methodology. More than this, they ‘follow the object’ (p 16) and introduce ‘project biographies’ (*ibid.*) to studying a particular film or product, mirroring much of the empirical thrust of this thesis, particularly Grabher’s (2004) reference to projects.

Case study research aligns neatly with Grabher’s focus on project ecologies, as well as the use of ANT-inspired research, in that it allows for the transparency of description, have multiple methodological approaches (interviews linked with ethnographies), and also tell a story (Latour, 2005) in a way that does not attempt to generalise or suggest a meta-narrative or grand concept;

“Despite critics’ calls for scholars to spell out the ‘representativeness’ of our chosen case studies, we simply cannot ever guarantee that the slice

of the world we choose to examine is somehow a ‘statistically representative’ case or ‘typical’ instance from which we might make inferences about a population of other ‘identical’ regions”.

(James, 2006: 295)

Nor should we have to, as to ‘contextualise’ the case study would be to add the researchers own context to it, which at best, would then distort the empirics into subjectified data (Latour, 2005), or at worst stylise some ‘paradigmatic instance of the phenomenon in question’ (Peck, 2003: 736) – as ANT empirics, we need the data to be as *objective* as it can.

These ANT-inspired methodologies (specifically the ethnographies of PIII) added to the data set by providing *collaborative* and *relational* data of Sydney’s film and TV production industry, which added to the *capacity* data collected in PI. Combining the different types of data collection has been critiqued as being methodologically eclectic (Winchester, 1999), however if the strengths of each particular method is tailored to be used in the most efficient way for this thesis, then it can only result in more rigorous and robust data (Baxter and Eyles, 1998; Yeung, 2003; James, 2006). Therefore, the empirics, specifically PIII, are designed to highlight the practices, processes and performance of those being studied. Furthermore, this form of empirical agenda is both empirically realist and ontologically relativist;

“ANT is empirically realist, in the sense that it leaves the task of challenging its empirical base to the research and user communities it addresses, and ontologically relativist in that it typically embarks upon research without a clear picture of what sort of entities it will discover through interaction”.

(Lee and Hassard, 1999: 393-394)

So, the methodology will steer away from meta-narrative restrictions (such as geographical scale), instead to describe and tell the stories of the actants involved in Sydney's film and TV production industry, and how they create the city of Sydney, and all the other 'boundaries' that have been previously theorised as rigid. 'Global', 'local', 'culture', 'economics', 'the film and TV industry', 'Sydney' – they are bounded constructs emanating from the topological formation, so it is this formation that will be studied.

#### 4.4 Concluding Remarks

Latour (1999) argues that a 'Theory'<sup>45</sup> is what is in place when the agency and behaviour of the observed or studied becomes obsolete, when people stop acting of their own accord and start acting mechanically. This being the case, the actant becomes an 'immutable mobile' (Latour, 1993; Murdoch, 1997a), something that does not change its shape, structure, being or context as it creates the network. People and objects, however, do not stop acting and exerting their agency on network formation - so a Theory, renders this type of conclusion irrelevant (Latour, 2005). To reduce the agency of actants to an unquestionable way of behaviour or to a 'structure' by imploring a 'Theory' is like telling them not to think or act any more (Martson et al., 2005). If an action or particular function of a network is completely dependable, i.e. it happens the same way every single time, what would be the point in studying it? Agency means that this does not happen, so to put a Theory around them is paramount to telling people how to behave, which seems at best, impertinent (Latour, 1999, 2005). Therefore "ANT is more like the name of a pencil or brush than the name of an object to be drawn or painted" (Latour, 2005: 145) and not an 'off-the-peg' theory (Hoggart, 2002) which guides the empirics.

There have been critiques of ANT as a methodological technique which argue that despite ANT's capacity to account for heterogeneity and multivocality, it 'is only one kind of multiplicity, and one kind of power, and one kind of network' (Star, 1991: 28). However, this critique is dependent on ANT being regarded as a Theory with a

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<sup>45</sup> There have been many debates concerned with 'Theory' with a capital 'T'. For example, when talking about the 'new turns' in cultural geography, Whatmore (2006: 601) argues that "I want to emphasize that this recuperation manifests a rich variety of analytical impulses; philosophical resources and political projects that don't 'add up' to a singular 'new' approach, let alone one that has a monopoly of insight or value". Here, she is arguing for a multiplicity of knowing, or 'theory' (with a small 't') in line with Deleuze and Guattari (1988).

definable ethos, which as we have seen above, is not the case. Also, Monterio (1999) argues that there is a tendency for ANT to be 'goal-directed', in that it is orientated toward a specific goal in mind, and not used to simply come to the conclusion that is reached through the empirics. This is a critique levelled at many methodologies, not just ANT-inspired ones, in that the researcher has a tendency to influence the empirics to equate to and 'prove' what they initially set out to discover (Markusen, 1999). However, this bias can only be applied if there is an 'interpretation' of the data (Martson et al., 2005). If a contextualisation of the empirics to meta-narratives takes place, then it is here when the researcher's bias may equate the empirics to a pre-conceived objective. ANT demands a description of the data and no interpretation or application, as ANT is 'ontologically relativist' (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 393) so this 'goal' (as Monterio states) is never reached. Another critique of descriptive qualitative data collection on processes (or what Doel and Hubbard (2002) and Peck (2003) refer to as 'fuzzy concepts' in case study methodology) is outlined below;

'Fuzzy concepts' [are] characterizations lacking conceptual clarity and difficult to operationalize. [Too often] authors get by with characterizations in which agents disappear, causal connections need not be made and processes rather than deliberative human action are responsible for the built environment and the distribution of economic actors across space".

(Markusen, 1999: 870)

Other than neglecting the agency of nonhuman actants in network formation, Markusen, in her attempts to champion quantitative over 'empirically thin' (Martin and Sunley, 2001) qualitative research, is over-simplifying that which is researched (Law, 2004). To 'operationalize' each observed action is to assert that there is a clear, one-to-one correspondence between casual process and outcome (Peck, 2003). The



heterogeneous natures of actants' associations (Murdoch, 1998) suggests that there are multiple causalities for multiple outcomes;

“Either the world out there is getting fuzzier than it was in the halcyon days of industrial restructuring or (more likely) we have come to see and understand it differently. The shift towards qualitative methods does not imply lower ‘standards of evidence’, it entails *different* standards of evidence”.

(Peck, 2003: 738)

The ‘messiness’ (Law, 2004) of the observed necessitates methodological techniques that account for it<sup>46</sup>, which is why ANT-inspired research including interviews, ethnographies and case study research, is essential.

To recap, ANT is not a framework but a descriptive empirical enquiry, a way of viewing the network and to follow it to gain the data required. The ‘framework’ should be designated by the limits of my thesis. As everything is “more or less long or more or less connected” (Latour, 1993: 120), one cannot describe the networks to their entirety; so the framework used is the capacity of my thesis – be that the word limit or once my empirical data starts losing relevance to the research question, in this case Sydney. This ‘*in situ*’ research methodology has been critiqued as being contradictory to network analysis (Markusen, 1999; Martin and Sunley, 2001), yet the information and data that ‘in situ’ research gathers is valuable in gaining the understanding needed as Yeung (2003: 451) argues;

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<sup>46</sup> This can be interpreted with another rhetoric – that of ‘pluralism’ (Plummer and Sheppard, 2006) or ‘local epistemologies’ (Longino, 2002). Indeed, these ‘local epistemologies’ are “a situated understanding of the subject at hand, grounded in a set of methodological and substantive assumptions with respect to which the account is persuasive” (Plummer and Sheppard, 2006: 632).

“New economic geographers need to conduct research *in situ* to obtain much richer and intimate understanding of identities and representations of actors within and outside firms, industries, markets and regions. In that sense, *in situ* research offers much more reliability and reflexivity”.

However, this form of network analysis could be detrimental to the aims and objectives of the thesis if the network is followed to such a distance that it begins to lose relevance to the thesis (Murdoch, 1998). In order to stop myself continually describing connections and following the endless networks, there has to be, as Latour (2005) argues, a ‘picture frame’ in place, i.e., certain limitations set by a number of factors. As has been argued, “it is reasonable to expect that researchers seek projects of a scale and nature that are achievable within the typically modest budgets of academics and postgraduates” (O’Neill, 2003: 4). Therefore, the level of study, amount of funding, word limits, even the researcher – these are the factors which set the frame, not a subjectification or contextualisation of the empirics themselves. Sydney provides the frame (as opposed to London or Los Angeles which already make plenty of frames<sup>47</sup>) to work with, so a physical visit to Sydney is simply the construction of the frame.

Thus, the following empirical chapters should be read as what is in this frame. Chapter 5 will deal mainly with PI, Chapter 6 with PII and Chapter 7 with PIII. This delineation is for the purpose of clarity, yet the nature of the connections mean that there will be ‘spill over’ of data collection phases between chapters, however this is to ensure that the

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<sup>47</sup> Here I am referring to the large number of world city projects that focus on London (e.g. Beaverstock et al., 2006; Favell, 2006; Falcounbridge, 2004 to name some of the recent GaWC related frames); indeed Taylor observes that “London is one of the most researched and written about places in the world” (Taylor, 2004c: 298). As for Los Angeles, it is the one of the most discussed cities in research projects with film as the theme (see Scott, 2002; Christopherson, 2004, 2006; Currah, 2006).

descriptions match the 'frames' being set, and that the practices of those actants being studied are the focus of the study.

The work on world cities by Beaverstock et al. (1999), Krätke (2003) and Taylor (2004b) (among others) classifies Sydney as a beta world city; this is despite its relative geographical remoteness to the ‘core cities’ of Europe and North America<sup>48</sup>. The connections of the film and TV production industry are the most intense between Sydney and other cities around the world that have English as their first language, sharing filmmakers themselves and markets in which to distribute the product. These next three chapters will display the empirical findings of this thesis, and in the interests of creating a comparable and useable data set, the data in this chapter specifically will be presented in a similar vein to the world city data that has preceded it. Moreover, the next three chapters will build upon the attributional work of previous world city data on Sydney (Stein, 2003) and provide qualitative relational data, thereby advancing the knowledge and empirical understanding of Sydney as a world city. It is worth noting that throughout these three chapters, despite the rather simplified delineation of particular themes into chapter, section and subsection headings, there will be an amount of cross-over and spillage from one chapter, section or subsection to the next because of the ‘messiness’ of the connections of the film and TV production industry – but as has been suggested, “if the world is complex and messy, then at least some of the time we’re going to have to give up on simplicities” (Law, 2004: 2).

Sydney’s role in the world city network when it comes to the film and TV production industry involves a multitude of (to use ANT terminology) actants, intermediaries and

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<sup>48</sup> Apart from Hong Kong and Tokyo, which along with Sydney are considered part of the ‘Pacific Rim’ (Taylor, 2004b), yet are classified as alpha cities.

mediators, that act, translate and practice, thereby creating the spacing and timing of the connections Sydney has with other cities. The first part of this chapter will first discuss the geography of Sydney, i.e. its connections and geographical reach by 'placing' them and mapping them. This will be done using data from the cultural industries of Sydney collected via the fieldwork and other sources. The following two sections (on the television production industry and the film production industry respectively) will then obtain more detail on the specific industries using similar data analysis methods. It is important to highlight at the outset however, that these two industries do overlap in terms of their facilities and personnel; although the firms that deal with TV production and those with film production have marked differences in their business practice and culture more generically – which will be discussed in later chapters. Another important note about this chapter is that it is written as a starting point from which to engage with the actant-networks; bearing in mind that a 'starting' place of an actant-network is a myth (see section 3.2), it must be clear then that this chapter sets the frame – in other words, this chapter will 'manufacture' the frame. Therefore, using statistical and predominantly quantitative data in this chapter, it will be more akin to the 'static' network theorists (Castells 1996; Beaverstock et al., 2000; Taylor 2004)<sup>49</sup>, providing quantitative relational data that is useful in adding value to the world city literature. However, this thesis will go 'beyond counting' (or inside the frame) (Smith, 2003a) and provide detailed accounts of the actant-networks that create the spacing and timing of Sydney and its film and TV production industry.

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<sup>49</sup> See section 3.1 for a detailed account of the deficiencies of this theorisation on the workings of the world city network.

## 5.1 Sydney's Position and Capacity

In section 2.2, the work of Rolf Stein (2003) was discussed in detail as it is a major study on Sydney in relation to the global and world city literature. Much of the work in Stein's report was discussed in that section, so to avoid repetition, some of the work in this section eludes to Stein's (and others) data, but builds upon it by using relational qualitative data, as opposed to attributional and hierarchical data that is used in Stein's report. Indeed, one of the ways in which this thesis adds value to the global and world city literature is that it is researching the cultural industries, a sector that Stein rarely touches upon in his report (2003: 73-74), and when the cultural industries are analysed, he constructs hierarchies. In doing so, he neglects the presence of large, multi-national firms in Sydney whose connections and relationships provide a source of empirical data which can be used for the global and world city literature. Stein is not alone, as there is a relative paucity of empirical work undertaken on the cultural industries with regards to the global and world city literature<sup>50</sup>. Therefore, this section will begin with an overview of Sydney's capacity with regards to the cultural industries, and then look at the inter-city connectivity of Sydney's cultural industries presenting a quantitative relational data set.

The statistical department of the federal government of Australia is known as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and it provides a number of key facts and statistics on industry. Compiled from a number of separate and differing sets of statistics, the main source being the *Arts and Culture in Australia: A statistical overview* (from [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au), accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2005), as well as the 'Museums' and 'Libraries' statistical collections (also from [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au), accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2005), Table 5.1 shows the capacity of the cultural industries in New South Wales compiled using this ABS data.

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<sup>50</sup> For those world city literatures that have, see Section 2.3.

**Table 5.1: Overview for New South Wales' Cultural Industries (as defined by the ABS)  
for 2003-2004 (unless otherwise stated) (Source: ABS publications – available at  
[www.abs.gov.au/ausstats](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats) accessed, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2005).**

Industry	No. of Businesses/Outlets	No. of Employees (a)	Total Income (b) AU\$m	Expenditure AU\$m
Public Libraries	372	3,283	178. 5 (169.7)	177
Museums/Galleries	413	2,542 (7,853)	288.3 (193.4)	245.7
Commercial Art Galleries (c)	230	670	151. 1 (d)	22.1 (e)
Commercial Free-to-air TV stations	12	3,016	1,741	265. 8 (f)
Film and Video Production	1208	8,232	928. 1	221. 8 (f)
Film and Video Distribution (c)	47	932	694. 8	n/a
Motion Picture Exhibition (c)	67 (1,513) (g)	3172	243. 7 (h)	45.1 (f)
Video Hire Industry (c)	373	3585	181. 2	36. 3 (f)
Performing Arts Venue industry (c)	38	1671	113. 9	30. 6 (f)
Performing Arts Festivals	55 (i)	291 (3,345)	24. 1	22. 5
Other services to the Arts (c)	226	1742	371. 1	47. 6 (f)
Music and theatre production	390	3686	259	84. 9 (f)
Sound Recording (j)	96	263	17. 5	15. 4

- (a) Where applicable, number of volunteers is in brackets
- (b) Where applicable, government investment is in brackets
- (c) Using 1999-2000 statistics
- (d) Includes gross sales of artworks
- (e) Comprised of wages and artwork purchases
- (f) Comprised of wages only
- (g) Number of cinema screens in brackets
- (h) Gross Box Office receipts
- (i) Number of festivals
- (j) Using 1996-1997 Statistics

With regards to this data, there are a number of limitations to note, and they go some way to highlighting the importance and uniqueness of the rest of the data that was collected. The most obvious limitation (from the point of view of this thesis) is that the data in Table 5.1 is for the state of NSW. There is no urban-level data available for Sydney, although due to Sydney's primacy within NSW, the majority of this data will be applicable to metropolitan Sydney. However without precise city data, the

presence of other large metropolitan areas in NSW (Newcastle, and in a few cases the ACT has been joined with NSW data), mean that this data must be used with caution if using it for the metropolitan area of Sydney. This deficiency in the data only serves to highlight the lack of official urban-level data sets, and in turn highlights the practicality of this thesis by addressing this dearth, and producing a data set that is applicable urban-level data of Sydney (see Table 5.2). Second, as with many statistical collection agencies, the nature and definitions of the phenomenon being collected changes with time, and with this data, many of the industries that were surveyed in 1999-2000 were either added to another industry definition, or left out completely in 2003-2004. Third, some of the industries that the ABS included in their cultural industries survey did not contain any state-level data (including the prominent cultural industry of book publishing), only providing national-level data. Finally, the cultural industries used in the ABS survey have been defined by the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) which in itself is a comprehensive list. However, some of the industries in their list have not been surveyed in the cultural industries survey, and also some other important cultural industries (such as the fashion industry) have been left out of the ANZSIC classification altogether. With these limitations in mind, Table 5.1 constructs a general overview of the capacity (i.e. the size of the industry in terms of number of people employed, income and expenditure) of the cultural industries of Sydney. Table 5.1 shows that it is the film and TV production that is the most prominent in NSW with 8,232 employees and an income of AU\$928.1million in film and video production, and 3,016 employees and an income of AU\$1.7billion in the television industry for the year 2003-4. As stated in section 1.2, this is justification for focusing on the film and TV production of Sydney as it is the most lucrative and populous industry in NSW and Sydney, a fact which these figures justify. Another way in which it is possible to account for the cultural industries with more specificity on Sydney, is to use Yellow Pages 2004 – 2005 classification, which is a viable resource when it



comes to the presence of companies<sup>51</sup> (see Searle and De Valence (2005) use of the Yellow Pages for the basis of their study on Sydney's multimedia firms). Table 5.2 below shows the cultural industry categories as defined by the ANZSIC classification of the ABS, and their corresponding Yellow Pages category. These categories given by the Yellow Pages largely corresponded with the ABS categories, but with many sub-categories as well, hence there being more than one Yellow Pages categories to one ANZSIC category. Also, the industries of art galleries and fashion design have been included to coincide with other research agendas on the cultural industries (e.g. Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Gibson, 2003; Abrahamson, 2004; Pratt, 2004), as well as to parallel with work conducted by geographers such as Scott (1997, 2000), who identify the fashion industry (Crewe, 1996) and art galleries (Pratt, 1997) as cultural industries.

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<sup>51</sup> Primarily because companies have an economic interest to be in the Yellow Pages, in that it provides prime advertising potential.

**Table 5.2: Number of companies in Sydney's cultural industries as given by the Yellow Pages (Source: Sydney Yellow Pages, 2004-5)**

ANZSIC Definitions	Yellow Pages Category	Greater Sydney	Sydney CBD
Newspaper Printing and Publishing	Newspapers	205	32
Other Periodical Publishing	Publishers: Magazines and Periodicals	348	32
Books and Other Publishing	Publishers: Books	250	17
<b>Film and Video Production</b>	<b>Film Production Services</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>16</b>
	<b>Film Production Facilities and Equipment</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Video/DVD Production and/or duplication</b>	<b>954</b>	<b>29</b>
Film and Video Distributors	Film and Video Distribution	24	4
Motion Picture Exhibition	Cinemas	91	21
Radio Services	Radio Stations	102	8
	Radio Program Services	11	2
<b>Television Services</b>	<b>Television Program Production: Services and Suppliers</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>2</b>
	Television Program Production and Distribution	116	12
	Television Stations	37	3
Libraries	Libraries: Public	142	8
	Libraries: Private	7	2
Museums	Museums	51	14
Parks and Gardens	Parks, Gardens and Reserves	17	1
Music and Theatre Production	Band Orchestras and Choirs	140	15
	Dance Tuition and/or venues	311	39
	Theatre and Theatre Companies	50	9
Creative Arts	Artists	149	1
	Artists: Commercial	95	4
	Cartoonists and Caricaturists	46	2
	Sculptors	35	1
	Potteries	37	1
	Musicians and/or Musicians Agents	271	20
	Music Arranges and/or Composers	104	5
Sound Recording Studios	Recording Services	214	10
	Sound Engineers	12	0
Performing Arts Venues (a)	Halls	101	1
	Convention and Conference Centres	323	99
Services to the Arts	Casting Agencies and Consultants	52	7

	Costume and Costume Hire	78	1
	Theatrical Supplies and Services	154	10
	Theatre and Entertainment Booking Agencies	32	9
Video Hire Outlets	Video/DVD libraries	680	24
	Video/DVD Equipment Hire	90	9
	Computer Game Hire	31	8
Photographic Studios	Photographers: General	606	41
These 2 sections are not in the ANZSIC, however should be included in the Cultural Industries Classification			
Art Galleries and Services	Art Galleries	286	47
	Art Restoration and Conservation	32	0
	Art Dealers	95	11
	Aboriginal Arts and Crafts	32	12
Fashion Design	Designers: Textiles and/or Fashion	105	10

(a) Could also include the Yellow Pages classification of 'Dance Tuition and/or venues'

Table 5.2 shows that when considering those companies in the Yellow Pages and the urban region of Sydney, the film and television production (highlighted) stands out as the most populous in terms of listings, if we take the combined total of the ANZSIC classifications of 'film and video production' and 'television services'. Using these two tables (Tables 5.1 and 5.2) combined; a clear outline of Sydney's capacity with regards the cultural industries emerges. Despite this, when combined with Stein's (2003) data on Sydney's hierarchical position, it still only produces an attributional data set, albeit a comprehensive one. For this thesis to satisfy the aims and objectives, there is a need to collect more relational data, both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. In order to produce the quantitative relational data, the connections between Sydney and other cities around the world must be analysed. This involves constructing a data set inspired by the GaWC group, taking into account the firms in Sydney and their subsidiary office and company locations. As was discussed in earlier chapters, Beaverstock et al. (2000) conducted a 'new metageography' based on the connectivity of APS firms. So, to remain consistent with the global and world city literature, the following data set was constructed using

similar methods, but instead of using advanced producer service firms, media firms will be used in order to advance the global and world city literature, as cultural industries have so far been largely neglected in world city literature.

The first step in this is to identify the major cultural industries of Sydney, and when considering the lack of a pre-given ranking, this can be problematic. In this data set the largest companies have been used in order for compatibility with other global and world city empirics (see Beaverstock et al., 2000; Krätke, 2003). Within the data sets of these research papers (the latter of which deals with media firms) the world's largest firms in their field of study that were selected "had to have a presence in at least three different national economic areas and at least two continents or 'world regions'" (Krätke, 2003: 613). Relating this criterion to a single city, it was decided that the ten largest companies would construct a viable data set which is consistent with these published work on world cities. Therefore, using data sourced from websites, industry directories, newspaper articles and information from the phone survey, some interviews, television news reports and conversations with industry personnel, it became clear that the most significant cultural industry firms in terms of importance, employment and size in Sydney are the following (in alphabetical order):

- Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)
- John Fairfax Holdings Limited
- News Limited
- Nova Radio
- Optus
- Publishing and Broadcasting Limited (PBL)
- Special Broadcasting Service (SBS)
- Southern Star\*

- Telstra Corporation
- The Seven Network
- The Ten Group

\*As Southern Star exclusively produces television programs it will be omitted from this data set and included in the data sets in the following section (on TV production firms), thereby reducing this data set to ten.

The companies listed above are all headquartered in Sydney, although News Limited and Nova Radio are owned by larger media companies which are located elsewhere – Nova Radio is owned by the Daily Mail and General Trust plc based in London, and News Ltd is owned by News Corporation which has its headquarters in New York, having moved from Sydney in 2004 (News Corp., 2005). Also, some of the companies listed above have bought out companies themselves and thereby own their production capabilities and connectivity. Of the Sydney based companies listed above, they can all be considered cultural industry companies, and although Telstra and Optus are both predominantly telecommunication companies they both have substantial ownership in the pay-TV service Foxtel and other media outlets.

Having selected the companies to survey, the relational aspect of the data set is in the quantification of the connections that those companies have, which involves showing the city locations of offices that the companies listed above have outside their headquarters in Sydney<sup>52</sup>. However, some of the companies above (News Ltd.

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<sup>52</sup> This is consistent with previous world city literature – specifically Taylor (2004b) discussed in section 4.1. The “conversion from information to data” (Taylor, 2004b: 67) problem identified on page 78 is evident here, and as was discussed then, this is overcome by the addition of qualitative descriptive data, provided in the following chapters.

and Seven) have no overseas offices, and others (Optus, PBL, Telstra and Ten) own companies that have offices in other cities;

- Optus owns SingTel, a telecommunications company from Singapore
- PBL owns the Sydney-based television station Channel 9, and the Australian Consolidated Press (ACP – also based in Sydney)
- Telstra owns Telstra Clear (the New Zealand branch), CSL which is based in Hong Kong and Reach, based in Sydney (both of which are telecommunications companies)
- The Ten Group own Eye Corp., a media supply firm.

Table 5.3 below shows the cities in which the companies listed above are present, be it with their own other-city offices or with the offices of a subsidiary company<sup>53</sup>. A quick note of caution must first be attributed to Table 5.3 and Figure 5.1. While quantification of offices is a method used in GaWC, what it does not take into account is the functions of those offices. For example, ABC list on their website “ABC offices”, with no indication as to whether it is a functional office with a full-time team of staff, a news bureau, or simply a correspondent. This information was not available during my fieldwork (due to restrictions of access) and so there was no systematic way to identify the purpose of the offices. Therefore, to err on the side of inclusively, all mentioned overseas offices have been included. To therefore maintain consistency, this applies with much of the work conducted throughout this quantitative chapter.

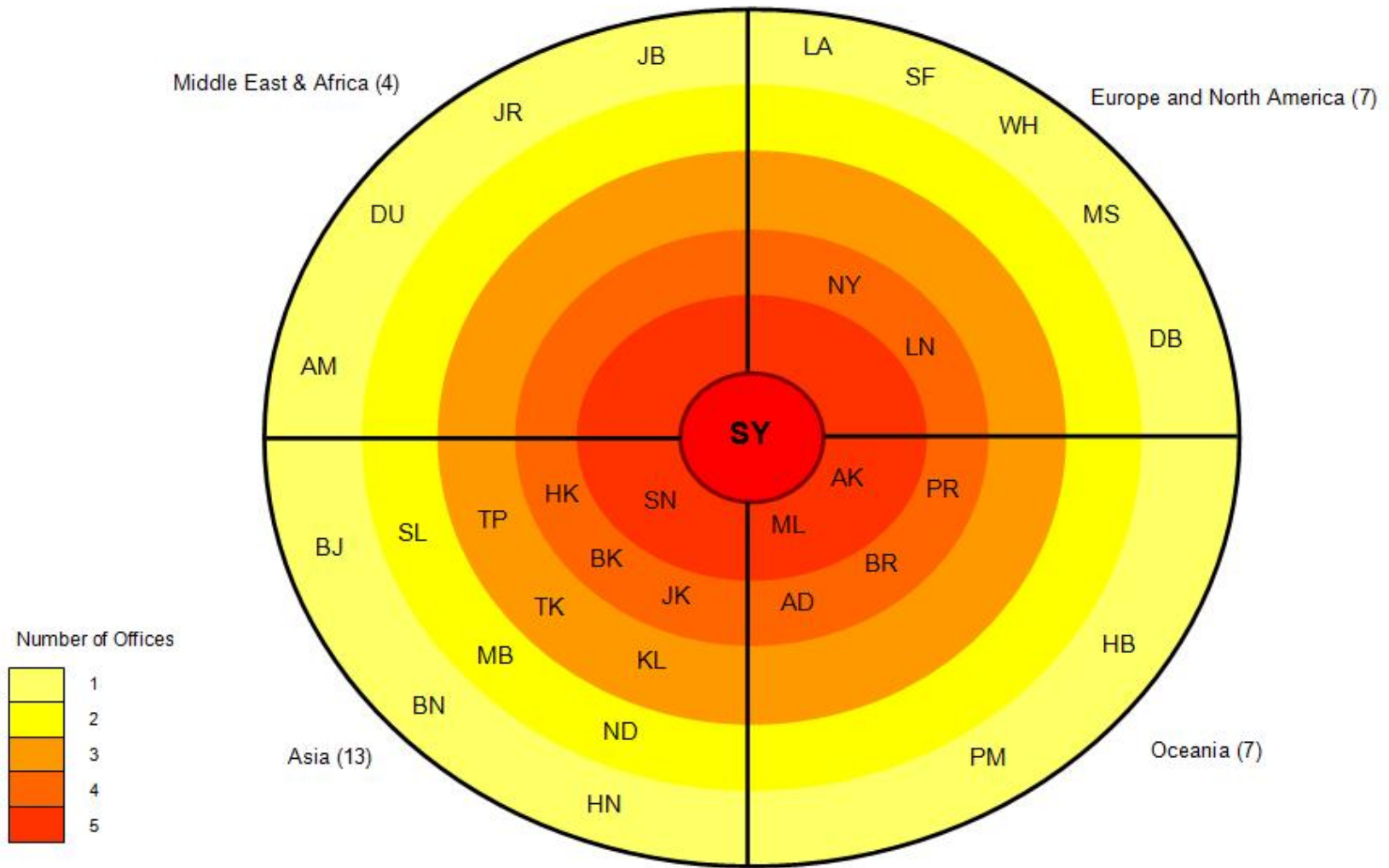
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<sup>53</sup> The nature of business is dynamic and company ownership is changing all the time. Indeed, in early 2004, Telstra launched an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to buy Fairfax, however all information given below was correct at the time of writing.

**Table 5.3: Frequency of cities in Sydney's most significant cultural industry companies**

(Source: Author's survey)

City	ABC	Fairfax	News Ltd	Nova Radio	Optus	PBL	Telstra	SBS	Seven	Ten	Total
Adelaide	•	•				•	•			•	5
Amman	•										1
Auckland	•	•				•	•			•	5
Bangkok	•	•				•	•				4
Bangladesh							•				1
Beijing	•										1
Brisbane	•	•				•	•			•	5
Dubai		•									1
Dublin						•					1
Hanoi							•				1
Hobart	•										1
Hong Kong		•				•	•				3
Jakarta	•					•	•			•	4
Jerusalem	•										1
Johannesburg	•	•									2
Kuala Lumpur		•				•	•				3
London	•	•				•	•				4
Los Angeles						•					1
Makita City							•				1
Melbourne	•	•				•		•		•	5
Moscow	•										1
Mumbai		•					•				2
New Delhi	•						•				2
New York	•	•				•	•				4
Perth	•	•				•				•	4
Port Moresby	•										1
San Francisco							•				1
Seoul		•					•				2
Singapore		•			•	•	•			•	5
Taipei		•				•	•				3
Tokyo	•	•					•				3
Washington DC	•										1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>79</b>



*City abbreviations:*

AD Adelaide; AK Auckland; AM Amman; BJ Beijing; BK Bangkok; BN Bangladesh; BR Brisbane; DB Dublin; DU Dubai; HB Hobart; HK Hong Kong; HN Hanoi; JB Johannesburg; JK Jakarta; JR Jerusalem; KL Kuala Lumpur; LA Los Angeles; LN London; MB Mumbai; MC Makita City; ML Melbourne; MS Moscow; ND New Delhi; NY New York; PM Port Moresby; PR Perth; SF San Francisco; SL Seoul; SN Singapore; **SY Sydney**; TK Tokyo; TP Taipei; WH Washington DC.

**Figure 5.1: Geographical reach of Sydney's media firms: The cities that house subsidiary offices and companies of Sydney based cultural industry firms**



Seeing which cities appear in the list above, it becomes clear that there is a strong presence in Asia and among other Australian cities. It also shows that four companies dominate – ABC, Fairfax, PBL and Telstra (with three companies not have any overseas offices). Table 5.3 is displayed visually in Figure 5.1, where the strong links with Asia are emphasised by the large number of cities with subsidiary offices in that region. Figure 5.1 is set out so each city is placed within a region and also a concentric circle denoting how many offices from Sydney-based companies occupy that city. The regional classifications used in Figure 5.1 are deliberate in order to show the variations of Sydney firms' presence in a particular 'market'<sup>54</sup>.

It can be seen from Table 5.3 and Figure 5.1 that the cities in which Sydney-based cultural industry firms have most locations in are Adelaide, Auckland, Brisbane, Melbourne and Singapore. Of these cities, only Auckland and Singapore lie outside of Australia, and only Singapore outside of the Oceanic region. The presence of Singapore as the most connected city outside Oceania seems to correlate with Stein's (2003) research on the region, which emphasises the importance of trade with Singapore. However, where this data set differs from Stein's is that it makes suggestions as to the connections between Sydney and Singapore, albeit quantitatively, which are lacking in Stein's report (see section 2.2). Cities that occur in the data set with a frequency of four include Bangkok, Jakarta, London, New York and Perth, which alludes to the significance of specific Asian cities to Sydney based media firms, as well as more established media centres such as London and New

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<sup>54</sup> Many firms in Sydney are looking to operate in Asia because of their economic potential, a sentiment expressed by many of the interviewees. One interviewee in particular suggested that the amount of aid given by the Australian government in response to the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004 (approximately AU\$1bn – more than any other government in the world) gives an indication as to Australia's inclination to deal in that market. Another example of this is the Australian Football Association's recent move out of the Oceanic Football Confederation, to be now part of the Asian Football Confederation. So by using global-region classifications in Figure 5.1, this phenomenon is clearer, as well as highlighting the importance of the 'domestic' market (i.e. Australian and New Zealand cities).

York. These two cities occupy the top category in the GaWC hierarchy of cities (Beaverstock et al., 2000; Krätke, 2002) and again, are referenced in Stein's report but only in terms of their position in relation to Sydney in the hierarchy, and with no reference to the connections between Sydney and these cities. Even the preceding caution, the cities mentioned in this database can therefore be construed as a guide for the rest of the empirics in this thesis. If the information on the nature of these offices was freely available for all the companies, then more detailed analysis could have been deployed regards to the characteristics of these inter-city connections. However, the lack of information on the nature of these offices only serves to justify the inclusion of PII and PIII, as the paucity of available information on the types of these overseas offices can only be rebalanced through in-depth qualitative research.

With this data set of how the cultural industries of Sydney connect with other cities in terms of their subsidiary office locations (and the cities that occur as preferred locations), it is already becoming clear how this data is adding value to the global and world city literature, by going beyond what Stein (2003) and other political economy authors (Knox & Taylor, 1995; Sassen, 2000, 2001, 2002, Harrison, 2007) have conducted, in that it produces quantitative relational data. The following section will now focus on the television production industry, and the connections that this industry maintains, in a similar vein to that already conducted (i.e. by analysing the locations of subsidiary offices), but also in some more qualitative measures by describing some of the actors, mediators and intermediaries and their enrolment as they go about creating the spacing and timing of the industry, and more broadly, the cultural-economic globalisation of Sydney.

## 5.2 Television Production

As with the previous section on Sydney's most significant cultural industry firms, in order to proceed with a relational analysis and thereby produce a quantitatively relational data set, the most significant television production firms need to be identified. Unlike the larger cultural industry firms, independent television production firms tend to have a small number of staff (in many cases, a single operative, i.e. freelance firm) sometimes operating out of their homes (Gorenstaeva, 2008). However, there are a number of established companies with a larger workforce and a number of office locations around the world. As in the previous section, the larger firms were used as the basis for this data set to correlate with existing global and world city literature research, however unlike the cultural industry firms in Sydney, the most significant television firms were not as obvious. There are no publications or official statistics that ranks these firms (for example like there is for law firms, namely [www.vault.com](http://www.vault.com)), so in order to select the firms to analyse, more direct criteria were used. Hence, below is a list of the firms that produce programs for television which have their headquarters in Sydney *and have offices in other cities*, which totals twelve. In terms of the size of these firms, the ownership of offices in other cities correlates well with the number of staff data that was obtained from the phone survey of PI, in that those firms with a larger number of staff tended to have an office outside of Sydney<sup>55</sup>. The data on the size of the firm (number of staff, frequency of production release) was obtained during the preliminary phone survey (PI), and although proved useful in highlighting some of the more productive and established firms, only served to ossify the fact that the dynamism and evanescence of the industry inhibits the existence of a large number of established firms. Therefore, by

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<sup>55</sup> In fact, only one company, called 'aht(' with staff numbers above 10 did not have overseas offices, and even then the company deals mainly in digital media, and only delve periodically into documentary making for television.

using secondary sources such as the Encore Directory 2004 (as well as information from the phone survey) the following firms (listed alphabetically) were selected for this data set:

- Becker Entertainment
- Beyond International
- Classroom Video
- Doll
- 8 commercials
- Flying Fish
- Grundy
- LIC
- Screentime
- Southern Star
- TWI
- Woss Group

All these companies have their head offices in Sydney, although some of them are owned by larger parent companies that have their headquarters in other cities. However, the above companies do have production autonomy, and have existed as an independent entity since their creation, some of which were bought out by a larger company at some stage in their history. The cities where their subsidiary branches are located are listed below with their appropriate company.

**Table 5.4: Frequency of cities in Sydney’s television production companies (Source: Author’s survey & Encore Directory, 2004)**

City	Becker	Beyond	Classroom Video	Doll	8 Commercials	Flying Fish	Grundy	LIC	ScreenTime	Southern Star	TWI	Woss Group	Total
Auckland			•		•	•			•				4
Bristol, UK			•										1
Dublin		•							•				2
Jakarta	•												1
London		•		•		•			•	•	•		6
Los Angeles												•	1
Melbourne							•						1
New Delhi											•		1
New York			•								•		2
Shanghai			•					•					2
Singapore	•												1
Vancouver			•										1
Washington DC		•											1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>

The cities listed in Table 5.4 were those mentioned by the managers and CEOs surveyed in PI and those listed in the directories. This is not a fully comprehensive list of subsidiary branches, as there are other outlets in other cities. For example, Grundy Television has an outlet in London, but is nothing more than a front desk, a gateway to the main company office in Sydney. Those outlets were not included as they were not fully functional offices with an element of operational independence from Sydney<sup>56</sup>. It was also important to use those companies that had a high degree of contact and communication with the overseas offices, as some of the overseas subsidiary offices of the larger established firms are increasingly independent, and although the communication with Sydney is on a weekly basis, it is increasingly formalised with conference calls and real-time video meetings, unlike some of the smaller firms where the contact is more informal and consists of e-mail chatter and

<sup>56</sup> The identification of an office as a ‘front desk’ or fully operational office was clarified by the manager or director surveyed in follow up emails or phone calls.

phone calls. As Table 5.4 shows, London houses the most overseas branches of Sydney-based firms, with six in total even though London is the second most furthest city away geographically (10,553 miles, the first being Dublin at 10,689 miles). Auckland is the next 'most connected' city with four. Both Dublin and Shanghai have two offices and the rest of the cities only have one.

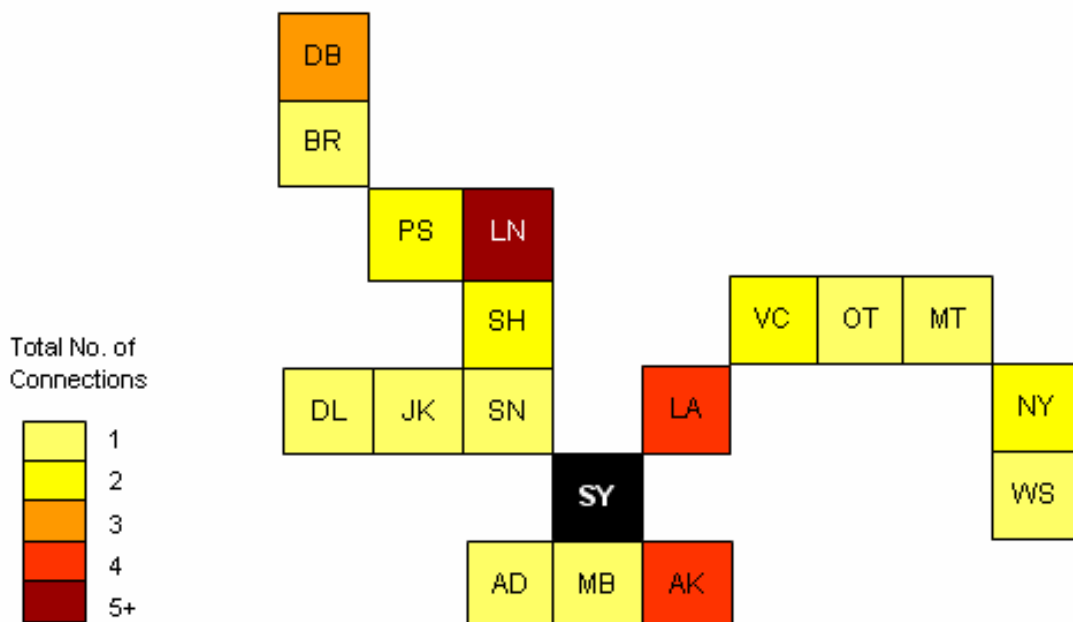
Another way to analyse connections quantitatively between cities with regards to the production of television programs, is to address the issue of co-productions between production firms in Sydney and other production companies in cities around the world. Co-productions are a common and cost-effective way of producing programs with many firms having long-standing relationships (e.g. Southern Star and Endemol). Table 5.5 below shows cities and the number of firms that participated in co-productions with Sydney firms between 2000 and 2005.

**Table 5.5: Number of TV co-productions between Sydney firms and firms in other cities 2000 – 2005 (Source: Adapted from [afc.gov.au/gtp](http://afc.gov.au/gtp))**

City	Number of Co-Productions
London	4
Los Angeles	3
Paris	2
Adelaide	1
Dublin	1
Montreal	1
Ottawa	1
Vancouver	1

London again tops the list with four, perhaps to be expected given the amount of overseas offices that are located there. Los Angeles has three, Paris two, and the

rest of the cities have just one. Using these two data sets as means of quantifying collaboration, Figure 5.2 below visually expresses the connections that Tables 5.4 and 5.5 describe. The placement of the cities in Figure 5.2 are not random, it has been set out in a (relatively) realistic geographical pattern around Sydney, separated out into approximate regions in order to remain consistent with Figure 5.1 and with the global and world city literature (most notably the GaWC ‘Urban Hinterland’ visualisations – see Taylor, 2001a; Taylor and Walker, 2004 as well as Sydney’s urban hinterland in section 2.2, page 35).



*City abbreviations:*

AD Adelaide; AK Auckland; BR Bristol; DB Dublin; DL Delhi; JK Jakarta; LA Los Angeles; LN London; MB Mumbai; MT Montreal; NY New York; OT Ottawa; PS Paris; SH Shanghai; SN Singapore; SY Sydney; VC Vancouver; WS Washington

**Figure 5.2: Geographical reach of Sydney’s TV production industry**

In Figure 5.2, the data for Table 5.4 and 5.5 are combined, with overseas office counting as one connection, and a co-production between Sydney and another city also counting as one connection. These two means of connectedness are the most

tangible way of denoting collaborations between cities, being that they embroil a certain amount of formal communication, such as board meetings, policy discussions, conference calls and official business visits<sup>57</sup>. From the data and Figure 5.2 shown above, it is London which is the most 'connected' to Sydney (with a total of 10 connections), but with very few other European cities (other than Dublin, Paris and Bristol). In fact, other than the occurrence of Paris and the four cities in Asia, the cities present have a population that is predominantly English-speaking. This is important in this industry as when dealing in products that are broadcast on television, the language that the program is recorded in can specify a particular market. Those programs that use the English language are easier to transport to cities which have English as its major language, and although dubbing and subtitling can be undertaken, this enrolls more firms and ultimately leads to more expense. So language is an overriding factor in the connections between Sydney and other cities, although it is a wider characteristic of the production industry as available. Bob Campbell, the Executive Director of Screentime (one of the companies involved in the data set) argues;

“At the core of all this is the English language. We’re very lucky that our first language, in fact our only language, is the international language of commerce, the international language of television. If we’re dealing in Hungarian, we wouldn’t be doing what were doing. So, what that means is that successful shows or successful formats are known about instantaneously”.

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<sup>57</sup> There is a plethora of other communicative actions that would go on between Sydney’s production firms and other firms in other cities (as well as government agencies, institutions and freelancers), and attempting to map this type of communication in a way that could be used in data sets such as the one which produced Figure 5.2, when this communication is dynamic, ephemeral, often informal, would over-complicate what is designed as a quantitative relational data set. Thus, this type of communication, while although very much embroiled and entangled in the communicative measures outlined in Figure 5.2, is described in detail in later chapters with a (more suited) qualitative analysis.



(Interview with Bob Campbell, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

Screentime, as can be seen in Table 5.4, has offices in (thereby facilitating the sale of products to) Auckland, London and Dublin, so is very much focused on an English-speaking audience.

In relation to the co-production alliance between Sydney-based firms and other firms, the presence of Canadian cities is a result of the need for firms outside Los Angeles to collaborate with each other to become competitive in a market which is dominated by LA-based firms (i.e. Hollywood). For some firms, the only way to have enough capital to compete is to manufacture international co-productions and enrol other firms from other cities, thereby increasing the revenue for the venture (as there would be two sets of income, not only from the firms themselves but from government subsidies) and also increasing the amount of talent from which to obtain resources from. Canadian cities and London are frequent targets for this kind of co-operation, as they too would be considered in the same bracket of domestic television production industry to that of Sydney<sup>58</sup> (in section 7.2, the case study of *Mary Bryant* is used, which is an official co-production between Sreentime and Granada TV of London). The majority of the co-productions are one-offs (largely due to financial pressures), but some of the relationships may yield repeated products if it was initially successful and profitable, or because the firms enjoyed the experience. For example, Yoram Gross, a Sydney-based animation firm has made more than one production with the Parisian company Tele Images ([www.afc.gov.au/gtp](http://www.afc.gov.au/gtp), accessed 10<sup>th</sup> October 2005), producing a series of successful animated children's shows, and large profits for both companies<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> In that they are all English-speaking cities with a productive industry, but are trying to compete against Hollywood products.

<sup>59</sup> Source: Interview with Greg Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2004.

It is important to take into account the nature of the data, in that company and questionnaire data (PI) has been used to quantify connections. As has been discussed at length previously, the freelance nature of this industry builds connections constantly between cities which cannot be underestimated. Using these official co-production figures gives an insight, but as the phone survey suggested, there are a large number of freelance workers in the industry who are constantly shuttling between Sydney and other cities, working for particular companies on an *ad hoc* basis. These are exactly the kind of connections and relationships that serve to create a 'messiness' (Law, 2004) in the spacing and timing of Sydney's cultural-economic networks. For example, Peter Andrikidis (a Sydney-based director) has worked on the *Farscape* television series, which is produced by the Los Angeles based Jim Henson Company, and so could be construed as a Sydney – Los Angeles co-production. However, this relationship was short-lived as he directed a total of seven episodes (*Farscape* ran for four years), yet remains in contact and regularly visits Los Angeles for work (both in pitching for work and applying for directorial posts)<sup>60</sup>. This type of co-productive relationship was not included in the data primarily because it is not recognised by the AFC as an official co-production, but also because this type of connection is so commonplace among freelancers that qualitative case studies are better suited and will be used instead to exemplify the myriad and intangibility of such connections (Peck, 2003; James, 2006)<sup>61</sup>. This is because they provide a narrative in which the complexities and characteristics of such connections can be better understood. This demands an ANT approach to network analysis, which will provide a richer source of descriptive data that will outline the 'messiness' of the connections that until now have been overlooked in world city literature.

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<sup>60</sup> Source: Interview with Peter Andrikidis, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

<sup>61</sup> This resonates with the discussions of case study methodologies in section 4.3.

### 5.3 Film Production

When dealing with television products, the financial inputs are, on average, smaller than that of feature films<sup>62</sup> and can seem a little more 'business-like' than the 'heartache' and 'emotional stress'<sup>63</sup> that film-makers go through during the production of any particular film. However, this is not to say that there cannot be a quantifiable account for the geographical reach of the film industry in the same way that has been done for the TV industry in Figure 5.2. This can be done using the information of feature films shot in Sydney and those projects that use the post-production facilities in Sydney (i.e. the digital effects and sound-editing studios), which shows where these features, or more correctly, the companies producing them, come from. Therefore, Table 5.6 shows the number of feature films that have been shot in Sydney since the year 2000, and the cities from which that production originated. The data was retrieved from the AFC and Ausfilm, however where city data was not available (i.e. the company name was given but not the location) secondary and web-based research was conducted.

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<sup>62</sup> Recently, some Los Angeles based production companies such as ABC and Fox have spent blockbuster-style budgets on making TV shows. For instance, the pilot episode of *Lost*, an episodic drama filmed in Hawaii cost ABC US\$12 million. Also, each episode of the fourth series of *24*, another high-production value serial drama from Fox, had a budget of a reported US\$1million per episode ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com), accessed 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2005).

<sup>63</sup> These scare-quotes are some of the terms used by film-makers about their projects during the course of my in-depth interviews.

**Table 5.6: Number of feature films shot in Sydney and city of origin 2000 – 2006**

(Source: [www.afc.gov.au/gtp](http://www.afc.gov.au/gtp))

City	Number of Feature Films
Los Angeles	11
Mumbai	2
Tokyo	2

Feature film production in Sydney is dominated by those firms in Los Angeles, all of which are the major Hollywood production houses, such as Twentieth Century Fox and Warner Brothers. The presence of Mumbai reflects the expansion of Bollywood, and its exploration of foreign locations as places to shoot its films. Table 5.7 is similar, using the post-production sector of feature films. The digital post-production of feature films is increasing exponentially (for a film with a blockbuster budget of US\$200 million or more, the digital component can be upwards of US\$40 or US\$50 million<sup>64</sup>), and there are many digital post-production houses (as they are known in the industry) pitching for post-production work. The ‘placelessness’ of the digital component facilitates the spread of this work, as much of it can be transported as data and emailed, compressed and sent electronically or conducted virtually using web-based programs.

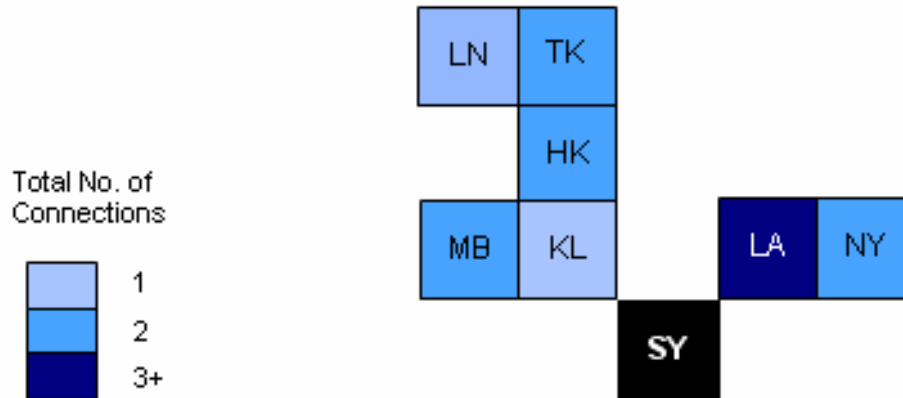
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<sup>64</sup>Source: Interview with Greg Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2004.

**Table 5.7: Number of feature films that used post-production companies in Sydney and city of origin 2000 – 2006 (Source: Ausfilm, 2005).**

City	Number of feature films
Los Angeles	4
Hong Kong	2
London	1
New York	1
Kuala Lumpur	1

Again, Los Angeles firms are the most numerous customers of Sydney-based digital post-production houses. The other cities in the list, Hong Kong with two, and London, New York and Kuala Lumpur with one, would be viewed as fairly large producers of feature film material in themselves (with perhaps the exception of Kuala Lumpur) and their presence in Sydney is due to the production companies trying to obtain competitive rates in the digital post-production market. The dominance of Los Angeles in both Table 5.6 and Table 5.7 is attributed to the reverse, in that the large Hollywood firms have the higher budgets and can afford to shoot in Sydney and other cities around the world (Herd, 2004). Figure 5.3 represents the connections within the film industry, quantified in Table 5.6 and Table 5.7.



*City Abbreviations:*

HK – Hong Kong, KL – Kuala Lumpur, LA – Los Angeles, LN – London, MB – Mumbai, NY – New York, SY – Sydney, TK – Tokyo

**Figure 5.3: Geographical reach of foreign feature film production in Sydney**

In Figure 5.3, each feature film that used Sydney either as a location in which to shoot, or as a postproduction location, is represented by one connection. Only Los Angeles has more than 2, in fact it has 15 in total, with every other city having 1 or 2. Los Angeles houses some of the most productive<sup>65</sup> (and richest) film companies in the world, and as Sydney has Fox Studios and a number of other high-quality film producing assets (crew, infrastructure, cast, equipment and so on) large Hollywood firms can shoot there for a lower cost than in the LA studios, but with no (significant) loss in production talent<sup>66</sup>. With the case of Fox Studios, although it is a large complex (and a relatively expensive one if the client is not from Hollywood), many of the large productions (*Star Wars II and III*, the *Matrix* trilogies, *Superman Returns*) can afford to use up the whole of the studio space for a long period of time, thereby restricting the ability of any other company to shoot there simultaneously. Also, from

<sup>65</sup> In fact, Bollywood producers the most amount of films per annum, 900 a year in 2004 (www.imdb.com), although they are of a significantly lower budget than Hollywood films.

<sup>66</sup> Source: Interview with Larson, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2005, see also Herd (2004) and Goldsmith and O'Regan (2003).

an imagery perspective, the cityscape of Sydney can be dressed up as an American city without too much effort or extra sets, which is an advantage when looking to attract 'runaway' production<sup>67</sup> (more of which will be discussed in section 6.1 and 7.2).

In much the same way as the freelance nature of the television industry, the feature film production industry too has freelancers who work for any production company in the world who are willing to pay for his or her services<sup>68</sup>. These freelancers, once employed by the production houses can subsequently employ hundreds of other staff in a single production, yet because they are not an established firm or company (and as the results from the phone survey have proved) it can be difficult to quantify their contribution to the industry using official methods (such as the AFC's 'Get the Picture' report which solely focuses on firms). As we have seen through the discussions in section 2.4, the Sydney-based film industry has a 'corrosive egalitarianism' (Long, 2005), which is indicative of many film-productive cities other than Los Angeles (Rifkin, 2005). The proliferation of freelance working in the film industry has created a 'suburban economy' (Gornostaeva, 2008) in which these freelancers operate from their homes on a day-to-day basis, only venturing outside for location shooting and castings. One of the key catalysts for this fragmentation is the funding structure as the Film Finance Corporation (FFC) and Australian Film Council (AFC) (the two main funding bodies for Sydney-based filmmakers) operate on a project-by-project basis, handing out finances if the criteria of the project itself qualify, rather than to a particular firm. This is a fundamental difference in the funding structure for the film

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<sup>67</sup>Source: Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

<sup>68</sup> Stephen Jones for example, a freelance producer has worked on *Water Rats*, a successful Australian show made by Southern Star and is now currently employed in the *Superman Returns* film. Also, Peter Weir, a resident of Sydney who was the director for one of Australia's first successful feature films, *The Car That Ate Paris*, and now works on major Hollywood productions such as *Master and Commander* and *The Truman Show*.

and television production industries as opposed to other (cultural) sectors, and yet another reason for the focus on projects as a mode of research – as was discussed and forwarded throughout the review chapters of this thesis.

Therefore, this is why case studies will be used (Yin, 2003) to provide narratives and descriptive empirics about these freelance connections and the wider networks involved in feature film production, as ANT inspired qualitative analysis will illustrate and describe these connections qualitatively (Latour, 2005). The behaviour and action of these freelancers and their interaction with other freelancers, production firms, financial agencies and governments is what constitutes the mobility and presence of the industry (in both TV and film production), which cannot be tied to a particular geographical scale. The global, the regional, the local, the individual, are not 'levels' or 'scales' on which the actants in this industry act, but in fact these 'levels' are constructs of the actants' everyday workings and actions. Therefore, in the next chapter, these scales and the dualisms they create within the industry will be challenged in favour of a more relational ANT inspired viewpoint. This chapter has been about positioning Sydney in *relation* to the other relevant cities (and deliberately not producing a hierarchy) in the industry in order to build upon previous research, and now that the global and world city literature on Sydney has been furthered quantitatively, the next chapters will be about furthering it qualitatively.



So far in this thesis, the emphasis has been on how it adds value to the global and world city literature by advancing some of the previous work conducted on Sydney (e.g. Connell, 2000) and its cultural industries (Stein, 2003). The objective is to go beyond the quantitative attributional research that has been a characteristic of much global and world city epistemology and develop empirical qualitative and ethnographic research. This is in keeping with new urbanism (Amin and Thrift, 2002, 2007), poststructural and ANT-inspired thought on world cities (Smith, 2003a; 2003b)<sup>69</sup>. However, in the previous chapter, the data was largely quantitative which, as was pointed out, is necessary in order to provide a frame (Latour, 2005) for the qualitative data that is needed to achieve the objectives. Having now set the frame, it is ready to 'capture' the qualitative data that will now be described, presented and analysed in this chapter and the next. However, the qualitative data needs to be analysed and described critically and carefully, detaching it from meta-narratives (that have previously been used as frames of enquiry), forming a 'lattice of topologies' (Serres and Latour, 1995), a skein of networks that is neither global nor local, inter-city nor intra-city but rather short and long, near and far. The first section of this chapter will show how the global/local or inter-city/intra-city meta-narrative can mask the performativity of the network, and in doing so, will expose the deficiencies in using such an approach to global and world city research. The second section will deal with another dualism that ANT dispels, that of the human/non-human divide. The final section of this chapter will be about how another binary within the industry,

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<sup>69</sup> See section 3.1 for a detailed discussion on these topics.

namely that of a 'Sydney film industry versus a film industry in Sydney'<sup>70</sup> can be overcome in a similar way to which the meta-narratives can be overcome, and explain how the resulting topological data can be used to add value to the global and world city literature through the discussion of a major cultural industry.

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<sup>70</sup> This is a debate that engulfs much of the industry in Sydney and this particular phrase was coined by an interviewee Robert Connolly, a feature film director.

## 6.1 The Global/Local Divide

As has been discussed in section 2.1, much of the global and world city literature has been dominated by the global/local ontology, which is part of the political economy thinking on cities by authors such as Sassen (2001, 2002) and Friedmann (1995). In this social-constructionist view, there is an inextricability of cities from the rhetoric of scale, into which various processes (economic, cultural, social and political) are 'embedded' (Sassen, 2001). The view of ANT on the global/local dualism can be encapsulated by the following sentence, "the words 'local' and 'global' offer points of view on networks that are by nature neither local nor global, but are more or less long and more or less connected" (Latour, 1993: 122). In other words, the very premise of 'global' or 'globalisation' and their equivalent 'local' or 'localisation' are parts of a network that have been framed off, a snapshot on a continuum that obfuscates the skein of connections and ties, which should be the focus of empirical enquiry (Smith, 2003b; Latour, 2005, Murdoch, 2006). With this in mind, this section will be split up into two sections, the first of which will be in keeping with the theme of the previous chapter, in that it will focus on the production firms and the networks of connections that they produce, and how studying them using ANT has transcended the global/local divide. Using qualitative data predominantly from in-depth interviews (PII) (but also, where needed, some from the phone survey (PI) and some ethnographic research (PIII)), the connections will be discussed and described, showing how they can undermine the previously conceived meta-narrative of the global/local ontology. The next half of this section will use similar data to look at the phenomenon of 'runaway' production, which involves the shooting of major Hollywood blockbuster features in cities other than Los Angeles for primarily financial reasons (Herd, 2004). This phenomenon has been of major financial benefit to Sydney; a rhetoric of it as a 'global' process with 'local' benefits, with authors such as Coe (2001) and Scott (2002) arguing that the cities that 'receive' runaway production (e.g. Vancouver,

Toronto, Cape Town, Prague and Sydney) are production arms of Hollywood. This has led to the conceptualisation of a new interpretation of the New International Division of Labour (NIDL) but in line with the cultural-economic nexus (Scott, 2000; 2002; Christopherson, 2006). Using an ANT inspired approach, the topology of actants enrolled in the network will be discussed, and shows how a narrative of a cultural-economic nexus hence becomes an inadequate conceptualisation when it is the performances of the actants that is focused on.

### *6.1.1 The Actor-Networks of Firms*

It is a common conception that the film production industry of Sydney-based firms is in a lull period, compared to relative success of the 1980s and early 1990s<sup>71</sup>. There are many reasons for such a decline (which discussed in section 6.3), however it is the consequences of this decline that is of interest to this section. Investment into the Australian industry has fallen of late, with overall funding (including government, private and foreign investment) at a recent low (see Table 6.1).

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<sup>71</sup> As is the case with many indigenous film industries that are in competition with Hollywood, there is an overall cyclical trend of peaks and troughs (Blair, 2001). At the time of writing, the interviews and surveys all suggested that Sydney's film industry was widely considered to be in a 'trough' due to the low levels of domestic film production in the city.

**Table 6.1: All Australian feature films, two-year rolling averages (Source: [www.afc.gov.au/gtp](http://www.afc.gov.au/gtp), 2004)**

	Value of production (AU\$m)	Investor contributions (AU\$m)		
		Aust. govt sources	Aust. film/TV industry & private investors	Foreign sources
1997/98 & 1998/99	140	35	27	78
1998/99 & 1999/00	122	32	25	65
1999/00 & 2000/01	103	35	17	52
2000/01 & 2001/02	105	36	30	39
2001/02 & 2002/03	90	24	35	31
2002/03 & 2003/04	91	25	21	45

In Table 6.1, the value of production is an average for the two annual periods. This was done by the AFC in an attempt to cancel out the ‘timing of principal photography start dates’ which can skew results and mask trends (AFC, 2004). Government funding includes the Film Finance Corporation (FFC), and the various state government funding bodies (e.g. the NSW Film and Television Office (FTO)), as well as the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), both of which are television stations, but also have a feature film investment policy. Sydney-based film and TV industry and private investors include the commercial free-to-air networks (Channel 7, Channel 9 and Channel 10), pay-TV (Foxtel) and other companies from the private sector that have had a financial interest in a particular production. Foreign investment includes funding from the Hollywood majors, foreign television broadcasters (the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Channel 4 from the UK have a strong history of investment in Australian TV and films) and finance from any other sources other than Australian ones. As can be seen from Table 6.1, the trend in all the three different investment categories has been in decline, albeit fluctuating. Although Table 6.1 shows data for

Australia as a whole, it shows the necessary trends that illustrate the decline in production in the past few years, which is applicable to Sydney as well as other cities in Australia<sup>72</sup>. Investment from government sources is especially important to the large number of independent film-makers in Sydney, with few feature films made without the financial backing of the FFC. Also, it is the individual film-makers that receive the funding and they can become over-reliant on it and pressured into completing the project quickly and as a result, sacrificing quality and content (Long, 2005). This starts a cycle whereby those film-makers rarely go on to make further films, or if they do, they can spend years between projects and in the interim, not making any income from their work. This is not to say that the proliferation of freelancers has come about from the lack of funding; it is an outcome of a wider culture of filmmaking in Australia that is based on the premise of the filmmaker as an individual, mainly because of the success of that culture in the 1970s when the Australian film industry was “pulled up from its boot-straps”<sup>73</sup>. However, this individualistic funding policy continues today with the FFC mission statement reading that “the FFC wishes to ensure that its funds are spread amongst the production community and not unduly concentrated in the hands of small number of companies” (FFC, 2004: 3). Therefore the FFC gives preference to production companies asking for smaller amounts of funding. It then becomes possible for any local filmmaker, due to the nature of the funding, to apply for money with an individual idea for a project. And, due to the funding policy of breadth and not depth, they are more likely to receive the funding. This then causes a proliferation of applicants, all looking for a thin slice of the cake to fund their project with varying degrees of success<sup>74</sup>. This

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<sup>72</sup> However, this again highlights the deficiency in the data. The AFC provide only incidental state level data and no city level data, with most of the data representing a national level (which is perhaps to be expected from a national body). This thesis then will go some way to redressing this balance by providing detailed data on Sydney as a world city.

<sup>73</sup> Quote from an interview with Malcolm Long, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

<sup>74</sup> Source: Interview with Donald Crombie, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2005.

emphasis on the individual, however talented, can sometimes be a disadvantage as Malcolm Long notes, “a corrosive egalitarianism has tended to see a large number of indifferently talented industry stalwarts drip-fed small amounts of public funding, leaving little in the bucket to support the endeavours of the truly talented” (Long, 2005: 45). In other words, the scarce funding that there is available is being spread too thinly across a broad base of film-makers which talent-wise, has breadth but little depth.

All these factors catalyse the proliferation of a ‘cottage industry’ (*ibid.*) or freelance nature, and this therefore bequeaths a plethora of connections and ties that can be analysed empirically. Also, the dynamism, ephemerality and in many cases intangibility of them necessitates qualitative analysis. For the firms involved in film and TV production, the messiness of connections is a product of everyday action, which can be accounted for with interviews, such as in this interview with an independent filmmaker. When asked about her personal collaborative networks of people and other freelance filmmakers that she works with, she responded;

“Getting a group of people around me that I could trust because so much of the production isn’t possible to control and if you really want an efficient production you have to give up control and so you have to be, if you are a control freaks like I am, and if the essence is on the quality, then you need to be sure of the people that you are trusting ...and for me I have to be sure that I deliver, because there are just so many things that can make the products go pear-shaped”.

(Interview with Anny Slater, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

This type of freelance independent filmmaking is very much reliant on the trust aspect of relationships (noted by Murphy, 2006), so much so that when (for example)

a director finds a Director of Photography (DoP) that he or she has a good professional working relationship with, then they will work together on numerous subsequent productions. This phenomenon is indicative of the industry, right through to big budget Hollywood productions. Within more established firms in Sydney, everyday interactions between headquarters and subsidiary offices can exemplify these connections; for instance Southern Star, one of the major TV production firms in Sydney (as was discussed in the previous chapter, section 5.2) has an office in London, and the communication between the offices in Sydney and London is constant. In an interview with Errol Sullivan, Executive Director of Southern Star, he commented on the 'traffic' between the two offices;

“OM: So, there’s constant communication between yourselves and London? Do you meet up with them?

ES: When I was running the thing [department that deals with London i.e. distribution and sales], I was there five or six times a year, now the guy that does that, he is there [in London] five or six times a year, every two months, but we have tele-conferences every other week, we’re on the phone every night...

OM: And what sort of things do you discuss? Are they financial matters or...?

ES: Well, obviously the management of the place, but also, product development, as shows are looking like getting ordered or picked up in that market then we look at the distribution side of the financing equation. So you know, just normal business, and creativity matters as well for sure”.



(Interview with Errol Sullivan, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

The communication from Sydney to London<sup>75</sup> is illustrated here as being business-like – ordering shows, distribution of those shows to a network either in Sydney, London or other city (depending on which firms are represented at the meeting or tele-conference). The nature of the communication between offices within the Southern Star corporate structure could be viewed as formalised or ‘official’, in that it is conducted in a business environment, but like any of the other larger established firms in Sydney, a number of freelancers work for (and are connected to) Southern Star, lengthening to the actant-network that is being qualitatively described here. One such individual is John Edwards, a producer who has worked for Southern Star in the past and now runs his own production company, but is still situated within the offices of Southern Star and still bears the name (his company is called ‘Southern Star John Edwards’). The company is technically an independent production company from Southern Star, yet once the programs have been made he still has use of the distribution arms of the company, thereby facilitating the distribution process;

“This company has a very big London office. We are very active, we own Oxford Scientific, we own a number of productions, do you know Carnival? We own Carnival, they are part of us... So, the company's international, that hasn't led to really much to and fro, but it did lead to *Secret Life Of Us* happening that way.

(Interview with John Edwards, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2005)

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<sup>75</sup> As was seen in Figure 5.2 on page 143, London is the city with the most intense connections with Sydney, so this discussion is an example of how this thesis is adding value to the world city literature by adding qualitative descriptive data to the quantitative data.

*Secret Life Of Us* was an episodic drama produced and developed by John Edwards and is one of Southern Star's most successful show that came about through Southern Star's connections in London. Since then, the show has continued to sell through Southern Star's distribution arm in London to Channel 4, as well as other television networks around the world. The show, as a finished product, is therefore sold via Southern Star to television stations around the world, creating the actant-network, yet the show itself remains the same. Thus, the numerous series of *Secret Life Of Us* (there have been four so far) could be considered 'immutable mobiles' (Latour, 1987), in that they do not change their form (unless they are subtitled or dubbed) as they create the spacing and timing of the actant-network, yet they are themselves a network of creativity and production (Law, 2000) involving the many actors, directors and other crew members, and John Edwards himself.

As well as John Edwards, there are other producers who have similar production companies set up in Southern Star. Also, the company undertakes outsourcing of production work to other freelancers who operate independently of the company. In terms of the creative aspect to the program production, it is the freelancers and the outsourced directors and producers who contribute, so Southern Star becomes a funding and distribution aspect of the production process. Thus, Southern Star is an intermediary in its distributional duties, it "transports meaning or force without transformation" (Latour, 2005: 39) which immutable mobiles (*The Secret Life Of Us* is an example, but other dramas and documentaries that are sold as a finished package could be considered immutable mobiles) pass through. However, if the firm is involved in the financing of a particular show, such as the reality-TV show *Big Brother* (which is co-produces with Endemol, a production firm from Amsterdam) then it has creative input;

“Typically, we put a lot of value into the show, the way we put the value into the show on screen is in two ways. First way was to treat it like a drama, and cast it and shoot it, film it like a drama, edit it like a drama. A lot more cuts, we have matching signals, so we have camera portals in order to cover it, so it feels more like a soap drama”.

(Interview with Errol Sullivan, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

*Big Brother* is a popular program format that is sold to many television stations around the world, and so the higher the creative input into a show, the higher the financial reward (or cut of the profits) if it is sold on after its completion. Given the popularity of the *Big Brother* format, selling it has been very profitable, and so given that Southern Star own half of the rights due to a co-productive relationship with Endemol, the relationship with the Dutch company is important to Southern Star;

“OM: Big Brother is an internationally renowned show and it’s a product of Endemol, so what’s your relationship with them?”

ES: We formed a joint venture with Endemol. First of all it was hard to get the rights to that show because everyone wanted the rights, so we went to Holland and said don’t give the rights to anybody, we’ll form a joint venture vehicle of which we 50 per cent owned and then whatever we make out of the show we’ll share 50/50. So you’ve put the rights in, and we’ll put in our resources, our facilities and our people, and so that’s what we did, and that was five years ago... What we did here was... its a bit harder in this market because it’s an expensive show, it was hard to get it up, believe it or not, it wasn’t easy to get it all. The license fee that was paid, the network paid less than the production cost of the show, but

we had a lot of ratings bonuses so, the show really rated, got extra money and that's where our profit came from".

(Interview with Errol Sullivan, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

The relationship Southern Star has with Endemol has created further shows, and coupled with the success of the *Big Brother* format, it can be argued that it was a shrewd business move to set up that connection.

Another example of an 'official' collaboration (in so much that it has been done with the assistance of government agencies, such as the FTO and the FFC) is the amalgamation of two Sydney-based production firms, Hilton Cordell and RB films;

Hilton Cordell are just about to come together with another company called RB films to make television and features and I've worked with Rosemary [a director/producer of RB films] on one of her films. I produced one of their features and have been developing and working on other things with them. They are about to amalgamate like other large companies with an infrastructure underneath and they were given help from the FTO or the FFC who are trying to actually push companies together to have more resources to pull from. It's a really good idea, RB films do documentaries as well, but they can share facilities with Hilton Cordell and share ideas and keep the costs down".

(Interview with Brenda Pam, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

If these two examples of inter-firm relationships are analysed using a political economy view of a social constructionist ethos, the connection or link would be considered 'global' as it incorporates two firms. In the Southern Star-Endemol case, one is from Sydney the other from Amsterdam, and they produce a show that is aired

in numerous countries around the globe. However, using this viewpoint and language denies the plethora of connections, and also glosses over the actual performativity of the connections. In using an ANT approach, “not only does it lead you backstage and introduce you to the skills and knacks of practitioners, it also provides a rare glimpse of what it is for a thing to emerge out of existence by adding to any existing entity its time dimension” (Latour, 2005: 88). Therefore, looking at the connections and their actual doings shows how the industry is made, unmade and remade through the spacing and timing of those connections rather than the false ‘construction’ of a static ‘global’ process that somehow guides the industry. This ‘global’ process in political economic language is sometimes mirrored by the ‘local’ process, which is theoretically articulated by Allen Scott (1997, 2001, 2002, 2004a), who talks of the film industry (and other ‘cultural industries’) as a ‘cultural-products industries’ that “represent substantial segments of all advanced capitalist systems” (2001:16), and that the inevitable clustering process “straddles the critical interface between any given agglomeration and global market” (Scott, 1997: 334). This ‘interface’ that Scott speaks of between the (local) agglomeration and the global market is the particular issue that is being questioned by qualitatively analysing relational data – in that by researching the performativity of the actors involved, we soon find out there is no real ‘interface’ to straddle in the first place<sup>76</sup>.

What also must be noted here is the knowledge accumulation by activity through the networking of people, firms and things. Henry and Pinch (1999) have suggested that knowledge is transferred through suppliers, high rates of new firm failure and start-ups, informal collaboration, gossip and observation (see page 65). In the case of Sydney’s film and television production, it is the latter (information collaboration, gossip and observation) that is most prevalent. This is exemplified by the high

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<sup>76</sup> There are many other authors who purport to a similar ethos, but I have singled out Scott partly because of his volume of work but also because he specifically makes reference to the film industry.

number of internships in particular firms (especially the larger firms like Southern Star and Grundy), unpaid volunteers, and gaining work through personal contacts. This also highlights the importance of Grabher's (2004) project ecologies, further highlighting the relevance of the film and television industry as relevant to the 'project-turn' (see the discussions in section 2.4).

There is also some data that can be used to exemplify the extent of the actant-networks of the production industry and the involvement of London; data which was gained via the phone survey (PI in the methodology, section 4.1). One of the questions asked in the survey was concerned with previous experience of the CEO or MD of the firm in question, which yielded results that show the other cities that have provided the people which now make up the personnel of the film and TV production industry of Sydney. When asked about their background and experience before setting up the company, 32 per cent of the CEOs or the founders of the firm had previously worked for one of the national television networks, the ABC, SBS, Channel 7, 9 or 10. The jobs performed at the networks were of a varied nature, directing, producing, cameraman, head of programming or simply typing the news ticker that is displayed in Martins Place. This shows the importance of the television stations in a training sense, in that many of the filmmakers in the industry have gained their experience from working in an environment conducive to their career. As we can see from Table 6.2 below, of the 41 different firms and institutions identified as previous places of employment, the ABC is the most mentioned, with 17. Channel 7 and Channel 10 have five and four respectively, SBS has four and Channel 9 has 3 mentions. What is important here though is that the television networks occupy the top five places in terms of frequency of occurrence, along with the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS) also having four mentions.

**Table 6.2: Firms or institutions mentioned (frequency more than 1) as background and experience and the city of origin.**

Name of firm/institution	City of HQ	No. of mentions
ABC	Sydney	17
Channel 7	Sydney	5
Channel 10	Sydney	4
SBS	Sydney	4
AFTRS	Sydney	4
Channel 9	Sydney	3
Film Australia	Sydney	3
BBC	London	3
NIDA	Sydney	2
Hoyts Theatre	Melbourne	2
ITV	London	2
London Film School	London	2
LWT	London	2

The experience does not just come from the television stations however, or indeed just Sydney; the BBC, Independent Television (ITV) in the UK, London Weekend Television (LWT)<sup>77</sup> and the London Film School also are mentioned. This data highlights other characteristics of the connections between London and Sydney, and although the Australian national television networks provide the majority of experience and training for future independent film and TV makers, London is embroiled into the actant-networks of Sydney's production industry further by providing a number of the human actors that constitute it. This data set also ossifies the strong linkage that Sydney has with London that is exemplified in the examples given above by Errol Sullivan and John Edwards, as well as what is outlined in Chapter 5 (see Figure 5.2, page 129).

As was shown in the previous chapter (the discussion surrounding Table 5.7), the post-production sector is a profitable sector and many of the firms in Sydney have

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<sup>77</sup> LWT has since dissolved.

major Hollywood studios as their clients. One such firm is Animal Logic, a digital effects lab that is based within Fox Studios in the Moore Park area of Sydney. For a digital effects post-production studio to obtain work, it is more than just economics and financial matters involved;

“OM: When was that set up, the LA office?”

GS: About three years ago. It’s a front door really and just to demonstrate that we have a commitment to that market. We have one person there who is a producer, and her main background focus is television commercials. We get quite a lot of commercial work out of New York and Chicago, as well as LA and she basically services that. All the heavier visual effects for movies, *The Matrix*, *Face Off* and all that stuff, they require a lot more intensive kind of relationship-building, and it’s those relationships along with our people those are our key assets, and the know-how. ... There’s no substitute for the emotional connection of those relationships and the importance of those relationships which is why you’ll find us on the plane and we’ll be over there, just to hang for a week or whatever, we’ll take the dinners and the lunches and the meetings to build the personal relationships because the whole thing is so ephemeral ultimately, you don’t wind up with bricks and mortar, so you’ve really got to trust your business partner and so its about who you are”.

(Interview with Greg Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)



Here, Greg Smith is advocating the personal level at which some of these connections are made<sup>78</sup>. The face-to-face contact of the management personnel of these firms is fundamental to the working of the industry, a sentiment that has been echoed by other managers, producers and directors that were interviewed. The actant-networks that enrol the film and television companies also incorporate and enrol the other economic agents (or mediators (Lawrence and Phillips, 2002)) involved in the industry. These non-producing corporations include the FFC, the industry guilds and associations (the Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA) and the Australian Screen Directors Association (ASDA)) and the FTO among others. The FFC is a government-run company which finances feature film and television program projects in Sydney and throughout Australia, although it does retain money from any profitable investments;

OM: You're a part of the government right?

MR: We're a company, but we're a government owned company, we're incorporated under general company law.

OM: Is it purely government revenue that is given to you or do you have any other means of funding?

MR: Yeah, we keep the money we earn from the programs we produce and the other thing is of course market co-finance which I suppose is a bit like a public-private partnership thing, but it enables us to spread out the money a little bit more to the productions that need it.

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<sup>78</sup> Again furthering the importance of trust in network building, as Murphy (2006: 428) suggests "trust is a key influence on the constitution and development of economic spaces like production, innovation, and commodity networks; one that embeds and stabilizes relationships, fosters knowledge and technology diffusion".

(Interview with Marie-Anne Reid, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

The corporate nature of the FFC means that it is run very much like a private company. Therefore, the connections between production firms and the FFC would be of a similar ilk to the connections and communications between production firms and other means of finance for a particular project. It is these connections that lengthen the actant-networks of the film and TV industry in Sydney by enrolling these government-run agencies such as the FFC and the FTO. A characteristic of these connections is detailed by Jane Smith, the then-CEO of the FTO;

“The FTO is trying to set up a whole lot of projects throughout Australia which have been identified through the structural weaknesses, and one of the things we do is a digital scheme which is where we work with not only Animal Logic, but a number of other digital effects houses and we jointly fund six-month on-the-job training exercises to improve the pool of digital artists, because they've been importing people from other places. It is a highly sought-after area, and we actually have a relationship with the television commercial sector through our post production and liaison officer, even though we fund them, we have a whole thing about marketing, attracting production and what New South Wales has to offer”.

(Interview with Jane Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2004)

Here, the precise nature of the connections between the production industry (Animal Logic and other post-production digital effects houses) and the state government (the FTO) is outlined, thereby qualitatively linking the two institutions via their performativity. Social-constructionist literature (Sassen, 2000, 2002; Castells, 1996) would look upon the firm and the Government as two ‘nodes’ in a network. However,

using an ANT approach and showing the characteristics of the connections, the pre-conceived boundaries of government and industry break down because there has been detailed analysis and description of the actions and collaborative behaviour of the actants involved. The inter-city relations can be further exemplified, as the FTO has connections with other cities in their marketing department;

“Another area we have international connections is in the marketing New South Wales as a film destination, so we have someone go to Los Angeles probably about four or five times a year, we have also just had someone come back from Shanghai and Beijing”.

(Interview with Jane Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2004)

Here, the network of the industry is lengthened by the actions and actual workings of the FTO which, although not a production firm itself, serves the industry and shares many personnel (many film directors are on the board of the FTO).

Other major non-producing bodies are closely connected to the industry, such as the unions ASDA, SPAA and the writer's guild. They are seen as key institutions in encouraging collaboration and communication through organised events, as Richard Harris, the Managing Director of ASDA explains;

“OM: On your web site it says ‘to encourage collaborations between directors’ – how do you go about doing?

RH: That happens through the events that we run and members meetings, we normally do them regularly, it's more communication really because the directors aren't watching enough of other directors' work. When you're an actor, you're working with other actors all the time, but a

director will rarely watch another director shoot, so it's about bringing them together and actually sharing techniques. A lot of the lobbying we do is about bringing a bunch of directors together and try to work out the technical side of things”.

(Interview with Richard Harris, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2005)

These events are a productive way of getting the filmmaking community together for a forum and for individuals to forge connections and relationships<sup>79</sup>, not only with other filmmakers, but also with potential broadcasters and financiers, as Geoff Brown, the executive director of SPAA notes;

“We run a SPAA conference which is the biggest broadcasting and production event of the year. The programme is always fantastic and it works, but if I really pressed all the people who attended, they would say it was the networking opportunities that they went for, so a lot of people go to the conference to do deals, because it's the only event of the year where I have the broadcasters, distributors, exhibitors, producers, financiers all in the one spot. So they line themselves up for a month out because they know that they are going to be there for three days and drink copious amounts of coffee and wine”.

(Interview with Geoff Brown, 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2004)

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<sup>79</sup> This can relate to a theme in geographical literature that focuses on ‘buzz’ (Bathelt et al., 2004; Storper and Venables, 2004; Gertler and Levitte, 2005) which highlights the importance of trade conferences and industry gatherings in generating ‘buzz’ or face-to-face contact.

These non-producing firms are key bodies within the industry<sup>80</sup>, not only for the training projects and encouragement that they give the industry (in the case of the FTO and FFC), and not only for the functions and networking events they host (as is the case with the unions), but also because the board members are often filmmakers themselves. One director interviewed, Robert Connolly, is a successful Sydney-based director (see section 7.3.1 for an ethnography involving one of his films, *Three Dollars*) but is also on the board of the FTO;

“It’s a very strong board that they have there, it has lots of obligation, but its main obligation is to foster the industry within New South Wales. I’d been actively involved in a lot of and initiatives since I’ve been there, they established Aurora which is the script writing project which is amazing, which is shifting away from the idea that, you find a genius filmmaker and surrounding him with talent, we say no, we want to support teams of people, we want to support a first-time director and producer that have graduated from film school”.

(Interview with Robert Connolly, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

Having filmmakers on the boards of the institutions means that their policy making and strategy implementation is informed by those it is intended to help, such as the Aurora project, which fostered the scripts for the feature films *Somersault* and *Little Fish*, both of which have won critical acclaim. The Aurora project also has help from Los Angeles, with three LA-based directors working as script advisors for the project<sup>81</sup>. There is also the SPARK programme, funded by the AFC which is another

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<sup>80</sup> They are key because they have intense connections throughout the industry, via the board personnel, membership, website visitors and experience – i.e. they have a topological sense of ‘power’ through their heterogeneous associations (Allen, 2004).

<sup>81</sup> Source: Sydney Central, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2005, page 16.

script writing workshop, which produced the script for *Footy Legends*, another ethnography that is undertaken in section 7.3.2.

As the title of this particular section suggests, the networks of firms enrol a variety of human and nonhuman actants (see section 6.2), the behaviour and workings of which are what creates the network. The enrolment of other institutions (i.e. corporations that are not production firms such as the FTO) from not only Sydney but other cities (the examples given by Jane Smith are of Shanghai and Beijing and with Greg Smith mentioning New York and Chicago) lengthens the network. It is important to use this terminology to overcome the narrative of the global/local ontology (Latour, 1993), and to research the length of these networks rather than which particular scale they are 'embedded' on (which is how some of the political economic authors such as Sassen (2001) or Castells (1996) would have analysed it), then we can confidently dispel the global/local divide with regards to the networks of production firms in Sydney.

### 6.1.2 Runaway Production

The presence of the large, mainly Hollywood, productions in the city of Sydney has been the subject of some debate within the industry (see the section 6.3), but within this sub-section the performativity of the actants enrolled in the networks of this so-called 'runaway production' (Herd, 2004, Christopherson, 2006) will be qualitatively discussed using interview data and secondary sources. In the next chapter a particular case study will be used, that of the feature film *Superman Returns*, so this data set will use other examples, although where necessary, data obtained from the ethnography (during PIII) of *Superman Returns* is used.

The opening of Fox Studios in the Moore Park area of Sydney in 1998 was a major development in Sydney's film-making capacity;

"Sydney's reputation as an international film capital was sealed with the construction of Fox Studios. Located at the former Sydney Showground, the facility is Twentieth Century Fox's first major studio development outside North America and is the largest film studio in the Southern Hemisphere. The production of films commenced at Fox Studios in 1996, well before the official opening of the studio in May 1998. The studios comprise eight world-class sound stages. In 2004-2005, there was a total of 1,838 equivalent full-time jobs in the precinct, 1,226 at the Fox Studios and 612 in production businesses".

([www.business.nsw.gov.au](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au), accessed 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2005)

The credits of the Fox Studio include major Hollywood productions of *Star Wars II and III*, *The Matrix trilogy*, *Mission Impossible II*, *Stealth* and *Superman Returns*, as well as a number of features produced by Sydney film makers, including *Dark City*, *Babe: Pig in the City* and *Moulin Rouge*, albeit with finance from LA-based firms. As can be seen from the figures in the quote above, the NSW government (which played a large role in attracting Twentieth Century Fox to build the complex in Sydney rather than another Australian city) preaches the economic benefits of the studio complex. One of the other proposed benefits of the foreign production that is situated in the Fox lot is that it gives the opportunity for local filmmakers and actors to work on large-scale productions and work with budgets, that when compared to locally produced films, are much higher. This can provide valuable experience and the opportunity to work with contemporaries from Hollywood, as Tony Knight, the head of acting at NIDA explains;

“When the Fox opened here, you had this extraordinary period of when we had *Star Wars*, *The Matrix*, *Moulin Rouge*, *Mission Impossible II*, just these huge blockbusters, it was great for the Australian crews, and it was great for the actors, although they only really had the part of one-liners, but nevertheless, you had to play an American, your American accent had to be up”.

(Interview with Tony Knight, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2004)

The actors from NIDA, or those established within the domestic industry, typically receive ‘the part of one-liners’, a phenomenon mirrored with the crews of these films, in that the major positions, director, producers and head of departments, tend to be filled by people immediately connected to the production, and the Sydney based filmmakers fill the other roles once the production starts in Sydney. However, there are a few cases where more senior roles in these productions have been filled by Sydneians; Andy Mason, for example, was the executive producer for *The Matrix Trilogies*, appointed because of work he did on a Mystery Clock (a Sydney-based firm) production *Dark City*, a film shot in Fox Studios (www.imdb.com, accessed 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2005);

“Joel Silver had set this project up in LA, then it was decided that nobody liked the economic equation, but they had already cast Keanu Reeves and were in an early phase of pre-production. Because of a few connections that I had I was able to talk to Warner Bros. and eventually convince both them and the Wachowski brothers that Sydney is the filmmaker’s paradise of the world. By filming here in Sydney they would be able to get what they would not be able to, or perhaps be allowed to, in Los Angeles”.

(Mason, 2005)



Here, the actions or agency of Andy Mason entailed the persuasion of Warner Brothers and the Wachowski Brothers to bring the production of *The Matrix* to Sydney, thereby creating a change of direction to that particular network – instead of the feature enrolling actants from Los Angeles, the performativity of the producers caused the enrolment of a myriad of actants from Sydney to be enrolled. These included the roles in *The Matrix* that had not yet been cast, with a number of roles given to Sydney actors who had previously been in Sydney-based films and dramas, including a main role for Hugo Weaving who had previously worked on *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert* and *Babe*, produced by Sydney firms. If Scott's (2000, 2002) rhetoric is observed, i.e. Sydney (and other runaway recipients) as a mere production arm of Hollywood and a cheap labour option for the capital-heavy centre of Los Angeles, the process of enrolment described by Andy Mason above refutes this by showing how the topology of the film production industry includes Hollywood and Sydney. It is more than a simple cost-benefit analysis, there are a myriad of factors that are taken on board when deciding where to shoot.

The crew on many of these Hollywood productions are from Sydney, and while they may occupy the less creative roles, there is still a large amount of Sydneys employed on the production;

“Because you've got, something like *The Matrix*, which is high risk projects, the complexity of film, *Moulin Rouge* is a very good example, the costume department, there were 120 or so people in the costume department from *Moulin Rouge*, it had its own accountant, so there are only a handful of places in the world where you could do that. You need those scales on these huge films, you need to be able to scale up... You need to find them, and they need to be good, they have to be A-list.

They talk about in the film industry, if I go to LA, which I would usually do about three times a year, one of the questions is how many A-list crews have you got?”

(Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

These ‘A-list’ crew members are often employed by the LA-based production firm, and in the case that Garry Brennan uses of *Moulin Rouge*, which was shot at Fox, the director, Baz Lurhmann, was also from Sydney.

The usage of cast and crew from Sydney by the Hollywood majors in runaway production has obvious benefits to the city in terms of job creation as well as the filmmakers themselves, as it gives them an opportunity to work on films with high budgets. Without dwelling on the repercussions this has for the domestic industry (for this argument see section 6.3), it is important to see how this runaway production actually comes about. From the interviews conducted, the attraction of Sydney to Hollywood producers can be loosely categorised into three reasons;

- Infrastructural capacity
- Cost competitiveness
- Diversity of locations

While the next part of this section will focus on these three attractions in turn, it is important to say that it is the actions of people and firms beyond the filmmakers and production firms that are essential in bringing a production to Sydney, which ultimately leads to a blurring and overlapping of these three categories. Garry Brennan of the FTO and NSW government explains;

“The most important thing for Sydney is that because we don't have huge amounts of money to entice with, we build up relationships, so if someone is doing a high risk project in Sydney, they need to minimise their risks, so they need to know the standard of the environmental production here. I'm a representative of the government and I'm the liaison person with them, so I regularly meet the heads of production studios over there [in LA], and even if they haven't got a film, we know that one day they might, so I keep the lines of communication open. And suddenly one day when you're over there, for example, while *The Matrix* was still shooting, they said, 'let me tell you about the next project we've got for Sydney'. And in the time that I have had that meeting with him, we went through about ten scripts, three directors, the thing changed enormously before it finally got down to the point where it was ready to go ahead. But Warner Brothers have such an established network here, that when they start to move up towards preproduction, the first thing they would do is hire a location manager to start doing things, they might want to find warehouses, they might want to find offices – before they even go to preproduction, they start making inquiries, and then they will start budgeting and they will hire a line producer in Sydney, who will start working for them”.

(Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

Here, we can detail the processes and actions that the government goes through in order to attract this runaway production to Sydney. As Sydney is in competition with other city recipients of this runaway production (Toronto, Vancouver, Cape Town, Prague), it is important that Sydney has an advantage and, as Garry Brennan suggests, it is very much dependent on the personal relationships that are built up

through visits and seminars. Also, there are more formal approaches, as Les Clements of the NSW Economic and Regional Development department states;

“Part of our job is we have now got this group called the Sydney Film Support Team... basically if we get a major production like, AU\$50, AU\$60 million plus, a really big one, they can come to the Sydney Film Support Team, which is made up of my boss, the CEO, a very senior person in the premiers department and the head of the FTO, and they say ‘hello, welcome, we want you here, you tell us what you want’, and we make sure that the government is ready for it, get a round table which will get the people, the agencies that are directly involved in this movie for the location shooting, the usual thing, roads, police, transport”.

(Interview with Les Clements, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

This ‘round table’ format is a common occurrence in cities that have regular location shootings, and is a prime example of a way in which the networks are created and coerced in a particular way to facilitate the production of a movie. This ‘round table’ phenomenon will be discussed in more detail in section 7.2.

Some of the seminars and informal conferences that are staged in order to set up the networks between Hollywood filmmakers and Sydney filmmakers (that Garry Brennan mentions in the quotation above) are staged by AusFilm, which is a government funded company designed for the purpose of promoting Australia to foreign production companies;

“We will have around three events in Los Angeles every year, and at those events we will invite up to 600 people from the film and television community in LA and we normally get 150 to 200 attendants, and we do

different formats, I guess that what we have found that what works quite well is breakfast seminars and having filmmakers or producers who will give seminars, and talk about their experiences of filming in Australia”.

(Interview with Susanne Larson, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

As well as their head office in the Fox lot in Sydney, AusFilm also has an office in Los Angeles that is designed to take inquiries from LA-based filmmakers about the practical and logistical technicalities of filming in Australia;

“That office [LA office] is also very grassroots, very on the ground and is constantly taking inquiries from, you know, immigration issues, customs, importation of firearms, all that sort of thing.”

(*ibid.*)

The presence of this office is a clear indication of the market that the Australian and NSW government is trying to capture, with many of the government officials and institutions sending high-ranking officials to LA on a regular basis, a phenomenon which is mirrored in the data set in the previous chapter (see Tables 5.6 and 5.7, and Figure 5.3 in section 5.3). Another way in which the infrastructure of Sydney has been deliberately focused on accommodating this runaway production is in the formulation of an educational partnership between Fox Studios and the Australian Film, Radio and Television School (AFTRS). As Malcolm Long describes;

“Not too long ago we did a special course for the employees of Fox Studios about the changing nature of the film production process, and the head of the Fox Studios, Michael Harvey, who we get on very well with, asked if we could design a course which would take his staff, because even though they work at Fox Studios a lot of them don't

actually gets to see the whole production chain, so we took them through the whole process of provisional development rights all the way through to production”.

(Interview with Malcolm Long, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The education of filmmakers is an important part of realising the infrastructural potential of a city, and the presence of AFTRS (the national film school) in Sydney has benefits not only to domestic production, but to Sydney-based foreign production also. Sydney has developed a ‘critical mass’<sup>82</sup> of film and television production, with the major firms having headquarters in Sydney, the FFC, AFC, AusFilm and the film school all being present – which makes filming in Sydney, as opposed to another city with a studio complex in Australia (such as Melbourne and the Gold Coast), more attractive.

As well as the infrastructural benefits that Sydney has for runaway production, there is also the cost issue involving a tax rebate that the government offers to foreign production, which the AFC have outlined on their website;

“In September 2001, the Federal Government introduced a refundable tax offset, a financial incentive for producers of large-budget films to locate in Australia. The offset provides a benefit worth 12.5 per cent of qualifying production expenditure. The key requirement is a minimum Australian expenditure of AU\$15 million. Initially restricted to feature films, mini-series and telemovies, legislation was introduced to include television series in August 2005. The application for the rebate is

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<sup>82</sup> Source: Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

submitted with the producer's tax return in the year the project is completed”.

(Source: [www.afc.gov.au/gtp](http://www.afc.gov.au/gtp) , accessed 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2006)

This recent tax incentive has been specifically designed to attract the runaway production that is considered so financially lucrative to state government. The film industry is traditionally very footloose (Coe, 2001) and so those production companies with the highest budgets, namely the Hollywood majors, will scout various locations around the globe for cities offering the most financially rewarding package;

“So I think primarily cost is obviously an important thing, obviously you can see that because places like Louisiana, New York City, they have these great incentives which is a response to the kind of runaway production that we are trying to get, I mean, they have realised the importance of the industry in their region so, to sum it up I think it's a number of factors, primarily the cost and then I guess the infrastructure and locations depending on what the script requires”.

(Interview with Susanne Larson, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The importance of the financial package offered by Sydney and NSW is seen as working in conjunction with the infrastructural benefits mentioned above, yet while remaining comparable to other incentive packages offered by other cities like Toronto, Vancouver and Cape Town, AusFilm are adamant that it is also the diversity of locations and the ability of Sydney and wider NSW to replicate other parts of the world that attracts Hollywood production;

“For instance say something like *Stealth*, a military air force film, they shot around New South Wales and Australia at all of those places

mirrored other countries, it was supposed to be somewhere else. And I think that's good for us because we can actually use that and say this is what we can do, this is what we can be, we are cost competitive, we have the crews, infrastructure that sort of thing, that is one aspect to it. On the other side of that though, would *The Matrix*, not really being Sydney, and a lot of it was studio work, it showcases what you can offer in terms of a studio”.

(*ibid.*)

In this example, the *Stealth* film that Susanne Larson refers to, used a variety of locations in Sydney, including the Blue Mountains to the west of Sydney which was used to double as the forests of North Korea. The promotion of this versatility of the landscape can have other externalities attached to it, in terms of tourism potential, as Susanne Larson argues;

“You just have to look at *Lord of the Rings*, it really made New Zealand from tourism point of view, but that part of the film, and they were able to promote themselves as the Middle Earth, beautiful scenery that really worked from tourism point of view. And other films as well, like *Thelma and Louise*, brought a lot of people to that canyon land in the US, or *Rob Roy* which did huge things for Scottish tourism, as did *Braveheart*. But I think it's just luck of the project, the script comes first - they are not thinking let's make a film that showcases Australia”.

(*ibid.*)



The versatility of Sydney's cityscape is a major attraction to the Hollywood majors, as is the 'americanised' look of the city<sup>83</sup>, and so it becomes important for AusFilm, as well as the FTO and the state government, to promote this and attract more production to Sydney. However, as we have discussed, these foreign productions should not be seen as a 'global' process because they originate in Los Angeles and are shot in Sydney. Instead, by using the qualitative data described above, it is possible to see how this function is rejected in favour of a skein of networks (Serres and Latour, 1995) that incorporates actants from many parts of the globe. To gloss over these intrinsic and fundamental details by branding the whole process as a 'global' process ignores the nuances of production. This topological approach can single out the important actors and how they interact with their contacts and go about their daily routine, and how this behaviour creates these networks that bring a 'runaway production' to Sydney.

Within this section, it has been shown how the meta-narratives used in political economic language, global/local, can be transcended by researching the workings and behaviour of the actors involved. It is these characteristics that creates the network, be that an executive producer of Southern Star flying to Amsterdam to strike a deal with Endemol; or the CEO of the NSW FTO creating a working alliance with digital post-production houses in Sydney; or the film liaison officer of the NSW government flying to Los Angeles to persuade the president of Warner Brothers to film in Sydney; to label these process as 'global' or 'local' is adding a contextualisation. The examples and small case studies given in this section have highlighted the behaviour of the actors involved in the industry and how they go about creating the spaces and times of the networks, and there could have been even more examples, if there was further research into the other actants, people and

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<sup>83</sup> Source: Interview with Jennifer Lindsey, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2004.

institutions that are not included in this data set. Due to the continued dynamism of the filmmakers behaviour (their constant search for work, the continued networking of filmmakers, their change in lifestyle and need-for-income patterns), the 'network' outlined in this section changes constantly, and to take it as some sort of ossified 'rule' of the workings of the film and TV production industry in Sydney would be impertinent. However, this data set clearly describes some of the key processes that go on, and have gone on in the industry, and is a clear indication of the behaviour and performativity that goes about creating the world-city network (Amin and Thrift, 2002). Indeed, a "successful network is an arrangement that enrolls actants to produce apparently stable patterns of purpose and action" (Smith, 2003b: 576), which is exemplified by the actions and performativity of those actors involved in the data set above. So, while the dynamism and continued re-organisation of the network is caused by the everyday actions of the enrolled actors, the usefulness and importance of this data set to global and world city literature comes from its apparent stability of 'purpose and action' (Yeung, 2005; Martson et al., 2005). Ultimately, what this section describes is the multiplicity of actors involved, and what it is precisely that they do to create, evolve and change the spacing and timing of the production networks, which relates back to the ANT view that "global networks, space and time, are not static, fixed, given, but are made, remade and unmade" (Smith, 2003b: 576).

This section has so far focused on the people that are enrolled in the networks, but to continue the application of ANT to this thesis, the role of nonhumans need to be discussed (Murdoch, 1997b), as the agency of the nonhumans is inextricable from that of the humans (see Latour, 1994)<sup>84</sup>. The following section will therefore discuss some of the nonhuman traits of the industry that were analysed, and show how they

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<sup>84</sup> This process is detailed in section 3.2.

too have agency and performativity in the spacing and timing of Sydney's film and TV production networks.

## 6.2 Human/Non Human Divide

The methodology of ANT incorporates nonhuman actants into the network; in that every action that is carried out by a human actor ‘ends up in the action of a nonhuman’, thereby the responsibility of that action lies with both human and nonhuman actants (Latour, 1994: 795). The (inter)action of these actants leads to the empirical importance of the nonhuman elements to the networks, as they have previously been understated in the literature of cultural industries and global and world cities (Smith, 2003a). The reliance on creativity and innovation as industry ‘drivers’ has led to the notion that it is the people that ‘have the power’ within the network, as creativity and innovation are human traits (Florida, 2002; Scott, 2004b). However, as (Latour, 1994a: 793) suggests, this is not always the case as “there is no sense in which the notion of a human can be disentangled from the nonhumans”. Creativity can be viewed as another trait of the ‘collective’, and one which has nonhumans ‘woven’ into it. The importance of the nonhuman in the film and TV industry can then be a script-writers’ computer, a camera lens, a particular location, a piece of government legislation or a cinema projector. Each of these items can be deemed just as ‘powerful’<sup>85</sup> or interconnected to the network as the people they relate to – as it is difficult to see how the industry would survive without these items.

This can be typified with one such example from the TV industry. With the onset of reality TV and its subsequent boom in popularity, there has been a series of themed shows. The production company Screentime, based in Crows Nest, acquired the

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<sup>85</sup> As with the non-producing institutions discussed in the previous section being deemed ‘key’, in this instance, the term ‘powerful’ is encamped in scare quotes because the notion of power can be just as misleading as ‘global’ or ‘cultural’. Power can be seen as something that “exercises us in particular ways; what happens between here and there (or differing points on the continuum) makes a difference to the workings of power” (Allen, 2004: 24).

international rights to *Popstars* after its initial airing in New Zealand, and since then have produced what they call a 'production bible';

“What we do is, we sell concepts or formats, and the best way of doing this is to start with a successful program that attracts big audiences in the home country. To do that, take out a piece of video tape and show them, and then a distributor will sell an option for a producer or a broadcaster to make the show and then, when all the details have been finalised in the home market, they will permit the option to produce. And we charge them a percentage of the production budget, we then charge the budget consultancy fees [...] then we will charge a percentage derived from the brand, record sales, merchandising, touring and so on. But for all that, they get what's called a production bible. So, it's a comprehensive look at the background, which is the structure, the parties involved, the concept, the outline of it, the project structure, who you need to put to it, how you need to particularly contract it, then how to coordinate the event and then how to conduct the paper work if you will. So, that's the project schedule, and then you have project budgets, flight and accommodation, all that sort of deep cover, itineraries, budget... So this is like a maintenance manual for a motor vehicle”.

(Interview with Bob Campbell, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

This production bible, as mentioned above, is then sold to the various production companies in other cities and they in turn get a workable, step-by-step guide to producing a successful show. The format does have a certain amount of malleability, but particular formats such as the music for the show, the logo and set design are non-negotiable which results in a quasi 'cut-and-paste' scenario. This (nonhuman) production bible could be considered an 'immutable mobile' (Latour, 1987) which, like

the dramas produced by Southern Star (see section 6.1.1), are items or ‘things’ that are transported and mobilised without changing their form. Their durability is important because it is the mobilisation of these immutable mobiles and their dispersal and delegation that formulate the networks (Smith, 2003a; Latour, 2005). This production bible is therefore a nonhuman actant that is ‘creating’ the network of the TV industry as (in this example) it passed along from Screentime to ITV. As the network is created through the mobilisation of this actant, it begins to enrol other actors (both human and nonhuman) into the network. Record companies are enrolled to offer the recording contract to the winners of the show, crew members are contacted to acquire their services in creating the show, locations are booked, sets are designed, wannabe stars send in their application forms, and audiences turn on their TV sets. The network is produced and extended by the agency of these nonhuman actants, and in doing so, aligns itself with Latour’s original thinking of nonhuman agency in the network.

Another example of the nonhuman agency is what is known as the creative review tool (CRT) used by the postproduction houses like Animal Logic;

“We have technologically invented something called the CRT, the Creative Review Tool, and it’s a computer, its actually quite a simple web-based program where you’re in your hotel room in Prague or LA or anywhere else you want to be, and I’m here and we are looking at the same image on our screens in real time, and with the cursor I can just say, you’re the director, I want you to shade this bit bluer, or this thing deeper, and I can see what you’re pointing to, and I’d say ‘what like this?’ We could do it immediately, or might have to get back to him and we can have a webcam thing and do it face to face if we want to”.

(Interview with Greg Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

This CRT becomes an interface between the director and the postproduction house and, as Greg Smith states, can connect the two wherever they are in the world as long as they both have broadband internet connection. The relationship, in this respect, between the director (or whoever is in creative control) and the production design crew carrying out the amendments is completely virtual, the use of the webcam means that they only see each other on screen, and speaking on the phone or via the Internet as well. We can see from the example of the CRT that, because of the inextricability of the human and the nonhuman, the entanglement between them is total (Latour, 1994), in so far as face-to-face human interaction is non-existent – only really present in the initial meeting of the director and the production house. The recognition of the nonhuman in global and world city literature is something which has been called for (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Doel and Hubbard, 2002; Smith 2003a, 2003b) because they are vital to the relational aspect of city empirics and the use of ANT as a methodology demands that the nonhuman aspects of network creation are taken into account, indeed “this relational materialism demands consideration of the way that human and non-human actants are implicated in the articulation of the global network” (Doel and Hubbard, 2002: 358). As we have seen, the production bibles are a good example of how a nonhuman immutable mobile goes about creating the network of world cities as it passes from one company to the next; and how the CRT associates the human and nonhuman element together in the network. Another example of a particular ‘thing’ that can have similar effects on the network of the film and TV industry more generally is the show reel;

“The show reel has become an essential part of the industry, basically, every actor has to have a show reel which is basically a collection of snippets of work, it may be a scene or a monologue from usually a film or television programme or script, it shows the range of what you look

like, how you general speak, almost everything they are generally interested in”.

(Interview with Tony Knight, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2004)

The show reel, as Tony Knight explains, is an important piece of work for any aspiring actor as it allows them to have an easily accessible and digestible snapshot to give to a producer or casting director. Anoushka Zarkesh is one such casting director;

“It [the show reel] helps me because there are thousands of actors, usually I use the same actors that I know and trust and love<sup>86</sup>, but if I don't know the actors, I get thousands of actors inundating me with photos, biogs, so instead of meeting them and testing them, I can't meet everybody, I say send in a show real in so I can stick it in, and after three minutes I can say this person cannot act or I get a sense of what they can do, or voice or the types of quality they have. So the show reel for me is important”.

(Interview with Anoushka Zarkesh, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The show reel therefore gives the actor an opportunity to showcase their talent to a casting agent without having to meet them or go to a casting. If the show reel is good enough, the actor in question may then get called upon to come in for an audition, thereby mobilising the actors (in both the dramatic and Latourian sense) and enrol them in the spacing and timing of that particular actant-network. The production of the show reel itself enrolls a number of different institutions and people; the directors and copyright holders of the film that the clips are from have to be contacted, special

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<sup>86</sup> Again, the issue of trust is raised here, emphasising its importance in creating the production networks of film and TV production.



equipment has to be used to splice images and footage from whatever format the visuals may be on (DVD, film, video), indeed there are special companies devoted to the compilation of show reels<sup>87</sup>. Therefore, to use an ANT terminology, they too can be considered as 'immutable mobiles' (Latour, 1987) in that they do not change their form as they create the spacing and timing of the actant-network, yet they are themselves a network of creativity and production (Law, 2000), in much the same way we considered the production bibles and a TV program (*The Secret Life of Us* in section 6.1.1).

The entanglement of nonhuman actants or 'things' into the world city network has not been a recent occurrence, it has always been the case; but the global and world city literature has generally neglected them thus far. Too heavy an emphasis has been placed on the agency of humans and firms, a common symptom of a political economy standpoint on world cities (in particular Castells, 1996). But as we have seen with the few examples alluded to in this section, the agency and performativity of nonhuman actants must be considered when describing a qualitative empirical account of the creation of a world city network. The film and TV production industry, as with other cultural industries literature, has been overly reliant on the agency of humans, however the role of the nonhuman in extending the networks ever longer is evident in all aspects of the film and TV industry from the cameras shooting the film, to the cinema projector showing it – and these need to be accounted for in any detailed narrative of a world city network. To distance and extricate the performativity of a human from that of a nonhuman is a false dichotomy, an unnecessary cleavage of an entangled continuum (Murdoch, 1997a; Smith, 2003b), and a forced boundary upon a lattice of topologies (Serres and Latour, 1995), and so should be avoided by

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<sup>87</sup> Source: Interview with Robert Connolly, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

accounting for the performativity of the nonhuman into the creation of the world city network.

The first two sections of this chapter have been about dispelling particular dualisms that have been typical of a political economy approach to world cities, and showing how an ANT-inspired narrative of the constant production of the network can bring about a rejection of these meta-narratives. The next section of this chapter also dispels a dualism, but one which has emanated from the industry itself, not from the global and world city literature, which has taken the form a debate being argued by many within the industry.

### 6.3 A Sydney Film Industry versus a Film Industry in Sydney?

One of the objectives of this thesis is to address the lack of cultural industries data as well as the lack of relational data in the global and world city literatures, thereby creating a relational account of the cultural industries of Sydney. The interviews and ethnographies that were collected constitute these data sets, but in the process of collection and trying to immerse in networks of the industry, it became apparent that the debates and 'concerns' within the industry have an effect on the data set as a whole. The dynamism and continual drive for improved productivity and wealth-generation within the industry (and any industry for that matter) directly influences the connections and relations that are being analysed. Therefore, in this section, one of the more vehemently debated topics by people in the industry, i.e. the proliferation of 'runaway production' and its effects on the domestic industry production, will be discussed. By analysing this debate, more of the behaviour and performativity of the actants will be described, thereby adding to the bulk of data. Many of the seminars, annual meetings and general discussions within the industry seem to centre around this debate; so by qualitatively describing the details of the argument, not only will it add value to the global and world city literature via the presentation of a qualitative relational data set on a cultural industry in a world city, but also contribute to the debate in question as well.

Many filmmakers argue that the runaway production discussed in section 6.1.2 is detrimental to the indigenous film industry of Sydney. One of the arguments that is put forward by Sydney based film makers is that "we live in fear of the Government forgetting there's a difference between a film industry in Australia and an Australian film industry"<sup>88</sup>. This can be related to the construction of Fox Studios, which has

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<sup>88</sup> Quote from Robert Connolly, in *Variety International Film Guide* 1999, page 34

seen the production of a number of major, highly-funded Hollywood productions. However, despite the amount of foreign production that is conducted at the studio complex, some of the Sydney-based production firms view this foreign production as concurrent with their own rather than aiding it, in one case being described as “irrelevant”<sup>89</sup>. The studios and the films that shoot there have economic benefits to NSW, with NSW State Development Minister John Watkins saying that the filming of the *Superman Returns* film in 2005, which is expected to cost over \$US300 million to make, had injected AU\$110 million into the economy. An example of how the press has expressed the advantages of Fox Studios and the filming it brings to Sydney is outlined here;

"*Superman Returns* is likely to be more powerful than a locomotive at the box office here next year and it's already proven a winner for the NSW economy. It's injected tens of millions worth of investment into the local film industry, and that means jobs and continuing growth for this sector of the state's economy."

(O'Dwyer, 2005)

The film is said to have created 800 local jobs and employed up to a further 1000 people in positions created by the production. *Superman Returns* is said to have employed 10,000 people during filming, with 60 sets operating continually on nine stages (*ibid*)<sup>90</sup>. The counter argument to this is that the jobs created by the production are short-term, temporary jobs only existing during the production period, and the most 'creative' jobs within the production are already taken by people from

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<sup>89</sup> Quote from an interview with Donald Crombie, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2005.

<sup>90</sup> These statistics and the quote from John Watkins also show the reoccurrence of the state-level data bias, with the figures given for NSW, not urban-level data for Sydney, which highlights further the importance of this thesis in providing city-level data for Sydney.

the country of origin. When asked about the effect of this type of foreign production, John Edwards had this to say;

“OM: Do you think a positive effect on the TV industry?

JE: neither positive nor negative really. The idea was, and the reason it was supported by the government, it kept the infrastructure in place and it kept a high level of skill. We all thought it was going to damage us, we thought people would become rarer, it didn't really, it is slightly positive but it's difficult to assess how important the positive is”.

(Interview with John Edwards, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2005)

There has been some cross-over between the domestic industry and the foreign feature film production in Sydney. However this has been restricted to the ‘high-end’ TV production, such as episodic dramas and telemovies, because the technical and general creative skills involved in both formats is similar;

“At the high-end of TV, which are shot on film, there is a fair bit of movement, almost easy movement between film and TV. For example, my first production, the cinematographer was John Seale, who has won an Oscar. ...My second production, the cinematographer has also won an Oscar for *Lord of the Rings*”.

(*ibid.*)

This type of movement is rare, and despite the successes of Sydney-based filmmakers in Hollywood, the presence of the foreign productions in Fox Studios and Sydney remains largely ineffectual to Sydney’s film making firms. However, as John Edwards points out in the quotation above, the government see the influx of this

runaway production as beneficial, maintaining industry infrastructure and high skill levels, but these benefits are usually priced out of the indigenous market – local film makers simply cannot afford to shoot at Fox Studios or have Russell Crowe in their movies<sup>91</sup>.

This situation is not so unique to Sydney, with the studio system being criticized by some (see Hannigan, 2002), and with foreign or runaway production having little or no impact on the local production sector;

“They can be criticised for being top-down and undemocratic in the way they limit local and community input. [...] This is a charge that has been levelled at both the Sydney and Melbourne studios, with some justification. They can be derided as exogenous developments parachuted into a location, lacking any organic relation to the communities within which they are situated”.

(Goldsmith and O'Regan, 2003: 38)

For the NSW state government, Fox Studios cements Sydney's place as the major film-making capital of Australia, and although it comes at a price, it is a price worth paying. For the then-NSW Premier, Bob Carr, the films that are made at Fox “are now part of the life of Sydney; we've got ourselves a new industry with all the benefits and some of the inconvenience. It means from time to time you might find a road closed off, helicopters in the air above Martin Place on a weekend, the entrance to a building closed off, but it feeds into our economy the way few industries do” (Bob Carr quoted from the Sydney Morning Herald, 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2002, page 21).

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<sup>91</sup> Source: Interview with Robert Connolly, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

As well as the construction of the Fox Studios complex, there is a perceived lack of domestic interest in films produced by Sydney-based firms. One of the key arguments (albeit tongue-in-cheek) is detailed below;

“Australian cinema today is diverse, imaginative and multicultural. But all Australian films released in any given year are made for the cost of the light-sabre budget for the new Star Wars films. And most films aren't released anywhere but latte sipping festivals where they wear berets and talk about the "common man" and how their film glorifies him. ...Too many of our films [those produced by Sydney firms] are small, personal and artistic and therefore non-profitable. How many of you have seen more than a handful of new Australian movies in the last year? All the festivals, training workshops and subsidies that exist in Australia don't matter if the film has no chance of being commercial as well”.

(Marshall, 2000)

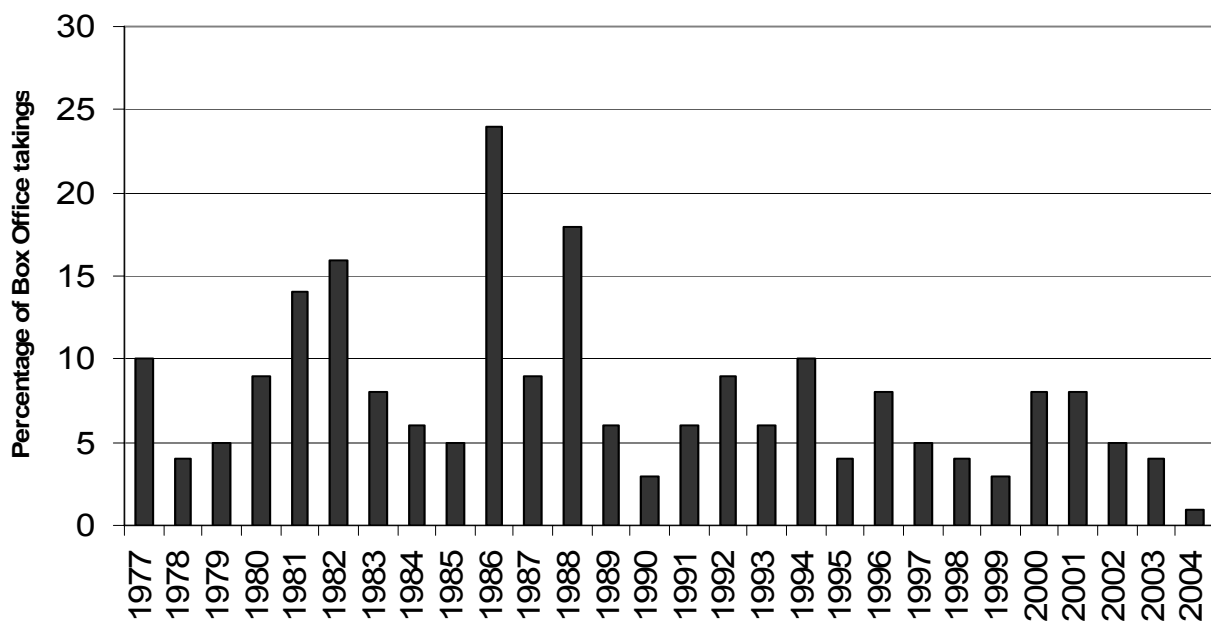
Despite the relative age of the quote (i.e. 2000), the majority of films made by Sydney firms are considered too artistic, have a small budget, and are on themes that are too dissociated with what mainstream cinema-going audiences want. Many of the films produced by these companies are not released nationally, and are shown only in art house cinemas located in Sydney and possibly Melbourne; and then, they have to compete with the mass-appeal feature films produced by Hollywood which have much higher budgets. Also, the perception of domestically produced films by the public is that the films are of a poorer quality than their Hollywood counterparts;

“At screen culture forums where we analysed classic Hollywood road movies and the Australian versions of the genre, people told me they found them mostly ‘boring’ and ‘cheap’. One young woman who initially

claimed she liked Australian cinema admitted she couldn't actually recall when she last saw one, adding: "When I go out on a date, I want a good time. It's too risky to choose an Australian film".

(Mills, 2001: 16)

As well as the lack of interest domestically, another perceived problem is that there is a lack of investment from government and private firms. As Table 6.1 shows on page 144, the level of investment in feature films has been declining, which has been mirrored by a fall in the percentage of box office revenue from Australian made feature films, as shown in Figure 6.3.



**Figure 6.3: Percentage of Box Office takings by Australian films per year (Source: AFC, 2004)**

1986 saw the biggest percentage of Australian feature films in the domestic box office with the release of *Crocodile Dundee*, the most successful domestic film to date. As Figure 6.1 shows, since then, there has been an overall decrease in the level of interest from domestic viewers in feature films produced by domestic firms. Another



issue in the debate, especially among government officials, is that of the many films shot in Sydney, the cityscape is used as a generic, faceless city without reference by name of visual identification;

*The Matrix* films were filmed here, but they were consciously making Sydney anonymous, when the Museum of Sydney was a backdrop, the name was been morphed out. And I suppose that can be artistically justified, because it's supposed to be nowhere in the world, it's supposed to be a futuristic place, but let's face it, that film could be made anywhere and if you have this multinational level of these footloose films happening around the world, you could end up having our film industry described as 'Mexicans with mobiles' – but that's not what we want for this city”.

(Interview with Jennifer Lindsey, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2004)

For *The Matrix*, the cityscape was supposed to be generic, and as Jennifer Lindsey of the NSW Ministry for Arts points out, it is “artistically justified”, however the lack of the iconography of Sydney in many of the films shot there is troubling some of the city's filmmakers, as it detracts from the creative milieu of the city and turns it into a commodity for Hollywood to dress up as New York or Metropolis as they see fit<sup>92</sup>. One of the few Hollywood films to counter this was the production of *Mission Impossible II* in Sydney, which used the iconography of the city to a large extent, with panning camera shots of the harbour, use of the Harbour Bridge in stunts and views of the Opera House<sup>93</sup>.

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<sup>92</sup> Source: Interview with Donald Crombie, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2005 and Peter Andrkidis, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

<sup>93</sup> Source: Interview with Jane Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2004.

The down-turn of the domestic film production industry has been highlighted by some of the concerns of the industry personnel detailed above, but there have been some suggestions from within the industry itself to make the industry more productive. The development of the post-production sector, and the increasing percentage of a feature film's final budget on the digital effects, is a part of the industry that is attracting many companies in Sydney, with the presence of Animal Logic, a "digital production company at the forefront of the international visual effects industry" ([www.animallogic.com](http://www.animallogic.com), accessed 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2005) being evidence of that. The profit margins to be had in digital effects can be far higher than that of traditional film production, so there have been calls for the increase in resources aimed at attracting digital postproduction to Sydney. We have already seen in section 6.1.1 (page 170), from Jane Smith (the CEO of the FTO) is describing the relationship the FTO has with the postproduction digital sector in training people who want to work in that sector. This is evidence of the desire that the industry has to generate the digital infrastructure in the postproduction sector that will hopefully attract more and more jobs and projects. More generally, another solution to the perceived ailment of the domestic production industry is increased collaboration between firms. Malcolm Long, who used to be the managing director of SBS, now the director of the AFTRS, argues that;

"There can be many reasons attributed to the nature of this industry set-up, attributed largely to the overarching culture of Australian filmmaking which often indiscriminately, celebrates the existential romance of the isolated filmmaker as jungle-fighting individualist and underplays the important skills of alliance-making and collaboration... Forming more enterprises, alliances and collaborations committed to both creative and business sustainability would pay off for the Australian film industry: most importantly, it would make better films".

(Long, 2005: 44)

Here, Malcolm Long is advocating the increased collaboration between firms and freelancers within the industry in the hope that it helps to produce better quality films. This is relevant to the empirical enquiry of this thesis as it is the connections that are being qualitatively analysed that are being referred to here. However, it is the performativity of these connections and alliances that are crucial to understanding the workings of the industry, and focusing on this performativity will mean a better understanding of these relationships. In the same way that the global and world city literature has progressed from 'static-network' theory (Castells, 1996; Sassen, 2002; Taylor, 2004) to new urbanism (Amin and Thrift, 2002)<sup>94</sup>, by looking at the actual workings and not the nodes in the network (i.e. the 'in between' such as the alliances within the film industry), the actual behaviour of the actants involved needs to be analysed and scrutinised to subsequently have a better understanding of the workings and productivity of the industry. In this section, the debate in question has been detailed, with some of the key personnel giving their opinion. As mentioned in the introduction to this section, this analysis was included because it adds to the global and world city literature, and it gives a further insight (and therefore more data) into the actions and reasoning of the filmmakers (both human and nonhuman) and how they create the film and TV production actant-networks.

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<sup>94</sup> See section 3.1.

## 6.4 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has dispelled some of the binaries that have prevailed through the political economy-driven global and world city literature, namely the global/local, human/nonhuman and of the debate emanating from the industry itself, that of Sydney film industry and a film industry in Sydney. Using ANT and the ideals from the new urbanism thinking on the global and world city literature (Amin and Thrift, 2002, 2007; Smith, 2003a, 2003b, Smith and Doel, 2007), these meta-narratives have been overcome using qualitative relational data, descriptive accounts of the actual behaviour of the human and nonhuman actors involved in the industry, and how this behaviour goes about creating the world city network. Therefore, the data in this chapter can be seen as adding the subject matter to the empirics set out in Chapter 5, which (as mentioned in the opening of this chapter) acted as a frame in which a quantitative relational stance was taken on the cultural industries of Sydney and their involvement in the world city network. This empiricism is in keeping with the need to “find out precisely how networks work and are maintained over long-distances” (Smith, 2003a: 31). The need for this type of work has been explicitly explained in Chapter 3 so there is little need to revisit those arguments here, however what is important to realise through the data presented in this chapter, is how it goes about in its rejection of the aforementioned dualisms that shape political economic approaches to the world city network (cf. Castells, 1996; Friedmann, 1995; Knox and Taylor, 1995; Sassen, 2001; 2002; and more recently, Harrison, 2007).

In the first section of this chapter, the global/local divide is tackled using examples from the larger production firms in Sydney as well as the runaway production phenomenon. Without reiterating the examples given, it can be seen that it becomes very misleading to describe their everyday actions (or performativity) as ‘local’ producing ‘global’ results, as the relationships and network-building actions that have

been qualitatively describe constitute much more than simple 'local' process or 'global' processes. The ontology of scale is something that only serves to inhibit our understanding of the world city network formation and;

"In this emerging new order, spatial configurations and spatial boundaries are no longer necessarily or purposively territorial or scalar, since the social, economic, political and cultural inside and outside are constituted through the topologies of actor networks which are becoming increasingly dynamic and varied in spatial construction".

(Amin, 2004: 33)

The use of ANT in the empirics has essentially allowed the researched to guide the researcher (Thrift, 2005), and not to place some preconceived meta-narrative onto their everyday actions (Latour; 1998, 2005). The difference of using ANT as an empirical tool as opposed to a political economy ethos is its theoretical unobtrusiveness (and hence counter-intuitiveness), acting as a 'guide for the eye' (Latour, 2005), highlighting the processes and performativity of the actors involved in the area being studied.

The inclusion of the human/nonhuman divide as a dualism that needs overcoming is a deliberate one as much of the global and world city literature tends to focus on the human agency within a network, and pay scant attention to the agency of things (Smith, 2003b), and the effects of human and nonhuman actants become indistinguishable and inextricable from each other (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Latour, 1994; 2005). The role of nonhumans in the world city network cannot be understated and any account of such a network needs to include them in order to fully comprehend the action and workings of the humans – as the two are inextricably linked, as every action of a human ends up in the action of a nonhuman (Latour,

1994). So when action is alluded to, as it is with this data set, then it must take into account the nonhuman aspects of the network, and their contribution to the creation of a world city network, be they in the form of intermediary, mediator or immutable mobile.

The final section of this chapter dealt with a topical debate that is currently engaging the industry and those people within it, and by accounting for the arguments put forward and those counter arguments, it becomes possible to qualitatively describe the actions and workings of the people involved in the argument. Once these actions have been recorded it then becomes possible to show how using an ANT perspective, which focuses entirely on the actual doings of the actant-network, suggests that the once-perceived duality of a film industry in Sydney against a Sydney film industry breaks down. By looking at the argument with an ANT-inspired perspective not only have the skills and behaviour of the actants been accounted for, but we can point to these behaviours creating the networks that have previously been theorised as the meta-narratives in which process and practice are 'embedded' (Castells, 1996; Sassen, 2001). Therefore, it is the behaviour of those involved in both 'sides' of the debate which come to the fore, and those practices that attempted to bridge or even bypass the debate are highlighted. Instead of an 'us versus them' mentality that is evident in patches through the industry, the collaborative relationships (which of them work and which do not) are reported on, and thus provides invaluable evidence as to how this debate can be sidelined in favour of a co-operative relationship between all those institutions present in Sydney.

To achieve the aims and objectives of this thesis, a rejection of dualist thinking is only one way of presenting the data. It does allow us to see how the previous meta-narrative thinking of Marxist and political economy urban geography can be critiqued, and it provides a 'frame' (Latour, 2005) for the data to present itself. However, the

data tells a story; the in-depth interviews and the ethnographic work undertaken over the course of a year is rich in all the elements needed for a gripping film script; industrial turmoil, personal strife, one-man-against-the-odds, political intrigue, it has it all. In order to present the data in a more free-flowing, narrative way, the next chapter of this thesis will provide case studies (Yin, 2003) to tell the story through three different projects that were all in production (albeit at varying stages) during my year-long fieldwork period in Sydney. The humans (and nonhumans) involved in the production, the firms, city government, overseas actors, the money and the city of Sydney itself will all be accounted for, and the way in which they interact with one another in a collaborative (and sometimes competitive) way will be highlighted, recording the performativity of the actants as they go about creating the spacing and timing of Sydney's urban network.

Despite all the competition between firms in terms of cost-reduction, cheaper labour and inexpensive locales, the output of the products themselves can ultimately make or break a firm or individual. One can simply ask George Lucas if he ever needs to work again after his *Star Wars* films and the answer would be a definite no as, due to the success and wealth generation of the films, he “has made enough money to fail for the rest of his life”<sup>95</sup>, so it would be safe to say that he owes his financial security to Luke Skywalker and the rest of the *Star Wars* world. However, the profitability of a product does not always lie with the artistic creativity; a reality TV product, for example, may have huge mass-appeal and subsequently have the format sold to numerous countries around the world (for example the *Popstars* production bible sold by Screentime discussed in section 6.2), and although may not be critically acclaimed, the audience numbers, advertising revenue and general wealth they create can be far higher than a drama or feature film. Also, with these particular shows, they tend to be of a low-cost, high-income nature and so can generate enormous revenue in a short space of time and are also relatively low-risk. When it comes to features and episodic television dramas, the risk can be much greater (Allen and Hill, 2004). The money needed to make the project has to be made available before the project can begin, so there is obviously no way to view the finished product, therefore the risk to the financier is that much greater. The larger numbers of crew and cast involved can add to the complexity of the operation, as well as the length of shoot. Budgets can overrun, creative forces can clash, and there are a lot more factors that can go wrong. Quasi-guarantees can be offered with well-

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<sup>95</sup> Quote from George Lucas on a Channel 9 News special, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2005, on the release of *Episode III*, the final film of the *Star Wars* saga, which was shot entirely in Fox Studios, Sydney.



known actors or directors (people that the financiers know will attract audiences) but ultimately the stakes are a lot higher in these types of products. What makes these types of products particularly interesting from the point of view of this thesis is that they enrol a large number of varied personnel – directors, producers, gaffers, grips, actors, set designers, costume designers, make-up artists, armourers, the list could go on for many pages. All of these people (and the related ‘things’) have to be enrolled and mobilised in order to get the product finished on time and on budget – both of which are likely to change throughout the duration of the production period. The topology of the production and a particular project then becomes a skein of networks of people and things, all creating the connections and the networks as they go about their daily routine of production.

With this in mind, this chapter will focus on particular examples of products and projects, and exemplify how the connections of these projects go about enrolling and mobilising the network. This is related to the discussion on page in section 2.4 regarding the ‘project-turn’ in economic geography, and the work of Grabher (2002, 2004). Both the humans and the nonhumans of the network will be identified, the ‘immutable mobiles’, as well as the mediators and the performances – the various aspects and areas of the network will be reviewed<sup>96</sup>, akin to the ‘project ecologies’ that Grabher (2004) notes in his work on the cultural industries of advertising and software. This empirical data will then show how looking at a project as a case study can expose the connectivity, dynamism and non-linearity of production (Yin, 2003), and start “thinking about knowledge spaces topologically” (Grabher, 2004: 106) – the details of which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

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<sup>96</sup> That is, all the areas and aspects of the network that are relevant to the research aims and objectives – as to review all the aspects of the network would be detrimental to this thesis (see section 4.4).

The four projects, or ethnographies, I have chosen to conduct are the Hollywood feature film production *Superman Returns*, the London-Sydney co-television production *Mary Bryant*, and two independent feature films made by Sydney firms, *Three Dollars* and *Footy Legends*. In all these projects, a detailed ethnography was conducted, including in-depth interviews with key personnel, and where available, on-site visits of production in progress (be that shooting or post-production) and secondary source research including press releases and watching the finished product. These projects were chosen, not only because of the availability at the time, but also because of their variety; *Superman Returns* being very much of the high-budget end of the scale (web blogs and magazine articles have suggested that it could become the most expensive film ever made) with a mass-appeal and an international distribution network; *Mary Bryant* being a television drama, shot in Sydney but incorporating firms from Sydney and London; and *Three Dollars* and *Footy Legends*, exemplifying Sydney's independent filmmakers' film, with a smaller budget and a limited initial release. Throughout the examples, other projects and productions that the interviewed and shadowed people have worked on will be alluded to in order to more comprehensively narrate the processes involved. This ensures that they stay true to the ANT-inspired empirics of this thesis and give a more topological account of the industry. Despite this stance, the 'frame' of the sections of this chapter will remain the productions themselves, but it is important to realise that the topologies of the humans and nonhumans involved in these productions transcend these 'frames', and as Latour (2005) suggests, these frames are a way of completing this thesis, not an opaque generality or law, but simply a way of rounding off the topological processes and performativity that have been described.

## 7.1 *Superman Returns*

Superman has always been a popular character in the mainstream media, since originating in Action Comics in June 1938 he has gone on to appear in four films in the seventies and eighties, two television series and with the release of *Superman Returns* in June 2006, 68 years after his original appearance, the 'Man of Steel' is back in his latest incarnation. This section will provide an ethnographic empirical data set that qualitatively describes the networks and connections of the production of *Superman Returns* as it was filmed in Sydney from March to August 2005. The preproduction and postproduction periods are eluded to in this ethnography and referenced when possible, but the main focus of this ethnography is the main shooting period. Much of the information displayed in this section has been gathered from in-depth interviews of government officials in Sydney and staff at Fox Studios, as well as informal interviews with cast and crew members. Also, on-site visits were conducted, with a number of days being spent on set, talking to cast and crew members, gathering information on the connections between people (and things). All this data provides a comprehensive description of the production networks of *Superman Returns*; however where there was a need to find any additional data, secondary sources were used including websites, newspaper articles, television programs, the final production of the film itself.

The Hollywood production company responsible for the production of *Superman Returns* is Warner Brothers, who also produced *The Matrix* trilogy, which was shot in Fox Studios (and around the streets of central Sydney) in 1997 for the first film, and 2001 and 2002 for the subsequent sequels. Indeed, the negotiations for the shooting of *Superman Returns* in Sydney were conducted whilst *The Matrix Revolutions* (the third *Matrix* film) was still in production at Fox Studios;

"With *Superman Returns*, I had my first meeting with Warner Brothers in Los Angeles, in 2003. So I go over there and meet the vice president of production... and while *The Matrix* was still shooting, he said, 'let me tell you about the next project we've got for Sydney'".

(Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The relationships that Hollywood production firms have with the film liaison officer for a city (in this case, Garry Brennan for Sydney) is an important one<sup>97</sup> as it facilitates the capturing of 'runaway production', which is considered by the government of Sydney and NSW to have major economic benefits to the city. The enticement of this type of Hollywood runaway production, and the networking involved in that process, is therefore an important part of the agenda of the government of Sydney. This can be exemplified by Garry Brennan visiting the vice president of production at Warner Brothers, someone who would be very influential in the location of a film's shooting schedule. One of the other benefits to Warner Brothers of shooting in Sydney is that they can mobilise the actors used in the previous production (*The Matrix* trilogy), i.e. people who have worked with them before; and as we have discovered in the previous chapter, networks of trust in film and TV production are vitally important. A point that is emphasised by Vivienne Skinner, the arts adviser to the Premier of NSW;

"Certainly, with Warner Brothers, it is very important to establish a relationship with them and making sure that they are satisfied. Certainly with *Star Wars*, Rick MacCallum and the Director, when they went back to L.A in Hollywood to report on the production, there was this full page advertisement saying that 'filming in Sydney is one of the best

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<sup>97</sup> See section 6.1.2, page 161.

experiences ever, and I would recommend it to anybody!' Nice to know what that translates into, but I think we have had to work hard at being accommodating and servicing them very well when they're here, because we realise that there's a lot in it for us, they want to use us as a filming destination and use our locations, use our facilities and use our crew. But the other side of that is that they spend an awful a lot of money, they create jobs and they create industry, create business".

(Interview with Vivienne Skinner, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2005)

It is inevitable that this rhetoric of economic benefits and job creation from these Hollywood runaway productions emanates from the government of NSW. She went on to suggest that in terms of the benefits that these productions have to the city of Sydney, the level of finance that these films generate for the local industry is considerable;

"I think something like *Superman Returns*, which is spending something like AU\$100 million on the ground and is going to be employing over the course of the shoot, 10,000 people, New South Wales people, so it's quite phenomenal".

(Interview with Vivienne Skinner, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2005)

The figure of AU\$100 million quoted by Vivienne Skinner has since been amended, with John Watkins, the NSW State Development minister, saying it is over AU\$110 million<sup>98</sup>. Despite the government hype, it is widely recognised that Sydney has a relatively large 'pool' of high production talent for the major Hollywood production companies to choose from, as well as the low cost of production in Sydney;

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<sup>98</sup> Source: Sydney Morning Herald, 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2005.

“The really big important productions, they come to Sydney not anywhere else, there is no possibility that they would do a *Superman Returns* in Queensland. They might do it in New York which was the other choice, but can you imagine the costs involved with that?”

(Interview with Les Clements, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The financial impact of the filming of these ‘footloose’ films in Sydney is evident (see Christopherson, 2002), and therefore the government creates what they term a ‘film friendly’<sup>99</sup> city. Part of the government’s activities in creating a ‘film friendly’ city is to set up what is known as a ‘round table’ which is explained by Vivienne Skinner;

“We organised for what we call the Premier’s round table, I did the organisational bookings and leg work, but the Premier hosted it; we brought in all the agencies and state agencies, like the RTA [the Road and Traffic Authority], the state transit authority, the police, the fire brigade. It was probably a dozen different agencies, plus we brought in City of Sydney, a representative from there, plus we brought in several private sector heads”.

(Interview with Vivienne Skinner, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2005)

The round table (set up by Vivienne Skinner for the production of *Superman Returns*) is a coming together of the different agencies that are needed to facilitate the filming of a Hollywood film. It creates a forum in which the Premier (at the time *Superman Returns* was being shot, the Premier of NSW was Bob Carr) can talk directly to the heads of departments and tell them what is needed to facilitate the shooting process.

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<sup>99</sup> Source: Interview with Jane Smith, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2004, Vivienne Skinner, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2005, Garry Brennan 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005 and Les Clements, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

For example, one particular weekend of shooting was taking place outside Wynyard Station on York Street, where the façade of the station building was made into Metropolis General Hospital. For that weekend, Wynyard station was closed, as was a square block of York Street and Carrington Street, a major bus stop area, servicing bus routes to Northern Metropolitan Sydney and beyond. So for the duration of Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> and Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2005, a major subway station, bus stop and main road into the city of Sydney were shut. This involved a great deal of organisation in order to re-route buses and trains, as well as manning roadblocks and redirecting traffic. The round table gave all the heads of the involved departments the chance to voice their opinion, offer suggestions or simply get told directly what to do by the Premier. This coming together of department heads and private companies was also conducted when *Mission Impossible 2* was filmed, which was needed to resolve a dispute involving the companies located at the Governor Philip Tower, a skyscraper on Farrer Street in Sydney, in which the companies were not willing to vacate their offices to allow shooting in them. After the round table sessions, the situation was still not resolved, so the Premier sent out;

“... Something called a Premier’s memorandum which doesn’t go out that often but it’s just if the Premier wants to make a statement that’s to affect all government agencies, he’ll do something called the Premier’s memorandum. He’s issued at least 2 of those which I can think of, encouraging agencies to support the agency, cut costs, keep location fees down to a minimum and cooperate, as a matter of rule”.

*(ibid.)*

After this memorandum was sent out, the company agreed to vacate the offices for the agreed period, although the location fees stayed the same. There was a similar

problem with the filming of *Superman Returns*, as Garry Brennan of the FTO explains;

“Right now I am working on *Superman Returns*, and they are looking to get permission to film here [at Wynyard Station] as they are going to hold a two-day shooting outside Wynyard Station in a couple of weekends time. Now that requires incredible logistics, station, buses, and neighbouring buildings. ... You know the park opposite the Station? On the other side of that park, there is that little scene where Lois Lane get out of a car and walks across the park, so that has to be lit, so we are hoping to hang lights from the balconies of the buildings but one property owner is refusing permission for the lights, so that's a problem that I have to fix today”.

(Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The problem was eventually overcome, as the scene took place as scripted. Given that *Superman Returns* is the latest Hollywood feature film to be shot in Sydney, the various institutions, companies and individuals that are affected by the location filming are becoming increasingly accepting;

“Certainly for *Superman Returns* we had the big round table about 6 weeks ago and they [those agencies and businesses involved in the round table] know too that having got the whole government recognising the value of the industry and the Premier's personal commitment; it's not as hard as it used to be, you don't have to bend as many arms. They don't say 'our job is to run roads; it's not to close off roads for the bloody film industry!' You don't tend to get that anymore, they know what's expected of them. It might be seen as their business, but it's the



government's core business to make sure there are jobs in New South Wales and that's what the [film] industry translates to".

(Interview with Vivienne Skinner, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2005)

The round table and these different 'trouble-shooters' (in this case study, Garry Brennan) are part of the process of making Sydney a 'film friendly' city, and they provide a good example of how actors not directly involved in film production are enrolled and mobilised in the film making process. The connections between the film production company (in this case, Warner Brothers) and the NSW government means that the various other institutions are enrolled to carry out their individual tasks necessary in order for the smooth running of the filming process. To use ANT terminology, the NSW government conducts a process of *interessement* which, as was discussed in section 3.2, is described as "the group of actions by which an entity ... attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of other actors it defines through problematization" (Callon, 1986: 208). The RTA, police, fire department, private companies and other institutions can be identified as those 'other actors' who are needed in order to complete the smooth operation of feature film production, which is required by the NSW government. The round table phenomenon is a good example of how the connections are forged and maintained as it is a tangible occurrence of connections between various institutions and government agencies for the single purpose of film production. To continue using ANT terminology, it can be argued that the round table 'punctualises' or 'black boxes' (Law, 1994) the city processes in order to facilitate the filmmaking process for Warner Brothers. The processes of the round table continue while the shoot is in progress, but are not immediately 'visible' to the filmmakers unless there is a problem that needs fixing by a city agency. Not only is it a good example of networking and inter-agency (and intra-city) connectivity, but it can also be considered a nonhuman actor, thereby adding weight to the argument (put forward in section 6.2), that nonhuman actors in the network need to be

considered in order to better understand the agency and processes involved in the spacing and timing of the film and TV production industry.

So far, the process of government agencies and the city institutions have been described; as for the production of the film itself, the enrolment of cast and crew members, as has been mentioned before, is heavily reliant on trust networks, and professional relationships (and personal) between filmmakers. The preproduction of *Superman Returns* began before postproduction of *The Matrix* trilogy had finished, and as was suggested previously by Garry Brennan, talks were already underway between the executive producers at Warner Brothers and officials in Sydney concerning shooting *Superman Returns* in the city. This continuity of production benefited some of the crew members who worked on *The Matrix* trilogy as they managed to secure the same jobs again on the *Superman Returns* roll call;

“On *Superman Returns* for example the first people they hired, right after *The Matrix* finished, they hired the production designer and costume designer, so Alan Paterson, who was the production designer on *The Matrix*, a Sydney-sider, Alan was hired to be the production designer on *Superman Returns* and so was the costume designer, Kim Barrett, a Sydney costume designer who lives in LA, she was hired to do the costume design on *Superman Returns*”.

(Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

Since the current director, Bryan Singer, was involved however, these two Sydney-based crew members have been replaced as he wanted a different set design and his ‘own people’ enrolled in the production process<sup>100</sup>. After a number of different

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<sup>100</sup> Source: Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

directors had been linked with the production (Tim Burton and Christopher Nolan were both attached to the project at once stage), Bryan Singer finally got the role, after almost 8 years of deliberation. When he became enrolled, he further enrolled a number of his 'own'<sup>101</sup> crew with him, displacing a large number of Sydney-based filmmakers that had previously worked on *The Matrix* and other Hollywood productions based in Sydney;

"I believe that *Star Wars* had, on crew, 10 imports [filmmakers from outside Sydney] out of over 500 people working on the film, but I believe *Superman Returns* is probably closer to about 50, out of about 600.

(Interview with Susanne Larson, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

As well as the crew members that Bryan Singer enrolled into the production, a number of the key cast members have worked with him before. Kevin Spacey, who plays Lex Luthor, has worked with him on *Usual Suspects*, and James Marsden, who plays Richard White, has worked with Bryan Singer before on the *X-men Trilogy* ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com), accessed, 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2006).

Much of the on-location filming taking place in and around the CBD of Sydney was conducted at weekends or at night to minimize disruption, with the main bulk of the filming (such as the indoor scenes at the Daily Planet and the special effect sequences) conducted at Fox Studios. Those scenes shot outside (such as the one depicting Wynyard station as Metropolis General Hospital) required a very large number of cast and crew, with this scene alone having 1500 extras and over 150 crew members<sup>102</sup>. Due to the scale of production, intense filming schedule, and high

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<sup>101</sup> While these crew members are not owned by Singer, they have worked with him on almost all of his productions, and he rarely works without them.

<sup>102</sup> Source: Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005 and ethnographic data.

budget, in addition to Bryan Singer directing, there is what is known as an assistant director or second unit director which took control of a number of on-location shooting periods. One of these periods was the weekend of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2005 at Wynyard Park. The section of York Road and Carrington Road outside the station was closed off at 1am, allowing time to set up the shoot in time for a 5am start. This operation alone involved the RTA, Sydney Buses and the Police, and their continued cooperation throughout the weekend in order to 'troubleshoot'. One such problem involved the height of a traffic light that would have been in shot. The set of traffic lights hung over the street, but the assistant director decided that the lights should be in shot. The RTA was then notified, and within minutes there was a technician atop a stepladder amending the height on the traffic lights to a suitable level so they could be included in a shot during a particular camera angle (as shown in Figure 7.1).



**Figure 7.1: A member of the RTA amending a set of traffic lights for the production**

**(Photo courtesy of John Vink)**

Also, in order to make the traffic light appear more like those that would be found in Metropolis (i.e. more tailored to those found in New York), an adhesive, plastic yellow trim was added to the borders of the traffic lights. This process can also be seen in Figure 7.1. Another amendment that can be seen in Figure 7.1 is the Metropolis city logo that has replaced the original Sydney city logo on the York Street sign (the original logo can still be seen on the Erskine Street sign). This is a clear indication of how Sydney has been 'dressed up' to look like Metropolis (the ramifications of which is discussed in section 6.3), and the level of detail that is obtained by Hollywood productions. It also shows the round table in operation, with the RTA involved directly in assisting with production and being on hand to deal with any requests that the filmmakers may have. More importantly though, it depicts the actual *process* that creates the network between the RTA, the NSW government and Warner Brothers, in that it is the actions of the RTA that enabled the film to be shot to the filmmakers specifications.

The area used by the production crew took up over half of the Wynyard Park area (which occupies an entire square block) with a designated costume area, make-up area, armourer's quarters and digital effects tent, which can be seen in Figure 7.2.



**Figure 7.2: The production tents in Wynyard Park (Photo courtesy of John Vink)**

The digital effects tent (the canopy to the right) can clearly be seen, as well as the Sydney police officials in the other tent to the left. Each of these areas had designated security staff (either Sydney police officers or staff from a private security firm) and only those with the appropriate clearance were allowed in. This photo also shows the police involved in the running of the production (the man in the high-visibility vest), highlighting again the processes of the round table discussions being out into action.

Throughout the two days of shooting, there was constant movement of people; assistant costume designers chasing up extras who had not dressed correctly; lighting crew erecting a 25 foot diameter light reflector in order to obtain the desired light level for the shoot and Sydney police officers in conversation with the director about moving the on-looking crowds further back so they do not effect the noise

levels. Once the set itself was finalised, the extras were then led onto street level from an underground temporary base (at Wynyard station), into position. They were playing a crowd of Superman supporters cheering on as he recovers in hospital, so there were a number of placards and signs given out to the extras to resemble a sympathetic and supportive crowd. These props had their own designers and department also stationed in Wynyard Park with their own security staff member, restricting access to those unauthorised to be there. Throughout both days of shooting, which achieved a total of approximately 90 seconds worth of footage for the final cut of the film, there was a constantly high level of activity, with someone always running from one department to another, a new piece of scenery being tampered with, a new costume being designed or a sign repainted. The only moments of relative calm came when there was an announcement from the director or assistant director to inform the crowd of a take. The level of communication between individuals is also constant as all heads and assistant heads of departments had hand held communication devices with ear pieces. When asked why they felt the need for so many crew members to have these communication devices in a relatively small space, one head of department said that it makes everything run smoother, and as things are changing constantly and problems present themselves all the time, the ability to speak to one another during a shooting period saves effort and more importantly time, which is always at a premium when doing on-location shoots.

Another period of shooting that I attended was a series of night time shoots, which were for a car stunt scene set in Martins Place, one of the main pedestrian thoroughfares of the city. The scene involved the cars travelling from the entry point to Martins Place on Macquarie Street down to the junction with George Street, which spans five street blocks. Each night (over a five night period) every street block was coned off in sequence, and the filming took place from approximately 6pm to 6am. During these night shooting periods, the cars used in the sequence were brought in

and then modified for the stunts. This example of process is highlighted here as it took place next to, and on the property of, a large number of private shops and business, all of whom had to be contacted to obtain permission. This responsibility fell to Garry Brennan and his department, and in most cases he was successful in obtaining the permission needed to film. This particular street, Martins Place, was also used for location shooting in *The Matrix* (and as many of the firms and businesses had previous experience, they were willing to cooperate).

With other outdoor locations, much of the street paraphernalia was 'dressed up' to resemble Metropolis.



**Figure 7.3: A banner depicting the fictional 'Metropolis Museum' replacing real banners around the shooting location (Photos courtesy of [www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au) and John Vink)**



The image on the left in Figure 7.3 shows how the banners are used around the city of Sydney to advertise particular events around the city, in this case, the Jazz Festival held at the Queen Victoria Building. During the shooting period, the banners at the specified location (in this case, Martins Place) were replaced with banners advertising the fictional 'Metropolis Museum' (shown on the right in Figure 7.3). Also, bus stop posters were changed to fictional Metropolis-based companies, station names and car licence plate logos were changed, along with many other slight detailed additions to the set and props. This level of detail makes for a very realistic image of Metropolis, and is part of the Hollywood style of production, which is another reason for the high budget. The 'erasing' of Sydney's imagery from the film also extends to firm names having to be covered up if in shot (although this is partly due to advertising laws). For example, during the car stunt scenes, there is a Westpac bank (a major Sydney-based bank) building that is very prominent on Martins Place, with a large red 'W' as their logo that is illuminated at night. Once the director had decided on the particular camera angles for the shot, he realised that the Westpac logo was in view and it needed to be removed. So, instead of changing the camera angle, he called upon the 'trouble shooters' of the Sydney government to contact the owners of that particular Westpac building and instructed them to turn off the light to the logo. Unfortunately for the filmmakers, due to the timing of the shoot (i.e. after business hours) it was not possible to contact the bank and therefore the light could not be turned off. So, instead of changing the camera angle or rethinking the shooting sequence, the director took the decision to film as planned and then digitally remove the logo in postproduction. This process of digitisation is very costly, yet the decision was taken in order to save time on the shoot as, for Hollywood productions, the major restricting factor is usually time and not money. This example of Westpac shows how the trouble shooting process can fail, and how the creative

decision to shoot at night meant that the round table connections could not operate fully, thus creating further work for the postproduction firm to do<sup>103</sup>. To use ANT terminology, the ‘punctualisation’ process that is carried out by the Sydney government and their trouble shooters has failed, and the filmmakers have enrolled the postproduction firm to a larger extent (in terms of more personnel) in order to compensate – thereby lengthening the actor-network of the production.

During the shooting period of *Superman Returns*, it occupied the entire Fox Studios complex, meaning that no other film could be shot there. This required a large amount of officiating from the staff at the Fox lot, including security staff, caterers and administrative staff. The studio space is important as filmmakers are using increasing amounts of digital effects in the visualisation of film, meaning that there has to be a greater control of the backgrounds as well as the actors and props in front of them. During one of the on-site visits to Fox Studios while *Superman Returns* was being shot there, it was clear to see the amount of digital effects that were going to be used in postproduction by the large amount of green screens used; one particular set that involved a seaplane over a water tank with an 800,000 litre capacity<sup>104</sup>. The green screen was erected on three sides of the water tank so that whilst filming took place, the digital backgrounds could be added in place of the green screens during postproduction. This is a common feature of many recent feature films, with some films including *Star Wars: Episode III*, which was also shot at Fox Studios, filmed entirely in front of a green screen. For this particular shot in *Superman Returns*, the shell of a full size seaplane was built out of aluminium, and placed onto the water and anchored in place in order to provide a sturdy platform for the actor to stand on. To simulate the action of waves ‘dump tanks’ were used, which are water tanks atop

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<sup>103</sup> Incidentally, one of the postproduction firms involved in *Superman Returns* is Rising Sun Pictures, based in Sydney. The other digital effects labs being used are in Los Angeles and London.

<sup>104</sup> Source: Interview with James Bramley, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

stilts with a sharp slope. The water is then 'dumped' from these tanks down the slope so as to create enough ferocity to replicate the action of large waves out at sea. The construction of this scene enrolled a number of varying actants together, including the digital postproduction head with the carpenters, metal workers, water technicians, as well as the director to create the effect required. Also, the nonhuman actants of the dump tanks, the sea plane prop, water tank, cameras and so on, were also involved. It is an example of how the requirement of the semiotics of the film enrolls a variety of skills and individuals. From an ANT perspective, creating the set and the mechanisms needed to shoot a particular scene enrolls different actors who otherwise may not work together, thereby shortening (or short-circuiting) the network between a digital effects supervisor and (for example) a carpenter. Moreover, it is the *action* involved in the creating of the seaplane scene which produces connections between firms and individuals with particular skills, and therefore shortens the production network by decreasing the distance between these (otherwise distant) actors.

This ethnography has displayed in detail a selection of the processes of the people (and things) that go about creating the spacing and timing of the production network of *Superman Returns*. There are a plethora of other connections, networks and actors that could be researched that would add extra detail to this data set, but for the purposes of this thesis, the detailed qualitative data set is sufficient in order to show the topological, dynamic and multi-faceted nature of the production industry. It has also exemplified 'runaway production', and the processes involved in the filming of a major Hollywood film in a city other than Los Angeles. It has shown Sydney's connections with other cities, and the behaviours that sustain them, as well as an insight into the workings and processes that go on in feature film production. By providing a qualitative narrative of process, it has produced a unique data set not only applicable to the global and world city literature of Sydney (and the other cities

that have been enrolled into the network), but also to the cultural industry of film production.

## 7.2 *Mary Bryant*

The story of Mary Bryant is an imperial story about the colonial connections between England and Australia, so it is perhaps with a touch of poetic justice that the story should be retold by a London-Sydney collaborative effort. It tells the true story of a young English convict sent to the penal colony of Botany Bay in NSW. She then escapes with her family and two friends to East Timor, a Dutch colony, where they pretended to be shipwreck victims. They are soon found out and sent back to Britain, but on the journey, all but Mary perish. She stands trial and if found guilty, faces the death penalty, but she is eventually pardoned due to huge public outcry (King, 2004). In this section, there will be a description of how this particular project came about, using the interview data that was collected from key personnel involved in the production of this drama, and provide a narrative of the processes and actions of those personnel, and how their behaviour and performativity went about creating the spacing and timing of the *Mary Bryant* network. This ethnography is different to *Superman Returns* detailed above, as the principal photography had already been completed before my arrival in Sydney. However, there were some postproduction visits that were made, and in-depth interviews, discussions and socialising with the key personnel involved. As with section 7.1, and indeed Chapter 6, this section should be read as a narrative of process, of action, of performance, not as an attempt to formulate some static lineage or fixed network of people and things, but a topological account of pure process that itself creates spaces and times as it happened – an actant-network that is not fixed in time or space, but elusive, temporal and dynamic.

The story of Mary Bryant is one from the 1790s, and so historical accounts of her voyage are mostly from diaries of soldiers and convicts that came into contact with her or had some part to play in the events of her life. It is a particularly poignant story

for Sydneysiders as it is linked to the initial settlement of Botany Bay, and the eventual settlement of Australia. So this is perhaps why, when I first started to ethnographically research this production of *Mary Bryant*, I learned that the executive producers of the production company, Screentime, had been keen to do a feature-length dramatisation of Mary Bryant's adventure for some time, as Bob Campbell, the executive director of Screentime suggests;

"It's something we've wanted to do for a long time, my business partner happens to be very passionate about it, but he first attempted to have Mary Bryant produced about fifteen, sixteen years ago – this has been a labour of love – and, so, we were both involved in executive decisions for the Seven network, back then, and for all sorts of reasons it didn't get done".

(Interview with Bob Campbell, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

The story is an epic one and lends itself to a large-budgeted production, and the most effective way to raise large amounts of finance for a television production is to create it as a co-production;

"The head of drama productions for Granada...liked the story and we talked about it off and on for a while and realised this could really be a collaboration between Britain and Australia, the story lent itself to that. So that's how these things start. It's got to be an Anglo-British story ... [it's] got to have some resonance in both countries, and if it does, then you've got a chance of putting up this amount of money and deciding how you're going to make it".

(*ibid.*)

The preliminary conversations also involved the FTO. When Granada were looking into making the production, Garry Brennan, the then-production manager liaison at the FTO, was contacted about the generalities of conducting such a large operation;

“I had a meeting with Andy Harris [of Granada] quite a while ago and they first mentioned that the idea that they had a script. ...So, Granada had a script for the mini-series and they came to see us [FTO] and wanted to talk about how they would make the film, where they would make of the film, could it be done, what you need and so on. Also, is it eligible for any financial assistance and all that sort of thing, and then they come back another time with their Australian partners, they've partnered up with Screentime, so those guys then come on board”.

(Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

So with Granada productions (who are based in London) involved, the fact that it is now an official co-production entitles it to funding from the FFC, as Marie-Anne Reid, who is the Policy Manager at the FFC describes;

“We [the FFC] are not a producer of programs, so executive producers will come to us with their applications, so Bob [Campbell] of Screentime would have come to us, and they would have done all that networking with Granada and ITV off their own back, I mean that's what producers do, they draw these things together and then they come to us... and because *Mary Bryant* is a certified co-production all we need to see is the certificate and not look into the “Australianess” of it because that's already been done by the AFC. We are looking at it to see that it meets our investment guidelines; and we invested around 30 to 40 per cent,

and the rest of the money would come from... the distribution money and the broadcasters on a contractual basis”.

(Interview with Mary-Anne Reid, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

With some money obtained from the FFC, the production could still raise additional funds from distributors. As it was a co-production, extra funds could be secured from broadcasters in the UK and Australia, and as Granada had strong existing links with ITV, the rights for UK distribution were soon bought by the London-based channel. In Sydney, Bob Campbell and Des Monaghan, the two partners and co-founders of Screentime, initially tried to get a dramatisation of *Mary Bryant* when they had previously worked at Channel Seven, although it was Channel 10 that eventually secured the distribution rights for Australia, almost 10 years later. Channel 10 also acted as a financier to the show, although they had limited resources, as it is the production company rather than the distributor that applies for the FFC grants. The process is explained by Geoff Brown, the executive director of SPAA;

“They [Channel 10] put money in yes, by way of the license fee because they can't access the FFC money so they can only put in the license fee money. The producer, Screentime, applies for the FFC funding on the basis of a presale which is with [Channel] 10”.

(Interview with Geoff Brown, 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2004)

With the funding secured with additional funds from Power Television, who hold the international distribution rights to the film (excluding the UK) (a total budget of AU\$15-16million in total was raised<sup>105</sup>), the actual process of production can begin, with core personnel being hired and key actors recruited. It is this process that is very

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<sup>105</sup> Source: Interview with Bob Campbell, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2004.



much reliant on the social networks and personal relationships within the industry, as people will hire those who they work with best or who they know can do the best job for this type of production. And that was one of the primary reasons why the director, Peter Andrikidis, was hired as he had recently directed another Screentime production of *Jessica*, a dramatisation of true events surrounding a young women's fight for justice during World War I, which had won numerous awards. The partnership between Screentime and Peter had therefore been a successful and enjoyable enterprise, and it was decided to continue the partnership when the opportunity arose to work on another period drama<sup>106</sup>. With the recruitment of people into the production, it is the executive producers who have ultimate control. Each executive producer represents one financier – Des Monaghan of Screentime, Andy Harries of Granada, Sue Masters of Channel 10 and Justin Bodle of Power Television. Peter Berry a freelance producer, with the assistance of the director, Peter Andrikidis, is influential in selecting who is assigned what role, both in cast and crew. However, there is a certain amount of delegation, with the executive producers and directors recruiting the co-producers and line producers, who then in turn recruit those 'below' them (in terms of creative control), such as heads of departments, costume designers, set designers and so on. However, one of the key positions in the production is the line producer, who is responsible for the practicalities of the shoot. The line producer for *Mary Bryant* was Brenda Pam, who outlines her role;

“The line producer is really the practical producer but you don't have a line producer on every project, you usually have line producers if the producers on the show are more creatively bent and not as practical or don't have the level of practical experience within the territory. Probably

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<sup>106</sup> Source: Interview with Peter Andrikidis, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2005. Incidentally, in this interview, Peter admitted that by doing *Mary Bryant* so soon after *Jessica*, he felt perhaps he had been typecast as a period drama director.

it's a good idea in this case because... one of the key producers was Andrew Benson of Granada and he didn't have the local knowledge because he hadn't worked in Sydney before and that's kind of where I come in. Greg Haddrick was the Australian producer and he is an ex-writer, so he is more scripts and creatively and casting bent, and being a really big show it needs several people to do things”.

(Interview with Brenda Pam, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

So, with a production of this size and budget, the executive directors felt that there was a need for a hands-on line producer working in tandem with the producers<sup>107</sup>, Andrew Benson of Granada and Greg Haddrick of Screentime. The appointment of Andrew Benson is similar to that of the director, as Andrew has worked as a producer on the ITV show *Hornblower*, which uses a similar set design to *Mary Bryant*, as well as the use of extended sequences of colonial ships, suggesting that he was hired because he was the ‘right man for the job’;

“We all come from a different level of professionalism and the most important thing in this instance is that they are the right person for the mix and sit of that particular job, which was the case with Andrew”.

(*ibid.*)

With the most ‘creative’ positions filled, that of director and producers, the assembled crew then go about suggesting people who could fill the other positions in the crew. It is at this time in the preproduction period when the contacts that these individuals

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<sup>107</sup> Note that producers and executive producers are two very distinct roles in this industry. Executive producers are traditionally less involved and represent the financiers, whereas producers have very creative and technical roles.

have are most used, in that those in creative control will want to hire those they trust, and those they know can do a good job. As Brenda Pam explains;

“Some people were already on board, people that Peter [Andrikidis] liked to have on board, and there is always a small team of people that we would like, so the next stage was that they wanted to choose a production designer and a costume designer, casting agent and so on. Then we put together a list; they [the executive producers] have a few people, Peter had a few suggestions, I had a few suggestions, they put together a list and then they interviewed. This was all way before the preproduction started, and then it came down to a shortlist and I negotiated, then it went down to a decision about who would we choose and who we not want. And then it went London, key creative decisions had been made by Granada because of the financial involvement. So it all had to be agreed by everyone, Channel 10 also had to be contacted, the Film Finance Corporation, everyone who put money in”.

*(ibid.)*

With the majority of the financing done and the major creative roles filled, the processes of preproduction and casting then starts. As is the case with a production of this size, there is a degree of rigidity to the processes, inflicted by the financiers' timing constraints. However because of the nonlinearity and 'unconventional nature' (Fitzgerald, 1994) of the film industry, the work done in the initial stages (the budgeting, contracting, negotiating and so on) continues throughout production, even after the product has been shown on television. In other words, there is no clear or distinct 'break' between the various stages of production, it is a continuum, constant activity that goes about creating the product in its final form (examples of which will be given throughout the ethnography). Therefore, to think of preproduction as the

next 'stage' denies the processes that create the topological timing and spatial formation, and although I will go on to discuss the processes involved in preproduction next, it is important to note that it is not a linear process, and the various 'stages' of production are happening to a larger or lesser extent concurrently.

Anoushka Zarkesh, the casting director for *Mary Bryant* describes her involvement in the production, and at what stage;

"In my part of the [pre-]production, I'm involved right in the beginning and then say goodbye to everyone when they start the principal photography. I'm employed by the executive producers, Screentime and Andrew Benson who is from Granada, they approached me to do the casting so basically they just gave me the script and say, in consultation with Peter Andrikidis the director, what they have in mind and then they both say can you suggest and start screen testing actors for each and speaking roll. So I then read the script, then we have endless meetings about it, I give a list of actors who I think are appropriate to each roll and then they say yay, nay, yay, nay".

(Interview with Anoushka Zarkesh, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The casting director is one of the 'creative roles' in that they are initially recruited by the team of producers and directors, and so her influence in deciding who to cast in specific roles is vital. Although the executive producers and the director have the final say as to who is in and who is out, the day to day activities are left to her discretion;

"For me, they don't know who I contact, agents, they are not aware of the dynamics that I do, they just want to hear that I'd booked them all in which actors are coming in, and all the negotiations, they don't want to

hear all that day-to-day shit that I'm talking to the agents about – they just want to know if there's a problem, and if it is a problem, sort it out”.

*(ibid.)*

It can be said, therefore, that there is an element of ‘black boxing’ to Anoushka’s role, in that it is the results of her process that is shown to the producers – in other words, she ‘punctualises’<sup>108</sup> the casting processes. The work that she does and the actions that she performs have their own actor-network, but it is in its crystallised form when she presents the results to the producers and executive producers. Parts of her processes involve drawing up the shortlist of actors for particular roles, a process which is described below;

“We wheel them [people in for the auditions] in with a weeks notice with the script, we give them a scene for the audition and then they come in for a screen test with a camera and a video and usually it would be the director and I in the room. In this situation, the producers stay out of the picture and then we do recalls and fallbacks, but once you have a shortlist you bring the producer in and in this case it was Andrew Benson, he was quite hands-on, he would want to meet them and have a chat with them and then they all [the other producers] got involved. But pretty much the whole process of casting was intimate just at the director and I and the actors”.

*(ibid.)*

Here, we see a clear indication of the punctualising process, in that she does not contact the producers (the people who enrolled her in the network in the first place), until she has a shortlist. The process of casting is not as straight-forward as who are

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<sup>108</sup> In a similar way to the round table in the *Superman Returns* ethnography, see page 202.

the best actors, there is an issue of the right actor to sell the product. Because it is a co-production, there is a need for 'star' actors from Australian television as well as British television, and so there was a great deal of debate as to who would be in the key roles. The debate was conducted in teleconferences between London and Sydney;

“There were 10 of us, from London [Granada], Channel 10 and us [Sreentime] all fighting over which actors we wanted, who had more profile in Australia, who had more profile in the UK ...trying to sell Sam Neill better then they could sell Colin Friel, so there was a lot of fights about which actors sold a production more. Jack Davenport is a big name in the UK, but no one gives it shit who he is here. So there are those discussions. Once you've decided who your actors are the line producer [Brenda Pam] and I will negotiate contracts on the financial side of things and that's all done before we start shooting – and those conferences were all done over the phone”.

*(ibid.)*

It is important to note at this point in the narrative that this particular instance of teleconferencing is a prime example of how it is the process and action of the actants involved in the industry that go about creating the production industry networks. The negotiations between people in Sydney and people in London are what constitute the network, there is not a Castellian (1996) net over the globe which these connections are travelling along, but the workings of the industry is creating the connections, it is a 'work-net', “it's the work, and the movement, and the flow, and the changes that should be stressed” (Latour, 2005: 143).

The process of casting for the show took approximately 5 months, but there were some roles that had been cast some time before the process of casting began;

“In the case of David [Field] who was playing one of the main roles, Peter [Andrikidis] had it in his mind that he wanted David right from the beginning, so he said I'm going to get David for that role and that's it. So we had to play around and audition people, but the producers wanted David as well, in fact I think David was the first one cast, he was easy”.

(Interview with Anoushka Zarkesh, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

This exemplifies the nonlinearity of the whole process, with the casting of David Field, which would ordinarily take place in the preproduction stage, all but sealed when the director was hired, as David himself explains;

“He's [Peter Andrikidis] a television director, he doesn't have time to sit and go (mimics choosing) there's no time. I would say to him when I come in and do a test, 'I'm going to play it like this', and he'll say 'yeah, but don't go too far that way, but that's a good idea', then I will give him something else and he will say 'yes I like that character', he knows I'm a good actor”.

(Interview with David Field, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The relationship that David has with Peter is a strong one, in that they have worked together officially in four different productions, emphasising the fact that personal contacts are key – if you work well with a director as an actor (or crew member) then you are more likely to get hired again<sup>109</sup>. Being a relatively small industry (compared

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<sup>109</sup> Source: Interview with Frank Arnold, 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2005 and interview with Peter Andrikidis, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

to Hollywood), this phenomenon is extenuated in that if an actor or crew member does not do a sufficient job, then because of the closeness of connections, word spreads quickly and that person is not as likely to get another job in the industry<sup>110</sup>.

The main locations in the story of *Mary Bryant* were Cornwall, Botany Bay, East Timor and London. There was an attempt made to use the facilities at Fox Studios at Moore Park, however, this was ultimately unfeasible;

“I was negotiating to use the water tank in Fox Studios for *Mary Bryant* and they [the studio executives] were really keen to have us in, but they couldn't allocate the time that we needed because they thought something was big coming in from the States [i.e. *Superman Returns*]”<sup>111</sup>.

(Interview with Brenda Pam, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

For this production, there were two primary locations for shooting, Sydney and the Whitsunday's in Queensland, which was used for the East Timor scenes. There could have been shooting in Plymouth however;

“It was finally agreed that everything would be shot here [in Sydney], but there were very tight controls being exercised both here and in London. Scripting approvals, casting approvals, everyone sees everything that is shot every day; we fly tapes up to London everyday”.

(Interview with Bob Campbell, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2004)

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<sup>110</sup> Source: Interview with Frank Arnold 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2005 and interview with David Field, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

<sup>111</sup> The inability to shoot at Fox is another example of how the studio complex in Sydney is unobtainable to domestic producers. See section 6.3.



The constant movement of tapes on a daily basis between Sydney and London is another example of the way in which nonhuman actants proliferate the creation of the world city network. However, unlike the finished articles that get transported from Sydney (for example *The Secret Life of Us* as an immutable mobile – see section 6.1.1, page 148 - 149), these tapes would have been of ‘raw’ footage, with none of the postproduction value of sound or special effects added. The footage would have been seen by the executive producers in London and they would then have cast their critical eye over the footage, asking for specific changes to particular scenes or dialogue<sup>112</sup>. The specificities of this action are explained;

“We don’t put them on the satellite because it’s expensive and its not that time’s critical, but we send them in overnight bags. And they go to Granada Productions, who do it on behalf of ITV, and they go to the distribution company Power Television”.

*(ibid.)*

Therefore, the lines of communication between London and Sydney (and perhaps the Whitsunday’s if that is where the shoot was taking place at the time) are constant, with overnight bags sending the tapes from one side of the world to the other and back again for the duration of the production. This ‘acting at a distance’ by the executive producers in London means that it is the more ‘hands-on’ producers that have a very involved role in the everyday practicalities of the shoot, such as the line producer, Brenda Pam;

“I was heavily involved [in shooting] but I wasn't on the set every day, I'm on set every few days. Usually, if there was just the line producer and

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<sup>112</sup> Source: Interview with Peter Adrikidis, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

not a production manager, then I would go every day, but because there were a number of producers and a production manager, it wasn't necessary for me to go every day".

(Interview with Brenda Pam, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

The role of the line producer and the production manager are to make sure of a 'smooth shoot', and generally troubleshoot on set. This can be a very involved task, as there are a number of different departments which need coordinating to complete the production on time and on budget. There are a number of people whose job is not directly involved in the shoot itself (such as an actor on screen or a crew member) but whose job is to service those people. For example, there was an accent coach on set all the time<sup>113</sup> as there were many actors from Sydney having to put on a Cornwall accent. Another role which is important from a legal sense is the armourer;

"If you use a weapon on this shoot, you have to have an armourer present on the set. This is to stop guns disappearing and the next day having them used in a hold-up, so if you have a weapon on the set you have to have an armourer, and an armourer would cost you about AU\$1,000 a day, and he has to provide the weapons and lock them up and train people to use them. So what they would typically do is that they would schedule all the days in which guns would be fired, put them all in one day of the week or two days a week, and they would get the armourer in those two days - then the other days they would use replicas made of wood or something".

(Interview with Garry Brennan, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

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<sup>113</sup> Source: Interview with David Field, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

The use of an armourer is a legal requirement in film and TV production in Hollywood as well as Sydney, and so any violation of the law with regards to the use of firearms is potentially a major problem for those involved in the legal representation of the production. So when the law was changed to incorporate replica firearms as well as actual firearms, there was a need for swift action for those in charge of the shoot;

“The law has been changed in NSW to now even a replica gun is a prohibited weapon and needs to be licensed and needs to have an armour present. So I got feedback from the production crew that they were using replicas but didn't have an armour on set. So, if you're a government agency and your job is to facilitate film production, and sort out any troubles, one of the frequent troubles that productions have is with weapons legislation”.

*(ibid.)*

Being with the FTO, one of the governing bodies of filming in Sydney, Garry Brennan was contacted by Brenda Pam regarding the change in the law and the use of replicas on set, and the government body in charge of the legislation was then contacted, and the problem was solved. This is an example of how the troubleshooting process is conducted, with many different people and agencies involved in the solution of a problem. For a production as large as *Mary Bryant*, it is important to produce these lines of communication, in the same way as the round table format for Hollywood productions (as was shown in section 7.1 in the *Superman Returns* ethnography). It is the efficiency of communication which ultimately leads to the resolution of these types of problems, which in turn keeps the project to time and budget.

Once all the shooting has been completed (the whole shooting period was 16 weeks – 2 week rehearsal period and then 14 weeks of shooting<sup>114</sup>) the process of postproduction begins, which still involves the key actors in the rerecording of voices. Analogue to Digital Recording (ADR) is a major process in postproduction, which involves all the key actors rerecording their voices digitally to replace the analogue recordings that were obtained during the shoot. In this particular production, the ADR process involved a new piece of software which enabled the actor to engage with the ADR process remotely. Romola Garai, who plays the lead role, was conducting her ADR in London, while the postproduction firm involved, Spectrum films, are located on the Fox lot in Sydney<sup>115</sup>. This, like the CRT discussed in section 6.2, page 176 - 177, is an example of how nonhuman actants within the industry have agency, in that they produce the networks of *Mary Bryant's* production. The ADR process has previously needed the actor to be in the same room as the recording equipment and the original footage (i.e. in Sydney), however this new software has enabled this process to be conducted while the actor is in London – this nonhuman actant (or more precisely, its performance) has extended the length of the network.

The role of some of the actors in the production of *Mary Bryant* are finished once the ADR has been completed, although they may be asked to do interviews for television shows, promotion work or collect awards – the two producers, Greg Haddrick (Screentime) and Andrew Benson (Granada) won an AFI award for best telefeature or miniseries. Also, there are still some outstanding financial and legal issues;

“I look after all the insurers, and claims some of which are still going through on the shoot, go to our company which is out of London so I've

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<sup>114</sup> Source: Interview with David Field, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

<sup>115</sup> Source: Interview with Peter Adrikidis, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

got to go through a lot of things, there are a lot of fiddly bits and pieces I still deal with, the completion guarantor, the FFC”.

(Interview with Brenda Pam, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

These legal and financial issues, as long as they do not interfere with the ability of the distributors to sell the show and Channel 10 and ITV to broadcast the show, will continue even after it has been shown on television. *Mary Bryant* was shown on Channel 10 on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2005 (and watched by 1.6 million people in Australia) and on ITV on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006 (watched by 6.3 million in the UK).

The production of *Mary Bryant* involved a multiplicity of institutions; production firms, film financiers, distribution companies, broadcasters, directors, actors, casting agents and lawyers are some that have been discussed in this ethnography. There are a number of other people, firms, agencies and government departments that could be discussed in relation to this production, depending on how far the network is followed. The advertising agencies involved in the selling or advertising time whilst the production is on air, the landowners who rented their property in order for the production to be shot, the light and camera manufacturing company, even the families and friends of those involved, provide avenues of exploration, all of which have agency and whose performance affect the spacing and timing of the production network of *Mary Bryant*. However, for the purposes of this thesis, the actors that have been analysed and their performances that have been described, provide ample exemplification of the topological nature of the production networks, and how this performativity goes about constructing the reality of the production networks involved in *Mary Bryant*.

### 7.3 Sydney's independent filmmakers

In this section, I have chosen two productions, both made by Sydney-based filmmakers. The first, *Three Dollars*, is made by Arena films and was chosen because the timing of the project meant that it was already released when I came to conduct the ethnography, so there is emphasis on the distribution as well as the production. The other production I will focus on, *Footy Legends*, like *Superman Returns*, required on-location visits and more 'interactive' ethnographic methods (see page 94), which were conducted in order to obtain first-hand experience of the processes and activities involved in the making of a Sydney-financed film, made by Sydney filmmakers.

#### 7.3.1 *Three Dollars*

The ethnography of *Three Dollars* has been used in order to exemplify the networks involved in the production and distribution of a film made by an independent Sydney-based production firm. The firm that made *Three Dollars* is Arena Films, and are based in the Surry Hills area of Sydney. *Three Dollars* was originally a novel by Elliot Perman published in 1998, and tells the story of one man's downward spiral to homelessness interjected with personal relationships that give him a feeling of hope and satisfaction at the end. When the ethnography took place, the film had already been released, and so the data describes the distribution processes as well as the production processes. Therefore, there was a plethora of published work on *Three Dollars*, including newspaper and magazine articles, websites, radio and television programmes that could be used as data sources, as well as watching the film itself. Like the ethnographies in section 7.1 and 7.2, this too is a narrative of the performances and action of the actants involved in, not only the production of *Three*

*Dollars*, but also, its distribution in Sydney, throughout Australia, and the rest of the world.

*Three Dollars* is the brainchild of one man, Robert Connolly, who is a Sydney-based feature film director, co-founder of Arena films and Footprint films, an AFTRS graduate and an AFI award winner. When writing the screenplay for the film, he sought the help of the novel's author, Elliot Perman, and together they wrote the screenplay, which differs in chronology from the novel, but still retains all the critical elements (a screenplay for which they won the AFI award in 2005);

"I think *Three Dollars* was a different, tougher nut to crack [than his previous film *The Bank*] in that respect, because the politics of Elliott's novel are much clearer and we were very keen not to be didactic. So there was a common level of discussion amongst the entire creative ensemble I work with about how we were going to sneak this one under the radar".

(Quote from Robert Connolly, in Dawson (2005))

The story of *Three Dollars* revolves around a single character, Eddie, played by David Wenham, and was filmed in Melbourne, despite Arena films being based in Sydney. So, Eliot Perlman, the novel's author who lives in Melbourne, became enrolled into the network by visiting Sydney;

"They flew me to Sydney for a while and we had a series of meetings over four days, this was the beginning of it. And I walked into the room with a document that I'd prepared. I'd essentially condensed 380-something pages of the novel into around 40 or 50 pages, so that every single thing that happened was there in point form, cross-referenced to

the page in the novel... And Robert walked into the room with a series of cards, I think they were different coloured cards, and he divided the story into three acts, a different colour for each act. And although I had met him before, I didn't know him all that well and it was the first time we'd actually talked about the work and how we were going to structure the film”.

(Quote from Eliot Perlman, on ABC's *At the Movies*, aired 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2005)

Once the script had been finalised, a process of pitching the script to various institutions in order to gain financing began;

“So in the development stage, networks would involve dealing with agents, negotiating, our lawyers, funding bodies to raise finance, with a video distribution – we work with the company in Melbourne called Madhouse – although having said that we doubled our money with a special programme at the AFC, so we deal with the AFC and the FTO. Because we were shooting in Melbourne and Victoria, we contacted Film Victoria as well. During that development stage, acquiring the rights for the project [...] often may involve international communication, someone like David [Wenham] had an American agent, and when we are in the financing stage we have our relationships directly with financiers, the FFC, state agencies, video distribution, Dendy cinemas to secure a theatrical release, and Dendy were involved in the release of the film internationally, kind of broadening out”.

(Interview with Robert Connolly, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)



When a Sydney-based filmmaker is looking to make a film, the financing provides a common stumbling block, with many firms struggling to obtain sufficient funds to make the film that they have in mind. So the differing amounts of institutions and distribution firms that were contacted by Robert Connolly show that there were multitudes of financing options that he applied for. The AFC, the FFC, video distributors and Dendy Cinemas, who are the art house cinema chain with theatres in Sydney and Melbourne, were approached and they decided to contribute capital toward the production of the film. Once the money had been raised, the process of recruiting the filmmakers began;

“Then in production, we set up a whole new set of complex relationships, casting agents, you really end up broadening your production and postproduction networks”.

(*ibid.*)

The enrolling of key crew members and actors in this type of production is more reliant on the relationships that Robert Connolly has, than the same processes in a production with a larger budget (like *Superman Returns*), as he has a significantly larger creative control on the final outcome of the film. For instance, he used David Wenham for the main role, who he has worked with on all three of his previous films, *The Bank* in 2001, *The Boys* in 1998, and *Roses are Red* in 1995, as they have developed a strong working relationship. As the production budget was lower than that of *Superman Returns* and *Mary Bryant*, the cast and crew numbers are small and there are fewer departments. This is in part due to the intimacy required by the director, but also due to the lack of finance with which to employ a larger crew. For many films made by Sydney-based filmmakers (and indeed in other cities around the world where the budget for their film is relatively small), there is an ethos, a general filmmaking philosophy of subsistence filmmaking;

“With our [Sydney] crews, they will do a couple of different jobs as opposed to in the US. With the crews that come out here, there is usually one person for every kind of job, a truck driver and a gaffer, whereas in Sydney the gaffer will drive his own truck”.

(Interview with Susanne Larson, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2005)

The small crew means that the production of the film is more intimate<sup>116</sup>, with a greater degree of creative control at the hands of the director than there would be on a production with more executive producers. However, this increased creative control is malleable, as proved to Robert Connolly by the 10-year old actor, playing Eddie’s daughter Abby in the film;

“I mean I remember on set there's a scene where she [Abby] has come back from hospital and she says "I was on a bed with wheels on it in the hospital," and her grandmother says, "That must have been fun," and Johanna says, "No, everyone had them." And on set I said to Johanna [who plays Abby], "Look maybe in this next take could you show a bit more attitude towards your grandmother, you know, that you're a bit frustrated she'd ask you such a dumb question." And Johanna thought about it and she turned to me and said, "I don't think my character would be rude to her grandmother." And I felt this crew of 40 people looking at me going, "The kid's right, how's the director going to handle this?" It was quite daunting.”

(Source: Interview with Robert Connolly, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

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<sup>116</sup> Source: Interview with Robert Connolly, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005.

Once the shooting period has been completed, the postproduction can begin. This was conducted not in Sydney, but Melbourne;

OM: Which post production companies did you use?

RC: Atlab. They are a post production company in Melbourne.

OM: So how to go about choosing someone like that?

RC: It's not done on a cost basis, it is done on a relationship basis.

Nearly everyone that I have mentioned, it is an ongoing relationship”.

*(ibid.)*

Again, the nature of the connections is portrayed as a trust-relationship (Murphy, 2006), not simply which firm is the cheapest, but the work is conducted by a company that Robert trusts and who he knows can do a job that is up to the standards that he requires. Indeed, one of the actors in the film, Sarah Wynter, working on an Australian film for the first time, suggested “they work in a way that’s very collaborative, but not to the point where I felt like an outsider. I was very welcomed” (Source: quote from Sarah Wynter, in Sydney Morning Herald, 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2005).

The networks of production displayed here, although differing in the number of actants enrolled from those discussed in the *Superman Returns* ethnography, have similar qualities in that there is still an element of trust and loyalty in the choosing of firms and individuals to carry out particular jobs of production. However, to make comparisons between large-budgeted films and smaller-budgeted films is the antithesis of a relational data set, and only serves to contribute to the very literature

that is being critiqued. So instead of dwelling on the comparisons between filmmaking by Sydney firms and by Hollywood firms, it is the relations that have been, and are being, analysed in this chapter, creating a topological view of film production in Sydney.

At the time this ethnography was conducted, *Three Dollars* had already been released throughout Australia, released initially in an art house cinema chain, Dendy cinemas. Dendy were one of the original financiers of the film, and in doing so, secured cinematic distribution rights to the film. The other areas of distribution are owned by the original firm;

“Arena films produces the film, and Footprint films, our other company, provided the Australian distribution rights and they have relationships with video and pay-TV”.

(Interview with Robert Connolly, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005)

Many films produced by domestic filmmakers open in art house cinemas such as the Dendy cinema chain, which has locations in Sydney (Newtown and Circular Quay), Melbourne, Brisbane and Byron Bay. There are very few national cinema chains (the largest being Village Roadshow, Hoyts and Greater Union) that will screen an Australian-made film because the fees they charge are unaffordable to local filmmakers;

“The largest of the [mainstream] exhibition is Greater Union cinemas and Village Roadshow, they control exhibition and pretty much everything, it's almost impossible to penetrate, so we had problems there... But after the first week, it moved into these larger cinemas because if the figures are strong enough, they will then take it; they won't take it upfront of

course, unless you pay millions of dollars, so how do we penetrate that market? But having said that, when I do my next film, having already had a film in the larger cinemas puts me in a much better position”.

(*ibid.*)

If the film is strong enough and attracts large audiences in the art house cinemas, the larger cinema chains will then start to show the film. The art house cinema chains, in this case Dendy cinemas, are therefore very important to the distribution of the films made by Sydney filmmakers, as these are the places people need to go in order to watch a theatrical release of the film. This is why Robert Connolly embarked on a vigorous marketing campaign which saw him visit Darwin, Cairns and Bryon Bay in three consecutive days in order to promote the film to local cinemas, the local press and television stations<sup>117</sup>. If the film is successful enough to make the transition to national release (as was the case with *Three Dollars*) the art house cinemas lose out<sup>118</sup>. The Dendy cinema in Newtown (an inner-city suburb of Sydney) was the first cinema to show *Three Dollars* as it suited the particular market that the manager was looking for. However, once the film ‘went national’, the audiences then began to watch the show at the larger cinema chains rather than the Dendy cinema in Newtown.

The distribution of a particular film, while not being the main focus of this thesis, does play an important role in the success of a film. The Cinema Release Calendar (CRC) was highlighted throughout the ethnography as important in the distribution business because it controls when a particular film is going to be released. A film for a particular audience, for example a Pixar animated film aimed predominantly at children, may want to hold off release to the next school holiday. Similarly, if a film

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<sup>117</sup> Source: Bryon Shire News, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2005, page 5.

<sup>118</sup> Source: Interview with Mark Sarfarty, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2005.

made for an audience of predominantly adult males is released the same week as the start of the rugby World Cup, it can severely hinder the box office takings of the film<sup>119</sup>. Hollywood majors, with the integrated production and distribution facilities, can 'date dump', which means that they release a number of their own films on a particular date in order to reduce competition<sup>120</sup>. The CRC can be used as another example of the importance of nonhuman actors in the networks of (in this case) film distribution. As was discussed in section 6.2, the nonhuman actors that contribute to the network have largely been neglected by world city literature, so incorporating the CRC into the ethnography again highlights the role that nonhumans can perform in the spacing and timing of Sydney's film and TV industry.

### 7.3.2 *Footy Legends*

In this ethnography of the feature film *Footy Legends*, much of the work was conducted via on-site visits to location shootings in and around the Sydney metropolitan area. It describes in detail the intricacies of the actual process of shooting a film, and a nuanced perspective of the roles of people and firms in this stage of production. The film is about a group of young Vietnamese-Australians living in the Liverpool area of Sydney in the Western suburbs, who form an Australian Rules football team in order to change the direction of their lives. The film is directed by Khoa Do, who is a Vietnamese-Australian from Sydney himself, but the production firm officially credited with the production is Suitcase films, which consists of Megan McMurchy, a freelance producer. The two have worked previously;

"Khoa asked me to produce *Footy Legends* in October 2002, after sending me a first draft script. We spent the next 2 and a half years

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<sup>119</sup> Source: Interview with James Bramley, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

<sup>120</sup> Source: Interview with Mark Sarfarty, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2005.

developing the script before I raised finance for production by early 2005. I had previously worked with Khoa when he wrote the script for a short drama called *Delivery Day*, which was one episode in a 13-part series, entitled *Hybrid Life* that I produced for SBS Independent”.

(Source: Email correspondence with Megan McMurchy, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2006)

This feature film exemplifies the coming together of a number of freelance individuals with no involvement of established and organised firms (as was the case with *Mary Bryant* and *Three Dollars*). The idea for the film was initially set up by Khoa Do who had conceived an initial script, however the script was soon put in the SPARK program<sup>121</sup>;

“SPARK gave our team a great opportunity to accelerate the development of *Footy Legends* at a critical stage, in a creative environment that was both challenging and supportive”.

(Source: Megan McMurchy, [www.afc.gov.au](http://www.afc.gov.au), accessed 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2006)

Having benefited from SPARK, been approved for FTO funding of AU\$325,000 ([www.fto.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fto.nsw.gov.au), accessed April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006), and the cast and crew now assembled, they then began the process of shooting. It was during this stage of production that I was invited to the locations of the shoot to conduct my ethnography. The initial contact was with Megan McMurchy, and when the dates of my visits were finalised, the call sheet, which is an itinerary for the period of shooting (in this case it was a full 14-hour working day) was emailed out to those filmmakers and other personnel involved. This call sheet outlines all the necessary information needed for

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<sup>121</sup> The SPARK program is also discussed in section 6.1.1, page 160.

the days shooting, including who needs to attend, time slots, equipment needed and so on. A portion of the call sheet is shown in Figure 7.4.

<b>POLICE:</b> 148 George St, Liverpool (02 98218444)		<b>FIRE:</b> 000
<b>HOSPITAL:</b> Liverpool Hospital, Elizabeth St, Liverpool (02 9828 3000)		<b>AMBULANCE:</b> 000
		<b>EMERGENCY:</b> 000
<b>"FOOTY LEGENDS"</b>		
<b>Suitcase Films Pty Limited</b>		
<b>Production Office: Canal Road Film Centre, Shed 7, 1 Canal Road, Leichhardt NSW 2040</b>		
<b>Tel: (02) 9560 7933 / 6466 / 9377 Fax: (02) 9560 9544</b>		
Post-Production Office: P O Box 557, Alexandria NSW 1435		
Tel: (02) 9699 3443 Fax: (02) 9699 3443		
<b>CALL SHEET</b>		
<b>DIRECTOR:</b> KHOA DO		<b>SHOOT DAY THIRTY ONE</b>
<b>PRODUCER:</b> MEGAN McMURCHY		<b>Tuesday 12th July, 2005</b>
<b>LINE PRODUCER:</b> ANN FOLLAND		
2ND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: SCOTT LOVELOCK (0412 144 440)		
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR: ALISON PARKER (0407 811 257)		
UNIT MANAGER: JOHN RILEY (0410 344 287)		Truck ptu: 0415
		UNIT: 0515
<b>LOCATION #1:</b>	<b>UNIT BASE:</b> All Day	HAIR/MAKE-UP: 0530
<b>FRONT PORCH/ESTABLISHER</b>	Liverpool Tafe,	COSTUME: 0530
29 Roebuck St	College St, Liverpool	<b>CREW CALL: 0630</b>
Cabramatta	(park as directed)	<b>EST WRAP:</b> 1715
		Sunrise: 0659
<b>Unit Base:</b> Not Available		Sunset: 1702
<b>UBD:</b> 249 P8 (See attached Map)		<b>Breakfast: 0615 - 0645</b>
<b>LOCATION #2:</b>	<b>BREAKFAST AND ESSENTIALS TO BE AT</b>	
<b>ADF ACADEMY OFFICE/CORRECTIONAL</b>	<b>LOCATION #1.</b>	
Liverpool Tafe	<b>MAKEUP AND COSTUME TO BE AT</b>	
College St, Liverpool	<b>LOCATION #2.</b>	
<b>Unit Base:</b> as above		
<b>UBD:</b> 36 A13 (See attached Map)		
<b>Weather:</b> (BOM: 02 9296 1555)		<b>TRAVEL TIME:</b>
<i>Occasional Showers.</i>		Prod. Office-LOC#1: Cars: 40min Trucks: 45min
<i>Max 19 Min 6</i>		Prod. Office-LOC#2: Cars: 50min Trucks: 55min

Figure 7.4: A portion of the *Footy Legends* call sheet

The call sheet gives everyone involved a clearer idea of when they are needed and to what extent, which is useful in a film production as there can be substantial periods of time when particular departments or individuals are not needed, so to call them in for their specific time increases the efficiency of the production.

This particular day of shooting took place at the Liverpool TAFE university campus in the western suburb of Liverpool, which has a population majority of first generation Vietnamese and subsequent generations of Vietnamese-Australians. As can be seen



in the call sheet, the day started for some at 4:15am, with a crew call at 6:30am. The day then goes on for as long as is needed to shoot the required material. During the days shooting, much of what goes on is in the control of the director, Khoa Do, who decides when to break for lunch, which sequences to shoot, as well as having creative control over content including script, costume, make-up and so on. The producer of the film, Megan McMurchy, took a more 'distanced' stance during the shoot, with most of the time spent on the phone, organising other parts of the film's production that were not being dealt with at the time. This included organising locations for subsequent days shooting, giving progress reports to the funding bodies, hiring equipment, among other tasks.

Because of the significantly lower budget than *Superman Returns*, *Footy Legends* had a smaller number of crew, with many people doing more than one task (i.e. the costume and make-up department were run by the same single person). Because of the small number of crew, the interaction between different departments was informal and colloquial, with many of the crew having known each other from previous productions. Many of the people who were on set were freelancers who had been enrolled by the production company (Suitcase films/Megan McMurchy) to work on the film, and were employed on a temporary basis while the film was in production. The location manager for example, Tobin Hughes (originally from Birmingham), was a freelancer who had previously worked on *Mission Impossible 2* (shot in Sydney), as well as other Hollywood-produced films that were shot in Sydney. He was enrolled in the production of *Footy Legends* where the wage was much less than on the Hollywood films. He explained that it was because of family reasons that he was taking on this project, in that the job required no travel outside of Sydney and was relatively 'low scale'. Indeed, many of the reasons given by cast and crew of *Footy Legends* as to why they took the job are rarely purely financial reasons. One of the main cast members was hired when he was spotted by the director, Khoa Do, whilst

on a ferry ride across Sydney Harbour. He noticed his distinctive hair style and then asked him to be an actor for one of the key roles in the film. This is perhaps an exceptional recruitment, but to suggest that freelancers are employed purely for a financial reason does not give a true reflection of the employment process. As has been mentioned and exemplified in section 6.1.1, the personal relationships that filmmakers have with each other are more important in the future employment in productions, and this was certainly the case with *Footy Legends*. Of the cast and crew members that I spoke to during my visits to the on-location shooting of the film, the vast majority of them (10 out of the 12 people that I managed to interview) said that they had had a previous working relationship with either the producer Megan McMurchy or the director Khoa Do (overall, the core members of cast and crew numbered 45<sup>122</sup>). Of those 10 people, when asked why they thought that they were hired again, they all suggested that it was because they thought they could be trusted to do the job that was being asked of them. The other two people that I managed to interview had worked with someone else who had worked with either Megan McMurchy or Khoa Do – so the mobilisation of human actors for the production was very much motivated by trust and personal connections.

Due to the size of the production, most of the people and firms contacted during the production were based in Sydney. If there were actors from other cities involved in the production it was rarely on a direct basis. Therefore, it is the intra-city connections that are most prominent in this ethnography, with very few direct inter-city connections, which is often the case with feature films produced by Sydney-based firms and filmmakers. Although, this is not to say that the inter-city connections are non-existent; indeed as we have seen with *Three Dollars*, it was filmed in Melbourne with the help of the Film Victoria, but the story of *Footy Legends* is set in

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<sup>122</sup> Source: Email correspondence with Megan McMurchy, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2006.

and around Sydney and the western suburbs, and has been funded and developed by Sydney-based institutions. For *Footy Legends*, the AFC developed the script (a national body but headquartered in Sydney) and finance was provided by the FFC, FTO and Showtime (all headquartered in Sydney), which secured the pay-TV rights. Also, the postproduction process is being carried out by Sydney-based firms, Spectrum films (which also was the postproduction house for *Mary Bryant*) and Soundfirm, which is carrying out the sound postproduction. Soundfirm, although headquartered in Melbourne, has offices in Beijing and the Fox lot in Sydney, which is the office being used for the *Footy Legends*<sup>123</sup>. It is only when the distribution process starts that overseas firms are enrolled, which is the case when a locally produced film is trying to secure as wide a release as possible. In this case, Fortissimo Films, based in Amsterdam but with offices in London and Hong Kong, are handling the international release of the film. Despite the number of different firms involved in the postproduction, the key creative influences of Khoa Do and Megan McMurchy are still heavily involved;

“I am extremely heavily involved in all aspects of post-production - the picture editing at Spectrum Films, and the sound post at Soundfirm. I'm currently supervising production of all the delivery materials for our distributor and overseas sales agent [Fortissimo Films], which is a very detailed and time consuming process. Khoa and I are both very closely involved in planning for the national release of the film, which involves design of poster, trailer, website, electronic press kit (EPK), production notes and so on<sup>124</sup>”.

(Source: Email correspondence with Megan McMurchy, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2006)

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<sup>123</sup> Source: Email correspondence with Megan McMurchy, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2006.

<sup>124</sup> Note the nonhuman actants listed by Megan as key components of the distribution network.

The number of inter-city connections of this production, however, remains small, with there being little need for Suitcase Films (the production company behind *Footy Legends*) to source from outside Sydney.

Using the two examples of *Three Dollars* and *Footy Legends* in this section, it has been possible to focus on the intra-city networks that are created by the process of domestic film production in Sydney. In the previous sections, the case studies of *Superman Returns* and *Mary Bryant* have been about exemplifying the performativity of individual filmmakers, firms and government institutions, and how their actions and processes constitute the topological networks of knowledge (cf. Grabher, 2004) within Sydney's production industry. Within this section, the intra-city processes have been described, showing again how the actions of filmmakers create Sydney's film production industry. It is important when going through these ethnographies that they are not taken as a fixed account of the networks of Sydney, so to argue that these networks somehow bring together the actors, and that the processes involved in film and TV production pass through or travel along these networked connections, denies the performativity of the actors (Thrift, 1999). Moreover, it is the processes themselves that creates the network, and these are constantly evolving. The spacing and timing of the networks is dependent upon the performativity of the actors, and not vice versa. During these ethnographies, it is the qualitative data that has been describing these processes and deliberately not assigning them to a particular pre-conceived ethos of scale or space in general. This point will be developed further in the following chapter.

The previous three empirical chapters have described the processes that create the spacing and the timing of Sydney's film and TV production industry, detailing the socio-technical networks involved. As was outlined in the aims and objectives (section 1.1, page 13), this thesis has 3 main aims – theoretical, empirical and methodological. The theoretical perspective used throughout this thesis has been one inspired by ANT, which is one perspective used for new urbanism empirics. If the empirical data presented in this thesis is to align with the new urbanism approach to global and world city literature, the connection needs to be made explicit between the data, obtained through via the methodology, and the theories of new urbanism (i.e. not to contextualise the data, which would be to go against the ethos of ANT). This is achieved through the empirics, thereby achieving the aims and objectives set out in section 1.1. Specifically, it is possible to see how the various stages of the data collection (PI, PII and PIII) tie together thematically. Chapter 5 used quantitative data to show which cities Sydney connected to through the film and television production industries. In section 5.2 (page 139) we saw that London has particularly strong ties with Sydney (also exemplified with the data in Table 6.2, page 167). As was mentioned in the discussion surrounding Figure 5.1 (page 136) of Sydney cultural industry reach, the lack of information on the nature and functionality of the offices used to construct that visualisation, meant that qualitative data was needed to complement it. This was provided in the next chapter by highlighting the practices which maintained these link; and then in Chapter 7, *Mary Bryant* was selected as a project that also exemplified this important link. Similarly, in section 5.3 (page 147), we saw how Los Angeles was the most connected city to Sydney with regards the film industry (Figure 5.3, page 200), and so Chapter 6 developed this by providing

information on the processes of actants, which constitute the so-called 'runaway' production. This was then exemplified with *Superman Returns*, precisely because it was a project that showed the practices 'in action'. We also discussed the intra-city networking that goes on within Sydney in Chapter 6, which was then exemplified through two case studies, *Three Dollars* and *Footy Legends*. The systematic selection of data therefore provides a coherent data set which not only satisfies the aims empirically (A2), but also theoretically (A1) and methodologically (A3).

O3 states that ANT is used as the methodological stance of this thesis, which guides our reading of the empirics. Therefore, the rest of this chapter will discuss the empirics set out in the previous three chapters using ANT, and relating it back to the aims and objectives. The terminology and practicalities of ANT have been eluded to within the three empirical chapters, and so these instances will be built upon and discussed, but the main focus of this chapter is to show how this thesis has achieved what was outlined on page 13. It would not be feasible to go through each aim and objective systematically, as much of the explanation would overlap, therefore, through discussing the empirics in relation to ANT and the wider new urbanism (and new economic geography literature), it will be noted where the aims and objectives have been achieved.

The global and world city literature, as detailed in section 2.1, had a 'dirty little secret' (Short et al., 1996) namely a lack of relational empirical data to back up its theoretical approach. Since then, there has been a substantial increase in the amount of data collected and, as mentioned in the introductory chapters, this thesis is adding to that collection by researching a city that has not been prominent in the literature, and through an industrial sector that has also been largely neglected, namely the cultural industries, and specifically the film and TV production industry. It is possible to see, especially in Chapter 5, a useable data set for Sydney's enrolment in the world city

network. The data given in Chapter 5 is predominantly quantitative, providing relational data of Sydney's reach through its cultural industries. The data is presented so as to align itself with similar research techniques carried out in the global and world city literature, most notably the work of Taylor (2001a, 2004a), Taylor and Walker (2004) and Krätke (2003), and therefore be analogous with that type of research. Without repeating the analysis of the data that is given in Chapter 5, it is possible to clearly see the connectivity of Sydney through the cultural industries, the TV production industry and the film industry in quantifiable *relational* ways. London, New York, Singapore, Los Angeles, Melbourne and Auckland all show strong ties with Sydney. This data complements other relational data of world city research and adds a further, cultural dimension to APS data (Beaverstock et al, 2000; Faulconbridge et al., 2007), airline passengers (Smith and Timberlake, 2001, Choi et al., 2006), telecommunications (Rutherford, 2004, 2005), research connectivity through universities (Matthiessen et al., 2006) and media conglomerates (Krätke, 2003, Krätke and Taylor, 2004). Conducting research on a variety of industry sectors in this way only serves to increase the collection of relational data, and thereby the knowledge of world city connectivity. The collection and description of this quantitative relational data therefore has satisfied **O1**, **O2**, and thereby achieved the aim of **A2**.

As was discussed in section 3.1, new urbanism theorises the city in terms of relations as opposed to attributes (Amin and Thrift, 2002) and continuums as opposed to bounded entities (Smith, 2003a; 2003b); and using ANT as the empirical tool of this thesis demands a focus on these relational processes. During the empirics of this thesis, it is precisely these processes that have been described, as they are what create the continuums, or spaces, of Sydney as a world city network. Moreover, in describing these processes (and thereby not contextualising them through a pre-conceived concept such as geographical scale), the empirics align with an ANT

perspective. The rejection of scale is an effect of ANT and new urbanism, and the empirics reflect this by allowing the interactions and performances of the actors involved to 'speak for themselves'. In other words, scale is *produced* by interactions with socio-technical networks that have been alluded to in the empirics. For example, in the meeting between Garry Brennan of the NSW FTO and the vice president of Warner Brothers in which filming of *Superman Returns* was discussed (see section 7.1), the interaction between the two was conducted in the vice presidents' office in Los Angeles, yet the results of the meeting brought the production of a major Hollywood production to Sydney. To take a political economic stance would be to suggest that 'local' processes produce 'global' results, however this presupposes the scales in which the actors are performing, that somehow Garry Brennan and the vice president are 'passing through' spatial scales and 'traversing' these scales from the local to the global. To think of the interactions in this way requires a large amount of imagination, in that using this political economic language assumes an actualisation of structure. This is simply not the case. Instead, the process of that meeting produces other processes, which bring about further processes, that bring about the filming of *Superman Returns* in Sydney, i.e. it is the length of the network which changes. Garry Brennan and the vice-president of Warner Brothers are the actors that "*organise the network*" (Murdoch, 2006: 69), or mediators (Latour, 2005) that translate the network by enrolling a number of other actants (both human and nonhuman). In other ANT terminology, they problematise (Law, 1994; Lee and Hassard, 1999) i.e. set the 'goal' of the network, in this case, the shooting of *Superman Returns* in Sydney, and perform interessement by identifying and stabilising the actors they chose to enrol (Callon, 1986). The use of ANT terminology here shows how the 'power' inherent in Garry and the vice president comes about from their connections to others, and the power attributed to them is their heterogeneous associations (Allen, 2004; Murdoch, 2006). This brief narrative has exemplified how, through a discussion of ANT, this thesis has achieved **O3** and **A1**.



Therefore, the effect of geographical scale is made up of these heterogeneous connections (Martson et al., 2005). Similar meta-narrative constructions exist when theorising about the production firms (see Scott, 2001). As was articulated on page 52, to think of the firm as 'bigger' than those it organises is misguided, as "an organisation is made only of movements, which are woven by the constant circulation of documents, stories, accounts, goods and passions" (Latour, 2005: 179). This is highlighted in the empirics on Southern Star (see section 6.1.1), which detailed these precise nuances of the firm, accounting for the communication between the Sydney and the London offices. It is these 'circulations' that create the firm of Southern Star and it only exists on some supra-individual scale in that the building is physically bigger than the people it houses<sup>125</sup>.

The firm is an important actor in the theorisation of the city (see Yeung, 2000; Jones, 2002), specifically the processes carried out by the individuals within the firm, hence the level of description and empirics in Chapter 6 devoted to them. The freelance nature of firms in the film and TV industry only adds weight to the fact that firms are not 'bigger' or 'supra-individual' because, in many cases, the firm is simply a name used by a person for tax purposes, or as a means of listing their company in a directory, as was the case with Anny Slater, a filmmaker who went under the name of Moondance pictures (see page 159) and Megan McMurthy, who had the name Suitcase films (see page 257). With Anny Slater (in the quote on page 159), she suggests she wants people around her that she can trust, as it is this trust that produces 'quality productions'<sup>126</sup>. This echoes with the discussion of trust as relational (Murphy, 2006 – see section 3.1) neatly, as Anny trusts the people she

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<sup>125</sup> Even the building, it can be argued is an actor-network, comprising of the processes and performativity of the architect, the builders, the plumbers, and so on.

<sup>126</sup> Source: Interview with Anny Slater, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

works with, and while it is an ongoing process or “ephemeral, mobile, and highly fluid” (Murphy, 2006: 440) process, it produces “stabilised locations” (*ibid.*), in this case the productions. The detail of this thesis, especially that in section 6.1.1 and the ethnographies, highlight the level of trust within the production industry, which is an important theme that comes through the empirics. The mobility and fluidity of the connections of trust (that Murphy describes) is constantly alluded to throughout the empirics and are crucial to the stability of the industry in that when a production gets the ‘green light’, a director or producer will call upon their personal relationships and connections in order to enrol the cast and crew that is wanted; exemplified by Peter Andrikidis enrolling David Field for *Mary Bryant* (page 239), Bryan Singer enrolling Kevin Spacey and James Marsden for *Superman Returns* (page 219) and Robert Connolly enrolling David Wenham for *Three Dollars* (page 249). This is an example of how it is the *intensity* of heterogeneous connections (however fluid and ephemeral) that produce seemingly stable and rigid structures (Smith, 2003b; Martson et al., 2005; Yeung, 2005), and there is are not a pre-given platform or stage for these connections to occur.

Unlike other world city research agendas, this thesis used recently developed methodological techniques (as outlined in **A3**) to provide the actualities of relational data instead of attributional data. Also, the actualities of the other, more tangible connections are displayed in this thesis, again, highlighting the need to theorise the firm as relational, and not a supra-individual structure. The scale of the ‘global’ has then also been viewed as a mere effect (or frame) which should be recognised as such. The same can therefore be said about the scale of the ‘local’.

However, this is not to say that the ‘local’ is all that exists, far from it, it is still a ‘scale’ and therefore is a product, a framing device on actants’ performances. A ‘locality’ is still produced by interactions and processes, such as Wynyard Station in central

Sydney. During the filming of *Superman Returns* it was dressed up as Metropolis General Hospital which required a number of different people and skills (for the details including the changing of street signs, see Figure 7.1 in Chapter 7, page 220 onward). The empirics of the ethnographic research conducted on the filming of *Superman Returns* required a 'framing off' of the locality, in that Wynyard Station (or central Sydney for that matter) acted as a starting point of enquiry *for this particular study*. The architects of the station, the builders, the electricians, the train drivers and the millions of commuters who use it every year are all actors whose processes contribute to the production of that 'locality' (both spatially and temporally). The RTA who change the road signs, the police department who act as security staff, the city government officials who change the flags and bus stop posters to show the fictional museums, newspapers and firms of Metropolis; it is their performativity that create the 'local' scale which is hosting the filming of that specific weekend. What is more, these agencies are under the instruction (or intercession) of the round table which has been set up by the city government in order to facilitate (problematise) the filming process and thereby further the attractiveness of Sydney to Hollywood production firms. We saw previously how the 'global' scale has been constructed from focusing on the interactions, and now, how those same interactions can also be considered to construct the 'local'. These 'scales' therefore must be viewed as afterthoughts, incidental spatial constructs that only serve as reference points, snapshots on a topological spatial formation which is created by the complex and messy processes and interactions of the actants being studied (Law, 2004). This is why the objective of this thesis was to use ethnographies, as they are the most fertile way of studying these interactions. The data given in the previous three chapters provide a plethora of this fertile empirical description, and provides details of this messiness and the complexity of the interactions that construct the 'global' and the 'local' (and hence satisfy **A1** and **O3**).

As was discussed in section 2.3.2 and 3.1, this particular line of discussion of the empirics can be problematic, as it risks simply suggesting that the answer to the rejection of the rigidity of scale and structure is to adopt the opposite, namely unbounded proliferation and an unending messiness of process (Yeung, 2005; Murdoch, 2006). The empirics have been displayed in such a way so they read as pure description, but it is only in their relation to the new urbanism (O4) theory that they become relevant to the global and world city literature.

It can therefore be distinguishable through using metaphors discussed on 74 of this thesis, that of 'forces' of the city being distinguished by "what they carry, by how they carry, by their stretch in space and by their cyclicity" (Amin and Thrift, 2002: 81) – examples of which are given throughout the qualitative descriptions of this thesis. For instance, in the *Mary Bryant* ethnography, the dissemination of production footage was discussed, i.e., the tapes of the raw production footage being sent (what they carry) in overnight postal bags (how they carry) from Sydney to London (their stretch) everyday (cyclicity) during filming. Also, there is a similar situation with the release of films made by Sydney-based firms, in that it is the film roll being sent to the art house cinemas (what they carry) under the instruction of the CRC (how they carry), to a few cinemas in Sydney's inner city areas (stretch) and then is run for a period of time determined by the films popularity (cyclicity). These are only two of the many examples in the empirics of this thesis, and indeed more examples could be related to Amin and Thrift's 'circulatory' ideals as the data describes the interactions, and not some overarching structure or meta-narrative.

So we have seen how a descriptive approach in the methodology can bring about a reading of the qualitative data in a way that is not simply the opposite of the rejection of scales such as the 'global' or the 'local'. This has been done by identifying the actants, be they individuals, firms, governments, nonhumans or localities, as

interactions that circulate and reveal the city (Amin and Thrift, 2002). However, as was discussed in the literature review of ANT (page 86-87), to continue the discussion of the empirics as more than a rejection of spatial meta-narratives, it is necessary to continue the ideals of process and associations for the individual actors themselves (Murdoch, 1998). If the varying localities in the empirics (as well as networks of Sydney and the film and TV production industry) are made up of these associations, then it follows that the actants are as well. If we were to break the line of associations and interaction at the actants, then it is the same as bracketing off the 'global' or the 'local' and suggesting they are rigid spatial structures. Theorisations of ANT argue that it is only when the actor-network of the individual 'breaks down' (Latour, 1993; Law, 1986) that we can 'see' the associations; humans are 'black boxes' (Law, 1986, 1994; Latour, 2005) and while individuals act as one, we are made up of heterogeneous associations that are only exposed once we stop functioning or acting as a mediator. Therefore, to continue the relation of this thesis to ANT, the actant (both human and nonhuman) must be shown to be made up of interactions.

A particular incidental example that can be used here is the *Footy Legends* ethnography in section 7.3.2 (page 254). In it, a number of the interactions that make up the actants involved are discussed, including the family reasons for Tobin Hughes' acceptance of lower-paid work, the striking haircut of the main character landing him the role, the reasons given for the production of a call sheet, and the creation of the script development programme SPARK which aided in the development of the script for *Footy Legends*. All these incidental examples give an insight into the 'assemblages' of the actants involved in the production of *Footy Legends*, creating a continued nuanced perspective into the networks of the film production industry of Sydney. Smith (2003b) writes of cities as a continuum, and so to fulfil this theoretical ideal, then as well as the associations and performativity of the actants creating

Sydney and its film and TV production industry, these associations continue to create the actants themselves (for example the production bibles that are used in reality TV shows discussed in section 6.2 page 189). They are nonhuman actants whose movement to and from a particular firm in Sydney, London, or wherever the recipient firm may be, create the topological formation of the TV production industry. However, Bob Campbell of Screentime tells of the interactions and processes that *made* that production bible<sup>127</sup>, thereby continuing the analysis of the processes involved in the TV production industry through to the construction of a 'black-boxed' actant. Another example is the case of David Field, one of the lead actors in the *Mary Bryant* production. In section 7.2 page 239, he describes how his professional history with the director, Peter Andrikidis, meant that he was one of the first actors cast. In it, David describes how Peter "knows I'm a good actor"<sup>128</sup> so the acting school that David attended, as well as the previous projects that he has worked on with Peter all form part of that particular interaction. Much like the boundaries of the city are broken down by researching the process and networks of actors between cities, so too are the boundaries of the actant (human and nonhuman) by researching the interactions that construct them. This is yet another exemplification of how **O3**, and therefore **A1** have been achieved.

As was also alluded in the discussion of ANT in section 3.2, time (page 87) is also a contested meta-narrative that can be looked at through a focus on process. The empirics in the previous three chapters are littered with these associations – references to a previous, present or future time, all contributing to the interactions and processes of Sydney's film and TV production industry. For example, Figures 5.2 and 5.3 use data from the year 2000. Also, in the debate in section 6.3 on the productivity of the domestic film industry in Sydney, many of the processes put in

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<sup>127</sup> See the quote from Bob Campbell on page 189.

<sup>128</sup> Source: Interview with David Field, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

place by government (such as script development programs, co-production alliances and collaborative programs between educational institutions and private firms), are all the result of *past* failures of Sydney-based films. Also, these collaborative efforts are set up in order to effect *future* production. There are other (more subtle) temporal associations that are still effecting the interactions being studied, such as the problem that the filming of *Superman Returns* encountered when the large 'W' from the Westpac bank logo was in shot. The timing of the shoot (at night) meant that the power that lit the sign could not be turned off, so other connections were made to rectify the problem, but also the piece of legislation which states that there can be no unofficial advertising in films is as old as the film industry itself. The very story of *Mary Bryant* took place in the 1790s, yet it is being told over 200 years later through the networked associations of the production team of Screentime and Granada. The production of *Three Dollars* meant that Robert Connolly has 'broken' through to the multiplex cinema market (when his film went from Dendy cinemas to the Hoyts cinema chain) and therefore will be in a much more advantageous negotiating position with the multiplex cinema chains when he is looking to release his next production.

The focus and reliance on process leads to the ontology that process 'creates' space, or to echo Doel (2000: 125), it is "better to approach space as a verb rather than a noun". In this case, space (and time) become experiential, in that space only 'exists' when it is achieved through the processes and actions of actants. Thinking of space as a verb is an ontology which justifies all of the theoretical and empirical agenda of this thesis. If space and subsequently geographical scale is articulated as a verb and not a noun, then it can have no boundaries. It is continually made by the processes of actants, it is temporally specific and can be reduced to a 'plane of consistency' (Smith, 2003a). In the same way then, we can view the city as a process, as the

actions described throughout the empirics have been shown to 'create' the network of film and TV production, as well as the city of Sydney itself.

This chapter has been about relating the empirics given throughout the thesis to the global and world city literature and the economic geography literature more generally (O4). There has been a distinct narrative of a shift away from chronological scalar thinking to interactions of associations, with examples of how the empirics of the thesis align with this thinking – and there could have been many more examples given. This chapter was specifically designed to show *how* the empirics relate back to the original aims and objectives of this thesis, which is why specific examples were given; however the rest of the empirics that have been given in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 can be related in the same way. So with the information given in this chapter in mind, it may be beneficial to the reader to perhaps return to these chapters and reread the descriptive narratives, but with the theoretical arguments detailed in this chapter in mind. Then, all the associations, processes, workings and performativity given in these empirical chapters will have wider, theoretical implications for the global and world city literature and new (or relational) economic geography literature as a whole.



“As I always say: a good thesis is a thesis that is done”.

(Latour, 2005: 148)

To suggest that this Epilogue will put into *context* all that has gone before would be to disown the very ethos of ANT and this thesis, so this epilogue will be (to borrow a term from the filmmakers) ‘wrapping up’ by suggesting that this is where my thesis stops, yet the socio-technical networks continue regardless of whether I have taken them into account or not. As Latour suggests in the quote above, this thesis has reached the end of its task; it has set out what it intended to do. Therefore, it will now set out some guidelines on how the information provided throughout this thesis can be used to the betterment of a variety of audiences. From geographical theorisations of space and time, to the intricacies of Sydney’s film and television production industry, there are a number of different groups of people that may gain some benefit from the findings of this thesis.

The point has been raised throughout this thesis that it is a clear empirical contribution to the literature on global and world cities; providing a data set on Sydney and its cultural industries. It has drawn upon the literatures of urban geography to add a data set on Sydney that can be utilised where necessary. However, I would also argue that the findings of this thesis and the empirics that go with it also have an audience in the realm of the film production industry itself. As an ANT study necessitates story-telling descriptive empirics, there is no doubt that the personnel of the film and TV production industry would be aware of the majority of the data, as they are the ones with agency that creates the networks. However, what

may be of benefit is the nature of the research into the processes, an aspect that has been so far neglected in much of the official publications within the industry. For example, the annual data set produced by the AFC, called 'Get the Picture', provides very useful and in-depth statistical data on the state of the Australian film industry. Many of their statistics have been used in this thesis, but are limited to assessing the size of the industry, the number of features that have been made, the monetary value of television products, and other such quantitative statistics<sup>129</sup>. There is very little in the way of qualitative work that *describes action* within the industry. Pratt & Gornostaeva (2006: 13, my emphasis) suggest that there is "a need for a more nuanced perspective on film making that does not only concern itself with the bottom line, or with organisational control, or markets. Rather, it is one that should explore the shifting sands of the process of film making as *practice*". The AFC, while providing clear and concise information on the markets (indeed one of their subsections in 'Get the Picture' is 'Australia's Audiovisual *Markets*'), fails to undertake or commission any substantive work which focuses on the processes involved in the film industry, which could provide an alternative data set that compliments the existing data, and yet further it by analysing and describing the actions and processes of the humans and nonhumans of the industry. Also, other institutions involved in the industry can benefit, such as the FTO, ASDA and SPAA, who could all utilise the data to assess what they have done well and what they can do better within the industry.

Another potential audience could be the city policy makers. As the film industry is an important wealth generator for Sydney and the state of NSW, there is a genuine attempt by the local government (the City of Sydney) to encourage filmmaking and encourage a more general culture of creativity within the city. This thesis, as it

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<sup>129</sup> Another problem of the AFC data is that is only compiled at national and state level, with little or no data on cities.

explores the *processes* of creativity and the people and institutions that are key to it, provides excellent data for the policy makers. By showing that there is a better understanding of the actant-networks of an industry by focusing on process and action, the policy makers of the city can seize this and see which processes and actions are beneficial (and indeed which are detrimental) to the creative milieu of Sydney. There is also the opportunity for the government to see which other cities are the most connected to Sydney in terms of film and TV 'traffic', and set in place policies, partnerships and relationships between the equating institutions of these cities. In fact, this process is already happening with the FTO who, having seen some of the preliminary findings of this thesis and the close ties that the television production sector has with London actants, are looking into setting up an official partnership with the London equivalent (Film London) which will allow people to move between Sydney and London to gain experience in the realms of film liaison, skills development and location management. While this movement is in an embryonic stage and may or may not come to fruition, it proves that the findings in this thesis are not only relevant in purely academic circles, but for actual policy development.

Another benefit of conducting an ANT epistemology is that it highlights those institutions, humans and nonhumans, that are particularly *active* actants. It has been argued that the power of a network is manifested by the most productive actants (Allen, 2004), so by researching the processes and actions of institutions, it is highly probable that those institutions that are relatively 'static' (i.e. they do not 'do' anything that has an effect on the construction of the network), will not show any discernable processes. Throughout the empirical chapters, the FTO is mentioned on many occasions and in relation to many different projects and productions, which suggests that it is highly active in the networks of the film and television industry. In contrast, some institutions that may be considered involved in the networks were not

mentioned or described in the research, and are perhaps more 'static' than is ordinarily considered by those in the industry. For example, the AFC plays a very important role in the setting of regulations for the industry and providing statistics on it, but when it comes to the actual production of the films and television programs themselves, there is little evidence of 'action' from them.

As was stated in section 4.4, there were decisions made at the outset of this thesis which limited the scope of the research to the film and TV production industry. However, the nature of an ANT research project necessitates an ethos of 'following the network' (Law, 2004; Latour, 2005), which meant that as a researcher, I could have continued to follow a particular line of enquiry to such an extent that the subject matter would become disengaged from the themes of the thesis. For example, while interviewing Greg Smith at Animal Logic, he talked of how more and more filmmakers (directors and producers) are moving into the computer game market as these games have more advanced narratives which require specialised filmic direction. If I was to continue this line of enquiry, I would have interviewed computer game makers and firms, and while this type of enquiry is 'following the network' and shows how the network lengthens, the themes of the interviews would not correlate with those of this thesis, therefore this line of enquiry was not followed. This point is indicative of the wider theoretical debate of ANT to do with the porosity of boundaries and the veracity of compartmentalisation (Law, 1994, 2004; Murdoch, 1997b, 2005; Latour, 1993; 2005), which is discussed in Chapter 3. By compartmentalising the 'film industry' or the 'computer game industry', these links (between filmmakers and computer game firms) defy the constructions of these boundaries and questions their steadfastness and indeed their ontological 'existence'. This suggests that there is scope for continued work, the example of the computer game industry and the continuing and burgeoning links between the film industry is an obvious one. However, there are many more immediate 'areas' or 'compartments' that I could have continued with,

such as the distribution industry. There is an argument that the distribution processes are equally as important in the promotion of indigenous films as production processes, which suggests that there is a need to restructure the distribution of domestically produced films differently to that of foreign (mainly Hollywood) films if they are to be successful (Mitchell, 2003; Herd, 2004). Therefore, there is a tremendous amount of scope to consider the possibilities of how a 'revamp' in the distribution industry might aid the interest, and therefore profitability, of those films produced by Sydney-based filmmakers. There is also the opportunity to study the composition of the various board members of the intermediaries such as the FTO, FFC, ASDA, SPAA and so on. Many of the board members are filmmakers (e.g. Robert Connolly is on the board at the FTO, Frank Arnold, another interviewee, is on the board at the ASDA), and so to perform ANT or social networking analysis on who is on the boards of which institution would give more insight into the movements and practices of individual filmmakers. Social networking analysis has been conducted in management and corporate governance literature (Kim, 2005) as well as in relation to the firm (Yeung, 2005), but could yet provide a valuable insight into geographical networks of people and their actions, as they have potential synergies with ANT and GaWC-style approaches to global and world cities. If this were to be undertaken, it could be presented in a way akin to the data presented in Chapter 5, adding more quantitative relational data to the thesis.

There is also scope to continue 'following the network' and study some of the cities with strong connections to Sydney. If a research agenda was conducted on London's television production industry, then that would complement the data in this thesis well as the connections between Sydney and London in this sector are shown to be durable, with a large amount of communication, freelance movement and inter-firm relationships. A study of London would allow for a lengthening of the actant-networks and provide more descriptive accounts and narratives of the traffic of the urban

networks of television production. Also, Los Angeles showed strong connections with Sydney in the film industry, primarily for the reasons associated with runaway production (Herd, 2004, Christopherson, 2006). However, the film industry of Hollywood has been well documented (Scott, 2002; Krätke & Taylor, 2004 and more recently Currah, 2006) with regards to world city geography. Therefore further study could focus on the role of other runaway locations, such as Vancouver, Toronto, Cape Town and Prague. These cities boast studio complexes that house Hollywood productions and a supporting independent industry, and so similar ANT studies could also aid the data on the global urban networks of the film industry and show how Sydney connects to a more or lesser extent with these cities.

Most prominently however, I believe, is the methodology employed in this thesis, i.e. the use of ethnographies and how they can be attributed to the wider research community within geography. Recently, and concurrently with the writing of this thesis, there have been a number of authors that have championed the use of projects (Grabher, 2002, 2004; Christopherson, 2006; Lash and Lury, 2007) as a mode of research, particularly into the cultural industries. As this sector of the economy continues to gain political and financial inertia, so too must the academic research into them. However, as has been stressed throughout this thesis, there is a need for a new alternative approach to these industries as much of the research techniques that have been adopted so far (see section 2.3 for full details) need to be developed.

Recent debate in economic and urban geography has, in many areas, been progressive and starting to seriously consider a new emerging literature, in particular that of projects, which in a world increasingly dominated by knowledge-intensive economies, projects are fast becoming a method of labour that can no longer be ignored. This therefore entails incorporating the practices of freelancers into the

realm of economic geography, because as we have seen throughout this thesis, they play a crucial role in the economic landscape of the cultural industries, as well as other industries. Indeed, construction is project-based (Grabher, 2004a) and there is even work devoted to freelancers translators (Fraser and Gold, 2001). Self-employed freelancers penetrate all areas of the economy – from self-employed venture capitalists to comedians to gardeners – and their day-to-day practices significantly contribute to the economy. Therefore, future research should consider freelancers as part of these projects. Also, researching particular projects should be considered as part of the agenda as the duration of a project can have a significant bearing on its magnitude. Chapter 7 of this thesis has highlighted four specific film and television projects, but equally architectural projects, the design and manufacture of a particular car or fashion item, a piece of art work – there are a multitude of arenas that could be studied, all which contain firms, freelancers, government institutions, guilds, associations and so on. As has been mentioned previously, Lash and Lury's (2007) recent contribution has highlighted what they describe as 'project biographies' in which they detail the processes which have contributed to the production of particular brands or productions (one example being the Aardman Animation production of Wallace and Gromitt), proving that the use of projects as viable research methodologies is expanding within the social sciences.

As has been stressed throughout this thesis, the cultural industries were researched as they have been largely neglected within world city literature. So while this thesis focused in on the film and TV production industry, there is scope for other cultural industries to be studied. The data in section 5.1 suggests that the museum and gallery sector is relatively large in Sydney, and from many of the interviews conducted with the local government, it is a sector of the cultural economy that they

are looking to expand<sup>130</sup>. Therefore, there is scope for a study concerned with the actant-networks of Sydney's museums and galleries, which is a cultural sector that has (again) been largely neglected from world city and economic geography literatures.

All these other avenues of research are linked to this thesis as they all connect to Sydney's film and television production industry actor-network by the enrolment of actors, or the translation of other actants to differing industry sectors, or to other cities. Therefore, a greater scope for study (i.e. more time, larger funding) would then allow for research into these avenues, which would make for more description, more empirical story-telling and a lengthening of the networks. These avenues are possible future research projects or grant proposals but for now, the frame upon this thesis will be completed by quoting one of the interviewees who stated, "it's a fast-paced industry this one... it's all about motion"<sup>131</sup>.

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<sup>130</sup> Source: Interview with John McInerney, March 19<sup>th</sup> 2005, Jennifer Lindsey, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2004, Ann Hoban 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2004 and Kate Pembroke, 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2005.

<sup>131</sup> Source: Interview with Frank Arnold, 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2005.



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## Appendices A: Interviews

Below is a *selection* of interviews that were transcribed. Some of the interviewees requested that the conversation was not recorded and in other cases, the quality of the recording was such that it was not possible to transcribe.

### 1. Interview with **Bob Campbell**, Executive Director for Screentime Productions on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2004.

Oli Mould: Right, well basically, what I'm trying to establish is, um the links that you make, you have. Because I like the idea on your website, the little diagram with the main company up here and the little branches that you have, what I'm interested in are the little blue lines that link them together, because its kind of a relational study as opposed to a, an attributional one. But first, could you tell me a little bit about what you do in the company, what your role is. And then perhaps a little bit about the company, how is was set up, maybe or why it's in Sydney that kind of thing.

Bob Campbell: Ok, well my role in the company is two fold. I'm a 20 per cent, 25 per cent shareholder in the company, and ah, I'm also an executive director. And my business partner Des Monahan, is the same, 25 per cent shareholder and executive director. And we have a 50 per cent shareholder who, is a, family investment company from Sydney. So our roles really are running the company overall and that goes through strategy, erm, overall control, financial and legal, creative control in terms of what we make and how we make it. And in erm, overseeing all the projects that come into Screentime. What Screentime is, is an independent television production company that has operations in er, Australia, in New Zealand, in the UK and in the Republic of Ireland. And what we do is we make television programs, or broadcast in the home market, and where applicable to export internationally. So we are, really in the business of um, IP. It's basically another form of IP. Intellectual Property that is entertainment, that is er, intellectual property that is across a number of different genres from mini-series, made-for-television movies, television series and serials, reality programs, children's programs and documentaries. So why are we based in Sydney? Um, because the owners live in Sydney, and, but in everything that we do we have an international focus. Because in a small market like Australia, we can be very successful here, in terms of getting programs commissioned and produced, but not make exceptions in terms for the investment and the shareholders, so we all always need to be able to translate what is done here internationally. So, I think that's about us...

OM: No, that's great, another quick question about the company, how people do you employ both here and...

BC: We have, what we have is a sort of headquarters here, there are twelve people, in New Zealand, there are, er, nine people, in London there are six people and in Dublin there a five people. Now this, this is what we call a 'run of



show model', so when programs come, we buy in all that talent, and when that program ceases, that talent goes off our payroll. So, right now, we've probably got, in Australia, we'll probably sign, this financial year over a thousand groups of certificates, do a very big mini-series here, for Australian consumption and ITV in the UK.

OM: Is that the Mary Bryant thing?

BC: Mary Bryant, that's right, but um, people come and go as shows come and go, so we've got a full-time regular staff that handle our operations of under 40 people. And that will always be the way, however much work we put on, and whatever we're doing, whether we bring people in to do the work they go when the work is concluded.

OM: Ok, kind of like a revolving door policy with...

BC: It's classically what used to be called 'piece work'. So you pay people when their working, and you go away when your not, except for full-time.

OM: Yeah, ok I understand. That's great, the other thing I wanted to move onto now is really the establishment really of the different companies you have in Auckland, in London and in Dublin. I mean, erm, were they initially companies to begin with and you kind of, took them over, or what?

BC: Well we started nine years ago, and we started a private company prospectus, to attract capital, and initially the company was constituted with four shareholders. The two executive directors, our [...] Australian investor and a UK investor, London based company called TEAM – Television enterprise active management. And that company, that um, vehicle was an aggregation of companies based in the UK, we were the first international investment they made, and the investing team were the Rockefellers and the Oppenheims. So this was blue chip to say the least, this was, the small part of a private investment for both families, but they were interested in claiming the industry, so we set out to, er seek capital and um, four shareholders. And we started our operations here in Sydney, and quite soon thereafter opened in Auckland because my business partner was formally the deputy chief executive of television New Zealand [...] so we was well known and well credentialed, we were both known there. So Auckland started soon after Sydney started and we soon got a commission in, in Auckland and built the business there. Er, so for the first seven years of our operations we were er, an Australasian company. In the seventh year an opportunity came forward in Dublin through a company called 'ShinAwil'. And there was a venture capitalist in that company who wanted in on [...] our company. Then a year ago, a little over a year ago, maybe even a year and a half ago, again a London based Distribution Company was in a distressed condition, was in statutory management, and the management were doing and MBO – Management buyout. So we gave them a quote for the resources to do it and asked if they would be interested. We broke a golden rule to do it, but we broke the rule and got on with it! So we've been opportunistic in our development, but always with an eye to keeping true to the business of investing in the production industry and distribution, television companies that we know something about, and not, spreading our

relatively scarce capital resources into things we don't know, or to things that we can't add value to. So that's how the company has grown.

OM: Ok, that's great well, um, so, you talked about the people, these 'piece workers', are these the contracts that you talk about on the website? I mean, the "contracted exclusive relationships", I mean are these the things that, um, er are these contracts that you buy in? Or...

BC: No, these, what happens is, ok, we are in the business of manufacturing television programs, producing television programs. So what the core staff here and in Auckland do, is to go to the Broadcasters, both free-to-air and pay, and pitch ideas. If the network likes those ideas we get momentum into the project. We help raise the money, um, we have to get the scripts written, we have to get parts in programs cast, and then we put a producer who we hire in, to produce the program. And then the actors and the crews making the program, and the writers are all the like 'piece work' or the run of show operatives making, physically making the show.

OM: And they're, obviously you'd have a mix of national and international?

BC: We do.

OM: But I mean, erm, in terms of the national input, are they based in Sydney? Or are they from Melbourne? You don't look to try and get them locally? Is that a policy you have or it is just a, er the best?

BC: The best. It will depend where the production is based. We do a drama for a national broadcaster here, the ABC, called MDA which stands for Medical Defence Association. Now, that, that, for a lot of reasons, most of which because the ABC has spare studio capacity out there, is made in Melbourne. So we put a producer in, er who is down in Melbourne a fair bit, but in that case, um, the writers are all over Australia. Principally in Melbourne and Sydney, but they write and submit, re-write and submit again and go through parts and, um the [...] is a Sydney producer who er, relocated to Melbourne, but most of the cast live in Melbourne, and all of the er, the crew – camera, audio, lighting, make-up wardrobe, are all Melbourne based. So, it's a difficult question to answer, but for the sort of thing that we do it almost exclusively Sydney and Melbourne, although we will shoot all over Australia if we have to. The big drama Mary Bryant we're doing, the biggest single undertaking of a drama, attempted has been shot in and around Sydney. This is a period piece set in the early days of the colony here, um and it's the story of the convicts who escaped [...] a rather remarkable story in its own right, but some of that's been shot off the coast in Queensland in the Whit Sundays, which is why, we've got to get some sense of tropical Australia, so...yeah...

OM: Yeah, I was going to talk about that one, the Mary Bryant thing. It said on the website that it was a collaboration, and that was from the ITV and Granada, I mean how did that come about did someone approach ITV from here...?

BC: Well, Mary Bryant is a public domain story erm, its been told and retold through a number of different authors and a number of different, um had a number of different incarnations I suppose is the right word. But its something we've wanted to do for a long time, my business partner happens to very passionate about it, but he first attempted to have Mary Bryant produced about fifteen, sixteen years ago – this has been a labour of love – and, so, we were both involved in executive decisions for the Seven network, back then, and for all sorts of reasons it didn't get done. Partly, one of the reasons being that the Americans got in the way, in doing what they do, stuffed it up. But it's been a story that we've liked forever and then we got some interest from Granada productions. The head of drama productions for Granada is a guy called Andy Parry who liked the story and we talked about it off and on for a while and realised this could really be a collaboration between Britain and Australia, the story lent itself to that. So that's how these things start. It's got to be an Anglo-British story or am American-Australian, sorry and Anglo-Australian or a American-Australian, or a German-Australian for that matter, but its got to be, got to have some resonance in both countries, and if it does, then you've got a chance of putting this amount of money, with this amount of money and then decide how you're going to make it. Now, there's a British writer on it, a British producer on it, an Australian producer on it, an Australian director on it, there are two UK stars out there, Romola Garai and Jack Davenport and a bunch of Australian stars, and Australian crews. But the reason its been done here, we've had to knock up Portsmouth and knock up Teemoor, but, is because um, dollar for dollar, or dollar for pound, your money goes further here. So the moment you go back to the UK, you're using the equivalent of Australian dollars in UK pounds, so you're spending two and a half times the money. So, it was finally agreed that everything would be done here, but there were very tight controls being exercised both here and in the UK. Scripting approvals, casting approvals, everyone sees everything that is shot every day, we fly tapes up to London everyday..

OM: How is that? You post them or?

BC: No, we don't put them on the satellite because it's expensive and its not that time's critical, but we send them in overnight bags. And they go to, um Granada Productions, who do it on behalf of ITV. And they go to the distribution company Power Television, who are selling the show, putting money up, for the rights to sell the show all territories outside the UK and Australia.

OM: Yeah, that's great because its that kind of interaction that I'm er, interested in like what it is that's acting between the two countries as it were, the two cities – between London and Sydney, I mean...

BC: Well at its core, what drives this is we make television, to go on networks to attract big audiences. That's the core motivation for ITV wanting Granada productions to do it, and for Network Ten here wanting us to do it. So that way we collaborate with a core mutual interest of attracting big audiences.

OM: Ok, well you obviously have to meet up. How often do you, do you physically actually meet up? I mean, do you go there, they come here, is there video conferencing?

BC: We go there, and they come here, and in a project like this, which started shooting in er, umm August and will conclude shooting in December, and then we'll spend six months in editing, post-production and all the other, to video. Um, we will, its on a need to go basis, but we have been to London in that period, three or four times and they would have come down here, probably three times. So, yeah, that's much better, as I say, everyday the two will, see the shooting, and everyday there's a situation report about what's happening the following day. So, you may as well be here or in London in terms of control and seeing what's going on. It's very important, because in pounds, it's a six and a half million pound production, it's a lot of money. And, um, its got to be, it's a high wire act in that its, it's got to be suitable and resonant for a UK audience, as well as for an Australian audience. Because of our shared history, it's much easier to do this then if you were doing a French-Australian production where there's not much shared history.

OM: So, your trying to keep the cultural aspect of the film, the semiotics, you are trying to keep that strong, to apply to both markets.

BC: Exactly. But, given that this is based on a true story, immigration, convict immigration here, and how it played when it was here and what the consequences of it were, it's easier than most to use that perspective.

OM: Ok, you talked about the distribution company, Power TV, obviously you have to deal with a lot of them, in general. How did that relationship work, not, I'm not thinking specifically of this Mary Bryant, but in general, the whole, I mean how does that relationship manifest itself?

BC: Well, distribution companies are set up to sell television shows to broadcasters all over the world – from the smallest in Kazakhstan to the biggest in America. So what these companies do is they have an infrastructure of people, in this case London based, who go out and sell a range of television programs to broadcasters all over the world. So they have specialists who speak, most of the people who work in the organisation are multi-lingual, so they will have a Latin-American specialist who will speak Spanish, they'll have a European specialist who will speak French, German, English and probably a fourth language, they'll have a South East Asian specialist who will speak Mandarin and Cantonese, English and some other language. So, its an efficient way of selling things because the overheads are spread out over a whole range of programs, for a whole lot of different television production companies like that. So what happens is that we, and a number of these independent producers, and a number of distributors I'm sorry, and there a number of organizations who have big distribution networks which tend to be American networks, or Granada, or the BBC. Which perhaps have the biggest catalogue of anyone in the world. But in this case, um, Power television who specialise in historic mini-series said they want to be involved, put up quite a lot of advanced money which will go toward, er help make it. They then earn that money out through their distribution [...]. So the thing gets sold, [...] they pay distribution commission fees, which are usually er, 30 to 40 per cent, with the rest of the money going back to the investors. Which are usually here [...] the FFC, AFC NSW FTO and so on.

OM: So the distribution company, their interest is primarily the financial side of things as opposed to the directorial...

BC: They want to make sure that what they're putting their money into has a chance of being sold internationally, so they will want to particularly understand the expertise of the people making the program, be confident about it, and in this case be confident that it has enough, erm known, and renown international cast unit, to make the buyer in Istanbul and the buyer in Peru, and the buyer in this case more probably Canada and New Zealand and South Africa and Germany gets it. So in this case, the UK stars are quite well known, Jack Davenport was in Pirates of the Caribbean, Romola Garai is a rising, erm female star in the English speaking world, and Sam Neill, who erm is a New Zealand actor who is well known internationally. So that's what they, it has to be an interesting story well told, well executed and it has to have those known names.

OM: Ok, what I'm thinking of now is the actual contact you may have with other cities, or other areas, outside your particular company, i.e., Auckland, London and Dublin. If any, I mean Cape Town's important, I mean Cape Town is a city that seems to crop up in the statistics and readings that I've done. Vancouver is another one. Do you erm, I mean you obviously speak to these cities, what is that regarding?

BC: Er, at the core of all this is the English language. We're very lucky that we er, our first language, in fact our only language is the international language of commerce, the international language of television. If we were dealing in Hungarian, we wouldn't be doing what we're doing. So, what that means is, that successful shows, or successful formats are known about instantaneously, as you would know a world of connections. So, I'll er, give you an example, er, um let's continue with Mary Bryant. As soon as Mary Bryant was announced as being financed to be produced, the people at Power Distribution will talk to the broadcasters in South Africa, Canada, in New Zealand, um principally because of the UK heritage, and say this is something you should keep an eye on. And more broadly they would have said this is the cast therefore, for the Germans to think about it, for the Americans to think about it because of Sam Neill, um so, for finished programs, people will wait and see what it's like, look at it and then buy it. In the case of a format, which is the right to make the program, um we've done Popstars here, and continue to do it, um we saw Popstars in New Zealand, and it was done on a shoestring, but was done remarkably effectively given the limited resources. We brought it here and made it and it became a huge hit in Australia. So as soon as it was known of it's um, success here, Target Distribution in London then put about its distribution and armed with the finished program here and the success of it, which goes back to that core thing that binds as all together, they went out to all the international broadcasters, there are two markets a year that happen in Cannes, two television markets, in April and in September, September October. And so, broadcasters and production companies from all over the world gather, and look and shows and decide whether they're going to buy them or not. And so Popstars really took flight and, it started here in the year 2000, and to date I think it's been produced in over 50 countries and there have been multiple productions of that in most of those countries. And with isolated, it's been in the top ten programs wherever it's played. So there's that sort of, um, that proven success that binds broadcasters together. So, for you language is important in the finished programs, market casting is important in these programs beyond English speaking territories. And the third factor, is proven track record of a show's success, but to show something's different in Popstars, because you, in some cases they the English language finished product programs, but in most cases they

bought the right, the format to make it in their own, home territory with their own talent, with their own presenters, their own people auditioning, their own outcomes.

OM: Yeah, I suppose that's interesting in a way, because it crosses over between the boundaries of television and music as well in that it creates a huge amount of, you know well the one in England anyway, the Hear'say lot, their single was like the biggest selling single of...

BC: And Girls Aloud have just released another Christmas album. So we've inflicted Popstars on the world...

OM: Yeah, there's been a huge amount of interest...

BC: Which we've not the slightest tang of conscious! And there's been a lot of derivative shows come out of that, Pop Idol and um, Star Academy and those sorts of things. That's the risk you run when you do this sort of thing, it's almost impossible to protect the intellectual property rights.

OM: Yeah because with Pop Idol there was a thing with, no it's the X-Factor that's been shown in the UK, I think there was a bit of controversy because the guy that made the Pop Idol, he's suing him or...

BC: Well, we would say that Pop Idol was inspired by previously Popstars, and the X-Factor has been inspired by Pop Idol, so we say that you know, we were the first ones to, anyway that's a whole different argument, all the copyright lawyers get involved and it never ends.

OM: Right, and on the format side of things, obviously like you said there's a difference in selling a finished program and a format. Do they, er, when it comes to something like that because obviously the reality TV thing has kind of exploded, so presumably this format selling as opposed to program selling is quite common.

BC: Well there is, it's been, um, it's become a very big part of international television market in the last five years, now I think it's always going to have a place in the market but it's probably peaked and been over-saturated in the last two years, but it will continue on.

OM: Ok, how much degree of er, stringency do you have on the actual format? Because obviously it's got to stay true to the, erm, your initial conception?

BC: Yeah, I'll show you how... (Gets up to his desk brings back 'Popstars Bible' Folder) Um, what we do is, we sell concepts or formats, and the best way of doing this is to start with a successful program that attracts big audiences in the home country. You do that, take out a piece of video tape and show them, and then a distributor will sell an option for a producer or a broadcaster to make the show and then, when all the details have been [...] home market they will permit the option to produce. And we charge them um, for that a percentage of the production budget, we then charge the budget consultancy fees which basically cover the costs of our airfares and accommodation and er, then

we will charge more so, a percentage derived from the brand, record sales, merchandising, touring [...]. But for all that, they get what's called a production Bible, which is one of these. So, it's a comprehensive look at, um, the background which is the structure, the parties involved, um, the concept, the outline of it, the project structure, who you need to put to it and how you need to particularly contract it. Um, budget partners, clear music, it's a very critical issue, because music's, everyone charges for the rights to do covers, um project communication, project schedule, project budgets, and then how to coordinate the event. And then, how to, how to conduct the paper work if you will. So, that's the project schedule, and then you have project budgets, flight and accommodation, all that sort of deep cover, itineraries, budget... So this is like, a maintenance manual for a motor vehicle, how to do audition forms, so it's very, ok. So, in this sense, to answer your question, um, in a long-winded way, we're selling a very specific package, to do it a particular way. Now, some people have done it very differently – um, the Italians were the first to do it, typically, we signed a contract with the Italians to do ten one hour programs, and we met them at one of these markets, and said how is the program going? Have you shot any of the ten episodes? They said, oh no no no. We're not doing ten, we're doing 60 half hours. So, you know, people have taken it and adapted it to their specific market requirements. Always called Popstars, always looked like that (pointing to the Popstars symbol), always adhered to what's in here – but it will look and sound very different to, in Italy, to the UK, to Argentina, to Slovakia.

OM: So, I suppose in a way their morphing it, shaping it to their market...

BC: Oh, and you know the behavioural laws of the country are obviously different. In Italy the judges sang with the contestants, laugh with the contestants, cry with the contestants, in some cases I think they had sex with the contestants so its just the way things are in different places.

OM: Yean I see what you mean, in England there was nasty Nigel and Simon Cowell's attitude is a blatant copy...

BC: Yes. Yes, well it's populist television, and understandably so, so whatever makes it attractive to the audience, is pretty much the issue.

OM: Are these lot still around (Pointing to the picture of Bardot on the cover of the 'Bible')?

BC: They are, not as an entity but they're all performing in their own ways, and all, it creates opportunities for young aspirants and if they're good enough to grab them while their good. There's been some quite successful acts to come from it, generally the acts have fallen apart and haven't continued on. Music is almost, the rite of passage in music means you have to be really really determined, and more than not, it's the writing of original music that keeps acts together as opposed to these rather more, I mean the Spice Girls are no longer together, they didn't come through this, they came through a different process but...

OM: I mean, would you have any input of the management, this Bardot lot, so you have any intake on their..?

BC: Yes. Yes, we had a er, we had a stake in the band, [...] yes we had a say in the management of it, in fact we've just been sued by the manager for wrongful dismissal, and we're just going through the process of getting that settled now, um, but that's a bit unusual, we're much better, we enjoy a good relationship with the acts from series two and three, and four.

OM: No, that's that's good. That Bible thing is especially good as, another way at which I'm looking at it is erm, I using this academic theory called Actor-Network Theory, and one of the implications of that is that it likes to um, it likes to give equal agency, equal, power is the wrong word, but er, sort of performativity to kind of inhuman items as well as managers and directors and something like that, like a document or a policy, something like that is going to be very stringently followed, so it exerts a certain amount of power as it were over the workings of the industry, over the processes themselves.

BC: I think that, more of a consequence gives power, but it's more to do with people wanting to buy certainty. They're wanting to buy proven success, they're wanting to buy proven how-to. So this a successful, this is like, building a house from a proven architect. So it does, it does erm, gives us some checks and balances in the process to be sure that we're not going to have crap productions or you know, skinny budgets and no, [...] succeeding under our brand. But more important than that from the users point of view, it's about buying certainty. It's like buying a cake mix, you know the cakes going to work.

OM: Yeah, I know exactly what you mean. Is there anything like that governing the industry as a whole? Is there a piece of legislation or a government..?

BC: No, no. Not at all, this is the free flow of information, and as a consequence of that, um, it's very hard to protect and intellectual copyright, and intellectual property is notoriously difficult to regiment. And in systems other than those governed by, um, the niceties of the protection of Westminster...

OM: That was something that I was kind of... (Phone Rings) Yeah, sorry it was interesting what you were saying about intellectual properties because um, something which I was interested in was the, all these ideas, like Popstars, that idea is a very innovative one, but there's obviously an initial spark of, from someone somewhere who comes up with the idea for this show...

BC: I'll tell you how, there's a, there's a, Popstars is a good example. There's a New Zealand cameraman at home, who has, there's a New Zealand cameraman, there's his two young daughters. They're at home one Saturday morning, and he saw them dancing, miming imitating the Spice Girls in front of the television and he said they should be doing that in front of New Zealand cameras, that's how it started. So he was inspired to then say we can do this, why don't we do some auditions and form the New Zealand Spice Girls. They did it on a shoestring, we saw it over there, we said we'd like to buy out the international right which they still participate in, so there in a share of us, so we brought it here, polished it, gave it more money, put it on a big network here, the Seven network, and then that's how



it started. So, where does the inspiration come from for these things? That, or it could rooms full of people, sitting in [...] opposite the guy who does Survivor, thinking about the next big thing.

OM: I mean, people get paid huge amounts of money to think up these things, and more often than not, it's the initial spark of idea, but the recording of that idea and manifesting itself into a program, that kind of, that journey is another part which is quite interesting.

BC: Well, then it becomes much more prescriptive, because then you have to a network and sell something, and the network will say well ok we're going to give you this amount of money for it, and then you've got to evolve structure, that breaks it down episodically, shoots have to be made, producers have to paid to get it on the air, so then you're dealing with er, a contracted position, where you've got all the checks and balances of doing something within a budget, which is true, worldwide.

OM: The other thing, is the knowledge factor, I mean, the idea of creativity, really the whole crux of the industry is based, on tacit knowledge, and things that are ideas, and inspiration rather than hard, physical things.

BC: Yes, yes. You don't pull a lever and produce another widget. Here you are dealing with much more, er, in balance sheet terms a much more intangible asset.

OM: Would you say that that's a more difficult thing to sort of quantify and to catch?

BC: Very much, if you're manufacturing motor vehicles or bricks, you know that there are these inputs, this process and that output, [...]. When you're making television programs or more particularly feature films you never what the outcome is going to be, until the manufacturing process is over, and often the marketing process is well in [...], and only then do you know the results.

OM: There's a lot of risk involved basically?

BC: Er, less risk in television for the producers because you're getting all the money to make it up front, the risk is for people who invest in movies, you're risking it all before anyone's seen it. And then you're relying on the quality of the production, the marketing, the scheduling, the critics, taste, weather, all sorts.

OM: Ok, well I think that's everything I need...

## 2. Interview with **Anoushka Zarkesh & David Field** (Casting Agent and Actor) on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2005

OM: I'm just trying to get an idea of the connections and networks in the industry so maybe you could start by telling me a bit about the area here first, I mean I was speaking to someone at the FTO and...

AZ: yes, we have film llorawa, which is down here and Newcastle have film hunter. And today it worked nothing basically, they are a government organisation to bring business to these areas, because we met at one of the other day because they were thinking of bringing its film down here and they try and encourage basically filmmakers to make a film in their area and they will do everything in their powers to the try and reduce location fee is, find people accommodation, whatever it takes it they will try and do so absolutely nothing because it all state government funded.

OM: So there are different branches are there?

AZ: yeah, so we are shooting a film in Newcastle which is just north of Sydney, and they have provided me with information about drama schools, accommodation, actors, whatever you need they will run around and do it for you in their local area. So it is another support network, the fairly ineffectual ultimately, it's just two people in an office saying we'll ring around for you which otherwise would have been done.

OM: I kind of get the impression is quite reliant on government funding and subsidies...

DF: government subsidies (laughs). You remember that woman? Her name was Thatcher? We got one of them except his small, balding and got glasses. I mean, they're not very forthcoming, we made 16 films last year, Iran probably made 50. So clearly your investigation is as much into a cottage industry as it is into anything else.

OM: that's what Malcolm Long said...

DF: there needs to be a culture of film, the Danish have just achieved that they've got 33% of their films shown at the box office, 33% of their box office takings are from their own films, what they'd done is they've looked back in, so the fox factory becomes an enemy to many people here. It's like if you go into a country where people make bread baskets, then you get them to make them altogether for you, it's a similar kind of colonialist idea, and is interesting because it's a supposedly first world country where the Third World film industry and I find that fascinating in terms of where we are right now.

AZ: and it's a shame because people don't see their own films unless there's a lot of height and a lot of money invested in them, in marketing...

DF: it's got to tap into us, Muriel's wedding tapped into us, Priscilla tapped into us, Wog Boy tapped into us, not a good film, quite shocking film, but a culture of it is reflective, but we'd been influenced like we're an annex of the USA.

OM: yeah, it's like when Hollywood films come over and dress up Sydney to be somewhere else...

AZ: and that's fine, for locations and things like that but we don't roll over and lick their asses which we do.

DF: ultimately, it is insulting.

AZ: unions rolled over, everyone rolled over, because everyone thought it would bring in money and it was going to support our industry, and that wasn't going to happen like anything they would have sucked the life out of our business and not give anything back and that's again, government and certain bureaucrats allow that to happen but unfortunately Australians don't see their own films either, and I don't know whether the English to see their films.

OM: well, there is one film every so often which seems to be internationally popular...

AZ: and maybe that's just about the American industry dominating everywhere because of their nature, because they can make so many...

DF: Fox came in here, I mean that they pay no payroll taxes so there's our French remover gone down the drain, so you may be don't pay your tax to us, pay it to the film industry, and then they might say oh well really want to pay half the tax, okay will meet you there, otherwise fuck off. Had we said that, we would have this free bank by bleeding at the monster. I just as a film recently by a guy who made a film called the lawnmower man, he has made a couple of films that have made money in Hollywood, came over here and made a film, fell in love with the place... and I just made an \$8 million HD film all in American, so instead of saying, okay well you can come over here and made a big American film, I'll just bleed and million dollars out of there, and I'm going to actually make a film that is American. Guess what? And it's a really cheeky subversion of the system by American, but you'd think he was an Australian. I have an American producer here that I work with they've come here and seen that there is actually, look, I've worked with a guy called Jack Davenport late last year, and he said all your industry seems to be in pretty good shape, I said to Jack, I'll tell you what we are Jack, you know you see those runners at the Olympics, the Ethiopians who run the best 10,000 the best marathon, no one could knock them over, they are the business, I said, you know they run out of a tin shed, that's us. I said we breed lots of champions but we've actually run out of tin sheds. I've made for films with a filmmaker out of Melbourne, it's won the best first film of Montréal, won acclaim all around the world, he can't get financed in this country because he sought of a mike lee, he's in that sort of area where the arts bureaucracies see him as, had Mike lee not achieved what he has achieved that he would be getting any money believe me, I mean, great realism films and he's done really well, but he's made films here, we've made 2 films are \$44,000 of features on film that's what you sort of, reduced to, but that, I think we are the interesting place in the film industry now, well I don't need the money, I actually just need to want to make it, then I can make it. So, I've given you

philosophy about where we are what we doing, well it's because you see the grips and the crew left the actors wailing when the Yanks came in, the crew had Star Wars lined up, all of a sudden that the Yanks said we want your gear, so they sold or their gear, now, they're saying well when the cream was in front of you sniffed it and took it and now, look where all in the same position so okay I'm going to call in a favour and give you a percentage of a film and I think the whole thing is going to go back to a really collaborative, socialistic in the best use of the word. But certainly to work, probably to a more black fellow sort of thinking, probably more back to that, which is everyone gets a crack at it, and that's very exciting.

OM: So did you just talk us through a typical production and how you go about getting involved? Specifically the Mary Bryant production.

AZ: in my part of the production, I'm involved right in the beginning and then say goodbye to everyone when they start the principal photography. I'm employed by the producers, screen time and Andrew Benson who is from Granada, they approached me to do the casting so basically they just gave me the script they then say, in consultation with Peter Andrikidis the director, what they have in mind and then they both say can you suggest and start screen testing actors for each and every roll, speaking roll, so then we go about, I read the script, then we have endless meetings about, I give a list of actors who I think are appropriate to each roll and then they say yay, nay, yay, nay, in this case we were allowed to bring in two imports, to UK imports that is what the union allowed us...

OM: which union was that?

AZ: that is the MEAA, the media and entertainment arts Alliance, so they had done an agreement with Granada as a coproduction, even though it wasn't a coproduction it was an Australian production with English money, and I just kept saying what the fuck does that mean? It's a coproduction, it must have something to do with some contracting and financial, I mean, did Bob say it was an Australian production?

OM: yes he did, but he said something about the coproduction means that you get pacific tax rebates.

AZ: Granada put a lot of money in, 15 million I think...

DF: Granada didn't come up with all of that...

AZ: yes, but I think they came up with the majority of it, I think the FFC has to put up a certain percentage of it, but the idea was, once they have decided that the union had said then the way our then you can then bring 2 international actors, which was to English actors and they were supposed to be the lead, and ended up being Romola Gari and Jack Davenport who were the two leads. We can then choose whichever roll we want to, and that includes Peter Andrikidis the director. So we did endless tests in London, redid endless tests here and we found who we wanted. We Almost got an Australian Mary Bryant, and we had too many Australians and not enough pommies,

and then we to find high profile actors like Sam Neale, who is a New Zealander but is still considered an Australian product. So, but, we could have had an American actor as well if we wanted to do, they didn't stipulate that, it could have been from anywhere but we could only have two imports. Then the journey began, probably for months of casting where we tested everybody and anyone.

OM: So how would that go about, do you just sit in a room with the director and wheel them in?

AZ: we wheel them in with a weeks notice with the script, we give them a scene for the audition and then they come in for a screen test with a camera and a video and usually it would be the director and I in the room in this situation of the producers stay out of the picture and then we do recalls and fullbacks, once you have a shortlist you bring the producer in in this case it was Andrew Benson, he was quite hands-on, he would want to meet them and have a chat with them and then they all got involved. But pretty much the whole process of casting was intimate just at the director and I and the actors.

OM: and that's how it works pretty much all the time is it?

AZ: yes. The producers stay out of that creative process, I mean we call it a creative process is pretty standard and the director in this case in new lot of actors so it was fairly comfortable with the actors and didn't want to see endless actors he kind of stipulated who he wanted. Then there was the[...] finding because he felt, the director in this country and normally has a lot of power to be able to say I want to that person, that person, that person, but because there was also Channel 10 involved, sue masters, head of drama at Channel 10 as well as the Granada end, we had a major conferences, that there were 10 people in the conference every week, there were 10 of us, from the UK, Channel 10 and us all fighting over which actors we wanted, who had more profile in Australia, who had more profile in the UK and so there are a lot of conversations leading the director, trying to sell Sam Neale better then they could sell Colin Friel, so there was a lot of fights about which actors sold a production more so than, you know, like Jack Davenport is a big name in the UK, no one gives it shit who he is here, they will recognise his face but that's it. So there are those discussions. Once you've decided who your actors are eyed Owen and negotiate contracts on the financial side of things and that's all done before we start shooting.

OM: So the conferences were done on the phone?

AZ: yes, then I ring the agents, then I ring back the producers saying they won't accept \$100,000 for a 14 week shoot, so I'm packed to the producers saying what can we agree, what's in the budget, I have a fairly good idea about what's in the budget, but the English actors ended up costing a lot more than what's in the budget, but that's their problem. So Granada had to find the money to pay to them, in the case of David who was playing one of the main roles, Peter had it in his mind that he wanted David writes from the beginning, so he said I'm going to get David for that role and that's it. So we had to play around and audition people, but the producers wanted David as well, in fact I think David was the first one cast, he was easy. You couldn't do the negotiation because it's a conflict of interest So we left that to the producer. So that's kind of the process for me, right down to the people who have one line, even

the ones that act but don't have to say anything, so a total there are about 50 roles, and then the extra is casting agents took over.

OM: and that took...

AZ: about 4 or 5 months which was a fairly intensive period.

OM: So then you just serve your ties?

AZ: that's it, I say goodbye, I take my money and go I think I got paid about 40 or 50 grand for months work which they pay upfront So all my costs of paid for, then I say goodbye and David takes over So I kind of know about the production through David, if he wasn't in the show I wouldn't have heard from them again, except when the director calls me for the wrap party.

OM: after there many other lines of the production and just casting? What about locations or...

AZ: there is one person, a woman called Brenda Pam, who is the genius. She is the one that does everything, you have Andrew Benson who deals with the big picture and because he was from Granada he was doing a lot of those dealings to Granada and overseeing the whole production, however he has person called Brenda Pam who is the line producer. Most films don't have line producer's but on a production like this she is the one that does all the number punching, deals with all the heads of departments, deals with the cinematographer's come at the crew, everybody, she does everything, and she is on a one to one, any problems that arise she deals with them first and if their major problem she will go to Des Monohan and Andrew and they would form a meeting basically saying this is becoming a huge problem, she would have tried to deal with it as best she can but she was the one who was kind of the troubleshooter. And of course the location manager is going out, and he has all his connections, his contacts and because they would try to find locations where it would be suitable, they would try to find stables they said that they all Australiana colony at a place called Ingle Burn which was a stud farm and they built the whole set out there, so was the whole set and it was on someone's farm and he allowed flight six or seven weeks to them to shoot every day. I think the thing got washed out in week one, they had a rainstorm and the thing got washed out, they had to rebuild it at a cost. For me, they don't know who I contact, agents, they are not aware of the dynamics that I do, they just want to hear that I'd booked them all in which actors are coming in, and all the negotiations, they don't want to hear all that day-to-day shit that I'm talking to the agents about they just want to know if there's a problem, and it is a problem sort it out. So that's kind of my thing, and I'm employed per job.

OM: So, how did you get involved?

DF: it's always through an agent, agent which has been contacted by Anoushka, from the producer or from the casting agent blah blah blah, they give me a test, I did a test script and then test, get the job, the negotiation then begins. When that is all agreed upon away we go.

OM: how long was the shooting period?

DF: 14 weeks.

AZ: and 2 weeks rehearsal, so it was a big shoot, on and off, it was 14 weeks but Dave might only go in for 4 of those.

DF: not much time and rehearsal, usually go straight into it.

OM: all shot here?

DF: all shot here, then the two weeks in Boam (?) North Queensland.

OM: didn't they shoot in Plymouth in the UK?

AZ: they will going to, but money ran out. Because the story is set in the UK, Australia, and East Timor, all the East Timor stuff was done in Queens land. They set up the whole Dutch colony on the barrier Reef up there. There's probably about 30 or 40 agents, but the best actors are probably with a handful of them, and they all have different manners and different ways of approaching them. The ones like Shanahan I really difficult because they had all the big names like Mel Gibson and so on.

DF: (showing me pictures of the shoot) this is Parramatta, Australian, Australian, Australian, Australian all playing English which is funny. We have an accent coach onset all the time. Parramatta house was used as the governors building in Timor, it finished on the 19th of December...

AZ: and Dave's just doing ADR now, you know revoicing and post synchronisation.

OM: and where is that's done?

DF: that's done at Fox, Spectrum which is in Fox. ... During the job, I was the second most used person.

OM: is there much redirection of the script? If they feel something isn't working what they change it instantly or...?

DF: ultimately with television, they made changes when it's happening but really their out to save money rarely does a solution become better than the original, it doesn't have that kind of collaboration which makes it swing that way.

AZ: they will enough to have Nick Berry who was the English writer come out here and rework it so they had the luxury of that, and as they knew each actor they they began to write scripts for that actor, they had a lot for David which meant that he had a lot more lines.

DF: they will swing that way in television if they can, they will say, oh, this one is good, we like that one lets just punched another scene on at the end so they end up more stuff, let's say their editing up to four hours, well they probably started with eight to nine hours and then they would have trimmed it to seven, so they are then still to 3 too long, and then they have to start choosing who are we following here, who are we chasing, they have to narrow the story, television works more like that, film doesn't really have that luxury basically because you shot it is got two or three takes and you made your choice, television generally has more money to reshoot so if they need to shoot to more scenes tell shoot them, they'll find the money.

AZ: they saw it as to telly movies, 2 two-hour movies.

DF: Peter is a renowned TV director here, is one of the best.

OM: you've done things of him before, is that common? Do you form relationships like that?

DF: they do favour you yes, he's a television director, he doesn't have time to sit and go (mimicks choosing) there's no time. I would say to him about come in and do this test, I'm going to play it like this, and he'll say yeah but don't go too far that way, but that's a good idea, then I will give him that is, he will say yes I like that character, he knows I'm a good actor.

AZ: he's a smart director he will choose good actors and he will use them over and over again and Dave's works of him what, three times?

DF: four times.

OM: what what were they then?

DF: I worked on him with my husband My killer, a real story about a guy here who killed a rich man who killed his wife, who had his wife killed which was it a telly movie...

AZ: Dave won an award for that, and that was Channel 10 as well.



DF: 10 like me, I'm actor who can worked of them in telly movies, they wouldn't give me a series but they slot she were they see you. But he's got to the, a lot of the young guys said when we started, I would say Peter is a classic, and they would say, ah, I find him very difficult to work with he hasn't given me anything, then I would say but that's how he works, he says I already think your fantastic, you gofer broke and I will tell you of this too far, too slow, too loud or too soft, but I want you to have a crack at it. And then that when the young guys understood that, who were three fantastic young actors, they just flew, he was saying by employing you, you go for it.

AZ: this industry is very much who you know, if you put 1 foot wrong it could ruin your career...

DF: it doesn't take much for talk to start.

AZ: yes, you get a bad reputation and if you did something 10 years ago it still sticks to you like mud, you can be a really terrific person and change, and stop taking drugs, it still comes with you, they remember it.

DF: you've got to tell the right people to get fucked.

AZ: (Laughs) all you just try and stay out of politics, but it's very hard because everyone knows everyone, everyone spreads a nasty gossip about everyone, in a small country town within the industry, and people with a lot of power utilise it. I mean, I'm the same, I would only work with people that I know, because I know what they can do, and actors it's the same. I suppose the connections are well actually, you know, there and people know everybody from different walks of life, if you've been at long enough, everyone knows, I mean my best friend is a line producer and a production manager and everyone from crews to grips and gaffers, some people are privy to information in that you'll eventually find out about, but yes, if you muck up or don't do a job properly you'll do it once and then you're out.

OM: what about connections outside of Sydney or Australia? Obviously the London was a big thing with Mary Bryant, so is its just projects related what do you have general connections or communications with other places in the world?

AZ: if we doing coproductions, or if the actors are actually living in, I mean I've just finished a film where the actors, it is an Australian production but, a lot of the actors went to LA because they were looking for Australians, they were looking for an import, but I got them to take all the Australian actors that were living in LA so in that case I have to deal with the American producers, the LA agents, same in London I have that it was all the agents in London, the casting director Kate James who is based in London is an English casting director, and she was taking all the English side of it, I form these relationships which you know, every now and again I'll ring, if I'm doing a job a year later I might ring that contact and say can you give me a hand, who is the youngest and hottest UK actor which I did, there is this guy called Max Beesley in London, who is Robbie Williams is best friend he's just doing a series in London, so then I can suggest to my producers if you want an English actor the next hottest English actor is this guy called Max Beesley, so so I look good because I know was happening in the UK that is going to cost them the cheap money, and

they went and tested him and now is going to be in a film and they go, wow, isn't she smart person. But those contacts you make along the way, you might have an obscure one, I was doing a German coproduction years ago for example. And I suppose because Australians also big in the US, we are kind of the toast of the town that a lot of connection at that way.

OM: when it comes to picking a production what kind of criteria to look for?

DF: depends on the situation, if the situation is that I don't really want to work while, or I'm working on stuff myself, I'm working on two things at the moment, one feature than directing and one feature that I'm producing an acting in, those things on and off will always take a couple of years. I'll Get spurts on with those, if I just want dough, then I do a telly movie that pays nice, its a solid role I can do it, make something of it, then there's the love job, that something different. Something that I just love, and I don't care if they pay me 20 bucks, I'll want to do it, or I want to work with this person or whatever it is, it just depends on what is necessary for us to, now we have two children, the work we did three years ago it has altered drastically, I think for the better ultimately because it has made as calmer, besides that...

AZ: we can't afford not to have money. So we have to do jobs that we don't necessarily want to do.

OM: does it take you to other countries?

DF: no, no. Although I just went to the States for the opening of a film, that opened a festival in LA, but I was in a couple of years ago that hasn't been released here yet, I picked up a manager then, that was the first time I'd really been to LA where I had taken a serious approach, you know, I'll get myself an agent, I took some DVDs and happened. And now I have an American manager, so I do tests from here, send them there, on an NTS DVD because they are on a different system to us, so I have to shoot tests here, going to town get them turned over.

AZ: also David agent has connections in L.A. his agent knows other agents and casting directors so if they goes over there he'll test.

DF: it has opened those doorways, they have opened up for us now by so many people going there, although I don't have a great desire to go there, like I say, for me, the culture of film making here is actually ultimately really exciting, I think.

AZ: but they pay better.

DF: okay, now that I have kids, I say let's bleed of the monster so I can have a few more rooms on my house, thank you very much see you later.

AZ: it opens up doors, it gives the opportunities for bigger world.

DF: not so much a bigger world for me, I'm a character actor and I always have been, so if you know that the you don't frustrate yourself too much, the broader my range becomes from that end of comedy to that end of tragedy, a myriad of characters, the more my career could always be assured. I'm lucky now because I played [...] for the first 15 years of my career but now I'm playing lots of other things say looking so that too. Depends on where you're coming from, you know.

OM: now, the show real, is it important?

DF: it can be, it can be. If you're looking to break into a different market yet it can be but ultimately there be nothing like the person in the room.

AZ: but it helps me because thousands of actors, because I use the same actors that I know and trust and love, so if I don't know the actors I get thousands of actors inundating me with photos, biogs, instead of meeting them and testing them, I can't meet everybody, I say centre to show real in so I can stick it in, and after three minutes I can say this person cannot act or I get a sense of what they can do, or voice or the types of quality they have so show real so me are important, but people spend a lot of money on show real is, I would not go out of my way and say get one, like the NIDA kids, poor bastards.

DF: what they need is three years on the stage so they can learn how to fucking act. Do it because you are compelled to, it is not a compulsion don't fucking do it. Ultimately there is nothing like the person in the room, that is the strongest thing, when a person walks into the room, no matter who it is, you can sense was coming you can sense the energy and you can sense the presence.

AZ: but it is important to show real is important.

DF: yeah, but not for them. Because ultimately it's not going to be shot generally, filmically, beautifully, so it's not going to help them in that way.

OM: it is a means to more productive end.

DF: you have to be careful what you put on there.

AZ: what happens is that NIDA start one up just as they are leaving and it is organised through the school and its very theatrical, monologues, yes it's important, but you may look at the student and think they're over acting, can they do an American accent? And then what you say is, okay, out of 24 students I may get three who are completely different. So yes it's a tool, but they'll have to redo it five years later.

DF: if NIDA were really smart, in the third year they would prepare 3 1/2 minutes of show reel their overall project and give them access to people with HD cameras who are employed to come in and shoot those three scenes so they look great so you actually prepare that if that was ready by the third year, if you were really professional in your project.

AZ: but most show reel is generally are of a professional nature like Dave's show reel would be all the films that he's done thus far. You might look at it and go, okay, well he's done this that and the other.

OM: Well, thanks for your time.

### 3. Interview with **Garry Brennan**, member of New South Wales Film and Television Office Management team, also on placement in the New South Wales Premier's Department, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

GB: one other things you should look at, is the annual report of the FTO, and the one other things I've tried to do in that report is to tell a bit of a narrative of the last two years off how the economics of offshore production works, because there's not really a tradition of strong economic analysis in Australian film industry, at a policy level and historically because the Australian film industry is government funded, you look at any of the industry bodies like the screen producers association, at the screen directors association, but writers Guild or if you go into any of the publications by the Australian film commission and so on, you will see that nearly all the policy work has been on regulation, that is at the level of Australian content in television and also on the funding of Australian productions. In terms of the wider economic, at the way you might look at any other industry, like horticulture or forestry, none of that sort of industry analysis has historically been done in Australia so it's, as a researcher when you're looking at the industry you are trying to find a gauge that tells you the story of how the industry works, it's quite amazing, it's, the dominant concern of the industry as a whole has been funding for the next film. So, even the idea of looking at productions serially is quite alien to me in a big way, they are always focused on the next project, so the idea that there is industry where you fund a years project or a two years project or a three-year project and then analysed the sum of it, there is no real culture of doing that in Australia. So what's your angle then?

OM:... the networks that make Sydney a film production place.

GB: well firstly, you need to understand that Sydney has not always been the centre of the Australian film industry, if you go back 30 or 40 years and Melbourne and Sydney will probably level pegging, there wasn't this, what we have now is a real aggregation of people, services, finance, the industry is predominantly based in Sydney, probably if you

looked for example at the postcodes of screen producers, or the members of the screen producers association, 60 or 70% RK are. You looked out of the total amount of production, film and television production and television commercial production, it is a thing we don't collect data on but is massive, if you put all of those things together, you are looking at Sydney as 70%. So how did it get so prominent? 40 years ago, we might have had 40% we now have 70, the triggering factor was that change in legislation about television station ownership, when television was created in Australia in the 1950s each state had for, three stations and you couldn't own that station in more than one state, so they were all independently owned. Then, at some time in 1979 or 1980, the Australian broadcasting authority, at some stage that was all broken down and you could buy up stations, you could build networks. Now, what happened was that they all became sent in Sydney, so if a producer wanted to get a programme on a network, and that's producer was in Melbourne, he has to come to Sydney to pitch and to get commissions and to get funding. So very quickly really, may be over 10 or so years, the industry just coagulated to Sydney because that's where the decisions were being made in television. Directors and producers,, directors of photography, and, driven very much by television because in Australia we don't have the segregation of [...] if you're a director of photography, you pay for your house by working on television commercials, you didn't pay for your house by working on home and away, or neighbours, it's mainly, the commercials industry provided high paying employment for the best talent and they eventually all move to Sydney and actors did the same. What we have is this, in a certain stage there is probably a critical mass in terms of networks, some stage there is just enough people in Sydney that the curves just went up like that and that's where we are now at that stage where Sydney has an unassailable position. The interesting thing is of course because we are a government funded agency, the other state government what their share of film industry status, so they are throwing massive amounts of producers, to make their films in other states so, we have a film the television coming up commissioned by a TV network called Little Oberon, and it's a story set in the blue Mountains of Sydney, just west of Sydney. In the blue Mountains there is a town called Oberon, and it's going to be made in Victoria because the Victorian government has given that's producer and incentive package to take that blue Mountains based film to Victoria and it made down their. So what happens is that the competitive economics between the states, all the time is Sydney is under attack, we have this aggregation which has given us a comparative advantage and it's massive, once you get to that point your comparative advantage, or that's talent there, you have so much less friction in the economy, if you want to put a project together, you put it together in Sydney because everybody is here, there is so much competition, you have capacity, you know, you've got everything you could possibly need is here. It actually more expensive to make a film in the other states, theoretically but of course the comparative disadvantage is eaten away by the other states running incentive programs to try and pull this network apart, so that how we come to get at this point. And as a film agency, even though my political mast is up here on the 41st-floor, they would be horrified if they heard me say this, but it's not because of government policy, as an agency that film and television office has always been the vastly is smaller than the other states. Our incentives are less, the number of staff we have is less so we've got 70% of the film industry, but we've got less than half of the funding, we probably got 25% of the funding, Australia wide. So we are a small agency, so in a sense we are being steered by this powerful network, it's got a head of steam, we try and set guidelines which are generally, we set out compass to say that the general direction of North, but basically we and Scots control over it. Whereas in the other states, probably if the government made a catastrophic change in policy, a big ideological change,, it would

have a big effect on their local industry. It would take serious mistake on our part to put the industry off the rails in this state. You just have so much momentum which is in a way I guess what you are trying to say riders as to why that is, why does this momentum?

OM: So what's your background?

GB: Well I started has to be a filmmaker, I went to school to be a filmmaker but I ended up in journalism, I got recruited into journalism at a university directly, so I never had a career in the film industry, I went into journalism. And then from journalism I went into advertising and public relations, and then I went into industry policy, I've been in marketing management in cities, so I'd been in regional economics, a town planning, so I actually had an interest in these things myself from longtime, before I came back into the build industry which was about 10 years ago, 1993. I got back into distilled industry through policy, I got recruited to do policy work for the people in New South Wales, and then after a few years of that, I went on the staff so, and now I'm the film commissioner the New South Wales, like the one in London or even Leicester. Scotland has a whole heap of because of that regional film, regionalistic film mentality. London has a thing now called film London, and I know the London film commissioner quite well.

OM: do you have a lot of conversation with him then?

GB: this is a very international Organisation, we have an annual conference every year with most of the film commissions from around the world, it's an accredited think you have to do like three-day course, it's basically gives don't commissioner's some basic training how some market, how to facilitate film production and so on.

OM: So what sort of communication which you have with London example?

GB: if I wasn't here, I've been here to six months and probably will be for another six months, if I was back in my normal job at the FTO I would go to London and probably once a year on film industry business, talked through producers in the UK. The UK producers make a number of productions in Australia per every year, the latest one has just been a miniseries made called Mary Bryant, which Granada did. I think Granada have just amalgamated with Carlton, and Andy Harris is the head of production at Granada and as a regular visitor to Australia and Granada have an office here in Sydney.

OM: did your department have much to do with that as well?

GB: well what we did with Mary Bryant is, with Mary Bryant, I forget who approached me first, I had a meeting with Andy Harris, quite a while ago and they first mentioned that the idea that they had a script, it was about the story of Mary Bryant, because there had been a number of scripts, there has even been at play in London are the same thing, in fact interestingly enough with Mary Bryant the play, the guy who plays Rumpole of the Bailey, famous British series about a lawyer, Leo McErn, played Rumpole, this grumpy old lawyer, well that he played, he was in the Mary

Bright stage play in London and his daughter works with the FTO so, and there has been a film script in Hollywood about it, people have tried to option it in various ways, and its came back into people's radar when [...] book about the story was written. Anyway, Granada got to scripts that the miniseries and they came to see us and wanted to talk about how they would make the film, where they would make of the film, could be done, what you need, so we get into this discussion about the what's does the projects need and how you would go about it. Is it eligible for any financial assistance and all that sort of thing, and then they come back another time with their Australian partners, they've partnered up with screen time, so those guys then come on board, Granada Australia, Jason Moody, he didn't produce it, so they have a company in Australia that makes things but it was Granada at UK, who linked up with screen time, and then screen time went around and pitched it to Australia and television stations as I understand it, channel ten, cable channel in Australia, and then Granada UK have sold it to ITV, and then they probably sold it on to cable in the US. Then I had meetings with those people, Dennis Monaghan and his sidekicks, I can't remember who, we further meetings with those guys and a talked about, at one stage they would go to film up the coast, they were going to take the boat, the small boat was going it is travel all the way up the coast and pull into coves, and they were going to film various scenes are the coast, by the time they got to do a budget of course, and because it involved a tall ship, there was scenes where the big tall ship sailed, and of course anything up with her big sales ship in it becomes hideously expensive, because you have to get the sail up to the right point and a mast and the ropes, retake scenes by which time the boat goes up and the sun has changed position, its hideously expensive. So their ambitions were cut back enormously about a what's there were going to do, so they ended up shooting most of it in and around Sydney and then, did they do some small scenes in Queens land? Which were the East Timor scenes. Anyway, what happens is that we talk to them, put them in touch with people, that the producer, at the guy who did the Hornblower, Andrew Benson, he came to see us, then we talked a lot about locations about where you would do it, how you could do it, they ended up using the mouth of the Hawkesbury River, when you go up past Palm Beach, up there, at the north coast, I think they film to the sailing scenes up their. They had a lot of trouble finding a place that would double as Sydney cove because they needed to find a bit of Bush land where they could actually cut trees down, because most of the parklands are, you can't just go into the Bush and suddenly cut trees down, so I forget where they ended up, they found so much out of Sydney I think. So we helped to them in trying to find the location. Once they worked out where they wanted to go, and a budget is done and all this other stuff, said Brenda Pam would take control and, I'm not sure whether they did come back, I would have to talk to staff to see whether she did things for them during the show, I don't know, but I get feedback from this should, because they used illegal weapons. Because, if you use a weapon on this should, you have to have an armourer, present on the set. To stop guns disappearing, if the next day someone uses them in a hold-up, if you have a weapon on the set you have to have an armourer, and an armourer would cost you about \$1000 a day, and he has to provide the weapons and lock them up and train them, so what they would typically do is that they would schedule all the days in which guns would be fired, put them all in one day of the week or two days a week, and they would get the armourer in those two days. Then the other days, the three days of that we can they would use replicas made of wood or something. The law has been changed now in New South Wales when even a replica is a prohibited weapon and needs to be licensed and needs to have an armour present. So I got feedback from the production crew that they were using replicas but didn't have an armour on set. So, if you're a government agency and your job is to facilitate film production, and sort out any

troubles, and one of the frequent troubles that film house is with weapons legislation. It's extremely difficult, so there are issues to do with safety, firearms, all sorts of perks and the like. Generally speaking at agency will like mine will, we get involved in preproduction, heavily involved in preproduction and then sorting out how they are going to do a show it, where there are going to do it can they afford it,, no don't take your ship up their it's too noisy, all sorts of things which we provide expertise for,. Then once they get started, we hope we never hear from them again, but you do, because your job is to sort out problems they have at helped them out where you can. Often, the sort of problems they encounter are all, right now I am working on Superman, and they are looking to get permission to film here (shows me a photo), but are they are going to hold a two-day shooting outside Wynyard Station in a couple of weekends time. 1500 extras. Now that requires incredible logistics, Station, buses, neighbouring buildings. You go through this sort of thing, you go through the planning, is preproduction and things, (shows me another photo) that all been done to Superman, but their shooting now, but [...] you know the park opposite the Station, that little park there, on the other side of that park, there is that little scene where Lois Lane get out of a car and walks across the park, so that has to be lit, so we are hoping to hang highlights from the balconies of the buildings but one property owner, which is a superannuation trust, are refusing permission for the lights, so that's a problem that I have to fix today. So that's where we add value, if you want to take a value chain analysis, we try and add value by facilitating the production end and in a complex shoot in a big city like Sydney or London, London has run me up to ask me ask how they solve problems, that film that they made their once, used to be a science-fiction thing with puppets, Thunderbirds, they made a live-action film of it, and they had a particular problem of filming with helicopters, I think they had to fly helicopters down the Thames and so, they rang me up and asked how do I solve this problem. That's a job at that's the film commission and the FTO, you do that production liaison task, so it's a fairly constant thing, you have staff, staff back in my old office and myself working, and every day, every day you get calls like that, how are we going to do this? We need but alight on this building, if you need to know more about how that works and I can tell you, but that is essentially, I don't know if we did, on them every Bryant if we had to solve any problems, once they started shooting and production, whether we sort of any of their problems I don't know but I can find out for you, if you need any anecdotes or anything.

OM: to Superman is interesting office late because of the Fox Studios...

GB: did Mary Bright have their production office in Fox?

OM: did and they added up at the screen time headquarters in crows nest?

GB: yes, but they would have had a production office as well, Brenda would have had an office, they might have taken over, sometimes they take over old factories or warehouses and things like that.

OM: but Superman is a runaway production...

GB: they call it a runaway, we don't call it runaway.



OM: what you call it then?

GB: well we have a number of names for them, we call them footloose, footloose production is a film that could be shot anywhere, and Sydney has a huge comparative advantage of footloose production because of, we can do anything, we can do the 18th century for Mary Bryant, you can do any geography or any period, or non-period, like science-fiction, the matrix or Star Wars, Superman, for example, that building (shows me a photo) doesn't exist, the footloose phenomenon is quite an interesting one, Sydney has a very strong comparative advantage in terms of footloose productions, and the interesting thing is, it's not the cheapest close to make a film, you could make Superman in South Africa, in Argentina, Eastern Europe, but, and like, where everything costs of a quarter of what does here in Sydney, why do people come to Sydney? Because of the aggregation of talent. The people who can solve the problem here, when you're spending \$100 million what you want to do, more than 100 in the case of Superman, you're a big studio, what you want to is minimise risk, this is a very interesting thing about the film industry, you spend more money because the risk is less. Because you've got, something like the matrix, which is high risk projects, the complexity of film, Mulan rouge is a very good example, the costume department, there were 120 odd people in the costume department from Mulan rouge, it had its own accountant, so there are only a handful of places in the world where you could do that. You need that scales of these huge films, you need to be able to scale up and find, with a film like Superman, 800, between 1500 people to work on that movie. You need to find them, and they need to be good, they have to be a list. They talk about in the film industry, if I go to LA, which i would usually do about three times a year, one of the questions is how many a list crews have you got? They would ask the same question in London because, Warner Brothers made the Harry Potters, they've made three or four films there because they found some financial, bloody tax thing, and they made Harry Potter, batman, they made a whole series and basically they ended up using up everybody that there was on the English a list sp peoples suddenly started to ask a huge prices.

OM: does that happen here? Using up all the talent?

GB: well, because you have a studio here, Fox, there is a limit, we can only actually do wine the matrix or one Superman at a time. So right now in Melbourne, there are two big American films being made down there, one is called Ghostwriter, which is the guy from Stealth, Ben Walshe, he's gone down there to make Ghostwriter. And Paramount are making, I forget what the other one is, but it is being made in Melbourne. They got a most of their, most of their key crew came from Sydney, so in the same way like in New Zealand that Peter Jackson, his DOP, first assistant director, and so the Lion the witch and the wardrobe the arts director of that, key people, they are all from Sydney and working on those films. The situation is now that Sydney starts films all over the world, this latest Star Wars, George Lucas didn't have to shoot in Tunisia, but the one before he did, but he recruited his crew for the Tunisia shoot in Sydney and took them over there. If your filming in Thailand, you often use Australian crew in key roles, Oliver Stone film the two years ago and recruited people from Sydney. Sony have just made a film in Shanghai they recruited, not a lot, but a handful of people from Sydney, so it's sort of, Sydney's got that critical mass

of high-quality people that are starting to service, they service beyond a Sydney market. In fact, the the guy was doing my old job as the FTO works on that film in Shanghai, as the location manager, so you have a Sydneysider goings at Shiner on location, that was Robyn Clifton. And also on that film, the line producer, you have to be a bit careful because on American films, the Australian line producer's don't actually get the line producer credit, because on American film, the line producer has to be a member of the directors guild, so when you make a film in Australia, the Australian line producer gets a credit on the movie as co-producer, or assistant producer, and an American gets the line producer credit. So this guy wasn't the line producer, there would be an American working on Superman, he might be the producer or he might be the first assistant director or he might be, and he will end up with the line producer credit. Because he have to be a member of the directors Guild, and it's very lucrative because they get residuals whereas Australian line producer's on an Australian film you do not get residuals. So when you look at the credit list of foreign film been shot in Australia, it often very misleading about who did what. If you look at the matrix films are example the Australian line producers, the people who line producer that film, get the assistant producer credit and someone else who was probably one of the American producers, just so happens to be a member of the directors guild, some other time they hardly set foot in Australia but they will get the line producer credit.

OM: so it's just preproduction that you work with them, or at least you try to work with them...

GB: well, yes, we work very closely with them in preproduction because Superman is so long, the shooting from March to August, so preproduction is going on while the film is still shooting, so things that would normally, a projects like Mary Bryant, generally speaking would have had about six weeks reproduction and a 14 weeks shoot, so most things would have been sorted out, most of the things we would have needed to help them with a typically be done during preproduction. When Superman, I had my first meeting with Warner Brothers in Los Angeles, in 2003. So I go over and meet the vice president production...

OM: to entice it over?

GB: well what we really do is, the most important thing is asked to Sydney is because we don't have huge amounts of money to entice with, we build up relationships, so once again if someone is doing a high risk project in Sydney,, they need to minimise their risks so they need to know the standard of the environmental production here, they need to, I'm a representative of the government, I'm at the liaison person with them, so we regularly meet, I mean the heads of production studios over there, and even if they haven't got a film, we know that one day they might so they keep the lines of communication open and suddenly one day when you're over there, while the matrix was still shooting, let me tell you about the next project with got a Sydney. And in the time that I have had that meeting with him, we went through about 10 scripts, three directors, you know, the thing changed enormously before it finally got down to the points were it was ready to go ahead. But Warner Brothers have such an established network here, that when they start to move up towards preproduction the first thing they would do is higher location manager to start doing things, they might want to fight warehouses, they might want to fight offices, the fall the even go to reproduction, they start making inquiries, and then they will start budgeting and they will high rate line producer in Sydney, who will start

working for them. On Superman for example the first people they hired, right after the matrix finished, they hired the production designer and costume designer, so Alan Paterson, who was the production designer on the matrix, a Sydneysider, Alan was the hired to be the production designer on Superman and so was the costume designer, Kim Barrett, a Sydney costume designer who lives in LA, she was hired to do they are costume design on Superman. What happened was after about a year of them working together, they designed the whole movie through, before even a director was appointed so they worked, designed the whole movie, and Hugh Bader (?) Who is the art director, Hugh did budgets of all the art departments, and then at a certain stage, I'm not sure which director it was, the director came on got hired and wanted to have a completely different look. So Hugh, the art director, he's a Sydney guy, he's still on the movie, but Kim Barrett and Alan aren't. So the production designer is now an English guy called Guy Byass, he's the production designer and I'm not sure who was doing costume now, it might be someone from L.A. the whole thing then changed enormously. Alan Paterson was going to build shoes metropolis sets by the water, metropolis was going to be a city on a lake and, but the current director, Brian Singer, changed the whole story it is different now.

OM: so where is the daily planet going to be?

GB: they are going to build it at Fox, or outside a studios somewhere is going to be built. One of the things about, the interesting thing about these big American movies it comes to appoint work you need to so many lights to get the look, it's almost like a scale, you could almost plot this mathematically, the higher the budget and the more Hollywood the look of the film, to get that fantastic look on the big screen, perfect cinema, we go over to the screens in LA, or to screening in Fox all somewhere like that, we see pristine prints on the world's best projectors it is just incredible what they look like, they glow. To get that look it takes an enormous amount of lights and electricity and an enormous amount of money it gets to appoint where you do it in a studio because to do it outside you would need half the bloody generators in Australia to do it. Up there on Kent farm, they did some exterior shots with more lights that I think just about anything that ever been shot in history and now, these studio executives are saying we should have built the fucking farm on stage. Because you so many lights, now this is a night scene, it wasn't going to be originally originally it was going to be at day scene, but now it's a night scene is going to be a candlelit vigil so you need a lot less lights to shoot it, but the daily planet is in the studio or at the studio because they need, it gives them a lot more environmental control of the lighting and so on, and the studio has an enormous amount of juice, it plugs almost straight into that power grid but they probably will still have to supplement it with generators. So that's what happens, the studio, the Fox Studios, makes an enormous difference, the directors, the senior people on films, love working on Fox. The Americans love to come over here...

... because we are small and the industry is large, you have two limits the amount of time is spent the people, I have too many nodes, people in government people throughout the film industry just shoot amounts of people, so you have to curtail the amount of time is spent the people. This guy, Gilbert Adler, I did say to him if you need me, ring me, and they know, that if the star gets caught with a 14-year-old, they know who to ring.

#### 4. Interview with **Errol Sullivan**, Executive Producer at Southern Star Productions, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2004.

OM: Ok, well I'm an urban Geographer in training, but what I'm looking at Sydney specifically and how it kind of, connects to other cities and there's a lot of other literature on the economic and stuff, but there's very little done on the creative industries, cultural industries. So, I'm looking at the film industry, film and television industry and how it helps Sydney in forging these links with the other cities, other areas, other places, like Melbourne, and obviously inter-city as well, I mean you obviously deal with other companies within Sydney. So, I'm just trying to get an idea really of the ins and outs of the industry, what is actually is that that is traffic, that forms the links, because from a theoretical point of view there has been very little done [...] Yeah there's a lot of work being done on the actual nodes, the cities themselves, like how many um, production firms, and how many HQs, but not really anything on what happens which is strange really because its these that makes cities tick. Um, so yeah, that's why I'm here, what I'm doing, um what I'd like from you really is to just, just tell me what is it that you do, within the company that helps, that forms this traffic as it were. I was looking on the website and it says you have a company in London as well, yeah, um so just really you could start off by just telling me what your role is...

ES: Well, my role has changed, why don't I just talk a bit and you can direct me, I'm not quite sure where you're coming from but I'm the only consultant of the company, I'm better off talking about what the company does I think, because I used to run all the entertainment production businesses and other businesses, but someone else does that now, I'm on the board and a consultant. Um, the principle behind this company is, has always been one of um, emphatic software creation and software ownership and then software distribution, so that we, um, what we create we try and own, and then we have a sales business which tries to sell it, um, what has been created, usually in partnership with the broadcasters, and in our sales position, we, you know, once upon a time we would sell, [...] almost entirely what we made, you know as we've grown we acquired other software from other suppliers. Now, we've been the principle supplier if you like co-distribution business and you know that's kind of core mission stuff. Um, in terms of how we've done it, we've sort of done it by not having a classic broadcast rule, or a classic studio model, in other words not only by way of infrastructure, so we haven't had, we haven't owned labour, we haven't owned resources or facilities, and we still don't. So that we're kind of, maintaining ourselves as creatively led, and on the floor below us is where all our creative producers work. So they create ideas, we market them, we test them, we pilot them, we do what we do, and if we can get it financed, then we go and attach the labour, the resources and facilities whatever to the project so all that stuff is attached, but it's only there as long as the show's there, and when the show goes all the overhead goes. So we maintain, as much as we can within the business a very low overhead base, given that it's a very low margin business, profit margin business, at the front end, in other words at the creation end, in a, you don't make a lot out of making a show, you only make a lot out of it if it becomes a hit, and on television national. So, that's how we maintain our cost base without being a studio. So, in that sense, to come back to you know, what do we do, then we, outside of Sydney or within Sydney, then it depends on where the shows

located, because that's where we hire and fire and utilise resources and locations, labs, facilities, you know whatever it's going to be, and erm, we make shows you know, if you're getting international trim out of it, then we've made shows in pretty much every state, New Zealand, Queensland, Melbourne, we haven't been out of production in Melbourne for eleven or twelve years, in Sydney and in Brisbane, New Zealand as I've said and occasionally in Perth. So, we've taken a show, the show has gone where it's been creatively best suited to go, and we've resourced it there. So, in a structural sense, you know that's how we interface with various cities and...

OM: So what about the core staff? I mean, you said that the er, the actual core staff you have, how many do you have?

ES: It's all here, yeah, well in the entire company, entire business there's probably about you know, a hundred in sales and production, maybe 80 or 90, it might be closer to that, but anyway, we're probably employing another five, six hundred people maybe more – depends what shows are in production and what are in rest. You've got Big Brother going in Queensland, that employs three or four hundred itself, so it could be seven, eight hundred.

OM: Ok, I wanted to talk to you a little bit about Big Brother because it's obviously an international show, I mean, it's a product of Endemol, so what's your relationship with them?

ES: We formed a joint venture with Endemol to, first of all it was hard to get the rights to that show because everyone wanted the rights, and we went to Holland and said don't give the rights to anybody, we'll form a joint venture vehicle which we 50 per cent owned and then what ever we make out of the show we'll share 50 50. But you've [...] the rights in, and we'll put in our resources, our facilities and our people, and so that's what we did, and that was five years ago.

OM: Yeah, it's in Dreamworld isn't it?

ES: What we did here was, which was different to Big Brother's elsewhere was, it's bit harder in this market because it's an expensive show, it was hard to get it up, believe it or not, it was easy to get it all, you know the license fee that we were paid, the network paid less than the production cost of the show, but we had a lot of ratings bonuses so, the show really rated, got extra money and that's where our profit came from.

OM: Which network was it?

ES: Ten. So, you don't do those kind of deals frequently because A, you've got to [...] show that actually, the show doesn't make any money, but the only way we could get the show up with the amount of production values that we needed in this market, because in this market it's not a late night show. It's a seven o'clock show, it's prime time early evening show – it's the only country where that's the case. So, you know, in other countries it's bigger markets, on a smaller channel, with a twelve share, fourteen share, late night vehicle, lower cost, you know, bit of sex and tits. Here

it's broad demographic market, three commercial TV stations, only 20 million people, early evening seven o'clock, going to be a wide demographic. Network with a 25 share, not a twelve share, so it's got to talk to everybody – as much as you can on the show. Typically, [...] we put a lot of value into the show, the way we put the value into the show on screen value was in two ways. First way was to treat it like a drama, and cast it and shoot it, film it like a drama, edit it like a drama. A lot more cuts, we have matching signals, so we, you know we have camera portals in order to cover it, so it feels more like a soap drama than it does say in England – number one one. Number two, was to give it production value, and the way we get production value is to bring in a theme park. So we built the house in a theme park at their expense, so there's a three or four million dollar expense which wasn't in the budget that the theme park bore, and it became an exhibit in the theme park, and we made a little money out of the exhibit, and the theme park got its money back from the exhibit.

OM: Right ok. How did the actual meeting go about with Endemol...

ES: We flew to Holland.

OM: Yeah, but you heard about the show?

ES: Oh yeah, it was big. It was big in Europe. Hadn't gone to air in England...

OM: So, you heard about it and wanted to get a part of it. Ok, so its that how the partnership with the London company came about, is that...?

ES: Oh no, that's a long history. We er, we went public in '96, and shortly after that we bought a small listed company in England that was in er, in stress. And that [...] in the UK, and that company had production capacity, forty per cent share hold in Carnival, just another production company, you know in the distribution company with catalogue, so we could merge the distribution businesses and most importantly had the rights to Home and Away, which were coming up for renewal with ITV, and we took it off ITV and gave it to Channel Five, for a lot of money. So we bought that company, that put us into the market in a production sense, and enabled us to have our, er distribution base out of London, and that gave us a know you a, er....

OM: So, there's constant communication between yourselves and London? Do you meet up with them?

ES: When I was running the thing, I was there five or six times a year, now the guy that does that is there five or six times a year, every two months, but you know we have tele-conferences every other week, we're on the phone every night, you know...

OM: And what sort of things do you discuss? I mean, are they financial matters, or...?

ES: Well, obviously the management of the place, but also, um, product development, you know, as shows are looking like getting ordered or picked –up in that market then we look at the distribution side of the financing equation. So you know, just normal business, and creativity matters as well for sure.

OM: Ok, great well I was looking at the website, Hugh Marks?

ES: Yeah, Hugh's got my job.

OM: Right, ok. There was a quote from him saying, "Southern Star looks to expand it's creative talent base at all levels as well as growing its production base". This creative talent thing, that's obviously recruitment?

ES: We recruit people who we think can create shows.

OM: So, you go on experience?

ES: Well, it's a very small business, so you know everyone here.

OM: Right, ok but are they predominantly Australian? Local?

ES: Erm, one or two English fellows, here who have come out from England. You know, England is very creatively rich when it comes to entertainment formats, and er... you know, you're always sourcing talent, because its what makes the business. I mean, what we do is strike deals with our creative people so they own a piece of the action. So that we're trying to, you know just creating a mutuality of interests in creation and ownership, and exploitation.

OM: Just going back to the Big Brother thing, the format is something which, because of the explosion in reality TV programs, and I was speaking to Bob Campbell of Screentime, and he was telling me about the Popstars format, and was telling me how that's sold around the world, it's not the finished program, although that is sold, it's mostly the format. The, er, Big Brother format came from Endomol, is that something that you have a part in selling? I mean, is there any deviation form the format when they go to different countries, obviously yours is different, like a different time slot...

ES: Different show, you but the underlying format is what Endemol own, and they licence it, or go into joint ventures on a territory by territory basis.

OM: So, that doesn't really change...

ES: No, I mean you could pick up that we make, and sell it if their were buyers; there won't be buyers, by and large, it may be put on late night for curiosity for low-dollar. The English version doesn't get sold into Australia, two reasons,

first because no-one's interested, two you protect the format by not selling it, you make more out of re-making it then you do selling the finished show.

OM: Is there any history, sorry changing the subject completely, is there any history of why initially in Sydney?

ES: Why the industry is in Sydney, or why we're here?

OM: Well, why you're here. I mean, is there any benefit, advantage over somewhere like say Melbourne?

ES: Yeah, well Sydney is increasingly the home of entertainment, it's not spreading out, it's centralising.

OM: Is that nationally?

ES: Yes, yeah. I mean, a lot of reasons behind that, um, um, you know, I think we're mostly talking television, and it's a mature form, I mean it's been around a long time, I think maturation tends to centralise rather than decentralise? Um, just as important for structural reasons, which is that as networks have become more of a network, then they cut out a lot of talent bases in other cities and use them as re-transmission cities. So much more, I mean, once upon a time there was Channel Seven in Sydney and Channel Seven in Melbourne had, not vastly different schedules but each had very different, had different shows in their slots that were created in each market. Or they programmed the same shows in different slots, so each city kind tended to have production and programming stuff. But the networks have become more centralised and that thing has died over cities. And there are outcomes to that which aren't healthy, which is you've narrowed your talent base, your training pools, you know all that stuff, you know, has, has suffered. Particularly the networks who can't really find people to become new programmers and stuff, because they've got to train them, underneath someone rather than have them trained in Perth, then move them to Adelaide, then move them to Brisbane, Sydney and eventually, fifteen years later given them a big job. People don't get the experience they once had, so there has been a centralisation, no question. I would say it's different for audiences, but that's anecdotal, I would say that audiences' tastes become more local as time goes on.

OM: I suppose that's help by the fact that the population of Sydney has risen sharply over the last decade or so...

ES: Yeah, Sydney's got three or four million now, but erm, we audience test all our shows and always test them in at least two markets, sometimes three, Brisbane and Melbourne, always Sydney, you know, I'm always surprised sitting in group discussions or in group screenings that the, to get the different responses to the same product.

OM: So that's er, when you say testing that's not pilots?

ES: Research, research. It all depends on what kind of research we're doing, but we could be doing small focus groups or we could be doing larger group screening tests, and whatever, but you know we, typically we do a



screening to two groups of 50 in Melbourne, and two groups of 50 in Sydney. And then break into two or three groups after that for discussion, and we've used the same research company for many-a years, so that is kind of got, some sort of normity to it.

OM: Ok, that's interesting. Another question, on the website, um, Amanda Higgs' story, she went over to LA?

ES: Well Amanda started here, as a script assistant I think or secretary on one of the first series we made in 1990 [...] and she worked as a P.A to one of the producers, John Edwards, and then, erm, she was a film school graduate, and we helped her go to LA, helped fund her go to LA for a year, and she worked on picket fence script office, production office and then came back here, went into development [...]

OM: So that was purely for a, experience purposes?

ES: Yep.

OM: Ok, well is there any other, LA has strong ties with Sydney. Has there been any experiences that you have come across that suggest that maybe have strong ties with Los Angeles? Maybe selling shows?

ES: No. Well, America's very insular market, it's still not a big market for us, we have made, we have made a fair number of shows, for the American market as the primary buyer but only in mini-series, TV movies formats, not even long-running series.

OM: So where's your biggest market? Europe or Asia?

ES: Europe certainly. Well, we sell a lot in Asia, and we've always been effective in Asia, we used to sell all our Hanna-Barbera animation throughout Asia many years ago before Keith Turner bought the catalogue, so we've always had a very active distribution network through Asia, it's just on high volume, low dollars type business, you know, so, not a lot of hours, but my guess is if we're going to talk about [...] my guess is, six per cent of our total revenue base in sales, something in that order anyway.

OM: I was just reading, on the wall downstairs on reception, there's a little newspaper cutting, and it says that you're in the top three production companies. When I was erm, getting the information last year the Encore people sent me a directory which had all the different companies of Sydney which was great. But I asked them if they had any kind of information that gave a rank or gave a, so that was the first inkling I got of the size of the industries. Would you have any idea what the other two might be? Just as a pure...

ES: Well what you read is probably years old, but we'll be the biggest production company you know, probably quite easily right now. Um, Grundy, which is owned by Fremantle is still big because they make Idol, and they make

Neighbours, they don't make much else. Well, they used to make a lot of, a lot of, well no Sale of the Centaury. Not Sale of the Centaury, um Wheel of, not Wheel of Fortune, Price is Right is back so they're doing quite well in there area, but its all pre-news now rather than, rather than prime time, game shows, they tend to be pre-news. It's a changed market. So after them, I think it's quite distant to the next one, beyond (Phone Rings), excuse me.

ES (On phone): Put him through for a second. Hello? Hello? Yes. Errol Sullivan. Oh Hi. Yeah, good thanks. Hmm. Yeah, I own the screen plays, and the rights are owned by United Artists, UA. Yep, the remake right. Yeah, you've got to get the remake right. And they bought all rights originally, from the, the author is still alive. So I [...] then for about three or four years when Dean Stolber(?) was at UA, I don't think he's been there for years has he? All the re-make rights reside with United Artists. It'd be a hell of a job to get them now. Yeah. Yep, yeah that's right. Alan who? I think that show would only work as a musical now, it's a bit old-fashioned. Yeah, I had the original author, Ray Lawler adapt the work with another writer so in a sense I've got Ray's original work in a screenplay which is what you'll need as well, right's wise. Ideally I mean. Well, first of all you have to get the rights, you can't do anything without the rights. And if you wanted to look at our screenplay then I'd be happy to help. Righto mate, thanks then, bye.

OM: Ok, just as a side, that kind of conversation, gold dust really, so UA, there an American company? So that's what constituting the traffic you see.

ES: It does, you see what I've done is I've let the rights lapse, because I didn't want to spend 25,000 dollars a year to hold them, US, but because I own something, and if anyone ever gets the rights, they'll probably need, they don't have to have it, but the original author is so old he's nearly dead and I've got his name and the screenplay which was co-written with someone else.

OM: What production was it you were talking about?

ES: Summer of the Seventeenth Doll. It was made by Burt Lancaster's company in 1954 and starred Angela Lansbury, English actor who's name I can't remember for a second, [...] and its kind of a missing work, and someday someone will want to do it. That's how I know that show On The Beach (points to a movie poster on the wall) with Showtime in America. That's a remake of an MGM movie and I got the rights, got a screenplay developed based on another screenplay developed at MGM, who owned the [...] without owning the rights. But couldn't get it financed right away, but then one day someone phoned [...] and they had to come to me, yeah so I bought have the money, [...] by Showtime in America largely. And we ended up making it, we made it in Melbourne.

OM: Bryan Brown is someone I'd quite like to speak to.

ES: Yeah, I'll give you his number he's a nice guy. ... Yeah, it's easy for me to talk about how we structure [...] markets like Melbourne, in terms of what shows are being made, but there is a relationship between the cities which is up for discussion and analysis which, no one can really nail it. But certainly I know things like the differences

between audiences' responses in the market, and as a result, when it comes to drama's for instance, we like to try and set our dramas in Melbourne, because the Melbourne audiences' love that, and the Sydney audience doesn't give a shit where it's set. Drama's set in Sydney can be quite an antagonistic idea to a Melbourne audience, it's got to overcome it. We once did a show on Sydney Harbour called Water Rats about the Water Police and we filmed it on that island down there (points to an island in the Harbour out of the window), that was our production base. And we made it with very much, you know, Sydney was one of the characters, so we tended to film the iconic Sydney a lot, beaches, Harbour Bridges, Opera Houses, water, and that got away with it because it was very much iconic Sydney, part of Australia, people feel proud of it, but it was a thing that could have gone very sour in Melbourne, [...] shoving Sydney down their throats, they don't want to watch it. And it's a little bit like, I don't know, um, there's always been competitive cities within nations, and I think there tends to be winners and losers in that, and the loser here is Melbourne, because once upon a time, it was the financial capitol, once upon a time it was the capitol, and the cultural capitol – probably. But that's just history now, Melbourne is part of the rust belt of Australia, aging population, you know when people get to 55 they move to Queensland...

OM: The balance of power has shifted.

ES: The balance of power has totally shifted, the film and TV industry is centred in Sydney most definitely, and you know, there's kind of a lag in attitude that goes with it, so there's a really big difference, in that the older this place gets, Australia I mean, the more different the cities become. I mean Australia, is still pretty much a homogenous country, accent-wise all that sort of stuff. But compared to years ago it's not.

## 5. Interview with **Jane Smith**, the CEO of the NSW FTO on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2004

OM: My focus is Sydney, and I'm using the film industry as an example of those connections...

JS: it makes a Hollywood look like a black hole in that analogy.

OM: Indeed, so what I would like a new first and foremost is what is your role within the film and television office and more generally the role of the film and television office within the film industry of Sydney?

JS: well I'm the chief executive of the FTO, and in Australia we have a system of both national and state government funding for the film and television industry. And as the most other Western countries apart from say the US, governments make decisions based on cultural reasons that they want to fund their own stories, and so new south Wales is the largest estate in Australia and we have somewhere between 55 and 60% of the film and television industry. The FTO's role is really to support the industry in a number of different ways. We have a whole series of development strategies and financing we have intensive script workshops we have financing for, you know, draughts of scripts, we have a young filmmakers fund, new media that kind of stuff. And then we have a financial role in terms

of, we are generally a minority investor of the film and television that's made in New South Wales, the Australian television that has made in New South Wales. The film Finance Corporation, which is the national body, being the majority investor in the majority of the film and television in Australia. Um, we also provide cash flow facilities and a whole lot of those other kind of a financial instruments associated with the production, we then have a sort of a cultural mandate in the sense of trying to engage the general public in a dialogue of the industry and what it's about and, you know, give them access to films and there is also a professional development issue from the industry itself. The other area that probably fits most with what you're interested in is marketing New South Wales at the film destination, so that we have someone go to Los Angeles probably about four or five times a year, um, just had someone come back from Shanghai and Beijing, you know we send people, there is a body called AusFilm which again is a national body which I'm on the board of, and that it was about marketing a professional services Australia internationally and it goes back to the Hollywood as the black hole analogy, you know, the focus is very much on the footloose and runaway production from the US of which there is about, the number varies, but say about \$8 billion US a year of footloose production. And we've also had a, I guess a more limited role with Asia and Europe in terms of, marketing New South Wales. Sydney in terms of its specific character, resists the other parts of Australia, it has a reputation, you know, you can get an a list to come and spend four months in Sydney, they went go to the Gold Coast in Queensland and spent four months there. There's a famous story of Sarah Michelle Gellar, you know Buffy, going to film the film there and she got the plane down every weekend to Sydney to go to a restaurant here, she just didn't want to be there on weekends, me that I may. Sydney also had most of the postproduction capacity in Australia and also had a bit of an international reputation, from the first matrix and various other things. So, and because the bulk of the industry is here there is a natural kind of drawing power for that. So I guess in terms of the things that you are interested in what we, that's the way we see it.

OM: Yeah, I wanted to speak to you about, I was speaking to Gregory Smith a few weeks ago of animal logic, and didn't he used to work here?

JS: he was a predecessor of mind, so he was here up until about 1995 and then I came in 97.

OM: okay, so how would you go about communicating with someone like animal logic? Does having Gregory Smith there help?

JS: we spend a lot of time thinking about structure of industry, and indeed try to find the areas that are not being addressed, the areas of weakness. I come from a background where one of the things I did was run a whole lot of [...] projects so it's been a long time thinking about sustainability and obviously this industry a good example of trying to think about sustainability is. So, the FTO is trying to set up a whole lot of person in Australia which had been identified through the structural weaknesses, and one of the things we do is a digital Scheme which is where we work with not only animal logic, but a number of other digital effects houses and we jointly fund six-month on-the-job training exercises to improve the pool of digital artists, because they've been importing people from other places. It is a highly sought-after area. So we have, we actually had a relationship with the television commercial sector through

post production and liaison officer, even though we fund them, we have a whole thing about marketing, attracting production and what new south wales has to offer. And we've done a lot of work on trying to improve and ease the cost of the filming particularly in a city like Sydney which is quite complex and relatively expensive. So in doing patchwork, you actually engage with the postproduction sector. Now, animal logic, are the best at that because they are the biggest and they can finance a position, you know they have an office in Los Angeles, and you know, they are very active in high-profile, you know, work.

OM: when it comes to marketing and the Chinese cities or in Los Angeles, what is it that you actually do?

JS: well, I think they are different depending on where you are looking at it from, the Hollywood studios is, though always scour the world looking for the most cost-effective locations for their production is, so a lot of their production. And, So in that context, Australia competes with New Zealand and South Africa, Canada, Mexico. And what we provide there is the fact that we have great crews, Americans really like their crews, they think they are very can do, and have a demarcation disputes that they obviously have, in the US. And of course you have the attractions of Sydney, a great climate, very sophisticated. When you are looking at a country like China, where there are major problems about censorship, foreign currency dealings, those kinds of things, you start from a different way. Like, we had done it from a government way, governments to government arrangements, because that is obviously where Chinese feel most comfortable, where the decision making is. So when China joined the WTO, they are going to gradually increase the number of foreign firms that there will invest in the films, so we want to them an opportunity to think more about Australian films, so there's actually now quite a few Australian films that are on the pay-TV channel in China called CCTV Channel six. Before the Australian dollar went up as much as it has, there was quite a bit of postproduction work coming to Australia, so basically programme sales, and some postproduction. I mean, the thing with China is that the Chinese are so amazing what they do, I think your window of opportunity on things like postproduction is maybe five years because of they will be able to do themselves within five years. They have spend a lot of money on technology and infrastructure, and once they get a handle on it and they will be one of the best in the world.

OM: So, what you do you go up and set up stalls?

JS: there on the number of delegations, there has been a number of ministers who have gone from, New South Wales state ministers who have gone to China, um, we've also, we've taken a whole delegation of filmmakers, and post houses and whatever, for their big Shanghai Festival which had a big film and television bit. So we have had a number of high-profile visits and there has been a number of Chinese ministers and delegations to which had come to Australia, they are very keen to do a coproduction treaty with the Australians, which is being negotiated as we speak. So it's a, I mean, when we started with the Americans, I mean the 10 years ago you wouldn't have got someone from LA coming to Sydney. There was a number of things that change that, I think in part to the Olympics made a huge difference on Sydney's visibility and but a Sydney on the map, in part to that was just an increasing the number of Australians who kept succeeding in Hollywood and suddenly the people in Los Angeles went we should go

down there and see what's happening down there. The predecessor to AusFilm, and indeed AusFilm itself used to pay for a lot of high-profile people from the studios to come down at our expense and basically meet the people, see what's here, give them a fantastic hotel on the harbour because the Americans don't travel as much as the rest of us, and often don't have a particular realistic view of the rest of the world. And so once you've done that, films like the matrix was made, Joel Silver one of the big producers in Los Angeles, and from the Warner brothers, he said he is publicly in Los Angeles that he staved at 14 million US dollars in that film and did all the postproduction here and it was a huge box-office success. So you don't have to sell Sydney any more, people know what it is, the issue to them is now cost and ease, ease of doing what they want to do.

OM: So now that Sydney is so well known, is the marketing side of the film and television office, is that not so much a part of your mandate? Or is even more important now to keep the reputation going?

JS: Um, you need regular contact, you don't need to sell to people to think about Sydney, what you need to talk to them about is the complexity of how to shoot and how we manage it and after the Olympics there was this fantastic can-do attitude and as we get further and further away from the Olympics, some of that kind of dissipates. So the issue for us was to very much, very much about what kind of shoot people want to do and how much it is going to cost, and how complex it is going to be to organise. So it's a different kind of marketing in that sense.

OM: what steps does the film and television office take to secure infrastructure that goes toward making a creative milieu?

JS: well, one of things that you are probably, would be quite an interesting case study, we started in 2002, we started this intensive script called the Aurora project. Now it was loosely based on the Sundance Institute in the US and also there is some European versions of this under the media programme. And we got Jane Campion has our patron who did the [...], she is Sydney writer-director of the PNO, she's won the Palm Door, you know, she's an Australian New Zealander depending on how you've view her, she's a very high profile director internationally. Through her we actually filmed, we had four high profile advisers working on the scripts every year, and then in a whole series of high-profile people from the financing marketing distribution posts of industry, and the first year everyone had such a great time, one of the first-year scripts was financed almost straight away and got a standing ovation and sold 20 territories. And so Aurora, this brand name of Aurora and the FTO had, and suddenly got an international profile in away we would have never had before. So when I go to LA, or Cannes or London, or my colleague does, we get into see the high-profile people, and there is a whole bunch of high-profile people lining up to be considered for an advisory role, it's a great time. So you build a brand, and it becomes a self-perpetuating, and so the FTO because of Aurora has got his network of high-profile people around the world, we are friends with, you know, first-time producer goes to, if a producer goes to the cannes film Festival for the first time which is pretty tough, and because of she's done Aurora, she can ring this guy who is the vice president of focus pictures, and he said you should go and see x, y and z, or if you have any trouble with them, and see me and we will get you into see them. So, the connectivity of those kinds of strategies in this just fantastic and so you've got to that kind of freedom which now means that we

do get into people in the industry at the high level. And also because we have different kinds of people, because we send people to LA at least four times a year, and a lot of production comes here, we have high-level contacts in the studios, and then it's not that difficult to get into high-level people in the studios. And we seem Australians going to Hollywood and doing well, and when, I will be there in January again, they have an Australia Week, this is the second one, so based on the back of the success of the film industry, they are going to sell wine and food and other Australian products. But when the whole nominations come out of the Golden globes and the academies or whatever there's always a whole bunch of Australians to get a nominated for acting, directing, cinematography, visual effects, whatever. So that again is part of the connectivity and we've just got a Kate Blanchett in a lead role for our role one of our Aurora projects. And that links back again, she hasn't done an Australia in the film since she left in 97, but she read the script and decided that she really wanted to do it. So again you have someone of her calibre coming back to Australia, and the number of the Australians, Russell Crowe, and Nicole Kidman, are scheduled to do an Australian film called eucalyptus, in January on the north coast of New South Wales. And again that interesting because Fox Searchlight is completely funding it, and its got all Australians, director, writer, leads, cast, crew, that's a very new phenomenon to have a completely Australian cast and crew. I think Moulin Rouge was the last one. So again because of the high profile of the individuals, that get a lot of their training by working with the local funding, So when the FTO helps fund someone's first feature, that have a whole lot of potential particularly, you know, the actors and directors end up in Los Angeles and you have links there, with people. So there is quite a bit of movement and connectivity that may as well.

OM: that something that has come out, the social networks are the most important networks within the industry, more important than that more tangible physical infrastructure. Is that something which you have come across and you have experienced?

JS: absolutely, the thing about the film industry is that you have an emotional response as well as an objective response, and the first time I went to the Cannes film Festival, for me it was like this 3-D kind of chess game going on, and depending on what the reaction was in a particular screen, a film, film's get this kind of buzz and hype about them, where whatever terminology you would like to use, and whole kind of bidding war that goes on, and its based on the audience reactions in the screens. So yes those people have got to go away and think about what their offer and what they can sell it for, they have to do all that, a whole emotional response in this industry, and the So this emotional interaction is such an important part of it. Yes, so that is a big part of it.

OM: that something that you have experienced back when you at the ABC and even before that?

JS: this industry, is more important in this industry than in the ABC, but I guess when I was doing [...] projects, I guess you have to be able to work and communicate closely with people about a whole range of issues, so it's done differently in this film industry because it is more, it's more sophisticated, but he still have to make those links.

OM: what about your personal connections? You mentioned you on the Ausfilm board, and also you were on the judging panel for the AIMIA awards?

JS: yes, I'm not on any other boards, I suppose it's just a timeframe. In terms of international links, I suppose I'd been going to the can film Festival for I don't know, seven years now, and what to do that you made, I mean, I can almost not make any appointments at Cannes, because you ran into people, in the first couple of years that I went, I went to pester people, and you would actually have to really work at filling your itinerary, and now I can go with may be 25% of my itinerary organised and just had meetings when I get there. Run into people, go to functions, and that kind of stuff to keep up a lot of those international links. And I go to Los Angeles at least once a year, So again...

OM: why do you do that?

JS: well, it's just important to me to be there rather than someone at the next level down, I mean they are the ones that go and do all the detailed meetings, but I will go and see some of the studios and the heavyweights, you know, just do a bit of, the schmooze thing that you're talking about. It's about making these people feel impertinent and trying to have a meal of some of them, and all that stuff.

OM: anywhere else? I mean, what about some of your competitors/coproducers like for example Cape Town?

JS: well I've just been to New Zealand, I went over with, we are doing a number of our development strategies with the New Zealanders, and I haven't been to New Zealand since I've been in this job, I've had some dealings with the New Zealanders when I was at the ABC, so I just went over. They had a, their annual conference so I went and talked to them about the structure of their industry, and made some of those links. And again, we had this thing called enterprise which is about business School's producers. We've got a guy which I met at cannes, called Jonathan Osbert from London to actually come and give it a last year with just the Australians, and now this year with the New Zealanders as well. So we actually got a mix of producers between Australia and New Zealand and have to go away and construct a business cases and stuff like that. So yes I'd been to New Zealand, I've been to China about three or four times, so the Singaporeans come here a lot because they want to talk to us about what we are doing. I mean, we have limited resources he got to actually work out how much, what are the real opportunities, but I already have gone to Japan, around the States.

OM: So, I'm just trying to gauge the situation about Sydney. You said Sydney was the most important city in Australia and film and television production, but why do you think that is? I mean, is there any infrastructure in place that makes it more...?

JS: it is quite interesting the history of the film industry within Australia because the second ever feature film was made in Australia, and Australia had a bit of a boom in the industry in the early 1900s and that got quashed by the studios in America. So then and there was really only documentaries and her about the seventies when the national



government had decided to establish a number of institutions and they were all put in Sydney. We've got the Australian film commission, you've got their national institution of dramatic arts, you have the Australian film and television and radio School, and they were placed in Sydney. So that obviously helped establish a kind of critical mass even though they were meant to be national bodies and they have various offices in other states. So there's all of that, which I think helps. You know, there were studios built by Warner Brothers on the Gold Coast probably about 10 years ago, before they built in Sydney, but they were relatively small and did kinds of television, you know movies of the week and television series and stuff. And when Fox built their studios here, what happened was, was that you had some of their high-profile films being made, you had the Star Wars prequels, Mission impossible 2, the matrix trilogy, Babe was made there, so Sydney got this reputation of making the really high end, incredibly complex big Hollywood blockbusters well, and cost effectively. So that also enhance its reputation, and as I said, you know, people by and large enjoyed being here. I think Jade Pinkett-Smith's it's about the only one I heard of it didn't had a particularly good time here.

OM: yet, I heard about that, and isn't that why I, robot didn't come to Sydney?

JS: well, that's one of the reasons given. As with all these things are they are highly political and I think having someone that was going from a budget of about 5 - 7 million US dollars to a budget of about 100 million US dollars and having them in Australia and not caused by, some other reason, but that was kind of the reason that was leaked out and, I tried to get to the bottom of it and I'm not sure it was as bad as it has been made out, but that has been part of the excuse. But I just think that in the studio would have probably wanted production to be closer than Australia with a someone who was seen more of a first-timer on that kind of budget.

OM: yeah, its funny because the film is supposed to be set in Chicago yet it was filmed in Vancouver

JS: well, the first matrix film was supposed to be, people, the Wachoski brothers are originally from Chicago, there was as great a letter in one of the trader mags saying Chicago looks fabulous and it a shot of the Sydney skyline.

OM: right, okay. Do you think that with Sydney having such iconic architecture, like the bridge and the Opera house, do you think that may be somewhat of a hindrance or a deterrent for studios wanting to shoot here because in the matrix it was very much portrayed as a generic city a kind of placeless city.

JS: I mean, the thing about a lot of those American films is that they want people to think that they can shot in America. So, you know any, when they are looking for a location, they want to recreate the streets of New York. Like, outside of here, we actually had one of Jerry Bruckheimer films that close to Liverpool Street and Elizabeth Street, so those two main streets fell to weekends in a row and dressed them as New York, and they had New York cabs and the lot which was for the film Kangaroo Jack. So Sydney can do kind of futuristic stuff, and it can do, look in certain circumstances look like some of those American cities. Because of the value of the dollar you have to do that as part of your suite of things you can offer because most of the runaway production coming out of the US as I

say, they want people to either think that it is future generic location, or it is an American city. So that the things that you need to be able to do, and then you have the case were sometimes they were write a story where it is about Sydney which is why the Mission impossible two movie was fantastic. But, are generally looking to recreate America somewhere else.

OM: the board here, is made up of some high-profile people such as Andy Mason, Ross Gibson. What do people like this bring to the film and television office?

JS: the FTO didn't have a board until 97 and before that it was part of the ministry for arts, and that there had been a review of the FCO and it was decided that to put abroad in, and they chose me, so I was never here before that wasn't abroad. But the thing about broad has brought, again we are lucky that we have been able to get the cream of the crop of Australian industry, they had been prepared to be on the board and we have a corporate planning a day once a year where we freeform about the structure of the industry and what we need to do and they bring their expertise about that. We have competitive rounds for our productive investment funding, so four or five times a year we sit in a room with the board and discuss how the financing is working in boats here and from overseas, and the structure of deal was handled what we should be prepared to participate in and what we should not be prepared to participate in. I put papers to them on our development strategies, so they really bring an enormous amount of contemporary practitioner expertise to the board. Obviously they are their own ambassadors, they about talking to people abroad about what the FTO is doing or not doing, and people are happy they will engage with them. But mostly, that seems to be okay, but that's fine, when I'm recommending a rejection on funding the board will be peppered with letters about why that would be a bad idea. But I'm not a practitioner, I mean, I'm out of a strategy, policy kind of issues management background, and so, and I had a lot of practitioners around me, I've learned a lot about the industry now, I'm not obviously as clean as I was when I started but there are still a whole bunch of things that I like to have practitioners around, if I needed something from a board member and I say, there is something going on here and that I can't get a handle on it. When I first started I'd had quite a lot, because I just didn't, and I knew that with confidentiality I could remember them up and say my gut telling me that there is something not right about this, can you talk to me about it. But I don't do that as nearly as much now, but the board is very supportive and they had a lot of links into different places you know, we've got people about television, about feature films, about documentaries, about distribution, and to have someone from the distribution part of the business on the board, we were on the first funding bodies to actually have that. Which is great, because they will sit there and go, but this is what you could get in the DVD market, but this is what I think this will do, so it's a really important mechanism for the organisation.

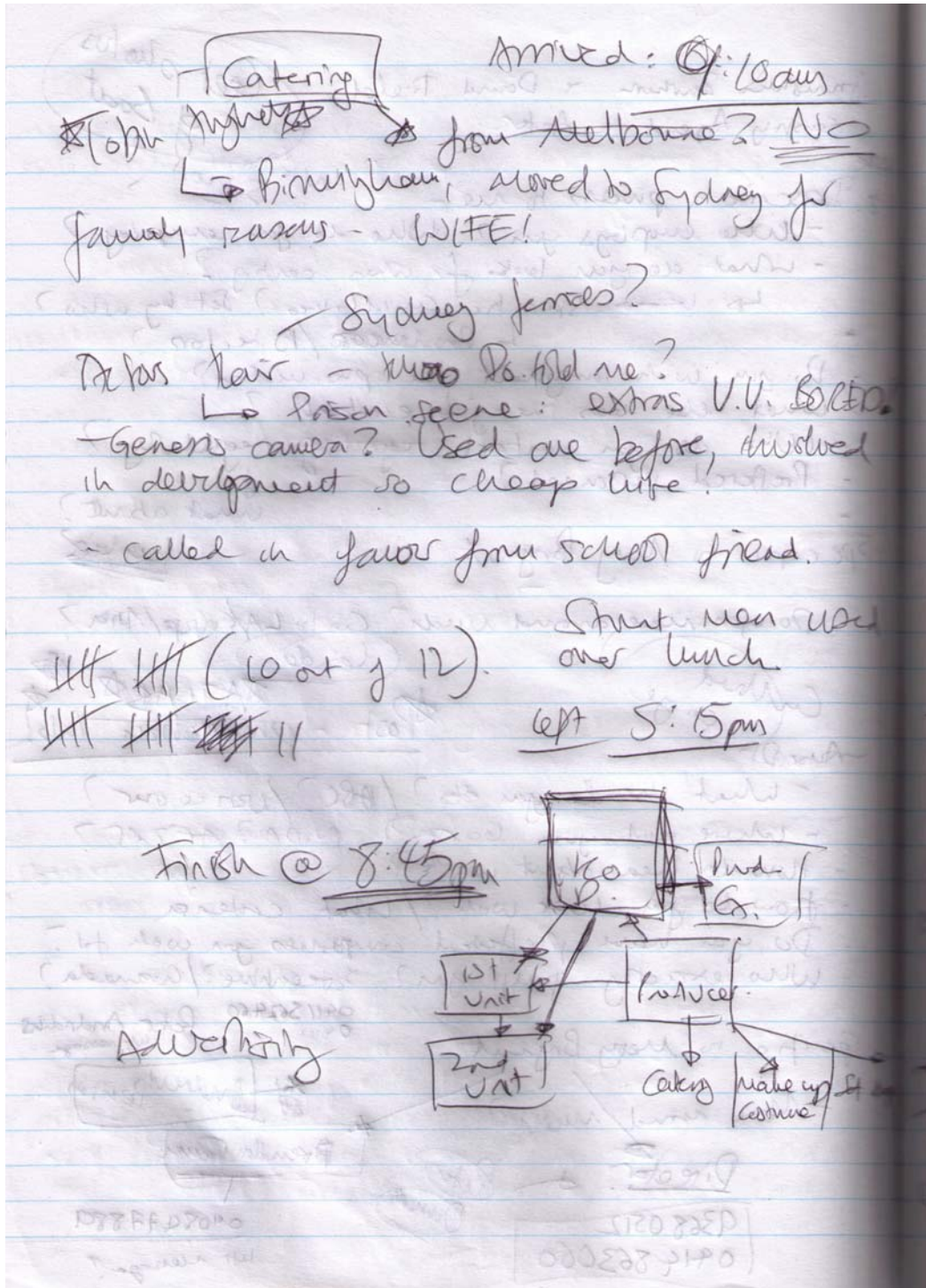
OM: the onset of digital films has obviously exploded with films such as finding Nemo, Shrek, and the like. And with animal logic being such a huge company and based in Sydney, it obviously alerts people to the fact that Sydney has a something special when it comes to digital arts. As a funding body, do you have any plans in place for any particular policies that may be addressing this shift in production?

JS: we are still grappling with what do you do without whole of digital content area and you know, the whole dot com crash made people very wary of what is the business model, in this brave new world. We are involved in a film of the cross media lab, which it said to like the Aurora concepts where you make a number of projects and they get world experts to come and work with them over a number of days, and they had a lot of links, in fact in fact there is a guy who is now out at the film and television and radio school, Mark Petchey, who actually wrote one of the languages, VTML, or something and he came out to a cross media lab and he was so impressed with one of the projects he said if someone can find me a job I will come and work on it for nothing. So I rang Malcolm Long who I used to work with at the ABC, who had done a lot of work on digital content and is now running at the film and television School and said this guy is fantastic, and he is looking for a job, and Malcolm was looking to set up a whole lot of digital content stuff. So marks been here from more than a year, so again those, to go back to your conductivity points, those development strategies, if you can bring someone here who is world-famous and had a great time, and can see the strength of our creative projects, we then forge links with them and often can often get them to come to Australia are still provide assistance where they are, whether that's Los Angeles or London where France wherever. So we haven't got a lot of money to digital content, and there is a bunch of us who had been working in various government departments to look at what we do, and Gregory and I talk on a regular basis. It's really hard to know, without any extra money, from government or anywhere, how do you make the transition into that area of digital arts, so...

**Appendices B: Fieldwork notes**

Below is a selection of fieldwork notes taken during particular points in the ethnographies.

1. Sample page of notes taken during onsite visit to production of *Footy Legends* at the Liverpool TAFE campus:



2. Notes from a visit with Mark Safarty to Dendy Cinemas head office in Newtown, Sydney, to see the distribution process of *Three Dollars*.

Mark Safarty - head of Dendy Cinemas <sup>2nd June 2005</sup>

Buy films for his particular market (ie not having Alison Adlam)

Purchase by Becker Corp - when? why? how?  
 what benefits? - what? (do Becker receive get them?)

~~by film~~  
 How important is Dendy and other independent cinema circuits to his films?  
 - When *3 dollars* went from limited - select he lost money  
 Do you agree there is an Aussie film market in Aus?  
 Crossover not so ~~subtle~~ direct but is there?  
 From your experience is there much crossover?  
 - Groups - all got together + formed 1 company  
"more corporatized" (cos of Fox)

for - city networks: Do you work/speak/contact other cities for any reason?  
 - Any advice from any other markets?  
 (ICAA)?

Release Calendar - important - film companies battle for best days - also other larger firms can "date dump"

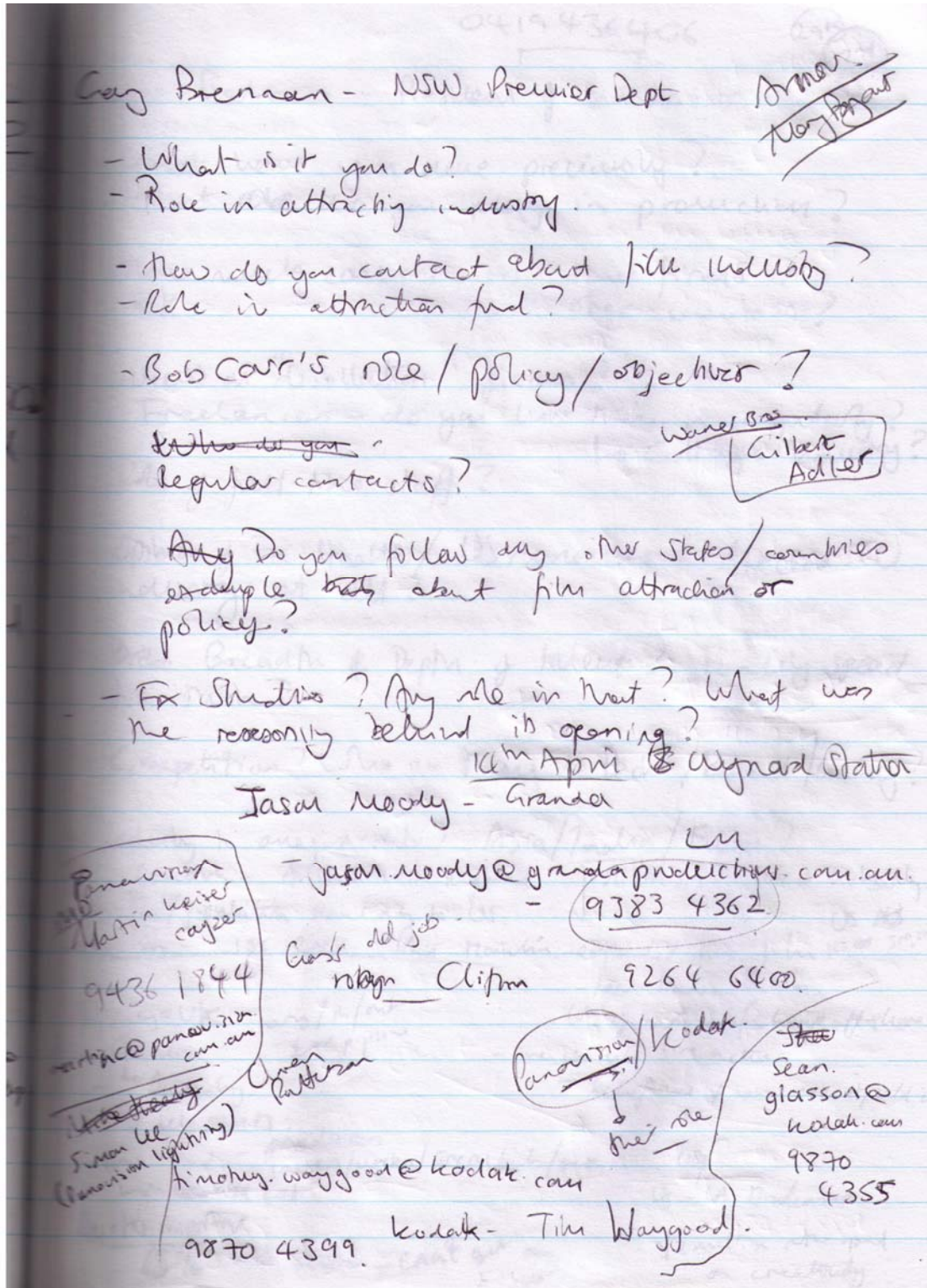
for - city networks:  
 - which companies do you deal with most?  
 - Can you run through a particular ex.  
 eg *3 dollars*?  
 (Melbore)

(Nova in Carlton most popular Ind. in Australia)  
 How important is it to  
 What role does it play? ~~low~~

works are on a personal level, lunches, business meetings, festivals.

the films released *3 dollars* through Dendy not their company.

3. Notes from an interview with Garry Brennan, while sitting in Fox Studios production studio, awaiting the shooting of the seaplane scene from *Superman Returns*.



## Appendices C: Interview and Ethnography timeline

- September 2004 Arrive in Sydney
- November 2004 5<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Bob Campbell, Screentime  
9<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Greg Smith, Animal Logic  
11<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Errol Sullivan, Southern Star  
13<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Susanne Larson, AusFilm  
17<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Marie-Anne Reid, FFC
- December 2004 ALL MONTH – Phone survey (PI)  
6<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Martin Kornberger, Producer  
8<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Jennifer Lindsey, NSW Ministry of the Arts  
9<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Jane Smith, NSW FTO  
10<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Geoff Brown, SPAA  
16<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Ann Hoban, City of Sydney
- January 2005 14<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Kate Pembroke, City of Sydney  
25<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Richard White-Smith, aht(  
26<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Tony Knight, NIDA
- February 2005 1<sup>st</sup> – Interview with Frank Arnold, Director  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Interview with Con Anemogiannis, Director
- March 2005 1<sup>st</sup> – Interview with Philip Nelson, LIC  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Interview with John Edwards, Southern Star  
9<sup>th</sup> (am) – Follow up interview with Susanne Larson, AusFilm  
9<sup>th</sup> (pm) – Interview with Malcolm Long, AFTRS  
10<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Anny Slater, Moondance Pictures  
14<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Les Clement, NSW Dept. of Redevelopment  
16<sup>th</sup> – Interview with James Bramley, Fox Studios  
27<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Donald Crombie, Director  
29<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Anoushka Zarkesh and David Field

30<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Garry Brennan, NSW FTO  
 April 2005 2<sup>nd</sup> – Interview with Neil Balnaves, Southern Star  
 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> – On location at Wynyard Station for *Superman* (PIII)  
 11<sup>th</sup> – Interview with John Peachy, Warner Brothers  
 12<sup>th</sup> (am) – Interview with Richard Harris, ASDA  
 12<sup>th</sup> (pm) – Interview with Vivienne Skinner, Premiers Dept.  
 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> – On location at Fox Studios for *Superman* (PIII)  
 25<sup>th</sup> – Night shoot for *Superman Returns* (PIII)  
 28<sup>th</sup> – Interview with John McInenery, Deputy Mayor  
 May 2005 6<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Peter Andrikidis, Director.  
 11<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Robert Connolly, see production notes of  
*Three Dollars* (PIII)  
 19<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Brenda Pam, Line Producer  
 June 2005 2<sup>nd</sup> – Interview with Mark Sarfarty, Dendy, see distribution  
 process of *Three Dollars* (PIII)  
 30<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Philip Raskall, City of Sydney  
 July 2005 7<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Bruce Wolpe, Sydney Opera House  
 12<sup>th</sup> – Visit to Liverpool TAFE campus for *Footy Legends* (PIII)  
 August 2005 15<sup>th</sup> – Interview with Bruce Williamson, AtLab  
 16<sup>th</sup> – Visit AtLab for ADR postproduction on *Mary Bryant* (PIII)  
 September 2005 Left Sydney  
 January 2006 Follow up emails to interviewees (PII and PIII)