



Figure 1. Robert Pattinson (right) in *Twilight* (dir. Catherine Hardwicke, US, 2008). Courtesy of Summit Entertainment/Photofest

# **The Poetics of Addiction: Stardom, “Feminized” Spectatorship, and Interregional Business Relations in the *Twilight* Series**

---

Victor Fan

I learned about *Twilight* as a novel when I taught eighth graders at a tutorial school. After its publication on 5 October 2005, within a fortnight, the novel became a student handbook—literally to be found in everybody’s hands. It was quite a sight to see a roomful of early teenagers lovesick with their imaginary vampires (the multiple forms of Edward Cullen) and the ardent ways in which these young readers discussed the text. One student explained to me that she had read the book six times. Each time she reached the final page, she felt compelled to renew her reading pleasure. In addition, her classmates developed a habit of exchanging their copies of the novel. Somehow, this ritual of physical textual circulation and transaction was in itself a form of self-perpetuated pleasure, which, for me, can be read as a form of “addiction.”<sup>1</sup>

*Camera Obscura* 79, Volume 27, Number 1

DOI 10.1215/02705346-1533439 © 2012 by *Camera Obscura*

Published by Duke University Press

31

Like many other adults, I entered the *Twilight* fandom when Edward Cullen was no longer imaginary: when he had already gone through his first articulation as reality, embodied as Robert Pattinson.<sup>2</sup> Of course, we may ask which reality of Pattinson has left its trace in the image and, as a result, has been textualized. Further, how do stardom and the industrial and social conditions that create it convene to negotiate individual and social desires? In this essay (in which I discuss specifically *Twilight* [dir. Catherine Hardwicke, US, 2008] and *The Twilight Saga: New Moon* [dir. Chris Weitz, US, 2009]), I wish to develop an interpretative model of what I call the poetics of addiction and, in so doing, bring together two lines of reading that often seem to run counter to each other: hermeneutics (the unearthing of the social and individual desires, or the *dispositifs* and their various intersections) and a historical materialist reading of the film industry. I define addiction not simply as a form of dependency but as a strategy and process of intersubjective negotiation between the spectators and the film, the business, and the marketplace. I propose that this idea of addiction can be used to rethink how contemporary Hollywood films manage symptoms of gender and political asymmetries in the construction of their real or imagined “feminized” spectatorship.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Politics of Addictive Spectatorship**

How do studios anticipate and construct a “feminized” spectatorship? What social desires motivate such construction? How do actual or idealized “feminized” spectators, like those of *Twilight*, negotiate their individual desires and pleasures while viewing the films and participating in the discourses around them? These questions have been debated by film scholars for many years. I will discuss some of them in this essay; for now, I will point out one key question that underlies this debate. Since Laura Mulvey made the argument that classical Hollywood cinema is best read as a predominantly heteronormative male scopophilic regime, scholars have been trying to get away from the binary conceptions that govern thinking about gender and social politics in terms of domination and submission, center and margin, heteronormative

and queer. Instead, they suggest that in mass cultural consumption, subjectivity is often ambiguous, fluid, multiply layered, interchangeable between genders, inconsistent, or at times distanced or even absent from the image or text's seemingly predetermined subjectival position. In this sense, the spectators and the characters/performers are related to each other not always as subjects and objects but as interrelated subjects that work through, and sometimes put in play, the very power asymmetries and socially restricted imaginations of gender and sexuality.<sup>4</sup> In this light, I see *intersubjectivity* as a keyword in our understanding of feminized spectatorship, and, to push this concept further, I borrow Slavoj Žižek's term *interpassivity*, an astute reversal of what we usually call interactivity. Žižek does not argue that intersubjectivity is fundamentally passive; he simply points out that interactivity, seen from a different angle, is in fact interpassive.<sup>5</sup> For him, intersubjectivity involves an active surrendering of the subject's knowledge in favor of an underlying common belief, which, seen from another perspective, is a passive consignment of their beliefs to those of the Other (which, in the Lacanian sense, is the imaginary authority that maintains the ontological consistency of the subject).

To facilitate my reading of this interpassivity in *Twilight* fandom, I propose a term: *the poetics of addiction*. This term can be understood on three levels, with each problematizing not only the poetics and economics of the films but also the social topos of our gender and sexual politics. On an allegorical level, the film's power to generate a compulsion to see it repeatedly, to interpret it, to discuss it, to desire it, and to circulate multiple discourses related to it in a marketplace, with Pattinson as the locus of addictive consumption and transactions, is analogous to drug dependency. More specifically, on the second level, *addiction* must be understood as a historically constructed term. In the popular imagination, addiction is often understood simply as an individual's dependency on a substance, a compulsive act, or nonnormative sexual behaviors. Yet historically, according to narcotic historians Virginia Berridge and Griffith Edwards, the term was coined during the nineteenth century by Victorian physicians and pharmacists. By naming addiction as a medical and social problem, these physicians and phar-

macists could entitle themselves to manage and legislate drug use. These means of management include often arbitrary distinctions between medical use and recreational consumption, assumptions about private use that is considered socially tolerable in contrast to “drug abuse” that disturbs “public order,” and the impression that addiction is a specific problem of both the upper classes, the cultural elites, and rock stars and the working classes, immigrants, and people of color—all groups that require the “morally intact” white middle classes to police and regulate them. Hence, Berridge and Edwards suggest that the term *addiction* is best understood as a signifier of the political power of someone who is authorized (in this case, by the state authority) to claim the socially other as an addict.<sup>6</sup>

That said, addiction is also best understood not simply as an instantiation of a top-down power relationship. Between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, drug users (who were being classified as addicts) appropriated the term and fabricated both real and imagined narratives about their drug use as narratives of addiction. These narratives simulate the effects of the drug by the power of language and have the effect of replacing the drug as the agent that can “addict” its readers.<sup>7</sup> As Tania Modleski would argue (based on Roland Barthes’s theory), by mythologizing addiction as the pleasure of the intellectual elite, such literature of drug use inoculates the very concept of addiction—not, as Barthes might argue, for the purpose of normalizing the political power to control individual lives but instead for the purpose of queering the very term and questioning the political authority that defines addiction in the first place.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the *Twilight* franchise, on this level, is best understood not simply as a text about addiction; its poetics and economic circulation depend precisely on its structure of addiction and the way it can potentially put into question the economic, social, and political power that facilitates its circulation.

This idea leads to the third level of my understanding of the term *poetics of addiction*. In the clinical sense, addiction is defined medically as a “failure of management.”<sup>9</sup> The agency of “management,” at first glance, is highly ambiguous. It is unclear

whether the “addict” is defined as such because she or he is incapable of managing her or his own life, or if she or he presents a challenge for a higher authority to manage her or his life. The latter idea suggests an implicit passive consignment of individual lives to a super authority, which, on a political level, can be seen as sovereign authority (defined by Jean Bodin, Walter Benjamin, Carl Schmitt, and more recently, Giorgio Agamben as, precisely, a mystical authority that is answerable to no higher authority) or, on a narrative level, as the supernatural.<sup>10</sup> In fact, as I will discuss later, the supernatural in the narrative can in turn be read as a symptom, or an allegory, of the sovereign authority or state power to which individuals consign the right to manage their lives.

In a narrower sense, and as an entry point, *Twilight* can be understood as operating upon the principle of what the clinical circle has recently defined as “sexual addiction,” though this term embodies its own gender trouble. Medical scholars who support classifying certain sexual behaviors under the pathological study of addiction are aware of their proposals as a potential measure of new biopolitics. For example, Patrick J. Carnes and Marie Wilson emphasize that an individual’s trespassing of an accepted moral norm is not considered an addiction. Rather, an individual arrives at a stage of addiction when (1) she or he loses control over her or his desire to control; (2) her or his behaviors produce “adverse consequences” (e.g., arrests, divorces, financial problems); (3) she or he generates a cycle of obsessive “preoccupation” with “obtaining, using, or recovering” from such behaviors.<sup>11</sup> In other words, for these supporters, medical intervention is considered necessary only either when an individual has trouble reconciling her or his behaviors with her or his individual moral standard and sense of guilt or when the state or financial institutions begin to execute interventions, which in turn is seen as an individual’s inability to manage her or himself.

At first glance, Carnes and Wilson’s idea appears to be a “fair game”: the clinical determination to intervene is triggered either by an individual need to manage and correct her- or himself or by a social desire to “save” an individual from any further legal intervention. Taking into account questions of gender

asymmetries, however, these ideas may not be as fair as they initially sound. Eric Griffin-Shelley, in his study of teenage sexual addiction, suggests that an individual can be considered sexually addicted when she or he is “in love with love” or, metonymically, in love with “sex”—that is, a craving for a biochemical state associated with the first experience of love or masturbation.<sup>12</sup> Mark F. Schwartz and Stephen Southern believe that this form of falling in love with love or sex is gender related, derived from what they call a “vandalization” of “love maps.” Schwartz and Southern base their idea on John Money’s definition of the love map: a “personalized, developmental representation or template in the mind and in the brain that depicts the idealized lover and the idealized program of sexueroetic activity with the lover as projected in imagery and ideation or actually engaged with that lover.”<sup>13</sup> Falling in love with love is therefore considered more problematic in men because it implicitly trespasses the accepted notion of heteronormative male sexuality as dependent on oracular-penile stimulations, whereas falling in love with sex is generally considered more problematic in women because it implicitly trespasses the accepted notion of female sexuality as dependent on relational, tactile, ideative, and erogenous stimulations beyond those of the genitalia.<sup>14</sup>

By reading the economics and the poetics of *Twilight* in the light of sexual addiction, I do not intend to conform to these clinical notions of sexual addiction and their implicit moral principle. Rather, I find it interesting to see how the franchise rewrites these gender relationships, moral principles, and the discourse of addiction precisely by turning the franchise into an addictive agent.

### **A “Male” Star Is Born . . . So Is a “Feminized” Spectatorship**

Becoming addicted to a male star, his body, and his screen image (with all the gender asymmetries that the politics of addiction opens up) is not entirely new to cinema. Nonetheless, the phenomenon related to *Twilight*, I argue, involves a different mode of consumption and circulation of desires. To start with, it would be too simple for us to consider feminized spectators’ attraction or addic-

tion to the male star as merely a binary subject-object relationship. This point has been debated and discussed by a number of feminist scholars. For example, in “The Disappearing Act,” Modleski studies the modes of identification and pleasure of women who read what Ann Barr Snitow terms the “women pornographic novels,” Harlequin Romances. Modleski argues that women do not only derive their reading pleasure from identifying with the fashionable, seductive, mysterious, yet submissive women who enjoy the domination, dismissive language, and muscled bodies of their male counterparts. They also get pleasure by turning the to-be-looked-at-ness of these women into a form of inward-self-looking (which echoes Mary Ann Doane’s idea of a woman masquerading herself as a “man” who enjoys a woman being looked at) and by experiencing an intellectual superiority over the female protagonist (as the readers can usually recognize plot details that the female protagonists fail to acknowledge).<sup>15</sup> Likewise, in *The Future of an Illusion*, Constance Penley argues that if cinema were to be treated as a kind of fantasy, constructed as a way to answer the “origins” of various desires, “all the possible roles . . . are available to the [spectating] subject, who can be either subject or object and can even occupy a position ‘outside’ the screen, looking on from the spectator’s point of view.” The mobility of these fantasized roles therefore trespasses, reverses, or multiply layers the formal positions of “masculinity” and “femininity” on the textual surfaces.<sup>16</sup>

Miriam Hansen, in *Babel and Babylon*, discusses the way Rudolph Valentino is staged in *The Son of the Sheik* (dir. George Fitzmaurice, US, 1926). In that film, Valentino is “captured by a gang of swarthy villains, half-stripped and suspended from his wrists on the wall of an exotic ruin, then whipped, taunted, and tortured at length.”<sup>17</sup> Here, Hansen argues that cinema offers the heteronormative female spectator a socially sanctioned space (a public sphere) where the desirable male body is displayed and the female desire for such body is openly negotiated, despite the fact that the film has already managed properly to suture such bodily display by supplying a reverse shot of Valentino’s torturer (269–94).<sup>18</sup> Hansen’s observation can be pushed further on two counts. First, Val-



entino becomes a social problem precisely at a narrative moment when Valentino is turned from an object of love to an object of sex—that is, when an addiction (understood in its narrow sense) to his image is turned from an addiction to love to an addiction to sex. Second, her assumption is that such bodily display escapes from the supposedly unified narrative system (à la David Bordwell) as an excess, or a perversion.<sup>19</sup> What if perversion, however, has taken over an economy of desire and become the structural dominant, of which the narrative is merely an excess? In relation to this idea, Lynne Joyrich, in her study of “Elvisophilia,” argues that the public obsession with, discursive transactions around, and personalization of a public icon is best understood as an addiction, though she aptly turns around our understanding of agency in addiction. She argues that it is not the pop icon (Elvis), with his seemingly multifaceted sexuality and excesses, that negotiates the tension embodied in our knowledge of desires; rather, it is this tension in our desire for knowledge that creates “Elvis” as a blank slate, a figure without a lack (and hence, without any strict form of gendering), which is capable of opening itself to multiple forms of consumption and renegotiation of not only sexual desires, but our desire for knowledge of desire.<sup>20</sup>

Such analyses of these female pleasures and desires are relevant to an analysis of the enjoyment readers/viewers take in *Twilight* and in Robert Pattinson as well. As I mentioned earlier, *Twilight* is inseparable from Robert Pattinson as a star, in himself an industrially and sexually constructed image and narrative. In *Stars* (1982), Richard Dyer argues that a star is best understood as a topos where conflicting social beliefs and standards of gender, sexual, economic, and political values are negotiated, exchanged, and reconciled, a sign that can be so powerful that an interpretation of a film is often articulated within the star’s terms (e.g., *Stagecoach* [dir. John Ford, US, 1939] is not only a western, or a John Ford film, but is, as importantly, a John Wayne movie). A star also instantiates a difference between the actor as an individual and her or his screen persona as a commodity and locus of desire, and exists in the very liminal space that negotiates such imagined difference.<sup>21</sup> Ironically, as Béla Balázs argues, certain aspects of

the actor's "real" personality are exposed on her or his face and gestures involuntarily, aspects of the actor from which she or he would usually recoil, thus making what the star represents (and the characters she or he portrays) potentially more truthful than the private individual.<sup>22</sup>

Pattinson was not yet a star when Summit Entertainment, the studio behind the *Twilight* franchise, announced on 11 December 2007 that he would portray Edward Cullen. Pattinson had had a modeling career as a teenager, and he had appeared in two of the Harry Potter films, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (dir. Mike Newell, UK/US, 2005) and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (dir. David Yates, UK/US, 2007). He had also played Salvador Dali in the \$2 million production *Little Ashes* (dir. Paul Morrison, Spain/UK, 2009). In Summit's announcement, President of Production Erik Feig stated, "It's always a challenge to find the right actor for a part that has lived so vividly in the imaginations of readers but we took the responsibility seriously and are confident, with Rob Pattinson, that we have found the perfect Edward for our Bella in *Twilight*."<sup>23</sup> The Internet chatroom reception at the time was lukewarm. For example, a teenage fan claims, "Blah . . . I love Robert but err . . . yeah. I'll keep my comment to myself. No one can ever stand a chance next to the Edward I have envisioned in my mind."<sup>24</sup>

Feig made it sound like his challenge lay in matching Pattinson with the diverse and fixated images of Edward in *Twilight* fans' minds. His real challenge was, however, to make Pattinson better than the Edward in everyone's mind. The objective of Feig was therefore to make Pattinson an eclipse (a literalization of the third installment of the franchise, *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*, dir. David Slade, US, 2010) of Edward Cullen as the object and locus of desire, or the agent of love or sexual addiction.

### **Viva Team Edward!**

By the time of *Twilight*'s release almost a year later on 21 November 2008, Edward Cullen had become merely a placeholder for Pattinson. Upon his entrance—backlit and in slow motion, with

the rest of the fashionably dressed Cullens—Bella Swan (Kristen Stewart) asks her schoolmates who he and his companions are. After having introduced the Cullens in a seemingly casual conversation between Bella, Angela (Christian Serratos), and Jessica Stanley (Anna Kendrick), the film cuts to a shot of the cafeteria’s window, partly covered by a blind on the right of the frame (fig. 2). We then see Pattinson entering the frame from the right. The camera dollies left to follow him across the frame to the left (the door). He opens the door, which motivates a swell in the music (a rhythm composed of an electric guitar and a hi-hat). Pattinson steps onto his mark to achieve a brief but emphatic close-up (fig. 3) before the film cuts back to the over-the-shoulder shot of Bella looking at Angela and Jessica in the foreground, with Pattinson strolling from frame left to right, out of focus, in the background (fig. 4). These shots of Pattinson’s entrance have effectively suspended the narrative with a composition that resembles a stage wing, and Pattinson’s entrance, not unlike a theatrical star’s first entrance in a play, appears outside the diegesis as a star that deserves her or his applause and recognition. It is only when the camera reframes him in the background as an out-of-focus figure that Jessica formally introduces the character in question as “Edward Cullen.”



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Before I get further into an analysis of the films, however, it is important to lay out more specifically what Pattinson-as-star rep-

resents. Summit painstakingly claims that the targeted market of the *Twilight* franchise consists of teenage girls, and the first installment also attracted a group of urban “*Twilight* moms” (i.e., married women in their forties).<sup>25</sup> Summit has been trying to solicit a stronger gay following, with limited success, as “gay” rumors about Pattinson were spread all over the Internet. Indeed, to reinforce his sexual ambiguity, in an MTV interview Pattinson refused to comment on the publicity about his romance with Stewart, and he made a playful remark that Edward Cullen is kiss-shy because “he [Pattinson or Edward] is gay.”<sup>26</sup> Pattinson’s weakness in his gay appeal has been attributed to an array of “reasons,” including his lack of musculature, his hairiness, his age and immaturity, and the lack of sophistication of the *Twilight* series itself. A more fitting explanation, however, may lie elsewhere.

Teenage girls and young mothers, unlike gay men, are two groups of spectators that are socially understood as being “asexual”: the former being sexually premature, the latter being confined within matrimonial and familial boundaries. Pattinson is commonly considered as a perfect image of a young man who has the potential to be sexual but who cannot be imagined in practical sexual terms. For example, when *Entertainment Weekly* designed a cover with Pattinson in an open shirt, holding Stewart in her low-cut evening gown in his arms, with an apple in her hand—an image that, compared to other contemporary magazine covers, can hardly be considered racy—fans complained that the image was too sexually explicit.<sup>27</sup> Later on, fans’ desire for Pattinson’s asexuality was also articulated negatively, when MTV reported that Pattinson “smells,” even though his smell does not spoil his perfect image.<sup>28</sup>

Pattinson’s perceived asexuality is narrativized in the first installment of the franchise, in which Edward Cullen tries to have sex with Bella, only to find out that Bella’s blood is too delicious to resist. The couple instead decides to talk on her bed all night.<sup>29</sup> In fact, as a vampire, Edward has a “cold” body, which somehow corresponds to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century notion of a “sick” and opiated intellectual. This notion is corroborated by Edward’s stereotypical love of classical music and his resemblance



Figure 5. Bella looks lustfully at Jacob's body. *The Twilight Saga: New Moon* (dir. Chris Weitz, US, 2009). Shown from left: Taylor Lautner, Kristen Stewart. Courtesy of Summit Entertainment/Photofest

to someone with a condition that is deliberately altered and balanced by drug use. Because of these features, he is desirable yet unapproachable.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, available sexuality in the franchise is then displaced onto the muscular and implicitly hypersexualized “hot” body of Taylor Lautner’s character Jacob Black. Jacob is literally hot in the narrative from the second installment on, for Jacob is turned into a werewolf and, during his off-time, a full-bodied young man who generates excessive body heat and hence does not need to be clothed.<sup>31</sup> In *New Moon*, for example, scenes of Jacob and Bella often feature a lustful Bella looking fixatedly at Jacob’s body (fig. 5). In fact, Bella’s lust (or love) for Jacob is poorly articulated in narrative terms; rather, the spectators are expected to understand Bella’s desire simply by her lustful look, the sexual energy carried by Jacob’s hyper-perfected body, his otherness as a Quileute young man, and Jacob’s other identity as a werewolf. Not only that desire is othered; Jacob is also narratively structured as Edward’s double in a way that Jacob too must refrain from having sex with Bella because he may turn into an animal and hurt her.<sup>32</sup>

Pattinson's sexuality therefore embodies a tension: on the one hand, he is sexually appealing and desirable; on the other hand, once such sexuality is approached and tested, it becomes excessive and destructive. The narrative therefore explores this very liminal space between these two imaginary poles of his image. Outside the film's diegesis, these two poles are built into his otherness as a British actor who plays an American character. For example, his non-*Twilight* film *Remember Me* (dir. Allen Coulter, US, 2010) was variously promoted in the UK around the fascination with Pattinson's linguistic and cultural fluidity as he plays American roles and, in the US, with how he brings in a young British college man's antisocial attitudes and behaviors in his portrayal of the main American character Tyler Hawkins.<sup>33</sup> Pattinson is advertised as a man who loves to drink and go clubbing with his friends during his stays in Los Angeles and New York City. In the US media, the idea of two potentially sexualized activities, drinking and clubbing, are therefore bracketed and made asexual within the British culture of social drinking and dancing.<sup>34</sup> However, the marketing of *Remember Me* failed to counterbalance Pattinson's image in the narrative, for the critical backlash of the film in the US is largely attributable to Pattinson's rampant and self-destructive sexuality in the film, an image of Pattinson that seems to be more readily accepted in the UK than in the US.<sup>35</sup>

Pattinson's stardom, at least in the US, therefore emerged out of a negotiation between an unusual expectation of an attractive young man to be upright and asexual and a fascination with his sexuality and constructed sleaziness due to his imagined otherness. These contesting expectations are best exemplified by a controversial set of photographs by Norman Jean Roy published in *Details*, in which Pattinson poses as a playboy with entirely or semi-naked female models, with his eyes staring at, or his head in between, some of these models' crotches. He commented, "I really hate vaginas. I'm allergic to vagina . . . I had no idea what to say to these girls. Thank God I was hungover."<sup>36</sup> The promotional stunt works for three markets: the metrosexual image designed to appeal to the UK urban audience; a sexual contradiction designed to appeal to the American audience (with the remark on his drunkenness/

Britishness); and a gay undertone designed to appeal to a yet-to-be-conquered territory, the gay market.

Teenage girls and *Twilight* moms who are addicted (in the popular sense of the word) to Pattinson's image in the *Twilight* franchise are therefore not so much addicted to love or sex but to the contradiction or structural incongruity in the way our society defines sexuality: that is, the very sexual contradiction that maintains the ontological consistency of heteronormative sexuality. One of *Twilight's* powers is the way in which it allows its spectators to feel as though they are falling in love for the first time. Yet the sensual and emotional stimulations do not come from love itself (as though it were an uncontested unified ideal) but from the socially constructed sexual contradiction that makes love or an initiating sexual experience both tempting and guilty: precisely the structure that makes sexual addiction possible once it reaches the point where compulsion and guilt take over one's management of the body or desire.

### **The Structure of Desire**

A similar structure was analyzed by Sigmund Freud in psychoanalytical terms as the *fort-da* game. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he observed an eight-month-old child throwing a wooden reel with a piece of string attached to it toward the side of his draped cot with an "o-o-o-oh" sound (identified by Freud as the word "fort," or to go away); the child then pulled the reel back with a far more joyful sound "da" (there). Freud suggests that this is a reenactment of the supposedly unpleasant experience of the mother going away in order to enjoy the pleasure of her reappearance. Freud observes that the child performs the first part of the game far more frequently than the second part, thus suggesting that the denial of pleasure is in itself pleasurable to the child. With this in mind, Freud proposes that, by transferring the child's compulsive attraction to the mother to the wooden reel and by throwing away this mother substitute, the child gains the pleasure of avenging his traumatic experience by performing it on the body of the other.<sup>37</sup> Thus, in the context of the analysis of *Twilight*, on the one hand

the fort-da structure tells us that sexual pleasure is derived precisely from a compulsive negotiation between Pattinson's image as a seductive man who promises abundant sexuality and a cold-blooded vampire who can potentially bring such pleasure to the point of excess or annihilation. In this sense, the same can be said about Jacob. On the other hand, it suggests that Edward's constant denial of Bella's desire, or Bella's denial of Jacob's, is in itself a form of pleasure. Through Edward's act of denial, sexual desires that had been disavowed in real life are narrativized and reenacted upon the body of the other (or Bella) as a mother substitute.<sup>38</sup>

This fort-da structure of addiction is a built-in mechanism of the generic convention of the vampire film, which typically features a woman who is both deeply attracted to, yet potentially endangered by, the vampire—a tension that is usually laid bare by a confession scene but that, here, is exacerbated by an editing pattern that is unexplainable in terms of the classical logic of cause and effect. In his commentary of the film, J. D. Connor questions the logic behind the editing decisions of *Twilight's* confession scene, which fails to convey the sense of sexual tension we expect from such a critical moment.<sup>39</sup> In fact, the scene has been widely parodied on the Internet for its seemingly stylized but narratively unmotivated cuts between extreme long shots and close-ups and its unexplained Steadicam movements and cranes. How do we explain such inconsistencies, especially in relation to the sequence's point of view?

The editing logic of this scene depends precisely on Bella's addiction to the contradictory structure of desire. At this point, Bella has just done some Internet research on the history and specificities of the vampire; her frightful knowledge about the vampire makes her ever more attracted to Edward. In this sequence, Bella leads Edward into the woods. We then see a long shot, from the ground level, of a large opening within the woods. Bella enters this area from behind a tree (fig. 6, setup 1). She throws her schoolbag to the ground as the camera cranes to the right. Edward then enters the by-now stage of confrontation from behind the same tree, as the camera cranes up to give us a high-angle shot. Bella, in the long shot, begins to talk about her observation of Edward: "You are impossibly fast . . . and strong."



The film then cuts to a close-up of Bella (fig. 7, setup 2), shot with a Steadicam that moves slightly to the left of frame, which is occupied by Bella. In the shot, she comments on Edward's cold and pale skin, which motivates a cut to a medium close-up of Edward (fig. 8, setup 3). The Steadicam moves back as Edward moves forward toward Bella (the camera). On the sound track, we hear Bella talk about Edward's eyes. The film then cuts back to the opening shot (fig. 9, setup 1a) as it cranes further up and Bella says: "Sometimes you speak . . . like . . . you're from a different time." The film then repeats the close-up of Bella (fig. 10, setup 2a) as she says, "You don't even drink anything." The camera pans quickly to the left and tilts up a little to review Edward behind her (fig. 11, setup 2b.1).

The film then cuts to a long tracking shot from left to right from behind a tree (fig. 12, setup 4) before it returns to the two-shot of Bella and Edward in their close-up (fig. 13, setup 2b.2) as she asks: "How old are you?" In the highly unstable shot, Edward tells Bella that he is seventeen—and has been seventeen for a while. The film then cuts to a bullet shot of the two, which rotates around them almost 360 degrees (fig. 14, setup 5); but, before the camera movement finishes, the film cuts back to the shot before (fig. 15, setup 2b.3), as Bella says that she knows what he is, and Edward asks her to "say it." The camera moves in a little to increase the intensity, and the film cuts to a low-angle shot of the trees; when the camera pans down, we see a long shot of Bella and Edward (fig. 16, setup 6).

The film then cuts to an extreme close-up of Edward (fig. 17, setup 7) saying "out loud." The music swells at this point. The film next cuts to a long shot from the opposite side of the 180-degree line, and it swerves up to give us a slanted long shot of Edward and Bella (fig. 18, setup 8) before the film cuts back to the extreme close-up of Edward (fig. 19, setup 7a), repeating "say it." The film then cuts to a variation of the opening shot (fig. 20, setup 1a), beginning with a tilted image of the trees and ending with a high-angle shot of Bella and Edward. The film then cuts back to the two-shot close-up of Bella and Edward (fig. 21, setup 2b.4), and Bella says, "Vampire." Edward then asks Bella if she is afraid. After a pause, she turns around, which motivates a close-up of Bella from Edward's point of view (fig. 22, setup 9). "No," Bella answers.



Figure 6. Setup 1



Figure 7. Setup 2



Figure 8. Setup 3



Figure 9. Setup 1a



Figure 10. Setup 2a



Figure 11. Setup 2b.1



Figure 12. Setup 4



Figure 13. Setup 2b.2



Figure 14. Setup 5



Figure 15. Setup 2b.3



Figure 16. Setup 6



Figure 17. Setup 7



Figure 18. Setup 8



Figure 19. Setup 7a



Figure 20. Setup 1a



Figure 21. Setup 2b.4



Figure 22. Setup 9

Notice that the visual structure of the sequence is organized around setup 2 and its variations, including setup 7. In fact, setup 7 is shot from the exact camera position as in setup 2, where the frame now only includes Edward's face. The logic of its construction can be understood as what Bordwell calls "serial poetics": a shot-by-shot order that is not based on narrative cause and effect, but on a conscious mathematical repetition of shots and variations.<sup>40</sup> Such organization lacks any committed visual point of view. Instead, the spectators are confronted by the totality of the camera's consciousness. The result is a narrative suspension, and we are supposed to be liberated (though, arguably, the sequence does not actually succeed) from the sequence of narrative events that came before this, and will soon come after, and thus able to focus on the image itself as a discourse. In this light, the narrative of the vampire is serially disintegrated by its visual structure as a pretext that allows us to satiate our fascination with the image and to satisfy our craving for the image of Pattinson and the fort-da structure of desire that he represents.

### Believing through the Other

Despite the moment of narrative suspension in the sequence I have just analyzed, Bordwell maintains the assumption that the classical Hollywood norm (the shot-by-shot economy motivated primarily by the narrative's cause-and-effect sequence, which is fundamentally anthropocentric) still serves as the underlying principle of storytelling for a film like *Twilight*, of which the type of serial poetics just analyzed is best understood as an intentional deviation. Sean Cubitt and William Brown, in their respective ways, offer other possible modes of reading for this seemingly inexplicable editing order. In "The Supernatural in Neo-Baroque Hollywood," Cubitt theorizes this stylistic phenomenon with the term *neo-baroque*, a style in which a "proliferation of signs drains the meaning out of any single instance of symbolization." For Cubitt, the neo-baroque Hollywood film not only overwhelms its viewers with multiple signs on the screen that suggest no definite meaning but also draws heavily on the idea of a supernatural (political or moral) power. Cubitt believes that neo-baroque Hollywood's fascination with the supernatural around the turn of the millennium (especially after 9/11) is not coincidental; instead, it is symptomatic of the anxiety (for some) over, or the desire (for others) for, submitting individual rights to the state.<sup>41</sup>

In fact, these different responses to biopolitical management often go hand in hand. Signs that drain the meaning out of any single instance of symbolization therefore allow spectators to negotiate the complex relationship between their anxiety and desire, at times allowing them simply to enjoy the pleasure of submission, and at times lending them imaginary agency to control and manage these traumatic conditions in alternative ways. Brown pushes this idea further by calling this form of cinema a "post-humanist cinema"—understood both technologically (i.e., cinema with nonhuman interfaces that have fundamentally transformed our state of being in the world) and formally (as cinema offers us modes of perception that are beyond human).<sup>42</sup>

The ideas proposed by Cubitt and Brown can be mobilized to open up the *mise en abyme* of what Bordwell calls serial poetics in the current context. For Cubitt and Brown, such a stylistic

mode is not merely a variation that maintains a structural difference with the classical norm; rather, it signals possible entry points, underneath a narrative surface that is apparently still driven by a classical heteronormative male protagonist, into multiple *révélés* that disintegrate this narrative surface by privileging the power of the invisible or the supernatural (as in the unexplained shots from an extreme high angle, Steadicam moves, or the almost 360-degree turn in the sequence, all of which offer perspectives or modes of perception that are beyond human). Such a paradigmatic shift in contemporary Hollywood cinema is in itself symptomatic of the spectators' and, as I shall argue later in this essay, the industry's loss of agency over the power to look and the ensuing desire to construct an imaginarily unified narrative system with a classical Aristotelian cause-and-effect narrational logic. Here, the underlying suggestion is that intersubjective relationships, including that between Bella and Edward and that between the feminized spectators and Edward/Pattinson, are interpassive: we all consign our trust, fear, or in fact our belief system to those of the Other. That said, the Other is best understood not as an unquestionable superpower; rather, it is a mythological authority, unconsciously constructed for the purpose of concealing, renegotiating, rewriting, and reconfiguring desires and death drives that would otherwise be considered disorganized and unlivable (the Real). The belief of the Other is in fact the site at which knowledge is surrendered; but as Joyrich would argue, this void of knowledge is the driving force around which desires are circulated, which motivates our craving for knowledge of desires.<sup>43</sup>

What is in this for the discourse of feminist criticism is the potential (though not always actualized or instantiated) reconfiguration of the classical scopophilic regime, as the questions "pleasure for whom" and "pleasured by whom" are constantly destabilized, yet such destabilization in turn reinforces the mythical authority of the Other. If Mulvey's idea of the scopophilic regime can be interpreted as a collective assignment of pleasure to the gaze of the Other, *Twilight* lends individual spectators their imaginary sense of agency by precisely personalizing each individual relationship with the Other.<sup>44</sup> In the sequence in question, the looks between

the supposedly heteronormative vampire and the supposedly heteronormative Bella are both overseen by the supernatural. Narratively, the boundary between the human and the nonhuman is reconfigured as Edward crosses his nonhuman territory into the human, and vice versa for Bella. Both the survival of these two trespassers and the pleasure of the spectators who are attracted to their acts of trespassing and sexual contradictions are therefore dependent on their implicit trust in the Other, redistributed in the form of mutual dependency or mutual interference: two parties consider themselves mutually dependent and are willing to surrender certain rights to the Other for the purpose of mutual survival.<sup>45</sup> Within the context of this essay, I call this a mode of mutual addiction, or the addiction to the Other.

### **From Addiction to Survival**

This idea of mutual interference for the purpose of mutual survival is seen in a well-known segment later on in the same sequence. Edward carries Bella up to the top of the mountain, where he confesses his addiction to Bella in a flattering telephoto close-up (fig. 23). Here, Edward looks down from a tree branch where he crouches, slightly off camera, supposedly toward Bella: “You are . . . like a drug . . . like my personal brand of heroin.” The camera then moves in a little before the film cuts to a high-angle shot of Bella from over forty-five degrees of where Edward is supposed to be, thus disrupting the classical eyeline match (fig. 24).



Figure 23



Figure 24

As a result, Edward’s close-up is once again lifted from the flow of the narrative, and his verbalization of desire/addiction is best understood as an invitation for the addicted spectator’s mimesis: she or he whispers in front of the screen with Pattinson the

same line, only, for her or him, the agency of addiction is the reality that escapes from the narrative through the face as a visual landscape. Like her or his personal brand of heroin, she or he is compelled either to revisit the movie theater in order to return to this close-up or to return to this point in her or his video file or DVD in order to watch it over and over again. This compulsive viewing structure is therefore symptomatic of our addiction to the very sexuality that Pattinson's face unwillingly exposes, and the screen itself bars our ultimate fulfillment of desire. To push this further, the narrative here serves not as a dramatization of desire and its fulfillment, but as a constant blockage—a form of pleasure—to our sexual access to Pattinson as an agency of addiction.

If the spectators are addicted to the Other as not only an imagined authority but also a site where the tension of desires is negotiated, we may push further the poetics of addiction to the level of the studio as one of the key substitutes of the Other. In this sequence, addiction as a discourse is carried out on the summit of the mountain, which alludes to Summit Entertainment as a topos where desire is traded and exchanged for the purpose of addiction. In this sense, Pattinson, as a representative of the studio's executives, is announcing to the spectators: "You are . . . like a drug . . . like my personal brand of heroin," with an expected mimetic return path built through Pattinson as an addictive agency.<sup>46</sup> Later on, Edward carries Bella to the summit of a giant western hemlock, followed by a panoramic shot of the mountains (the iconography of Paramount, the studio where the franchise was initially developed), signifying a studio management's takeover of the industrial power via both Pattinson and the film (over Paramount) through the process of addiction.

Curiously, in *New Moon*, the second act culminates in a scene in which Bella runs up the summit of an Italian town in order to prevent Edward from suicidally displaying himself as a vampire in front of a crowd. The sequence is organized around what Bordwell calls a "deadline" principle; in this case, Bella must stop Edward from exposing himself by noon when people will gather at the town square.<sup>47</sup> By so doing, he will let other human beings know that he is a vampire, an act punishable by death by the Council of Volturi

(the ruling coven of vampires). As a result, Bella will be “freed” from loving him and may continue to live as a human being. This subsegment begins with a close-up of Bella leaning over a fountain in the middle of the town square (fig. 25), from where she looks up at the top of the clock tower. The film then cuts to the clock striking twelve (fig. 26). These two shots, at first glance, place spectators in Bella’s point of view, by showing a shot of her look, followed by an indicator of the narrative deadline. The film then alternates between shots of Bella running toward Edward (figs. 28, 30, 31, 33) through a fountain and shots of Edward stripping (figs. 27, 29, 32, 34). The shots of Bella running through a fountain create a baptism metaphor, for the sequences serve as a rite of passage for Bella, who must overcome the temptation of falling in love with Jacob and save the life of Edward. One may argue that these shots are seen from Bella’s perspective, although the absence of any exchange of looks between her and Edward suggests that a higher power (in this case, the Volturi) is watching, an idea that will be confirmed in the following sequence.

Next, we see a long shot of a crowd in red, celebrating what they believe to be the medieval expulsion of vampires from the town; within the crowd, a little girl turns her head toward the camera (Edward; fig. 35). The film cuts to a medium close-up of Edward finishing his undressing with downcast eyes (fig. 36); it then cuts to his point-of-view shot of the steps (fig. 37), followed by a repetition of figure 36 (fig. 38). The film next cuts to a three-quarter shot of Bella running toward the camera (fig. 39), and then cuts to a close-up of Edward’s feet going down the steps (fig. 40). After a repetition of the previous shot of Bella (fig. 41), we return to the medium shot of Edward stepping down, with the diamond-like scale on his skin (which, in the narrative, is a beautiful feature of a vampire revealed only under sunlight) illuminating and radiating (fig. 42). The film cuts to a close-up of the little girl trying to catch her parents’ attention to Edward with joyful curiosity (fig. 43). We then see an over-the-shoulder three-quarter shot of Bella running toward Edward (fig. 44), followed by a close-up of Edward (fig. 45), before Bella jumps up to Edward in order to cover him (fig. 46).





Figure 25



Figure 26



Figure 27



Figure 28



Figure 29



Figure 30



Figure 31



Figure 32



Figure 33



Figure 34



Figure 35



Figure 36

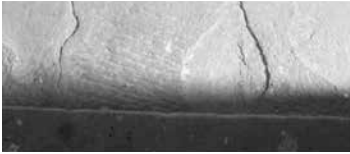


Figure 37



Figure 38



Figure 39



Figure 40



Figure 41



Figure 42



Figure 43



Figure 44



Figure 45



Figure 46

Again, this structural climax of the narrative of *New Moon* is marked by narrative suspension, on the one hand, and economic self-referentiality, on the other. The arrangement of having Edward exposing his beauty as a suicidal effort is merely a narrative excuse for a striptease, a show that stands outside the narrative flow of cause and effect. However, if we do read this narratively, what at first

appears to be a sequence driven by Bella's desire (to save Edward, to meet the deadline) is in fact structured around an alternation between Bella as the seer and an Edward who does not look back. The implication is that both Bella's act of looking and Edward's refusal to look back (his point-of-view shots tell us that he focuses on his footsteps, not on Bella) are performed for a higher power to see. Hence, both Bella's desire to save Edward and Edward's suicidal act are interpassively performed for the Other. More interestingly, the Other is substituted offscreen by the Volturi (whom we will meet in the following sequence), on-screen by the little girl (suggesting the next generation of teenage girls), and allegorically by Summit Entertainment. The right to see (of the Other) is therefore divided between a fictional substitute (the Volturi), a spectatorial substitute (the soon-to-be teenage girl), and a corporate substitute (Summit Entertainment). Seen this way, the sequence lays out the interpassive codependency and addiction between the spectatorial and the corporate interests via the diegesis as a means of negotiation. In this economy of exchange, Bella functions not as a substitute of spectators' desire (to see Edward stripping) but as someone whose mission is to deny her/our visual pleasure. As I suggested earlier, such disavowal is, in itself, the very form of pleasure that perpetuates our desire to follow the film series.

### **Othering America for America's Other**

In *New Moon*, available desire is in fact transferred partially to the body of Lautner/Jacob. As I mentioned earlier, Bella's desire for the literally hot Jacob is narratively barred by a possibility of his passionate transformation into a werewolf during their intercourse (as, in *Twilight's* mythology, this shape shifting is not dependent on the full moon), a structural parallel to Edward's possibility of transforming his kissing into blood-sucking during sex. Nevertheless, Lautner/Jacob's physical transformation, not just into a wolf but also into a well-built, full-bodied young man, and his fraternal living with the rest of the wolf pack consisting of equally desirable Native American men, confronts spectators with a humanity too overt to ignore. Here, the film contrasts not only the nineteenth-century notion of an opiated and sick

intellectual (Pattinson/Edward) against a healthy bodied, muscular man (Lautner/Jacob) but also one otherness (Pattinson/Briton) against another (Jacob/Quileute; Lautner claims some Native American heritage as well). *New Moon* is therefore best understood as Bella's experimentation with sexuality—here with a near-human who lives like a college frat boy and relates to her not so much in terms of addiction but as a cure to her addiction to Edward. Nonetheless, this near-heteronormative romance is quickly displaced by an otherness that is constructed not only narratively but also historically through the historical and historicized othering between whites and Native Americans.

This notion of otherness may help us push further this discussion. I have so far considered *Twilight's* poetics of addiction in primarily “American” terms. In these terms, the film relies on cultural clichés that can hardly be politically justified. Nonetheless, let us think about this question from another angle. The *Twilight* series makes an effort to construct America in every possible way permitted by the narrative: its family values, its fraternity culture, the political tension between whites and Native Americans, its reference to the European invasion of North America, its romance with the American Northwest, and its story of native-bred vampire and werewolf. Nonetheless, what sense does it make when an American story is enacted by a British actor and when a Native American culture is constructed with fictive mythologies? In other words, every attempt to construct the series's Americanness is made up of stereotypes, and the narrative is fabricated fundamentally by an assemblage of others. The *Twilight* series is thus less an attempt to tell an American vampire story than a transnational fantasy of America, one in which non-Americans play a crucial role in its construction.<sup>48</sup>

From a business perspective, *Twilight* has had an almost fifty-fifty split between its domestic and foreign markets (\$192 million and \$200 million, respectively),<sup>49</sup> while *New Moon* has garnered \$413 million from the foreign market, constituting 58 percent of the film's worldwide gross (\$297 million domestic).<sup>50</sup> The films' structure of addiction is therefore symptomatic of the mutual addiction between Hollywood and the overseas market. Hollywood's narrative structure, stardom, style, and political unconscious thus become a personalized brand of heroin for its global

audience, whereas the overseas market also becomes a personalized brand of heroin for Hollywood studios and executives. In this sense, *Twilight* is a symptom of this structure of mutual addiction to brand Hollywood, and Pattinson, at once a global icon and narrativized as American, serves as an agency of addiction to the fort-da structure of sexual and economic desires, targeted specifically to an imagined and actualized feminized spectatorship.<sup>51</sup>

The complexity of the term *addiction* as a poetics and industrial allegory on a transnational level is best illustrated in the distribution of *Twilight* in mainland China. *Twilight* was released in Hong Kong and Taiwan (where no import restrictions were imposed) on the same date in 2008 that it was released in the US and Canada, but it failed to receive its distribution permit in mainland China at that time. It was unclear why, although an Internet source speculated that the government authority was worried by the saturation of domestic horror films that year and afraid *Twilight* (being classified as a horror film), like its Chinese generic counterparts, could be read by its spectators as a politically subversive allegory. A distribution permit for mainland China was eventually given in 2009, and the film was imported by the Huaxia Film Distribution Company (Huaying), not by a rental agreement (Huaying would usually pay a rental fee and the performing rights to the US distributor, with a profit-sharing agreement between the two parties) but a purchase agreement (Huaying bought all the prints and the performing rights with a flat fee), and it garnered only 6 million yuan (approximately \$880,000).<sup>52</sup> Through television reports, newspapers, and brochures distributed in movie theaters, in addition to a government-approved translation of Meyer's *The Twilight Saga: The Official Illustrated Guide*, the authority and Huaying gave an official interpretation of the film and its significance in understanding American culture with the comment: "The more stupid the film is, the more popular it is in America."<sup>53</sup> By the time the film was released on 26 November 2009, however, most people had already seen it and were informed about its cultural impact globally via the Internet or by traveling to Hong Kong and Taiwan. As a result, a news portal calls this incident a "cultural embarrassment" of mainland China.<sup>54</sup>

Or is it? In one register, mainland China can be seen as one of the largest markets for Hollywood blockbusters today, a market to

which Hollywood studios are “addicted.” The *Twilight* scenario seems to illustrate how the government authority in China, having this in mind, employed effective policy (albeit top-down policy) to fight against the popular addiction to Hollywood cinema and American youth culture. The actual transactions of ideas and discourses about the film, however, took place not through these official channels but precisely in the year-long window during which Summit Entertainment was waiting for its distribution permit. It was on the Internet that the film was trafficked, discussed, and interpreted, and, with it, the stardom of Pattinson grew among Internet users and bloggers. Versions of an imagined America (or fantasized versions of China projected as an imagined America) were therefore invented, rewritten, and reproduced through these image exchanges and discourses. In fact, revisions or sequels of the *Twilight* novels appeared in fans’ blogs during and after this incubation period.<sup>55</sup> What is addictive thus lies neither in the film itself nor in its official discourses and management, but in spectators’ (or in this case, users’) processes of active participation and revision, that is, the process of personalizing their own brands of heroin and the process of appropriating the term *addiction* (like their nineteenth-century predecessors) for the purpose of questioning the governing authority’s fear about addiction, its power to define it, and the interregional relationship in the eyes of the two states (China and the US).

The mutual addiction between Hollywood and global fantasies might be further illuminated by other productions by Summit Entertainment. For example, another film starring Pattinson, *Remember Me*, is less a story about New York itself than a global imagining of America under 9/11, with the key parts played by non-American actors; *The Hurt Locker* (dir. Kathryn Bigelow, US, 2009), which garnered a 65.4 percent worldwide gross in the foreign market, addresses a global addiction to the war in Iraq as America’s international discourse;<sup>56</sup> *The Ghost Writer* (dir. Roman Polanski, US, 2010), with 74.2 percent worldwide in the foreign market, capitalizes on viewers’ addiction to Roman Polanski’s addiction to global political conspiracy and his imagination of global America.<sup>57</sup> Like *Twilight*, these films reveal both the pleasures and dangers of a poetics of addiction, revealing as well how an analysis of these poetics might provide a way of understanding not

only dynamics of gender and sexuality, and stardom and fandom, but also Hollywood's relationship with the world.

### Conclusion

I end this discussion of these issues with a quote from Pattinson, who claims that he has “always been hypersensitive about being looked at,” and that his “first thought” whenever he finds himself in a crowd is: “Someone could very easily stab me.”<sup>58</sup> If “global Hollywood” depends on the mutual to-be-looked-at-ness between Hollywood and the global, female and male, and queer and heteronormative, such appearance of mutual dependency is also symptomatic of a deep mutual distrust. If we put it in a Pattinsonian manner: “We depend on each other and work with each other because you could very easily stab me.” Such mutual dependency based on mutual distrust is not unlike Bella's relationship with Edward, as though she were saying, “We are addicted to the same blood; I trust you; but you could very easily bite me” (see fig. 1). Returning to the question of feminized spectatorship in contemporary Hollywood, *Twilight* is neither an attempt by Summit to “drug up” an anonymous interregional mass of imagined feminized spectators nor a text that allows these spectators fully to negotiate the multiplicity of their desires, but a symptom of the mutual addiction and interference between the studio and the spectators, between the multiple desires that circulate among spectators with different gender and sexual constructions, and between Hollywood and the world. In this sense, the feminized audience thus constructed is neither a fully active nor a fully passive one but an interpassive component within the larger structure of addiction, dependency, distrust, and, hopefully, recognition and constructive interference.

### Notes

A rough draft and shorter version of this essay was posted on the communal blog Printculture on 4 April 2010 ([www.printculture.com/item-2556.html](http://www.printculture.com/item-2556.html)). I wish to thank Haun Saussy for the opportunity to use the blog to gather comments and ideas, and Olga Solovieva for her invaluable feedback.

1. Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* (New York: Little, Brown, 2005). I place the term *addiction* within quotation marks here in order to emphasize its contestedness and multiplicity.
2. For the idea of the absence of cinema's "double articulation," see Christian Metz, "Problems of Denotation in the Fiction Film," in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader*, ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 39–41.
3. I use the term *feminized* here because, first and foremost, I wish to take away the biological limitation that the term *female* imposes on my discussion. Nonetheless, the term *feminized* needs to be understood as a contested term. In the context of this essay, for example, the studio behind the *Twilight* franchise, Summit Entertainment, may have one idea of what femininity means, whereas the targeted audiences that I discuss here—teenage girls, *Twilight* moms, and gay men—all have different notions and expectations of "femininity" and, in relation to it, of "masculinity" and other gendered formations.
4. Here I am referring to Tania Modleski, "The Disappearing Act: A Study of Harlequin Romances," *Signs* 5, no. 3 (1980): 435–48; Constance Penley, *The Future of an Illusion: Film, Feminism, and Psychoanalysis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); and Lynne Joyrich, "Elvisophilia: Knowledge, Pleasure, and the Cult of Elvis," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 5, no. 1 (1993): 73–91; also, Laura Kipnis, *Bound and Gagged: Pornography and the Politics of Fantasy in America* (New York: Grove, 1996).
5. For the concept of interpassivity, see Slavoj Žižek, "The Interpassive Subject," European Graduate School, [www.egs.edu/faculty/zizek/zizek-the-interpassive-subject.html](http://www.egs.edu/faculty/zizek/zizek-the-interpassive-subject.html) (accessed 3 November 2011); I was introduced to this concept by Thomas Elsaesser, who uses it in "Real Location, Fantasy Space, Performative Place: Double Occupancy and Mutual Interference in European Cinema," in *European Film Theory*, ed. Temenuga Trifonova (New York: Routledge, 2009), 47–62.
6. See Virginia Berridge and Griffith Edwards, *Opium and the People: Opiate Use in Nineteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); see also Victor Fan, "Football Meets Opium: Sovereignty and Cinematic Imaginations—A Sino-British Perspective" (unpublished book manuscript, 2011).



7. I discuss this idea substantially in Fan, "Football Meets Opium," 67–107. I am especially inspired by the study of Marcus Boon, *The Road of Excesses: A History of Writers on Drugs* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002). There are numerous works that can be classified as part of this genre; for our purpose here, I cite the most famous example, Thomas de Quincey, "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater," in *London Magazine*, September/October 1821, 293–312, 353–379.
8. Modleski, "Disappearing Act," 441; here Modleski refers to Roland Barthes, "An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative," trans. Lionel Duisit, *New Literary History* 6, no. 2 (1975): 262.
9. See Berridge and Edwards, *Opium and the People*, 278–81.
10. Jean Bodin, *On Sovereignty*, ed. Julian H. Franklin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 59; Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," trans. Edmund Jephcott, in *Selected Writings: Volume 1, 1913–1926*, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 236–52; Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), 7, 10, 12–13; also, Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).
11. Patrick J. Carnes and Marie Wilson, "The Sexual Addiction Assessment Process," in *Clinical Management of Sex Addiction*, ed. Patrick J. Carnes and Kenneth M. Adams (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2002), 5.
12. Eric Griffin-Shelley, "Adolescent Sex and Love Addicts," in Carnes and Adams, *Clinical Management*, 347.
13. Quoted in Mark F. Schwartz and Stephen Southern, "Manifestations of Damaged Development of the Human Affectional Systems and Developmentally Based Psychotherapies," in Carnes and Adams, *Clinical Management*, 92.
14. This notion of sexual difference is most famously formulated by Jane Moir and David Jessel, *Brain Sex: The Real Difference between Men and Woman* (London: M. Joseph, 1989).
15. See Modleski, "The Disappearing Act"; the term "women pornographic novel" is derived from Ann Barr Snitow, "Mass Market Romance: Pornography for Women Is Different,"

- Radical History Review* 20 (1979): 157; see also Mary Ann Doane, "Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator," *Screen* 23, nos. 3–4 (1982): 74–87. In her essay, Doane takes the idea of the masquerade from Joan Riviere, "Womanliness as a Masquerade," in *Psychoanalysis and Female Sexuality*, ed. Hendrik M. Ruitenbeek (New Haven: College and University Press, 1966), 213; see Doane, "Film and the Masquerade," 81n25.
16. Penley, *Future of an Illusion*, 79; here, Penley refers to Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Fantasy and the Origins of Sexuality," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 49, no. 1 (1968): 1–18.
  17. Miriam Hansen, *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 1.
  18. Jürgen Habermas defines the public sphere as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body." See "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)," trans. Sara Lennox and Frank Lennox, *New German Critique* 3 (1974): 49.
  19. David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 157–62.
  20. Joyrich, "Elvisophilia."
  21. Richard Dyer, *Stars* (London: BFI, 1982).
  22. Béla Balázs, "The Close-Up," in *Film Theory and Criticism*, 6th ed., ed. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 314–15.
  23. Summit Entertainment, "Actor Robert Pattinson Joins Cast of *Twilight* for Summit Entertainment," press release, 11 December 2007.
  24. Blabber\_sticks (blog commenter), Snitchseeker.com, 11 December 2007, [www.snitchseeker.com/harry-potter-news/robert-pattinson-cast-edward-cullen-twilight-52263/](http://www.snitchseeker.com/harry-potter-news/robert-pattinson-cast-edward-cullen-twilight-52263/).
  25. See, for example, Nancy Cordes, "'Twilight' Attracts Unexpected Audience," *CBS Evening News*, 22 November 2009, [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/11/22/eveningnews/main5739857.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/11/22/eveningnews/main5739857.shtml).

26. See, for example, “Robert Pattinson Gay?” MTV UK, 3 May 2009, [www.mtv.co.uk/artists/robert-pattinson/news/118841-robert-pattinson-gay-scene](http://www.mtv.co.uk/artists/robert-pattinson/news/118841-robert-pattinson-gay-scene); see also Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart, interview, *MTV News*, 30 March 2009, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4ByZf77mU8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4ByZf77mU8).
27. “EW’s ‘Twilight’ Cover Backlash,” *Los Angeles Times*, 10 July 2008, [latimesblogs.latimes.com/entertainmentnewsbuzz/2008/07/ews-twilight-co.html](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/entertainmentnewsbuzz/2008/07/ews-twilight-co.html). The original image is on the cover of *Entertainment Weekly*, 18 July 2010.
28. Jocelyn Vena, “Robert Pattinson Smells Bad, *New Moon* Crew Members Say,” MTV, 25 May 2009, [www.mtv.com/news/articles/1607693/20090325/story.jhtml](http://www.mtv.com/news/articles/1607693/20090325/story.jhtml).
29. The scene actually generated some thoughts among reviewers about what adolescent girls really want from a story that denies them physical excitement but instead offers them a mixture of danger and emotional engagement. See, for example, Caitlin Flanagan, “What Girls Want,” *Atlantic*, December 2008, 3, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/12/what-girls-want/7161/1/](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/12/what-girls-want/7161/1/); see also Brian Truitt, “Our Deep, Dark Obsession with Vampires,” *USA Weekend*, 21 November 2009, 2, [www.usaweekend.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=200991121001](http://www.usaweekend.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=200991121001). I am indebted to J. D. Connor for these two references.
30. See Boon, *Road of Excesses*, 28–29.
31. In *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse* (dir. David Slade, US, 2010), this contradiction is put at play in the narrative itself. For example, in the film, Edward has to entrust his rival, Jacob, to protect Bella, who is being hunted by Victoria (Bryce Dallas Howard), a vampire whose lover Edward killed in the first installment. As a werewolf, Jacob’s smell can cover up the smell of Bella’s blood, while the other Cullens plan to run around the country to distract Victoria. In one scene, when Edward hands Bella to a topless Jacob, Edward asks, “Doesn’t he own a shirt?” Later on in the film, Jacob carries Bella to the top of a mountain in order to avoid Victoria. At night, they meet a snowstorm, and Bella needs the body heat of Jacob to warm her up. In order to convince Edward to allow him to wrap his body around Bella, Jacob says, “Let’s face it, I am hotter than you.”
32. Hansen discusses the question of otherness as an entry point for sexual negotiations for women in the case of Valentino; see Hansen, *Babel and Babylon*, 293.

33. Larry Carroll, "Twilight Tuesday: Robert Pattinson Discusses *Harry Potter* Comparisons . . . And His Huge Feet," MTV, 15 July 2008, [www.mtv.com/movies/news/articles/1590892/story.jhtml](http://www.mtv.com/movies/news/articles/1590892/story.jhtml).
34. "Pattinson Works Undead Charm at L.A. Bar," *Celebuzz*, 19 February 2009, [www.celebuzz.com/pattinson-works-undead-charm-la-s87111/](http://www.celebuzz.com/pattinson-works-undead-charm-la-s87111/); and "Robert Pattinson Takes New York," *Celebuzz*, 3 June 2009, [www.celebuzz.com/robert-pattinson-takes-new-york-s109861/](http://www.celebuzz.com/robert-pattinson-takes-new-york-s109861/).
35. See, for example, Jake Coyle, "Review: Pattinson Still Brooding in *Remember Me*," distributed by Associated Press, 10 March 2010, [today.msnbc.msn.com/id/35803063/ns/today-entertainment/t/pattinson-still-brooding-remember-me/](http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/35803063/ns/today-entertainment/t/pattinson-still-brooding-remember-me/); see also Lisa Schwarzbaum, "Remember Me," *Entertainment Weekly*, 10 March 2010, [www.ew.com/ew/article/0,,20350091,00.html](http://www.ew.com/ew/article/0,,20350091,00.html).
36. Jenny Lumet, "Robert Pattinson on Life Beyond," *Details*, March 2010, [www.details.com/celebrities-entertainment/cover-stars/201003/twilight-star-actor-robert-pattinson-remember-me](http://www.details.com/celebrities-entertainment/cover-stars/201003/twilight-star-actor-robert-pattinson-remember-me), photographs by Norman Jean Roy.
37. Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. C. J. M. Hubback (London: International Psycho-Analytical Press, 1922), 11–16.
38. This corresponds, again, to the observations by Doane and Modleski, respectively; see Doane, "Film and the Masquerade"; Modleski, "Disappearing Act."
39. J. D. Connor, "Contemporary Hollywood: Art and Industry" (course lecture, Yale University, 18 November 2009).
40. Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 275–89.
41. Sean Cubitt, "The Supernatural in Neo-Baroque Hollywood," in *Film Theory and Contemporary Hollywood Movies*, ed. Warren Buckland (New York: Routledge, 2009), 51, 54–63.
42. William Brown, "Man without a Movie Camera—Movies without Men: Towards a Posthumanist Cinema?," in Buckland, *Film Theory and Contemporary Hollywood Movies*, 66–85.
43. See Joyrich, "Elvisophilia"; see also Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).
44. See Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in Braudy and Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism*, 841.

45. For the concept of mutual interference, see Thomas Elsaesser, *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 126–29.
46. For the methodology of this type of analysis, see J. D. Connor, “‘The Projections’: Allegories of Industrial Crisis in Neoclassical Hollywood,” *Representations*, no. 71 (2000): 48–76.
47. Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 157.
48. In fact, Connor, in his lecture “Contemporary Hollywood: Art and Industry,” argues that when Bella browses the Internet for information about vampires, the information network brings us to a global understanding of vampires, an interregional and intercultural network of storytelling that helps construct this fantasy of America.
49. Figures from *Box Office Mojo*, [boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=twilight08.htm](http://boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=twilight08.htm) (accessed 26 July 2011).
50. Figures from *Box Office Mojo*, [boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=newmoon.htm](http://boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=newmoon.htm) (accessed 26 July 2011).
51. For a discussion of global Hollywood, see Toby Miller, *Global Hollywood* (London: BFI, 2001); see also Paul Grainge, *Brand Hollywood: Selling Entertainment in a Global Age* (London: Routledge, 2008).
52. “Wang shang kan *Muguang zhi cheng*, *Di jiu qu piaofang pingping*” (“The Internet Figures Show: Fair Box Office Performances for *Twilight* and *District 9*”), Heilongjiang xinwen wang (JLHNews.cn), 3 December 2009, [www.hljnews.cn/xw\\_why1/system/2009/12/03/010502778.shtml](http://www.hljnews.cn/xw_why1/system/2009/12/03/010502778.shtml).
53. “Movie *Twilight* Hits Chinese Screens,” CCTV-International, 27 November 2009, [english.cctv.com/program/cultureexpress/20091127/101459.shtml](http://english.cctv.com/program/cultureexpress/20091127/101459.shtml).
54. “*Xinyue yi ying*, *Muguang cai lai*; piaofang ganga lingren danyou” (“*Twilight* Arrived after *New Moon*—The Embarrassing Box Office Is Worrisome”), iFeng, 26 November 2009, [ent.ifeng.com/movie/news/occident/detail\\_2009\\_11/26/175101\\_0.shtml](http://ent.ifeng.com/movie/news/occident/detail_2009_11/26/175101_0.shtml).
55. Here are simply a few examples: Hermione, “*Xuxie de poxiao Muguang zhi cheng*, *Xinsheng*—*Xingxing Yuanchuang*” (“A Sequel to *Breaking Dawn*—*Twilight: New Birth*: An Original Creation by Xingxing”), 8 June 2010, [www.douban.com/group/topic/11823012/](http://www.douban.com/group/topic/11823012/); Cuo'ai, “*Xuexie: Zaijian Muguang zhi*

- cheng” (“Goodbye, *Twilight*—A Sequel”), tieba.baidu.com/f?kz=1035779960 (accessed 26 July 2011); and Smile Muguang zhi cheng, “*Muguang zhi cheng* poxiao zhi hou de chenxi” (“*Twilight*: The Morning after the Breaking Dawn”), tieba.baidu.com/f?kz=1109268228 (accessed 26 July 2011).
56. Figure from *Box Office Mojo*, boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=hurtlocker.htm (accessed 26 July 2011).
57. Figure from *Box Office Mojo*, boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=theghostwriter.htm (accessed 26 July 2011).
58. Alex Pappardemas, “He’s Hot, He’s Sexy, He’s Undead,” *GQ*, April 2009, 106.

**Victor Fan** is assistant professor in the Department of East Asian Studies and the World Cinemas Program at McGill University, specializing in Chinese cinema, media, and literature. He graduated from the Department of Comparative Literature and the Film Studies Program at Yale University. His works have been published in *Film History*, *Screen*, and *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, and his book manuscript is titled “Football Meets Opium: Sovereignty and Cinematic Imaginations—A Sino-British Perspective.” He is also a filmmaker, composer, and an active contributor to the communal blog *Printculture*.

Figure 47. Bella and Edward walk blissfully on campus like a pair of movie stars in *Twilight*. Shown from left: Robert Pattinson, Kristen Stewart. Courtesy of Summit Entertainment/Photofest

