

# Precious Footage of the Auteur at Work: Framing, Accessing, Using and Cultifying

## Vivian Kubrick's *Making The Shining*

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### Abstract

This article aims to explore the centrality to Kubrick's cult reputation of a touchstone resource for Kubrick fans: Vivian Kubrick's 1980 documentary *Making The Shining*. Through an analysis of the documentary itself, as well as a charting of its circulation from original broadcast on television to its dissemination and discussion via a prominent Kubrick fan site, *alt.movies.kubrick* (*amk*), the article will explore the shifting valuations of this crucial Kubrick-related paratext in relation to Kubrick's status as cult auteur and to forms of technological change which have impacted on this documentary's history of distribution and dissemination. In particular, the article will attempt to problematize the notion that the cult status and value of particular texts automatically diminishes when they become readily available on DVD, by focusing on the range of ways in which *Making The Shining* is valued by *amk*-users, subsequent to its shift in status from a rare object (swapped on second and third-generation video copies of off-air recordings) to a key DVD extra, in a remastered form, on DVD releases of *The Shining* from 1999.

**Key Words:** Cult Authorship; Media Paratexts; Digital Auteurism; Online Fan Communities; *The Shining*; Stanley Kubrick

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*Nasties* (2007) and *The Evil Dead* (2011), and co-editor (with Sarah Thomas) of *Cult Film Stardom* (2012). She is currently working (with Jamie Sexton) on a project on the local British censorship of *The Devils* and *Monty Python's Life of Brian*.

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In 'From Bad to Good and Back to Bad Again?', Jamie Sexton attempts to consider and to chart some of the 'contextually shifting uses' of the 'the term "cult"' – to examine 'the semantic shifts that "cult" has undergone' as the term has circulated through film culture from the inter-war period and onwards (2014, 129). Towards the end of the essay, Sexton outlines the ways in which 'technological changes such as the growth of home-viewing platforms and the rise of the Internet' (140) have initiated a new set of debates, amongst film scholars, about whether such developments (which have allowed for easier access to a wider range of films previously associated with the cult label) are leading to the notion that cult now has increased 'irrelevance as a conceptual term' (141). Sexton refers here to a number of scholarly contributions to a critical symposium on cult in a 2008 issue of the journal *Cineaste*, and, in particular to Jeffrey Sconce's argument that because, for him, cult, in its 'original form' connotes 'an esoteric sense of social, cultural, and esthetic exile' (informed, clearly, by the obscure and/or hard-to-obtain status of many films that have been associated with cult), that this central definer of cult cinema – a definer that clearly illustrates cult's distinction from conceptions of the mainstream – is being eroded by the increased availability and access to a wider range of films that has been enabled by technological shifts such as DVD and the internet (141).

Crucially, Sexton's response to such debates draws on his aim to illustrate the ways in which the term cult (and its uses and meanings) is historically contingent. For him, the term 'cult'

has shifted in its uses and ‘operated’ differently ‘across different contexts’ (141), from its uses by Siegfried Kracauer to Andrew Sarris to Umberto Eco to more contemporary uses in the work of scholars such as Sconce, Mark Jancovich and others. Consequently and for him, these shifting historical uses and operations problematize the conception of ‘access as the litmus test of cultism’, on which arguments such as Sconce’s depend (142). For Sexton, ‘issues such as knowledge, awareness, and expertise’ can be equally important in terms of the ways in which fans of particular films (or, indeed, stars or auteurs) are able – through particular uses, forms of engagement and valuation – to be cultified (142).

In this article, I want to focus, firstly, on the ways in which the cultification of particular texts (as they circulate through different, changing technological platforms and sites) is, inevitably, informed by issues of access (lack of easy availability of a text or a set of related texts and thus the constitution of such texts as rare, precious and exclusive) but also, secondly, how these issues of access (or lack thereof) can also be informed by (and thus complicated by) the valuation of crucial forms and networks of knowledge (knowledge which underpins the ways in which such texts are used and read, as these texts circulate, across time, amongst communities of devoted fans). In order to do so, this article will focus not on a film (as such) but, to all intents and purposes, a promotional paratext, Vivian Kubrick’s 1980 documentary *Making The Shining*. Through a focus on the history of circulation and changing valuation of this ‘making of’ documentary (which documents the working practices of its director during the production of *The Shining*), this article will not only consider the ways in which devoted fans seek access to (and thus cultify) particular texts but also the ways in which this can connect to the need for increased access to, and knowledge about, particular directors: in this case, Stanley Kubrick, a director whose status, reputation and persona was, and continues to

be, characterised by notions of (and the tensions between) accessibility and inaccessibility, absence and presence.

Originally broadcast on BBC2 on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1980 as part of the channel's *Arena* strand of arts documentaries, *Making the Shining* (a thirty-minute documentary filmed by Kubrick's youngest daughter, Vivian) has, without question, become a touchstone resource for Kubrick fans. In particular, this documentary was used, discussed and drawn upon by a key group of Kubrick fans – the users of the discussion group *alt.movies.kubrick* (*amk*) and their associated website, *The Kubrick Site* – between 1996 and 2005: a crucial period in the circulation history of both the documentary and of Kubrick's associated cult and auteurist reputation. This timespan marked a period of pronounced activity and discussion around *Making The Shining* on *amk*, both prior to and following Kubrick's death (and the subsequent release of his last film, *Eyes Wide Shut*). This was a period when the documentary moved from an 'ultra-rare' (Michael Brooke 16/7/99, *amk*) artefact circulated through first, second and third generation off-air video recordings to one of the most prominent extra materials on video and DVD releases of *The Shining* and, in turn, when the internet and DVD were being embraced by early adopting film fans and cultists alike (of a kind clearly exemplified by *amk*'s contributors). In this sense, and in the spirit of recent work which has aimed to historicise the cultification of films, stars, auteurs, and related consumption practices (Smith 2010; Egan and Thomas 2013; Sexton 2014), this article will home in on key periods in the lifespan of *Making The Shining*, when key shifts and developments in film marketing and associated forms of film and home video distribution and dissemination were taking place and impacting on its (potentially cult) meanings and value (from the original television transmission of *Making The Shining* in 1980, to its subsequent circulation – through talk and off-air video

recordings – on discussion groups like *amk* from 1996, to its appearances on DVD from 1999 onwards).

Through doing this, I want to consider two related questions, about cultures of fandom around Kubrick and the role and currency of *Making The Shining* in relation to this. Firstly, how might the shifting status and valuation of *Making The Shining* be informed by the ways in which Kubrick has been approached and considered as a cult auteur? Secondly, while *Making The Shining*'s value as an 'elusive' object (Peter Tonguette 20/10/99, *amk*) within Kubrick fan communities was inevitably at its height prior to its release, in a remastered form, on DVD in 1999 and then again in 2001 (complete with Vivian Kubrick commentary), how did its subsequent ready availability on DVD impact on the ways in which it was used and valued by these fans? Before considering this in detail, I first need to address two areas of scholarly debate which clearly inform my aims in this article: firstly, recent work that has attempted to consider and explore Kubrick's potential status as a cult auteur, and secondly, the growing tradition of work around the commercial promotion of the auteur and, increasingly, its relation to new technologies (in particular, DVD). Both of these contexts, as illustrated below, inform the ways in which *Making The Shining* has come to be valued as cult object amongst Kubrick enthusiasts, and help to provide an initial map of a number of ways in which access to this paratext has been so important to Kubrick fans on discussion groups such as *amk*.

### **The Specificity of Kubrick as a Case Study: Cult Auteurism and 'Contemporary Auteurism' as Contexts for the Valuation of *Making The Shining***

It's important to state, at the outset, that Kubrick is clearly not a director who can be related, in any way, to conceptions of cult associated with notions of the obscure: to valuations of directors as cult because they are little-known, under-appreciated and/or whose roots are in low-budget or exploitation filmmaking. Clearly, to draw on Ernest Mathijs and Jamie Sexton's useful term, Kubrick can be conceived of as a public figure with a 'double-tiered status' (2011, 77): as an inherently 'mainstream' and/or art-cinema related figure (illustrated by his evident status as undoubtedly one of the most famous, but also written-about and revered, directors in film history) but also as a figure with great potential to be understood, appreciated and valued in ways that are, distinctly, cultish (in particular, by his most devoted fans, of which the *amk* discussion group – and more recently the devoted fans featured in the documentary *Room 237* – are clear exemplars).

This 'double-tiered status' has been addressed and explored by a number of scholars working on aspects of cult cinema and cult auteurism: by David Church in a 2006 article entitled 'The "Cult" of Kubrick', by Ernest Mathijs and Jamie Sexton in their ground-breaking 2011 book *Cult Cinema*, and, most recently, by David Andrews in his work on what he terms 'cult-art cinema'. For Andrews, 'cult-art cinema happens in the subcultural spaces where cult cinema and art cinema overlap' and, inevitably, this will be underpinned by aspects of film culture heavily associated with both art and cult cinema: such as, crucially, cult auteurism (2013, 95-96). As a consequence, for him, the existence of these subcultural spaces (which clearly can include dedicated fan communities) can lead to directors being imbued with unintentional cult reputations, and Kubrick (along with Orson Welles and Stan Brakhage) constitutes, for Andrews, a key exemplar of this, as a 'traditional auteur...whose films have [also] often been praised as cult classics' (105). In terms of the other intersection identified above (the way in which Kubrick's reputation straddles the mainstream – in terms of his pronounced and

undiminishing fame – and forms of cult valuation), Mathijs and Sexton have identified Kubrick (along with Orson Welles, Terry Gilliam and Nicholas Ray) as prime examples of what they term the ‘mainstream maverick’: a kind of cult auteur that ‘can gain a reputation for their battles with the studios, or for fiercely preserving an egotistical control over the creation of a commercial product’ (2011, 70). Interestingly, while they note that this latter type of mainstream maverick is rare, they acknowledge confidently that, if anyone conforms to this type, it is Kubrick.

Herein lies a bone of contention for many a Kubrick enthusiast: the powerful public image of Kubrick (both before and after his death) as someone who clearly conforms to the romantic notion of the creative genius battling – and in many ways defining himself against – the ‘mainstream’ or the Hollywood ‘system’, but who, in a less positive sense, is therefore frequently portrayed as an egotistical controller or dictatorial figure; obsessive, tyrannical, demanding extreme perfectionism. For Church, Mathijs and Sexton, and Kubrick’s biographer Vincent LoBrutto, this portrayal of Kubrick is largely based (because of his famous desire, during his lifetime, for privacy and his lack of interest in publicity) on what they identify as legends or ‘apocryphal stories’: stories which, for LoBrutto, have led to the production of ‘a mythology more than a man’ (1997, 1).

It is indeed the key components of this ‘mythology’ surrounding Kubrick which, for Church and Mathijs and Sexton, are at the heart of his cult reputation and the forms of appreciation which inform it. As Church notes (albeit discussing critical, rather than fan, readings of Kubrick):

By remaining intensely private and secretive, on the *fringes of an industry built upon public exposure*, the notion of Kubrick as auteur fostered a cult of personality by his very refusal to exploit the limelight occupied more comfortably by other prominent directors...This hermeticism encourages [cult] auteurist readings...because the auteurist critic must ‘*gain access*’ to the filmmaker’s private world...using the sort of *detailed cross-textual knowledge* (and/or trivia) of Kubrick’s work necessary for...[a cult] auteurist reading (2006, my italics).

Here, then, Church highlights key aspects of Kubrick’s auteur reputation which have fed, markedly, into his status as an object of cult devotion and fascination, and which are in clear dialogue with notions of access, rarity and knowledge that are seen to be at the heart of a significant number of cult film formations and cultures. As Kubrick’s stepdaughter, Katharina noted in the 1999 documentary, *The Last Movie*, her stepfather ‘had the best of being famous, in that he was terribly famous but completely anonymous’ (quoted in Joyce 1999). This paradox (at the heart of Kubrick’s public status both prior to and subsequent to his death in 1999) has clearly attended the ways in which devoted fans of Kubrick have engaged with their central fan object: Kubrick ‘the man’ beneath the layers of the Kubrickian ‘mythology’. And it is this engagement, as I will go on to illustrate, that centrally informs the ways in which *Making The Shining* is constructed (as a particular kind of ‘making of’ documentary or promotional paratext) and the ways in which this documentary is subsequently engaged with, used and discussed by Kubrick fans on *amk* as a key form of ‘cross-textual knowledge’ about Kubrick and his ‘private world’.



If this illustrates the ways in which Kubrick, his reputation, and shifting understandings and valuations of this reputation, have connected with conceptions of cult auteurism, the other key context which informs my aim to chart the shifting framings, uses and meanings of *Making The Shining* (and its relation to Kubrick's cult reputation) is Kubrick's relationship with what Catherine Grant has termed 'contemporary auteurism' (2008, 101): the tradition of work which has sought to explore how extrafilmic or paratextual materials (of which *Making The Shining* is a clear example) feed into and help to promote the public image of particular auteur figures. The canonical work within this tradition is, of course, Timothy Corrigan's piece on the commerce of the auteur in his influential 1991 book *A Cinema Without Walls*. As Stephen Crofts has noted, Corrigan's crucial intervention into film authorship studies here was to draw on but also extend Michel Foucault's influential work on the 'author-function' and 'author-name', by reinstating the 'social agency' of the author as a 'commercial presence': a figure who is able, through extratextual material (most prominently, the director interview), to 'engage' and 'disperse' their 'organizing agency as auteur' (Crofts 1998, 322; Corrigan 1991, 105 & 108).

For Corrigan, this shift to a kind of 'commercial auteurism' in film culture since 1980 has ushered in a pronounced focus (in terms of directorial reputations) on directors actively working 'to promote his/her name' as, in Crofts words, 'a central means of marketing and product differentiation' which frequently 'supports the cultural and cult statuses of cinema' (Corrigan 1991, 115; Crofts 1998, 322). More recently, these initial explorations and questions have fed into the study of what Devin Orgeron terms 'postdigital notions of authorship' (2007, 60), which has addressed the ways in which digital formats (from laserdisc to DVD to Blu-ray) have created 'new modes of delivery of auteurism' (Grant 2008, 103) through which a director can 'disperse' and project their public image as a particular kind of

auteur. In particular, Grant, in her influential essay ‘Auteur Machines?’, has considered the key role played by director’s commentaries within this new postdigital form of auteurism, exploring the ways in which, through these commentaries, direct address by directors to ‘interested viewers-users’ and ‘connoisseurs’ has enabled new, more direct and more intimate, means through which auteur figures can engage and disperse their ‘agency as auteur’ (2008, 110).

Crucially, Kubrick’s relations to these shifting, and clearly prominent and prevalent, auteurist discourses has been distinctive and vexed since the establishment of digital home viewing platforms, for a number of reasons (all of which were discussed and drawn on by *amk* users during the time period on which I’m focusing here). Kubrick passed away in March 1999, at a time when laserdisc remained a specialist collector’s medium and DVD sales were only just beginning to rise and take hold of the home viewing market. Aside from this, he was, as Church notes above, an extraordinarily private individual situated ‘on the fringes of an industry built on public exposure’. In this sense, if, for Corrigan, the commercial status of many post-1980 auteurs was founded on a marked ‘commercial presence’ in the public sphere, then Kubrick – as someone whose auteur image was constituted in many ways through public absence rather than presence – could equally be seen as being ‘on the fringes’ of this cultural and commercial activity from 1980 onwards.

While, in the mid to late 1990s, the legends, myths and stories that fuelled the mythology of Kubrick continued to circulate, and increase in number and scope as the gap between the release of his last film (*Full Metal Jacket*) and his forthcoming film (*Eyes Wide Shut*) grew larger, access to the man himself (to his working practices, even to his image and voice) remained limited. While Kubrick gave some print interviews to accompany the release of

each of his films, audio-visual interviews with the feted director (clearly a key potential platform for the dispersal of an ‘organizing agency’) were non-existent. In this sense, Kubrick, both prior to and subsequent to his death, was a director with limited potential to, in Barbara Klinger’s terms, enter the ‘digital pantheon’ of auteurs whose reputation and status could be dispersed via extra features on DVD (2008, 39). Furthermore, while rumours that Kubrick had recorded DVD commentaries for *The Shining* and *Full Metal Jacket* proved to be unfounded, the potential for relevant extras to be included on digital releases of his films remained (and remains) limited, considering that Kubrick was famous for working on closed sets and that it was believed that he had destroyed all outtakes from his films.

In this sense, the desire for Kubrick fans on *amk* to ‘gain access’ to Kubrick’s ‘private world’ and to the ‘man’ himself – a man whose image, voice and views on his working methods remained distinctly inaccessible in both pre-digital and post-digital film culture – has been particularly pronounced, heightening the value and currency of any ‘cross-textual knowledge’ that these fans have been able to obtain in order to gain some kind of contact with, in LoBrutto’s terms, the ‘man’ rather than the ‘mythology’. With this in mind, the following two sections will further explore the ways in which *Making The Shining* has figured as a distinctive text, and a key piece of ‘cross-textual knowledge’, about Kubrick the ‘man’ during the course of its circulation from television to bootleg video to DVD. Through this, this article will further consider how these forms of circulation have fed into conceptions of rarity, distinctiveness and exclusivity which complicate the notion that easy access to a previously inaccessible text reduces that text’s value within online communities of devoted cult film fans.

Firstly, in order to consider how the documentary itself has informed the ways in which it has subsequently been evaluated and used on *amk*, I will consider the status of *Making The Shining* as a particularly distinctive, and in some ways anomalous (and thus potentially cult), paratext in its own right, exploring the ways in which this status is informed not only by Kubrick's specific public image but also by historical shifts in industrial and marketing practices (of the kind identified by Corrigan, Grant and others) which have informed its circulation through time and through different mediums and formats. Secondly, I will then home in on the (past and continued) uses of *Making The Shining* to fans and enthusiasts on *alt.movies.kubrick*, focusing, in particular, on the ways in which this documentary has served as a primary piece of 'cross-textual knowledge' about Kubrick, and a key – consistently returned to – resource for exploring the persistent question at the centre of the vast FAQs section on *The Kubrick Site*: 'so who was he really?' (The Kubrick FAQ, 2001, [www.visual-memory.co.uk/faq/](http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/faq/)).

### **'A Kind of Miracle'?: Valuing *Making The Shining* as a Transitional Paratext**

In an *amk*-user review written in 2001 and included in *The Kubrick Site* FAQs section, *Making The Shining* is described as 'a kind of miracle, in that it is an intimate, almost fly-on-the-wall portrait of the famously "publicity shy" director at work' (RM, The Kubrick FAQ, 2001, [www.visual-memory.co.uk/faq/index3.html](http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/faq/index3.html)). A previous 'making of' feature had been produced for one of Kubrick's films – *2001: A Space Odyssey: A Look Behind the Future and What is Out There?* (1968) – but while footage is included here of Kubrick at work on set, it is minimal and includes no location sound. Indeed, in contrast to *Making The Shining*, and unlike Arthur C. Clarke, lead actor Keir Dullea and some of the film's NASA consultants, Kubrick doesn't speak to or acknowledge the presence of the camera during the course of his

appearances on screen in this 1968 documentary. As a consequence, and in relation to the public conceptions of Kubrick's privacy and inaccessibility discussed in the previous section, *Making The Shining* has had marked value, for Kubrick fans on *amk*, as a 'special' documentary, featuring both sound and image of Kubrick and thus constituting 'almost the only footage of Kubrick we have of him working on a movie' (Matthew Dickinson 29/10/02, *amk*).

This valuation of *Making The Shining* in terms of the scarcity of available footage of Kubrick (whether at work or otherwise) dovetails with another aspect of Kubrick's reputation, which Church aligns with cultish forms of consumption and appreciation. As he notes, 'the infrequency with which Kubrick produced films – only thirteen in almost fifty years of filmmaking, with lengthening intervals between films in his late career – adds to an almost cultish overinvestment in each release' (2006). With these notions of scarcity in mind, Kubrick fan investment in, and engagement with, an additional Kubrick-related audio-visual text was perhaps inevitable, allowing *Making the Shining* to achieve the status of a cult text in its own right. Indeed, after its initial television broadcast on BBC2 in 1980 and prior to its first appearance on DVD in 1999, *Making The Shining* could, undoubtedly, be seen as being part of a network of inaccessible texts or 'lost objects' – in David Church's terms (2006) – prized by Kubrick enthusiasts: circulating, just like bootleg video copies of two Kubrick titles which had been withdrawn in the UK, *Fear and Desire* and *A Clockwork Orange*, in exclusive 'video trade and sales circles' (Church, 2006) which *amk* users were clearly connected to (with trading of copies seeming to be at its height on *amk* between 1996 and 1999).

However, before moving to further consider the status of *Making The Shining* as a documentary which includes rare footage of Kubrick, I want to first consider another reason why *Making The Shining* is valued as distinctive and special by *amk* contributors. As *The Kubrick Site* review also notes, it is also the ‘informality’ of Vivian Kubrick’s approach within the documentary that makes *Making The Shining* a particularly ‘candid’ and ‘revealing’ piece of work, and succeeds in allowing her to capture ‘truths about the filmmaking process’. As a consequence, for this reviewer, ‘all these factors elevate *Making The Shining* far above the crop of bland studio-made electronic press releases that accompany the opening of the majority of contemporary films’ (RM, The Kubrick FAQ, 2001, [www.visual-memory.co.uk/faq/index3.html](http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/faq/index3.html)). This view was echoed by another *amk* contributor who noted that ‘a “making of” documentary need not be a piece of fluff or glorified EPK. See “Making The Shining”, “Hearts of Darkness”, etc’ (Philip Sondericker 9/3/02, *amk*).

However, the flipside of this appreciation of *Making The Shining* as a distinctive paratext – an authentic portrait of a director at work which is elevated and seen as a cut above standard ‘bland’ making of documentaries – is illustrated by its original reception, on television, as a rather anomalous entity. As Jonathan Gray argues, while paratexts (such as promotional ‘making ofs’) ‘have surrounded all media throughout history’, ‘as Hollywood’ has grown ‘fonder of franchises and multi-platform brands or characters, yet more paratexts are being produced’ (2010, 39). To extend this further, clearly the marketing genre of the ‘making of’ has grown and become a more familiar part of the paratextual environment since the establishment of a solid infrastructure of distribution for such texts (i.e. the establishment of digital home video technologies from laserdisc to DVD and Blu-ray, as well as the internet). As Gray notes, prior to laserdisc, and as the existence of the *2001* ‘making of’ illustrates,

paratexts were clearly being produced in order to ‘announce’ a media ‘text’s presence’ (2010, 39). However, platforms for their distribution and circulation were clearly limited to either theatrical distribution, or to radio or television broadcast. Furthermore, as John Thornton Caldwell (2008) has illustrated, much of this pre-DVD ‘making of’ material (designed to promote upcoming film releases) was indeed disseminated in the form of Electronic Press Kits (EPKs), raw promotional material which was then used, selected, framed and mediated by television broadcasters as part of entertainment news items, with this raw ‘making of’ footage then being re-used, re-edited and repurposed as it was employed, through time, in a wider range of promotional material associated with a particular film title.

In contrast, *Making The Shining* was a pre-edited, stand-alone documentary (rather than raw EPK footage for subsequent assemblage and use by broadcasters), and, in this sense, it can be seen to hover precariously on the border between a documentary feature film – akin, as noted in the *amk* comment above, to ‘making of’ documentaries such as *Burden of Dreams* (1982) or *Hearts of Darkness* (1991) – and a standard, more explicitly promotional, ‘making of’. Indeed, the imprecise status of *Making The Shining* (in relation to EPK material on the one hand and feature length documentaries on the other) is illustrated by the fact that, because it was thirty minutes in length and thus not a feature length making of documentary, it’s initial dissemination was via television broadcast and not just in any broadcast slot but within the framework of the prestigious BBC2 *Arena* arts documentary strand (overseen, in 1980, by future BBC controller Alan Yentob).

Consequently, the press reception of *Making The Shining* on initial broadcast also foregrounded its status as a distinctive anomaly, but in the sense that it was, in the *amk* users terms, more akin to a ‘glorified EPK’ or ‘piece of fluff’ that was masquerading, through its

broadcast as part of the *Arena* slot, as a legitimate arts documentary. For the *Morning Star*, for instance, this ‘*Arena* special’ ‘proved to be little more than promotion for the film’ (Lane, 1980), while, for the *Daily Telegraph*, ‘why this giggly amateurism should be given the network slot was hard to understand’ (Last, 1980). In this sense, *Making The Shining*’s status as a distinctive or anomalous ‘making of’ documentary is clearly informed by two factors that relate to its moment of production and broadcast. Firstly, this relates to its status as a precursory or transitional paratext, which, if made twenty years later, would undoubtedly have found a natural home on an official internet site and then on DVD but which, due to being made in 1980, was instead screened on BBC television via a framework that seemed inappropriate or awkward, at least for press reviewers. Secondly and particularly in relation to its potential status as a cult text, the two forms of evaluation discussed above (that of *amk* fans retrospectively, and press reviewers at the time of original broadcast) highlight, as noted above, the ways in which *Making The Shining* was imbued, from first broadcast, with an ambivalent status: neither higher-end arts documentary (attended by the expectations and conventions associated with this category) or conventional, promotional ‘making of’ (of the kind that Caldwell sees as a natural development, and repurposing of, traditional EPK content).

This ambivalent status is evident both in terms of the way in which *Making The Shining* is formally constructed and in some of the, quite elliptical, comments Vivian Kubrick makes about factors that led to the commissioning of the documentary in her DVD commentary (which accompanied its inclusion on a DVD release of *The Shining* in 2001). So, despite the evident ‘fly-on-the-wall’ tone of much of the documentary – its employment, throughout, of a hand-held camera and other markers of authenticity – its status as promotional tool for *The Shining* is evident from the fact that a number of clips from the film (of substantial duration)



are included throughout the documentary. Indeed, the documentary's structural pattern, throughout, is to include behind the scenes footage of the actors and crew preparing for a scene to be shot or actually shooting a scene, followed by a clip from the film of the scene in question (in its completed form), followed by a 'talking head' interview with relevant cast members involved in that scene or featured in the associated behind the scenes footage (either Jack Nicholson, Shelley Duvall, Danny Lloyd or Scatman Crothers).

Indeed, *Making The Shining*'s status as, on the one hand, 'fly-on-the-wall' documentary and, on the other, promotional paratext is also evident in comments Vivian Kubrick makes during the course of her DVD commentary. At the commencement of her informal, relaxed and engaging commentary, Vivian Kubrick outlines the reasons why she ended up making the documentary. Here she notes that she had previously been working in *The Shining*'s art department but had then been asked by her father to film the production in order to keep her out of mischief – a comment which perpetuates the authenticating notion of the documentary as a kind of intimate home movie of Kubrick at work through his daughter's eyes, commissioned by Vivian Kubrick's father as a way to keep her busy and occupied on the set. However, later on in the commentary, she remarks that 'At the time' that the *Making The Shining* footage was being shot 'Warner Brothers didn't really know what I had and, although I shot a tremendous amount, I was restricted to making this over thirty minutes long and it had to contain a lot of clips, because that was the only format that Warner Brothers could work it. There was so much footage' (Kubrick, 2001).

In alignment with the conflicting nature of the evaluations made by press reviewers and *amk* fans, then, a sense of conflict and compromise is set up here (in a way which, potentially, contributes to *Making The Shining*'s status as an anomalous paratext). As noted earlier, on

*amk*, *Making The Shining* is valued for its candid, frank, revealing approach and thus its privileged view of Kubrick both during and between takes on the set of the film (which, for *amk* users, connects it to other, celebrated, feature-length making of documentaries such as *Hearts of Darkness*). This approach is primarily attributed, by *amk* users, to Vivian Kubrick. However, while this attribution, in turn, is supported and consolidated by Vivian Kubrick's commentary, through the ways in which she sets herself up as a tireless documenter of life on the set of the film, she also refers here to the ways in which the process of documentation was overseen – and curtailed and restricted – by a Hollywood studio (Warner Brothers) whose perception of *Making The Shining* is clearly, and inevitably, far more aligned with the notion of it as a conventional promotional tool.

While this therefore presents *Making The Shining* as a compromised text (neither feature length arts documentary nor conventional 'making of'), its value as an unusually distinct and frank portrait of the production and of Kubrick, in particular, has remained primary in terms of the ways in which it has been valued by Kubrick fans. Both Barbara Klinger and Jonathan Gray have argued that the construction of more contemporary making of documentaries (produced for the DVD market) is centrally informed by the need to address viewers as insiders who are being invited to 'share' 'intimate "secrets"' about filmmaking and particular film productions (Gray 2010, 103). However, as Klinger has noted, in an oft-cited argument about 'making ofs':

As the viewer is invited to assume the position of the expert, s/he is drawn further into an identification with the industry and its wonders. But this identification...is based on an illusion. Viewers do not get the unvarnished truth about the production; instead, they are presented

with the ‘promotable’ facts, behind-the-scenes information that supports and enhances a sense of the ‘movie magic’ associated with the Hollywood production machine (2001, 140).

While there is no question that, to a significant extent and as illustrated by Warner Brothers’ central involvement in its production, *Making The Shining* conforms to this conception of the ‘making of’, there are a significant number of aspects of this documentary which seem to distance it from notions of promotion and imbue it with an ‘unvarnished’ quality. Most prominently and is now well-known both within and outside Kubrick fan circles, *Making The Shining* documents the distinctly tense working relationship, during the production of *The Shining*, between Kubrick and lead actress Shelley Duvall.

Indeed, if *Making The Shining* is approached purely as a documentary (rather than as a promotional ‘making of’), then it is evident that Kubrick’s working relations with Duvall constitutes the documentary’s central narrative arc. As the documentary progresses, each encounter between Duvall and Kubrick becomes more and more tense: from shots of the two of them standing together, relaxed with cigarettes in hand, as James Mason and his family are permitted a rare visit to *The Shining* set; to footage of Duvall collapsed on the floor (surrounded by Kubrick, Nicholson and other members of the crew); to a seemingly jovial but increasingly awkward sequence where Kubrick teases the actress and instructs the crew (with a wry smile) to not show her any sympathy; to an intense exchange between the two as Kubrick gives her critical feedback on her performance in a previous take. This arc then culminates with the most widely known and disseminated sequence in the documentary, where Duvall misses her cue after Kubrick and his crew have carefully set up an exterior scene. As Duvall fails to appear on cue, Kubrick yells ‘Action Shelley!!’, the assistant

director gives the camera a nervous glance, and we then cut to the camera hovering behind Kubrick at the entrance to the set as he and Duvall engage in a heated argument (complete with f-words which, as Vivian Kubrick has explained, were bleeped in the BBC transmission but restored when the documentary appeared on DVD). ‘Oh come on!’ says Kubrick, as he hits his leg with his hand in frustration. ‘We’re fucking killing ourselves out here. When you do it, you’ve got to look desperate, Shelley. You’re just wasting everybody’s time’. The film then cuts to a shot of Duvall inside the set, after the argument has taken place. Addressing Vivian Kubrick and the camera, she notes that ‘On the record, I got a bollocking...’ and then proceeds to explain her perspective on the argument. On the one hand, then, this narrative arc (and its culmination) clearly works to structure the documentary and its dramatic thrust and interest. Indeed, during a rather hesitant stretch of her commentary on the sequences where Duvall is shown collapsed on the floor and then engaging in some awkward banter with Kubrick, Vivian Kubrick acknowledges that Duvall was given ‘a hard old time’ during the production of the film and then, after pausing, notes, tellingly, that ‘I don’t know. I have to say without Shelley, this [documentary] wouldn’t have been as interesting’ (Kubrick, 2001).

It should be noted here that this narrative arc isn’t as far removed from an overt emphasis on promotion (of the kind associated with conventional ‘making ofs’) as it might initially appear to be. Indeed and importantly, this final dramatic encounter between Duvall and Kubrick is then addressed and, in many ways, explained and resolved through a section of the ‘talking head’ interview with Duvall which is placed after this encounter and before the documentary’s closing montage and credits. Here, after discussing how difficult the experience of making the film (and working with Kubrick) had been for her, she notes, in a passionate address to the camera, that:

If it hadn't been for that volley of ideas and sometimes butting of heads together, it wouldn't have come out as good as it did. And it also helps to get the emotion up and the concentration up, because it builds up anger actually and you get more out of yourself. And *he* knew that and *he* knew he was getting more out of me by doing that...And I find I really respect him and really like him, both as a person and as a director. He's taught me more than I learnt on all the other pictures I've done, within one year's time on one picture.

Clearly, then, what is being emphasised here (and this was noted by Duvall in a retrospective interview on her experiences in the 2001 documentary *Stanley Kubrick: A Life in Pictures*) is that, on a Kubrick film, the 'end justifies the means' (Duvall quoted in Harlan, 2001); in order to produce an exceptional film, Kubrick productions trade on an exceptional set of working methods, which include (in this case) ensuring that Duvall was able to get all she could out of her performance. However, despite this arc's overall function, therefore, as a means of conveying, illustrating and (in many ways) promoting an aspect of Kubrick's distinct approach to directing, these sequences (and their documentation of extremely tense moments on set) still seem unusual in a text whose primary function is promotional. The swearing, the heated exchanges, the awkward expressions of crew members, and the shots of Duvall (just prior to a shot being filmed) huddled up in her dressing gown with a cold, smoking, blowing her nose and (after her tense banter with Kubrick) rolling her eyes at the camera seem, in many ways, to be as far removed from conceptions of 'movie magic' as it's possible to be.

However, this does not mean that *Making The Shining* is an entirely unique ‘making of’ documentary, in terms of the extent to which it depicts these decidedly tense and seemingly raw experiences as part and parcel of the process of filmmaking. Even if the celebrated feature-length documentaries *Burden of Dreams* and *Hearts of Darkness* are taken out of consideration (documentaries which depict similar moments of stress, tension and conflict but which, aside from being feature-length, were both released after the release of the films whose production they document), there are other prominent examples of promotional making ofs or commentaries which have been valued and appreciated for their revealing candidness and frankness. In Mark and Deborah Parker’s book *The DVD and The Study of Film*, for instance, they discuss the now legendary Criterion laserdisc release of Terry Gilliam’s *Brazil*, which includes *What is Brazil?*, an ‘unusually frank’ making of ‘shot during the film’s production’, and note that the disc as a whole ‘is well worth watching for an understanding of what has been lost in current DVD supplements – candid discussion of problems relating to the making of any film’ (2011, 65).

Indeed, what Parker and Parker’s account of the production history of laserdisc and DVD extras illustrates and foregrounds is the way in which early laserdisc and DVD extra producers grabbed a window of opportunity (in the early days of the laserdisc and DVD industry) in order to produce making of documentaries and commentaries that were not only primarily focused on documenting the ‘problems of filmmaking directly and empirically, often in terms of specific decisions made on the set’ but were also, on occasions, ‘unusually frank’ (2011, 22). Here, a key example, discussed at length in their book, is the commentary track for Steven Soderburgh’s *The Limey* which foregrounds the hostility between co-commentators Soderburgh and screenwriter Lem Dobbs regarding moments in Dobbs’ script that were removed from the finished film (a commentary about which, according to the

commentary's producer, Soderburgh has received more telephone calls and questions than those relating to the film itself). For Parker and Parker, as the DVD industry mushroomed and began to corner the market from the early to mid 2000s, this emphasis, in laserdisc and DVD extras, on an 'archival and critical' outlook (23) which frequently trades on frankness and rawness – rather than (or as well as) a more naked promotional approach – began to wane. In particular, they argue that anxieties about lawsuits have led to more stringent restrictions on paratextual content, which have curtailed some of the more candid and 'freewheeling' aspects (Parker and Parker 2011, 45) of such materials.

It should be noted here that, while this suggests that *Making The Shining* can be neatly slotted into this paratextual history, as a seeming precursor to the more candid promotional materials Parker and Parker associate with the early years of the laserdisc and DVD industry, this is complicated by the fact that these discourses of frankness have (contra Parker and Parker) continued to proliferate in paratextual material clearly designed to connect with the retrospectively acquired cult status of particular titles released on DVD. For instance, John Thornton Caldwell has illustrated how MGM, via the DVD commentary on MGM's VIP Limited Edition of *Showgirls*, encouraged the hired commentator (writer David Schamer) to 'savagely ridicule' the film in line with its emergent status as camp 'cult classic' (2008, 163). In addition, in my own work (2014) on the commentaries accompanying DVD re-releases of *The Evil Dead*, I explored the ways in which the filmmakers, Sam Raimi, Robert Tapert and Bruce Campbell, emphasised poor quality aspects of the film in order to enable them to reflect on their previous status as amateur filmmakers and thus, through this, to distinguish themselves from the discourses of 'movie magic' which, for Klinger, are foregrounded in extra features accompanying bigger-budget, or more 'mainstream' titles onto DVD. However, what the existence of these cult-orientated forms of promotion illustrates is how the

conceptions of intimacy, candidness and frankness constructed and conveyed within Vivian Kubrick's *Making the Shining* (and emphasised in her subsequent commentary on the remastered, DVD version of the documentary) have informed the ways in which, like the reflective commentaries on *The Evil Dead* DVDs, *Making the Shining* has been appreciated by *amk* users as distinct from seemingly more 'mainstream', commercially-oriented, EPK-like paratextual content. It is this form of evaluation, in relation to these shifting contexts within 'directorial and promotional film culture' (Grant 2008, 103), which clearly informs the ways in which *amk* users have engaged with and valued the precious footage of Kubrick contained within *Making The Shining*. And, while the inclusion of Vivian Kubrick's commentary constitutes one way in which *Making The Shining*'s status as a distinctive, precious paratext has been perpetuated (if not enhanced) via modes of technological change, then the other relates to the ways in which the documentary was consistently returned to by *amk* users, as a touchstone piece of 'cross-textual knowledge' within a wider network of information about Kubrick, subsequent to the documentary's release on DVD.

### ***Making The Shining* and the Network of Knowledge: Seeing, Hearing and Gaining Access to Kubrick**

As previously noted, due to Kubrick's status as an 'intensely private' individual, knowledge about Kubrick's working methods (as a particularly celebrated and revered director) have been confined to a finite set of materials, which clearly – and perhaps most prominently – include the footage of Kubrick at work included on *Making The Shining*. During his lifetime, he rarely gave interviews to camera (indeed, he isn't interviewed, along with his fellow actors, in *Making The Shining*, despite the fact that the director is his own daughter), and, beyond information about his working methods, access to his body, his voice, his behaviour,



his characteristics, his personality, and thus his image have therefore been, to a significant degree, thwarted and distinctly mediated. Crucially, this mediation has occurred not only via the newspapers and magazines which have long speculated on these issues (and thus helped to construct the Kubrick mythology), but also via the extensive number of documentaries that have now been made about Kubrick, many of which have either circulated via DVD or terrestrial television and have also been prized, sought-after texts (often in the form of second or third-generation video copies) for *amk* users. These documentaries include: two films made by documentary filmmaker, Paul Joyce, for Channel Four (*Stanley Kubrick: The Invisible Man* [1996] and *The Last Movie: Stanley Kubrick and Eyes Wide Shut* [1999]); the feature-length *Stanley Kubrick: A Life in Pictures* (2001) (made by Kubrick's brother-in-law and frequent executive producer, Jan Harlan); and Jon Ronson's more recent Channel Four documentary, *Stanley Kubrick's Boxes* (2008).

All of these documentaries directly address the 'mythology' of Kubrick (and, in many ways, attempt to debunk extreme claims that have been associated with it), and, in the absence of Kubrick himself, they frequently do so through the memories of members of Kubrick's family but also those of a group of 'expert witnesses' – to borrow Annette Kuhn's term (2002, 10) – who had worked closely with Kubrick during the course of his filmmaking career (primarily actors, but also key crew members and screenwriting collaborators). On *amk*, this bank of 'expert witness' accounts (drawn from written and audio-visual sources and contributing to the 'cross-textual knowledge' about Kubrick drawn on throughout *The Kubrick Site* and its associated discussion group) is supplemented with text-based interviews with Kubrick (included in the site's archive section). However, in addition, this is, crucially, supplemented by information drawn from two key expert witnesses who are also members of the *amk* discussion group and to whom other *amk* members thus have privileged access:

Kubrick's aforementioned stepdaughter, Katharina Kubrick-Hobbs and Gordon Stainforth, assistant editor on both *The Shining* itself and Vivian Kubrick's *Making The Shining*.

In line with conceptions of authenticity within star studies and the associated relations between the ordinary and the extraordinary within all forms of stardom (Dyer 1982), these expert witness accounts of Kubrick work, in key ways, to debunk myths about Kubrick which, as a consequence, allow them to present him as more ordinary and relatable: for example, that he was, to quote a Stainforth comment in an *amk* post, 'dear old Stanley' (5/9/99, *amk*), a witty man, with a passion for his family and his pets, who could be sweet, loving and caring. However, many accounts of Kubrick, given by these individuals, cannot help but continuously foreground Kubrick's extraordinariness – his singularity, his exceptionality – and thus, while giving viewers and fans a sense of access to the real Kubrick, they can also be seen to perpetuate fascination with him by continuing to cloak him with an aura of untouchability and uniqueness. In this sense, these accounts of Kubrick (drawn on from collected documentaries or via comments from Stainforth on *amk*) cannot help but continuously distance Kubrick from the 'normal', imbuing him, in many senses, with qualities which could be seen to accentuate his status as a distinctly cult auteur in that, in Mathijs and Sexton's terms, 'the mainstream' is here being continuously employed as a 'major framework *against* which the cult auteur is constructed' (2011, 71).

There are perhaps two major discourses about Kubrick's exceptionality which inform these accounts. The first discourse relates to Kubrick's distinct and unique ways of making films, with accounts inevitably referring, in a markedly positive sense, to Kubrick's famed rigour and precision which is also, clearly, at the heart of many *amk* users' investment in him as a filmmaker. While Stainforth, for instance, notes, in an *amk* discussion thread, that 'the way

he worked was just so unlike anyone else I ever worked with in the film industry' (23/12/03, *amk*), many other accounts of working with Kubrick from these expert witnesses couch this experience in terms of its distinction from 'the normal' or from other, conventional directors. Sydney Pollack, for instance, positions the qualities of Kubrick's methods and their results as being distinct from those 'you see in most other movies' (quoted in Joyce 1999), while, in a reproduced interview with Michel Ciment on *The Kubrick Site*, Kubrick's frequent cinematographer John Alcott compares the pre-production preparation Kubrick undertakes with the problems that occur when this isn't done by 'other directors' ('Interviews by Michel Ciment', 1982, reproduced on The Kubrick Site, [www.visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/0082.html](http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/0082.html)). Alongside this, a second major discourse of exceptionality at the centre of these accounts relates to Kubrick's marked level of talent and intelligence. For Arthur C. Clarke, Kubrick is 'one of the most intelligent people I've ever met' (quoted in Harlan 2001); while for celebrated production designer Ken Adam, Kubrick has 'an enormous active brain' which, for him, is 'the brain almost of a computer' (quoted in Joyce 1996). Here, then, the predominant discursive strands in these accounts seem to continually push Kubrick further and further away from the notion of being a relatable individual (constantly emphasising notions of the different, the unique and, indeed, the extraordinary). And, in turn, these prevalent discourses seemed, on *amk* throughout the period on which I'm focusing and subsequent to the release of *Making The Shining* on DVD, to inform continued fascination with and investment in discussing, debating and analysing Kubrick's working methods on set and/or his changing appearance and voice and, crucially, doing this through a frequent return – often during the course of discussions with *amk*'s key expert witness Stainforth – to a re-assessment of key scenes in *Making The Shining*.

Consequently, *Making The Shining* is returned to consistently between 1998 and 2002 on *amk*, as evidence drawn upon in innumerable discussions about all things Kubrick. On hearing Kubrick's voice in the documentary, for instance, one user wondered whether its similarity to Peter Sellers' accent, as Merkin Muffley in *Dr Strangelove*, suggested that Sellers 'borrowed his voice in that film from the director' (Brian Matney 2/8/99, *amk*). In another instance, footage of lights bouncing off the ceiling in *Making The Shining* was drawn upon by Stainforth, in a discussion of Kubrick's working methods, to illustrate the characteristic ways in which Kubrick lit sets during the course of his career (Gordon Stainforth 30/11/04, *amk*), and, in another fascinating *amk* discussion, speculation about whether a man visible in a shot in a café in *Eyes Wide Shut* is actually Kubrick, is countered by a user who carefully compares the movements of Kubrick's head in *Making The Shining* to those made by the alleged Kubrick in the shot under discussion (Acquisitn 22/7/99, *amk*).

Here, then, is an example of digital technology (in the form of DVD) allowing Kubrick enthusiasts to function as what Mathijs and Sexton (citing Laura Mulvey) have called 'the *possessive spectator*, who can use video or DVD players to...gain a heightened relation to the body of the [cult] star', as well as, I would argue, to extract detailed information about that star's behaviour and mannerisms at particular points in that star's life, allowing, as Mulvey notes, for 'the kind of extended contemplation that had only previously been possible with stills' (quoted in Mathijs and Sexton 2011, 85). In this sense, one of the advantages of owning what one *amk* user calls a 'cleaner version' of *Making The Shining* (in its remastered form on DVD) is made evident (M4RV1N 5/10/99, *amk*), and clearly connects to a form of fan activity yet to be fully addressed here: the repeat viewing and re-reading of particular texts as a key form of cultic devotion to a particular cultified object (in this case, Kubrick as both working director and human being). In his work on online fans of *Bladerunner* and

*Inception*, Matt Hills (2013) has explored the way in which devoted fans return to these texts 'long after an initial viewing' (103) in order to ask new questions, obtain 'new information' and to make 'new readings and discoveries' (113) in a form of what Hills terms, citing Jason Mittell, 'forensic fandom' (116). For Hills (drawing on Winnicott's work on object-relations), this return to and re-reading of these films is clearly informed by their status as 'enigmatic object[s]' (2013, 112) with complex and ambiguous narratives, and such an approach seems clearly applicable to the ways in which *amk* users continued, throughout this period, to draw on the footage in *Making The Shining* in order to continue to ask questions about an individual who (despite the existence of this footage) continued to remain, to some degree, a distant, inscrutable figure. In this sense, as with the online fans discussed by Hills, further access to and understanding of Kubrick (as director, star auteur and human being) could be gained through a revisiting of such footage with new questions to hand (informed by new insights and further information circulated on *amk*, via expert witnesses like Stainforth).

Furthermore, and offsetting the accessibility of *Making The Shining* from its DVD release onwards, Gordon Stainforth's confirmation (on *amk*) of the existence of around forty hours of additional footage from the shoot of *Making The Shining*, and the subsequent inclusion of some of this footage (as well as footage from Vivian Kubrick's uncompleted making of documentary for *Full Metal Jacket*) in the 2001 *A Life in Pictures* documentary, continued to fuel fascination with rare footage of Kubrick amongst *amk* users from 2000 onwards. As a consequence, fascination with and discussion of such additional footage (knowledge of which was acquired via new 'cross-textual knowledge' gleaned from these documentaries and from online discussion with Stainforth) arguably led, on *amk* at this time, to the re-constitution of new forms of valued, elusive and rare material: new 'lost objects' which could be inserted into the network of rare material which had been constructed by fans over the course of the history of their engagement with and interest in all things Kubrick. Indeed, knowledge of the

existence of these two sets of footage on *amk* led to consistent calls, between 2000 and 2005, for it to be made available or, ideally, for Vivian Kubrick, to produce both a *Full Metal Jacket* making of and a longer version of *Making The Shining*. However, after confirmation from Stainforth and Kubrick-Hobbs that there were no plans for this to occur (particularly as Vivian Kubrick became estranged from the Kubrick family prior to Stanley Kubrick's death), one *amk* user noted that 'as much as I'd like to see everything there is like outtakes, interviews and behind the scenes stuff, knowing there's things out there in the vaults at least safe leaves us fans something to look forward to' (Mike Jackson 22/4/03, *amk*). This promise of further footage (which, at the time of writing, has yet to be met) therefore continues to sustain the tension between access to knowledge and scarcity of material, at the heart of Kubrick's continued cult reputation and appreciation by Kubrick fans and enthusiasts.

### **Conclusion: *Making The Shining* as Infamous Paratext and Archival Document**

Since the end of the period on which I have focused here, public and fan fascination with Kubrick, and the endless search for information and knowledge about the man, his life and his working practices, has continued unabated up to the present day. *Making The Shining* has remained a key reference point in discussions about the reputation of the director and his status as a star auteur figure who, as Church notes, continues to carry 'more currency' in death 'than any of his contemporaries' (2006). Not only have parodies of *Making The Shining* been produced and uploaded to *YouTube* but references to moments from – and crew members featured in – the documentary were also incorporated into a trailer for a season of Kubrick films on the British freeview channel More 4 in 2008 (references which, tellingly, clearly assumed a detailed knowledge of the original documentary amongst those Kubrick enthusiasts who might view the trailer).

In addition, of course, new forms of information about Kubrick have been made accessible to the public, with the boxes of files and other artefacts kept by Kubrick throughout his life (and which constituted the focus of Jon Ronson's 2008 documentary) having since been donated to the University of Arts, London as part of the Stanley Kubrick archive. This has led to the production of coffee-table books and touring exhibitions (overseen by Kubrick's family) which draw on aspects of the archive, as well as an increase in new scholarly work on Kubrick within film studies that makes use of this material: for instance, Peter Kramer's (2009; 2011) fascinating, and ongoing, work on the letters that were sent to Kubrick, from cinemagoers, throughout his life. The *amk* group has recently been resurrected on Facebook, and has also drawn on this archival material in its ongoing discussions. However, despite the existence of this wealth of official material and thus of new forms of access to this most notorious of private individuals, *Making The Shining* will, no doubt, remain a key research material and source of knowledge for Kubrick fans online. While new documentaries on Kubrick are being produced (including a 2013 'full oral history' on the making of *The Shining* containing memories of the production from Kubrick's wife and nine crew members), these, arguably, will work to sustain the cult reputation of *Making The Shining*. As new information of this kind continues to emerge, it will continue to shed new light on the significance and meanings of the precious footage contained within *Making The Shining*, allowing this most infamous of paratexts to remain as a key touchstone cult resource with the potential to continue to yield insights on the mysterious cult auteur.

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