"Revenge upon a Dumb Brute": Casting the Whale in Film Adaptations of *Moby-Dick*

DAVID DOWLING

UPON THE 2011 ANNOUNCEMENT of the discovery of the sunken antebellum ship *The Two Brothers*, a rash of *Wikipedia* pages instantly broke out, opening up new dialogue about the previous voyage of its captain George Pollard Jr. on the whaleship *Essex*. The discussion gravitated toward Pollard's link to the fictional character Ahab in Herman Melville's novel *Moby-Dick*; the *Essex*, like Ahab's *Pequod*, sunk in the aftermath of a hull-shattering collision.[1] But did the whale intentionally ram the ship's hull? Is it in the nature of this essentially docile creature to attack in such a manner? The history of film adaptations of *Moby-Dick*, the general subject of this article, evolved out of the widely held belief that whales are in fact capable of such malevolence. The representation of the whale as evil or malicious reflects a number of factors, especially developments in film technology and the popularity of monsters. The popularity of monsters in film and attitudes toward animals, I argue, coalesce in each adaptation's larger ideological function. Just as Ahab heaps his worldly woes onto the whale, filmmakers have typically made the creature a scapegoat for the culture's political and social frustrations.

DAVID DOWLING is an assistant professor in the University of Iowa's School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the author of several books, most recently *Literary Partnerships and the Marketplace: Writers and Mentors in Nineteenth-Century America*, which includes a chapter on Herman Melville. Dowling's work on Melville and media appears in his 2010 book, *Chasing the White Whale*.

Questioning the whale's capacity for revenge threatens the core of the legend—largely perpetrated by the tendency to turn *Moby-Dick* into an action-adventure film—that whales are natural enemies to humans and will seek out and attack ships at sea. To problematize the agency of the whale in film versions of Melville's novel not only threatens to defuse the tension at the core of Melville's narrative, which bloggers desperately wanted to revive in their discussion of Pollard. Such questions also deflate the drama of conventional cinematic storytelling that demands an unambiguous villain. Film thus represents a radical departure from the pages of *Moby-Dick*, which not only showcase the dramatic potential of such blood vengeance by staging a fierce confrontation between Ahab and Moby Dick, but which also depict sperm whales in their own nautical sanctuary in scenes detailing the animal's peaceful nature.

When Melville's *Moby-Dick* is not following the expansive ruminations of its cerebral and reflective narrator Ishmael on philosophy, ethics, law, science, and other fields, it centers on Ahab's quest for revenge against the notorious white whale that tore away his lower leg in a previous encounter. Ishmael's original intention to ship aboard a whaler as a common sailor goes awry when he finds himself on the *Pequod*, captained by a madman uninterested in the commercial enterprise of hunting all whales and instead obsessed with vengeance toward one particular creature. Melville interweaves Ishmael's meditations and reveries with Ahab's search for Moby Dick, which eventuates in his sighting and a three-day chase. The confronta-

tion ends with the destruction of the *Pequod*, leaving Ishmael as its sole survivor, clinging to a coffin his shipmate converted into a lifebuoy. Among Ishmael's more poignant ruminations throughout the journey are those about the relation between humans and whales that lead him to value compassion and diversity, a perspective providing a sophisticated counterpoint to Ahab's autocratic rule over the crew and obsessive thirst for power and domination.

In film adaptations of *Moby-Dick*,[2] directors have avoided Melville's complex ambiguity and signature delight in ironic, often absurd dissonance in order to highlight the spectacle of the clash of the legendary sea creature and the monomaniacal captain. Film has rendered the whale not in the serene independent existence of his own natural habitat but as a malicious foe capable of matching Ahab's ill will with equal and opposite force. With a few notable exceptions, film has eschewed Melville's complex multi-perspective approach to the whale that includes consideration of the creature's instinct for flight or self-defense and instead has staked its claim on the seemingly blunt alternative of casting him as a predator whose behavior is marked by concerted and tactical aggression. But such portrayals have enabled more than just narrative fireworks for the spectacle of the concluding melee. They have opened the door for a complex set of attitudes and concerns to be projected onto the whale. On screen, Moby Dick becomes an artist of torture and destruction variously portrayed to signify the culture's social and political anxieties unique to the time of each film's release.

Conceived of as an adaptation of *Moby-Dick*, *Jaws* (1975) originally was to feature a predatory whale rather than a shark. Just as Moby Dick is imbued with rational calculating will, the great white in *Jaws* is bent on destruction with an equally purposeful agenda. Quint is the film's Ahab figure, deranged and seething with revenge for a near-fatal shark encounter in his past, which I discuss later. The shift from whale to shark is telling of Hollywood's transformation of Melville's expressive multidimensional creature into a lion of the sea. From *Jaws* (1975) to Patrick Stewart's rendition of Captain Ahab in the USA Network's 1998 television miniseries adaptation of Melville's magnum opus to the low-budget thriller *Moby Dick: 2010*, the creature repeatedly plays the role of the villain, whose assaults are cast as so much motiveless malignancy. As with Charles Bronson's *Death Wish* series and *Duel*, perhaps the ultimate payback tales in 1970s cinema, the silent yet persistent stalking of an agent of evil incites retaliation and vengeance along with a primal escape instinct.

This article explores how *Jaws* appeared at the heart of these celluloid narratives, pointing toward the cultural preoccupation with predation, signaling both post-Vietnam-era angst over political and economic prosperity unique to its time and a longer history of vilifying the whale that dates back to the sinking of the whaleship *Essex* in 1820 by a wayward cetacean who inadvertently rammed into it while fleeing his hunters. In the 1970s, the vilification of the whale served rhetorically to justify unilateral vigilante-style military solutions to geopolitical conflicts, whereas whale narratives from their inception validated the decimation of the species for profit in the global whaling industry. Only on rare occasions, such as with the Stewart version of *Moby-Dick*, do revenge narratives self-consciously expose (and thus render problematic) rather than elide the rhetorical conundrum of projecting blame on an animal, calling into question the androcentric premise of vilifying the whale in the first place.

The transformation of the whale from peaceful and solitary to hostile and highly dangerous is attributable to a process of projecting agency on the natural world to explain causality in the wake of a traumatic event, a mechanism that has lately drawn considerable critical attention. "We see faces in clouds," Barbara Ehrenreich notes, "hear denunciations in thunder, and sense transcendent beings all around us because we evolved on a planet densely occupied by other 'agents'—animals that could destroy us with the slash of a claw, arbitrarily or in seconds" (14). The great white shark menacing the sunny beaches of Amity Harbor in *Jaws* embodies precisely such swift and fatal power.

The shark in the film refigures Melville's whale specifically to highlight its predatory, savage quality. The connection between *Jaws* and Melville's novel is obvious in light of the intentions of the original director, Dick Richards, who was fired and replaced by Steven Spielberg for insisting on replacing the killer shark with a murderous whale (McBride 232). Just as Moby Dick is imbued with rational calculating will, the great white in *Jaws* is bent on destruction with an equally purposeful agenda.

From the *Essex* to Silent Film, 1820–1926

The impulse to impose agency "on a dumb brute . . . that simply smote thee from blindest instinct" and to be "enraged with a dumb thing" (Melville 163–64), as Starbuck describes Ahab's sin, is as old as the sea itself, drenched in thousands of years of myth sprung from what ethnographer Stewart Guthrie calls a "hyperactive agency detection device," an impulse to locate humanlike agency in the environment that might not actually exist (188). In his 1820 *Narrative of the Loss of the Whaleship Essex*, first mate Owen Chase pins agency for the shipwreck—a fatal accident involving protracted starvation and cannibalism that he contributed to in several ways—directly on the whale. Beyond merely spinning a ripping yarn from the fabric of the culture's romantic fervor, Chase's tale willfully obscures the fact that human injury and death in whaling often occurred when whales fled their captors. His motive is not only a self-serving means of protecting himself from blame for faulty seamanship. Psychologists and legal experts alike describe a pattern of human behavior in the wake of traumatic incidents distinguished by a reflexive need to impute intentionality on participating agents. "The concept of intentionality brings order to the perception of behavior in that it allows the perceiver to detect structure—intentions and actions—in humans' complex stream of movement," according to recent psychological research (Mallee and Moses 1). The question of intentionality is profoundly complicated when an animal is introduced into that stream of movement. Imputing intentionality, furthermore, "supports coordinated social interaction by helping people"—especially captains of sunken whaleships like Chase—"explain their own and others' behavior," such as that of nonhuman participants, "in terms of its underlying mental causes." Most importantly, "intentionality plays a normative role in the social evaluation of behavior," especially in the case of deviant behavior that inflicts harm, "through its impact on assessments of responsibility and blame" (Mallee and Moses 1). This was precisely the psychosocial mechanism at work, coupled with the drive toward moralistic determinism inherent in the aesthetic of antebellum romanticism and modern film and television, that vilified the whale and valorized whalemen.

If whales do not typically ram into ships on purpose, then why would Chase have portrayed precisely that event in his 1820 *Narrative* that inspired Melville's novel? Although countless tales of whales destroying chase boats had been in circulation for nearly a century prior, the *Essex* was unique in that it was the first whaleship on record to have sunk in a collision with a whale. Significantly, virtually every narrative of whaling after 1820 not only showed an awareness of the incident but even retold the story, typically in hues of hyperbolic moral allegory of the sort romanticism had been nurturing in literature, art, and drama. Chase had finally provided the whaling industry with a dramatic character that would transform the business into narrative, expanding and heightening the increasingly outlandish nature of the wildly popular travel and adventure genre driving the literary market. Chase's *Narrative* thus created the identity of the evil whale specifically as a product for and by antebellum commercial whaling, not Jonah's whale whom the Bible casts as an agent of God, but a vicious force of nature unambiguously opposed to the pursuit of profit that might create national economic dominance and thus imperial geopolitical prominence. The implication that the collision was an accident resulting from the whale's natural instinct to flee conflict was totally incongruous with the master narrative the larger

culture seized upon, which Chase had originally offered only tentatively with full knowledge that he might encounter skepticism toward his insistence on the whale's intentionality. Not only *Moby-Dick*, but also scores of other popular narratives, rushed into print with tales of vindictive nonhuman agents, monsters in every sense of the word, from Cornelius Mathews's *Behemoth* to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

The culture gloried in the idea that an animal might calculate an assault on a whaleship, the paragon of all industry and the most lucrative trade in the world, for the whale embodied a common enemy against which whaling could galvanize its social purpose and professional mission. Only a handful of skeptics rebelled, alleging that these were all hyperbolic nautical yarns inclined toward the preposterous fabrications inherent in the genre of the strange-but-true sea story, the sort satirized by Jonathan Swift. Philip Armstrong has recently argued that *Moby-Dick*'s commercial failure came about because readers resisted, rather than embraced, the notion of animal agency out of a desire to defend capitalist agency and thus supremacy over the natural world.[3] But readers and reviewers indeed praised the inclusion of a malevolent whale in Melville's magnum opus. What they disapproved of was his departure from a clear moral allegory, one uncomplicated and told in a linear fashion. He instead gave them multiple forms of agency—whale, lines, Ahab—and told the story in a nonlinear way that deliberately deconstructs crisp allegorical dualism between good and evil into complex ambiguity in which the reader is forced to face constant inversions of the hunting narrative. "Who is chasing whom?" Melville seems to ask at so many junctures, such as when Ahab in hot pursuit finds himself playing the helpless rodent, shrieking and waterlogged, to Moby Dick's playful and cruel giant aquatic feline.[4]

After this long history of print culture's vilification of whales, the White Whale's cinematic debut cast him as supporting actor rather than leading villain. The 1926 film *The Sea Beast*, starring John Barrymore, repackaged Melville's novel into a love story, focusing on revenge against a romantic rival. Bess Meredyth's screenplay concocts the backstory of a love triangle to justify Ahab's pursuit of the whale. The captain's dark half-brother, Derek, lusts after Esther, who has already established a passionate yet chaste relationship with Ahab. To put his rival out of the way, Derek shoves Ahab overboard while they are chasing Moby Dick, and in the fracas, the whale rips away the captain's leg. Ahab pursues the whale madly like Melville's character only when he mistakenly thinks Esther has fallen for Derek in light of his new injury. Meredyth, writing in the 1920s, had the cinematic wisdom to foresee that Ahab's revenge could not appear motiveless on screen. Thus, she clearly projected Ahab's grudge against Derek onto the White Whale, ending the film as she began it, with the captain as a sympathetic protagonist, whose victory over Derek—he pushes him into the sea while stabilizing his peg leg in a hole on deck—provides the denouement (Webb).

If "[a]ll the momentous symbolism of the novel is stripped from the silent version" (Cotkin 150), it is only because the film was operating out of the conventions of early silent cinema rather than the antebellum literary novel of Melville's era. Romantic rivalry and love triangles set in exotic locales in the vein of Rudolph Valentino vehicles would become standard fare in the first decades of Hollywood filmmaking. The title character of *The Sea Beast* thus comes to represent forces opposed to Ahab's romantic quest, embodied by romantic rival Derek. The Ahab of this film seeks authenticity in a world of false fronts or pasteboard masks, as Melville's Ahab describes it. One of the ways a whale can significantly figure into a love triangle is as an external representative of the hero's rival.

In *The Sea Beast*, director Millard Webb was drastically limited by film technology in producing stirring whale hunting scenes, which come off as a clumsy series of rapid crosscutting between close-ups of Ahab's strained face and shots of the sea, where the creature is primarily submerged and out of view. The absence of underwater photography, of course, robs Ahab's

capture of Moby Dick of its drama, which comes off looking more like a nautical bullfight, with a series of parries and charges ending with the final hurled lance. The lack of color contrast between the whale and the sea also dampens the creature's performance, which largely takes place beneath the surface, leaving the viewer to track him only via his occasional spoutings. Thus, the true climactic confrontation occurs in the prior scene on deck between Ahab and Derek, with both combatants in plain view for a much more stirring duel. Webb cleverly refers to Ahab's previous confrontation with the whale through the visual metaphor of his peg leg, which, anchored in the deck, signifies his new stability achieved from defeating Moby Dick, an emblem now of strength rather than disability. The film makes the open ocean a kind of void into which evil is dispatched, presumably to be devoured by Moby Dick, much less the arena of conflict (mostly underwater) that it will later become in subsequent adaptations. Once Ahab effectively is fortified by his defeat of Derek, in which his prosthetic becomes the force from which he thrusts his rival into the vast menacing abyss of the ocean, he goes on to destroy Moby Dick himself, conquering his romantic rival and nature's monster in succession. The film's concluding scene depicts newly wed Ahab and Esther embracing before their new dream home, complete with a white picket fence, an icon of bourgeois stability decades before the 1950s (Webb). Interestingly, the trope of domestic stability would be invoked later in *Jaws* through its emphasis on the threat to the children of Amity Beach.

Webb enhanced the effect of the open ocean as a motif signaling danger and chaos through innovative camera techniques for the establishing and closing shots of hunting scenes. One can trace a filmic genealogy of aquatic special effects beginning with *The Sea Beast*, the first film in motion picture history to employ the technique of opening and closing the screen frame for dramatic effect. At the beginning of chase scenes, the screen dilates from a tiny aperture to encompass the entire horizon, a method designed to dramatize the expanse of the open ocean on a whale hunt. To conclude such scenes, the encroaching whale, with jaws open, would then signal the closing of the screen frame to express the feeling of a narrowing enclosure, a visual metaphor for being swallowed Jonah-like, by the whale itself (Webb). Film historian Arthur Knight notes that "the entire pursuit of the great white whale takes place on this enlarged screen until finally the monster turns on his pursuers. Then, just as the massive jaws are closing down on Captain Ahab, the sides of the screen contract, cutting off the possibility of escape" (332). This technique is designed to intensify the moment of contact with the whale. The viewer is implicated in the chase itself with a point-of-view shot that then becomes constricted by the whale himself, who turns the tables and initiates his assault. A sense of no escape is precisely the dramatic import the technique instills, perpetuating even in this early visual storytelling medium the assumption that the whale is capable of direct and vicious assault resulting in death, dramatized as the closing of consciousness into the oblivion of darkness, signified by the constricting screen frame. Indeed, when Barrymore's character is venting his romantic frustrations on the whale, a warning from Starbuck cements the whale's malignity: "The Great White Whale is the devil's self" (qtd. in Inge 697).

Although this line would indicate that the whale assumes a larger-than-life role in a film titled *The Sea Beast*, technological limitations prevented the creature from even remotely approaching the charismatic aura of the creature in *Jaws*. It indeed is "a crude papier-mâché monster as best Hollywood could muster at the time," as M. Thomas Inge points out (697), one that would become larger and have much more screen time by 1956 in the Huston version. The mechanical whale, however, is regrettably artificial and appears to be "something like the Goodyear blimp," according to Martin Bickman (qtd. in Metz 65); Walter Metz calls it a "rubbery special effects whale" (66). In *Jaws*, Spielberg would surmount those limitations with stunning results, however, through new technologies that would produce the most lifelike me-

chanical sea creature in film history. Because sharks are indeed predators and do stalk their prey, which can include humans, the new technologies in film editing and special effects coalesced with the recasting of Melville's sperm whale to produce one of the most horrifying images of an animal in its natural habitat since the origin of cinema. To shape that animal's behavior as *Jaws* does, in terms of the animal's role as enemy to humanity, then magnifies the impact of his villainy; viewers had previously never known the sea to be capable of such terror in the history of film. Those special effects Spielberg made such powerful use of were decades from being developed when Huston directed his film in 1956, which explains the very real limitations, beyond a rather myopic Bradbury screenplay, he faced in representing the animal's sophisticated behavior onscreen.

Unlike *Jaws*, the *Sea Beast* is a romance and not a horror film, despite its deceptive title and explicit references to the dark themes of Melville and Conrad. Its immediate predecessor in the genre of nautical-themed love stories was the 1922 silent film *Down to the Sea in Ships*, the first movie about antebellum whaling ever made. Shot on location in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where Melville embarked on his first whaling voyage aboard *The Acushnet* in 1846, *Down to the Sea in Ships* bears distinction for its attention to historical accuracy. The antebellum whaler the *Charles W. Morgan*, for example, appears as one of the vessels used in the film. Instead of manufacturing an artificial whale to simulate hunting scenes, photographers "in small boats stood by their cameras at the risk of their lives to photograph the fighting whales," as mentioned in the film's credits (Clifton). Mariners recruited as actors hunted real whales in the film, which was shot long before the 1939 regulation spearheaded by the American Humane Association requiring the now-familiar disclaimer that "no animals were harmed in the making of this film." Neither the characters nor the plot of *Down the Sea in Ships* derive from Melville; the movie instead centers on romantic rivals vying to marry the daughter of Captain William Morgan, a well-respected Quaker owner of a whaling fleet. The footage of the whaling scenes nonetheless constitutes the most accurate visual record of what nineteenth-century whaling entailed. These scenes, which convey whaling as a process more perfunctory and messy than sensationalized print and film narratives suggest, render whales as a faceless herd, rounded up and slaughtered with all the industrial mechanization and blunt brutality of a meat-processing plant. The footage is archived and on display currently at the New Bedford Whaling Museum.

The Whale in Modern Cinema, 1956–2010

Whereas the mass slaughter of *Down to the Sea in Ships* leaves no room for the presence of a character with the charisma of Moby Dick, the whale is notorious for destroying whaleships and ripping the limbs from his victims in later films of Melville's novel. In one scene late in the 1998 cable miniseries of *Moby-Dick*, Captains Ahab and Boomer marvel at their respective stumps and commiserate about surviving their encounters with the White Whale. Boomer takes his loss as a cause not for retaliation, but for retreat. "Isn't one limb enough?" he asks Ahab, stunned that he would want to risk his life for revenge. "No, thank you, sir—no more white whales for me. He's best left alone," he insists. Ahab responds, fuming, "Ay, but he'll be hunted nonetheless! What's best left alone, Captain, isn't always the least to fight." Boomer is incredulous and shouts, "Your blood's at a boiling point!" as Ahab pivots on his ivory leg and storms off, leaving Starbuck to explain his blood vengeance that defies reason and sanity. "Has he lost his senses?" Boomer asks. "'Tis the pain in his stump," Starbuck answers unconvincingly, leaving Boomer to rightly conclude, "The man's mad!" (Roddam).

For Ahab, ascribing willful intent to the whale to justify his personal retaliation is suicidal insanity, especially in the eyes of a sane victim such as Boomer. Their exchange is the equivalent of the Ludovico effect in the film version of Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*. This fictional aversion therapy Alex undergoes is

also a sort of aversion therapy for the viewer, functioning as a means of exposing the degree of his pathological deviance. Patrick Stewart's Ahab, like Malcolm McDowell's Alex, has been gradually slipping into deeper levels of insanity. To remind viewers of just how egregious Ahab's unreasonable behavior has become, the filmmakers highlight it by contrasting him to a sane outsider. Similarly, Laurence Fishburne is perhaps never more evil in his vengeance in the Kenneth Branagh version of *Othello* than when he strikes Desdemona to the shock of a disbelieving Ludovico, who—unlike the viewer—has not become accustomed to his insanity. In his theory of theater, Bertolt Brecht would describe a similar device, the *verfremdungseffekt* (alienation effect), which distances the reader/viewer from any normalizing or romanticizing influences of characters who are otherwise perpetrating profound acts of injustice, exploitation, and violence.[5] Stewart's performance captures Ahab's own recognition of his indiscretion.

Stewart described this bondage to revenge as Ahab's tragedy. "He has a choice" and chooses vengeance, which leaves him "in agony because he knows how inhuman his choice is" (qtd. in Cotkin 204). To be clear, that choice is to risk his and the entire crew's lives to avenge the whale's presumed vendetta against the sailors of the world and Ahab in particular. Stewart's Ahab is fully aware of his self-deception regarding the whale's agency, especially through his deeper knowledge that the whale may not necessarily remember their encounter or heap such universal significance upon it, as he does. This self-deluding trick, in Stewart's performance, sits uneasily with Ahab and thus reflects a postmodern position on animality, one totally at odds with the unselfconscious Cold War rage portrayed by Gregory Peck's captain (an icon of totalitarianism set against Ishmael's image of freedom) in John Huston's 1956 film. Stewart's self-tortured Ahab—at one point he sheds a tear when he confesses he is helpless to alter the fatal course of his own design—resonated with the viewing audience, who would see the steely-willed commander weep for the first time on screen. The TV miniseries garnered 5.9 million viewers for its two-night presentation, "the largest audience ever for any program other than news or sports" for cable television up to that time (Mifflin).

Whereas Ray Bradbury's 1956 screenplay of *Moby-Dick* omits the anguish Melville emphasizes in chapter 132 of the novel, titled "The Symphony," Stewart's Ahab brilliantly captures the sentimental speech expressing his aching lament over being trapped by his irrational hatred of the whale. Its rhythms echo those of *Othello*'s cracked and painful speeches lamenting the loss of the former wife he thought he knew. The fractured syntax, "God! God! God!—crack my heart!—stave my brain!—mockery! mockery! bitter, biting mockery of grey hairs, have I lived enough joy to wear ye" (Melville 544), calls to mind the chaos of Othello's heart that also emanates from that "one dent in my marriage pillow." As in the novel, the tone shifts when Stewart/Ahab pulls Starbuck near for sympathy in his darkest hour, his first mate seizing the opportunity to soften the captain as he begs to return home so that he too might see his wife and son. The bleak coda of this chapter's orchestral maneuvers ends with Ahab's speech, a helpless soliloquy in the face of the "hidden lord and master . . . recklessly making me ready to do what is in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare" (Melville 545). The harpooner Fedallah's silent, "reflected, fixed eyes in the water" then mingle with the tear Ahab just shed there, superimposing the hidden lord and master on the captain's tortured soul in the sea (Melville 550). The next chapter, as well as the next scene in the Stewart film, fittingly immerses us in "The Chase—First Day."

"The Symphony," crucially poised immediately before the savage three-day conflict with the whale, brings to light a reference to separate spheres ideology, in which a longing for home appears to be coded female in contrast to the male business of the chase. The binary breaks down as soon as it appears, however, as we realize that we have just seen Ahab and Starbuck searchingly look into each other's

eyes for the warm glow of the domestic hearth, as the man who threatened to strike the sun if it insulted him drops an anguished tear in a vast, indifferent ocean. "The Symphony" dramatizes the recursive feedback in its very nature, a back-and-forth process carrying on like a series of echoes, as in the exchange between Ahab and Starbuck, and like the one in the novel's climactic three-day chase, a series of thrusts and parries, calls and responses. As in the chapter "Fast Fish and Loose Fish," the game of chase between Ahab and the whale has created an inseparable and fatal bond precisely like the duel between Starbuck and his captain, which both realize can never be severed. This "monkey rope" of inextricable mutual dependency (chapter 72) is in this case fated for disaster, given the human agency of malicious intent that Ahab has artificially imposed on the whale. This is a death wish of sorts, born of the fatal notion that animals are selective and discriminating when it comes to the humans they kill and may declare war on the entire human species despite having no known predatory instinct, as is the case with the sperm whale. This dramatic situation was ripe for exploitation by 1970s cinema.

Charles Bronson, perhaps the most recognizable revenge-plot actor of 1970s cinema, who specialized in playing perennially angry and begrudged characters, starred in *The White Buffalo* about a Native American chieftain whose daughter is gored to death by a monstrous white buffalo.[6] Like sperm whales, buffaloes are not natural predators. The mythological freight of universal evil loaded onto a single animal derives from an ethos totally incongruent with Native American beliefs. Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (1977), considered one of the greatest Native American novels, views nature, for example, as a continuum of tensions between good and evil above and beyond human intervention. To locate the world's evil in one particular animal would be unheard of in Native American cultures, which would not scapegoat individually unique creatures, but instead might characterize an entire species, such as the roadrunner, as a trickster and an allegorical representative of a much larger pattern of behavior in the universe. Among humans, the toxic figures of Silko's novel such as Emo—the gung ho Pueblo war veteran who spews jingoistic bravado laced with misogynistic tales of conquest like those of his oppressors—are not dealt direct personal revenge but instead are understood as part of a larger pattern of evil that will eventually destroy itself. Indeed, *Ceremony* ends with the protagonist Tayo refusing to dispatch Emo, despite having an ideal opportunity and full moral justification for doing so (Silko 230–47). Instead he lets the evil consume itself—Emo self-destructs in a cesspool of his own alcoholism and hatred—as Tayo remains a picture of restraint and poise, diametrically opposed to Ahab's frenzied pursuit. As portrayed by Stewart, Ahab knows that his tragedy lies in forgoing reconciliation such as Tayo's. As played by Gregory Peck, Ahab is an unselfconscious killer totally unaware that such a peaceful resolution lies within his grasp.

The White Buffalo follows Peck's precedent. The deadly title creature is so damaging and destructive that it takes on supernatural significance, entering the dreams of Bronson's character, Wild Bill Hickok. Moved by these horrific visions, he goes west to confront their source. There he finds Crazy Horse, played by Will Sampson, and together they vow to hunt the beast to the death. Here we have all the elements in place of the Huston film—an unambiguous military solution to eradicate a giant white animal possessing a viciousness that makes him an anomaly to his species. This time the narrative is cloaked in 1970s-era (faux) spaghetti Western mise-en-scène, with the buffalo in question resembling more of an albino wooly mammoth or wildebeest, possessing the agility and irascible nature of a rodeo bull. The film was duly marketed in movie posters showing the giant animal lunging at a cowboy and Indian dwarfed in the foreground and dodging his charge. "Charging . . . Roaring . . . Breathing Fire and Hell . . . THE WHITE EARTHQUAKE IS HERE," the heading roars in an obvious nod to the earthquake disaster movie franchises that dominated 1970s cinema, with a tag beside

the image promising, "You Won't Believe Your Eyes" (Thompson). Whatever social progress this film attempts by having the most recognizable of Indians, Crazy Horse, join forces with the most recognizable of cowboys, Wild Bill Hickok, the output nonetheless replicates the distrust and paranoia of an ideology of fear and loathing projected onto the natural world. As Hunter S. Thompson would point out, this was precisely the ethos that also permeated the politics of the 1970s.

Not surprisingly, *The White Buffalo* appeared in 1977, the second *Moby-Dick* adaptation to appear in two years. These adaptations, unlike the 1998 *Moby-Dick*, are saturated with post-Vietnam/Watergate cynicism and a thirst for vigilante justice. Released in 1975, the same year as the fall of Saigon, *Jaws* is an allegory for how the United States should have won the Vietnam War according to Cold War ideology, as Walter Metz argues. There was no shortage of revenge narratives in theaters and on TV at the time, as Clint Eastwood's *Dirty Harry* franchise and *The Gauntlet* attest. Mid-1970s film narratives repeatedly glorified the unilateral seizure of the law to the extent that they provided the language for libertarian-inspired legislation; the "make my day" law (a line Clint Eastwood delivers as Dirty Harry to a thug he threatens at gun point) was adopted as the Defense of Habitation Law in 1985 by the Colorado state legislature, designed to release killers of trespassers from liability for murder. Perhaps the most iconic expression of this ideology appears in *The Gauntlet*. After convincing a hoard of Hell's Angels that he has probable cause for arresting them and taking one of their motorcycles, Eastwood's character subdues them with an Ahab-like megalomaniacal speech in which he brandishes the threefold source of his authority: "I've got this badge, I've got this gun, and I've got the love of Jesus in these pretty green eyes." Exactly on cue with Captain Boomer's declaration of Ahab's madness, the camera cuts away to a woman biker, who says, "Is he high?" (Eastwood). Eastwood hijacks their motorcycles for his own purpose just as Ahab hijacks the *Pequod* for his. In both cases an appeal to authority (the badge, the doubloon) mystifies into submission a rough-hewn hoard of men associated with physical violence. Further, *The White Buffalo* and *The Gauntlet* both debuted in 1977, a time when taking the law into one's own hands had an entirely different register and pitch than it did in 1998.

The Ahab figure and leader of vigilante justice in *Jaws* is the bounty hunter Quint, the madly individualistic professional shark killer who refuses the more Starbuck-like, communal, cautious approach carried out by police chief Martin Brody, played by Roy Scheider, and marine biologist Matt Hooper, played by Richard Dreyfuss. Following precisely the same rhetorical sequence as the chapter "The Quarter-Deck" in *Moby-Dick*, social cohesion comes through the identification of one particular sea creature as the common enemy. The community bonds by pledging an oath to its destruction, a secular yet sacred vow for the safety of the greater good. Their zeal is fueled, of course, by a collective goal of revenge and punishment against the beast—with the runaway momentum of a pitchforks-and-torches lynch mob—which becomes distilled and intensified within the isolated character of Quint/Ahab. Ahab's vengeance is personal, yet it transforms into a communally endorsed mission thanks to his mesmerizing speech that sways the sailors to his purpose. Quint's revenge also is personal, but it lies nascent until the community activates it by sounding the alarm and posting the reward. Ahab, on the other hand, is the instigator, riling his crew into a frothing rage to match his own.

Quint retells the story of his buried past in what has become the most re-watched scene from *Jaws* in online media, amassing over 295,000 YouTube hits. With a salty brogue and a hushed whisper, he tells the tale of his grisly encounter through a pained grin one dark night at sea in the cabin of the *Orca*, a scene shot in eerie shifting light. Brody and Hooper blanch while hearing of his voyage aboard the *USS Indianapolis*, the cargo navy vessel that delivered materials for the atomic bomb to end World War II. The mission ended when a Japa-

nese submarine sank the ship, leaving him and the crew vulnerable to attacking sharks for days. The sharks devoured hundreds, and Quint and the other survivors found themselves surrounded by screaming victims and legless corpses bobbing grotesquely for days in their life jackets. The film adheres to the facts of this single greatest loss in any US Navy disaster. Quint's vendetta against the species therefore gains a new target in the great white shark menacing Amity Beach, as the mariner bursts from his hermit-like existence with suicidal zeal. After the epic battle that ends with the shark gnashing at the deck of the *Orca* while Quint helplessly slides into his awaiting jaws, Brody and Hooper gather themselves for a final strike, in the process devising a chemical solution to end the series of bloody battles in one explosive moment—an unmistakable reference to the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima—simultaneously to avenge Quint's past trauma suffered at the hands of the Japanese and the sharks as well as Amity Beach's young victims. This dramatic climax occurs when Brody dupes the shark into swallowing an oxygen tank and lets the creature swim off to a safe distance before dispatching him with a rifle. Like the pilots safely ensconced in the cockpit of the *Enola Gay* high above the nuclear fallout of Hiroshima, Brody sees the destructive effects of his technological solution from a safe distance. The underwater shot of the exploding and sinking shark resembles a stricken submarine in an image that at once satisfies Quint's personal grudge against the species. The shark's destruction may also allegorically fulfill the military fantasy of a definitive end to the protracted bloodletting that was the Vietnam War (Spielberg).

Critic Walter Metz has argued that this scene is a straightforward reproduction of the Cold War ideology of the Gregory Peck film, overlaid with a concern for corporatism and technology unique to the 1970s (65–76). I would suggest that the madness of Quint—so driven by revenge against sharks for the horrors of his previous near-fatal encounter—is unmistakably also Ahab's, precisely in that it lashes back against the animal itself, rather than the Japanese and their submarines, for example, who were more direct agents of action behind his trauma. Instead, like Ahab, Quint's irrationality and insanity are visible in his cold individualism and reckless disregard for his own life, figured in the metaphor of his refusal to wear a life jacket because it suspended him in the water as so much bait for the attacking sharks. (Ahab is also notoriously unwilling to take precautions for his own physical safety, at one point rushing back into the fray to battle the whale despite having lost his prosthetic leg). Quint's aversion is an affective associative psychological response, deeply paradoxical because the life jacket literally saved his life. This is just as unreasonable as vowing blood vengeance on a species of sea creature for acting entirely within its natural range of inherent behaviors. Herein lies a madness—specifically the androcentric imposition of human agency on a nonhuman species—unmistakably aligned with the illogic, insanity, and (to Starbuck) blasphemy of Ahab's "vengeance on a dumb brute."

The Ahab of *Moby Dick: 2010*, as one might expect, is pure action figure in Barry Bostwick's performance, complete with paramilitary accouterment, down to the vessel he hunts the whale with, which is a navy submarine. The crass spectacle the film makes of the whale's animality and agency is not uniformly sophomoric, however. One scene in particular, shot with tongue in cheek, is simultaneously self-referential and critical, calling attention to its own place within the trappings of a campy third-rate action monster movie, while also mocking the well-meaning piety of whale watchers as embodying yet another equally blind androcentric understanding of the whale. The scene opens with an establishing shot of a typical whale-watching tour making its way into the open ocean. The guide, his voice lilting with a pet owner's cuddly affection for his subject, delivers the requisite description of whale behaviors, including mating, feeding, migration, and breeding. He then alerts the passengers that one just spouted nearby. The

ogling whale watchers are gaping from the rail through their binoculars, anticipating a breech, when Moby Dick—whom filmmakers expanded from sixty to three hundred feet, the size of a football field—rises up from the sea, jaws wide, and swallows the boatload of horrified tourists (Stokes). Moby Dick's appetites, the scene tells us, do not discriminate between Japanese and Norwegian hunting expeditions bent on mass whale slaughter and those whale-watching Greenpeace advocates who would oppose the whalers. The animal then resides totally apart from political debate by swallowing it all, and every other human invention, leaving us with a creature whose agency becomes a performer or showman in the theater of violence showcasing the aesthetics of revenge. The *Moby Dick: 2010* whale indeed would love to swallow all of academic discourse, including this article, which it would regard as so much whale watching, but it would pause to wink at the camera in the process.

New Media: Whale 2.0

The playful interaction and goodwill of the whale's agency is missing from media adaptations of *Moby-Dick*, from Chase's *Narrative* to *Moby Dick: 2010*. Often, as Melville indicates, whales will playfully interact with crews and chase boats until stricken by a harpoon. They are indeed more than the "dumb brutes" Starbuck takes them to be but are decidedly different from humans in their nuanced range of calculated choice for action. Indeed, not only play but also maternal nurturing and protection of calves, such as Melville depicts in the chapter "The Grand Armada," reflect sides of whale behavior yet to find their way into visual media adaptations of *Moby-Dick*. Louie Psihoyos, former *National Geographic* photographer and Academy Award–winning director of *The Cove*, a 2009 documentary exposing international illegal dolphin hunting, has made a career of studying the behavior of cetaceans. In a December 2011 conversation, he attested to the innate sociability of sperm whales, noting that on several dives mothers have led him and his group to their offspring to play and interact. Their vulnerability is evident in the frequency with which humans have killed them either intentionally or accidentally. Ships today still collide with whales as they did during the antebellum era, leaving the creatures mangled and crushed in their wake. Modern vessels sport reinforced hulls impervious to such collisions compared to the hulls of relatively weak wooden antebellum whalers (Psihoyos). The vulnerable party in such collisions is the whale, as witnessed in the production of the new Whale Alert app for the iPhone, designed to alert captains of their location to save the creatures from becoming so much nautical roadkill (Maguire). The development of the Whale Alert app will be featured in *6*, Psihoyos's latest film in production at the time of this writing.

Even Melville, who so strenuously argues through the voice of Ishmael (under the influence of Ahab's quarter-deck speech) for Moby Dick's status as a "murderous monster" with an "uncommon magnitude and malignity," cannot ignore the blissfully serene and peaceful nature of the species, as duly recorded with poetic grace in the herding and socialization dramatized in "The Grand Armada." Even when Ishmael admits to hating the whale, at least temporarily, because his "shouts had gone up with the rest" in the crew's ritual vow to destroy Moby Dick, a preponderance of the novel's Ahab-driven depictions of the beast as the embodiment of all evil still acknowledge his hunters as the cause of his most fearsome behavior (Melville 179). Indeed, Melville's formulations consistently imply that the whale's violence comes only as a defensive reaction. The whale, "after doing great mischief *to his assailants*, had completely escaped them" (179, emphasis mine). Melville takes this as a metonym "of the perils of the Sperm Whale fishery at large," which had been "marked by various and not unfrequent instances of great ferocity, cunning and malice *in the monster attacked*" (179–80, emphasis mine). Despite casting the whale as a villain here, Melville's prose carefully explains

his viciousness only in conjunction with his assailants; attack thus heightens the power of his wild reactions. "More than all," Ishmael notes, "his treacherous retreats struck more of dismay than perhaps aught else" (Melville 183). Perhaps his most explicit acknowledgment that the whale will not lie in wait to pounce on unsuspecting whalers testifies that the "unconscious power" of "his very panics are more to be dreaded than his most fearless and malicious assaults" (Melville 164). Such emphasis on alarm, panic, and flight, therefore, rather than sheer love of conflict, begin to paint the whale as not only a victim but also a master of transoceanic migration for survival—Ishmael speculates whales will elude their captors by gravitating to the distant and icy poles—in hues that become more pronounced in later chapters, such as the meditation on extinction in chapter 105, "Does the Whale Diminish?"

Although Ray Bradbury never shared Melville's or Psihoyos's appreciation for the plight of whales, he agonized over the prospect of capturing such nuances of the animal-human interface in his screenplay for the 1956 production, locking himself in a hotel room off the west coast of Ireland where the film was to be shot on location. Forty-eight hours prior to his deadline, with absolutely nothing written, he panicked. Frantic, he called director John Huston for advice on how to transform this poetic, symbolic, metaphysically unwieldy novel into a screenplay. "John didn't know any more about *Moby-Dick* than I did," Bradbury recalled (qtd. in Cotkin 208). "It was the blind leading the blind." Without a critical agenda, which at the time could be either psychoanalytic or text-based New Criticism, the film became an allegory for totalitarianism, in which Ahab "wants the men's souls" (Bradbury, qtd. in Cotkin 208)—just as ten years prior, Mussolini and Hitler had won their nation's souls through authoritarian tyranny—as a means of achieving revenge against the whale. The 1956 film finally was not "the Melville Society's version of *Moby-Dick*, or the Jungian version, or the Freudian version" (Cotkin 208). "I want Ray Bradbury's version," Huston urged his screenwriter (qtd. in Cotkin 208). When Bradbury finally emerged from his own epic struggle to translate vengeance onto the screen, the film became a tale of the will to power, as Nietzsche would have it, isolating evil not in the whale so much as in Ahab himself. In many ways, Peck's portrayal has become difficult to eclipse; as "[g]lobally and in the U.S., clips from this film provided illustrations for new editions of *Moby-Dick*, comic books, and advertisements, Peck's image of Ahab came to represent the 'essential' Ahab for many," Elizabeth Schultz has noted. "Not even Patrick Stewart, *Star Trek* hero," she goes on, "could successfully challenge this image in his portrayal," a point that my previous reading of Stewart's self-conscious Ahab amends (Schultz 536).

Bradbury would eliminate problems of intentionality and agency altogether in the 1968 BBC radio drama *Leviathan '99* by recasting the whale as a giant white comet headed for earth. The science fiction radio drama, which was written and produced as a stage play two years later, indicates the hold *Moby-Dick* had on Bradbury's imagination, which nonetheless truncated and bluntly abridged Melville's deep concern for the psychosocial matrix of responses to a previous trauma perceived as deliberately offensive. That is, Bradbury's nonsentient comet has no mind of its own, nor has his captain encountered it before.

The character of the whale has received increasing attention in subsequent film adaptations of the novel. Each one inevitably confronts the problem of imposing intentionality on the whale and succumbing to the overactive agency detection (which social scientists and psychologists confirm to be at the core of human responses to trauma), despite overwhelming evidence supplied by natural scientists and specialists in whale behavior confirming the sperm whale is docile by nature. As digital media and visual storytelling continue to become increasingly dominant, we now have more technological power than ever to narrate agency in nature at the heart of such profoundly

influential works as *Moby-Dick*. New Bedford's annual marathon reading of the Melville book, which began as a low-tech affair without a cell phone in sight, became inundated with digital technology in 2010.[7] Instead of open novels, attendees now typically hold smartphones, tweeting their commentary, which appears on a giant screen, putting them in communication with listeners around the world who are taking in the event online through live streaming. Digital media shapes the event as well as the consumption of Melville's novels in the twenty-first century. Issues of agency and intentionality in the whale remain primarily in text-based media at the reading.

Videos and motion pictures at the marathon reading, for example, are not nearly as prominent as fine art inspired by *Moby-Dick*. Present at the reading in recent years, however, has been a film crew led by Dave Shaerf, currently working on the production of a documentary on the event set for release in 2014. As of the writing of this article, Shaerf's project is incomplete and will not be alone if it remains that way. Orson Welles also attempted to produce a Melville-inspired film and failed to finish. More recently, Timur Bekmambetov's graphic arts film adaptation of *Moby-Dick* has stalled because of issues regarding the screenplay's presentation of revenge toward the whale. Its original writers, Adam Cooper and Bill Collage, have abandoned their original script, which has now been taken over by Evan Stiliotopoulos, to liberate the script from a "revenge-centered Captain Ahab" so that it might better showcase the multidimensional character of the whale beyond that of a "dumb brute" (Schmidlin). Since the graphic arts animated motion picture will consist of no live shots, the production values promise to raise the stakes for the characterization of the whale and thus imbue the story with a richer explanation for Ahab's motivations, as well as his relation to the whale, than we have encountered in media versions of *Moby-Dick* thus far. The film may not take the liberties of the *Dylan Dog* comic series with Melville's plot, but it will likely set a new visual standard for the film and thereby introduce a new angle on the issue of animality and agency at the heart of Melville's novel.

NOTES

1. See, for example, "'Moby Dick' Captain's Ship Found"; Temple; Kuehn.

2. Film and video adaptations of Herman Melville's novel *Moby-Dick* (1851) include *The Sea Beast* (1926) starring John Barrymore, which was remade as *Moby Dick* (1930); *Moby Dick* (1956) starring Gregory Peck; *Moby Dick* (1978) directed by Paul Stanley; *Jaws* (1975); *The White Buffalo* (1977); *Moby Dick* (1998) starring Patrick Stewart; *Hakugei: The Legend of Moby Dick* (1997); *Moby Dick: 2010* (2010) starring Barry Bostwick; *Age of Dragons* (2011); and *Moby Dick* (2011) starring William Hurt. The tragedy of the whaleship *Essex* that inspired Melville's novel is the subject of *In the Heart of the Sea*, a 2014 Hollywood film directed by Ron Howard in production. It is based on Nathaniel Philbrick's bestselling book of the same title published in 2000.

3. I contest here Armstrong's claim that "the shock attending this incident results largely from the challenge the whale's apparent agency poses to the complacent pursuit of profits via the labor of industrial capitalism" (118). He appears to be doing what the antebellum readers were, only in the inverse, by casting the whale here as heroically retaliating against the forces of capitalism that were bent on killing and commodifying him. However irresistible the argument both ethically and theoretically, it breaks down under the hard glare of nature science, the research from which is conspicuously absent in Armstrong's work. Such science, as in Hal Whitehead (73–77) and Louis M. Merman (228–29), indicates the real likelihood that the whale was not inclined by behavior or anatomy to attack ships, but that Chase and the larger romantic culture were eager to make him appear so in his original casting in that role.

4. "In the metropolitan centers, away from the realities of the industry, such accounts were received with skepticism and mockery," Armstrong notes (119). There were indeed skeptics of Chase, but they were hardly so influential as to stop the tide of popular demand for tales of whales capable of sinking ships, rather than mere boats, at will. Nor did any widespread skepticism against such agency gain traction to the extent that it could have ruined the popular reception of *Moby-Dick*, despite Melville's anticipation of backlash in response to "The Affidavit" chapter that vehemently argues, based on Chase, for the plausibility of whales having the capacity to destroy ships.

5. The alienation effect, according to Brecht, is a theater technique that exposes inequities and injustices within the social system to dislodge them from their otherwise hidden and seemingly "natural" place

in everyday life. Brecht wishes to activate discussion of social and economic inequity to prompt radical social innovation beyond that "which doesn't threaten its social function possibly by fusing it with the educational system or the organs of mass communication" (34). See also Brecht's definition in his chapter on the "Alienation Effect in Chinese Acting" (91).

6. More recent films such as *Heathers* and *Powder* also make explicit intertextual use of *Moby-Dick*, but without emphasis on the narrative of revenge toward one particular animal.

7. For a discussion of the 2009 marathon reading as a sit-in protest against digital technology harking back to the oratorical culture of Melville's own antebellum America, see David Dowling (38). At the 2009 event, New Bedford mayor Scott Lang "expanded on the sense of community and shared social capital building in an era of individual cell phones, lap tops, and iPods; the pretechnological tenor was palpable. 'You won't hear or see a cell phone,' Lang assured me with words that amazingly proved correct" (Dowling 38).

REFERENCES

Armstrong, Philip. *What Animals Mean in Fiction and Modernity*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.

Brecht, Bertlot. *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*. Ed. John Willett. New York: Hill and Wang, 1997. Print.

Chase, Owen. *The Loss of the Ship Essex, Sunk by a Whale*. Ed. Nathaniel Philbrick and Thomas Philbrick. New York: Penguin, 2000. Print.

Clifton, Elmer, dir. *Down to the Sea in Ships*. W. W. Hodkinson, 1923. Film.

Cotkin, George. *Dive Deeper: Journeys with* Moby-Dick. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. Print.

Dowling, David. *Chasing the White Whale: The Moby-Dick Marathon Reading; or, What Melville Means Today*. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 2010. Print.

Eastwood, Clint, dir. *The Gauntlet*. Warner Brothers, 1977. Film.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. "The Animal Cure." *Harper's* June 2012: 13–16. Print.

Guthrie, Stewart. "A Cognitive Theory of Religion." *Current Anthropology* 21.2 (Apr. 1980): 181–203. Print.

Huston, John, dir. *Moby Dick*. Warner Brothers, 1956. Film.

Inge, M. Thomas. "Melville in Popular Culture." *A Companion to Melville Studies*. Ed. John Bryant. New York: Greenwood P, 1986. Print.

Knight, Arthur. *The Liveliest Art: A Panoramic History of the Movies*. New York: Macmillan, 1978. Print.

Kuehn, Daniel. "Moby Dick Discovery." *Facts & Other Stubborn Things*, 19 Feb. 2011. Web. 15 Feb. 2013.

Maguire, Eoghan. "Save the Whales? There's an App for That." *CNN World*. CNN, 23 Apr. 2012. Web. 17 Feb. 2013.

Mallee, Bertram F., and Louis J. Moses. *Intentions and Intentionality: Foundations of Social Cognition*. Boston: MIT P, 2001. Print.

McBride, Joseph. *Steven Spielberg: A Biography*. Cambridge: De Capo, 1999. Print.

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle. Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1988. Print.

Merman, Louis M., ed. *Cetacean Behavior: Mechanisms and Functions*. New York: Wiley, 1980. Print.

Metz, Walter C. "The Cold War's 'Undigested Apple Dumpling': Imaging *Moby-Dick* in 1956 and 2001." *The Literature/Film Reader: Issues of Adaptation*. Ed. James Michael Welsh and Peter Lev. Lanham: Scarecrow P, 2007. 65–76. Print.

Mifflin, Lawrie. "Melville Fans." *New York Times* 18 Mar. 1998: E7. Print.

"'Moby Dick' Captain's Ship Found." *BBC News*. BBC, 12 Feb. 2011. Web. 10 Feb. 2013.

Psihoyos, Louie. Personal interview. 23 Dec. 2011.

Roddam, Franc, dir. *Moby Dick*. USA Pictures, 1998. Television.

Schultz, Elizabeth. "Creating Icons: Melville in Visual Media and Popular Culture." *A Companion to Herman Melville*. Ed. Wyn Kelley. New York: Blackwell, 2006. 532–52. Print.

Schmidlin, Charlie. "Rewrites Galore: Timur Bekmambetov's 'Moby Dick' and James Watkins's 'Methuselah' Get Tinkered With." *Indiewire: The Playlist*. Indiewire, 12 June 2012. Web. 7 Feb. 2013.

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony*. New York: Viking, 1977.

Spielberg, Steven, dir. *Jaws*. Universal Pictures, 1975. Film.

Stokes, Trey, dir. *Moby Dick: 2010*. The Asylum, 2010. Film.

Temple, Emily. "The Real Captain Ahab's Ship: Found." *Flavorwire*. Flavorwire, 12 Feb. 2011. Web. 10 Feb. 2013.

Thompson, J. Lee, dir. *The White Buffalo*. United Artists, 1977. Film.

Webb, Millard, dir. *The Sea Beast*. Warner Brothers, 1926. Film.

Whitehead, Hal. *Sperm Whales: Social Evolution in the Ocean*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2003. Print.