SOCIETY FOR ANIMATION STUDIES
NEWSLETTER

A divided Art? Animation in Germany and Europe

A Society for Animation Studies (SAS) conference in co-operation with Deutsches Institut für Animationsfilm, Dresden (DIAF) and Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Dresden

12. to 15. April 2005, during the 17th Filmfest Dresden

The conference "A divided Art? Animation in Germany and Europe" will discuss the history and aesthetics of German animation film, focussing in particular on the developments after 1945. As the two German states were in the front line of Cold War for decades, the European and international context of German animation plays an important role in the panel

discussions. Therefore, the relationship of animation in both Germanys with animation in the East European countries is a central topic of the conference. Beyond the German perspective, divisions between animation as an art form and animation in the applied arts are discussed, as well as questions about conditions of learning and producing animation film have to be raised. The conference also looks at the current situation of animation studies in Germany. Other topics on European animation will be considered.

The conference will feature three days of papers and screenings in Dresden – a city closely connected with animation film for, here, the DEFA Trickfilmstudio, German biggest animation company, produced for 35 years. At night, public screenings in the course of the 17th Filmfest Dresden will present highlights of German animation film. The conference is part of the 17th Filmfest Dresden, April 2005.

The organisers encourage contributions not only from researchers in the fields of animation film studies and film studies but also from researchers with other interdisciplinary approaches and practitioners. Submissions that develop questions with reference to the conference's main issues are privileged. However, papers on other topics of European animation are also highly welcome. Please submit paper title, a 200-word abstract and short biographical information before 28 February 2005. Conference languages: English and German. Translations will be provided.

http://divided-art-conference.com
Paper proposals: Jeanpaul.Goergen@t-online.de

McLaren Lambert Scholarly Book Award

The Society for Animation Studies is seeking nominations from SAS members for the Norman McLaren-Evelyn Lambert Award for the 'Best Scholarly Book on Animation'. Books should have been published in 2001, 2002, 2003 or 2004 and can be in any language. (Note: We reserve the right to disqualify a book in a language that we cannot find a willing SAS member to read and evaluate.) The award committee comprises Dr. Karin Wehn (University of Leipzig, Germany), Dr. Suzanne Buchan (Animation Research Centre, Farnham, UK) and will be chaired by Michael Frierson (University of North Carolina Greensboro, USA). Please submit the title, publisher, and ISBN # for your nomination to: Michael Frierson, Department of Broadcasting and Cinema, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, PO Box 26170, Greensboro, North Carolina, USA 27402-6170. Or via e-mail to frierson@uncg.edu. The deadline for submissions is 15 April 2005. This award will be sponsored by the National Film Board of Canada

Society for Animation Studies Essay Award

During the last General Meeting we discussed the expansion of the SAS awards. In addition to the McLaren-Lambart award for scientific books on animation, we also want to establish a prize for essays on animation. This is the first year that we will be awarding this prize. The essays have to be submitted in English. We have discussed this at length because we would have preferred having them submitted in the various languages in question but that would create too many problems. We realise that in doing this we discriminate against many people who do not use English as their language of communication. Those people not writing their essays in English will encounter additional translation or correction costs. The Netherlands Institute for Animation film would like to make the sum of Euro 1,500 available this time to go some way towards meeting our wishes and also towards encouraging entries from non-English native speakers. We could then call the award - the Society for Animation Studies Essay Award. The five essays would be published in the SAS eNewsletter and could be downloaded on the web site(s).

Abstracts of no more than 400 words should be sent to the SAS, Netherlands Institute for Animation Film, sas@niaf.nl. The deadline for abstracts is 15 April 2005. Applicants should also send a bibliography with the abstracts. A jury will adjudicate these abstracts, all written in English, and select five to be elaborated further or submitted complete. Around 15 June entrants will be notified as to whether their abstracts have been accepted and that they can work on their essays. The essays will then be sent to the NIAf by 15 August. The jury will then have until 1 November to pass on the results to the NIAf. An essay may be no longer than 8,000 words. The jury can work out the criteria. A winner will be selected from these five essays. The winner will receive Euro 500 and the other four entrants, each Euro 250. The NIAf will send out a call for abstracts. Please send us the addresses of Institutions and academics around the world. The award committee comprises Dr. Karin Wehn (University of Leipzig, Germany), Dr. Suzanne Buchan (Animation Research Centre, Farnham, UK) and will be chaired by Michael Frierson (University of North Carolina Greensboro, USA). The Netherlands Institute for Animation Film will sponsor this award.

Ton Crone

President's Report

Later than expected, we wish our members all the best for the New Year. Automatically, when writing this report at the beginning of 2005 I look back over the past year. Last year we lost a very special member of our organisation - William Moritz. He was a valued member of the animation film community as has emerged from the many written responses to his death. On a global scale, last year came to a tragic end with the Tsunami in Asia killing more than 200,000 people. And for us in the Netherlands with the murder of the filmmaker Theo van Gogh on 2 November while riding his bicycle to his office. Murdered because of the short film *Submission* that he made for a special television program in collaboration with Ayaan Hirshi Ali, a Dutch politician of Somali origin. The film was intended as an indictment of the Koran and the oppression of women in the name of Islam. His death caused a shock that we are still coming to terms with. As I write this, the International Film Festival Rotterdam has just started. During this festival a debate will be held on freedom of speech. That same film broadcasted once on television (August 2004) was also to be screened during this festival in a special program but the producer withdrew it because of the possibility of threats.

We are not accustomed to withholding our opinions in the Netherlands because of the threat of what could follow. The Rotterdam festival has always been a refuge

for filmmakers to screen films either forbidden in their own country or, if screened, films that could pose a threat for the filmmakers. Now the same has happened to us in a country that we thought was civilised. My thoughts go out to animation filmmakers who have made their films under the same circumstances or those who, through their animation films, voice a complaint against oppression or those who feel they are not free to voice their opinions. We are familiar with the book by Karl F. Cohen *Forbidden Animation: Censored Cartoons and Blacklisted Animators in America* but there must be more. It would be a good idea to draw up an inventory of animation films and literature on this theme and to learn from it.

Urbana-Champaign
The conference in Urbana-Champaign was a success, thanks to Richard Leskosky. The discussions were lively and the paper presentations were interesting. The ambiance on the campus of the University of Illinois was good. Speaking as a European, the facilities on such a campus never cease to amaze me. Paul Wells has written a detailed report on the conference. This edition of the SAS eNewsletter also includes the interesting key note address by Mark Langer 'Birth of the Boop: 'Thought's on Cartoon Stardom" that he presented at the beginning of the conference. Suzanne Williams took the minutes at the General Meeting.

Conferences
The next conference is entitled: "A Divided Art. Animation in Germany and Europe", which will be held during the Dresden Film Festival. Jeanpaul Goergen is one of the organisers. The closing date for submitting paper proposals has been extended to the end of February! See the latest news on the conference in Dresden. Unfortunately the conference planned in San Antonio, Texas this year will not go ahead, but we can look forward to the conference in 2006 that Suzanne Williams from Trinity University is going to organise. It is even possible to submit preference dates for the conference, see the news from Texas in this issue. There are plans to organise a conference in December in Faro, Portugal. Various speakers have agreed to take part but the organisers want to wait with the publicity until the fund raising is all arranged. More news about this in the next SAS eNewsletter.

New Board
As I stated in the last eNewsletter I want to hand over the presidency at the end of this year. Mark Langer (mlanger@ccs.carleton.ca) is prepared to chair the nomination committee and to prepare the elections for a new president. The other members of the committee are

Joanna Bouldin, Pierre Floquet and Richard Leskosky. Nominations should be submitted before 30 April 2005, together with a short resume stating opinions about the Society for Animation Studies and what the candidate would like to achieve as president. Some management experience is desirable, and a good command of the English language and one other foreign language would be to the candidate's advantage. Nominations can be sent to Mark Langer, mlanger@ccs.carleton.ca. Given the fact that there will be no SAS conference after Dresden this year, voting will have to take place mainly electronically, something new within the SAS.

Membership and membership fee
In order to be able to vote as a member of the Society for Animation Studies it is of course necessary to be a legitimate, and consequently a paid-up, member. We will once again be sending you electronic invoices that should be paid by return. Payment of the contribution fee is still by means of traditional cheques or transferring money to a bank account (Europe) but next year we hope to collect the fee via PayPal.

Official status
During the conference in Urbana-Champaign a small working party was set up comprising Michael Frierson, Paul Wells and Ton Crone to examine the cheapest way of gaining official status for the SAS. One of my objectives is to achieve this during my presidency. My findings have revealed that for a small organisation such as the SAS, it is too expensive to do this in Los Angeles or New York. Now, with the new Internet PayPal payment system, it is no longer particularly important where the SAS is registered and where it can open an account. We are therefore now busy examining where the SAS as an international organisation can best be established and easy to reach without entailing too much cost. This will mean drawing up articles of association.

Web site
Once official status has been acquired we can make a start on our own web site. At the present moment we use the Animation World Network and the ASIFA but we are unsatisfied with this arrangement for a number of reasons as I have explained earlier. Jeanpaul Goergen has set up a separate web site for the conference in Dresden. This web site can develop into a separate web site for SAS Europe. But there is an enthusiastic group with young SAS members, comprising Joanna Bouldin (USA), David Surman (UK), Michal Frierson (USA), Hee Holmen (DK), Kirsty Stevenson (UK) and Ton Crone(NL), who would like to work on the international SAS web site. Once official status is established, work on this can commence.

Norman McLaren Scholarly Book Award and the Society for Animation Studies Essay Award
This year there are two prizes to be awarded. An award for the best scientific book about animation film and an award for the best essay on animation film. The first is made available by the National Film Board of Canada and the second by the Netherlands Institute for Animation Film. The committee that will select the winners will comprise: Michael Frierson (University of North Carolina in Greensboro, USA), Suzanne Buchan (Animation Research Centre, Farnham, UK) and Karin Wehn (University Leipzig, Germany).

Now that the conference in Texas has been moved to 2006 I hope to see you all in Dresden.

Ton Crone, president

Annual General Meeting

University of Illinois

Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, October 2, 2004

Members Present: Joanne Bouldin, Suzanne Buchan, Alan Cholodenko, Ton Crone, Pierre Floquet, Michael Frierson, Hee Holmen, Gigi Hu Tze Yue, Richard Leskosky, Mark Menga, Dongil Oh, Lynne Perra, Ozge Samanci, Seungmin Song, Kirsty Stevenson, David Surman, Karin Wehn, Paul Wells, and Suzanne Williams-Rautiola Apologies: Jeanpaul Goergen, Martin McNamara, and Gunnar Strom

Minutes from the September 29, 2002, meeting were read, received and approved unanimously without correction.

President's report was presented by Ton Crone. Suzanne Buchan noted that the 2003 Conference in Farnham, Surrey, was not an SAS Conference. While she appreciated the support from the Society, she asked that the record reflect that the initiative to organize the conference was from the Animation Research Center, Surrey Institute of Art and Design. Noted.

Ton announced that there would be two conferences in 2005: an official international conference to be held in San Antonio, TX, in early August, and an European SAS-supported conference in Dresden from 12 – 15 April 2005. There was concern raised by Pierre Floquet of a dilution of the organization since many could not go to both. There was also concern expressed by Suzanne Buchan that the organization is missing important

contributions by requiring papers to be delivered in English and not having translators. Discussion included translation possibilities, including via the internet.

Michael Frierson then opened the discussion of a SAS website and who would create and update it. David Surman noted that archives were too passive and that the website needed to be more interactive. Joanna Bouldin proposed that a subcommittee be formed to work on the online presence of the SAS. Volunteers for that subcommittee included Joanna Bouldin, Ton Crone, Michael Frierson, Kirsty Stevenson, David Surman, and Karin Wehn.

Ton then provided an overview of the organization. He noted that the treasury has US$9,237 and approximately E3,000, which was static over the past year. Further, there are from 45 to 50 paid US members and approximately 26 members in Europe.

Richard Leskosky asked about setting up a Lifetime Membership. There were questions as to whether the organization could support such memberships and what one would get with the membership. Suzanne Buchan made a proposal to institute a Lifetime Membership, Joanna Bouldin seconded it, and the proposal passed.

It was proposed that the McLaren/Lambert Award for the Best Scholarly Book be reinstated. During the General Meeting we discussed the expansion of the SAS awards. In addition to the McLaren-Lambart award for scientific books on animation, we also want to establish a prize for essays on animation.

Ton noted that while he had enjoyed being president of the Society, he had accomplished many of his goals, and it was time for him to step down. Therefore, an Election Committee has been formed consisting of Pierre Floquet, Mark Langer, Richard Leskosky, and Joanna Bouldin to collect names of possible candidates and to organize an election if necessary.

Ton noted that he would like to have a copy of all papers for the archive; however, this would not be considered publication if the authors would like to submit their papers for publication in the future.

Ton closed the meeting by extending the appreciation of SAS to Richard Leskosky for organizing the conference.

Respectfully submitted by

Suzanne Williams-Rautiola
Acting Secretary
San Antonio, TX, November 29, 2004

Greetings from Sunny San Antonio, Texas!

I regret to announce that we are postponing the San Antonio conference of the Society for Animation Studies until 2006. With a number of other conferences already in the works and the concerns with scheduling travel arrangements from Europe and two consecutive conferences in the United States, Ton and I came to the mutual agreement that 2006 might be a better year. As of this date, we are considering July 14-16, 2006 (Friday through Sunday morning); however, dates have not been finalized. Although July and August are very hot months for San Antonio, the University is able to offer us very reasonable lodging in the dorms as well as meal service during the summer. If this date does not work for you, other possibilities are late July or the first two weekends in August. Please let me know if these dates work better. You can reach me at swilliam@trinity.edu, 210.999.8152 (office, 210.999.8355 (fax), or Trinity University, Department of Communication, One Trinity Place, San Antonio, TX 78212-7200. I look forward to an interesting and lively conference in 2006!

Suzanne Williams-Rautiola

Society for Animation Studies

15th International Conference 2004

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Comics artist and theorist, Scott McCloud, has suggested that 'as the technological distinctions between media fall away, their conceptual distinctions will become more important than ever'. In many senses, this view is at the heart of the current debates within animation studies. Animation is an omnipresent aspect of visual culture worldwide. It is present in its traditional form in the films produced by Disney, Dreamworks, and PIXAR, and in television sit-coms like The Simpsons and South Park. Equally, it exhibits its versatility in every ad break, as anything from washing machines to cereal packets take on anthropomorphic tendencies. It is the lingua franca of the games industry. On the world wide web, most sites have some form of animated figure or banner, as well as housing new forms of cartoon or stop-motion animation. And on mobile phones, too, animated characters and games proliferate. Independent film survives in the face of economic adversities, providing festivals with inventive and affecting shorts, while the 'invisible art' of animation within the special effects tradition continues to transform, and in some aspects, eradicate 'live action'. And, animation continues to embrace new applications in science, architecture, healthcare and broadcast journalism, to name but a few.

The oft repeated question of 'what is animation ?' is now redundant, and should be replaced with 'how does the application of the animated form work in a particular context ?', and by extension, 'with what meaning and effect ?'. This configuration does not take for granted that we know precisely or definitively what the language of animation is, and requires that it is necessarily defined within the context within which it is assumed to be used. The range of papers at the 15th International Conference of the Society for Animation Studies, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, confirmed this view, tracking the ever expanding parameters of the animated form and re-defining its purpose in everything from Betty Boop to Brickfilms; from news reports to Minority Report; from Avery to animé; and from the UBU filmgroup to the Animation Hothouse.

This diversity in many respects reflects the dilemma of 'Animation Studies' in the sense that the search for a common language which defines the practice and

criticism of animation remains elusive, coloured by a variety of approaches which resist reference to a common animation literature, or a canon of films or related texts. Arguably, on the one hand, this is a good thing as it insists on breadth and embraces literature from other fields, simultaneously, confirming the multi-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary nature of the form. On the other hand, however, this may constantly inhibit or indeed, prevent 'Animation Studies' becoming a fully acknowledged discipline, which can both impact further on School / College / University curricula, and properly engage and collaborate with the animation 'industries'. It should be noted that this is not a position to promote gloom and despondency. The very longevity of the Society itself is proof of the desire of scholars and practitioners to keep working at the core questions even if definitive answers are not possible. Encouraging too, is that a global community is invested in the area, and that people across the world are consistently working to research and develop their critical and creative activity. It has always been the case that animation has always remained experimental even as it has entered the popular mainstream (even something like PIXAR's *Finding Nemo*, with its hackneyed Disney-patented 'absent-parent-rites of passage-emotional-journey' experiments technically and aesthetically); it may well be that this will also be the case for animation scholarship.

Comforting then perhaps, that the Conference began with papers about the American cartoonal tradition, Eythan de Seife confidently refuting the view that Frank Tashlin's approach to the cartoon was especially characterised by the previously lauded and particular style of his editing and quasi-live action cinematography, arguing instead, that his claims to 'auteur' status lie with the distinctiveness of his comedy. One of the most distinctive and influential of the Hollywood cartoon directors, Tex Avery, created his comedy from a heady brew of sex, status, speed and spectacle, and was here addressed by Pierre Floquet, who explored the relationship between Avery's 'girl' characters – all essentially variations on the curvaceous 'Red' – and the ideological currency they represented as their aesthetic and contextual representation changed in the light of differing cultural climates. There is some irony in the fact that 'zoomorphic' representation seemingly preserved an acceptable morality in a short like *Red Hot Riding Hood* (1943) by presenting 'lust' in the guise of a wolf and not in the guise of a man; such was the assumed innocence of the form that the bestiality implied in the sexual exchange between an animal and a human was not noticed, a surprising aspect of animation since the days of Kong and Fay. Floquet traced the steady denial of sex

and sexuality through the use of animals, and the re-working of 'Red' into increasingly de-sexualised figures, innocuous hybrids of cute animal and child-like human. This sense of distanciation was perhaps inevitable in its time as a response to moral panic and social anxiety, but seen from a distance throws into relief the explicitness of its intention and meaning. This is clearly the case, for example, in what Conference convener, Richard Leskosky described as 'the single invader saga' present in numerous cartoons between the 1930 and the early 1940s. Such a saga featured the introduction of a community, the invasion by a singular threatening figure, the mobilisation of the community in response, and the final return to order once the villain was expelled or vanquished. Over and above this structural premise, Leskosky's example, Balloonland, raised a host of issues about its representational tropes – phallic balloons, 'black' characters, pins and penetration – all now visible to contemporary eyes much more concerned to move beyond narrative premises and early animation aesthetics. Kirsty Stevenson's polished analysis of Betty Boop in this light, showed Betty as a victim of social change; her representational currency inhibited by increasing conservatism as she moved from 'dog faced girl' to 'showgirl' to 'girl next door'. The interesting case made here, though, was that in the removal of her 'sexuality', and the malleable iconography of her body, as played out through the Fleischer aesthetic, Betty also lost her 'stardom'. The implied corporeality of Betty's body carried its authenticity; denied such physical propensity, Betty's star wained. Issues of a related order were addressed in Mark Langer's exemplary keynote speech. Langer's gift of 'writing-to-speak' enables him to give thorough address to his topic while allowing accessibility and debate. His engagement here, with the trials and tribulations of Mae Questel in claiming her rightful place (and presumably, reward) as the material template for Betty Boop, opened up a range of perspectives about the status of the animated image; the ownership and copyright of imagery in the public domain; and the institutional and commercial 'clout' which operates to ensure he who makes the profit also has the moral and social high ground.

The International Animation panel saw Lynne Perra offer an engaging overview of Canadian animation as a reflection of national identity. As in most analyses of the relationship between animated film and nationhood, the sheer diversity of approaches can undermine any compelling case for recognising a particular and regularly presented 'idea' of a country, but when localised in specific historical and cultural contexts, animated films can be highly revealing – most notably here, perhaps, in

Caroline Leaf's traditional folk stories or Frederic Back's nostalgic and spiritual view of French Quebec. It is John Grierson who may be of help here. The National Film Board, while being set up in the public interest, and as a context in which artwork should embrace indigenous idioms and identity, operates in a way that demonstrates its democratic focus and social imperative, and in doing so, encourages variety and inclusiveness. On the one hand, then, an approach informed by work about Canada, but perhaps most importantly, on the other, encouraging work by Canadians, and indeed, many others, through its multi-cultural perspective. For Grierson, both in Britain and Canada, creative and aesthetic works were ultimately just as much an act of social 'record' as documentary, and this view was engaged with in Hee Holmen's 'interactive animated documentary', *Life in Norway*, about her sadly disappointing and sometimes upsetting experiences as a Korean student studying in Norway. Playing with a variety of definitions of documentary her on-line diary-cum-critique served to prompt some interesting questions about the status of documentary in the digital domain, and animation as the language of a global visually literate culture.

Underpinning many aspects of the Conference was the diversity of delivery platforms for animation, and the difficulty in finding a mode of address which could determine 'meaning' within recognisable and common parameters of understanding, and the necessity to find a new language for such an analysis. The panel concerned with animal representation, for example, found Shana Heinricy grounding her analysis of *Spongebob Squarepants* in animal rights debates, while Nina Martin's close textual analyses of *Happy Tree Friends*, enabled both a social and aesthetic reading of the violence in the episodes; both papers opening up key questions about animation's representational flux, a theme I pursued in my own contribution to this panel about 'bestial ambivalence', and the shifting terms of meaning and affect in any one animal character or narrative. The tendency to 'fix' some terms and conditions by which to analyse texts in this panel, was sharply challenged by the papers looking at the relationship between animation, computers and 'realism'. Joanna Bouldin's lively and insightful perspectives on the 'animated' news coverage of the Gulf War, suggested that digital images enable a simulated 'slippage' which only brings an abstract distanciation to seemingly familiar urban contexts. Such virtual terrains enable viewers to not have to engage with real acts of war or the real people involved in them. Animation ensures that eyewitnesses only view a simulated conflict in a simulated land – a perspective explored, most famously in Baudrillard's work, 'The Gulf War Did Not Happen'. Alan Cholodenko, one of the most

established of Baudrillard scholars, figured on the same panel, presenting part two of 'The Nutty Universe of Animation', playfully using the central metaphor of 'the nut' to integrate Derridean perspectives on Hawking; notions of the 'cosmological uncanny'; and perspectives on the presence of counterintuitive logic in cartoons which chime with the chaotic imperatives of childhood and critical theory. Such intellectual bravura was a long way from the socially grounded analyses earlier, but readily related to Suzanne Buchan's introduction to her work in exploring the shared visual and graphic terrain of aesthetic and scientific 'worlds'. It has long been acknowledged that one of animation's greatest achievements is its ability to sustain the inner logic of its own codes and conventions – however surreal or apparently arbitrary – in a variety of techniques and approaches. Buchan's approach in interrogating the shared 'digital' space of artistic and scientific representation may provide the ready tools to break down C.P.Snow's 'Two Cultures Divide', and provide a 'new language' in analysing animated forms; a point noted in David Surman's incisive address of 'realist' theories of animation. Refuting any essentialist definition of animation, Surman argued, is a minimum requirement in addressing the transdisciplinarity of the animated form, and at the heart of embracing its indeterminacy. For old-fashioned 'separatists' like myself, who want to preserve some notion of 'essentialism' for any amount of reasons, not least politically, in the championing of 'Animation' studies, this was heady stuff, and self-evidently, true. Literally and metaphorically, I will be back to the drawing board.

Jonathan Frome's analysis of the live action and animation versions of the animé, *Wicked Cities*, brought me some comfort, though, in the sense that self-evidently, the animated version was superior, and had little technical or aesthetic interface with its live action counterpart. Byungho Park also promoted the view that animé did have 'national' purpose when promoting pro-Japanese, anti-German values in work like Yamato and Mobile Suit Gundam, while Qi Wang addressed animation's intrinsic language of artifice and illusion as an implied rhetoric of opposition, otherness, projection and memory. Once more, these comparatively orthodox readings were countered by the panel looking at computer generated humans, and the interface between animation and the special effects tradition. Mark Menga sought to meld philosophical perspectives drawn from thinkers as diverse as Descartes, Mitry, Baudrillard and McCloud in a quantative analysis of digital humans in contemporary film. While this systematised an approach, it will be interesting to see

how this work impacts on an understanding of the representational status of the figures within the texts themselves – if a digital human is recognised as such, for example, in a film like *Final Fantasy*, does this still render the film as 'animation' or does it become a fully blown post-photographic 'digital' movie akin to live action ? Equally, if a character like Gollum in *Lord of the Rings* is recognised as the same as his live action human counterparts, does this cease to be 'animation' ? Perhaps, these are not the relevant questions. Bob Rehak's energetic and engagingly intelligent analysis of 'stunts' in contemporary film, demonstrated both the invisible yet spectacularly self-evident presence of animation as an effect, and the absence of the 'stuntman' as a signifier of traditional 'authenticity'. Such 'blurry borders' were also explored by Ozge Samanci in another spirited address showing how Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* had more in common with the traditional construction and execution of animated movies than it did the orthodoxies of live action. By interrogating the language of animation in this way, Menga, Rehak and Samanci drew attention to some core concerns in the literature of animation – the status of the body; issues of literal and metaphorical transformation; and the manipulation of technology in progressing representational tropes.

Gigi Hu Tze Yue's analysis of the Japanese portmanteau narrative, *Fuyu no hi*, served to challenge the immersed status of animation in live action, though, by showing all of its diverse forms interfacing or counterpointing each other in the linked poetic adaptations of Matsuo Basho's acclaimed renku. Further, Lienor and Dan Torre's enlightening overview of Australian experimental animation showed that Yoram Gross, Bruce Petty and Len Lye are but the most well known of some considerable creative talent in a range of progressive abstract forms. Their work in recovering this history and promoting its talents is long overdue. The same might be said for the burgeoning presence of Korean animation on the world stage. Recent retrospectives have brought some engaging work to the attention of fresh audiences, and papers by Dongil Oh and Seungmin Song sought to analyse the particular aesthetic and social concerns of such films. It is gratifying that a number of young scholars are embracing animation in this fashion, as the development of animation studies worldwide will rely on their important contributions.

The Conference also included a visit to a Virtual Reality installation; retrospectives of Dutch animation and late 1970s / early 1980s independent animation; and an amusing and informative presentation by Karin Wehn on the growing 'left-field' animation practice of 'Brickfilms'. This included an interview with film-makers Dave Lennie and Andy Boyer, who explained their love for lego, and prompted a whole variety of childhood anecdotes from an audience self-evidently eager to return to their attics for toys to animate ! As is clear, the conference reflected the current diversity of animation study, and its quality and progressiveness was a fitting tribute to William Moritz, a former president of the SAS, who sadly died this year. Moritz will always be remembered for his unflagging commitment to animation and the intellectual rigour which informed his work, and will no doubt be fondly recalled in many future papers.

Paul Wells

Loughborough University, UK

November 2004

Birth of the Boop

thoughts on cartoon stardom

In 1984, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis brought suit against Christian Dior-New York, Lansdowne Advertising, photographer Richard Avedon, model Barbara Reynolds and Ron Smith Celebrity Look-Alikes. Onassis charged that an advertisement for Christian Dior was an appropriation without consent of Ms Onassis' likeness for commercial use, and thereby violated her right of privacy.[1] However, Jacqueline Onassis did not appear in the ad. Who did appear was a Jackie O. look-alike named Barbara Reynolds -- a secretary who also made money at a second job, posing as Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis at events for Ron Smith Celebrity Look-Alikes. Despite the absence of Onassis' image, Reynold's presence in the advertisement along with real-life "C-list" celebrities Ruth Gordon, Gene Shalit and Shari Belafonte was alleged to imply that Onassis endorsed the Dior product.

The defendants argued that since Onassis did not herself appear, Jackie O. had no case. The disputed image was that of Barbara Reynolds. Barbara Reynolds was not made up or disguised to look like Onassis – she just happened to look that way. It was Reynolds' persona that was used in the ad, and the image had been taken with Reynolds' permission. Now, Onassis was trying to interfere with Reynold's ownership of her own image.

The New York Supreme Court found for Onassis under sections 50 and 51 of the New York Civil Rights law, which provide that "A person, firm or corporation that uses for advertising purposes, or for the purposes of trade, the name, portrait or picture of any living person without having first obtained the written consent of such person...is guilty of a misdemeanor."[2] The defendants were found to have misappropriated Onassis' persona. Although Barbara Reynolds was not disguised in order to mimic Onassis, the intent in using Reynolds as a model was to imply that Onassis endorsed the Dior products. But in effect, Onassis' ownership of her likeness superceded that of Reynolds' ownership of her own image.

The Onassis case set off a stream of similar lawsuits. In 1988 Bette Midler sued Ford for using a singing voice that sounded like hers in an ad. Vanna White sued Samsung Electronics in 1993 for an advertisement using a robot in a blonde wig flipping lettercards like White's on "Wheel of Fortune."[3] There have been many similar cases. (I'd like to observe parenthetically that one of my favourites is the earlier *Carson v. Here's Johnny Portable Toilets, Inc*, where Johnny Carson successfully sued a porta potty company for using the line "Here's Johnny" in their ads.[4] What distinguishes the Onassis, Midler and White cases from the earlier ones is their establishment that such physical attributes of "persona" as one's appearance, voice and other characteristics suggesting a particular celebrity, had the status of property <u>even if the depiction was of someone else's image, voice or gesture.</u> In fact, recent interpretations of law following the Vanna White case established that identity is not at all dependent on likeness. If anything suggests a celebrity's identity, then privacy rights apply, and the courts have applied privacy rights as meaning commercial rights. In fact, the International Trademark Association and the American Bar Association recently have been considering whether to treat "persona" rights as trademarks. Under this proposal, such rights could be treated like other forms of property, being freely transferable and descendible.[5]

Court cases regarding identity that affected the film industry go back as far as *Binns v. Vitagraph Corporation* in 1913. Binns was a telegraph operator on a passenger liner called "The Republic". When "The Republic" collided with another ship, it damaged the radio room of the sinking ship. Binns repaired the radio, sent the message that successfully brought another ship to the rescue and remained with the sinking ship to take and receive messages, even though the radio room was eventually flooded. When he finally was rescued and arrived in NY, he was hailed as a hero and a ticker-tape parade was held in his honour. Vitagraph made a short re-enactment of this, and the horrified Binns, feeling that his privacy had been violated, successfully sued Vitagraph for representing him by a professional actor made up to look like the operator. The court ruled that "A picture within the meaning of the statute is not necessarily a photograph of the living person, but includes any representation of such person"[6] which opened up the law in a manner that later accommodated Onassis, Midler and White. But it should be stressed that Binns sued because his privacy had been invaded. Onassis, Midler, White and others sued because they asserted commercial proprietorship over their personae.

Now, this is not a paper in law, so let me get this back to our field of study. In an article written about the Onassis case, Jane Gaines put her finger on the issue at stake, in addition to that of privacy rights becoming property rights. Traditional notions of the ontology of the image tend to stress the indexical – that the camera is photographically recording some sort of empirical reality. As Gaines points out in regard to the Onassis case, If the

law of privacy were interested in the empirical evidence offered by the photograph, there would be no doubt that the image in question belonged to Barbara Reynolds and therefore that Dior had a right to use it. But photographic realism and privacy doctrine want different guarantees. The one defers to a conviction that there is a final, verifiable, empirical real, and the other defers to a construction of personhood which does not require the existence of a real body (whether in the past or in the present) as its support.[7]

The construction of personhood which does not require the existence of a real body brings us to the focus of this paper, which is a case concerning stardom as a property in a commercially contested site. The site that I will discuss is a court case from the early 1930s, which involves the appropriation without consent of the physical attributes of a real, live-action star by an animated cartoon character. Character appropriation in animation raises theoretical issues that go beyond those encountered in live-action cinema, so I will touch on some of these issues as well

Much scholarship on stardom focuses on the degrees of distance between the performer and the role. In a survey of the literature on stardom, Christine Geraghty classifies three basic forms of stardom – the star as celebrity (which emphasized biographical elements of the personality), the star as professional (which emphasizes whether an actor's presence in a film seems to correspond with a particular film context, thus effacing the gap between the person and the role), and the star as performer (which emphasizes the process of impersonation required for a star to play a role).[8] Central to the star system is the belief that there is an extra-filmic personality in the "real" world. This belief informs audience reception of individual roles played by a star. At an earlier SAS conference, in a paper called "The End of Animation History," I once mentioned in a paper about a student who came up to me after a class screening and asked me what happened to Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman after the end of *Casablanca*. I responded that they went to their dressing rooms, took off their costumes, showered, changed into their street clothes, and went home. This conflation of role and performer is typical of audience reception of stars. Bogart, for example, was little like his early film roles – being the product of an upper class New York background, not a working class upbringing. No matter whether the off-screen Humphrey Bogart actually may have conformed to the characters he played, the reception of individual Bogart roles by audiences would have been in part determined by a belief in an extra-cinematic "Humphrey Bogart" with a well-defined public persona. This persona is seen as distinct from the apparatus of cinema itself. Much of our understanding of film stardom depends on the consciousness of this fact. According to Walter Benjamin, the spectator identifies with an actor's struggle to perform in front of a camera, lights and recording equipment, which shows the viewer how "humanity...can assert itself in the face of the apparatus."[9]

This doesn't apply to cartoon stars in the classical period of American studio animation. Most, like Mickey Mouse, are artificial creations. Walt Disney may have provided the voice of Mickey for several years, and may have identified with the character, but Mickey did not signify Disney in the way that Sam Spade signified Bogart. There was neither a physical resemblance to Disney in Mickey Mouse, nor would an audience of the time have identified Mickey's voice with that of Disney. On the other hand, Sam Spade's image, voice and gestures are the very likeness of Humphrey Bogart, and this image is a constant among all roles that Bogart played, even when cast in such unlikely and even embarrassing parts as the Irish horse groomer Michael O'Leary in *Dark Victory (1939)*. No matter what the film, Bogart's distinctive accent and look remained a constant and the image of Bogart on screen always refers to an off-screen entity.

Although audience responses to individual appearances of Mickey Mouse may be informed by earlier film appearances, they are not mediated by a belief in an extra-cinematic "Mickey Mouse"[10] who must struggle to assert himself in the face of the apparatus. There is no separation of the human from the apparatus. In a sense, Mickey Mouse IS the apparatus. Now, most of you are aware of instances of "documentaries" where Mickey, Donald, Bugs Bunny, etc. are interviewed, or of Bugs and Daffy appearing in an Academy Awards broadcast a few years ago. You've also seen cartoon characters being interviewed by live-action journalists, or on television ads endorsing products like Tang or Popeye's Fried Chicken. You've also seen Disneyland TV ads where children hug "Mickey" (actually some park employee in a Mickey costume). But I would cite these as special cases that in no way contradict what I'm saying about cartoon characters and the extra-cinematic. Reference to an extra-cinematic existence for these characters is marked in different ways – either as comic parody, or evidence of a child's innocence. In neither case is the viewer of these extra-cinematic "appearances" to believe that this means that Mickey, Donald, Bugs, Daffy, etc. have "real" existences off-camera, in the sense that the audience would believe that, say, Arnold Schwartzenegger might have – which is why Mickey Mouse is not a Republican candidate anywhere. Arnold Schwartzenegger as a performer asserts himself in the face of the apparatus (and even makes jokes about how poorly he does so at the Republican Convention) while Mickey cannot be distinguished from the apparatus of the cinema itself, except in an ironic, fantastic or playful sense that is based upon the recognition of the impossibility of such a

separation. Similar senses of the fantastic or play inform such films as *Duck Amuck*.

This kind of distinction is problematized by cartoon stars who are based on recognizable live-action stars, as was the case with several major animated characters. The screen persona of Betty Boop was based on Helen Kane, who was known as the "Boop-Oop-A-Doop Girl," just as Olive Oyl, although adapted from the Elzie Segar comic strip "Thimble Theatre," drew on the voice and movement of Paramount supporting actress Zasu Pitts. This indexical link to recognizable star figures of the period places these characters in an interstitial space between live-action and cartoon stardom, which I intend to explore in this paper.

The presence of celebrity voice artists has become a staple of modern animation, from Robin Williams' performance as The Genie in *Aladdin* (1993), Ellen DeGeneris' comeback role in *Finding Nemo* (2003), to Robert DeNiro and Martin Scorsese's voice work in the just-released Dreamworks production of *A Shark's Tale*. Last week, I curated a Hayao Miyazaki retrospective at the Ottawa International Animation Festival, and was hoping to find that we were able to obtain subtitled prints of his features. Well, not all the films were the subtitled versions, so I had to cope with seeing films like *Kiki's Delivery Service*, with Phil Hartman's recognizable voice as the cat Gigi, or *Princess Mononoke* with Minnie Driver voicing Lady Eboshi. This is disturbing to me, as I find the extra-cinematic associations of these characters to interfere with a kind of perceived "Japaneseness" that I value in the films. In general, this kind of reference to stars is a recent phenomenon. Although there were isolated instances of this (such as Disney's use of has-been singer Gus "Ukelele Ike" Edwards as the voice of Jiminy Cricket in *Pinocchio*, or bit player Ed Brophy as Timothy Mouse in *Dumbo*, and the Fleischers' use of radio singers Lanny Ross and Jessica Dragonette as the singing voices of Prince David and Princess Gloria in *Gulliver's Travels*) such references were of really minor celebrities and were rarely foregrounded until Disney's use of past their prime celebrity voices like Phil Harris in *The Jungle Book* [1967]).

In the "Golden Age of Studio Animation" an emphasis on celebrity voicing was the exception, not the rule. In the past, most overt allusions to live action personalities in animated films were done through caricature. Major Hollywood stars were caricatured in films like Disney's *Mickey's Gala Premiere* (1934), *Freleng's Coo-Coo Nut Grove* (1936), or Avery's *Hollywood Steps Out* (1941). So important was caricature to animation that several studios hired specialists, from Disney's hiring of Joe Grant, based on his caricatures of Hollywood personalities in the *Los Angeles Record*, to Leon Schlesinger's hiring of Ben Shenkman in 1939 to design caricatures for *Malibu Beach Party* (1940).[11]

But since recognizable stars appeared as caricatured cameos in these films, the animated figures did not exist as independent entities in their own right – their appearances were brief intertextual references unrelated to the construction of a coherent animated star persona. Far different is the case of Betty Boop in her relationship to the singer and actress Helen Kane.

In April of 1932, in what *The New York Evening Journal* called "The Battle of the Boops,"[12] Helen Kane took legal action against Max Fleischer, Fleischer Studios Inc. and Paramount Publix Corporation under the provisions of Sections 50 and 51 of the Civil Rights Law and for unfair competition, claiming that the defendants "have been and still are designing and producing for public exhibition and display in moving picture theatres....animated cartoons or a series of them which contain a full length portrait or picture of plaintiff, slightly caricatured but readily recognizable as plaintiff." Kane's suit alleged that the character "Betty Boop" was created with the intent "to identify said portrait or picture and songs as those of the plaintiff, and cause the public to identify them as such, and thereby to enrich the said defendants by trading on the name, portrait, picture, songs and fame of the plaintiff...without the written consent of plaintiff to such use." Kane asked that the defendants stop making cartoons featuring Betty Boop, and that they pay $200,000 damages, $50,000 exemplary damages and all court costs.[13]

Helen Kane now is a fairly obscure figure in the history of popular music, but was immensely popular during the late 1920s, when she was known as "the Boop-Oop-A-Doop Girl". Born Helen Schroeder, Kane played minor roles on stage (including a stint with the Marx Brothers), and performed in night clubs before making a hit in the play *A Night in Spain* at the Wintergarden in 1927. During the run of *A Night in Spain*, Kane auditioned for Paul Ash at the Paramount Theatre, beginning her association with that company.[14] More Broadway appearances in musical comedy followed, including the Busby Berkeley choreographed *Good Boy* in 1928, in which she introduced the song "I Wanna Be Loved By You." Kane was a mainstay of nightclubs and vaudeville, and became a regular at vaudeville's pinnacle, the Palace, where Dave Fleischer had worked as an usher almost two decades before. Kane was in the forefront of vaudeville performers, getting top billing on programs that included such people as Bill Robinson, Joe Frisco, Herman Timberg, Jimmy Savo, and the team of Clayton, Jackson and Durante. She recorded a series of hit songs including "That's My Weakness Now," "Button Up Your Overcoat," "I Want to Be Bad,"and "I Wanna Be

Loved By You," selling over six million records by 1929.[15] Her name also became synonymous with a risque sexuality. Within the span of two years, Kane went from being characterized in the *New York Evening World* as "a cute little thing that knows how to 'put over' a song" to Helen Huston's claim in *Photoplay* that Kane's pout "can turn a strong silent man into a bowl of mush."[16]

In 1928, after negotiations with a number of film companies, Kane signed a contract with Famous Players-Lasky. She starred in various shorts, as well as in such features as *Nothing But the Truth* (1929), *Sweetie* (1929), *Pointed Heels* (1929), and *Paramount on Parade* (1930). In the latter of these films, Kane is introduced before her appearance as "the Boop-oop-a-doop Girl", and this slogan was used in advertising for most of her pictures. These films also generated more hit songs for Kane, such as "I Have To Have You," and "Ain'tcha" So associated was Kane with the catchphrase "Boop-oop-a-doop" that a letter addressed to "Boop-oop-a-doop, California" was delivered to her home. But the novelty of her "booping" began to wear thin – as Mordaunt Hall observed in reviewing her final feature *Dangerous Nan McGrew* (1930), "It is scarcely aided by Miss Kane's technique in 'boop-oop-a-dooping'."[17]

In 1929, *Photoplay's* Helen Huston said of Kane, "Is there a sugar daddy with heart strong enough to resist? Is there a man alive who could deny that baby talk baby anything?"[18] Evidently, there wasn't. While married to department store buyer Joseph Kane, Helen was rumored to have had an affair with one of her directors. She also had a less discrete relationship with Murray Posner, partner in the Bond Dress Company. As Bond Dress was going into insolvency in 1930, it was alleged that Posner gave Kane $50,000 from the company's assets, as well as substantial gifts of jewelry. Posner and Kane were hauled into court by creditors in a case that would last for five years. Details of the financial shenanigans and their relationship were in papers all over the country. Perhaps a greater problem was Kane's size. She had always had problems with weight control, but now really began putting on the pounds. Hollywood may tolerate scandal, but having the press refer to Kane as "the chubby virtuoso of boop-a-doop" was a career killer. As George Gerhard described the problem at the time in *The N.Y. World*, "suddenly she permitted herself to become very much overweight, and then, just to make it harder, she became involved in the Posner bankruptcy suit, and now look at her." Paramount executives did, and her contract was dropped in 1930.[19]

In that same year, the Fleischers released a film in their "Talkartoon" series, starring Bimbo, that had a new cartoon character that would eventually be identified as Betty Boop.

Was Betty Boop based on Helen Kane? Max Fleischer denied this, claiming in court that Betty Boop was wholly the product of his imagination. I'll let you be the judge. I'm going to show a clip of Helen Kane performing the song "I Have To Have You" with Skeets Gallagher from the film *Pointed Heels* and then play a clip from the first film in which the character that would later be known as Betty Boop appeared – *Dizzy Dishes* (1930).

In 1990, I interviewed animator Grim Natwick, who was among those credited by Max Fleischer in his court testimony as contributing to the creation of Betty Boop. According to Natwick, "...one day, Dave [Fleischer] came in with a song cover of... Helen Kane. ...I had her song and she had the spitcurls. ...And so I made this first sketch with the little spit curls, and they used Helen Kane's recording. ...I made her a female dog...and in the end, she was completely a girl."[20] There is other evidence to support Natwick's contention that Betty Boop was derived from Helen Kane. The first voice artist for the character was Margie Hines, joined shortly afterwards by Bonnie Poe and Mae Questel. They were hired by Lou Diamond, head of the Famous Music division of Paramount, which previously marketed Helen Kane's recordings. In 1929, Paramount sent Helen Kane on a personal appearance tour of movie theatres where she judged Helen Kane "Boop-oop-a-doop" contests. All three of the Betty Boop voice artists won prizes in these contests. In the final one held at the Riverside Theatre in New York, Mae Questel took first prize, and Bonnie Poe and Margie Hines tied for second prize. Helen Kane fell ill on December 29, 1929, when she was to perform at RKO Proctor's Fifty-eighth Street Theatre, Mae Questel substituted for her.[21] So, there is substantial evidence that these three women had a track record of imitating Helen Kane. Despite this, Max Fleischer's lawyer entered drawings that Max had done of these three voice artists into evidence during the trial, claiming that Betty Boop looked as she did because the voice artists looked that way.

The presence of blonde-haired and blue-eyed Margie Hines in court somewhat compromised this evidence. Nevertheless, in terms of appearance, voice and mannerisms, Betty Boop appears as a facsimile of Helen Kane. Her risque nature not only appears to have mirrored Kane's screen persona, but seems based on the very public sex scandals that Kane was involved with at the time. Yet, in light of these facts, Helen Kane lost the case. Why?

The usual answer given is that Paramount produced a reel of film that was shown in court. This film depicted an African-American singer called Baby Esther, who

used the "Boop-oop-a-doop" hot licks in her singing. Conventional wisdom tells us that Kane lost the case because the Baby Esther recording proved that Kane took her signature style from an earlier performer.[22]

What is omitted from this account is that the film of Baby Esther was taken in 1928, and that in it, Baby Esther sings three songs that were earlier made hits by Helen Kane – "Don't Be Like That," "Is There Anything Wrong with That?" and "Wa-da-da."[23] This was hardly proof that Helen Kane derived her singing style from Baby Esther. So despite conventional wisdom about this, it is likely that Kane originated the "Boop-oop-a-doop" phrase.

In his decision, Judge Edward J. McGoldrick ruled that because the animated cartoon is purely fanciful, because cartoon figures are grotesque while Helen Kane is of normal proportions, and because the Fleischer character did not use Helen Kane's name, there was no violation of the Civil Rights Law. Because the animated cartoon is *sui generis*, because the use of nonsense syllables interpolated into songs as "hot licks" had been performed by others before Kane, because Kane was not the copyright proprietor of her songs used in Betty Boop cartoons, because several girls provided the voice for Betty Boop, and because the defendants had no intention of identifying their cartoon character with the plaintiff, there was no unfair competition. McGoldrick ruled that Helen Kane "has no property right in the tones of voice, motions, actions and gestures used by her, nor does she have any property right in the words 'boop-oop-a-doop' and its variants, nor does she have the exclusive right to the rendition of songs containing such vocables."[24] The basis of this decision remained for decades until the cases involving Onassis, Carson, Midler and White. The key elements in McGoldrick's decision seems to have been that he ruled that animated films did not refer in any way to the "real world". He said that they "were fantastic in plot, incident, character and design; they did not deal or purport to deal with the mundane world; they were unreal and created the illusion of dealing with a sphere of things wholly divorced from every day life." These cartoons, said McGoldrick, "represented wholly distinct types of entertainment and were not susceptible of identification or resemblance as between themselves." Since the Betty Boop films were divorced from every day life, they could not, by their very nature, represent Helen Kane in any way. In other words, McGoldrick denied that any indexical link was possible between an animated film and empirical reality. And so, Kane lost her case.

It should be obvious that I disagree with Judge McGoldrick, and that I think that the evidence does support the views that Betty Boop was modeled after Helen Kane. I believe that various degrees of animated indexicality do exist. What interests me about this arcane footnote to animation history is what it means in terms of stardom. One aspect of stardom lies in typecasting, where a character is associated with a particular kind of role because of physical attributes. Margaret Hamilton would be a good example of this – her role as The Wicked Witch of the West was perhaps the most extreme example of a career spent playing cantankerous spinsters, mandated by her looks and scratchy voice. A more contemporary example might be Arnold Schwartzenegger, who has been typecast in roles from *The Terminator* to "The Governator." Helen Kane was the most prominent example of a type popular in the 1920s, called a "baby vamp" – a curvaceous figure, sexy behavior and baby voice. As Barry White has pointed out, typecasting means that acting ceases to be simply a matter of impersonation. When "the actor is selected by physical type...these physical attributes mean in and of themselves. ...the actor becomes...the ostensive sign in which the substance of the signifier is the substance of the signified: the actor is the person, has the personality, his or her appearance suggests she/he is."[25]

I would argue that this is also the way in which we perceive most animation stars. The separation between Mickey Mouse and the role he plays is, if not completely non-existent, at least far less than one encounters with live-action typecasting. Mickey Mouse did not take off his costume, shower and go home at the end of a work day at Walt Disney Productions – what the spectator sees on the screen is both the signifier and the signified in respect to stardom. Some cartoon stars do make passing reference either to live-action stars or to the act of performing itself. Mickey can act out roles in such stories as "Through the Looking Glass" or "Jack and the Beanstalk," but is always essentially Mickey. Bugs Bunny has his Groucho Marx walk, he can impersonate Leopold Stokowski, a Wagnerian beauty, or the Barber of Seville, but still plays a constant character who temporarily inhabits those roles. The foregrounding of the very process of impersonation means that these "roles" are always subordinate to Bugs himself. Earlier, in the silent period, Felix the Cat fused Chaplin's walk to other mannerisms, or the Fleischer character Ko-Ko the Clown appropriated the "Yama-Yama Man" costume of Broadway star Bessie McCoy.

Aside from these details, these animated stars were fundamentally distinguished in personality, actions, and often, in appearance from their live-action referents. While Ko-Ko looks like Bessie McCoy's "Yama-Yama" costume, he is male while she is female. She has a mane of hair while he is bald. There are slight differences in costume. Ko-Ko originally was silent, but later had a

voice that did not recall McCoy's. Felix might have Chaplin's walk, but no other characteristics.

With all due deference to the Honorable Edward J. McGoldrick, I'm arguing that Betty Boop is different in that she is not fundamentally distinguished from her live-action referent. Although Helen Kane did not perform Betty Boop, the character reverses the "actor as signifier / role as signified" relationship that exists in typecasting. Helen Kane (a performer <u>not</u> playing the role) is signified by Betty Boop (a role not played by anyone), not only in *Dizzy Dishes*, but in the Betty Boop cartoons that followed. In later Betty Boop cartoons, the star character's appearance lost her dog ears and was modified to look even more like Kane than she did in her initial appearance. While Kane herself rapidly faded into obscurity,[26] the Betty Boop character took on a life of its own. Where earlier there was a close connection between the animated character and its live-action referent, the signifier eventually became autonomous from the signified. These films exhibit a decoupling of the performance from its performer, the screen persona from its player, and the character from its referent. As a cartoon character, Betty Boop initially had a parasitic relationship to Helen Kane. As time went on, the parasite erased the host – Betty's cartoon stardom effaced the live-action stardom of Kane, replacing her as a Paramount star. Helen Kane was no longer the "Boop-oop-a-doop Girl". Betty Boop was. Betty Boop continues to be a star, while Helen Kane is lost in the mists of cinema history.

Mark Langer

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Notes
1. Onassis v. Dior, 122 Misc. 2nd 60 (1984), 605.
2.http://www.markroesler.com/pdfs/caselaw/Onassis%20Christian%20Dior.pdf
3. Edward Hore, "A Columnist's Junket: How a Robot Can Breach Vanna White's Personality Rights," http://www.edwardhore.com/lw961025.htm
4. http://www2.bc.edu/~yen/Torts/Vanna%20White%20ed.pdf
5. O. Yale Lewis, Jr., "The Right of Publicity," http://www.hllaw.com/a_rightofpub.html
6. Lewis.
7. Jane Gaines, "Dead Ringer: Jacqueline Onassis and the Look-Alike," *South Atlantic Quarterly.* V. 88 no. 2 (Spring 1989): 468.
8. Christine Geraghty, "Re-examing Stardom: Questions of Texts, Bodies and Performance," in Christine Cledhill and Linda Williams (eds.), *Reinventing Film Studies.* (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 183-201.
9. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften.* (Ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhauser. (Frankfurt, 1989), cited in Miriam Hansen, "Of Mice and Ducks: Benjamin and Adorno on Disney," *The South Atlantic Quarterly.* Vol. 92 no. 1 (Winter 1993): 44. How separate the performer is from the apparatus is a matter of debate. For example, long after Humphrey Bogart died, his persona is used to endorse products, such as furniture, in various ads.
10. There are, of course, numerous cases of animation stars making appearances with live-action movie characters (eg. Tom and Jerry dancing with Gene Kelly), appearing at live-action public events (eg. Bugs Bunny appearing at the Academy Awards) or endorsing products in television commercials (eg.

Popeye in fried chicken advertisements). But the pleasure invoked in the spectator in these "appearances" lies in the recognition of the fact that characters that we know not to have an extra-cinematic existence are treated as if they did.
11. Donald Crafton, "The View From Termite Terrace: Caricature and Parody in Warner Bros. Animation," in Kevin S. Sandler, *Reading the Rabbit: Explorations in Warner Bros. Animation.* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998), pp. 107-108.
12. "Whoops – The Boops!," *The New York Evening Journal.* (19 April 1934): 11
13. *Helen Kane v Max Fleischer, Fleischer Studios, Inc., and Paramount Publix Corporation.* DR-4542, Supreme Court of the State of New York, Appellate Court Division – First Department, pp. 5-11.
14. "Helen Kane, 'Find' of Season, Gets Stellar Offers," *Long Beach Gazette.* 24 Mar. 1929, p. 5; Boop-Boopa-Doops In Baby Voice Turn Trick for Helen Kane; in Movies," *Detroit Free Press,* 9 August 1929, p. 3; Frank Cruickshank, "'A Night in Spain' SPECIAL - Helen Kane," undated press release, c. 1927 Helen Kane file, Shubert Archive.
15. "'Good Boy' Displays Scenic Novelties," *The New York Times.* 6 Sept. 1928, p. 23: "Helen Kane Sings Baby Songs At Palace," *The New York Times.* 8 Dec. 1930, p. 27; "Helen Kane Amazed By Fame," *Boston Sun Globe.* 21 Mar. 1929, n.p.; Dan Thomas, "Helen's Baby Voice Takes Edge Off Naughty Songs," *Pittsburgh Press.* 18 Aug. 1929, n.p.
16. Bide Dudley, "A Night in Spain," *N.Y. Evening World.* c. 1928, n.p.; Helen Huston, "The Films Go Baby Talk," *Photoplay.* (Oct. 1929): 39.
17. Mordaunt Hall, *"The Screen," The New York Times.* (June 21, 1930).
18. Huston, 126.
19. "La Kane Diets For Talkies," c. 1928, and "Getting Personal," c. 1931, unidentified clippings in Helen Kane file, Museum of Modern Art Film and Media Study Center; "Boop-A-Boop!" *Hollywood News.* 13 Aug. 1930, n.p.; "Boop-Boop Girl Forgets Hubby, $40,000 Check," *N.Y. Daily News.* 14 Aug. 1930; "Helen Kane Avoids Posner," *N.Y. American.* 15 Aug. 1930, n.p.; Arthur O'Sullivan, "Probe of Helen Kane's $50,000 Wrings Out Dress Man's Love," *N.Y. Daily News.* 21 Aug. 1930, p. 3; "Helen Kane Can't Touch Her $50,000," *Zit's.* 23 Aug. 1930, n.p.; "Posner Disputes Helen Kane, but Vows Affection," *N.Y. Herald Tribune.* 27 Aug. 1930, n.p., "Boop-a-Doop Girl Facing Suit Over $70,000 Presents," *N.Y. World.* 3 Sept. 1930, n.p.; "Helen Kane Gets That $50,000 – Tied to String," *Los Angeles Examiner.* 5 Sept. 1930, n.p.; "Posner Sobs Out Helen Kane Cost Him $100,000," *Zit's.* 6 Sept. 1930; "Helen Kane Weeps on Stand," *Chicago Sun.* 15 Sept. 1930, n.p.; "Kane's Checks to Posner Disclosed," *Zit's.* Oct. 4, 1930, n.p.; "Helen Kane Sued By Bank," *N.Y. American.* Nov. 8 1930; Patricia Kelley, "Boop-a-Doop Kane Drew Many Checks To Help Out Boys," *N.Y. Daily Mirror.* 26 Sept. 1930; "Helen to Boop 2nd Spouse," *N.Y. Evening Journal.* 19 Oct. 1934, n.p.; George Gerhard, "The Screen," *N.Y. World.* 3 Oct. 1930, n.p.:
20. Grim Natwick, interview with the author, 28 January 1990.
21. *Kane v Fleischer et al,* pp. 197-99, 298-304, 314-315, 430-432; Evelyn Seeley, "Busy Little Betty Boop Squeaks Way to Fame for Mae Questel, Her Voice," *The New York World-Telegram.* (12 July 1932); Mae Questel interview with Mike Barrier, n.d.; "Best Kane Mimic Has Variety Role," *New York American.* 30 December, 1929, clipping in Helen Kane file, Museum of Modern Art Film and Media Study Center. Questel not only won this contest, but also had her own vaudeville act and NBC radio program in which she did impressions of performers such as Maurice Chevalier, Zasu Pitts , and Mae West. Questel claimed in this interview that Betty Boop was physically modeled after her, which is unlikely given the number of films featuring the character that were made prior to the hiring of Questel by Fleischer Studios, Inc.
22. Leslie Carbaga. *The Fleischer Story in the Golden Age of Animation.* (N.Y.: Nostalgia Press, 1972), pp. 52.
23. *Kane v Fleischer et al,* pp. 334-339. Recordings of songs sung by Patsy Young and Al Jolson, also recorded after they were first performed by Kane, were entered in evidence by the defence.
24. *Kane v Fleischer et al,* Decision, pp. 16-30.
25. Barry King, "Articulating Stardom," in Christine Gledhill (ed.), *Stardom: Industry of Desire.* (N.Y.: Routledge, 1991), pp. 176.
26. While Kane did appear on Broadway briefly after her contract with Paramount ended, her career faded. *The New York Times* review of her last Broadway performance, "Shady Lady" observed that "Miss Kane began her career in the musical field, went to the movies and now is back. Unfortunately she did not add much to last evening's rather grim affair." Kane slid into nightclub performances, eschewing her earlier "Boop-oop-a-doop" performance style. Eventually, she quit show business and became a restauranteur, until her dubbing of Debbie Reynold's performance of "I Want To Be Loved By You" for M-G-M briefly revived her career in the 1950s. She died in 1968. "The Play," *The New York Times.* (6 July 1933): 26.

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