Genre portrayal within stop motion movies: A Comparative look into the Films of *Wallace and Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* and *Corpse Bride*.

Zoë Barron – N00163143

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Declaration of Originality

This dissertation is submitted by the undersigned to the Institute of Art Design & Technology, Dun Laoghaire in partial fulfilment of the examination for the BA (Honours) 3D Design, Model Making and Digital Art. It is entirely the author's own work except were noted and has not been submitted for an award from this or any other educational institution.

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Your name: Zoë Barron

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Abstract

Observed will be how genre is portrayed in stop motion animation, and whether stop motion should be considered its own genre within the category of animation movies. This will be analysed by looking at the breakdown of the process of animation to note how genre is portrayed. Two movies *Wallace and Gromit the Curse of the Were-Rabbit* and *Corpse Bride* will be compared to further explore this breakdown process. Analysed after which will be the breakdown of genre theory and how genre is classified. Further explored will be the process of socialisation and culture in relation to genre.

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Introduction

Stop motion animation is renowned the world over. *From Santa Claus is Coming to Town (*1970) and *James and the Giant Peach* (1996) to *Boxtrolls* (2012) and Missing *link* (2019). The style of movies has only advanced and grown in fashion. It is no wonder that the awards given to various stop motion movies have risen, such as *Fresh Guacamole* receiving an Oscar in 2012 and many other renowned movies. Despite the rising popularity and development of stop motion movies they do not always obtain the recognition necessary as the term of stop motion gets hidden in the genre section. The question is whether stop motion should be considered its own category within the classification of animation movies, rather than be analysed within the realm of the other genre.

By analysing how genre is portrayed in stop motion animation this question will be answered. This analysis and comparison will be of two movies, *Wallace, and Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* and *Corpse Bride*, and their portrayal of genre. This will be done by looking at the breakdown of the pre to postproduction of each movie separately. The analysis will explore further into both the genre and the connections it has with animation. By doing this it is hoped to prove that animation is too vast in its entirety to be simply cast as one category. The analysis will observe the possibility of challenging the idea of genre that exists for stop motion animation movies, by looking at how animated movies choose to depict genre. These two stop motion animation movies mentioned are essential for the analysis not only because of their reputation worldwide, but for also being the best type of animation to investigate due to the full availability to investigate the breakdown, and process of making a stop motion movie. As well as this they both happen to be stop motion animation movies made in the same year, 2005. This is significant in the analysis to be made as both companies had access to the same advantages and technological developments as the other.

The depiction of genre is being analysed due to the crucial part genre plays in an audience's choice of film to observe. The reason genre is considered crucial is due to the fact that it creates expectation, a viewer knows based on the genre which film emotionally and mentally they wish to view. It creates security to stop disappointment or confusion in the movie viewed, knowing which genre the viewer has chosen, and knowing it is meeting the expectation can heighten an experience and gives you a chance to prepare mentally for some things unconsciously, such as for horror. Genres in film are defined as 'categories that define a movie based on its narrative elements. Each genre is unique in the types of stories they tell. Genres have changed and evolved over time, creating several subgenres that further define the filmmaking styles.'[1] Genres are broken down into categories, these categories are determined by narrative elements. These narrative elements are important characteristics of work for example a plot, setting, or character. Different narrative elements, such as different settings or points of view, create a unique story and therefore a unique category of film, this category is known as a genre. When narrative elements of different movies overlap, they are placed into a genre together, however if they both have only a few overlapping narrative elements but also several that do not overlap this creates a subcategory or sub-genre.

Analysed in both movies will be the preproduction, filming, editing, and postproduction areas of the making of these movies, as well as the behind-the-scenes work, and mise-en-scene, 'Mise en scène is the arrangement of scenery and stage properties in a play. The term mise en scene refers to everything in front of the camera, including the set design, lighting, and actors. Mise en scene in film is the overall effect of how it all comes together for the audience'[2], used throughout each movie. To further explore the depiction of animation in these movies and the breakdown of their process, the work of Tom Gasek, Mark

[1] How to Identify Film Genres: Beginner's Guide to 13 Film Genres (2022)
[2] What Is Mise En Scène in Film: The Ultimate Guide to Every Element (2022)

Lamster, Vincenzo Maselli, Mark Wolf, and Susannah Shaw will be used as reference.

After analysing each movie, they will be compared in their depiction of their genres through their production. After this analysed will be the way in which genre is perceived socially and culturally, to see how the perception of genre is based, and whether it is possible to change it on a social and cultural standing. To investigate this further genre theory will be analysed. To further this investigation the works of Eric R, Williams, Daniel Chandler, Anis Bawarshi, and David Buckingham will be referenced.

Eric Williams research is 'Movie Genre: It's Not What You Think.' Daniel Chandlers research is 'An Introduction to Genre Theory.' Anis Bawarshi research is 'The Genre Function.' David Buckingham's research is 'Children Talking Television: The Making of Television Literacy.'

Chapter 1

This chapter explores the 2005 movie 'Wallace and Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit'[3] by Aardman animation studios, written and directed by Nick Park. This movie was originally deemed to be a 'Supernatural comedy' film. It has been placed into the genres of: Animation, Adventure, Horror, Comedy, Family, Fantasy, Mystery, and Sci-Fi. To be defined as a supernatural comedy it is believed you must have elements of things that are unnatural or unknown but still show a light humorous plot. This movie was chosen due to the portrayal of multiple genres. The analysis of the breaking down of these genres will begin by looking into several aspects of the movie making from pre to postproduction. To begin this analysis the evaluation will first be looking at the film's puppets and their materials, from there under analysis will be the world-building setup. The simple choices made in these areas can contribute greatly, not only to the movie but also contribute to the genre chosen to be portrayed.

Aardman Animation studios is a leader of Claymation, this is evident by the awards and nominations received for the work they have produced. The studio has won four Oscar awards and an academy award for Best Animated Feature as well as a BAFTA award for Best British film for *Wallace and Gromit*. They use Newplast plasticine to create their characters. Some, such as the main characters, have eyes and noses that are simple beads, and they have armature skeletons. Nick Parker, the writer and director of the Wallace and Gromit movies, animated the first Wallace and Gromit Sequence himself. The look of the characters is still supposed to represent this idea. They all still have obvious fingerprints and the same style he originally used. This connects him to his original ideas.

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[3] Nick Park, Wallace, and Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit (20 05))

Fig. 1: Park, Nick. *"Wallace and Gromit"* (2005)

In *The Curse of the Were-rabbit* however, there were new characters created. The were-rabbit itself is the main one. Looking into the making of this character it is not a clay creation. This aspect alone gives us an idea that something has changed within the movie and therefore we start off with a sense of uncertainty. It has been made of armature wire with stop motion joints, coring to bulk out the limbs, padding as a base, and a fur skin. This creature was an entirely new step for the Claymation animators, Fur can be a rather difficult material.

Fig. 2: Park, Nick. *"Wallace and Gromit"* (The Were-Rabbit, 2005)

While this creature is meant to be deemed as scary and suspicious in the story, it is evident from the beginning by the material used that he was a gentle creature and not at all scary. The use of the soft fur gives a teddy bear like feel, the specific movements he has are far gentler than expected. Vincenzo Maselli says 'The puppet's skin material has its own story in narration parallel to that of the actual narrative. A metadiegetic narrative.'[4] A narrative is a written account of an event or a story, a metadiegetic narrative is a secondary narrative, usually one that is in the background of a primary narrative. The metadiegetic narrative or secondary narrative can be perceived in various aspects of a narrative. Analysed specifically is how the material in which a puppet is made, this material creates a metadiegetic narrative. The material of a character may be made up of clay, this can create an idea of openness from the character, creating a secondary unconscious narrative.

This is also shown in a way in the opening sequence. The opening title goes from a moon lit horror font to become a fluffy soft font by becoming wrapped in the same fur as the Were-rabbit. This shows both the main horror aspect expected of the film, but also shows the comedic, fantasy, and family friendly genre essence of the movie right from the start. Because skin is used as an 'organ of simulated touch'[5], as well as expression and recognition, the skin material is a rather big idea. Skin creates a foundation, it tells a lot about a person and their story, it is also a point of contact, of touch, what we feel can vary depending on the stimulus, each person may feel the same thing differently. A puppet can create a simulated illusion of touch, it is inanimate yet the more it is interacted with the more it stimulates the illusion. This is especially noted in a studio such as Aardman as their most noteworthy and recognisable 'skin' is that of plasticine.

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[4] Maselli Vincenzo. "Performance of Puppet's Skin Material: The Metadiegetic Narrative Level of Animated Puppets' Material Surface." (International Journal of Visual Design, 2019)
[5] Maselli Vincenzo. "Performance of Puppet's Skin Material: The Metadiegetic Narrative Level of Animated Puppets' Material Surface." (International Journal of Visual Design, 2019)

Therefore, this change of skin material for their first feature length movie with these recognisable characters is a notable choice. This gives the viewer a sense of uncertainty and change to the movie on an unconscious level, which can also contribute to the mystery genre elements. The character design and making aspects are all contributors to the world building of any story.

As well as the character design there are a lot of aspects, like set design and sociology that go into world building. 'Worldbuilding is the multi-layered process of using your imagination to create a world or entire universe.'[6] The directors and animators are essentially playing God to all these things to portray everything they want to show. The animators chose the shots to make the sight movement made between each section, as well the director chooses the camera positioning and staging, each of these minor aspects of the making of this movie adds to the entire universe of the characters. There are aspects of world building that are genre based. In the world building for this movie for example the studio added a countryside estate set that is often a factor seen in the horror genre. 'Architecture sets a scene - conveys information,'[7]. In many horror stories the architecture used becomes iconic, for example, the home from *The Exorcist (1973).*

Essential aspects of the world in which Wallace and Gromit exist are the various technological advancements and machines made by either two of the aforementioned characters. These machines and advancements alone contribute to the sci-fi genre. Therefore, in this previously familiar world, it was quite easy to add a horror element to it. The use of the already familiar set design and the world of Wallace and Gromit is extended even further to help with the expression of the genres already known in the Wallace and Gromit world and used to further them into more genres. When Wallace pulls out the machine to mind meld with the rabbits for 'rabbit rehabilitation' it fits both

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[6] A Guide to Worldbuilding for Filmmakers (2019)

[7] Mark Lamster, "Architecture and Film" (Princeton Architectural Press, 2013)

comfortably into the world of Wallace and Gromit with its previously mentioned technological advantages, and its machinery as well as presents a horror element. This is helped along initially by the lighting and setting of the roof with the full moon in the background. It looks dungeon like. This is an example of the previously known world being altered slightly with set design to further along with the genre.

Yet despite this whole horror-based scene, it comes across as a funny moment, due to the action and reaction of the characters and medium angled shots. The scene presents more to the comedic genre than that of horror as expected. There is also a mystical genre moment when the machine starts to work and the rabbits float around, this is helped by the slightly angled middle shot and music. Similar moments of multi genre scenes happen throughout the movie. The lighting and camera angles are consistent with scenes from horror movies. For example, placed at night with only moonlight or dimly lit streetlights, low angled shots, close-ups, or perspective view shots. These are all techniques consistent with horror movies.

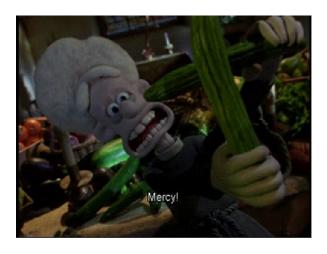Fig. 3: Nakata, Hideo. *"Dark Water"* (Elevator scene, 2002)

Fig. 4: Park, Nick. *"Wallace and Gromit"* (Church Scene, 2005)

These images are both horror scenes. They both consist of an angled view of a character, both with an expression of terror and both placed in a dimly lit area. In both scenes, the character of the scene is protecting something important to them. In *Dark Water,* the protagonist is protecting her daughter from harm. In *Wallace and Gromit,* the priest is protecting his vegetables. Yet despite this horror aspect the scene in *Wallace and Gromit* has also a secondary genre portrayed. In this *Wallace and Gromit* scene, there is also a sense of mystery and fantasy as you do not know what exactly is attacking, we only get a shadow. Despite the portrayal of the were-rabbit in this scene all the creature wants is the vegetables. The moment of terror quickly turns into a moment of comedy as the priest goes to grab what looks like a crucifix but instead lifts cucumbers in the shape of a cross. This comedic stance eases any concern that a viewer momentarily had as one would expect him to have grabbed the actual cross and this, therefore, comes across as bizarre and humorous. This also ties into the movie's idea of the town's obsession with their vegetables and finding them more loved and almost godlier than God. When the creature 'attacks' and eats the cucumber, the priest swiftly faints from terror. Any tension or suspense left in the scene after is quickly eased by the creature belching quite loudly.

There are constants of comedic moments like this throughout the movie. There are some moments of simple comedic lines throughout, for example when using the mind machine Wallace states "Another 30 minutes brain washing should suffice and then we can move on to the conditioning"[8]. This is comedic because he feels like he is wearing a salon style hair dryer. Another example is that before the priest is attacked by the Were-Rabbit, it belches, and the priest calls out for one of his parishioners Ms. Mulch thinking it is her. There is also the moment when the arson joke is made by the police officer at the town meeting or the alluring lady rabbit that Gromit is controlling from the van. These are a small few mentions of the many comedic moments shown throughout. This constant pace of change between a base of horror and comedy is consistent throughout the entirety of the movie. There are a fair few that lead to a lot of other genre bases as well, such as family, adventure, sci-fi, and mystery.

The studio of Aardman animations was distinct in their portrayal of the various genre right from the preproduction of this movie. The puppet's skin material showed a variation of uncertainty and horror as well as something soft and family friendly as is evident with the fur which was a new venture for the studio. The addition of the manor to the countryside setting added a sense of horror at times, this is also seen with the new machinery presented in this feature. Evidently, throughout the movie, various scenes portrayed a multitude of genres, comedy, and horror being the obvious two. The humour was used to balance the horror, which is evident in a variety of shots, to give an all-rounded family fun movie.

This shows that throughout the entirety of the movie there are multiple genres. That simply classifying this movie as a horror, or a comedy alone is quite difficult. Let alone diverging into the types of horror or comedy. It is based on all this information that proves that this movie being also classed as an animation movie is a bit vague. That the multiple other genres themselves are already fighting for the

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[8] Nick Park, Wallace, and Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit (2005)

main genre title. This provides evidence for the idea that animation movies should not be a class of genre but instead a category of film type.

Chapter 2

As with *Wallace and Gromit*, this chapter will be exploring the stop motion movie *Corpse Bride (2005)*[9] directed by Tim Burton. This movie will be analysed due to its placement of being not only a stop motion animation movie, and also of being made the same year as *Wallace and Gromit: the curse of the were-rabbit*. This movie presents the opportunity to have another mixed genre movie analysed. This movie has been placed in the genre 'gothic.' As well as this genre it is also known to be of a children's, comedic, romantic, and horror genre. To be defined as a gothic movie genre it is believed that there must be a sense of mystery and fear. The gothic genre is usually portrayed by the setting and atmosphere. There are usually elements of romantic and villainous actions, as well as a paranormal feeling with curses and emotional anguish exhibited throughout. This movie will be examined for its representation of the variety of the various genres. We will be examining this movie breakdown in a similar sequence to the breakdown of that done with 'Wallace and Gromit' previously. By looking into various aspects of the movie from pre to postproduction as well as the mise-en-scene, particularly for this movie, the colour palette as Burton's studio uses colour as a representation of the split worlds within the movie.

As before we will begin analysing by looking at the puppets and their skin materials, we will then investigate the world building setup. From the beginning of any Tim Burton movie, Burton does original sketches of the characters he imagines and makes plans for his ideas, this concept is the same for this movie. The character designers then use this sketch to become the final design for the characters. Burton has a say and plan for every facet of each movie right from the start, nothing is accidental. The sketch of Emily can be seen below.

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[9] Tim Burton and Mike Johnson "Corpse Bride" (2005)

Fig. 5: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (Original Sketch of Emily, 2005)

The puppets used are made with an armature to start; each main character was given a mechanical head. This is something that at the time was rarely done at such a large-scale operation like a feature length movie. This was used so that animators could display a range of emotions as they wanted to. Meaning that the personality of each individual animator was perceived and displayed through each character, this helped to further the simulated sense of touch in the puppet's skin. The designed characters are iconic, tall, and thin as is Burton's style. This meant the armatures used could not be a standard one, each armature was designed specifically for the movie. As well as this, each rig for connecting them to the sets was specifically designed. This is an extremely specific thing Burton's team had to organise. Creating a unique armature and rig for the characters rather than using a standard rig is, just like with Aardman animations use of fur, something unknown made specifically for this style of movie. This contributes greatly to the sense of uncertainty and yet control Burton had over this feature.

This means that every single element of the design for this movie was original. Emily's, 'The Corpse Brides,' dress alone was recreated multiple times from a variety of materials so that different scenes could show it doing several different actions. This originality displayed in the making of the characters, their materials, and their elements shows a level of narration perceived by their materials as explained in the chapter above. This shows a metadiegetic narration.

This 'skin material'[10] is, as a skin, not only the means of being used to show identification but also to display personality. All of which is a way characters are displayed not only within the narrative but to create a secondary narrative to help further along the genre within this metadiegetic narrative. As previously stated, skin is an organ of touch, therefore the material used on these characters and within this movie are all essential parts to portraying not only the characters and their personalities but also the genre demonstrated within this movie. It is not only with the clothing specifically in this movie that it is evident that the narrative shows through with multiple genres. By separating the two worlds they had the opportunity to split the people into two distinct categories of genre in a way. One would think by watching this movie that the underworld would be more horror based and the 'world upstairs or the living world would be fuller of life and colour. In this movie however it is the opposite that is represented. The world 'upstairs' acts more dead and is bleaker. Through this world the gothic element is shown in every sense to the point of a horror movie, everything is dark, repressed, and rigid. Therefore, the horror genre is easily portrayed alongside the gothic genre. This is evident in the set design and through the world building. The setting is based in Victorian times, the style of which helps add to the gothic, gloomy and repressed atmosphere. The colour palette for 'the land of the living' is toned down and dull. The Victorian styled architecture is also a factor of the set design and world building that contributes to the gothic and horror genres.

The land of the living that is being portrayed in this movie has mise-en-scene that relates to that palpable of horror movies, the lighting, and colour for example are dark and dull as seen below, as well as the low, wide camera angles. These elements are synonymous with horror movies, the use of the dark of night and the play of shadows and low lighting, as well as a basis of black or grey tones.

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10 Maselli Vincenzo. "Performance of Puppet's Skin Material: The Metadiegetic Narrative Level of Animated Puppets' Material Surface." (International Journal of Visual Design, 2019)

Fig. 6: Friedkin, William. *"The Exorcist"* (1973)

Fig. 7: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (Upstairs Town, 2005)

The camera angles are also tangible with the horror genre. The over the shoulder, extreme close up or high angled views are iconic and well known in connection to horror movies. The corpse bride has moments of scenes with such angles. Such as the end of the wedding rehearsal and when Victor and the audience meet Emily for the first time, which is pictured below. Horror genres are also consistent with their gothic settings, usually a dark rural area or a house which feels empty or abandoned, all of which are shown throughout the 'upstairs of this movie. The characters also dress in dull clothing and are perceived as still and formal throughout.

Fig. 8: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (Emily's Introduction, 2005)

Fig. 9: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (Window Scene, 2005)

Fig.10: Carpenter, John. *"Halloween"* (1978)

The horror genre depiction exists clearly whilst watching the movie. It is portrayed everywhere. It is evident in each character design, in the world building, and the mise-en-scene, especially for the upstairs. Yet in the 'downstairs' underworld everything is slightly more colourful and brighter, there is more life in people. Still, everyone is decaying, this also continues to provide a gothic sense. Their mysterious genre is shown in this half of the world as while it is comedic and whimsical, yet still gothic. The world is still unknown. But the switch of worlds is almost comedic as one only becomes alive after one dies. The costuming and lighting are all brighter once you enter the downstairs. The set is a pub like area that seems to be the centre hub for the deceased, which entails a more relaxed and happier atmosphere, this involves music and dancing. The mood perceived here is a lot more fun and friendly, which contributes to the romantic

and family genres. Yet despite this, the characters are still deceased and decaying, which is observed throughout the movie. This gives a consistent pace of horror and gothic genres.

Emily, for example, not only has shown through her clothes the gothic style but also through the decaying of her body, specifically her eye and leg, and how it is wearing down. This gives us a more horror and gothic look through the movie; it is evident how she changes in both her clothing and her body. Yet in the description of her life whilst alive is apparently sad and dull, she is more 'alive' whilst dead, despite the decaying. The setting and world built for the land of the dead contrast the horror or gothic genre of the land of the living. The sets and characters are a lot more vibrant. This sets more into the family and comedic genre.

Fig. 11: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (Downstairs Set, 2005)

Fig. 12: Burton, Tim. "*Corpse Bride*" (Downstairs Characters, 2005)

The downstairs shows a level of colour and life. The colour is an extreme contrast to the grey and black tones of the upstairs. Whilst being brighter overall with much more vibrant colours, the specific

colours used are also important. In the downstairs blue, yellow, green, and purple can be seen frequently and quite strikingly. In colour theory for film, blue is seen as the colour of faith, spirituality, loyalty, tranquillity, harmony, stability, unity, trust, truth, and confidence. Blue is seen more frequently than the other colours. Yellow is wisdom, knowledge, relaxation, joy, happiness, optimism, and hope. Green and purple are used as under tones and they represent healing, soothing, healthy, and renewal as well as spirituality, ceremony, mystery, transformation, wisdom, enlightenment, mourning, sensitivity, and intimacy, respectively. These colours also establish a romantic basis in the genre. The purple and blue are seen around Victor and Emily when they are seen together, this indicates a romantic and stable relationship between them. Later in the movie when the people of the downstairs ascend to the upstairs, they essentially drag the colour with them. Give a little bit of life, whilst not as vibrant, to those of the living. Everything comes across as friendly and fun, almost carefree. This is also evident by the set, character designs, and mise-en-scene. In romantic movies, a close up or long shot are used often, as well as high angled shots.

Fig. 13: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (2005)

Fig. 14: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (2005)

Fig. 15: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride"* (Bridge Scene, 2005)

These camera angles in this movie, as shown from the various shots above, are consistent with the camera angles used in romance movies, the high and wide angled shots as well as the low-key lighting and the setting, are evidence that in this movie the romantic genre is seen. When the movie is concluding and the two 'worlds,' that of the dead and the living, meet the genres that were previously dedicated to each one meet. The movie's end is both gothic, horror, romantic, and comedic based.

Fig.16: Burton, Tim. *"Corpse Bride Poster"* (2005)

Burton had a say in every aspect of this movie. He did the initial designs for the characters and had unique armatures and rigs made. This involvement right from preproduction made sure that the exact genres and ideas that he wanted to portray were portrayed. The unique rigging contributed to the skin material and the idea of simulated touch. Within *Corpse Bride* the narrative world is split into two, within each of these worlds the metadiegetic narratives contribute to the portrayal of the gothic genre. The upstairs of the world is mostly portrayed as gothic based on the camera angles,

colour schemes, set design, and costuming, however, there are still scenes that present evidence of romantic and comedic genres, such as the piano scene with Victoria. The music score helps assist this romantic genre. In the downstairs of the world, whilst it would make sense for the deceased to be more gothic than the upstairs it is rather the opposite. Being full of colour and life. This amusing switch of worlds contributes to the comedy genre. The colour, camera angles, costuming, and music score of the downstairs world contribute to the romantic and family friendly genres of the movie. Yet there is still evidence of the gothic genre as they are all still deceased and decomposing.

It is clearly evident from this analysis that *Corpse Bride* portrays a variety of genres. These genres are perceived easily by looking at the setting, world building, and mise-en-scene of the film. They are also noted in the preproduction and postproduction from the character design and making to the music score. These multiple genres within simply one movie are evidence clarifying that this movie as an animation, let alone a stop motion animation and set within this genre alone is not viable. This provides evidence towards my hypothesis that animated movies need not be a genre, but a category of film.

Chapter 3

Analysed in this chapter will be the previously mentioned movies in chapters one and two, and the examination of the similarities of how genre was depicted throughout each. From here examined will be how the vast and constant change of genre is perceived, as well as which conditions add to that perception socially and culturally. This will be done by looking at the connections between knowledge, discourse, and society by reference to the work of Teun A. van Dijk and Daniel Gyollai. Then analysed will be how the perception of genre is based, and whether it is possible to change it on a social and cultural standing. This will be analysed by looking further at genre theory, as well as the social cognitive view of genre and which bases affect the definitions of various genre classifications. This will be done by analysing the work of Jourdan Aldredge, Anis Bawarshi, Daniel Chandler, Eric R. Williams, and Carolyn R Miller.

In both movies mentioned prior, genre is portrayed in a multitude of ways. These movies were chosen as they are both stop motion movies of the same year as well as that both consist of a variety of genres. Both *Wallace and Gromit* and *Corpse Bride* being of the same year, 2005, each start with one overall genre tag. However, whilst reviewing them both they have an obvious multitude of genres portrayed. One is classed as a supernatural comedy and the other is classed as gothic. Both of these main tags within themselves are made up of a genre combination or 'hybrid genre.' Supernatural comedy is broken into animation, adventure, horror, comedy, family, fantasy, mystery, and sci-fi. Gothic being broken into children, comedic, romantic, and horror genres. Both movies consisted of horror, comedy, and family-based genres with horror being the primary underlying genre. The horror bases are covertly covered by the consistent comedic and romantic attributes of the other genres, creating a family friendly genre.

Both studios that produced the movies each had a unique aspect to their films, this is evident in the character making alone. Aardman

animation studios had the fur of the were-rabbit, whilst Tim Burton Productions had their head mechanisms, unique armatures, and rigging. It is clearly evident that both these movies have portrayed more than one genre. Both make the various genres manifest right from the start of the pre-production process. As it is seen in both the previous chapters the skin material is a contrast to the base story genre. As well as the unique character design. Both movies consisted of a world building and set building that contributed to the genres they were trying to exhibit. Both movies used mise-en-scene that are considerable and count towards a number of genres. In both *Wallace and Gromit* and *Corpse Bride,* the mise-en-scene is palpable with horror in a multitude of ways. Both movies consist of scenes that have low or close up shots and camera angles, they both have dimly lit or back lit scenes, they have grey or black tones of colour, and have music scores and sets which add to the horror aspects of the genre. However, in both these movies, during these horror-based scenes, both had depictions of mixed genre scenes. For *Wallace and Gromit* comedy is often used to balance the horror scenes, to ease tension which makes the movie more family friendly. Whereas *Corpse Bride* has an air of romance mixed in with horror-based scenes. This consistent portrayal of multiple genres is shown right through from pre to postproduction of the movies. From the skin material to the set design, world building, and mise-en-scene. Both movies consist of multi-genre scenes throughout. The hybrid genre portrayal is substantial in only two movies.

This portrayal of genre is evidence that the ability to specify any one movie alone into only one genre is not always viable. There is also evidence that there is a lack of specificity of mise-en-scene to stop motion or animation movies than there would be to other genres such as horror or romance. This is also a reason that it is thought that animation should not be a genre specifically than should be a category of film. Therefore, labelling a stop motion movie as one specific genre and having it as an animation also is ludicrous. The question is of the placement of animation as a genre of movie, rather than a

categorisation type of movie. It is widely known that genre is vast and ever changing. Within genre theory, there are multiple categories and within each of these divisions, there are subcategories. For example, in science fiction alone there are space travel, time travel, cerebral science, robot and monster films, and disaster and alien invasion. Genre is nomological and typological. The main category of genres is known often as the 'Super Genres'[11]. These genres include action, crime, fantasy, horror, romance, science fiction, slice of life, sports, thriller, war, and western. Professor of media arts and studies at Ohio University, Eric Williams, breaks down super genres by looking at macro-genres and micro-genres. Professor Williams claims that the components of genre can be split into three distinct groups: atmosphere, character, and story. This idea is furthered as he looks into the voice and pathway of films as well as genre layers and audience expectations. He claims micro-genres, macro-genres, and super-genres are all connected.

Genre is defined as 'a style, especially in the arts, which involves a particular set of characteristics.'[12] The classification of genres is not consistent. There will always be disagreements about the specificity of the definition of certain genres. The characteristics of genres that are viewed differ depending on the individual analysing them. The vast range of genres in their mise-en-scene overlap. These genres become another genre altogether, a hybrid genre. There are many unnamed or unclassified genres that are possible to try and reason for. It is an open-ended stream of possibilities. These various categories differ depending greatly on where a person is from, their religious views, their culture, and their socialisation. 'Number of genres in any society depends on the complexity and diversity of society.'[13] Socialisation alters perspectives of specific people's ideas of genre. There are

[11] Eric R. Williams. "Movie Genre: It's Not What You Think." (How to View and Appreciate Great Movies, 2018)

[12] Cambridge English Corpus (2021)

[13] Daniel Chandler, "An Introduction to Genre Theory." (1997 Revised 2000)

cultural biases and ideological views that contribute to what a viewer would perceive as a specific genre, for example, horror might be more terrifying to one specific group than another depending on a variety of aspects. 'The cycle and transformations of genre can nevertheless be seen as a response to political, social, and economic conditions.'[14]Socialisation is a large part of the influence of how genres are categorised. It is therefore a difficult subject to define the specificity of one genre, as it is evident that the definitions are ever changing. It is evident also that human error and views play a significant role in the subjectification of what is specific to each genre. 'Genre is not ... simply "given" by the culture: rather, it is in a constant process of negotiation and change.'[15]

Socially and culturally genre is different depending on the viewer. Each viewer in an audience has a different understanding of what should be classed as a variety of genres due to their own personal views. One such viewer for example could have more experience in their life towards romance than another. They may find characteristics of a film in the romantic genre, such as obsession or destruction to be especially important. Whereas a viewer with little to no romantic experience may find these characteristics strange and not a part of a romantic genre, or vice versa. This is evidence that every specific viewer's socialisation can create a difference in what they believe a social standard to be.

Rethinking genre from a sociocognitive perspective may be a good course to define specific genres without constant change of cultural concepts. Sociocognitive perspective involves how viewers identify, interpret, and make sense of an organisation's methods, actions, and outcomes. 'Phenomenological sociology has immense potential to provide a strong theoretical support to the Sociocognitive Approach in Critical Discourse Studies.' [16] "Phenomenology within sociology is the

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[14] Daniel Chandler, "An Introduction to Genre Theory." (1997 Revised 2000)
[15] David Buckingham, "Children Talking Television: The Making of Television Literacy" (London: Falmer Press, 1993) 135-55

[16] Daniel Gyollai, "The Sociocognitive Approach in Critical Discourse Studies and the

study of the formal structures of concrete social existence as made available in and through the analytical description of acts of intentional consciousness'[17]. Phenomenological sociology explores the interconnected structures of subjectivity, knowledge, and the social world. 'Discourse is defined as a form of social interaction in society.'[18]

Sociocognitive approach interconnections between knowledge, discourse, and society. Phenomenological sociology remains progressively more important to sociological research. The correlated connection between personal and socially shared understanding is a significant idea of the relationships to discourse production and interpretation.

Previously mentioned is how society and an individual's socialisation create a different understanding of genre. Culture has the same affects as socialisation. Diverse cultural or religious views alter an individual's idea of what creates romance, horror, or comedy. Attempting to define genres without a cultural impact may prove difficult. To attempt this definition of genre that may be used the world over knowledge, discourse and socialisation have to be explored. There has to be a connection created and a socially shared understanding of interpretation. This may be possible with the use of sociocognitive perspective, helped by phenomenological sociology. Both *Wallace and Gromit* and *Corpse Bride* provide the evidence that stop motion animation movies consist of a variety of genres. This is evident from the break down of pre to postproduction of each of the movies. Despite these movies having a specific genre tag, they have a hybrid genre movie. This evidence provides a standing ground that stop motion animation movies should themselves not be a genre tag. This evidence is furthered by the lack of mise-en-scene specified for

Phenomenological Sociology of Knowledge: Intersections." (2020)

[17] Alfred Schutz, "Alfred Schutz on Phenomenology and Social Relations" (Cambridge University Press, 1970)

[18] Teun A. van Dijk, "Discourse and Knowledge: A Sociocognitive Approach." (Cambridge University Press, 2014)

stop motion or animation itself. Yet despite the evidence society provides animation as a genre. When looking into the breakdown of genre theory social and cultural classifications of genre constantly differ. Genre is ever changing and inconsistent. Most super genres are consistently the same, yet sub genres and hybrid genres are ever changing, especially depending on the audience and location of the genre viewers. By analysing knowledge, discourse, and socialisation there may be a definition of genre that can be determined without the constant cultural and social changes. This would create a connection and a socially shared understanding of the interpretation of genre, used with a sociocognitive perspective of genre.

Conclusion

Stop motion animation is vast in its representation of genre, yet despite this, stop motion is in itself perceived as a genre. Both *Wallace and Gromit* and *Corpse Bride* are proof of the immense genre representation in stop motion. These two movies of the same year, 2005, which represent the stop motion animation movies were chosen in this exploration as evidence of representations of a multitude of genres. These movies were analysed by the breakdown of the pre to postproduction in both movies, as well as the mise-en-scene. This analysis was done to examine both the genre and the connections it has with animation.

In both *Wallace and Gromit* and *Corpse Bride* horror is the primary genre displayed throughout the movies. Yet both have a secondary genre that is constantly present in the multi-genre scenes. In Wallace and Gromit, the comedy genre is evident alongside the horror genre. Whereas in Corpse Bride the romance genre is represented creating a gothic genre. These genres are displayed throughout the movies as seen with the breakdown of the puppet's skin material and metadiegetic narrative, the set design and world building in each movie, the mise-en-scene, specifically the camera angles and shots, the various lighting, the colour, and music score. As well as the costuming and editing in the postproduction of each movie.

Genre is evidently substantial in stop motion animation movies. These multiple genres within simply two movies are evidence clarifying that these two movies as an animation, let alone a stop motion animation, and being set within the genre alone is not feasible. Based on all the evidence provided it is seen that both movies being also classed as an animation movie is a bit vague. Throughout the entirety of the movies, there are multiple genres. Simply classifying each into one genre alone is quite difficult. Let alone diverging into the types of genre and sub genres. There are a multitude of the other genres themselves which are already fighting for the main genre title. As well as this ill-fitting classification of animation into genre. There is also the proof

that there is no specific mise-en-scene that is related to animation. This provides evidence for the idea that animation movies should not be a class of genre but instead a category of film type. The exploration of the depiction of animation in the project was assisted by the work of Tom Gasek, Mark Lamster, Vincenzo Maselli, Mark Wolf, and Susannah Shaw.

The comparison and breakdown of these stop motion movies and their genre representation were observed to challenge the idea of genre that exists for stop motion animation movies, by looking at how animated movies depict genre. The depiction of genre was analysed due to the crucial part genre plays in an audience's choice of film to observe. The reason genre is considered crucial due to its creation of expectation to a viewer, based on the genre which an audience chooses to view. The question of whether cultural and social interpretations affect the specificity of genre theory and functions. The investigation of genre theory was analysed by reference to the works of Eric R, Williams, Daniel Chandler, Anis Bawarshi, and David Buckingham.

Analysed was the idea of super genres, micro-genres, and macro-genres. When looking into the breakdown of genre theory social and cultural classifications of genre constantly differ, depending on the audience and location of the genre viewers. By analysing the knowledge, discourse, and socialisation there may be a definition of genre that can be determined without the constant cultural and social changes. This would hopefully create a connection and a socially shared understanding of the interpretation of genre, used with sociocognitive perspective of genre. With this possible new breakdown of the classification of genre, a more definite determination of genre and its sub genres are possible. The hope with this new classification would be the realization and view that stop motion animation movies and animation movies would be placed as a category of film, rather than be placed into the genre tags.

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