Challenging capitalism: ethics, exploitation and the sublime in *Moon* and *Source Code*
Professor Catherine Constable

Abstract

This paper is the first academic article to offer a detailed analysis of both Duncan Jones' sf films: *Moon* and *Source Code*. The readings explore the films' complex philosophical themes, focusing on ethics, specifically utilitarianism, and the aesthetics of the sublime. Both discourses inform the films' presentation of technology and labour within futuristic forms of late capitalism. Drawing links between the two films emphasises their shared themes of exploitation, suffering and resistance. This enables an appreciation of the complexities of *Moon* and provides a new way of reading *Source Code*, focusing on the interplay between the film's different realities rather than privileging the virtual space of the train. While the films utilise the aesthetics of the sublime, my readings will trace the ways in which they close down the possibility of transcendence, thereby relocating resistance to the system within different types of replication and repetition.

Introduction

Both *Source Code* (Duncan Jones US 2011) and *Moon* (Duncan Jones UK 2009) present ethical dilemmas that are framed in the vocabulary of utilitarianism, pitting the happiness of one versus the flourishing of many. The dilemmas place the films' protagonists in opposition to the needs of wider communities, global and national respectively. Those characters and companies who present the privileging of the many as the right choice deploy the key metric of Mill's classic account: 'the utilitarian standard … is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether' (2015: 125). On Mill's model, 'actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure' (2015: 121). However, what follows is not a pure utilitarian reading of the films, their ethical themes are articulated through the presentation of technology and labour within futuristic forms of late capitalism, offering a complex intersection of divergent discourses.

The exploration of the devastating impact of new technologies offered by *Moon* and *Source Code* also draws on the aesthetics of the sublime. In Burke's model, the 'delightful horror' experienced by those who view the sublime arises from the passions concerned with self-preservation (1990: 123). It is the possession of particular characteristics, including: obscurity, power, vastness, infinity and difficulty, which renders certain objects, animals and works of literature sublime (1990: 53-4, 59, 66-7, 70-1). Thus, for example, the sublimity of the mountain range and precipice lies in their exhibiting the quality of vastness. Kant changes Burke's model in two key ways. Firstly, the sublime is not caused by the qualities of external objects but rather constitutes a particular state of 'mental *agitation*' in the viewing subject, which arises when the imagination fails to meet the demands of reason (1987: 101). Vast overhanging rocks and mountains evoke the dynamic sublime, as the 'irresistibility of nature's might' is a power of such annihilating force that it surpasses comprehension through the imagination, thereby giving rise to terror (1987: 120). However, the terror evoked by the failure of the imagination reveals man's 'supersensible vocation': 'a feeling that the mind has a vocation that wholly transcends the domain of nature', namely the realm of pure reason (1987: 128). The linking of the mental conflict of the sublime to the possibility of transcendence – the realm of pure reason and the basis of moral judgement – marks the second break with Burke. Kant reconstructs the sublime as a means of transcendence, the

overcoming of terror by pure reason, thereby giving it the familiar form of a narrative of mastery.

This paper traces the ways in which the complex visual metaphors offered by *Moon* and *Source Code* take up elements from different philosophical and theoretical systems – the ethics of utilitarianism, the aesthetics of the sublime – to convey the impact of futuristic technologies. It also explores the visual figures that present the construction and reconstruction of time in *Source Code*. My methodology draws on previous work, which emphasised the key role of the figurative as the locus of conceptual and theoretical information in the science fiction film (Constable 2009). The paper offers a philosophically informed, detailed textual analysis, which traces the intersections and juxtapositions of diverse theories, rather than a single, overarching philosophical argument. The closing down of the transcendental juxtaposed with the non-transcendental ethics of utilitarianism creates a patterning that emphasises a key problem, namely what can constitute resistance to a system that has no outside. This paper will end by exploring the ways in which the films use models of repetition, both visual and temporal, in order to generate the possibilities of resistance from within capitalist and/or military systems. These moments of resistance also reprise elements of the discourses of utilitarianism to open up possibilities of critical thought and generate alternative ideals.

Moon
Moon begins with an advertisement for Lunar Industries, answering the initial written question 'Where are we now?' with a voice-over narration offering a brief eco-history: 'Remember the time when energy was a dirty word? When turning on your lights was a hard choice?' The consequences of the 'hard choice' are presented simultaneously with the spoken words, a long shot of a group of children scrabbling in detritus on a beach followed by a shot of seagulls scavenging in mud and rubbish, emphasising the brutal effects of fossil fuel consumption on all life forms. Next, third world 'cities in brown out' are contrasted with first-world traffic jams thereby contextualising the question about the lights as a choice made by a Western individual. The traffic jam also shows how few have cared about the global consequences of their energy consumption. The ethical framework of this 'hard choice' references utilitarianism. The dilemma pits the one versus the many and the right choice is to opt for the course of action promoting the greatest happiness, or more minimally, least suffering, of the many. Mill's account offers a broad conception of happiness, including pleasures of the intellect, imagination, and feelings (122, 149-151) and an equally wide-ranging analysis of pain and suffering, specifically deprivation of 'the means of happiness' be they physical or mental (172-172, 175). The cut from the children to the seagulls, all scavenging for food, dehumanises the children by depriving them of the most basic, physical means of happiness. The global scale of the negative consequences of poverty, suffering and pollution clearly construct the Western individual's choice to consume fossil fuel as morally wrong.

The advert evokes utilitarianism, only to announce that such ethical dilemmas are now, fortunately, over, thanks to Lunar Industries' role as 'the largest producer of fusion energy in the world'. The announcement accompanies a long shot of a pier lit up at night – clusters of white bulbs festoon the rides at the end, while multi-coloured neon spokes power the big wheel. The graphic match from the circular big wheel to a diagrammatic circle of the sun, emanating animated rays of light, foregrounds the natural location of the source of fuel and marks a shift from stock footage to animated diagrams. The narrator's explanation transforms him from historian to scientist, while consistently deploying the objective, disinterested voice

of truth as he intones: 'The energy of the sun, trapped in rock, harvested by machine, from the far side of the moon.' The simple language that accompanies the basic animated schematic would appear to be an exemplary instance of the 'dull and routine language' that Sobchack suggests accompanies the presentation of extrapolative or speculative science in sf films, serving to 'authenticate the fiction in the film's premises' (1987: 154).

The shift from past to present appears to mark the end of ethics, indeed the graphic match from the big wheel to the sun shows that energy consumption is no longer a matter for concern or thought but simply fun. However, the presentation of the desirability of the new clean burning fuel continues to deploy the vocabulary of utilitarianism. The beneficiaries of the new, clean energy comprise over '70% of the planet' diagrammatically located in the continents of North and South Americas lighting up across a globe. The global community is further evoked by four shots containing children whose diverse ethnicities conjoin Asia and China, black and white. The first medium close-up of mother and child is followed by three close-ups of children, the shot scale drawing attention to their beaming faces. The linking of clean energy to human happiness, flourishing on a global scale is clear, and this serves to present Helium 3 and the scientific processes of its extraction as morally good. The children also represent the future, encapsulated in the advert's tag line: 'The power of the Moon; the power of our future'. Puns on power occur throughout the advert. The written banner 'HE3 = POWER' that accompanies the diagram of the Americas lighting up constructs the image as both a vision of new energy and a global market place, control of the former enabling Lunar Industries to dominate the latter. The conflicting discourses deployed across the advert, both ethical and economic, set up a tension that is explored later in the film.

Sobchack argues that sf films seek 'to pictorialize the unfamiliar, the non-existent, the strange and the totally alien—and to do so with … verisimilitude', creating the genre's distinctive 'visual tension' between the alien and the familiar elements (1987: 88). *Moon* deploys a number of strategies for presenting its futuristic science of lunar mining for Helium 3 as familiar. The first presentation of the interior of the Sarang mining base draws on a history of representation. The rectangular padding on the walls displayed by concealed lighting and the octagonal construction of the exit, create a predominance of geometric patterns in the largely white mise-en-scène, recalling the living quarters of the Nostromo in *Alien* (Scott US 1978). The retrieval of the Helium 3 involves journeying by rover across the moon's surface to a large harvester, which rumbles slowly but ceaselessly forwards, spitting out a residue of small rocks and dust in its wake, reminiscent of the airborne detritus ejected by a combine harvester. The Moon set combines old and new special effects: Peter Talbot designed the beautiful miniature vehicles, while Cinesite added the computer generated atmospheric features, such as smoke and dust. While the sounds of the machinery should not be audible given the Moon's lack of atmosphere, they have a 'perceptual realism' being congruent with their size and weight (Bould 2015: 10-11). The broad evocation of the familiar is appropriate for the depiction of labour that conforms to older economic models of imperialist expansion in its exploitation of the advantageous properties of a particular place.

The most striking feature of the Sarang base is that it has a crew of just one, Sam (Sam Rockwell), whose only company is the computer, GERTY. His isolation is compounded by the lack of any 'live feed' enabling real time communication with earth. All communications, from employers' instructions to entertainment such as football matches, take the form of recordings, placing Sam at a temporal and physical distance from both his work colleagues and fellow fans. The first message from his wife, Tess (Dominique McElligott), recalls the shot of the beaming mother and child towards the end of the advert, thereby underscoring

Sam's isolation from both public, global and private, familial communities. The message appears less posed than the advert – Eve (Rosie Shaw) snuggles into Tess's lap and looks to the left of the camera, rather than addressing it directly. However, its apparent authenticity is undermined by the jump as Tess discusses Eve's birthday, which coupled with the black and white aesthetic, gives the impression of a glitch in an old-style video copy. The reference to Eve's birthday, her third given later hints in the film, present her as the daughter Sam has never actually met. Tess alludes to marital problems, suggesting that Sam's isolation on the Moon might be good for both of them, thereby presenting the three year contract as a period of exile from the family. Paradoxically, the 'home' Sam genuinely longs for with such intensity is presented as doubly inauthentic: a simulation (an old replayed recording) and an idealisation (a denial of domestic difficulties).

The psychological signs of over-extended isolation on Sam are evident from the beginning of the film. He talks to himself and suffers visual hallucinations that cause him to have accidents, culminating in his crashing into the harvester. Concern for Sam's deteriorating mental condition is expressed by GERTY, mellifluously voiced by Kevin Spacey. The timbre and expressive tonal variety of GERTY's voice recalls HAL in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Kubrick UK/US 1968) voiced by Douglas Rain. Sobchack notes that HAL's 'ripe and soft' voice contrasts with the inexpressiveness and lack of texture of the voices of the two astronauts: Dave Bowman (Keir Dullea) and Frank Poole (Gary Lockwood) (1987: 177). This contrast serves to humanise the computer, human speech is 'lack lustre and mechanical', whereas 'HAL—in the first part of the flight—can almost be regarded as a chatterbox, a gossip, emotional' (ibid). Both computers pose questions pertaining to their astronauts' mental states: GERTY's general: 'Sam are you OK?' and HAL's more pointed: 'Are you having second thoughts about the mission to Jupiter?' The latter is not answered directly by Dave who sidesteps the issue, treating the question as part of HAL's on-going psychological evaluation of the crew. The intertextual reference underscores the ambiguity of GERTY's beautifully voiced expressions of concern, drawing attention to their functional role as surveillance, an on-going check on the viability of the work force.

The references to *2001: A Space Odyssey* also set up possible turns for the narrative. HAL's notorious unreliability, killing four of the five crew members of the Discovery, accords to a common sf 'scenario in which technologies … behave in unexpected ways, malfunction[ing] or evolv[ing] into something not anticipated' (Wood 2002: 17). However, the narrative twist in *Moon* does not rest on the unreliability of technology but the narrator himself. The presentation of Sam's psychological disintegration, the vivid dream sequence of having sex with Tess and subsequent awakening, invites questions as to how far what he experiences is really happening. Nicely misdirected to focus on the subjectivity of the protagonist, the viewer is most likely to read the scene following the crash as Sam regaining consciousness in the infirmary. The editing – the fade to black from the long shot of the crashed rover – does provide a visual hint that the awakening marks the beginning of a new chapter. The narrative twist is that Sam is a clone (later records suggest he is 11th in the series) and the waking figure is actually Sam #12.

Replication and the Human
After Sam #12 has rescued Sam #11 from the crashed harvester, their evident likeness means each has to come to terms with his status as a clone. Interestingly, the scene of reawakening is the only moment in *Moon* that plays with the viewer's inability to distinguish between the two. The clones are differentiated through age, physical agility and repertoire of emotional states. Sam #12 is young, athletic, angry and determined; while Sam #11 is older, physically

injured by the crash, resigned, and patient – the last acquired through hobbies such as gardening and model making. This differential depiction is entirely counter to Baudrillard's characteristically apocalyptic analysis of cloning as a mode of serial duplication that results in an 'eternity of the Same', marking the end of all difference and indeed the individual (1994: 95). However, the logic of his argument is disrupted by a brief comment in a footnote: 'it is probable that … even the "clonic twin" will never be identical to its progenitor, will never be the same, if only because it will have had another one before it' (1994: 102). This bare notion of differences arising through placement within a series is extended by the 3-year gap between Sam #11 and Sam #12 and widened by the sudden physical deterioration of the former, coughing up blood and loosing teeth, which exaggerates the gap to the point of a recognisable generational difference between Sam (senior) and Sam (junior).

The differential presentation of the clones means each presents the other with a double that embodies a future or past self. Sam #12 is clearly concerned by Sam #11's mental state on finding him talking to his plants, asking 'How long have you been here?' Sam #11 responds, reaching out to Sam #12 to thank him for saving his life, adding 'I'm real lonely you know. I just want to shake your hand. Will you shake my hand?' His face with its blackened eye appears deathly white as he reaches out, imploringly. Sam #12's refusal, hastily backing away, is both unsympathetic and an understandable revulsion from the pressing spectacle of his own future mental and physical decay. Later, after the clones' argument about the hidden room that culminates in Sam #12's destruction of the model village, Sam #11 confides to GERTY: 'He scares me … he flies off the handle'. The spectacle of uncontrolled rage provided by the younger clone gives Sam #11 an outsider's view of his own past behaviour, thereby enabling him to understand his wife's perspective: 'I see it now. I see what Tess was talking about.' He then confesses to GERTY that his temper led Tess to leave him for 6 months. She gave him a second chance and his exile to the Moon is an opportunity for him to change and save his marriage.

Sam #11's confessional encounter with GERTY presents the computer as a key source of reliable information – albeit limited to 'what occurs on the base' – explaining the process of awakening and testing the clones. Spacey's vocal tones then change, dropping and slowing slightly, as the clones' memories of Tess and Eve are revealed to be implants based on the edited memories of the original Sam Bell. The revelation that Tess is a simulation, following immediately on the confession of domestic abuse, utterly undermines the narrative of redemption through exile that Sam #11 has taken for his *raison d'être* throughout his short life-span. Utterly devastated, he turns away from GERTY, who adds, in the same tones: 'I'm very sorry'. The apology is accompanied by a gesture, the rudimentary automated arm reaching out to Sam #11 and adjusting slightly just before touching him gently on the shoulder. The apology successfully enacts the vocabulary of compassion (both vocal and gestural), a reaching out to console at a time of sorrow. However, this momentary humanisation is immediately followed by GERTY's offer of food, a misplaced repetition that underscores his failure to fully understand the clone's emotional devastation. This serves to render the computer less human and to construct Sam #11 as profoundly human at the very moment he tries to comprehend what it means to be a clone.

GERTY combines programmatic elements, indicated by repeated speeches, such as offers of food and statement of overall function: 'I'm here to keep you safe'; with key one-off moments that exceed functionality, such as the imparting of information about Tess, and the compassionate gesture. The last contrasts with the earlier scene in which Sam #12 refused to shake Sam #11's outstretched hand. The film thus draws attention to the computer's

occasional mastery of a particular performative vocabulary of compassion (both vocal and gestural), which forms the basis of GERTY's humanisation. The denaturalisation of compassion is further compounded by its presentation as a learned vocabulary, one that the individualist Sam #12 initially lacks but gains as he begins to treat the older, dying clone as more than a bleak vision of his own future. In contrast, Sam #11 is seen to have learned the emotional and ethical vocabulary of caring for others through his relations to GERTY and his taking seriously the roles of husband and father offered by the simulations of Tess and Eve. In all cases the vocabulary of care is expressed through individual one-to-one relationships (whether real or simulated). The narrative arc of emotional progress facilitated through false memories clearly references *Blade Runner* (Scott US 1982) where implants are used to ensure the replicants' emotional development across their equally short life-spans.

GERTY exceeds functionality yet again by giving Sam #11 access to secure data on all the Sam Bells. The uncoiling of the automated arm approaching the keyboard behind the clone appears almost sinister until the adjustments for typing make its task clear. The close-up of the database's home page shows records over a period of 31 years, suggesting that Sam is the 11th clone. His predecessors are distinguishable as individuals by varying details of hairstyle, facial hair and items of clothing – a hat, sunglasses. While four offer final speeches before entering the 'cryogenic protection pod', one waving a photo of Eve, the chosen recordings show three deaths by incineration. The succession of utterly exhausted clones, unwittingly going to their deaths one after the other, recalls Frederic's hallucination of the industrial labour force as an endless march of slave sacrifices to the pagan god Moloch in *Metropolis* (Lang Germany 1927). The clinical orchestration of the series of sacrificial clones in *Moon* is indicated by the *mise-en-scène*: the starkly lit, octagonal, white and black chamber containing the sparkling white coffin-shaped pod has a horrific, hygienic, efficiency. Sam #11 exits before the database plays out the final part of the recording, GERTY's automated arm vacuuming away the fallen ashes, which formed the ghost of the last incinerated clone. The computer is utterly dehumanised, part of a sanitary, mechanised process of death.

Exploitation and the Sublime

The presentation of the clones as a necessary sacrifice to the globally beneficial enterprise of creating clean energy is addressed in the next scene. Interestingly, Mill considers the issue of sacrificing one for the benefit of many when analysing punishment as a form of deterrence in the final chapter of *Utilitarianism*: 'On the connection between Justice and Utility'. Summarising the arguments against the infliction of harsh punishments in order to deter others from committing the same crimes, he notes 'the acknowledged injustice of singling out an individual, and making him a sacrifice, without his consent, for other people's benefit.' (2015: 168-169). The happiness of the many cannot be secured through the ill-treatment of the few. While this is largely expressed through the language of individual rights, it is also linked to a vision of social equality for all sentient beings. For Mill, 'justice which is grounded on utility [is] … the most sacred and binding part of all morality' and is to be found in those 'moral rules that forbid mankind to hurt one another' (2015: 172). His analysis of the 'most marked cases of injustice' follows: 'acts of wrongful aggression, or wrongful exercise of power over some one; … wrongfully withholding from him something which is his due; in both cases inflicting on him a positive hurt, either in the form of direct suffering, or in the privation of some good' (2015: 173).

On entering the octagonal chamber, Sam #11 closes the pod door, activating the speech of thanks recorded by one of the company's directors. 'As you begin to feel sleepy, think about the magnificent job that you've done and how proud your family are of what you've

accomplished.' This utterly cynical evocation of family links a series of patriarchal roles: husband, father and breadwinner. The simulations of Tess and Eve can now be seen as crucial to the construction of an efficient labour force, providing the psychological means of exacting every last ounce of energy from the clones before they cease to function properly and are put to death. Classical Marxist analyses emphasised the alienation within labour epitomised by the Fordist model of industrial assembly lines, which dehumanised workers by reducing them to a single machinic function. In contrast, the utter brutality of this futuristic late capitalist model lies in its creation and co-option of the human – specifically conceptualised as the conscious, the sentient and the emotional – purely in order to render its workforce more efficient. Lunar Industries' 'wrongful exercise of power' goes beyond Mill in its simulation of the three year contract and the private sphere, evoking what is due to the clone workforce only to withhold it and thereby cynically inflicting levels of physical and mental suffering that are utterly unjust.

The director continues: 'Lunar Industries remains the number one provider of clean energy world-wide due to the hard work of people like you.' The line echoes the initial advert shifting the focus from the happy recipients of the energy (over 70% of the planet) to the status of Lunar Industries as the number one provider. The visual presentation of the director, rather than the advert's recipients, marks a shift from utilitarian ethics to global capitalism, highlighting its status as beneficial to the privileged few who control capital. If the face of capitalist economics visually displaces ethics, the vocal link to the advert is a horribly ironic reminder of the first presentation of the provision of clean energy as morally good. The irony works because the visually displaced ethics continue to provide the standards by which the industrial practices of Lunar Industries can be judged to be morally wrong. The scene also significantly shifts the film's formulation of the one and the many: from the sacrifice of a succession of individual clones for global good to individual venture capitalists' exploitation of the clone workforce. The scale of exploitation is explored in the next scene.

The clones venture down into the hidden chamber beneath the octagonal room together, finding a long, well-lit subterranean space divided into a series of bays, each containing 4 columns of 4 drawers, running along the right side. The resemblance to a vast morgue is heightened as the pair pull out a drawer disclosing the inert body of another clone, whose unlined face indicates pristine youthfulness. His head is pillowed by items like those his predecessors wore to demonstrate their individuality, two baseball caps and a slogan T-shirt, which metonymically assert his status as one product among many. The infinite series of bays is created by a 15-18 foot false perspective set, which is slightly canted to the right displaying more of the endless columns of drawers. These are separated by vertical lines of neon lights, while on the left side venetian style shutters also create vertical lines of light, both converging to form a vanishing point left of screen centre. The set evokes Burke's sublime in the form of 'the artificial infinite' by exhibiting the key features of succession and uniformity (1990: 68). The successive bays form 'parts … continued so long and in such a direction, as … to impress the imagination with an idea of their progress beyond their actual limits' (ibid). The geometric uniformity of the archways of the bays, columns of drawers and vertical lines of light convey 'uninterrupted progression' (ibid). For Burke, uniformity facilitates the uninterrupted flow of a single idea, a cumulative progression towards the unboundedness of the infinite, generating an appreciation of magnitude that 'fill[s] the mind with that sort of delightful horror, which is the most genuine effect … of the sublime.' (1990: 66).

It is interesting that the film's most awe-full moment is an interior set. Within sf criticism, philosophical conceptions of the infinite vastness of the sublime tend to be evoked in relation

to the presentation of outer space. While the first presentation of the Sarang base evokes the iconography and physicality of harvesting, rendering the strange reassuringly familiar; the gothic hidden chamber draws on the disquieting figure of a morgue only to invert it and project it to infinity, rendering it still more disturbing. The horror is not purely that of the sublime's formal magnitude, the spatial cues of the artificial infinite take on temporal connotations in that the successive lines of drawers are the future work force. The succession of drawers parallels the sequential production of the clones, while also reducing them to a series of identical geometric shapes. Previously, the incineration of the clones marked their status as blood sacrifices to capitalist industry, their lives truncated and eliminated by exploitation. Here, the presentation of the future work force within a limitless morgue indicates the clones' entire existence comprises a death in life/life in death. The visual metaphor forcefully conveys their complete entrapment within a system that exploits them as labour while creating and disposing of them as product.

The scene adapts features of Burke's sublime to create a powerful sense of the limitless, all-encompassing nature of futuristic late capitalism. The overwhelming effect of the geometry of the chamber is indicated through the placement of the human figures. The false perspective set is shown in four long shots in the short scene, each shot has at least one of the clones in the foreground. The placement of the human figure/s to the side of the set clearly facilitates the perspectival view but it also conveys their powerlessness. Their positioning can be contrasted with the centrality of the male figure in Caspar Friedrich's famous painting 'Traveller looking over a sea of fog' (1817-18), which suggests a level of mastery over the sublime landscape. Both clones are utterly overwhelmed by what they see. Standing either side of the opened drawer, Sam #12 looks towards the unending series of bays exclaiming: 'Jesus Christ – there's so many of them'; while Sam #11's response is to look towards the ladder and make a wordless, rapid exit from hidden chamber. The fourth long shot shows Sam #12 pushing back the drawer and backing away from it towards the ladder, as though he too cannot bear to look at the infinite series of bays. The brief lines of dialogue locate the chamber's capacity to terrify in the clones' confrontation with the endless replication of themselves – the 'eternity of the Same' as horrific spectacle (Baudrillard 1994: 95).

In Burke's analysis of the artificial infinite, succession and repetition sustains a cumulative appreciation of the single idea of magnitude, 'the delightful horror' of the sublime, which is carefully distinguished from the terror/horror that arises from being placed in actual danger. The film's presentation of the chamber as unbearable spectacle draws on this sense of cumulative magnitude – the dawning realisation of the vastness of this self-perpetuating capitalist system. However, the clones are positioned inside and outside the spectacle that they survey as both spectator and object. This doubling sets up a reciprocal circularity that undermines the cumulative presentation of a single idea. As workforce and product the clones are embroiled within and produced by the system. There is no safe distance from which they can survey their own exploitation and dehumanisation and thus no moment at which terror might become delightful horror.

Both clones respond to this terrible moment by rationally exploring different avenues of escape. Sam #11 phones 'home' only to discover that Tess is dead and the teenage Eve is being brought up by another man, whom she calls father. The sense of both revelations being too much to bear is expressed through his despairing cry: 'That's enough. I want to go home.' The simultaneous expression of Sam #11's desire for and the impossibility of escape emphasises his complete entrapment within the system. The presentation of the private realm as a simulation negates its status as an alternative space outside the system, a separate realm

that has constituted the locus of meaning and value for Sam #11. Lunar Industry's simulation of the private realm short-circuits the terms of classical Marxist critique. Labour does not de-humanise a pre-existing category of the human; instead the human is a category created to secure the efficiency of labour. The moments in which Sam #11 is presented as most human are those conveying his desperate emotional turmoil as he comes to understand and face the implications of his cloned identity and false memories. Thus, the film presents the capacity for suffering as the key demarcation of the human.

In contrast, Sam #12 is able to envisage escaping from the Moon to an earth not yet idealised as 'home' in the space pod designed to deliver the Helium 3. While his ability to conceptualise escape is facilitated by his failure to be fully integrated into the simulated roles of husband, breadwinner and father, it is also the result of the differential doubling offered by Sam #11 who instantiates the dire future that is rejected. On the Baudrillardian model, the combination of replicative model of the code and the commodification of late capitalism creates a fully integrated circuit in which escape is impossible: 'all that remains is fascination with the operation of the system that annihilates us' (1981: 60). In *Moon*, the differential of age and the minimal community of two constitute key differences, which enable the clones to learn from each other. The film presents their different fates by cross-cutting between long shots of the space pod falling to earth like a shooting star and close-ups of the dying Sam #11. The editing evokes the links between the clones, suggesting that both clones remain entrapped and both escape. The discovery of the body of Sam #11 is followed by the restoration of live feed to the Moon, which provides an aural track of the media frenzy following the arrival of Sam #12. *Moon* thus offers a profoundly compromised vision of 'escaping the system' that is entirely congruent with its critique of the all-encompassing power of futuristic late capitalism.

Source Code

Source Code begins by setting out a series of different spaces: Chicago, the train, the capsule and the control room. Warren Buckland argues that these constitute 'three ontological … realities': the video game space of 'the train and its environment', the 'imaginary space' of the capsule, and 'the actual world' presented by Chicago and the control room (2014: 193). While these divisions are useful, Buckland's reading centres on the train. In contrast, my focus on the film's presentation of labour under late capitalism and its construction of utilitarian ethical dilemmas will draw attention to dramas played out in the 'actual world' locales, particularly the power struggles in the control room. This will involve a detailed analysis of Goodwin's role, neglected in previous readings, charting her transition from moral compass to protagonist. While the majority of readings argue that the film ends locating the protagonist in the Source Code, envisaged as a virtual world (Blouin 2013: 110) or alternative reality on the model of a branching universe (Buckland 2014: 195; Cameron and Misek 2014: 110); this article will examine the film's complex visual metaphors of time to offer a different reading of the ending.

The film opens in the actual world with three helicopter shots of Chicago, the first sweeping across Lake Michigan towards the city, before cutting to a high angle shot of a train speeding off-screen left. The subsequent cross-cutting features overhead shots of the city, which appears as a series of geometric shapes. These overhead shots of geometrised urban spaces are reprised later in the CNN news footage of the failed evacuation of the city and capture of the bomber. The aerial shots impart a particular aesthetic to the presentation of the real world of the city, which enable it to be both particular, Chicago, and universal, any first world city. The cross-cutting at the beginning parallels the real world of Chicago with the city-bound

commuter train. The first presentation of the train interior aligns the spectator with Captain Colter Stevens (Jake Gyllenhaal) as he awakens bemused *en media res*.[1] A series of subjective shots of fellow passengers, adult men and women of various ethnicities: black, white, Chinese and Asian, and ages – from teenaged student to late-middle aged commuters – depict a community. The close proximity of diverse social and ethnic groups corresponds to Schivelbusch's analysis of the train as a 'technical guarantor of democracy' (73 in Bould 2012: 64). The passengers function as a social microcosm of the city and, by extension, of America itself.

The first scene on the train sets up a series of everyday events: Christina Warren (Michelle Monaghan) tells the story of her sudden resignation, a female commuter spills her coffee, two male commuters complain the train is late, the conductor passes down the train inspecting tickets, and a helpful student returns a lost wallet to a passenger (ultimately identified as the bomber) who is exiting the train. These form key points that are repeated in subsequent scenes in this space. Buckland notes that the train is the site of a 'serialized repetition of action with variation (in the form of progression) from one repetition to another' (2014: 193-4). The first scene offers a plethora of familiar daily interactions, which form a counterpoint to Stevens' growing disquiet. His bemusement at being taken for Sean Fentress culminates in a visit to the bathroom where he sees Sean (Frèdèrick De Grandprè) entrapped on the other side of the mirror. Stevens reacts by taking cover, turning to see Sean reaching towards the mirror imploringly. Their gestures suggest both the mirror space and the train are spaces of entrapment and thus constitute self-enclosed, virtual worlds.

The crowded, virtual world of the train is contrasted with the solitary, imaginary space of the capsule. Stevens awakens to the sound of a woman's voice repeating: 'Captain Colter Stevens this is Beleaguered Castle'. The title of the unit references 'a restricted game of solitaire in which the person plays alone and almost always loses' (Blouin 2013:109). Close-ups of Stevens' face and hands are followed by medium shots in which he occupies the pilot's seat of a craft resembling a Sikorsky UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter (Fordham 2011: 51). The shot sizes restrict the view of the craft, providing glimpses of grey metallic walls shaped by three-dimensional, triangular and pentagonal pieces. New details, such as the screen to Stevens' left and the eject lever on the floor are shown in subjective shots, suggesting the items constitute mental projections. However, this solipsistic space is not entirely malleable, Stevens' inability to undo his seatbelt or reach the eject lever construct the capsule as yet another space of entrapment.

The film introduces the real world space of the control room after the second scene on the train and it acts as a key site of exposition (Buckland 2014: 191). Goodwin explains the purpose of Stevens' missions – he needs to identify the bomber in order to prevent an immanent second attack, which will take the form of a dirty bomb that will eliminate the population of Chicago. Buckland notes that Goodwin sets up both 'narrative goal and timeline' thereby fulfilling two key demands of 'conventional narrative' (2014: 191). While the temporal urgency of finding the bomber provides a narrative context for Goodwin's refusals to converse with Stevens about issues that are outside his mission, it also underpins the film's first articulation of an ethical conflict that takes a classically utilitarian form. Stevens' clash with Goodwin pits individual concerns, his desire to fully comprehend his

---

[1] I have chosen to follow the film and refer to the characters of Colter Stevens and Colleen Goodwin by their surnames throughout the paper. This foregrounds their position within the military and emphasises the contrast with non-military personnel, particularly Dr Rutledge.

strange new circumstances, against the flourishing of the many, the basic survival of two million people living in Chicago.

The control room is also the site of information about Source Code. While Dr Rutledge establishes his scientific credentials through his airy use of terminology, such as 'quantum mechanics' and 'parabolic calculus'; his explanation for the activity of the brain post-mortem uses an easy, everyday metaphor – it is compared to the halo effect in a light bulb that has been switched off. This aspect of enduring brain function allows access to a short-term memory track of the eight minutes prior to death. Dr Rutledge clarifies: 'Source Code is not time travel. Rather, Source Code is time reassignment. It gives us access to a parallel reality'. Importantly, for the doctor, this parallel reality is limited. Like the halo effect, it is a lesser double of a prior real and has a finite duration of eight minutes. However, his assumptions are called into question as the film progresses.

Death and the Sublime
The repetition of the bombing of the train, each time visualised differently, means the film ceaselessly reiterates a series of violent deaths. The fourth repetition raises the key issue of what might constitute a good ending to life and Stevens articulates his desire to apologise to his father. This tallies with earlier scenes in the capsule in which Stevens repeatedly requests that his father be notified of his return, suggesting his failure to apologise is a lasting regret. In the fifth scene on the train, Stevens learns of his own death, resulting in the unprecedented convergence of the train and capsule spaces as Christina's face pixillates and the vocal track oscillates between her voice and Goodwin's. Fainting, Stevens recalls the moment of his death in Afganistan. The green-tinged close-ups of military personnel commenting on his state are cross-cut with images of falling playing cards that mark the beginning of his attachment to Beleagured Castle. The green tinted cards suggest the ending of *Alice in Wonderland*, the deadly Queen of Spades replacing the Queen of Hearts.

Confronting Goodwin with the news of his own death, Stevens secures her reluctant corroboration of the information. The acknowledgment that the capsule is purely 'imaginary' causes it to change shape with unprecedented rapidity, the sound of metallic juddering emphasising the stressing of physical materials as the walls move outwards in a flexion of triangular shapes while a large rift appears in the ceiling space overhead, light pouring through it. However, the space beyond cannot be glimpsed. In the next shot, an overhead shot of Stevens lying on the floor, the camera zooms out apparently taking up its position in the newly opened space, showing the debris of wires representing the destruction of neural pathways. The shots create a sense of an impossible space beyond the capsule, a place where the mind might directly confront its own death and the prospect of eternity, be-it in the form of non-existence or paradise. This sublime confrontation is followed by elision, the repositioning of the camera effectively resealing the capsule once again. Entrapment here is within the limits of the human mind thereby evoking and reworking the Kantian sublime.

The link between the Kantian dynamic sublime and death is made clear by Deleuze: 'intensity … is raised to such a power that it dazzles or annihilates our organic being, strikes terror into it, but [also] arouses a thinking faculty by which we feel superior to that which annihilates us' (1992: 53). The flexing walls of the capsule physically instantiate the dreadful mental agitation arising from the failure of the imagination in its endeavour to synthesise an understanding of what it would be to be dead. Recombining experiential material – the physical form of the helicopter – is simply not adequate to the apprehension of annihilation and the unhinging of the capsule's flexing walls ally terror and madness. While the shafts of

light suggest a transcendental outside beyond the capsule, the overhead shot that contains Stevens within it shows he does not achieve any form of transcendence. The film does not present the move beyond understanding to pure reason, the Kantian apprehension of the Ideas of God and immortality. There is no reassuring narrative of mastery, revealing 'a superiority over nature that is a basis of a self-preservation quite different in kind from the one that can be assailed by nature' (1987: 121). As a result, Stevens' inability to envisage the outside of the capsule can be seen to reflect both the limits of his understanding and his powerlessness. Within the narrative, the form of the capsule also suggests Stevens' entrapment within last moments of his life, the final helicopter battle so profoundly shaping his consciousness that he remains forever poised at the brink of death.

Exploitation
Dr Rutledge intervenes to force Stevens to overcome his existential crisis and pursue the mission of finding the bomber once again. The space of the capsule reforms as Dr Rutledge takes over the live feed from Goodwin. Stevens, now standing, looks up at the screen from which the doctor, both literally and metaphorically talks down to him, asserting his superior knowledge of the Source Code as outside the temporal flow of the real world. His speech shifts to a discussion of Stevens' role within the programme, there is a close-up of Stevens looking up and a cut to a subjective close-up of the screen, which has been dislodged and is tilting to the right. The doctor's face fills the entire cinema screen as he declares: 'This may be difficult for you to hear but you are a hand on a clock, understand?' The tilted framing references a common depiction of the mad scientist within sf, reinforcing the dialogue to suggest megalomania. The doctor continues: 'We set you. You move forward. We reset you. You move again'.

Dr Rutledge's comparison of Stevens to the hand on a clock reduces him to the machinic while also referencing the factory – the clocking on and off of industrial labour and temporal control of workers on the assembly line. The unending process of resetting the clock evokes the endlessness of labour within late capitalism. This is partly facilitated through the fusion of private and public spaces in the intrusion of the control room's broadcasts into a solipsistic mental space. Taking over from Goodwin, Dr Rutledge declares she has been too soft, there are to be 'no more rest periods'. Denied both rest and eternal rest, Stevens is now subjected to a speeded up regimen that is positively torturous, the two insertions into the Source Code fuse the visual transitions with elements from the train itself, single shots of moments like the ticket being punched, which are only just recognisable in the rapid flow. Unable to process the sheer quantity of information, Stevens lies breathless on the capsule floor, pushed beyond his mental limits. Importantly, the rapidity of the process renders Stevens incapable of carrying out any further experiments of his own within the Source Code, reducing him to the role of instrument rather than participant.

While the doctor accuses Stevens of failing to consider the 'two million real world Americans' who will die if the bomber succeeds, the megalomania suggested by the canted framing coupled with the extreme assertion of power over his dehumanised experimental subject strongly suggests that what is at stake is personal ambition. Saving Chicago would secure the success of the Source Code programme, rendering it viable for more substantial funding and enabling the doctor to build his own scientific empire. Indeed, later, once the bomber has been identified, he will refer to the possibility of having eight Source Code projects, science following the model of capitalist expansion. While Lunar Industries' evocation of utilitarianism also provides the moral standards whereby the suffering inflicted through their industrial practices can be judged, the greater characterisation of the figure of Dr

Rutledge brings the processes of his ethical judgement into question. Mill argues that weighing up the balance between individual self-interest and collective happiness requires the moral agent 'to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator' (130). The doctor's lack of the spectator's qualities suggests his evocation of utilitarianism rests on a happy congruence of self-interest and the needs of the wider community.

Dr Rutledge's 'wrongful exercise of power' over his experiment includes the infliction of extreme suffering as Stevens is deemed not human due to his status as legally dead. When Stevens complains that his treatment cannot be legal; the doctor responds by saying the project has been sanctioned by a military court. At this point in the film, Stevens is presented as a sacrifice to the flourishing of the many, although he, unlike the clones in *Moon*, is unwilling rather than unwitting. *Source Code* evokes the concept of sacrifice through the military language of service and duty. While the doctor's assertion that many servicemen would welcome the opportunity to continue to serve their country after death is rebuffed by Stevens' straight reply: 'one death in service is enough', his later contention that others 'would find being part of this programme an honour' meets with a more hesitant response. The sacrificial clones die sequentially one after the other; the sacrifice of Stevens is an unending cycle of dying and reanimation. *Source Code*, like *Moon*, presents a vision of an endless death in life/life in death by utilising the sublime. While the lines of the morgue reaching to infinity show the never-ending exploitation of the clones, the impossibility of envisioning a space beyond the capsule marks entrapment within an eternal life forever poised at the brink of death.

Dr Rutledge's endeavours to coerce Stevens into co-operating take numerous forms, including bribery – agreeing to allow him to die once the mission is accomplished – and flattery. Hailing Stevens as 'a born hero son' he adds, 'even your father thinks so. Saving people is what you do best'. The doctor then plays a recording of Douglas Stevens' voice that has the desired effect, Stevens visibly pulls himself together and asks to be sent back in. The use of psychology to render Stevens capable of further work conforms to the late capitalist eradication of the private realm. The latter is extended by Lunar Industries' exploitation of the clones in which key elements of the private sphere were simulated purely to make the clones more productive. Both variants of futuristic late capitalism treat their work force (the clones, the dead Stevens) as non-human, while simultaneously evoking and exploiting their human characteristics, specifically consciousness, sentience and emotion. The last is expressed through the love of family members (whether real or simulated) whose messages of reassurance also allude to unresolved conflict. Like the first recorded message from Tess, the father's interview in *Source Code* has an equivocal status: the very sound of the paternal voice serves to reassure and reinvigorate Stevens, while the content references a painful disagreement caused by Stevens choosing his military unit over his family. Both Sam #11 and Stevens express the desire to be reconciled with their families and their motivation is cynically manufactured and/or utilised to make them work more efficiently.

The familial also positions Sam #11 and Stevens within different masculine roles: breadwinner/carer and dutiful son respectively. The father's story in *Source Code* presents his son's sense of duty to his unit as a displacement of familial bonds – 'those guys were his family', however, the paternal voice inspires Stevens to take up his mission once again thereby acting as a reminder of duty and obligation. Thus the film draws on a traditional Freudian model in which the voice of the father is the basis of the superego, playing an instrumental role in the formation of moral prohibition and obligation (Freud 1977: 319). The Freudian model psychologises Stevens' highly developed sense of duty, which is linked to

other key characteristics pervasive at the moment of death: the filial desire for reconciliation and capacity for heroism. The very characteristics that construct Stevens as an individual subject mark his suitability for the Source Code project, only a hero with a 'saving-people thing' of Harry Potteresque proportions could be persuaded to die again and again in the completion of a single mission (Rowling 2003: 646). At this point, heroism is not positioned outside the capitalist/military system but becomes a key means of exploitation within it.

Dr Rutledge's hailing of Stevens as 'a born hero' is also reflexive, drawing attention to his narrative role and raising particular generic expectations. The subsequent return to the Source Code is the first mission in which Stevens succeeds in identifying the bomber, Derek Frost (Michael Arden). The pursuit of Derek also involves Stevens leaping from the speeding train in an as yet unprecedented display of stunt work typical of an action hero. Held at gunpoint in the car park, the bomber offers a brief explanation of his nihilism – rebuilding the world requires that it first be reduced to rubble. The presentation of the homemade bomb in the van, complete with stars and stripes container, emphasises the home-grown nature of this terrorist threat. The eighth variation of the mission ends in a new mode of death with Derek shooting both Stevens and Christina. There is a cut to an overhead shot of the car park, the bomber's white van in a central parking space, while Stevens and Christina lie dying either side of the van, each positioned centrally within the adjacent spaces. The straight, white lines marking the parking spaces delineate their inhabitation of separate, parallel worlds: Stevens in the capsule, Derek in the real world and Christina in the Source Code. The white van pulls out, leaving Stevens and Christina contained within their spaces, their paralysis at the point of death explaining their inability to intervene. The overhead shot thus sets up a complex visual metaphor that confirms Rutledge's understanding of the Source Code programme as an entirely separate parallel world whose inhabitants are unable to affect the real world, which continues inexorably onwards. Further confirmation is provided when the train explodes, finding the bomber does not change this outcome, the bombing has always already happened and the passengers, including Sean and Christina, are all dead.

From commentator to protagonist – Goodwin's trajectory
The scene in which Dr Rutledge's exploitation of Stevens is presented as a form of torture, also dramatizes a split in the military-capitalist hierarchy. The medium shot of the doctor following Stevens' two rapid immersions in the Source Code shows Goodwin in the background left, suggesting she has had to physically distance herself from the whole process. Later close-ups give Goodwin's reactions of incredulity and distaste. The film's presentation of a three-way relay of looks creates a space for Goodwin's entirely non-verbal commentary on Dr Rutledge's actions, splitting the hierarchy of those who control the programme from those who run it and setting up a clash of different value systems. While both Goodwin and Dr Rutledge have espoused utilitarian values – the importance of finding the bomber to save millions of lives – her use of this logic has a military emphasis – saving millions of civilians. Goodwin's alignment with military values is evident from her swift understanding of Stevens' remarks on service and duty as well as her initial refusal to provide him with more information than was necessary for his mission. Her disgust highlights the unprofessional nature of Dr Rutledge's actions – the subjection of a serving officer on one's own side to bribery, torture and emotional coercion – presenting them as morally wrong.

After the successful eighth mission, Stevens informs Goodwin and Dr Rutledge of the bomber's identity and his capture is shown on CNN footage. Goodwin and Stevens continue their discussion about the nature of Source Code in a private conversation. On finding out that Goodwin is divorced, Stevens asks if she can imagine another world with 'an alternate

version' of herself 'a Goodwin who made different choices', thereby sketching a model of a branching universe. His brief comments suggest the possibility of saving Christina within the Source Code, re-envisaging it as a space in which actions are efficacious, creating a change of outcome that sets up an alternative reality. This conforms to the branching model of two real worlds side by side: one in which Christina dies and another in which she lives. His comments continue to utilise one key aspect of the metaphor set up by the overhead shot in the car park, the worlds, like the clearly delineated parking spaces, are parallel and separate. Paradoxically, while Stevens offers a new model of the Source Code as a possible world and thus a continuous reality; his request for one last mission, a return that will enable him to die in action, also constructs the space of the train as bounded and finite – the last eight minutes prior to death.

The film's first presentation of a significant disjunction between Goodwin's and the audience's view of Stevens occurs as he makes his request for death in the Source Code. There is a medium close-up of Stevens in the capsule, turning back towards the screen to appeal directly to Goodwin as he angrily comments: 'I'm asking you' (emphasising the last word) and then repeats more softly 'I'm asking you', (emphasis on the second word) the plea underscored by his reaching towards the screen, 'Just send me …'. There is a cut to a close-up of Goodwin's camera and a tilt down to reveal Stevens' words displayed in green writing on the computer screen. Importantly, the presentation of the content of the written phrase renders it impossible to distinguish the tone in which the repeated words were spoken. The writing continues without accompanying voice-over: 'Send me back in. Then switch me off.' A close-up of Goodwin follows she gives a slight shake of head, as though registering the impossibility of her being able to grant this request. A subjective shot from her point of view provides the first glimpse of the rectangular container that houses what remains of Stevens.

It is important to note that Goodwin cannot see the features that render Stevens' appeal so eloquently to the film spectator. The viewer is visually aligned with Stevens to the extent of viewing his projected 'residual self-image' to borrow the language of *The Matrix* (Wachowski US 1999). The virtual self appears as a human body, moreover, one that takes the well-known form of the physique and facial features of a major film star, Jake Gyllenhaal. Having privileged access to what Stevens sees, both within the capsule and within Source Code, enables the viewer to chart the extent of his suffering as he dies and is reanimated again and again. Stevens' request for a final death makes its emotional appeal to the viewer on many levels: in the changing tones of Gyllenhaal's voice, the reaching gesture, and the exhausted, fine-featured beauty of the star's face. In presenting Goodwin's view of the screen and the container, the film draws attention to the very different forms of information on which she bases her ethical decision, his words become data, his suffering charted by heat maps indicating the physical symptoms of stress on his bodily remains. The film can thus be seen to stress the impartial, dispassionate grounds on which Goodwin makes her decision to terminate Stevens' life.

The presentation of euthanasia builds on Goodwin's role as moral compass, shifting her from commentator to protagonist. Goodwin comes closest to Mill's 'benevolent and disinterested spectator' (2015: 130). Her disinterestedness is constructed through the formality of the data that she views, the military discourses that inform her choice, and her disregard for the negative consequences to herself that will ensue. Her benevolence is expressed in the warm professionalism of her interactions with Stevens, which reaches its apotheosis in her heartfelt delivery of the formal farewell: 'It was an honour Captain and I thank you for your service', before dispatching him to his final death in action. Goodwin's moving military farewell

contrasts with the ironic speech offered by the director of Lunar Industries in *Moon*. It is pivoted against Dr Rutledge's technological discourse in which Stevens is once again constructed as a machine, albeit a computer storage device rather than a hand on a clock. The combination of intertextual and in text references place Goodwin as moral protagonist in opposition to the capitalist system. Having ensured that Dr Rutledge cannot enter the room containing Stevens' life support machine, she presses the off button saying: 'He's done enough Doctor'. Two MPs then break in to effect her arrest.

Death and the Sublime (again)
Dying within the Source Code gives Stevens the chance of one last mission in which he can put everything right. On hearing that Goodwin will send him back in and terminate his life support, the capsule space reforms, contracting back into the tighter helicopter space – the site of Stevens' final battle that has constituted the limits of his imagination. The ease with which Stevens accomplishes the preliminary tasks of disarming the bomb and capturing the bomber emphasises the status of Source Code as a solipsistic dream world, the final repetition taking the form of a daydream rather than a nightmare. Taking the bomber's phone Stevens sends a message to Goodwin, before ringing his father in the guise of his son's friend and apologising to him. The film thus presents an ideal death for Stevens personally: accomplishing his mission, reconciliation with his father and romantic union with Christina; as well as exploring an ideal ending for the community of passengers, Stevens paying the comedian, Max Denoff (Russell Peters), to entertain them. Importantly, the ninth and final immersion in Source Code is the only one to cross-cut continuously between the spaces of the control room and the train, conveying a strong sense of two simultaneous missions, Stevens' and Goodwin's, taking place in two parallel worlds. The interlinking of the worlds is indicated by the dissolve from Goodwin pressing the button to a medium shot of Stevens and Christina petrified in mid-kiss, the camera pulling out to show all the rest of the passengers in the carriage held in a frozen tableau.

Blouin suggests that the tableau constitutes a form of Deleuze's cinematic sublime (2013: 114-115). However, his analysis of the scene is merely generally congruent with the reflexive modernist framework of *Cinema 2*, in which 'the time-image *thematises* the lack of creativity in the movement-image … The cliché is embraced in order to be resisted, by taking a failure of form as new content' (Mullarkey 2009: 184). For Blouin, the frozen tableau is a shocking departure from the fast pace of contemporary cinema. 'Cinematic form momentarily falters', gesturing towards a sublime beyond the limits of the frame (2013: 115). Freed from immersion within the narrative flow and challenged by the exposure of the limits of cinematic form, 'the spectator is forced to conceive of what "beyond" could mean' (ibid). The problem with reading the tableau as the end of cinematic form itself is that it uses a well-known, simple effect created by the technique of having the actors stand still while the camera continues to move (Fordham 2011: 66). The technique is famously used in *A Matter of Life and Death* (Powell and Pressberger UK 1946), when the physical, everyday world stops on the arrival of the Heavenly messenger, Conductor 71, played by Marius Goring. The clash between the static figures and the moving camera conveys the coincidence of two entirely different temporalities: the present and eternity. The conceptual dimensions of this technique arise through a particular intersection of narrative and form, which, as I will demonstrate, requires the viewer to pay attention to what is contained within the frame.

In reading the tableau as a suspension of narrative, Blouin does not address the evocation of community set up by the fluid camera movement. The camera pulls back from Stevens and Christina, its movement changing direction slightly as it reaches Stevens' first suspect, the

man with the computer (James A. Woods) whose jaw he broke in the second mission, before reframing to reveal the last suspect sitting across the aisle, the man on the phone, George Troxel (Brent Skagford), whom Stevens held at gunpoint in the eighth mission. Now physically and mentally restored, the ready legibility of the former suspects' smiling faces conveys the end of their status as suspicious persons. They act as a reminder that the presentation of a happy, harmonious community is reliant on the identification and exclusion of the bomber. The camera tilts up to reveal unknown passengers on the top deck enjoying the show, thereby reforming the carriage space as a theatre complete with upper circle. The known and the unknown are conjoined in laughter, marking the restoration of harmony to all the commuters and gesturing towards the wider unknown community beyond the train. The camera tilts down and travels back, showing the businessman (Craig Thomas) frozen in the act of consulting his watch, his waspish concern at being late for work now tempered by a smile, while the woman opposite travelling to her hair appointment, laughs. Their associations with the minutiae of everyday life link the film's evocation of community to the celebration of the ordinary. Individualised yet conjoined in laughter, beautifully lit by shafts of sunlight, the tableau of passengers is a celebration of multicultural harmony and happiness that offers an ideal microcosm of the city and America itself.

The tableau also draws on the earlier scene in the reforming capsule in which shafts of light suggested the presence of an unreachable, transcendental space. Previously the camera took up a position in the sublime space resealing the capsule; its movements here explore the space within the train. Both scenes stage a confrontation with death: the first playing out the terror of Stevens' imagination failing to apprehend the impossible space beyond the frame, while the second draws attention to the beauty of the ordinary presented within the frame. This difference is conveyed through lighting, the shafts of light illuminating the train have dust playing in them that glitters briefly, ephemera irradiated by eternity, like the passengers themselves. Thus, the tableau on the train reverses the transcendental movement of Kant's sublime, coming closer to Blake's vision of holding 'Infinity in the palm of your hand', suggesting the immanence of eternity (1863). The intertextual reference to *A Matter of Life and Death* reinforces the sense of a clash of two temporalities, the present and eternity, while also recontextualising it as the collision of two parallel worlds: reality and the Source Code.

Time, Repetition and Resistance
My reading of the final presentation of the relations between the two worlds requires an analysis of the film's use of geometric shapes to link the capsule with the Source Code. The final transition from the former to the latter is exemplary: a medium shot of Stevens in profile, the triangular structures of the capsule walls visible in the background, overlaid by a net of light that comprises a series of shapes, predominantly triangles and quadrilaterals. Jean-Pierre Boles, the special effects director of Fly Studios, notes that these effects drew on Cubism, referencing Marcel Duchamp's painting 'Nude Descending a Staircase' (1912) (Fordham 2011: 52). Just as Duchamp's painting creates a descending figure from repeated conical and cylindrical shapes, so the form of Stevens' face and body remain recognisable within the shifting geometric patterns of the overlay. The patterns appear to solidify and disperse, featuring new computer glitches such as square pixillations and motifs of 'link lost', before flexing and reforming into the outlines of a landscape. The geometric shapes suggest basic primary structures, the computerised aesthetic suggestive of the complex technology sustaining Stevens and the Source Code, while also reflexively drawing attention to the CGI that creates it. The outlined landscape gradually changes into the aerial shot speeding across a lake towards the train, this shot is used three times, underscoring the repeated events in each immersion. Transitions from the train back to the capsule, such as the one after the successful

eighth mission, deploy the geometric in the form of kaleidoscopic patterns, creating axes of symmetry around central diamond shapes and including other triangular figures. This transition also cross-dissolves to images of Christina and the Cloud Gate sculpture (Anish Kapoor 2006), suggesting Stevens' daydreams might go beyond the confines of the train and the capsule.

The final cross-cut from the spaces of the control room to the train juxtaposes a close-up of the life support monitor, the flat lines conveying Stevens' death, and the frozen close-up of the kiss, whose participants begin to move again. The end of the cross-cutting strongly suggests that the two spaces no longer constitute parallel worlds. Blouin suggests that the remainder of the film plays out within the Source Code (2013: 110). Buckland argues that the video game space of the train is changed from 'rule following activity to free play sandbox mode' constructing an entire 'alternate parallel universe' (Buckland 2014: 195, 196). However, my reading will demonstrate that close attention to the film's complex visuals places the ending within the real world once again. The new pattern of cross-cutting from the interior of the train to aerial shots of the city recalls the film's first presentation of Chicago and suggests a return to the actual world. The helicopter shot of traffic flowing freely across the five-lane spaghetti junction contrasts with its last appearance – jam-packed with stationary cars in the CNN footage of the city's evacuation. The restoration of order is confirmed by the voice of traffic reporter extolling the beauty of the day, while the familiar curving lines of the junction add a sense of *déjà vu*. Stevens' question to Christina: 'do you believe in fate?' suggests predestination, the sight of her beside the Cloud Gate sculpture transforming his daydreams into flash-forwards. The long shots of the sculpture show the cityscape transformed within its convex mirrored surface, the tall, parallel lines of the skyscrapers bending inwards. The geometric composition of the city is reformed through its assimilation to curving lines, the real world bending under the pressure of cyclical time.

The long shot taken from within the chamber beneath the sculpture offers the film's second complex, visual metaphor for time. This vision of dynamic curves contrasts with the straight lines dominating the aerial shot of the car park, which evoked separate parallel worlds. The shot shows the bean shape of the sculpture's outlines, its concave interior creating reflections that appear as a series of ovular curving lines each side of the central circular indentation. The effect is that of an endlessly curving mirror folded back in on itself like a Moebius strip. The shaping recalls Burke's analysis of the rotund as a form of the artificial infinite: 'in a rotund, whether it be a building or a plantation, you can nowhere fix a boundary … But the parts must be uniform, as well as *circularly disposed*, to give this figure full force' (my italics). Thus, the evocation of the infinite in Cloud Gate lies in its circular disposition, the curving shapes of the enfolding reflections either side of the central indentation creating a sense of endless flow. The sculpture lacks Burke's criteria of uniformity, its two sides echo each other rather than forming perfect symmetry; however, this creates a dynamic, organic structure reminiscent of Georgia O'Keeffe's flower paintings, particularly 'Abstraction White Rose' (1927). The flowing curves also contrast with the geometric triangular and rectangular structures that construct the capsule and the transitions to Source Code. As a result, the vision of time turning back on itself is not a computer reboot, the circular lines of the sculpture link the infinite with the replicative power of both art and nature, offering a Nietzschean eternal return in difference (Nietzsche 1982).

The folding back of time also offers a characteristically Nietzschean reversal of the film's key terms, life over death. After the kiss has ended, Stevens looks back at all the laughing passengers exclaiming: 'All this Life!' His existence has been reduced to an unending cycle

of dying and reanimation, the missions differentiated by various modes of violent death. Goodwin's act of euthanasia means the final mission explores the nature of a good death both for Stevens and the rest of the passengers. Their stasis in the tableau contrasts with the violence of the explosions, offering a peaceful ending and an ideal vision of community. The film's romantic resolution also reincorporates Sean within the community. The final long shot of the concave exterior of Cloud Gate shows Stevens standing hand in hand with Christina, while its mirrored surfaces show Sean gazing happily into her eyes. The previous presentation of Sean in the mirror on the train emphasised his unhappy entrapment within a parallel world, here the congruence of the reflection and reflected erases the differences between the spaces. Thus, temporal enfolding is matched by intersections of identity, the romantic interest in Christina conjoining both male protagonists. These intersections suggest the flash-forwards to Cloud Gate could be viewed as Sean's longstanding daydream of inviting Christina out.

The romantic resolution is followed by the restoration of working life at the Nellis airforce base. Goodwin, no longer subject to arrest, arrives at work, greets her colleagues as usual and receives a message from Stevens. Source Code no longer constitutes a parallel world (as Dr Rutledge insisted) or a branching reality (as Stevens explained); instead, changing the outcome of the bombing has caused it to be enfolded into the real world, transforming reality. Entering Dr Rutledge's office, Goodwin overhears a conversation that corroborates Steven's account of the failed attack and capture of the bomber, to which the doctor responds by bemoaning the loss of an opportunity to test/display the Source Code project. Blouin reads these encounters as positive. Stevens' voice-over 'urges Goodwin to keep up the good work and assist others in reshaping their perspective on the postmodern world. Even Rutledge, left waiting unaware of the radical potential unleashed by Goodwin, retains hope … What appears throughout to have ensnared one in manipulative late capitalist design opens up to yet another faith in transcendence' (2013: 113).

Importantly, for Blouin, transcendence is to be located in going beyond the limits of cinematic form, particularly that of commercial Hollywood cinema, and is further defined as 'an emotional aspiration that Jameson argues forever embeds itself in the process of form-making' (2013:113). The link to Jameson is crucial for it foregrounds the parallel between the sublime, here conceptualised as a pure space beyond the limitations of capitalist cinematic form, and the traditional placement of cultural theory and critique outside capitalism. Jameson notes that traditional models of oppositional thinking 'from slogans of negativity … and subversion to critique and reflexivity', share 'a single, fundamentally spatial, presupposition … the … time-honoured formula of "critical distance"' (1991: 48). For Blouin, transcendence as distance enables the audience to move beyond the film and into the space of critique: 'imagin[ing] nascent possibilities for cinematic form' (2013: 112).

As I have already demonstrated, the encounters with the infinite presented in *Source Code* either block or reverse the movement of transcendence – seen in the reforming of the capsule space and the tableau on the train respectively. Rather than conforming to the traditional equation of objective thought with distance, both *Moon* and *Source Code* explore different ways of constructing critical thinking through patterns of replication and repetition. In *Moon*, the clones are confronted by a vision of their never-ending exploitation that utilises the aesthetics of the sublime. While they cannot achieve a safe distance from the spectacle, being both viewer and object viewed, the reciprocal circularity of their positioning both inspires terror and prompts the rational pursuit of avenues of escape. The clones hold up a mirror to each other, versions of past/future selves that impact upon the identity and life plans of both viewer and viewed. At stake here is a mode of differential doubling that opens up the

possibility of critical thought. Thus the transition from isolation to a minimal community of the same creates the possibility of self-discovery as well as the stimulus to uncover Lunar Industries' business practices. In this way, an extreme model of capitalist replication becomes a fallible system whose failures generate unpredictable effects.

Source Code explores three rather different models of repetition in its presentation of Stevens' nine missions. The first five conform to a cumulative model of differential repetition, in which Stevens is able to learn from the past, accruing information and eliminating suspects. For Buckland, this mode of 'serialised repetition' and progression draws on the paradigm of a video game, positioning the protagonist as game player (2014: 193). 'With each repetition, a form of replay, [Stevens] … learns the rules of the game and becomes more proficient. He receives punishment when he fails (the bomb explodes) but also rewards' (2014: 194). However, this cumulative model is disrupted by the two torturously rapid immersions controlled by Dr Rutledge, which can be seen as pure replication, a rapid bricolage of elements drawn from prior missions. Buckland does not address these moments, which foreground both Stevens' lack of choice – he cannot choose not to play – and the physical suffering caused by repeatedly dying/watching others die. The rapid replications position Stevens as late capitalist labour, paradoxically reducing him to the machinic while making it impossible for him to accomplish his allotted task.

The contrast between replication and differential repetition lies in the deployment of Stevens as, respectively, a machine or an active, sentient, thinking consciousness. Being positioned as a subject enables Stevens both to fulfil his mission and to foray outside its allotted perimeters – attempting to save Christina and achieve reconciliation with his father. While Dr Rutledge exploits the father-son relation in order to force Stevens to work efficiently, it acts as a further stimulus for Stevens to utilise the Source Code for his own ends. In this way, a key method of control has unpredictable consequences, conforming to the model of a dissipative system. The two final missions play out a transition from differential repetition to the Nietzchean model of eternal return, marking the crucial shift from death to life, from nihilism to affirmation. The visual enfolding of the two worlds in the mirrored surfaces of the Cloud Gate sculpture is a circular enfolding conjoining reality with a variant version of the Source Code, which, in turn, reconstructs the real itself as a modality of differential repetition – a world made anew.

Both *Moon* and *Source Code* explore futuristic forms of late capitalism locating strategies of resistance within differential models of repetition. Each evokes Mill's ethics in order to explore the possibilities of resistance and critique. While Lunar Industries and Dr Rutledge co-opt the discourses of utilitarianism for their own commercial and/or personal ends; the same discourses provide the basis of critique in *Moon* and inform aspects of Goodwin's resistance in *Source Code.* Indeed, the ending of the latter draws on the classical utilitarian standard of 'the greatest amount of happiness altogether' in its the idealised vision of the laughing community on the train, the union of the romantic couple/s, and the restitution of order at the Nellis base (2015: 125). The coda ending also offers a particular instantiation of what is to constitute resistance within futuristic late capitalism – Goodwin's decision to withhold information from Dr Rutledge. This small, significant, gesture both expresses and recreates divisions between medical and military personnel, those who control Source Code and those who implement it, setting in play the potential splits between capitalist and military values that led to euthanasia. Thus, the possibility of subversion as critique and/or change comes about through systemic failure and discrepancies between systems, creating moments in which the workforce/products come together in a series of local allegiances – the clones' community of the Same and the alliance between Stevens and Goodwin.

Bibliography

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ed. and Trans. Shelia Faria Glaser, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.

Blake, William. 'Auguries of Innocence', first published 1863. https://www.poetryfoundation.org. Accessed 20 September 2016.

Blouin, Michael. 'Tarrying with Sublimity: the Limits of Cinematic Form in Duncan Jones' *Source Code*'. *Terror and the Cinematic Sublime: Essays on Violence and the Unpresentable in Post 9/11 Films*. Ed. Todd. A. Corner and Lloyd Isaac Vayo. London: McFarland and Company, 2013, pp. 103-118.

Bould, Mark. *Routledge Film Guidebooks: Science Fiction*. London: Routledge, 2012.

Buckland, Warren. '*source code's* video game logic', *Hollywood Puzzle Films*. London: Routledge, 2014, pp.185-197.

Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. [First published 1757].

Cameron, Allan and Misek, Richard. 'modular spacetime in the 'intelligent' blockbuster: *inception* and *source code*.' *Hollywood Puzzle Films*. London: Routledge, 2014, pp. 109-124.

Constable, Catherine. *Adapting Philosophy: Jean Baudrillard and The Matrix Trilogy*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 1*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. London: Athlone Press, 1992.

Fordham, Joe. 'Reality Deconstructed'. *Cinefex* 126 (2011): 41-67.

Freud, Sigmund. 'The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex'. *On Sexuality: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality and Other Works*. London: Penguin Books, 1977, pp. 313-322.

Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Judgement*. Trans. Werner Pluhar. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987. [First published 1790].

King, Geoff and Krzywinska. *Science Fiction Cinema: From Outerspace to Cyberspace*. London: Wallflower, 2000.

Mill, John Stuart. *Oxford World Classics: On Liberty, Utilitarianism and Other Essays*. Oxford: OUP, 2015. [*Utilitarianism* first published 1861].

Mullarkey, John. 'Gilles Deleuze.' *Film, Theory and Philosophy: The Key Thinkers*. Ed Felicity Colman. Durham: Acumen, 2009, pp. 179-189.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*. Trans. and Ed Walter Kaufmann. London: Viking Penguin Inc, 1982. [First published 1892].

Rowling, J K. *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. London: Bloomsbury, 2003.

Sobchack, Vivian. *Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film*, revised edition. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1987.