

The Diegetic Presence and Absence of Children in the Rock and Roll Festival Film; or, Whatever Happened to the Mother and Child Reunion?

by Michael Kramp

The rock and roll festival films of the late 1960s and early 1970s invite us to consider the efficacy of live diegetic music—i.e. music that belongs to the narrative world a film *and* is captured as a live public performance—within documentaries that offer ostensibly objective treatments of historical events. These accounts of early rock and roll concerts, often dubbed rockumentaries, treat the music, musicians, scenes, and fans of the emergent rock and roll counterculture, an oft-mythologized generation that criticized the stringent ways and belligerent world of their parents and optimistically vowed to create a new social order. The musical performances in such films are well known as cultural documents that reflect the energy, creativity, and passion of this distinctive generation. The live music of these films, of course, also helps to solidify the spatio-temporal realities of these rockumentaries; as diegetic sound, it grounds people and events within real time and material places, unlike edited compilations such as music videos. And yet, the music of these festival films engenders important narrative complexities when it is used alongside montages and sound bridges—specific filmic techniques that have the capacity to modify temporal progression, complicate our perceptions of space, and destabilize the objectivity of a film. In the films that I consider here, children are consistently shown within such moments of temporal discontinuity. *The Monterey Pop Festival* (1967), *Woodstock* (1970), and *The Isle of Wight Festival* (1970) offer us poignant depictions of children, including announcements of children’s births, jarring portraits of infants at rock shows, and gorgeous montages of kids and families enjoying a time of revolution and revival. While there are several montages and bridges in these films (e.g. the opening sequence of *Woodstock* aligned with the music of Crosby, Stills, and Nash), these famous rock and roll documentaries offer few images of children. These images of children are, nonetheless, memorable because they occur in moments of temporal elision. We see families and children as part of the larger community of the rock and roll festivals, and yet we see them removed from the spatio-temporal reality produced by the live diegetic music.

Documentary filmmakers Michael Wadleigh, Murray Lerner, and most famously D.A. Pennebaker use innovative techniques to directly capture the joy and vitality of rock and roll festivals, as well as the harsh realities of these concerts; they shamelessly display the noise, mud, and confusion of the venues, the frustration of attendees, and the administrative challenges of the organizers. But their treatments of children are well-crafted and aesthetically-pleasing visual and sonic experiences in which all three directors use techniques of elision to remove the young concertgoers from the temporal progressions of the narratives. The films present children as a beautiful part of the spirit of optimism and hope that pervades the festivals, but they simultaneously disconnect the youth from the spatio-temporal realities of the live musical performances, and in effect, the realities of the documented historical moments *and* the future of the rock and roll counterculture. I discuss the most prominent representations of children in these documentaries in which diegetic music is employed to bind image to image or scene to scene, ostensibly engendering narrative progression in the films; and yet the origin, future development, and relationship of these children to the live public music is lost. These

scenes thus offer a paradoxical filmic experience: they clearly depict children as part of these radical events, but they are always already distanced from the temporal continuity of the filmic narratives and the future of the historic counterculture movement. And it is this distinction that I believe is vital. In other words, children and the occasional nod to mothering and/or parenting, make for cinematic montages that disrupt the harshness of direct cinema and imply that the counterculture community is both young and burgeoning, but the films place children in montages and bridges that effectively remove them from the real time of the documentary footage. These films ultimately remind us that the generation showcased by the festival celebrations of the late 1960s was a brief and distinctive generation that severed its connection to its children—and by implication its future—even as it played, sang, and danced with them.

Diegetic Music, Temporality, and the Documentary

The same music that (still) most clearly identifies the late 1960s rock and roll counterculture contributes to its inevitable atrophy, as the young children of the festival attendees are removed from the spatio-temporal realities of the performances and seen in moments of elision. This filmic technique incorporates the shots and scenes of children within the narrative while simultaneously freeing the images from the restrictions of diegetic time and space. The prominence of live music in these films invites us to reconsider the filmic potential of diegetic sounds in documentaries. Kurt London's *Film Music* (1936) is still cited as an authority on the history and function of music in cinema. While most film scholars now argue with London's claims about such strategies as the "pernicious habit of 'mixing' music behind a scene" and his critique of the "song-hit craze," he advances a very basic idea that continues to help us think about the role of music in film: "music must have its meaning. There must be good reasons for its sound to be heard" (123, 121, 126). London's insistence on the artistic meaning of music, of course, led him to critique what he felt were careless uses of background music and hit songs in early sound cinema, and it has encouraged recent film scholars to think critically about the reasons, functions, and efficacy of music within the cinema.ⁱ The search for the rationale of musical sounds in a film has prompted research on the place of music in the film industry as well as studies of music in specific films, genres, and traditions.ⁱⁱ While such research has helped us to better appreciate the presence of music in various film forms, it has often obscured the various formal types and uses of music in the cinema. In other words, in our rush to study and reassess the meaning and function of film music, we may have lost sight of the fact that not all film music must—or even can—be talked about in the same way.

The diegetic music of the rock and roll festival films is particularly compelling because of its visual nexus to famous live events. As numerous critics have pointed out, the music of these films has become metonymic for the material spaces, audiences, and performances of the concerts, and an historic era.ⁱⁱⁱ The filmmakers attempt to frame their accounts to accentuate specific features of the late 1960s and early 1970s counterculture, and the music is vital to our understanding of this generation.^{iv} It thus informs (and in some case misinforms) our perceptions of this historical moment while it simultaneously secures the spatio-temporal realities of the documentary footage. The music, however, is also instrumental in disrupting the continuity between space and time

in the films' depictions of children. While recent studies of film music, often informed by the work of Bergson and Deleuze, have discouraged scholars from privileging space over time, discussions of film sound have always invited us to think about the nexus between these domains in the cinema. Indeed, filmic sound, including music, normally provides us with temporal and spatial fixity upon which we rely as cinematic viewers to "enliven" what Siegfried Kracauer refers to as "the more material aspects of reality" (144). Kracauer felt that music specifically assists spectators in their attempts to adjust to the world of the film; as we hear the music, we come to accept the time, space, and materiality of the diegesis.

The material reality of the succession of time is undoubtedly an essential component of this adjustment, and the temporal function of sound in cinema is perhaps best explained by Michael Chion, when he indicates that "sound temporalizes images in three ways." Chion summarizes:

The first is temporal animation of the image. To varying degrees, sound renders the perception of time in the image as exact, detailed, immediate, concrete—or vague, fluctuating, broad. Second, sound endows shots with temporal linearization. In the silent cinema, shots do not always indicate temporal succession, wherein what happens in shot B would necessarily follow what is shown in shot A. But synchronous sound does impose a sense of succession. Third, sound *vectorizes* or dramatizes shots, orienting them toward a future, a goal, and creation of a feeling of imminence and expectation. The shot is going somewhere and it is oriented in time. (117)

Chion's now-standardized explanation reminds us of our reliance upon sound to order perceptions of filmic time, but it also accentuates the role of sound in relating shot to shot and orienting time progressively. Sound organizes shots that we necessarily receive in temporal sequence; the sound ultimately confirms that our perception of linearity is correct. This function of the sound is crucial to documentaries that include or replay live footage of famous events in history, such as the rockumentaries; the sounds, including the music, ensure that the shots have not been edited to manipulate history or achieve artistic effects. While contemporary documentaries have certainly used non-diegetic music to accompany montage (c.f. Michael Moore's corpus), the live music of the festival footage operates distinctively.^v The vast majority of this music operates as the sonic accompaniment of public performances—events tied to specific times and spaces—and affirms the historicity of direct cinema.

And while these festival films certainly offer us numerous memorable live performances, they also expand the potential of diegetic music that interestingly recalls the emergence of non-diegetic music in Early Cinema. Deleuze traces the efficacy of filmic time to the early uses of sound and explains that "silent cinema music found itself subject to a certain obligation to *correspond* to the visual image, or to serve descriptive, illustrative and narrative ends, acting as a form of intertitle." The music of Early Cinema accompanies and explains filmic events, ensuring the telos of the story, much as the music of the festival films verifies that that the performances on stage were both live and in real time. While Deleuze claims that the music of Early Cinema ties one image to

the next for the purpose of extending narrative continuity, he theorizes: “when cinema develops sound and talking, music is in a sense emancipated, and can take flight” (238). The diegesis is still maintained by the sound track, including talking, noises, and ancillary sound effects, but the music is now freed to pursue new artistic ends. Film music can now more fundamentally sever a viewer’s nexus to the temporal and spatial continuity of the filmic world while maintaining a visual nexus that promises to yoke us back to the diegesis whenever the music concludes.

The documentary has recently shown the capacity to use non-diegetic music in such liberating ways, but these artistic techniques become temporally and mimetically problematic when the music is at once explicitly diegetic and the accompanying visual representations explicitly neglect the continuity of space and time. The rock and roll festival films show us live events, with numerous images of individuals singing and dancing along with simultaneous diegetic music; it is this model of live music coupled with the appropriate live images that makes the documentaries’ treatment of children extraordinary. These films ostensibly present historical musical events, but they occasionally use the music to accompany and amplify images and scenes that do not correspond to the fixed linearity of the music—and the children of these films are consistently affected by such moments of disjunction. Children are part of these films’ diegesis, and we know this because we see them as we hear the live music, but the films displace the children from the spatio-temporal reality of these concert events, signaling the inability of the counterculture to share its radical ideas, practices, and experiences with the next generation.

Nostalgia, Rock, and the Counterculture

The rock festival films display children as artistic devices that beautify the concert events and romanticize the counterculture as innocent, unadulterated, and vital, but these documentaries fail to represent such children as the future of the radical movement; the children of these rockumentaries appear frozen in time, much as the popular perception of the Woodstock generation. The rock and roll festival films show us a powerful time in American cultural history, and the uniqueness of this time is accentuated by its popular conception as brief and isolated. Barbara Tischler addressed the near-mythical status of the 1960s, and urged scholars to “contribute to the creation of a more sophisticated analysis of the 1960s in popular memory” (3).^{vi} Despite Tischler’s recommendation and scholarly accomplishment, the people, places, and outcomes of the rock and roll festivals are consistently treated nostalgically. John Street treats the nostalgia for Woodstock, and concludes, it is “preserved . . . as a utopian moment, as a turning point, and as a highlight in lives being lived now” (31).^{vii} The importance of the counterculture and its music is rarely dismissed, even by historians who, like David Steigerwald, treat the phenomena as “the consequences of historical forces rather than forces in and of themselves” (iv). Still, it is the memories and famous legacy of this culture that endure, and the documentaries often serve to enhance this nostalgia of a time past. The revolutionary young adults of the late 1960s, no doubt, generated potent ideas, fervent spirit, as well as offspring—and they brought their children to the famous music festivals. Children were included in the

celebrations of music and community, and they become crucial symbols of optimism in the future.

Woodstock, *Monterey Pop*, and *The Isle of Wight* present the children of this emergent generation as part of what David R. Shumway theorizes as the practice of rock and roll. Shumway explains that “Rock is both a sign system—or perhaps an ensemble of such systems—and a practice: a form of semiosis and an activity in which performers and listeners engage” (120).^{viii} The progeny of the men and women attending the rock festivals of the late 1960s becomes involved in the practice, sign-system, and even performances of the music events that facilitate the cultural activity of rock and roll. Their presence at the concerts aesthetically suggests how music will now unite parents and children rather than spur heated disputes. In addition while the festivals were certainly crowded and muddy, they are also sites of familial harmony in which the innocence of the children augments the energy and promise of the music. The child at the rock show, then, becomes a potent symbol of cross-generational communion that should help to move and extend the energy of the festivals into the future. The films present the children as the ostensible inheritors of this radical moment, who would supposedly bring the love, peace, and, perhaps most importantly, the music of the concerts into the future. But unfortunately these children are absent from the spatio-temporal reality of these historic musical performances. The counterculture visually shows off its progeny in these documentary films, but it simultaneously erases its future by removing these same children from the material spaces and temporal continuity generated by the films’ diegetic music.

The Monterey Pop Festival

This counterculture community is alive and well in D.A. Pennebaker’s classic *Monterey Pop Festival* (1967). Pennebaker’s cinéma vérité documentary captures the momentous music as well as the social event of the initial great concert. In the outtakes of *The Criterion Collection*, Buffalo Springfield offers a rare performance of “For What It’s Worth,” sans Jim Messina and Neil Young but including a guest appearance from David Crosby, then of the Byrds. In this scene, and the sound montage that ensues, we observe a prominent disjunction of time. The first three shots of the scene are clearly taken during a late-evening time. The opening medium-close up of the public address announcer accentuates the dark environment because of the flash bulbs; in addition, this opening shot is a long take that orients us to the darkness of the moment. The following two shots are quick takes that briefly show us the band in darkness as we await their music. Their music, however, does not begin until the fourth shot, in which we note a significant contrast; we have shifted time and place to a sun-drenched scene backed by an archetypal hippie-painted bus. We are not immediately certain that we have entered montage, but the break from the space of the live performance instructs us that our spatial and temporal continuity has been disrupted; we are clearly no longer in a late-evening time in front of a stage.

The fifth shot of this scene, a medium shot of an individual woman eating corn that zooms into a medium-close, solidifies the sound montage. We have shifted to yet

another new place; the bus is no longer in the background, but the music continues uninterrupted. Pennebaker then shows us a rather obscure and as yet uncontextualized shot of a balloon that fills the frame, followed by a medium shot of a man and boy holding hands in daylight, moving across the field. The father is framed neck to knees, while the son is framed head to knees, and the camera tilts to showcase the father's head, especially the flower, prominent alongside his ear. The montage then moves to a medium-close up of a family of four on the grass—mother, father, and two children. While Buffalo Springfield's powerful political protest song blares in the background, this group appears to enjoy the sun and grass of another temporal and spatial reality. The dissonance between the music and the patrons is highlighted in the subsequent shot, in which we see a medium-long shot of a man and woman dancing, in the daylight with an apparent shack in the background. This setting is strikingly different from those previously employed in the montage, and while it suggests a degree of privacy or solitude, the music reminds us of the time sequence that belongs to a public space. The tenth shot of the scene (seventh shot of the montage) returns us to prominent images of children. Pennebaker provides a medium following shot of a blond-haired boy walking by festival attendees; the camera then moves to a blond-haired girl and follows her as she takes a flower from an older man (presumably her father?). The camera continues to wander through the crowd, as if on a perpetual quest for other cinematic images of blond-haired children. These shots solidify the presence of children at the famous festival, but the places in which we see the children do not correspond to the temporal reality generated by the music.

This discontinuity continues to affect blond-haired children in the thirteenth shot of the scene (tenth shot of the montage). We are reintroduced to the balloon icon that Pennebaker showcased in the sixth shot of the scene (third shot of the montage), but this time, the balloon is squishing a blond-haired boy into the lower right corner of the frame. This balloon, marked with the word "love" creates the filmic effect of a close up of the boy, but it also essentially forces him out of the frame. The slogans and celebrations of the counterculture have visually squeezed the child from the image and sonically removed him from the temporal reality of the music; his displacement is solidified by the next shot, in which we return to the night and the opening temporality of the scene with a long shot of the band, again with hard lighting and flash bulbs. The scene contains an additional twenty-nine shots that reorient us to the temporal and material world of the night, the stage, and its live music, requiring us to make some filmic sense of the brief montage framed by the public address announcer's introduction of the band and the return to the live performance. Were the music of the montage non-diegetic, such a scene would be standard, but because the introduction of the band creates a temporal and spatial reality that is resolidified by the visual return to this materiality, the montage strangely belongs to the diegesis but remains disconnected from the diegetic space and time.

The live music of this scene at once involves the beautiful children of the montage in the narrative of the Monterey Pop Festival and forces us to question their place in the spatio-temporal reality of the diegetic sound. Claudia Gorbman points out that "if the advent of diegetic sound narrowed the possibilities of temporality into a sort of

relentless linearity, music could return as the one sound element capable of freeing up that temporal representation” (39). The music of Buffalo Springfield emancipates the sound montage, and its powerful images of children and families, from the “relentless linearity” of the film, but because this music ultimately belongs to the diegesis, it both produces an expectation of diegetic temporality and ultimately returns us to the temporal and spatial reality of its origin. The spaces and times of the montage’s images are thus displaced; these children clearly belong to the narrative world of the film, but they quite simply do not belong to the temporal world of the live performances of the music. While this generation of hope, change, and as the balloon suggests, “love,” may be associated with its music, the progeny of this generation are fundamentally elided by this same music. Buffalo Springfield continually instructs and asks: “Stop children! What’s that sound?” And it is not at all coincidental that it is the sound of the band’s music that has effectively stopped or trapped the children, and excluded them from participating in the future of this community. The music of the film helps Pennebaker to pointedly represent children amidst their parents and elders, and yet these same children can neither benefit from nor perpetuate the liberating and community-building music.

Woodstock

Woodstock (Dir. Michael Wadleigh, 1970) offers a more well-known montage that engenders a similar elision of children, family, and parenting. In the opening shot of the John Sebastian performance, we hear from an as yet disembodied public address announcer: “Settee McGee, please come immediately to backstage right; I understand your wife is having a baby. Congratulations.” This long take follows Sebastian as he walks from back stage to the front of the Woodstock stage, zooming finally to a rear-angle medium-close up to show us the momentous size of the crowd. Sebastian reports: “Oh boy, this is really a mind-fucker of all times, man. I’ve never seen anything like this, man.” The camera pans to show us again the vastness of the crowd with a side-angle shot of Sebastian, zooming out to a medium shot, and then back to a medium-close up. This opening shot of the scene clearly establishes the diegetic time and place of the filmic moment; it is a live concert stage before a huge crowd. The initial shot may not be a classic establishing shot, but its length provides the linear and spatial continuity upon which we rely to grasp the spatial and temporal materiality of the filmic world. And in the second shot, Sebastian reminds us of the cultural mythology of Woodstock when he instructs: “Just love everybody all around you, and clean up a little garbage on your way out and everything’s gonna be all right . . . This is gonna work.” His simplistic idealism and optimism are, of course, belied by the end of the film, but at this moment in the narrative, Sebastian and his music imagine a culture and a future that will be “all right” and “work”—a culture in which neighbors will pick up garbage, and children will be born at rock shows.

Sebastian continues to talk to the crowd in the following four shots. The scene’s third shot pans over a segment of the enormous crowd while he narrates: “I’d like you to hear a tune about . . . I guess about those discussions that . . . that I seem to have had in so many small circles of friends around living rooms, around pipes when they weren’t selling no papers on this street, and we weren’t walking around this beautiful green

place smoking and, uh . . . not being afraid.” In the midst of Sebastian’s introduction to his song, we cut to a front-angle medium close up of him on stage with his guitar. The cut again reminds us of the temporal and spatial continuity between Sebastian’s narration, the huge crowd, and his impending live performance. Sebastian’s current and future sonic acts correspond with the spatial reality of the shots of the crowd, and as we await his performance, we establish a sense of future linear time. The fifth shot of this scene provides a notably distinct high-angle long shot of the crowd that zooms to an extreme long shot to reaccentuate the massive crowd. During this shot, Sebastian returns to the announcement that initiated this scene: “There’s a cat, and I really don’t even know his name. But I remember that Chip said that, eh, that his old lady just had a baby, and that made me think, ‘Wow, it really is a city here.’ But this is, this is for you and your old lady man, and whew, that kid’s gonna be far out.” Sebastian begins to strum his guitar, and we get one final side angle medium-close up of him on stage before the music begins proper and the shot dissolves into montage.

In the ensuing eleven shot sound montage, Sebastian sings and plays as we transition from shot to shot solely through dissolves. His song, “The Younger Generation,” addresses the struggles of the counterculture to relate to both their parents and their children. And the sound montage now moves us away from the live public stage to highlight found images of children, parenting, and the festival grounds. Our initial shot of the montage showcases a mother feeding a baby in a field, and zooms to a close up on the child’s face, tightly framing his mouth. We then dissolve to a medium shot of a bare-chested and long-haired man carrying a baby in a backpack across an open field. This quickly dissolves to a medium shot of a naked girl flanked by three women; the camera zooms to a medium-close up of the baby girl, and another naked baby enters the frame immediately prior to dissolving again to a medium-close up of a father lying on the ground with a child lying on his chest, covered only by a towel. A naked child approaches the sleeping father and removes his hat. These early shots in the montage imagine the festival as a family event in which kids were actively involved in the concert—as both a material reality and as a harbinger of better times to come. In addition, the consistent image of the nude child reminds us of the innocence of the children, who appear to treat the famous musical event as a chance to play with their parents. As Sebastian asks in his song, “Why must every generation think their folks are square,” we see images of parents whom a younger generation would ostensibly *not* find square. Sebastian sings of his efforts to resolve conflicts between parents and children, and Wadleigh dramatizes what appears to be the Woodstock generation’s ability to mend such tension through music and nudity. And yet, the disconnect of these images from the linearity of the diegetic music established during Sebastian’s introductory remarks invites us to consider the effect of including such shots in the narrative while excising them from the spatio-temporal logic of the filmic sound.

The sixth shot of the montage (twelfth shot of the scene) frames three naked kids banging on the drum set of a practice stage. We move to a new practice stage in the next shot, but we return to the image of the naked child, as this medium side-angle shot shows an unclothed baby running out on stage, soon to be covered with a towel by a jubilant stage attendant. The montage directly links the child—and specifically the

naked child—with the concert stage in these shots, reminding us of the presumed continuity between the ongoing music of Sebastian, the public performances of Woodstock, the magnificent crowd, and gorgeous images of blond-haired (preferably naked) children and their playful spirit. The following two shots return us to the reality of children. In the eighth shot of the montage (fourteenth of the scene), Wadleigh shows us a classic nursing scene, initially tightly framed on the child and the mother's breast. The camera zooms out to show three other women and a naked toddler girl whose nudity is neither as playful nor as innocent as the drum-banging or hat-removing children that we observed in earlier montage shots. This toddler merely stands observing the other women, and as she is notably older than the other children in the montage, her nakedness is not merely innocent. This dissolves to a close-up of a boy—clothed only with a shirt—squatting, apparently to urinate. The shot begins tightly framed on the boy's genitalia, and tilts upwards to showcase his face, ultimately zooming out to a medium shot that reveals three kids circling tie-down ropes of a tent. Unlike any other shot in the montage, the children of this shot distinctly return the gaze of the camera. They appear to have been interrupted, or perhaps they even question why the camera is capturing their presence at a rock festival; they are simply playing, and seem confused by the role of the filming crew. The children's confusion suggests their very displacement, as they themselves appear to doubt their role in a rock and roll documentary—a role that has clearly been dislodged from the time and space of the live diegetic music.

The final two shots of this montage focus on a specific family. Wadleigh first shows us a medium shot of a man, woman, and infant child; the child is held by the father in a sling-carrier. This quickly dissolves to a side-angle close up of the same man carrying the child in front of him. We look over his shoulder, as the father now peers directly into the child's eyes. This classic shot of fatherly adoration ends the montage, highlighting the emergent generation's great love for their children. When we dissolve back to the live moment of the diegetic music, we are offered a standard high-angle long shot of Sebastian on stage that again accentuates the tremendous size of the crowd. The camera pans to a side-angle shot to remind us of the width of this crowd, zooming back to a medium-close and then a close up of Sebastian. This notably long take serves as a re-establishing shot that solidifies our return to the temporal and spatial reality of the diegetic present; in addition, the perpetuity of the diegetic music once again asserts the linearity of time. Since Sebastian's live sonic performance has been uninterrupted, from his introduction by the public address announcer, through the sound montage, to the reversion to the long shots of the crowd, the continuance of linear time requires us to make temporal sense of the cinematic sound montage. From where did these children come? What relationship do these children and their ostensible parents have to the music of Sebastian—music that is clearly about children? But there is only a paradoxical answer to these questions; the children clearly belong to the world of the film, but they are not connected to the time and space established by the famous musical performance.

Sebastian ends his sentimental tune with his narrator querying: “could it be you couldn't live up to your dreams?” Sebastian has sung of generational strife and the

difficulty in resolving this conflict, and the leading question with which he closes his song clearly throws doubts upon the ability of the famed Woodstock generation to rise above such parent-child strife, but he immediately adds: “No, it’s not true, because we’re doing it. I love you. Goodbye.” And as a following shot keeps pace with Sebastian as he leaves the stage, we hear the same public address announcer who opened the scene, now close the scene with the announcement: “Ladies and gentlemen, John Sebastian.” Following this, the camera swish pans back to an extreme long shot of the vast crowd. This huge crowd has clearly enjoyed Sebastian’s musical account of parents and children, and the film has used this sonic moment to escape from the dirt and grime of the festival and string together eleven shots of children and parents who appear to have transcended the difficulties of generational conflict with playful innocence, communal joy, and nudity. This immense crowd embodies, of course, the hope of a new age still in the process of becoming, and their own progeny will be vital to the cultural community it precipitates. But this progeny, and its production and care, are disconnected from the temporal linearity of the narrative. The children and parents of the shots in the montage most assuredly still belong to the diegesis of *Woodstock*, but they have been removed from the temporal continuity of the scene in which they are presented. The music that accompanies the historical footage of the documentary should ensure the linearity of the film’s temporality, but the shots of the montage quite simply cannot be accounted for within the temporal reality of the scene; thus their framed images are lost to the temporal continuity of the diegesis and instead serve merely as accoutrements to the narrative. These images of children augment the distinctiveness of the concert event as a unique time in American culture, and this status certainly enhances our nostalgia for Woodstock, but the film displaces such images from the spatio-temporal reality of this historical moment.

The Isle of Wight

This memorable montage from *Woodstock* reminds us that there were children and childcare present at the rock festival, and that the youth were a vital symbol of the countercultural community and practice, but while the film shows us the importance of children to the Woodstock generation, it also employs the live diegetic music to ensure a fissure between the Woodstock moment and the realities of children, childcare, and parenting. And, of course, the dreams of the Woodstock generation, of which Sebastian was so confident, did not materialize; instead, the festival grounds were left full of mud and garbage, as Wadleigh captures in the now-famous Jimi Hendrix finale performance. The Rolling Stones would attempt to recapture the spirit of Woodstock with their free concert at Altamont Speedway in December of 1969, memorialized by the Maysles’ brothers *Gimme Shelter* (1970), but this event would end with the fatal stabbing of a concert attendee. In the summer of 1970, the British response to Woodstock, *The Isle of Wight Festival* (Dir. Murray Lerner; 1970), sought to rejuvenate a generation looking to remember its hope and promise, but as the film documents, the concert event was marred by strife, budgetary difficulties, and crowd-management problems. In what becomes dubbed as “the last great event,” *The Isle of Wight Festival* recounts perhaps the final days of the dreams of the emergent generation that we glimpsed in Pennebaker’s *Monterey Pop*. Although *Isle of Wight* does not offer a child-ridden sound

montage like the earlier two films, it deploys an image of a child through a prominent sound bridge that accomplishes a similar filmic effect. This brief moment late in the film—a film that bids farewell to the generation we saw caring for and cherishing its children in *Monterey* and *Woodstock*—now uses diegetic music to effectively mute its children.

And *Isle of Wight* even suggests that these children, and even childhood more broadly, have already become temporally, and perhaps now imaginatively, misplaced. This scene, which immediately precedes the Who's performance of "Naked Eye," offers a short interview of an anonymous man, with his apparent son positioned notably off center. The father and son (perhaps eight to nine years of age) sit in front of a small campfire, preparing and then eating a modest meal. The open shot of the scene is a notably long take that begins as a medium and eventually zooms to a close up of the man eating over the fire. While the presumed father eats, he speaks of the great insecurity inherent in the world:

You've got to remember that anytime the world can fall in on your head... and it can you know... chaos is waiting just outside your door... just around the corner... And so material security is no answer; you've got to have security inside your soul or head or something... And you don't find that at school... You don't find that in our level of physics or math or all that other crap they teach you.

The interviewer, whom we never see in the scene, questions whether the strategies employed to reach such non-material security include "turning on?" The camera now zooms to an extreme close up of the man's food, as he responds: "No. Turning on is just a means to an end." As we zoom back to a medium-close of the man, he elaborates: "I started turning on when I was sixteen. I was very aggressive, very rebellious at that time And I started to turn on and it cooled me down, you know. It makes you think much more . . . It calms you. It cuts out the aggression." According to this parent, drugs served as a mechanism; they helped him to work more effectively with others; they soothed his anger and enabled him to be part of a community. The implication of the man's comment, of course, is that without such "means," he would not be able to peacefully join others at concert events such as the Isle of Wight Festival. Instead, he might have become a belligerent hooligan like Alex from Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* (1962).

When we finally turn to a second shot, the camera reminds us of the presence of the child, and the interviewer reaffirms this by asking: "What does he take?" We are told that "Oh, he smokes pot, you know." As the father reports this, the son finishes his drink from a red plastic cup, and looks directly into the camera. The father continues: "But he doesn't inhale, or very little you know. Its just sort of . . . I don't like to think of him being out of it, you know." The camera pans to offer a medium-close up of the boy drinking again from his red plastic cup, accentuating his youth and displacement from the discussion. The father concludes: "Like if he's cut out of this scene, then he's going to be jealous and angry and react against it in aggressive ways and so on, so you might as well let him get on with it. It's not going to do him any harm any way." The father's

logic is notable for a variety of reasons. He dismisses the danger of marijuana to his son, but what is more, he rationalizes that he should include his son in his own drug use or else the child may react aggressively; since the father found drugs to be a successful mechanism in calming his own anger toward others, he now suggests that withholding drugs from his child might engender jealousy and anger on his part. The child now functions as a useful tool and/or excuse for the father to perpetuate his own drug use, again reminding us of the important utility of children's presence in the previous rock and roll festival films.

In the third and final shot of this brief scene, we get a medium shot of the father chewing on what appears to be marginally-cooked bacon. In the interviewer's final question, he asks: "Do you let him try acid?" The man quickly responds: "He's taken a little bit . . . and he reckons it had no effect." After offering his own explanations for why his son would experience little effect from the acid, we begin to hear Pete Townsend's recognizable guitar. The nonsimultaneous diegetic music creates an efficacious sound bridge that ensures a nexus between the space and time of the discomfiting interview and the space and time of the Who's live performance. While the diegetic music formally encourages us to connect one moment in the narrative with the next, the non-simultaneity of the chords of Pete Townsend's guitar—sounds that we soon discover to be diegetic—inhibits the linear progression of time from scene to scene, and the child becomes lost in time as a result. The child is again part of the plot and diegesis of the film, but his muted presence is functional at best. He is akin to a phantom that serves as a useful backdrop to the impending crescendo of the Who. In addition, we note no maternal or familial presence; the joyful fun of mothers, fathers, and children at Woodstock and Monterey is replaced by a discourse on the function of drugs—which are imagined as the antidote to men (young and old) reverting to actions and lifestyles that might promote the hypermasculinity, aggression, and generational strife that Sebastian had confidently asserted his audience would supersede.

As the rock and roll festival film approaches its final days, the montages of families, and especially women, have disappeared, and children have been silenced, but they still appear within the diegesis. Indeed, the depiction of this young boy in *The Isle of Wight* solidifies the uniqueness and brevity of this radical generation that has come to an end, notably without the figure of the mother who once facilitated the biological reproduction and rearing of the next generation—even at rock concerts. The father and his young male child are isolated subjects who serve as powerful symbols of the inability of the counterculture to grow and develop. This is an uncomfortable scene that does not encourage us to share in the peace and love celebrated by *Monterey* and *Woodstock*. The boy of *Isle of Wight* is older than his filmic counterparts in the other rockumentaries, and his innocence appears lost. The last great rock festival still highlights the importance of the child to the countercultural generation, but s/he is no longer part of aesthetically-pleasing and cinematically-engaging sound montages. Instead, the child is now imaged as a malnourished premature adult, who appears excised from a material presence; instead, he experiences the filth and drugs that the sound montages of the previous films elided.

He is neither naked nor playful, and while he may have blond hair, the dirt of the concert grounds has sullied his visage; *The Isle of Wight* shows us a muted child, who struggles with the legacy of his father. This scene does not promote the nostalgia we note in the earlier rock festival films. Rather, the child's silenced presence is now truly out of sync with the famous music and the movement it represents.

In Deleuze's discussion of Jean-Luc Godard's famous television program, *Six Times Two*, he reminds his interlocutor that "we should take him quite literally when Godard says children are political prisoners" (41). Godard's provocative claim might provide a useful way for us to think synthetically about the role of children alongside diegetic music in the classic rock and roll festival film. I have no intention, of course, of suggesting that children are somehow held prisoner at such rock festival films, and I am not even interested in theorizing the intentions of the films' directors, but as with political prisoners, I believe that the deployment of children within these films produces, or even forces, difficult choices, strategies, and consequences. The filmmakers portray children in spatial realities that do not correspond to the temporality of the diegetic music. This is a formal cinematic technique that enables filmmakers to include various times and spaces within a narrative. But this technique affects how we see and understand the presence of children and childcare at the rock concerts. While the visual images of the children emphasize their importance to the memorialization of the late-1960s counterculture, their absence from the time and space of the music suggests their disconnection from both the continuity of the films' narratives and their account of historical events. We remain nostalgic about this era, and we enjoy the images of young and old listening to the same music, occupying the same places, and sharing in the same energy that the documentaries showcase, and the rock and roll festival films' depictions of children help to secure both the uniqueness of this time and our fondness for it. The films ultimately use the child as a device to help viewers relish the innocence, vitality, and potential of this moment, but they likewise compel us to disassociate children from the temporal continuity of the historical moments of the documentaries. Ultimately, we should not expect to see these children as adults; they are separated from the very diegetic music of the films that helps us to remember and maintain our nostalgia.

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ⁱ David Neumeier, in his introduction to the recent anthology, *Music and Cinema* (2000), observes that “Film music has played almost no role in heating the seas to boiling in either film studies or musicology, despite the fact that music has been a part of film presentation and production since the very beginning The very challenges that make the study of film music intellectually exciting also inhibit its move to the center of either cinema or music scholarship” (1-2).

ⁱⁱ See, for example, Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music* (1998), Denisoff and Romanowski's *Risky Business: Rock in Film* (1991), and Roy M. Pendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art: A Critical Study of Music In Films* (1992).

ⁱⁱⁱ See especially Carl Francese and Richard S. Sorrell, *From Tupelo to Woodstock: Youth, Race, and Rock-and-Roll in America, 1954-1969* (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt, 1993), 175-87.

^{iv} Keith Beattie, in his impressive new study, *Documentary Screens: Non-Fiction Film and Television* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), discusses numerous techniques employed by the Rockumentary genre to heighten the documentary effect. Beattie devotes specific attention to the use of the hand-held camera for backstage and on-stage scenes. See especially, 100-102.

^v The proliferation of scholarship on the documentary genre may be traceable to Bill Nichols's, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991) and Michael Renov's collection, *Theorizing Documentary* (New York: Routledge, 1993). More recent treatments, such as Renov's *The Subject of Documentary* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), James McEnteer's *Shooting the Truth: The Rise of American Political Documentaries* (London: Praeger, 2006), and Beattie's *Documentary Screens* (2004) have highlighted the genre's conscious use of fictional film techniques.

^{vi} David Farber also consciously addresses this strong strand of nostalgia in the critical approaches to the 1960s in his collection, *The Sixties...From Memory to History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

^{vii} This emphasis on the nostalgia for the Rock and Roll Festivals of the late 1960s is apparent in both critical and popular studies of the events. See, for example, Jack Curry, *Woodstock: The Summer of Our Lives* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), *Remembering Woodstock*, ed. Andy Bennett (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), and *Woodstock: The Oral History* (New York: Doubleday, 1989).

^{viii} Although dated, R. Meltzer's *The Aesthetics of Rock* offers a useful treatment of the cultural accoutrements traditionally associated with emergent rock culture.