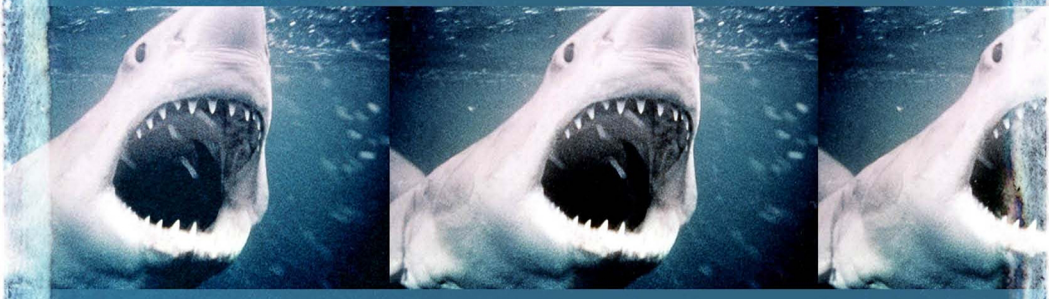
THE JAWS BOOK

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE CLASSIC SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER

EDITED BY
I.Q. HUNTER AND MATTHEW MELIA



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Foreword

Carl Gottlieb

Once upon a time in Hollywood a long long time ago in a different galaxy, there was something called the Studio System. It was already failing but still in operation when Universal Studios and the Zanuck/Brown Company agreed that Peter Benchley's best-selling novel *Jaws* would make a good summer popcorn movie. They also agreed that an emerging talent named Steven Spielberg, already under contract to the studio, would be the right guy to direct it. Steven, in turn, thought I should be in the film – as an actor and television comedy writer with improvisational experience, I could help out with crowd scenes and work with local actors who had little or no experience.

At the same time, Steven wanted very much to rewrite the existing script, and we discussed it in detail with an eye towards how we'd change it. Three weeks before principal photography was to begin, I met with Richard Zanuck and David Brown and Steven Spielberg at the Bel-Air hotel for a Sunday brunch, which turned into high tea after we had spent hours discussing the script. It was only twenty days before commencement of principal photography and hardly enough time to rework the entire screenplay.

It was agreed that Steven and I had a good take on the revisions, so I quit my job as a story editor of a successful TV series (*The Odd Couple*), got on a plane with Steven to Boston and Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, and began immediately reworking, rethinking and rewriting the screenplay. The process would continue through months of anguished technical difficulties and the resulting screenplay as filmed became the movie we all know as *Jaws*, and which I have come to think of as the Fish Movie that changed my life.

For 'The Record', a large part of which you are holding in your hands in this volume: In the summer of 1974, when *Jaws* was made, it was a studio picture made as a popcorn summer movie to be released in 1975, filling out a release schedule that was conventional for the times. What happened next could not have been predicted, was unforeseen and changed movie history and exhibition patterns for the next 45 years – the movie doubled its budget and schedule and jeopardized the careers of everyone connected to it. How, Why, Who and What actually happened is explored here in refreshing academic detail, by dedicated scholars of film-making. Enjoy!

Carl Gottlieb co-wrote *Jaws, Jaws 2* and *Jaws 3-D*, as well as *The Jerk*, *Dr. Detroit* and *Caveman*, which he also directed. *The Jaws Log*, his classic account of the film's production, is the biggest selling 'making of' book in publishing history.

Acknowledgements

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Nine chapters in *The Jaws Book* began as presentations at the *Jaws 40th Anniversary Symposium* on 17 June 2015 at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK. We wish to thank DMU's Cinema and Television History Research Institute (CATHI) and Centre for Adaptations for generously funding the symposium and thereby making this book possible. Thanks are also due to Nicholas Blatt, Callum Coombe, Elizabeth Castaldo Lundén, Daniel Massie, Adam O'Brien and Conor Wigert, who presented excellent papers at the symposium, and especially to Carl Gottlieb, who gave a memorably gracious, witty and informative interview via Skype and contributed a Foreword to *The Jaws Book*.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Katie Gallof at Bloomsbury for commissioning *The Jaws Book* and being the most supportive and understanding of editors and to Erin Duffy for seeing the book through to publication.

Special thanks to Wieland Schwanebeck, in whose edited collection, *Der weisse Hai Revisited: Steven Spielbergs Jaws und die Geburt eines amerikanischen Albtraums* (Berlin: Bertz + Fischer, 2015), Chapters 13 and 14 originally appeared. They are reprinted here with Wieland's kind permission, in translated and slightly revised versions.

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Introduction

I. Q. Hunter and Matthew Melia

This year Steven Spielberg's *Jaws* (1975), one of the most popular and important films in the history of Hollywood, turns 45.

Widely regarded as the first 'summer blockbuster', *Jaws* grossed $7.06 million in the three days after its release on 20 June 1975, went into profit after ten days and would go on to gross $260 million domestically.[1] By 10 September 1975, it had beaten records set by *The Sound of Music* (1965) and *The Godfather* (1972) and become the first film to earn over $100 million in domestic rentals (the money paid by exhibitors to the distributor).[2] Overtaking *The Exorcist* (1973) as the most successful film of all time, *Jaws* eventually grossed around $480 million worldwide[3] and set the scene for a new type of 'high-concept' action film, one capable of 'being reduced successfully to a single image' and designed for ease of marketing to the widest possible audience.[4] After the success of *Jaws* and then *Star Wars* (1977), which surpassed *Jaws* with a worldwide gross of $775 million,[5] fantasy blockbusters in the mode of what Peter Krämer calls 'the family-adventure movie' became the defining Hollywood output.[6] Such big-budget 'event' films would become a Spielberg trademark in films like *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) and *Jurassic Park* (1993), the film that came closest to recapturing *Jaws*' blend of horror, suspense and nature run wild.

The significance of *Jaws* to American cinema cannot be over-emphasized. *Jaws* launched the career of the most successful director in history – after its success Columbia green-lit *Close Encounters* and Spielberg would get final cut for the rest of his career[7] – and set a vertiginously high standard for blockbuster entertainment. Yet even though *Jaws*' production history and promotion strategies have received wide critical coverage, few books are devoted exclusively to analysing the film itself.[8] In fact till recently little scholarship – let alone sympathetic scholarship – addressed issues of form and meaning in Spielberg's films as opposed to their commercial impact and supposed complicity in dumbing down Hollywood.[9]

The Jaws Book takes a fresh look at the original summer blockbuster, questioning some myths, analysing themes and formal strategies, and tracking the legendary film's cultural footprint. In the current age of mega-expensive and expansive digital cinematic universes and fast and furious franchising, the time is right for new perspectives on this much loved classic movie that not only kept people off the beaches but decisively moved the needle of American popular cinema and culture.

Selling the shark

Peter Benchley's first novel, *Jaws*, was still in galleys when up-and-coming producers, Richard Zanuck and David Brown, paid $175,000 for the film rights, including $25,000 for Benchley to write the screenplay.[10] Steven Spielberg, whose first feature, *The Sugarland Express* (1974), was produced by Zanuck and Brown, came across the galley proofs in their office and asked for a copy.[11] Armed with concept drawings by production designer Joe Alves, Zanuck and Brown pitched the movie to Universal, with which they had a distribution deal, hired Spielberg to direct and started pre-production even before the book's publication in January 1974.[12]

Although *Jaws* the novel became a bestseller and shifted three and a half million copies by early 1975, *Jaws* the movie was nevertheless a risky production.[13] Spielberg was still a relatively young contract director at Universal, albeit with two TV movies behind him, *Duel* (1971) and *Something Evil* (1972), as well as the as yet unreleased *The Sugarland Express*.

The lead actors had featured in some of the biggest recent hit films, but they were not themselves superstars and major box office draws. Roy Scheider was recognizable to audiences through his role in *The French Connection* (1971); Richard Dreyfuss's most notable appearance had been in *American Graffiti* (1973); and British actor Robert Shaw was best known as the villain, Red Grant, in the Bond movie, *From Russia with Love* (1963), and as Doyle Lonnegan in Zanuck and Brown's *The Sting* (1973). More worrying, *Jaws* would be the first film shot on the ocean rather than in tanks on a studio lot, and there was no guarantee that the proposed hydraulic shark would be convincing on-screen.[14]

The producers and Benchley therefore began promoting the book as soon as it was published and plugged the film relentlessly long before its release date. As Michael Pye noted in the *Sunday Times*:

> Eight months before the film opened, producers and author did the rounds of radio and TV chat shows to sell the book, already an established best seller. One month before the opening, even Verna Fields, who as editor would usually have no part in any film promotion, was on tour to sell the film. The Press coverage, with careful leaks, included a *Time* magazine front cover.[15]

Brown told Jim Harwood of *Variety*:

> We sent copies to people who talk to other people, like headwaiters and cab drivers. We adapted the artwork from the book to the artwork of the film promotion. By the time we sneaked the film in Dallas, we didn't even need to name it in the ad. We put in the logo of the sharks teeth and the swimming girl and 3000 came out in a hailstorm![16]

Zanuck and Brown dedicated a promotional tour exclusively to the novel to keep the film in the public consciousness '"during the arid space" between the finish of photography last September and the June release':[17]

> Zanuck and Brown have been closely involved in promoting the paperback … The pair recently returned from a six city tour sponsored by Bantam, instead of the usual film oriented public appearances, they took the route normally used by authors, appearing in bookstores, radio-TV talkshows and interviews with literary editors.[18]

Meanwhile, Benchley wrote the first three or so drafts of the screenplay, which incorporated Spielberg's suggestions.[19] Playwright Howard Sackler then did five weeks of uncredited rewrites, instituting major changes from the novel and contributing the idea and a version of Quint's Indianapolis speech, which was subsequently reworked by John Milius (according to some accounts) and Robert Shaw.[20] At Zanuck's and Brown's insistence the book's adulterous affair between Ellen Brody and Matt Hooper and a Mafia subplot were excised to streamline the story into two acts and make it more suitable for a family audience.[21] To write the final version, Spielberg enlisted actor and television comedy writer, Carl Gottlieb, who had a small role in *Jaws* as newspaper editor, Harry Meadows.[22] Gottlieb would continue to rework the screenplay on location amid a high-pressure chaos of improvisation, daily rehearsals and nightly rewrites.[23] Some of the film's most celebrated lines were apparently ad-libbed, such as Brody's 'You're going to need a bigger boat'. In fact, Spielberg later claimed – somewhat implausibly – that

> all the dialogue for *Jaws* came from improvisation because I was not one hundred percent happy with the script that I had developed and was responsible for. I was very happy with the structure, but not with some of the characterizations and dialogue. So I sat with these three talented actors at my house every day, and we improvised and rehearsed till we found a way to play the scene.[24]

In the end the screenplay was credited to Benchley and Gottlieb, though at no point did they actually collaborate.[25]

Location shooting began at Martha's Vineyard off Massachusetts in May 1974, while Ron and Valerie Taylor filmed additional footage of real great whites at Dangerous Reef, South Australia. The production was famously one of the most troubled in film history, as Gottlieb recounts in his classic first-hand account, *The Jaws Log*, and had all the ingredients for a terrific behind the scenes movie like *The Disaster Artist* (2017) or *Dolemite Is My Name* (2019).[26] (In fact, Ian Shaw, Robert's son, dramatized it in a stage play, *The Shark Is Broken*, at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2019.[27]) The shoot was extended from thirty-five days to over five months, wrapping finally in September 1974, while the budget more than doubled to $8 million.[28] There were tensions within the cast, notably between Dreyfuss and Shaw, who was frequently drunk. The mechanical shark, Bruce (named after Spielberg's lawyer), frequently refused to work, causing Spielberg to rechristen it (probably apocryphally) the 'Great White Turd'. Bruce's failure to perform was ultimately to the film's benefit. As Spielberg said, keeping the shark mostly off-screen made him work less like Ray Harryhausen and more like Alfred Hitchcock,[29] so that *Jaws* became a 'less-you-see-the-more-you-get-thriller'.[30]

After some cuts to mollify the censors *Jaws* was released with a remarkably lenient PG rating and a warning on the poster that the film might be 'too intense' for minors. Reviews were cautious. Many top critics, such as Roger Ebert, recognized Spielberg's mastery of technique and storytelling: '*Jaws* is a sensationally effective action picture, a scary thriller that works all the better because it's populated with characters that have been developed into human beings we get to know and care about.'[31] Others, like Molly Haskell in *The Village Voice*, complained that 'you feel like a rat, being given shock treatment',[32] while Charles Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times* hated the film as 'a coarse-grained and exploitive work which depends on excess for its impact' and called Shaw a 'Poor Man's Captain Ahab'.[33] Penelope Gilliatt in *The New Yorker* unfavourably compared *Jaws* with *Rollerball* (1975), which came out five days before. She wrote:

> The scriptwriters are Peter Benchley and Carl Gottlieb. The stars (one swallowed) are Robert Shaw, Richard Dreyfuss and Roy Scheider. The shark is plastic. The film is punk … *Jaws* is a foolish exercise in special effects, not to be mistaken for sci-fi; 'Rollerball' is ideological sci-fi, but politically as purblind as any film dealing in augury as I have seen' both films are dependent on sorts of grossness, lassitude, and blood lust that they break their necks to create in us. Without our compliance, which we could contemplate withholding, they would be non-negotiable goods.[34]

Jaws nevertheless quickly became a cultural phenomenon. Soon after its release Pye commented on the film's ubiquity and what he termed '*Jaws*-consciousness', noting the role of the studio in managing public awareness of the film through promotions and tie-in merchandising (an area that *Star Wars* would develop exponentially):

> On the back of the shark, Universal studios, who made the film, have launched T shirts, bike bags, beach towels, pyjamas, knee stockings and plastic cups; outside New York, a discotheque called *Jaws* has opened, complete with stuffed shark; real estate advertisements in Los Angeles feature natural lakes with a guarantee 'No Jaws Here'
>
> … The Studio has meticulously counted 35 political cartoons based on the *Jaws* poster in which the Shark has played roles from Ronald Reagan to Soviet submarines, and the innocent victim has been President Ford, the Statue of Liberty, Individual Rights and Congressional Ineffectiveness … Unofficial merchants have offered plastic shark's fins for wearing on the back while swimming, shark jaws at $50 (£23) and ice cream flavours named Finnilla, Jawberry and Sharkalate.[35]

Three days prior to the film's opening, the studio 'unleashed its TV advertising campaign nationwide to cover all 464 cinemas [409 in the US and 55 in Canada] where the film was to open'.[36] Universal spent $1.8 million on pre-release advertising and $700,000 on TV spots.[37] This concentrated 'three day blitz' of 'front-loading' was intended to 'knock the nation over the head' – a strategy that the studio considered a success.[38] Rather than a staggered release to build an audience by word of mouth, the film was opened

wide, a policy of saturation booking more usually associated with exploitation cinema. This is credited as one of the film's key innovations, though an initial intention to open even wider in 800–1000 cinemas simultaneously was scrapped.[39] In fact none of these strategies was new but the campaign brought them together 'into an eye-catching strategic synthesis and exploited them to the maximum'.[40] As a result,

> *Jaws* became the definitive modern blockbuster as both large-scale production value and box office attraction, profiting from enormous promotion and publicity as well as ancillary benefits … *Jaws* doubled the stock value of MCA, Universal Studio's owner, which had already risen following positive previewing.[41]

Jaws won Oscars for sound mixing, John Williams's score and Verna Fields's editing – she was widely rumoured by insiders to have 'saved the film'[42] – though it lost to *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) in the category of Best Picture. Remarkably, Spielberg was not even nominated as best director.

Interpreting and assessing *Jaws*

The film's success and the ensuing *Jaws*mania suggested that it had tapped into *something* significant and reviewers were eager to read it as a zeitgeist movie.

The secret to the film's success lies in the simplicity of the pulp material, which included, as David Brown put it, 'A little bit of *Peyton Place*, a hint of Moby Dick, and a dollop of underwater *Godfather*', but it also draws from the great American literary tradition.[43] Its narrative of man-against-nature owes much to the myth of the frontier and the wilderness as well as Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1951), Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) and maybe even Jack London's *Call of the Wild* (1903). *Jaws* engages both high and low cultural taste. In many ways, it is an updated 1950s exploitation 'creature feature'.

Gottlieb has admitted the influence of both William Castle's gimmicky horror movies and *The Thing from Another World* (1951),[44] while Spielberg said they were simply trying to make a Roger Corman picture.[45] Like *Godzilla* and other 1950s monsters, the shark comes to embody the anxieties and fears of the nuclear age and the devastation of the atom bomb, which Quint helped to deliver in 1945. At the same time *Jaws* belongs to the early 1970s 'revenge of nature' horror cycle along with *Frogs* (1972) and *Phase IV* (1974), though it is striking that contemporary reviews didn't refer to it as a horror film; Roger Ebert, for example, called it an adventure film and Vincent Canby, science fiction.[46] *Jaws* also plausibly aligns with the disaster movie cycle that began with *Airport* (1970) and peaked with *The Towering Inferno* (1974) and *Earthquake* (1974), and it inspired such hybrids of the revenge of nature and disaster cycles as *King Kong* (1976) and *The Swarm* (1978).[47] Indeed this generic indeterminacy – adventure, horror, science fiction, small-scale disaster film, Hitchcockian thriller – doubtless increased *Jaws*' box office appeal because, as Nigel Morris remarks,

> it avoided alienating potential viewers … Hybridity … offers a potentially wider tonal range, possibly enriching the permutations of emotional, visceral or intellectual impact for any individual viewer – as the hugely varying range of critical interpretations seems to confirm – while ensuring different but compatible satisfactions, and hence a successful excursion, for couples and groups.[48]

Jaws quickly attracted deeper readings of varying plausibility from critics seeking cultural and political significance in its massive success.[49] This 'feeding frenzy for semioticians' inspired many a 'half-assed autopsy' – as Mayor Vaughn puts it – on the fish, the director and the audience.[50] Critics have seen in the film an archetypal confrontation between man and uncontrollable nature that plays upon primal fears such as the engulfing sea and the unique horror of being eaten. Freudian subtexts are certainly easy to spot. Consider the image of a giant phallic shark ripping into a naked girl in the opening scene while a boy lies drunk on the beach moaning 'I'm coming, I'm coming'. Propelled by the unforgettable threatening (chomping) two-note heartbeat of John Williams's score, *Jaws* reaches down into our unconscious and disturbs anxieties around parenthood, childhood, gender and masculinity, sexuality, rape and castration. As Mark Kermode wrote at the time of *Jaws*' fortieth anniversary:

> First things first; *Jaws* is not about a shark. It may have a shark in it – and indeed all over the poster, the soundtrack album, the paperback jacket and so on. It may have scared a generation of cinemagoers out of the water for fear of being bitten in half by the 'teeth of the sea'. But the underlying story of *Jaws* is more complex than the simple terror of being eaten by a very big fish.[51]

Interpretations of the film particularly linked it to Watergate and the Vietnam War. After all it was released in the same year as the war drew to a close and the year after the resignation of President Richard Nixon, who is embodied in the film by lookalike Mayor Vaughn and his attempted cover-up of the shark attacks. Vietnam is allegorized, perhaps, in the scenario of American masculinity out of its depth against an unseen enemy, and the traumatized home front, by the death of Alex Kinter and his mother's grief at officialdom's indifference to the lives of the young (see Melia's chapter). Or maybe, as Fidel Castro declared, the film is in fact a cunning metaphor for capitalism, with the Mayor and the shark equally amoral and rapacious in tearing apart the American Dream.[52] Critics dwelled too on the sexual politics of a 'movie in which sex and violence are, if not indistinguishable forms of oral aggression, then certainly the source of kindred thrills' and diagnosed symptoms of misogyny and anti-feminist backlash (see Morris's chapter).[53] Consensus has gelled around the film's conservatism and nostalgia for the certainties of the patriarchal family: 'Today – especially in light of Spielberg's obsessive focus on the defence and reconstitution of the nuclear family throughout his subsequent films – *Jaws*' reauthorisation of a conservatively conceived middle-class patriarchal masculinity … seems very much more apparent'.[54]

The unprecedented box office success of *Jaws* incited countless imitations and encouraged trends towards 'sequelitis' and franchising. The first sequel *Jaws 2* (1978), essentially a teen film, generated over $50 million in rentals and was the fifth highest earning film of the year.[55] *Jaws 3-D* (1983), on which Gottlieb also worked, was an excuse to fit a sequel around the latest cinematic fad. The final sequel, the awful but endearingly quirky *Jaws: The Revenge* (1987), asked the audience to buy into the conceit that the original shark's family was pursuing a vendetta against the Brodys (see Loock's chapter).[56] Meanwhile, unlicensed rip-off '*Jaws*ploitation' films proliferated from the United States (*Grizzly* [1976], *Piranha* [1978], *Orca* [1977]) to Mexico (*Tintorera* [1977]) and Italy (*Tentacles* [1977] and *The Last Shark* [1981], which copied *Jaws* so closely that Universal sued).[57] *Jaws* partly inspired the slasher film cycle of the late 1970s and early 1980s – the extended point-of-view shot that opens *Halloween* (1978) resembles the shark's-eye perspective at the start of *Jaws*.[58] *Alien* (1979) – essentially '*Jaws*-in-Space' – also showcases a killer motivated by pure instinct, delays full view of the creature and relies on a variety of Hitchcockian scare-tactics. Though *Jaws* itself escaped the indignity of being remade, the *Jaws*ploitation film has re-emerged since the 1990s to take advantage of the cheapness and convenience of digital special effects, with such films as *Deep Blue Sea* (1999), *The Reef* (2010), *Bait* (2012), the *Sharknado* series (2013–18), *The Shallows* (2016), *47 Meters Down* (2017) and *The Meg* (2018).

While *Jaws* has now achieved classic status – and a 98 per cent Rotten Tomatoes score – its place in film history is more ambiguous, at any rate from the perspective of many film scholars. The 'New Hollywood' that is conventionally dated to *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *The Graduate* (1967) is sometimes divided into two periods, roughly a Golden Age 'Renaissance' of radical films from 1967 to 1975 followed by a populist 'New New Hollywood' kick-started by *Jaws*, *Star Wars* and family-friendly hits like *Grease* (1978) and *Superman* (1978).[59] *Jaws* has in fact many elements of the earlier, edgier period, such as violence, exploitation influences, a largely male cast and a focus on testing masculinity, but its happy ending and the defeat of threats to the nuclear family look forward to the later family-adventure movies (see Krämer's chapter). Many scholars and critics have blamed *Jaws* and *Star Wars* for ushering in a reconstituted and much more conservative studio system churning out multiplex superhits for kids and fixated by opening weekends (see Nigel Morris's chapter). Effectively ending the critically lionized Renaissance of the early 1970s, *Jaws* supposedly marked the decline into what Robin Wood, most scathing of these politically minded critics, called the 'Lucas-Spielberg Syndrome' whose ideological project is to infantilize both films and filmgoers.[60] According to Wood, in 'films catering to the desire for regression to infantilism,'[61] Spielberg's sincerity is 'unaccompanied by anything one might reasonably term intelligence, and in fact incompatible with it'.[62] *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, Peter Biskind's popular history of the New Hollywood, repeated the charge for the benefit of a wider readership. Spielberg and Lucas, he wrote, 'were infantilising the audience, reconstituting the spectator as child, then overwhelming him and her with sound and spectacle, obliterating irony, aesthetic self-consciousness, and critical reflection'.[63] The result, according to Jonathan Kirshner, was the cultural downgrading of cinema and the irksome sidelining of critical gatekeepers:

> movies opening everywhere at once … aggressively marketed and highly dependent on the first few weeks of grosses, were less reliant on the opinions of cinephiles and the influence of serious critics. Talking about movies, and, worse, arguing about them, would become less important.[64]

Despite scholars' long-established condescension towards Spielberg, hostility towards his films has diminished sharply in recent years.[65] The critical standing of *Jaws* in particular is now higher than ever. Many younger film scholars, brought up on Spielberg and often unembarrassed fans of *Jaws* and *Star Wars*, retain little of the older generation's nostalgia for art cinema and visceral distaste for blockbuster movies and their mass audiences. Moreover, rather than a popcorn movie of crude shocks and jolts, *Jaws* now seems a precision-engineered masterpiece of classical film-making, whose deep focus compositions, painstakingly blocked long takes, subtly controlled palette and sensational editing have only started to be fully acknowledged and studied. Critics are finally starting to take serious account of Spielberg's precocious 'visual mastery'[66] as well as the remarkable craft of Gottlieb's screenplay, Fields's editing, Williams's music, the ensemble acting and the cinematography by Bill Butler and Michael Chapman.

The Jaws Book

Part One of *The Jaws Book* takes the long view of the film. The first two chapters examine and frankly complicate *Jaws*' status as the first summer blockbuster. Peter Krämer considers its cultural and historical position in relation to the Hollywood Renaissance of 1967–75 and the 'New New Hollywood' of blockbusters and franchises, and offers a personal reflection on his own history with the film. Assessing their statuses as adaptations and original works, he compares *Jaws* with *Star Wars*, which he judges the real game changer in engaging young woman and children as well as young men and thereby recapturing the family audience for Hollywood films. Suggesting a new line of research, Krämer highlights *Jaws*' ecological dimension and its emphasis on mothers, the maternal and Mother Earth.

Sheldon Hall's chapter uses primary archival research to question many of the myths about the film's release and distribution, such as its being the first summer blockbuster and the first major film to open wide with saturation booking and a TV advertising campaign. Arguing that *Jaws* was the culmination of existing industry trends rather than a sudden breakthrough, he clarifies the film's place in the development of Hollywood's characteristic practices.

Turning to issues of form and aesthetics, Warren Buckland extends his research into editors' contribution to the Hollywood Renaissance by analysing the problems encountered on *Jaws* by 'Mother cutter' Verna Fields.[67] Referencing the normative conventions described in Karel Reisz and Gavin Millar's *The Technique of Film Editing*, Buckland highlights *Jaws*' technical and formal innovations, notably the interplay of restricted narration and point-of-view shots and the meticulous use of continuity and shot flow in the final chase scene. Emilio Audissino meanwhile

focuses on another Oscar-winning triumph of the film, John Williams's score, arguing that one of its key roles is to 'materialize' the shark and make up for the mechanical Bruce's technical inadequacies. He notes that the score does this with striking honesty – when we hear the celebrated *da-da-da-da* 'shark ostinato' the shark is always 'present', but when we do not, the shark is never there. Williams's 'neoclassical' score also brilliantly captures the different 'spirits' of the film's two acts: the first is a horror film with the shark as protagonist, and the second, buoyed by 'pirate music', a seaborne adventure story. Although Williams's score for *Star Wars* is usually credited with reviving symphonic music in films, Audissino shows that *Jaws* was crucial for demonstrating that traditional scoring could strengthen and not merely complement narratives.

Nigel Morris's chapter provides an overview of *Jaws*' critical heritage and reveals how *Jaws* and Spielberg himself became hostages in a culture war over the fate of the New Hollywood and the ideological function of blockbuster cinema. As noted above, Spielberg's reputation especially among academic film critics used to be remarkably low, even after – indeed especially after – his rebranding as a serious *auteur* with *Schindler's List* (1993). As Morris says elsewhere, 'Spielberg, because of *Jaws*, is blamed for dumbing-down movies, and for the shortcomings of other directors' products, whether high-concept blockbusters or exploitative imitations'.[68] Morris investigates how *Jaws*, always a popular favourite in spite of critical ambivalence or disdain, achieved its current extremely high reputation even among film scholars – a reputation to which Morris's own revisionist books on Spielberg have significantly contributed. He also shows that the critical agenda on *Jaws* was rapidly established in the early reviews, especially in relation to Watergate, Vietnam and gender politics.

Murray Pomerance's richly allusive chapter, by contrast, is an 'unorthodox foray' and very deep dive into the mysteries of *Jaws*, which offers a set of new theoretical frameworks for understanding it. Taking the maw of the shark as his point of departure, Pomerance considers the film's cunningly musical manipulation of temporality as well as unexpectedly reading it in alignment with van Gogh, von Hoffmannstahl and Samuel Beckett.

Part Two of *The Jaws Book* mostly centres on interpretations, which for once do not cluster around Watergate, Vietnam and the politics of gender. With considerable wit and audacity, Nathan Abrams's chapter sets out to excavate *Jaws*' unacknowledged Jewish subtexts. Remarking that little has been written about Spielberg as director of specifically Jewish films beyond *Schindler's List* and *Munich* (2005), Abrams argues that *Jaws*, like Stanley Kubrick's films, is resplendent with coded intimations of Jewishness.[69] By 'reading Jewish', Abrams shows that *Jaws* serves up a smorgasbord of possible Jewish interpretations, from the shark representing the tough Israeli Jew in the wake of the Yom Kippur War to Hooper's role as a brave Jewish outsider coming to the rescue of the gentiles.

Linda Ruth Williams draws on her extensive research into children and family in Spielberg's films to examine how, contrary to popular belief, they are not cosy or child-friendly worlds.[70] She explains that Spielberg provocatively exploits and threatens his

child characters and, in *Jaws* (as in *Jurassic Park* and others), breaks cinematic taboo by presenting them essentially as meat. At such moments, Spielberg refuses the mantle of family director and assumes the identity of an exploitation director.

Robert Geal offers a comparative discussion of *Jaws* and Spielberg's other great monster movie, *Jurassic Park*. He explores the films as theoretical battlegrounds that invite competing, conflicting and overlapping theoretical approaches, in this case poststructuralist and cognitive ones. Interrogating Stephen Heath's poststructuralist analysis of *Jaws* in the essay '*Jaws*, Ideology and Film Theory' and his presentation of cinema as a machine of ideology and masochism, Geal considers *Jaws*' self-reflexivity and its challenge to the allegedly passive cinematic spectator.[71] He considers how the (visual) absence of the mechanical shark in *Jaws* and the fetishization of the dinosaurs and their technological means of creation in *Jurassic Park* are used to elicit audience reaction.

A trio of chapters sets *Jaws* in its historical and generic contexts. Matthew Leggatt interrogates the atomic and nuclear contexts of *Jaws* against the historical backdrop of the sinking of the *USS Indianapolis* recalled in Quint's monologue and analyses how the film encodes the anxieties of the Cold War and the post-Hiroshima nuclear age. *Jaws* is ultimately about confronting disaster, and as with so many of Spielberg's films the inescapable reference point is the Second World War. Daniel Varndell, by contrast, relates *Jaws* to an even most distant historical point, the nineteenth century and its Romantic tradition, which associates seafaring with 'suffering, pain, separation and loss'. Addressing themes of lostness, displacement and territoriality, as well as changing depictions of the beach, Varndell unpicks how *Jaws* updates the representation of seafaring as a voyage of self-discovery and comments on 'the inexorable expansion of capitalism' and the tensions of an increasingly globalized world.

The western is one genre to which Spielberg has so far not contributed – unless you count the opening scenes of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989). Matthew Melia's chapter, however, argues that the western is a definite albeit largely unacknowledged presence in *Jaws*. As well as featuring visual and aural references to classic westerns including *High Noon* (1952) and *Rio Bravo* (1959), *Jaws* is indebted to the genre's iconic frontier spaces and narratives of chivalric virtue and adventure in the wilderness. Like the revisionist westerns of the New Hollywood, such as *The Wild Bunch* (1969) and *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* (1971), *Jaws* ironizes the myths of male heroism imprinted on the genre even as it reclaims the lost romantic ideal of American masculinity represented by Hawksian male bonding.[72]

The final part of the book ventures beyond *Jaws* to address the sequels and wider questions around the film's afterlife and cultural impact. Katherine Loock uses *Jaws* as a prism for understanding the problems and politics of remaking in Hollywood sequels. After an historical analysis of 'sequelitis', she addresses the use of repetition, 'one-upmanship' and textual continuity in the *Jaws* franchise, which struggled to work meaningful variations on the hopelessly constraining set-up of man versus fish. Felix Lempp's chapter critically engages with the creation and perpetuation of myths around the film's production in Gottlieb's *The Jaws Log* and two 'making-of' documentaries. Interrogating these accounts of heroic problem-solving in the face of hostile elements

and islanders and the whims of a mechanical shark, Lempp reveals how the making-ofs' narrative strategies remediate myths of the film's creation in their own visual and narrative language. The making-ofs, he argues, 'stage the very production processes they pretend to describe objectively'.

Although *Jaws* is not usually classed as a cult movie,[73] Neil Jackson's chapter offers a case study of *Jaws* as the object of a creative but distinctly ambivalent mode of cult worship. Focusing on a French fan film, *Jaws: The Sharksploitation Edit* (2009), Jackson debates how far this mischievous act of 'artistic vandalism' works as a subversive form of adaptation and relates 'its processes of textual desecration and transformation' to mainstream *Jaws*ploitation films. He asks whether such an unauthorized fan interaction re-enforces the film's cultural position or as an editorial intervention disrupts the film's narrative, structure and interpretative meanings and relocates it as grindhouse exploitation.

In the final chapter, Vincent Campbell discusses the crucial relationship between *Jaws* and nature documentaries about sharks and, in particular, the film's use as a framing device on the Discovery channel's *Shark Week*. Campbell also considers how Ron and Valerie Taylor's *Blue Water*, *White Death* (1971), the first documentary to record extensive footage of great white sharks on camera, not only inspired Benchley's novel but also lent a visual style to the footage that the Taylors filmed for *Jaws*. He also discusses how *Jaws*' demonization of sharks impacted, very badly indeed, on the global shark population.[74]

This book cannot hope, and does not pretend, to be comprehensive. There is still much research to be done on *Jaws*, especially research grounded in primary and archival resources. Eagerly we await, for example, empirical studies of *Jaws* fandom, audience memories, the screenplay's development and the distribution, exhibition and reception of the film outside the United States. *The Jaws Book* certainly aims to encourage such research, but the chief purpose of these new perspectives is to invite fans and scholars alike to look afresh at Spielberg's masterpiece and celebrate one of the greatest achievements of Hollywood cinema.

Notes

1 https://www.the-numbers.com/movie/Jaws#tab=box-office (accessed 9 December 2019).

2 Elizabeth Guider, '"Jaws" Phenom Took Bite of History', *Variety* 12–16 June 2006: 6. See Sheldon Hall's chapter and this useful overview: Michael Coate, 'The Game Changer: Celebrating *Jaws* on Its 40th Anniversary', *The Digital Bits*, 22 June 2015, http://thedigitalbits.com/columns/history-legacy-showmanship/remembering-jaws-40th?showall=1 (accessed 3 December 2019).

3 Nigel Morris, *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg: Empire of Light* (London: Wallflower, 2007), 44.

4 Justin Wyatt, *High Concept: Movies and Marketing in America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), 112. Cf. Marco Cucco, 'The Promise Is Great: The Blockbuster and the Hollywood Economy', *Media, Culture & Society* 3, no. 2 (2009): 219.

5 https://www.the-numbers.com/movie/Star-Wars-Ep-IV-A-New-Hope#tab=summary (accessed 3 December 2019).
6 *Jaws*' status as a 'family-adventure film' is up for debate and is discussed in Peter Krämer's chapter. On the family-adventure movie, see Krämer, 'Would You Take Your Child to See This Film? The Cultural and Social Work of the Family-Adventure Movie', in Steve Neale and Murray Smith, eds, *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1998), 294–311; and Krämer, 'The Impact of *Star Wars*', *Pure Movies*, 16 March 2014, https://www.puremovies.co.uk/columns/the-impact-of-star-wars/ (accessed 4 December 2019). On the blockbuster, 'the audiovisual product that best represents today's Hollywood', see Cucco, 'The Promise Is Great'.
7 'Jaws: The Groundbreaking Summer Blockbuster'.
8 On *Jaws* the film rather than its production history, see Nigel Andrews, *Jaws: The Ultimate A-Z (Bloomsbury Movie Guide)* (London: Bloomsbury, 1999); Antonia Quirke, *Jaws* (London: British Film Institute, 2002); and Wieland Schwanebeck, ed., *Der weisse Hai Revisited: Steven Spielbergs Jaws und die Geburt eines amerikanischen Albtraums* (Berlin: Bertz + Fischer, 2015).
9 Notable recent books on Spielberg include Morris, *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg*; Lester D. Friedman, *Citizen Spielberg* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Warren Buckland, *Directed by Steven Spielberg: Poetics of the Contemporary Hollywood Blockbuster* (New York: Continuum, 2006); James Kendrick, *Darkness in the Bliss-Out: A Reconsideration of the Films of Steven Spielberg* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014); Adrian Schober and Debbie Olson, eds, *Children in the Films of Steven Spielberg* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016); Molly Haskell, *Steven Spielberg: A Life in Films* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Adam Barkman and Antonio Sanna, eds, *A Critical Companion to Steven Spielberg* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2019); Linda Ruth Williams, *Steven Spielberg's Children* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, forthcoming); and, the most comprehensive, Nigel Morris, ed., *A Companion to Steven Spielberg* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2017).
10 Carl Gottlieb, *The Jaws Log*, 30th Anniversary Expanded Edn (London: Newmarket, 2005, Kindle), Chapter Three; Howard Sounes, *Seventies: The Sights, Sounds and Ideas of a Brilliant Decade* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 222–3. See also Ted Morgan, 'Sharks: The Making of a Best Seller', in Robert Atwan, Barry Orton and William Vesterman, eds, *American Mass Media: Industries and Issues* (New York: Random House, 1978), 140–50.
11 Joseph McBride, *Steven Spielberg: A Biography* (New York: Faber & Faber, 1997), 230.
12 Dennis L. Prince, *Joe Alves: Designing Jaws* (London: Titan, 2019), 12.
13 Andrews, *Jaws*, 20.
14 Prince, *Joe Alves*, 65.
15 Michael Pye, 'Enter the Shark', *Sunday Times*, 3 August 1975. Unpaginated clipping on *Jaws* microfiche in BFI (British Film Institute) Reuben Library.
16 *Variety*, 4 June 1975. Unpaginated clipping on *Jaws* microfiche in BFI (British Film Institute) Reuben Library.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Gottlieb, *The Jaws Log*, Chapter Four; Donald R. Mott and Cheryl McAllister Saunders, *Steven Spielberg* (London: Columbus, 1986), 32.
20 Andrews, *Jaws*, 27. Carl Gottlieb's detailed account of the speech's gestation, from Sackler's draft screenplay to Shaw's final version, is given in the expanded edition of *The Jaws Log*, note to Chapter Eleven. He is clear that Milius did *not* write the speech.

21 Sounes, *Seventies*, 223. See also I. Q. Hunter, 'Spielberg and Adaptation', in Nigel Morris, ed., *A Companion to Steven Spielberg* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 212–26. At the *Jaws 40th Anniversary Symposium*, Gottlieb described the film as having (unusually) just two acts, but others, such as Warren Buckland in this book and Gottlieb himself in *The Jaws Log*, claim that there are in fact three.
22 Gottlieb, *The Jaws Log*, Chapter Five.
23 McBride, *Steven Spielberg*, 239; Mott and Saunders, *Steven Spielberg*, 33. See also John Baxter, *Steven Spielberg: The Unauthorised Biography* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), 129–32; and Friedman, *Citizen Spielberg*, 162.
24 Susan Royle, 'Steven Spielberg in His Adventures on Earth', *American Premiere*, 10 July 1982: 23–4.
25 Andrews, *Jaws*, 43.
26 As well as Gottlieb, *The Jaws Log*, these books exhaustively recount the film's production: Edith Blake, *On Location … on Martha's Vineyard*: *The Making of the Movie Jaws* (New York: Ballantine, 1976); Patrick Jankiewicz, *Just When You Thought It Was Safe: A Jaws Companion* (Albany: BearManor Media, 2009); and Matt Taylor, *Jaws: Memories from Martha's Vineyard*, expanded 2nd edn (London: Titan, 2012).
27 https://themalestrom.com/interviews/the-shark-is-broken-ian-shaw/ (accessed 9 December 2019).
28 Sounes, *Seventies*, 229.
29 '"Jaws": The Groundbreaking Summer Blockbuster That Changed Hollywood, and Our Summer Vacations, Forever', *Cinephilia & Beyond*, n.d.: https://cinephiliabeyond.org/jaws-groundbreaking-summer-blockbuster-changed-hollywood-summer-vacations-forever/ (accessed 4 December 2019).
30 McBride, *Steven Spielberg*, 249.
31 Roger Ebert, review of *Jaws*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, 1 January 1975, https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/jaws-1975 (accessed 4 December 2019).
32 Quoted in ibid., 256.
33 Champlin's original review of 20 June 1975 is archived here: https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/herocomplex/la-et-hc-jaws-original-review- 20150619-story.html (accessed 4 December 2019).
34 Penelope Gilliatt, rev. of *Jaws*, *New Yorker*, 7 July 1975. Unpaginated clipping on microfiche in BFI (British Film Institute) Reuben Library.
35 Pye, 'Enter the Shark'.
36 Ibid.
37 McBride, *Steven Spielberg*, 255.
38 Pye, 'Enter the Shark'.
39 Baxter, *Steven Spielberg*, 140; Cucco, 'The Promise Is Great', 216, 221.
40 Barry Langford, *Post-Classical Hollywood: Film, Industry, Style and Ideology since 1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 156.
41 Morris, *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg*.
42 McBride, *Steven Spielberg*, 252.
43 Andrews, *Jaws*, 29.
44 Emilio Audissino, *John Williams's Film Music: Jaws, Star Wars, Raiders of the Lost Ark, and the Return of the Classical Hollywood Music Style* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 108.
45 Peter Biskind, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls: How The Sex 'N' Drugs 'N' Rock 'N' Roll Generation Saved the World* (London: Bloomsbury, 1998), 265. See also Roger

Corman, with Jim Jerome, *How I Made a Hundred Movies in Hollywood and Never Lost a Dime* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1998), xi.

46 Jason Zinoman, *Shock Value: How a Few Eccentric Outsiders Gave Us Nightmares, Conquered Hollywood, and Invented Modern Horror* (London: Duckworth Overlook, 2012), 175–6.

47 See Hall's chapter and J. Hoberman, '*Nashville* contra *Jaws*, or "The Imagination of Disaster" Revisited', in Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King, eds, *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004) 195–222.

48 Morris, *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg*, 57.

49 See Friedman, *Citizen Spielberg*, 163–4; and Morris, *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg*, 48–57.

50 Andrews, *Jaws*, 143.

51 Mark Kermode, '*Jaws*, 40 years on: "One of the truly great and lasting classics of American cinema"', *The Observer*, 31 May 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/may/31/jaws-40-years-on-truly-great-lasting-classics-of-america-cinema (accessed 4 December 2019).

52 Andrews, *Jaws*, 118; McBride, *Steven Spielberg*, 255.

53 Hoberman, '*Nashville* contra *Jaws*', 213.

54 Langford, *Post-Classical Hollywood*, 154–5.

55 Richard Nowell, *Blood Money: A History of the First Teen Slasher Film Cycle* (New York: Continuum, 2011), 127.

56 See also I. Q. Hunter, '*Jaws: The Revenge* and the Production of Failure', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 33, no. 6 (2019): 677–91.

57 On *Jaws*ploitation movies, see Denis Lotti, 'Mare Monstrum: il riverbero di Jaws nei sequel illegittimi: mockbuster, imitazioni, ripoff (e documentary) di produzione italiana (1976–1995)', *Cinergie, il cinema e le altri arti*, 7 (2015): 96–104, https://cinergie.unibo.it/article/view/6976/6712 (accessed 4 December 2019); and I. Q. Hunter, *Cult Film as a Guide to Life: Fandom, Adaptation and Identity* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 77–96.

58 Nowell, *Blood Money*, 92–3.

59 See Peter Krämer and Yannis Tzioumakis, 'Introduction', in Krämer and Tzioumakis, eds, *The Hollywood Renaissance: Revisiting American Cinema's Most Celebrated Era* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018), xvii. See also Peter Krämer, *The New Hollywood: From Bonnie and Clyde to Star Wars* (London: Wallflower, 2005), 90.

60 Robin Wood, *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). See also McBride, *Steven Spielberg*, 259; and Friedman, *Citizen Spielberg*, 176–9.

61 Wood, *Hollywood*, 175.

62 Ibid., 178.

63 Biskind, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, 344.

64 Jonathan Kirshner, *Hollywood's Last Golden Age: Politics, Society, and the Seventies Film in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 214.

65 See Andrew M. Gordon, *Empire of Dreams: The Science Fiction and Fantasy Films of Steven Spielberg* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008, Kindle), 'Introduction'.

66 Friedman, *Citizen Spielberg*, 169.

67 Warren Buckland, 'The Film Editors who Invented the Hollywood Renaissance: Ralph Rosenblum, Sam O'Steen and Dede Allen's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), in Krämer and Tzioumakis, eds, *The Hollywood Renaissance*, 19–34.
68 Morris, *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg*, 47.
69 On 'reading Jewish' with reference to Kubrick, see Nathan Abrams, ' "A Double Set of Glasses" Stanley Kubrick and the Midrashic Mode of Interpretation', in Saer Maty Ba and Will Higbee, eds, *De-Westernizing Film Studies* (London: Routledge, 2012), 141–51.
70 Williams, *Steven Spielberg's Children*. See also Linda Ruth Williams, ' "Who Am I, David?": Motherhood in Spielberg's Dramas of Family Dysfunction', in Morris, ed. *A Companion*, 243–57.
71 Stephen Heath, '*Jaws*, Ideology and Film Theory', *Times Higher Education Supplement* (26 March 1976); reprinted in Bill Nichols, ed., *Movies and Methods*, vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
72 See also Friedman, *Citizen Spielberg*, 165–6.
73 But see the Preface to Hunter, *Cult Film*, for an autobiographical account of unabashed *Jaws* cult fandom.
74 See McBride, *Steven Spielberg*, 249; Nancy Knowlton and Wendy Benchley, 'The State of Sharks, 40 Years after *Jaws*', *Smithsonian.com* 11 August 2014, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/state-sharks-40-years-after-jaws- 180952309/ (accessed 4 December 2019).