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# Creating Authorship? Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin's collaboration on *If....* (1968)

**ABSTRACT**

*This article draws upon the research currently undertaken for my doctoral thesis and is meant to act as a complementary study of Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin's partnership on If.... (1968), following Charles Drazin's 2008 article for the Journal of British Cinema and Television, 'If... before If...'. Charles Drazin (2008: 318) highlights the idea of a 'creative dynamic' underlying the working partnership between Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin on If...., as well as in the subsequent projects they developed together. The following article aims to uncover the nature of the creative dynamic suggested by Drazin's article by looking at both the personal and the artistic dimensions that the working relationship assumed. The aim is to highlight the distinctiveness of their collaboration in the cinema; the article will show that in the course of this collaborative work they realized their artistic potential through an exchange of expertise, and that*

**KEYWORDS**

authorship  
collaboration  
David Sherwin  
Lindsay Anderson  
sequence 5  
script to screen  
transition  
process of  
equivalence  
François Truffaut  
'une certaine  
tendance du  
cinéma français'

1. The title for the film is *If...*, with four ellipsis dots, not three. See Lindsay Anderson (2004a, 2004b) and Mark Sinker (2004: 14).

*their collaboration helped to bring about an alternative approach to the conventional opposition between screenwriter and director, especially when it comes to claiming authorship over a film.*

## INTRODUCTION

The following article explores the nature of the working relationship between the film director Lindsay Anderson and the screenwriter David Sherwin during the screenwriting and production phases of the feature film *If...* (1968).<sup>1</sup> The objective is to highlight the distinctive nature of their director-screenwriter partnership by unravelling the existence of a dynamic that their respective artistic potentials made possible. The



*Figure 1: Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin during the shooting of If... (1968). Courtesy: Lindsay Anderson Archive, University of Stirling.*

background to the article originates from my own Ph.D. research which focuses upon the cinema authorship of Lindsay Anderson; it also aims to offer a complementary reading of Charles Drazin's own insight into what he regards as 'one of the British cinema's most significant writer-director partnerships' (2008: 318). The article will further relate the dynamic underpinning of Anderson and Sherwin's work on *If...* to Anderson's own view of the film-making process.

During his days as the editor of the cinema journal *Sequence*, Lindsay Anderson argued for the need to acknowledge the process of film-making as the '[...] almost miraculous fusion of many and various creative elements' (Anderson 1948: 199). This proved a clear departure from the approach that his French counterparts in the *Cahiers du Cinéma* were to privilege, from the mid-1950s, and which for him denied the true nature of film-making; 'a basic weakness in most French writing on the cinema... seems to be this extraordinary unawareness of the fact that films have to be written before they can be directed' (Anderson 1955: 255). For Anderson, the French journal's reviewing practice of American cinema overlooked the reality of the studio system, one in which the director has little latitude in terms of creative input, as scenarios are often imposed upon them by producers. However, Anderson's systematic review of the artistic role which each – screenwriter, director, producer – assumes within the film-making process illustrates his belief in the existence of a creative exchange and thereby reasserts his particular brand of authorship; 'analytical criticism, discussion of [the] filmmaker's personality, is impossible if a good half of the constituent elements of each film is simply ignored' (Anderson 1955: 255).

The following article will place this claim in the context of Anderson's first feature film involving an original script as well as a close working partnership before, during and after filming.

## **THE BACKGROUND TO ANDERSON AND SHERWIN'S FIRST COLLABORATION**

The story of the collaboration between Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin is one that deserves more than a mere acknowledgement within the history of British cinema, as it spans a nearly thirty-year period. The two men were formally introduced at a London Soho pub, the 'Pillars of Hercules', in July 1966: Seth Holt, a director and producer as well as a personal friend of Lindsay Anderson, had arranged a meeting with the intention of convincing Anderson to direct an original script written by two young aspiring screenwriters, with Holt as producer (2004b: 108). *Crusaders* was the brainchild of two school friends, David Sherwin and John Howlett, who had set out to fictionalize their days at Tonbridge School in Kent. By the time Lindsay Anderson met the two friends, their hopes to ever see the script realized onscreen were running low. Their story – a chronicle of the struggle for power and the resulting revolt against the daily abuses taking

2. See David Sherwin's 5 May 1960 entry: 'the only experience we've got is that Nazi camp – Tonbridge – our schooldays!' / [John Howlett] 'it's never been done. Not the real truth. The torture! The keen types!' (Sherwin 1997: 2).
3. See Lindsay Anderson: 'They had been working on the draft for some years, and in various drafts had submitted it to such people as Nicholas Ray... and the British producer Ian Dalrymple (who had told them they both deserved to be beaten)' (Anderson 2004b: 108). Also David Sherwin noted on 21 May 1960 '[Lord Brabourne] is straightforward. *Crusaders* is the most evil and perverted script he's ever read' (Sherwin 1997: 4).
4. See also Penelope Houston: 'France probably has a rather higher share of enlightened investors than Britain or America, men prepared to take risks on a creative rather than a commercial reputation' (Houston 1963: 87). Also, 'looking across the Channel ... France and Italy have their defiantly young directors, as unafraid of making mistakes as they are of making pictures; and Britain's cinema by contrast looks scared of cutting loose, of appearing immature or juvenile' (Houston 1963: 113).

place within the confines of a fictional English public school<sup>2</sup> – had, in Sherwin's words, generally been met with moral outrage and outright condemnation.<sup>3</sup> David Sherwin's published diaries (1997) and more recently Charles Drazin's account of *If...*'s genesis (Drazin 2008: 321–324), highlight the connections between the adverse feelings which the original script generated and the context in which it was presented to potential producers. Drazin's article in particular outlines what he perceived to be the lack of artistic vision and ambition that characterized the British cinema of the late 1950s and early 1960s (Drazin 2008). Quoting his own interview with Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, Drazin contrasts the inertia afflicting the British cinema scene with the then blooming French New Wave that was, in his opinion, taking the medium into uncharted territories of new-found cinematic creativity with films such as François Truffaut's *Les quatre cents coups/400 Blows* or Jean-Luc Godard's *A Bout de Souffle/Breathless* – both 1959 (Drazin 2008: 326).<sup>4</sup>

By the time the script – still entitled *Crusaders* – reached Lindsay Anderson in 1966, two film directors are cited as having expressed an interest in the story (Sherwin 1997: 3–10, Anderson 2004b: 108). In both cases, however, they decided against directing it themselves; Nicholas Ray, the director of *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) whom David Sherwin and John Howlett greatly admired, turned down the project on the grounds of his American heritage, which he believed disqualified him for the task. Similarly, the second director to react positively to the script, Seth Holt, also felt that his lack of a first-hand experience of the



Figure 2: Lindsay Anderson and Malcolm McDowell on the set of *If...* (1968). Courtesy: Lindsay Anderson Archive, University of Stirling.



*Figure 3: Anderson and Sherwin consult their scripts, while shooting If... (1968). Courtesy: Lindsay Anderson Archive, University of Stirling.*

English public school system proved too much of an obstacle for him to produce a film that would do justice to the script (Anderson 2004b: 108). Both David Sherwin's diaries (1997) and Lindsay Anderson's own recollection (2004b: 108) privilege the personal dimension in the decision-making process of these directors, while the industrial context might just as equally have accounted for Nicholas Ray's and Seth Holt's unwillingness to see the project through. Sherwin's entry, detailing his first meeting with the American director, is illustrative of the tone which characterizes the screenwriter's records for the genesis of the film; a tendency to turn the context in which film-making practice was operating in Britain at the time into a critique of his own personal struggle over artistic creation:

[Nicholas] Ray stares quizzically at me... 'Well, why don't they want to make your...?' – a long Ray pause – 'film'? I explain Lord Brabourne's reaction. 'It's England'. Ray tells me he is too American to make the film himself, but I have a great future in Hollywood. God, I think, I'm almost there.

(Sherwin 1997: 8)

Within the context of this article the quote also allegorises the connection between the personal and the artistic sides of Lindsay Anderson's and David Sherwin's lives. Their respective frustration at a system which was only just opening up to more socially relevant and challenging themes for screen adaptation is but another

5. See Robert Murphy (1992: 102–14), and in particular; ‘Complaints about Rank and ABC’s domination of the industry led Edward Heath... to refer the “Supply of Films to the British Cinema” to the Monopolies Commission. Their report, finally delivered in October 1966, proved to be a clear and incisive indictment of the monopoly influence exerted by the two big corporations’ (Murphy 1997: 106–107).
6. See also Roger Manvell (1966: 116–133).
7. Lindsay Anderson commented ‘we were not writing on commission, had no ‘development deal’, and so felt beholden to nobody, and quite unaffected by any prejudices except our own. In this way *If...* was well and truly in the tradition of “Free Cinema” (2004b: 110).
8. David Sherwin: ‘With this mutual flash of understanding my and Lindsay’s destinies change...’ (Sherwin 1997: 11).
9. David Sherwin recalls in one of his diary entries how the title for the film came about (Sherwin 1997: 18). Lindsay Anderson was using his old school – Cheltenham College – as one of the shooting locations. As Anderson feared the reaction of the headmaster, should he read the actual *Crusaders* script, a fake script was sent instead. The title for this fake, from Rudyard Kipling’s poem *If*, was suggested by Albert Finney’s secretary, Daphne Hunter, and Sherwin decided to keep it afterwards for

manifestation of the duality which was to inform their working partnership. Robert Murphy (1992) provides a useful account of the structural and economic changes that were affecting the British cinema industry in the course of the 1960s. If the Rank Organization and Associated British Picture Corporation (ABPC) had a de facto monopoly on the British cinematic production and distribution until as late as the mid-1960s,<sup>5</sup> cracks in the system had started to emerge in the early 1960s with a string of unexpected critical and public successes achieved by independent productions.<sup>6</sup> *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (Karel Reisz, 1960), for instance, which Seth Holt had edited, managed to overcome the hurdles of a hostile film trade, gaining critical and public acclaim which further enabled Tony Richardson’s newly created Woodfall film company to achieve financial viability (Murphy 1992: 21). Of note, Albert Finney, the lead in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, was to become the producer of *If...* with his own film and theatre company, Memorial, taking the project on board in June 1967 (Sherwin 1997: 18). Lindsay Anderson had himself been given the chance to direct his first feature film at the suggestion of Karel Reisz, who acted as a producer on *This Sporting Life* (1963). It could be argued that Lindsay Anderson merely continued with David Sherwin the tradition of artistic exchange, started in the wake of the Free Cinema initiative, whereby respective areas of expertise were both used and promoted with the objective of furthering a common vision for the cinema.<sup>7</sup> In this respect David Sherwin describes the conditions which led him to work with Lindsay Anderson as a personal and artistic epiphany (Sherwin 1997: 11). Charles Drazin (2008) also stresses this sense of artistic recognition – ‘a mutual flash of understanding’<sup>8</sup> – which was to herald a lifelong intellectual, artistic and emotionally-charged collaboration of which *If...* (1968) captures the essence.

### **FROM CRUSADERS TO IF.... :9 UNRAVELLING THE DYNAMIC OF A WORKING PARTNERSHIP**

If this ‘stroke of divine providence’ (Drazin 2008: 329) translated into an opportunity for the script to become a film, it also led Sherwin to a profound reassessment of his professional skills in view of Anderson’s outright dissatisfaction<sup>10</sup> with the draft submitted to him. As Drazin’s interview with Sherwin indicates, a self-confessed teacher/student working relationship soon asserted itself (Drazin 2008). It appears that the young screenwriter accepted the terms of their working partnership as a necessary and even integral part of a tacit learning curve. Lindsay Anderson’s own view of the early stages of their collaboration certainly suggests that his intervention brought about a complete re-appraisal of the existing draft: ‘David Sherwin and I took *Crusaders* to pieces, invented new characters, new incidents and a new structure’ (Anderson 2004b: 109).

This idea of a new departure for the script finds further confirmation in Anderson's mention of the subsequent decisions by John Howlett and Seth Holt to withdraw from the project entirely (2004b: 109–10, 113). An interesting pattern then develops between the two men, as suggested in the Drazin article (2008: 331), from this initial hierarchical structure in their approach to their craft; the screenwriter locates his own strength in his capacity for imagination, but also professes a need for containment which he believed the director's proclaimed synthetic and analytical skills provided.<sup>11</sup> Lindsay Anderson also appears to accept his role as the more experienced practitioner. The letter which he wrote to Sherwin from Poland in November 1966<sup>12</sup> illustrates the point fully:

You have (excuse me writing like a school report) a fecundity of imagination, but it seems to operate rather without organic sense, like a series of prose poems: or jottings for a script. Sometimes a whole idea is valuable, sometimes a couple of lines, sometimes nothing.

(Anderson 2004a: 171)

Not surprisingly, David Sherwin's entries recording the redrafting process betray a high degree of emotional turmoil. Between July 1966 and June 1967 Sherwin's mood seems to oscillate between extremes of exultation and depression. In his published diaries, two entries, one for December 1966 immediately followed by one for Spring 1967, are an indication of the emotional strain experienced by the screenwriter:

December 1966: I get so carried away by this letter that I produce a script which is complete rubbish.

Christmas Eve 1966: Lindsay tells me the script is awful. I have failed. 'Go away and write simply. Remember Georg Buechner,' he says.

Spring 1967: [...] finish the new draft in April. In trepidation I post it off to Lindsay. He rings me at the crack of dawn to say it's brilliant.

(Sherwin 1997: 15)

What is noteworthy, however, is the positive light which both Sherwin and his editor on those same diaries, Charles Drazin, cast upon the same period. Drazin regards their collaboration as an 'organic relationship of two equal collaborators' (Drazin 2008: 331). Sherwin similarly adopts the view that their working relationship produced a 'creative dynamic', which he defines as a process akin to a 'Thesis', 'Antithesis', 'Synthesis' approach (Drazin 2008: 331). In so arguing, however, Sherwin also opens up the possibility of a more negative approach to their collaboration. If no feeling of resentment permeates the narrative

the film itself. Mark Sinker highlights the fact that Lindsay Anderson leaves room for doubt as to whom – himself or Sherwin – Daphne Hunter suggested the use of the poem title (Sinker 2004: 18). See also Anderson (2004b: 110).

10. 'After reading it, though, I found myself disappointed. It was certainly appealing in an anarchic, even poetic way, but I felt there was a naivety about it, which... made me feel that it could only be directed by the authors themselves' (Anderson 2004b: 108).
11. Charles Drazin: 'Anderson [...] possessed a formidable sense of structure and the analytical ability to push a dramatic situation to its logical conclusion' (Drazin 2008: 331).
12. Anderson spent three months in Warsaw between October and December 1966 to direct a Polish production of John Osborne's *Inadmissible Evidence*, with Tadeusz Lomnicki in the leading role. While in Poland, on the suggestion of the director of the Documentary Studio, Anderson also filmed a documentary about the Warsaw Dramatic Academy, which he called *Raz, Dwa, Trzy/The Singing Lesson*.

13. Lindsay Anderson: 'David Sherwin arrives early morning – well 10.00: but I am not up... the idea of getting down to discussing *Crusaders*, rewrites, etc. is really alarming and distasteful' (Anderson 2004a: 177).

of his published diaries – merely the sense of an emotionally-driven creative spirit in need of critical support – the recent interview which he granted Charles Drazin (2008) appears to undermine, ever so slightly, this view of their collaboration. For instance, Sherwin recalls his attempts to regain control over the drafting process and his subsequent strategy of privileging afternoons for their working sessions – in all likelihood due to Lindsay Anderson's self-proclaimed aversion to working in the morning:<sup>13</sup>

[Sherwin set out to learn] how to trigger Anderson's sub-conscious: 'The best thing I found – it was no good in the mornings, but in the afternoon he quite liked whisky – I would give him half a glass of whisky every half an hour until by the end of the evening [Anderson] was firing with creative thoughts'.

(Drazin 2008: 332)

It is tempting to argue that the only way for this young screenwriter to ever see his script transposed onto the screen was to agree to a tacit denial of his artistic impulses. David Sherwin betrays an apparent desire to redress the balance: 'Anderson was a containing influence for a highly inventive mind... Sherwin recalled the warning that the director would often issue during their work together: 'David, bread as well as jam. And you're too much jam' (in Drazin 2008: 331).

In these circumstances the dual dimension underpinning the collaborators' working dynamic would point to the precarious position in which a screenwriter finds himself, whenever allowing the director to become involved in the drafting process. Instead of the fruitful collaboration which Sherwin appears keen to emphasize, a struggle for creative dominance (for which Anderson's and Sherwin's respective set of artistic skills would provide a metaphor) asserts itself. An entry in Sherwin's diaries, from around the same time as Anderson's remarks quoted above, encapsulates this idea of a contrary pull, and is to the detriment of the screenwriter. On 15 May 1967 Anderson pronounces the draft to be complete. Sherwin says, 'Our draft of *Crusaders* is finished. Lindsay is pleased...'. However, the following morning Sherwin finds himself in a state of panic: 'The script is rubbish' (Sherwin 1997: 17). What is interesting about Sherwin's outburst is that it seems to act as a question mark over his claim of the authorship of the script. In this regard, his published diaries do not make any mention of the redrafting that subsequently took place at Lindsay Anderson's flat in London, but an account of this is found in Anderson's diaries (2004a: 177–80).

Charles Drazin (2008) contributes his own approach to the issue of who could rightfully claim the authorship of the final script in assimilating script and filmed version. Instead of establishing a clear divide between the author of the written script and the director of the film, Drazin reinforces the idea of a common artistic goal which would have been attained through a collaborative effort throughout.

He declares, for instance, 'the film was an example of the key creators in effect pooling their authorship through shared values. *If...* was neither Anderson's film nor Sherwin's film; it was *their* film' (Drazin 2008: 333, original emphasis).

This compromise position, which Drazin seems to privilege, finds its manifestation in the tone of the interviews at the time of the film's release and the subsequent publication of the script in 1969. In an interview for *The Observer* in December 1968, Lindsay Anderson clearly attributes all decisions in terms of narrative and style to both Sherwin and himself (Anderson 1968: 114). Similarly, in the 'Notes for a Preface' to the published script of *If...*, the director discusses the background to the storyline as well as any decision pertaining to style or any meaning to be inferred from their working partnership (Anderson 1969: 120–3). Furthermore, given that Anderson's subsequent two feature films as well as an unrealized sequel to *If...* were scripted by David Sherwin as well, the picture of a particularly productive and mutually beneficial partnership would appear most convincing. David Sherwin does not seem intent on directly claiming the authorship of the script for himself. In his published diaries he refers to 'our script', or talks about his 'contribution to *If...*' (Sherwin 1997: 17, 23). The closest he comes to proclaiming the script as his own creation is his mention of the British Writers' Guild Award, which he won for the 1968 Best British Original Screenplay (Sherwin 1997: 26).<sup>14</sup>

It follows that Charles Drazin's article (2008) convincingly highlights the emotional dimension underlying Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin's collaboration on the drafting process by offering a detailed insight into their working pattern and writing rituals. However, the question of assigning the final authorship of the script remains open as Drazin grants each partner's input equal importance. Within the present context this proves useful as it provides a starting point from which to investigate conventional notions of authorship in a cinematic context.

## FILMING *IF...* : A PROCESS OF EQUIVALENCE

David Sherwin contributes the following diary entry the day before the filming is due to start:

The night before shooting starts at Cheltenham College. Lindsay calls me round to his flat in Greencroft Gardens. He admits to me point-blank that he's terrified. Lost. He doesn't even know where he's going to put the camera. We drink a whisky and listen to The Beach Boys one last time before the battle begins.

(Sherwin 1997: 21)

This entry is significant in two ways: first, it establishes the emotional bond which is an intrinsic component of their collaboration

14. 'I stare at the story in *Variety*, not quite believing that it is true: SHERWIN WINS BRITISH WRITERS' GUILD AWARD' (Sherwin 1997: 26).

15. Entries in April and May 1967 note: 'We settle into a routine... Lindsay insists on two walks a day... then along the stony beach and into – JOY! – a wonderful seaside pub called the "Broadmark". Here in the public bar we play the jukebox and listen to the Beach Boys. If I've been a good writer, Lindsay allows me a second glass of barley wine' (Sherwin 1997: 16).

on the film. Second, it hints at their ability to transcend the usual boundaries between each other's assumed areas of expertise. This would in turn suggest the existence of an interchangeable dynamic between the two – a dynamic which lies at the heart of their artistic drive. Sherwin here writes himself into the role of dominant partner, referring to Anderson by his first name and further recounting their meeting that night by simply using the third person pronoun, and thereby asserting his control over the situation. Of note, Mark Sinker (2004: 62–3) regards the sequence in which the three main protagonists in *If...* are whipped as evidence of an underlying S&M motif, for which the public school's etiquette works as an allegory. He further argues that this reading would account for Mick Travis's subsequent rebellion as in S&M practice "[...] the bottom *is* running [the] scene" (Sinker 2004: 63). With regard to the present argument highlighting the degree of emotional dependency displayed in turn by both Anderson and Sherwin, it is tempting to regard the sequence in the film as a fictional re-creation of their own artistic process; in other words, the apparent teacher/student relation that had established itself during the drafting process is indicative of a pre-established hierarchy necessary to the production of the story but by no means impervious to change and/or challenge.

Here, the recourse to a drink and some music mentioned by Sherwin functions as a much-needed reprieve from having to face the consequences of their artistic endeavour. A ritual has established itself between the two partners; whoever happens to find himself exposed to outside scrutiny can rely upon the emotional comfort and temporary leadership granted by the other. Both Anderson's and Sherwin's diaries support this view by providing examples of the same pattern repeating itself on numerous occasions. In the case of *If...*'s pre-production and filming stages, David Sherwin's diary entries, referring to his stay at Lindsay Anderson's family cottage, mirror the account of Anderson's breakdown on the eve of shooting.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Anderson documents his location-scouting trip to Charterhouse, at the end of which he reports Sherwin experiencing his own anxiety attack:

As we left, David announced himself as feeling quite ill and intimidated by the whole experience... we recovered a bit with teas and a Kit-Kat and records on the juke box in a chara caff on the road home...

(Anderson 2004a: 185)

The working pattern between the two men also provides an illustration of the human dimension underpinning the coming-into-existence of the script. It further lends legitimacy to Anderson's vision of the film-making process as a fusion of many and various creative elements; the script becomes an intrinsic part of the production of the film. Neither a compilation of filming guidelines for the director, nor the transposition

of a novel, the script is the product of a creative dynamic which, in turn, makes the film possible.

Two episodes further illustrate the relevance of the dynamic that underpins Anderson and Sherwin's partnership. The first involves the writing stage: the second, the passage from script to screen. In 1994 Lindsay Anderson recalled a key instance of a scene 'which seem[ed] entirely right within the film but which [was] not in the original script' at the start of filming (2004b: 117). The scene in question occurs straight after the sequence during which the three main protagonists and friends – Mick, Johnny and Wallace – go through the ritualistic flogging by the school's prefects. Anderson reports that he did not think that the scene 'worked' as scripted, so instead he relied upon his intuition and devised an entirely new scene. For the director the new scene, showing Mick shooting darts at a collage of newspaper cuttings, 'solved the transition after the beating' (Anderson 2004b: 117).

The background to the filming of this unscripted scene reinforces Lindsay Anderson's distinctive championing of the existence of creative elements at the heart of the film-making process. Anderson's account, justifying the suppression of one scene and its substitution by another conceived by the director himself, initially seems to echo François Truffaut's own directorial practice on *Les Quatre-Cents Coups/ 400 Blows* (1959), a film which has often been cited alongside Anderson's *If...* for their common homage to Jean Vigo's *Zéro de Conduite/Zero for Conduct* (1933). Roger Manvell quotes Truffaut as advocating a directorial practice liberated from the constraints of a written script and thereby opening up fully the cinematic potential of a film (Manvell 1966: 69).<sup>16</sup> While the French New Wave representatives are keen to suggest that a gradual dismissal of the screenwriter's input ought to operate when moving from the page to the screen,<sup>17</sup> the collage scene constitutes another manifestation of the dynamic underlying Anderson and Sherwin's collaboration; this visual token illustrates the process of equivalence that supersedes any traditional definition of authorship. Lindsay Anderson provides an illustration of this process of equivalence such as it applies to the two men's working pattern and, in this instance, to the collage scene:

[A]s the script developed we were consciously determined *not* to appear to be reflecting, in journalistic style, upon the revolutionary student action in France or in America. That was one reason why [...] we eliminated all the fashionable iconography of revolt from the walls of the boys' studies.

(Anderson 2004b: 109)

Anderson's comment highlights the extent to which the development of the script and its transposition to the screen function interdependently from each other. The decision to take out a scripted scene from the film does not constitute a challenge to the validity of the screenwriter's

16. 'I work practically without a shooting script; all I prepare is the dialogue [...] You can't put the best moments of a film down in a script' (Truffaut in Manvell 1966: 69).
17. See for instance Louis Marcorelles: 'The credits of *A Bout de Souffle* list François Truffaut as screenwriter and Claude Chabrol as "artistic supervisor"; but this was done for the benefit of the technicians' union and, in fact... Truffaut's contribution was the discovery of a news snippet which became the starting point of the plot. *A Bout de Souffle* is therefore a genuine *film d'auteur* – more so than either *Les Quatre-Cents Coups* or *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*, to which the screenwriters made powerful contributions' (Marcorelles 1960: 84).

18. 'It is only when you make [the film], you write it, you film it, you edit it that all the creative process sets in, and that you reach a conclusion which is the film *per se*' (Anderson 1969, trans. the author).
19. The notebooks themselves are held in the Lindsay Anderson Collections, Stirling University.

work. Instead, the main protagonist 'firing darts into the collages broaden[s] the impact' intended by the film (Anderson 2004b: 118), and reaffirms the collaborative dimension of the pair's work because, as Sherwin explains, 'we worked through the night, arranging the pictures in different patterns on the floor, until finally we have highly charged collages for our heroes' (Sherwin 1997: 23).

This mention in Sherwin's diaries of the collage scene assumes further significance when seen in parallel with an incident that took place barely a month beforehand. David Sherwin was present for the shooting of the sequence showing the three friends carrying out their punishment for killing the chaplain. Just as the camera was supposed to start rolling, Lindsay Anderson started reproaching Sherwin for not having written one single line of dialogue between the protagonists from that place in the story until the very end of the film. At that point Anderson appears to forego all claim of authorship over the script and instead castigates his screenwriter for his alleged laziness. Sherwin's rebuke – 'It's called poetry, Lindsay – the poetry of cinema' (Sherwin 1997: 23) – undermines the traditional notion of authorship being limited to particular stages of the film-making process. A more fluid definition takes precedence: one which acknowledges the area of expertise of each person involved in the film-making process, while at the same time emphasizing the existence of a continuous exchange inherent to that same process. Sherwin's active contribution to the preparation for the scene, which had come into existence as a result of directorial involvement, puts forward the interdependence of both. This dynamic sheds a new light upon the claim of the authorship over the script, which involves a process of equivalence.

There is no journal or shooting diary of the film itself; as far as we know, Lindsay Anderson did not keep a record of his day-to-day experience of shooting *If....* Anderson did, though, give a significant number of interviews at the time of *If....*'s release in 1968, as well as on the occasion of the film's presentation at the 1969 Cannes International Film Festival. These interviews suggest that Anderson, the director, goes beyond the normal and expected practice of marketing a film: it brings out Anderson's view of his function as a director or, in other words, how this function translated into the practice of film-making. For instance, in a 1969 interview to a French cinema journal, *Jeune Cinéma*, Anderson defines his role as film director as an integral part of the creative process underpinning film-making, as opposed to being the film's sole or main originator: 'c'est quand on le fait, qu'on l'écrit, qu'on le tourne, qu'on fait le montage que s'opère tout le processus créateur et au bout on arrive à une conclusion qui est le film' (Anderson 1969: 9).<sup>18</sup>

Anderson's published diaries provide another example of his view; the editor, Paul Sutton, notes the presence in Anderson's notebooks of a mock interview featuring both the questions and the answers (2004a: 193).<sup>19</sup> One of the mock questions outlines the relevance of the

film to the trends and concerns of 1960s' youth. Lindsay Anderson's corresponding answer is consistent with the interviews the director gave at the time of the film's release in which he would emphasize the film's claim to thematic and stylistic universality. In other words, both the storyline and the adopted filming style would illustrate the principle of Dr Johnson's 'grandeur of generality' (Anderson 1968: 113); the core example, which underpins the director's argument here, involves a systematic reference – with varying degrees of openness – to the collage artwork episode. Anderson's consistent use of the personal pronoun 'we' to explain the rationale behind the selection process of each photograph and/or any item relating to the students' possessions and surroundings, implies a direct correlation between the written intention present in the script and its visual realization onscreen. In other words, a scene became a reality as the result of a process whereby the role of the director and that of the screenwriter assume a function of equivalence. This function of equivalence happens when the directorial decision originates an unscripted scene, but which only becomes 'filmable' through the intervention of the screenwriter, who acts both intellectually as cognisant of the script and literally by taking over the role of the art department.

Another example of this notion of correspondence between script and screen or, in other words, between the screenwriter's wording and the director's visualization in the case of Anderson and Sherwin's collaboration, involves the so-called episode of the 'Chaplain-in-the-Drawer'. We learn about the genesis of this oft-commented-upon scene in David Sherwin's diaries. During the working holiday in April and May 1967 at Lindsay Anderson's family cottage, Sherwin reports the circumstances that saw the birth of one of the key scenes in *If....*:

It happens like this. I am lying on the floor with a pad and Lindsay is walking around the large wardrobe. We are running through the scene where the Crusaders are being 'punished' by the Headmaster for 'murdering' the Chaplain. And I blurt out: 'Cut from the screaming Chaplain... to the Headmaster... Now, Lindsay, at this moment the Headmaster slides open the large chest of drawers and there is the Chaplain! He sits up and the Crusaders each shake his hand one by one. Then the Chaplain lies down and the Headmaster shuts the drawer...

(Sherwin 1997: 17)

For anyone who has seen the film, the correspondence between script and screen is striking. In terms of the dynamics operating between the screenwriter's and the director's respective practice, it provides an example of this idea of equivalence that constitutes a key feature of their partnership. It also brings further confirmation that Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin's working collaboration on *If....* challenges the traditional notions of authorship within

20. Reprinted in Lindsay Anderson (2004b: 194–199).

the film-making process; through the director's and screenwriter's open acknowledgment and sustained exchange with the constitutive stages of the film-making process, a more fluid understanding as to who is making/writing/ creating the film becomes possible. When Anderson, as a director, defends *his* choice of literally 'putting the Chaplain in the Drawer' (Anderson 2004b: 118), he provides evidence of the dialectic which he places at the heart of his artistic practice; 'I used to throw myself against reality out of which I can create something – but to create that reality is very hard for me. I only seem able to work through some kind of dialectic' (Anderson 2004a: 174).

### **CONCLUSION: CREATING AUTHORSHIP?**

In 1976 Gore Vidal launched his own attack on the auteur theory by dismissing the centrality of the director's role within the film-making process. He contends that the director is 'expendable' as 'there are thousands of movie technicians who can do what a director is supposed to do... they actually do his work behind the camera and in the cutter's room' (Vidal 1976: 148). He argued instead for the primacy of the screenwriter's role, going as far as proclaiming that 'there is no film without a written script' (Vidal 1976: 148). As mentioned previously, in an article for *Sequence*,<sup>20</sup> Lindsay Anderson promoted an all-encompassing view of the film-making process, whereby each constitutive phase was granted its full relevance and significance – 'to form something new, something individual, a whole greater than its parts' (Anderson 1948: 199). His article provides an overview of the constitutive stages of a film, assessing the contribution of each and attempting to set up a possible hierarchy to determine their relation to one another within the film-making process. His view of the screenwriter's role is particularly insightful as it reaffirms the centrality of the script while maintaining the idea of an integrated process. Anderson believes that any weaknesses in the script will damage the film, no matter how skilled the director might be; but conversely, the script does not exist in its own right as a novel or a play might. In other words, the quality of a film – aesthetically or thematically – stems from the skilful negotiation between the written and the visual, 'for it is under the director's guidance that the film is created, transformed from the inadequately expressed idea of the script to a living sequence of sound and images' (Anderson 1948: 198).

Anderson's use of the term 'inadequate', to qualify the written word before its transcription onto the screen, recalls François Truffaut's attack upon the French Tradition de Qualité which he attributed to screenwriter-director partnerships such as the one embodied by Jean Aurenche and Pierre Bost (Truffaut 1954: 224–36). In his influential 1954 essay in *Cahiers du Cinéma*, 'Une Certaine Tendance du Cinéma Français', Truffaut denounced the practice known as the process of equivalence or 'invention without betrayal'

(Truffaut 1954: 226). This refers to transformation between media, whereby in screen adaptations of pre-existing novels or plays, some scenes would be deemed un-filmable. Truffaut believed instead in the potential for an 'auteur's cinema' (Truffaut 1954: 234), that is, a practice of film-making which would acknowledge the true potential of the medium. Using Robert Bresson's bold inclusion of a supposedly un-filmable scene in his adaptation of *le Journal d'un Curé de Campagne/ Diary of a Country Priest* (1951), Truffaut advocates the need for transcending the boundaries which 'scenarists, directors and *littérateurs*' have imposed upon film-making (Truffaut 1954: 234). Within our present context, it proves tempting to shed a new light upon a seminal text that is commonly regarded as the manifesto of the *Politique des Auteurs*, which was to champion the centrality of the director's role in the film-making process and the study of film.<sup>21</sup> It is worth noting that, in that same article, Truffaut resorts to screenwriting practice to illustrate the shortcomings of the 'scenarists and *metteurs-en-scène* of the "Tradition of Quality"'; he argues that (screen)writing comedy is the ultimate test for identifying the true men of the cinema (1954: 234). In other words, Truffaut might also have intuited the interdependence of screenwriting and film directing but subsequently failed to investigate the connection any further, as his later contributions to *Cahiers du Cinéma* tend to suggest. Lindsay Anderson's vision for the role of the director in the film-making process would here provide the missing connection by highlighting the centrality of the latter's role while simultaneously arguing for the need of a creative trigger. In other words, Truffaut's reference to the writing of comedy as a way of testing the cinematic potential of 'true men of the cinema', would echo Anderson's view of the 'form versus content' debate in the cinema. For Anderson contrary to what is happening 'in the other arts [that display many] facets of the same personality, in the cinema we have a varying number of artists – each perhaps with a slightly different conception of the work they are combining to create (Anderson 1948: 198). In that same article for *Sequence*, Anderson further argues in favour of regarding the director's role as essential, making possible the 'fusion' of the creative elements in the film. He also simultaneously proclaims the director's reliance and dependence upon the other members of the filming crew – 'he cannot stand alone' (Anderson 1948: 199). This is a view which Lindsay Anderson reaffirmed throughout his career as a film critic (e.g. 1955: 255–256; 262; 271–276), and which his working collaboration with David Sherwin on *If....* exemplified. In 'Notes For A Preface' (Anderson 2004b: 120), Anderson acknowledges the autobiographical undertones that pervade the film, but urges audience and critics alike to look at it in more general terms. The way in which the personal (both Anderson and Sherwin attended a public school) and the artistic intersect in *If....*, parallels the way in which the context of the late 1960s that surrounded the film's release – that

21. See David Gerstner and Janet Staiger (2003: 3–25) and Virginia Wright-Wexman (2003: 1–18) for instance, for recent overviews of the debate surrounding the issue of authorship in film.

22. See Lindsay Anderson (2004b: 118).

of 'youthful dissidence and revolt' (Anderson 2004b: 108) – intersected with the film's script. It provides the metaphor for their working dynamic just as the parallels between lived experience and social context fed into the film – at the pre-production, production and exhibition stages. In that sense, their collaboration on *If...* transcends the conventional boundaries of authorship within the film-making process. The intrusion into each other's area of expertise does not signify a denial of authorship; instead, it signals a constant interchange of creative practice. Just as film functions as a metaphor for society but not merely as a reflection upon current events,<sup>22</sup> Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin's collaboration illustrates the possibility in film of:

...a complex series of relationships, susceptible to so many changes of emphasis... But one constant truth emerges – that the evolution of a whole and consistent film demands a rare, almost miraculous fusion of many and various creative elements.

(Anderson 1948: 199)

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