Aliens, bodies and conspiracies: Regimes of truth in The X-files

Leanne McRae
Edith Cowan University

1999

Aliens, bodies and conspiracies : regimes of truth in The X-files

Leanne McRae
Edith Cowan University

Edith Cowan University

Copyright Warning

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study.

The University does not authorize you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site.

You are reminded of the following:

- Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright.

- A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. Where the reproduction of such material is done without attribution of authorship, with false attribution of authorship or the authorship is treated in a derogatory manner, this may be a breach of the author's moral rights contained in Part IX of the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).

- Courts have the power to impose a wide range of civil and criminal sanctions for infringement of copyright, infringement of moral rights and other offences under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth). Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

Aliens, Bodies and Conspiracies: Regimes of Truth in *The X-Files*

By
Leanne McRae, BA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the award of

Master of Arts

(Media Studies)

at the School of Communications, Health and Science

Department of Communications and Multimedia

Edith Cowan University

1999

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

The X-Files is a television program that first screened on Australian television in 1993. This thesis will investigate the role of *The X-Files* as a cultural text. *The X-Files* is a significant program, and has contributed to a shift in the way in which television texts represent ideas about society, knowledge and truth. This thesis argues that *The X-Files* presents 'knowledge' in particular ways, and makes it possible to think about the relationship between the body, knowledge, and society in ways which have not previously been so visible.

Bodies have been more consistently, spectacularly and regularly mutilated on *The X-Files* than on any previous television program. The body is a site for infestation, invasion and possession, and the program insistently searches for knowledge and meaning *within* as well as through the body.

By examining the approach of *The X-Files* and previous and contemporary science fiction television (*Babylon 5, Star Trek*), this thesis suggests that *The X-Files* has a less insistently visual approach to racial knowledge: aliens in this program are not always visible as such. However, at the same time, *The X-Files* emphasises the power of invisibility. This challenges the formulation of 'community' in *The X-Files*. Where communities are often defined visually in both the traditional and 'new' public sphere: those who look different are often involved in a problematic relationship with the central community. This is not the case in *The X-Files*. It is also the role of conspiracy in *The X-Files* to conceal knowledge about society. Conspiracies are the most common ways in which the regimes of power are represented within *The X-Files*. This suggests that the traditional and new forms of the public sphere are not effective in providing knowledge about society. *The X-Files* takes this further, however by suggesting that although the public sphere may be depleted there is still room for *resistance* through a privatised public sphere. This is where proficiency in consumerism provides the criteria for negotiating the popular media as the new public sphere.

The relationship between this knowledge and the viewing public will then be explored. This thesis examines the ways in which the possibilities of the text are taken up by audience communities on the Internet. In particular, it will

examine whether the information presented in the program is understood to be 'truth' or 'fantasy': whether it provides viewers with ways of making sense about the society in which they live. It will aim to locate the ways in which the challenges to knowledge within *The X-Files* has been mobilised within popular discourse and the extent to which this knowledge provides the basis of the construction of the Internet community.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except for where due reference is made in the text. It does not contain any defamatory material.

Signature: ███████
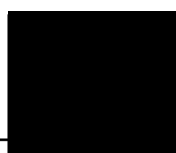
Date: 23 3 2000

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who have assisted me in the completion of this dissertation. Firstly I would like to thank Dr Alan McKee for his supervision on this project.

To my Mum and Dad for their unending faith and love, which taught me to have faith in myself.

Finally, to all my friends and colleagues who have encouraged and supported me: Ann, Dennis, Keith, Helen, Richard, Paul, Adrianne and Deborah. Thank you all for your humour and generosity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction:
The Truth is Where?

Mulder: You saw exactly what I saw in the sky tonight. What do you think they were?
Scully: Just because I can't explain it, doesn't mean I'm going to believe they were UFOs.
Mulder: Unidentified Flying Objects. I think that fits the description pretty well. Tell me I'm crazy.
Scully: Mulder, you're crazy.
(*Deep Throat*).

The X-Files first screened on Australian television in 1993. The premise of the program is that two FBI agents investigate cases that remain unsolved due to unexplained phenomenon. These two agents employ different approaches to their investigation. One is a medical doctor and employs methodical scientific reasoning to her approach. The other has a history of researching the Occult and employs a certain unorthodox approach relying on mythologies, instinct, folklore and other assorted sources.

In *The X-Files* the two approaches interact and a dialogue on knowledge emerges. This position, however, does not take the 'usual' course of dominant representations. The rational scientific approach embraced by Agent Dana Scully does not always provide the irrefutable answers required to close the case, as is expected, and while Agent Fox Mulder's theories on supernatural phenomenon seem to propose an alternative, but not altogether unreasonable explanation- the two are not exclusive. Rather, they seem to rely on each other, neither one providing all the answers. The two forms of knowledge engage here and need each other in order to arrive at any sense of closure or 'truth'.

This thesis seeks to explore this debate and examine the role of knowledge within *The X-Files*. It seeks to examine the ways in which the discourses of *The X-Files* are

resituating common sense knowledges and therefore reconstituting the parameters of what we understand as, and how we understand, social reality. The program engages in a number of practices to rework and challenge these knowledges.

Government Denies Knowledge - of what?

> Mulder: I would never lie; I wilfully participate in a campaign of misinformation.
> (*Shadows*)

Knowledge is a contested concept and a great deal of work has been devoted to the nature of knowledge as a social organising tool under a variety of labels; Epistemology, Sociology of Knowledge, the History of Thought, the History of Ideas. These approaches have sought to understand the relationship between humans, knowledge and reality. This thesis does not seek to dispute or reconstitute this work. It seeks to work within it and draw on the notions of knowledge, society and culture in order to show how *The X-Files* is contesting the dominant ways in which knowledge is negotiated, and therefore how social reality is constructed.

Knowledges come in varying and diverse forms, many of which have been excluded from common sense approaches to understanding reality, however:

> Knowledge still pertains to everything that counts as knowledge, from folk beliefs, techniques and remedies for living, to religious ideas and collective opinions. Knowledges are also understood as expressing the collective experiences of entire societies as well as particular groups, classes, region and communties. (McCarthy, 1992, p. 22)

Even though such diversity in knowledge exists there has been consistent trends in social history to only validate certain kinds of knowledge over others as social organising principles. What is crucial to this thesis and to an understanding of 'reality' is understanding knowledge as a truth claim; "It is information that we recognise to be genuine that yields the characteristically human sort of knowledge that distinguishes

us as adult cognizers from machine, other animals and even our childhood selves" (Lehrer, 1992, p. 4). Knowledge must have a claim to truth to be *valid* knowledge and therefore worthwhile to engage with. This is suggested by Fiske, (1992), in his examination of the hierarchy of knowledge. Fiske proposes that some knowledges are perceived to be more valid than others and only those that are most valid, like scientific rationalism for example promote Truth and are seen to be worth knowing and engaging with. In short, "knowledge refers to any and every set of ideas accepted by one or another social group, or society of people, ideas pertaining to what they accept as real" (McCarthy, 1996, p. 23). These knowledges are predominantly in the area of science and carry a powerful agency in the understanding of social reality. In *The X-Files* however, in positioning a dialogue between valid and invalid knowledges the program destabalises the notion of science as the only valid notion in which to understand this social reality.

This thesis explores what else may be constituted as truthful knowledge about society and how this concept, of science as the only truth, is contested. We begin our exploration into *The X-Files* and into knowledge with an understanding of 'reality'. Theorists such as Marx, (1976), Durkhiem, (1984), Mannheim, (1966, 1980), and others believed that society existed as an actual location, and argued that knowledge was something that was constituted out of the material conditions of this location. Conversely the work of Stark, (1991), Levi Strauss, (1968), McCarthy, (1996), and others argued that society is a discursive product, that it is determined by the knowledges mobilised in an understanding of social relations. As a result, when we consider the 'social construction of reality' (McCarthy, 1996, p. 20), the status of knowledge about society becomes vitally important.

Realism is not what it used to be.

> Scully: There's something up there Mulder.
> Mulder: Ooooh, I've been saying that for years.
> (*Gender Bender*)

> ...interest in the role of knowledge has developed along with the recognition
> that social reality is not a phenomenon that exists in its own right but one that
> is produced and communicated; its meanings are derived in and through these
> systems of knowledge. (McCarthy, 1992, p. 17)

Reality does not exist separate from humans; it is constructed through knowledges

engaged by humans. These knowledges however, must still rely on truth claims. These

truth claims are not necessarily objective fact in its true sense, but rather social

conventions. These are knowledges that are accepted as common sense and have been

put in place over time so they are simply accepted as the way of doing things. These

knowledges rely on the history of their own usage as a source of validation within our

understanding of reality. This history contains ready-made meanings and judgements

that already situates reality within a framework. The meanings we draw from these

knowledges operate within already accepted conventions of what we consider as

truthful.

Discourse: Something to talk about.

> Mulder: Do you think they would have taken me more seriously if I had worn
> the grey suit?
> (*Tooms*)

These meanings are drawn upon when formulating ideas. Our understanding of truth

relies on this history of meaning and what Stark (1987, p. 9) refers to as the

axiological realm.

> The axiological layer of the mind is the *apriori* system of social valuations or
> prejudgements, which enable us to form, out of the infinitude of the knowable,
> the finite and hence comprehensible universe of the known. Without this
> system of judgements, without this prior evaluation, ones view of the factual

scene would never shape and order itself, would never become historical knowledge.(Stark, 1987, p. 9)

This axiological layer of the mind positions a strong sense of convention when it comes to understanding knowledges and our social reality. It also closes us off to many possibilities that contradict or do not conform to the system of valuations we use to determine valid knowledge. Knowledges here are not separate from us as humans, we determine our social reality as we determine what is valid. Reality does not exist separately from us. An entire history of ideas is drawn upon when formulating ideas and making decisions about the validity of knowledges. As a result, nothing exists outside of our capacity to make *sense* of these knowledges. These meanings- our history of ideas- are discursive. *The X-Files* takes on this approach in its diegesis and attempts to position a challenge to knowledges that we simply accept as truthful and suggests that the knowledges we have accepted as common sense may not be adequate to explain the entirity of our social reality. *The X-Files* shows us a society that is complex and must engage with multiple knowledges and approaches to arrive at any reasonable understanding of truth. Science does not provide all the answers here and it is not always truthful. *The X-Files* encourages us to position the 'truth' as 'out there' in an attempt to suggest that it is not science nor any other form of necessarily valid knowledge that holds the answers, truth is far more difficult than that.

ABC easy as 123

> Mulder: He psyched the guy out. He put the whammy on him.
> Scully: Please explain to me the scientific nature of 'the whammy'.
> (*Pusher*)

The X-Files resituates such knowledges through its discourse around three major areas; aliens, bodies and conspiracies; or more properly, questions of identity and the

body, knowledge and visibility, and the relationship between knowledge, power and social organisation. In attempting to locate these shifts within *The X-Files*, a number of research questions will be asked; Why is *The X-Files* a significant text in our culture? How does *The X-Files* produce 'knowledge'? How does *The X-Files* discuss the mind/body distinction in relation to knowledge? How does *The X-Files* make it possible to think about the society in which we live?

This thesis argues that discourses on aliens, bodies and conspiracies in *The X-Files* are using these examples to challenge the basis of truthful knowledge in our society and thus, making it possible to renegotiate and expand notions of social reality. Examining audiences then, shows how these knowledges may be taken up in the construction of communities in our social reality. This thesis seeks to show the ways in which *The X-Files* challenges common sense notions of embodiment, visibility and power in the configuration of knowledge in our social reality. An examination of the relationship between embodiment and identity within the text and how it relates to an understanding of our selves is the starting point in this thesis of how knowledges can be challenged and negotiated in new ways.

I think therefore I am

The strict division between the mind and the body was positioned by Descartes with the phrase; "I think therefore I am." In uttering these words, the validity of the mind was privileged over the body in the configuration of an identity. In this manner, identity was conceived of as a stable structure. What is important about identity, however, and what we have come to understand in Queer theory is that it is more fluid than stable. Behavioural and personal characteristics are discursively constructed. That is, they are not given, but produced within the individual through experience.

However our concept of the formation of identity still relies on traditional notions of mind and body relationships. This relationship relies on rigid notions of the mind as a realm that is defined separately from the body. This idea is restrictive in the sense that it also assumes that once an identity is developed it will remain fixed; "Social theory...(commits) itself to the claim that identities are constructed but primarily seeing that construction as a matter of the preparation of young people for adult participation" (Calhoun, 1994, p. 3). This is the idea that 'true' identity, or the 'true' self lies in the mind; "A crucial common denominator is recognition of a new kind of stress on identity that is, on the notion that self is integrally and immediately being and consciousness, name and voice" (Calhoun, 1994, p. 9). The body, in this relationship is left as a redundant vehicle and simply a vessel for the self, devoid of any value in of itself. The body here is largely redundant with no value in the formation of an identity and may even pollute the mind; "Bodily activity can thus be dismissed as essentially alien to the mind, wherein lies the true essence of the self" (Cranny-Francis, 1995, p. 3).

However ideas of identity are being reformulated and as a result much work (eg; Probyn, 1995, Waldby, 1996, Nicholson, 1990) have sought to situate *embodied knowledges*. The idea that the body can provide a site through which thinking can be done and reconfigured to disempower the patriarchal validity of mind over body. This is the idea that the body generates a range of meanings in relation to power and social relations that needs to be examined with consideration to the body as a site of knowledge. Work on the body has mainly taken shape around gender discourses with the alignment of the body and femaleness, the mind and maleness and the power relations generated by this. While this thesis draws on this work in understanding the relationship of the body to knowledge, it is also interested in the new concepts of

identity as explored within Queer Theory. The interest is in the ways in which this can open up new territory for embodied knowledge as explored in *The X-Files*.

Work within Queer Theory (Jagose, 1996, Dellamora, 1996, Seidman 1996) deals with identity as a fluid idea- something that is never fixed but is continually negotiated. It does not rely on the mind/body dualism (or division) but seeks to challenge the dualisms in gender (masculinity or femininity) by challenging the sex-gender-sexuality continuum. Queer work on sexuality as a social construction has linked bodies, pleasures, desires and identity. By focussing on heterosexuality as a social and political organising principle, Queer theory has positioned solid links between the body and identity.

> Queer theory's debunking of stable sexes, genders and sexualities develops out of a specifically lesbian and gay reworking of the post-structuralist figuring of identity as a constellation of multiple, unstable positions. (Jagose, 1996, p. 3)

Queer theorists seek to figure identity as permanently open. They position a fluid relationship between gender and sexuality thereby arguing for a more negotiated relationship between the body and identity.

This concept is drawn upon when situating the ways in which bodies are treated in *The X-Files*. The program challenges the mind/body dualism, though not only through the excesses of the body, but through challenges to common sense gender distinctions. Such as in *Gender Bender* where the sexuality of the characters in the episode are dramatically altered and ambiguous, the relationship between Mulder and Scully and the inverted gendered knowledges they engage with, and themes of reproduction within the alien discourse of the text. In making such challenges *The X-Files* is also reconfiguring common sense notions of what constitutes the self, or identity. *The X-Files* positions a much more fluid idea of identity.

Queer theorists consistently, seek to position the body and identity as a much more fluid entity. Gender, as a, or the, construct of identity is inadequate in their terms. In this context, the body is situated as fixed, constructed biologically and assigned as male or female. This then is fixed into gender roles, masculine and feminine as forms of identity, which as such guarantee a dominant heterosexuality. Queer theory's challenge to these dominant constructs enables the body to be situated differently. The body can be moved beyond simple constructs of gendered identities and can be thought of as a site of interaction between social, scientific and personal knowledge. The body is excessive in *The X-Files* and refuses to be contained. Stable notions of self and identity spill out into the surrounding world only to be reconstructed into something new. 'Normal' notions of embodiment and identity do not apply. In *The X-Files* it is the grotesque body that is the major site for meaning. Corporeality itself is situated as transgressive. It is difficult here to create the body as simply an object and the mind as the source of the subject. The distinctions between these two realms are collapsing which means that the subject/object division of the mind/body dualism can be deconstructed. In *The X-Files* not only is the body excessive, inscribing it as a site for dramatic negotiation, but identity becomes attached to the body as opposed to the mind. Identity then is primarily deconstructed as a coherent, contained notion by the cyborg in the text.

> By the late twentieth century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics... the relation between organism and machine has been a border war. (Haraway , 1991, p. 150)

Cyborgs are the nexus between humans and nonhumans. They exist on the border of common sense relationships between body and mind, humans and nonhumans. In this capacity, the cyborg is resituating embodiment and redefining the self. Shifting gender

as the primary construct of identity suggests identity is constructed through more complex means; "Gender might not be global identity after all, even if it has profound historical breadth and depth" (Haraway, 1991, p. 180). *The X-Files* then aligns with Queer theory and its desire to deprioritise the sex-gender-sexuality continuum by transgressing the boundaries of the body and identity. *The X-Files* presents cyborgs throughout its diegesis and positions them as a primary mode of engagement with the social world.

"*They* have been here for a very long time Mr Mulder." *Deep Throat.*

While boundaries of the body and gender are being transgressed in *The X-Files* so are the boundaries of what constitutes a community. Anderson (1991, p. 6) argues that the nation community is imagined; " It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." Even though the nation is imagined, it is however 'known'. We 'know' the nation because we are told about it through what John Hartley calls the 'new' or postmodern public sphere-the media; "...television can be studied as a meaningful system, whereby social meaning is circulated among particular individuals by textual means. (Hartley, 1992, p. 85) Television is the new public sphere through which the social is discussed and made visible. It is through this system that, the largely unseen community exists, or is represented. It is here where we see imaginings of the community;

> ...It is a place, but you can't walk into it, and it is a group of people - a vast group of people- but they never meet.... So while they don't exist as spaces and assemblies, the public realm and the public are still to be found, large as life, in media. (Hartley, 1992, p. 1)

Representation is the key to understanding and negotiating the nation community. It is through this public sphere that the community is known. It is here that the members

are represented to 'us' so we are able to formulate knowledges around who is included within the community and who isn't.

Trespassers will be prosecuted!

Communities are constructed in order to construct boundaries to distinguish between 'us' and 'them'. Anderson (1991) identifies the ways in which constructing the nation and those that are included within it is powerful when he discusses the notion of the 'Unknown Soldier'. Unknown soldiers evoke a national imagery that inspires a notion of 'deep horizontal comradeship' (Anderson, 1991, p. 7) and clearly defined boundaries;"...void as these tombs are of identifiable mortal remains or immortal souls, they are nonetheless saturated with ghostly *national* imaginings. (Anderson, 1991, p. 9) These powerful national imaginings are generated around a deep sense of sharedness that is profoundly motivated by a sense of community and who belongs within it. These unknown soldiers are symbols of the effort to keep certain people out of the community they therefore are crucial to an imagining of those within and outside of the community. Further highlighted in the fact that these 'unknown soldiers' often do not exist at all and have to be imagined. They evoke the power of the national imagining and mobilise a range of discourses around the idea of community. The construction of the nation community through such imaginings has a powerful presence that significantly impacts on the ideas of what or who constitutes a community.

Seeing is believing

Discourses of visibility are one of the primary ways in which we are told that we can know who is not apart of this community, or who is not - the Other. The Other here is those who do not belong within the nation community, or those who are in the nation community but are extricated or marginalised within it; "Imperialism operated within

an ideal of the Manichaean binary, which constructed a demonised Other against
which flattering, and legitimating, images of the metropolitan Self were defined"
(Jacobs, 1996, p. 2). It is the public sphere that allows us to see those who are
included within the community and helps in the national imaginings. In examining
this public sphere, race can be used as a case study in an effort to locate who is
represented within the community and who is not. More traditional notions of what
constitutes a nation has relied on such definitions of race, religion or ethnicity as a
primary distinguishing factor between different nations. This approach however has
many significant problems, despite this it is often held onto as a way in which to given
foundation to abstract notions of sharedness or 'comradeship'. Race has not only been
mobilised in this fashion, it has also had a significant part to play in the legitimisation
of colonialism through the eighteenth, nineteenth and even twentieth century. Charles
Darwin's *Origin of the Species* is a primary example of the manner in which race was
theorised biologically; "No country can be named in which all the native inhabitants
are now so perfectly adapted to each other and to the physical conditions under which
they live, that none of them could be still better adapted or improved" (Darwin, 1859,
p. 111). This was mobilised as a strategy by Europeans to legitimate an entire process
of oppression and marginalisation through the expansion of the British and European
empires into Southeast-Asia and other places throughout the world.

What is important about this discourse is that race was a primary way in which the
relationship between visibility and knowledge became linked.

The history of definitions of race has relied upon visibility, and on the notion of
biologically conceived racial groups. The notion of colour itself is a way of situating
knowledge of race visually. The raced individual is deemed visible by his or her
physical difference, skin colour, hair texture, eye shape and so on; physical features

that are labelled different. However, socially, the raced individual is invisible. Racialized individuals are homogenised and disempowered through dominant social structures. This was done in colonisation through hegemonic institutional structures which were put in place in order to validate colonial rule. Schools, government, hospitals and so on were the institutions that mobilised the racist discourses of colonialism in order to position the ruling body as valid. (Grossberg, 1988, p. 26) The Other was and is identified through the relationship between visibility of knowledge. Once the Other is made visible, however, hegemonic structures go about putting in place social structures to make the Other invisible. This is part of a desire to maintain the dominance of the ruling position and to reinscribe relations between 'us' and 'them'.

> Whites assume visibility in virtue, though often in denial, of their whiteness, and extend visibility to those upon whom whiteness lights, in recognising the mulatto, for instance. Recognised as black, black people at once made visible to be rendered invisible to be 'denegrified'. (Goldberg, 1997, p. 87)

Hence the Other is made visible in order to either exclude, oppress and/or assimilate - make visible racially and invisible socially. The Other then is always knowable, knowable through marked raciality, and through representation once made invisible. The mediated public sphere is the contemporary place where we know the Other and it is also the place where they are rendered socially invisible or disempowered. Visibility and knowledge are inherently linked in this relationship and is the process whereby social relations are 'seen'.

New Life and New Civilizations

Within science fiction texts (*Star Trek, The Invaders, Babylon 5*) the Other is always visibly marked. The Other, here however, is not so much about race but alien. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis the same model can be applied. Aliens are

always visible and therefore always knowable. In fact the more obscure the alien is the larger the threat they are to any humans within the text. Frequently it is humanoid aliens who turn out to be so called 'good' aliens and grotesque bug-like aliens which are dangerous. For example in the television series *Something is Out There*, the threat to earth is a giant cockroach like alien and the alien sent to eliminate it is humanoid. Even though the evil alien is able to conceal itself as humanoid there is always the moment in which it can be identified for what it really is. It cannot contain itself within the human form. No matter what, it always becomes visible

Within *The X-Files*, this link between visibility and knowledge breaks down. The Other is not always visible. While aliens that operate on the periphery of the text maintain the link between visibility and knowledge, it is the notion of an Other - aliens at the centre of the text- transgressing the boundaries of community that is interesting for this thesis. The Other, in *The X-Files*, is not visible and therefore not knowable. Therefore the notion of the imagined community breaks down. The community is difficult to imagine when we are presented with such a radical transgression of otherness within the boundaries of the nation. The distinction between 'us' and 'them' becomes problematised and can no longer be strictly demarcated. The clarity of our social organisation is no longer guaranteed. Links between visibility and knowledge are contingent in *The X-Files*; 'knowing' cannot depend on this. However, within the diegesis this does not only apply to the relationship between aliens and humans, but between the organs of power, governmentality and social citizens.

Trust no one

Knowledge about power and social organisation is being deconstructed in *The X-Files* through the shifting of what is constituted as public and private spheres. The public

sphere was once an actual location- the Greek fora -at which the free members of the community met to discuss issues of importance and to see government at work. John Hartley (1992) argues that the public sphere still exists - and it is still an effective forum. However, he suggests that it has now been relocated to the popular media. The popular media is now the forum through which issues of interest and importance are brought to members of a community or society. Hartley goes further to locate the way in which the public and private spheres merge and how the power of the public sphere is transferred into the private sphere. The location of the television within the family home as a dominant forum of popular media is a prime location through which the public sphere is brought into the heart of privacy. This is where citizens become empowered to function within society. It is where they are able to see institutional power of public institutions. *The X-Files* relocates public power. The government is rarely represented within *The X-Files* and if it is, it is at the mercy of what seems to be a more powerful institution. Governmentality is not a place of power in the text, rather, power is located within private interests - The Smoke Ring and The Lone Gunmen. Jurgen Habermas, identifies the ways in which the public sphere has changed through economic and social development. This has lead to an increasing role of corporate interests in government and a shrinking of the traditional public sphere. Subsequently the public sphere fails to provide information about the regimes of power in order for citizens to participate in an active and informed manner in democracy; "Tendencies pointing to the collapse of the public sphere are unmistakable, for while its scope is expanding impressively, its function has become progressively insignificant. Still, publicity continues to be an organisational principle of our political order" (Habermas, 1989, p. 4).

While Hartley argues that the media has taken on this role, *The X-Files* accords with Habermas's approach in that it is not concerned with the popular media so much within the text. Rather *The X-Files* is interested in the ways in which the private sphere is mobilised through consumption to participate in rational-critical debate. By positioning conspiracy as a major theme, *The X-Files* is situating new modes of 'knowing society', primarily through a privatised public sphere as well as through the collapse of the traditional public sphere and divisions between state and corporate interests. Both The Smoke Ring and The Lone Gunmen represent new relationships between the public sphere and organs of power. Conspiracy theory in *The X-Files* does not position a clandestine organisation operating outside of society, nor does it present a dictatorial autonomous government manipulating the public. Rather there is a complex web of relationships between government, private, corporate interests and Extra-terrestrials which uses popular knowledge to hide behind.

Watching

These shifts in knowledge in *The X-Files* simultaneously construct, represent and reorganise the public as part of the nation community. The program itself is a part of Hartley's media public sphere. Within this role of constructing and representing a public the program itself is constructing a kind of public- audiences;"...the TV audience...represents a way of conceptualising not a group in society but what *constitutes* society as a whole in its specifically sense-making mode. (Hartley, 1992, p. 85) This thesis is not concerned with what audiences are 'actually' doing with *The X-Files*, (Whether they think it is *real* or not) rather it is concerned with the ways some audiences of the program employ it in a 'public' way- constructing communities on the Internet. The Internet provides a forum through which audiences can gather. In this forum they are represented and it can therefore be utilised as a mechanism

through which knowledges in *The X-Files* can be traced. In the final chapter of this thesis, I examine audience communities on the Internet. My research here is only meant as a case study, not a comprehensive analysis of audience activity. Audience communities on the Internet are not just 'active' audiences. Like fans (and surely many of them are), they are engaged in a process of manipulation and appropriation of the text in order to extend the pleasures associated with *The X-Files*; "...the fans assert their own right of interpretations, to offer evaluations and to construct cultural cannons" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 18). However, this is not the end of the audience's engagement with *The X-Files*. Audiences are engaged with the project of *The X-Files*- a project of the deconstruction of dominant cultural hierarchies.

The X-Files initiates this deconstruction through its themes of truth, ambiguity and transgression in aliens, bodies and conspiracies. Audiences pick up on these themes and through both diegetic and nondiegetic modes of engagement, celebrate, extend, parody and privilege these themes; "Yet the fan's resistance to the cultural hierarchy goes beyond simply the inappropriateness of their textual selections and often cuts to the very logic by which fans make sense of cultural experiences" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 18). Audience communities on the Internet are then engaged in the same deconstructive project as *The X-Files* - a challenge to dominant cultural hierarchies and knowledges. These audiences are repositioning common sense knowledges and in this fashion they too are challenging the dominant hierarchy of knowledges within social reality. The Internet provides a public forum through which the knowledges of *The X-Files* are further mobilised within popular discourse. These challenges become increasingly validated as they are mobilised in diverse ways. This thesis aims to trace this project and position *The X-Files* as an important cultural text. This is not just through the audience activity that surrounds it but through the fundamental challenges

to the way in which we make sense of our social reality. We begin our journey by examining in more detail the role of the cyborg in *The X-Files* and the manner in which this complex notion resituated ideas of embodiment and identity. Then we move onto visibility and knowledge and look at the ways in which this common sense relationship is fundamentally challenged in *The X-Files*. We then visit conspiracy theory and look at the manner in which the public sphere has been reinscribed and reanimated in its role. Finally we move beyond the diegesis to look at audiences and how this knowledge has been mobilised within social reality. This will be an attempt to trace the ways in which *The X-Files* has cued the deconstructive project of many Internet audience communities.

Chapter 1
Bodies and *The X-Files*: Know yourself.

What this man imagined, his dreams, who he loved, saw, heard, remembered,
what he feared, somehow, its...all locked in this small mass of tissue and fluid.
Special Agent Dana Scully -- *Little Green Men*.

This statement- made by special agent Dana Scully about to embark on yet another

autopsy- indicates the position the body occupies as a site of knowledge within *The X-*

Files. This statement positions subjectivity as an embodied experience as opposed to

an experience of consciousness. This directly breaks down the mind/body dualism of

much western philosophical thinking, in that the body becomes the privileged site of

the self. Rather than the mind, it is the body that leaves traces of the self, or identity.

This then challenges the notion of the body as an object or container for the self. The

idea of strictly demarcating the moment when the object (body) ends and the subject

(identity) begins cannot be so easily separated. The two become intertwined or rather,

always were intertwined. *The X-Files* makes this relationship clear in its transgression

of bodily boundaries through monsters and the cyborg. From monsters, clones,

mutants and creatures to Agent Scully's microchip and cancer and the Black Oil *The*

X-Files subverts any attempt at positioning dualisms or binaries and in doing so

situates a fluidity in identities.

Split personalities

Feminist thinking has demonstrated that the traditional mind/body split of Cartesian

philosophy (Cranny-Francis, 1992, Grosz, 1994) privileges 'disembodied' ways of

thinking; that the mind is at the centre of all that is rational, logical and valid.

There have been two broad approaches to challenging this binary within feminist

philosophy. The first privileges 'feminine' modes of knowledge production. It

celebrates those knowledges designated as inferior- such as intuition, emotion and

instinct- as valid forms of knowledge. Lorraine Code (1995) in a chapter entitled 'I

know just how you feel.', suggests that feeling and emotion as modes of knowledge

production should be recognised.

> Scientific...knowledge is better, so the prevailing wisdom goes, to the extent
> that it eschews empathy, with its affective (hence not objective) tone... in their
> separation of reason and emotion, they foreclose possibilities for adequate
> analyses of reason and knowing. (Code, 1995, p. 120-122)

This approach still operates within the traditional Cartesian binary of western

philosophy, but seems to privilege previously invalid forms of knowledge production.

The X-Files too appears to work within this model with two central characters, one

male, one female; one rational and scientific, the other intuitive and working by belief.

Agent Scully continually validates scientific approaches to investigative practices,

through her use of scientific experiments, canonical texts and proven knowledges.

In the *Pilot* episode Scully remarks to Mulder; "The answers are there, you just have

to know where to look." And in *Squeeze*; "Genetics might explain the patterns. It also

might explain the sociopathic attitudes and behaviours..." Conversely; Mulder rides

on belief and intuition, relying on instinct more than science. He uses his experience

in investigating unexplained phenomenon to point him in the right direction and

continually privileges the less valid approaches. In *Aubrey* Scully points to Mulder's

unorthodoxy;

> Mulder: "You mean a hunch?"
> Scully: " Yeah something like that."
> Mulder: " Well that's a pretty extreme hunch."
> Scully: " Well I seem to recall you having some pretty extreme hunches."

However, this is not the end point of *The X-Files* knowledge system. Firstly, the

rational thinker is a woman - the one who would traditionally be associated with

emotional and instinctive approaches to knowledge. The male, normally associated

with rational approaches, relies on instinct and belief. Furthermore, it is not always obvious within the text which way of thinking wins out. Mulder and Scully invert the traditional relationship between knowledge and gender by positioning the male with the more embodied engagement with instinct and belief, and the female with the more logical 'mind' approach of science. This relationship is further challenged with the two modes of thinking interacting and overlapping in a conducive partnership in the pursuit of truth. Almost every case assigned to Mulder and Scully relies on Scully's medical expertise and Mulder's instincts to come to any sort of plausible explanation of events. One approach is not valid without the other. For example; in El Chupacabra it is Mulder's reliance on folklore that leads the investigation to the correct suspect but it is Scully's science that isolates the organism used in the murders.

Pregnant Pauses

Feminist epistemology also demands new ways of thinking about the relationship between the mind and the body. Here the question is not the value of disembodied versus embodied knowledge, rather the proposition is that all thinking is thinking through the body. Pivileging the body in this manner serves to deconstruct patriarchal knowledges about embodiment and identity, however it does so through an inversion of the mind/body dualism.

> [For]Helene Cixous...patriarchal binary thought...head/emotions...these binary oppositions can be analysed as a hierarchy where the 'feminine' side is always seen as negative...Her whole theoretical project can in one sense be summed up as the effort to undo this logocentric ideology...and to hail the advent of a new, feminine language that ceaselessly subverts these patriarchal binary schemes. (Moi, 1995, p. 105)

Cixous suggests that because women have different experiences of their bodies, they think differently and make sense of the world differently.

> Women's...experiences of pregnancy and childbirth, for example, entail the possibility of a different relation to the Other...a feminine subject position

refuses to appropriate or annihilate the Others' difference in order to construct the self in a (masculine) position of mastery... (Sellers, 1994, p. xxix)

In other words, women, through the very nature of their own bodies do not perceive a discrete boundary between self and others. Men, on the other hand, are understood to put greater distance between themselves and others. *The X-Files* however, challenges this idea through shifting in the link between gender and knowledge as positioned by Mulder and Scully. However, in this form of feminist thinking, the distinction between the subject and the object is a fiction. The body becomes a privileged site through which knowledge is generated and circulated. This knowledge is not only about the external world, but about the self. Embodiment becomes the primary means through which we understand ourselves and the world around us. This is not only about deconstructing approaches to gendered knowledge as the primary mode of social engagement. Rather that our entire social reality of embodiment and self and the way in which this interacts with the world, can be understood in much more complex ways.

Disembodied bodies

Scheman (1993) points out that in traditional epistemology, the thinking subject- although embodied- was perceived to be less embodied precisely because its body was unproblematic. Leder (1990) develops this idea through the concept of the absent body. She suggests that, the body, when functioning normally, is transparent - we cease to notice our bodies; "Perception of anything, Leder suggests, demands a kind of phenomenological absence or transparency of the perceiving organ" (Williams, 1998, p. 61). Our bodies only demand our attention when something happens to them. At this point we become aware of the way in which the subject and object overlap in the embodied state as the two become aware of each other. When we are made aware

of our bodies, we are controlled, influenced and shifted by this awareness.

> In so far as the body tends to disappear when functioning unproblematically, it seizes our attention most strongly at times of dysfunction. We become most aware of our bodies, in other words, when our spontaneous, unreflective relationship to them is disrupted in some way... (Williams, 1998, p. 61)

Through pain, disability, death and so on our unproblematic relationship to our body is disrupted. It is no longer easy to ignore the body. *The X-Files* continually gives us problematic bodies which transgress their boundaries and therefore refuse a clear distinction between subject (identity) and object (body). Williams (1998) argues that corporeality itself is transgressive. The body excretes, secretes and 'issues forth' a range of 'seepages' that transgress the boundary of the human body continuously. There is no neat boundary that closes off the body from the world, nor is there a neat boundary that closes off the body from the self. *The X-Files* consciously and continuously presents us with the grotesque in an attempt to deconstruct any notion of a 'clean' 'pristine' embodiment. The program deconstructs any notion of a clearly partitioned off sense of identity. This grotesque body as developed by Bakhtin is permanently transgresive.

> The grotesque body is not...a closed, completed unit; it is unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits. The stress is laid upon those parts of the body that are open to the outside world, that is, the parts through which the body itself goes out to meet the world...the emphasis is on the apertures or convexities, or on various ramifications and offshoots; the open mouth, the genital organs, the breasts, the phallus, the potbelly, the nose. The body discloses its essence as a principle of growth which exceeds its own limits only in copulation, pregnancy, childbirth, the throes of death, eating, drinking, defecation...From one body a new body always emerges in some form or other...The unfinished and open body (dying, bringing forth and being born) is not separated from the world by clearly defined boundaries; it is blended with the world, with animals, with objects. (Bakhtin cited in Williams, 1998, p. 64)

Bakhtin's grotesque body, along with later feminist theory and *The X-Files*, insists that bodies are inescapable. There is a problematic, messy and uncontainable relationship

between the body and identity. The neat divisions of dominant western thinking are inadequate to describe the role of the body as a site for and of knowledge.

Pizza

In privileging the Autopsy within the diegesis, *The X-Files* positions the body as a valuable site for gathering knowledge. An autopsy is performed almost every episode, and it is through the autopsy that valuable information is gained. The quotation opening this chapter clearly identifies the way in which the body is the possessor of knowledge about the self *and* the external world. The autopsied body provides a range of information about the subject and is often the point through which Mulder and Scully begin to understand the nature of their investigation. Autopsies in the *Pilot* episode, *Jose Chung's From Outer Space* and *Gethsemane*, for example, provide valuable information on the nature of the bodies examined.

In the *Pilot* episode, the shrunken body discovered in the coffin exhumed by Mulder is inconclusively identified, but reveals a nasal implant of unknown origin, a key piece of evidence which at the end of the episode is concealed by the hierarchy of the FBI. In *Jose Chung's From Outer Space* the dead alien discovered in the woods is revealed to really be a human in a suit through the autopsy performed by Agent Scully. In *Gethsemane*, the alien body discovered in the Alaskan wilderness is removed before the autopsy can reveal vital information, seriously hindering the investigation. In *Bad Blood*, the autopsy is used as a source of humour. Bodily organs are slopped into weighing machines while Scully is reminded of how hungry she is while examining the contents of the victim's stomach - pizza.

Autopsies not only reveal types and times of death, but also strange diseases

(*F.Emasculata*), and hidden organisms (*Piper Maru*). In short, they place the body at

the centre of knowledge within *The X-Files* in that they reveal as well as contain

information. Autopsied bodies are not neutral or redundant, rather they are an

abundance of information. It is not the live subject that is important in *The X-Files* -

rather it is the dead body that reveals information about the subject. The autopsied

body creates identity in new and interesting ways. In *The X-Files* identity does not end

with death, the body continues to exist as a subject beyond this point. This subject

may no longer think or feel, but can communicate all the same through the very real

tissues and cells of corporeality. In this manner corporeality cannot and is not closed

off, the body continues to extend out into the real world. This extension is however

most prevalent within the monsters of the text.

It's Alive!

The X-Files is populated with monsters; Victor Tooms, The Jersey Devil, Lyle, The

Flukeman, Mrs Paddock, Donnie Pfaster, Twin, 2Shy, The Peacock Clan, El

Chupacabra, Isaac Luria, Eddie Van Blundht, The Great Mutato are just a few that

position grotesqueness as a privileged position within the text. It is these monsters that

overtly call attention to the body within *The X-Files*.

These monsters are bodies out of control; their bodies spill across the strict dualist

boundaries of the closed body;" The issue is not so much that monsters threaten to

overrun the boundaries of the proper, as that they promise to dissolve them"

(Schildrick, 1996, p. 2). The monstrous body however, is the body of the Other, a

body, which openly leaks, secretes, mutates and flows. The notion that *The X-Files*

positions this body recurring and prevalent within the text is important in that it

becomes normalised within its discourse. Monsters are not abberations, they are the

dominant kind of body in the text. Consequently, they call attention to the

'abnormality' of the 'normalised' body. Normal bodies are out of place in *The X-Files*; it is the grotesque body that is prevalent. In the episode *Shapes*, Mulder and Scully investigate a case involving a man turning into a werewolf. In *The Host*, The Flukeman, is half human, half flukeworm, calling overt attention to the transgression of the human body. This monster is the size of a human with similar human facial features but with a worm's body. *'3'* is an episode about vampires, which inherently transgress the body boundary by violating it and feeding upon another human. The fangs of a vampire extrude into the outside world, providing a 'point' at which they may join with another human. In *Humbug*, Lenny's twin literally confuses the body boundary by being physically attached as well as able to be detached from Lenny. Where does Lenny's body end and the twin's begin? *Sanguinarium* has the evil Dr Franklin using the body parts of other humans to change his own appearance, through some macabre metamorphosis. In *Humbug*, almost the entire cast is made up of mutants and freaks and it is Mulder and Scully who are out of place. It is monstrousness that tends to normalised in *The X-Files*. However monsters, have existed in horror and science fiction films and even literature in this transgressive role for many years.

Vivian Sobchack describes the history of the monstrous human as a punishment for nonconformity. It is the one who operates outside of social norms and conventions is the one who becomes monstrous.

> The monster can be a scientist, a gangster, a 'hero', but he is almost always a misfit in the sense that he does not conform with accepted modes of social behaviour, or does not obey orders, and thus places himself in isolation, away from society, so that he alone is contaminated. (Sobchack, 1989, p. 51)

The 'victim' becomes the representation of his/her transgression - the monster. Films such as *Night of the Living Dead, The Fly, The Thing! Creature from the Black*

Lagoon, Alien and so on, all situate the monster at the centre of the text and embark on a struggle to restore the order of the 'normal' body. What is important and new about *The X-Files* is that it is the normal body that is out of place. Normalcy is rarely restored in *The X-Files* and even if it is - the next week, yet again monsters and bodies are out of control. In this way, the monster is privileged - it recurs in *The X-Files* and the order of the 'normal' body is not always restored (eg; *The Host*). Further, *The X-Files* depicts the *pleasure* of the monstrous body. The monsters in *The X-Files* gain intense pleasure from their transgression.

In *Tooms,* Victor Tooms, a one hundred-year-old hibernating mutant, needs to feed on human livers to sustain him through the thirty-year hibernation period. In one particular scene, Tooms is working for Baltimore Animal Regulation. He comes across a dead rat on the road, he puts his gloves on and picks the animal up, puts it in a garbage bag and into the van, he then licks his glove where he had touched the rat. Tooms gets intense pleasure from his desire governed by his transgressive body-literally tasting his own desire and unable to 'behave' within conventional structures of acceptance.

Dominant thinking suggests that this sort of transgression must be resisted, not embraced, and Tooms is definitely depicted as deviant, but *The X-Files* shows almost all its monsters as gaining pleasure from their bodies and their transgression. Monstrousness here positions Otherness as central. As a result, it is further challenging the relationship between gender and bodies.

> If a woman takes pleasure precisely from (her) incompleteness of form...that pleasure is denied by a civilisation that privileges phallomorphism...the one of form, of the individual, of the (male) sexual organ, of the proper name, of proper meaning. (Williams. 1998, p. 69)

Pleasure in *The X-Files* is gained from the transgressive body thereby deligitimising a patriarchal, 'phallomophic' approach to desire. Women's bodies then, which are also

the bodies of the Other are no longer positioned in a subordinate relationship to men's bodies. Rather all bodies are depicted as out of control. The 'normal' body is actually quite difficult to find in *The X-Files*. The pleasure of this transgressive body is a recurrent theme which therefore deconstructs the notion of women's deviance as well as dominant modes of bodily representation; that of the struggle to resist and conquer the monstrous and grotesque body.

The Monstrous Fem/asculine

In her work, on the monstrous feminine, Barbara Creed has expanded the idea of the woman as the Other. She shows how women are positioned as overtly monstrous simply through the nature of their embodiment particularly in recent films such as *Carrie* (1976), *The Exorcist* (1973), and *Aliens* (1986).

> Women's bodies, paradigmatically, and by elision, women themselves, exemplify an indifference to limits evidence by such everyday occurrences as menstruation, pregnancy, lactation and such supposedly characteristic disorders as hysteria. Women are out of control, uncontained, unpredictable, leaky: they are, in short, monstrous. (Schildrick, 1996, p. 3)

This work is based on the idea of the transgression of the body boundary as a source of horror, and females, in their status as the Other, are precisely the source of this horror. The privilege and recurrence of monstrousness in *The X-Files* deconstructs this notion. Not only are both men's and women's bodies depicted as out of control, but any sort of 'normal' body on which to position the theory is hard to find. Not only are monsters transgressing the boundaries of the body and positioning bodies out of control which are desirable, but Mulder and Scully too, have bodies which are out of control. It is not Scully who is monstrous, Mulder is too. In presenting the two heroes in this manner there is little scope for stability in identity within *The X-Files*. Here there is no central force, or person, or act that reorganises and restores the validity of common sense knowledges about the body and identity. Bodies and identities are in a

state of disruption and are permanently confused through new relationships between them.

Queer Things

Recent work within Queer Theory (Seidman, 1994, Dellamora, 1996, Radel, 1994.) has celebrated the notion of identity as fluid rather than the stable, solid notion it has commonly been thought of. This is inherently tied to the notion of the open, transgressive body of *The X-Files* and therefore the challenge to subject/object binaries.

> Queer theorists argue that identities are always multiple or at best composites with literally an infinite number of ways in which 'identity components' (eg; sexual orientation, race, class, nationality, gender, age, able-ness) can intersect or combine. Any specific identity construction, moreover is arbitrary, unstable and exclusionary. (Seidman 1994, p. 11)

The body is inherently tied to formations of identity. Seidman talks about race, age, able-ness and so on as some of the 'infinite number' of 'identity components'; elements which are inherently tied to corporeality. But such things as age, and able-ness that are related to the body, are not stable entities, they are contingent upon circumstances that shift over time. Bodies shift, change, age, expand and contract, all of which impact on the self, perception and the construction of identity.

> The body is a most peculiar 'thing' for it is never quite reducible to being merely a thing; nor does it ever quite manage to raise above the status of a thing. Thus it is both a thing and a non-thing, an object which somehow contains or coexists with an interiority, an object able to take itself and others as subjects, a unique kind of object not reducible to other objects. (Grosz, 1994, p. xi)

Grosz, identifies the manner in which bodies and embodiment are abstract and not necessarily coherent manifestations. As a 'thing' and a 'nonthing', the body exists in a kind of liminal social, theoretical and metaphorical reality whereby the notion of clearly defined boundaries of mind and body are redundant. Boundaries that close off

the body to the external world and restrict identity can no longer be adequately

understood. Cathy Waldby, argues that identity has been traditionally thought to be

coterminous with the boundaries of the body making the body a closed, solid object

with impermeable boundaries.

> The discrete subjectivity implied by individual identity can be brought into
> being by making the limits of the "I" coterminous with the body's outer
> surface, its skin. The body ego of individualistic subjectivity relies upon the
> impermeability of its skin to guard against disturbance from outside itself,
> from external objects and from 'others'. (Waldby, 1996, p. 72)

Waldby then goes onto argue that the body is not so impermeable; it is grotesque, it

leaks, secretes and changes, and therefore does not situate a solid "I". The body

boundary is not containable, both the body and identity spew out into, and is

influenced by, the external world. This body is simultaneously subject and object. It is

an object in the sense that it grows, sheds and touches and it is also a subject that

feels, experiences and perceives, which relies on the physicality of the body.

Identity is not purely an interior formation. It is continually shifted and changed

through changes in embodiment that is altered and mobilised by changes as it meets

the external world. As the body operates in this world; touches, feels, smells, is

invaded by it and invades it, embodiment adapts and is altered by this experience.

Identity does not remain stable in light of this. If identity is open and flexible, then it

must flow through the body and adapt to changes with and to the body.

In understanding the relationship between the body and identity in this manner,

traditional binaries become redundant. In engaging in this more fluid construct of both

the body and identity through monsters and autopsies, *The X-Files* too refuses the

dominance of binaries. The role of Mulder and Scully are also crucial in this process

as they come to mobilise more dramatically the role of the permeable body. Their

bodies are not grotesque but transgressive in that they do not rely on the skin being the

final boundary. Their bodies frequently move beyond this and they challenge

dominant modes of thinking primarily by being cyborgs.

"You say potato..."

Binaries or dualisms are dominant ways in which to make sense of social reality.

Mind/body, culture/nature, male/female, biological/technical, human/nonhuman, all

construct discourses and structures of power which create knowledges through which

to construct and understand social reality. These relationships often appear as

common sense, however this approach to understanding social relationships is flawed

in that it fails to recognise the autonomy of the so called 'lesser' category. Two

incompatible realms, eg; mind and body, are linked together and dealt with by

privileging one over the other. Dualisms are problematic in these terms as they place

restrictions on the variety of ways in which these elements may be made sense of.

Often there is little attention paid to the ways in which the two realms can overlap and

impact on each other.

Bruno Latour (1993) argues that society is not as segregated as these dualisms

suggest. Knowledges, practices, techniques and discourses cannot be partitioned off

into neat categories; there is certain amount of movement between these dualisms.

> All of culture and all of nature get churned up again everyday. Yet no one
> seems to find this troubling. Headings like Economy, Politics, Science Books,
> Culture, Religion, and Local Events remain in place as if there were nothing
> odd going on. The smallest AIDS virus takes you from sex to the unconscious,
> then to Africa, tissue cultures, DNA and San Fransisco, but the analysts,
> thinkers, journalists and decision makers will slice the delicate network traced
> by the virus for you into tidy compartments where you will find only science,
> only economy, only social phenomena, only local news, only sentiment, only
> sex...Let us not mix up heaven and earth, the global stage and the local scene,
> the human and the non-human... (Latour, 1993, p. 2)

Latour (1994) argues that in order to gain a more complete understanding of social

reality it becomes necessary to locate the cross overs and renegotiate dualisms to

include the interweaved, multiple knowledges that operate in an everyday context, but

remain divided in discourse. In an extension of the collapse in the mind/body dualism

Latour suggests that humans have extended their social relations to other actants, for

example; machines and technologies with which they construct a collective. By

situating non-humans in a link with humans, Latour is extending the experience of

embodiment and subjectivity further beyond the boundaries of the human body. "In its

scientific embodiments as well as in other forms, nature is made, but not entirely by

humans, it is a co-construction among humans and non-humans" (Haraway, 1992, p.

297). Cyborgs are metaphors for the extensions of technology into our everyday lives.

They are a representation of the ways in which our bodies have become seamlessly

sewn into the machines, techniques and technologies we use everyday.

> A cyborg is a hybrid creature, composed of organism and machine. But,
> cyborgs are compounded of special kinds of machines and special kinds of
> organisms appropriate to the late twentieth century. Cyborgs are post Second
> World War hybrid entities...(Haraway, 1991, p. 1)

The cyborg is a border creature. It is a manifestation of the inherent transgressiveness

of corporeality. Cyborgs rework nature and culture so that one can no longer be a

resource for the exploitation of the other and as a result they form a whole from parts.

(Haraway, 1989, p. 191) It deconstructs simplistic binaries into a more fluid

negotiated example of the manner in which bodies transgress boundaries.

The cyborg crosses the human/nonhuman border and positions the body as

transgressive. What is important about the cyborg is that it is not the body of the

Other. It is the 'normal' body that is transgressive and fluid. *The X-Files* positions the

heroes, Mulder and Scully as cyborgs. The two heroes of *The X-Files* are the

representation of the normal body not only in light of the monsters and aliens they

encounter, but in that the other humans in the text are also bodily out of control.

Cancerman evokes the imagery of infected lungs and smoke induced emphysema. Krychek is robbed of his arm in *Terma*. Marita Covarubias becomes infected with the Black Oil. Skinner experiences visions and has become infected with nanotechnology. The Lone Gunmen are simply odd bodies. One confined in a suit of respectability, the other grotesquely short, the other with long hair and bad eyesight. Scully, however becomes a cyborg when in *Neisi*; she discovers a metallic implant in the back of her neck. As a result she has physically crossed the line between the skin boundary and the nonhuman realm. But it is not just its presence that classifies her as a cyborg. It is also the fact that when it is removed she becomes ill with cancer and that she only regains her health when the implant or subsequent implant is replaced in *Redux II*. This implant has a dramatic effect on her embodiment. It is not simply an attachment, but becomes linked to her experience of corporeality and therefore identity. Her embodied experience is dependent on her extension into the non-human realm. Her once 'normal' body becomes less and less conventional. Mulder is a cyborg in *Kill Switch*, in which he becomes physically linked to an Artificial Intelligence. Mulder's embodied experience shifts during this link. When Mulder is linked to the computer, he ceases to be embodied. That is, he enters the realm of virtual reality in which the perception of embodiment is manufactured for him. Real and artificial embodiment become confused as the boundary between reality and unreality become mediated through the embodied or lack of embodied experience. Mulder becomes cyborg in that he is physically linked to the technology and his perception is dramatically altered depending on this experience. Mulder's body is both subject and object here with the boundary between the two thoroughly blurred. It is an object strapped into the computer as well as the subject of distress within the simulation, and the two are reliant on each other to create the desired embodied experience. Mulder and Scully's

normality become constantly problematic.

For both Mulder and Scully their extension into the world of nonhumans is regularly signified through their reliance on the mobile phone. As a symbol of modern day digital technology their use of this device as a communication tool and object of information they regularly 'jack' into the realm of nonhumans. The mobile phone is constructed within the diegesis as a permanent link between Mulder and Scully. It functions as an umbilical cord through which they can interact with each other. Their bodies and their identities flow through this device as they move around in their everyday life. "Mulder...it's me" has become a catch phrase and it signifies the importance of the mobile phone within the text and the physical as well as emotional link it creates between the two main characters. In *731* Scully uses it to try save Mulder trapped in the train car. In *Chinga* Mulder uses it to continually bother Scully while she is on vacation. In *Colony* it is through the mobile phone that Scully is able to identify the man who knocked on her door as not Mulder even though he appears to be. On numerous occasions it provides the link between the two characters as they are both following different threads of investigation. This device frequently and continuously moves them beyond their corporeality.

For Scully, she also becomes cyborg through cancer. Her corporeality is extended not only to include the invading cancer, but the integration of technology though radiotherapy, chemotherapy and an assortment of other tests and devices used to help her fight the disease.

> In med school, I learned that cancer arrives in the body unannounced. A dark stranger who takes up residence, turning its new home against itself. This is the evil of cancer, that it starts as an invader but soon becomes one with the invaded, forcing you to destroy it but only at the risk of destroying yourself. It is science's demon possession. My treatments, sciences attempts at exorcism. Dana Scully – *Memento Mori.*

The cancer here is an object in terms of being an 'it', an organism, but it also is a subject with intentions, actions and agency; "A dark stranger". It is not clear where Scully ends and the Cancer begins. Scully must become cyborg to defeat the cancer. The invaded body must extend its transgression even further to eliminate the threat. In Scully's case the normalcy of the body is not restored, the implant must be replaced for the cancer to be defeated as a result, the body is rendered even more transgressive. Further transgression and extension of the human body occurs through the Black Oil or Oil Slick Alien within *The X-Files*. Introduced to us as the Black Cancer in episodes *Tunguska* and *Terma*, this alien occupies the human body. It uses this body for transport and terminates it upon leaving. The permeability of the human body is highlighted here. Identity becomes problematic with the Oil Slick Alien using the body to colonise the subject. While this is not cyborg as we have come to understand it here, it is still a manifestation of the manner in which the body can blend and extend out into the external world. Like Cancer, the Oil Slick Alien invades the body therefore permanently shifting embodiment. However, this alien has agency, it has intention and eliminates the subject. Further, this alien is an object from the external nonhuman world that takes up residence within the body and significantly shifts the embodied experience of the subject. This dramatically reinscribes the body and profoundly probelmatises the impermeability of the skin. It also challenges notions of identity as a stable configuration separate from and unreliant on the body.

The X-Files blurs the boundaries between subject and object through these elements and positions its heroes as vulnerable to the same transgressions. Mulder and Scully both extend from human corporeality into the world of technologies, machines and animals. As a result, *The X-Files* is deconstructing the notions of dualisms as the dominant way of understanding social reality, and positioning 'movement' between

these dualisms into a much more fluid way of knowing the body and therefore constructing identity.

The End of Us?

The X-Files is a text that takes common sense knowledges about the mind, the body and the subject and attempts to position alternative ways of understanding them. The simplistic binaries of mind versus body are broken down in *The X-Files* by positioning the body not as an object, but as a less than stable configuration that is not closed off to the external world. By positioning monsters at the center of the text *The X-Files* suggests that corporeality itself is transgressive and 'normal' bodies are redundant. The program privileges the excess of the body and its potential to be a source of and for knowledge. Desire is rooted in this excess which challenges the dominant notions of male desire and compulsory heterosexuality. Identity is more fluid in *The X-Files* where the subject is at the mercy of bodily transgressions and alterations. Identity cannot be stable as the body is continually metamorphasising into something new. This identity is further confused as the saviours of normalcy, our main characters are depicted as ultimately transgressive in their role as cyborgs. Mulder and Scully frequently sojourn into the realm of nonhumans through primarily their mobile phones. Scully's implant melds her to the technology as is Mulder in *Kill Switch*. The realms of the human body are pushed into rapidly expanding areas within *The X-Files*. There is no such thing as a normal body within the text which suggests that our way of understanding the body as a closed off, vacant entity is significantly misguided. *The X-Files* is challenging our common sense notions of binaries and the ways in which knowledge is mobilised within our social reality. Taken for granted knowledges are being challenged and broken down here and the body is providing a specific site through which to do this within the diegesis.

This does not mean the end of any coherent notion of identity, it simply means that we need to be more fluid in our understanding of our own and others identities. We must, as *The X-Files* does, take into account the way in which our bodies are out of control and the ways in which we impact and are impacted upon by the external world.

Chapter 2
Aliens and *The X-Files:* Know others

Mulder: "I'm sorry. I meant no offence.'
Mr Nut: " Well then why should I take offence? Just because it's human nature to make instantaneous judgments of others based on solely upon their physical appearances? Well I've done the same thing to you, for example. I've taken in your all-American features, your dour demeanour, your unimaginative necktie design, and concluded that you work for the government; an FBI agent.... but do you see that tragedy here? I have mistakenly deduced you to a stereotype. A caricature, instead of regarding you as a specific, unique individual."
Mulder: "But I am an FBI agent." (*Humbug*)

It is Mulder's normal body here that, is being reinscribed by Mr Nutt who finds his excessive acceptability and validity distasteful. What is important about this dialogue however, is that the inscription of Mulder's body is made primarily through visibility. Mr Nutt makes his judgements based on Mulder's appearance and he turns out to be right. *The X-Files* however, spends a good deal of time deconstructing this notion. Seeing is, and isn't believing in *The X-Files.* The program challenges the links between visibility and knowledge that are positioned in a common sense manner. Mr Nutt, in attempting to show Mulder how wrong it is to judge by appearance turns out to be right in his observations. But in doing so this scene taps into the ironic humour of *The X-Files* as well as calling attention to the social relationships between visibility and knowledge. This chapter attempts to trace the way in which *The X-Files* deals with visibility in the construction of communities. It looks at the ways in which 'us' and 'them' are constructed through examining race as a case study and how these formations impact on the notion of a community.

Notions of nations

The nation, is an important way in which we construct a social context. However, defining exactly what a nation is has been a difficult exercise. Hobsbawn (1991, p.1)

points to the words of Walter Bagehot as he attempts to explain the vague notion of a nation; "We know what it is when you do not ask us, but we cannot very quickly explain or define it." Ernest Renan (1991) argues that basing the construction of a nation on ideas such as race, religion, language and geography are simplistic and fail to take into account the multiple and diverse elements that make up a nation; "We have now seen what things are not adequate for the creation of such a spirited principle, namely, race, language, material interest, religious affinities, geography, and military necessity" (Renan, 1991, p. 19). What Renan argues is that it is not criteria that is crucial to the nation, but the vague notion of sharedness amongst an equally vague notion of a homogenised 'people', combined with a complex web of contemporary and historical forces that contribute to the shape of the nation. As a result, the nation does not *just* exist. It must be created. Homi Bhabha (1991) points to the ways in which nations must always be constructed, and, that they do not exist separate from this construction. It must be constructed as a community. This construction however relies on, the 'many as one' - the 'people' (Bhabha, 1991, p. 292) This is an idea of a common identity, a sharedness.

> It is the mark of the ambivalence of the nation as a narrative strategy – and an apparatus of power- that produces a continual slippage into analogous, even metonymic, categories, like 'the people', minorities, or 'cultural difference' that continually overlap in the act of writing the nation. (Bhabha 1991, p. 292)

These categories are crucial in that they assist in the construction of 'the people'. This imagined category is carefully mobilised through power structures in order to clearly define who is included in this very vague notion of what a nation is. Benedict Anderson (1991) develops the notion of the construction of the nation through his important concept of the 'imagined community'. The nation is an imagined community precisely because though one may know that they live within a nation, they will never

meet, see of hear the majority of the other people within it;"...it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 1991, p. 6). This imagining is crucial to determining who is included in the community because it is a metaphorical way of making those within the nation visible to others. Because you cannot see the members of the nation community, they need to be imagined. This imagining creates an expectation of who is included in the nation and who isn't. This imagining Anderson suggests emerged upon the invention of mass printing.

> ...the basic structure of two forms of imagining first flowered in Europe in the eighteenth century: the novel and the newspaper. For these forms provided the technical means for re-presenting the kind of imagined community that is the nation. (Anderson, 1991, p. 25)

It is in this forum where members of the nation community get to see the representation of their community. The invention of the printing press compressed time and space which therefore meant that these representations could transcend large geographical territory and contribute to a collective, almost simultaneous imaging of the community. In this manner it was the media that took on the role of informing members of the community about their community rather than the traditional public sphere.

The public sphere was once an actual location where free members (men) of Greek society gathered to discuss issues of concern to the society. What was important about this sphere was that it was designed so that the processes of democracy could be *seen* and so that the members of society could be *seen*. Jurgen Habermas (1989, p. 3) suggests that the public sphere is a specific domain separate from the private sphere. Drawing on Greek formations of the polis which was common to free citizens; that is

male citizens and those who weren't slaves or foreigners, public life was conducted in the market place. It was a specifically visual forum. There was no need to imagine the community - you could see it. The public sphere, however, does not exist in this strict form any more, but public discussion still does take place, though no longer in 'traditional' forms. Television now performs this role, of the public sphere, by representing the nation and bringing that representation to almost every 'private' household within that nation.

> No account of the public sphere in the twentieth century would be complete without addressing radio and television. Over time, the electronic media have become so pervasive, so linked not only to political institutions, but to the machinery of debate and decision, so seized with importance, that they suffuse and overwhelm other aspects of public discussion. (Price, 1995, p. 27)

The nation community is constructed and represented through the popular media. This is where we see the community. As a result, what we see through this medium determines who we imagine as part of the community. Television has become the realm through which we come to 'know' ourselves as well as 'know' others. The discussion of public life now takes place within the media. This creates an overlap between private and public realms that construct and represent 'us'. Television and the popular media tells us about other people with whom we share the nation and it is through television that we 'know' the nation. It tells us about them primarily by making them visible. *The X-Files* is itself apart of this process. As a television text, it is representing and constructing the 'public'. It presents its idea of what this 'public' looks like and how it functions. Themes raised within *The X-Files* become part of public discourse in its role as both constructor and representative of the 'public'. Television texts are often construed as a source for public discussion. They are able to move beyond their time slot and into social discussion and popular knowledge.

> Soap Operas...can now be defined...by the presence of stories which engage an audience in such a way that they become the subject for public interest and interrogation. Who shot JR? (*Dallas*), Should Dierdre leave Ken? (*Coronation Street*), Will Den divorce Angie? (*Eastenders*), How will Meg be written out? (*Crossroads*), are like it or not, questions which became apart of the public arena... (Geraghty, 1991, p. 4-5).

The popular media, in this way, permeate our lives in profound ways. By carrying the discourse into everyday life, the media become crucial in our understanding of our social reality. *The X-Files* is a part of this process whereby its ideas too are transferred into public discussion. It too presents us with ideas about who is and who isn't included within the community. This does not imply that the audience is taking up the representations in *The X-Files* as representations of 'real' life. But that as a text that is a part of the public sphere *The X-Files* is making visible issues that are central to social reality. As a result, *The X-Files* is challenging many common sense knowledges that circulate in public discourse. Within this context, *The X-Files* promotes a specific kind of nation community. This nation is not limited by geographical area or by race or religion. The nation in *The X-Files* is not a pure thing, and it is not a coherent thing. The nation in *The X-Files* is not represented as a homogenous community with 'deep horizontal comradeship', it is a nation that is violated, which has its borders regularly transgressed and therefore is not really 'known'. Homi Bhabha situates the notion of a fixed, linear and visible nation as a fiction. Instead, he argues, in the age of migration, immigration and refugees, the boundaries of the nation are regularly transgressed, and are constantly shifting. Furthermore, he suggests that identifying someone as belonging to a 'nation' can never be an external process, it must always be a matter of personal affiliation.

> The recurrent metaphor of landscape as the inscape of national identity emphasises the quality of light, the question of social visibility, the power of the eye to naturalise the rhetoric of national affiliation and its forms of collective expression. There is however, always the distracting presence of

another temporality that disturbs the contemporaneity of the national present...(migration etc). (Bhabha 1991, p. 295)

As a result, the nation becomes fluid, made up of multiple experiences and appropriations of other cultures. He argues that the basis of the nation, the 'many as one' – the 'people' (Bhabha, 1991, p. 292) is a mythology, that, this 'many as one' is always shifting and that this metaphor in itself clearly situates the ambiguity of the nation. 'The people' are not homogenous as this term suggests; they migrate and shift across boundaries in a continual movement. Superficial constructs of the nation along one-dimensional lines, according to Bhabha are not adequate to explain the metaphorical nature of the nation.

In *The X-Files* the idea of a violated community is not necessarily new. The theme of the violated community has existed for some time is science fiction and other texts. Films such as *Alien, The Thing, Screamers, The Village of the Damned, Scream, Batman, I Know What You Did Last Summer*, and so on, all explore the notion of an isolated or semi-isolated community which is invaded by an entity or disturbance which must be eliminated for order to be restored to the community. *The X-Files* explores this in the *Pilot, Ice, Gender Bender, Miracle Man, Shapes, Firewalker, Darkness Falls, Blood, Red Museum, Excelcius Dei, Irrisistible, Die Hand Die Verletz, Colony, Dod Kalm, Humbug, Our Town, D. P. O., The List, The Walk, War of the Coprophages, Syzygy, Hell Money, Quagmire, Home, El Mundo Gira, Kaddish, Postmodern Prometheus* and *Bad Blood* to name some. But *The X-Files* promotes a community that cannot be known, that is always, silently, unknowably, out of order. But it also promotes a community in which homogeneity is the exception and in which order, cannot always be restored. Importantly, we cannot know this community through visibility. *The X-Files* privileges the 'corrupted' community in which the

homogenised community is permanently in a state of disruption. There is continually an aberrant creature or person invading the 'homogenous' community. In the *Pilot*, a young man takes victims to be abducted by aliens in a small town. In *Ice* an alien entity invades an isolated excavation team in the Arctic. In *Gender Bender*, the Kindred cult are beings with shapeshifting ability in a small American town. *Shapes* has a werewolf creature invading another small town, *Blood* has clever computers influencing human behaviour, *Red Museum* has the local, shunned cult as the saviours of the town from a dangerous killer. *Die Hand Die Verletz* has a small town community invaded by the devil in the form of a substitute teacher. *War of the Coprophages* has a small town on the verge of being overrun with alien cockroaches and *Hell Money* is set in an Asian community dealing in body parts. Communities within communities and disruptive elements to the community are a recurring theme in *The X-Files*, which represents the community permanently transgressed with order rarely restored in any coherent legitimate fashion.

In *Blood,* the clever computer simply stops its murderous influences with the message;"All done now, Bye Bye." Mrs Paddock the substitute teacher in *Die Hand Die Verletz* leaves, writing on the blackboard; "It's been nice working with you." In *Firewalker,* a group of researchers are stranded on a volcano, having been invaded by a strange parasite that occupies the body, incubates and then kills the host. At the end of this episode, the community is not saved by eradicating this life form, but by the community leaving.

The community always on the verge of being out of order is therefore difficult to 'know', and this unknowability translates into being 'unvisuable'.

Hartley (1992) dubs this 'wedom' and 'theydom' to refer to the ways in which the media (as a public sphere) excludes those who do not belong. What can be seen in the media is linked to being positive, and what is excluded is degraded. Therefore visibility and knowledge are linked; "...pictures of aboriginal people are routinely printed without name captions; they are representative of their race, not of their persons, even in so-called positive human interest stories. People from wedom are scrupulously named" (Hartley, 1992, p. 207).The act of naming here links to a process of visualisation and visibility that relates to certain kinds of 'valid' knowledge. Being unnamed means to be unseen and therefore not worth knowing. It is through this process that one may know who belongs and who does not. The processes of being made visible and invisible has been mostly theorised in terms of race; "Race...is a semiotic marker" (Kramer, 1997, p. 2). Race is a signifier that creates meaning based strongly on the notion of visibility and knowledge;

> Race is one way by which the boundary is to be constructed between those who can and those who cannot belong to a particular construction of a collectivity or population. In the case of race, this is on the basis of an immutable biological or physiognomic difference which may or may not be seen to be expressed mainly in culture or lifestyle but is always grounded on the separation of human populations by some notion of stock or collective heredity traits. (Anthias & Yuval-Davis 1996, p. 2)

Race is a way in which visibility is used to determine who belongs. Being black is constructed as the 'Other' and therefore not an accepted part of the community. This manifests in the new public sphere (the popular media) where blackness is either absent or constructed as the undesirable Other, in an attempt to police the boundaries of the imaginary community. This results in what is known as 'social invisibility'. That is the notion of being 'known' in order to be labelled 'not worth knowing'. "Social invisibility, Lewis Gordon (1995) notes, manifests in not being seen...wrongdoing no matter how extreme, goes unrecognised because those suffering aren't those one

recognises (as people, as kin, as important) though one expresses horror when the same condition confronts 'ones own'" (Goldberg, 1996, p. p. 80). Race therefore, is a visual marker, a semiotic code for the Other that must be controlled so that the nation remains stable. Through the process of identifying the Other, the Other can be rendered invisible- not worth knowing.

This idea can be seen in previous and current science fiction television and film where aliens are always represented in as visibly different. Extra fingers, large foreheads, strange eyes and spiny protrusions all function to signify the Other, to identify the boundaries between 'wedom' and 'theydom'. For example; *Star Trek, Babylon 5, The Invaders* and so on, all signify aliens in this way. Texts such as *Star Trek*, however, position a permanently expanding community. While aliens are the Other, they may still become part of a stable, coherent community.

The X-Files, however posits a community that is permanently fractured, in which Others are apart of a permanently disrupted community. Specifically, the Other cannot be *seen*. In *The X-Files* the aliens are not clearly identified. To begin with, 'real' aliens are actually quite difficult to find within the text. There are aliens on the periphery of the text known as 'the greys', seen in *Conduit, Deep Throat, The Erlenmeyer Flask, Max, Little Green Men* and others. While they are implicated within the text, their 'true' existence is neither confirmed nor denied in the diegesis. They are only eluded to and implied, never explicitly identified. The first alien that is clearly identified is a worm in the sixth episode *Ice*. In the next episode we encounter a ghost like alien entity in *Space*, then in *Gender Bender*, the religious cult are implied to be alien. It is not until the middle of season two in the episode entitled *Colony* do we encounter a

'real' alien, that is, a humanoid extraterrestrial, with superior strength, a space ship and a strange weapon – an alien clearly situated within the text. Only two aliens have been positively identified within *The X-Files*; The Bounty Hunter (*Colony, End Game, Talitha Cumi, Harrenvolk, Emily*) and Jeremiah Smith (*Talitha Cumi, Harrenvolk*). These two aliens are white, western and male; that is, firmly located in 'wedom'. There is nothing to signify them as the Other, and as a result, their Otherness is invisible and in this context, powerful. They cannot be made visible in order to be rendered 'invisible'.

Invisibility, however, does have the potential for subversion and empowerment. Goldberg (1996, p. 187) in his article In/Visibility and Super/Vision: Fanon on Race, Veils and Discourses of Resistance, outlines Fanon's position on the place of the veil in Algerian culture. Fanon sees the veil as a form of invisibility that is empowering; "The veil stands for (as it at once enables) a space of self determination, a possible – because unseen and so undisciplined and literally uncontrollable – realm closed to colonial penetration." The veil seen by westerners/whites as an oppression of women is seen by the colonised as a site of resistance – to be unveiled is to be made visible in order to be rendered invisible- being unseen in this context is a site of resistance and power. Aliens in *The X-Files* are therefore 'unknowable'. They simultaneously create and subvert the notion of 'the people'. They conform to the imagining by appearing white, western and male, but they transgress the boundaries of the nation community by remaining invisible as the Other. The characters of The Bounty Hunter and Jeremiah Smith are not 'marked' in any way, it is therefore not possible to 'know' the Other, and in the context of *The X-Files*, this creates for them a powerful agency. Able to operate unseen, aliens are able to function within the human community in any way

they please, and they are able to transgress and disrupt society. This disturbance is located internally, within the community, rather than external to it.

In fact, most of the disruptive elements come from *within* the community, rather than *external* to it. Mrs Paddock, is the local schoolteacher, a person at the centre of town life. In *Blood*, the disruption comes in the form of everyday objects; a television, a mobile phone, a microwave - nothing particularly out of the ordinary. *War of the Coprophages*, has its disruptive element as the common, household cockroach. In *Irresistible*, Donnie Pfaster is the disruptive element within the community, however he is not an invader, but the embodiment of evil. *Red Museum* has a community within a community as the saviours of the town, though these saviours are initially constructed as corruptors. These are not external invaders to the community, but elements located within it. The community therefore, is not inherently stable, only ever disrupted by external elements, but incoherent and messy.

Audiences are first introduced to The Bounty Hunter in *Colony*, and for most of the episode he is constructed as human and valid. There is nothing to mark him as the Other. Towards the end of the episode a colonist comes into the 'custody' of Mulder. The Bounty Hunter, wishing to eliminate this colonist goes to kidnap Agent Scully for the purpose of an exchange. Scully, in her hotel room, is on the phone to Mulder when she receives a knock on the door. She opens it to find Mulder standing in front of her. Here we encounter the alien, not distinguishable from any human and able to duplicate Mulder to perfection. He is the embodiment of normality, except at this moment of duplication where he is rendered visible. In this capacity he is transgressive. He transcends the boundaries of 'wedom' and 'theydom' by being located within both. Visibility and invisibility thereby become problematic as a

defining structure of 'the people' and the nation community. This relationship between visibility and knowledge is further reinscribed in *Colony* through the colonists themselves. Each colonist is invisible in that they are 'normal', they are firmly located within 'wedom'. There is nothing that marks them as the Other. They are the perfect imagining of members of the nation community. Their bodily inscription of normality however becomes problematic as it is precisely this that renders them visible as the Other. They are clones, it is only when they come together as a group that their 'normality' can be seen as a duplication. The clones are invisible in their normality and become visible precisely because of that normality. The fragmentation of the community is positioned as central with this episode whereby even those who seem to be 'normal' are indeed transgressors of the boundaries of the community. The relationship between visibility and knowledge here is both confirmed and denied thereby challenging the common sense relationships we ascribe to visibility and knowledge.

No Longer Visible

Communities in *The X-Files* are problematic from the beginning. The program positions the disruption of the community as a central plot device. However, what is important about this is that *The X-Files* rarely restores the order of the community. Communities are never represented as coherent nor are they ever made coherent through the activities of Mulder and Scully. The most dramatic and disturbing disruptions often occur at the heart of the community. These disruptions do not come from outside but from within. These disruptions eminate from housewives, PTA members, religious teachers, high school students, hardware store workers and the like. *The X-Files* positions a community that is never homogenous. There is never a representation of 'the people', rather there are groups of different, diverse and

disturbing people. Creatures come from within the community and are rarely eliminated from it despite the best attempts of townsfolk and Mulder and Scully. As a result there can never be an accurate imagining of the community. Even though the nature of an imagined community suggests a fiction, behind this idea is the underlying that the imagining is pretty close to the 'real' thing. *The X-Files* does not allow its community members to get complacent about this imagining. Rather this imagining is never validated by *The X-Files* at any point as they continually position fragmentations and aberrations within the community. This idea suggests that the community can never be 'known' and this is highlighted by the presence of aliens within the text. The clearly identified aliens within *The X-Files* - The Bounty Hunter and Jeremiah Smith are in no way signified as aliens. There are no strange eyes, spiny protrusions or extra fingers to mark them as Other. They infiltrate the imagined community in *The X-Files* firmly located within 'wedom'. They are white, western and male, the 'perfect' imaging of community. It is only in their ability to duplicate normality, to appear too normal (as Mulder or Deep Throat) that they can be identified. They are simultaneously visible and invisible. Visible in that they are apart of the imagined community, invisible in that they are Other and have not been rendered visible as the Other to be excluded. *The X-Files* here is making dramatic challenges to notions of the relationship between visibility and knowledge. Our common sense understanding of imagining our community is being shifted and challenged here.

Chapter 3
Conspiracy Theory and *The X-Files*: Know Society

> Mulder: "You can deny all the things I've seen, all the things I've discovered, but not for much longer. Because too many others know what's been happening out there, and no one, no government agency has jurisdiction over the truth. " *Fallen Angel*.

Public places

The traditional public sphere, as understood in the Greek classical sense, is an actual physical location at which people gathered to discuss issues of concern. It was a visible forum through which not only members of the community could be seen, but also government could be seen. The space was large enough for all citizens to see the process of government and to see democracy in action. In this context, the public sphere was strictly demarcated from the private sphere. Public space was for being seen, the private was not. This visibility meant that the public sphere was a place of freedom while the private was not and neither were those who were tied to this realm; women, slaves, foreigners were not free.

> ...in classical Greece and Rome, assuming you were a free man- rather than a woman, slave or foreigner- you could walk into the agora or forum and participate in public life directly, as a voter, a jurist, a consumer, or as an audience of oratory in the service of public affairs. (Hartley, 1992, p. 35)

Democracy, in this context, functioned properly when it could be seen and when members of the 'free' public could see and participate in it. Jurgen Habermas suggested that the public was made up of private individuals, and that these individuals were formed primarily within the private realm, which included the family.

> It is defined as the public of private individuals who join in debate of issues bearing on state authority. Unlike the Greek conception, individuals are here understood to be formed primarily in the private realm...(Calhoun, 1992, p. 7).

He went a step further by suggesting that this private realm is a site of freedom that needed to be defended *against* the domination of the state. This shifted notions of democracy and freedom. Here, government is depicted as duplicitous, as something that can no longer be relied upon to look after its citizens; as something that cannot be seen. It also indicates the decline in the role of the citizen in the public sphere in monitoring the democratic process.

Habermas traces cross-overs and connections through economic developments that shifted the needs to individuals, and resulted in their less visible role in government. He outlines the development of trade and industry as important factors in the growth of a new bourgeois public sphere that offered new possibility for citizens to engage in discussion on the state's exercise of power. This can be traced as an attempt to reconfigure the public sphere not only with the decline of the Greek fora, but with the dramatic social and economic changes that shifted the role of government. "With the growth of trade and industry, state policy came to have an importance for the growing bourgeois which it had not had in a society of small scale household production and retailing" (Outhwaite, 1996, p. 7). The role of government here becomes less about freedoms and more about policy and legislation. Economic and social concerns come to be prioritised over discussions of freedom and citizenship. The bourgeois public sphere emerged out of the economic developments of seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe. With the development of printing and increasing literacy amongst the population, this increasingly modern society produced a bourgeois public sphere; "The seventeenth and eighteenth century notion [of the public sphere] developed alongside the rise and transformation of the modern state, as well as on the basis of capitalist economic activity" (Calhoun, 1992, p. 7).

This public sphere however was still plagued with inequalities. It was not, in reality, the ideal forum Habermas thought it to be. For to be a free, rational-critical member of the public sphere, required a certain amount of wealth. "The function of that [the public] sphere depended, of course, upon a relationship between property and education that excluded the great majority of the population from effective participation in it." (Baker, 1992, p.186) Freedom was synonymous with being a male, property owner. Despite the developments in the economy not everyone was in a position to act as a rational-critical member of the bourgeois public sphere due to the fact that they lacked the ownership of property. This public sphere began to privilege 'private' interests over 'public' ones. This bourgeois public sphere, however, struggled 'against the powers of the absolutist state' and as a result 'managed to generate a new social space or field between that state and civil society' (Dahlgren, 1992, p. 3). As a result government here is depicted as an institution unconcerned with 'public good'. This is a manifestation of the shift towards a 'civil society'.

'Civil society' is a term that has gone through a number of incarnations over time, however, in the context of this essay I am relying on Habermas's notion of civil society which relates closely to private market.

> Civil society, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, developed as a genuine domain of private autonomy [that] stood opposed to the state. Capitalist market economies formed the basis of this civil society, but it included a good deal more than that. It included institutions of sociability and discourse only loosely related to economy. Transformations of the economy nonetheless produced transformations in all of civil society. (Calhoun, 1992, p. 8)

As economic concerns become prioritised, this sphere seeks to exert its dominance over others. Habermas argues that as a result, the public sphere begins to expand as more and more voices seek to be heard. Consequently the 'quality' of the discourse declines - where more private concerns become mobilised over others. With the

corresponding expansion of civil society comes the emergence of large corporations

that increasingly encroach on the state. The public sphere therefore suffers, declines

and becomes ineffective in its role.

Public Mut(il)ations

Habermas traces this transformation of the public sphere through economic and social

change suggesting that a reconstruction or 'rationalisation' of the economy occurs in

which economic factors contribute to the expansion and transformation of the public

sphere. This is the idea that as humans advance economically they also advance

socially and as a result social relations shift and change to account for and as a result

of these transformations. Habermas, suggests that this is a two-fold process. First there

is a specifications process in which traditional worldviews are replaced with explicit

and reflective ideas. There is also, then, a growth of market structures which become

self sufficient and removed from the forum of discussion.

> The replacement of traditional world views and forms of social action by new
> forms which were reflexive, explicit, ordered and calculable: the specification
> of life projects, whether religious or economic, and the extension of the areas
> of social life as open to agreement rather than having been laid down as part of
> a religiously legitimated order...[then] the growing independence of market
> and administrative structures which are again removed from the domain of
> discussion and possible agreement. (Outhwaite, 1992, p. 14)

This comes about due to the development of cultural commodities and the

introduction of a public sphere of institutional bases. These range from coffee houses,

to journals and webs of social relations in which, Habermas suggests, rational-critical

debate took place on a more specific level.

That the family is an intimate sphere, separate from economic interest, becomes

increasingly unclear due to notions of a public sphere made up of private people. The

family is influenced by economic factors that do not remain separate from the public

sphere in which private people operate; "The family was believed to be independent of

the market whereas in truth it was profoundly caught up in the requirements of the market" (Calhoun 1992, p. 12). The family is increasingly idealised as a sphere in which people are bound together by human closeness.

> The family thus provided a crucial basis for the immanent critique of the bourgeois public sphere itself, for it taught that there was something essential to humanness that economic or other status could not take away. (Calhoun, 1992, p. 11)

This focus on the family influences economic factors through the introduction of laissez-faire economics and civil laws which attempted to guarantee private freedoms. Habermas suggests that this then leads to the refeudalization of society- that is, the divisions between private and public become thoroughly blurred and state and society infiltrate each other. At the centre of this blurring is the deconstruction of the notion of autonomous, equal persons; "who in public discourse might address the general public interest"(Calhoun, 1992, p. 22). Social interests then become devalued as economic ones are privileged.

Inequalities are increasingly brought to the fore and even considered a basis for action and discussion. The idealism of a common interest is put aside in favour of negotiated compromise of interests. The private sphere is reduced to the family as the notion of a sphere of work is developed between the public and private spheres. Therefore the role of the citizen becomes less important.

> Structural transformations came about, however, as private organisations began increasingly to assume public power on the one hand, while the state penetrated the private realm on the other...The public sphere was necessarily transformed as the distinction between public and private realms blurred, the equation between the intimate sphere and private life broke down with a polarisation of family and economic society, rational-critical debate gave way to the consumption of culture. (Calhoun, 1992, p. 21)

As a result the public sphere is transformed. It ceases to be a forum of rational-critical debate and shifts to a place of consumption; the mediated public sphere.

> ...the public sphere was turned into a sham semblance of its former self. The key tendency was to replace the shared, critical activity of public discourse by a more passive culture of consumption on the other hand and an apolitical sociability on the other. (Calhoun , 1992, p. 23)

The public sphere in its role of ensuring democratic freedom becomes less important as rational critical members are supplanted in favour of consumers.

Habermas's notion of the transformation of the public sphere relies on a somewhat idealised version of public life. Central to his notion of the public sphere is the idea of the rational individual who is informed about issues and public life and thus able to engage responsibly in rational-critical debate. He also assumes a certain eagerness in participation. That there is a central will of all humans to engage in such activities. But what is important about his analysis of the public sphere is the notion of so called 'private' or corporate economic interests infringing on the state. It is this idea that *The X-Files* engages with in its conspiracy and raises crucial questions about the role of the 'free' citizen in democracy.

Publix

In *The X-Files* there is no longer a representation of a public sphere as a site of discussion or as a site of resistance in opposition to the state or public authorities. The conspiracy theory in *The X-Files*, suggests that the public sphere in any form has been supplanted by private interests. The role of the government has been largely subverted in *The X-Files* and the consideration of democratic process is presented as something that needs to be struggled for and that is hidden. The notion of a public sphere geared towards visibility is challenged in *The X-Files* with government rarely figuring as an active participant within the diegesis In *The X-Files*, the organs of power are no longer traditional state apparatuses. Though at times they do seem to include the government, they are by no means limited to it. The conspiracy theory within *The X-Files* locates organs of power outside of government and suggests that it is no longer possible for

citizens to seen government to the extent of becoming informed critical members of society. Nor is the 'bourgeois public sphere' functioning in an oppositional relationship with government apparatuses but supplanting them altogether.

> The conspiracy theory of society...is the view that an explanation of a social phenomenon consists in the discovery of the men or groups who are interested in the occurrence of a phenomenon (sometimes it is a hidden interest which first has to be revealed), and who have planned and conspired to bring it about. (Popper, 1966, p.94)

In *The X-Files*, this social phenomenon is not one thing - but the basis of the construction of an entire social reality. The stakes are high in *The X-Files*, it is not only about uncovering the hidden interests, but uncovering 'the truth'. Conspiracy in *The X-Files* is beyond coverups or government corruption. It challenges the way in which we think about government, private and public interests and their roles. The public sphere is dramatically reinscribed in *The X-Files*.

Contemporary writing suggests that the media has become the 'new' public sphere, through which knowledge circulates; "Television, popular newspapers, magazines and photography, the popular media of the modern period, are the public domain, the place where and the means by which the public is created and has its being" (Hartley, 1992, p. 1). Public sphere visibility has shifted from the towns square to the square box. People no longer gather in the town square to discuss issues of concern, rather, issues are now represented through the media, just as the public is represented through the media, through publicity. The media simultaneously constructs and represents the public sphere. Not only does it represent 'the public', those members of the community, but it represents those issues of concern to our social reality that enable us to become informed and critical members of the state. Even though this is a representation it does not become a matter of locating the 'real' public, as there is no 'real' public to fulfil some ideal notion of truth. Mediated representations are the real

public; "images are themselves quite real" (Hartley, 1992, p. 2). What is needed is a way in which to engage with this new public and public sphere; "So it is not a question of contrasting a real public with the illusory media, it is a matter of showing how pervasive the textualisation of public life has become, and how it works" (Hartley, 1992, p. 2). What is important about this textualisation of public life is that it exists in the heart of privacy - the home.

The publicity of the public sphere within and through the media has brought the public sphere into the heart of privacy. The individual can now only see and participate in the public sphere through the media, through television, newspapers and magazines. *The X-Files* presents the role of the mediated public sphere as problematic. The mediated public sphere in *The X-Files* is ineffective; furthermore, it is failing in its duty to provide the necessary knowledge about the organs of power in society in order to conduct rational-critical debate. *The X-Files* however, suggests a different relationship between the new public sphere and privacy. This new public sphere in *The X-Files* cannot be simply transferred into a new realm and rely on the same mode of engagement utilised in the traditional public sphere. This new public sphere is reinscribed in the private sphere and as a result the two spheres are no longer strictly demarcated, therefore new knowledges must be mobilised about and through these spheres. In *The X-Files* it is not the popular media on its own that disseminates all the information required by critical citizens unproblematically. *The X-Files* engages with the idea that the public sphere is not what it once was and must be *actively* mobilised to fulfill its democratic role. Individuals become important in this process.

In presenting the conspiracy theory as a dominant way in which to understand the relations between the public sphere, organs of power and knowledge, *The X-Files* is restructuring dominant ways of understanding society. *The X-Files* is suggesting new

ways in which the public sphere may be restructured to regain its status as an

oppositional body to the state, by being mobilised through the private sphere by

individuals equipped with particular knowledges.

Well Manicured Publics

Consumers are being positioned as new rational critical members of the public sphere

who mobilise knowledges through their consumption in the private sphere. *The X-*

Files suggests that the public sphere is failing in its role to provide the necessary

knowledge about the organs of power in society. That it is private individuals who are

proficient in their consumption that are able to gather knowledge about the organs of

power in society, which too are located in private interests.

The Smoke Ring is a term invented by fans of *The X-Files* to describe a secret group

of powerful men within the diegesis. In other places they are described as The

Syndicate, The Consortium or Syndicate Elders. These men represent the re-

emergence of a more traditional bourgeois public sphere, brought about by the

refeudalization of society, with the state and civil society converging. They are private

interests impinging on the traditional 'public' interest of government.

> The early bourgeois public sphere...[are]...composed of narrow segments of
> the European population, mainly educated, propertied men, and they
> conducted a discourse not only exclusive of others, but prejudicial to the
> interests of those excluded. (Calhoun, 1992, p. 3)

In *The X-Files*, The Smoke Ring subvert their role in opposition to government by

appropriating and supplanting its power. Within the diegesis, The Smoke Ring is

helping extraterrestrials colonise the earth and create hybrids cloned from human ova

and alien biomaterial. These clones will then be immune to their planet's deadly Black

Oil (Oil Slick Alien - *Tunguska, Terma,*). However, The Smoke Ring has developed

its own inoculant to ensure their own survival.

What is important about The Smoke Ring however, is that they are not necessarily members of government. The Smoke Ring consists of an undisclosed number of men from all parts of the world (though dominantly European) who meet in an old club in New York. The majority are wealthy white men. They may very well be members of government, however this is not made explicit within the diegesis. They are represented as being concerned with their own 'private' interests. It is implied, rather, that they are corporate interests- men with money and power operating for their own interests rather than the 'public good'. Their interest is beyond economic or social power but with 'the truth'. As a result they will not be made visible through the public sphere and they do not seek to create critical citizens to improve debate. The public sphere here is no longer involved in rational-critical debate of the organs of power. The Smoke Ring is able to operate and conspire due to the lack of public scrutiny.

Postmodern Public?

In *The X-Files* there is no central power bloc congruent with government. The Smoke Ring is not equated with government nor are any of its members necessarily government representatives. But The Smoke Ring in *The X-Files* is where the power lies.

By destabilising the notion of a central, powerful government, the relationships between knowledge, organs of power and the public sphere shift. Knowledge becomes a powerful commodity and becomes subject to controlling interest. Knowledge is no longer 'freely' available in terms of the traditional public sphere, becomes controlled through the mediated public sphere. Power, relocated outside of governmentality increasingly becomes centralised in civil society and corporate interest. This relocation of power then impinges on the circulation of knowledge. As a result, the

public sphere becomes increasingly privatised and develops new ways of accessing knowledges.

In *The X-Files* The Smoke Ring is representative of the civil or corporate society that has infiltrated state activities and become a new locus for power. Governmentality is largely redundant in *The X-Files* and any government officials are either ignorant or under the control of The Smoke Ring. The case of Marita Covarrubias, an international representative of the United Nations is an example. For although she is ostensibly a UN official, she does not function without the approval of The Smoke Ring. In one episode, she remarks to Cancerman (referring to Mulder); "I will tell him what you want me to tell him." (*Unrequited*).

The X-Files has very few politicians within the text. Only Senator Richard Matheson is identified as a sitting member of Congress. The diegesis is not concerned with these people and they are represented as not having the same kind of power as The Smoke Ring. Furthermore, the public sphere in the form of popular media is rarely of concern in *The X-Files*. Newspapers and television are not depicted as a source of information about the powers that be. *Wetwired*, the only episode to specifically deal with television, has ordinary people turning into multiple victim killers due to subliminal messages. It is represented as a forum through which people are duped (on the surface), not a forum through which to engage in rational-critical debate.

Deep Throat and Mr X are also representatives of the way in which private individuals can mobilise critical debate. Deep Throat and Mr X were unofficial 'contacts' of Mulder. Mysterious men who meet with Mulder via signals and code in which,

Mulder tapes and 'X' to his window in regards to Mr X (Season 2 and 3) or receives a phone call with two clicks on the other end of the line in regards to Deep Throat (Season 1).These men possess knowledge of great interest and necessity to Mulder and Scully, however their knowledge is strictly controlled (by The Smoke Ring) and as a result they must conduct the complex ritual outlined above. Deep Throat and Mr X operate to enable information to be released into public debate. They are mobilised by traditional notions of freedom and democracy and they seek to recreate critical debate. They do not wish to do this through visible government processes but through the individual actions of Agent Mulder. Deep Throat and Mr X along with The LoneGunmen operate within the private sphere and significantly reorganise the role of the public sphere in this manner. The public sphere is therefore no longer a central unifying force in *The X-Files*, it has become privatised and centred on the individual. Its new role is to locate the 'real' organs of power.

Without the scrutiny of the public sphere, The Smoke Ring is able to conspire and to conceal knowledge about themselves as the 'real' organs of power. They are the men who have hidden interests in the occurrence of 'particular social phenomenon', and, like Habermas's refeudalization, in *The X-Files* the distribution of power is in the hands of a small group of large corporations. However *The X-Files* seeks to reanimate the public sphere in new ways.

Seeing the Difference

The difference, however, between Habermas and *The X-Files* is that in *The X-Files* it is still possible for citizens to gain information about the working organs of power. Habermas suggests that the transformation of the public sphere is a degeneration, which as a whole suggests that there is no room for rational-critical debate within this

new transformation. *The X-Files*, however, differs in its approach by suggesting that there is room for action on behalf of the individual.

The Lone Gunmen are a group of three young men, known predominantly by their surnames; Langly, Byers and Frohike. The three publish a newsletter entitled *The Lone Gunman* that is dedicated to exposing various government conspiracies and operations. Introduced within the diegesis as Mulder's marginal, weird friends, The Lone Gunmen are private consumers who are able to negotiate knowledges in order to become critical citizens. They are radical consumers of the media. Langly is the communications expert and computer hacker; Byers, the military and information systems expert, and Frohike is the photographic and surveillance expert. It is their expertise in the realm of mediated publicity and information systems that provides the space for them to obtain knowledge about organs of power. The public sphere, now thoroughly mediated, is a sphere in which the ability to correctly read the text (television, photograph and so on) is paramount.

The Lone Gunmen work within a *privatised* public sphere. The traditional mediated public sphere in *The X-Files* serves a purpose of disinformation, producing a lack of interest in the working organs of power. The conspiracy theory in *The X-Files* positions private public individuals as in the possession of power, with the ability to gain knowledge of the organs of power. Rather than private people coming together as a public, private people are able to gain public authority within the private sphere. The distinction between private and public domains distinguished the authority of the public to impinge on the private. The public sphere as the realm of freedom and moral virtue provided the framework upon which to base private life. Distinguishing

between the two realms was therefore relatively easy based on distinguishing

individual and community.

> Their first step was to consider all adults as capable of conducting the
> transactions necessary to regulate their personal relations. It is to this minimal
> aspect of agency, as it were, that one must look to identify the criterion for
> distinguishing what concerns each individual, and is therefore private, from
> what concerns the community, and is therefore public. (Gobetti, 1992, p. 68)

However as the public sphere transforms so does the private sphere and as a result,

over time, the private sphere has come to mean many things. As the public sphere has

expanded the private sphere has shrunk to now be represented in the family.

> The final meaning of privacy and privacy rights is that of the intimate sphere.
> This is the domain of the household, of meeting the daily needs of life, of
> sexuality and reproduction, and of care for the young, the sick and the elderly.
> (Benhabib, 1992, p. 91)

This, private sphere, however is not passive. Habermas points out that the public

sphere is made up of private individuals whose opinions are shaped in the private

sphere. This private sphere too has become or always was, increasingly politicised.

> The home and suburb, together with their associated institutions (shopping
> centre, family, media) and practices (dressing and congregating; looking,
> listening and talking), constitute the place where and the means by which
> public, political knowledges are not only circulated and consumed but
> recreated, generalised and personalised. (Hartley, 1992, p. 156)

The private sphere has thus become the realm of the public. Individuals in the private

realm gain the authority of the traditional public sphere. The private sphere is the

realm in which public issues and debate are most active. To this extent the public and

private realms are thoroughly integrated.

Hugh Stretton, cited in John Hartley's *Popular Reality* (1996, p. 161) points out the

intimate relationship between public and private spheres.

> Stretton argues for the importance of the domestic economy (unwaged work)
> as well as the commercial one, and points out that not only do people use their
> homes for all sorts of productive and creative activities which are recognisably
> suburban; but that also 'formal culture' often originates in suburbia - writers,
> composers, painters and so on do their work at home, their followers do much

> of the work of enjoying culture in the same place...that's where most people...read and see and hear most of the world's news and most of the analysis and commentary on it...such energetic engagement in public culture does not confine people to their homes but propels them out, into the city and the country where 'public community and city life' still continues. (Hartley, 1992, p. 161)

The private sphere is an active one in which rational-critical debate can take place in a privatised public sphere.

The Lone Gunmen have the ability to read texts. Combined with their access to information technologies, this leads to their position within *The X-Files* as having some access to the knowledge of The Smoke Ring.

> Contemporary politics is *representative* in both senses of the term, citizens are represented by a chosen few, and politics is represented to the public via the various media of communication. Representative political space is literally made of pictures - they constitute the public domain. (Hartley, 1992, p. 35)

But this is not as simple as turning on the television in *The X-Files*. The Lone Gunmen are media experts in the context that they have access to a range of information technologies and communication systems. They have become so proficient in their consumption that they are able to gain access to systems and knowledges that circulate within the private realm. Hacking, surveillance and so on are not public activities rather they are private personal activities that utilise media (computer and photographic) in traditionally solitary, individual capacities.

Kung Fu and Funky Poaching

In *The X-Files*, The Lone Gunmen operate within a privatise public sphere. They disseminate information about the conspiracy theory that they gain through their private means. In *Memento Mori* they assist Mulder in breaking into a fertility clinic using their computer hacking and surveillance abilities. In *The Usual Suspects* they once again use their computer hacking abilities to decode secret encrypted

government documents. In numerous other episodes they put the same skills to work

in an attempt to reveal 'the truth'.

The Lone Gunmen use a range of computer, information and scientific techniques to

expose the conspiracy theory and in this fashion they are engaged in rational-critical

debate. Computer hacking, known as kung fu (*Usual Suspects*) and stealing

information, known as funky poaching (*Memento Mori*) are the tools The Lone

Gunmen use to gain information about the organs of power.

The publishing of their newsletter is the major way in which they disseminate this

information and engage in rational-critical debate. This is not a newspaper. It does not

circulate in the traditional public sphere, as a news*letter* it implies intimate circulation

and private distribution. A newspaper has public circulation, it is consumed on a

popular scale, therefore, Anderson (1991, p. 35), argues one 'is continually reassured

that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life."

> The obsolescence of the newspaper on the morrow of its printing - curious that
> one of the earlier mass-produced commodities should so prefigure the inbuilt
> obsolescence of modern durables - nonetheless, just for this reason, creates this
> extraordinary mass ceremony: the almost precisely simultaneous consumption
> (imagining) of the newspaper-as-fiction. (Anderson, 1991, p. 35)

The newsletter does not have widespread public circulation; rather it is more likely to

be circulated amongst smaller more 'private' groups. Furthermore it does not have the

obsolescence of the newspaper. A newsletter may last from a week to a month or

more, as it is not dependent on immediate information. Reading newspapers,

Anderson suggests, is a form of Morning Prayer which; "Each communicant is well

aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands

(or millions) of others whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has

not the slightest notion" (Anderson, 1992, p. 35). Newsletters do not have this same

sort of simultaneity or confidence. They are on a much smaller scale and may not have regular distribution times nor a widespread consumption ritual, therefore not the assurance of the same imagined world. In this way The Lone Gunmen are creating or promoting a public sphere via the private realm. As a result The Lone Gunmen as private people obtain a public authority within the private sphere.

However, in *The X-Files* there does remain a space for a public sphere. This is a public sphere that can still engage in rational-critical debate and gain knowledge about the workings of organs of power.

The Truth

The truth may not be as 'out there' in *The X-Files* as we think it is rather it is 'in there', in the capacity to be literate in the media. The public sphere has not existed in its original form for many many years and whether it actually functioned in its utopian approach to democracy is perhaps still up for debate. However the role of making government visible to the public is an idea that is still very much apart of our consciousness even if it does not play out. In *The X-Files*, government is not visible, and when it is rendered visible it is usually in the service of the consortium who wish to direct attention away from themselves. The FBI does its best in *The X-Files* but that too is under the thumb of The Smoke Ring. Mulder and Scully only ever significant progress when they begin to operate largely as private individuals (Scully's cancer thread, Mulder's search for his sister and so on). It is only then that they get into any significant trouble with the hierarchy because it is then that they begin to uncover 'truth'. The public sphere is reinscribed in *The X-Files* into the private sphere. Consumption does not make citizens passive in *The X-Files* rather it gives them the skills to adequately critique the roles of social institutions. However, *The X-Files* still hangs onto the idea of a single unified truth; "The Truth is Out There." In this way, it

presents a very traditional view of society in which certain skilled professionals know the truth about the world while the masses remain duped. All is not lost however, as individuals are given the power to not be duped. The public sphere in *The X-Files* has disappeared in its original form, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't still have the capacity to work in its intended role.

Chapter 4
Audiences and *The X-Files*

> All I know is that television does not make a previously sane man go out and
> kill five people thinking they're all the same guy. Not even Must-See TV can
> do that to you.
> Mulder, *Wetwired.*

This thesis has sought to locate shifts in what counts as valid knowledges in the

constructions of social reality in *The X-Files*. I have explored notions of identity,

community, public and private realms and the ways in which these concepts, located

within *The X-Files*, have shifted to provide alternative explorations of social reality.

This final chapter seeks to understand how audiences engage with this knowledge.

This is not an attempt to find out what audiences are 'really' doing with *The X-Files* as

a text, but rather to discover how audiences are using the knowledge located within

The X-Files - in a public way- to construct audience communities.

I seek to show how audience/communities play with knowledge in much the same

way as *The X-Files* does and that these knowledges influence the construction of these

same audience communities. This chapter examines this *X-Files* community on the

Internet. This community is textualualised - all communication is written. This allows

me, as a researcher, to perform textual analysis in order to gain an insight into the

ways in which audiences may engage with knowledge.

In this way the imagined community of audiences may be accessed and given form.

The written text is the site at which audiences may be represented, the abstract notions

of 'actuality' that are bound up in audience research gives way to analysis of

representation which locates the construction of an audience community rather than

the 'reality' of individual audience members.

Particular to this chapter and to the notions of textual representation and analysis on the Internet, are fans.

Fans are active producers of texts. They are engaged with television and media texts in such a way that they are prolific producers of representations; "Fans are...the most visible and identifiable of audiences" (Lewis, 1992, p. 1). Fans are more than just active audiences. Fans engage with the text, appropriate it, and rework it to produce new meanings (Jenkins, 1992, p. 18). Fan fiction, Drinking Games, and Frequently Asked Questions involve manipulation and reworking of the text to produce meanings that highlight and extend the pleasures associated with the original text. In this way, they are producing *new* texts particular to fan audiences.

> Fans whether online or off, discuss characterisation...express their affection for or dislike of, particular characters; alert each other to appearances by the actors on talks shows or in other roles; compile lists of useless information...speculate about what would have happened if some feature of the story had been different...compare series, seriously and not so seriously...make up drinking games...and hash over any number of other issues arising from the aired episodes. Analysing the events in specific episodes is probably the most common form of discussion. Fans try to fill in the gaps left by writers and form connections between episodes. (Clerc, 1997, p. 76)

This act of production on the Internet is what is pertinent for this chapter, to identify the ways in which audiences may be engaged with *The X-Files* and its knowledge. The audience community on the Internet is diverse, constructed by many different kinds of people; however, they commonly refer to themselves as X-Philes.

Philing

In attempting to map this activity, my research took place over a number of months spanning 1997 and 1998. At random intervals I went onto the Internet and selecting no particular search engine, typed in *'The X-Files'*, selecting simply in the order they were listed I downloaded websites taking note of how they were set out, what

information they dealt with and how they dealt with it. I was selective in that I was only interested in those sites that included some sort of content, and not just a list of links to other sites.

There are two general trends in *X-Files* Internet sites; diegetic and nondiegetic. *Diegetic* elements are those which deal with the diegesis, that is, everything internal to *The X-Files* as a text. These sites deal with characters, episodes, plots, narratives and concepts related to the content of *The X-Files*. This includes sites such as; episode guides, mythology guides, alien and conspiracy threads, fan fictions, episode reviews and ratings, 'shipper' sites (relation-shippers believe that Mulder and Scully should be romantically involved), sites devoted to Mulder and Scully, The Lone Gunmen, Krycek, Cancerman and The Smoke Ring.

Nondiegetic elements are those that deal with elements external to the program-people, organisations and so on that influence the text. In these sites, the actors, rather than the characters are celebrated: The David Duchovny Oestrogen Brigade, Gillian Anderson Testosterone Brigade, Nicholas Lea Gallery, and Mitch Pileggi Oestrogen Brigade. Also included are those sites which celebrate or criticise the creator, writers, producers and directors of the program as well as articles and interviews with the various *X-Files* actors. Furthermore, gossip plays a large part across many of the sites. Gossip covers anything from what various actors said or did, to information on yet to be released episodes. Many sites include both diegetic and nondiegetic elements. They are not mutually exclusive. Within all of these sites this *X-Files* audience (X-Philes) are engaging with the text in particular ways. The knowledge in *The X-Files* is being used in specific ways to heighten and extend the pleasures of the text.

Trust Nothing

Audiences draw on the elements in *The X-Files* and use them when engaging with the text. Humour, satire, darkness, complexity, truth, and conspiracy are just a few of the elements X-Philes are picking up. Some 'popular' newspapers and magazines utilise *The X-Files* logo in the assumption that *The X-Files* audiences are engaged with the text as 'reality'. For example both *X-Factor* and *UnXplained* deal with 'real' UFOs and 'real' conspiracies. Research done on the Internet indicates a community who are using the text quite differently. Here audiences are playing with the knowledge in *The X-Files* acutely aware of its diegetic function. These audiences are highly analytical, engaging in very sophisticated deconstructions of the text, not to apply it to their own reality of *The X-Files* as a way of extending the pleasures of the text. When an audience member writes; "I personally believe the aliens are a lie" (http://members.aol.com/Neverthot/alienlie.txt) or, "OK lets be realistic now" (http://members.aol.com/Neverthot/ciggie.txt) he or she is not speaking in terms of actuality or 'reality', he or she is speaking diegetically. That is, when an audience members claims "lets be reasonable now" what is meant is 'lets be reasonable in terms of the diegetic consistency of the narrative and the text.' Such a comment represents an attempt to form logical, consistent links through *The X-Files* as a series. It is not about dealing with stand-alone episodes and it is not about dealing with 'reality'.

The X-Files establishes a criteria within its narrative through which knowledge is deployed. This criteria involves conspiracy, multiple truths and ambiguities. X-Philes engage with this criteria when discussing, celebrating and criticising the text. One particular diegetic site entitled *Post Your Own Conspiracy Theories* is an example of the ways in which audiences engage with the criteria and display themes. This site

revolves around the season four cliffhanger, *Gethsemane*. This episode sparked much debate as it left audiences with Mulder apparently dead. At this site audience members were invited to comment on the episode and suggest solutions, theories, hypotheses or indeed anything in regard to the events in the episode or to the history of *The X-Files* leading up to this episode. Here, audiences are being asked to comment on the conspiracy within the diegesis of *The X-Files*. X-Philes are picking up the criteria or theme of conspiracy within *The X-Files* as a dominant form through which to disseminate information. The site demonstrates a play with the notion of conspiracy, engaging with it as a theme for knowledge but not as a 'reality' of knowledge. Within this site, the ambiguity of knowledge within *The X-Files* is also picked up. Audience members here are never certain, a common theme throughout the posts was the double standard; "This is how it is - but you never know." X-Philes presented their ideas but were sure to add the disclaimer.

The plays on truth as well as its elusiveness within *The X-Files* are another theme picked up by audiences. X-Philes engage with this when discussing the text. Predicting the re-emergence of long dead characters (Deep Throat) is not ludicrous speculation, parody or absurdity, but a reflection of the ambiguity, insecurity and downright vagueness of some of the knowledge within *The X-Files*. Very rarely is anything discounted. *X-Files* plot devices involve open-ended resolutions and many character twists. Established characters are always expendable. Deep Throat, Mr X and Division Chief Scott Blevins whose parts were solid and semi regular were all disposed of in spectacular plot twists. Furthermore, the motives of each of these characters were either ambiguous or hidden. Deep Throat, while appearing genuine, was always acting with his own interest at heart attempting to absolve his guilt over

actions in the past. Mr X always walked a thin line between helping Mulder and his own self-preservation, and only in *Wetwired* is it revealed that Mr X works for Mulder's nemesis Cancerman. Chief Blevins in perhaps the most spectacular deception, was working for the mysterious group 'Roushe' with covert intentions of thwarting Mulder and Scully, after putting them together in the first place, while in a position that represented truth and justice.

This is a further way in which *The X-Files* plays with themes of knowledge, truth and conspiracy. Each of these characters represent the ambiguity of the text by occupying a position of instability, in the case of Deep Throat and Mr X, or a position designed to subvert truth as with Chief Blevins. Characters, like knowledge, in *The X-Files* are not stable; this creates a diegetic environment devoted to challenging conventional narrative devices, which also challenges dominant social constructions of knowledge and reality. These themes are developed in audience reactions on the Post Your Own page when X-Philes speculate on motives, agendas and similar knowledges exploited within *The X-Files*. The 'truth' in *The X-Files* is elusive and audiences are never quick to rule out possibilities, always looking for deceptions, exceptions and hidden truths. To this end they exploit, like *The X-Files*, as many sources of information as they can.

Facts and Philes

Knowledge within *The X-Files* comes from range of areas; science, mythology, UFOlogy, pathology, forensics, psychology, theology, witchcraft, occultism, parapsychology, hypnosis, communication technologies, biology and genetics to name a few. X-Philes engage with this approach, poaching from as many sources that they can. Even when discussing the diegesis, they are by no means restricted to the diegesis. Audiences examine nondeigetic information as well- and gossip is particularly useful. They make links between the background of the writers and

developments in plots, what mood Chris Carter is in, what David Duchovny said in a particular interview and so on to draw conclusions about narrative direction and motivations for plot threads. This was particularly evident in season five in which for two episodes- *Chinga* and *Kill Switch*- two prominent fiction writers- Stephen King (*Pet Cemetary, The Stand, Shawshank Redemption*) and William Gibson (*Neuromancer*)- were involved in the scripting process. As a consequence, this information is utilised in any analysis of these episodes by X-Philes; "This episode was written by Stephen King, so expect spookiness." (http://hal-pc.org?~tas/chingakillswitch.htm). King's status as a horror writer is drawn on in speculations about the episode, as is Williams Gibson's history as a science fiction writer. Developments 'behind the scenes' involving the writers are a further source utilised by X-Philes. Much is made of the fact that Stephen King's first draft for *Chinga* was rejected by Chris Carter. Audiences use nondiegetic knowledge in drawing on popular science fiction knowledge in an attempt to make sense of some ambiguous elements within the text. That is, concepts that have not been specifically raised within *The X-Files* are drawn upon to help fill in gaps. For example; one poster remarked in an examination of the Jeremiah Smith character in the third season finale *Talitha Cumi* (an alien with shapeshifting ability);

> How do they know who to morph into? I mean, how did Jeremiah Smith know what Bill Mulder and Deep Throat looked like? In the original script he was supposed to morph into Melissa, and I can't see how Smith would ever have seen her to know what she looked like. Are they getting something from the minds of the people they are trying to fool, or something? Or do they just have a *very* good memory for faces? Or is it not physical at all, but done simply by making the viewer believe that they are seeing whoever the morph wants them to see?...Do they have some sort of group memory of people to morph into.

These ideas have not been raised within the texts of *The X-Files*- particularly the idea of some sort of collective memory. This is something that has come from outside the

text, from popular science fiction. In *The X-Files* only two of these aliens have ever been clearly identified and no more than three of four of these shapeshifters have been viewed together at one time, which in diegetic terms tend to suggest no such thing. Unlike the representations of the most dominant and familiar context of shared memory in science fiction, The Borg in *Star Trek* who are seen enmasse rather than individually. This passage may also be noted for its use of other nondiegetic material; 'the original script' as a context of information about the diegesis.

Nondiegetic sites are heavily laden with information, continuing this theme. Close scrutiny of all the elements of the text can reveal 'truths' within the text. One particular site is devoted to Mark Snow who provides the music score to *The X-Files* and developed the opening theme (http://www.thex-files.com/music02.htm). Within this site, the author attempts to make links between Snow's personal and professional history and *The X-Files* as a text. Linking Snow's background in baroque music and the 'eerie sounds' of *The X-Files* the author provides extra layers of meanings with which audiences may engage.

The Truth is...?

Even though truth is elusive within *The X-Files*, the direction of the series, nevertheless is persistently towards truth;" The Truth is Out There." Themes of truth in *The X-Files* are consistent and privileged not only through Mulder and Scully but discourses about who has access to truth and who 'knows' the truth. Furthermore, the open-ended plots of *The X-Files* episodes point to the way in which truth is rarely 'found' in *The X-Files*.

X-Philes too press towards truth and much of the discussion, disagreement and debate around *The X-Files* is structured around the themes of truth. This central discussion, however, takes place against a disavowal- for in many of these debates can be as the desire for truth and the persistent pursuit of it- but, also a knowledge, in *The X-Files*, that there is no such thing as an absolute truth. X-Philes are invested in this, and their attempts to understand the text, to draw links across episodes and make sense of the threads are tied up in this specific for taken by truth in *The X-Files*.

In this context, conspiracy elements are paid close attention - to the point that these audiences actively utilise *X-Files* discourse of conspiracy within their own discussion; as we have seen already in the *Post Your Own Conspiracy Theories* site.

X-Philes pick up the conspiracy theme when they refer to The Lone Gunmen as a valuable resource. On the *Post Your Own...* site there are several suggestions of the usefulness of the Lone Gunmen arguing that their status as 'knowing the truth' of the conspiracy is valid knowledge. That the Lone Gunmen are indeed a resource for the truth positions the marginal and skilled knowledge of the Lone Gunmen as valid ways of knowing. There are also several references to Mulder (in *Gethsemane*) faking his own death to go 'underground', suggesting the further away one is from the FBI and government institutions, the more access one may have to the 'truth'. Once again this engages with the validity of *The X-Files'* conspiracy theories. Audience members on this site often used the term 'They' when referring to those is power, acknowledging the discourse raised in *The X-Files* about the vagueness of knowledge surrounding the organs of power.

Fun, Files and Fiction

The X-Files is also playful in its treatment of the validity of its knowledge. In episodes such as *Jose Chung's From Outer Space, Bad Blood, Chinga, Never Again, Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man, Postmodern Prometheus, Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose, Humbug,* and, *War of the Coprophages, The X-Files* utilises satire, parody and intertextuality as ways of addressing its larger themes of truth, ambiguity and conspiracy. Audiences are also thoroughly engaged with these elements of *The X-Files* and as a result often do unexpected things with the text.

For example, *The Rogue Gallery* (http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Rampart/7953/) is set up in a number of sections; mutants, psychics, aliens, government, occult, primordial, syndicate, most wanted and 'rogue at a glance'. Each section is devoted to the mutants, creeps, creatures, weirdos and different kinds of antagonists that have crossed Mulder and Scully's path throughout the series. This extends from regular baddies such as Cancerman, Kryceck and The Smoke Ring to strange creatures such as the green bugs in *Darkness Falls* or the extraterrestrial ghost in *Space*.

What is most interesting about this site, however is the *celebration* of popular guest character baddies. For example; Doug Hutchison who played Eugene Victor Tooms in *Squeeze,* episode 1.03 proved so popular that the character was brought back for a second episode; *Tooms,* episode 1.21. Robert Wisden who played Robert Modell in *Pusher,* episode 3.17 returned in *Kitsunegari,* episode 5.08. These characters, along with many others are celebrated on this site. The main page has a short introduction articulating the way in which these 'rogues' are regarded;

> There is opposition in all things. For without evil, how can you recognise good? Therefore, I submit to you, The Gallery of Rogues. This site is dedicated to the rogues, villains and fiends of The X-Files. While some were

truly evil, others were victims of circumstance...but ALL were responsible for actions which harmed others, broke the law, or caused strife.

A picture of the character, as well as a brief description, along with the episode he/she/it appeared in are listed. It is their capacity for nastiness that is privileged at this site. This is what is written for Eugene Victor Tooms;

> A genetic mutant made Tooms capable of contorting and elongating his body in order to gain access to his victims. He then proceeded to feast upon their livers. He is finally stopped when he suffers from death by escalator.

The Flukeman received this attention;

> This six-foot tall, blood sucking, Chernobyl-born megaworm slummed through the sewers of Newark, New Jersey in search of its hapless victims. It is unclear whether this creature is still alive after being cut in half...of course, parts is parts!

The author does his/her best to play on the 'grossness' of the creatures, thereby celebrating their transgressive potential.

X-Philes here, are placing almost the same value on the antagonist as the protagonists, Mulder and Scully. Celebration of these characters is not so much play with knowledge in terms of satire or parody, but an unexpected element of identification. Audiences, like *The X-Files* as a text, are not averse to drawing elements from the text and positioning them as valid ways of engaging with the text. *The X-Files* privileges creatures, parody and conspiracy, and audiences take it a step further by celebrating the pleasure of these creatures, intensifying the parody and engaging in conspriacies. Furthermore, these approaches by audiences are not unusual ways in which *The X-Files* is taken up. For X-Philes the 'bad guys' are just as interesting as the 'good guys'. *The X-Files* does different things with its knowledge; it challenges the concept of truth in *Jose Chung's From Outer Space* with the concept of point of view, *Bad Blood* uses

the same technique to present the unreliability of truth through and even dares to satirise its main characters. In *Chinga*, the program plays with the character of Mulder and in *Never Again*, it satirises him. *Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man* parodies *Forest Gump* with Cancerman sitting on a park bench proclaiming; "Life is like a box of chocolates. A cheap, thoughtless, perfunctory gift that nobody ever asks for..." *Humbug* comments on the concept of normalcy concluding with the villain being eaten by a circus performer- The Conundrum. X-Philes in *The Rogue Gallery* are engaged with this element of *The X-Files*, taking up the marginal, the different, the despised, the freaks and privileging them.

Abducting the Audience

By looking closely at these sites on the Internet it can be seen that X-Philes do not engage with the text as a 'reality'. Much writing on audiences (Ang, 1996, Hobson, 1982, Fiske, 1987) has been geared at deconstructing the notion that audiences engage with media texts as 'reality'. It has aimed to construct audiences as active consumers of texts rather than passive dopes.

Ien Ang (1992), in her book *Watching Dallas* dictates it is important for characters to be real at least in the sense that they must be *believable*;

> The more 'genuine' a character appears to be, the more he or she is valued. But what is even more remarkable is that even for the severe critics, 'genuineness' is the criterion by which they judge the characters. The only difference is that the severe critics tend to see them as 'unreal', whereas among the fans, the opposite is the case. Characters who are 'caricatures' or 'improbable' are not esteemed, characters who are 'lifelike' or psychologically believable' are. (Ang, 1992, p. 33)

This sort of 'realness' is important in almost any text. However, as And argues, this does not translate into perceiving a text as an actuality. It is not perceived to be 'real life'. Audiences rarely do this as Dorothy Hobson, in her book, *Crossroads* points out. A text does not have to be real, only possible; "It is the difference between the

'possible' and the 'fantastic' which is one of the criteria by which the audience judge

fiction for its relationship to their conception of reality" (Hobson, 1982, p. 122).

Audiences may engage with texts in this way, however, Christine Geraghty (1991, p.

19), identifies the simultaneous engagement and distance of audiences in relation to

soap operas.

> The gap between episodes brings the audience up against its own inability to
> control the telling of the story and draws attention to its fictional construction;
> the establishment of truth, the claim of most narratives, is, in soaps, subject to
> conventions which quite overtly postpone resolution, making us aware that
> fiction is not the inevitable and uninterrupted revelation of the truth.

According to these researchers audiences do not, take up fiction as 'reality'. Audiences

become invested in television texts and their characters- they are, however, well aware

of the fiction, the narrative structures and plot devices.

Though audiences pick up and utilise the knowledge within *The X-Files*, this is not

done in the context of 'reality'. This can be seen when we take an example of one of

the very few 'real' conspiracy *X-Files* sites, a site that uses *The X-Files* as a basis for

reality, and compare it to the sites I have analysed. 'Real' conspiracy sites, explore

'real' UFO's and 'real' cover-ups. Two of the three sites I looked at used *The X-Files*

explicitly within its information, the other only relied on the name and iconography,

this third one was found through a link on an *X-Files* page. But all assumed the

'reality' of the events they described and by utilising *The X-Files* iconography

implicitly implied that *The X-Files* audiences engaged with the text as 'real'. On the

site entitled; *The Real X-Files: Alien Abductions, Government Cover-ups and UFO*

Encounters that Inspire the Show, the author John Flynn links episodes of *The X-Files*

directly with 'real' events. Flynn links *Deep Throat* episode 1.01 with the accounts of

Robert Lazar, a former employee of Area 51 and the secret projects that go on there. He also links *Fallen Angel*, episode 1.09 with the events in Roswell in 1947. Episode 1.16, *EBE* is linked to a top-secret document made public during the Carter administration, revealing that an alien had survived the crash at Roswell. *The Erlenmeyer Flask*, episode 1.23 is linked to a 'Project Sign' involving the experimentation with alien DNA.

Amongst many of his links Flynn makes the argument that *The X-Files* is indeed taken from 'real' events and is therefore engaging with actuality. He then links the content with audiences and reality by proclaiming; "Agent Fox Mulder's paranoia is merely a reflection of the mistrust that most people feel towards the government."
This idea of a television text 'reflecting' social reality is a simplistic way of making sense of *The X-Files*, and relies on a notion of the 'reality' of the text. This comment, makes an assumption about how individuals personally interact in their social reality- an assumption which media researchers such as those discussed above have sought to displace.

Audience members may or may not trust their government but when they engage with *The X-Files* they make no attempts to link the text to reality on the Internet sites. On none of the sites I looked at did X-Philes discuss the relevance of *The X-Files* to Area 51, Roswell or JFK, or any other so called project or event. Even when the text made specific references to Roswell, JFK or Area 51 audiences only discussed them in terms of the diegesis. While knowledge from popular culture is used and celebrated it is not positioned in terms of actuality.

The events at Roswell, are still debatable. The notion that an alien space craft crashed in the desert, and that live aliens were recovered from it is to, some extent, an element of popular culture that is neither true nor false. It has been perpetually caught up in simultaneous revelation and denial, like most conspiracies. It is this liminal status of the knowledge that *The X-Files* picks up and utilises. Likewise, this is what audiences engage with. X-Philes are not interested in the reality of these events but the debate between truth and fiction in the attempts to locate the truth- and the suggestion that ultimately, truth is elusive. While *The X-Files* boldly claims; "The Truth is Out There", it always remains elusive. X-Philes recognise this and acknowledge it in their double standard; 'This is how it is - but you never know'. X-Philes are aware of the twists, deceptions, ambiguities and vagueness of much of the knowledge in *The X-Files* and never discount anything, but mostly, they do not rely on the text as an account of social reality.

Deconstructing phildom

The X-Files is engaged in a process of deconstruction, of investigating what counts as valid knowledge. By contracting different forms of knowledge and by privileging knowledges not normally perceived as valid, *The X-Files* is suggesting new ways in which to engage with knowledge.

Fans are similarly engaged in a deconstructive project- simply through the ways they engage with a text. The projects of *The X-Files* and fans coincide into a project geared towards subverting dominant cultural hierarchies.

> The stereotypical conception of the fan [as a crazed loner], while not without a limited factual basis, amounts to a projection of anxieties about the violation of dominant cultural hierarchies. The fans' transgression of bourgeois taste and disruption of dominant cultural hierarchies insures that their preferences are seen as abnormal and threatening by those who have a vested interest in the maintenance of these standards. (Jenkins, 1992, p. 17)

Fan culture transgresses boundaries by appropriating texts and manipulating their meanings. By altering meanings in the original text, fans are taking on an authority to make meanings, meanings that are particular to them. In doing do they privilege popular texts over canonical works. Struggling over the control of meaning transgresses boundaries between viewer and producer and therefore dominant cultural hierarchies.

> Far from syncopathic, fans actively assert their mastery over the mass-produced texts which provide the raw materials for their own cultural productions and the basis for their own social interactions. In the process, fans cease to be simply an audience for popular texts; instead, they become active participants in the construction and circulation of textual meanings. (Jenkins, 1992, p. 24)

The fans and audiences of *The X-Files* on the Internet construct a community in a playful investigation of what counts as 'knowledge' and 'truth' - in the diegesis of a program doing exactly the same thing.

It should also be acknowledge that X-Philes also engage with the text in quite traditional ways. On the Internet, X-Philes still produce and engage with Fan Fiction, Frequently Asked Questions and Drinking Games. These kinds of activities are picked up across many texts and are not unusual for X-Philes to be engaged in.

But by celebrating villains, ambiguities, multiple truths and conspiracy theories, X-Philes are not merely extending the pleasure of the text, but are engaging in a deconstruction of dominant cultural hierarchies by utilising the text in ways cued by *The X-Files*, and therefore, by engaging with marginal alternative and unconventional knowledges.

What is important is that X-Philes are not engaging in this way simply because it is traditional fan behaviour, but, also because they are engaging with the nature of their

favourite program. The Internet community uses, manipulates, plays and reflects these

knowledges throughout diegetic, nondiegetic and gossip websites representing

audiences as engaged with and playing with this knowledge.

Conclusion:
Fight the Future

I'm the key figure in an on-going government charade - a plot to conceal the truth about the existence of extraterrestrials. It's a global conspiracy actually, with key players at the highest level of power that reaches down to the lives of every man, woman and child on this planet. So, of course no one believes me. I'm a... I'm an annoyance to my superiors, a joke to my peers, they call me spooky...Spooky Mulder, whose sister was abducted by aliens when he was just a kid and who now chases after little green men with a badge and a gun shouting to the heavens or anyone who will listen that the fix is in, that the sky is falling. And when it hits it's going to be the shit storm of all time. [Mulder *Fight the Future*].

The X-Files film, *Fight the Future* was released in June 1998. The film is a

culmination of all the major themes in *The X-Files* television series.

I aim to use the film as a case study, in order to revisit the themes of aliens, bodies and

conspiracies and the arguments raised in this thesis.

The film opens, not with Mulder and Scully, but Texas 35000 years BC and two

cavemen attempting to save another from a strange creature in an ice-filled crevasse.

Cut to present day Texas and a young boy falls through a hole in the ground leading to

the now dry and sandy crevasse. The boy quickly becomes infected with a black oily

substance, that regular viewers would recognise as the Black Cancer, or Oil Slick

Alien. Emergency services are called which too become quickly infected. A week

later Mulder and Scully are called to Texas to assists in an investigation of a bomb

threat to the Federal Building.

Due to conspiratorial elements they are not able to prevent the bombing of not the

Federal Building, but the Federal Emergency Services Building across the road.

During the following inquiry, Mulder and Scully learn that a young boy and two men

died in the bombing and that they are being blamed for it. This leads Mulder and

Scully into a difficult search for the truth about the bombing that takes them across the state of Texas, to Washington and into the heart of Antarctica.

Aliens bodies and conspiracies are represented at almost every turn, and through these themes I aim to explore the notions of visibility and knowledge, transgressive bodily boundaries and the privatised public sphere as a realm of knowledge and power raised in this thesis. This conclusion will also look at the ways in which audiences on the Internet take up the knowledge from the film and how they engage with it.

> Scully: Oh my God. This man's tissue, Mulder...
> Mulder: Its like jelly.
> Scully: There's been some kind of cellular breakdown, it's completely oedematous. There's been no autopsy performed here, no Y-incision, no internal exam.

In the film, bodies are again a central theme. The transgressive potential of the human body is further developed to position it in a total breakdown of the body boundary. The Black Cancer uses the human body, as an incubator, to transform into a fully-grown, mutated alien. This alien feeds on the internal organs of the human to sustain its growth.

The notion of the grotesque body is developed here as the nature of human corporeality is situated as naturally transgressive. Gestation and the human body are inherent, even though commonly assigned to the female body; it is not a concept that one is familiar with. Gestation allows another being to exist within another-transgressing the closed, exclusive body -, which is exactly the case here, though it is a male body. The fact that it is a male body further breaks down notions of bodily exclusivity, as the male body is not designed for a gestative process. That the male body is used, means that notions of gender, that are then inherently tied to the body,

breakdown somewhat. The boundary between what counts as male and female, masculine and feminine begins to blur as the gestation process here, occurs in the male as well as the female body.

The autopsy is privileged in *Fight the Future* as it is in *The X-Files* series, as the site at which to gain knowledge. As indicated in the previous quote by Scully to Mulder, the autopsy is the point at which information about the body and the self is gained. In this scene, Scully stays behind to conduct an unauthorised autopsy and it is through the autopsy that they both begin to understand the nature of the transgression of this body.

> Mulder: What did you find?
> Scully: Evidence of a massive infection.
> Mulder: What kind of infection?
> Scully: I don't know.

The autopsy further functions to show how the body boundary is easily transgressed. Scully's autopsies are routine in *The X-Files*, and through this scene, we are not spared all the blood and secretion of the body. We see her cut out a piece of the ribcage and hold it up to look at. When forced to hide, under tables and corpses from authorities attempting to stop her from conducting the autopsy, the camera pans down to reveal her hiding place and a gooey substance dripping from the table and corpse above.

Bees in *Fight the Future* also show the body as vulnerable. The Bee is an insect that injects a substance into the human body and acts on the body to alter it. In *Fight the Future* this is amplified as the bees concerned transport a much deadlier virus. Mulder and Scully discover a giant hive in the middle of Texas. After being caught in the middle of swarming bees and chased off by black helicopters, they make their way

back to Washington. Soon after Scully is stung, however she does not experience a 'normal' reaction, but one that renders her immobile. The bee and the sting, which then acts upon the body to render it incapable, transgress the bodily boundary.

> Scully: Mulder...something's wrong.
> Mulder: What?
> Scully: I'm having lancinating pain in...
> Mulder: What?
> Scully:...my chest.
> Mulder: Scully...
> Mulder: Scully...
> Scully: My pulse is thready...a funny taste in the back of my throat.
> Mulder: I think you've gone into anaphylactic shock.
> Scully: No...I have no allergy.

The body here is transgressed by the bee; it is not closed, but constantly acts upon and is acted upon by the external world. In this way the division between subject and object is blurred. Subject/object divisions in *Fight the Future* become problematic through the transgression of the human and alien bodies, bees and through the cyborg. The cyborg is represented in *Fight the Future*, again through Scully.

After being stung by the bee, Scully is not taken to hospital, but rather, taken by those who conspired to get her stung. Mulder finally tracks her to Antarctica and finds her in a large underground complex. Scully, now totally incapacitated, is suspended in green liquid with tubes running in and out of her body- tubes carrying the black oil directly into her body. In short, she is transformed into a cyborg. The technology infringes upon her body, and the boundary between her and the external world is blurred. This transgression and blurring ceases when the body is acted upon once again by Mulder, with the vaccine.

The body is not a stable, contained entity, therefore the "I" that is considered coterminous with the body boundary too, shifts and alters with the body. Identity is then altered as the body merges with the technology and shifts again when it is terminated.

The notion of community is introduced to the viewer within the first ten minutes of the film when a young boy - Stevie - falls in a hole and is infected with the black oil. The camera pans up and out of the hole to reveal a small community - Blackwood - with the city of Dallas off in the distance.

The black oil here, however, is not an external invader to this community, it has actually been there for over 35000 years, albeit in a dormant, unknown form. The community is not homogenous, it is disrupted. The link between visibility and knowledge and 'wedom' and 'theydom' is established early. When Stevie becomes infected with the black oil, his eyes begin to cloud over and when he looks up at his friends, they immediately identify him as the Other.

> Kid 1: Stevie!
> Kid 2: Hey Stevie, you okay?
> Stevie looks up
> Kid 2: Hey man lets get out of here.

This link is extended, when later in the film those in authority have set up a 'base' over the hole in which the black oil exists. The camera pans across children playing in a playground, showing the children looking through holes in the fence. The camera pans up to reveal what the children are looking at - a rather large, conspicuous base of operations.

The link between visibility and knowledge, invisibility and power is developed when Mulder and Scully arrive at the small town of Blackwood and are only able to see the barren land; no sign of anything strange, no sign of the base. They then notice a brand new playground with fresh green grass obvious against the brown soil. This playground obviously covers the hole Stevie fell down. All trace is removed so no one can *see* any evidence of the black oil. The playground renders the 'operation' invisible, therefore those who conducted it are powerful - they may operate without being seen. Furthermore, the transgression of the community boundaries by the other at Blackwood is through invisibility.

The power of the black oil is its invisibility, which too can be said for the Bees. Bees are a common insect- they are invisible precisely because they are ordinary. In *Fight the Future*, they are constructed as powerful not only through their ordinariness but also through the invisibility of their 'deadliness'. The bees carry a deadly virus as an effective means of transportation. A virus is almost invisible, unable to be seen with the naked eye. Therefore, this virus - a form of the black oil- is powerful.

> Mulder: A plague?
> Dr Kurtzweil: The plague to end all plagues, Agent Mulder. A silent weapon for a quiet war. The systematic release of an indiscriminant organism for which the men who will bring it on still have no cure. They've been working on this for fifty years! While the rest of the world have been fighting gooks and commies, these men have been secretly negotiating a planned Armageddon.
>
> Well Manicured Man: What is a virus but a colonising force that cannot be defeated? Living in a cave, underground, until it mutates - and attacks

The black oil is invisible and therefore 'unknowable' It only becomes 'knowable' when it infects Stevie and therefore becomes visible as the Other. The black oil is intricately

linked to the conspiracy theory in *Fight the Future*, in that it is a representation of the 'truth' that Mulder and Scully have tried for so long to uncover and that certain powers have tried to keep concealed.

Fight the Future maintains the notion developed in the series of conspiracy as a representation of shifting public and private spheres. Government is not explicitly represented in *Fight the Future*, neither is the popular media. Those that 'know' the 'truth' or have access to the 'truth' are constructed as corporate interests. At the other end of the scale are media specialists, who do not produce, but interpret the media. In the film, primarily two people - Well Manicured Man (WMM), and Mr Strughold- represent the Smoke Ring.

The Well Manicured Man is first shown in *Fight the Future*, sitting drinking tea in his English home. Beautiful landscape and a quite obviously wealthy home surround him. A servant arrives to inform him of a phonecall. His obvious wealth is linked to his position as a corporate interest. The same can be said for Mr Strughold, the implied leader of the Smoke Ring. While less explicit about his wealth his power is constructed through the centrality of his actions to the film. The Smoke Ring appears to operate around him and are reluctant to keep him waiting.

These men 'know' the truth and this is represented when the Well Manicured Man informs Mulder of the 'truth'.

> Mulder: This is what you've been conspiring to conceal? A disease?
> WMM: No for God's sake, you've got it all backwards! AIDS, the Ebola virus, on an evolutionary scale they are newborns. This virus walked the planet long before the dinosaurs.
> Mulder: What do you mean walked?
> WMM: Your aliens, Agent Mulder. Your little green men arrived here millions of years ago. Those that didn't leave have been lying dormant underground since the last ice age in the form of an evolved pathogen, waiting to be reconstituted by the alien race when it comes to colonise the planet- using us as hosts...

The corporate interest and their access to the truth are further represented by FEMA,

The Federal Emergency Management Agency. This agency is constructed as the

organisation at the centre of the conspiracy- the organisation that enables the

conspiracy to be played out.

> Dr Kurtzweil: Are you familiar with the Hanta virus Agent Mulder?
> Mulder: Yeah it was a deadly virus spread by field mice in the south western
> United States several years ago.
> Dr Kurtzweil: According to the newspaper, FEMA was called out to manage
> an outbreak of the Hanta virus. Are you familiar with what the Federal
> Emergency Management Agency's real power is? FEMA allows the White
> House to suspend constitutional government upon declaration of a national
> emergency. Think about that! What is an agency with such broad sweeping
> power doing managing a small viral outbreak in suburban Texas?

FEMA has ambivalent links to the state. It may very well be a government agency, but

it is not involved in any sort of democratic process. In the film it is more closely

aligned with corporate interests, which are shown to increasingly infringe upon

government.

There is however, is *Fight the Future*, also the capacity for citizens to learn about

those in power- to 'know them and what they are up to. This is represented in a

privatised public sphere through The Lone Gunmen and Dr Kurtzweil. These are

specialists in media who thus have access to 'truth'. Dr Kurtzweil once worked on

projects for the government/Smoke Ring and therefore has prior knowledge of some

elements. However most of his knowledge in *Fight the Future* comes form

'underground' media and being able to read media texts.

The Lone Gunmen make a small appearance in *Fight the Future*. Their contribution

serves to show how they, as members of a privatised public sphere and media

specialists are able to 'know' the 'truth'. After Scully is stung and kidnapped, and Mulder is shot, they are able to use their expertise to piece together the chain of events accurately.

> Byers: We put together you called 911. That call must have been intercepted. Frohike: Scully had a reaction to an Africanised honeybee we found in your hall.

The Lone Gunmen have been absent in the narrative up to this point, they are unaware of what Mulder and Scully have been investigating - yet they are able to fairly closely uncover the chain of events.

This group of media specialists function within a privatised public sphere that acts as a realm through which to 'know' those in power and engage in rational critical debate. They are able to 'know' the 'truth' and 'know' society.

Audiences of *The X-Files* pick up the themes of truth, conspiracy, ambiguity and so on in their construction of communities on the Internet. This activity is carried on in regards to *Fight the Future*. Audiences on *Fight the Future* sites are highly analytical and utilise all kinds of information in their analysis. Diegetic and nondiegetic information is utilised in extending the pleasure of the text as well as parody, ambiguity and humour. The film is analysed in terms of the entire series in the context of consistency. Audience members are able to identify the themes within *The X-Files* easily and celebrate them in *Fight the Future*.

Perhaps a little different to many of the 'regular' series websites, *Fight the Future* sites analyse the film in terms of both diegetic and nondiegetic information. The film is seen as an amalgamation of all the major themes of *The X-Files* and its analysis is conducted on such terms.

> And the overall story about the conspiracy to hide the agreement made
> between The Syndicate Elders and the aliens, and to use Mulder and The X-
> Files as a red-herring, while using Scully as a spy on her partner's work in case
> Mulder got too close to the real truth, was exceptionally done by Carter. The
> time Carter has spent on researching facts such as the powers of FEMA are
> evident, and he uses them well in connecting them to the conspiracy. Also
> evident of Carter's usual 'pick a piece of fact from the news headlines and
> contort it into an X-Files' guideline is the "child fallen down the well" story,
> not to mention the bombing of a federal building in the south central United
> States. (http://www.x-files.pho.com/season_5/x5x21.htm)

Parody is still utilised within sites on *Fight the Future* and even though the film is not

as prevalent with such humour this seems to be carried on from analysis of the series

by the audience community.

"Ahh finally the answer we've all waited for. Will Scully marry the cigarette smoking

man." (http://www..baradv.on.ca/wwwmovie/messages/86.html) This is a play on

many of the themes in *The X-Files*, the search for truth, the link between Mulder and

Scully and the relationship between them and cancerman.

Audiences even recognise their own position within the making of *Fight the Future* in

their analysis of the film. They utilise this nondiegetic information in an attempt to

understand the developments within the plot and to extend their pleasure through the

notion that they somehow impacted on the producer in the making of their favourite

text, a boundary that is mostly strictly maintained;

"Chris Carter, the creator of The X-Files, during filming of the movie bombarded us

X-Philes with misinformation, trying to keep the plot a secret. He did a good job."

(http://157.22.243.39/boiled/reviews_98/the_xfiles.html) Like the 'regular' sites, *Fight*

the Future sites celebrates the deconstructive nature of *The X-Files*, by privileging the

pleasure of the themes;

> And so begins another Mulder and Scully chase after shady government
> figures, information and misinformation of a conspiracy to end all

conspiracies, and the alleged existence of extraterrestrials. And finally, we learn just how all those bees, conspiracies, Black Oil and Syndicate Elders link up. After season five, it's about time. What a thrill it was... (http://www.x-files.pho.com/season_5/x5x21.htm)

Fight the Future, as a culmination of all the themes in *The X-Files* shows the ways in which aliens, bodies and conspiracies are linked.

Bodies in *The X-Files* are a representation of the ways in which the transgression of the body boundary is a common thing and that the structures of identity assigned to bodily exclusivity become redundant. This transgression makes us aware of our bodies and therefore deconstructs subject object divisions by reducing the clear boundary between the human and nonhuman realm. This then is linked to arguments about the visibility of the Other and aliens in *The X-Files*. The transgressed body, is the visible body, and this is where previous representations of aliens in science fiction perform their role. The Other in *Star Trek* and so on- the alien- is represented through the body- the large forehead, strange eyes and so on. In *The X-Files* the Other too is represented through the body. However, here it is not a grotesque body, but a 'normal' body. Aliens in *The X-Files* have a transgressive body that remains invisible; they are shapeshifters and are able to make themselves invisible, in terms of being ordinary. They are then able to transgress the boundaries of 'wedom' and 'theydom' through their invisibility within the community. However, this community is not as homogenous as it is constructed, the grotesque body is privileged and its disruption is necessary. Therefore 'wedom' and 'theydom' are not so clearly defined.

Conspiracies are about the struggle to reveal what is hidden. Regimes of power cannot be *seen* in the context of conspiracy, they are hidden and seek to keep what they 'know' and do hidden. The public sphere is about making visible the workings of the

state in order to conduct rational critical debate. This is done through the visual realm of the popular media. Television allows one to see those in power; in *The X-Files* the conspiracy is such that those in power cannot be seen and seeks to avoid being seen. This visibility is then shifted to a much more subtle visibility of the privatised public sphere, where individuals may act to be able to see those in power through specialist knowledge.

In this way, all of the major themes within *The X-Files* are linked to provide a comprehensive deconstruction of the hierarchies of knowledge. *The X-Files* challenges the dominant forms of social reality by positioning shifts in knowledge that allow for a much more fluid construction of what counts as valid knowledge.

REFERENCES

Anderson, Benedict. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London, New York: Verso.

Ang, Ien. (1996). *Watching Dallas: Soap opera and the melodramatic imagination*. London, New York: Routledge.

Ang, Ien. (1996). *Living room wars: Rethinking media audiences for a postmodern world*. London, New York: Routledge.

Anthias, Floya. And Yuval-Davis, Nira. (1996). *Racialized boundaries: Race, nation,gender, colour and class and the anti-racist struggle*. London, New York: Routledge.

Baker, Keith, Michael. (1992). Defining the public sphere in eighteenth-century France: Variations on a theme by Habermas. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 181-211)

Benhabib, Seyla. (1992). Models of public space: Hannah Arendt, the liberal tradition, and Jurgen Habermas. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 73-98)

Bhabha, Homi. K. (1990). Introduction: Narrating the nation. In Homi Bhabha (Ed.), Nation and narration. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-7).

Bhabha, Homi. K. (1990). DissemiNation: Time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation. In Homi Bhabha (Ed.), *Nation and Narration*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 291-322).

Calhoun, Craig. (1992). Introduction: Habermas and the public sphere. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 1-49).

Clerc, Susan. (1996). Estrogen brigades and 'big tits' threads: Media fandom online and off. In Lynn Cherny and Elizabeth Reba Weise (Eds.), *Wired Women: Gender and new realities and cyberspace*. Washington: Seal Press. (pp. 73-97)

Code, Lorraine. (1995). *Rhetorical spaces: Essays on gendered locations*. New York, London: Routledge.

Cranny-Francis, Ann. (1995). *The body in the text*. Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Creed, Barbara. (1993). *The monstrous feminine: Film, feminism, psychoanalysis*. London, New York: Routledge.

Dahlgren, Peter. (1991). Introduction. In Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks (Eds.), *Communication and citizenship: Journalism and the public sphere*. London, New York: Routledge.

Darwin, Charles, (1859). *The origin of the species*. New York: The Modern Library.

Dellamora, Richard. (1996). Absent bodies/absent subjects: The political unconscious of postmodernism. In Peter Horne and Reina Lewis (Eds.), *Outlooks: Lesbian and gay sexualities and visual cultures*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 28-47).

Descartes, Rene. (1997). *Key philosophical writings*. (Tanslated by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross). Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions.

Durkheim, Emile. (1984). *The division of labour in society*. (Translated by W.D. Halls). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Press.

Fiske, John. (1992). The cultural economy of fandom. In Lisa Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 30-48.)

Fiske, John. (1993). *Power plays power works*. London, New York: Verso Publishing.

Foucault, Michel. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge*. London, New York: Tavistock Publications.

Fraser, Nancy. (1992). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 109-142).

Gellner, Ernest. (1995). *Encounters with nationalism*. Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing.

Geraghty, Christine. (1991). *Women and soap operas: A study of prime time soaps*. Cambrige: Polity Press.

Gobetti, Daniella. (1992). *Private and public: Individuals, households, and the body politic in Locke and Hutcheson*. London, New York: Routledge.

Goldberg, David , Theo. (1997). *Racial subjects: Writing on race in America*. London, New York: Routledge.

Grossberg, Lawrence. (1988). It's a Sin: Politics , post-modernity and the popular. In Lawrence Grossberg, Tony Fry, Ann Curthoys and Paul Patton (Eds.), *It's a sin: Essays on postmodernism, politics and culture*. Sydney: Power Publications. (pp. 23 - 34)

Grosz, Elizabeth. (1994). *Volatile bodies: Toward a corporeal feminism*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Habermas, Jurgen. (1987). *Knowledge and human interest.* (translated by Jeremy Shapiro). Cambridge, Oxford: Polity Press.

Habermas, Jurgen. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society.* (translated by Thomas Burger). London: Polity Press.

Haraway, Donna. (1989). *Primate visions: Gender, race and nature in the world of modern science.* London, New York: Verso

Haraway, Donna. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs and women.* London, New York: Routledge.

Haraway, Donna. (1992). The actors are cyborg, nature is coyote and the geography is elsewhere: Postcritps to 'cyborgs at large'. In Constance Penley and Andrew Ross (Eds.), *Technoculture.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (pp. 21-26).

Hartley, John. (1992). *The politics of pictures: The creation of the public in the age of popular media.* London, New York: Routledge.

Hartley, John. (1992). *Teleology: Studies in television.* London, New York: Routledge.

Hartley, John. (1996). *Popular reality: Journalism, modernity, popular culture.* London, New York, Sydney, Aukland: Arnold.

Hobsbawn, E.J. (1991). *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Program, myth, reality.* Cambridge, New York, Port Chester, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press.

Hobson, Dorothy. (1982). *Crossroads: The drama of a soap opera.* London: Methuen.

Jacobs, Jane. (1996). *Edge of empire: Postcolonialism and the city.* London: Routledge.

Jagose, Annamarie. (1996). *Queer theory.* Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Jenkins, Henry. (1992). *Textual poachers: Television fans and participatory culture.* London, New York: Routledge.

Kramer, Eric. (1997). The spiders of truth. In Eric Kramer (Ed), *Postmodernism and race.* Westport, Connecticut, London: Preager Publishing. (pp. 1-15).

Lather, Patti. (1991). *Feminist research in education: Within/against.* Geelong: Deakin University Press.

Latour, Bruno. (1993). *We have never been modern.* New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Latour, Bruno. (1994). Pragmatogonies: A mythical account of how humans and nonhumans swap properties. *American Behavioral Scientist* 37 (6), pp. 791-808.

Leder, Drew. (1990). *The absent body.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Lehrer, Keith. (1992). *Theory of knowledge.* London, New York: Routledge.

Lewis, Lisa. (1992). Introduction. In Lisa Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media.* London. New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-30).

Levi-Strauss, Claude. (1968). *Structural anthropology.* (Translated by Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest). London: Penguin Press.

Mannheim, Karl. (1966). *Ideology and utopia: An introduction to the sociology of knowledge.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Marx, Karl. and Engels, Friedrich. (1967). *The communist manifesto.* Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books.

McCarthy, Doyle. (1996). *Knowledge as culture: The new sociology of knowledge.* London, New York: Routledge.

Moi, Toril. (1985). *Sexual/textual politics: Feminist literary theory.* London, New York: Routledge.

Nicholson, Linda, J. (1990). Introduction. In Linda J. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/postmodernism.* New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-16)

Outhwaite, William. (Ed.), (1996). *The Habermas reader.* London: Polity Press.

Parry, D. L. L. (1998) Articulating the third republic by conspiracy theory. *European History Quarterly* 28 (2), 163-188.

Popper, Karl. (1966). *The open society and its enemies vol II The high tide of prophecy: Hegel and Marx.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Price, Monroe. (1995). *Television, the public sphere and national identity.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Probyn, Elspeth. (1995). Queer belongings: The politics of departure. In Elspeth Probyn and Elizabeth Grosz (Eds.), *Sexy bodies: The strange carnalities of feminism.* London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-18).

Radel, Nicholas. (1994). Self as other: The politics of identity in the works of Edmund White. In Jeffrey Ringer (Ed.), *Queer words, queer images: Communication and the construction of homosexuality.* London, New York: New York University Press. (pp. 175-192).

Renan, Ernest. (1990). What is a nation? In Homi Bhabha (Ed.), *Nation and narration.* London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 8-22).

Said, Edward. (1993). *Culture and imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus Publishing.

Seidman, Steven. (1996). Introduction. In Steven Seidman (Ed.), *Queer Theory/Sociology*. Cambridge, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. (pp. 1-30).

Sellers, Susan. (Ed.), (1994). *The Helene Cixous reader*. New York: Routledge.

Scheman, Naomi. (1993). *Engenderings: Constructions of knowledge, authority and privilege*. New York: Routledge.

Sobchack, Vivian. (1997). *Screening space: The American science fiction film*. New Brunswick, New Jersey, London: Rutgers University Press.

Stark, Werner. (1991). *The sociology of knowledge: Toward a deeper understanding of the history of ideas*. New Brunswick, London: Transaction Publishers.

Waldby, Cathy. (1996). *AIDS and the body politic: Biomedicine and sexual difference*. London, New York: Routledge.

Williams, Simon, J. (1998). Bodily dys-order: Desire, excess and the transgression of the corporeal boundaries. *Body and Society* 4 (2), pp. 59-82.

Wolff, Janet.(1990). *Feminine sentences: Essays on women and culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amesley, C. (1989). How to watch Star Trek. *Cultural studies* 3 (3), pp. 323-339.

Anderson, Benedict. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London, New York: Verso.

Ang, Ien. (1996). *Watching Dallas: Soap opera and the melodramatic imagination*. London, New York: Routledge.

Ang, Ien. (1996). *Living room wars: Rethinking media audiences for a postmodern world*. London, New York: Routledge.

Anthias, Floya. And Yuval-Davis, Nira. (1996). *Racialized boundaries: Race, nation,gender, colour and class and the anti-racist struggle*. London, New York: Routledge.

Aronowitz, Stanley. (1988). *Science as power: Discourse and ideology in modern society*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Press.

Baker, Keith, Michael. (1992). Defining the public sphere in eighteenth-century France: Variations on a theme by Habermas. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 181-211)

Benhabib, Seyla. (1992). Models of public space: Hannah Arendt, the liberal tradition, and Jurgen Habermas. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 73-98)

Berko, L. Liebes, T. and Katz, E. (1992). On commuting between television fiction and real life. *Quarterly review of film and video* 14 (1-2), pp. 157-178.

Bhabha, Homi. K. (1990). Introduction: Narrating the nation. In Homi Bhabha (Ed.), Nation and narration. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-7).

Bhabha, Homi. K. (1990). DissemiNation: Time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation. In Homi Bhabha (Ed.), *Nation and Narration*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 291-322).

Bondi, Liz. (1993). Locating identity politics. In Michael Keith and Steve Pile (Eds.), *Place and the politics of identity*. London, New York: Routledge.

Boss, P. (1986). Vile bodies and bad medicine. *Screen* 27 (1), pp. 14-24.

Bottomore, T. B. and Rubel, Maximilien. (Eds.), (1990). *Karl Marx: Selected writings in sociology and social philosophy*. London, New York: Penguin Books.

Bourdieu, Pierre. (1979). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. London, Melbourne, Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Brosnan, J. (1978). *Future tense: The cinema of science fiction.* London: Macdonald and Janes Publishing.

Bukatman, Scott. (1992). Who programs you? The science fiction of the spectacle. In Annette Kuhn (Ed.), *Alien zone: Cultural theory and contemporary science fiction.* (pp. 196-213).

Butler, Judith. (1991). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity.* London, New York: Routledge.

Buxton, D. (1990). *From the avengers to Miami vice: Form and ideology in television series.* Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press.

Calhoun, Craig. (1992). Introduction: Habermas and the public sphere. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere.* Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 1-49).

Calhoun, Craig. (1995). *Critical social theory: Culture, history and the challenge of difference.* Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing.

Cartwright, M. Hague, A. and Lavery, D. (1996). *Deny all knowledge: Reading the X-Files.* London: Faber and Faber.

Chambers, Ian. (1986). *Popular culture: The metropolitan experience.* London, New York: Methuen.

Clerc, Susan. (1996). Estrogen brigades and 'big tits' threads: Media fandom online and off. In Lynn Cherny and Elizabeth Reba Weise (Eds.), *Wired Women: Gender and new realities and cyberspace.* Washington: Seal Press. (pp. 73-97)

Clover, C. J. (1993). *Men, women and chainsaws: Gender in the modern horror film.* London: BFI Publishing.

Code, Lorraine. (1995). *Rhetorical spaces: Essays on gendered locations.* New York, London: Routledge.

Collins, Jim. (1989). Watching ourselves watch television, or who's your agent? *Cultural studies* 3 (3), pp. 261-281.

Cranny-Francis, Ann. (1995). *The body in the text.* Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Creed, Barbara. (1993). *The monstrous feminine: Film, feminism, psychoanalysis.* London, New York: Routledge.

Crossley, Nick. (1996). Body-subject/body-power: Agency, inscription and control in Foucault and Merleau-Ponty. *Body and Society* 2 (2), 99-116.

Csordas, Thomas. (1994). Introduction: The body as representation and being-in-the-world. In Thomas Csordas (Ed.), *Embodiment and experience: The existential ground of culture and self.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (pp. 1-26).

Dahlgren, Peter. (1991). Introduction. In Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks (Eds.), *Communication and citizenship: Journalism and the public sphere.* London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-21)

Dellamora, Richard. (1996). Absent bodies/absent subjects: The political unconscious of postmodernism. In Peter Horne and Reina Lewis (Eds.), *Outlooks: Lesbian and gay sexualities and visual cultures.* London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 28-47).

Dervin, Daniel. (1992). Primal conditions and conventions: The genre of science fiction. In Annette Kuhn (Ed.), *Alien zone: Cultural theory and contemporary science fiction.* London, New York: Verso. (pp. 91-95)

Descartes, Rene. (1997). *Key philosophical writings.* (Tanslated by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross). Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions.

Donald, James. (Ed.), (1989). *Fantasy and the cinema.* London: BFI Publishing

Durkheim, Emile. (1984). *The division of labour in society.* (Translated by W.D. Halls). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Press.

Eco, Umberto. (1994). *Apocalypse postponed.* (edited by Robert Lumley) Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Eisenstein, H. Jardine, A. (1994). *The future of difference.* New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Elster, John. (Ed.), (1989). *Karl Marx: A reader.* Cambridge, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press.

Engell, R. (1995). The spiritual potential of otherness in film: The interplay of scene and narrative. *Critical studies in mass communication* 12.

Featherstone, Mike. and Turner, Bryan, S. (1996). Body and society: An Introduction. *Body and Society* 1 (1), pp. 1-12.

Ferguson, Harvie. (1997). Me and my shadows: On the accumulation of body-images in western society part one - The image and the image of the body in premodern society. *Body and society* 3 (3), 1-31.

Fiske, John. (1991). *Television culture.* London, New York: Routledge.

Fiske, John. (1992). The cultural economy of fandom. In Lisa Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media.* London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 30-48.)

Fiske, John. (1993). *Power plays power works.* London, New York: Verso Publishing.

Foucault, Michel. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge*. London, New York: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, Michel. (1975). *The birth of the clinince: An archeology of medical perception*. New York: Vintage.

Foucault, Michel. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. (edited by Colin Gordon.) New York: Pantheon Books.

Fraser, Nancy. (1992). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. In Craig Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press. (pp. 109-142).

Frow, John. (1995). *Cultural studies and cultural value*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gatens, Moira. (1996). *Imaginary bodies: Ethics, power and corporeality*. London, New York: Routledge.

Gellner, Ernest. (1995). *Encounters with nationalism*. Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing.

Geraghty, Christine. (1991). *Women and soap operas: A study of prime time soaps*. Cambrige: Polity Press.

Gever, Martha. (1993). Pictures of sickness: Stuart Marshalls Bright eyes. In Martha Gever, John Greyson and Pratibha Parmar (Eds.), *Queer looks*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 187-201).

Giroux, Henry. (1994). *Disturbing pleasures*. London, New York: Routledge.

Gobetti, Daniela. (1992). *Private and Public: Individuals, households, and the body politic in Locke and Hutcheson*. London, New York: Routledge.

Goldberg, David , Theo. (1997). *Racial subjects: Writing on race in America*. London, New York: Routledge.

Grossberg, Lawrence. (1992). Is there a fan in the house?: The affective sensitivity of fandom. In Lisa Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 50-65.)

Grosz, Elizabeth. (1994). *Volatile bodies: Toward a corporeal feminism*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Habermas, Jurgen. (1987). *Knowledge and human interest*. (translated by Jeremy Shapiro). Cambridge, Oxford: Polity Press.

Habermas, Jurgen. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. (translated by Thomas Burger). London: Polity Press.

Haraway, Donna. (1989). *Primate visions: Gender, race and nature in the world of modern science*. London, New York: Verso

Haraway, Donna. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs and women*. London, New York: Routledge.

Haraway, Donna. (1992). The actors are cyborg, nature is coyote and the geography is elsewhere: Postcritps to 'cyborgs at large'. In Constance Penley and Andrew Ross (Eds.), *Technoculture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (pp. 21-26).

Harrison, T. Helford, E. Ono, K. and Projansky, S. (Eds.), (1996). *Enterprise zones: Critical positions on Star Trek*. Colorado: Westview Press.

Hartley, John. (1992). *The politics of pictures: The creation of the public in the age of popular media*. London, New York: Routledge.

Hartley, John. (1992). *Teleology: Studies in television*. London, New York: Routledge.

Hartley, John. (1996). *Popular reality: Journalism, modernity, popular culture*. London, New York, Sydney, Aukland: Arnold.

Hobsbawn, E.J. (1991). *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Program, myth, reality*. Cambridge, New York, Port Chester, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press.

Hobson, Dorothy. (1982). *Crossroads: The drama of a soap opera*. London: Methuen.

Hughes, Alex. and Witz, Anne. (1997). Feminism and the matter of bodies: From de Beauvoir to Butler. *Body and Society* 3 (1), pp. 47-60.

Jagose, Annamarie. (1996). *Queer theory*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Jameson, Fredric. (1992). *The geopolitical aesthetic: Cinema and space in the world system*. Bloomington, Indianapolis: BFI Publishing.

Jenkins, Henry. (1992). *Textual poachers: Television fans and participatory culture*. London, New York: Routledge.

Jenkins, Henry. and Tulloch, John. (1995). *Science fiction audiences: Watching doctor who and star trek*. London, New York: Routledge.

Jensen, Joli. (1992). Fandom as pathology: The consequences of characterization. In Lisa Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 9-27).

Knight, P. G. (1997). Naming the problem: Feminism and the figuration of conspiracy. *Cultural studies* 11(1), 40-63.

Kramer, Eric. (1997). The spiders of truth. In Eric Kramer (Ed), *Postmodernism and race*. Westport, Connecticut, London: Preager Publishing. (pp. 1-15).

Kristeva, J. (1980). From one identity to another. In L. Roudiez (Ed.), *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*. New York: Columbia University Press. (pp. 24-33).

Lather, Patti. (1991). *Feminist research in education: Within/against*. Geelong: Deakin University Press.

Lather, Patti. (1991). *Getting smart: Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern*. New York: Routledge.

Latour, Bruno. (1993). *We have never been modern*. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Latour, Bruno. (1994). Pragmatogonies: A mythical account of how humans and nonhumans swap properties. *American Behavioral Scientist* 37 (6), pp. 791-808.

Leder, Drew. (1990). *The absent body*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lehrer, Keith. (1992). *Theory of knowledge*. London, New York: Routledge.

Le Guin, Ursula. (1979). *The language of the night: Essays on fantasy an science fiction*. New York: G.P. Puman's and sons.

Lewis, J. (1991). *The ideological octopus: An exploration of television and its audience*. London, New York: Routledge.

Lewis, Lisa. (1992). Introduction. In Lisa Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media*. London. New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-30).

Levi-Strauss, Claude. (1968). *Structural anthropology*. (Translated by Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest). London: Penguin Press.

Lingis, Alphonso. (1994). *Foreign bodies*. London, New York: Routledge.

Lyotard, Jean-Francois. (1991). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University press.

Mannheim, Karl. (1966). *Ideology and utopia: An introduction to the sociology of knowledge*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Mannheim, Karl. (1980). *Man and society in an age of reconstruction: Studies in modern social structure*. London, Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Marx, Karl. and Engels, Friedrich. (1967). *The communist manifesto*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books.

McCarthy, Doyle. (1996). *Knowledge as culture: The new sociology of knowledge*. London, New York: Routledge.

McKee, Alan. (1997). *Textualising reality: The claims of ethnography in audience studies*. Unpublished manuscript. Edith Cowan University, Perth, Western Australia.

McNay, Lois. (1994). *Foucault: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge, Oxford: Polity Press.

Moi, Toril. (1985). *Sexual/textual politics: Feminist literary theory*. London, New York: Routledge.

Neale, Steve. (1992). 'You've got to be fucking kidding!' Knowledge, belief and judgement in science fiction. In Annette Kuhn (Ed.), *Alien zone: Cultural theory and contemporary science fiction*. London, New York: Verso. (pp. 160-168).

Nicholson, Linda, J. (1990). Introduction. In Linda J. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/postmodernism*. New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-16)

Nicholson, Linda, J. and Seidman, Steven. (1995). *Social postmodernism: Beyond identity politics*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nightingale, Virginia. (1993). What's 'ethnographic' about audience research? In John Frow and Meaghan Morris (Eds.), *Australian cultural studies reader*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin. pp 149-159.

Norris, Christopher. (1995). Culture, criticism and communal values: On the ethics of inquiry. In Barbara Adam and Stuart Allen (Eds.), *Theorizing culture: An interdisciplinary critique after postmodernism*. London: UCL Press. (pp. 5-36).

Outhwaite, William. (Ed.), (1996). *The Habermas reader*. London: Polity Press.

Parry, D. L. L. (1998) Articulating the third republic by conspiracy theory. *European History Quarterly* 28 (2), 163-188.

Pirie, David. (1996). In the cold: The X-Files has changed everything. *Sight and Sound* 6 (4), pp. 22-24.

Popper, Karl. (1966). *The open society and its enemies vol II The high tide of prophecy: Hegel and Marx*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Price, Monroe. (1995). *Television, the public sphere and national identity*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Probyn, Elspeth. (1987). Bodies and antibodies: Feminism and the postmodern. *Cultural studies* 1 (3), pp. 349-360.

Probyn, Elspeth. (1995). Queer belongings: The politics of departure. In Elspeth Probyn and Elizabeth Grosz (Eds.), *Sexy bodies: The strange carnalities of feminism*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 1-18).

Radel, Nicholas. (1994). Self as other: The politics of identity in the works of Edmund White. In Jeffrey Ringer (Ed.), *Queer words, queer images: Communication and the construction of homosexuality*. London, New York: New York University Press. (pp. 175-192).

Rasmussen, David. M. (1990). *Reading Habermas*. Cambridge, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Renan, Ernest. (1990). What is a nation? In Homi Bhabha (Ed.), *Nation and narration*. London, New York: Routledge. (pp. 8-22).

Said, Edward. (1993). *Culture and imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus Publishing.

Samuel, Geoffrey. (1990). *Mind body and culture: Anthropology and the biological interface*. Cambridge, New York, Port Chester, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press.

Seidman, Steven. (1994). *Contested knowledge: Social theory in the postmodern era*. Cambridge, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Seidman, Steven. (1996). Introduction. In Steven Seidman (Ed.), *Queer Theory/Sociology*. Cambridge, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. (pp. 1-30).

Sellers, Susan. (Ed.), (1991). *Feminist criticism: Theory and practice*. New York, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Sellers, Susan. (1991). *Language and sexual difference: Feminism writing in France*. London: Macmillan Education.

Sellers, Susan. (Ed.), (1994). *The Helene Cixous reader*. New York: Routledge.

Scheman, Naomi. (1993). *Engenderings: Constructions of knowledge, authority and privilege*. New York: Routledge.

Schildrick, Margrit. (1996). Posthumanism and the monstrous body. *Body and Society* 2 (1), pp. 1-15.

Shaviro, Steven. (1993). *Theory out of bounds: The cinematic body*. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press.

Sobchack, Vivian. (1997). *Screening space: The American science fiction film*. New Brunswick, New Jersey, London: Rutgers University Press.

Stam, Robert. (1989). *Subversive pleasures: Bakhtin, cultural criticism and film*. Baltimore, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Stark, Werner. (1991). *The sociology of knowledge: Toward a deeper understanding of the history of ideas*. New Brunswick, London: Transaction Publishers.

Stratton, John. (1997). *Not really desiring bodies: The rise and rise of email affairs*. Media International Australia 84, 28-39.

Tong, Rosmarie. (1992). *Feminist thought: A comprehensive introduction*. London, New York: Routledge.

Treichler, Paula. (1987). AIDS, homophobia and biomedical discourse: An epidemic of signification. *Cultural studies* 1(3), pp. 312-348.

Waldby, Cathy. (1996). *AIDS and the body politic: Biomedicine and sexual difference*. London, New York: Routledge.

Watney, Simon. (1993). The spectacle of AIDS. In Henry Abelove, Michelle Aina Barale and David Halperin (Eds.), *The lesbian and gay studies reader*. London, New York: Routledge.

Wei Leng, Kwok. (1996). On menopause and cyborgs: Or, towards a feminist cyborg politics of menopause. *Body and Society* 2(3), 33-52.

Wiley, Juniper. (1997). No body is 'doing it': Cybersexuality as a postmodern narrative. *Body and Society* 1(1), pp. 145-162.

Williams, L. (1989). *Hard core: Power, pleasure and the frenzy of the visible*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Williams, Simon, J. (1998). Bodily dys-order: Desire, excess and the transgression of the corporeal boundaries. *Body and Society* 4 (2), pp. 59-82.

Willis, Ann. (1996). The politics of self and identity: Decontextualising the body in the digital domain. *Media International Australia* 81, 90-97.

Wolff, Janet.(1990). *Feminine sentences: Essays on women and culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wolff, Janet. (1995). *Resident alien: Feminist cultural criticism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wolmark, J. (1994). *Aliens and others: Science fiction, feminism and postmodernism*. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

APPENDIX OF EPISODES

Season 1

1.00 *Pilot: The X-Files*
1.01 *Deep Throat*
1.02 *Squeeze*
1.03 *Conduit*
1.04 *The Jersey Devil*
1.05 *Shadows*
1.06 *Ghost in the Machine*
1.07 *Ice*
1.08 *Space*
1.09 *Fallen Angel*
1.10 *Eve*
1.11 *Fire*
1.12 *Beyond the Sea*
1.13 *Gender Bender*
1.14 *Lazarus*
1.15 *Young at Heart*
1.16 *E.B.E.*
1.17 *Miracle Man*
1.18 *Shapes*
1.19 *Darkness Falls*
1.20 *Tooms*
1.21 *Born Again*
1.22 *Roland*
1.23 *The Erlenmeyer Flask*

Season 2

2.01 *Little Green Men*
2.02 *The Host*
2.03 *Blood*
2.04 *Sleepless*
2.05 *Duane Barry*
2.06 *Ascension*
2.07 *'3'*
2.08 *One Breath*
2.09 *Firewalker*
2.10 *Red Museum*
2.11 *Excelsius Dei*
2.12 *Aubrey*
2.13 *Irresistible*
2.14 *Die Hand Die Verletzt*
2.15 *Fresh Bones*
2.16 *Colony*
2.17 *End Game*

2.18 *Fearful Symmetry*
2.19 *Dod Kalm*
2.20 *Humbug*
2.21 *The Calusari*
2.22 *F. Emasculata*
2.23 *Soft Light*
2.24 *Our Town*
2.25 *Anasazi*

Season 3

3.01 *The Blessing Way*
3.02 *Paper Clip*
3.03 *D.P.O.*
3.04 *Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose*
3.05 *The List*
3.05 *2Shy*
3.07 *The Walk*
3.08 *Oubilette*
3.09 *Nisei*
3.10 *731*
3.11 *Revelations*
3.12 *War of the Coprophages*
3.13 *Syzygy*
3.14 *Grotesque*
3.15 *Piper Maru*
3.16 *Apocrypha*
3.17 *Pusher*
3.18 *Teso Dos Bichos*
3.19 *Hell Money*
3.20 *Jose Chung's From Outer Space*
3.21 *Avatar*
3.22 *Quagmire*
3.23 *Wetwired*
3.24 *Talitha Cumi*

Season 4

4.01 *Harrenvolk*
4.02 *Unruhe*
4.03 *Home*
4.04 *Teliko*
4.05 *The Field Where I Died*
4.06 *Sanguinariium*
4.07 *Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man*
4.08 *Paper Hearts*
4.09 *Tunguska*
4.10 *Terma*
4.11 *El Mundo Gira*

4.12 *Kaddish*
4.13 *Never Again*
4.14 *Leonard Betts*
4.15 *Memento Mori*
4.16 *Unrequited*
4.17 *Tempus Fugit*
4.18 *Max*
4.19 *Synchrony*
4.20 *Small Potatoes*
4.21 *Zero Sum*
4.22 *Elegy*
4.23 *Demons*
4.24 *Gethsemane*

Season 5

5.01 *Unusual Suspects*
5.02 *Redux*
5.03 *Redux II*
5.04 *Detour*
5.05 *Christmas Carol*
5.06 *Postmodern Prometheus*
5.07 *Emily*
5.08 *Kitsunegari*
5.09 *Schizogeny*
5.10 *Chinga*
5.11 *Kill Switch*
5.12 *Bad Blood*
5.13 *Patient X*
5.14 *The Red and The Black*
5.15 *Travelers*
5.16 *Mind's Eye*
5.17 *All Souls*
5.18 *The Pine Bluff Variant*
5.19 *Folie a Deux*
5.20 *The End*

Note: Season five was not screened in exact order.

Film

The X-Files: Fight the Future

APPENDIX OF WEBSITES

X-Files Official site
http://www.thex-files.com

X-Files Episode Guide
http://www.swol.net.au/xfiles.htm

The X-Files
http://www.metronet.co.uk/culttv/xfiles.htm

X-Files Terminal X
http://www.neosoft.com/

Jeanne Cavelos 'The Science of The X-Files' Overview
http://www.sff.net/people/jcavelos/xf.htp

The X-Files: Fight the Future
http://www.digmagazine.com/inside/film/xfiles.cfm

The X-Files
http://incolor.inetnebr.com/mbrinkho/xfiles.html

'The X-Files' is back. So are a trio of its imitators
httP://www.nj.com/features/ledger/stories/stones/5e803d.html

The X-Files
http://www.erols.com/guesses/

The X-Zone: X Facts - Facts on The X-Files
http://www.aal.co.nz/~smitha/xfacts.html

The X-Files - ICQ List
http://geocities.comArea51/Rampant/3397/xlist.html

The X-Files
http://www.unclebear.com/elguapo/xfiles.htm

The X-Files - What's New?
http://wkweb4.cableinet.co.uk/neil.grant/xnew.htm

The X-Files In Jokes List
http://www.nashville.com/~Laura.Witte/xfiljoke.html

X-Philes Unite!...
http://www.ualberta.ca/~gpadlows/xfiles.html

The X Files

http://www.zeta.org.au/~seeto/tv/xfiles.html

The X-Files X-Test: The True Test for X-Files Fans
http://www.tvgen.com/tv/xfiles/archive/xstory2/indexpg.sml

The X-Files - Smoking Man
http://www.tardis.ed.ac.uk/~dave/guides/x-files/people/smokingman.html

The X-Files Drinking Game
http://www.rain.org/~uring/tvdrink/games/xfiles.htm

The X-Files Exposed, part 2
http://pathfinder.com/ew/950310/xfiles2.html

Episode Guides
http://www.algorithms.com/users/janesr/links.htm

TGFTXF!
http://sunflower.signet.com.sg/~liviafyk/xfiles.html

The X-Files
http://www.club.innet.be/~pub02732/X-files

The X-Files - Main
http://gator.naples.net/~nfnl1988/

The X-Files Fan page
http://www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/Palladium/8340/bextx.html

The X-Files
http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Quad/4303/xfiles.html

Peggy's X-Files Homepage
http://www.people.virginia.edu/~mjb5x/

Enrico's X-Files Page
http://www.bchs.uh.edu/~ecantu/xf.html

The X-Files & Award Site
http://www.altair.net/~shaner/page6.htm

The X-Files Test
http://www.servtech.com/public/ptnmring/nate/test.html

The X-Files Bureau
http://www.angelfire.com/sc/chemical/index.html

Believe the Lie: Gethsemane Conspiracy Theories
http://members.aol.com/Neverthot/believe.htm

Cancerman's Lungs
http://www.thegrid.net/magray/Xfiles/lungs.html

Netpickers Guide to The X-Files
http://area16.k12ia.us/ricke/netpickhome.html

2Shy's Homepage
http://onion.pspt.fi/~srandeli/2shy/

Complete X-Files
http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/3142/

Dark Skies vs The X-Files
http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/7448/dark_skies.html

Eclectic X-Files Page
http://hamp.hampshire.edu/~cls595/x-philes.html

The Lone Gunmen
http://freespace.virgin.net/david.strachan

The Definitive X-Files: Monster of the Week
http://www.cs.unmass.edu/~ehaugsja/x-files/motw/

Rogue Gallery
http://www.webpak.net/~kirkhamt/xfiles.html

The X-Files
http://bedlam.rutgers.edu/x-files/

The X-Files
http://www.mjq.net/xfiles/sf-faq.htm

The X-Files Post Episode Fan Fiction
http://members.aol.com/dfaonxa/front.html

The X-Files Experience
http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Vault/1411/

Strange Realities, The X-Files Alternate Universe Archive
http://members.tripod.com/~Zepirinel/

Strange things DCU- The X-Files
http://thorung.eeng.dcu.ie/~stdcu/xfiles/

The X-Files Magazine #5
http://www.thex-files.com/medmup05.htm

The X-Files Music - Songs in the Key of X
http://www.thex-files.com/music02.htm

Real X-Files Stuff on the Web
http://www.jbrecker.com/realx.html

Real X-Files Stories of the Unexplained
http://www.mediasoft.net/designworks/realxfiles/realxfiles_2.htm

The Extraterrestrial Biological Entity Page
http://www.ee/fit.edu/users/lpinto/main.shtml

The Real X-Files: Alien Abductions, Government Cover-Ups and UFO Encounters
That Inspire the Show.
http://www.towson.edu/~flynn/xfiles.html

The Real X-Files Organization
http://users2.ipa.net/~tandem/

Conspiracy
http://www.fortunecity.com/lavender/lavender/29/conspira.txt

Genuine Admirers of Gillian Anderson
http://www.cyberbeach.net/~jonmg/GA/GAGA.html

The X-Files Time Wasting Page
http://www.blarg.net/%7Emiri/xf/time/

The Myth Arc
http://www.flash.net/~bobdobbs/xfiles/mytharc.html

X-Files Comic Synopsis: Issue 17
http://smashmgz.com/comics/guides/xfiles/xfom_17.html

X-Files Viewer Survey Results
http://bedlam.rutgers.edu/x-files/survey-report.html

X-Files Comic Synopsis: Issue #1
http://smach.mgz.com/comics/guides/xfiles/xfcom_hero.html

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://members.spree.com/frozen/x-files.html

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://www.geocities.com/TelevisionCity/Studio/7941

The X-Files FTF
http://www.lipetsk.ru~xfiles/MOVIE/group2.htm

The X-Files Review : The X-Files Fight the Future
http://www.x-files.pha.com/season_5/x5x21.htm

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://www.baradv.on.ca/wwwmovie/messages/86.html

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://www.geocities.com/~trust-no-1/xmovie.html

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://157.22.243.39/boiled/revies_98/the_xfiles.html

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://members.aol.com/FoxVader/xfmreview.html

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://home.earthlink.net/~joeythorne/x-files.htm

The X-Files Fight the Future
http://fightthefuture.co.uk/x-files.html

Sgrmac Productions salutes The X-Files: Fight the Future
http://www.birchworks.com/sgrmac/xfiles/xfilm.htm