# 3 – Parody

Chapter Three traces another line of flight that can emerge from an affective encounter with a televised road safety advertisement. The chapter is named after the common excess that can emerge from spectatorship of three unrelated texts: one from the United Kingdom, one from Australia and one from New Zealand. As in Chapter Two, the line of flight is traced through a reliance on *criminological aesthetics* and the concept of excess. The chapter will show that parody is a potential line of flight that can emerge from each of the texts in unique ways. Thus each of the three texts bring something different to the chapter, revealing that inter-textual excess can either vindicate, pervert or reverse the intended meaning of the original text. The chapter also uses governmentality as a tool to explore how the fear of crime is used as a strategy to constitute and transform failed subjects. The chapter will show that two of the three texts (*Pinky* and *Texting*) discursively constitute failed subjectivity, while the third text (*Legend*) constitutes an ethical subjectivity. This comparison sustains the assertion that the fear of crime is used by late modern governments as a technology to transform both the fearful and feared subject. Finally, the representation of the feared *other* in the texts will be highlighted in order to expose the inadequacy of delimited representations of subjectivity.

## *Pinky*

This Australian[1] advertising campaign was launched in June 2007 and included television, cinema, outdoor, print and online advertising (Road Traffic Authority (NSW), 2007). It was developed to respond to a cited statistic that of the 874 speeding related fatalities in Australia between 2002 and 2006, 345 of these were aged 17-24 years of age; despite only accounting for 14% of all licence holders (Transport Roads and Maritime Services (NSW), 2011). As such,

[1] New South Wales.

the target audience was particularly aimed at young drivers. Moreover, the purpose of the creative approach was to:

> *increase the social unacceptability of speeding within the community. To combat the speeders' behaviour and perception that speeding is a manly act. (Transport Roads and Maritime Services (NSW), 2011).*

In this way the advertisement not only targeted young drivers, but specifically young male drivers. The creative approach utilised in order to target this population led to the creators of the campaign being rewarded with several Australian advertising effectiveness awards (Transport Roads and Maritime Services (NSW), 2011).

The first scene of the advertisement opens with a yellow Ford travelling in slow motion toward an intersection. The overlayed audio is a calm instrumental arrangement, not unlike elevator music, that was an "original piece of music…composed for this campaign to suit the slow motion visuals" (Transport Roads and Maritime Services (NSW), 2011). Two young males seated in the front of the vehicle turn their heads to the left to view two young females on the footpath. The driver turns back and faces camera, smirks, grips the steering wheel tighter and then the shot changes to view the traffic light change from red to green. The frame returns to the frontal view of the driver and then a quick change of frame reveals the tyres spinning in slow motion. A side view of the driver shows his nose scrunched and his tongue exposed, revealing an excited and somewhat sexual expression on his face (Figure 3.1). The frame changes to a wide lens shot of the vehicle with smoke emanating from the tyres (*burn out*) as he travels through the intersection (Figure 3.2). The camera pans back to the driver revealing a self-satisfied expression on his face (Figure 3.3) and then the camera returns to the young women on the footpath, who both display their pinky fingers (Figure 3.4).[2]

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[2] Denoting that the driver's behaviour is compensating for having a small penis.

**Figure 3. 1**

**Figure 3. 2**

**Figure 3. 3**

**Figure 3. 4**

The next scene shows a middle aged woman crossing at a pedestrian crossing (Figure 3.5). An old red sports car approaches the intersection and the woman steps back toward the curb as the vehicle travels through the pedestrian crossing. The frame changes to view a young male driving the vehicle. The male's gaze appears to be transfixed on the road and he is apparently oblivious to the pedestrian crossing (Figure 3.6). His expression also appears to be somewhat sexually excited, particularly due to the manner in which his top lip is

curled and his bottom lip is pouted.[3] The frame changes to reveal the middle aged woman's irritation as she looks toward an elderly woman at a nearby bus stop. The elderly woman displays her pinky finger in the same manner as the women in the previous scene (Figure 3.7).

**Figure 3. 5**

**Figure 3. 6**

**Figure 3. 7**

The final scene displays four young males in an old blue Holden experiencing grip oversteer (*drift*) around a corner (denoting that the driver was driving too fast around the corner). The shot changes intermittently between a view of the driver and his two rear passengers. As the driver corrects the *drift* there is a look of intense concentration and effort on his face (Figure 3.8). The shot changes to the show the rear passengers experiencing the gravitational forces of the *drift*; the expression of the passenger on the left appearing to be fearful while the other passenger mouths an expletive (Figure 3.9). The frame changes to show

[3] For an interesting perspective on the notion of sexual arousal associated with road traffic injury see David Cronenberg's film of J.G. Ballard's 1973 cult novel of the same name – *Crash*. *Crash* explores the fascination and excitement of the car crash through sexual arousal (Sharrett in Brottman, 2002, 319).

the driver with a look of self-satisfaction on his face (Figure 3.10). The camera then returns to the rear passengers, revealing the left rear passenger exhibiting his pinky finger in the same manner as the previous scenes (Figure 3.11). The frame returns to the driver who looks in his rear vision mirror and witnesses the exchange (Figure 3.12). The driver's expression immediately changes from self-satisfaction to an emotional state that could either be interpreted as shock, shame or hatred towards his passengers. White text appears at the bottom if the screen: "Speeding. No one thinks big of you" and the Road Traffic Authority (RTA) badge appears in the top right of screen. The music fades out and the scene ends.

**Figure 3. 8**

**Figure 3. 9**

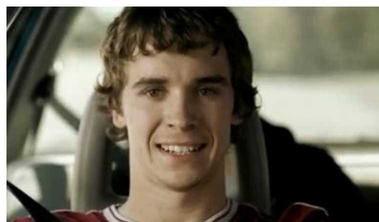

**Figure 3. 10**

**Figure 3. 11**

**Figure 3. 12**

## *Texting*

*Texting* is a four minute trailer of a half hour drama production entitled *COW – the film that will stop you texting and driving* (Ziplinecreative, 2009). The film was shot in the United Kingdom[4] as part of a joint initiative between the Gwent Police, the Tredegar Comprehensive School and a professional creative company, Zipline Creative. The objective of the film (and its associated trailer) was to "stop ALL drivers, but particularly young and new ones, from causing accidents" (Ziplinecreative, 2009). While the film and the trailer are not a traditional government funded televised campaign the involvement of the Gwent Police still make it relevant to a governmentality based analysis. Like traditional televised campaigns *Texting* has a wide audience, the *You Tube* site for the trailer having 2,230,272 views (at the time of writing) (Ziplinecreative, 2009). For these reasons it is suggested that this text should be treated in the same manner as the more traditional campaigns discussed within this thesis.

[4] South Wales.

The scene begins with three females travelling in a small sedan. The driver, Cassie Cowan[5] is holding a mobile phone and sending a text message while driving. The rear passenger appears not to be wearing a seatbelt as she is positioned in between the two front seats as she interacts with the other females in the front. The three females deliberate about the contents of the text message as the driver continues to look at the screen of her mobile phone (Figure 3.13). A song on the radio can be heard as the car gradually drifts toward the centre line and ultimately traverses it into oncoming traffic (Figure 3.14). The sound of a horn dominates the audio, causing the driver to look up from her mobile phone in time to see the impending collision; all three females scream. The vehicles collide head on, shown from above (Figure 3.15). The camera enters inside the vehicle and the speed of the frame immediately slows. From different angles the shot shows the three females being pushed and pulled around the cabin of the vehicle on account of the gravitational forces caused by the collision. Glass and debris are evident about the frame as the driver's airbag deploys and her head collides with the window to her right (Figure 3.16). The front passenger's face hits the dash board and then the back of her head hits her seat (Figure 3.17). The rear passenger travels backwards then to the right and left of the vehicle, hitting her head on every occasion (Figure 3.18).

**Figure 3. 13**

**Figure 3. 14**

[5] The full length film is named after her – *COWan*.

**Figure 3. 15**

**Figure 3. 16**

**Figure 3. 17**

**Figure 3. 18**

The frame then returns to normal speed, showing the two vehicles come to a stop. The camera re-enters the vehicle depicting the driver and front passenger connecting their gaze as another vehicle travels at pace toward them in the background (Figure 3.19). The passenger turns her head to see the oncoming vehicle as it collides with their vehicle. At the centre of frame the front passenger's head travels at speed into the driver's shoulder, while her neck is at full extension (Figure 3.20). Over the radio and collision noises is the distinct crack of a broken bone, presumably the passenger's neck. After a short moment of skidding the vehicles come to rest and the radio is silent. The only audible

sound is a supressed horn until the driver opens her eyes and starts crying. She surveys the cabin of the vehicle, sees her passengers and screams.

**Figure 3. 19**

**Figure 3. 20**

The camera then pans out to survey the wreckage, revealing a road sign that reads: “Tredegar Welcomes Careful Drivers” (Figure 3.21). Soft but dramatic music can be discerned as members of the public attend to the vehicles before police, ambulance and then fire rescue arrive. The sounds of sirens dominate the audio, amidst whimpers from the vehicles and conversations between emergency services and onlookers. From one conversation the spectator can deduce that the driver is stuck and her passengers are dead. The frame changes to show inside one of the other vehicles involved in the collision. A male driver and a female front passenger have their eyes closed and in the back is a small girl who repeatedly says: “*Mummy, Daddy, wake up*” (Figure 3.22). The frame changes to show a baby in a car seat next to the little girl. The baby’s eyes are wide open and the child is motionless (Figure 3.23) as the spectator can hear a female voice say: “*I’m afraid I just can’t get any response whatsoever*”. The little girl states to an emergency services worker: “*I want Mummy and Daddy to wake up*” and the frame changes to view the perspective of someone seated in the front of the cabin. In the foreground are a bloodied, deflated airbag and a cracked and bloodied windscreen. Beyond the windscreen numerous

emergency services personnel attend to the other two vehicles involved in the collision (Figure 3.24).

**Figure 3. 21**

**Figure 3. 22**

**Figure 3. 23**

**Figure 3. 24**

The frame changes to show emergency services personnel working on the vehicles, employing the 'jaws-of-life' to free Cassie from the wreckage. When the door is removed an emergency services worker attends to her injuries and asks: "*Cassie, can you hear me. What is your friend's name in the back*" and through an oxygen mask she cries. The next frame is shot from a helicopter about to land at the scene and the sound of the helicopter dominates the audio momentarily, until it fades out and the dramatic music increases in volume. Through the window of the helicopter the traffic disruption caused by the

collision is discernible, as a long queue of vehicles can be seen into the far distance. The emergency services workers focus around Cassie (Figure 3.25) and she is manoeuvred onto the helicopter and airlifted away from the scene, as another helicopter arrives. The scene finishes with a shot of Cassie drifting in and out of consciousness in the helicopter (Figure 3.26); she winces and the screen turns black.

**Figure 3. 25**

**Figure 3. 26**

## *Legend*

The New Zealand Transport Agency developed *Legend* (NZ Transport Agency, 2011) as a response to 2008 – 2010 figures that revealed that in New Zealand (NZ) more than 40% of all drink driving crashes involve intoxicated drivers under the age of 24 years; 82% of which are male and 32% identify as Maori (NZ Transport Agency, 2012). The rationale behind the campaign was that drink drivers are poor planners and in order to combat this the campaign focussed on the friends of the potential drink driver by acknowledging “the feelings a young man might have around speaking up when a friend is going to drive drunk” (NZ Transport Agency, 2012). The advertisement launched on NZ television in October 2011 and was supported by billboards, outdoor panels, location posters, drink coasters, beer mats and radio. Since then the *You Tube* uploaded version

of the advertisement has reached 2,404,987 views (at the time of writing), revealing its widespread coverage in NZ and internationally (NZ Transport Agency, 2011).

The scene begins with a group of young males and females at a house party. The audio throughout is a deep and slightly muffled bass beat, created especially for the advertisement (NZ Transport Agency, 2011).[6] The camera pans about the room in slow motion and rests momentarily to provide a close up of a young male (ethical friend) (Figure 3.27) and then to another young male (George) standing with his car keys in his hand (Figure 3.28). The ethical friend enters into an inner dialogue that is heard above the music.

> *Ethical friend: "Oh no, George is driving. He's too wasted. I should say something but I could look dumb in front of Monique".*

The frame shifts to display a young female in the unfocused background and a male in the foreground addressing the ethical friend (Figure 3.29):

> *Male: "Bro, Monique says you're dumb."*

The camera then pans around the back of the ethical friend's head, as his inner dialogue continues:

> *Ethical friend: "But if he crashes, I'll have to live with his family."*

**Figure 3. 27**

[6] Many of the blogs on the *You Tube* site for *Legend* relate to the likeability of the sound track.

**Figure 3. 28**

**Figure 3. 29**

The shot changes to reveal a family sitting around a table in a dimly lit room with the ethical friend. All of the characters are dressed formally in shirts and appear to be putting pieces into a large puzzle (Figure 3.30). In the background, mounted on the wall is a smiling picture of George. A young boy at the table looks at the ethical friend and says: "*Puzzletime*". An older male clicks his fingers as he points to the ethical friend and then the shot changes back to the party as the inner dialogue continues:

*Ethical friend: "And if he dies, ghost George will haunt me forever".*

The scene changes to show the ethical friend and George walking along a roadside. George is wearing a white sheet and his legs are edited out of the shot to give the appearance that he is a ghost (Figure 3.31). They have the following conversation:

*Ghost George: "Grab a chip. Want a chip?"*
*Ethical friend: "You know I can't grab your ghost chips. Go away."*

The shot changes to show the ethical friend reaching out to ghost George from the perspective of two young males who cannot see him. They insult the ethical friend; calling him a "*Spoon*" and a "*Space head*".[7]

**Figure 3. 30**

**Figure 3. 31**

The scene returns to the party and ghost George scares the ethical friend: "*Boo*". The ethical friend is then lifted from his internal dialogue as he is approached by the *real* George. The other members of the party hush to listen to their conversation (Figures 3.32-3.34):

> *George: "What are you doing Bro?"*
> *Ethical friend: "I've been internalising a really complicated situation in my head".*
> *George: "What are you on about?"*
> *Ethical friend: "I don't think you should drive."*
> *George: "Nah."*
> *Ethical Friend: "No you're too drunk Bro, just crash here."*
> *An unknown male calls out: "Yeah just crash here."*
> *George: "OK."*

The frame changes to show the members of the party dancing and the volume of the music increases. The scene ends with the ethical friend looking self-satisfied and relieved, strutting around the party. His inner dialogue resumes:

[7] Derogatory labels common in New Zealand reserved for persons of low IQ or suffering from mental illness/drug addiction.

*Ethical Friend: "Stop a mate from driving drunk – Legend!"*

At the same time white text is overlaid over the frame and reads: "*Stop a mate from driving drunk. Bloody Legend*" with the badging of the New Zealand Government to the left and the New Zealand Transport Agency's feather symbol and tagline: '*safer journeys*' to the right (Figure 3.35). The audio and image fade out abruptly.

**Figure 3. 32**

**Figure 3. 33**

**Figure 3. 34**

**Figure 3. 35**

## *Risky youth*

The main truth statement presented within the three texts is a proposition concerning the riskiness of young drivers. Truth statements are used to privilege essentialist propositions which create strict binary alternatives that must be subscribed to. This binary logic serves to make visible one category by excluding its binary opposite and in doing so portends to capture the absolute essence of a thing (Halsey, 2001, 389). In *Legend*, the assumption is made that young drivers will consume alcohol at house parties and the text does not attempt to curb this behaviour with messages of moderation. Rather the text attempts to change the behaviour of driving after having consumed alcohol. Likewise, *Texting* assumes that young drivers will send text messages while they drive and *Pinky* assumes that young (male) drivers will 'hoon around' in their vehicles. The texts assume that young drivers will, and do, take unnecessary risks on the road and as such the hegemonic truth of the risky youth underpins the three texts.

The proposition that all youths are risk takers is perpetuated by their demonization in the media. The public are presented with newsworthy images of youths that conjure up:

> notions of uncontrolled freedom, violence, irresponsibility, vulgarity, rebellion and dangerousness to those of deficiency, vulnerability, neglect, deprivation or immaturity (Muncie, 2009, 4).

This perceived uncontrollable essence of youth makes stories about youth deviance highly popular in the media (Muncie, 2009, 13). These stories, much like the three advertisements that feature in this chapter, propagate the binary division between youth and adult. This binary logic invokes other related binary divisions like "civilised and savage" (Presdee, 2000, 114) and the feared (youth) and fearful (adult). The discursive qualities of these categories are highly problematic because older drivers: also text while they are driving; also speed through pedestrian crossings; also drink drive; and also 'show off' in their vehicles. Regardless, older drivers enjoy the ethical side of the binary divide and

young drivers are made visible, as the irresponsible and feared *other*. Despite these problematic divisions, the binary category of good and evil is rarely presented in televised road safety campaigns targeting young drivers.

The couplet of good and evil rarely features in the binary logic of the adult and youth divide. There is a hint of the good and evil nexus in one of the scenes in *Pinky*. In Figure 3.6 the young male driver travels through the pedestrian crossing causing a woman to step back onto the curb for her own safety. For the duration of the scene the driver has a mild smirk on his face which may be perceived by the spectator as a sign of evil intention. However, this could just as easily be interpreted as inattention or even sexual arousal. Likewise the good and evil nexus is not prominent in *Texting* or *Legend*. It is suggested that the 'evil youth' and the juxtaposed 'good adult' is not a regular theme presented in road safety advertisements. Youths are certainly portrayed in road safety advertisements as reckless and distracted, but not as the evil *other* (like the adult in *Creepers II*). Perhaps this exception exists as some vestige of *Doli Incapax*[8] and the rationale behind enlightened youth criminal justice practices. Alternatively, perhaps it is because adults can reflect back on times when they were youths and therefore can identify with or somewhat excuse reckless behaviour. Conceivably, youths are perceived as less of an unknown *other* and more of a 'savage' that is yet to be 'civilised' (Presdee, 2000, 114). As the creators of *Legend* explain:

> *These boys are not bad people. They're good people who make bad choices. They don't set out to drive drunk, they just don't plan ahead. A few beers with the lads can easily morph into a bigger night, poor judgement and fewer options to get home (NZ Transport Agency, 2012) .*

Young drivers are therefore not perceived as inherently evil drivers who set out to ruin lives with their vehicles. Their dangerousness is not evil but rather a by-product of immaturity, poor planning skills, and the value of other things over

[8] The legal presumption that a child does not have the capacity for criminal conduct (Butterworths, 1998, 135). Common law throughout Australia creates an irrebuttable presumption that a child under the age of seven cannot be guilty of an offence (C v DPP [1996] 1 AC 1). In most Australian jurisdictions this age has been raised to 10 years.

their own safety. It can therefore be said that truth statements about riskiness at work in the texts serve to create the binary categories of adult/youth, ethical/failed, good driver/bad driver, and fearful/feared; but not good/evil.

Another truth statement portrayed in the texts is the notion that youths value their social position and interaction within their peer group over their safety. In *Pinky* the young male drivers in the first two scenes are undeterred (and unaware) that the pinky symbol has been used in respect of their driving (Figures 3.4 and 3.7). It is only when the young male driver in the final scene becomes aware of his friends using the pinky symbol (Figure 3.11) that it appears to have an impact (Figure 3.12). Similarly, in *Texting* the driver is texting because she is interacting with a male on behalf of her friend in the rear passenger seat. Additionally, in *Legend* the entire internal dialogue of the main character features his concerns regarding 'saying something' to a potential drink driver. He deliberates over whether he will be shunned for 'saying something' to George ('Monique says you're dumb' – Figure 3.29) or alternatively have to participate in mundane family activities with George's family ('puzzle time' – Figure 3.30) if he does not 'say something' and 'he dies'.[9] The value of peer acceptance underpins these texts and extends the truth statement concerning youth riskiness further. It makes the claim that youths incorporate social status in their assessments of risk. In this way the texts create a truth statement that suggests that youths are risky drivers because they desire to be accepted by their peer group. The discursive features of this elaborated truth statement still invoke the same binary categories of ethical/failed, safe/risky, and fearful/feared. However, they also assist in the creation of the additional category of accepted/rejected. These categories privilege certain scenarios and make invisible their oppositional alternative in order to constitute modes of subjectivity.

[9] Perhaps the puzzle that the family are trying to solve represents the question of why the ethical friend did not say something to George.

## *The fearful subject*

As technologies of the self the three texts present categories through truth statements which allow the spectator to recognise their place within a system of power. The presentation of categories like: ethical/failed, safe/risky, fearful/feared, and accepted/rejected, allow the spectator to contemplate these possible modes of existence and align themselves with one of the binary categories. A spectator, when presented with the categories of feared and fearful may align themselves with a mode of subjectivity that makes them fearful of driving on the road. The images may lead to the perception that the ethical driver may be run down by dangerous youth drivers, leading to excessive fearfulness. As discussed in Chapter Two the proliferation of fear inducing images about crime always run the risk of invoking unproductive fear. For example, an unproductive fear may emerge from spectatorship of *Texting* when the twisted and crushed vehicle becomes the object of the spectator's gaze (Figure 3.24). The image portrays the point of view of a victim through a cracked and bloodied windscreen. The gender and extent of injuries of this victim is unknown, invoking Young's concept of the *universal victim* (Young, 1996, 51).[10] Even though Cassie Cowan (the driver) is injured, through the polarising eyes of the *universal victim* (Figure 3.24) she cannot be a victim; only the feared *other*. In this way *Texting* could discursively constitute an ethical but fearful subject who envisages that they are at the mercy of all young drivers. There is no information provided for a fearful subject to equip themselves to take actions toward their safety. Without a transformative message an unproductive fear of crime may result. As discussed in Chapter Two unproductive fear can produce docility and is therefore an inefficient and expensive exercise of power; inconsistent with late modern governmentality. This is not to say that the fearful subject is never the object of road traffic campaigns. Rather, when the fearful subject is constituted it is to produce an active subject who can be equipped to take responsibility for their own safety.

[10] As discussed previously in Chapter Two.

An historical example of a road safety advertisement equipping the fearful ethical subject is the *Blunders* campaign from the early 1970s in the UK. The campaign featured a family (The Blunders) of dangerous and inattentive drivers. In one of the advertisements “young Billy Blunders” borrows the family car and is seen to drive around a suburban area in a rapid and distracted manner (MotorTorqueUK, 2009). The narrator informs the spectator:

> *You could meet Billy Blunders on your way home from work. No matter how well you think you know the road, no matter how sensible a driver you are, Billy Blunders could be around the next corner. That’s why you should always wear your seatbelt (MotorTorqueUK, 2009).*

The shot focuses on the side pillar of the ‘sensible’ driver’s car, revealing that the male driver is not wearing his seat belt. The frame changes to show Billy Blunders cause a collision, resulting in the ‘sensible’ driver colliding with the windscreen (Figure 3.36). The narrator concludes: “Even on the shortest trip, beware of the Blunders. Click, Clunk”(MotorTorqueUK, 2009).

**Figure 3. 36**

Through the propagation of graphic images (at least for the early 1970s) the spectator is presented with the categories of sensible and ‘blunderous’, as well as fearful and feared. The categories can (and are intended) to constitute a sensible and fearful subject who is transformed by the order words: ‘always wear your seatbelt’ in an effort to reduce the risks that the *other* poses. In this way *Blunders* uses the fear of crime as a strategy to transform a fearful subject so they take steps to reduce risks to their safety. *Legend* is different from *Blunders* in that, while it constitutes a fearful subject, it does so in hope that the

fearful subject will be transformed to take steps to ensure the safety of the *other*.

*Legend* addresses the subject in a manner that constitutes an ethical mode of subjectivity. The placement of the camera allows the spectator's gaze to regularly align with the ethical friend, whose internal dialogue can be heard throughout the text. Most of the shots of the failed subject, George, are from the perspective of the ethical friend. George is a visual object in the text, not the subject of the text and thus the spectator is addressed by George's ethical friend. The ethical friend invokes the categories of dangerous and risky through his dream sequence concerning ghost George. He also models their binary opposites (ethical and safe) when he confronts George about not driving. Similarly, the ethical friend also presents the categories of accepted ('Yeah just crash here' and 'legend') and rejected ('Monique says you're dumb', 'spoon', and 'space head'). The discursive properties of these categories compel the spectator to divide their own experience using the same binary logic. The spectator is told that if you 'stop a mate from drink driving' you are a 'legend' who is accepted by their peers. By default, the binary opposite also comes into play here: if you do not 'say something' you will be rejected ('dumb', 'spoon' and 'space head'). The first is the presentation of an ethical mode of subjectivity and the second is a failed mode. The subtext is that you have a duty to your friends to "reject the passivity of victimhood" and choose the ethical mode of subjectivity (Young, 1996, 56). Presented with these categories the spectator must align themselves with one of the binary options. In this case an ethical subjectivity can (and is intended to) be constituted so that they may be transformed to take steps towards ensuring the safety of their hapless friends. In *Texting* and *Pinky* however there is a change in address. The texts constitute a failed and feared subject in the hope that they may be transformed towards more ethical modes of subjectivity.

## *The feared subject*

In *Texting* and *Pinky* the spectator is addressed in a manner that promotes the constitution of a failed subject. The camera placement varies in and between the two texts. On two occasions in *Pinky*, the gaze of the *other* is depicted. In Figures 3.9 and 3.11 the position of the camera displays the view of the driver looking through the rear vision mirror: first to see his rear passengers being thrown about the rear of the vehicle (Figure 3.9) and then to see the pinky symbol (Figure 3.11). All of the remaining shots in *Pinky* are from a third party perspective: either pedestrians on the side of the road or from the convenient position of a third party on the bonnet. In this way *Pinky* allows the spectator the opportunity to experience the viewpoint of those watching the behaviour of the *other*, as well as the driver's own viewpoint. In *Texting*, the gaze of the *other* is represented as the driver looks about the cabin to view her injured passengers after the collision. Aside from this, all other viewpoints are from third parties (bystanders, and emergency services workers) or from the perspective of the *universal victim*. This is explored most significantly in Figure 3.24 where the camera position provides the point of view of an injured driver viewing the *other's* vehicle through a cracked and bloodied windscreen. Again the spectator is provided the opportunity to engage with the perspective of the *other*, as well as those watching the *other*. This variation in camera placement in both texts signposts that the failed *other* is both object and subject of the texts.

As subject of the texts the viewpoint of the *other* is represented through camera positioning. The images present the subjective viewpoint of the *other* to the spectator. These images make visible the categories of dangerous (Figure 3.9) and rejection (Figure 3.11) and are devoid of their binary opposites (safe and accepted). The discursive properties of these categories ask the spectator to then divide their own experience using the same binary logic. The subtext is: *If I have ever texted while I am driving, driven inattentively, or experienced drift or burn out, then I am dangerous and do not belong.* If the spectator can align

themselves with any of those experiences, then a failed subject can be constituted. Alternatively, as an object of the texts, the viewpoint of the bystander and *universal victim* is represented through various camera shots. These images also make visible the categories of risky (Figure 3.8), dangerous (Figures 3.13 and 3.24) and rejection (Figure 3.12) and ignore their binary opposites.[11] In this way the depicted gaze of the victim or a third party allows the spectator the opportunity to reflect upon how the community views these behaviours. Again if the spectator can align themselves with the behaviour of the *other* in the texts, then they are forced to consider the out-casted status of the risky driver. In this way the camera placement in *Texting* and *Pinky* forces the spectator to divide their past driving experiences into moments of ethical behaviour and moments of dangerousness. If the subject aligns with the moments of dangerousness presented in the texts then a failed subject is constituted.

## *Death, injury and rejection*

The fear of crime is used in all three texts to transform subjects who have been discursively constituted through the petition of categories: an ethical subject in the case of *Legend* and a failed subject in *Texting* and *Pinky*. The fear of crime is invoked in both subjects through the presentation of images that portray undesirable 'possible worlds'. As discussed in Chapter One the possible future discloses an unwanted consequence that 'might still be', inspiring fear in the subject. In *Legend* the possible unwanted futures presented are the rejection of your peers and the death of a friend. The possible future concerning George's death is handled with humour and treated less seriously than the possibility of rejection. The consequences of George's death are overtly explored in the narrative, whereby the ethical friend will have to (for some

[11] The failed *other* is also depicted as victim in *Texting* (see Figures 3.16, 3.20, 3.25 and 3.26). While this is an important distinction between *Texting* and the other texts, this discussion is reserved for Chapter Six and the consideration of killer-becoming-victim.

unstated reason) live with George's unfashionable family[12] ('puzzle time' – Figure 3.30) and perhaps be haunted by ghost George *('*you know I can't eat your ghost chips' – Figure 3.31). These consequences are deliberately farcical in order to appeal to the desired target population (young males). However, the possible future of rejection by the peer group is handled much more cogently. The ethical friend's fear of rejection is explored early in the text ('I should say something but I could look dumb in front of Monique') and is overtly depicted in the confrontation with George. In Figure 3.32 George confronts the ethical friend, who responds with 'I don't think you should drive'. A look of fear is evident on the ethical friend's face in Figure 3.33, which only subsides when George concedes. The ethical friend is fearful that he will be rejected by his peers, namely George and Monique, but these fears are allayed when the desirable possible future of George's acceptance (and George not driving) eventuates as a result of his actions. In this way the possible futures presented in *Legend* straddle the 'possible worlds' of acceptance and rejection.

*Pinky* and *Texting* present the same possible unwanted future of peer group rejection as that offered in *Legend*. However, these texts differ in that the possible world is presented to the discursively constituted failed subject. In the first two scenes of *Pinky* the driving *other* is unaware of the disapproval of his driving behaviour. When the female bystanders indicate their condemnation of the drivers' behaviour (Figures 3.4 and 3.7) the drivers have already left the scene and are therefore unaware of the rebuke. However, in the final scene the condemnation of the driver's behaviour is realised when he sees the pinky symbol utilised by a member of his peer group (Figure 3.11). It is at this moment that the spectator can detect signs of a negative emotion on the face of the driver (Figure 3.12). Whether the emotional reaction of the driver is perceived as shock, shame, hatred or something else, the close up shot exposes the unwanted possible future of rejection by the peer group. This rejection is also a possible world presented in *Texting*. Implicit in the title of the text, 'COW'

[12] Why this would be the case is not explored in the text, leaving the spectator, or at least this one, perplexed.

(derived from a play on words of the driver's name - Cassie COWan) is a palpable instruction that the spectator must reject the driver. The spectator's endorsement of this naming is expected to be transposed into real driving situations, effectively labelling all texting drivers as *cows*. This exercise of naming can inspire feelings of hatred and exclusion toward Cassie Cowan which can then be inverted and redirected toward the behaviour in general. The desired result is that the discursively constituted subject realises a possible unwanted future whereby someone directs the same feelings of hatred and exclusion toward them. However, this is not the only possible unwanted future presented in *Texting*.

Additional to the possible unwanted future of peer group rejection, *Texting* also presents the same 'possible worlds' discussed in Chapter Two: death, injury and property damage. *Texting* presents the unwanted possible future of: causing death (Figures 3.18 and 3.20); causing injury to others (Figure 3.24); causing injury to oneself (Figure 3.25); and causing damage to vehicles (Figure 3.21). The text goes further to explore the latent long term effects of these possible unwanted futures. One example of this is the young girl who repeatedly calls out (in a thick Welsh accent): 'Mummy, Daddy, wake up!' (Figure 3.22). This scene triggers a visceral sentiment of grief and loss associated with the notion of the orphan. Similar sentiments are also tangible in Figure 3.26 as Cassie leaves her dead friends at the scene but perhaps most potently in the extended close up of the baby. The close up of the baby's face (Figure 3.23) coincides with the audible information: 'I just can't get any response whatsoever' from an emergency services worker. This lingering shot of the big lifeless eyes of the dead (or unconscious) baby is suggestive of its infancy; as the eyes are yet to turn from the neutral blue/grey of a new born to the colour s/he would have lived the rest of her/his life with. This scene can invoke more potent feelings of guilt surrounding notions of injustice and *a life not lived*.[13] Whether the possible worlds represented in the texts are guilt, rejection, death, injury or property

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[13] This notion of *a life not lived,* or *a stolen life,* as a possible unwanted future is explored at length in Chapter Four.

damage[14] the key point is that they are chosen because they are unlikely to be desirable. This presentation of an undesirable 'possible world' can inspire fear because the subject does not want it to be realised. By igniting fear in the spectator the subject can then be inspired to take steps to reduce the prospect of that possible unwanted future.

## *Agency*

The fear inspired by the presentation of a possible unwanted future can motivate the discursively constituted subject to transform their behaviour. In the case of *Legend* the ethical subject is presented with a clearly articulated rationale: 'I should say something but I could look dumb in front of Monique…But if he crashes, I'll have to live with his family…And if he dies, ghost George will haunt me forever'. The ethical subject is also presented with clear and cogent order words: 'say something' and 'stop a mate from driving drunk'. These order words, when combined with a possible unwanted future, compel the subject to obey. Quintessentially, the ethical subject *must* 'say something' to prevent the possible unwanted future. These order words return agency to the ethical subject, resisting docility and transforming the subject into action. Interestingly, the order words appear to be more ambiguous in *Texting* and *Pinky*, which attempt to address the discursively constituted failed subject.

In *Pinky* and *Texting* there are no patent order words which compel the failed subject to obey. There are no transformative words in *Pinky* to compel the failed subject not to speed (or hoon), nor a direct order to stop texting while driving in *Texting*. This is not to say however that there is no language that demands conformity in the texts, but rather that the order words are more subtle. In these texts the order words need to be deduced, such as *pay attention to the road* (*Texting*) and *don't drive like a hoon* (*Pinky*). However these

[14] Or even a pathway into the criminal justice system which is not explored in this chapter. See for example *Eyes* (thinkuk, 2009).

commands are subsidiary to the categorical statements and images contained in the texts. The truth statements ‘no one thinks big of you’ (*Pinky*) and the confronting images in *Texting,* transmit the agency inspiring message without the need for a manifest order word. These veiled messages still serve to motivate the failed subject to change their behaviour and in doing so transform them toward more ethical modes of subjectivity in the future. It is suggested that one explanation for the buried order words in these texts is the current marketing trend employed when speaking to the youth market.

Late modern governments regularly utilise marketing and qualitative social research expertise when attempting to manage a specific population on a specific issue. Regularly the social research that feeds into government messages about crime stress an emphasis on tone of delivery. A popular perspective on tone of delivery, as the social research company Firefish suggests, is that “draconian or judgemental tone creates ‘shut down’ and/or disconnect” (Bloor et al., April, 2009, 97). Instead the preferred tone is a “non-judgemental provision of information” and an emphasis on knowledge and safety, not punishment and judgement (Bloor et al., April, 2009, 87). To be more effective, governmental messages should acknowledge the ”desire to relax, enjoy and escape” and focus on the spectators’ “right to know” and make an “informed choice” (Bloor et al., April, 2009, 90). This preferred tone was also acknowledged by Colmar Brunton, the social research company employed as part of the *Creepers* campaign discussed in Chapters Two, Five and Six of this thesis. A Colmar Brunton representative said of another campaign:

> *It told people off. It had a very parent to child approach, which we were trying to sell to MAC that they should shift that voice and become peer-to-peer and a more constructive voice. But it was very parent-to-child. … It didn't go any further, again it was an insult; it was telly-offy, which is a very technical term! (Interview with Colmar Brunton 18/11/09).*

The same representative also specifically highlighted the need for the use of a constructive tone when addressing the youth market:

*What we had to accept in the drink driving campaign was that people drink… in fact in past campaigns the drink-driving case has linked the guy falling over pissed*[15] *with the act of driving, not illogically, and said: 'don't drink and drive'. And it's been reasonably well proven that our target market, particularly young people, look at that and say: 'you're actually telling me not to drink so I fall and look like an idiot, and therefore not to drive. I'm not going to do any of that. I don't connect with any of that'... So we said: let's acknowledge that people drink. Let's just ask them to be a bit more planned about it. To give them strategies so that they can go off and enjoy themselves and hopefully do it responsibly (Interview with Colmar Brunton 18/11/09).*

Seemingly the strategic trend for appealing to youth populations is a 'peer-to-peer' tone which provides a 'non-judgemental provision of information'.

The 'provision of information' is an approach taken in *Pinky* and *Texting,* partly because the behaviours at the centre of the texts do not concern the more traditional road safety topics of speeding, wearing a seatbelt and drink driving. While *Pinky* is branded as a speeding advertisement through its tag line ('Speeding, no one thinks big of you'), as will be discussed below the images disconnect so greatly with the notion of speeding that the text has *become* a message about hoon driving. In this way *Pinky* may incorporate notions of speeding but it is not delimited to it. Hoon driving and texting while driving are relatively new topics to concern road safety regulation and therefore there needs to be a circulation of truths about these behaviours so that they may be categorised as risky, dangerous and criminal. The 'provision of information' contained in *Pinky* and *Texting* serves to create these relevant categories so that they can be used to constitute modes of subjectivity and transform the subject. This is an important process, particularly for the youth market, because with each new generation of drivers the need arises to recirculate truth statements so that binary categories can be presented for the purposes of managing these new populations. This need arises particularly because the perception of risk associated with some driving behaviours can lead to the rejection of the message.

[15] Intoxicated.

## *Rejection*

There is little innovation in the suggestion that road safety advertisements, through design, can transform a spectator toward compliance. It is accepted that this is one thing that these texts can *do*. A more interesting discussion however relates to when the text *does* something else. Blog comments that respond to *Pinky*, *Texting* and *Legend* clearly indicate that one thing the texts can *do* is inspire their own rejection. As will be shown, the possible futures presented to the spectator in these texts can conflict with the spectator's own perception of those possibilities, leading to a rejection of the text. The upshot of this, of course, is that the text subsequently fails to transform the subject towards more desirable behaviours. This is particularly the case with the presentation of road traffic risks because the risks of certain undesirable driving behaviours can become undervalued. These risks can become underrated because of the repetition of positive experiences and a lack of negative repercussions when the behaviour is undertaken; as the NZ Transport Agency indicated in respect to the rationale behind *Legend*:

> *But while the consequences of driving drunk are well-known, it's also widely believed that if you drive drunk, it's likely you'll get away with it. This belief is reinforced by the times they did 'slip up' and got away with it. They lived to tell the tale, which has since become a 'success' story they share with their mates (NZ Transport Agency, 2012).*

In this way the repetition of a positive experience can normalise an undesirable behaviour and cement the idea that it is a low risk activity. This is particularly apparent in the area of drug driving.

Drug driving, as well as texting while driving and hoon driving, are relatively new areas of road traffic regulation that suffer from the perception of being low-risk activities. In Colmar Brunton's qualitative research for MAC[16] the risks associated with drug driving (Ecstasy) were recognised as most likely to result in 'being looked down on' and 'feeling bad' over and above the 'risk of injury'

[16] 114 in-depth interview, eight focus groups and 1074 telephone interviews conducted in South Australia.

(Colmar Brunton, March 2009, 46). This disregard of physical risk is partly reliant on the perception that drug driving is not as risky as drink driving, as the following blogs indicate:

> *I would prefer to get in the car with a driver who has had a couple of pills, or a few lines or a few joints than someone who has been drinking. Drinking and driving is a lot worse (The Dynamic Advertising Group, 2013).*

> *40 years I've been driving stoned, accidents nil, get real it's alcohol and prescription meds that cause destruction Funnily enough not one of my let's say 200 stoner driver mates has ever had an accident either, this ad is big brother being a jerk again (Pete, 2012)*

> *Driving when youre high is the safest form of driving. you only go 20![km/h] (Tom, 2011).*

> *Drugs are irrelevant it's the alcahol consumption that kills (Cam, 2011).*

It appears from these blogs that the perception of low risk surrounding drug driving may stem from its comparison with a more risky behaviour. This comparison is used as a strategy to underplay the risks of the activity, perhaps supporting the notion of the *rational choice* offender who weighs up the costs and benefits of a criminal act. However this "yoke of foresight" (Bentham, 1962, 307) theory does little to explain some of the perceptions of risk related to the undesirable behaviours portrayed in *Pinky, Texting* and *Legend*.

Of all of the undesirable driving behaviours that feature in this chapter, drink driving has received the most advertising exposure because governments have known of the risks of this activity for longer. Nevertheless, the behaviour is still largely normalised within certain populations. In Colmar Brunton's qualitative research, drink driving was perceived to cause 'injury to self and others', but this was deemed to be only secondary to the risk of 'losing your licence', 'paying a fine' and being 'looked down on' by others (Colmar Brunton, March 2009, 28). Similar disregard of the risks of drink driving were evident in the, now banned, *face book* site called: *if u drink n drive ur a bloody idiot, if u make it home ur a*

*fucking legend*. Posts on this *face book* site reveal a rejection of the risks of drink driving:

> *I drink and drive every weekend, whatcha gonna do about it (Pollard, 2010).*

> *You know some people actually drive better when there (sic) drunk so keep that in mind (Pollard, 2010).*

An active (at the time of writing) *face book* page on the same theme called: *If u drink n drive ur a bloody idiot..if u make it home ur a sick kunt*,[17] includes numerous posts of the same type of risk refusal:

> *drink n drive.... notin happenz .... dont trust anyone..... only trust doctor.... n go 4 it..... :-) (Pitale, 2010).*

> *haha i made it home when i was drink driving! Ima sick kunt!!! (Dillon, 2010).*

> *The trick is to not drive like a maniac lol if your drunk just remember, slow and steady wins the race (Telford, 2010).*

> *rolled the car flipped it bak over n made it home, i will drink n drive again but never like a wannabe rally driver (Aaron Co-cup, 2010).*

> *The fun parts doin 30 over the limit in both lanes with cops on your arse (James, 2010).*

> *I ♥ to drive drunk! (Migliore, 2010).*

While bravado, exaggeration and poetic licence cannot be excluded from considerations of the authenticity of these remarks, these particular posts show something more than a low perception of risk: a rejection of the risks of drink-driving. This rejection of risk is also evident on the topic of speeding/hoon driving raised in *Pinky*.

In Colmar Brunton's qualitative research speeding was recognised as a risky activity: with 76% of respondents indicating a likelihood of 'injuring someone

[17] Interestingly the site has 29, 445 *likes* at the time of writing.

else' (Colmar Brunton, March 2009, 62). However, there appears to be significant dispute amongst some spectators of *Pinky* as to whether the advertisement is representative of speeding issues. There are numerous blog posts which reflect on *Pinky* and speak to this issue:

> *wait.. which one was speeding? the burnout? or was it the guy not stopping at the pedestrian crossing? or was it the drift? oh wait, none of those things involve going over the speed limit (Aaronx3Sally, 2007).*

> *this was just about bad driving.. has nothing to do with speeding.. fuckin fail!!! (squallz13, 2007).*

> *also i missed the part of this ad with any one speeding these are guys hooning (caliberracer, 2007).*

> *Umm... This video doesn't actually show anyone speeding. It's all hooning. Taking off at the lights like that doesn't break the speed limit, neither does rounding the corner like that or not stopping at a crosswalk. Maybe the agency that came up with this should have actually read what they were supposed to be advertising. That speeding is for pinners, apparently (MaxMetal1993, 2007).*

> *Does anyone think its funny that none of the drivers in this ad are actually speeding? My registration will probably go up 50 dollars this year to pay for this ad. Well done RTA you have failed yet again!! (MB81837, 2007).*

What these blog posts indicate is that the tag line '*Speeding, no one thinks big of you*' may conflict with the images that the spectator receives. The images show a driver smoking his tyres (*burn out*), a failure to stop at a pedestrian crossing and an example of *drift* (grip oversteer). It appears that although *Pinky* is branded as a speeding message it can be rejected as such. Many spectators resolved that the message speaks to the issue of hoon driving, which can include, but is not limited to speeding. For this reason, as this analysis relates to what a text can *do* to the spectator, *Pinky* will be treated as a text relevant to the issue of hoon driving, which may also incorporate the issue of speeding. On the subject of hoon driving, as with drink driving, blogs indicate that the risk can go beyond being downplayed, and actually be ignored:

> *bet the hypocrite [sic] that made this video is 70 years old and had his fun behind the wheel, just trying to ruin it for the younger generation, the mock up*

*for this add so much better, that xr6 burnout was alright thumbs up to smoke shows (tx528, 2007).*

*I don't drive like that to impress people, I drive like that because it's fun (AtonementOfficial, 2007).*

*U KNOW WHAT,I COULD'NT GIVE A FUCK HOW BIG YOUR DICK IS, I'M JUST INTERESTED IN THE HOONING! (260KPH, 2007).*

*its not the guys who drive fast that cause crashes its the old nannas that dont keep up . iv seen some old people doing 20 in a 60 zone like WTF (Kafnorak, 2007).*

*Not all men speed and do wheelspins and donuts. And the ones that do, most of the time do it to but a smile on there face and not to impress or show off. As the great Jeremy Clarkson says "its not the speed that kills you, its the sudden stopping that does (DarkAngel1979fuck, 2007).*

*what the go with this pinky shit i give that bloke in the falcon the thumbs up... decent skid and that bloke in the blue commodore deserves a slap in the falce his skid was shit iv seen girls do better (madness256, 2007).*

These blogs indicate that a spectator of *Pinky* may reject the text through a complete disregard of the risks of hoon driving. In this sample there is no sign of the calculative *rational choice* offender but a rather complete rejection of the risks because of the fun and excitement that comes from the undesirable behaviour. The same phenomenon was also locatable in *Texting*.

On the issue of texting while driving, Colmar Brunton's qualitative research revealed the perception of the risk of 'seriously injuring and killing someone else' as higher than the 'likelihood of a fine', 'loss of licence', and being 'looked down on' by their peers (Colmar Brunton, March 2009, 98). However, this high perception of risk conflicts with some anecdotal material widely available on the internet. The creators of *Texting* uploaded the film to *You Tube* which led it to 'go viral' (2,230,272 hits at the time of writing), particularly in the United States (US) (Ziplinecreative, 2009). Numerous video responses emerged as a result of viewing *Texting,* some of which indicate a rejection of the risks of texting while

driving. Many of the video responses involve quantitative type questions to young drivers like: 'Do you text and drive?' The overwhelming response being: 'yes'. Others involve messages from friends and families of deceased road users, promoting the dangers of texting while driving. One video response worthy of discussion involves interviews with four young adults in the US being asked questions about texting and driving. One 20 year old male respondent, Kurt, remarked:

> *I believe there are people who can double task, and I can do it. And I have been texting and driving for numerous years and it never almost caused an accident. I've always been keeping my eye on the road…I'm safe about it but I still do it…If I was a 16 year old girl who just got her licence and can't freak'n drive then yes…they already can't drive without a phone in their hands how they gonna drive with a phone in their hands? (snoboard1500, 2010).*

Another young male respondent, Dylan, when asked what he uses his mobile phone while driving for, stated:

> *What don't I use my phone for while I'm driving. Sometimes I just look at it, sometimes I text, sometimes I play Angry Birds, which is the best game ever (snoboard1500, 2010).*

The same respondents were then asked to watch *Texting* and respond to further questions. All four of the respondents remarked that they would still text and drive after watching *Texting*, as Dylan remarked:

> *Well it would definitely convince me to keep buying American, that's for sure but I wouldn't stop texting and driving because if you're in a Ford, a real genuine built Ford Tough, have you heard of that? You can't even get hurt...not once...nope! (snoboard1500, 2010).*

What can be gleaned from these particular comments are the notions of invincibility associated with the risky pursuit. For Dylan this invincibility stems from his superior choice in vehicle ('you can't even get hurt') and for Kurt it is his superior skills ('I can do it'). In this way calculative rationale choice assessments of the risk are overruled by some visceral feeling of invincibility. What this process discloses is the possibility of the 'transcendence' of rationality associated with the seduction of crime, better known as *edgework*.

*Edgework* refers to any activity where people explore the boundary between order and disorder or life and death (Lyng, 1990, 855). *Edgeworkers* engage in the activities they do because of the freedom, sense of control, and the physical and emotional sensations they derive from the experience. It is an opportunity for "creative, skilful, self-determining action" (Lyng, 1990, 877). For Katz offenders allow their calculative rationality to be overtaken by powerful moods in order engage in "sneaky thrills" that produce excitement (Katz, 1988, 312-313; O'Malley, 2010a, 62). Katz's offender can feel a sense of achievement by flirting with the humiliation of failure. If they are successful then they are overwhelmed with feelings of superiority, which makes risk taking a source of reward on its own. Recently, O'Malley has reworked this concept of excitement and risk-taking.

For O'Malley *edgework* is "plagued" with criminology's past focus on crime as an escape from the boredom of the mundane (O'Malley, 2010a, 62). He rejects this idea that crime stems from the need to escape, positing that "life is enriched [by crime] rather than escaped from"(O'Malley, 2010a, 62). Similarly, he argues that Katz's model is problematic because it only recognises humiliation as the generator of thrills, and not other significant motivations. O'Malley's model, based on Mertonian *Anomie*, Katz's *Seduction* and Halsey's work on high speed pursuits, advances a new rationale for risky crime:

> *if the societal value you have adopted is excitement, if excitement is commodified and you cannot be in the market for it, then resort to illegal means to embrace risky commodities (O'Malley, 2010a, 75).*

This model accepts that there is a market for non-legal, risky modes of excitement. The blogs set out above are evidence that drink driving, texting while driving and hoon driving may be commodities in this market. This is particular cogent because O'Malley suggests that the adoption of the 'societal value' of excitement is generated by fear. He suggests that excitement springs from a fear that one's own existence is at stake.

O'Malley suggests that fear is a common motivator for risky pursuits because there is "excitement associated with the risk of pain or injury, even death" (O'Malley, 2010a, 64). Following this argument, commodities like drink driving, texting while driving[18] and hoon driving are potentially an opportunity for excitement because of the fear that can be induced when flirting with death and injury. Remarkably, it is this same fear (of death and injury) that is commonly used as the motivator to deter spectators away from the same behaviour. Logically, if some spectators are excited by the fear of injury and death, and road safety advertisements attempt to manufacture fear associated with injury and death, then these texts could be promoting the undesirable behaviours they attempt to quell. By using fear as a motivator to reduce road fatalities, late modern governments may actually be contributing to the road toll and road traffic offending. In this way texts like *Pinky*, *Texting* and *Legend* could affect a spectator to reject the road safety message, or go even further to actually advocate the undesirable behaviour. This is a potential aberration (excess) that can emanate from an affective encounter with these texts. From this standpoint there are several manifestations of what these texts can *do*. They can lead to compliance, rejection, or some other aberration that occurs while the spectator attempts to make meaning of the text. While it is accepted that there are numerous ways in which meaning making could lead to aberration, the line of flight that will be traced for the remainder of this discussion is parody.

## *Parody*

Parody does not simply refer to a copy (simulacra) or an imitation of the text; nor a satirical response to a text. Linda Hutcheon in her theoretical project on parody (2000) contends that parody is regularly confused with satire and clarifies the distinction between the two. The target of parody is always "another form

[18] Texting while driving could simply be a desire for the gratification of instant communication, rather than excitement.

of coded discourse" or text whereas satire is "moral and social in its focus and ameliorative in its intention" (Hutcheon, 2000, 16). As such, satire targets society where parody is intertextual because it is the intersection of two (or) more texts (Hutcheon, 2000, 13). The intertextuality at work here, however, does not suggest that a parody is a "nostalgic imitation" of the first text (Hutcheon, 2000, 8). Rather it is "a form of repetition with ironic critical distance, marking difference rather similarity" (Hutcheon, 2000, xii). This reliance on the concepts of difference and repetition should not however lead to the conclusion that Hutcheon conforms to a Deleuzian perspective on text. As Hutcheon cautions:

> *Parody cannot be explained totally in structuralist terms of form, in the hermeneutic context of response, in a semiotic-ideological framework, or in a post-structuralist absorption of everything into textuality…the complex determinants of parody in some way involve all of these current critical perspectives – and many more (Hutcheon, 2000, 116).*

Nonetheless this remark does not discount a post-structuralist analysis of parody and thus a treatment of parody that relies on both Hutcheon and Deleuze is not irreconcilable.

While not irreconcilable, there is some uncertainty in Hutcheon's perspective. It is not so much Hutcheon's fusion of structuralism, semiotics and post-structuralism that is problematic, although a theoretical lens of this configuration could be irreconcilable. Rather, the problem arises from the statement that 'parody in some way involve[s] all of these current perspectives'. Parody, as text, can be viewed through the lens of structuralism, semiotics or post structuralism, but can parody 'involve all…critical perspectives'? For poststructuralism there is no essence in a text that can command the use of a (or many) particular critique tool/s. A critique is something that a subject brings to the text which leads to the actualisation of that text. As Hutcheon herself accepts: "texts do not generate anything until they are perceived and interpreted"(Hutcheon, 2000, 23). If Hutcheon intended to explore a new perspective on textuality and critique then this was not adequately addressed in

her scope. This distortion of the role of critique may be why Hutcheon was able to reconcile a fusion of structuralism, semiotics and post-structuralism. That being said, however, Hutcheon's view of parody as "a modern recoding which establishes difference at the heart of similarity" is entirely valid (Hutcheon, 2000, 8).

Hutcheon sees parody as repetition with difference which can either be conservative or transformative. She uses Foucault's idea of authorised transgression (1977, 35 in Hutcheon, 2000, 26) to argue that parody has dual drives of conservative and revolutionary forces that are inherent in its nature. She concludes that these dual drives are paradoxical and uses this idea of paradox to reject the Deleuzian conceptualisation of difference and repetition. She suggests that her idea of repetition is not a "post-structuralist differential or relational kind of repetition that stresses only difference" but she does accept that the repetition can sometimes be disruptive, destabilising and transformative (Hutcheon, 2000, 101). She rejects Deleuze's conception of repetition, that repetition is always by nature transgression, exception and singularity, because it does not account for conservative repetition that unifies and reconciles (Deleuze, 1968, 12 in Hutcheon, 2000, 102). This reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of this post-structuralist concept. For Deleuze parody would be the difference, or something new, in the process of repetition (sameness). A parody of a text is always something new, otherwise it would be an exact copy (simulacra) and could not be distinguished from the original. For Deleuze this newness can be conservative or destabilising but what it always is, is something other than it was before; or a becoming.

While the Deleuzian conceptualisation of difference and repetition will be discussed at length in the Chapter Six, it is important to understand here that parody is newness, or the difference in the process of repetition. This is the case because there must be some form of repetition in parody otherwise, if it is too new, it cannot parody effectively. There must be some kind of familiarity to the original text that can be recognised, recalled and appropriated for the parody to

work. Similarly, there must be some form of difference in parody otherwise it would just be an image of itself (simulacra). As such, parody both replicates but also proliferates the original text. This proliferation of the text may lead to a subversion and dilution of the original or it may complement and enhance the message. As such, the intersection of the original and parodying text is not always a simple rejection of the original text (intertextual disaster) but can also enhance it (intertextual compliance) or invert it almost beyond recognition (intertextual perversion). It is suggested that the following parodies of *Pinky*, *Legend* and *Texting* can proliferate in all of these ways. There are numerous parodies available on *You Tube* that have emerged from the texts featured in this chapter. A small number have been selected to highlight each of the textual potentialities discussed above.

## *Intertextual disaster*

There are three parodies which can be categorised as forging an intertextual disaster, or rather are disobedient to *Pinky*. The first is a television advertisement which launched the new *Top Gear Australia Magazine* (TopGearAus, 2008). A late model Audi is depicted driving around inner city Sydney[19] and stops at a traffic light in front of an attractive woman. She proffers the pinky symbol at the male driver and he responds in kind, only to reveal an absurdly large pinky finger (Figure 3.37). The clear suggestion here is the exact reverse of the original text. In *Pinky* the pinky symbol represents the idea that '*no one thinks big of you'*, or rather, that you have a small penis (a sign of sexual inferiority) if you drive in the manner depicted in the text. However, in the *Top Gear* parody the suggestion is that if you drive in the manner depicted in the text, or at least drive a late model Audi, you have a disproportionately large penis (a sign of sexual superiority). As Muzzatti suggests, crime and transgression is used to give:

[19] Australia.

*products edgy appeal whilst still serving the conservative interests of consumer capitalism and its control functions. This interplay of advertising, consumption and control in late modernity is multifaceted and ephemeral (Muzzatti, 2010, 138).*

In this case undesirable driving behaviours, combined with notions of sexual virility, can create 'edgy appeal' that may sell a magazine. As such, the parody inverts the original message in *Pinky* and creates an intertextual disaster of the originally intended message.

**Figure 3. 37**

The remaining two intertextual disasters are amateur videos posted on *You Tube.* The first incorporates clips from *Pinky*, interlaced with a collection of textual remarks that comment on the original text, as well as some amateur videos depicting hoon driving (Zebde, 2007). Two particular aspects of this parody are worthy of discussion. Firstly, the parody begins with a textual remark:

*the RTA may try to have an impact. But the reality is, it has nothing to do with speeding (Zebde, 2007).*

The text is replaced with the first scene of the original *Pinky* text and followed by another textual remark:

*The reason for the gesture is simple. His burnout didn't look like this (Zebde, 2007).*

The scene changes to show an amateur video of a similar car to that depicted in the original text, smoking its tyres (Figure 3.38). This comparison is repeated

toward the end of the parody, where the original image of the drift is depicted and followed by another textual remark:

> *Maybe the RTA should look at this for drift. Same car, different conditions*[20]*. The most likely consequence (Zebde, 2007).*

The scene then changes to show another amateur video of a vehicle, similar to that depicted in the drift scene of the original text, losing control of the vehicle around a corner on a wet road, closely followed by another vehicle. This scene is followed by the textual remark:

> *Plain and simple. The RTA has made an Ad with no relation to the very message it is trying to promote (Zebde, 2007).*

It is acknowledged that these remarks concerning the RTA are more satirical because they make comment about a social institution, namely the Road Traffic Authority of NSW. However, there are parodying aspects at work here which create an intertextual disaster because the original depiction of a 'burn out' (smoking tyres) and 'drift' (grip oversteer) are rejected as not being good or severe enough. It harks back to the famous line from the movie *Crocodile Dundee*: "That's not a knife, this is a knife"(Faiman, 1986). In this way it does not negate the behaviour of carrying a knife, or driving like a hoon, but rather trivialises the degree of the original act by referring to a more substantial act; thus inverting and rejecting the original message.

**Figure 3. 38**

[20] The remark "Same Car, Different Conditions" relates to a campaign (*Slo Mo*) from the Transport Accident Commission, aired in Victoria, Australia in August 2002. The advertisement depicted two identical cars breaking in a controlled experiment on a race track; where one vehicle was travelling at 60 km/h and the other at 65 km/h (TACVictoria, 2009b).

The final intertextual disaster is another amateur production available on *You Tube (MuVIC, 2008)*. The parody uses an edited version of the original text, interwoven with white on black remarks. The editing in the parody excludes all of the original shots that include the pinky symbol, retaining only the shots of the undesirable driving. The scene starts with the remark:

> *Three Public Service Announcements brought to you by: the RTA of NSW…Get your eyes checked regularly (MuVIC, 2008).*

This is followed with the second scene of the original, without the disapproving gestures of the pedestrian and the elderly lady. The next comment states:

> *Drifting any car (particularly a stock VL) will impress your mates – If not they're bloody girls(MuVIC, 2008).*

This is then followed with the images from the third scene of *Pinky*, without the disapproving gestures of the passengers in the rear of the car. The remarks continue:

> *Remember: Practice makes perfect! So keep on trying until you get it right…Most Importantly: NOTHING gets more chicks than a good solid burnout. Nothing(MuVIC, 2008).*

This final statement is followed by the first scene of the original text, without the disapproving gestures of the young women on the footpath. The clip then ends with the textual remark: 'Cars are fun'. By eliminating the images of disapproval in *Pinky* this parody subverts the message in the original text. Similarly, by telling the spectator to 'practice…until you get it right' there is a radical reversal of the original text, which aims to prevent such behaviour. The message has become inverted to the point of encouraging the behaviour. In doing so these parodies create an intertextual disaster at the intersection of the original and parodying texts. However, this is not always the case as there can also be *intertextual compliance* at this intersection.

## *Intertextual Compliance*

There are three parodies that will be discussed within the context of *intertextual compliance*: two parodying *Texting* and one parodying *Legend*. Both of the *Texting* parodies are amateur productions from the US, posted on *You Tube*. The first asks the spectator: "Texting While Driving. Is it Really worth it?'…Do you text and Drive?"(giannas24, 2011). The song *How to Save a Life* (The Fray, 2006) is discernible in the background as a series of young American interviewees appear to answer the question. The scene and music change to show three youths in a vehicle, the driver with a mobile phone in her hand. This image is intermittently overlaid with white text which informs the spectator of facts pertaining to the costs and risks of texting while driving. Images from *Texting* are intermittently cut into the secondary text, as depicted in Figure 3.39. The youths have a near miss on account of the driver's distraction and then the entirety of the crash scene from *Texting* is displayed. The remainder of the seven minute feature consists of interviews, an interpretive dance and more scenes from the original text. The text ends by asking the spectator to make a pledge to stop texting while driving. The message contained in the parody is clearly compliant with the message in the original text: to stop texting and driving, and as such can be said to be intertextually compliant.

**Figure 3. 39**

The second parody of *Texting* (sgrant32, 2010) begins in the same manner as the original text, with a message being typed on a mobile phone (Figures 3.40). The next scene depicts a staged collision and several injured passengers (Figure 3.41). The song *Broken* (Lifehouse, 2008) dominates over the crash scene noises. Emergency service vehicles are depicted travelling to the scene and

attend to the crash in a similar manner as that depicted in *Texting*. The parody also goes beyond the crash site, showing the funeral of the texting driver. In the hands of the dead driver in the coffin is a mobile phone displaying the following text: “LIFE IS PRICELESS” (Figure 3.42). What is particularly interesting about this parody is that, while in *Texting* the driver is one of the few survivors, in the parody she is one of only two deceased persons involved in the collision. This is worth mentioning because the parody portends to instil a sense a justice (she deserves to die) which is, perhaps, deliberately missing from the original text. Despite this variation there is still *intertextual compliance* because both texts convey the same message not to text while driving.

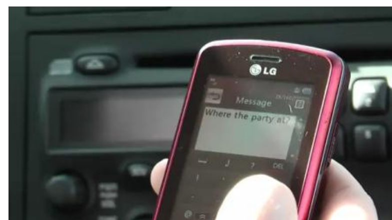

**Figure 3. 40**

**Figure 3. 41**

**Figure 3. 42**

The final example of *intertextual compliance* is a song by *The Cuzzies*, a hip-hop group from New Zealand, who parody *Legend* both through lyric and film (superg33ks, 2011). The main character raps the following at the beginning of the song:

*George is pretty drunk and I think he's gonna drive, I should say something coz I don't want him to die. Drinking on beer, eating on a pie, internalising really complicated situations in my eye. I want to make sure that George is OK, Don't wanna look dumb in front of Monique eh. Monique says you're dumb bro, Monique says you're dumb. Monique says you're dumb..Ooh eh? If Ghost George dies then he'll haunt me forever, I rather he's alive coz that'll be heaps better.*

This section of the song is entirely consistent with the message to 'say something' in the original text. The song continues on the issue of ghost George and his ghost chips, the main character eventually stealing and celebrating his attainment of the chips (now tangible and edible). The song ends in a manner similar to the original ad: a self-satisfied main character behind the *Bloody Legend* tag. However in the parody he is a 'legend' because he 'stole ghost chips from ghost George' (Figure 3.43). There is *intertextual compliance* here because the original message to 'say something' is intact. However, the remainder of the song features an appropriation of the notion of 'ghost chips' for an unintended purpose, which could be described as an *intertextual perversion*.

**Figure 3. 43**

## *Intertextual perversion*

Intertextual perversion can be understood as a cultural hijacking of a text that falls short of a radical reversal of the text. As Ferrell suggests, subcultural groups invent their own styles by reworking and reinventing "stylistic fragments that they pry loose for their own purposes" (Ferrell et al., 1995, 177-8). *Legend* for example, is a consumer object that has been appropriated by *The Cuzzies* for uses other than the intended purpose. Through a parodying hip-hop track, *Legend* (particularly the notion of 'ghost chips') has been transformed into an

object of style (Lyng, 2004, 370). Thus *intertextual perversion* can be seen as a line of flight that has become something different or new, but not altogether bad. It is not a radical reversal of meaning that creates an *intertextual disaster*, it is just something other. There are two more parodies that will allow further exploration of this idea of *intertextual perversion*: one also relating to *Legend*, and the other to *Texting*.

The second parody of *Legend* to be discussed, dubbed *Ghost Noodles* is a comedic sketch by a New Zealand comedian (WannaBenTV, 2011). The scene begins in the same manner as *Legend*, with a house party in the background. The main character, Ben, has an audible internal dialogue:

> *Ben: "Oh No. Raymond Khan is driving. But he is too Asian. I should say something but I could look racist in front of Monique".*
>
> *Unknown male: "Bro, Monique thinks your racist."*

The sketch continues to repeat the same dialogue from the original text; except "Puzzle time" is replaced with "Karaoke Time" and "Ghost Chips" is replaced with "Ghost Noodles". Raymond confronts Ben in the same way as George confronts the ethical friend in *Legend*, but the dialogue deviates as such:

> *Ben: "I don't think you should drive."*
>
> *Raymond: "Why? Is it because I'm Asian?"*
>
> *Ben: "Nah because you are drunk"*
>
> *Raymond: "I've only had half a beer"*
>
> *…….*
>
> *Ben: "Right. Well I was hoping you would stay so we could hook up".*

The sketch ends in the same style as *Legend*, with white text overlayed over the main character (Figure 3.44) but the narration has the following difference: “pretending you’re gay so you don’t look racist…awkward”. This parody is an appropriation of the original for uses other than was originally intended. *Ghost Noodles* does not reverse the meaning of the original but it does pervert the meaning beyond recognition. The issue of drink driving is replaced with the advancement of racism and homophobia for the purposes of entertainment. As such there is an *intertextual perversion* at the intersection of the parody and the original text.

**Figure 3. 44**

The remaining *intertextual perversion* relates to a parody of *Texting*, called *Texting While Walking* by its producers (blandhackpictures, 2009). The text begins with three young females walking along a path, one is operating a mobile phone while she walks, and the message on the screen is displayed to the spectator, as in the original (Figure 3.45). Due to their inattention the females collide with a family walking toward them from the other direction (Figure 3.46). The pedestrian collision is in real time but the actors slow down their movements in a farcical manner to imitate the slow motion of the original. The aftermath of the collision (Figure 3.47) depicts purposefully unrealistic fake blood and limbs, and one character appears to be impaled by a carrot. The absurdity of this parody has not been entirely well received, as this blog indicates:

> *Your'e making a joke over a serious matter. Thousands have been injured or killed because of texting and driving. What the fuck is wrong with you? Eat shit dude (Slicaz, 2009).*

Despite this response, the parody does not actually serve to reverse the texting and driving message of the original; it is not an *intertextual disaster*. Rather, it is

an appropriation of the original text for unintended purposes. The message not to 'text and walk' is not entirely inconsistent with the message to not 'text and drive' and in this way the parody is a perversion of the original for the purposes of entertainment. Fundamentally, what the above examples of *intertextual perversion* highlight are that governmental messages concerning road safety cannot be completely controlled.

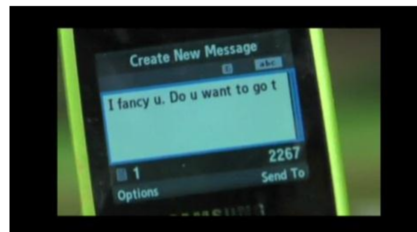


**Figure 3. 45**

**Figure 3. 46**

**Figure 3. 47**

All of the parodying texts here disclose that the original texts are becoming-other. In the same way that subjects are constantly transforming while still retaining a semblance of their former properties (Deleuze et al., 1993, 124), so too are texts. This process of transition, or becoming-other, occurs because texts (like bodies) open onto and connect with each other, leading to a transformation (Deleuze, 1992a, 217). The original texts can transform conservatively, as in the examples of *intertextual compliance*. Conversely, the

original texts can lead to a more revolutionary type of newness, like the examples of *intertextual disaster* and *intertextual perversion*. This conception of parody as a text becoming-other demonstrates how governmental messages about crime and safety cannot be fully controlled. Some government messages about road traffic safety may follow a line of molarity, leading to ethical modes of subjectivity. However there are always lines of flight which can lead to disobedience, or alternatively to intertextual parody. Interestingly, while parody is a line of flight which at first fails to produce the repetition of the desired behaviour, the parody can then change and follow a line of molarity that then leads to the repetition of that desired behaviour; through *intertextual compliance*. Or alternatively, the text may continue on a line of flight, leading to somewhat harmless *intertextual perversion*. More destructively, the text may continue on a line of flight leading to an *intertextual disaster* that can in turn affect subjects in a way that leads to disobedience. It is the representation of these disobedient modes of subjectivity in the original texts that will now be discussed.

## ***The other***

The texts explored in this chapter portray two modes of subjectivity: the obedient *self* and the disobedient *other*. The ethical *self* does not text and drive, does not drink and drive and does not speed or hoon. Juxtaposed is the failed and dangerous *other* who does all of these things. The *other* in these texts is a socially driven, hedonistic youth who is a poor planner. In *Legend* the *other* takes risks by drinking at a house party and attempting to drive home. Whereas in *Texting* the *other* is risky because she converses by text message while driving and in *Pinky* the risk is showing off ('hoon'), which may or may not involve speeding. This demonised depiction of the young failed driver is problematic because it fails to recognise that many older drivers have, at the very least, used their mobile phones while driving and travelled at speeds in excess of the speed limit. As will be addressed in Chapter Six, the binary conceptions of *self* and

*other* represented in the texts are inadequate because they do not represent the fullness of the spectator. The representations of the *other* in these texts fail to acknowledge that drivers are equally capable of driving ethically or driving dangerously at any point on the road, despite their age.

This chapter has problematized the representation of the *other* in order to show the inadequacy of binary conceptualisations of subjectivity, such as youth/adult and good/bad. In Chapter Six a more plastic conceptualisation of the subject will be discussed as an alternative to this inadequacy. Through the use of governmentality tools the chapter also showed how the fear of possible unwanted futures (fear of crime) is used as a strategy not only to transform the ethical subject but also the failed subject toward ethical action. Lastly, this chapter traced a line of flight that can be produced through an affective encounter with *Texting, Pinky and Legend,* namely parody. The tracing of this common excess revealed how an affective encounter with a text has the potential to transform both subjectivity and text. This exercise revealed another way in which governmental messages that attempt to promote ethical behaviour in populations cannot be completely controlled. Chapter Four that follows explores another uncontrollable line of flight that can emanate from an affective encounter with four new texts. It will be argued that the texts have the potential to emerge as a dysfunctional fear of crime that can disrupt meaning making and detract from the safety message.