

– ARTICLE –

Paratexts, Industrial Reflexivity, Affective Labour and *King Kong*: Peter Jackson's *Production Diaries*

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Abstract

King Kong: Peter Jackson's Production Diaries (2005), a self-contained DVD package released at the same time as *King Kong* (2005), is an example of paratext and of what John Caldwell calls 'industrial reflexivity'. While cast as a direct act of communication with fans and as a means of revealing the behind-the-scene workings of Jackson and his crew, the *Production Diaries* work also as industrial discourse which seeks to portray creative labour as a space of enjoyment, of affective investment and of individual fulfilment within a group of highly talented and motivated individuals. The diaries are both the production and the record of the creative labour and its transformation into a commodified media object through the process of affective labour. The *Production Diaries* provide an image of production for both external and internal purposes.

Introduction

Since the production and release of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001, 2002, 2003; *LOTR* henceforth), Peter Jackson and his collaborators have experimented with different ways of engaging with audiences, documenting their creative processes, and producing reflexive narratives about their industrial practices. *LOTR* generated multiple forms of paratexts. One essential ingredient of these paratexts was the focus on New Zealand as location and setting of Middle-earth (Jutel 2004) and the commodification of its landscape for the tourist gaze (Leotta 2011, 166). The focus on location and tourism tie-ins was itself the object of deliberate governmental policy in collaboration with New Line Cinema and, buttressed by grants and centralised coordination of multiple agencies and public bodies (Thompson 2007, 311). The production of *King Kong* (2005) did not benefit from such direct and exceptional support from the New Zealand government even though it had access to the Large Budget Screen Production Grant (Thompson 2007, 317). According to Leotta, while Jackson had previously announced that he would work on a smaller-scale project after *LOTR*, there were significant

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commercial incentives to produce *King Kong*, such as a favourable deal with Universal and the chance to gather all of his previous collaborative creative personnel (2016, 145). An additional factor was the need to keep all of Peter Jackson's and his associates' companies involved in large-scale projects and demonstrate that the success of *LOTR* would generate continued and sustainable creative and economic involvement in other projects lead by Jackson and others. Finally, the companies associated with Peter Jackson were involved in securing their business in Wellington, a place with strong geographical, transport, governmental and economic incentives (Leotta 2016, 69), a priority which has remained at the forefront of many collaborative developments between the Miramar filmmakers, the Wellington community, and the Wellington City Council.

King Kong: Peter Jackson's Production Diaries (2005, *Production Diaries* henceforth), the focus of this essay, provides an illustration of practices previously seen in *LOTR* supplementary material. It also documents some of the practices associated with the establishment and consolidation of Miramar as Peter Jackson's creative enterprises. Since the use of New Zealand's natural locations in *King Kong* was much less consequential, and not associated with promotional campaigns producing significant financial benefits for the production, the supplementary material for *King Kong* traces an inward movement: the reflexive and introspective look at the production of the film. The diaries gesture towards an exhaustive account of the production's timelines and deadlines and the specialised, arcane and intricate investigation of a broad range of activities connected to the making of the film. Gone is the broader discussion of the role of the production of *LOTR* as contributing to national identity. Gone also is the production of virtual tour through the landscape and the social fabric of New Zealand. As the title suggests (*Peter Jackson's Production Diaries*), the tone and form of the paratextual material mimics a confessional and direct mode of address and asserts the authorial presence and performance of those in charge. One of the diary entries makes this point explicit when the director (Michael Pellerin) and his crew follow Peter Jackson during one of the days of principal photography ('Production Day 100: A Day of the Life of Peter 24 Feb 2005').

This essay proposes to look at the *Production Diaries* as a performed self-portrait and what John Caldwell describes as the ways in which 'the industry creates a critical understanding of itself through public practices (organising, marketing and promotion)' (2006, 144). In other words, the promotional function of supplementary material should not be the sole focus of a critical analysis. As John Caldwell argues, media industries

invest tremendous resources in producing knowledge (and critical knowledge) about the industry. Viewing this kind of industrial knowledge production, furthermore, as mere public-relations, marketing, bumpf, promotion, context, is shortsighted and misguided given the extensive and convoluted nature of contemporary mediascape. (2006, 110)

This essay explores the diaries from two perspectives. Firstly, it approaches the *Production Diaries* as a text addressed directly to fans and to prospective audiences – in parallel with the production and release of the feature – who seek access to supplementary material for its own sake. Secondly, it considers the *Production Diaries* as an attempt to consolidate the practices and ‘lived communities’ (Caldwell 2006, 112) of Miramar’s film industry, and to document a stage in the evolution of big-budget production and industrial practices in Miramar. The diaries’ making and their immediate release on the Internet and then in a packaged DVD provide a connection between the filmmakers and their most passionate audiences, and ‘invite the viewers to identify with the filmmakers and their art’ (Jones 2009, 192). They also reinforce the creative ethos underpinning the production process. The *Production Diaries* provide an image of production for both external and, as I argue here, internal purposes. By using the expression ‘image of production’ I foreground the fact that one of the outcomes of the production process is to generate a representation and an impression of the material, technological, creative and affective labour of those involved and that that image can be packaged, commodified and circulated, not solely for financial gains but also as an affirmation of the cultural habitus valued and rewarded within Jackson’s production team.

What transpires in many of Peter Jackson’s paratextual interventions and specifically in the case study of the *Production Diaries* is a discourse about the melding of big-budget means, scales and pressures, and the artisanal and passionate touch of individuals involved in the making of films, starting with Jackson himself. The underlying logic is not that of exploring the contractual organisation of creative labour and the neo-liberal hegemony of self-employment’ (Smith and McKinlay 2009, 13) but rather the emotional investment which all above-the-line and below-the line creatives are compelled to demonstrate. As Ahmed states, ‘emotions *do things*, and they align individuals with communities—or bodily space with social space—through the very intensity of their attachments’ (2004, 119). The introspective and reflexive turn of the paratext, the deployment of affective modes of involvement on the part of Peter Jackson, the investment with fans and viewers, and the documenting of creative labour in the diaries demonstrate the terms by which the reflexive and industrial discourses of the *Production Diaries* aim to produce and reflect a production culture.

This essay will first discuss the characteristics of Jackson’s paratextual objects and specifically the DVD release. It will then look at the continuities between *LOTR*’s and *King Kong*’s paratexts and specifically focus on how they produce an affective bond with crew and audiences. John Caldwell’s notion of reflexive industrial discourse will then provide the means to conceptualise the diaries as ‘cultural expressions and entities’ (2008, 2). One of the key aspects of this discourse is the emphasis on the ‘authoring personality’ (Caldwell 2006, 130) of Peter Jackson in parallel with the figure of Carl Denham, the fictitious director in *King Kong* and the maker of the film within the film. The final section will discuss the logic of affective labour as it shapes the modes of interaction within the crew and in relation with the audience. The conclusion offers

some reflection about the long-standing effects of the strategic, institutional and economic functions of Jackson's industrial, reflexive discourse.

The *Production Diaries* as Object

The *Production Diaries* for *King Kong* first appeared online on KongisKing.net, a fan site associated with TheOneRing.net. Diary entries were posted regularly during the production of the film – more exactly, during principal photography, in 2004 and early 2005. They are dated from 6 September 2004 to 8 Apr 2005. The 54 individual vignettes, each lasting between one and five minutes, were posted regularly on the website and were available for free viewing. Altogether, these entries add up to about four hours of extra and behind-the-scene material. Jackson presents most, but not all, of these vignettes. While he is the central creative presence in the diaries (whether physically present or referred to), other members of the crew narrate, explain and bear witness to different aspects of production. Topics are as varied and as technical as sound recording, prop making, miniatures, as well as more humorous (but nonetheless important) subjects such as plane-spotting at the Wellington airport to warn teams on set of an incoming jet ('Production Day 10: Plane Spotting 15 Sep 2004'), or the different types of animal excrement required in different locations of the story ('Production Day 14: Animal Droppings 23 Sep 2004'). There are also spoof entries, such as one where Peter Jackson, Jack Black and the rest of the crew try to track an intruder (Gandalf) around the set who, they claim, posted unauthorised pictures of a location along the coast of Wellington ('Production Day 36: Gandalf the Spy 28 Oct 2004'). The tone oscillates between technical geekiness, intimate chat and banter. At the time of release, the KongisKing.net website also had a forum where fans could discuss aspects of the production and make responses to the production diaries, ask further questions and discuss the insights gained on the progress of the production and its adaptation of the original film. Peter Jackson introduces 'Production Day 66: Journey of a Roll of Film 07 Dec 2004' as 'the first web diary sequel' to the previous entry on cameras ('Production Day 62: Cameras 02 Dec 2004') and in response to requests. The entry follows the workflow associated with a roll of film from the camera on set as it journeys through the hands of eleven crew to be delivered back to Jackson and the director of photography as rushes. Fans were invited to make requests for what they wanted covered in the entries and in some instances, Jackson introduces these specific diary entries by acknowledging the fans who sent in the request, such as in 'Production Day 68: Creating New York in New Zealand 09 Dec 2004'.

The 54 individual entries were subsequently assembled in a DVD package and released for sale on 13 December 2005, right after the premiere of the film a week earlier, but prior to the release of the film to the public. A five-minute-and-thirty-second introduction by Peter Jackson was added to the disc so that Jackson could explain the development and the goals of the diaries as they became clearer to the crew, and in response to fan feedback. The introduction ultimately frames the framing as it performs a metadiscursive commentary on the diary entries. It also underlines the discursive

practices used to narrate the diaries and the mode of address to the viewer, which aim to create a sense of immediacy and authenticity because of the stated emphasis on transparency:

The idea of doing a production diary concurrently with the shooting of the film and posting on the Internet was not really an idea we had at the beginning as strange as it may seem ... Why don't we invite people in to experience the making of this film first hand? ... They grew without a master plan ... They were a constant source of amusement and fun actually during the making of the film. It was a thing I had never done before. It's not a calculated piece of publicity. It's actually just the filmmakers connecting directly with fans ... When you look at them, as a body of work, they accurately and truthfully reflect the tone and the feeling while making this film ... We didn't try to hide anything, the exhaustion and the fatigue, and the stress ... We didn't censor ourselves. (*Production Diaries* 2005)

Jackson's investment in the making of the production diaries as web entries extends to his following fans' responses to the postings. Jackson acknowledges the feedback loop which arose out of responses and requests from fans on the Internet: 'We were always looking for what reactions were and what people seemed to be enjoying' (*Production Diaries* 2005). While the DVD package does not have the same level of interaction as the web diaries, it does record the different forms of collaborative work and investments within the crew and with the viewers of the diaries.

The individual diaries are accessible on a 2-disc set, in a DVD case which also contains a clipboard-style fifty-two-page booklet featuring a description of each entry. The DVD is styled to look like a 1930s set of production notes and is entitled 'Production Memoir' stamped with a 'PJ Approved' label – a way of stressing the biographic and auteurist mode of address of the diaries and the filmmaking enterprise and acknowledging the personal touch in what are ultimately mass-produced media objects. The DVD package features a 'certificate of authenticity' and four 'exclusive production art prints' and is presented in a box made to look like a brief-case and embossed to resemble leather. The two DVDs have a complex menu page which lets the users select which entries to watch. They can follow the entries in the order in which they were produced and released, or they can arrange the material to suit an individual location, such as New York City or Skull Island. On disc two, the 'Final Six Weeks of Production' entries are available in addition to the fifty-four other entries. There is also an additional 'featurette', *The Making of a Shot: The T-Rex Fight*, as well as some other behind-the-scene moments. The set aims at providing an exhaustive and detailed record of the production diaries to make the material circulated on the Internet available in better quality, and to disseminate work beyond the niche yet essential audience of the KongisKing.net website. It is also designed as a stand-alone object which both registers as, and could become, a collector's item. Contrary to previously released paratextual material, it is not

literally supplementary material to the DVD releases of the feature film, as it is a self-contained and purchasable object.

Paratexts, Affective Bond and Peter Jackson

The specific forms and functions of the paratext *Production Diaries* grew out of paratextual practices which precede Jackson's adaptation of *King Kong*. Many were introduced during the production and promotion of *LOTR*. According to Gray, the supplementary material associated with Peter Jackson's big-budget projects serve as a means of marketing media products to anticipate, frame and generate fans' involvement and attachment (2010). Gray attributes an essential meaning-making function to the paratext which enriches the experience of the film or media text it supports, expands the reach of the text, and provides additional and often valuable layers of signification and experience (2010). During the trilogy's production, Jackson had also engaged with Tolkien's fans well in advance of the release of the first film through TheOneRing.net website, where he could both present himself as much a fan of Tolkien as any other of the site members and introduce the most attentive and dedicated audience of his films to the process of adapting Tolkien's epic tales to the screen. Jackson focused on establishing a discursive framework to explain, document and justify production decisions. This was not simply a matter of explaining his directorial intentions, but also of demonstrating the scale of the production enterprise as well as his and his team's dedication. He established an affective relation with audiences, with the original material (Tolkien's literary work) and with those involved in the production. When discussing the extra material associated with *The Lords of the Ring*, Gray argues that the bonus material released on the different version of each of the three films enhances the experience of the films by setting

a fantasy realm of cinematic production and reception into which producers, cast, crew, and fans alike can enter... They create a Middle Earth of artistic creation, with an author (or two), an aura, and authenticity. *The Lord of the Rings* is an epic tale of an unlikely group of heroes who, through comradeship, resilience, and compassion, manage to overcome the odds and triumph in the face of immense adversity. (2010, 92)

The narrative and the production process constitute a 'bond' (Gray 2010, 93) in which the community of cast, crew and audience can join. As Gray notes, 'The bonus materials insist on the cast becoming their own Fellowship, united by compassion, respect, and dedication, and determined to succeed in their own grueling quest' (93). Much of the behind-the scene material focuses on the camaraderie and the ingenuity of the cast and crew in a display of what could be taken as an egalitarian intention to overcome the division of below- and above-the-line creative labour. That collective and creative ethos has been a constant refrain for those involved in the production of Jackson's films

(Welch 2011). When interviewed about the release of *King Kong*, Jack Black, who plays the director within the film, Carl Denham, summarises,

I didn't read the script when I accepted the role, I did it because I wanted to work with Peter... You want to work with cool people with great minds and creativity, and Peter Jackson was an artist that I wanted to hang out with. You want to spend time with people that you really respect; it's not just making the movie, but like you're spending a year of your life with that person, you want it to be someone that you enjoy their company. (Movieweb 2005)

It is the experience of working with Peter Jackson and others that is in itself valued by those involved, especially stars and key creative crew, and is a common trope about which reporters inquire and fans seek to witness or at least intuit. This public emphasis by key talents about their affective investment in the project and in Peter Jackson's authorial guidance is not solely an expression of loyalty, but a necessity in a context in which the large-scale production of *LOTR* is treated as an artisanal project, or as Peter Jackson puts it, 'the biggest home movie in the world' (quoted in Thompson 2007, 101). Kristin Thompson describes this approach as the reconciliation between a low-budget and independent moviemaking applied 'to an expensive event film' (75). She characterises Jackson's approach to filmmaking as 'improvisatory, let's-try-us-this-way approach [which] smacks more of small, independent filmmaking' (79). In order to cope with Jackson's 'fluid approach to filmmaking' (78), the production team relied on strong collaborative partnerships with key creative, business and life partners (Leotta 2016, 29-31). The public statements in interviews and throughout paratextual material are much more than public relations and promotional gloss: they reflect a determinate discursive practice about the creative process and specifically the affective bond which stands as leitmotiv to characterise the nature of the individual and collective investment in creative labour. They also reflect what John Caldwell calls 'reflexive industrial discourses' (2008).

Production Diaries as Reflexive Industrial Discourse

Caldwell's notion of 'reflexive industrial discourses' refer to the constitution, production and reproduction of discursive practices which provide a frame of reference for industry practitioners, other members of the media industries, public institutions and audiences to explain, contextualise and make sense of the creative process in the context of cultural industries. As Caldwell notes, industrial reflexivity in media industries has become itself the focus and the source of much textual production (2008, 1) and finds its most visible materialisation in the making of behind-the-scene vignettes and in the case-study this essay discusses, the making of video diaries during the production of *King Kong*. Jackson's reflexive industrial discourses as produced by the *Production Diaries* function firstly as internal affirmation of the values and aspirations of the production teams and generate an image and a mise-en-scène of collaborative

production process. Secondly, the *Production Diaries* constitute a form of enthusiastic self-validation communicated to outside audiences through a performance and an assertion of generosity, self-deprecation and authenticity. Finally, the diaries constitute self-standing media objects which transform an image of the production labour into a commodified, marketable and consumable product and reinforce an ethos of affective investment in the creative process. The combined elements form what David P. Marshall calls 'the new intertextual commodity', which offers the delivery of texts and experiences across varied platforms such as film, DVD, supplementary material, Internet and more recently, social media, as well as games and other publications. Marshall states that

[t]he cultural industries are providing a circumscribed agency for the new audience by providing complex patterns of engagement and explanatory architectures.... Various forms of production are aligned with providing background information in cultural forms that are designed to deepen the commitment of the audience in the cultural commodity. (2002, 80)

'Circumscribed agency' and 'commitment of the audience' point to the terms by which supplementary material, and here the production diaries, engage viewers to share the ethos of Jackson's production culture. The *Production Diaries* work as industrial reflexive discourse and offer a model of affective labour both in terms of production and reception, a characteristic which was implicit in previous supplementary material associated with Jackson's big budget films and here made explicit. The *Production Diaries* not only contribute to the development and sustainment of fan culture and reception; they also function as an instance of industrial reflexivity which associates the habitus of the production crew with the response of viewers to the immediate and authentic mode of address.

Peter Jackson and Carl Denham

The DVD set is part of a logic of creative labour as emotional, financial and creative expenditure, which Peter Jackson wants to acknowledge and validate not as a supplement to the feature film but as integral part of the filmmaking-as-enterprise. Jackson's own affective investment in the original film is well known:

For Peter Jackson, his 2005 remake of *King Kong* was the realisation of a life-long dream. By Jackson's own admission the original 1933 version of *King Kong* directed by Merian C. Cooper played a crucial role in his decision to become a professional film maker. (Leotta 2016, 143)

As reported by Leotta, Jackson's collecting of *King Kong* memorabilia started early in his life. In one of the entries ('Production Day 42: Peter Kong's Collection 03 Nov 2004'), Jackson displays some of the props from the original film, including the model used for the brontosaurus in the film during stop-motion sequences (Erb 2009, X). The prospect of generating new memorabilia with the production of his own remake of the film was

inspired as much by Peter Jackson's personal investment as a fan, as it was by commercial imperatives. In one of the diary entries, Jackson grabs one of the props on the SS Venture and declares that the buoy, once it has fulfilled its function as prop, will end up on the wall in his office ('Production Day 6: Rough Seas on Land 13 Sep 2004').

Jackson's motivation for remaking the film sets in motion a mode of response in which the film, its memorabilia and its production and reception experience contribute to a deeply-seated emotional attachment. Jackson is drawn to the characters of the films, the premise of filmmaking as adventure and the 'tremendous urge to physicalise a creative task that has become essentially cerebral' (Caldwell 2006, 131). This is a propensity he had already demonstrated in his participation as himself in the mockumentary *Forgotten Silver* (Jackson and Botes 1995), in which he retrieves the lost history and the lost films of Colin McKenzie, a fictitious filmmaker, adventurer, soldier and long-lost national hero (Jutel 2008). Of all contemporary filmmakers, few have been as keen to portray themselves as fans as has Jackson. That enthusiasm is a source of connection with the fans of his films and the fans of the original *King Kong*. Being an enthusiast is never an ironic stance taken by Jackson. It functions as a mode of address to the viewers of his films and, especially in the *Production Diaries*, a mode a generating a production culture specific to the Miramar environment.

Carl Denham, the director in *King Kong*, is driven by a passion for the making of a cinema of attractions; others on the crew are there by necessity or have been recruited under false pretenses. The film is set during the Great Depression and the harshness of everyday life compels Denham to produce a spectacle which will bypass the stifling power of executive producers who are dead-set against the project, but will delight crowds in search of escapism. Creative passion and commitment must overcome the tyranny of business imperatives, an approach Jackson's Denham shares with Colin McKenzie. Contrary to the original Denham, Jackson's Denham is more tentative, less self-assured, as he is riddled with self-doubt and relies extensively on others to complete and give shape to his vision. The casting of Jack Black as Denham adds an anti-heroic dimension to the character.

Denham's aim is to produce a popular spectacle which combines an unashamed reliance on exoticism, exploitation, and sentimentality. The narrative foregrounds his dubious intentions, but never ultimately rejects the ambition to entertain, something that Jackson's films promise to deliver. The narrative draws from the tradition of films on films, especially those associated with Hollywood. Peter Jackson's *King Kong* fictionalises the conflicting impulses behind the making of the film within the film and particularly Denham's obsession with the giant ape and his desire to produce a commercially successful film. Jackson's *King Kong* psychologises the filmmaker's predicaments, but never challenges Denham's obsession. Jackson's depiction of Denham is more a playful illusion of psychological depths than a deconstruction or critique of his morbid, racist and misogynistic impulses. This is a common pattern of Hollywood films

on Hollywood; while superficially critiquing the manipulative and exploitative impulses of the industry, the fantasy is never entirely rejected. As Christopher Ames argues,

Since films about filmmaking promise to show what transpires behind the scenes, their appeal is precisely in stripping away the illusion of seamlessness. And yet, as mainstream Hollywood films, they remain within the dominant invisible style. Thus the content of these films is often at odds with their style. To put it in ideological terms, the content demystifies while the style mystifies; the content at least purports to reveal what is ordinarily hidden while the style continues the convention of hiding the mechanics of cinematic construction. (1997, 6)

The tensions between business and art in Jackson's treatment of *King Kong's* narrative can be resolved, so it seems, by recognising and assenting to what Denham and Jackson perceive as the authenticity implicit in a lust for thrills and spectacle. The self-reflexive and referential treatment of Denham's passion 'alludes ironically to Jackson's contemporary status' (Rayner 2013, 150). The *Production Diaries* echo this determination to entertain, which drives the making of *King Kong*, and serve to emphasise Jackson's goal to produce a cinema of entertaining spectacles and affective bonds. The diaries highlight the intention of the remake to function as an homage to the original film, and for Peter Jackson 'to become the director that realises the ambition of the 'Carl Denham's' [sic] that preceded him, that is to bring to the cinematic audience the ultimate visual effects creature' (Constandinides 2010, 123). Mystification, to use Ames' term, is self-consciously and self-reflexively the ultimate goal of the adaptation. The *Production Diaries* explicitly relate this process to the affective bond in every aspect of creative labour.

Affective Labour

The bond implied in the production and reception contexts is negotiated in the *Production Diaries* through the direct access to the production team. The entries function as an exploration and an explanation of the creative process, in which members of the crew, led by Peter Jackson, anticipate discursive responses to the film and privilege

critical discourses (aesthetic analysis, knowledge about production technologies, working methods, and behind-the-scenes information) [which] can be directly discussed and negotiated with audiences and users without critical/cultural middlemen. (Caldwell 2008, 298)

Peter Jackson as creator and enthusiast produces insights into the making of the film: what matters is the service to the project, which is the implicit driving force behind the entries. The completion of the film takes on a priority and an urgency, which frames every crew member's contribution no matter what their position on the creative hierarchy, the divide between above and below the line crew or the notoriety of the

participants. Peter Jackson is omnipresent throughout the set, as are the actors, key creative crew but also anonymous members including extras ('Production Day 82: New York Extras 31 Jan 2005'). Anonymous crew members as well as identified participants are often the first witnesses and viewers of the diaries in their making and in the production of the feature film. That position of privileged viewer therefore extends to those who have accessed the diaries on the Internet or on the DVD.

Costas Constandinides sees in this assortment of texts associated with *King Kong* what he calls a 'super-paratext that redefines the role of the viewer in the process of consuming the film' and a multi-platform distribution a logic akin to Lev Manovich's 'database cinema' (2010, 119-120). The *Production Diaries* constitute a "metanarrative" where each scene incorporates the vision of a digital grid as it may well be presumed that the viewer oscillates between the illusion and the acquired knowledge of the scenes' construction' (139). According to Constandinides, the viewer is involved in a cognitive activity to piece together not so much the totality of the film's narrative but the progression and the realisation of the project. The 'hypermediated environment' of Jackson's adaptation of *King Kong*, which includes the web diaries and the official website, 'transforms the ways a story is told in traditional media texts to a timeless database structure that functions as a kind of nonlinear/nonhierarchical narrative' (135). Constandinides associates this with digital capitalism (124), where the media product is a network of texts and experiences linked together by increasing points of entry into the business of making *King Kong*, which here refers to both the diegetic and textual content of the film (the making of a film by Denham) and its contextual and industrial reality (Peter Jackson's adaptation of a much-cherished classic). The premise is that personal investment brings immediacy and authenticity to all these enterprises and positions the viewer as an active contributor to the realisation of the project. In other words, I want to foreground the affective dimension implicit in the transaction to Constandinides' compelling analysis of the terms by which the 'super-paratext' engages the viewer in act of consumption and reception.

As I introduced earlier, the *Production Diaries* create an image of production in which the circumstances and the process of creative labour are foregrounded, if not revealed. This expresses itself in a variety of ways. The rhetorical stance in the *Production Diaries* work as internal affirmation of the values and aspirations of the production team. Jackson introduces the DVD set by emphasising that the material contained in the diary does not add meaning to the narrative as much as it validates the commitment and industry of the production team. Jackson's facilitating the behind-the-scene look at the production process works less to produce directorial and intentional fallacy, and more to front the work of a creative team. He bears witness to the work of his associates. The personal commitment he demonstrates and performs in the diaries foregrounds that of his crew when they speak of the long hours spent on the work and the pressures of deadlines. Creative labour is made manifest through physical exhaustion and exertion and through the shared reference to 'physical masochism' (Caldwell 2006, 131). Jackson places the production of the diary entries as part of the production team's rituals and

bonding exercises and a means of marking the passing of time. The tone of the diaries emphasises disclosure and honesty, and when elements of the production need to remain invisible, and especially the representation of Kong, it is done in a humorous tone which acknowledges the prospective enjoyment of the spectacle ('Production Day 105: Naomi in Kong's Hand 03 Mar 2005').

The extra material rhetorically frames the significance of Jackson's remake in terms of the technical, technological, creative and human investment made in the course of production. The diary entries as paratexts emphasise the importance and significance of the filmmaking enterprise to the extent that, while the film is geared towards an immersion into the diegetic world through special effects, it is the human performance and labour which provide an indexical connection with the legacy of the original film and Jackson's, and by extension the crew's, affective attachment to the material. A measure of the film's commitment to the original lies in the expenditures – human, technical and economic – that the diaries both implicitly and explicitly detail. This dimension is especially relevant to the characterisation of Kong embodied by Andrew Serkis and produced through motion capture. On the later release of 'post-production diaries', one of the diary entries ('Post-Production Diary: 31 weeks to go 31 December 2005'), motion capture is introduced not solely as technological device, but as intense physical and emotional performance. Tanine Allison relates the exhausting performance of Serkis to the film's ambitions to insist on the actual inscription of the film's genesis in the moment of production:

While examinations of the publicity for the 1933 and 1976 versions of King Kong reveal that deception was deemed necessary to protect the fantasy created onscreen, the publicity for the latest version of the film shows that contemporary filmmakers do not feel the need to hide the apparatus so as not to ruin the illusion. Rather, it is only by breaking with older notions of realism that sought to keep the production apparatus invisible that Jackson and his team were able to frame motion capture in terms of authenticity and reference to the real world. (2011, 325-326)

Allison's analysis suggests that the behind-the-scene material as publicity generates an image of production which is inscribed in the final film despite its reliance on extensive special effects. This image is directly related to the work of embodying Kong as metaphor for the entire production enterprise, and as if the fictional figure of Kong and the moment of its creation on set had an indexical relationship with the human presence and labour during the making of the film and as documented in the diaries.

Thus, the DVD set, like the Internet entries, is also a stand-alone media object which transforms an image of the production labour into a commodified, marketable and consumable product. The diaries insist on a creative labour ethos, which, as it unfolds in the time of production, functions as a ritual for the crew and cast. A new production diary is often greeted by an acknowledgement of the crew presenting it through

bantering, play, practical jokes, and the performance of complicity between crew members ('Production Day 7: Shooting Inside the *Venture* 14 Sep 2004'). The shooting style relies on hand-held and highly mobile cameras techniques. The editing is quick, the cuts sometimes abrupt but guided by an emphasis on immediacy and the literal illustration of a specific point. Jackson, when he hosts the diary entry, talks directly to the camera and there is no pretense of a careful introduction but rather an immediate focus on the topic of the day.

The narrative structure of the entries is often related to a sequence of events following a process such as shooting a scene, recording a sound effect or a performance, a downtime when a technical problem on set is being resolved, or a moment in time which can lead to a journey through the set behind and in front of the camera. Occasionally, the diary is a performance or a commentary on how crew and cast spend time and use the set for social interactions. B-roll footage is used sparingly but always to illustrate the point explicitly, as if the filming privileged the presence of the crew producing these entries and as if the minimalist editing interventions assured an unmediated access to the set and the experience of the moment. The production of the set as a place of affective labour is echoed in the goal of mastering new technologies, including motion capture, to generate mood, emotions and affects. The impression of approachability and sincerity of all involved as well as the visible expenditure of energy and emotions inscribe the production of special effects in a relatable scale. The *Production Diaries* cannot be treated simply as marketing in the sense of performing a rhetorical gesture to convince potential viewers to watch *King Kong*. It draws a parallel between the affective labour of the crew and the affective labour of the fan. These documented and implied investments illustrate Massumi's commentary on the function of affect in contemporary culture: 'The ability of affect to produce an economic effect more swiftly and surely than economics itself means that affect is itself a real condition, an intrinsic variable of the late-capitalist system, as infrastructural as a factory' (2002, 45).

King Kong: Peter Jackson's Production Diaries are cast in the terms of a strategic performance of authenticity which is reflected in the mode of address of the video diaries, and the process of adaptation of *King Kong* as an affective investment. Remarkably, the *King Kong Production Diaries*, both in their Internet-based delivery and the packaging I discussed here, remain an exemplary yet unusual initiative which foregrounds the diverse functions and discourses of industrial reflexivity. The extra material has a function within the textual production of film and the industrial logic of film production. In other words, the DVD set is not *extra* material which relates solely to a commercial and marketing logic. Of course, the DVD as commodity is a prequel to the subsequent ancillary material, such as the extended version of the film released on DVD, the *Ultimate Edition* on Blu-ray with the inclusion of the theatrically released version of the film, an extended version of the *Production Diaries* as well as *Post-Production Diaries* (Jackson, 2006) with the game, and all the other material and merchandise, what Marshall refers to as 'intertextual commodity' (69). But it is also a document whose function is to mobilise a set of affective exchanges. As John Caldwell has noted, 'the

production industry continues to militarise its professional rituals and identities' (2006, 127). According to Jackson in the introduction to the *Production Diaries*, the purpose of the diaries was to show how a production set requires 'marshall[ing] an army of skilled people'. I propose that the *Production Diaries* are representations and extensions of this logic and aim to convince the viewer to invest in the labour of reception just as the production crew invested their creative energies and their affective labour into the making of the film.

Conclusion

The making of production diaries, their release on the Internet and then their packaging in a stand-alone DVD act as documentation of the ways in which Jackson and his crew performed their commitment to the completion of the project; it is both the production and the record of the creative labour and its transformation into a commodified media object. While cast as a direct act of communication with fans and as a means of revealing the behind-the-scene workings, the *Production Diaries* work as an illustration of contemporary creative discourses which seek to portray creative labour as a space of enjoyment, of individual fulfilment within a group of highly talented and motivated individuals. We need to consider the production ethos on display as a means of producing films and as an end in itself. *King Kong* is after all a film about making a film, the industry, its financial imperatives, the tension between creative process and the exercises of power whether creative or institutional. The feature film *King Kong* could be read as the extra material for and the residue of *Production Diaries*. Yet there are specifically structural implications on the mobilisation and representation of affective labour. In order to secure the production of the three instalments of *The Hobbit* (Jackson, 2012, 2013 and 2014), Jackson successfully argued in 2010 that employment laws of New Zealand needed to be changed in parliament under urgency to accommodate the requirements of Warner Bros (Clark 2010; Jess 2011; Tipples and Walker 2011) and because of a supposed union-imposed boycott which would have threatened the production. Later release of correspondence between Jackson, Warner Bros and the government revealed that the union threat had been overstated and, despite the fact that the government went ahead and implemented a law change, it did not think this was required (Rutherford 2014; Jess 2011). The revelations had no discernible impact on public opinion and on the government's response and relation with the Miramar filmmakers. There are extensive financial and economic reasons why the Miramar filmmakers have significant cultural and political leverage in New Zealand. This essay has argued that this leverage is a consequence of practices of industrial reflexivity such as the *Production Diaries* aimed at validating and reinforcing its production ethos. As Caldwell argues in relation to the industry, and which here applies to Jackson's enterprises, it 'excels at publicly generating over-arching metaphors, figurative paradigms, and master narratives that constantly frame and re-frame the production industry' (2006, 116). The framing and reframing in the *Production Diaries* narrativise through the affective performance of those involved a means to gain and

reinforce power and influence and, as Caldwell states in relation to the rhetorical and strategic nature of industrial reflexivity, 'to perpetuate themselves and their interests' (2008, 2).

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