Script Supervising and Film Continuity

Third Edition

Script supervisor Pat Miller prompts Director Leo McCarey as he acts out a scene for Cary Grant and Kathleen Nesbitt. (Taken on the set of "An Affair to Remember," a Twentieth Century Fox release. © 1957, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and Jerry Wald Productions, Inc.)

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and
Film Continuity

Third Edition

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Illustrations by Joseph Musso, Mike Dirham, and Patrice Marak.

This book is dedicated to the often unheralded continuity (née script) supervisors, whose craft is an integral part of filmmaking.

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Foreword

Pat Miller's book on script supervision is the first, and insofar as I am aware, the only complete and thorough work of its kind ever published. It covers in detail the hundreds—and I mean literally hundreds—of tasks a good script supervisor must perform: the recording of how the director is shooting the scene; if a master, how he breaks it up; a description of each shot, including who is in it, etc.; where there are changes in the dialogue or action that would affect the story line; how the characters are dressed; how the characters are positioned, and in what direction they are looking; the points at which the characters sit, stand, or otherwise move; the times at which characters enter and exit, and whether or not their actions accord with the scenes that precede and follow; whether or not the action matches from one cue to the next; how long the scene runs in screen time; which lens was used; whether the camera was stationary or moving and, if the latter, when movement occurred; whether the take was good or not, and why; and so on, ad infinitum.

No one but an experienced person in the field could possibly have written such a full treatment of the subject, since it reveals not only the various problems confronting the supervisor but also the most efficient methods of handling them. Most important, though, is the fact that the text is written in language that is simple, unaffected, and understandable.

I consider the book a genuine breakthrough for those who aspire to become script supervisors, and in my opinion it can be read with profit by many others in our business: beginning directors, assistants, editors, and, in fact, those in every branch of our industry.

The importance of a good script supervisor is a fact of which I have always been conscious. He or she is a must for a smooth and successful production, but I have never realized the amount of work necessary before and after shooting that the script supervisor had to do.

I recommend the book heartily. It is sorely needed, and a job well done.

Vincent Sherman

Preface

This is the third edition of my book that delineates the methodology of film continuity—an integral facet in film production.

My first and second editions were published under the title *Script Supervising and Film Continuity*. Recently, the IATSE (International Association of Theatrical and Stage Employees) revised the title to: Script Supervisor/Continuity Coordinator. Sadly, this nomenclature perpetuates the misconceptions that abound with regard to the complex nature and major responsibilities of the job. I reiterate: the particular aspects of the craft have nothing to do with creating, revising, or supervising the written script per se.

During principal photography of theatrical motion pictures, movies for television, episodic television, or commercials, there is a technician, who is responsible for ensuring that every aspect of the film's continuity is meticulously transmitted from script to screen. That technician is the continuity supervisor.

The motion picture industry worldwide has adopted the (inappropriate) American nomenclature: Script Supervisor—instead of adopting Britain's (more appropriate) title: Continuity. And it is my fervent wish that when you, the reader, acquire expertise in this complex craft, you will insist that your screen credit read: Continuity Supervisor.

The continuity supervisor is concerned with the images that the director extracts from the script and transmits onto film. The director interprets and converts the written words to filmic product, while the continuity supervisor is essentially the liaison between the director and the editor during the complex procedure in which the script is transformed into a motion picture. What is

widely acknowledged in the film industry is that the job of film continuity constitutes a vital component in the filmmaking process.

In years past, most films were produced by major studios; there were intensive apprenticeship programs for the various craftspeople who comprise a motion picture crew. But those days are long gone. In the current era of independent film and television productions, film technicians must learn their skills by attending courses at film schools or by having a professional friend or relative train them in a specific craft. Learning nowadays is catch-as-catch-can, whether acquired in classrooms removed from the real action or on the often frenetic set itself—and usually without proper instruction. There is nothing better, of course, than on-the-job experience. Still, a person has to make a start somewhere. Thus, this book might serve as a stepping stone.

Because a goodly number of women are now active in the technical crafts—where the tasks, heretofore, carried masculine labels: cameraman, soundman, boomman—the gender designation for any craft title has been carefully avoided.

Between the date of my second edition and the present writing, a technological revolution has erupted in the film industry. My research, at this juncture, reveals that the advent of the computer has generated a burgeoning electronic phenomenon that has inextricably transformed the historical art of filmmaking. But at this point in time, the electronic revolution mainly impacts the camera and film editing processes: particularly, the introduction of the Avid and other digital nonlinear editing (DNLE) apparatus. Filmmaking today has become two industries: theatrical and technological (digital). Be that as it may, to function as a continuity supervisor, one must first master the disciplines of conventional filmic structure. Afterwards, computer literacy is a must.

The continuity supervisor's tangible role during principal photography remains intact, as well as the disciplines inherent during the period of preproduction: (a) comprehensively reading the script; (b) breaking down the script for shooting out of continuity; (c) timing the script; (d) providing the editor with the organic information that results in a well-crafted motion picture. The computer's phenomenal capabilities have not yet replicated the human ability to read, the faculty to comprehend, and the eyes to observe—although the voice to communicate is becoming a reality.

My third edition endeavors to update the tools of the trade and embody the high-tech innovations that come within the purview of the continuity supervisor. The duties have expanded from the prescribed liaison between the director and the editor. Today, the role demands practical knowledge in: visual effects, special effects, the numerous crafts, and the postproduction operations. Computer (digital) technology engenders amazing visual effects and animation photography that poses somewhat of a departure from shooting traditional dramatic live action performed by professional actors and animals. Nonetheless, the expertise of the continuity supervisor is mandatory.

Because of the frequency with which astounding technological innovations are penetrating film production, I recommend that you be on the alert for all developments in this field.

It is virtually impossible to enumerate all the technical and philosophical challenges that the continuity supervisor encounters in the course of a day's work. While computerized notes may reach the editor swiftly and be artistic enough to frame, the editor will be hard-pressed to overcome technical errors: glaring mismatches in the performance, or jarring film cuts that violate smooth continuity. The basic fundamentals (nuts and bolts) of film continuity still prevail.

My best continuity lesson came during apprenticeship: The scene was in a forest. Three hobos were sitting around a campfire drinking hot coffee. Suddenly, the sound of approaching horses. The hobos react—hurriedly, they douse the fire and run out of the shot. The posse rides in—assesses the situation—and rides out in pursuit. CUT.

The production company then moved to another scheduled scene in the script and remained there for several days. On a later day, the schedule called for shooting the continuation of the previous forest scene (in another part of the forest): The three hobos run into the shot, and are followed by the posse on horseback.

At the start of the first rehearsal for this shot, my teacher asked, " In which hand did the hobo Jason grab a cup as he ran out of the campfire scene? . . . he should have it in his hand for this shot because it is a *direct cut* from the shot of the other day." Of course, I had no recollection whatsoever of this action. My single concentration was on their correct progression: *left to right.* My teacher then showed me her script. In the margin at the appropriate scene number, she had jotted down: Jason/cup RH. (Of course, this notation alerted her that Jason must enter holding the cup in his right hand.)

Years later, another unforgettable goof. The scene reads: Ext. House. Eleanor gets a letter out of her mailbox. In the film, the actress comes through the front door, and the camera pans her walk to the mailbox installed at the curb. She removes an envelope from the mailbox, tears the envelope open, takes out a letter and reads it; then—with the letter in her hand—the camera pans her walk back to the open front door and she disappears into the house. CUT. The continuation of the scene—inside the house—is scheduled to be filmed at another time. On that date, we are inside the house. The script reads: INT. FOYER. Eleanor enters. The camera is focused on the front door, which is open. (To ensure smooth cutting, editing dogma dictates an overlap of the action through the open doorway.) Everything from the exterior scene matched: wardrobe, hair, make-up, props—and Eleanor is holding the envelope and letter properly. She comes into the foyer, and the camera pans her walk into the next room; the shot is cut. When I heard, " Cut . . . Print," I uttered an anguished " E-E-E-E." It suddenly hit me that the actress's fingernails were painted pink, and I subliminally remembered that her nails were bright red during the exterior scene. "Now what?" snarled the director. I sputtered an apology for not catching the error during a rehearsal: "Her nail polish was a different color!" To make a retake, the shooting was halted for the time it took to change the actress's nail polish from pink to red. Holding up production is a costly mistake!

By acquiring the basic tools and studying the explicit filmic details depicted in this volume, students and beginning professionals will gain enough practical knowledge to proceed to active participation in a studio or any location in the world where films for theater and television are produced.

Additionally, the book provides a comprehensive overview of both the technical and aesthetic components of filmmaking. So it should be of interest, also, to those who are curious about, or aspiring towards, other film pursuits: film directing, film editing, scriptwriting.

The fledgling FILM DIRECTOR could gain awareness of the camera's filmic idiosyncrasies, and thus be able to avoid technical pitfalls when rehearsing the dramatic elements of a scene.

The fledgling FILM EDITOR could gain a comprehensive overview of what transpires on the set as the script is transformed into numerous disjointed (discontinuous) pieces of film—and will glean an insight regarding the editor's influence on well-crafted motion pictures for theater or television.

The fledgling SCRIPTWRITER could gain insight into the metamorphosis that takes place when a script is transferred to the screen. Properly structuring a screenplay or teleplay would enhance its sale potential. A producer will be more inclined to purchase a good story which has already been developed into a viable script—and thus preclude the expense of extensive rewriting by professional scriptwriters.

This volume furnishes samples of all the requisite daily reports together with the continuity supervisor's final lined script (cutting continuity script)—the editor's bible. Additionally, the text is replete with film-industry terminology and jargon.

May this book be your career bridge into the twenty-first century.

Acknowledgments

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For my third edition, I wish to express deep gratitude to my friend, Odette Fischer, for her encouragement and generosity in allowing me the use of her computer. I wish to express appreciation to Tita Dobson, Martha Brennan, Rhonda Hyde, and Licia Wolf, for computerizing my handwritten text. And special thanks to Licia Wolf for her dissertation on visual effects; also for her photograph observing a scene via video monitor. And thanks to Cassandra Barrere for her piece on the responsibilities of the contemporary continuity supervisor; and also to Petra Jorgensen and Haley McLane for letting me peruse their work scripts on recent film productions. I also wish to express appreciation to Larry Johnson and Robert Birchard for their input.

1

Getting Into
the Act

It would benefit you enormously to gain entry into a movie studio lot—at your earliest opportunity—and observe a studio sound stage while filming is in progress. A sure way to get an inside track is to apply for any kind of a job. In the meantime, I shall endeavor to acquaint you with an overview of the traditional studio lot.

VISIT A STUDIO LOT AND MOVIE SET

A studio lot is a complex of sound stages and buildings that house the equipment, offices, and personnel connected with the production of feature pictures or television shows.

> NOTE: For someone entering a studio lot for the first time, here's a warning: *Heed the red light.* Sound stages are marked with huge numbers on their outside walls. There is also a red light above every door, or on a stanchion just outside the door. When the red light is blinking, it means filming (shooting) of a scene is in progress. In industry parlance, the process of transmitting a live performance onto film is referred to as *shooting the scene. Do not open the door* to peek in or enter the stage. Why? Because the squeak or slam of the door will be picked up on the sound track, causing an actor's speech to be obliterated; and if the scene were lit for darkness or other special effects, a shaft of light from the outside may well ruin what is being filmed. In each instance, the scene might have

to be done over because you have possibly shattered a delicate mood. Also, you've caused a costly, time-consuming disturbance. So I repeat: *Heed the red light.*

When the shooting takes place at locales away from the studio stages, other methods of forewarning are implemented. You will also profit by observing a movie set that is filming anywhere other than a studio sound stage—where there is no red light or forbidding door to forewarn you. At those locales, when the camera is ready to roll, the first assistant director (1st A.D.) or the production assistant (P.A.) will yell, "Quiet . . . rolling." All must instantly stop in their tracks—and not resume activity until the announcement "Cut" or "All clear"— at which time you may resume talking and moving about.

It will also benefit you to visit a local independent production company where filming is taking place—indoors or outdoors. I advise this because contemporary movie-making is no longer the exclusive domain of the time-honored major studio with performances confined to conventional studio sound stages. (Once again, a sure way to get an inside track is to apply for any kind of a job at a film or television studio, or an independent production company.)

A word of caution: Do not carry any camera onto a sound stage or shooting locale. You may be summarily asked to leave the premises, and the film in your camera may be confiscated.

Inside a Sound Stage

Having gained entry to the inner sanctum of a sound stage, try to remain there for the better part of a day. Carefully observe all the activities. Much may be incomprehensible at first, but before long you will be able to understand the functions of various technicians. But you will find one technician whose scope of work will not be readily apparent. He or she is the *continuity supervisor.*

You will observe this person concentrating on the scene and making notes in a book (known as the script), also conferring with the director, the actors, the director of photography, and other production personnel. Primarily, the continuity supervisor is recording critical information for the editor: notating the way the director is transforming the script into motion picture scenes that will be projected onto theater or television screens.

More intricate aspects of the continuity supervisor's functions will be depicted in subsequent chapters, and you will gain a perspective of the knowledge and skills that are mandated for the career of continuity supervising.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE JOB

Continuity supervising is a multifaceted and highly responsible job that requires specific qualifications: prerequisites and requisites.

Prerequisites*

□ A sharp eye for visual details and a good ear for sound.
□ Composure under stress and the ability to function with aplomb when the atmosphere is fraught with tension, and speed is a priority.
□ A high level of energy to sustain you during the long days and nights of a shooting schedule.
□ Ingenuity to improvise whenever circumstances arise that were not covered during your training, or encountered in past experience.
□ An analytical mind and a keen sense of organization.
□ An aptitude for basic arithmetic.
□ Legible handwriting or hand printing.
□ A respectable command of the English language.
□ Some form of shorthand or speed writing.
□ A pleasing personality, well-mannered deportment, and good grooming.

Requisites

□ Comprehension of the dynamics of the camera and film progression: to be proficient in matching camera angles and action cuts.
□ Techniques for rehearsing and cuing actors.
□ How to time rehearsals and performances.
□ How to calculate picture running time.
□ Expertise in reading a script to analyze and break it down according to standard procedure for filming scenes *out of continuity.*
□ Knowledge of screenplay and teleplay forms. It is suggested you read as many scripts as possible. Scriptwriting has undergone significant modifications in recent years, and you should be familiar with the changed formats. There may be times when part, or all, of a scene will be performed *ad lib*; not according to the written dialogue and description in the script. In that case, you will have to transcribe the improvised scenes per the particular format of the script at hand. There will be times when a scene goes into rehearsal—and sometimes even into filming—without benefit of script. In that event, you are the only person who can provide the record of the action and dialogue that has been committed to film. Here's where speed writing is valuable.

*If you do not possess the necessary prerequisites or are unable or unwilling to acquire them, then you would be wise to pursue another vocation.

- An understanding of the dynamics of camera direction and progression. Both subjects mandate particular skill in matching camera angles and action cuts.
- Techniques for rehearsing and cuing actors.
- How to time rehearsals.
- How to calculate picture running time.
- Basic computer literacy.
- Basic knowledge of video and digital visual effects.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

- Ballpoint pens
- Booklight: Tiny, batteried, clipped to script; or hanging from neck
- Brads
- Camp stool: To squeeze into tight camera spots, or for locations when chairs are impractical
- Clasp envelopes
- Computer, printer, and up-to-date software
- Correction fluid
- Dictionary (including a software dictionary in your computer)
- Envelopes: Legal size
- Erasers
- Felt pens—waterproof (Sharpies)
- Filing folders
- Flashlight
- Index dividers and tabs
- Laptop computer, portable inkjet printer, up-to-date software, and when possible, a computer diskette (obtained from the Production Office) with the most current version of the script in a software compatible with your own
- Mylar-reinforced three-hole paper*
- One-hole punch
- Paper clips
- Paper for printer

*For students and neophytes, the three-hole-punch paper used with self-stick reinforcements can serve until you are able to afford reams of the more costly Mylar three-hole reinforced pages.

- Pencils: Lead and colored—mechanical pencils eliminate need for sharpeners. I discourage highlighting words on the script page. This may obliterate the text when photocopied. Underscoring with colored pencils makes neater copy.
- Polaroid camera (or one of the new, small electronic digital cameras). In the past, at major studios, the use of Polaroid or any other kind of camera by the continuity supervisor for matching purposes was forbidden. According to the then union rules, only the still photographer assigned to a feature or a TV show could provide you with photographs you required for matching. (Rarely were they exactly right for your matching purposes.) Present-day continuity supervisors must provide their own cameras, so you are in control.
- Rubber bands
- Reinforcements (self-stick) for three-hole punch paper
- Ruler: Clear—attached to script binder by a cord
- Scissors
- Scratch pads
- Script binder: Spring-back or three-ring; different sizes for shorter or longer scripts
- Stapler and remover
- Staples
- Stopwatch
- Three-hole punch
- Timepiece: An accurate wristwatch or pocket watch is an essential tool because it is your official duty to record the time of the day's first shot, the time lunch was called, the time of the first shot after lunch, the time for dinner, and the time the company wrapped
- Typewriter and typing paper: If not using laptop computer
- Writing paper

FILM CONTINUITY IS A CRAFT

What is film continuity? It is the unique methodology by which a story is dramatized on film.

In a legitimate-theater stage play, actors perform the story in chronological order. That is, the curtain rises on Act 1, then drops and rises for Act 2 and Act 3—and the final curtain comes down. Applause. This format is not followed when scenes are performed in front of a camera and filmed for movie theaters or television screens. (Films for television are crafted the same way as major feature pictures, only the pace of operation is accelerated.)

SHOOTING OUT OF CONTINUITY

Like the scripts for stage plays, scripts for motion picture and television shows are written in standard sequential order. (See page 12, Figure 2.1.) But there the similarity ends. For motion picture and television productions, the actors do not perform the scenes in the sequential order written in the script. Instead, the scenes are shot (filmed) *out of continuity*. In other words, all sequences that take place in a given locale—no matter when they occur in the time frame of the story—are scheduled to be performed and filmed concurrently. Early filmmakers devised this format for economic reasons. It is very costly to equip (rig) a movie set for filming. Extensive preliminary work is involved: constructing overhead scaffolds on which a network of lights is mounted, building structural framework according to the production designer's specifications, and installing whatever equipment is required to make the set practicable. It would be cost-prohibitive indeed to construct and move in and out of sets—or travel to different locations—in order to film the script according to its chronological structure.

In the past—as a consequence of the nonsequential (nonlinear) order in which scenes are committed to film—the editor had to keep loads of pieces of film systematically stored in bins before assembling (splicing) the disjointed pieces into coherent, smooth-flowing dramatic sequences. The earliest term for joining cut pieces of film was "splicing." This was accomplished with the vintage Moviola: the film editors' primary viewing and editing device. In later years modernized devices for editing were machines called *flatbeds:* the Kem or Steenbeck.* Those devices—with their attendant bins bulging with processed film, the ever-present scissors, the splicing glue, and the obligatory white cotton gloves—have all ascended to movie heaven. The editing room now houses a computer-run editing console: the Avid or Lightworks. The advent of computerized digital film editing and image manipulation continues to revolutionize the motion picture and television industry.

To further explain the dynamics of shooting a script out of continuity, let us envision a schedule wherein actors will perform three different time-lapsed scenes in a kitchen. According to the shooting schedule, the cast and crew will work continuously in the kitchen area for as long as it takes to commit all three sequences to film.

But there is another twist in the scheme of filming scenes out of continuity. The shooting schedule lists Scene 37, Scene 46, and Scene 2 to be shot in that order (for reasons best known to the production planners). Consequently, the actors will perform their roles in that convoluted sequence.

In the chronology of the story, Scene 37 (the first scene to go in front of the camera) takes place twenty-five years after Scene 2. So for Scene 37, the actors

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*These were electronically controlled machines that permitted multiple rolls of picture and sound film to run *horizontally* on a *table* to be coordinated; then projected on a larger screen.

are made up to appear twenty-five years older and are dressed in contemporary clothes. The decor and accouterments in the kitchen are also contemporary.

The next segment to be filmed is Scene 46. It takes place only a few days or weeks after Scene 37. Here, the decor of the set and the actors' makeup remain much the same, with the exception that the actors are in different wardrobe. Sometimes only a change of wardrobe lets the audience know that there has been a passage of time (today's movie and television audiences are very sophisticated).

Finally, Scene 2 is scheduled for filming. At this juncture, all the furnishings are changed to transform the room into an old-fashioned kitchen of the era; the actors are made up to appear twenty-five years younger than they looked in Scene 37; and they are dressed in the fashion of the period.

> NOTE: Nowadays, instead of refurbishing a kitchen on a sound stage in the studio, or a movie set, the kitchen scenes may be shot at three different authentic locations, and shooting may take place weeks or months apart.

WHAT THE CONTINUITY SUPERVISOR OVERSEES

The procedure of filming scenes out of continuity mandates exceptional expertise on the part of the continuity supervisor.

Let us picture the three kitchen scenes that have been filmed. In each segment, we saw the actors come in (*enter*) through the kitchen door (from say, the back door). They spoke their lines (*dialogue*) and sat at the table or moved into positions prompted by the director. We saw them walk out (*exit*) through another door (into, say, the dining room). According to the production schedule, the dining room and backyard sequences are scheduled for filming at future dates. When those connecting scenes are enacted before the camera, flawless continuity is the supervisor's major responsibility. The actors must appear—in every minute detail—exactly as they were when they entered and exited the previously filmed scenes.

Each department has its responsibility to ensure editing continuity: the wardrobe department makes sure that the actors are dressed correctly; the makeup department makes sure the actors' makeup is correct; the hairdressing department makes sure the actors' coiffures are correct; the property department makes sure all the hand props carried by the actors are correct.

But the continuity supervisor is concerned with myriad infinitesimal details in each of the related scenes: In Scene 2, the top button of an actor's shirt was open as he entered, and he was wearing a sweater as he exited the room. In Scene 37, the actor's hat brim was rolled on the right side as he entered, and his coat collar was turned up on the right side as he exited the room. In Scene 46, the left corner of a shirt-collar was outside the jacket as the actor entered, and he exited the room without the jacket. In Scene 37, a cigarette, smoked

one-third down, was in the actor's left hand as he exited. In Scene 46, an actor was wearing eyeglasses as he entered, and he put them in his jacket pocket when he exited. In Scene 2, an actress's nail polish was pink, whereas the nails were dark red in Scene 37. An actress was wearing three rings in Scene 2 and two rings in Scene 46 (description of the rings and on which fingers they are worn must match). In Scene 37, a belt was tied in a bow to the right side of an actress's dress. In Scene 46, an actress was wearing pearl button earrings, and gold hoops in Scene 2. The actress pushed her hair behind her right ear as she crossed to the window before she exited Scene 2. In Scene 46, an actress entered with a purse in her left hand. In Scene 37, an actress exited with the strap of her purse over her left shoulder.

Every one of the above details must be meticulously matched for the actors' appearances in the scenes that precede and follow the kitchen scenes.

In addition to matching makeup, props and wardrobe, the continuity supervisor must also be on top of the following details: At what pace did the actors enter and exit the kitchen? Did they dash or saunter through the doorways? Action of entrances into and the exits from connecting sets must be made at exactly the same pace. And who followed whom? Were the doors open or closed at the start of each sequence, and what were their positions at the finish?

In each of the three kitchen segments, the actors first gave a continuous performance of all the dialogue and movement (much the same as in a stage play).

This is known as *shooting a master scene.*

Breaking Up the Master

Now another filmic convention comes into play. After a master shot has been filmed, the next procedure is: *covering* (or *breaking up*) the master. The terms mean the same and are used interchangeably. Covering (or coverage) is defined as shooting the scene from different camera viewpoints and also shooting closer on the same action and dialogue as played in the master shot. These component angles may feature three, two, or just one of the group of characters in the scene.

Every cover shot necessitates the repetition of either all or a portion of the master scene's dialogue and movements. The camera is focused on the individual character or characters while the other actors deliver their lines from *off-camera* (OC). Each actor whose turn it is on-camera must remember—or be reminded of—what his or her movements were during the performance of the master. This communication calls for utmost diplomacy on the part of the continuity supervisor. You must be delicately specific: On what word was a puff of a cigarette taken—held in the left or right hand? On what word of another's speech was a cup picked up with the right hand (with or without the saucer)? On what word was a fork (with a bit of potato on it) lifted in the right hand? On what word did the little girl turn to speak to the person at her left while her braid fell to her right shoulder? On what word did the strap of the actress's

gown slip off her left shoulder? On what word did an actor stand up or sit down? On what word were legs or arms crossed right-over-left or vice versa? On what word was the right hand placed on the hip, and when was it taken down? On what word did an off-camera actor stand up or sit down? This would change eye contact, requiring actors to look upward or downward. At what point in the dialogue did another actor enter or exit the scene? The list of action matches is incalculable.

Filming all the requisite cover shots in each of the three kitchen sequences may take days, weeks, or longer—depending on the complexity of the scenes. The techniques for scene matching and action matching are delineated in Chapter 13.

THE EDITOR'S BIBLE

An indispensable tool for the film editor is a comprehensive record of what has been transmitted to film on a studio sound stage, or at a movie set elsewhere (independent productions). Consequently, it became evident—during the shooting of a script—that the details recorded by the continuity supervisor (as liasion between the director and the editor) would serve as a comprehensive guidebook (bible) for the editor: (a) notations of how all the disparate pieces of film go together; (b) notations of deviations from the final script; and (c) notations of salient comments regarding the director's preferred shots.

Technology has also altered and added new facets to the continuity supervisor's role: (a) Records for the editor that heretofore were handwritten or typed are now often computerized. (b) Where the facilities exist, daily logs and notes can be faxed directly from your laptop in any location to the editor's cutting room. (c) Various records (logs) have been devised to be compatible with advanced methodologies in digital nonlinear editing (DNLE). Nonlinear means executing entities that do not follow in sequence. Digital means a computer process wherein variables are easily manipulated and changed via keyboard and clicking a mouse. (Curiously enough, the hallmark of continuity supervising was predicated on this unique method of performing scenes not in sequence—but out of continuity.) The editing term is: *nonlinear.* (d) Interaction with visual effects technicians to become conversant with the advances in technology for digitally created effects.

CONTINUITY SUPERVISOR/ ENTREPRENEUR

Years ago, when a major studio hired you as the continuity supervisor, the studio prop department furnished you with all the big and small stationery items you required for the assignment. However, when independent companies took over a great share of the feature film and television production, all these good-

ies sadly faded away. The continuity supervisor is now, essentially, an entrepreneur. It is necessary to own all the tools of the trade and supplies prior to applying for any assignment.

Nowadays, it is mandatory that you negotiate a *deal memo* with every assignment. Each company prepares its individual form. However, a document has been prepared and distributed to members by the Business Agent of Script Supervisors and Continuity Coordinators, Local 871, of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE).*

CONTINUITY SUPERVISING IS A SOLO ACT

Now that you have entered the challenging and fascinating world of continuity supervising, I caution you about an important prerequisite: Your health.

Production company departments usually consist of a key person plus a few assistants. But there is only one continuity supervisor. Yours is a completely autonomous position; you are quite literally a department of one. Should illness or death or gross incompetence cause your absence while filming is in progress, there is no one in the company to take over for you; a substitute continuity supervisor has to be hired. And what a Herculean task it is for the continuity supervisor who takes over—at a moment's notice—without the essential prior preparation.

So before you contemplate this engrossing career, be sure you are blessed with robust health and can endure working long and laborious hours. Moviemaking is as arduous as it is glamorous.

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*With reference to industry union rules, admissions vary in different locales. One should call the IATSE office where one will be living and inquire about the latest requirements.

2

Dealing with the Script

The written material from which a motion picture or television film is crafted is called the *script*. The written words undergo many modifications before they are considered a *shooting script*. A script written for a feature film is termed a *screenplay*; a script written for television is termed a *teleplay*. The script's format is the same in either medium.

FIRST COMES THE WORD

The following pages are a sample first act of an early teleplay.* In this sample, Scene 3 is the number of the master shot, indicating the locale where the action takes place. The consecutive numbers that follow (4,5,6) are the auxiliary numbers that suggest different camera angles. Consequently, scene numbers 3 through 6 constitute the master scene.

In previous eras, the standard format for screenwriting was to designate a number for the master scene, which was followed by auxiliary numbers denoting various camera angles for dramatic impact. However, contemporary directors ignored the writers' concept of film drama, and the scripts underwent a metamorphosis. Present-day scripts apply only one number to signify the master scene for each separate locale. Consequently—during principal photography—it is now incumbent on the continuity supervisor to assign slate identifications

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*Episode of "The Brian Keith Show," written by Perry Grant and Dick Bensfield.

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1. EXT. SEAN'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

    It is late and dark. SEAN comes up with a suitcase and
    a flight bag. He is tired. He unlocks the door and
    enters. He is wearing a Hawaiian shirt and slacks.

2. INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

    The lights are out. Sean enters. He yawns. He is tired
    and wants to go right to bed. He sets down his bag, then,
    as he heads toward the bedroom, he takes off shirt and
    casually tosses it onto a chair or sofa. He enters the
    bedroom.

3. INT. SEAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

    The lights are out. Sean enters, kicks off his shoes
    and slides out of his pants. Down to his shorts, he
    sighs, yawns, then slides into bed, stretching out.
    After a beat, a female arm comes lovingly across his
    chest and a sweet, female voice says...

                    CELIA'S VOICE (O.S.)
                I love you.

4. WIDER ANGLE

    Sean's head snaps toward the voice. He finds himself
    nose to nose with a lovely young bride, CELIA. She
    gasps. Sean reacts.

                    SEAN
                What the...!

                    CELIA
                (screams)
                Ahhh...!

    She grabs the blankets up around her.

5. ANOTHER ANGLE

    DAVE, the groom, bursts in from the bathroom. He wears
    a bathrobe. Light comes in from the bathroom.

                                            (CONTINUED)

Figure 2.1

                                                    2.

5 (Cont.)
                    DAVE
                Baby, what is it?

6. ANGLE ON SEAN

    He is halfway out of bed, still not certain what this is all
    about. He whips his head around to look towards the new voice.
    It has all happened in a split second. We FREEZE FRAME,
    catching him in an awkward position, halfway out of bed.

                                            CUT TO:

7. INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

    Sean, Celia and Dave are there in robes. MOE is there in
    uniform. Dave is holding his arm protectively around Celia.

                    MOE
                You wanna press charges, Doc?

                    DAVE
                What do you mean? He attacked
                my wife.

                    MOE
                (to Sean)
                Sorry, Doc...it's my duty to
                inform you of your rights.

                    SEAN
                I didn't attack her. I just got
                in bed with her.

8. ANGLE ON FRONT DOOR

    MRS. GRUBER lets herself in. Celia comes up to her.

                    CELIA
                Mrs. Gruber, thank goodness. Will
                you tell them you rented it to us?
                They don't believe us.

                    GRUBER
                (sees Sean)
                What are you doing here?

                    SEAN
                I live here.

                                            (CONTINUED)

3.

8 (Cont.)

                    GRUBER
          You weren't supposed to be
          back for a week.

                    SEAN
          Well, I'm back now and I got
          mugged in my own bed.

                    MOE
                (to Dave)
          You have the right to remain
          silent. You have the right to
          seek counsel.

                    DAVE
          Officer, she <u>rented</u> this place
          to us.

                    SEAN
                (to Gruber)
          You rented my apartment without
          my permission?

                    MOE
                (to Gruber)
          You have the right to remain
          silent...

                    SEAN
          Moe, will you shut up.

                    GRUBER
          Dr. Jamison, if you'd just once
          listen to reason. It is my property
          and this young couple is on their
          honeymoon.

                    CELIA
          And our reservations fell through.

                    DAVE
          I told you. The hotels are packed.

                    GRUBER
          I found them sitting on a bench...
          on their wedding night. You said
          you'd be away, so, being a romantic
          person, I let them stay here.

                    SEAN
          For a modest fee, no doubt.

                                        (CONTINUED)

4.

8 (Cont. 1)

                    GRUBER
          Just a breakage deposit.
                (trying to explain this)
          Well, I was just thinking about
          the night of my third wedding.
          Mario was a gymnast.

                    CELIA
                (tearfully)
          What are we going to do?

                    DAVE
          I guess we'll have to leave.

                    SEAN
                (relenting)
          Well...no. You can't leave in
          the middle of the night. I'll
          sleep on the sofa. You kids can
          have the bedroom.

          There is silence as bride and groom exchange glances.
          They obviously don't want Sean so close by.

                    SEAN
                (getting the message)
          Okay, I'll find someplace.

                    GRUBER
                (quickly)
          There's no room at my place.

                    SEAN
          I wouldn't trust you, anyway.

                    MOE
          Doesn't anybody want to be informed
          of their rights?

                                        DISSOLVE:

9.   INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

          PUNI adjusts some flowers in a vase, picks up the vase and
          starts with it towards Sean's office. DR. CHAFFEE enters.

                    CHAFFEE
          Good morning.

                    PUNI
          Morning, Dr. Chaffee.

                                        (CONTINUED)

5.

9 (Cont.)

               CHAFFEE
     Puni, I've told you and told you...
     stop putting flowers around.

               PUNI
     But Doctor, this is Hawaii.

               CHAFFEE
     I don't care. They're full of
     pollen. They'll make my patients
     sneeze.

He exits into the corridor. Puni looks after him and
makes a face.

               PUNI
     Yankee, go home.

                     CUT TO:

10.   INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

     Puni enters and sets the vase of flowers on his desk.

11.   ANOTHER ANGLE

     Sean, wearing a rumpled sport shirt and pants, is stirring
     on the sofa where he apparently has spent the night.

               PUNI
     Dr. Jamison, what are you doing
     here?

               SEAN
        (stretches, feels back)
     I've been asking myself that all
     night.
        (rubs back again)
     Ohhh...
        (gets up)

               PUNI
     But, Doctor, why couldn't you
     sleep in your own bed?

               SEAN
     It was two against one...

     Puni reacts.

                     CUT TO:

---

for the auxiliary shots that reflect the director's interpretation of the scene. Thus, the editor is provided with a comprehensive record of the day's shoot. The most common format is to attach consecutive alphabetical letters to the master scene number.

Writers often resort to variations on the script format when writing their scenarios. Therefore, you should read as many scripts as you can to familiarize yourself with writers' innovations.

HOW TO READ A SCRIPT

From the preceding sample teleplay, you will discern that a typical script consists of three major elements: the locale or set, the business or action, and the dialogue.

1. The Locale or Set

This is the site where the master scene (the *establishing shot*) takes place. The locale is always written in CAPITAL LETTERS and designates whether the scene takes place indoors (INT.—interior) or outdoors (EXT.—exterior). And the time element is always indicated: 1. INT. KITCHEN—DAY, or, EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET—NIGHT. The designation of DAY or NIGHT in the master-scene heading quickly conveys to the D.P. (director of photography), and the gaffer (key electrician), the basic lighting for the set. If a day scene takes place indoors, sunlight will come through the windows; if it is a night scene, darkness will be seen through the windows, lamps will be lit, and perhaps street lights will glow in the background.

At major studios, sometimes a scene marked EXT. is not actually filmed outdoors. Instead, the exterior scene is built inside the sound stage. Studio craftspeople can duplicate an exterior scene so realistically, the audience cannot detect that the filming was done indoors rather than outdoors. When the story calls for rain or other atmospheric conditions, the artistry of the *special effects* department even reproduces the inclement weather. In that way, the scenes are filmed under controlled conditions—a more convenient arrangement than subjecting cast and crew to the whims of Mother Nature. (The classic film "Singin' in the Rain," with Gene Kelly, is a superb example.)

However, most present-day shooting—for major films or television—takes place at natural locations, and during unpredictable weather conditions. So rain and snow fall where they may, and the actors and technicians get soaked and chilled. (If you know you are going to be on such an assignment, always carry rain gear as well as some cold remedy.)

At major studios, shooting anywhere away from the sound stage—indoors or outdoors—is designated LOCATION, and the address will be listed in the 1st A.D.'s *Shooting Schedule.* Independent companies' shooting schedules simply list the proper address where the shooting will take place.

When (STOCK) is written alongside the locale, it means that the scene will not be filmed by the company crew, but footage will be procured from a film library. During the editing process, that piece of film will be judiciously cut into the final picture. Stock shots are always indicated in the script: EXT. LOS ANGELES AIRPORT—ESTABLISHING SHOT—DAY (STOCK), OR EXT. DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT—NIGHT (STOCK).

2. The Business or Action

The written description of what takes place in the scene is referred to as *business* or *action*. The text describes characters' general movements, their physical appearances, their distinguishing marks, and the essential details of the decor and ambience of the set. Everything written in the script other than the dialogue is referred to as *business* or *action*.

3. The Dialogue

All the words spoken by the actors are referred to as *dialogue* or called speeches. The dialogue is written in a narrow column down the center of the page. Each speech is headed by the character's name in capital letters.

The words in parentheses under the character's name indicate their *mood* or *motivation*. These designations are the author's concept of the emotions that the actors should display. Sometimes the mood or motivation is suggested in the business or action part of the script. Example:

Albert gazes ruefully at his burned-out house.

ALBERT
Everything's gone! Everything!

When dialogue is to be spoken in unison, that is, two voices speaking simultaneously, the speeches are written side by side:

JOHN	MARY
(startled)	(startled)
What are you doing here?	What are you doing here?

If AD LIB is written in the script, you should be on the alert when shooting the scene. The script may read: The two couples meet in front of the church, AD LIB greetings. This is fine for the written script: the reader then visualizes the scene. But in filming, every spoken word is picked up by the microphone (on a *boom* or hand-held *fishpole*) and recorded. Therefore, your continuity script to the editor has to include the actual words spoken in the ad lib greeting. Your revised page could read as follows:

MARY AND JOHN (in unison)
Well, hello, there.

AGNES
Mary, it's good to see you.

JOHN
How ya doin', Tom?

When (OS) or (OC) is written alongside a character's name, it means that the voice is coming from *off-screen* or *off-camera*. This could be from another part of the room or another location. The speaker is not in the scene at this particular spot in the film. However, the speaker may or may not be put on film subsequently, depending on the director's discretion. At times, in the final editing, only the VOICE is heard—for a reaction on the face of an on-camera actor. Sometimes the letters OS denote any sound that comes from off-screen or off-camera.

When VOICE OVER (VO) is written *in place of* a character's name, it refers to the voice of a speaker whom the audience will not see. It may be a voice heard over a public address system at an airport or train station, a voice coming from a radio or television set, or the voice of a narrator. At the time of shooting that portion of a scene, the "voices" are usually spoken by the director, the first assistant director, an actor pressed into service, or the continuity supervisor (you). Later, in final editing these voices are replaced with recordings of professional voices.

HOW TO BREAK DOWN A SCRIPT

First and foremost, read the script. Read it, read it, and read it again. Become thoroughly familiar with the story line and the characters.

Primarily, *breaking down* the script for shooting consists of marking each page with notations that will enable you to spot salient details at a glance during pressured shooting hours. A helpful hint: use different colored pencils to underscore different elements in the script: Green for characters in or entering a shot; Blue for props; Red for characters or props exiting a shot; Purple for overt action; etc. And keep your color code consistent. That way you can instantly spot the pertinent information you need on the page. When shooting is in progress, accuracy plus speed are high priorities.

The following numbered paragraphs delineate a simple routine for breaking down a script. While the record-keeping models depicted in this book have proven very efficient (after years of trial and error), they are mainly for guidance. You may devise any course that is easy for you—so long as the records are thorough and accurate, with all the information readily accessible, and so long

as your method enables you to reply quickly and accurately to the numerous and urgent questions that will be fielded to you.

1. Master Scenes

Underline each numbered master scene; it is always identified in CAPITAL letters. A master scene encompasses a segment of the scenario wherein a continuous performance is staged in a specific setting (locale). Every new locale automatically signifies another master scene.

As mentioned earlier, the author's concept may differ substantially from the director's aesthetic interpretation. As continuity supervisor, you will aptly revise the script during the course of shooting so that the editor will bring the director's interpretations to the screen.

In the reading of the script, you will find some extraneous scenes interjected into the master scene, such as POINT OF VIEW (POV), FLASHBACK, or MONTAGE. These scenes should be underscored as master scenes, because in all probability they will be staged and filmed separately from the original master. The term CUT BACK TO (or BACK TO SCENE) means returning to the action of the original scene following the interruption of any extraneous scenes.

The *point of view* shot refers to what is seen from the actors' point of view as they observe something off-camera (OC) or off-screen (OS). This may be an object or an activity. In the confines of a stage-play, the actors verbalize what they see off-stage and the audiences visualizes the scene. But in filmic drama, when actors react to something off-camera, the audience's curiosity has to be satisfied. So a picture of the activity or the object is intercut.

The *flashback* is a story-telling technique by which past events or images are interspersed (intercut) with contemporary scenes. Some flashback scenes call for special cinematic effects.

The term *montage* is used for a series of quick shots that depict a passage of time, set a mood, establish a sequence of events, or rapidly present images that sharpen a story point or intensify the suspense of a scene.

The interjected scenes written in the script are, of course, viewed in proper sequence. The editor judiciously intercuts these filmed extraneous, but relevant, scenes into a compelling master sequence.

Writers do not always designate individual scene numbers for POV, FLASHBACK, or MONTAGE. Often the descriptions of the interrelated scenes are included in the business/action part of the script or expressed in dialogue. Example:

Sc. 23. INT. SERGEANT MARTIN'S OFFICE—DAY

In a darkened room, a group of people are viewing slides projected on a screen. Martin's VOICE explains each picture:

                    MARTIN
        That's our suspect posing as a gas attendant.

A CLICK, and another slide appears.

                    MARTIN
        That's our man playing tennis at the Wilshire
        Country Club.

CLICK, and another slide is flashed on the screen.

                    MARTIN
        There he is betting on the horses at
        Santa Anita.

The pictures in those slides are in the category of montage. Therefore, in all probability, they will be transformed into filmed master scenes—for the benefit of the audience.

According to traditional screenplay or teleplay format, the end of a scene or sequence is designated by a term such as CUT TO, DISSOLVE, WIPE TO, or FADE OUT. However, contemporary screenwriters often dispense with these traditional designations, and the only way you get to know that a scene or sequence has ended is to recognize that the following scene is the next master scene. The unmistakable clue is: *capital letters* spelling another locale. It is optional, but I draw a line across the page to separate each master scene, and jot down its page count.

2. Story Chronology/Time Breakdown

Mark each sequence with the chronological *time lapses* that manifest the progress of the story: 1st Day (indicated as D-1); 2nd Day (D-2), sometimes written as NEXT DAY; 3rd Night (N-3) which may take place three weeks, or three years, later in the story; 4th Night (N-4); 5th Day (D-5), which may take place two months later. (These time lapses should be properly noted on the page.) At the right-hand margin, below the line separating master scenes, or alongside each captioned master scene, mark the succeeding chronological numbers of the time lapses. When a sequence takes place later in the same day or night, I place a plus sign (+) alongside that chronological number, rather than spell out "later that day" or "later that night." If a master scene runs for more than one page, repeat the notation at the upper right-hand corner of each successive page of that master scene. This eliminates the time-consuming flipping of pages in order to find information needed instantly (Figure 2.2). Prepare a Story Chronology/Time Breakdown (Figure 2.3).

3. Time Elements/Day or Night

Underline the particular time when it is mentioned in the script: 8:00 A.M., 5:30 P.M., etc. The scene caption may read: DAWN, MORNING, LATE AFTERNOON, DUSK, MOONLIGHT, etc. Once again, this information alerts the D.P. and the gaffer to the basic lighting of the set—whether filming on a sound stage or on location. The designated time elements are also essential for the production manager—when reading the script. And you should check these details with the respective members of the crew. Often, special time factors crop up in the business portion or dialogue. For instance, references to time on a clock, or in a speech: "I'll meet you after school." Watch out for such clues and make notation alongside the scene caption; also make notation of the time factors when they affect the pages of any preceding or following scenes. Your conspicuous notation will alert you to be especially aware of wardrobe, makeup, or props in the affected scenes. Here's another lighting situation that's gleaned from dialogue:

Mary enters the living room, sees Jim slouched in a chair.

MARY
Jim, why are you sitting in the dark?

In preparing your breakdown, make notation at the caption of this scene: room starts in darkness. Alert the gaffer of this lighting factor. Further on in the script you will learn that blinds will be opened to let daylight in, or light of some kind will be switched on, or perhaps a candle will be lit, if the script depicts a period story. Mark these notations on the page where these light changes are apt to occur. This will remind you to carefully watch the action during rehearsals. Then mark the page where the light changes physically occur. Such notations will be valuable clues when making pickup shots and subsequent covering shots.

By the same token, if a scene starts with an illuminated room and the script reads that lights are to be switched off during the performance, you should make notation at the caption of the scene: light change—and mark the page at the point where the room goes to darkness. Also alert the gaffer, who will appreciate being informed as to the precise moment this light change must occur.

4. Names of Characters

Underline the names of the characters as they are revealed in each scene. Traditionally, the first time a name appears in the script, it is written in CAPITAL LETTERS. Subsequent references to this name are then written in upper and lower case. Regrettably, current practice by many writers (and some scriptwriting software) has evolved into capitalizing *all* instances of a character name in the stage directions.

5. Characters' Physical Distinctions

Underline the written descriptions of the characters. But keep in mind that the physical characteristics described by the author may not always correspond with the features of the actors cast for the parts. The script may mention a buxom blonde, but the actress cast for the role is a slinky brunette; or the script may call for a handsome, macho young man, whereas the actor cast for the part is corpulent and bald-headed.

As soon as possible, ask the director or the 1st A.D. if the actors cast for the roles fit the descriptions in the script. If not, you will have to alert the individual actors before they memorize dialogue containing erroneous descriptions. For instance, John, speaking to Harry, says, "Did you get a look at that buxom blonde in the accounting office?" Instead, he should say "that slinky brunette." These changes are critical when shooting out of continuity, so be on guard when specific images are mentioned in dialogue, and alert the actors whose speeches need to be changed (revised pages do not always get to the actors in time).

6. Overt Action

Underline the *overt action* written in the business and mood descriptions in the script. Overt action means the conspicuous movements that the characters display in a scene: engage in a fight, hug, kiss, pace the floor, read a book, feed the baby, parachute out of a plane, break glasses, smoke feverishly, ring a doorbell, put on or take off garments. Such obvious movements are *overt action.*

The underscored overt action in your designated color on the page will instantly alert you to the overall activity in the scene, and will be helpful when shooting is fast and under pressure.

It is also good practice to underscore the characters when they *enter* and *exit* the scene. Use one color for entrances and another for exits. In that way, you can instantly spot the comings and goings of the characters within the scene. Color codes are helpful—especially when scenes run for several pages.

7. Props

Underline references to props or make note of them in the right-hand margins. There are two kinds of props:

a. *Hand props* are articles that are held or handled by the actors, such as pipes, eyeglasses, suitcases, crutches, newspapers, briefcases, jewelry, purses, or any obvious articles.

b. *Stage props* are articles that are placed as significant dressing in the set, such as candlesticks on a table, a vase of flowers on a piano, pictures on a desk or mantelpiece, desk plaques, clothing placed on furniture, or any such visible item.

Among stage props are *breakaway props*. These are articles of set dressing used in overt actions, such as a vase that is broken over someone's head, a wooden or glass door that is shattered, a chair that falls apart when sat upon, or a baseball bat that is used to conk an actor on the head (such bat or weapons are made of balsa wood or other weightless materials). Sound effects that simulate a break or a thud are put in later during the editing.

Props are often mentioned in dialogue—watch out for those speeches. Underscore the item and/or make proper notation.

8. Read the Script Again

In rereading the script, you will frequently discover some vital detail in either the dialogue or the business that escaped your attention in previous readings. The detail might be an essential *carry-over* from one scene to another, relating to props, makeup, wardrobe, chronology, the weather, or whatever. Just one small word may trigger the need to add notations to preceding and subsequent scenes that are affected by the carry-over detail.

9. Back-Matching Notes

Because films are shot out of continuity, you must be sure to make accurate notes when details carry over from one scene to another. The detail may affect either a preceding or subsequent scene. This is called *back matching* and introduces the concept of *direct* and *indirect* continuity.

Direct Continuity. This occurs when a condition or detail (some business or prop) carries over from one scene to the next *consecutive* scene—with no time lapse. For example, the script reads: 1. EXT. HOUSE—DAY. John goes into the house. 2. INT. FOYER—DAY. John comes through the front door and races upstairs. In keeping with filmic procedure, the end of Scene 1 will be cut as John goes through the door to inside the house, or it may be cut just as he opens the door.

As is inevitable, according to the shooting schedule, Scene 1 is to be filmed a week later than Scene 2. The shooting schedule lists Scene 2 to be filmed a week later. Now then, when the filming of Scene 2 takes place: we see John coming through the front door with a key in his right hand; there is a newspaper tucked under his left arm, folded with the front page facing the camera. Therefore, at the start of shooting Scene 1, a week later, you must make sure that every detail about John's appearance and props matches Scene 2 (shot previously). This is *direct continuity*.

Here's another scenario. The script reads: 5. INT. BEDROOM—DAY. A maid enters carrying a bowl of fresh flowers. As she crosses the room and places the bowl of flowers on a table, we see a person asleep in the bed. The maid opens the drapes partially, then leaves the room.

During the course of shooting Scenes 6 and 7—which take place at other locales—it is revealed in dialogue that the sleeping person in the bedroom was

murdered while the house was unattended, and the body wasn't discovered for several days. Now, at Scene 8, the script reads that the dead body is being removed from the room on an ambulance gurney. Now, let us suppose Scene 8 were scheduled for filming before Scene 5. In that case, the bedroom would be furnished as per Scene 5: the drapes partially drawn and the bowl of flowers on the table. But here, in Scene 8, the flowers should be visibly wilted (after a lapse of several days). Now let us consider the day for filming Scene 5: according to the script, the maid enters with the bowl of *fresh* flowers, places it on the table, opens the closed drapes to the position seen in Scene 8—and exits. Of course, the bowl of fresh flowers must now match the wilted ones we first saw in Scene 8. The principle of direct continuity still rules. Even though a time lapse occurred, the rationale is: inasmuch as the house was unattended between Scene 5 and Scene 8, nothing in the bedroom could have been changed during the interim. Be extremely attentive to direct continuity details when scenes that take place later in the story are filmed before the earlier scenes.

Indirect Continuity. This occurs when a condition or detail does not follow through from one scene into the next consecutive scene, but carries over into a later scene. Once again (as usually happens), the later scene may be shot before the earlier one. In such instances, your back-matching notes are crucial.

Let us consider another scenario: In reading Scene 21, you learn that Dorothy will be taking a pill at a later hour, and she places a pillbox in her purse. In Scenes 22 through 25, you read about Dorothy in various locales and with different characters. But shooting starts with Scene 26: where Dorothy is to take her pill. She reaches into her purse, finds and opens the pill box—only to discover there are no pills inside. The actress is vexed and the director is irate—counting how much this reshoot will add to the cost of production. (You and the property department were asleep at the switch.) But had your script been conspicuously marked at Scene 26: Dorothy's purse with pills inside pillbox, this disturbing situation would have been prevented.

By preparing your script breakdown with meticulous back-matching notes to signal direct and indirect continuity, you will have no problem shooting out of continuity. Your notations will be beacon lights that will steer you clear of mishaps.

10. Scene Count

Tally the number of scenes in the script. Every scene number, including those numbers carrying A, B, C, etc., count as separate scene numbers. However, do not include in your total scene count the numbers marked (OMITTED) and those marked (STOCK SHOT).

A good way to control the scene count is to make a list of every scene number in the script. List the omitted scene numbers, but draw an X through them; also list the stock shot numbers, but mark them with an S. And remember, do not add these numbers into your total scene count (Figure 2.4).

11. Page Count

Tally the total number of individual pages in the script. Every numbered page—even those repeated with an A, B, C, etc.—is counted; 15A, 15B, and 15C count as three pages. Starting with page 15, the total page count for that sequence is: 4 pages.

When a page number reads 44/45 it means that a deletion has been made in revisions and the two pages have been combined. In this instance, your count for 44/45 will be one page (if it is full, or its fractional equivalent).

Page count is determined by the amount of written material on a page—that is, how much space the description of business/action and dialogue takes up. For shooting purposes, the standard practice is to divide the page into eighths. Every page holds an individual total of eight eighths (8/8) within the standard margins at top and bottom. If the text does not fill the page, then the total for that page is the number of eighths contained in the written portion. Several pages may not total 8/8. Therefore, it is good practice to verify your page count with 1st A.D.

The breaking down of page count into denominations of eighths was devised when filmmakers came to the conclusion that it would be more practical and economical to shoot scenes *out of continuity*—in other words, to film several sequences in one locale concurrently, no matter when they occurred chronologically. In order to make this procedure viable, it was necessary to first determine the actual number of pages that each sequence contained and then to calculate the aggregate number of hours or days it would take to shoot all those sequences. It was found that dividing the space of a page into eighths provided the most practical unit of measure for shooting on a day-to-day basis. Thus, the introduction of the *Shooting Schedule*, which is prepared by the 1st A.D.

> NOTE: In figuring your page count, do not include the space taken up by (STOCK SHOTS). It is customary to deduct 1/8 page per stock shot. Example: if three stock shots are included on one page, your total count of the written contents for that page is 5/8. Should the page consist of only three stock shots, then the count for that page is zero (0).

A good way to ensure an accurate page count is to make a list of each consecutive page number and record the number of eighths for each fractional page (Figure 2.5).

12. Master-Scene Page Count

At the end of every master sequence, jot down its individual page count. A master scene may add up to only 1/8 of a page. When one page contains several master scenes, each master scene scores its own portion of page count. Example: one master scene takes up 3/8 of the page; another master scene, 1/8 of the page; and a third master scene, 4/8 of the page. The sum total of the page

is 8/8. When a master scene continues for several pages and adds up to, say 22/8, the page count for that master scene translates to 2 6/8 pages (22 divided by 8). As a double-check for accuracy, total all your individual master-scene page counts. That total should be identical to your total page count for the entire script, as well as the total page count listed in the Shooting Schedule.

13. Continuity Synopsis/One-Liner

Prepare a continuity synopsis of the entire script. This record is sometimes called the *One-Liner*. It constitutes a composite of the script breakdown. Listed are: (a) the scene numbers of each sequence; (b) the locales, interior and exterior; (c) the time elements of day or night; (d) the chronological time lapses; (e) the page count of each master scene; (f) the names of the characters who appear in each sequence; and (g) a terse description of the action in the scene (Figure 2.6).

14. Wardrobe Outline

The wardrobe department—men's and women's costumers—have their own methods of preparing a wardrobe plot. Those departments are totally responsible for seeing that the actors are dressed in the correct articles of clothing—in every detail—at the start of every scene, or part of a scene. Nonetheless, my advice is to prepare your own outline—a record for your personal reference. By the same token, I recommend that you confer with the wardrobe personnel and confirm your record with theirs—particularly as to when costume changes must occur.

The Wardrobe Outline form suggested in this book is a practical record-keeper that has proved highly efficient. It automatically provides a quick double-check on all the scene numbers and locales that occur in each time lapse of the story. And you have—on one page—the wardrobe description of every principal actor who appears in the listed sequences, together with the dates on which the scenes were shot (Figure 2.7).

It is good practice to snap your Polaroid (or digital camera) picture—for wardrobe and makeup—at the moment the actor is ready to go before the camera. Otherwise, the attire and/or makeup may not be entirely correct. Your chief responsibility is to match what appears in the film.

15. Script Revisions

Invariably, constant changes are made in the script—before and even during principal photography. Every revised page is dated and printed on a different colored page from the previous page. Generally, the rotation has been: white for the original, followed by blue, pink, yellow, green, goldenrod, then back to white. Today, companies may vary this color routine. It is sound practice to incorporate every revised page into your work script as quickly as possible.

NOTE: While it is customary that you send photocopies of your work on the filmed script pages to the editor, copies made from colored originals often produce muddy or unclear duplicates. Therefore, for your purposes, the production office will (at your request) duplicate the colored-page revisions onto white pages. These white copies will, of course, still retain the printed legend across the top: REVISED—BLUE/PINK, etc.—(DATE).

Instead of revised pages, you may sometimes receive a memorandum from the production office that reads:

PLEASE NOTE:
Elmer and Alice Lester should be changed to:
ELMER and ADELE NESTOR
Mark scripts accordingly.

Now you must go through the entire script and change "Alice" to "Adele" and "Lester" to "Nestor" on every page where these names appear. Most important, you must go through the dialogue with a fine-tooth comb to see if any of the other characters mention these names. It is imperative to personally communicate with the actors and alert them to the changes before they study and memorize the wrong names. Also, make sure that the correct names are printed on doors or desk plaques or wherever else these names might appear. Stage sets and props are often prepared in advance of shooting. When you receive revised pages, heed the following instructions:

□ Immediately transfer all your notations from the original script pages to the revised pages.

□ Revise your One Liner/Continuity Synopsis (if affected) to conform with the new version of the script.

□ Correct your Scene Count and Page Count to reflect any deletions or additions.

□ Do not discard previous pages after receiving revised pages. File them numerically for reference. There is a good reason for this: Occasionally, the director will want to see, or will even prefer, an earlier version. In all probability, you will be the only person on the set who has a complete file of every revised page at your fingertips.

16. Special Forms

Prepare the various blank forms you will need during production. Photocopy a supply of each form for future use (see Appendix C).

SAMPLE SCRIPT BREAKDOWN

The following pages consist of the sample script breakdown of the teleplay presented at the beginning of this chapter.

```
                         ACT ONE
                                                              N-1
         FADE IN:

  1.    EXT. SEAN'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

         It is late and dark.  SEAN comes up with a suitcase and
         a flight bag.  He is tired.  He unlocks the door and
         enters.  He is wearing a Hawaiian shirt and slacks.     1/8

  2.    INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT   keys
                                          suitcase
         The lights are out.  Sean enters.  He yawns.  He is tired
         and wants to go right to bed.  He sets down his bag, then,
         as he heads toward the bedroom, he takes off shirt and
         casually tosses it onto a chair or sofa.  He enters the
         bedroom.                                                1/8

  3.    INT. SEAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (lite change)
                                   no shirt
         The lights are out.  Sean enters, kicks off his shoes
         and slides out of his pants.  Down to his shorts, he
         sighs, yawns, then slides into bed, stretching out.
         After a beat, a female arm comes lovingly across his
         chest and a sweet, female voice says...

                         CELIA'S VOICE (O.S.)
                   I love you...

  4.    WIDER ANGLE

         Sean's head snaps toward the voice.  He finds himself
         nose to nose with a lovely young bride, CELIA.  She
         gasps.  Sean reacts.

                         SEAN
                   What the...!

                         CELIA
                     (screams)
                   Ahhh...!

         She grabs the blankets up around her.

  5.    ANOTHER ANGLE

         DAVE, the groom, bursts in from the bathroom.  He wears
         a bathrobe.  Light comes in from the bathroom.          4/8

                                              (CONTINUED)
```

Figure 2.2

2.

N-1

5 (Cont.)

           DAVE
    Baby, what is it!

6.   ANGLE ON SEAN

He is halfway out of bed, still not certain what this is all
about. He whips his head around to look towards the new voice.
It has all happened in a split second. We FREEZE FRAME
catching him in an awkward position, halfway out of bed.

                    CUT TO: *3/8*

N-1+

7.   INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT *(LATER THAT NIGHT)*

Sean, Celia and Dave are there in robes. MOE is there in
uniform. Dave is holding his arm protectively around Celia.

           MOE
    You wanna press charges, Doc?

           DAVE
    What do you mean? He attacked
    my wife.

           MOE
      (to Sean)
    Sorry, Doc...it's my duty to
    inform you of your rights.

           SEAN
    I didn't attack her. I just got
    in bed with her.

8.   ANGLE ON FRONT DOOR

           keys
MRS. GRUBER lets herself in. Celia comes up to her.

           CELIA
    Mrs. Gruber, thank goodness. Will
    you tell them you rented it to us?
    They don't believe us.

           GRUBER
      (sees Sean)
    What are you doing here?

           SEAN
    I live here.

                (CONTINUED) *6/8*

3.

N-1+

8 (Cont.)

           GRUBER
    You weren't supposed to be
    back for a week.

           SEAN
    Well, I'm back now and I got
    mugged in my own bed.

           MOE
      (to Dave)
    You have the right to remain
    silent. You have the right to
    seek counsel.

           DAVE
    Officer, she rented this place
    to us.

           SEAN
      (to Gruber)
    You rented my apartment without
    my permission?

           MOE
      (to Gruber)
    You have the right to remain
    silent...

           SEAN
    Moe, will you shut up.

           GRUBER
    Dr. Jamison, if you'd just once
    listen to reason. It is my property
    and this young couple is on their
    honeymoon.

           CELIA
    And our reservations fell through.

           DAVE
    I told you. The hotels are packed.

           GRUBER
    I found them sitting on a bench...
    on their wedding night. You said
    you'd be away, so, being a romantic
    person, I let them stay here.

           SEAN
    For a modest fee, no doubt.

                (CONTINUED)

4.

N-1+

                    GRUBER
          Just a breakage deposit.
              (trying to explain this)
          Well, I was just thinking about
          the night of my third wedding.
          Mario was a gymnast.

                    CELIA
              (tearfully)
          What are we going to do?

                    DAVE
          I guess we'll have to leave.

                    SEAN
              (relenting)
          Well, no. You can't leave in
          the middle of the night. I'll
          sleep on the sofa. You kids can
          have the bedroom.

There is silence as bride and groom exchange glances.
They obviously don't want Sean so close by.

                    SEAN
              (getting the message)
          Okay, I'll find someplace.

                    GRUBER
              (quickly)
          There's no room at my place.

                    SEAN
          I wouldn't trust you, anyway.

                    MOE
          Doesn't anybody want to be informed
          of their rights?

                                        DISSOLVE: 6/8

9.   INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY   (NEXT MORNING)   D-2

     PUNI adjusts some flowers in a vase, picks up the vase and
     starts with it towards Sean's office. DR. CHAFFEE enters.

                    CHAFFEE
          Good morning.

                    PUNI
          Morning, Dr. Chaffee.

                                        (CONTINUED)   3/8

                                        5.   D-2

9 (Cont.)

                    CHAFFEE
          Puni, I've told you and told you...
          stop putting flowers around.

                    PUNI
          But Doctor, this is Hawaii.

                    CHAFFEE
          I don't care. They're full of
          pollen. They'll make my patients
          sneeze.

He exits into the corridor.   Puni looks after him and
makes a face.

                    PUNI
          Yankee, go home.

                                        CUT TO: 2/8

10.   INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - DAY   (MORNING)   D-2

Puni enters and sets the vase of flowers on his desk.

11.   ANOTHER ANGLE

Sean, wearing a rumpled sport shirt and pants, is stirring
on the sofa where he apparently has spent the night.

                    PUNI
          Dr. Jamison, what are you doing
          here?

                    SEAN
              (stretches, feels back)
          I've been asking myself that all
          night.
              (rubs back again)
          Ohhh...
              (gets up)

                    PUNI
          But, Doctor, why couldn't you
          sleep in your own bed?

                    SEAN
          It was two against one...

Puni reacts.

                                        CUT TO: 7/8

STORY CHRONOLOGY/TIME BREAKDOWN

TITLE: _____

SCENE NOS.	TIME
1-6	1ST NITE
7-8	LATER 1ST NITE
9-11	2ND DAY
12-14	LATER 2ND DAY
15-18	2ND NITE
19-30	LATER 2ND NITE
31-35	3RD DAY
36-39	4TH DAY
40-40	LATER 4TH DAY
41-44	4TH NITE
45-59	LATER 4TH NITE
60-60	5TH DAY
61-63	5TH NITE
	(END)

The above reflects the scene numbers of the complete script.

Figure 2.3

SCENE COUNT

TITLE: _____

1	21	41	61
2	2̶2̶	42	62
3	23	43	63
4	24/S	44	
5	25	45	TOTAL 60
6	26	46	STOCK 2
7	27	47	
8	28	48	
9	29	4̶9̶	
10	30	49A	
11	31	50	
12	32	51	
13	33	52	
13A	34	53	
14	3̶5̶	54	
15	35A	55	
16	36/S	56	
17	37	5̶7̶	
18	38	58	
19	39	59	
20	40	60	

The above reflects the scene count of the complete script.

Figure 2.4

PAGE COUNT

TITLE: _____

1	21	FULL PAGES	33
2	22	PART PAGES	
3	23	8|31	3 7/8
4	24	TOTAL	36 7/8
√	24A-3		
6	25		
7	26		
8	27-4		
9	28		
10	29		
11	30-√		
12	31		
13	32		
14	33		
15-7	33A-4		
16	34		
17	35		
18-4	36		
19	37-2		
20	38		
20A-2			

The above reflects the page count of the complete script.

Figure 2.5

CONTINUITY SYNOPSIS/ONE LINE

TITLE _____   PROD. NO. _____

DIRECTOR _____   DATE _____

SCENE NOS	SET	DESCRIPTION	D/N	PAGES	CHARACTERS
1	EXT SEAN DOOR	SEAN w/BAGS UNLOCKS DOOR, GOES INSIDE	N-1	1/8	SEAN
2	SEAN LIVING RM	SEAN ENTERS FROM LEFT. DROPS HAT + BAG, EXITS TO BEDROOM	N-1	1/8	SEAN
3,4,5,6	SEAN BEDROOM	SEAN ENTERS, DISROBES, GETS INTO BED. CELIA IN BED. DAVE BURSTS IN FROM BATHROOM. FREEZE ON SEAN	N-1	1	SEAN CELIA DAVE
7,8	SEAN LIVING RM	GROUP ARGUE. SEAN, CELIA, DAVE IN ROBES, MOE IN UNIFORM WANTS TO PRESS CHARGES. GRUBER ENTERS TELLS SNG RENTED HOUSE TO HONEYMOON COUPLE. SEAN RELENTS, WILL SLEEP ON SOFA	ENTER N-1	2 4/8	SEAN CELIA DAVE MOE GRUBER
9	RECEPTION RM	PUNI BRINGING FLOWERS TO SEAN's OFFICE. CHAFFEE ENTERS, COMPLAINS OF POLLEN	D-2	5/8	PUNI CHAFFEE
10,11	SEAN's OFFICE	PUNI ENTERS WITH FLOWERS FINDS SEAN ASLEEP ON SOFA	D-2	5/8	PUNI SEAN

Figure 2.6

WARDROBE OUTLINE

TITLE _____   Time Breakdown *N-1*

Scene Nos.	Sets	Date Shot
1	EXT SEAN FRONT DOOR	
2	SEAN LIVING ROOM	
3, 4	SEAN BEDROOM	
5	ANGLE BATHROOM	
6	SEAN BEDROOM	

CHARACTERS

SEAN _____   CELIA _____

DAVE _____

WARDROBE OUTLINE

TITLE _____   Time Breakdown *N-1 (LATER)*

Scene Nos.	Sets	Date Shot
7, 8	SEAN LIVING ROOM	

CHARACTERS

SEAN _____   CELIA _____

DAVE _____   GRUBER _____

MOE _____

Figure 2.7

WARDROBE OUTLINE

TITLE _____   Time Breakdown _D-2__

Scene Nos.	Sets	Date Shot
9	RECEPTION ROOM	
10, 11	SEAN OFFICE	

CHARACTERS

SEAN   PUN I

CHAFFEE

After absorbing the detailed script breakdown and the examples: Figures 2.3 through 2.7, you will be prepared with the essential data you should have for ready reference when attending the production meeting.

Observe the underscoring of master scene captions, names of characters and their distinguishing marks, overt actions, and special details of props and makeup; also study the notations of direct and indirect continuity, story time lapses, lines separating the master scenes, and page count for each master scene.

Every script breakdown mandates all the exacting procedures outlined in the previous pages—whether shooting episodic television, a movie made for television, or a four-hour feature film.

Up to this point, you have been introduced to the first phase involved in the craft of continuity supervising: how to read and break down a script—to be prepared for principal photography.

When you are confident of the accuracy of your script breakdown, you are in a position to focus your full attention on the other important functions that come within the scope of your responsibility in the preeminent role of continuity supervisor. I shall end this segment with the caveat: BEWARE THE 5 P's: *POOR PREPARATION PRODUCES POOR PERFORMANCE.*

3

Prior to Principal Photography

Before the start of principal photography, key personnel are given the then-final version of the script. Each member prepares the script according to his or her specific job.

PREPARATION TIME

There is a period known as *prep time*. The number of days or weeks allotted for prep time depends on the complexity of the script, the number of shooting days—and the budget.

During this period, you will be conscientiously preparing your script—that is, breaking it down according to the procedures outlined in the previous pages. The better you have prepared your script, the better control you will have during the hectic days of shooting *out of continuity*.

THE PRODUCTION MEETING

Before filming begins, a production meeting is held, in the production office, or another designated place. All key personnel attend with their respective script breakdowns. Page by page, the business/action elements of the script are read and discussed.

First, the producer and director make known how they perceive the film version of the written script. Then the crafts personnel discuss the technical

elements relating to each respective craft. If a technician brings up a possible problem with regard to achieving on film what the author has written, the matter is discussed, and a decision is made to modify, replace, or eliminate the troublesome element. These changes will appear in new script pages of a different color.

If, in the process of breaking down your script, you found a discrepancy or an inaccuracy that is not brought up by the others, you must bring the item to attention before the meeting adjourns—so that all concerned can make their necessary corrections. If you do not attend the production meeting, you will have to convey your findings individually to each crew member whose work may be affected. Before you do so, however, clear your findings with the 1st A.D., the director and/or the producer. It may very well be that your questions were fully answered at the meeting. You must then correct your script accordingly.

It is indeed important for you to attend production meetings. Here you will be privy to the interpretation of elements in the script that are not always spelled out by the writers. Thus, you will have the opportunity to fix your script to conform to the changes decided at the production meeting. Frequently, revised pages do not come from the production office in good time. In such cases, your script notations may make it possible for the company to start shooting without delay.

NOTE: Should the production meeting and/or scheduled rehearsal days coincide with your preparation days, you must stipulate in your *deal memo* that you will receive compensatory pay for those days, apart from prep time.

THE SHOOTING SCHEDULE

A few days before the start of filming, you will receive the Shooting Schedule (Figure 3.1) which has been prepared by the 1st A.D. This is the official blueprint that lists (a) the order in which scenes will be shot; (b) a terse description of each master sequence with its corresponding scene numbers and page count; (c) the total number of pages to be shot each day; (d) the actors who perform in each sequence; (e) all the required props; (f) all the required special effects; and (g) any extraordinary items called for. When shooting takes place at an outdoor location, the schedule lists the address of the site. If the address has not been confirmed by the time the schedule has been completed, the letters TBA (to be announced) will be listed. You should promptly compare the Shooting Schedule with your Continuity Synopsis/One-Liner to be certain that all the details you have notated in your One-Liner are in accord with the shooting schedule. Any variance should be discussed with the 1st A.D., without delay. The figures in your daily reports must always correspond with those of the shooting schedule.

SHOOTING SCHEDULE

SIMON & SIMON

Prod. No. 64413
Title: "Simon Says 'Goodbye'"
Start: 1/16/89
Finish: 1/24/89 (Camera Days - 7)

Director: GERALD McRANEY
Ass't. Director: KEVIN CORCORAN
Unit Manager: PAUL CAJERO

DAY/DATE	DESCRIPTION OF SET	CAST & ATMOS	PAGES	VEHICLES LIVESTOCK PROPS	DAY or NITE
DAY 1 MONDAY 1/16/89 BEVERLY BOULEVARD, L.A.	EXT. PHONE BOOTH NEAR POLICE STATION Scs. 11 pt.,12 pt. Dolph tells Holridge that the Simons are researching "Terry Adamson."	DOLPH 4-standins w/cars ATMOS 4-uniformed cops w/change for gallery 14-street types w/change for gallery (2-w/cars)	1/8	PROPS: Phone VEHICLES: 2-cop cars CAMERA: 2-cameras SET DEC: Pay phone	D-2
	EXT. PHONE NEAR RESTAURANT Scs. 23A,24 pt. Outside restaurant. Dolph calls Holridge.	DOLPH A.J. ? RICK ? ELISE ? JEFF ? 4-standins w/cars ATMOS 14-street types (2-w/cars)	2/8	VEHICLES: Camaro ?	D-3
	INT. RESTAURANT Scs. 22,22A Over lunch Elise tells the Simons about "Terry."	A.J. RICK ELISE JEFF 4-standins w/cars ATMOS 1-busboy 1-waiter 6-customers 8-street types (2-w/cars)	2-3/8	PROPS: Food & drink VEHICLES: Camaro	D-3

(1ST DAY CONTINUED)

Figure 3.1

SHOOTING CALL
UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS, INC   FILM

Due to Extreme Fire Hazard Please Be Careful Smoking. Use Butt Cans.

Unit 1   Day of Shooting

Production		No.	64413	Director	G. MCRANEY
	"SIMON SAYS GOODBYE"				

Series		Date	
	SIMON & SIMON - 1 HR. TV		MONDAY, 1/16/89

Art Director		Shooting Call Time	Condition Of Call
	CRONE	7:30AM	R/S

Set Dresser	
	DECINCES

[X] REPORT TO LOCATION   [ ] BUS TO LOCATION

CREW CALL: 630A @ LOC

PAGES	SET DESCRIPTION	SC. NO.	D/N	LOCATION
2/8	EXT. PHONE NR.POLICE STA. (DOLPH,ATMOS.)	11PT.,12PT.	D2	AUTHENIC CAFE 7605 BEVERLY BL.
	-1/2 BLOCK MOVE-			
2/8	EXT. PHONE NR.RESTAURANT (DOLPH,ATMOS.-CAMARO)	23A,24A	D3	
2-7/8	INT. RESTAURANT (AJ,RICK,ELISE,JEFF,ATMOS.)	22,22A	D3	
	-1/2 BLOCK MOVE-			
3/8	INT. ART GALLERY (RICK,DOLPH,ATMOS.)	42A,42C,43	D4	SAXON LEE GALLERY, 7525
2-5/8	INT. ART GALLERY (RICK,HOLRIDGE,DOLPH,ATMOS.)	44,45	D4	BEVERLY BLVD.
6/8	INT. ART GALLERY/LEVEL 2 (HOLRIDGE,DOLPH,ATMOS.)	46	D4	
2/8	INT. ART GALLERY (HOLRIDGE,DOLPH O.S.,ATMOS.)	11PT.,12PT.	D2	

ALL CALLS SUBJECT TO CHANGE BY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AT WRAP

CAST AND BITS	CHARACTERS		RPT TO	CALL TIME	ON SET
JAMESON PARKER*	(NEW)	A.J.SIMON	PU*HOME	LOC @ 715A	8A
GERALD MCRANEY*	(NEW)	RICK SIMON	PU*HOME	LOC @ 715A	8A
GERARD PRENDERGAST	(NEW)	DOLPH	LOC	630A	730A
CATHERINE MACNEAL	(NEW)	ELISE	LOC	615A	8A
RANDY HALL	(NEW)	JEFF	LOC	7A	8A
BRIAN PATRICK CLARKE	(NEW)	HOLDRIGE	LOC	10A	1045A
BILL BURTON	(NEW)	UTILITY STUNT	LOC	630A	W/N

NOTES: PARKING LOT FOR CREW DOES NOT OPEN BEFORE 6AM.
ALL COMPANY - CAUTION - FILMING IN ART GALLERY WITH HIGH
VALUE ART WORK - PLEASE BE CAREFUL WHEN WORKING NEXT TO
ART WORK.
*ND BREAKFAST PROVIDED

ATMOSPHERE AND STANDINS	RPT TO	CALL TIME	ON SET
4 SI'S (BARTLETT,JEPSEN,MACE,DILLEY)W/CARS	LOC	630A	W/N
4 UNIFORM POLICE (3M,1F) W/OWN CLOTHES	LOC	630A	W/N
FOR GALLERY			
14 PEDESTRIANS W/CHNG FOR GALLERY-	LOC	630A	W/N
2 W/AUTO-INCL.1 BUSBOY (M),1 WAITER (M)			
3 CONTEST WINNERS-WAIVERS	PU @ 9A	915A	W/N
1 MINOR (M)		9A	W/N

******************************** ADVANCE ********************************

TUES., 1/17:
INT. ART GALLERY   SC 24PT.,51PT.,52,1PT.,2PT.,3,
54,55

EXT. PKG LOT NR GALLERY   SC 4

Reprinted through courtesy of Universal Television.

Figure 3.2

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS   FILM

		Production	"SIMON SAYS GOODBYE"

Director	G. MCRANEY	Production No. 64413	Shooting Time 7:30AM	Date MONDAY, 1/16/89

No.	Set	Location	Phone
# 8	EXT. PHONE BOOTH NR POLICE STA	7605 BEVERLY BL.	(818)939-4626
# 52	INT. PHONE BOOTH NR RESTAURANT		
# 51	INT. ART GALLERY	7525 BEVERLY BL.	(818)893-5282

No.	CAMERA		Time	No.	TECHNICAL		Time	No.	LOCATION		Time
	Cam:			1	Key Grip	BEAM	554A	X	Permits	AS REQ.	
2	Panavision	PKG	TRK	1	2nd Grip	SLEMMONS	618A	2	Police	BDYGRDS	630A
1	ARRI-BACKUP		TRK	2	Co Grips		630A	1	Firewarden		730A
	Zoom For				Co Grips			2	Police/Cycles		545A
1	Dir. of Photog.	MARTINEL	554A	2	Crane Oper.	VESPER	618A		POLICE		
2	Operator	BETTCHER	630A		Crane			1*	Flag Person	LOC @	8A
2	1st Assistant	MENONI+1	618A	1	Crab Dolly	FISHER	TRK	1	Set Watch	(*CAR WATCH)	
1	2nd Assistant		618A		PEE-WEE		TRK		Night Watch		
	Camera Mech.				Greens Person				Uniform Police		
				1	CSE Setup		630A		Studio Firefighter		
	SOUND				Painter				HOSPITAL		
1	Mixer	RIGGINS	630A		Propmaker			1	1st Aid		630A
1	Recorder	DUNN	630A	2	Special Effects	EVANS +1	630A				
1	Boom Oper.	MITCHELL	618A		Effects				TRANSPORTATION	Drv.	
	Cable Person							1	Driver Capt.	COORD.	D O/C
	Playbk. Oper.				Sing. Dr. Rm.			1	Co/Capt.	CAPT.	D 4.8
	VTR Oper.								Mini		
X	Booms	AS ORD.	TRK		Dbl. Dr. Rm.				Maxi		
X	Mikes	"	TRK		Quad				Sta. Wgn		
X	RF Mikes	"	TRK					1	MAXI-PROD/WD		D 5.5
X	Mixer/Nagra	"	TRK	1	Schoolrm.				Buses		
14	Walkie Talkie	PU*DEPT	W/N		Heat Stg. #				Grip/Elec/Gen		
2	Megaphone	AS ORD.	TRK		Heaters						
6	CHARGES BATTS.		W/N		ELECTRICAL			1	Duz All	#460	D 5.3
1	MOTOROLA REPEAT		TRK	1	Gaffer	HARMON	554A				
	SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHY			1	2nd Elect.	KENNEDY	618A	1	Grip	#358	D 5.3
	Process DP			4	Lamp Opers.		630A	1	Elec.	#357	D 5.3
	Matte Supvr.			1	Lamp Opers.	BARR	618A	1	Generator		D 5.3
	Matte Crew				Gen. Oper.			1	CAM/SND #360		D 5.3
	Moviola & Oper.				Generator				Prop		
	Grip				Wind Mach. Oper.			10	Sen. Wgn 7 Rms.		8.0
	Head Proj.				Wind Mach.				Sen. Wgn Rms.		
	Projectionist				Battery Person				Powder Trk.		
	Proj. Equip.				Batteries						
					Air Cond.				Util. Trk.		
					Work Lights			1	4 x 4	C/CAB	D 4.8
	STILL PHOTO				Wigs/Phone			1	MU TRLR		TOWED
	Still Photog.							1	Ward.	TRLR	TOWED
	Still Eq. PU				PROPERTY				Insert Car		
	FOOD SERVICE			2	Property Mstr.	BINKLEY	630A		Car Carrier		D 5.3
X	Caterer	MICHELSO	8A	1	Asst. Prop	HALL	630A				
	Breakfasts				Benches For #			1	Jeep		TOWED
X	Walking Breakfast	PER A.D.	W/N		Makeup Tables						
X	Gala Coffee	X Doz. Donuts		X	Chairs	DIR/CAST	TRK	1	Water Wgn		
90	Lunches	20@12P	1230P								
	Dinners							1	Motor Hm. For PARKER		D W/N
	Suppers				MAKEUP			1	Motor Hm. For MCRANE		D W/N
	UNIT MANAGER			1	Makeup Artist	DAWSON	812A				
1	Script Supvr.	LOOMIS	8A	1	Extra MU	HOUSE	8A		Mechanic		
	Animal Handler				Extra MU						
	Wrangler				Body MU						
	Livestock			1	Hairstylist	POST	8A				
1	TEACHER-STRANGM		9A		Extra Hair				Pict. Equip.		
1	DIALOG COACH-		630A		Extra Hair			2	SDPD CARS		
	SNYDER				COSTUME			1	AJ'S CAMARO		
	MUSIC			1	Mens Cstmr	LANTZ	6A				
	Piano Player				Extra Mens			X	PU CONTEST		9A
	Music Rep			1	Ladies Cstmr	WING	6A		WINNERS @		
	Sideline Mus.				Extra Ladies						

DEPARTMENT	MISCELLANEOUS & SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
PROPS:	PHOTO OF YOUNGER HOLDRIGE.
PROD.	INFORM CENTRAL OF LOOK-A-LIKES FOR DOLPH.
SET DEC.	2 PAY PHONES

Assistant Director	CORCORAN/STOUT/THOMP	Unit Mgr	PAUL CAJERO	Approved	RALPH SARIEGO

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Figure 3.2 (continued)

THE CALL SHEET

On the day prior to the first day of filming, the 2nd A.D. will distribute a *Call Sheet* (Figure 3.2). This form lists all the scenes scheduled to be shot that day. It also stipulates the time of day at which all personnel (cast and crew) must report to the stage set or location. A Call Sheet is distributed for each shooting day.

Once again, if you discover any discrepancies between your One-Liner and the Call Sheet, communicate with the 1st A.D. and make both your records coincide.

PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

Before we proceed with further specifics of the continuity supervisor's craft, let us get acquainted with the members of the production staff with whom you will have daily interaction during the course of a shoot.

Executive Producer: brings together all the creative and financial elements in the making of a motion picture or television film; presides over the production.

Producer (also known as *Line Producer*): works with the executive producer, or—at a major studio—is assigned to administer and oversee the production.

Associate Producer: an assistant to the producer; handles certain administrative operations.

Director: is responsible for transforming the dramatic and technical elements of a script into a successful motion picture; communicates with the actors in regard to the interpretation of their roles.

Production Manager: in charge of all business affairs concerning preparation, preproduction, production, and postproduction operations of the company; oversees the budget and hires the crew.

Unit Manager: serves under the production manager; is responsible for the efficient operation of a company shoot when on location.

First Assistant Director (1st A.D.): works most closely with the director; prepares the production board and the Shooting Schedule for the entire production; is responsible for expediting each day's agenda; provides every requirement for the director; is responsible for maintaining a harmonious working atmosphere throughout the shoot; answers to the production manager.

Second Assistant Director (2nd A.D.): serves under the 1st A.D.; handles all the required clerical details; distributes the daily Call Sheet; is responsible for informing the cast and other personnel of their respective work calls; keeps time cards on the cast and crew in accordance with guild and union rates and regulations; gathers daily reports from all departments and conveys them to the production office.

Director of Photography (D.P.) (also called *Cinematographer* or *Cameraman*): the chief camera person—confers with the director to achieve the artistic aspects of lighting and camera composition that best reflects the style and ambiance of the story.

Camera Operator: physically operates the camera and is responsible for properly framing the subjects being filmed; is under the supervision of the D.P.

Camera First Assistant (also called *Focus Puller*): reloads the film into the camera and also removes it after the footage has been shot; focuses the lenses during filming.

Camera Second Assistant: functions as the *Slate Operator* (sometimes referred to as the *Clapper*) during shooting; keeps records of all the camera shots and takes; compares camera report with continuity supervisor's report to ensure accurate designation of slate numbers and printed takes; turns in a daily report to the 2nd A.D.

Loader: works under the Camera 2nd Assistant; is responsible for loading the raw (unexposed) film into the magazine and then unloading the exposed film into metal film cans for shipping to the film lab.

Film Editor: determines the creative approach to cutting and intercutting the filmed footage—to achieve the quintessential impact of the story.

Assistant Film Editor: chief aide to the film editor; prepares the dailies: all the printed film from the previous day's shoot.

Sound Mixer: operates the sound mixing panel and sound recorder: a Nagra for analog recording, or a DAT machine for digital recording; balances and controls the recording of the dialogue and all sound tracks during filming; keeps record of slate and take numbers; confers with the continuity supervisor to ensure accuracy of printed takes; turns in a daily report to the 2nd A.D.

Boom Operator: handles the boom or fishpole that holds the microphone. This apparatus picks up the dialogue and sounds that occur during the shooting of a scene, and transmits it to the sound recorder. The Boom Operator is responsible for the placement of microphones (mikes) in the set; also for equipping the performers with body radio mikes (when required).

Property Master: furnishes all the described articles (props) called for in the script; attends to the props that are handled by the performers; places and moves set dressing as required.

Assistant Property Master: aide to the property master; keeps track of the props that work during the shoot.

Production Designer: conceives and provides illustrations for the decor of the scenes described in the script.

Art Director: creates or locates articles for the sets depicted in the script; has a professional staff for building necessary sets.

Production Illustrator: on the staff of the art director; creates storyboards—illustrations that depict the action written in the script to assist the director to visualize the characters and layout of the stage set.

Set Decorator: handles the purchasing or renting of furnishings for the sets as conceived by the art director; arranges the furniture and decorations in the set.

Makeup Artist: attends to the normal cosmetic needs of the actors during filming; creates distinctive makeup as called for in the script: period and science fiction characters or for visual effects.

Hair Stylist (*Hairdresser*): responsible for grooming actors' hair during filming; styles and dresses the coiffures as specified in the script: wigs and hairdos for period pictures or science fiction characters.

Costume Designer: creates the style and personality of the garments worn by the performers or furnishes the wardrobe depicted in the script.

Men's Costumer: responsible for procuring, fitting, and maintaining the wardrobe for male performers.

Women's Costumer: responsible for procuring, fitting, and maintaining the wardrobe for female performers.

Stand-in: substitutes for a principal performer while lights and equipment are being adjusted after a scene that has been staged by the director.

Double: substitutes for a performer when risky and dangerous action is involved; or when the performer's actual appearance is unessential—such as in long shots of the actor walking, running, or mingling in a crowd. The double often physically resembles the principal actor. Sometimes a double is also a Stuntperson.

Stuntperson: performs actions and feats that cannot be executed by the principal actors or would endanger them: car crashes, leaps from buildings, vicious fights, being engulfed in flames, etc.

Extras (also *Atmosphere* or *Background*): those people who appear in scenes without speaking—in crowds, in street scenes, as diners in a restaurant, as dancers in a ballroom, as soldiers on a battlefield, as audience in a theater.

Bit Player: an actor who performs small parts in a film—with or without dialogue. When an extra is singled out by the director and is given a special piece of business or some dialogue (even just one word), that extra becomes a bit player.

Dialogue Coach: assists performers in their speaking roles; practices with actors when certain dialects or accents are required, such as from Texas, Boston, the Deep South; assists foreign performers to improve their American speech, or American actors to speak with a foreign accent.

Special Effects Personnel (divided into two categories): (1) those who invent, construct and operate mechanical atmospheric simulations or illusionary concepts—for science-fiction epics, action-adventure films, etc.; make operable the appliances and gadgets that must function for the actors during the performance of a scene; and (2) those whose domain involves using computerized digital imaging to create desired picture elements that were not (or could not be) actually photographed "live" by the camera; their specialized needs in postproduction will often affect the manner in which the original scene or shot is made.

Still Photographer: shoots still photographs for publicity.

Gaffer: key electrician—supervises all the lighting equipment and the placement of lights under the supervision of the director of photography (DP).

Key Grip: the principal stagehand and master carpenter—keeps stage sets in working order; supervises the installation and handling of movable walls and background scenery; lays dolly tracks and installs camera mounts.

Best Boy (electrical department): first assistant to the gaffer.

Best Boy (grip department): first assistant to the key grip.

Dolly Grip: pushes the wheeled platform (called the dolly) on which the camera is mounted; makes directional moves called for by the action in the scene.

Electrician (also called *Lamp Operator*—sometimes, facetiously, referred to as a *Juicer*): on the staff of the gaffer's department; assists with the handling of lighting equipment and adjustment of light fixtures.

Cable Operator: responsible for connecting cable for the sound and camera equipment on the set.

Generator Operator: handles the apparatus that supplies electricity for the equipment used when shooting is done at outdoor locations or at any locale away from the studio.

Scenic Artist (also called *Scenic Designer*): paints the background walls and scenery in the set.

Assistant Scenic Artist: repairs the damage done to walls and scenery during the shooting of a scene.

Craft Service: responsible for opening and closing sound stage doors; keeps the stages clean; provides coffee and refreshments for the cast and crew; generally does helpful jobs around the stage.

First Aid Nurse: a registered professional hired by the production company who administers first aid; ministers to the discomforts and minor injuries of the cast and crew; is present when shooting on location; accompanies to the hospital anyone who sustains a major injury; makes the required written accident reports.

Welfare Worker: makes sure that babies and children are properly handled on- and off-camera in accordance with established labor laws.

Schoolteacher: hired through the public education system to teach prescribed curriculum to underage performers. Classrooms are provided on the sound stages or at the location where the filming takes place.

Animal Trainer: trains and controls animals that appear in films.

Animal Handler: takes charge of handling the animals used during filming.

Wrangler: handles the horses that perform in films. (The name is sometimes applied to the handlers of all other species in the animal kingdom—pigs, cats, canaries, tarantulas.)

Greensperson: furnishes and maintains all the plant life (natural and artificial) that is called for as set dressing—from a jungle in the corner of a sound stage to a geranium plant on a window sill. The latter, if artificial, might be handled by the property master.

Musical Director: supervises staging of musical productions; composes or selects the music for scoring the completed film.

Music Editor: fits the music to the completed film.

Sound Effects Editor: incorporates into the completed film all the necessary sound effects: off-screen door closing, telephone ringing, gunshots, baby crying, or sound emitted from any special sound effects apparatus.
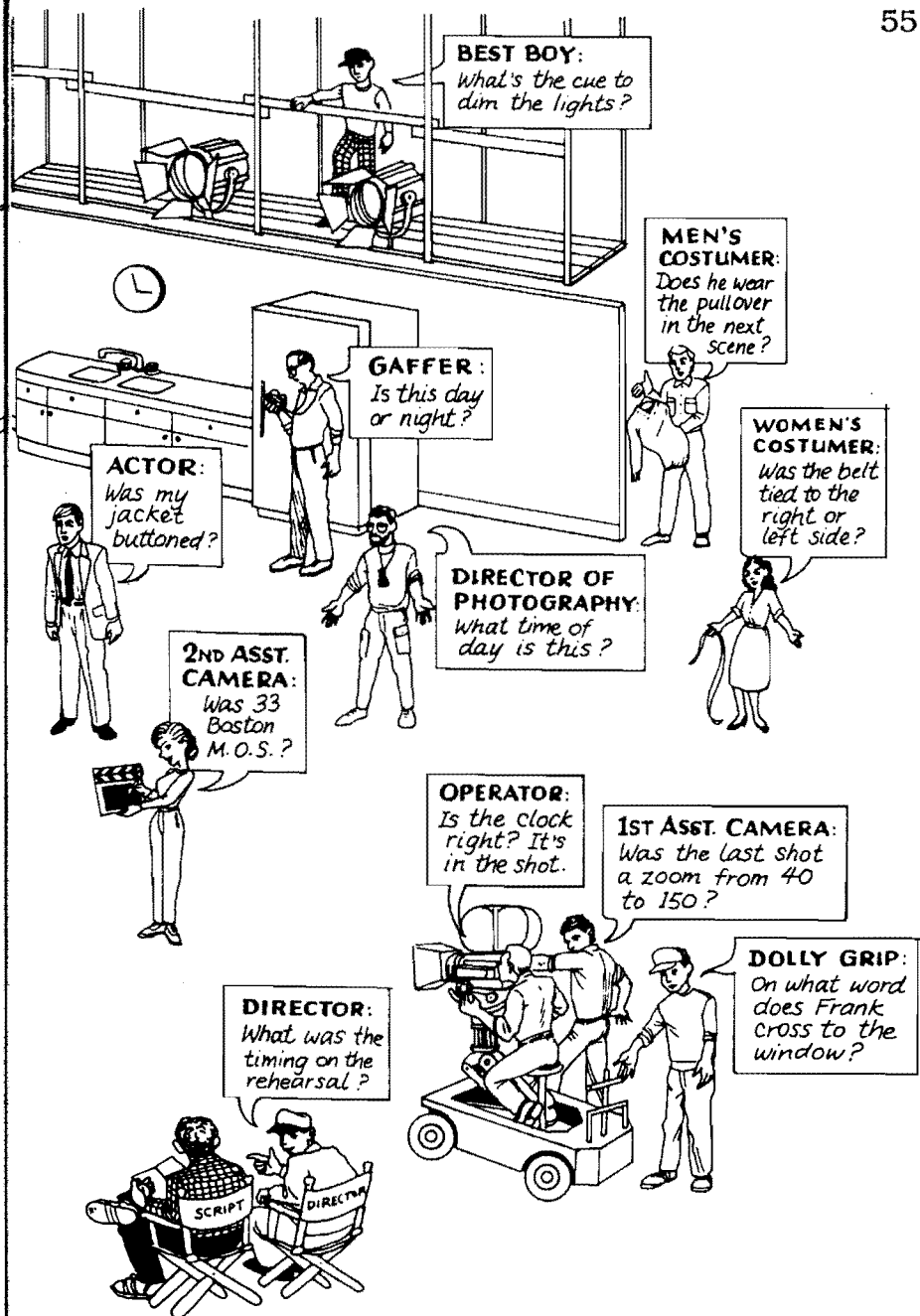
4

A Day on a
Movie Set
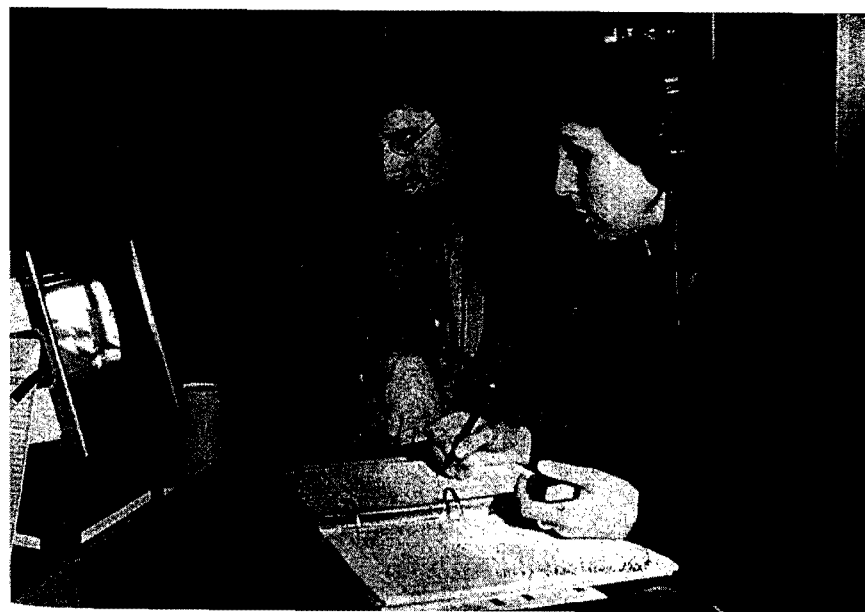
Michael Engler, Director, and Licia Wolf, Continuity Supervisor, viewing a shot via the video monitor. Courtesy of "Party of Five," Fox Television.

HAIR STYLIST: Does she wear the pink or red headband?

PROP MASTER: Was the door open in the last shot?

SPECIAL EFFECTS: Does the sink work in this shot?

BEST BOY: What's the cue to dim the lights?

MEN'S COSTUMER: Does he wear the pullover in the next scene?

BOOM OPERATOR: Where's Jane when she screams?

GAFFER: Is this day or night?

WOMEN'S COSTUMER: Was the belt tied to the right or left side?

SOUND MIXER: Were there two prints on 34 Apple?

ACTOR: Was my jacket buttoned?

MAKEUP: Do her tears play in this shot?

ACTRESS: Do I take a sip before or after my line?

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: What time of day is this?

UNIT MANAGER: How are we doing on time?

2ND ASST. DIRECTOR: What time was lunch break?

1ST ASST. DIRECTOR: Everything covered on Mary?

2ND ASST. CAMERA: Was 33 Boston M.O.S.?

OPERATOR: Is the clock right? It's in the shot.

1ST ASST. CAMERA: Was the last shot a zoom from 40 to 150?

PUBLICITY: Any juicy rumors today?

PRODUCER: Will we get that retake today?

DIRECTOR: What was the timing on the rehearsal?

DOLLY GRIP: On what word does Frank cross to the window?

SCRIPT DIRECTOR

The continuity supervisor | *has all the answers*

BEFORE THE CAMERA ROLLS

There is no such thing as a routine day in the life of a continuity supervisor. Every minute holds something unpredictable. The ensuing text will introduce some sights and sounds that fill a motion picture or television stage setting during the filming of a scene and after the filming has been completed.

The day begins with all personnel reporting to the sound stage or designated location at the times specified for them on the Daily Call Sheet.

RIGGING THE STAGE

A preliminary step in filming procedure is *rigging the stage* and *furnishing the sets*. It may be inside a movie sound stage or a designated location. The technical crew: key grip, carpenters, key gaffer and electricians, and other stagehands, arrive earlier and prepare the stage and the set. This may entail construction of scaffolds for hanging of lights and installing apparatus for placement of the equipment and furnishings that are to be utilized in the scene.

For a scene that takes place on a sound stage (indoors or simulated outdoors), the crew mounts overhead lights on the *scaffold* (also called *catwalk*) and installs walls, floors, and any called-for fixtures. The special effects technicians prepare the apparatus that will activate any appliance that will be functional during the performance; they will also install the equipment that will create the atmospheric conditions indicated in the script: rain, snow, wind.

> NOTE: When filming is done at a location away from a studio (indoors or outdoors), the rigging equipment is transported by truck to the site: generators, lights, set furnishings, etc.; also trailers with dressing rooms and washroom facilities.

THE SETUP

A *setup* is the confined area upon which the camera focuses during the enactment of a scene. It can take place on a sound stage in a studio, or any locale away from the studio.

An indoor (INT.) scene performed on a sound stage has the advantage of lights mounted on scaffolds—allowing work to proceed more efficiently because it is within a three-walled area.

An indoor (INT.) scene away from the studio is confined to a four-walled room and crowded with portable lights and set dressing.

For an outdoor (EXT.) scene at a location away from the studio: professional crafts personnel arrange the set dressing and decor described in the

script. If necessary, dolly track or plywood boards are laid to facilitate the camera's movements in following the action.

> NOTE: The multiple hand-held camera systems now in use have, in many cases, done away with the laborious laying of dolly track or boards.

THE LINEUP

When the technical crews finish the basic structure of the set, the director of photography (DP) notifies the director and the 1st A.D. that the stage is ready for a *lineup*. That means the stage is set for the camera to view the action that will take place in that setup.

The 1st A.D. instructs the 2nd A.D. to summon the actors to the set. The 2nd A.D. finds the actors wherever they happen to be—in dressing rooms, at makeup tables, in wardrobe departments—and announces: "Ready on stage," "Ready on set," "Ready for setup," "Ready for walk-through," or some other typical expression that registers a call to action. If stand-ins are required, they, too, heed this call.

As the cast approaches the set, the 1st A.D. loudly orders: "Put us on a bell!" The sound mixer presses a button that triggers a loud ring or buzz heard throughout the sound stage or the location set. The bell alerts all personnel involved in the scene to assemble at the camera.

> NOTE: When filming on location (away from a soundstage), the bell or buzzer is usually replaced by verbal instructions—either shouted or transmitted via walkie-talkie or bullhorn.

Flanked by key personnel: DP, 1st A.D., 2nd A.D., gaffer, grip, property master, boom operator, set decorator, and continuity supervisor—the director now studies the set and expresses thoughts on how the master shot might be choreographed. Each of the craftspeople listen for the mention of any detail that falls within the scope of his or her responsibility.

BLOCKING THE SET

Motivated by the dialogue and written business, the director sketches out the course of movements for each actor. The actors take their respective starting positions. The DP and the gaffer look through their viewfinders: a small instrument hanging on a cord around the neck; it shows the DP the limit of the stage set's *depth of field*, and gives the gaffer a perception for suitable lighting.

As the actors go through their prescribed movements, the DP watches the rehearsal to determine where to place the *key light*: the principal lamp for illuminating the set; also to determine the modality of shooting—a stationary or a moving camera.

Camera Modes

1. *Stationary.* The camera is mounted on a tripod, and its head can be panned 360° horizontally, and/or tilted 180° up and down.

2. *Moving.* The camera is attached to a dolly. A dolly is a small platform with wheels, and is pushed to follow the action in a scene.

   a. Some scenes may require the laying of tracks to accommodate the camera moving on a dolly. The wheels of the dolly are usually made to conform to the particular design of the tracks. The laying of tracks is the domain of the grip department.

   b. The *Crab Dolly.* This is a vehicle designed with four wheels that are so constructed that they can be steered in all directions: forwards, backwards, and even sideways—as the crab moves, which accounts for its name. The crab dolly is equipped with a central pedestal and/or a flexible arm (jib) on which the camera is mounted. The pedestal or the arm function—either hydraulically or electronically—is operated by controls on the dolly. This feature allows the camera to be raised or lowered vertically which gives the camera smooth movements to follow continuous action as characters rise from or drop to a seated or kneeling position. The camera's vertical movements on the pedestal are distinct from the up/down movements effected with the tilt of the stationary camera head.

3. *Hand-held.* Instead of being mounted on a tripod or a dolly, the camera is portable—held in some fashion by a camera operator.

   a. The *Panaflex* is today's standard studio 35mm camera. But, it can be configured into a hand-held camera and kept stable when attached to the operator by a special shoulder brace.

   b. The *Arriflex* comes in a range of small, light-weight cameras, and is held by a camera operator.

   c. The *Steadicam* is the trade name of a mobile camera mounting system. The unique apparatus permits any camera to be strapped to the operator's body. During shooting, the camera has the flexibility of a hand-held camera (without its inherent jerkiness and bounce), plus the steadiness of a stationary camera. Hence, the Steadicam. The equipment frees the operator to walk or run in any direction and maneuver into the tightest quarters. Additionally—if the mounted camera on the Steadicam has the capabilities of a zoom lens and variable speeds—the system is then operable for uninterrupted filming of continuous action. An invaluable time-saving feature.

      Hand-held filming can be highly effective: weaving through a crown and capturing spontaneous reactions in extreme close-ups can dramatically punctuate a scene when intercut with general photography.

The actors repeat their moves several times while extemporizing the dialogue or reading from their scripts—until the camera blocking is finalized. The DP decides where to place the secondary lights to achieve the most realistic atmosphere for the particular scene. The gaffer stays close to the DP for instructions, and, in turn, instructs the electrical staff: the best boy and lamp operators. The electrical department will also install the lights that are to be snapped on and off during the performance. These lights may be overhead fixtures, wall fixtures, or table lamps. If a fixture in a set has to be functional during a performance, it is called *practical;* if the same fixture is not operative in the set, it is called *set dressing.* For instance: during a day sequence, a table lamp will be *set dressing,* while the same lamp will be *practical* if it is lit or has to be switched on and off during a night sequence.

When filming is done on a sound stage, the key grip determines whether a wall, a part of a wall, or some fixture needs to be moved into, or taken out of, the set; how a dolly track or plywood "dance floor" has to be laid; whether a backdrop is required beyond a window for either a day or night sequence. A wall that is moved in and out of a set is known as a *fly wall* or *wild wall.* When scenes take place at outdoor locations, the grip also determines the equipment that will be required for laying dolly tracks, etc.

The set decorator has already installed a few pieces of furniture and decor. The director may approve, or may suggest changes.

The boom operator observes where the dialogue and action are taking place and informs the sound mixer where best to station the recorder panel. The boom operator also determines the best position for the boom (or fishpole) microphone. If pre-set floor mikes are used, they will be placed strategically so as to be hidden from camera range. The boom and floor microphones record all the sound and dialogue that takes place in the scene. Sometimes, when neither boom nor floor mikes are feasible, actors have to be *wired for sound.* That means, an actor is outfitted with a tiny microphone (called a lavaliere) attached invisibly to clothing as close to the actor's mouth as possible. A wire is run from the microphone—under clothing—to a separate tiny radio transmitter also hidden somewhere on the body under clothing. The dialogue is thus transmitted to the sound panel. This "radio mike" technique is customarily used for filming outdoors, when actors engage in dialogue while walking in a park, along a street, or while riding in a vehicle. Otherwise, the boom microphone (a long pole, hand-held or mounted on its own dolly) is used to pick up and transmit all the sounds to the sound mixer, who turns to the *mixing panel* and adjusts the quality and level of the sound before the signal is relayed to a *Nagra* (analog) or a *DAT* (Digital Audio Tape) recorder.

The property master provides all the hand props and stage props described in the script, or assures the director that they will be ready when needed.

The special effects technicians will have made ready the proper installation of all the practical fixtures called for in the scene: running water from a

sink faucet or a garden hose, gas burning on a stove, wood burning in a fireplace, breakaway articles, explosions—all the contrivances conjured by the writer. If the script indicates special weather conditions—rain, wind, fog, or snow—the special effects technicians will have installed the necessary equipment ready for action.

THE WALK-THROUGH

After the director has blocked the set for camera and made it ready for rehearsal, the actors walk through their moves, again. The scene is rehearsed as many times as the director deems necessary to make adjustments in the blocking or to try variations to heighten or intensify the dynamics of the scene.

If stand-ins are required, they watch the actors' movements closely so they can repeat the action exactly for the lighting technicians. Customarily, every principal actor has a stand-in. Usually, the stand-ins resemble the actors somewhat physically, especially in height, as that affects their lighting. For the same reason, it is required that a stand-in's attire be similar in color and texture to the attire worn by the actor.

As continuity supervisor, it is of utmost importance that you pay close attention to all the rehearsals, for you must recognize every deviation from the written dialogue and/or business. Furthermore, your continuity script must record every detail that differs from what appears in the film.

During this space of time, the director may also express some concepts regarding coverage (Chapter 12). You will hear these comments: "I want to get a two shot of Hillary and Bill . . . a close-up of Albert . . . a tight three at the door . . . and an insert of the calendar." You should make careful notations of these comments. They are important reminders for later coverage shots.

In the course of the blocking (and repeated rehearsals), you will become steeped in the dynamics of the scene. This will prove invaluable when doing coverage (Chapter 12).

NOTE: You are not always in the fortunate position of observing rehearsals. Occasionally, scenes get filmed without rehearsals. With experience, you will rise to the occasion.

MARKING THE ACTORS

When the director and the DP are satisfied with the blocking of the scene, the DP announces, "Mark 'em." That's an instruction for the camera second assistant to place a small piece of colored tape or a chip of wood at the feet of the actors where they stand at the start of the scene and again at each stopping point of their designated moves. The camera 1st assistant stretches a tape measure from the camera to the actors' noses in each of their positions. These

measurements of distances between the subject and the camera permit the camera assistant to maintain the correct lens focus as the actors make their moves during filming.

LIGHTING WITH STAND-INS

When the actors have been marked, they leave the set and the stand-ins (if needed) take their places. The electrical crew then proceeds with the lighting, while the other craftspeople ready the furnishings and dressings that are featured in the scene.

NOTE: The huge vintage lighting equipment that once produced enormous heat has been replaced by a wide variety of modern, smaller lamps that generate a fraction of the earlier heat and, furthermore, can diffuse more enhancing lighting on the actors. These lights—plus the advent of ultrafast color film which requires very little light—eliminates the need for both actors and stand-ins to suffer under large banks of hot lamps as in years past.

ACTIVITIES WHILE WAITING FOR THE SET

During the period when technicians are busy with the lighting, etc., the sound stage or location set undergoes a transformation: You will, perhaps, see a few people reading newspapers or the "trades" (*Hollywood Reporter* and *Daily Variety*), or working a crossword puzzle, knitting, telephoning stockbrokers, or taking a nap.

This interval may afford you some free time, but don't count on it—especially when shooting for television. You may snatch a few minutes to grab a cup of coffee and the ubiquitous doughnut, or dash out to the washroom—something you cannot do while shooting is in progress, no matter how urgently nature calls. (When asked what is an essential prerequisite for a continuity supervisor, I reply, "A strong bladder.") I also recommend that you keep a raincoat, overshoes, and umbrella handy for rainy days. The washrooms on a studio lot or at location sets are usually a distance from the sound stages, and for good reason: the flushing of toilets comes through the sound system like the roar of a wounded buffalo, with a disastrous result upon the scene in progress. (A word of advice: It is imperative that you inform the 1st A.D. or 2nd A.D. that you are leaving the stage or [if on location] the set. They will need to cover for you if something urgent arises.)

The possibility that you will indulge in any of the aforementioned pastimes is remote. In all probability, you will be preoccupied making notes for the editor, or reviewing the next shot, or answering questions: Who's in the next shot, what's the time element, details of wardrobe, makeup, props, or set dressing;

or perhaps a member of the executive staff will want to know: the time of the first take, how many setups are planned, how many pages in this sequence, how long will this scene run, etc., etc., etc.? Your responses to all questions must be quick and accurate.

If revised pages have been distributed, you may have to use this (leisure?) time to update your script. It is essential that you keep your script pages up to the minute. There will be many times when yours will be the only script that is current and complete. For such interludes, your laptop computer may prove extremely useful.

CUING ACTORS

During the lighting interval, an actor may ask you to "run lines." This is another important facet of your craft. Running lines means cuing (prompting) actors with dialogue while they study and memorize their speeches. Frequently, you may have to be present wherever the actor happens to be: in dressing rooms, at makeup tables, or somewhere away from the set.

There is a basic method for cuing: you speak the sentence (or last few words) of the preceding speech that leads into your actor's next speech.

You may also be called upon to *run lines* with a group of actors who wish to rehearse their scene ensemble. This manner of rehearsal entails a slightly different cuing approach: you follow the dialogue as each actor recites his or her lines, and, when one of the actors falters, you will prompt (cue) with the first couple of words of the missed speech. Some actors have a preference as to how they like to be cued. You should become adept at this. Of course, if the company hires a dialogue coach, you will be spared. But, be sure to check with the coach for any alterations that may affect your continuity script.

SCENE READING

Sometimes the director wishes to have a scene reading. For this, the performers convene with the director in a quiet corner or in one of the dressing rooms. As the actors recite their speeches and the director stresses the fine points of motivation and interpretation, you will make note of any suggested changes either in dialogue or business/action. Your notations may prove vitally important at the next rehearsal.

As you can see, your status during a shoot is anything but static. With experience, you will learn how to prioritize these extracurricular demands and use the time to your best advantage.

5

Camera
Rehearsals

As the stage crafts near the finish of their work, the D.P. signals the 1st A.D. that the stage is now ready for the *first team*: the principal actors. (The stand-ins are usually referred to as the *second team*.) Now, the 1st A.D. instructs the 2nd A.D. to once again summon the actors to the camera setup.

REHEARSALS PRIOR TO FILMING

The 1st A.D., having carefully watched all the operations taking shape, inquires of the director whether any foreseeable contingencies need to be addressed before the final dress rehearsal. If all is well, the 1st A.D. calls out, "Let's have a bell." The sound mixer activates a bell or buzzer. This is the signal for everyone in the vicinity of the set to refrain from chatting or creating noises. "Quiet!" yells the 1st A.D., and then addresses the actors with, "Places, everyone, please" or "On your marks, please." The stand-ins (if still there) leave the set, and the actors now move into their respective positions in the scene. At this juncture, the rehearsal will be a *dry-camera* rehearsal (no film turning). During every repeated rehearsal, it is advisable that you make only light pencil markings of the actors' movements; these may have to be erased when the scene is actually being filmed. By the same token, you should make bold notations during the filming that can be quickly spotted for matching the coverage shots. Invariably, you will discover that when the camera is rolling with the performance, the actors' actions do not always fall precisely at the same moment or on the same

words as in rehearsals. Remember: only the action and dialogue captured on film are your concerns for matching.

WARDROBE NOTES DURING REHEARSAL

While the actors make their way to the stage, you might take this opportunity to quickly jot a note or snap a picture of their wardrobe. Keep in mind, however, that actors do not always get into full proper attire until the last dress rehearsal. It is advisable to check with the costumers as to the actor's complete outfit. But be cautioned: your notes and pictures must reflect the exact wardrobe that is in the film—not the costumer's records, or your untimely photo. It bears repeating: Only what is put on film matters for matching purposes. As mentioned earlier, wardrobe accuracy is the responsibility of the wardrobe department. But as continuity supervisor, you are responsible for matching any modification in the state of the clothing that occur during the performance. Status of attire must match from shot to shot.

If you choose to make wardrobe notes (because using a Polaroid or digital camera is inconvenient), do write descriptive details: grey felt hat, brim down; black knit tie; maroon/blue diagonal-striped tie; pink polka-dot blouse inside white skirt; tan cardigan over short-sleeved blue shirt tucked inside blue jeans, etc. Abbreviate as much as possible. Sharp hieroglyphics instead of wordy descriptions are time saving and help you to quickly spot deviations in appearance.

REHEARSAL REFINEMENT

The first dry-camera rehearsal calls for the actors to go through their roles with a modicum of accuracy, so the camera operator, viewing the action through the camera lens, can make sure each move is correctly framed, composed, and in focus, and also that the boom mike following the actors does not edge into the picture frame or cast a shadow onto the performers or the area being photographed.

The dolly grip also concentrates on the rehearsals—to become familiar with the performance. Frequently, the dolly grip will ask you on which word of dialogue an actor will make a move; the dolly grip must anticipate this action in order to instantly push the camera to its next position. From your script notes, you should be able to give an instant response.

The actors rehearse a scene several times—each time more smoothly, more expressively, more emotionally. The director watches for dramatic impact, the D.P. watches for lighting perfection, and the camera operator watches for perfect framing and focus. And the scene is rehearsed as many times as necessary—until the director deems the performance ready to be committed to film.

PROMPTING ACTORS

During rehearsals, your eyes must closely follow the actors' dialogue. Most important, listen for ad libs, altered phrasing, or switched lines. When this occurs, get the director's approval for such changes. If the director disapproves, then the actor must be corrected promptly. The director will speak to the actor, or instruct you to do so. Sometimes an altered phrase might mean the same, but if the proper word cue is omitted, the vis-à-vis actor may be confused and cause an unnecessary holdup, or it may spoil the dialogue's rhythm. This is especially critical in comedy.

It is vitally important that you know your script backwards and forwards; then you can instantly recognize a changed word or phrase that conflicts with previous or subsequent scenes. The inconsistency must be corrected before the actor commits the incorrect words to memory or, worse, to film. Be on the alert particularly for inaccuracies in the mention of a date, an address, an amount of money, or the time on a clock. If the director opts to keep the altered version—but it impinges on a preceding or subsequent scene—you will have to make the changes in the affected script pages without delay, and also alert any personnel who must conform: actor, prop master, costumer, etc. By the same token, if the change conflicts with a scene that has already been filmed, then the dialogue and/or action in the scene at hand must remain as written. Be on the alert, also, for the proper pronunciation of names and technical terms. It is your responsibility during repeated rehearsals to catch and correct any variations from the script. Should an unacceptable ad lib or a mispronounced word occur during the filming, it may mandate a (costly) retake of a scene.

During run-throughs (rehearsals) an actor may hoarsely whisper, "I'm up," or "Line!" Those words are for your ears. The actor has forgotten the next speech, or part of it. And it is up to you to "throw the line." During all rehearsals you should closely follow the dialogue on the page so you can prompt the urgent line without missing a beat. In bygone days there was a caveat: You may "throw a line" during rehearsals, but never while the camera is rolling. However, the reversal of this rule—in present-day shooting—is addressed in due course (Chapter 7).

TIMING THE REHEARSALS

At the first really refined rehearsal of the master scene, you should activate your stopwatch and attempt to get an overall timing of the performance. If fluffs in dialogue or action, or technical malfunctions cause stops and starts, be sure to click off your stopwatch at the break points and be ready to instantly click it on again at the precise word or action that continues the scene. Thus, you can arrive at an approximate running time of the shot.

A good habit is to clock every rehearsal. By comparing the result of each timing, you will acquire a good sense of the pacing of the performance. It may

tend to speed up or slow down. If the variance is significant, discuss your finding with the director. The practice of constantly operating your stopwatch during rehearsals will sharpen your accuracy in timing a performance while the camera is rolling (Chapter 8: Timing the Performance).

With experience, you will acquire the skill of automatically operating the stopwatch while simultaneously writing, seeing, hearing and speaking. It becomes second nature.

DRESS REHEARSAL

After several rehearsals, and after all the creative and technical components of the scene have been fine-tuned, the director will declare, "Let's have a dress rehearsal." That calls for a final disciplined run-through with proper tempo, dramatic fervor, accurate wardrobe, functioning props, and camera moves—exactly as if the scene were being filmed. (But there may be one distracting detail: the white tissues tucked into the collars of the performers to prevent makeup from soiling their garments. These tissues will be removed in good time.)

During final dress rehearsal, be keenly aware of actors' spontaneous overt actions. Jot down a key word or a symbol at the appropriate spot on the page. This will be treasured information should the actor ask you, "What did I do when I said such-and-such?"

NUMBER THE SPEECHES

When the dress rehearsal is pretty well locked in (and the performance is ready for the camera), you may choose to include another detail onto your script page: add a consecutive number for each speech within the scene. (The reason is explained in Chapter 10, Page 126.)

SHOT DESCRIPTION*

Between rehearsals, you will have opportunity to write the *shot description* of the scene about to be filmed. This is a vital component in your continuity script. Shot description means a pithy summary of the action in the scene, including the camera moves. This legend is written on the blank left-hand page facing the script scene page. Following is an example of a shot description.

Start MS angle: toward office door. Smith enters. Pan his walk X-L-R to doorway into Charles (Chas.) office. Hold Full 4/Sh over Smith L-should to 3

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*See Appendix: A for a comprehensive list of abbreviations used in shot descriptions.

seated at desk: Chas, Mary, Bert—dial—As Smith moves fg to desk, DI to Tite/4: Smith (stg), Chas, Mary, Bert—dial—Mary rises and exits shot R-L; Smith follows, DI to Tite/2: Chas & Bert—dial—Chas rises and exits shot R-L—ZI to CU Bert. He rises, picks up phone, dials, talks and XG/ R-L. (Exits out of shot right to left.)

When writing shot descriptions, develop the habit of listing the names of characters in their respective positions (standing or seated) as seen in the camera. Train yourself to see and note all persons and objects in their relative positions (left to right) within the camera frame. For example, in the master (Full Shot) Chas is on camera left (CL) seated right of Mary, and Mary is on camera right (CR) seated left of Chas. In writing the shot description of their closer two shot, do not write 2/Sh: Mary and Chas. Record them as they appeared in the Master: Chas and Mary. In that way, you will never make the mistake of placing characters in incorrect positions during coverage—the blight of "wrong looks."

YOUR PLACE AT THE CAMERA

Always position yourself as close to the camera's viewpoint as possible, even if you have to crouch on the floor or stand on a ladder (Figure 5.1).

It is of utmost importance that you observe the scene from the camera's angle, not from the periphery of its vision. Your immediate concern is the image that is in the camera frame at any given angle, whether the camera is stationary or moving. Therefore, you must choose the best vantage point from which to see and hear every nuance of action and dialogue during the filming. You may even have to diplomatically ask someone (perhaps even the executive producer) to move to another spot so that he or she is not blocking your vision. By the same token, you should not, in your zeal to get the best view, block the director's vision. Another caution: during rehearsals or filming, always be sure to sit or stand out of the range of an actor's eyeline. Your constant hand movements and turning of pages may distract an actor's concentration. Some performers become unnerved by this distraction.

When the set is lit for filming, the rest of the surrounding area is in darkness. Years ago, this was a problem for the continuity supervisor: trying to read the script page. But today, you can purchase various attachable book lights which are practical for use on the set. (Should your book light fail, the electrical department can accommodate you with a work light [Figure 5.1].)

THE VIDEO MONITOR AND COMTEC

The admonition mentioned earlier: viewing the scene from a close position to the camera—has been obviated by modern technology: A video monitor

Figure 5.1

placed a distance from the set, accompanied by earphones and a Comtec* allows you to view the shot exactly as the camera sees it and the sound recorder hears it. Most all departments today avail themselves of this device.

The video signal is sent by wire or radio transmitter to the monitor from a video tap (a tiny camera) within the body of the film camera. Thus, rehearsals and actual takes can be viewed. But I caution your relying on the monitor for matching purposes. It may be adequate for the basic information: frame lines and points of dialogue when actors enter and exit the frame; but the monitor's two dimensionality and lack of sharp screen resolution may be less reliable for accurate match-related details.

The most ideal solution is: watch the actual performance during repeated camera rehearsals to become familiar with the dialogue and get a firm feel of the physical moves for essential matching. Then, when the camera rolls, you will watch the video monitor with confidence and follow the dialogue via the headset and Comtec.**

CAUTION: The sound department furnishes you with the earphones (headset) and the Comtec. When you are finished with these two items at the end of the day, you must return them to the sound department without fail.

*The Comtec is a small battery-powered wireless radio receiver pack with a socket to plug in your earphones. The gadget can be clipped onto your belt or your desk.

**There is a new vicinity on a movie set today. It is humorously called: Video Village. Here, a number of video monitors may be set up—at a distance from the shooting area—surrounded by a group of chairs for the assemblage of interested personnel who can sit (or stand) and watch rehearsals as well as the filming of scenes. The modern expediency obviates the former inconvenience of crowding around the camera.

6

The Slating
Syndrome

During principal photography, every camera shot is identified via a slate number. This number is the umbilical cord that connects the editor with the director, the sound mixer, the film processing laboratory, and the continuity supervisor.

THE SLATE

Early filmmakers pondered a modality for providing a line of communication between the stage—wherever principal photography takes place—and the cutting (editing) room. The scheme devised remains today the time-honored *slate*. And the assigning of slate numbers—during principal photography—remains the unequivocal jurisdiction of the continuity supervisor. Your daily notes together with the Editor's Log are the initial frame of reference the editor receives prior to the processed film.

The traditional slate (Figure 6.1) is a square piece of black wood; hinged at the top are two black and white striped bars. When the two bars are snapped together, it emits the sound of a *clap*. The camera 2nd assistant operates the slate (sometimes called the clapper).

The sound of the clap (on the audio track) together with the image of the slate (on film) provide the precise alignment points for the editor to synchronize both elements.

Figure 6.1
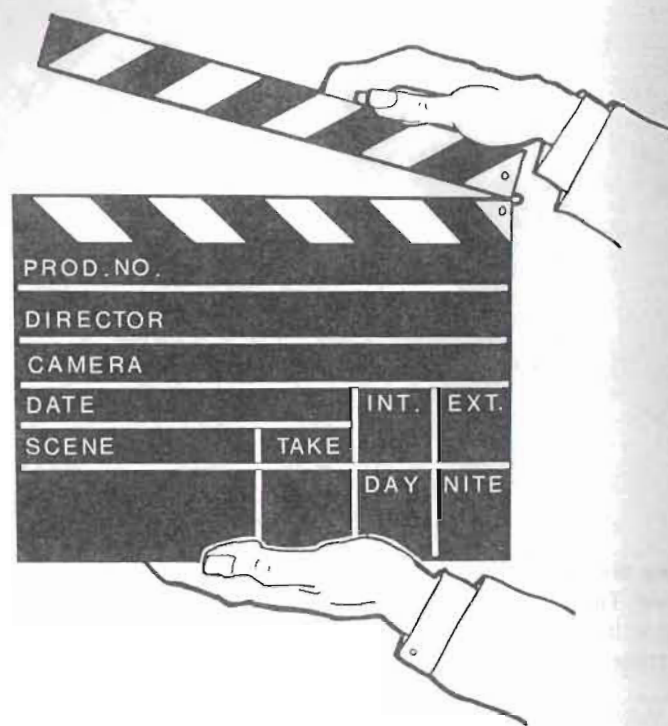
THE SMART SLATE

When the phenomenal digital computerized nonlinear film editing (DNLE) consoles superseded the earlier editing devices (Moviola), the standard slate also underwent cosmetic enhancement, plus an electronic implant. The new model (Figure 6.2) is similar to the traditional slate with its attached black and white striped clapper sticks. But the body is now made from a rectangular piece of (usually) white plastic, and features a timecode apparatus.

> NOTE: The Smart Slate is used *only* for shots where sound is to be recorded; it is turned off for shots without sound (MOS, SIL). According to legend, the term MOS originated with a foreign director who once gave the order: "Vee shoot dis mit out sound." A crew member then coined the acronym: MOS. It remains in use to this day.

Figure 6.2
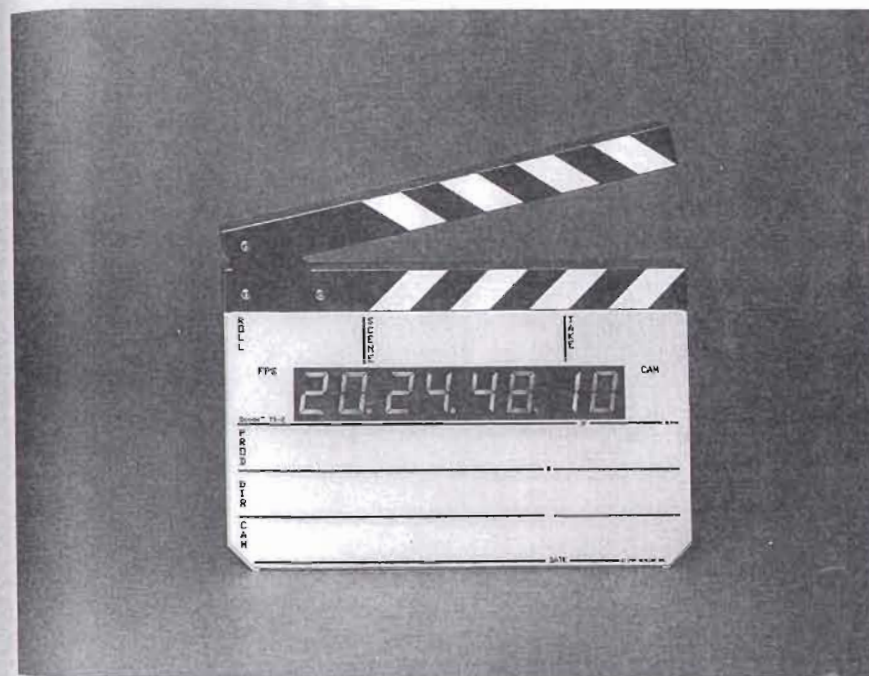
Smart Slate (*Courtesy of Denecke, Inc.*)

TIMECODE

The term denotes a standard electronic marking process that identifies each frame of picture, sound, or videotape. On the face of the slate is a digital display: a timecode module. On its back is a small battery (Figure 6.3). When that battery is activated—by raising the clapper arm—the row of large red numbers lights up and runs like a digital clock. The illuminating element is known as: LED (Light Emitting Diode). The signal displayed is in the form of hours, minutes, seconds, and frames. Example: 20:24:48:10 translates to: twenty hours, twenty-four minutes, forty-eight seconds, ten frames. These running numbers correspond to the identical timecode functioning in the computerized digital editing console and—via an electrical device—the flashing digits also correspond to the identical audio timecode generated in the contemporary sound recorder, known as DAT (Digital Audio Tape).

Figure 6.3
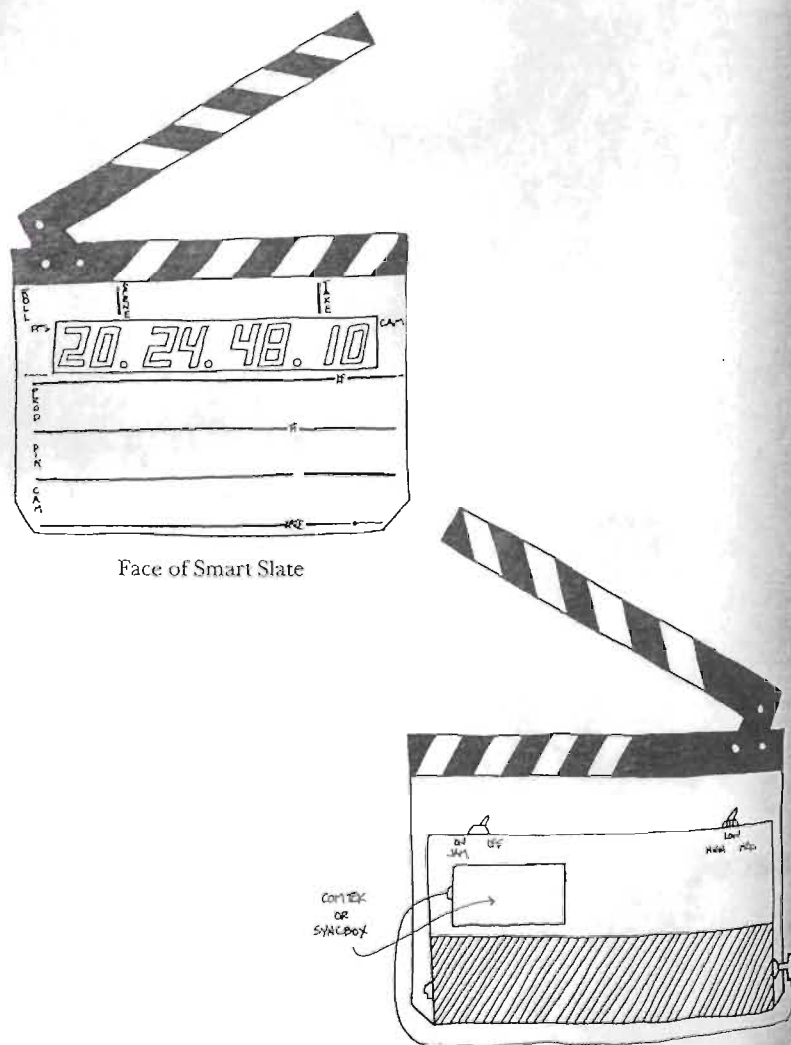
Face of Smart Slate

Back of Smart Slate

Courtesy of Denecke, Inc.

Prior to making a take, the camera assistant opens the clapper sticks, which activates the LED that lights up the panel on the face of the slate and starts the running of its numbers. For the length of the time the clapper stick is raised, the timecode digits run continuously—until the impact of the clap. At that moment, the flashing digits stop running and freeze in place. It is this pre-

cise timecode number—displayed to the camera and simultaneously recorded digitally on the audio track—that marks the sync point. And this is the methodology that launched the automated synchronization of picture and sound. The merging of the two media is processed at the film lab or at the telecine house.

> NOTE: At the beginning of each shooting day—depending on the mode of shoot—the smart slate is sync-generated by someone either in the sound or camera department. The operation involves the *jamming* of the smart slate with the specific timecode required for the particular shoot.

And now that you have been afforded a cursory delineation of the Smart Slate—your chief concern is to be sure that the correct scene and take numbers are displayed on the slate for each and every take.

METHODS OF SLATING

There are two systems for slate numbering:

1. Via script scene numbers. This is the most commonly used method.
2. Via consecutive numbers (also called numerical slating).

When using consecutive number slating, the routine is: On the first day of shooting, you will announce: "Slate number one (1)" regardless of where the scene occurs numerically in the script. Subsequently, no matter what the next shot happens to be, you will announce: "Slate number two (2)." Slate #1 may apply to Scene 96, and slate #2 may apply to Scene 5.

Consecutive number slating mandates an added measure of clerical detail: it is imperative that you record—alongside the slate number—the script scene number being filmed. This detail must assiduously be adhered to—and notated in your shot description page, your Daily Continuity Log and, especially, in your Daily Editor's Log. Subsequently, every shot—no matter where it appears in the script—will carry the next consecutive number, with an accurate scene number alongside. Without the vital reference numbers, it would be virtually impossible for the editor to assemble the disjointed (nonlinear/out-of-continuity) pieces of film in proper sequence.

THE SLATING PROCESS

During principal photography, the slating procedure is as follows: You announce the appropriate slate number; the slate operator affixes the number to the slate, and the sound mixer speaks the number into the audio mixing panel's microphone for recording on the Nagra or the DAT.

The visual and audio components function separately. The action (visual) element is rendered on film, while the dialogue and nonverbal sounds (audio)

are rendered on magnetic tape. The two components are synchronized and interlocked during the editing phase. When picture and sound are not in sync, the actors' lip formations do not fit the sounds of their words. If actors are not adept at lip-syncing, the editor may have to resort to the tactic of cutting away from the on-camera character and laying in the sound of the clear dialogue over another character's face.

A new slate number is announced and photographed:

- Every time the camera is repositioned.
- Every time the camera lens is changed—even when the camera remains in the same position. The recording of lens sizes is automatically the responsibility of the slate operator. However, when the matching of cuts is involved, it is advisable that you also notate the lens size in your script notes.
- Every time there is a pick-up shot at a different starting point on the script page (see Chapter 7: The Pick-Up Shot).

MIS-SLATE

When the camera assistant holds up the slate at the start of a shot (*head slate*), always look to see if all the information on it is correct. If you notice any error, alert the slate operator to be prepared at the finish of the shot to *end slate* (sometimes called *end marker, end sticks,* or *tail slate*). Also notify the sound mixer to voice the correct slate number. Immediately upon completion of the shot— and before both the camera operator and sound mixer switch off—the slate operator will shout "End slate" or "Tail slate" and will hold up the corrected slate (in upside-down position). The slate will be photographed—*without the clap sound.* Should the camera have been switched off prematurely, there will be no end/tail slate pictured on that piece of film. Therefore, if that happens, the camera operator will immediately switch the camera on and the slate will be duly photographed. Thus, the editor will be apprised of the incorrect head slate. If a head slate is not corrected via an end slate, it is your responsibility to advise the editor of that incorrect slate number. It is essential to mark "E/S" or "T/S" (for end slate or tail sticks) alongside the slate number listed in your script notes, in the Daily Continuity Log, and in the Daily Editor's Log.

END SLATE/TAIL STICKS

At times, it may be impractical to clap the slate at the start of a shot: when photographing animals or sleeping babies who would be startled by the sharp sound. Such a disturbance could impede the shooting process. For those shots, usually the camera assistant's hand motion is photographed as the *head slate.* This silent signal alerts the editor that there is an identifying slate number at the tail end of the shot—held upside down and without the clap.

THE TAKE

A *take* means that an action has been recorded in the camera and/or on the sound track. Takes are recorded consecutively with each slate number: written on the left-hand page facing the script page. The action may be repeated as many times as necessary. If you change the slate number, the corresponding take numbers must begin with number one (1) and run consecutively for each additional take.

When a take is acceptable, the director calls: Print. That announcement is an instruction for you, the slate operator, and the sound mixer to circle that take number on your respective reports. The circle signifies that this piece of *negative* film is to be developed and printed onto *positive* film at the laboratory. It is filmic tradition to indicate the printed take by circling the number. Some people note the word "print," alongside the number.

If the director requests another shot of the printed take, you will announce the next consecutive *take* number. The slate operator and the sound mixer will mark their records accordingly. You should always ask the director the reason for repeating a take, and notate the reason alongside the take number in your records.

THE RUNNING PICK-UP

Contemporary acting disciplines sometimes dispense with the time-honored routine of slating additional take numbers. Consequently, now when something goes awry in the performance, the practice is to make corrections without stopping the camera to reslate.

With the camera rolling, the director prompts the actors to "pick up": go back and correct the faulty dialogue and/or action—then resume to the end of the scene in progress. When this occurs, you must make notation for the editor alongside that take number: running pick-up.

This now-common practice imposes on the editor the task of juggling the film until the spot where pick-up of the scene is viable. The procedure may save some production time during photography, but it has an impact on the editor's valuable editing time—searching for a salient continuation point in the master shot—not to mention wasted film. However, the consensus is: the expense incurred is offset considerably by the high speed efficiency of the computerized editing consoles now in use.

OUT TAKES

Takes that are listed but not printed are called *out takes.* These takes may be complete or incomplete. It is good policy to clock and notate the running time each take. The reason is: on occasion, a flaw (scratch, fog) caused in the laboratory will appear in a strip of film. The editor will immediately refer to the

left-hand page of your continuity script and search for an out take. Your noted timings and the reasons for not printing those takes will tell the editor whether there is sufficient footage in those out takes to replace the defects in the master film. With judicious cutting, several out takes can be intercut with the good portions of the damaged strip of film. Thus, the editor can salvage the original sequence and avert a costly retake.

Another reason for timing each take: the camera 1st assistant (who closely watches the camera film gauge) may ask you, "Will 120 feet of film in the magazine be sufficient for the next take, or should the camera be reloaded?" Based on your timings of the recorded takes, you should be able to respond decisively.

Much depends on your quick and accurate reply: (a) By not spending time to reload the camera, the mood of the scene is preserved, and valuable time on the set is saved; and (b) utilizing the maximum of film in the magazine diminishes the waste of raw stock *short ends*—this can be cost effective for a small production company.

The more distressing and costly mistake is to begin a shot and *run out* of film. Therefore, your timing of every take will dictate whether or not the scene in question can be shot with the amount of film in the magazine (see Appendix B: Conversion Table and Conversion Chart).

RETAKES

When it is necessary to redo a printed shot because of questionable performance or any other reason, the new shot is called a *retake*. To slate a retake: use the original slate number and precede it with an R (for retake). This is an essential detail that applies to both scene-number and consecutive-number slating. For the consecutive-numbered slate, be sure to notate in your script notes and the editor's log the *scene number* that corresponds to the original consecutive slate number.

MULTIPLE CAMERAS*

When shooting with more than one camera, a prominent letter is attached to the outside of each camera, identifying it as A-camera, B-camera, C-camera, and so on. The slates, likewise, are marked: A, B, C. (On some productions—to further differentiate—the slate for each camera is of a different color plastic: white for A, yellow for B, green for C, etc.)

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*It is advisable to include in your deal memo that you will receive additional pay when multiple cameras are used.

Figure 6.4
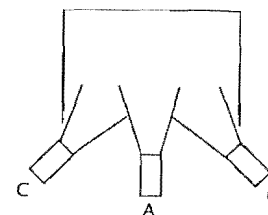
Camera Positions

It is necessary to write a separate shot description of the subject matter and actors' moves in each camera; also include the lens sizes, the distances between the subjects and the camera, and the directional moves, if any, of each camera.

A helpful hint: Always note on which side of A-camera the other cameras are positioned. This will preclude any mishap with regard to directions or progression when filming *coverage* for that sequence. Often, in staging a scene, a character may walk out of the range of B-camera into the range of A-camera, or vice versa. To be sure of accurate screen direction: draw a diagram of a three-walled space with configurations that denote the camera positions. Place the diagram either in the right-hand margin of the script page, level with the scene number, or on the left-hand page with the shot description.

THE COMMON SLATE

When two or more cameras are positioned to shoot in proximity to one another, a more efficient method called *common markers* may be employed. Prior to the take, each camera separately photographs its own slate (without sound). And the camera letter is displayed prominently along with the correct scene and take numbers. When all cameras start to roll for the take, a camera assistant displays *only one slate* (the smart slate) and shouts: "Common Marker!"— then claps it in view of all cameras. This is a timesaving measure compared to voicing *separate markers*: "A Marker" (clap), "B Marker" (clap), "C Marker" (clap), and so forth.

SLATING AUXILIARY SCENE NUMBERS

When the director shoots additional camera angles and close-ups that complement one script scene number, each camera shot mandates a separate slate number. These shots should be regarded as auxiliary scenes, and you should assign suitable slate numbers to each.

The routine for designating auxiliary numbers is to append a letter of the alphabet to the written script scene number. Let us assume that Scene 26 is *broken up* (covered) with a reverse angle and several closer shots. The slate for the original shot will read: 26. Each additional shot will be slated: 26A, 26B, 26C, etc. The letters may run the gamut from A through Z.

> NOTE: The letters "I" and "O" are excluded from slate numbers, script page numbers, and script-scene numbers. It is standard industry practice. The reason is: the letter "I" may be mistaken for the number "1" (one) and the letter "O" may be mistaken for the number "0" (zero). If additional shots need to be linked to the auxiliary numbers, the typical format is to double the letters: 26AA, 26AB, 26AC, etc.; then onto 26BA, 26BB, 26BC; then 26CA, 26CB, 26CC, etc.

When appending letters of the alphabet to a scene number marked on the slate, it is customary that you enunciate names of people, places, or objects whose initial letter is the clue: Adam, Baker, Charley, David, or Albany, Boston, Chicago, Denver, or apple, banana, cookie, dog. For doubling letters, announce: Double Adam, Double Baker, Baker Apple, Boston Charlie. Or, if you prefer, announce double letters: Adam Adam, Baker Baker, and so on. (Often, I purposely change the familiar names, using Cabana for Charlie, Devil for David, and so forth. It breaks up the monotony and assures me that camera and sound are accurately repeating my slate designations.)

ALTERNATE NUMBERING METHOD

There is an alternate method of numbering auxiliary shots: Instead of appending letters of the alphabet to scene numbers, append numbers: 26-1, 26-2, 26-3, and so forth; or use an "x" instead of the dash: 26x1, 26x2, 26x3, etc. This format allows a more expansive range of successive numbers when a scene involves extensive coverage. The alphabet mode sometimes gets clumsy and confusing with doubled and tripled letters.

The aforementioned consecutive numbering system precludes mis-slated numbers and saves shooting time on the set.

SLATING EXTRANEOUS SCENES

At times, you will be confronted with a script in which extraneous scenes, such as montages, flashbacks, and points of view, are written within one scene number. A case in point: refer to Chapter 2, page 20. In that scene, the actor verbalizes what is being shown on three projected slides. As mentioned earlier, these slide scenes may be transformed into filmed master scenes. Shooting-wise, you should regard such integrated scenes as *auxiliary master scenes*. But these numbers must not be construed as added script-scene numbers.

> NOTE: Any auxiliary number appended to a script-scene number during shooting *does not alter* (add to) the original total of the written script scenes.

Let us analyze the short scene depicted in the above-mentioned chapter. By means of dialogue and projected slides, the writer disclosed what may be interpreted cinematically as three montage sequences. But the writer failed to allot individual script-scene numbers for them. This is a shortcoming within the script-writing format. Nevertheless, as continuity supervisor, you have to be prepared for any circumstance. In this case—to identify the above-mentioned montage sequences—I prescribe that you precede the slate number with an "M" to stand for montage. Then append a letter (or a number)—depending on your preference—to each described slide: the first slide: M23A (M23x1); the second slide: M23B (M23x2); the third slide: M23C (M23x3), and so forth. As mentioned earlier, the sequential takes for each slate will begin with number one.

If the above sequences happened to be in the nature of *flashbacks*, the letter preceding number 23 would be "F" (for flashback).

Now, suppose the director opts to cover (break up with close-ups) each of the three montage master shots. In this event, you would number the first slide: M23AA (M23x1A); for the second slide: M23BA, (M23x2A); and, for the third slide: M23CA (M23x3A), and so forth. This numbering convention enables the editor to simply and unerringly assemble the continuity of the three filmed montages into the master scene number 23.

For normal coverage of the script's original master-scene number 23, slate numbering would follow the conventional format.

> CAUTION: When you employ the numerical slating system, be sure to place an "M" or an "F" (as the case may be) to precede every consecutive number that relates to the montage or flashback episodes. Thus, it is made clear to the editor that any slate number preceded by an "M" or an "F" belongs to the montage sequence within the master scene written in the script.

SLATING PICTURE WITHOUT SOUND TRACK

When scenes are to be filmed without a corresponding sound recording, you must announce this fact when *voicing* the slate number. The slate operator will mark the slate MOS. And, if using the smart slate, the flashing code numbers will not be activated when the slate is held up to the camera. Additionally, an experienced camera assistant will hold the slate in such position—with the clapper-arm fully opened—so that the clapper cannot fall to a closed position—even accidentally.

Filming of inserts, trick shots, and slow and fast motion is mostly done without recording sound simultaneously. In such case, be sure to notate MOS

or SIL alongside the recorded slate numbers in your continuity script, your Daily Continuity Log, and your Daily Editor's Log. In years past, when the camera rolled at other than the standard 24 frames per second (fps), sound would era rolled at other than the standard 24 frames per second (fps), sound would never be recorded simultaneously. Today, it is not uncommon for sound to roll on almost every shot even when camera speeds are other than 24 fps—and even when the camera speed varies *during* the shot. The sound mixer will voice slate the recording with the same slate number as the camera but add verbally: No clap sticks . . . rolling wild for effects only. Your script notes should accurately and completely describe this situation, noting (a) at what speed(s) the camera ran, (b) that the shot had a head ID slate but no clap sticks, and (c) that sound rolled wild to pick up whatever sound effects were present.

SLATING WILD FILM FOOTAGE

Scenes not written in the script but filmed at random—wherever and however they happen—are referred to as *wild footage.* These may be scenes of casual street activity, riots, scenes of disaster, public demonstrations, or the like.

Wild footage is often filmed with hand-held cameras, and sometimes even without slates. You will need to call out the shot numbers, to the sound mixer who will voice them into the recorder (Nagra or DAT).

For slating wild footage, you should employ an arbitrary high number—say, 500—and precede it with WF (for *wild footage*): WF500, WF501, and so forth. Also, write a terse shot description of the filmed subject matter. Include it in your script notes and forward a copy to the editor. If wild film footage (WF) shots are made without an accompanying sound track, the slate must also be marked MOS or SIL. In the haste to capture random footage, scenes sometimes are caught by the camera without benefit of slate or sound track. In that event, you will have to confer with the camera personnel as soon as possible—and write up a shot description of each scene or subject that was filmed. Keep this list of wild-footage shots—with identifying numbers and dates—and send a copy to the editor.

SLATING WILD TRACKS FOR PICTURE

Recorded sound tracks that are not synchronized with the rolling of the camera are called *wild tracks.* Wild tracks are recorded for the "practical" sounds that are heard in a scene: a food blender, a ringing phone, an idling automobile, a running vacuum cleaner, a door slamming, or the noise from any object that makes a sound in a scene during dialogue. Although the flexibility and selectivity of modern recording techniques have increased enormously and allow the recording of much "live" background sound during a scene, certain sounds cannot be recorded simultaneously with the rolling camera because they are too obtrusive and obliterate the dialogue.

It is preferable to record practical wild tracks while in the aura of the working set. In that way, the *room tone* will be compatible when the film is being

edited. (Room tone is defined in Chapter 16.) As it is not always expedient to record the practical sounds while in the actual set, you should conspicuously note SFX (for *sound effects*) in the right-hand margin of the page at the line where the sound must fall in the scene. This will alert the editor to either look for a set-recorded wild track, or be prepared to order the appropriate sound from a sound library. Sometimes wild tracks may be recorded right after the respective camera shot is completed. But often, in the interest of cost efficiency, the recording of such tracks is put off to the end of the day, after the camera crew has wrapped. Therefore, you must keep an accurate, cumulative list of all the necessary wild tracks so that when the often-rushed, end-of-day recording session descends, you will be prepared and ensure that no essential wild tracks are overlooked. Of course, your Daily Editor's Log must also list all the wild tracks recorded that day.

Furthermore, it is advisable that you prepare an accurate list—with respective scene numbers—of all the wild tracks written into the script, and include any incidental wild tracks that were recorded during the filming. Give a copy of this record to the editor.

Another procedure: scheduling a recording session for a future date, at which time every required wild track for each scene will be recorded. At this session, you will announce the slate number that corresponds to each filmed scene. The sound mixer "voices" the slate number into the recorder, preceding it with "WT" (for *wild track*). The property master will activate the appliances or create sounds of the objects that were featured in the scenes. The appropriate sounds will be duly recorded. And you will mark your script page at the proper spot: WT (the number), then draw a wiggly line through the words that denote the sound (Chapter 10: Final Lined Continuity Script).

SLATING OFF-CAMERA
(OFF-SCREEN) SOUNDS

When the sounds written in the script denote intrusions in the scene: a burst of thunder or lightning, footsteps, sirens, or any distinguishing noise—obviously, such intrusions cannot be rendered during the shooting of the scene. Instead, the director or a designated person in the company will either call out the nature of the "sound" or do a hand-clap as substitute for that sound to be heard in the scene. Again, you must conspicuously note SFX at the appropriate spot on the script page. The editor will obtain the necessary sound tracks from a sound library and fit them into the filmed scenes.

SLATING WILD SOUND

The term *wild sound* refers to any extraneous sounds that are not relevant to the script and are recorded separate from the camera. Such recordings are usually made during outdoor filming to capture environmental sounds: birds

chirping, dogs howling, hydraulic machines drilling, brass bands marching, or a helicopter whirling. The editor will intersperse these sounds wherever appropriate in the scenes during the final editing of the film.

For slating wild sound: use consecutive numbers, starting with XW1 (for *extraneous wild sound*), XW2, XW3, and so forth; and advise the sound mixer to do likewise. Also, list the sounds with a brief description, and notate the date and place where recorded. Send a copy of this list to the editor (who will also receive the customary report from the sound mixer).

SLATING MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS

Musical productions or musical numbers interpolated in dramatic scenes are filmed in the same manner as normal action and dialogue scenes, except the filming is done to *playback*. The songs that are sung and the music for dancing are prerecorded at a recording studio. During filming, the recordings are *played back* (PL/B) through large sound speakers on the set: the singers synchronize (*lip-sync*) their voices and the dancers perform their choreographed routines to the playback music. This technique was devised years ago in order to eliminate live orchestra accompaniment, which posed enormous staging problems and costs. The playback approach is also employed when a single musical instrument is portrayed: piano, violin, guitar, saxophone. In those instances, the actors' or doubles' hands feign the playing when the act is being filmed.

The Musical Director usually presides over a musical production in progress. But you, too, will follow the performance: watch the lip-syncing and the dancing in concert with the playback music. Each recording is assigned a separate PL/B number. You will also receive a copy of the sheet music, giving the title, lyrics, and/or musical score connected with each playback recording. The bars of music are numbered sequentially, so you can make critical notations at specific bars of music.

The routine is: you announce the scene or shot number together with the PL/B number. The slate operator affixes these numbers on the slate, and the sound mixer repeats them into the recording panel. This is a temporary sound track—used only for the dailies and as a guide track—to give the editor an inkling of what has transpired on the set. The finished film, of course, will include the correct professionally recorded sound track. Be sure to record in your script notes the PL/B number along with the slate number of every shot.

If stops and starts occur in the performance during a take, you should mark the precise music bar where these interruptions occurred; also, record the timing or the footage of each take. Such information is often helpful to the editor when editing and re-editing the film. It is also good policy to frequently check your notations with the music director—to make sure that you are in accord. Regarding the picture time of a musical number: you know, of course, that is predicated on the timing of the prerecorded music.

7

Getting the Scene on Film

At the completion of a satisfactory dress rehearsal, the director signals the 1st A.D.: "We're ready to roll," or "Ready to shoot." The 1st A.D. makes the announcement public. It is the signal for all concerned personnel to get to their appointed posts. The actors remain on set, and the 1st A.D. calls in the *wrecking crew*—an affectionate term for the makeup, hairdressing, and wardrobe people, who will enter the set to give last-minute finishing touches to the actors: the hairdresser smoothes a lock of hair; the costumer adjusts a wrinkle in a garment; the makeup artist mops the actors' perspiration, retouches their makeup, and, finally, removes the white tissues (if any) from the actors' collars.

FIRST SHOT OF THE DAY

As the crew leaves the set, the assistant director calls, "Places, please" (or some similar phrase). That's the cue for the performers to move into their respective starting positions in the scene, or the places from which they will make entrances onto the set. At the same time, the camera assistant picks up the colored tapes or wooden chips that marked each actor's primary and then stopped positions during rehearsals. And the gaffer may take this opportunity to make some last-minute lighting refinements.

When everything is ship-shape and the camera is in position, the director **signals the 1st A.D.:**

The **1st A.D.** shouts. ...."Let's have a bell."
The **Sound Mixer** presses a button
   on his panel...ONE BELL or BUZZ
   (This also activates the red light
   outside the sound stage door
   [when filming takes place at a
   traditional movie studio]. This
   sound warns that shooting is in
   progress and no one must enter
   or exit the stage door.)*
The 1st A.D. yells.."Quiet"
Dead silence engulfs the room and
   the magic of movie-making
   begins:
The Continuity Supervisor may
   call out ...."Scene 26, Take One"
   (The experienced Continuity
   Supervisor will have already
   communicated this information
   in advance, when possible, to the
   Camera Assistant and the Sound
   Mixer, thus preventing
   unnecessary last-minute shouting
   at the start of a take.)
The 1st A.D. calls.."Roll" or "Roll sound"
There is silence for a beat as the
   Sound Mixer waits for the
   recorder to come up to the
   correct speed and stabilize, and
   then voices the slate number
   into the recorder.
Sound Mixer.."Scene 26, Take one"
   (In many instances, when given
   the number in advance, the
   Sound Mixer will usually *pre-slate*
   [voice record the slate number
   on the tape in advance of the
   actual take]—to save time.)

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*When filming is not done within the confines of a traditional film studio—but out in the real world—the essential restrictions are administered verbally by the 1st and 2nd A.D.s, with the aid of walkie-talkies, walkie headsets, and bullhorns.

The Sound Mixer calls...................................."Speed"
The Camera Operator (peering
   through the lens and certain
   that the picture is in perfect
   frame and focus) snaps the
   camera switch on.......................................CLICK
The Slate Operator holds the slate
up to the camera's view.*
The Camera Operator
   (seeing the slate) calls.............................."Mark it"
The Slate Operator snaps the
   striped bar, hinged onto the
   top of the slate (clapsticks).......................CLAP
With the smart slate, the large red
   timecode numbers on the front
   start running when the Slate
   Operator flips the switch on the
   back of the slate; then, at the
   instant of the "clap," the
   numbers stop and freeze. This is
   the point at which picture and
   sound are in sync.
The Slate Operator then dashes
   out of the set.
The Camera Operator calls.........................."Rolling" or "Ready"
The Director, after a beat, calls...................."Action"
Now the actors exhibit their
   histrionic best, and the
   performance is committed to
   film. When (a) the scene is
   completed, or (b) something
   goes wrong with the
   performance:
The Director calls ...."Cut"
The Sound Mixer signals.............................TWO BELLS or BUZZES
   (This signal, at a traditional movie
   studio, automatically switches off
   the red door light, allowing
   normal activity to resume—until
   the red light comes on again. At
   an outdoor location or an
   independent company's indoor
   scene, the bell signals may be
   improvised.)

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*See Chapter 6: Mis-slate.

NOTE: With every change of take number or slate number, the entire litany is repeated. Many takes may be filmed before the director is satisfied and calls ... "That's a print." The 1st A.D. then announces where and what the next setup is to be, and the process begins all over again!

WATCHING THE PERFORMANCE

When you hear "Action," snap on your stopwatch* and focus your attention on the performance. If there is a great deal of activity in the scene, don't attempt to make notes on everyone and everything there. From the rehearsals, you will have gained a good concept of the consequential elements in the scene. Now concentrate mostly on the principal actors—with side glances toward the others.

COPIOUS NOTES

With practice and experience, you will become adept at writing hastily while seeing and hearing everything that is taking place during the performance. You will be amazed to find that you can mentally retain a host of details. But there is good reason for profusely jotting clues on the script page while a performance is in progress. It is fine to rely on your photographic memory if you are so endowed, but something written is less disputable—provided, of course, the notation is accurate.

BACK MATCHING DURING FILMING

The practice of back matching during filming is similar to the manner in which you back match the particulars in the scenes when reading and constructing your breakdown of the written script. While shooting is in progress, you will notate carryover details from preceding to subsequent scenes and vice versa. For example: Scene 44 is being filmed before Scene 42. In Scene 42, the script reads that a fight takes place: the actor is hit and sustains a black eye. The writer, of course, did not indicate which eye. However, in preparing for Scene 44, the makeup artist arbitrarily blackened the actor's right eye. Consequently, you will make a notation at Scene 44: right eye blackened. Then immediately turn the script pages to Scene 42 and make a conspicuous note: Hit to right eye.

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*When purchasing your stopwatch, test to see (hear) that it is absolutely noiseless. If the watch emits an audible click when activated, be advised that the little click hits the microphone like a burst of thunder, and will unnerve the sound mixer. (A good, professional watch supplier can remove the "click" for you.)

If you neglected to make the necessary notation at Scene 42—and if your memory did not serve you—something contrary may happen during shooting Scene 42: the exchange of fisticuffs might end up with the actor holding his hand over his left eye, the punch having landed on the wrong eye. It is your responsibility, when going into rehearsal for Scene 42, to inform the actor (or stuntperson) who does the socking that he or she must aim at the opponent's right eye—because it has to match Scene 44, which is already on film.

Sometimes, even with the most conscientious prior notations, errors do occur in the frenzy of staging a fight. Should that happen, a portion of the scene, or all of it, may have to be done over in order to match the previously shot scene. A costly retake.

Let us consider another example: In Scene 3, a chair breaks during a scuffle. There is a time lapse between Scene 3 and Scene 6 but, storywise, there is no way that someone could have replaced or removed the broken chair. Consequently, that broken chair must be in its place at start of shooting Scene 6. Once again, while shooting Scene 3, you must turn to Scene 6 and make notation that the broken chair must be in view to match Scene 3. The filming of Scene 6 may take place weeks later. While this detail is essentially the property department's responsibility, your double-check could prevent a mismatch—a saving of costly production time.

"CUT ... PRINT"

At the end of a shot, the director calls: cut. If the director is pleased with the performance and the technical departments do not announce any problems, the director will call out: Print! (More often these days, the director will merely turn to you and say, "Print," leaving you to inform the camera assistant and sound mixer. In your continuity script, you will draw a circle around that take number, and the camera assistant and sound mixer will do likewise on their respective logs. This segment of the film negative will be printed at the laboratory, and the matching section of audio tape will be transferred to magnetically striped 35mm film.

On occasion, in haste to move on to the next setup—the director may neglect to inform you of the print(s). It is then incumbent on you to corner the director, as soon as possible, and be informed which take numbers are to be printed. Then, convey the information to the other concerned departments.

"CUT ... NO PRINT" (OR "CUT ... GO AGAIN")

If "no print" is declared after a completed take, or the director otherwise indicates a desire for another take, you will announce the next take number on the same slate and continue with consecutive take numbers until the shot is

accepted for printing. As mentioned in Chapter 6, always discreetly ask the director the reason for rejecting a take, and notate the comment legibly alongside the take number.

VERIFY PRINTS

Camera reports, sound reports, and your Daily Editor's Log must be in absolute accord for each and every slate and printed take number. Make a point of *checking prints* with the camera assistant and sound mixer several times during the day. Or, devise any viable method of communication for this purpose. It is your responsibility to correct any discrepancies that show up on any of the reports before the camera and sound records are forwarded to the laboratory and the editor. A suggested automatic routine: Have the camera assistant and the sound mixer periodically hand you their reports (or tape them onto your table, chair, or script book). You can then, at your convenience, compare their records with your Editor's Log or your Daily Continuity Log, and make any necessary corrections.

WHO CALLS "CUT"?

Only three people may call "Cut" to stop the rolling of the camera.

1. The director—for whatever reason.
2. The camera operator—when there is: (a) Mechanical difficulty: film buckling, battery failure, or light shift; (b) unsatisfactory framing because the actors have not hit their marks as established in rehearsal; (c) a boom mike or its shadow has crept into the frame.
3. The sound mixer—when there is some mechanical sound problem or an off-screen disturbance: overhead airplane, loud coughing, or when the actor's dialogue is indistinguishable.

NOTE: Some directors forbid *anyone* but themselves the right to call "Cut." However, when potentially dangerous stunts or special effects shots are being filmed, a stunt coordinator or special effects coordinator has the authority to call "Cut"—when something is going awry that could result in unplanned damage or injury to personnel.

The continuity supervisor *never* cuts the shot—not even when the actors have spoken incorrect dialogue or made incorrect gestures. After the call "Cut," you will apprise the director of the flaws you noted.

The director may choose to repeat the shot from the beginning *(from the top)*, or the decision may be to repeat only the faulty portion *(do a pick-up)*. If the shot is to be repeated from the top, you will announce the next take num-

ber on the same slate. Takes will be repeated until the director calls "Print." Be sure you notate the director's comments for each take, whether incomplete, complete, print, or no print. Also mark the timing of each take.

THE PICK-UP SHOT

The director will call for a "pick-up" shot when only the faulty portion of the scene is to be reshot. In that case, you will announce a new slate number and start with take 1, as opposed to using a new take number when reshooting from the top of the scene.

Pick-up shots are designated by appending a letter (A, B, C, etc.) to the original slate number. When the slating system is by consecutive numbers: the next consecutive number will necessarily be the pick-up number as well. Consequently, it is important that you add PU (for pick-up) alongside that number on your (left hand) description page. This notation should also appear alongside that number on your (right hand) lined script page, the Daily Continuity Log, and Daily Editor's Log.

There are several ways in which pick-up shots are handled:

1. By reslating: A new slate number is placed at the spot on the page where the scene is being picked up.

2. By not reslating: Picking up at the flawed part of the scene and repeating the scene flawlessly with the camera continuing to roll. This practice is much more frequent in present-day shooting. Pick-up methods may entail a different approach for different circumstances:

   (a) *False Start.* If a flub in dialogue or action occurs near the beginning of the shot, the director will prompt the actors to "start again from the top." That means: go back to the beginning of the scene, and continue the performance to the end. When this happens, be sure to make the notation FS (for false start) alongside the take number on the description page. It is important that you also note FS alongside the slate number on the Daily Editor's Log.

      NOTE: Be sure to reset your stopwatch at the second start of the shot for an accurate timing of the scene.

   (b) *Running Pick-up.* When an actor flubs a line during a take, the director may opt *not* to cut the shot. Instead, with the camera still rolling, the director will prompt the actors to go back to an earlier speech or business, correct the blooper, and continue to the end of the scene. Let us now recall the rule mentioned in Chapter 5: Never throw a line while the camera is rolling. Here is the exception to the rule: You may throw the line from the pick-up point—*while the camera is*

rolling. Your eyes must quickly spot the exact dialogue on the page so you can instantly cue the actor with the earlier speech indicated by the director. When prompting (cuing) dialogue—you must never pick up in the middle of a speech—always start at the top of an actor's speech, or a couple of ending words from another actor's preceding speech. The reason for this rule is technical: The editor cannot *cut in* on an actor's face during the middle of his or her speech. Mark the precise spots on the lined page where the pick-ups in dialogue or action clearly begin and end. Also, make prominent notations to the editor in the right-hand margin of the script page.

THE BRIDGE SHOT

When a piece of flawed film remains in a shot—picked up without reslating, as described above—that unusable portion of film must be excised, and a suitable piece of film inserted by the editor as a *bridge shot*. The bridge shot is necessary in order to achieve a smooth transition of the action that was disrupted in the master shot. A bridge shot may consist of:

1. A separate close-up of one of the characters in the scene.

2. An appropriate angle change to correct that portion of the scene in which the action or dialogue was disrupted.

3. An effective shot of some other subject matter, called a *cutaway*.

(Another aspect of the cutaway shot is delineated in Chapter 12, under the heading Covering Wrong Action.)

It is essential to provide the editor with a bridge shot for every pick-up made, whether the master shot was reslated at the break or continued with the camera rolling. Your carefully marked page will preclude unfortunate oversights.

MULTIPLE PRINTS

At times, one slate number will include more than one printed take: When the director has okayed a take for printing and then opts to shoot more takes of the same action. In that case, you will announce the next consecutive take number on the same slate, and continue with successive numbers until another take is designated for printing. Again, always ask the director the reason for the repeat, and note it alongside the take number. Sometimes the director simply wants to see if a better performance will emerge. If the second printed take varies in any way from the first one, make this notation in your continuity script; also, notate the Editor's Log with the variances in each take. The decision as to which print will appear in the finished film is made in the editing room.

On occasion, the director will instruct you to print one or more of the *incomplete* takes. Be sure to circle the numbers of these desired takes, and pass the information on to the slate operator and the sound mixer; their daily reports and yours must be in absolute accord.

ALTERNATIVE SHOTS

1. When a master shot has been printed, and the director requests the scene to be shot again from another camera viewpoint, or for any substantive change in the performance, that piece of film constitutes an *alternative shot*. The print that will be used in the final cut of the picture is decided in the editing room.
2. At times, an alternate shot is filmed (in anticipation of censorship by broadcast standards). Perhaps the filmed scene contains potentially objectionable action and/or dialogue that may be prohibited in certain geographic or foreign regions.

An alternative shot filmed during principal photography will save time and money after the film has been released. Having an alternate print on hand, will preclude the editor's difficult task of cautiously excising the offensive portions in that one version, while retaining the coherence of the scene.

During photography, you will assign a new slate number for the alternative shot. In your continuity script, you will notate how the two shots differ in action and/or dialogue; also, the reason for making the change.

8

Timing Is of the Essence

Starting your stopwatch as the director calls "Action" and clicking it off at "Cut" will give you the running time of the shot, but not the picture time of the scene. *Picture running time* is not based on the amount of footage printed, but on the amount of usable film—that portion of the footage that holds the quintessential story elements and which, most probably, will be used by the film editor in final editing.

TIMING THE PERFORMANCE

A careful timing of the dress rehearsal can afford you a fairly reliable timing of the master shot. But it may not always be the exact timing for the complete sequence. Elements to consider: an actor revving up at the start of an emotional scene. You must reckon how many seconds to deduct from your stopwatch time. Inasmuch as some thirty or more shots are filmed in a day, you can appreciate how much unusable film would be "left on the cutting room floor"— and how inaccurate your picture-running total would be.

Another timing adjustment occurs when filming *coverage shots* (see Chapter 12). Actors will sometimes linger when filming their close-ups. Your timing expertise will dictate how many seconds need be added to the total of the master shot. Several prolonged close-ups can significantly stretch the picture time. Also, comedy action may run longer or shorter in the closer angle than in the master shot. Consequently, it necessitates that you consider, compare, and, if necessary, alter the originally estimated picture time.

Another important factor that reflects on the timing of a show is your ability to discern what is excessive in the shot: long walks to doors and exits, pregnant pauses, drawn-out histrionics.

The timing of a film carries huge responsibility. When your daily reports indicate that the film is *running long*—going beyond the projected length of the show—the director and the producer may be inclined to make deletions in the script. But if your timings are not accurate, the film may end up too short. Conversely, if your daily reports indicate that there is less film than required for the projected length of the show (*running short*), the director and the producer may opt to add or lengthen scenes. In that case, if your timings were inaccurate, the finished film may end up too long. In both circumstances (assuming no script changes were made), the editor will have to spend tedious hours trying to either stretch or condense the film footage into acceptable length.

Assuming your timing is consistently accurate, here's a rule of thumb: If, at the halfway point in the script, your timing reflects practically two-thirds of the scheduled time for the show, then the shoot is obviously *running long*. On the other hand, if your timing at the halfway point in the script reflects only a third of the scheduled film time, then the shoot is *running short*. At that juncture, it is advisable to discuss the picture time with the director or the producer, or both.

A helpful hint: when you feel uncertain about your timing, confer with the editor, who will have the assistant editor prepare a *timing log* of those scenes—shot by shot—which have already been cut together. Now compare the edited version with your on-set timings. While there will always be some plus or minus variance, you will gain insight as to the general correctness of your timing. Actually, the editor does—to some degree—manipulate the picture time (and may even impose a wholly different pace than existed during filming). Scenes can be shortened by trimming the fronts (*heads*) and ends (*tails*) of master shots and by judiciously clipping drawn-out close-ups. Conversely, the picture time can be lengthened by using every inch of the master shots and holding longer on the close-ups; and extend timing even further by lingering on cut-away reaction shots. But in the final analysis—during filming—it is your timing expertise upon which the company depends.

It is good practice to keep a progressive total of picture time in your Daily Continuity Log. In that way, you will have up-to-the-minute picture time at your fingertips. This is the detail the producer is most likely to ask for at any given hour of the day. Only you have the answer. And if you can reply promptly—without engaging in extensive arithmetic while the producer is breathing down your neck—your efficiency will not go unrecognized.

TIMING TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS

Two-way telephone conversations in a scene are not filmed concurrently. Rather, each character's dialogue is filmed at a different time, and at a differ-

ent place. You will clock the speeches for only the character on-camera. The responding dialogue may be spoken by someone other than the actor cast for the part. The procedure is as follows: At the start of the on-camera actor's speech, snap on your stopwatch, and shut it off at the end of the speech. While the off-camera person speaks, your stopwatch is disengaged. At the finish of the off-camera speech, start your stopwatch again. Repeat the procedure for each succeeding on-camera speech. This gives you the picture time for one-half of the telephone conversation. And you will record time credit for that dialogue on the date it is filmed. When the responding actor is on-camera—at a later date and place—you will follow the same procedure. Thus, you have the picture time for both halves of the telephone conversation. On that latter date, you will include in your Daily Continuity Log (Chapter 9, Figure 9.1) time credit for the second half of the telephone conversation. To repeat: each timing is recorded separately and included only on the dates the dialogues were filmed.

TIMING TRAVELING SHOTS

When the script specifies TRAVELING SHOT, it means the scene will be filmed and the dialogue recorded while actors are walking, running, or riding in a vehicle.

There are several ways of filming traveling vehicles. One procedure, commonly used, is shooting from another traveling vehicle, called an *insert car*. It is a truck equipped with an electrical generator and customized devices for mounting cameras—in several adjustable positions—as well as sound, lights, and other pertinent equipment, together with video monitors and seats for key personnel. The insert car travels from a vantage point on the road—while the camera is focused on the principal vehicle with the actors inside. The insert car is not always a professionally rigged vehicle. For low-budget productions, the equipment and crew may be crowded into a car, a pickup truck, or some other conveyance pressed into service.

Another method of filming a traveling shot: a camera operator—focusing a hand-held camera—is strapped to the outside of the actors' vehicle. Crouched inside that car (hidden from view) are: the sound mixer (with tape recorder), the director (equipped with headset earphones), and—if there is room—you, too squeeze in. In this cramped position—tightly holding your script, pencil, and stopwatch—and with headset clamped to your ears—you will follow the dialogue while simultaneously timing the shot.

Still another method of filming a traveling shot: a prefocused camera is strategically mounted on the body of the moving vehicle with actor(s) inside while the sound recorder will be hidden in the back seat or trunk. Since there will be no technician in the vehicle during the take, camera and sound must both be *preslated* with the correct scene number and take number. The camera and sound recorder are activated by remote control: a switch made available to one of the actors, who will clap his/her hands in view of the lens immediately before the dialogue begins—in lieu of proper clapsticks. Now the actor(s) per-

form the scene. At the finish, the camera and sound recorder are turned off—by the remote control switch.

In most cases, the director and key personnel, including the continuity supervisor, will ride in a *follow van* accompanying the principal vehicle on its journey—but staying out of view of the camera. Usually the van will be close enough to the actors' vehicle to permit you (and the director) to hear the scene through your headset and Comtec unit. (See Chapter 5, page 67). The director can also communicate with the actors via a walkie-talkie and the one hidden in the actors' vehicle. With this technology, the director can also call for "Roll," "Action" and "Cut," or give other instructions to the actors. If the distance between the picture vehicle and the follow van becomes too great for the Comtec units to receive a signal, it will be necessary for you to ask the sound mixer—as soon as possible after the take—to play back the audio tape for you. With script and stopwatch in hand, you will listen to and time the dialogue. If you find that improvised lines or words vary from the script, you must bring this to the director's attention immediately for the decision to: print, pick-up, or retake the shot.

TIMING RUN-BY SHOTS

A *run-by* refers to shooting a traveling vehicle with a stationary camera. Your timing of these shots is based on your educated guess as to how much film will actually be used by the film editor—irrespective of the amount of footage shot. Ninety feet of film shot may become a snappy six seconds of final edited picture time.

TIMING FAST AND SLOW MOTION

When actors perform at normal pace, but the film is run at fast or slow motion speeds, you must make critical adjustments in calculating total picture time.

Fast motion is achieved with an *undercranked camera*. This means the camera is running at a speed *lower* than its standard 24 frames per second (24 fps). *Slow motion* is achieved with an *overcranked camera*. This means the camera is running at a speed *higher* than its standard 24 frames per second (24 fps). When varied-speed film is put through standard projection machines—which are fixed at 24 fps—the undercranked film *speeds up* the subjects' movements, while the overcranked film *slows down* the subjects' movements.

Years ago, to achieve fast and slow motion on the old-fashioned (Mitchell) camera, it was necessary to stop filming for the time it took to reload the camera with different motors: one for fast motion, another for slow motion. But current filmmaking technologies have eliminated this clumsy procedure. Today, motion picture cameras are equipped with the facility to shift swiftly into fast and slow motion speeds at the tap of a computer key.

For varying the camera speed, a laptop computer is connected to the camera by cable. The camera assistant controls the speed settings while simultaneously resetting the camera's iris to compensate for the different exposures as the speed changes. Indeed, a time saver during principal photography.

These days, it is not uncommon—when a director opts for a unique effect in a scene—to have the camera run at other than its normal 24 fps—even while shooting a take *with dialogue*. New technological advances have produced sound recorders that can also run at off-normal speeds—even able to record various speeds within a scene. (The sound recorder's normal speed is: 7 1/2 IPS [inches per second].)

Traditionally, fast and slow motion filming was shot without sound (MOS) for the reason that recorders were not geared for running at varied, non-synchronized speeds.

When necessary, correct synchronization is obtained at a post production lab where the film is optically, or computer altered to its normal speed; and the sound recording is changed electronically to its normal synchronized speed.

The term for increasing speed is: Ramping Up, and for decreasing speed: Ramping Down.

VARIABLE SPEED CALCULATION

The following is the formula for figuring accurate timing when variable speed shots are filmed:

Fast Motion: For a shot made at 16 fps, your stopwatch registered 21 seconds: multiply 21 by 16, and divide the total by 24:

$$\begin{array}{r} 21 \quad \text{seconds stopwatch time} \\ \times 16 \quad \text{fps camera speed} \\ \hline 336 \quad \text{feet camera-running footage} \end{array}$$

336 divided by 24 fps (standard camera speed) = 14 seconds of picture time (as against 21 seconds clocked on the stopwatch).

Therefore, you will record picture-running time in your Daily Continuity Log: 14 seconds.

Slow Motion: For a shot made at 36 fps, your stopwatch registered 21 seconds: multiply 21 by 36 and divide the total by 24:

$$\begin{array}{r} 21 \quad \text{seconds stopwatch time} \\ \times 36 \quad \text{fps camera speed} \\ \hline 756 \quad \text{feet camera-running footage} \end{array}$$

756 divided by 24 fps (standard camera speed) = 31 1/2 seconds of picture time (as against 21 seconds clocked on the stopwatch).

Therefore, you will record picture-running time in your Daily Continuity Log: 31 1/2 seconds.

TIME/FOOTAGE CONVERSION

Footage is the measurement that relates to the number of feet of exposed film, as registered on the camera's footage counter. A 35mm magazine holds approximately 1,000 feet of raw stock, and the film runs through the camera at the rate of 90 feet per minute.

Should you forget to snap your stopwatch on when the camera starts to roll, don't panic. Immediately after the take, ask the camera second assistant for the footage of that shot; then convert the footage to minutes and seconds. (See Appendix B, Conversion Table and Conversion Chart.)

FILM/TV SYNCHRONIZATION

Let us consider a scene wherein a film camera is photographing a functioning television set. Since the standard American television is broadcast at the rate of 30 fps and the camera's normal speed is 24 fps, a technological adjustment is mandated in order to get a clear synchronized image from the television screen. One method is: the device of a moving bar over the screen of a customized TV set which is in sync with a unique playback system running at 24 fps. This will produce a proper sync with the film camera. However, when such equipment is not available, an alternative method is: run the film camera at 30 fps—which will synchronize with the normal television picture. But this necessitates that the viewing speed of the television film be later reduced—optically or digitally—to the camera's speed of 24 fps. The conversions are usually done during post production at a post production lab.

CONTINUITY SUPERVISING IS CONTINUOUS

No matter how varied the combination of camera and sound recorder speeds are indulged, one industry mandate will prevail: The continuity supervisor will be responsible for annotating accurately the pages of the continuity script, as well as the Editor's Log, with all the variables that were practiced during a shoot. This data is your lifeline to the editor, and it reflects the director's realization for the film.

Ceaseless technological advances in camera operation require your more frequent communication with the camera assistants, the sound mixer, and other personnel—especially when segments of a master shot include variable speeds and/or elements of computerized special/visual effects. Therefore, it is

important that you establish a compatible routine whereby those technicians will relay to you the vital information you require for the editor and your records.

PRETIMING SCRIPTS

Most companies prefer to get a general idea of the playing time (picture-running time) of a script before the start of photography. To be able to predetermine picture-running time by reading the script is a talent you can develop. How? By practice. With stopwatch in hand, you must emote (not just read) the written dialogue, and enact the business/action described in the script: slowly walk to the door; rush to the window—and open it; climb up a ladder; sit down in a chair; take the time to laugh and cry as prompted in the script. Glance at your stopwatch and note the number of minutes and seconds your performance registered. While emoting and skillfully using your stopwatch—when calculating picture-running time—it helps if you also possess an innate sense of dramaturgy.

At best, total picture time can only be approximated. There is no way of knowing the pace at which the cast of characters will speak (an actor may decide to stylize his role with a stutter). There is no way of knowing how the director's stage technique will pace the performance. One can only guess how much time to allow for traveling vehicles, car chases, pregnant pauses, or panoramic scenery. The accuracy of your pretiming technique is a measure of your proficiency as a continuity supervisor.

There is another complicating factor: constant revisions. Every revised page invariably alters your original timing. Despite the inexactitude of the result, many companies insist on being given a general (if vague) total playing time of a script before the start of photography. At one time, the major studios had a separate department for script timers.

Here's another caveat: Do not attempt to pretime scripts before you have had reasonable experience as a continuity supervisor. When you have developed a talent for proficiently calculating picture-running time—during filming— you might undertake the responsibility of pretiming scripts. A practical suggestion: When preparing your script breakdown, practice timing the written master sequences—interior and exterior. Jot down your timings of each master scene, and then compare them with the actual picture time during the filming of the scenes. See how close your timings came to the recorded film time.

Pretiming scripts is a source of extra remuneration: the pay for pretiming a script is separate from the pay for prep time. The number of hours it takes to render a complete scene-by-scene timing estimate depends on the length of the script and the complexity of the story. Pay for these assignments is negotiable.

9

"That's a Wrap!"

Toward the finish of shooting a sequence, the director is likely to ask you, "Am I covered?" You should be able to give the answer without hesitation. But before responding, refer to your list of notations taken at the time the director was blocking and rehearsing the scene (Chapter 4). Every entry there should be checked off (done at the time the shot was filmed). You should be sure there is recorded coverage on film for every bridge shot and/or companion angle.

COMPANY MOVE

With your assurance that all the requisite shots in a sequence have been duly filmed, the 1st A.D. will declare: "That's a wrap for this set," and will announce the next scheduled locale to which the company will move.

The term "wrap" denotes the finish of activity in a given location, at which time the various crafts people gather and "wrap" their equipment to be moved to another place.

STRIKE THE SET

The 1st A.D. gives the order to *strike the set*. This calls for the construction crew to dismantle all the lights and remove all the furnishings of the filmed set. It would be costly indeed to have to reconstruct the set—or revisit the location—just to film an overlooked bridge shot or closeup.

The word *strike* is also a command to eliminate a certain character, prop, or action from the scene. When you hear "Strike the little girl," "Strike the dog," "Strike the waiter," be assured that no violence is suggested.

At this juncture, if you possess that intangible dramatic perception (or have acquired it), you might venture a suggestion to the director: a shot that in your estimation might enhance the scene's impact or ensure a smooth editing transition. (*Be prepared to be embraced or dismissed!*)

KEEPING TRACK OF THE DAILY DATA

In the course of a day's shoot, myriad details come within the purview of the continuity supervisor. But you will find, by following the guidelines delineated in this volume: all components fall neatly into place.

The Daily Continuity Log (Figure 9.1) is your personal control sheet— your bible, so to speak. This record reflects a chronicle of the day's activity from start to finish:

- Every filmed setup. (Each slate number represents a camera setup; when multiple cameras roll simultaneously, each slate number is listed individually.)
- Every corresponding camera roll number.
- Every corresponding sound roll number.
- All the printed takes of each respective slate number.
- The recorded picture-time credit.*
- The recorded page-count credit.*

*NOTE: These totals must not include the timings of any *coverage shots*. To do so would give you grossly inaccurate daily totals.

It is imperative to keep your Daily Continuity Log up to the minute. With impeccable entries, you are in a position to momentarily give correct answers to any production-related question. Inevitably, these questions are fielded at you at the most trying time of a hectic day. Keeping up-to-the-minute running totals in your Daily Continuity Log also avoids your hurried arithmetic at the end of the day for completing your Daily Progress Report (Figure 9.3), and you will be able to hand this record without delay to the 2nd AD, who requires it for his/her end-of-day report to the production office.

It is advisable to make the entries in your Daily Continuity Log in concert with entering the necessary data in your Daily Editor's Log (Figure 9.2). The Editor's Log has to be in the editing room at the close of each day or the first thing next morning—for the assistant film editor to prepare the dailies.

Figure 9.1

DAILY EDITOR'S LOG

DATE **8/20**   TITLE _____
WORK DAY **4TH**   DIRECTOR _____
PROD. NO. **1560**

CAM ROL	SND ROL	SET	SCENE#	SLATE#	PRINT	TIME	DESCRIPTION
		LIV RM/BEDRM	2-4	71	4	.52	MAST. PAN SEAN x LIV RM TO BEDROOM FIND WOMAN IN BED
				B71	4		C.U SEAN
		BEDRM	3,4/6	72		.06	MAST. SEAN + CELIA FREEZE SEAN
				B72	1,2		T2 TO C.U SEAN
			4	73	1		2 BH - IN BED
		LIV RM	5	74	2	.04	MAST. F.S DAVE DASH IN FROM BATHROOM TO C.U.
		LIV RM/BEDRM	16-18	ETS 75	2	.48	MAST. SEAN X L-R TO BEDRM - 2/SH SEAN + CHAFEE
		BEDROOM		B75	2		OV/SH ON SEAN
				76	4		OV/SH ON CHAF.
			26	77	1		MAST. C.S CHAF SNORE W/ RAIN FX
				78	1		RET. ON 77 - NO RAIN FX
			19	79	1	.17	MAST. SEAN AWAKES PAN TO LIV RM
		LIV RM/BEDRM	21	80	1	.48	MAST. PAN SEAN X LIV RM TO BEDRM - CHAF ENT. SHOT- HOLD FULL 2/SH
		BEDRM		81	1		C.U SEAN
				82	1		C.U CHAF
			41-43	#15 83	4	1.06	MAST. F.S SEAN + BIRD STEW ENT. DET. TRISH
				B83	4		STEW EXIT TO LIV RM C.U. SEAN
		BATH RM/BEDRM	44	84	2	.43	MAST. MS CHAF COMES THRU DOOR PAN X L-R TO MIRROR - HOLD M. DASH IN MIRROR
				85	2		C.U SEAN (NO BIRD)
				86	1		PU ON 85
				87	3		C.U CHAF (L) MIRROR SHOT MOVE TO BACK

(CONT.)

WILD TRACKS   REMARKS
* 84 MISSLATED 83 TK#

Continuity Supervisor

Figure 9.2

WRAP FOR THE DAY

When all the scenes listed on the day's Call Sheet have been shot and covered, or when the time on the clock signifies the end of the workday, the 1st A.D. will proclaim: That's a wrap for today!

The different departments are allotted *wrap time* for gathering their equipment and preparing whatever daily reports are required of them for the production office. Now is the time for you to assemble all the data from your Daily Continuity Log (Figure 9.1) and complete your Daily Progress Report (Figure 9.3).

DAILY PROGRESS REPORT

At the end of each day, you will give your completed Daily Progress Report to the 2nd A.D., who turns it over to the production office. You may design any format for this report, so long as the production office receives daily accurate records. Following are guidelines for arriving at accurate totals:

1.   Page Count. *Tally the number of pages shot* for the day. If company-revised pages have changed the original total page count (by adding or deleting pages), you should use the revised figure. However, if improvisations during shooting have increased or decreased the page total, you must take credit *only* for the original page count recorded in the Shooting Schedule and your Continuity Synopsis/One-Liner. *Do not revise your breakdown total.* For instance, if the director played a full-page scene down to only half the page and deleted the rest, you must consider the last half of the written page as *covered*—to justify the total page count listed in the Shooting Schedule and your One Liner. Conversely, if ad libs and extra business extended a half-page scene to a full page or more, do not count the extra material as additional page length. Simply credit only the half-page written in the script. (The terms *covered* and *credited* are synonymous.)

CAVEAT: You may find, contrary to traditional practice, that a company's policy today mandates adding or deleting page counts predicated on the daily workload. Therefore, always check your day's totals with the 1st A.D.'s. Both records must conform at all times.

2.   Scene Count. *Tally the number of scenes covered.* If in the course of shooting, you found it necessary to append the script scene numbers with A, B, C, etc., do not add these lettered numbers to your original total scene count. Count (credit) only the script's original scene numbers. On the other hand, if company-revised scenes have altered the original total scene count (via additions or deletions), you must revise the figure under "New Total" on

DAILY PROGRESS REPORT

Shoot. Call __7:30 A__   Date __8/20__
1st Shot __8:04 A__   Work Day __4^TH__
Lunch __1:00 - 2:00 P__   Prod. No. __1560__
1st Shot __2:24 P__   Title_____
Dinner __7:00 - 7:30 P__   Director_____
1st Shot __7:45 P__
Cam. Wrap __8:52__
Snd Wrap __8:52__

	Scenes	Pages	Minutes	Setups
Total Script	50	36 7/8		
Added	1	2/8		
Deleted				
New Total	61	37 1/8		
Shot Prior	23	17	15:36	66
Shot Today	17	7 7/8	8:35	25
Shot To Date	40	24 7/8	24:11	91
Left To Do	21	12 2/8		

Scenes Covered	W/Tracks	Retakes	Remarks
2 19			ADD SC A-42
3 21			
4 26			
√ 26			
6 41			
7 42			
8 Ħ 43			
16 44			
17 A-42			
18			

Continuity Supervisor

Figure 9.3

the date you received the change. (See Chapter 6, "Slating Auxiliary Scene Numbers.")

If coverage for, say, scene 25 is not completed in one day, you will enter under "Scenes Covered": 25 pt. (part). For as many days as it takes to complete coverage of the unfinished scene, your Daily Progress Report will list, under Scenes Covered: 25 pt. And the day's total remains unchanged. On the day that the coverage is completed, you will list under Scenes Covered: 25 comp (complete). And on that day, under "Shot Today," you will increase the day's total by one (1).

3. Setup Count. *Tally the number of setups made.* Your total will be correct if you have accurately listed a new slate number for every shot. As noted earlier, you must announce a new slate number, or a letter appended to a scene (slate) number, every time the camera is repositioned or the lens is changed. Each change counts as an individual setup. And when two or more cameras run simultaneously, the change of camera position and/or lens—in each camera— counts as a separate setup. Conversely, you must not include in your setup total a pick-up shot that only corrects a mistake in dialogue or action. The reason is: neither the camera position nor the lens was changed—only a portion of the action and/or dialogue was repeated.

NOTE: With consecutive-number slating, be especially mindful to mark PU (for *pick-up*) alongside the sequential numbers that were pickups within a shot. Do not include these numbers in the total setups made.

There is reason for emphasis on the actual total number of setups. It's a clue for the production office: Is the director's coverage excessive or inadequate for the number of pages shot?

4. Picture-Running Time. *Tally the picture-running time* for the day. Refer to the Daily Continuity Log (Figure 9.1). Note that the individual timings of shots—minutes and seconds—are recorded cumulatively, and the "Total Time" is recorded progressively. (See Chapter 8: Timing Is of the Essence.)

DAILIES

Also called RUSHES—an earlier term, now infrequently used. Both terms refer to the film that is shot during a given day—developed at the laboratory throughout the night—and rushed to the editing room for viewing the next morning. This is the film that constitutes the selected shots (circled take numbers) that have been printed into positive film, called: "A" Negative.

Although all the exposed film is developed during the night, the unprinted negative footage is stored for possible future printing. This film is called: "B" Negative.

TRADITIONAL DAILIES FOR FEATURE FILMS

Now almost completely supplanted by digital computerized editing, the older method still exists: The technician viewing the developed negative at the lab follows the list of slate and take numbers on the camera reports, noting the take numbers that are circled: shots that are to be printed. All the pieces of film corresponding to the circled numbers are cut out of the bulk of negative footage and immediately wound onto rolls that are printed onto 35mm positive film: A Negative. The day's sound recordings are likewise transferred onto magnetically striped 35mm film.

The next morning—upon receiving the printed takes and transferred sound—the assistant film editor syncs up (synchronizes) all the various rolls of picture with their matching rolls of magnetic sound—using the slate's *clap* on both picture and sound as the sync mark. This composite is put onto reels. These dual reels—one for picture and one for sound—become the *dailies*. It is this film that the editor begins to cut and splice—fashioning it into the first semblance of the finished film. Once cut and spliced, that film becomes known as the *workprint.*

It is customary with big-budget features to run the dailies in a screening room for critical viewing by the director, producer, D.P., editor, and other key personnel.

INTRODUCING TELECINE (Pronounced: Tella Sinny)

In the early 1990s, the editing of film—for features and television—shifted dramatically to the computerized (NLDE) editing consoles: Avid and Lightworks are two of the most common. As a consequence, a new, vital electronic process was developed by which film—picture and sound—is transferred to tape. The process is called: *Telecine,* and the transfer is performed at a video transfer (Telecine) facility. The product can be used for either videotape cassettes or digital disks. Now with this transformed mode of tape, the editor can proceed with the editing of movie film via the latest editing systems. The editor's painstaking effort to cut and splice the actual pices of celluloid is movie legend.

TELECINE FOR FEATURES

The procedure for feature films is currently somewhat different than for filmed television production. For features, the reels of *positive* film dailies (as described earlier) are sent to an electronic postproduction house, where—via the telecine process—the film (picture and sound) is transferred to videotape

cassettes or digital disks. The video cassette is then used to *input* or *digitize* the dailies into the computerized editing consoles which allows the editor to begin the editing process. And video cassettes containing the edited film are prepared for distribution to the directors and producers to apprise them of the film's progress during the editorial procedure.

After all the editing has been completed, the Negative Cutter *conforms* the film to the final cut version. The conformed (cut negative) rolls are then printed with sound. And it is these reels of prints that are ultimately distributed to the movie theaters for projection to audiences.

TELECINE DAILIES FOR TELEVISION

For television projects, the procedure for dailies is somewhat different. All the exposed negative is likewise processed in the laboratory during the night. But at this stage, the processed *negative* is immediately sent to an electronic postproduction house. Here, the electronic technician follows the list of slate and take numbers on the camera reports, and notes the take numbers that are circled: shots to be printed. It is these takes *only* that are electronically transferred from the film negative to positive images on videotape—via the *telecine process.* Also, during the telecine process, the sound is simultaneously added to the video and synchronized with the picture. At this point, it is the telecine operator—not the assistant film editor—who syncs up the dailies. Consequently, the assistant editor's morning job—manually syncing picture and sound for the dailies—is eliminated.

Multiple video copies of the dailies are made up for distribution. One set of video cassettes is automatically sent to the editing room to be put into the computerized digital editing console, so the editor can proceed with the editing. Copies of the video cassettes are then sent to key personnel (director, producer, et al.) who view the film—as their time allows—in the comfort of their offices, at lunch in their trailers, between takes on the shooting set, or later at home. Afterwards, the key personnel communicate their critical comments to whomever is concerned. For most television companies and low-budget feature film companies, the use of a screening room for dailies has been eliminated.

CLEANUP/WRAP TIME

It is customary to be allotted time at the end of the shooting schedule to *clean up* your script. This entails making a final, neat, and comprehensive body of notes for the editor—computer-generated if you are so equipped and skilled. Depending on the daily work load, one may sometimes accomplish some script cleanup and computer entry of notes (via laptop) for the editor during waits while sets are being erected or lit elaborately. However, with present-day fast shooting, this luxury often goes glimmering.

The amount of cleanup time you will need at the end of a major shooting schedule—film or television—is an unknown quantity, and a matter to be resolved with the production manager. It is advisable to stipulate in your Deal Memo that cleanup time at the end of production will be paid in addition to daily wrap time, since the latter is spent preparing daily reports.

10

Continuity Script to the Editor

You have seen, first, a writer's original script (Chapter 2, Figure 2.1), then the same script with the continuity supervisor's breakdown notes (Chapter 2, Figure 2.2). Now, in this chapter, you will gain insight into the final continuity script—a composite record of what has been put on film—the editor's bible.

CONTINUITY NOTES TO THE EDITOR

At the end of each day, the required procedure is to dispatch to the editor:

1. Your Daily Editor's Log (Figure 9.2).
2. Photocopies of both your left-hand and right-hand script pages which reflect the scenes filmed that day (Figure 10.1, pages 118–127).

   NOTE: Never send your original pages to the editor. These must remain in your possession at all times.

Pages often get messy because of the myriad changes that occur during shooting. If your pages become too messy, it is wise to get fresh script pages and neatly write or hand-print all your pertinent continuity notations, as well as repeat the perpendicular lines delineating the coverage. Legible photocopied pages to the editor are essential.

Inasmuch as you are the line of communication between the set (wherever that happens to be) and the editor, it is mandatory that your notes be easily

readable as well as comprehensive. Valuable editing time (therefore company expense) is saved when the editor is spared tedious poring over illegible script notes.

THE LEFT-HAND SCRIPT PAGE

The data on this page, facing the script page (Figure 10.1), cites all salient information pertaining to the contents of every essential shot. You may design any format that serves your purpose, so long as the following information is properly recorded for the editor:

1. Slate number
2. Date of shot
3. Take number: noting prints complete or incomplete; reason for not printing*
4. Running time of each take. One of the most vital details is the recorded timing of each take. This notation enables the editor to quickly utilize an out-take that could solve an editing dilemma: a defect in the processed film negative.
5. Camera and sound roll numbers
6. Lens size (when mandated)
7. Shot description

Following are standard abbreviations for critical comments:

NG (No good)

NGD (No good for dialogue)

NGC (No good for camera)

NGS (No good for sound)

HOLD (Good, but not yet for printing. Or instead of the word, an asterisk attached to that number)

INC (Incomplete: NG or Good to the break; jot down speech number, or other reference mark)

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*Traditionally, a circle around a number indicates this take is to be printed, whether complete or incomplete. Some contemporary formats (including computer formats) add (P) alongside the take number or superimpose a box around the printed take number instead of the traditional circle.

THE RIGHT-HAND SCRIPT PAGE/
THE LINED SCRIPT

On the right-hand page of the script you will have recorded the following information.

- Notations of any deviations from the written script in dialogue or action that occurred during the performance.

- Marginal notes of any disruptions in the scene: off-camera noises or on-camera overlaps; also notes on which cover shots eliminate the interference.

- Markings at the exact spots on the page where *inserts* will appear in the film: a picture, a letter, the time on a clock, a gun, a book title, a newspaper headline, etc.

- Markings at the exact spots on the page where sound effects (SFX) occur in the scene: a phone ringing, a door slamming, a baby crying, off-screen sounds of hammering, footsteps, thunder, sirens, etc.

- Perpendicular lines. These are the editor's blueprint for cutting the film. The procedure is simple: At the start of each shot, mark the slate number and ID; then draw the perpendicular line from the slate number down to the exact spot where the shot ends: the action or dialogue stopped. Indicate the stop point by a small horizontal line or a tick. If the shot continues to following pages, place an arrow at the bottom of the line, and repeat the arrow and the slate number at the top of the next page; then draw the line down to the finish of the shot, with an ending mark. All the succeeding pages should be treated likewise.

When a shot is interrupted (cut) before completion, draw the perpendicular line and the tick to the spot in the dialogue or business where that take stopped. (The reason for *numbering speeches* suggested in Chapter 5 now becomes clear: If you cannot take the time during hectic shooting to immediately draw the lines, jot down the number of the speech alongside that particular take number. The speech number lets you and the editor know how far each take went. In a calmer moment, you can draw the necessary lines.)

For continuation of an interrupted shot: place the new slate number at the starting point of the pick-up and add the letters PU (for *pick-up*), then continue the line to the finish of the shot. Frequently, several pick-ups will need to be made before the filming of the scene is completed. Every pick-up spot on that ruled line must bear the letters PU.

When multiple cameras are used, draw the perpendicular and wiggly lines in the same manner for each camera, and designate at each slate number which camera applies: A, B or C. Draw lines for cameras B and C adjacent to the A-camera line. Thus, the editor sees where essential pieces of film are within each camera (Figure 10.1: Final Continuity Script).

NOTE: Some continuity supervisors have dispensed with ruling a line for each operating camera; they simply note beside the slate number that it encompasses two or more cameras.

▫ The *wiggly line* always evokes the question, "What's the significance of the wiggly line?" The explanation is simple: A straight line is drawn through those speeches and actions that have been filmed, while a wiggly line is drawn through any off-camera dialogue or sound. This classic pattern provides the editor with a quick sight reading as to which characters are speaking on-camera and which are off. It also alerts you to spot off-camera dialogue that may need to be filmed.

IMPORTANT: Make *conspicuous* notations in the margin of the right-hand script page regarding any mismatches that you called to the director's attention, to which the response was: Not necessary to retake. These notations will exonerate you from criticism later. Also, it will give the editor the opportunity to judiciously cut around the mismatch, thus saving valuable editing time.

LIFE IN THE COMPUTER AGE

Some continuity supervisors have made the transition to using a laptop computer on the set. They have created an electronic version of their Daily Editor's Log; then input information—as it accumulates during the day—directly into the predesigned blank form in their laptop. After wrap, you may transmit that form to the fax machine in the editor's room directly from your laptop, or later from home or your hotel room. Likewise, the photocopies of your continuity script notes may be faxed to the editor.

The advent of the fax machine and the computer's fax ability are enormous time savers, especially when filming on distant locations. Furthermore, if both the editor and you are "online" (connected to the Internet), e-mail messages and attached files of needed information may be exchanged with lightning speed.

FINAL LINED CONTINUITY SCRIPT

The pages 118 through 127 in this chapter constitute the final lined continuity script.

NOTE: This sample reflects a shoot that used consecutive-number slating and, occasionally, two cameras. Observe the perpendicular lines. They convey to the editor that there is a piece of film for each line; furthermore, the lines show who and what is on-camera and (per the wiggly lines) who and what is off-camera. Also observe that the shooting of Scene 7 occurred 41 setups later than the shooting of Scene 9—a good example of numerical slating.

1	8/13 Sc. 1
① comp. .12	Master - F.S. on door Sean enters R-L, opens door with key - exits to inside
71 A/B	8/20 Sc. 2, 3, 4/6
① comp. .45 door A-cam good B-cam 2 - 7S 3 - Comp .44 NG B-cam ④ Comp .52	Master - start F.S. angle on living room side door - Sean enters from behind drape - drops hat + bag - Pan him X- living room L-R to bedroom (thru open door) DI with his walk to bed - Hold Ogle M.S. as he removes his clothes - Pan R as he gets into bed, then ZO to reveal Title/2 Sean + Celia in bed - She exits frame R - Hold CS Sean B-CAM: CU Sean standing at bed	shirt pants out L SH N SH L SH N SH
72 A/B*	8/20 Sc. 3, 4/6 FREEZE FRAME
1. Comp cu or .16 n&c ② comp cu .06 ✱ PRINT 1 + 2 B-CAM	Med. 2/Sh in bed - overlap "I love you" - Sean springs up - FREEZE - then exit shot L B-CAM: Title/2 then ZI @ CU Sean
73	8/20 Sc. 4
① Comp .14	2 BIG HEADS in bed
74	8/20 Sc. 5
1- Comp .07 ② comp cu .04	Master - F.S. toward Bath- room - door slides open - slave pushes Ind cam to CU- Look off L - dialog

Script: Left-hand page

Figure 10.1

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

SIDE
1. EXT. SEAN'S ~~FRONT~~ DOOR - NIGHT   N-1

It is late and dark. SEAN comes up with a suitcase ~~and
a flight bag~~. He is tired. He unlocks the door and keys ht
enters. He is wearing a Hawaiian shirt and slacks.   1/8

2. INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT   keys ht suitcase ll

The lights are out. Sean enters. He yawns. He is tired
and wants to go right to bed. He sets down his bag, then, MAT +
as he heads toward the bedroom, ~~he takes off shirt and
casually tosses it onto a chair or sofa~~. He enters the
bedroom.   1/8

3. INT. SEAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 72 BTS (LITE ON ANGLE)
REMOVES SHIRT, PANTS, SITS ON A CHAIR, REMOVES SHOES, SOX.
The lights are out. Sean enters, ~~kicks off his shoes
and slides out of his pants~~ Down to his shorts, he AND T-SHIRT
sighs, yawns, then slides into bed, stretching out.
After a beat, a female arm comes lovingly across his
chest and a sweet female voice says...   73

                      CELIA'S VOICE (O.S.)
              I love you.

4. WIDER ANGLE

Sean's head snaps toward the voice. He finds himself
nose to nose with a lovely young bride, CELIA. She
gasps. Sean reacts.

                      SEAN
              What the...!

                      CELIA
                    (screams)
              Ahhh.

She grabs the blankets up around her.

5. ANOTHER ANGLE   74 DAVE

DAVE, the groom, bursts in from the bathroom. He wears
a bathrobe. Light comes in from the bathroom.   6/8

                                            (CONTINUED)

Script: Right-hand page

92 ⅗	8/20 Sc. 7,8
1- Int ngd .45 ② Int + P.U. .45	Master - Inte Group 4/sh Moe - Sean - Celia - Dave (2nd stool as bar) Gruber enters thru front door to 5/SA - on cue Moe xes Fg to CR - 5/SA Sean - Gruber - Celia - Dave - Moe dialog - on cue, Sean rises B-CAM: Inte/2 Celia/Dave
96	8/21 Sc. 7,8
① Comp .58	Close/2: Moe + Sean R. profile - Moe exits shot R- Hold CU Sean (R)
97	8/21 Sc. 8
① Comp. 1.43	CU Gruber - enters thru front door - dialog to end of scene.

---

2.   N-1

5 (Cont.)   I↕ DAVE

                         DAVE
                  Baby, what is it?

        B2L SEAN   72 M/cus   B72 CU SEAN
6.   ANGLE ON SEAN

He is halfway out of bed, still not certain what this is all
about. He whips his head around to look towards the new voice.
It has all happened in a split second. We FREEZE FRAME
catching him in an awkward position, halfway out of bed.
                                                           7/8
                                        CUT TO:

      92 MASTR B92 CU DAVE
7. INT. SEAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER THAT NIGHT)   N-1+
      SEATED AT BAR
Sean Celia and Dave are there in robes. MOE is there in
uniform. Dave is holding his arm protectively around Celia.
                   96 CU SEAN
              MOE (HOLDING POLICE CARD) RR
       You wanna press charges, Doc?

                     DAVE   NOTE TO EDITOR
       What do you mean? He attacked   USE COVERAGE AND
       my wife   O.S. LINES TO COVER
                                              NG MASTER SOUND:
                    MOE
                 (to Sean) I GOT
       Sorry, Doc. It's my duty to
       inform you of your rights. YOU HAVE
       THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT...
                    SEAN
       I didn't attack her. I just got
       in bed with her. IT'S MY BED.

8.   ANGLE ON FRONT DOOR   97 SEAN
                     keys
MRS. GRUBER lets herself in. Celia comes up to her.   a
                                                          CURLERS
                  CELIA   YOU'RE HERE.   IN HAIR
       Mrs. Gruber, thank goodness. Will
       you tell them you rented it to us?
       They don't believe us.

                  GRUBER
                (sees Sean)
       What are you doing here?

                  SEAN
       I live here.

                                 (CONTINUED)   6/8

92 $\frac{a}{b}$	8/20 Sc. 7,8	
1- one ngd .45 ② one + P.U. .45	Master - Tite Group 4/Sh Moe - Sean - Celia - Dave (std stool at bar) Gruber enters thru front door to S/Sh - on cue Moe Xes Fg to C.R - S/Sh Sean - Gruber - Celia - Dave - Moe dialog - on cue, Sean rises B-CAM: Tite/2 Celia/Dave	
96 ① comp .58	8/21 Sc. 7,8 Close/2: Moe & Sean R. profiles - Moe exits shot R - Hold CU Sean (R)	
97 ① comp 1.43	8/21 Sc. 8 CU Gruber - enters thru front door - dialog to end of scene.	

3.

N-1+

8 (Cont.)

GRUBER
You weren't supposed to be back for a week.

SEAN
Well, I'm back now and I got mugged in my own bed.

MOE → X TO DAVE
(to Dave) (READING FROM CARD)
You have the right to remain silent. ~~You have the right to seek counsel.~~ DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING TO ME OR ANSWER ANY OF MY QUESTIONS.

DAVE
Officer, she rented this place to us.

SEAN
(to Gruber)
You rented my apartment without my permission?

MOE
(to Gruber)
You have the right to remain silent... YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY...

SEAN
Moe ~~will you~~ shut up, WILL YOU.

GRUBER
Dr. Jamison, if you'd just once listen to reason. It is my property and this young couple is on their honeymoon.

CELIA
And our reservations fell through.

DAVE
I told you. The hotels are packed.

GRUBER
I found them sitting on a bench... on their wedding night. ~~You said~~ KNOWING THAT you'd be away, so, being a romantic ~~person~~ I ~~let~~ them stay here.

SEAN
For a modest fee, [no doubt.]

MOE, MOE, MOE, SHUT UP.

[I ASSUME]

(CONTINUED)

95 A/B	8/20	Sc. 8
① Comp .23		P.V. on 94 A+B
99	8/21	Sc 8
① Comp. .08		P.V. on 98
		C.U. Moe's last line
51	8/17	Sc. 9
1- Comp. .71		Master - 3.S. angle food
② Comp. .22		patio, past Puni at counter
		- Chaffee enters from Lbg
		patio, xing to Puni.
		Med. 2/shl. Chaffee + Puni
		dialog - Chaffee exits to
		corridor Bgr - Z.I. to
		C.S. Puni - she picks up
		flowers + exits past C.R.

8 (Cont'd 1)   N-1+

GRUBER
Just a breakage deposit.
(trying to explain this)
Well, I was just thinking about   → MOE
the night of my third wedding.
Mario was a gymnast.

CELIA
(tearfully)
What are we going to do?

DAVE
I guess we'll have to leave.

SEAN
(relenting)
Well ...no. You can't leave in → YOU TAKE THE BEDROOM
the middle of the night. I'll   AND
sleep on the sofa. You kids can
have the bedroom. OVER THERE ON THE COUCH.

There is silence as bride and groom exchange glances.
They obviously don't want Sean so close by.

SEAN
NOTHING, NOW? (getting the message)
Okay I'll find someplace. (RISE)

                                    96
                              I'LL FIND A BED
                              SOME PLACE.

GRUBER   97
(quickly)   YOU CAN'T STAY IN
There's no room at my place.   MY PLACE
                              (REMOVING CURLERS)

SEAN
I wouldn't trust you, anyway
SEAN XES FG, EXIT PAST C.R.   99
                                     PU
MOE
Doesn't anybody want to be informed
of their rights?

                              DISSOLVE: 4/8

9.   INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY   (NEXT MORNING)   D-2
                     (FRESH)
PUNI adjusts some flowers in a vase, picks up the vase and
starts with it towards Sean's office. DR. CHAFFEE enters.
                                              CASE RW
CHAFFEE
Good morning.

PUNI
Morning, Dr. Chaffee.

                              (CONTINUED)   7/8

50	8/16	Sc. 10,11	
1- Overage .12	Master- Start M.S. on		
2- Comp tags .23	Screen- Puni comes thru		
③ Comp .22	- Pan her X L-R to desk &		
	reveal Sean asleep on		
	sofa - she xes to him -		
	ZI to tite/2 shu Sean		
	awakens - dialog.		

5.

D-2

8 (Cont.)

TO F.G.

CHAFFEE
Puni, I've told you and told you...
stop putting flowers around.

PUNI
But Doctor, this is Hawaii.

CHAFFEE
I don't care. They're full of
pollen. They'll make my patients
sneeze.

He exits into the corridor. Puni looks after him and
makes a face.

PUNI (IMITATES HIM)
Yankee, go home.
MAKE MY PATIENT'S SNEEZE... ACHOO!

EXITS TO SEAN'S OFFICE.

CUT TO: 3/8

50

D-2

10.   INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - DAY (MORNING)

Puni enters and sets the vase of flowers on his desk.

11.   ANOTHER ANGLE

Sean, wearing a rumpled sport shirt and pants, is stirring
on the sofa where he apparently has spent the night.

PUNI
Dr. Jamison, what are you doing
here?

SEAN
(stretches, feels back)
I've been asking myself that all
night.
(rubs back again)
(gets up)

PUNI
But, Doctor, why couldn't you
sleep in your own bed?

SEAN
It was two against one...

Puni reacts.

CUT TO: 7/8

WARDROBE OUTLINE

TITLE _____ Time Breakdown _N-1_

Scene Nos.	Sets SIDE	Date Shot
1	EXT SEAN FRONT DOOR	8/13
2	SEAN LIVING ROOM	8/20
3, 4	SEAN BEDROOM	8/20
5	{ ANGLE BATHROOM (LITE)	8/20
6	SEAN BEDROOM	8/20

CHARACTERS

SEAN	CELIA
Straw hat, navy feather blue/wh. check west shirt (inside navy denim pants) dungy west. belt SC3: T-shirt striped shorts	Pink Baby-Doll nightie wedding ring
DAVE yellow pag	

Figure 10.2

WARDROBE OUTLINE

TITLE _____ Time Breakdown _N-1-(LATER)_

Scene Nos.	Sets	Date Shot
7, 8	SEAN LIVING ROOM	8/21

CHARACTERS

SEAN	CELIA
Same as next page (T-Shirt under robe	Same as previous page + short lace robe Hair on Rolled wedding ring
DAVE Same as previous page + short green terry robe	GRUBER west. shirt (patched cuffs open over lt blue pag. pants curlers in hair
MOE Uniform wear hat-strap down L.S.	

WARDROBE OUTLINE

TITLE _____   Time Breakdown _D-2_

Scene Nos.	Sets	Date Shot
9	RECEPTION ROOM	8/17
10, 11	SEAN OFFICE	8/16

CHARACTERS

SEAN	PUNI
Red/wh print short robe. Barefoot SC.10: no T-Shirt under robe	Lavender & wh print Chamsong over wh pants Violets in hair R.S.
CHAFFEE char. silk suit Blue shirt Gold/red pattern tie	

PRODUCTION STOCK SHOTS

There will be times when principal and second unit photography will be required to shoot certain scenes as STOCK SHOTS (Figure 10.3). This is more apt to occur when shooting episodic television.

When stock shots are filmed (usually without a script), it is your responsibility to compose a comprehensive description of each scene, including the date. The practical method I suggest is to number the shots consecutively, starting with 1, and precede each number with an S (for stock): S-1, S-2, and so on. Attach this list to your continuity script, and forward copies to the editor and the production office. It is advisable that you communicate your particular format to the 2nd unit continuity supervisor.

```
PRODUCTION STOCK SHOTS


TITLE:_____        DATE:_____


SLATE #

  S-1      EXT. MEDICAL BLDG - DAY.
           Unmarked blue Ford pulls up to curb L-R,
  50 ft.   stops.  Smith driving, Jones alongside.
           Both get out, PAN their walk across side-
           walk, and HOLD as they go into the building.

  S-2      EXT. MEDICAL BLDG - DAY
           Unmarked blue Ford parked at curb R-L.
  50 ft.   Smith behind wheel, Jones alongside.  Both
           get out.  PAN their walk R-L.  EXIT into
           the building.  PAN UP along front of build-
           ing and HOLD on sculptured Medical Insignia.

  S-3      EXT. MEDICAL BLDG -DAY
           Start UP ANGLE on Medical Insignia - PAN
  50 ft.   DOWN to Long Shot of Street.  Blue unmarked
           Ford parked at curb R-L.  Smith is behind
           wheel, Jones alongside.  Both get out and
           EXIT into the building.

  S-4      EXT. MEDICAL BLDG - NITE
           Start UP ANGLE on Medical Insignia (as
  75 ft.   above), PAN DOWN front of building to
           Long Shot on entrance doors.  Smith and
           Jones come out of building and cross to
           parked car at curb (R-L).  They get into
           car: Smith at wheel, Jones alongside.
           Start motor and drive away R-L.

               Tk-1 Camera late panning.
               Smith did not start motor.

               Tk-2 Okay
```

Figure 10.3

11

Dynamics of the Camera

The preceding chapters have delineated the continuity supervisor's role with respect to the methodology of breaking down a script for shooting out of continuity, and your essential relationship with the editor, the crew, and the production office during principal photography; also an overview of the stage activities in the course of a day's shoot. The ensuing chapters address the methodology with respect to the performance in front of the camera; and your visible relationship with the director.

EYE OF THE CAMERA.

Camera technology is in the domain of the camera personnel and the director. But it will benefit you to be somewhat conversant with the elementary principles of the camera in connection with shooting theatrical and television films.

LENSES

The lens is an optical device on the front of the camera which transmits light (the *image*) into the camera and onto the film. It contains a variable opening (*aperture*) which regulates the amount of light allowed to pass through.

Film is gauged in millimeters: 35mm, 16mm, and 8mm denote the most common dimensions of celluloid from which film is manufactured. In years past,

motion picture photography was shot with 35mm cameras, while documentaries, home movies and student projects were shot with 16mm or 8mm cameras. But those classifications are now out-dated. The advent of modern, readily available, light-weight, inexpensive 35mm film equipment and ultrafast film stock—as well as digital video technology—are supplanting all the earlier formats. Feature motion pictures, as well as a large percentage of television programming continues to be made on 35mm film. Increasingly, video—in all its various home and professional tape formats—is replacing those smaller film sizes. Also on the horizon is the new American HDTV (high definition, all digital wide screen). In the not too distant future, digital imaging will be standard modus operandi.

Focal Length is the gauge of a lens pertaining to the distance between the optical center of the lens in the camera and the subject being filmed. The distance is referred to as the shot's *field of view*. Lenses come in a variety of *focal lengths*, which are measured in millimeters. The standard equivalents are as follows:

25mm = 1 inch

50mm = 2 inches

75mm = 3 inches

100mm = 4 inches

There are also sequentially numbered lenses gauged below, between, and beyond the numbers mentioned above. The lens size determines the size of the image that is projected on the film. Technically, though, the size of the image is also predicated on the placement of the camera. For example: a 100mm lens on a camera positioned a substantial distance form the subject may project an image approximately the same size as that projected by a 75mm lens in a camera positioned closer to the subject.

NOTE: Some companies may require you to record the lens size of every shot. Do so if you must. But it is patently unnecessary because that detail is automatically recorded on the camera assistant's daily report. That being said, however, I refer you to the important note in Chapter 13, "Mastery of Matching," page 175.

Focus: The point at which a lens produces a sharp image.

Focusing: The act of making a precise lens adjustment to ensure the optimal sharpness of the image. *In focus* means that the projected image is sharply defined. *Out of focus* means that the projected image is not sharply defined.

Depth of Field: The area (spatial distance) in front of the lens in which any object will automatically be in sharp focus for a given aperture opening.

The lower the lens number (25mm vs 75mm), the shorter is the focal length and the longer the depth of field. Low-numbered lenses are used for shots that encompass a large area of the scene. In such shots (referred

to as *Wide Angle, Full Shot, Long Shot,* and *Extreme Long Shot*) , the images projected on the screen appear smaller to the audience. That is because the subjects are seen from a distant perspective.

The higher the lens number, the longer the focal length, and the shorter the depth of field. High-numbered lenses project a larger image on the screen (for a given screen size), bringing the subjects seemingly closer to the audience. Such shots are referred to as *Medium Shots, Close Shots,* and *Close-ups.*

Follow Focus: Means adjusting the lens for changes in distances as subjects move away from or toward the camera; or when the camera moves to follow the action. The camera 1st assistant (sometimes called the *focus puller*) controls the focusing apparatus when such shots are executed. If focus is not followed to maintain depth of field while one subject is in the foreground of the shot and the other is in the background, the subject in the background may appear fuzzy because it is in *soft focus.* At times, such images may be created intentionally for filmic effect.

When both the background and foreground images are sharply defined, the shot is referred to as having *split focus.*

F-Stop: A geometric measurement denoting the size of the opening (*aperture*) of the lens, through which the light passes to the film. A dimly lit set requires a lower f-stop number on the lens to allow more light to pass through to the film. Conversely, bright light situations require higher f-stop numbers to lessen the light reaching the film.

T-Stop: Refers to the matching of transmitted light from shot to shot.

Zoom Lens: A lens designed with a variable focal length, which gives the camera the capability of attaining different perspectives and image sizes with the simple touch on a lever while the camera is rolling.

Telephoto Lens: One that can bring an image into close view and focus from a great distance.

SCREEN (CAMERA) DIRECTION

The term screen direction (also called camera direction) refers to the movement of subjects within a frame of film—as they move from side to side (left-to-right) (L-R) and right-to-left (R-L); then toward the background (BG) (away from camera); or toward the foreground (FG) (toward camera).

If you train yourself to visualize a movie set in relation to a frame of film, you will always think in terms of screen (camera) direction. And the concept will be indelible in your mind.

A set is a three-walled area: there is the left side of the frame, known as *camera left* (CL), the right side of the frame, known as *camera right* (CR), and the *background* (BG) of the frame. The camera and the audience are the "fourth wall." When shooting interiors, the background limit is a wall or a structure. When shooting exteriors, the background limit is determined by the camera's

cutoff point: the most distant point at which the camera lens can hold the image in sharp focus.

INSCRIBED AREA

What the camera sees (what the frame holds) is referred to as the *inscribed area.* More specifically, the inscribed area is the space that the image takes up within a single frame—from side to side, top to bottom, and in spatial depth—whether the image is in wide angle or close up.

Every movement of the camera, however slight, creates an image change. Any change of lens size creates an angle change. Each modification alters the inscribed area. As continuity supervisor, your criterion at all times is what the frame is holding in any given angle: how the image is seen in the camera, not how it appears in your normal field of vision. It is your prerogative to peer into the camera to make sure that the shot description in your script notes is absolutely correct. The expediency of the Video Monitor (see Chapter 5) may not always provide exactly what you need to verify the inscribed area. But I caution you to use your prerogative wisely so as not to ruffle the camera operator.

IMAGINARY LINE/ACTION AXIS/ 180° RULE

The filmic principle that dictates the placement of the camera within a given spatial sphere is referred to as the *imaginary line,* the *action axis,* or the *180° rule.* A stationary camera on a tripod, moving its head left to right or right to left, pans a semicircle of 180°. The circumference of a circle, of course, measures 360°. The camera's viewpoint from a stationary shot predicates the principle of the 180° rule/action axis/imaginary line of that shot.

The concept of the imaginary line can better be described as a theoretical thread drawn across the scene extending between the line of eye contact of the two subjects closest to the camera on each side of the frame. Therefore, the camera position for all component shots—for that inscribed area—must be confined to the space prescribed by the imaginary line. Thus, congruity is maintained when intercutting the related shots (Figure 11.1). Should a component shot be made with the camera having crossed the imaginary line, the image on the screen will appear in reverse (Figure 11.4).

The only time that crossing the line will not disturb the flow of continuity is when the camera follows the subjects' movements within the setup, panning and dollying with the action—or shooting with hand-held camera. So long as the camera and actors are in movement, there is no commitment to an imaginary line. However, should the camera and the actors stop at a given point while

the dialogue continues, that stationary angle imposes a new imaginary line. And if the director decides to shoot close-ups for that stationary portion of the scene, then the component cover shots will have to adhere to that fixed imaginary line.

CROSSING THE LINE

Example 1

Let us say that a master 2/Shot (Figure 11.1) is covered by two single closer angles. In Shot 1 (Figure 11.2), the camera is focused on Character A looking CR to Character B. In Shot 2 (Figure 11.3), the camera is focused on Character B looking CL to Character A. But if the camera were positioned incorrectly for the latter shot (having *crossed the line*), then—screenwise—Character B would suddenly be looking CR, the opposite direction, even though the character and the chair remained in exactly the same position as in the master shot (Figure 11.4). This shot therefore cannot be intercut with either the master 2/Shot or the close-up on Character A.

Example 2

Let us visualize filming a vehicle that is traveling the road left-to-right (Figure 11.5), and it is later filmed traversing another location, caught by the camera positioned on the opposite side of the road (Figure 11.6). The vehicle will appear on the screen as though it is suddenly traveling in the opposite direction *right-to-left* instead of *left-to-right* to conform with the established traveling progression. If these two pieces of film were joined in editing, the screen would show the car in the first shot and the car in the second shot traveling toward each other. In other words, it would appear to the audience that the same vehicle is headed for a collision with itself (Figures 11.7 and 11.8).

In the course of shooting a film, you will sometimes encounter disputes over this technicality. As mentioned earlier, there are rule-breakers among filmmakers. Your expertise notwithstanding, the final decision rests with the director. All you can do is make a conspicuous notation in your continuity script to let the editor know that you mentioned this collision course to the director.

Adherence to the imaginary line used to be an unbreakable law. But in today's cinematic climate (due to ignorance, indifference, or, perhaps, the creative desire to move beyond the rigidity of the old rules) the discipline has been knocked off its pedestal. Curiously, audiences have become accustomed to the bizarre cuts and jumps. And some directors deliberately cross the line for stylistic, filmic effect.
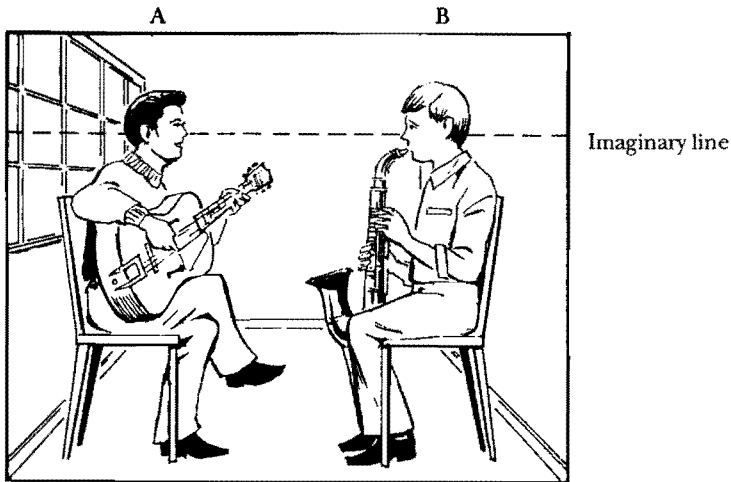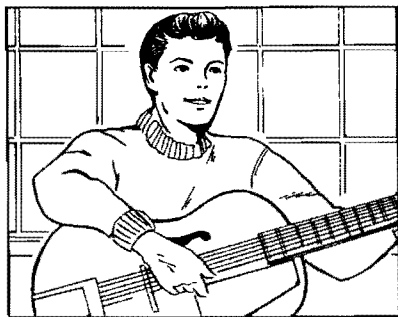
Figure 11.1

Imaginary line

Figure 11.2

Shot 1

Figure 11.3

Shot 2

Figure 11.4

Camera crossed the line and created a reverse shot. B's look to CR is wrong. This shot cannot be intercut with either the master 2/Shot or A's close-up.

Shot 2

Car traveling L-R, camera positioned shooting past the passenger.

Camera positioned on opposite side of the road, now shooting past the driver, makes the car travel R-L (reverse direction). Turn page upside-down to see direction from the point of view of this camera.
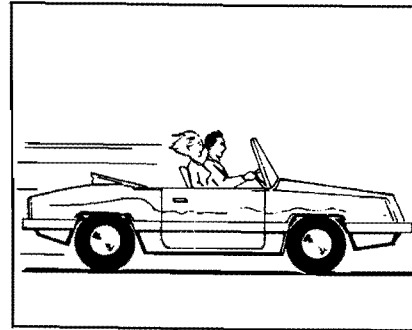
Figure 11.5

Figure 11.6
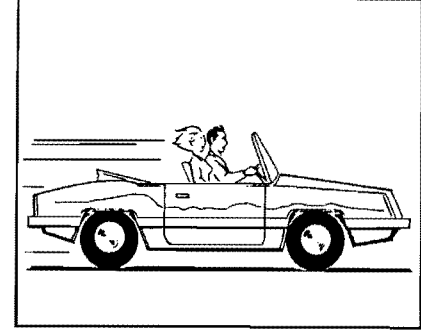
Figure 11.7
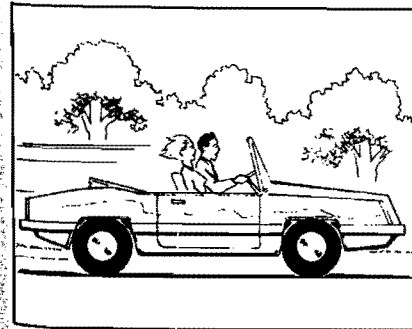
Figure 11.8
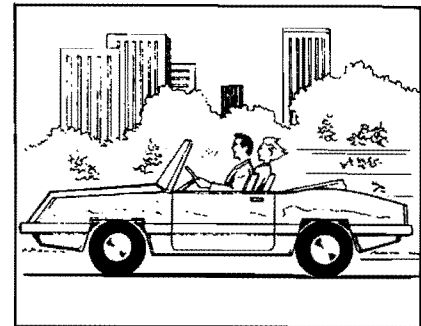
When these two shots are joined in editing, it appears that the one vehicle is headed for a collision with itself.

PROGRESSION

The principle of *camera progression* is the maintaining of an uninterrupted flow of movement in the same direction from one shot to the next. In other words, if it is established at the start of a sequence—that subjects (persons, animals, vehicles) will enter a shot via camera left (CL) and exit the shot via camera right (CR), or enter a shot camera right (CR) and exit the shot camera left (CL)—all succeeding shots connected to that sequence must maintain the exact same progression, until the action stops at a predetermined destination.

No matter how far apart the locations of the continuous shots may be, or how differently the shots are designed—high angle, low angle, or side angle—the established continuity progression must be maintained throughout. If kept within the traditional cinematic tenets, this technique conveys natural progression to the audience. If it is violated in any one of the successive shots in a sequence, the result is a disconcerting picture—with subjects' moves appearing to flop from side to side on the screen.

CAVEAT: In today's filmic arena—fostered by music videos, TV commercials, etc.—there is less adherence to conventional dogma of smooth editing. Audiences have become inured to all sorts of radical and outrageous camera cuts that violate the time-honored principles of screen direction. When you become a seasoned continuity supervisor (indoctrinated with traditional filmic tenets), you may venture to suggest to a less seasoned director to shoot a protection shot (a direction-neutral angle or a complete cutaway) that may be needed to salvage an otherwise jerky sequence.

Clean Entrances and Exits

It is mandatory that subjects make a *clean entrance* (from outside the frame) into every shot—and a *clean exit* (to outside the frame) from every shot. The editor cannot preserve the flow of uninterrupted progression if a moving subject does not completely clear the frame at the end of a shot or is in a still position in the frame at the start of the shot immediately following. Experienced camera operators are cognizant of this principle and will not switch off the camera before the subjects have cleared the frame (Figure 11.9).

Figure 11.9

PROGRESSION:
Clean Entrances and Exits

Right-to-Left
Location #1

Left-to-Right
Location #1

Exit CL   Enter CR

Enter CL   Exit CR

Location #2

Location #2

Exit CL   Enter CR

Enter CL   Exit CR

Location #3

Location #3

Enter frame at CR,
stop at destination

Enter frame at CL,
stop at destination
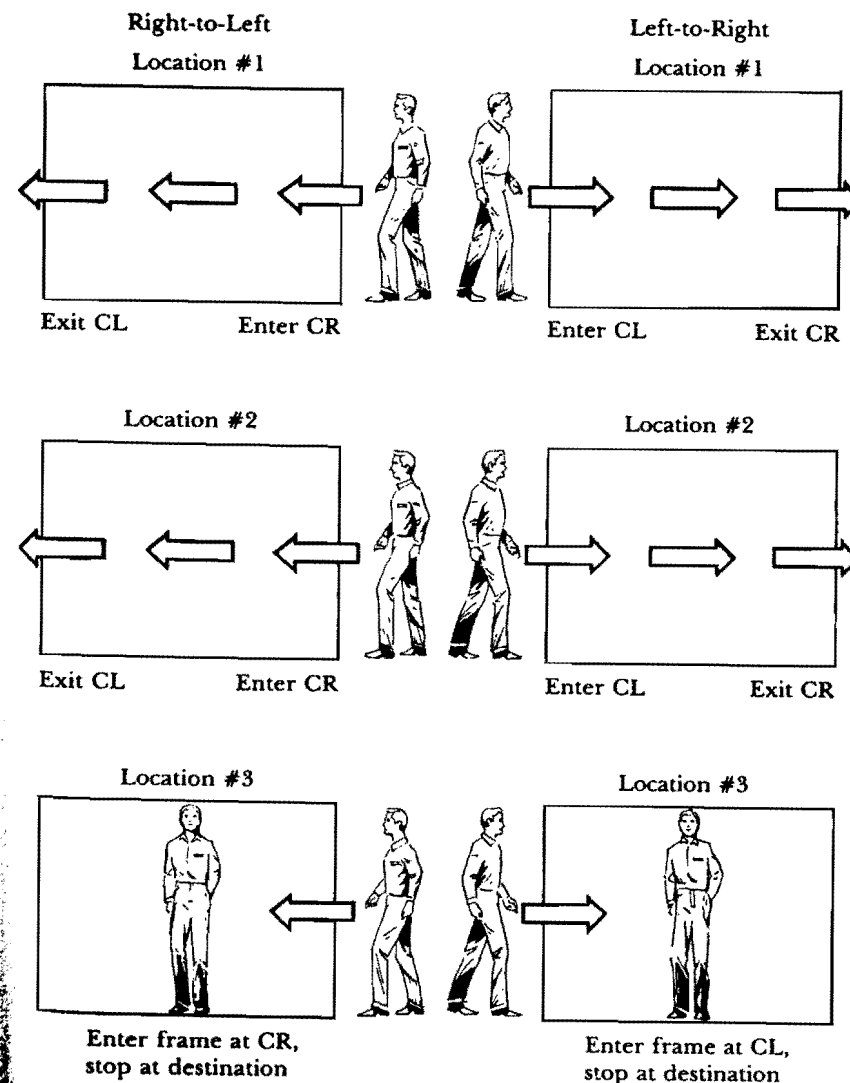
The Chasing Action

When two characters are moving in the same direction (Figure 11.10)—stalking or chasing each other (left-to-right)—each character must make a clean entrance into every shot and a clean exit out of every shot at the same pace as in the preceding shot. This progression must be consistent, no matter how far apart the individual location sites may be, or how much time elapses between shooting the number of setups called for in the sequence. Also, be aware that the locations involved in a chase sequence are often not shot in the order depicted in the script. Therefore, every segment of the chase must be unerring in progression continuity.

Figure 11.10

PROGRESSION:
The Chasing Action

Location #1

Enter CL   Exit CR

Location #2

Enter CL   Exit CR

Location #3

Enter CL   Exit CR
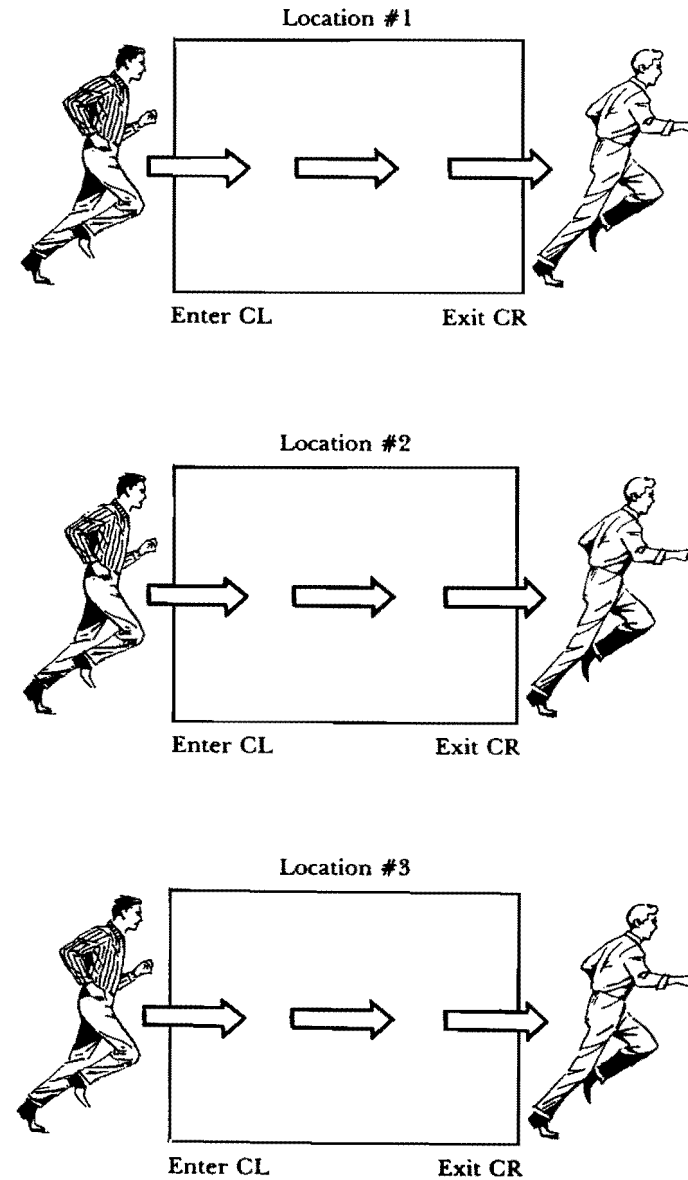
The Converging Action

The same strict fidelity to progression applies when characters or vehicles are supposed to be moving toward each other. The progression will be as follows: one will move left-to-right (L-R) and the other will move right-to-left (R-L). In every setup, each subject will make clean entrances and clean exits. At a point in the story when the subjects are supposed to come together, each will make the proper entrance from opposite sides of the camera and merge into the same frame (Figure 11.11).

It all comes together in the editing department, where every separately filmed piece will be assembled into the correct sequence. And the result will be a suspenseful episode on the screen.

Figure 11.11

PROGRESSION:
The Converging Action

Location #1   Location #1

Enter CL   Exit CR   Exit CL   Enter CR

Location #2   Location #2

Enter CL   Exit CR   Exit CL   Enter CR

Location #3

At destination, two characters
enter frame from each side of
camera and meet
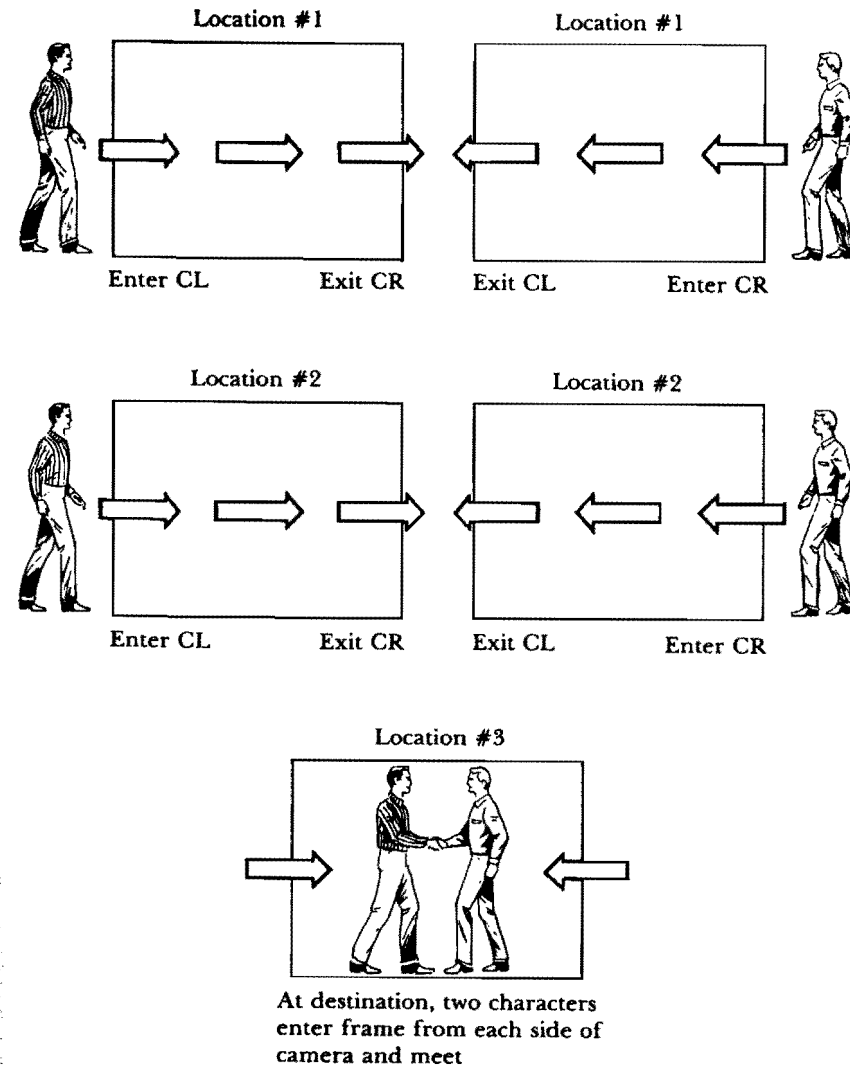
Direct Reverse Progression

There are times when proper progression is maintained with the camera placed in a reverse position. For example: A couple enters a large room where a party is in progress; in the background is a table with punch bowl and glasses. The camera is focused on the couple's backs (Figure 11.12) while they walk toward the background table (away from camera). At a certain point in their walk, the director will cut the shot: (1) to reveal the couple's identity to the audience, or (2) to shorten the length of the walk for timing purposes. Either purpose requires another setup and placing the camera in reverse position—crossing the line. Here, the camera is focused on the door—which is now in the background, shooting past the table in the foreground (Figure 11.13); and the camera is holding on the faces of the couple. Observe that this angle reverses their positions seen on the screen: in the first shot, the man is on CL and the woman is on CR; in the reverse shot, the man is on CR and the woman is on CL. As the couple continues their walk (moving toward camera) to the table in the foreground, the illusion of uninterrupted progression is cinematically maintained. Audiences accept this reverse technique as normal progression within the scene.

Figure 11.12
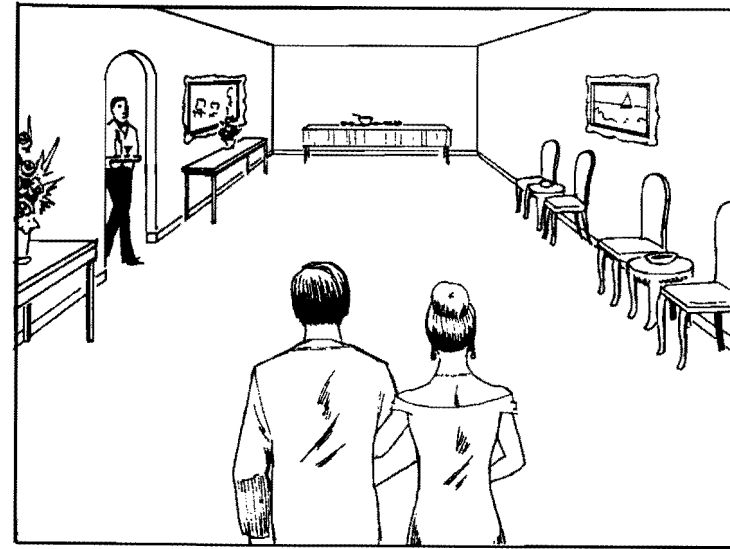
Figure 11.13

Establishing Geography

When designing sets for a film production—whether on a studio soundstage or at outdoor locations—the art director provides a blueprint for the director and the cinematographer. This rendering depicts the various set locales in relation to each other from a key point of view of the camera. For instance: the area depicted is a small town (Figure 11.14). The bank is to the left of the store and to the right of the church; the farmhouse is to the right of the church and to the left of the school. Once this geography is established, the screen direction—from left-to-right and right-to-left, for all the entrances to and exits from these sites—must conform in every shot. There can be no deviation. The audience becomes oriented and identifies with the characters' comings and goings to and from the various locales. When the rules of screen direction are strictly adhered to, it does not matter how disjointedly (out of continuity) the scenes have been shot; ultimately, the film editor will orchestrate every sequence into flawless continuity.

Doubtful Progression

Occasionally, a problem arises: There is uncertainty as to the progression of a scene from one setup to another. Did the character exit the previous shot camera right (CR) or camera left (CL)? Another problem occurs when proper entrance into a setup cannot be made because of crowded space. To overcome this predicament, the following technique was devised:

1. Start close-up on the back of a subject—blocking (filling) the screen to create a momentary distraction. As the subject starts to move away from the camera, a different scene is revealed. The subject may then proceed toward CL or CR as required for the scene's progression.

2. Reversing the above: Start close-up on the front of a subject's torso—blocking (filling) the screen to create a momentary distraction. As the camera pulls back (dollies back or zooms out) to a wider angle (medium or full shot), a different scene is revealed. The subject can then move forward *toward the camera* to either CL or CR as required for the scene's progression.

Cross-Country Progression

The progression for cross-country travel customarily conforms to the design of the United States map: west is CL, east is CR. You are traveling left-to-right (L-R) when going from Los Angeles to Chicago or New York, and you are traveling right-to-left (R-L) when going from New York to Chicago or Los Angeles.

Figure 11.14
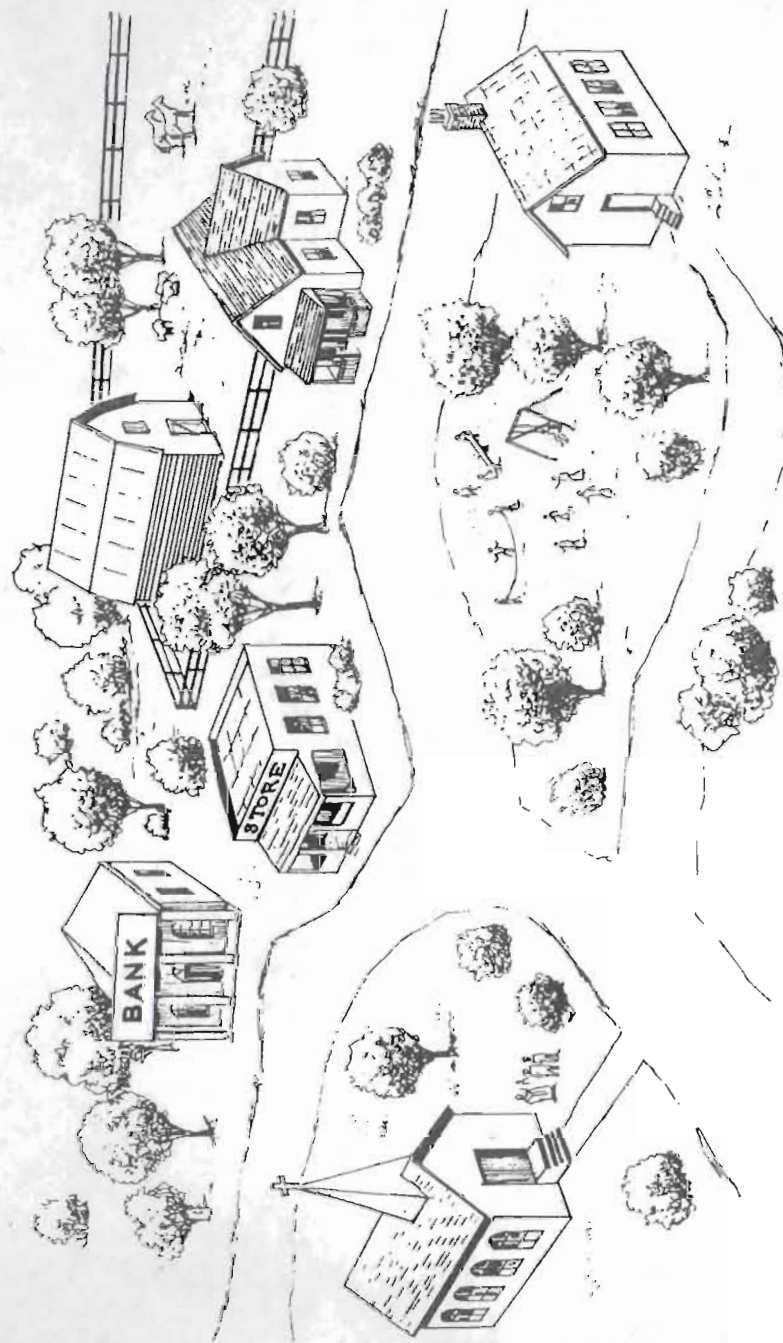
Eyes-Following Progression

The geographical position of the camera that is shooting a parade or a moving vehicle determines the way viewers' eyes will follow the moving subjects. For instance, let's say the camera is photographing a parade or a procession along a street—marching right-to-left (R-L). If the people viewing the parade are positioned behind the camera (unseen by the audience), then another shot with reverse camera position will be made to reveal the people at the curb viewing the parade. The eyes of the parade viewers will move left-to-right (L-R)—the reverse of the parade movement. To ensure the correct looks from the watchers, it is customary to have a person (usually the 2nd A.D.) walking behind the camera, holding up a flag, moving in the same direction and at the same pace as the parade. When the two pieces of film are judiciously intercut, it will appear to the audience that the people are watching the parade in proper progression.

Entering from Off-Camera

The illustration, Figure 11.15, depicts a hypothetical scene to demonstrate a wide-angle master shot, starting with six people seated at a table; and their subsequent movements. During the playing of the scene, each character rose and moved in the direction indicated by the arrows. As each character moved toward and stopped at a respective door, the shot was cut. From this viewpoint, each character must then make an entrance into his/her respective closer angle—without causing a directional mismatch or jump cut. The illustration shows from which side of the camera each respective character must enter to proceed through the door—while preserving cinematic continuous movement from shot to shot.

Figure 11.15

SCREEN DIRECTION
Off-Camera Entrance
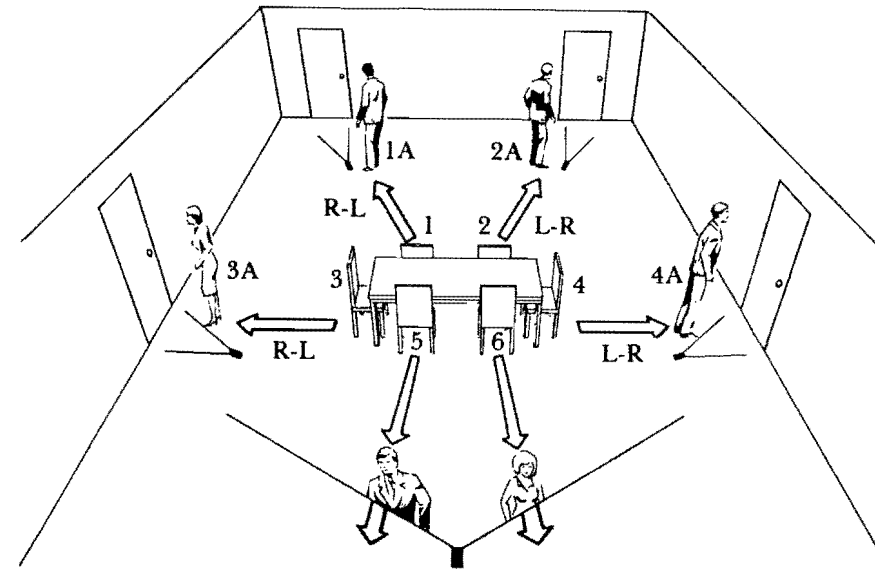
1. Move R-L to Lbg door.
2. Move L-R to Rbg door.
3. Move X-Room R-L to center door.
4. Move X-Room L-R to center door.
5. Move R-L to fg, exit past CL.
6. Move L-R to fg, exit past CR.

1A. Closer Angle on Lbg door; enter from behind CR.
2A. Closer Angle on Rbg door; enter from behind CL.
3A. Closer Angle on center door; enter from behind CR.
4A. Closer Angle on center door; enter from behind CL.

Going through a Door

To maintain the semblance of uninterrupted filmic progression—while bringing subjects through a door—mandates precise positioning of the camera on both sides of the door (Figure 11.16).

Shot 1, Exterior (Frame 1): The character is walking left-to-right (L-R) toward the door. When the character reaches the door and starts to open it, the shot will be cut. Screenwise, when the camera is placed correctly inside the house it will ensure the continuous movement of bringing the character coming through the doorway and continuing to move into the house.

Shot 2, Interior (Frame 2): The camera is positioned on the appropriate side of the door. When the door is opened, the only direction from which the character can enter the shot is from camera left-to-right (L-R). Thus, continuous progression from exterior to interior is maintained.

Shot 2, Interior (Frame 3): Take special note. The camera is incorrectly positioned at the interior side of the door (see broken line). On the screen it will appear that—in the middle of the doorway—the character is walking in reverse direction: camera right-to-left (R-L). There is no way that shots 1 and 3 can be co-joined for continuous movement.

NOTE: Here's a hint for ensuring flow of progression when going through a doorway: Whichever side of the door is shot first, make a note (or a diagram) indicating the placement of the *doorknob:* either on CR or CL. Then, when shooting the opposite side of the door, check to see that the doorknob is placed correctly on the direct *opposite side* of the door. If in shot 1, the doorknob was on CR, then in shot 2 the doorknob *must be* on CL. Study Figure 11.16.

There is a filmic convention that can technically preserve progression through a doorway: End the exterior shot (Frame 1) with the opening of the door and make a clean exit from the shot into the interior. When filming the interior shot (Frame 2), start with an overlap of the door being opened from the exterior. In that way, the editor has footage on both sides of the door to effect the smoothest transition.

An exterior scene may be filmed at an actual outdoor location, while the corresponding interior scene may be built and filmed on a sound stage or at another interior location. The filming of these individual scenes may take place days, weeks, or even months apart. Whichever scene is filmed first—the exterior or the interior—be sure to notate the screen direction of the *initial* shot; also, carefully observed where the door hinges are fixed. If in the first shot, the hinge is on CL, then in the second shot, the hinge must be on CR.

The technique of properly setting the camera to maintain consistent progression applies equally when going through interior doors from room to room.

Figure 11.16

SCREEN DIRECTION
Going through a Door

Shot 1
Exterior left-to-right

Shot 2
Interior left-to-right

Shot 2
Interior right-to-left

Camera on wrong side of doorway
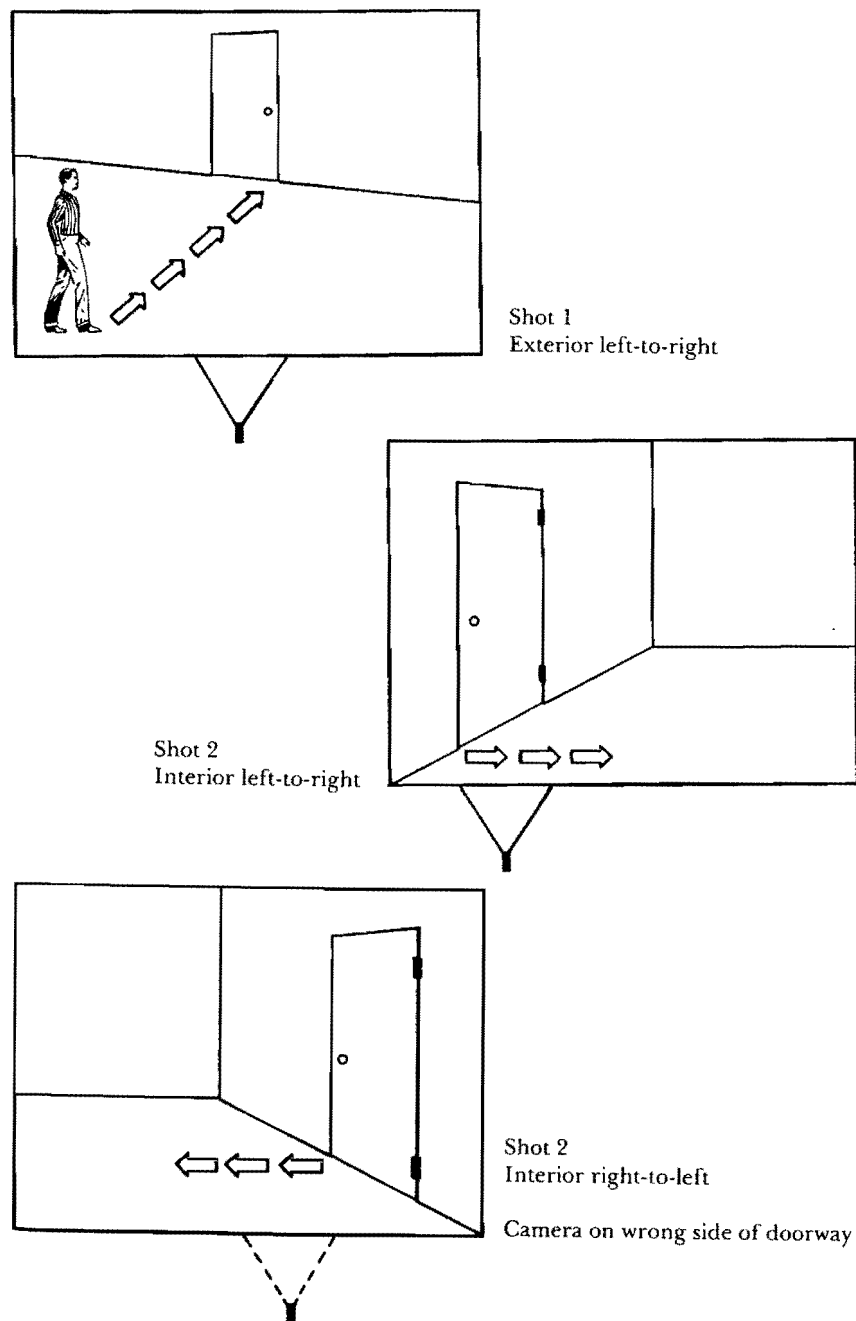
JUMPS ON SCREEN

When props within a shot are incongruously juxtaposed from one angle to another, *jumps* occur on the screen. The illustration (Figure 11.17) depicts a couple seated at either side of a table with a candle placed in the center. If the master 2/shot is to be covered by two single close-ups, it must be determined beforehand "who gets the candle?" It is a cinematic dictum that the prop cannot appear in both close shots. If the candle is included in both shots, here's what will happen: when cross-cutting the dialogue between the man and the woman, the candle will appear to jump from one side of the screen to the other: from camera right (close shot on A) to camera left (close shot on B). Consequently, the audience's eyes will gravitate to the glaring juxtaposition of the candle on the table. Such filmic distractions cause diverted attention from the couple's important dialogue and dissipate the dramatic impact of the scene.

Figure 11.17

Master 2/shot

Close shot—A

Candle on CR

Close shot—B
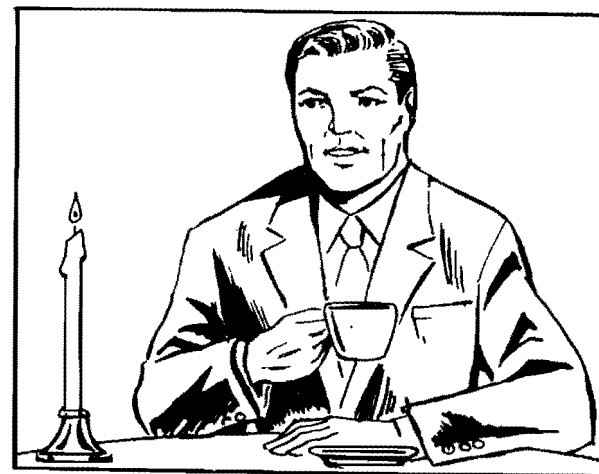
Candle on CL

SPLIT SCREEN

The *split screen* is a trick shot that projects more than one image in a single frame. This technique has been practiced since the early days of filming. Split-screen is used when actors play dual roles, or when the director wishes to effect a composite of different scenes in one frame. Today, most all such special effects shots are done digitally via image-manipulating computers.

12

The Concept of Coverage

As mentioned in Chapter 1, scene *coverage* means the *breaking up* of a filmed master shot into a variety of camera angles and closer shots. The concept of coverage is predicated on the theory—evolved by early filmmakers—that punctuating a master wide-angle shot with closer angles and different camera viewpoints heightens the impact of a filmed performance.

TECHNIQUES OF COVERAGE

In order to achieve the dynamic of coverage, the strategy evolved was: cut out a section of footage from the master shot, and strategically co-join (splice) the gap with the piece of film from the close shot. That is feasible in principle. But it poses a daunting task for the actors: to repeat their action and dialogue in the close shot with impeccable fidelity. And the actors' dilemma was compounded in view of the fact that close-ups have to be filmed separately and at varying times: Close-up shots require strategic positioning of the camera with regard to the background, as well as special lighting (particularly on the actresses).

THE PURPOSE OF COVERAGE

As mentioned earlier, the breaking up of a continuous master shot is to accentuate a dramatic or significant element in the scene: a shot of another character's reaction to a speech or a piece of business adds a new dimension; a big

close-up of a menacing weapon held by the heroine—or aimed at her—intensifies the suspense.

Another objective for coverage is to improve the tempo of a slow-moving performance: By punctuating the action with different angles and close-ups, the editor can accelerate the pace of the scene.

The province of coverage is the director's domain, while the province of action and scene-matching falls within the purview of the continuity supervisor (Chapter 13: Mastery of Matching).

SHOT SIZES

The illustration (Figure 12.1) gives an overview of shot sizes relative to the image captured in a frame of film. The designated terms and their abbreviations are more or less standard.

COVERING MASTER SCENES

The director has to design the master scene so the coverage can be achieved without incurring technical snags: jump cuts and directional mismatches. When smooth coverage is achieved, the editor is able to intercut all the component shots into a continuous, even-flowing sequence. Ultimately, a speech or an action can be heard or seen only once in the final cut of the picture. Therefore, copious coverage will afford the director and the editor creative options to employ the most dynamic shots and endow the scene with dramatic or comedic impact.

The gamut of coverage depends on the virtuosity of the director. However, that skill is sometimes throttled by mundane restrictions: the limitation because of budget, and the demanding schedule of production time. The tighter the budget and the tighter the schedule, the less fancy and varied are the time-consuming setups for coverage.

The following pages will give you a glimpse of the various angles (there are many more) that a director may shoot when breaking up (covering) a master scene.

Correct Looks

Because of an idiosyncrasy in cinematic technology, there is an inflexible rule that governs screen direction when covering a shot: characters' correct *looks*. Let us envision a scene of two characters engaged in conversation, and then the subsequent filming of individual close-ups of each character. A filmic convention mandates that the off-camera character be positioned at the appropriate side of the camera—not in front of the camera. The explanation is: the camera is now positioned where the off-camera character stood or sat in the

Figure 12.1

OVERVIEW OF SHOT SIZES

WHEN CAMERA CUTS:

Above chin —————— ECU (Extreme Closeup)
Just under chin —————— HCU (Head Closeup)
Head and neck —————— BCU (Big Closeup)

At shoulders —————— CU (Closeup)

At chest —————— CS (Close Shot)

At waist —————— MCS (Medium Close Shot)

At hips —————— MS (Medium Shot)

At knees —————— MFS (Medium Full Shot)

Full figure, including feet —————— FS (Full Shot)

Small area in Fg —————— MLS (Medium Long Shot)

Larger area in Fg —————— LS (Long Shot)

Character or object in distant Bg —————— EXLS (Extreme Long Shot)

master 2/shot. That makes the on-camera character's eyes fixed straight into the camera lens. This creates the impression on the screen that the on-camera character is speaking to an audience, not to the vis à vis character in the master shot. To circumvent this, the actors' looks must go, unequivocally, to either camera-right (CR) or camera-left (CL), as dictated by the scene. (Newscasters and lecturers look straight into the camera lens: they are addressing a listening audience—out there.)

When more than one off-camera character is involved, each must be positioned at the correct side of the camera in the exact rotation as they were—standing or seated—in the master shot. This will ensure the *correct looks* from the on-camera character. Otherwise, there will be inconsistency when intercutting the dialogue or the glances toward the off-camera characters. Observe the consistent order of positioning of the off-camera characters: Figure 12.2, Frames 1 through 10; Figure 12.3, Frames 1 through 8; Figure 12.4, Frames 1 through 6.

COVERING WITH DOUBLES

When risk is involved in the performance of a scene involving fights, stunts, or dangerous special effects, a substitute person takes the place of the principal actor. That person is known as a *double*, or a *stuntperson*. Usually doubles somewhat resemble the principals in physique—mainly they match the principals in height, because height may affect the lighting of a scene.

Scenes with doubles are typically made in wide-angle shots—the reason being that the doubles' faces are not recognizable from a distance; thus the audience is unaware that it is not the stars who are performing the feats. However, for close angles of the action, the principal actors perform their roles. This gives the audience the impression that the stars are actually engaged in the risky business.

The coverage that will take place at strategic stages in the action (as rehearsed with the doubles) is necessarily preplanned. You should be extremely watchful at the fixed-action spots where the principal actors replace the doubles. Note how the doubles landed on the floor: in awkward positions, the condition of the wardrobe, and of the makeup. The principal actors usually watch the doubles' performance so they can approximate the action. But the continuity supervisor is the authority with regard to matching. Always indicate in your shot description and the Daily Editor's Log the shots that were filmed with doubles.

COVERING MOVING SHOTS

When the camera is moving—traveling with actors as they walk and talk—the rule is: Do not *cut into a moving camera* or a *moving actor*. For instance: The camera

Figure 12.2

BREAKING UP THE MASTER—4 People in Frame

1. **Full 4/Shot**—head to toe.
2. **Med. Tight Group 4/Shot**—hip figure.
   Fill screen from side to side.
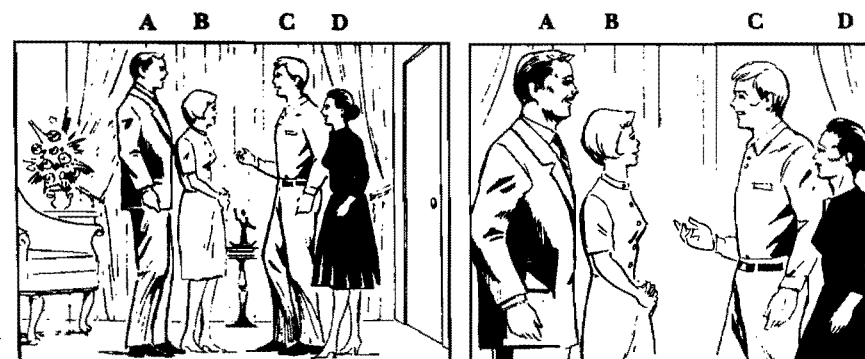
Frame 1

Frame 2
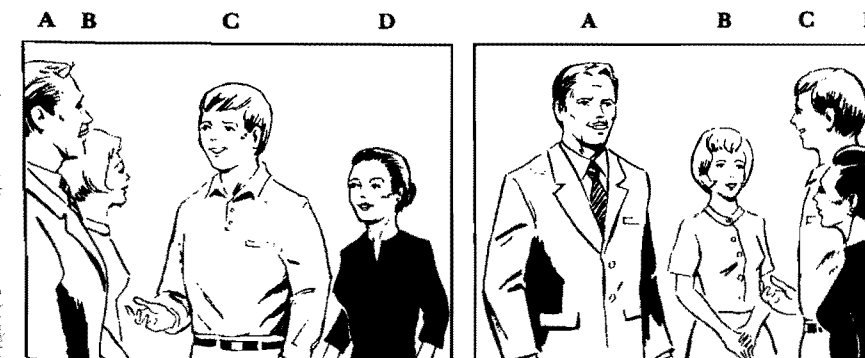
Frame 3

Frame 4

3. **X-Angle Rake Shot from stage left.** Profiles of A and B in left frame to full faces on C and D in right frame.
4. **X-Angle Rake Shot from stage right.** Profiles of C and D in right frame to full faces on A and B in left frame.

BREAKING UP THE MASTER—4 People in Frame (Cont'd)

5. Med. Close 2/Shot: A and B—waist figure. Look off CR to C and D.
6. Med. Close 2/Shot: C and D—waist figure. Look off CL to A and B.
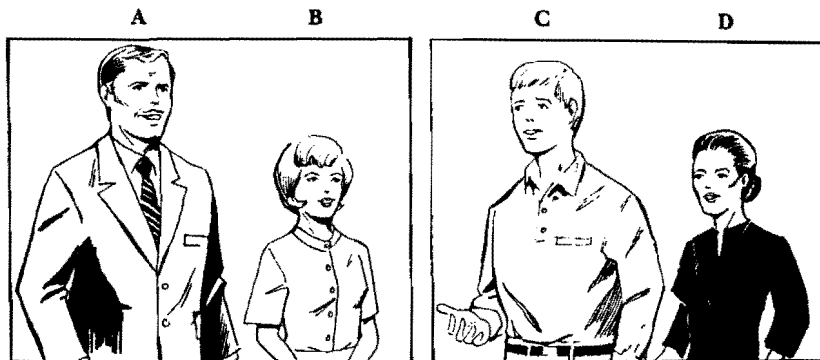
Frame 5

Frame 6

Frame 7

Frame 8

7. Close-up: A. Looks off CR to B, C, D.
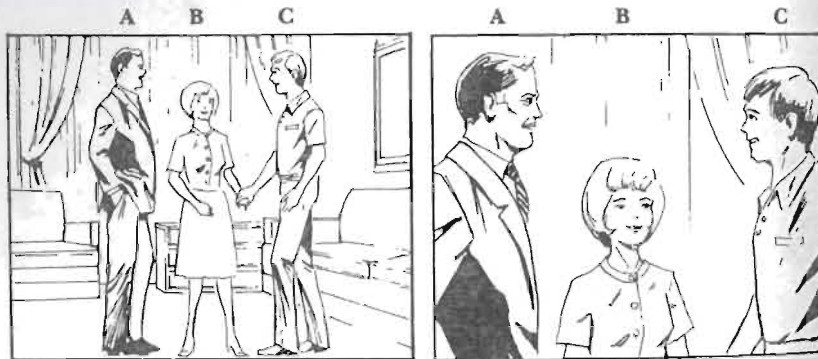8. Close-up: D. Looks off CL, to C, B, A.
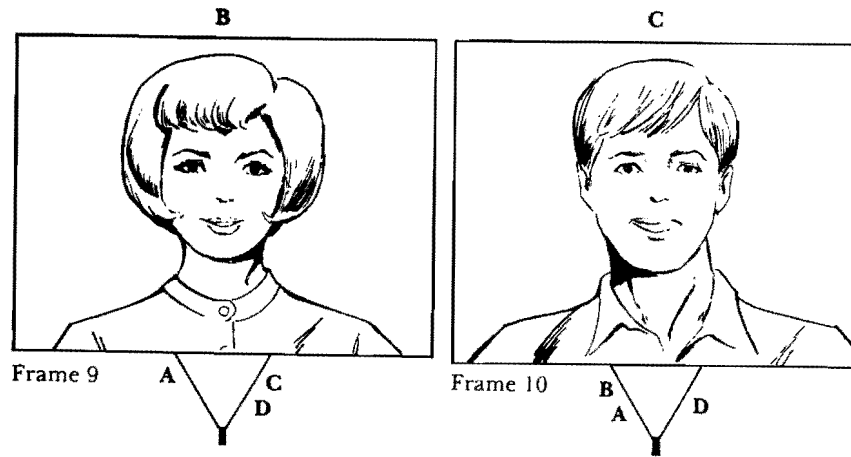
Frame 9

Frame 10

9. Close-up: B (Split Look*). Looks off CL to A.
   Looks off CR to C and D.
10. Close-up: C (Split Look*). Looks off CL to A and B.
    Looks off CR to D.

*The Split Look: In Frames 9 and 10, the on-camera characters split their looks to off-camera characters at both CL and CR (in the same setup). For the sake of simplicity, the on-camera characters (B and C) have been drawn to look straight ahead (neutral), leaving it up to the reader to visualize how the heads and eyes will turn to CL and CR as dictated by the dialogue in the scene (see Frame 7, Look CR; and Frame 8, Look CL).

Figure 12.3

BREAKING UP THE MASTER—3 People in Frame

1. Full 3/Shot—head to toe.
2. Med. Tight 3/Shot—waist figure.

Frame 1

Frame 2

Frame 3

Frame 4

3. Close 2/Shot: A and B. Look off CR to C.
   Will intercut with
4. Close-up: C. Looks off CL to B and A.

5. Close-up: A. Looks off CR to B and C.
   Will intercut with
6. Close 2/Shot: B and C. Look off CL to A.

Frame 5

Frame 6

Frame 7   **B on CR**

Frame 8   **B on CL**
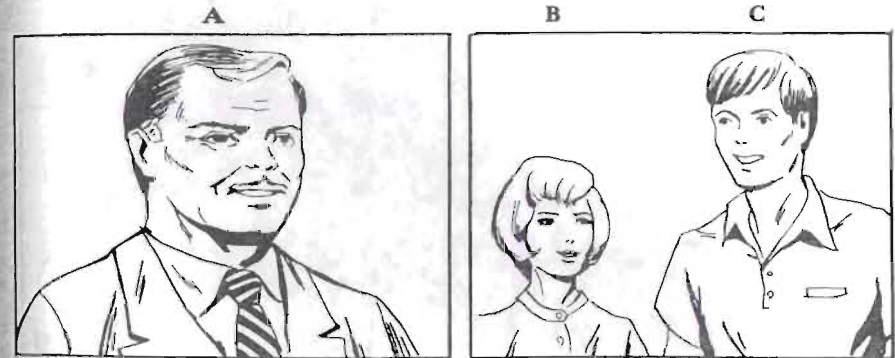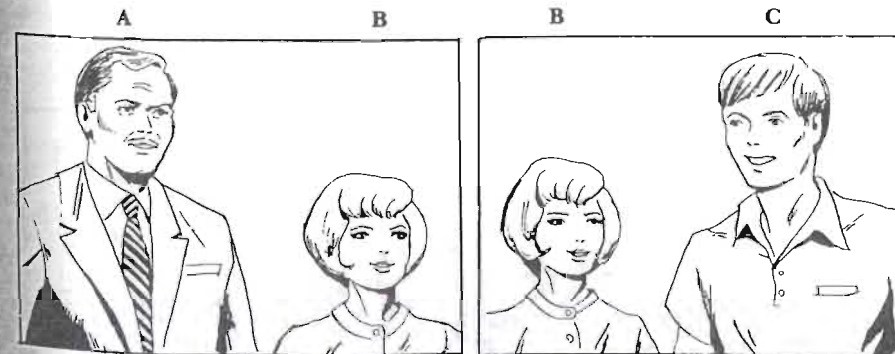
Frames 7 and 8 are taboo. NEVER break up a 3/Shot into two 2/Shots: center person with person on CL, then center person with person on CR. This will make the center person jump on screen from CR to CL.

Figure 12.4

BREAKING UP THE MASTER—2 People in Frame

1. Full 2/Shot—head to toe.
2. Med. Close 2/Shot—waist figure.

A   B   A   B

Frame 1   Frame 2

A   B

Frame 3   B   Frame 4   A
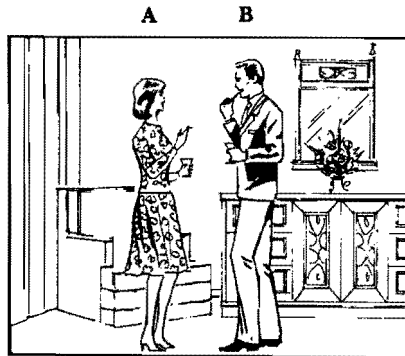
3. Close-up: A. Looks off CR to B.
4. Close-up: B. Looks off CL to A.

5. Over-the-Shoulder Shot: Featuring A looking CR to B. Camera setup is over back of B's *left* shoulder positioned in *right* side of frame.

6. Over-the-Shoulder Shot: Featuring B looking CL to A. Camera setup is over back of A's *right* shoulder positioned in *left* side of frame.

A   B   A   B
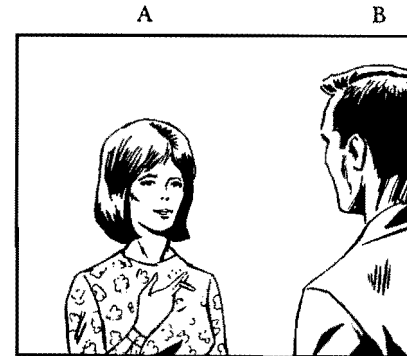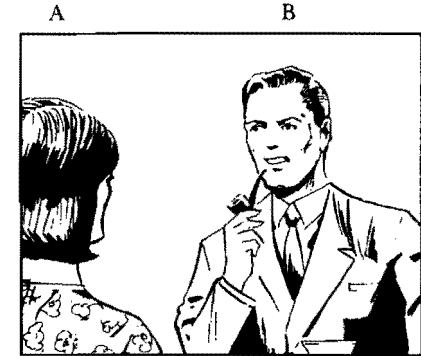
Frame 5   Frame 6

is following (moving with, or *trucking* with) two actors as they walk and talk. The director, in staging the scene, has decided beforehand which speeches and reactions will be covered in single close shots. Therefore, the actors are instructed to come to a halt at the beginning of each specific speech. The camera, too, must be stationary at the same spot. After the speeches have been delivered, both actors and camera resume moving in continuation of the scene. At a later time, the close shots are filmed at the exact spots where the stops were made.

You should make careful note where the pauses occurred: jot down a landmark, as well as some conspicuous background activity going on at the moment. A well-matched background enables the editor to effect smooth action editing.

Technically, there is an alternative for cutting into a traveling shot: repeat the entire action with a closer lens on the moving camera. The editor now has the option of judiciously cutting back and forth between the moving long shot and the moving close shot.

A stationary camera in the process of a pan is tantamount to a moving camera. You must constantly watch to see whether the camera head is in motion (*panning* or *tilting*) at a point where a cut-in of a close shot might be effective. Should the director opt to shoot a close shot at a point in the master shot

where you happened to notice the camera was moving (or panning), you should quickly alert the director. That proposed unusable shot may then be replaced with an inspired alternative. Your vigilance in preventing the unnecessary loss of time spent on an unusable shot will be appreciated.

COVERING CLOSE-UPS

When filming medium close shots and close-ups, always be aware of off-camera actors' intrusions into a speech that will *overlap* (cut into) the dialogue of the actor on-camera. When that happens, a double voice is heard over the face of the actor being filmed—causing a retake. Another disturbance to be aware of: off-camera laughter and crying within a scene; such sounds tend to *trail* in the atmosphere (a mechanical sound phenomenon). Those trailing sounds sometimes intrude on the continuing dialogue in the filmed scene. Therefore, it is advisable that you caution the off-camera actors to sharply cut off their laughing and crying histrionics to ensure that the ensuing on-camera speech will be in the clear.

COVERING OFF-SCREEN OVERLAPS

During a performance, be on the alert for any off-screen noises that intrude upon (overlap) a speech or action. Quickly mark your script where this has occurred. If the scene is not stopped (cut) at that point, the director probably has made a mental note to cover that portion of the scene in another angle, and thus eliminate the disturbance in the sound track. Sometimes, however, when concentrating on the performance, the director is oblivious to the overlapping noise. It is imperative that you mention the overlap to the director immediately after the take, although you will undoubtedly hear the sound mixer immediately shout: There was an overlap! and the director yell back: It'll be covered! So you know the situation is under control. But make sure—before leaving the set—that there is indeed another shot to cover (eliminate) the off-screen (OS) distraction. Always make notations in your continuity script as to which shots cover which overlaps. The editor will appreciate your conscientious indulgence.

COVERING WRONG ACTION

A hypothetical series of shots is depicted in Figure 12.5. A master shot is followed by several coverage setups. In one of the illustrated coverage shots, a wrong action is shown: it demonstrates a disruption for smooth continuity editing.

Figure 12.5

Covering Wrong Action

Frame 1

Frame 2

Frame 3
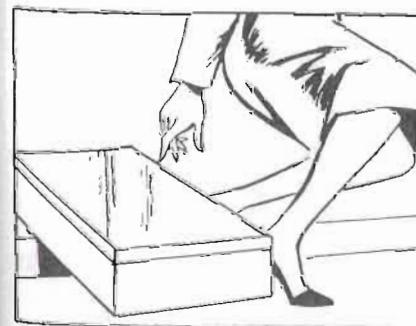
Frame 4

Frame 5

Frame 6
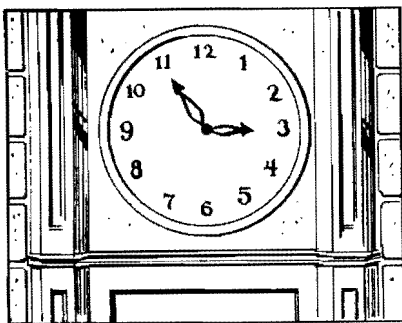
Frame 7

Frame 8

Frame 1: The scene is a wide-angle master shot of a street with a woman in the background hurrying forward. She is carrying a suitcase in her right hand and a purse in her left hand. She reaches the curb, and stops for a red light. When the light changes, she steps off the curb with her left foot and trips; she winces, and the suitcase falls to the ground. Recovering, she picks up the suitcase, and continues across the street—limping toward camera. She exits the shot left-to-right (L-R). CUT. End of master shot.

Frame 2: A close shot of the woman standing at the curb waiting for the light to change. Thus, the audience gets a closer look at the actress.

Frame 3: A medium shot at the curb. Stepping down, the woman trips and the suitcase falls. She winces with pain.

Frame 4: A big close-up—the woman's pained expression.

Frame 5: A low-angle shot—the woman bends down and picks up the suitcase.

Frame 6: A full shot—the woman steps off the curb and limps toward camera foreground left-to-right (L-R).

As is common practice, coverage of the scene is scheduled for shooting at a later date.

In repeating the action for the coverage angles, it goes without saying that the woman's wardrobe and cosmetic appearance must match in every detail; also, the purse must be in her left hand and the suitcase in her right hand. You might also remind the actress to step off the curb with her left foot—so the suitcase will fall in approximately the same position—and she will pick up the suitcase with her right hand and limp across the street, left-to-right (L-R). (I repeat: when action in closer angles is matched as closely as possible to the master shot, the editing will give the illusion to the audience that the actress's movements were continuous.)

Beware the Mismatch

Suppose that during coverage (Frame 6), the woman unthinkingly switches the purse to her right hand and the suitcase to her left hand. All the camera directions are correct—but there is an obvious mismatch. If this shot were intercut with the last piece of the master shot, what would happen on the screen is: in mid-run, the woman suddenly and unaccountably would be holding the suitcase in her left hand and the purse in her right hand (the reverse of Frame 8). To the public, this mismatch is called a *movie goof*, *flub*, or *blooper*.

Sometimes a retake cannot be made on the spot: perhaps gathering clouds changed the lighting of the area, or the company was running into costly overtime.

Without a retake to correct the mismatch, the editor will be forced to make a *jump cut*.

The Jump Cut

Conspicuous jump cuts cause jerky movements on the screen that are jarring to the audience. However, as mentioned earlier, today's audiences are less sensitive to unorthodox transitions.

> NOTE: The term *jump cut* differs in connotation from the term *jump* on screen, as demonstrated by incongruously juxtaposed props in a scene (Chapter 11, Figure 11.17).

The Cutaway Shot

It is possible to remedy a conspicuous jump cut, or some other mismatch, via the editorial strategy known as: the *cutaway shot*. That means a quick cut from the flawed shot to a shot of an extraneous scene or object, or another person's reaction, to serve as a momentary distraction. The cutaway shot supports the credibility that a sudden, unaccountable change—a prop being in a character's left hand in one shot and in the right hand in the next shot—occurred while it was off-screen during the interim of the cutaway shot.

Consider the mismatch that occurred in the aforementioned illustration. Let's assume that it was not possible, for whatever reason, to shoot a *retake* while the company was still in the setup. When confronted with this dilemma, the editor's favorite tactic is the *cutaway*.

For example: After Frame 6 (showing the mismatch), the editor will cut the film at a prudent point and insert a diversionary piece of film—perhaps a stock shot of a clock on a building (Frame 7)—to give the audience the impression that time is of the essence in this episode. Therefore, it can be assumed that during the brief period when the audience's attention was focused on the clock, the woman switched the purse to her left hand. To substantiate the switch, the editor will also interject the shot of the clock at a judicious point in

the final footage of the master shot (Frame 8). The audience will not be conscious of the interrupted flow of continuity. The action mismatch has vanished by cinematic illusion.

> IMPORTANT: You must make a notation in your script to apprise the editor of the action mismatch pictured in Frame 6. The editor will then make the scene viable by resorting to the stock shot solution or other editorial techniques at his command.

There is one situation in which a snag cannot be technically rectified by a cutaway shot: when the scene was filmed with the camera in the wrong position. (See Chapter 11, Crossing the Line.)

The Protection Shot

The director may sometimes opt to film a *protection shot:* a piece of important film that may or may not be used, except as insurance against a problem that might otherwise mandate a costly retake. A protection shot might consist of:

- Another angle of the scene: protection against some dubious footage—mismatch of action or direction.
- A subject filmed *both ways*—when in doubt about a correct look (CR or CL); the editor will use the appropriate one.
- Extraneous material for cutaways when certain controversial footage may need to be excised for certain markets or media—representing unacceptable action or dialogue.
- Expanded coverage for a sequence that was exceptionally complicated in staging—to safeguard against any untoward defect that may occur in the lab during processing or printing of the master shot.

When you have acquired a good insight into cinematic dramaturgy, you will uncannily discern an element in a scene that begs a protection shot. Your discreet suggestion to the director to provide such critical footage will distinguish you as a continuity supervisor.

CUTTING IN THE CAMERA

A director may opt to film a rather lengthy scene in one master setup—in effect, to preclude editing. This mode of filming would require a camera with extraordinary capabilities. Enter the Steadicam. The versatility of the mobile camera may practically dispense with otherwise obligatory coverage setups that would require the moving of furniture and considerable re-lighting. By the same token, this manner of shooting mandates highly disciplined rehearsals for

the actors as well as for the camera and sound technicians. Every position and movement must be impeccably coordinated with flawless dialogue.

Cutting in the camera dispenses with time-consuming coverage (and spares the continuity supervisor the challenging task of matching the action in each setup). But the result deprives the editor the luxury of choice and variation.

SHOOTING THE BEGINNING AND END OF A SCENE

Occasionally, to save time, the director will not shoot a master scene in its sequential entirety. Instead, a small segment at the start and end of the sequence will be filmed with a wide-angle lens. These shots will establish the atmosphere and the spatial dimensions of the set. The entire middle segment of the scene will be shot subsequently in various closer angles.

This mode of shooting disturbs an establish filmic rule: Any part of a scene that is filmed for the first time is in the category of a master shot. Consequently, you will have to carefully differentiate which portions of the filmed middle sections overlap the action in the master segments that constitute the beginning and end of the scene. For the continuity supervisor, shooting in this fragmented mode demands more exacting skill in matching, as well as in calculating picture running time.

COVERING ALTERNATIVE MASTER SHOTS

You will be prepared to do battle with coverage here if your notations on each of the printed master shots delineates how the performances differed: in camera perspective, business, and dialogue. (See Chapter 7, Alternative Shots). Should time and budget permit, it is indeed preferable to have coverage on both master shots. In that way, the editor has the luxury of using the last segments of each master shot with its respective cover shots. However, if the budget dictates that only one master shot is to be covered, you must be careful to adhere to your proper matching notations.

INTERCUTTING TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS

As described in Chapter 8 under "Timing the Performance," each character in a telephone conversation is shot individually. A filmic convention is to position the characters so they are cinematically facing each other: one looks CR (right-to-left) and the other looks CL (left-to-right). While this rule is now sometimes violated (with impunity), we shall consider it a basic tenet.

Make it a habit to note the camera direction (look) of the character who is filmed first (but who may not be the first to speak, scriptwise). Alongside that name, note: Look CL (or Look CR, as the case may be); then, immediately make notation of the opposite look alongside the name of the other speaker (Figure 12.6). Thus, you will know instantly what the correct look should be for that responding character—no matter when or where this dialogue is filmed.

Figure 12.6

JANET   *(Look CR)*

Hello, may I speak to Mr. Smith?

MR. SMITH   *(Look CL)*

This is Mr. Smith.

READING OFF-CAMERA DIALOGUE

On several occasions, you will be called upon to read off-camera dialogue: when an actor is unavailable to perform vis à vis speeches for a previously shot scene. So there you are, emoting dialogue while simultaneously watching that the on-camera actors match their action, listening to the correctness of their speeches, notating any deviations from the script, *and* timing the take!

13

The Mastery of Matching

Action matching and scene matching are cinematic idioms that pertain to a signal function of the continuity supervisor. You acquire this eminent responsibility by osmosis. The dictionary's definition of osmosis: a process by which something is acquired by absorption. Industry translation: a talent acquired by experience.

The mastery of matching is inextricably linked to the concept of coverage (Chapter 12). A cinematic methodology was evolved by cinematographers (DPs) and film editors whereby a transition of movement (action) in a close-up could be imperceptibly intercut with a wide-angle master shot—thus highlighting dramatic impact.

ACTION MATCHING/THE MATCH CUT

The methodology for intercutting close-up shots with wide-angle footage introduced the axiom: Cut on action, or Cut on movement. In other words, plan to cut to a close shot from a point in the master shot when subjects are in motion: rising from a sitting or kneeling position, sitting or falling from a standing position, making conspicuous hand gestures or body turns. (Refer to Chapter 1: What the Continuity Supervisor Oversees, and Chapter 2: Overt Action.)

The operative word is "overlap," which means: meticulously repeating, in a close-up angle, an action or dialogue that occurred in the master shot. This piece of close-up footage will then be intercut with the master footage at point where the action in both pieces of film match. In the old

actual celluloid would be physically *spliced*—one end glued to another. On modern editing consoles, this is accomplished digitally.

The following is a rough description of editing the action overlap: in the master footage, an actor's hand is holding a glass of wine resting on a table; as the hand moves upward (raising the glass), CUT. And the end of that piece of film will be spliced to the cut film of the closer angle—at a point where the action matches. Now stay on the close shot to see the actor take a sip, and grimace; then, as the hand starts lowering the glass to the table, CUT. Now return to the master footage at a later point where the action once again matches the cut edge of the closer shot; the hand returns the glass onto the table; and the performance continues smoothly in the master shot. With judicious editing, it will appear to the audience that the movement of the hand and taking a sip from the glass was continuous—not pieced together.

The technique of overlapping close action for intercutting with master footage also applies when making pickup shots in a flawed master shot (Chapter 7, "The Bridge Shot").

The director and you should be cognizant of the spots in the performance where overlapping action and dialogue are necessary.

With experience, you will acquire a keen sense of filmic dramaturgy and readily recognize which portions of a dramatic or comedic scene call for cinematic punctuation.

ACTORS AND MATCHING

Some years ago, the popular actress Ellen Corby ("The Waltons") gave me a gift: a short poem she wrote when she was a "script girl" in the "good old days." I've recited it on numerous occasions in my career.

> When I ask you to match your action
> Why do you refuse it?
> What's the good of a close-up
> If the cutter can't use it?

It is immeasurably helpful if actors are intuitively mindful of their actions during master scenes—and then ably duplicate their exact movements (and dialogue)—as many times as required for every necessary take. Some actors tend to be derelict in this discipline. Consequently, it is incumbent on you to tactfully prompt those actors how best to match their previous action that has been committed to film. Highly professional film actors automatically match their actions as closely as possible. However, less seasoned actors may require a bit of coaching.

A word of caution: Some actors don't like to be reminded of their earlier movements, and some directors don't like for you to engage in lengthy discourse with the actors. So your communication skills are on the line!

An impasse may arise when actors are not consistently matching their movements and dialogue for every take. After several unsuccessful takes, an actor may balk at repeating an ill-matched take. You will hear the expression, "Oh, they'll only use one or the other." And that is valid. But it is not always the best solution. A mismatch or a transposition of words forces the editor to make a crucial choice: a take in which the actor delivered the best dialogue may not match the important physical action. In opting to use the best dialogue take, the editor faces the dilemma of a jarring *jump cut* in the action. On the other hand, if the editor opts for the better action match and leaves the actor's best speeches *on the cutting-room floor*, the audience will never know that the actor is capable of a more compelling performance. Remember: the image and the words can appear on the screen only once. When film actors are mindful of action matching, it ensures that their best performance—from any angle—will always appear on screen.

It is humanly impossible and patently unnecessary for you to simultaneously watch and note every detail in a scene. The mark of a competent continuity supervisor is not so much the possession of extraordinary powers of observation (although that cannot be underestimated), but your confidence in knowing what is important to observe for matching purposes. By the same token, knowing when it is *not* necessary to match certain details proves invaluable. Your expertise will save the actors' vexation as well as save shooting time—which translates into saving money for the company.

MATCHING BACKGROUND

The matching of background action is out of the scope of your responsibility; it belongs to the 1st and 2nd A.D.s. Nevertheless, it is good policy for you to keep an eye on the background—particularly when the action there happens to be conspicuous.

Background (BG) and foreground (FG) action usually includes extras. The most important factor in matching background activity is to know on which speeches in the master shot did extras cross behind or in front of the principal actors, and whether they were moving camera left-to-right (L-R) or right-to-left (R-L). Your keen attention to background details will be appreciated by the editor.

PRECISION MATCHING FOR CLOSE-UPS

It is a foregone conclusion that wardrobe, makeup, and hair must match flawlessly in every angle. But there are additional elements in close-ups that require strict fidelity to the master shot (Chapter 2, "Overt Action").

Observe and notate:

- Body movements: bending backwards, forwards, or sideways.
- Cigarettes, cigars, pipes: on which word or action a puff is taken; each time the prop is put in or taken out of the mouth—whether placed to the left or right corner of the mouth; held in which hand, smoked to what length.
- A glass: held in which hand; the contents and color of the liquid; a sip taken on which word.
- Another person's hand, or an object, entering from off-camera: at which point in dialogue was it brought up to the right or left cheek, or shoulder; when was the hand or object brought down, or dropped out of the frame.
- Shoulders or torso crossing behind or in front of the subject; timed exactly to the action in the master.

UNNECESSARY MATCHING

As mentioned earlier, the competent continuity supervisor knows when *not* to spend time and energy on nonessentials. It is unnecessary to be concerned with matching details seen in the wide shot that are not within the frame of the close shot: a person or an object that was positioned at the side, below, or above the on-camera subject. The criterion is *knowing exactly what the frame is holding.*

As mentioned in Chapter 11 under Inscribed Area, it is your prerogative, at all times, to peer into the camera and see the image in the frame. *Don't be intimidated by an uncooperative camera operator.* Another caution: do not depend on the camera operator's response when you ask what the frame is holding. You will agonize vainly when seeing the film that the shot encompassed a larger area than the operator had indicated—and a portion of a body or a prop belonged in that now empty space.

The foregoing admonition may now be considered anachronistic, in view of the fact that current film productions include the ubiquitous video monitors utilized by every department. By the same token, should your beginning assignments happen to be with low-budget productions where video monitoring is unaffordable, your peering through the camera to see what the frame is holding will be advantageous.

MATCHING RUNNING SHOTS

When the action of a scene involves actors running progressively from one locale to another, it is imperative that the actors match the pace and breathing

rhythm of each preceding running shot—no matter how much time elapsed between setups; the first shot of a running sequence may be filmed in the early morning and the subsequent runs be filmed hours, or even days and weeks, later. Sometimes, an actor will start a connecting scene by running a distance or hopping in place—until the speed and breathlessness approximate a match to the prior filmed shot.

MATCH DISSOLVES

A match dissolve implies that the image at the end of one shot is duplicated for the beginning of the succeeding shot—each image being filmed at a different locale. The salient elements must be impeccably matched. For example:

Scenario 1. The scene is of a street accident: We see an injured person placed on an ambulance gurney. The camera Zooms In, or Cuts to, a close-up of the injured face (with bloody makeup of simulated wounds). The next shot (probably filmed weeks later) now opens on a matching close-up of the injured face. Here, the camera Zooms Out, or Pulls Back, to a medium or full shot, and reveals the gurney at another location: perhaps the emergency entrance to a hospital with the gurney being wheeled inside. The start of this subsequent shot must match the image of the face seen at the site of the accident.

On the other hand, the hospital-locale scene may be shot before the street-accident scene (as is likely to be the case). If so, then the size of the shot and the injured-face makeup will have to be impeccably matched when filming the scene of the accident.

Scenario 2. The scene is a bedroom: A man drops a pellet into a glass of water placed on a nightstand. As the man leaves the room, the camera Zooms In to an insert of the pellet disintegrating in the water. A time lapse is indicated as the camera Zooms Out, or Pulls Back, to reveal a woman lifting the glass and drinking from it. The implication here is that the woman is probably being poisoned, which is readily discerned by the audience.

When the script indicates, or the director designs, a Match Dissolve, it is essential that you carefully notate the lens sizes and the distances between the subjects and the camera. This information will expedite the camera setup time for the matching shot, and ensure a correct match.

Smooth action matches in the finished film are the result of providing the editor with shots that have been accurately action-matched during the filming. And you will be complimented.

CAVEAT: When shots require match cuts, it is essential that you record in the respective shot descriptions in your continuity notes: the lens size plus the distance between the subject and the camera. This will preclude searching the camera report and save shooting time.

WHAT AND HOW TO OBSERVE

Following is a partial list of the myriad minute details that mandate your acute observation for matching. The operative word is *WATCH*:

Hands

... into pants pockets: R or L or both; when placed into and when taken out of pockets; note whether jacket corners are in front or behind pants pockets.

... buttoning and unbuttoning jackets, coats, shirts.

... holding props: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, drinking glasses, eating utensils, books.

... wearing eyeglasses: put on and taken off on which word and which action.

... wearing jewelry: rings on fingers; bracelets; watches; cuff links; studs.

... picking up articles: cup (with or without saucer); on what word; sips taken before or after which word.

... placed on hips: put up and taken down on which word.

... placed on doors: to open or to close.

... holding telephones: R-hand to R-ear; L-hand to L-ear; R-hand to L-ear; L-hand to R-ear; R- or L-hand over mouthpiece.

... gloves: wearing both; wearing one, on which hand, and which hand holds the other; taking gloves off, which hand first and where placed.

... arms folded: L over R (L/R) or R over L (R/L); tucked under armpits, or grabbing elbows.

... pale skin in close-ups (should have body makeup).

... holding books, letters, envelopes or other objects: R-hand or L-hand; print facing camera.

... handing objects to another actor or receiving objects from off camera: with which hand, and in which position of the object.

... placed on objects when shooting inserts.

... picking up objects: with R- or L-hand, from CR or CL.

... arms around another person: at waist, on shoulder; placed at which point in dialogue or action; and when removed.

... sleeves: rolled up or pushed up; cuffs buttoned or open; cufflinks.

... holding pencils and pens (in which hand; pointing in which direction).

... nail polish: color and condition; length of nails.

Babes in Arms

... held in R- or L-arm; or R- or L-shoulder; how swaddling clothes or wrapped blankets are arranged.

Hair

... style: parted on R-side or L-side; slant of bangs; which way was the wind blowing.

... women's long hair: when or on what word in dialogue did strands fall to front, and to which shoulder.

... pushed behind which ear, with R-hand or L-hand.

... little girls' braids and curls: falling which way as child turns and twists.

Bodies in Bed

... which way head lies: R-profile, L-profile, or full face to camera.

... position of pillows: open end of pillowcase to CR or CL (toward center of bed or to sides).

... woman's hair spread on pillow.

... position of covers: amount of sheet folded over blanket; covers pulled up to which part of body.

Rising and Sitting Positions

... on which word actor sat down or stood up; note dialogue in standing and sitting positions; note level of eyes directed toward off-camera dialogue in each position. Correct looks are vital.

Legs

... crossed at knees, R over L (R/L) or L over R (L/R); knee extended horizontally; knee covered with R/H or L/H, or both hands.

... crossed at ankles, R over L (R/L) or L over R (L/R).

Turns

. . . head moves to R- or L-shoulder (clockwise or counterclockwise).
. . . body turns on R- or L-shoulder (clockwise or counterclockwise).

(NOTE: Editing cuts are usually made on turns of the head and body.)

Body Motions

. . . leaning forward or backward, or to the sides: to CL or CR.

Fight Scenes and Stunts

. . . actions of doubles to be repeated by principals.
. . . condition of clothing.
. . . end positions of bodies after falls.

Stubble on Men's Faces

. . . days of growth according to script chronology.

Injuries

. . . progressive or diminished makeup and bandaging according to script chronology.

Walking

. . . match overt gestures while in movement and during dialogue.

Stairs

. . . pace of actors walking or running up or down; if stops are made, note on which step and describe action.
. . . indicate direction of actors' turns at top or bottom landings: to CR or CL; also direction when exiting the shot: to CR or CL.

Falling Objects

. . . dropping down CL or CR.

Picking Up Objects

. . . with R- or L-hand, from CR or CL.

Eating Scenes

. . . handling of dishes and utensils; note specific food.

Entrances and Exits

. . . placement of people—who follows whom; pace when entering and exiting shots.
. . . carrying of props: in R-hand or L-hand; under L-arm or R-arm.

Wardrobe

. . . men's ties: position and size of knot (diagonal stripes are tricky).
. . . men's shirts: collar button open or closed; button-down open or buttoned; cuffs loose, buttoned, with links, or rolled up.
. . . makeup soil: around the collar—change garment if soil is noticeable in the camera.
. . . men's pajamas under robes: neck buttoned, collar in or out with corner protruding at L or R side.
. . . men's pocket handkerchief: match configuration—horizontal line or points.
. . . men's hats: position tilt on head—to L or R side; brim up or down; held in L-hand or R-hand; crown or hollow toward camera.
. . . collars: turned up or down.
. . . scarves or neckerchiefs: tied at front, or to L or R side.

Accessories

. . . earrings, necklaces, bracelets, belts, shoulder ornaments, etc.; note description or draw sketch.
. . . belts: tied in a bow or knot, to L or R side; buckled to R or L side.
. . . ladies' handbags: held in R- or L-hand; strap over R- or L-shoulder; switching from hand to hand—mark dialogue.

Props

. . . time on clock: reset for every passage of story time—see hands of clock move (analog), or numbers change (digital).
. . . dates on calendars: indicated in the script or mentioned in dialogue.
. . . contents of glass receptacles: note level—half full, 3/4 full, etc.; match color of contents.

. . . books and magazines: if open to recognizable text or illustration in master shot, match same in close-up; inquire whether identification needs to be hidden or seen (for legal reasons or network Standards & Practices clearance).

. . . lamps: lit or unlit.

. . . candles: lit or unlit; positions and size of burndown.

Doors

. . . placement in set: at BG wall; at CR or CL side walls.

. . . which way doors open: indicate with arrows—toward or away from camera.

. . . double doors: whether CL panel or CR panel opens and closes—indicate with check mark.

. . . shooting at doors from EXT to INT and vice versa: At the initial setup, draw a picture and indicate the placement of the hinges and the doorknobs. This will ensure accurate camera directions for entrances and exits when shooting INT and EXT locales.

. . . position of doors: open, closed, or ajar—before, during, or after action and/or dialogue.

. . . legends on doors: accurate numbers and wording must correspond with script.

. . . glass door: note visible activity in BG.

Windows

. . . placement in set: on which wall—BG, CL, or CR.

. . . draperies and blinds: open or closed—fully or partially drawn.

. . . shades: halfway up, down, or which way.

Furniture

. . . placement in relation to camera angles.

. . . position of chairs: with seats or backs to camera.

. . . props placed on furniture: over backs or arms, or across seats of chairs and sofas; match the way garments were folded—lining showing, etc.

. . . pillows on sofas and chairs: placement of shapes and color rotation.

Set Dressing

. . . note proximity of details (at BG, FG, or either side) surrounding person or object being photographed.

Automobiles

. . . Traveling Close Shots must match traveling Long Shots: elbows or hands on door windows; hand positions on steering wheel.

Legends on Buildings

. . . numbers and logos: to correspond with dialogue or business depicted in script.

FYI: For the sake of clarity in communication, I made it a habit to instruct an actor that his hat was tilted to the right side of his head, and instruct an actress that the bow of her scarf was tied to the left side of her neck. This ensured that the match was correct for the camera. Automatically, the right side of the body is camera left (CL) and the left side of the body is camera right (CR).

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Second Unit Filming

At times, your assignment may be with the second unit of a company.* The second unit shoots script scenes that have been excluded from the first unit's schedule: scenes of large crowds that may or may not include principal actors, outdoor activities, chases, horse or automobile ride-bys, special stunts with doubles, or particular panoramic scenery. Sometimes the second unit comprises a full crew, but usually it's a skeleton crew headed by a second-unit director and continuity supervisor.

PREPARATION

Your preparation and script breakdown for a second-unit shoot is minimal compared to that of the first-unit continuity supervisor. While your responsibilities are circumscribed to the second-unit sequences, it is advisable that you request and carefully study the One-Liner prepared by the first unit supervisor. It will provide you with a solid grasp of the entire scenario.

SHOOTING IN PROGRESS

Scenes wherein the second unit activity is contingent on shots that will intercut with the principal filming must receive your special attention. Let's envision:

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*It is unwise and imprudent for a company to schedule a second-unit shoot without the services of a competent continuity supervisor.

The principal actor, as he dashes out of a close shot is wearing a brown leather jacket and a tan hat, and is mounted on a sorrel horse that is covered with a maroon blanket. A double, performing in the second unit, continues the shot that becomes a wide angle as the horse gallops toward the distant horizon. Of course, the double cannot be wearing a plaid jacket, a black hat, and riding a pinto horse covered with a blue blanket. The double's clothing and props are furnished by each of the respective departments. Your major responsibility is to watch that the double (dressed correctly) is holding the horse's reins in the same fashion, and is riding in the same screen direction as the principal actor: camera R-L or L-R.

A more critical concern for you occurs when the second unit is scheduled to shoot an integrated sequence before the first unit's shoot. In that instance, both continuity supervisors must coordinate their notes meticulously. As second-unit continuity supervisor, you will receive wardrobe's and prop's records from those departments. But it is imperative that you communicate in timely fashion with the first-unit continuity supervisor, and confirm all details. There's many a slip between the horse and the whip.

SLATING

The system of slate numbering, of course, must conform to that of the first unit: either scene-number or consecutive-number slating. For scene-number slating: use the script scene numbers assigned to the second unit, and precede each number with an X, thus precluding any conflict between first- and second-unit slates.

For consecutive-numbered slating, the second-unit operation must start with an arbitrary high number that cannot conflict with a first unit scene number: for example, 5,000. The high slate numbers tell the editor that the shots are definitely from the second-unit shoot.

RECORD KEEPING

As second-unit continuity supervisor, you keep separate records of scene count, page count, and picture time related to your shoot. You forward your script notes to the first-unit continuity supervisor, together with all your pertinent records and continuity notes. The first-unit supervisor combines the notes of both units and prepares a comprehensive record of all the film footage and sound tracks for the editor.

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Filming for Television

Compared with theatrical feature films, television productions require more demanding endeavor on the part of all members of the crew and the cast. The work pattern is accelerated for both the shooting and the editing of movies made for television: *MOWs* (*Movies of the Week*), and even more demanding for *episodic* television.

SHOOTING BACK-TO-BACK

Weekly television shows are typically shot *back-to-back*. That means shooting continuously, without any time lapse between the end of one episode and the start of another. This mode of operation involves pressured working conditions: Week after week, you will be busily breaking down a script for the next episode while concurrently filming the present one. Back-to-back shooting ensures larger paychecks—you receive the required additional pay for prep time on each episode. But, what you don't get is the necessary time for carefully breaking down the script and properly annotating it to prepare for shooting out of continuity—a preeminent facet of your job as continuity supervisor. Nonetheless, it is advisable to prepare each script in accordance with the details prescribed for the shooting of a single script. What is paramount is being well prepared to function each week with energy and complete equanimity.

Many companies alternate directors, 1st A.D.s, and continuity supervisors when shooting episodic shows back-to-back. Of course, one does not take home

as fat a paycheck. But there are those who welcome the regularly scheduled respite after the lengthy, high-pressured work days to complete an episode.

SHOOTING MULTIPLE SHOWS

Filming two episodes back-to-back is far less challenging than shooting multiple shows in one day. The unique modus operandi of the latter schedule mandates shooting pieces from multiple scripts in one day. Such was my nerve-wracking schedule for eight years on the popular series "My Three Sons"—filmed many years ago.

The star of the show worked the first eight weeks of a thirty-week shooting schedule. In that span of time, we shot—on a daily basis—portions of scenes from ten to twelve episodes in which the star appeared. Whenever feasible, a second camera simultaneously photographed the star's close-up in each master setup. During this initial period, we devoted two or three days a week to shooting all the outdoor sequences in which the star appeared. For example: in a full shot with morning light, the star comes out of the front door of his house, camera pans his walk to the carport; he gets into the car, and drives away. In the same setup—with dusk lighting—the camera is now focused on a long-shot of the street. Pan the car from the street to the carport; the star gets out, and camera pans his walk to the front door; he exits the shot into the house. These two actions—Dad going to work; Dad coming home from work— were filmed until we had completed the number of times this action was written in each of the numerous scripts. Every separate sequence, in as many scripts, required the star to change his outfit so it would match his planned wardrobe in each of the corresponding interior scenes.

Let me describe what took place when kitchen scenes from a number of scripts were filmed concurrently: six to eight breakfast scenes, eight to ten luncheon scenes (the kids always came home for lunch). There were also several dinner scenes in the dining room. Weeks and months later, the property master had to provide all the different foods that were displayed (and eaten) in every master scene; various morsels of food had to match on the dishes that were served at each meal. What was required of the continuity supervisor?: On which word were bites of which food taken from which utensils, and when were sips of milk or juice, or tablespoons of soup swallowed; which hand did each boy reach out when taking the dish proffered by the property master (in lieu of the star's hand). The makeup department had to match all the boys' haircuts and injuries that happened months earlier in the numerous master scenes. The wardrobe department agonized over matching the garments that the boys outgrew between the master scenes with the star and the portions of their close-ups being filmed months later. (Kids grew irrespective of the shooting schedule!) To match parts of scenes that were filmed months earlier, the boys' pants, shirts, and jackets had to be altered or duplicated.

This manner of shooting was a challenging experience for all the crafts involved—including the production manager and 1st A.D. After perspicaciously preparing the production boards, the Shooting Schedules, and the Daily Call Sheets, they had to incessantly alter their prodigious work schedules in order to accommodate daily rescheduling of sets because of the unavailability of adult or child actors. Also at an impasse were the film editors: holding in suspended animation—for months—strips of film from more than a dozen unfinished shows and working on each sporadically as added shots came through—until several of the scripts were finally completed. Also considerable was the director's diligence.

For the continuity supervisor (yours truly), the task of scene-matching and action-matching for coverage of multiple scenes out of multiple scripts—holding five or six characters in every master shot—filmed three and four months apart—was a titanic experience, not to mention the clerical logistics of daily providing progress reports for perhaps a dozen scripts: reconciling page and scene counts, number of setups, and portions of picture time for multiple scripts shot intermittently over a period of months. The records that each department head devised for keeping continuity data became an art form.

At the end of forty days or so, we were into parts of thirty shows, having shot all the exterior and interior scenes in which the star performed. During the next many months, we continued filming at the rate of ten to twelve scripts a day, shooting coverage for all the scenes to correspond with the star's earlier close-ups. At this juncture, a dialogue coach (we had one, of course, to coach all those kids) and I read the star's off-camera dialogue to bewildered actors. In this fashion, we completed the remaining scripts. Because all the personnel were masters of their crafts, we never had a retake on account of a mismatch.

16

Film Language

For the final chapter of this edition, I am providing a handy glossary of terms and jargon indigenous to the film industry. Many of the terms have been precisely defined in the foregoing text. And innumerable source books are to be found in libraries and bookstores.

INDUSTRY TERMINOLOGY

"A" Negative Exposed camera film that has been processed at the laboratory and printed onto positive film stock: the printed takes.

Academy The term refers to the standard aperture size for framing a picture to be viewed via a 35mm camera in a movie theater. The ratio 1:3:1 is the standard guideline set by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Pictures for standard television viewing are held at a slightly reduced ratio (known as the TV cutoff), and the new American HDTV wide-screen television has a screen ratio closer to that of wide-screen feature films. See *Frame Formats*.

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) The organization of professionals in the motion picture industry. Membership is by invitation only. The members vote annually for the current year's highest achievements in the crafts, for which the Oscar statuette is awarded.

Action 1. The director's command for the performance to begin for a rehearsal or filming. 2. The rendering of movement in a scene being filmed.

ADR The abbreviation for Automatic Dialogue Replacement: a technical procedure used when dialogue is recorded to replace faulty original sound, or to add sound to silent film during postproduction. See *Looping; Dubbing.*

Aerial Shot A scene shot from the air via a camera placed on a helicopter or an airplane.

AFI The abbreviation for the American Film Institute, a special school that was founded for the establishment of an educational program for professional filmmakers.

Ambient (Atmosphere) Sound Track The recording of the nebulous natural background and atmospheric sounds inherent in a scene. This recording is made for indoor as well as outdoor sets. After a scene has been filmed, the sound mixer orders the assistant director to call for absolute silence on the set, then turns on the recorder to capture the atmospheric quality that permeates the set. This special track provides the editor with sound continuity in cases where sound variances occur during filming, or sound gaps occur between match cuts. These gaps create unnatural silences in portions of the film. Therefore, the editor lays in pieces of ambient track to complement the shots. Also known, popularly, by the term *Room Tone,* whether recorded for interior or exterior scenes.

AMPTP The abbreviation for American Motion Picture and Television Producers. The membership comprises motion picture and television producers who establish programs and codes for industry employees.

Angle The field of view (perspective of a lens) from the position of the camera when filming. *Normal angle* places the camera at eye level. *Low angle* places the camera in a lowered position, shooting upward. *High angle* (also called *Down angle*) places the camera in an elevated position, shooting downward. *Wide angle* encompasses a large area and holds full figures. *Medium angle* encompasses a smaller area and holds figures approximately from the waist up. *Close angle* (or *Close-up*) holds a magnified portion of a figure or an object.

Answer Print The laboratory's first composite print of the film footage and sound track for critical viewing by the powers that be.

A-Page A page added to the script. Letters are appended to the page number (21A comes between 21 and 22, but page A21 precedes page 21).

Apple Box A wooden four-sided object of varied sizes, used to elevate a person or an object to required height for camera angles. When upended, the box can serve as a seat.

Arc Light A large and cumbersome lamp of very high intensity. It was often used to simulate daylight when shooting a scene at night that takes place in the daytime (called *night-for-day shooting*). It has been mostly supplanted by smaller, more flexible incandescent lighting equipment. See *HMI; Night-for-Day.*

Arriflex The brand name of a popular, portable reflex motion picture camera; called *Arri.* See *Movicam; Panaflex; Steadicam.*

A-Scene A scene added to the script or added during shooting: Scenes 21A and 21B precede Scene 22; Scenes A21 and B21 precede Scene 21.

Atmosphere 1. The subtle aura pervading a scene. 2. People in a scene other than the principal actors (*extras*).

Audio Any element of sound in film and television.

Avid One of the most popular of the digital editing consoles. Basically, it is a multi-screen (video) computerized device with keyboard and controls to summon instantly any image or sound stored in its memory (input from the dailies). The editor can manipulate that image, as well as create any style of filmic transition between shots. Another popular brand is *Lightworks.*

"B" Negative Refers to that portion of the exposed and developed film negative which contains shots that have not been printed for dailies. See *"A" Negative.*

Backdrop/Backing A large piece of scenery: a painting, a photograph, or any facsimile used for background purposes. NOTE: Nowadays, background scenes can be changed or altered digitally.

Background Presence See *Ambient (Atmosphere) Sound Track.*

Banana An instruction to an actor: "Give me a banana when you cross to the desk"—meaning to walk in a gentle curved path rather than a straight line, as it makes for better camera composition. The term was inspired by the curve of a banana.

Beat A deliberate slight pause in the flow of dialogue or action.

Big Head Close-up The frame holds the subject's face from chin to top of head.

Bit A conspicuous but minor part in a film.

Bloop The sound device used to obliterate any undesirable words that can occur in live, or taped, television. (You'll hear the expression, "That'll have to be blooped.")

Blooper A mistake made in dialogue or action during filming. See *Flub.*

Blur Pan See *Swish Pan.*

Boom 1. The long pole or telescopic arm to which a microphone is attached and which picks ups the dialogue and sound during the filming of a scene. 2. A hydraulic operated device on which a camera is mounted, enabling the camera to make smooth vertical movements—upward and downward—to follow continuous action as characters rise from and drop to a seated or kneeling position. See *Camera Boom.*

Boom Mike The microphone connected to the sound boom.

Breakaway Props Articles specially constructed to be shattered or broken apart with ease and without injuring the participants in a scene.

Bridge Shot Any extraneous shot that connects two pieces of cut film.

Cameo A small part in a film, usually performed by a distinguished actor.

Camera Boom A sturdy mobile mount on which a camera is affixed and can be attached to a vehicle, a tripod, or a dolly. The term for the camera's vertical movement is: Boom Up and Boom Down.

Camera Left Subjects or objects are positioned at the left side of the frame or move toward the left side of the frame. Screen direction is opposite to theatrical stage direction. As you view the scene in front of the camera, Camera Left is parallel to your left-hand side. To move Camera Left: a performer moves in the direction of his or her *right-hand side;* to move Stage Left: a performer moves in the direction of his or her *left-hand side.*

Camera Right The opposite of Camera Left. As you view the scene in front of the camera, Camera Right is parallel to your right-hand side. To move Camera Right, a performer moves in the direction of his or her *left-hand side;* to move Stage Right, a performer moves in the direction of his or her *right-hand side.*

Camera Run Out Signifies that the magazine of film has emptied before the finish of a shot.

Catwalk In the traditional movie studio: A wooden walkway suspended above the stage set to accommodate lighting equipment and the personnel handling such equipment. Another term is: scaffold.

CGI Computer Generated Images. See *Visual Effects.*

Choker Camera framing that holds a character's face from the neck up.

Circled Takes The takes which will be printed from the exposed camera negative.

Clapboard See *Slate.*

Close Shot Camera framing that holds the character's figure from ribs to top of head.

Close-up Camera framing that holds the subject's figure from shoulders to top of head; a magnified image of an object.

Comtec A small, battery-powered wireless receiver pack with a socket to plug in earphones while watching a video monitor receiving the performance on a movie set.

Cover Set 1. A standby set inside the sound stage, to be used when inclement weather or other factors prevent the scheduled shooting of an outdoor set. 2. Any set prepared and standing by for use in case it is needed in an emergency.

Cover Shot 1. A shot made for a particular scene other than the master shot, usually from other and closer angles, to enhance the visual or emphasize a story point; to be cut with the master shot in editing to create a continuous flow of action. 2. An extra shot made to use in case it becomes necessary to cut out a questionable piece of film or to cover up a mismatch in continuity.

Crab Dolly A small vehicle equipped with special wheels designed to move in all directions: backward, forward, and sideways—as the crab moves, from which its name is derived. The camera is mounted on a hydraulically or electrically operated pedestal, or flexible arm (jib). During filming, the D.P. and camera operator are stationed on the dolly and attend the camera. The expedience of adjustable wheels and the camera's adaptability greatly facilitates shooting a variety of actions within a scene.

Crane Shot A scene filmed from extreme height on a special vehicle called a *crane.* The crane is equipped with a device called: Camera Boom, on which the camera is mounted. The boom is operated manually, hydraulically of via remote control. The camera is capable of panning 360°.

Credits The list of names acknowledging the persons and craftspeople who contribute to the production of a feature or television film. See *End Titles.*

Cross Angle The frame holds two or more subjects, with the camera focused on (shooting past) the profiles at either camera left (CL) or camera right (CR). Also sometimes referred to as "a raking shot."

Cross Cutting A style of editing wherein two or more scenes that occur at different locales are assembled alternately *(intercut)* to show that the different actions are taking place simultaneously, or wherein scenes that occur in different time frames are intercut. Also called *parallel action.*

Crosses Movements of subjects from one place to another in a scene, crossing the screen left-to-right or right-to-left.

Cue Cards Large cardboard sheets from which actors read hand-printed dialogue and/or directions (sometimes referred to, humorously, as *idiot cards*). See *Teleprompter.*

Cue Track A sound recording synchronized with the filming of a scene, but used only as a guide. Often, when shooting outdoors, atmospheric interferences—overhead airplanes, background disturbances—render a scene's dialogue or other needed sounds unusable. At a later date the actors re-record the dialogue impeccably for use in the final soundtrack, and the extraneous sounds—in proper perspective—are laid in during editing. See *ADR; Lip Sync.*

Cut 1. In editing: (a) to sever a segment of film and join it to another segment of film (to splice), (b) to immediately change from one shot to another, (c) to delete (cut out) a portion of a shot. 2. In directing: the order that the director gives to stop the action of a performance or the operation of any camera or sound equipment. 3. In the script: to delete any action or dialogue from the written page.

Cutaway A shot that is interjected into a scene which cuts away from the flow of that scene's immediate action. It may be a relevant story point, an intentional distraction, or a cover-up for a mismatch.

Cutter An early term for the film editor; nowadays it refers to the editor's assistant.

Cutting Room The room that houses the equipment used in assembling and editing the processed film. Today, most film editing is accomplished via large multi-screen computerized editing consoles: the Avid or Lightworks.

Dailies Reels of processed film from the laboratory (or their videotape cassette equivalents) that comprise the film of the previous day's work. This film (or tape) is reviewed for critical commentary by the director, the producer and other concerned personnel. See *Rushes.*

Dance Floor The term for a panel, or panels, of plywood or other material, placed over an area of uneven ground or stage floor to enable the wheels of a camera dolly to roll smoothly during filming.

DAT Abbreviation for *Digital Audio Tape.* A modern, high-tech system of recording motion picture production sound on tiny cartridges of magnetic tape, as opposed to the older analog method. See *Nagra; Sound Recorder.*

Day-for-Night Denotes the filming of an exterior nighttime scene during the daytime. Special filters are attached to the lens to create the effect of darkness, which is later enhanced in the lab or digitally.

Depth of Field The spatial area in front of the lens where the subjects in the foreground and background are automatically in equal focus.

DGA Abbreviation for Directors Guild of America.

Dialogue (or **Dialog**) The words spoken by actors during filming.

Dissolve The process whereby an image on the screen begins to disappear as another image takes its place. The term denotes the editorial transition from one scene to another, or indicates the end of a sequence in the script.

DNLE Abbreviation for Digital Nonlinear Editing. The contemporary system of editing film on the multi-screen computerized editing console which enables editors to readily find and rearrange shots and sequences electronically or digitally—as opposed to the old-fashioned Moviola or Flatbed methods of having to view the film sequentially. See *Avid.*

Dolly Any platform with wheels, upon which a camera is mounted, making it possible to move the camera to follow the action in a scene. Many varied types, including tracked and trackless, are currently in use. See *Crab Dolly.*

Dolly Back The camera is pulled backward, away from the subjects or objects, and thus moves from a closer to a wider angle. This makes the subject appear smaller on the screen.

Dolly Grip The person who pushes the camera which is mounted on a dolly that follows the action in a scene.

Dolly In The camera is pushed forward, toward the subjects, and thus moves from a wider to a closer angle. This makes the subjects appear larger on the screen.

Dolly Shot Any shot in which the action is followed with a camera mounted on a wheeled device.

Dolly Tracks Rails that are laid down to accommodate the wheels of a dolly used for a camera to follow the action in a shot.

Double The person who substitutes for a principal actor when the performance calls for dangerous or risky action (*stunts*).

Down Angle Shooting downward on a scene. See *Camera Boom; Crane Shot.*

Downstage The area closest to the camera. Moving downstage means moving toward the *foreground* (FG) of the shot. See *Upstage.*

Dubbing The term applies to different editing procedures. 1. The re-recording of dialogue in a film when only a cue track was recorded during the original shooting. The technical term is *Electronic Line Replacement* (ELR). See *ADR.* 2. Coordinating and synchronizing into a master track all the dialogue

and sound tracks from a finished shoot and integrating that track with the film footage. 3. Recording voices, in a foreign language, that will replace the original dialogue in a film. (Speaking in a foreign language while creating the impression that the speeches are coming from the mouths of the original actors in the film is a highly specialized skill.) See *Looping.*

Editing Room See *Cutting Room.*

ELR Abbreviation for Electronic Line Replacement. See *ADR; Dubbing.*

Emmy The achievement award statuette given by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (equivalent to the Oscar for feature films).

End Marker (Also called *end slate, tail sticks,* or *tail slate.*) The slate photographed at the end of a take if, for some reason, a slate was not (or could not be) photographed at the beginning, or if there was a mistake on the beginning slate. An end slate is held upside-down to be photographed.

End Slate See *End Marker.*

End Titles The list of names acknowledging the participants in a film or television production, shown at the end of the presentation. Also known as End Credits. See *Credits.*

Enters An actor coming into a shot through a door or coming into the frame from off-camera (OC).

Entrance Actors make an entrance when they come into a shot. See *Enters.*

Establishing Shot A (usually) wide-angle, long or full shot that introduces a particular locale by showing the geography, environment, or atmosphere of a scene.

Exterior Designation for scenes that take place out of doors.

Extreme Close-up The frame holds only a portion of a face, body or object; the image is magnified.

Extreme Long Shot A huge expanse of a scene. The frame holds subjects or objects that appear in the distant background of a shot.

Eyemo A very small camera—holding only 100 feet of motion picture film—usually run by remote control and often used in a protective *crash housing* when filming a stunt which does not warrant risking damage to an expensive camera and its operator.

Fade In 1. The process whereby a clear image emerges onto the screen from blackness. The process is usually executed at an optical laboratory. 2. In a script, the term is customarily used to indicate the start of a screenplay or teleplay, and/or the start of a new sequence.

Fade Out 1. The reverse of *Fade In:* the image on the screen disappears into blackness. The process is executed at an optical laboratory. 2. In a script, the term is customarily used to indicate the end of a screenplay or teleplay, and/or the end of a sequence.

Fast Motion Action caused to move at a faster-than-normal pace. The effect is created by undercranking the camera speed: photographing at less than 24 frames per second (fps).

Favor The term used to indicate that a character or an object is given a position of prominence in a shot.

Field of View See *Angle*.

Final Cut The ultimate edit of a finished film.

First Team The term refers to the principal performers in a scene to differentiate from the stand-ins who were used in the set during the lighting.

Flashback Scenes that relate to something in the past, interjected (intercut) between scenes of the contemporary exposition of the story.

Flopped Film A piece of film that was physically reversed. Today, this flip can also be done optically or digitally. Sometimes a shot is flopped during editing to correct the screen direction. However, this trick does not always work; for instance, when the background is recognizably reversed and/or numbers and objects are readily seen to be backwards.

Flub The term for an inadvertent error in dialogue or action made by a performer. See *Blooper*.

Fluff See *Blooper*.

Focal Length The distance between the optical center of a lens and the subject being filmed. The size of the lens determines the size of the image.

Focus The point at which a lens produces a sharp image on a frame of film projected on a screen.

Foley The technique of augmenting or creating sound effects to synchronize with the action in a film during postproduction: footsteps, slaps, punches, heavy breathing, etc. Today, most of this work is done by computer. Foley is the surname of the man who invented this technique.

Follow Focus Adjusting the sharp focus of a lens, according to the changes in distances as a subject, or the camera, moves within a shot. The operation is handled by the camera first assistant.

Forced Call Returning to work on a set before the contractually specified number of hours of rest. See *Turn-Around Time*.

Foreground 1. The space that is closest to the camera. 2. Any area or activity that is in front of the subjects or objects being filmed.

FPS (Frames per Second) The measurement of the speed at which motion picture film moves though the camera. The 35mm camera normally runs at a speed of 24 fps; it exposes 16 frames per foot, which translates to 1 1/2 feet of film per second, or 90 feet of film per minute. The 16mm camera running at 24 fps exposes 40 frames per foot, which translates to 3/5 of a foot of film per second, or 36 feet of film per minute.

Frame The basic measure of motion picture film on which images are projected.

Frame Formats Camera viewfinders (and now video monitors for cameras) are inscribed with outlines of the various frame sizes and ratios for each potential viewing medium. They are represented by a series of overlapping rectangles: (a) the full Academy framing, (b) wide-screen theatrical framing, (c) standard television framing, and (d) the new American HDTV wide-screen framing. Directors and DPs take care when composing a shot so that vital subject matter remains visible within the frame for whichever medium the film is finally intended. Conversely, unwanted material should

not be visible within any of the frame formats in which the production might ultimately be viewed.

Framing/To Frame The act of positioning the camera and adjusting the lens to achieve the desired dimension of the subject or area being filmed. See *Lining Up*.

Freeze Frame The holding of an image of a single frame of film, either optically or digitally, that continues as long as required. This gives the impression of suddenly stopped or "frozen" action.

From the Top An expression that mandates the repeating of a scene from its starting point or from the first word of an actor's speech.

Full Shot The frame holds subjects from head to toe and the screen is filled with some foreground and/or background activity. See *Long Shot*.

Full Three Shot (F3/SH) The frame holds three subjects in full figure.

Full Two Shot (F2/SH) The frame holds two subjects in full figure.

Group Shot The frame holds four or more subjects. The projected image may be in a long shot, a medium shot, or a close shot. The size of the lens determines the size of the image.

Hand-Held Camera Any camera which is held and operated by the hands of the camera operator when filming. See *Arriflex, Movicam, Panaflex, Steadicam*.

HDTV (High Definition Television) The most recent American broadcast standard, using a digital signal to send ultra high-quality, sharp pictures in a wide-screen format—to be compatible with any future, computerized wide-screen television sets.

Head-On Shot A shot in which the action advances directly toward the camera.

High Angle The camera is shooting from a height, focusing downward on a scene. See *Camera Boom, Crane Shot*.

High Hat/Hi Hat A very low tripod on which a camera is mounted for shooting scenes from an extremely low angle. Sometimes the device is placed in a dugout in the ground to achieve the ultimate of a low angle effect. The device acquired its name because it resembles a man's evening top hat.

HMI (Hydragyrum Mercury Iodide) A high-intensity, lightweight lamp whose rays simulate daylight brightness. See *Arc Light, Night-for-Day*.

"Hold That One" A director's instruction to the continuity supervisor not to circle a particular take number for printing but to mark it as a "hold" until further notice. It may be chosen for printing later, at which time the continuity supervisor will inform the camera assistant and sound mixer to circle that particular take.

Honey Wagon A large trailer equipped with washroom facilities; some trailers also have several cubicles used as actors' dressing rooms when companies shoot at locations where such facilities are not accessible; trailers are driven to the sites.

Hubba-hubba The murmuring sounds emanating from a crowd in a scene, prompted by the A.D.

IATSE Abbreviation for International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees—the trade union that embraces all the crafts personnel working in film and television production.

Idiot Boards See *Cue Cards; Teleprompter.*

Insert 1. A separate close-up shot that focuses attention on an object within the context of a scene: a letter, a picture, the time on a clock, a book title, a significant ring on a finger, an article in a box. 2. A shot used as a cutaway during editing.

Insert Car A special industry vehicle used for filming a scene that depicts traveling vehicles. It is a truck equipped with an electrical generator and customized devices for mounting cameras—in several adjustable positions—as well as sound, lights, and other pertinent equipment, together with video monitors and seats for key personnel. For low budget productions, a regular automobile or small truck can be pressed into service.

In Sync Denotes that camera film and sound track are running simultaneously at their correct corresponding speeds.

Intercut See *Cross Cutting.*

Interior Designation for scenes that take place indoors.

IPS (Inches per Second) The measurement of the recording speed of audio tape (sound track). Analog tape recorders use 1/4 inch tape and run at the speed of 7 1/2 inches per second (15 ips is sometimes used for better quality).

Iris In The effect of making an image emerge from a speck of light on a black screen to a fully lit picture. The process can be executed at an optical laboratory or through digital methods.

Iris Out The opposite of *Iris In.* A fully lit picture on the screen is diminished until the screen becomes total black. The effect can be executed at an optical laboratory or via digital means.

Key Light The principal source of light that illuminates a subject in the set; in addition, auxiliary lamps may be set to create the desired ambience.

LED Light Emitting Diode.

Left-to-Right A camera direction that denotes movement from the left side to the right side of the screen.

Lens An optical device on the camera, through which light passes and causes an image to be projected onto the unexposed film negative. There are two types: prime and zoom.

Level The relative degree of sound transmitted to the audio recorder, adjusted by the sound mixer through controls on the *mixing panel.*

Lightworks See *Avid.*

Lining Up When a new shot is being composed with actors and camera. See *Framing/To Frame.*

Lip Sync The technique of recording and synchronizing voice with filmed lip movements in order to replace faulty or absent sound track in scenes shot previously. The procedure takes place in a dubbing room, where the picture is projected on a screen. The actors, wearing earphones, listen as they

watch themselves in the film. They then speak the dialogue at the same pace and with the same inflection as in the original performance. The dialogue here is recorded impeccably, and the sound track of the *dubbed* voices replaces the original tracks (or *cue tracks*) during the editing of the final footage. If actors are not adept at lip-syncing, the audience becomes aware of the mechanical contrivance. Sometimes the editor may have to resort to the tactic of cutting away from the on-camera character and laying in the sound track of the clear dialogue over another character's face. See *ADR; Cue Track.*

Live Feed A live video performance transmitted to a television screen within a scene being filmed with a motion-picture camera. Usually, any material needed to appear on a TV screen (or computer monitor) is prerecorded on videotape and played back during the filmed scene—to better control the quality and timing. See *Video Playback.*

Long Shot A shot of subjects or objects that are distant from the camera, embracing a comprehensive view of the scene (see *Full Shot*). The images in long shots appear small to the audience.

Loop A piece of motion picture film spliced head-to-tail into a continuously repeating length of film for use during the lip-syncing procedure.

Looping The recording of dialogue in post production to match and synchronize with previously filmed material. See *ADR; Dubbing.*

Loose Shot A shot in which the frame holds subjects and objects with space (air) around the image, as opposed to a *tight shot,* wherein the image fills the frame.

Low Angle See *Angle; High Hat/Hi Hat.*

Master Shot The film that comprises the continuous performance of a scene (or major section of a scene), which includes dialogue and camera moves. Any portion of a scene, or any subject matter related to a scene being filmed for the first time is in the category of *master shot.*

Match Cut In editing, the technique of cutting film when characters are in movement. This achieves the semblance of continuous action between two joined pieces of film that have been shot separately.

Medium Close Shot Similar to *Medium Close-up,* but with more space (*air*) surrounding the figures.

Medium Close-up The frame is filled with the subjects' figures from the waist up.

Medium Long Shot The frame holds the figures from the ankles or calves up, and also holds activity in front of and behind the principal action.

Medium Shot The frame holds the subjects' figures from the thighs up and surrounded by space (*air*); also referred to as a *loose shot.*

Mirror Shot A shot of a subject's reflection in a mirror. Care must be taken to ensure that no incongruous room reflections intrude.

Mismatch An error in continuity caused by (1) any action that was not performed consistently to allow consecutive shots to be joined smoothly in editing: cutting from a full shot to a close shot, and vice versa; (2) any in-

correctly matched objects: in wardrobe, props, makeup, etc., that were shot separately—perhaps in different settings—but which, editorially, belong in the same sequence.

Mock-up 1. A replica made of a structure or an object featured in a scene, particularly when the script calls for its destruction: a building that burns or collapses. 2. A replica made of a section of an automobile, airplane, theater, or the like, for the purpose of shooting close-up angles for the dialogue or reactions of the characters occupying the seats.

Montage A filmic technique used to convey a story point: a series of brief shots (cuts or dissolves) that indicate a passage of time, a dramatic succession of events, or to establish a particular mood.

MOS The shooting of film without the simultaneous recording of sound.

Movicam The brand name of another 35mm reflex motion pictures camera. See *Arriflex; Panaflex.*

Moving Shot Denotes that the subjects or objects being filmed are in movement, and the camera physically moves with them on a dolly, a crane, or an insert car.

Moviola The trade name for the classic original machine on which editors viewed the film and marked it for cutting. These venerable relics are no longer in use; they have been supplanted by computerized digital nonlinear editing consoles. See *Avid; Lightworks.*

Nagra The brand name of the portable 1/4" tape recorder (analog) that is most commonly used in motion picture productions. The tape is subsequently transferred to the recorded final film sound track, during post production. See *DAT; Sound Recorder.*

NG The initials for "No Good," applied to anything that is unacceptable for any reason.

Night-for-Day Denotes the filming of outdoor scenes that take place in the daytime but are filmed at night to expedite the shooting schedule. The sets are illuminated by special lamps that simulate daylight. See *Arc Light; HMI.*

Night-for-Night Denotes the nighttime filming of outdoor scenes that take place at night.

No Print The comment made by the director to indicate that the last recorded take is not to be printed at the laboratory; the continuity supervisor, the camera assistant, and the sound mixer do not circle that take number.

Off-Camera (OC) Refers to an action or sound that is out of the range of camera view.

Off-Mike Refers to a voice or sound that is out of the correct recording range of the microphone.

Off-Screen (OS) Refers to an action or sound within the scene but out of the range of the camera's view. See *Off-Camera.* (OC and OS are often used interchangeably.)

On a Bell Refers to the time period after a single bell warns that all stirring within the sound stage or shooting area must cease for the duration of

filming a take. When the take is finished, two bells signal that activity may resume.

On Camera Refers to subjects, objects, or actions that are in front of the camera, being filmed.

Out of Frame Refers to subjects, objects, actions, or parts thereof that are not within the picture as seen by the camera lens.

Out of Sync 1. When filming, the running speeds of the camera and the sound recorder do not coincide. 2. In a projected film, the picture and sound are not properly aligned.

Out Take 1. A shot that was not printed (see *"B" Negative*). 2. A piece of film that was deleted in the course of editing.

Overcrank To run a camera at a speed of *more* than the normal 24 fps. This creates *slow motion* when projected on the screen. See *Ramping Up/Down; Slo-Mo; Undercrank.*

Overlap 1. The portion of action or dialogue that is carried over (repeated) from the end of one shot to the beginning of another shot for editing continuity. See *Match Cut.* 2. What occurs when a voice or any off-camera sound intrudes on the dialogue of on-camera subjects.

Over the Shoulder A standard filmic composition wherein the frame holds two subjects, one facing the camera and the other with back to the camera, having only one shoulder and the back of the head seen in the foreground of the frame—either at camera right or camera left.

Panaflex The current standard 35mm reflex motion picture camera, and its various models. See *Arriflex; Movicam.*

Pan/Panning 1. The horizontal movement of the camera head on its axis, from left to right (pan right) or right to left (pan left). See *Tilt/Tilting.* 2. A panning shot may also refer to a *panoramic* view of a scene. 3. The term also denotes a negative opinion of a theatrical production: a bad review.

Parallel Action See *Cross Cutting.*

Pickup The term applies when: (1) An incomplete shot is printed and the continuation of that scene begins at the point where the previous shot ended; (2) Only a portion of a shot is repeated to correct a flaw; (3) A significant change is desired in a portion of the dialogue or action after a shot has been printed.

Picture Time The actual number of minutes and seconds that a motion picture runs after final editing.

Playback 1. The prerecorded singing and/or music played during the filming of musical productions. 2. The prerecorded videotape used to feed a signal to a television set used in a scene. See *Video Playback.*

POV (Point of View) A separate scene shot from the viewpoint of a character in a filmed scene. It reveals to the audience what that character sees.

Production Board A tool used by the 1st A.D. Traditionally it consists of a large hinged wooden board displaying strips of colored cardboard that contain information on all the essential elements for each scene in the production—arranged in the order of shooting. This device helps the A.D. to expedite

the shooting schedule on a day-by-day basis. Today the physical *board* has been replaced by a computerized version. The A.D. now employs a laptop computer with specialized software—*Movie Magic*—which permits changes and updates to be conveniently entered and printed out.

Protection Shot See *Cover Shot.*

Pull Back See *Dolly Back.*

Push In See *Dolly In.*

Rake Shot The frame holds subjects or objects positioned in a row. The camera angle is from either screen right or screen left and holds the line of profiles, shooting past the character or object closest to the camera.

Ramping Up/Down The terms used to indicate increasing or decreasing the camera speed (*frame rate*) and automatically compensating for the exposure change while the camera is running. This effect is attained via a laptop computer wired to the camera, and controlled by the Camera 1st Assistant. See *Overcrank; Undercrank.*

Raw Stock Film that has not been exposed.

Retake A take that was done over—reshot—to correct some mistake or problem discovered after the film was processed at the laboratory.

Rig To install equipment in preparation for shooting a film set.

Right-to-Left A camera direction that denotes movement from the right side to the left side of the screen.

"Roll!" The order given by the 1st A.D. to the camera operator and the sound mixer to activate their equipment for the making of a shot.

"Roll Film" (or "Roll Camera") The 1st A.D.'s order to run the camera without sound being recorded.

"Roll Sound" The 1st A.D.'s order to start the audio recorder without the rolling of the camera.

Room Tone See *Ambient (Atmosphere) Sound Track.*

Rough Cut The first stage of editing a film, wherein film footage and sound track are assembled in proper continuity but without final editorial refinements or precise timing.

Running Time See *Picture Time.*

Rushes An earlier movie term for the reels of laboratory processed film which comprised the previous day's shoot to be reviewed by the director, the producer, and other concerned personnel. See *Dailies.*

SAG Abbreviation for Screen Actors Guild.

SC (or Sc) Abbreviation for *Scene.*

Scaffold See *Catwalk.*

Scenario 1. Another word for screenplay or teleplay. 2. A synopsis of a script giving essential details of the plot, scenes, and characters.

Scene 1. A segment of a script that describes the activity within a single time period in a given locale. 2. A unit of a performance in a film.

Scene Number The numerical identification applied to a scene within a script.

Scenery 1. The decor of a film set, reflecting an authentic locale or environment. 2. Natural vistas that are pictorialized on film.

Score The music that accompanies a film. It may be music that was produced independently from the film (including public domain works) or music written especially for the production.

Screen Credit See *Credits.*

Screen Direction The indication of movement within a frame of film: right to left, left to right, toward background, toward foreground.

Screen Test Traditionally, a filmed audition to determine whether an actor suits a particular role in a film. Currently, in the interest of economics and speed, some screen tests are recorded on videotape.

Screening The showing of a film to a public audience, or sometimes to a limited, privileged audience, such as a *studio screening.*

Screenplay Material written in a particularly stylized format that is used in the process of filmmaking.

Scrim Traditionally, a piece of special gauze mounted on a stand and placed between a lighting unit and the characters being filmed—in order to diffuse the light to be more flattering to the actors.

Script Any material written for dramatization. See *Scenario; Screenplay; Teleplay.*

Second Team The stand-in people used for lighting purposes while the actors (*first team*) rest or prepare for a take.

Second Unit An auxiliary crew that shoots (1) scenes where the principal actors are not featured (recognizable) or are portrayed by substitute performers (*doubles*)—or (2) additional scenes for a production—usually scenic and establishing shots.

SEG The abbreviation for Screen Extras Guild.

Sequence Refers to a segment of a script that depicts a continuance of interrelated scenes or shots. Sometimes the term is used synonymously with *scene.*

Set The specific site in which the filming takes place.

Setup The prescribed area in a set on which the camera and sound are focused for the filming of a particular shot.

Shoot 1. The professional term when the camera and sound record a performance or a setting onto film. 2. The process of filming a script: "What's the schedule for this shoot?"

Shooting The technical operation of the camera and sound recorder when filming performances and/or scenery.

Shooting Schedule The form—prepared by the 1st A.D.—that lists all the pertinent information extracted from the production board, or its printed-out computer counterpart. Copies are distributed to all the production personnel. The schedule details all the elements of who, what, where, and when, together with the number of scenes and pages to be shot each working day, for the length of time it takes to complete the filming of the project.

Shooting Script The script approved for filming—after all revisions of action and dialogue have been finalized and the pages arranged in acceptable form.

Short Ends The raw stock—unexposed film—that remains at the tail end of a magazine when that film is too short for making another complete take.

Shot The term applies to an image recorded on a length of film—with or without sound—and includes the gamut of camera angles and perspectives: Long Shot, Medium Shot, Close-up, High or Low Angle, etc.

Shot List The prepared list enumerating the camera shots that the director envisioned as a guide for shooting the scenes written in the script. Printed copies are customarily distributed to key personnel. (Any adherence to this list is often accidental!)

Silent See *MOS*.

Single A shot in which the frame holds only one subject, whether the angle's size is a full shot, a medium shot, or a close shot.

Slate The small (formerly black, now usually white) plastic board (also called *clapboard*) that is photographed at the start of every take. When its hinged black and white striped clapper arm is slammed shut, it emits the "clap" that marks both picture and sound with an alignment point for synchronization. The numbers written on the slate identify the particular shot to the laboratory and the editor. See *Smart Slate*.

Slo-Mo Abbreviation for *slow motion*. See *Overcrank; Ramping Up/Down*.

Smart Slate An electronic version of the standard slate. When activated by the battery attached to its back, the face of the slate lights up with a display of running digital numbers, representing a timecode—indicating hours, minutes, seconds, and frames. Via an electronic device, these digits correspond with the identical audio timecode generated in the sound recorder: Nagra or DAT (Digital Audio Tape). This methodology launched the automated synchronization of picture and sound used in editing on the high-tech computerized digital editing consoles. The Smart Slate is used *only* for shots made with sound. For MOS (silent shots) the electronic elements are not activated. See *Slate, Telecine, Timecode*.

Soft Focus 1. A deliberately defocused lens used to produce a filmic effect: an image not sharply defined on the screen. 2. An improperly adjusted focus; the mistake appears as an unsatisfactory image due to lack of sharpness.

Sound Effects (SFX) 1. Sounds that are indicated in the script but not recorded during shooting. These sounds are recorded subsequently and included in the final editing of the film. 2. The audio components in a film that are made to imitate real sounds. See *Foley*.

Sound Recorder The portable system that records the dialogue and sound on a movie set which can be played back for listening. See *DAT; Nagra*.

Sound Stage Traditionally, the soundproof studio in which the shooting of film and sound takes place. Today's "stage" filmmaking often takes place in ersatz sound stages: warehouses, abandoned supermarkets, or any large enclosed space without interior obstructions and often not sound-proofed.

Sound Track 1. A length of film carrying only sound, either magnetically or optically. 2. The portion of a motion-picture film strip that is reserved for sound. One or more bands of sound, such as multi-channel stereophonic

sound tracks, are recorded along one edge of the film to be in perfect synchronization with the projected picture. The combining of picture and sound elements onto one strip of film is performed in the film laboratory.

Special Effects (SPFX) Those scenes on the screen which have been created by *special-effects personnel* using on-set mechanical devices (differentiated from *Visual Effects*). Traditionally, special effects include simulations of fires, explosions, lightning, rain, etc., also actors made up as creatures. See *Visual Effects*.

"Speed" The term used by the sound mixer when announcing that the audio recorder has been started and is now running at the correct speed—synchronized with the speed of the camera.

Splice In editing, to physically join two pieces of cut film. The term has become virtually obsolete in the modern editing room where "cuts" (and all other transitions) are made digitally via an editing console. See *Avid; Lightworks*.

Split Screen Two or more separate scenes taking place within one frame. The two separately made shots are combined through digital or optical means.

Steadicam The trade name of a mobile camera mounting system on which any type of camera can be placed. The apparatus is securely strapped to the operator's body which ensures steadiness of the film while the camera is in operation, and also gives the operator the mobility to maneuver in any direction.

Sticks See *Tripod*.

Stock Shot A length of film obtained from a film library.

Storyboard A pictorial layout on paper—or via computer—of scenes or shots for a film. The art director furnishes this rendition to help the director and other key personnel to visualize the sequences and the planned progression of shots and angles to depict the story. In special and visual effects films, the storyboard is a vital reference guide for all departments.

Straight Cut In continuity editing: two shots joined directly to each other without any optical or digital transitional effect.

Subjective Shot The camera (often hand-held) moves slowly across a scene to create the impression that eyes are peering from a hidden position; or the camera moves/pans ominously to evoke a sense of an impending, volatile situation: suspense, shock, surprise, or imminent danger.

Subtitles Printed words, superimposed on the lower part of a screen, that are translations of a foreign language, or some parenthetical phrase.

Superimposure The process of placing one image on top of another without obliterating the first image. This is usually done to make a vital story point: an image superimposed on an actor's face—to convey what the actor is experiencing—is known as *stream of consciousness*. The second image is always written into the script as a separate scene number, with the notation "Superimpose."

Swish Pan The camera moves very swiftly from one image to another, blurring the former and focusing on the latter. Also referred to as a *Blur Pan*.

Sync Short for *synchronization* or *synchronized.* See *In Sync; IPS; Out of Sync.*

Tag A brief scene that marks the finish of a film. It either ties up a loose end of the story or injects a final revelation. Tag scenes are most prevalent in television filmed series, often appearing with the end credits.

Tail Slate See *End Marker.*

Take Any scene that has been recorded on film or videotape (with or without sound).

Teaser A brief, enticing scene or a series of intriguing shots at the start of a television film—intended to capture the audience's attention.

Telecine The process that transfers film (picture and sound) to tape. This tape can be used for either videotape cassettes or digital disks. See *Dailies; Smart Slate; Timecode.*

Teleplay A script written especially for a television production. See *Screenplay.*

Teleprompter The electronic device that replaces cue cards. Now the actors can easily read their dialogue and/or directions from the display on a scrolling video screen.

The Trades The industry's periodicals, particularly *Daily Hollywood Reporter, Daily Variety, Back Stage West/Drama-Logue.* There are several others.

Tight Shot A shot in which the frame holds subjects or objects that fill the space to the left and right sides of the screen.

Tilt/Tilting The vertical movement of the camera head on its axis as it pans upward and downward. See *Pan/Panning.* Current industry personnel mostly use the term "pan" to refer to any movement of the camera on its axis: *Pan up, Pan down, Pan left, Pan right,* etc. Tilting the camera head produces a movement that is distinct from the vertical (up and down) movements of the camera on a boom. See *Camera Boom; Crab Dolly.*

Timecode A standard electronic marking process that identifies each frame of picture or sound used in computerized editing systems. See *Smart Slate; Telecine.*

Titles The name and any inscription that appear at the beginning or end of a film or television presentation (known as *opening* and *closing titles*).

Tracking Shot A shot made when the camera is mounted on a dolly and moved on tracks to follow actors as they walk or run. See *Dolly Tracks.*

Traveling Shot A shot in which the camera is moving with the filming of a traveling vehicle. Sometimes, one or two cameras are mounted on the principal vehicle and film the actors as they perform a scene while riding in the car. See *Insert Car.*

Treatment A written synopsis of a story, delineating the main scenes and some dialogue. A treatment is prepared with the intention of developing it into a screenplay or teleplay.

Tripod A portable, adjustable three-legged stand, to which a camera can be affixed. Also called *sticks.*

Trucking Shot Same as *Tracking Shot.* A script may read: "Camera trucks along with John and Mary as they walk." Make note of (a) *Camera Preceding:* to indicate that the camera is focused on the subjects' faces, as they walk toward

the camera; (b) *Camera Following:* to indicate that the camera is focused on the subjects' **backs,** as they walk away from the camera; (c) *Side Angle:* to indicate that the camera is focused on the subjects' profiles, as they walk either left-to-right or right-to-left.

Turn-Around Time The time between when a company has wrapped for the day (or night) and the time of the *call* to begin work the next shooting day (or night), so that the actors and craftspeople have gotten sufficient rest. Customarily, the minimum Turn-Around Time is prescribed by union or guild contracts. When called back to work in less time than the contractual minimum Turn-Around hours, it is said that the persons are on *Forced Call* and must receive additional pay.

Two Shot (2/SH) The frame holds two subjects. It may be a full shot, medium shot, or close shot. Other common abbreviations are *2/S, 2-S,* and *2-Shot.*

Undercrank To run the camera at a speed *less* than the normal 24 fps. This creates speeded up motion when projected on the screen at the normal 24 fps. See *Overcrank; Ramping Up/Down.*

Upstage The area farthest from the camera. Moving upstage means moving toward the background (BG) of the setup. See *Downstage.*

Video 1. Term commonly applied to the *visual* components of film and television viewing. 2. Denotes the electronic television signals.

Video Assist Denotes prerecorded videotape which is played back to an on-screen television set that is being filmed in a scene.

Video Monitor A small television set that receives its signal from a video camera which is mounted inside the film camera. The monitors—being used by nearly all the departments—receive exactly what the movie camera is filming (or rehearsing). See *Video Tap; Video Village.*

Video Playback The prerecorded videotape that is projected in a television set being filmed in a scene. Both the recorder and the television set are customized for playback at 24 fps, to match the frame rate of a motion picture camera. (The normal Current American television broadcast rate is 30 fps.) This operation is usually accomplished during postproduction.

Video Tap A tiny video camera mounted inside the film camera which sees the same image from the lens as the film: its signal is sent by wire or wireless transmitter to video monitors where key personnel can observe the shot being rehearsed or filmed. See *Video Monitor.*

Video Village The facetious name given to an area on a movie set where a video monitor is placed with a grouping of chairs for interested personnel (seated or standing) to view a shot being rehearsed and/or filmed. This arrangement eliminates the former need to crowd around the camera. See *Video Monitor.*

Viewfinder The optical instrument through which the director of photography (DP) peers to establish the angle and framing of a particular setup. The instrument is also used by the camera operator during rehearsals to ascertain how the image will record on film, and to ensure the correctness of the camera moves.

Visual Effects Scenes of computer-generated images (CGI) that are intercut with live action performances during principal photography, then computerized digitally in the high-tech editing consoles during post production. The computer-generated scenes are a composite of multi-elemented images using blue and green screen techniques. Most filmmaking today includes some phantasmagorical visuals–whether it be in feature, television, science fiction, or commercials. Personnel of the visual effects companies usually work with the film production companies. See *Special Effects*.

Voice Over (VO) A voice heard on screen without the appearance of the speaker.

Voice Slate Slate and take numbers spoken (*voiced*) into the sound mixer's recording panel: Nagra or DAT.

Walkie-Talkie Small hand-held radio device (earphone/mouth-microphone combination) used for fast communication between the director and the A.D.s in the course of setting up for shooting a scene spread far apart.

Walla-Walla See *Hubba-hubba*.

Whip Pan See *Swish Pan*.

Wide Angle A camera angle in which the frame holds a large area, with a crowd of people and/or objects positioned at a distance from the camera. The lens' focal length makes the full figures appear small relative to the screen. Or the composition may be with the principal players positioned in the center or foreground of the scene, while the shot encompasses the activity behind and at both sides of the principals. The latter composition is described as *shooting past* the principals (from their ankles, knees, or thighs, as the case may be).

Wild Line A portion of dialogue recorded only on audio tape to replace some faulty filmed dialogue; the corrected tape will be *laid in* during editing.

Wipe An older, now seldom-used, style of transition from one scene to another: The image on the screen is virtually wiped off, by a hard or soft-edged line, as it reveals another image behind it; the effect is produced at a laboratory by optical means or via digital computer manipulation.

Wrap The finish of a sequence, the end of a day's work, or the end of an entire shoot: "That's a wrap."

Zoom In A similar effect to *Dolly In*; *Push In*; done with the zoom lens.

Zoom Out A similar effect to *Dolly Back*; *Pull Back*; done with the zoom lens.

Appendix A

Abbreviations for Shot Descriptions

ANG:	Angle
ARRI:	Arriflex
BG (Bg):	Background
BH/CU:	Big head close-up
CH/SH:	Choker shot
CL:	Camera left
COMP:	Complete
CONT:	Continued
CR:	Camera right
CS:	Close shot
CU:	Close-up
D/A:	Down angle
D/B:	Dolly back
D/I:	Dolly in
DIAL:	Dialogue
DISS:	Dissolve
DBLE:	Double
ECU:	Extreme close-up
ELS:	Extreme long shot
ENT:	Enter
E/S:	End slate
EST:	Establish shot
EXT:	Exterior
FG (Fg):	Foreground
F/I:	Fade in
F/O:	Fade out
FS:	False start
F/SH:	Full shot
FT:	Feet

F2/SH:	Full two shot
F3/SH:	Full three shot
GR/SH:	Group shot
H/A:	High angle
INC:	Incomplete
INT:	Interior
L/A:	Low angle
L/SH:	Long shot
L–R:	Left-to-right
MAST:	Master shot
MCU:	Medium close-up
MCS:	Medium close shot
MED:	Medium shot
MLS:	Medium long shot
MOS:	Film without sound track
MS:	Medium shot
NG:	No good
OC:	Off-Camera
OS:	Off-Screen
OV/SH:	Over the Shoulder
P/B:	Pull back
PL/B:	Playback
P/I:	Push In
R–L:	Right-to-left
R/SH:	Rake shot
SC:	Scene
SGLE/FS:	Single full shot
SND:	Sound
SFX:	Sound effects
SPFX:	Special effects
T/SH (TITE SH):	Tight shot
TR/SH:	Tracking (or trucking) shot
TRAV/SH:	Traveling shot
W/A:	Wide angle
X/ANG:	Cross angle
X'S:	Crosses screen
X'T:	Exits shot
Z/I:	Zoom in
Z/O:	Zoom out

Appendix B

Conversions

Conversion Table

35mm film runs through camera at:
90 Feet per Minute (fpm) (60 seconds)
24 Frames per Second (fps)
16 Frames per Foot (fpf)

Converting Footage to Time:	*Converting Time to Footage*
(Film ran 298 ft.)	(Film ran 3 min. & 18 2/3 sec.)
Divide number of feet by 90	*Multiply* minutes by 90

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ 90)\overline{298} \\ \underline{270} = 3 \text{ min.} \\ + 28 \text{ ft*} \end{array}$$

3 min.   = 270 ft.
18 2/3 sec. = 28 ft.*
               298 ft.

*To determine seconds on less than 90 feet:

*To determine footage on less than 1 minute (60 seconds):

Deduct 1/3 from number of feet; the answer equals the number of seconds:

Add 1/2 to the number of seconds; the answer equals the number of feet:

```
   28 ft.
 -  9 1/3
  18 2/3 seconds
```

```
  18 2/3 sec.
 +  9 1/3
   28 feet
```

Thus:

Thus:

298 ft. = 3 min. & 18 2/3 sec.

3 min. & 18 2/3 sec. = 298 ft.

Also written as: 3′ 18 2/3″

The fractions may be rounded out for quick calculation
(1 foot is less than 1 second: 1½ ft. per sec.)

```
   28 ft.        19 sec.
 -  9          +  9
  19 seconds     28 feet
```

Conversion Chart

Seconds	35 mm Footage	Minutes	35 mm Footage
1	1½	1	90
2	3	2	180
3	4½	3	270
4	6	4	360
5	7½	5	450
6	9	6	540
7	10½	7	630
8	12	8	720
9	13½	9	810
10	15	10	900
11	16½	11	990
12	18	12	1080
13	19½	13	1170
14	21	14	1260
15	22½	15	1350
16	24	16	1440
17	25½	17	1530
18	27	18	1620
19	28½	19	1710
20	30	20	1800
21	31½	21	1890
22	33	22	1980
23	34½	23	2070
24	36	24	2160
25	37½	25	2250
26	39	26	2340
27	40½	27	2430
28	42	28	2520
29	43½	29	2610
30	45	30	2700
31	46½	31	2790
32	48	32	2880
33	49½	33	2970
34	51	34	3060
35	52½	35	3150
36	54	36	3240
37	55½	37	3330
38	57	38	3420
39	58½	39	3510
40	60	40	3600
41	61½	41	3690
42	63	42	3780
43	64½	43	3870
44	66	44	3960
45	67½	45	4050
46	69	46	4140
47	70½	47	4230
48	72	48	4320
49	73½	49	4410
50	75	50	4500
51	76½	51	4590
52	78	52	4680
53	79½	53	4770
54	81	54	4860
55	82½	55	4950
56	84	56	5040
57	85½	57	5130
58	87	58	5220
59	88½	59	5310
60 (1 Min.)	90	60 (1 Hr.)	5400

Appendix C

Sample Forms

DAILY CONTINUITY LOG

PRODUCTION NO._____   DATE_____

TITLE_____   WORK DAY_____

FORWARD

Shoot. Call_____

1st Shot_____

Lunch_____

1st Shot_____

Dinner_____

1st Shot_____

Cam. Wrap_____

Snd Wrap_____

Scenes Covered

Wild Tracks

Retakes

	Scenes	Pages
Total Script		
Added		
Deleted		
New Total		
Shot Prior		
Shot Today		
To Date		
To Do		

CAM ROL	SND ROL	SET UP	SCENE	SLATE	PRNT	TIME	TOTL TIME	PAGES	TOTL PAGES

TOTAL

FORWARD

DAILY EDITOR'S LOG

DATE_____   TITLE_____

WORK DAY_____   DIRECTOR_____

PROD. NO._____

CAM ROL	SND ROL	SET	SCENE#	SLATE#	PRINT	TIME	DESCRIPTION

WILD TRACKS	REMARKS

Continuity Supervisor

DAILY PROGRESS REPORT

Shoot. Call_____   Date_____
1st Shot_____   Work Day_____
Lunch_____   Prod. No._____
1st Shot_____   Title_____
Dinner_____   Director_____
1st Shot_____
Cam. Wrap_____
Snd Wrap_____

	Scenes	Pages	Minutes	Setups
Total Script				
Added				
Deleted				
New Total				
Shot Prior				
Shot Today				
To Date				
To do				

Scenes Covered	Wild Tracks	Retakes	Remarks

Continuity Supervisor

STORY CHRONOLOGY/TIME BREAKDOWN

TITLE:_____

SCENE NOS.	TIME

SCENE COUNT

TITLE:_____

_____

PAGE COUNT

TITLE:_____

_____

CONTINUITY SYNOPSIS/ONE LINE

TITLE:_____   PROD. NO._____

DIRECTOR:_____   DATE:._____

SCENE NOS.	SET	DESCRIPTION	D/N	PAGES	CHARACTERS

WARDROBE OUTLINE

TITLE _____   Time Breakdown_____

Scene Nos.	Sets	Date Shot

CHARACTERS

Index