

Funny Games 1997 vs 2007 comparison - What happens when you remake exactly the same film 10 years later

A comparative analysis of two stories that are almost shot-for-shot identical and made by the same director

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<p>Sammandrag:</p> <p>Min examensuppsats är en komparativ analys om den österrikiska filmen Funny Games (1997) och dens amerikanska remake som gjordes 2007. Jag valde dessa två filmer för att de är nästan identiska och båda är regisserade av samma regissör (Michal Haneke). Syftet med mitt arbete är att forska vad är resultatet om man gör ungefär samma film tio år senare. Mina forskningsfrågor är följande: 1. Varför fick remaken sämre recensioner från de amerikanska kritikerna och publiken än originalen? 2. Hurdan roll spelar det för filmupplevelsen om man använder kända skådespelare i en remake? 3. Vad är skillnaderna mellan versionerna? Mitt material består av de här två filmerna. Med hjälp av Robert Mckee's "Act design" -teori, har jag vald att närmare analysera vändpunkterna i filmerna. Jag demonstrerar likheterna och skillnaderna genom att visa still bilder från filmernas viktigaste scener. Mina slutsatser är att det finns en forskning (Gun violence trends in movies) som visar att mängden av våld i amerikanska filmer har ökats i tio år. Därför känns den originala versionen av Funny Games mera våldsam än remaken, som känns inte lika skrämmande i dagens läge. Att använda kända skådespelare i en film är också en detalj som bryter illusionen av att det som vi ser på skärmen är en helt vanlig familj. Då blir filmupplevelsen inte lika skrämmande. Min uppsats bevisar att man kan inte göra en identisk remake om tio år, utan att förlora originalets inverkan.</p>	
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<p>My thesis is a comparative analysis about the Austrian Funny Games (1997) and its U.S. remake (2007). I chose these two specific films, because both of them are directed by the same director (Michael Haneke) and are really identical. The purpose of my thesis is to explore what happens when you make basically the same film ten years later. The research questions in my thesis are: 1. Why did the remake get worse reviews from the critics and the audience than the original? 2. How does the film watching experience change, if there are well-known actors in a remake? 3. What are the differences between the versions? My material consists of the two films. Through Robert McKee's act design I've chosen to analyse 3 scenes from the film that are the main turning points. I show the similarities and differences with the help of screenshots from the films. My conclusion is that according to a study (Gun violence trends in movies) the rate of violence has increased in American movies in ten years. While the original Funny Games feels horrifying, the remake feels outdated. The choice of using famous actors in the remake also makes it less horrifying: it breaks the illusion of watching the life of an average family. My thesis proves the fact that you can't make an identical remake ten years later without losing some of the impact compared to the original.</p>	
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<p>Tiivistelmä:</p> <p>Opinnäytetyöni on vertaileva analyysi Itävaltalaisesta elokuvasta Funny Games (1997) ja sen amerikkalaisesta uusintaversiosta (2007). Valitsin juuri nämä elokuvat, koska harvoin kohtaa alkuperäisversion ja uusintafilmissoinnin, jotka ovat saman ohjaajan (Michael Haneke) käsialaa ja juoneltaan sekä kuvakerronnaltaan lähes identtisiä. Työni tarkoitus on tutkia mitä tapahtuu, kun lähes sama elokuva tehdään uudestaan 10 vuoden tauon jälkeen. Tutkimuskysymykseni ovat: 1. Miksei uusintafilmissointi ollut menetys amerikkalaiselle yleisölle, miksi elokuva sai huonot arvostelut? 2. Mikä on katsomiskokemuksen ero, jos uudelleenfilmissoinnissa käytetään tunnettuja näyttelijöitä tuntemattomien sijasta? 3. Mitkä ovat versioiden väliset erot? Materiaalini koostuu näistä kahdesta elokuvasta. Robert Mckee'n kolmen näytöksen -teorian pohjalta keskityn analysoimaan elokuvien käännöskohtia. Näytän versioiden eroavaisuudet ja yhtäläisyydet kuva-kaappauksien avulla. Yhteenvetoni on, että erään tutkimuksen mukaan (Gun violence trends in movies) väkivallan määrä on kasvanut amerikkalaisissa elokuvissa kymmenen vuoden aikana. Alkuperäinen Funny Games vaikutti julkaistaessaan raa'alta, uusintaversiointi taas ei sävyyttänyt väkivaltaisuuksillaan. Tunnettujen näyttelijöiden käyttäminen uusintaversiossa tekee siitä myös vähemmän pelottavan: Se rikkoo katsojan illuusion siitä, että ruudulla olisi vain tavallinen perhe. Opinnäytetyöni todistaa, ettei samaa elokuvaa voi tehdä identtisenä 10 vuotta myöhemmin, menettämättä sen alkuperäisiä tehoja.</p>	
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FOREWORD

Personally I'm not a big fan of remakes. I think it's a rare occasion when a remake gives you something, you didn't already get from the original. The usual story behind a remake would be a black & white American classic being updated into today's film standards or a hit film from Asia or Europe, that is being remade for the U.S. market.

In my experience the best remakes are often the ones that add something to the original story, or in the most extreme cases the remake might tell a whole new story taking only some influences from the original. Quentin Tarantino's *Inglorious Basterds* is one good example. The original *Inglorious* was directed by an Italian director Enzo G. Castellari. The original version is a 100% exploitation picture from the 70's. After seeing the original and the Tarantino version, you wouldn't believe it's a remake! What he took from the original is basically the name and the setting. Everything else is done differently.

The most usual way of making remakes is to make a film that's more accessible to a wider audience than the original. Like the dozens of remakes of Japanese horror films from the early 2000s. In this case an already successful film is being "mainstreamed" by changing the actors and language, editing and visuals into the usual Hollywood blockbuster format.

In the end I would like to say that we live in an era where there are more remakes than ever. Is it a good or bad thing? Do we really need stories that have already been told? Has Hollywood run out of ideas? Hard to say, but my thesis is a case study of one pretty rare and unique example in the history of remakes.

Pietari Syväjärvi

01.03.2014 in Helsinki

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of the thesis and the research questions

Like I mentioned in my foreword my thesis is a case study. It's a comparative analysis of two feature length films. An original and a U.S. remake. These films are *Michael Haneke's Funny Games* (1997) an Austrian psychological thriller that was controversial when it was originally released and is still regarded as a disturbing piece of filmmaking. Well, as you already might guess the other film is the 2007 U.S. remake that goes by the same name.

Now I'm going to ask myself why did I choose these two particular films of all the available originals/remakes. Well, there are two main reasons why this remake stands out from the majority of American remakes. Firstly, the remake is directed by the same director as the original (Michael Haneke). Secondly it is quite identical to the original, a shot-for-shot transition of the 1997 version only with American actors. This is the fact that makes my case study a unique experiment. With a quick research over directors who remade their own films, I didn't find any other remakes that would be so identical to the original, as the *Funny Games* -remake.

There are three important questions that I'm interested in these films. The Austrian, original *Funny Games* was a successful, praised feature film, but the remake didn't really make the same impact when it was released. The U.S. *Funny Games* flopped pretty badly when it was released. So my first question is: *Why did the remake get worse reviews from the critics and the audience than the original?*

The other interesting thing to compare in these films is the choice of actors. Since the films are visually and storywise really identical the biggest differences lie in the choice of the main characters. My second question is: *How does the film watching experience change, if there are well-known actors in a remake?* My last question is: *What are the main differences between the versions?*

1.2 Materials & Method

For this analysis my material will simply consist of one physical dvd-copy of each film, the original and the remake. I will have repeated viewings of my materials. Probably play the other movie on a laptop and the other on a TV simultaneously, this way it is possible to pause the films and make shot-for-shot comparisons. Later on there will be screencaptures, snapshots of the most important scenes from both films to demonstrate how identical they actually are. There will be a snapshot and next to it a short explanation what happens in that particular picture/scene, what is the purpose of the scene and so on. I will also make a list of differences about some of the statistics from the original and the U.S. remake. In other words, my method is comparative analysis. Before the analysis I'll introduce the important terms and definitions, characters and plot summaries to the reader.

1.3 Theories

I'm going to use *Robert Mckee's* theories from his book "*Story - Substance, Structure, Style, and the principles of Screenwriting*" to demonstrate the similarities in the films. I will concentrate mostly on studying the characters and the structure of the films.

Another fact that I'm going to examine is how violent were these films seen as when they were released in 1997 and 2007. As a helping tool I'm going to have a closer look on a study called "*Gun violence trends in movies*".

1.4 Delimitations

I'm going to focus only on my material, which is the film itself. An important aspect that's not going to be analyzed in my thesis is the marketing of the *Funny Games* films. This is an important factor if we talk about the success of these films. I feel like you could write another thesis only about the marketing of *Funny Games*. I've decided to concentrate purely on the product, which is the film. When deciding if the movie is successful or not, I'll rely on critics reviews and user ratings rather than marketing and dis-

tribution. So later on in my text when I write about the success of the films, I mostly mean the ratings they've received, not the box office numbers.

1.5 Definitions

Breaking the 4th wall - In this case breaking the 4th wall means that the fictional character becomes aware of its fictional nature. For instance if a character is looking in the camera and directly speaking to the viewer, then he's breaking the 4th wall. (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Breaking%20the%20Fourth%20Wall>)

Protagonist - The main character in a movie that the audience emphasizes with. A protagonist is a willful character that has a conscious desire.

Antagonist - The opposite of the protagonist. The bad guy who's standing against the protagonist and its desires in the story. In the end of a traditional story the protagonist wins the fight against the antagonist.

J-horror - The name for the Japanese horror film genre. *The Ring*, *The Grudge* and *Dark Water* would be some examples of J-horror films.

Art House - Films that are made outside of the Hollywood production system and that focus on more subtle themes. Art house films are often experimental and not designed for mass appeal. (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Art+house+films>)

Remake - A new version of a film that has already been made.

Self-remake - A remake, that's been directed by the same director as the original.

Rottentomatoes.com - a web page that collects various critics' reviews. They have a percentage rating system. All the reviews are summed together and if the movie gets a

rating over 60% then it's counted as "fresh" meaning it's worth seeing. A rating under 60% on the other hand means, that the movie is "rotten" and not worth seeing.

IMDB.com - Internet Movie DataBase. The biggest and most famous movie database in the Internet.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Director's biography

Michael Haneke (born 1942) is an Austrian director. During his career he has been working on television, theater and films. He studied philosophy, psychology and Stage arts in the university of Wien. After graduating he worked in Germany as a film critic and dramaturgist. In 1973 he began directing for television. He worked in television for 21 years. In 1989 he made his feature film directorial debut "The 7th Continent". Nowadays he is married and has four children. Besides working as a director, he also works as a professor for directing at the Vienna Film Academy.

Haneke has been given multiple awards for his works as a director. He has won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival for White Ribbon in 2009 and Le Amour in 2012. He has made films in French, German and English. One of his famous personal quotes about filmmaking is: "A feature film is twenty-four lies per second. According to the Internet Movie DataBase Haneke has eight personal trademarks in his works as a director.

- Short outbursts of violence
- Use of extremely long static takes
- Uses no film score

- Shots of televisions, usually showing news
- Cuts to black between scenes
- Male character named Georg, George, or Georges Laurent
- Female character named Anna, Ann, or Anne Laurent
- Frequently centers around psychotic, violent youths

(http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0359734/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm)

Directors filmography

This is only a selected filmography of Haneke's most important feature films in a chronological order. Haneke also writes the scripts to all of his films.

1989 - The 7th Continent

1992 - Benny's video

1994 - 71 Fragments of a Chronology of Chance

1997 - Funny Games

2000 - Code Unknown

2001 - The Piano Teacher

2003 - Time of the Wolf

2005 - Hidden

2007 - Funny Games (U.S. remake)

2009 - White Ribbon

2012 - Amour

(http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0359734/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1)

2.2 A short history of remakes made by the same director

Michael Haneke isn't the only director who has remade his own film. There are more of examples. Often the original has been a non-english language feature, but not in every case. For instance the American director *Michael Mann* remade his film *L.A. Takedown* (1989). The remake *Heat* was released in 1995. Mann wanted to remake his film, because he had originally envisioned his crime-drama to be more involved. When there was more money available he could do the remake that he originally wanted to do.

Mann's example is a pretty fresh one, but if we take a closer look, we see that already in the 30's directors like *Alfred Hitchcock*, *Frank Capra*, *Howard Hawks* and *Yasujiro Ozu* later remade their own works. Hitchcock's original "*The Man Who Knew Too Much*" (1934) was remade in 1956 and the title remained the same. Hitchcock felt like his first version was "the work of a talented amateur" and pitched his idea of the remake to Paramount Pictures. Capra's "*Lady for a Day*" (1933) was transformed into "*Pocketful of Miracles*" in 1961. Capra liked to do self-remakes (also his "*Broadway Bill*" became a remake "*Riding High*"), but the studios thought that his story was too old-fashioned. After hearing that Capra decided to buy the rights to him. The shooting of "*Pocketful of Miracles*" turned out to be a really miserable one. The film also made a loss when it was released. Hawks remade "*Ball of Fire*" (1941) into "*A Song is Born*" (1948). When asked why he did it, his answer was "because I got \$25,00 a week, that's why".

The Japanese director had a purely technical motive when he remade "*A Story of Floating Weeds*" (1934). The original film was a silent film, and the director wanted to remake it in sound. The remake "*Floating Weeds*" was released in 1959.

If we jump back to the 80's and 90's we can see that European and Asian directors are making a lot of the self-remakes. First there's the non-English language original version that has become a small-time hit in Europe/Asia/or the festival circuit. The next step seems to be a remake for the wider audiences, your average Jane and John Doe's.

A Japanese horror film called "*The Ring*" started a new wave of J-horror remakes. Producer/Director *Sam Raimi* (*Evil Dead*, *Spider-Man*) spotted a ghost/horror feature called "*Ju-On: The Grudge*" (2002) directed by *Takashi Shimizu*. Raimi asked Shimizu to do a

remake for the American audiences. Shimizu was first reluctant, but he was promised that he could work with a Japanese crew and retain the Film's Japanese setting. The English language remake "*The Grudge*" was released in 2004. Legendary Hong-Kong director *John Woo* did another famous self-remake with his film "*Once a Thief*".

When we look at the European self-remakes there's three good examples (and both *Funny Games* films of course). Here's a list of the films.

- Ole Bornedal (Denmark): "*Nattevagten*" (1994), "*Nightwatch*" (1997).
- Gela Babluani (Georgia): "*13 Tzameti*" (2005), "*13*" (2010)
- George Sluizer (France): "*Spoorloos*" (1988), "*The Vanishing*" (1993)

What's common to these self-remakes is the fact that all of them were festival hits in Europe. Films that won various prizes and the U.S. rights were bought by bigger studios like Miramax and made into high concept -pictures. Bornedal, Babluani and Sluizer were more or less unknown names when they made the originals, and the possibility to do a remake in Hollywood must have been a big step for them. In every case the original is regarded as a fine piece of cinema. While the remakes have all had bigger budgets, none of them have become anything remarkable neither for the critics or the audiences. If we look at the Rottentomatoes.com -ratings, we notice that in every case the original is considered as "fresh" and the remake as "rotten".

In the end if we compare *Funny Games* with the other European self-remakes, we can see that Haneke had already made a name for himself before he did the remake. He wasn't in a situation where he would need much more exposure. But like said, his original motive was to aim *Funny Games* for the American public. But the German language used in the original, made it impossible. What is most interesting about *Funny Games* is that it remains in history as the only feature film self-remake that's almost shot-for-shot identical with the original.

(Kiang, Lyttelton, Perez. 2013. <http://blogs.indiewire.com/theplaylist/10-directors-who-remade-their-own-movies-20131121?page=3#blogPostHeaderPanel>)

2.3 Haneke's reasons for the remake

It was originally an American producer called *Chris Coen* who asked Haneke to do an English language *Funny Games* remake for the American audiences. Haneke was willing to do it, mainly because back in the days *Funny Games* was basically targeted for the American audiences. But the main problem was that a German language feature film doesn't get a big public unless you change the language (and cast more known actors). Haneke himself has said that *Funny Games* is ultimately "a film about the representation of violence in media, not about violence per se". In the late 2000's the director also sees his movie being more relevant than ever, because of "the pornography of violence represented in the media has increased".

He ended up doing a shot-for-shot remake because he didn't see any need to add anything to the film. The actors (Watts & Roth) only saw the original film once. Haneke was afraid that if they had repeated screenings of the original, the actors would try to act differently or identically as in the original. Haneke's most important demand for doing the remake was to get Naomi Watts to play the lead protagonist. He was impressed by Watts' work in *Mulholland Drive* (2001, dir. *David Lynch*) and *21 Grams* (2003, dir. *Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu*) and couldn't see anyone else as fit as Watts to play this part.

A number of translators started improving the English language script, making small changes that were necessary. For instance, in the Austrian version the wife can't remember the phone number of the police. But in America everyone knows how to dial "911". During pre-production it was hard to find identical looking locations as the ones in the Austrian version. Haneke says that on the set there was too many people around, he wasn't used to the American way of making films. They also had two extra weeks to shoot the film, but the experience was still tough. The director was asked if he watched those violent American films that *Funny Games* is directed against, his answer was "Rarely. Hardly at all". *Funny Games* remains the only Haneke film that has been remade, even though director *Ron Howard* asked if he could make a remake of another Haneke film called "*Cache*" (Hidden). (<http://cinema.com/articles/5600/funny-games-michael-haneke-interview.phtml>)

2.4 The History of Home Invasion movies

Home invasion movies are a popular sub-genre in horror today. According to a *Cinekatz.com* article these films "tap into our common fears and feel much more real than say, a creature feature or a slasher flick." Another web page called *Planetivy.com* writes: "Home invasion horror is the only major horror sub-genre that touches on everyday fears." And to be scared is probably the main reason for watching horror films. The difference between home invasion films and haunted house films like *The Haunting* (1999, dir. *Jan De Bont*) or *Paranormal Activity* (2007, dir. *Oren Peli*) is that the former feels unrealistic and never really gets to the core of our fears.

Home invasion films like *Funny Games* for instance is something that could happen to anyone for real and therefore it can feel scarier than something with extraordinary ghosts or monsters involved. *Natasha Harmer* also writes in the same article "Home invasion horror exploits our fear of a corrupt society". She says that in this sub-genre "heinous crimes are committed by everyday people against people they don't even know (this is also the case in *Funny Games*). So the worstcase scenario would be that after watching a powerful home invasion film you will feel a little bit paranoid about strangers and the outside world.

Harmer makes a good point by saying that "If Sky News makes us believe that it's only teenagers that go around mugging people, then we know who to avoid. When the media tells us that terrorism is exclusively related to Islam, we know who not to trust." Then she pretty much sums it up what the whole home invasion fear factor is about: "The truth is, extremism is prevalent in every societal group, no matter the religion, age, race or gender of the person. Home invasion says what the news doesn't and reminds us that evil is possible in any form. This is also the case in *Funny Games*, where the two villains are young boys from good families.

(Harmer, 2013, <http://planetivy.com/filmandtv/71967/why-is-home-invasion-horror-so-popular/>)

Here's a short list covering some of the most important films in this sub-genre:

- Dial M for Murder (1954, dir. *Alfred Hitchcock*)
- Cape Fear (1962, dir. *J. Lee Thompson*)
- In Cold Blood (1967, dir. *Richard Brooks*)
- Wait Until Dark (1967, dir. *Terence Young*)
- Straw Dogs (1971, dir. *Sam Peckinpah*)
- A Clockwork Orange (1971, dir. *Stanley Kubrick*)
- The Last House on the Left (1972, dir. *Wes Craven*)
- Black Christmas (1974, dir. *Bob Clark*)
- Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer (1986, dir. *John McNaughton*)
- Funny Games (1997, dir. *Michael Haneke*)
- Panic Room (2002, dir. *David Fincher*)
- High Tension (2003, dir. *Alexandre Aja*)
- Martyrs (2008, dir. *Pascal Laugier*)

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_films_featuring_home_invasions)

2.5 The Main Characters in Funny Games

The Protagonists

Anna/Ann - Susanne Lothar/ Naomi Watts

Anna or Ann in the remake is the main protagonist in the film. It is the character that has most of the screen time and the one that the audience ultimately feels for. Anna is the caring mother to Schorschi and the loving wife to Georg. Her character is build to act like the majority of people would act in the situations that she faces.

Georg/George - Ulrich Muhe/ Tim Roth

Anna's husband Georg has a fairly small roll in the story. Due to a small incident early on in the film, he can't react in the way that most of us would hope for i.e. saving his family from the antagonists. Georg can be considered as a sidekick to his wife Anna.

Schorschi/Georgie - Stefan Clapczynski/ Devon Gearhart

Schorschi is the son of Anna and Georg a young boy maybe in the age of 8-12.

The Antagonists

Paul - Arno Frisch/ Michael Pitt

Paul is the main antagonist in the story. A rich kid who is bored with his life and wants to play his "funny games" with the protagonist family. In the beginning he seems like he's overly polite, but soon the audience realizes that he is sadistically evil and dislikable in his nature. Paul has a white outfit and white gloves. He wears really short microshorts and looks tidy.

Peter - Frank Giering/ Brady Corbet

Peter is Paul's sidekick. Peter is a really similar character than Paul, almost identical. There is a little friction between these two though. In a couple of scenes Paul calls Peter a chubby. Peter has an almost identical outfit as Paul. Paul's hair is carefully combed.

2.6 Funny Games plot summary

The story opens with a wide helicopter shot of a car driving on a highway, classical music can be heard on the soundtrack. Inside the car there's Ann, Georg and their son Georgie. They are playing a game where they are trying to guess the composer whose music is playing on the car radio. We get the feeling that they are a peaceful, happy couple, which make a good living. Suddenly a trash metal song, and the title "Funny Games" appears on the screen in a red bold font abruptly interrupting the classical music. There's a 3-shot of the family and the opening credits start to roll. In a couple of seconds the change of music turns the mood from easy into uneasy.

Next the family arrives to their destination, but before that they're having a quick conversation with the neighbors. The neighbors are invited for a visit later that day. After leaving Ann wonders whom those two young men were (they were Paul & Peter, even though Ann doesn't know it at this stage). Finally Ann and the family arrive to their cottage and start to organize and unpack their sacks and suitcases. At this point we also notice that they have a dog called Rolfi (German Shepherd) and that George carries a

golfer. Suddenly two young men have appeared to the front gate of the yard. The dog is barking at them. George opens the gate. The other man is about the same age as George and the other is the main antagonist Paul. The older man introduces Paul as "the son of a business colleague". After a little discussion the guests leave. George and his son go to their boat to fix it.

Ann stays alone in the kitchen speaking on a cordless telephone. The son comes in asking for a sharp knife that he takes with him to the boat, but before leaving the son says there's someone at the front door. It's Peter, the other antagonist. Peter is being overly polite. He says he's the guy from next door, a friend of Ann's friends. Peter wants to borrow some eggs and says that Eva sends him (Eva is a friend of Ann's). Ann gets a little suspicious about how Peter came in to their yard (the gate was closed) and asks a bunch of questions. This is the first time when the audience might get a little suspicious about Peter's motives. You get the feeling that he's lying, just making up things when Ann asks him questions. When Peter is on his way out he "accidentally" drops all of the eggs that Ann had just given him on the floor. Ann comes from kitchen saying, "It's not a disaster". Peter says he's really sorry and so on. Next thing, Ann says that they need the eggs that remained left in the carton. Now this is when things start to get a little bit uncomfortable. Peter says that he saw that there were 4 eggs left in the carton and Ann could give him the remaining 4 and buy more. Ann decides to give Peter the eggs, and meanwhile Peter "accidentally" wipes the cordless telephone into the kitchen sink with his hand. Ann starts to get angry for the first time now. She tells Peter to take the eggs and leave. The dog is barking outside again. Peter leaves the apartment. Ann lights up a cigarette. Peter and Paul are suddenly both inside the house, while the dog is barking outside.

The atmosphere gets uneasy again. Paul spots the golf clubs and wants to try them out. Now the viewer really gets the feeling that the young men are just screwing around with the protagonist family. The dog's barking turns into a little whine that fades away. Ann asks Paul and Peter to leave. Paul asks for more eggs, because Peter smashed them again. George comes back in and is wondering what's the situation. Ann gets angry and George notices there's something going on. George asks the guys to leave as well. The guys insist on George giving them the eggs. George slaps Paul across the face. Now this is where the first turning point takes place in the story. After George slaps Paul, he takes

revenge by hitting George in his knee with the Golf driver. 25 minutes in the film have passed.

Little Georgie comes to help his father, then comes Ann. George has probably broken his leg, he can't move without the others helping him. The tone of the film has changed into a more menacing direction. Paul is just trying to piss off Ann and her family. They can't call for any help since the telephone fell into the kitchen sink and got wet. George asks Paul, why they are playing such games with them? His answer is "why not". Paul is the one who's leading the show trying to irritate the family and Peter is there to back him up.

In the next scene Paul and Ann go to the front yard to search for the dog. Paul is forcing Ann to play "find and seek" the "colder, colder, warmer, warmer" -searching game. What Ann finds in the end, is their dead dog that drops out from the backseat of their car when she opens the door. In this same scene Paul is breaking the 4th wall for the first time in the film. He winks to the camera with his eye, to sort of trying to get the attention of the audience.

The next important scene is when some other neighbors arrive to the pier with their boat. Paul & Ann go to greet them. George, Georgie & Peter stay inside. Paul tries to give a pleasant impression of him to the neighbors. Ann is the only one who knows his true nature. She is afraid to call for any help, because of Paul's presence. The neighbors sail away. Ann is again alone with the two psychopaths. The psychological torture continues inside the cottage. Paul is trying to blame George for slapping him. They kick his broken leg causing pain. George asks again why they are doing this? Paul & Peter start to tell stories about having a difficult childhood, having a hard life, becoming drug addicts and that's why they became such psychos. They are making it all up. Both of the villains are actually from good rich families and are doing this just for fun.

Everyone is still sitting on the sofa. Paul makes a bet that within 12 hours the whole family will be dead. At this point Haneke breaks the 4th wall for the second time. Paul looks in the camera again and asks the audience directly: "What do you think? Do they have a chance of winning"? Meaning, does the protagonist win in the end of the story. George is trying to offer them money. No reaction. Paul & Peter are having a small argument, Peter doesn't like Paul calling him "fatty". Next thing, the villains start to har-

ass the son Georgie, by putting a pillowcase over his head. They start to talk about Ann's body and her figure. Georg is unable to do anything, because of his broken leg. The antagonists want Ann to undress just to see her body. Georg and Ann realize they have no other choice but to do as the invaders tell them. Ann starts to cry and undress. Once she's done Paul says, "Great, not an ounce of flab, you can get dressed again". So they did this just to humiliate her. Meanwhile the son has pissed in his pants. Then there's a little fight between George and Paul. Now the son Georgie manages to escape from the house.

Georgie finds his way inside the neighbors' house, but what he finds is the body of the dead neighbor. Meanwhile Peter is telling Ann how he started studying law and has to take some Latin courses in school. Paul comes after Georgie. Georgie tries to hide from him, but he fails. He finds a rifle from the neighbour's house and is trying to use it against Paul. Now there's a small glimpse of hope. At the same time Ann is trying to desperately convince Peter to give up now and there won't be any charges, because nothing really serious has happened yet. In the neighbours house Paul is searching for Georgie and he puts on a cd and plays the same trash metal song as in the beginning of the movie. Paul eventually finds Georgie who has the rifle in his hand. Paul tries to encourage Georgie to shoot him, but Georgie fails to do it because he has no bullets.

Now we are back in square one. Ann has been tied up on the couch. Peter watches TV while Paul and Georgie arrive back. Now Paul has the rifle in his hand. Paul takes two bullets from his pockets and Peter loads the gun. Paul goes to the kitchen to grab some food. We hear a gunshot and screaming, it all happens off screen while Paul is making a sandwich to himself. This is clearly the "point of no return" in the movie, cause now the villains have crossed the line and done something that can't be undone. Next there's a shot of a bloody television showing a car-racing program. Then there's a wide shot of Ann alone on the sofa and next to her there's blood on the wall and the dead body of her son Georgie. This is a really exhaustingly long one-take shot that lasts approximately for ten minutes (these long shots are trademarks for Haneke). In the same take Ann rises up from the sofa and turns off the TV. Her actions are very slow, because she is probably in shock. After a while Ann says, "They're gone". It is completely silent. The antagonists might have left the building. Ann manages to untie herself. She helps George to untie himself as well. George starts to scream in agony. Ann tries to calm him down.

They sit on the floor completely quiet for a while and then start to make plans for how to escape and call for help.

In the following scene Ann realizes that the front door has been locked from outside, so George has to stay in the house with his broken leg. Ann jumps out from the window to get some help from the outside. The cordless telephone has also dried up, but it doesn't seem to work so they can't call for any help. They still try to dry it up more with the hair dryer. There's no sign of the antagonists. Ann cries and says, "I love you" to her husband.

Ann finally leaves the house and goes into the nearby road trying to call for help. It is late in the evening and the road seems to be completely empty. She tries to scream through the neighbours' gates, but they don't reply (because they are dead). But after a while there comes a car. Meanwhile George almost manages to call for help, but then quickly realizes that the phone is simply broken and nothing can be done. It's dark outside so Ann can't be sure who's driving the car. It might be the villains, so Ann decides to hide behind a tree. After the first car, there comes a second one. This time Ann decides to take a risk, which she shouldn't have taken.

George is alone in the house putting a blanket over his sons' dead body, when he suddenly hears some noise. George turns around and sees a rolling golf ball on the floor. This is quickly associated to the villains, who were playing with the golf ball earlier in the film. Paul appears in the door opening, then comes Ann (being tied up again), carried by Peter. Now it seems like both of our protagonists have given up. They lie motionless on the couch with no glimpse of hope. Haneke breaks the 4th wall for the third time. Paul looks in the camera saying "have you had enough already" and then adds: "But you want a real ending, with plausible plot development, don't you?"

They start to play another sadistic game where Paul forces Ann to say a prayer out loud. If she does this, George will be provided with a painless death. After several attempts Paul is finally satisfied with the way Ann says the prayer. While Paul is speaking, Ann suddenly gets a hold of the rifle and blasts away a hole in Peter. She finally gets the upper hand over the villains. This might be considered as the second turning point in the plot of the film, but what happens instead is that Haneke breaks our illusion by making his antagonist Paul grab the remote control and rewind the scene. After the rewinding

Paul gets a "second chance" and knows by now what Ann is up to and grabs the gun from her before she gets to shoot Peter. What happens now is that Paul shoots George instead.

Paul, Peter and Ann are now walking towards the pier with yellow raincoats on. They enter the boat and Ann is still being tied up. The trio sails away from the cottage. In the boat Ann finds the knife that his son borrowed earlier in the movie. She's trying to cut herself free, but Peter notices her attempts and stops her. Now Ann loses what seemed like her last chance. All this time the antagonists are sharing deep philosophical discussions with each other. Paul breaks the conversation by asking Peter "what's the time". He realizes that the 12-hour bet is up and it's time for Ann to die. Paul says "Ciao bella!" and pushes the tied up Ann into the lake. Peter wonders why Paul killed Ann "so early", because they still had an hour of the bet left. Paul replies that it was hard to sail with her being on board and secondly that he was getting pretty hungry. Both of them laugh and sail away.

In the epilogue, Haneke raises a question through his antagonists. Is the fiction that we see actually real, because you see it in a film? Because in Paul's words it should be as real as reality, cause what you can see should be real, right? Paul & Peter arrive on another pier. Peter stays on the pier to tie up the boat. Paul walks through the yard and knocks on the door. The woman who opens the door is the same neighbor of Ann's who visited them on the pier earlier. Paul asks her politely the same question as Peter did in the beginning of the film: "Could you borrow a few eggs." The woman lets Paul come inside their house. He comes in and waits, looks directly in the camera. The picture freezes. The trash metal track from the beginning of the film starts playing again and the bold red FUNNY GAMES -title appears on the screen. THE END.

3 THEORIES

3.1 Robert Mckee's act design

Robert Mckee has a theory about the act design in movies. In a feature-length film his design includes three major reversals. There needs to be three acts, otherwise the movie feels like it's lacking something. Before the acts there must be an inciting incident, which is the beginning of the important events. "The inciting incident launches the protagonist for a conscious or unconscious Object of desire to restore life's balance." Then there's the first act that usually lasts for the first 20-30 minutes. It's followed by the first turning point that begins the second act in the movie. The turning point is a radical change in the life of the protagonist (Mckee. 1999. p.218).

The second act is the longest act. This is the part where we get to know the characters and build up tension. Before the final third act, there's usually the "point-of-no-return". It is an event that guarantees that the protagonist isn't quitting his/hers quest for the object of desire. In a typical story, after point of no return comes the second turning point. This begins the thrid and final act in the film.

During the final act in the film the protagonist usually reaches the object of desire, and we have an ending for the story. The third act takes places 15-20 minutes before the end of the film.

In my analysis I will compare some of the most significant shots from these three turning points.

The first turning point - What I call "the egg scene" in the film

The point of no return - "The shooting of the son"

The second turning point - "The remote control scene"

3.2 The protagonist and its story

Robert Mckee has defined in his book "Story" how the protagonist in a movie should be like so the audience can feel for the story and the character. Here's a compiled list of the most important features a character should have according to Mckee:

- A protagonist is a willful character
- The protagonist must react to the inciting incident
- The protagonist has a conscious desire
- The protagonist may also have a self-contradictory unconscious desire
- The protagonist has the capacities to pursue the Object of Desire convincingly
- The protagonist must have at least a chance to attain his desire
- The Protagonist has the will and capacity to pursue the object of desire to the end of the line, to the human limit established by setting and genre
- A story must build to a final action beyond which the audience cannot imagine another
- The protagonist must be empathetic; he may or may not be sympathetic
- In story, we concentrate on that moment, in which a character takes an action expecting a useful reaction from his world, but instead the effect of his action is to provoke forces of antagonism. The world of the character reacts differently than expected, more powerfully than expected or both
- The measure of the value of a character's desire is in direct proportion to the risk he's willing to take to achieve it; the greater the value, the greater the risk.
- In a story an event throws a character's (protagonist) life out of balance, arousing in him the conscious/unconscious desire for that which he feels will restore balance, launching him on a quest for his object of desire against forces of antagonism. He may or may not achieve it.

(Mckee, 1999. p. 136-150)

Later on in the comparative section of my thesis, I will refer to these points and how they are visible in the stories of both Funny Games films.

3.3 Gun violence trends in movies

"Gun violence trends in movies" is a recent study made in *the American Academy of Pediatrics*. What the study actually shows in a nutshell is the fact that violence has increased in popular movies. The figure below shows that violence has more than doubled in movies since the 1950s

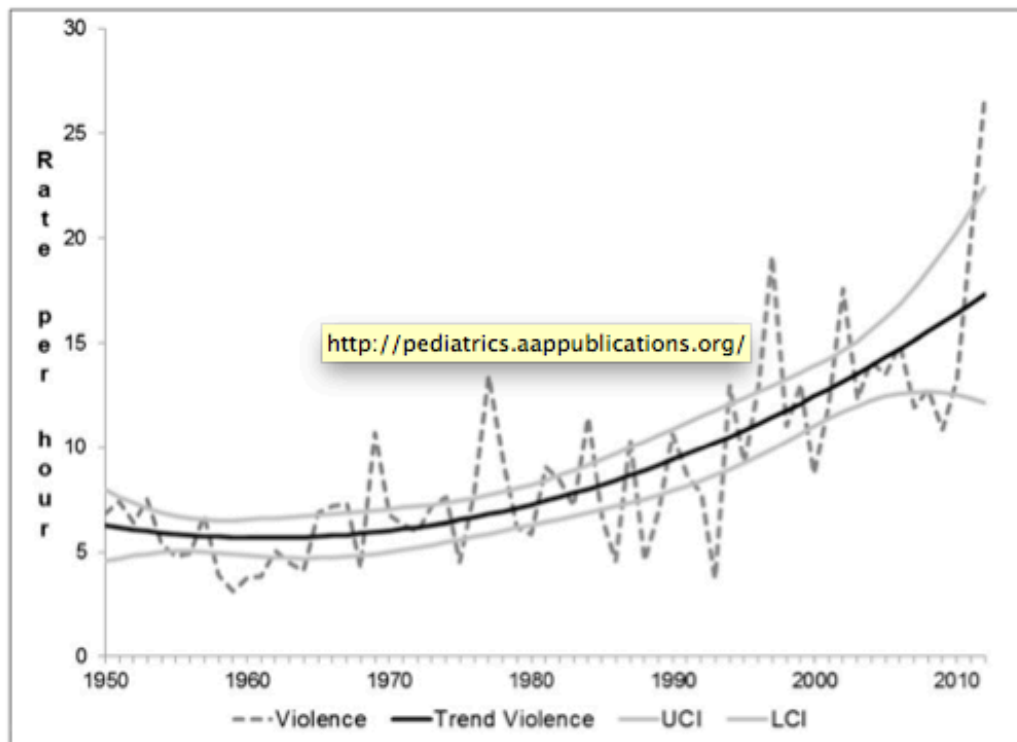


FIGURE 1
Rate of violent sequences per 5-minute segment for the top 30 ranked films, 1950 to 2012, along with linear trend and 95% upper CIs (UCI) and lower 95% CIs (LCI).

(Bushman, Jamieson, Weitz. Romer, 2013)

The figure shows clearly the increased rate of violent sequences in films from 1950 to 2012. In 1997 when the Austrian original *Funny Games* was made, the rate of violence was approximately at 10 sequences per an hour. Ten years later when the U.S. remake was released we can see that the amount of violent sequences per an hour has increased approximately to 15.

4 COMPARISONS

4.1 Comparing the statistics

I will begin my comparative chapter with a comparison between the 2 versions and the difference in their statistics (reviews, age certifications, etc.). Later on in my thesis I will refer to these stats. In this case making a table will be the most suitable way to compare information.

Title:	FUNNY GAMES	FUNNY GAMES U.S.
Year:	1997	2007
Running time:	108 min.	111 min.
Budget:	Not known	\$ 15 000 000 (estimated)
Box Office:	Not known	\$ 8 000 000 (approximately)
IMDB- user votes:	31 990	54 136
IMDB -rating:	7,6 out of 10	6,4 out of 10
Metacritic.com reviews:	10	33
Metacritic score:	69/100	44/100
Rottentomatoes.com reviews:	27	139
Rottentomatoes rating:	63% (fresh)	52% (rotten)
Rottentomatoes average rating:	6.7/10	5.7/10

These statistics were compiled from: IMDB.com, Rottentomatoes.com, Wikipedia.org

We can see from the table that the remake is slightly longer. I'm going to explain the reasons later on in the "Differences" -chapter. It would have been interesting to compare the budgets and box office numbers, but in my case it can't be done, because of the lack of information over the web. There doesn't seem to be any evidence of the original Funny Games budget.

Then there's the review section. I wanted to include this part to demonstrate that the original is considered to be superior over the remake. All the three different pages (IMDB, Metacritic and Rottentomatoes) show that the original has gotten better reviews both by the critics and the regular users of IMDB. But we have to keep in mind that the

remake has gotten a lot more votes, which might have a more negative effect on the ratings. I still think that the numbers are accurate. A lot of sources think that the original is the one you should see, if you had to choose between these versions. In the following chapters I'm going to try to find out why the original is considered to be generally better than the remake.

Here's a comparison of the films' age certifications in different countries, when they were originally released. The red color indicates if there has been a change in the rating.

Country:	Funny Games (1997) -ratings	Funny Games (2007) -ratings
Argentina	18	16
Australia	R	MA
Brazil	16	16
Canada (Quebec)	18+	18+
Finland	K-16	K-15
France	16	16
Germany	18	18
Hong Kong	Category: III	Category: IIB
Ireland	18	18
Italy	T	VM14
Japan	R-15	PG-12
Netherlands	16	16
New Zealand	R18	R18
Norway	15	15
Portugal	M18	M18
Singapore	R	NC-16
South Korea	18	18
Spain	18	15
Switzerland	18	16
UK	18	18
USA	Unrated	R

The above statistics were picked from www.IMDB.com

As you can see from the table, many of the countries have their own rating system. Some countries use letters or categories instead of age numbers. Here's an explanation for the ones that need explaining.

Australia: R= Restricted to 18 years and over. MA = Mature Accompanied. Unsuitable for children younger than 15. Children younger than 15 must be accompanied by a parent or a guardian.

Hong Kong: Category: III = No one younger than 18 years of age are permitted to rent, purchase, or watch this film in a movie theatre. Category IIB = the government suggests parental guidance when watching the film.

Italy: T = Per Tutti/ All ages admitted. V.M.14 = Restricted to 14 and over.

Singapore: R = for persons 21 years and above. NC16 = for persons 16 years and above.

USA: Unrated = If a film has not been submitted for rating or is an uncut version of a film that was submitted, the label Unrated is often used. When a movie is not submitted for rating, it means the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) is not sure what to rate it, and therefore may have content that is a mix of various ratings. R- Restricted = People under 17 years may only be admitted if accompanied by a parent or a guardian.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motion_picture_rating_system)

The table clearly shows us some valuable information about the films' age certifications. Since the versions are basically shot-for-shot identical and the content is the same, we can freely compare the ratings from 1997 and 2007. If we look at the ratings marked with the red color we can see that almost in every case (except Italy). The ratings are not as strict in 2007 as they used to be ten years before. In many of the cases it seems like what was regarded as an 18-rated movie in 1997, can now (2007) be viewed to minors under 18 with parental guidance. In the U.S. the unrated -versions are generally regarded as more violent as the R-rated ones. Italy seems to be an interesting exception to the rule, where the original had a lower rating than the remake. Later on in my thesis I'm going to use the information from this table to make my conclusions.

4.2 Shot-for-shot comparisons

In this chapter I have selected snapshots from both films. These shots are put next to each other in order to show the similarities and differences in the original and the remake. Next to the pictures there is a short description about what happens in these shots and some other small notes about the images. The scenes that I wanted to include in this study are the turning points in the movie. I will not include every single shot, but only the most significant ones that demonstrate the identical nature of these versions. All of the scenes also visualize the use of violence in *Funny Games*. A couple of shots are included to show the minor changes between the versions. In the end I will summarize and analyze the main differences between the stories, visual styles, characters and acting. The following shots will prove that the most significant changes are differences in set design, the blocking of the actors within the shots, and style of lighting.

Notice that some of the snapshots have the same situation, but the actors might have different gestures or slightly different positions because of the moment i took the snapshot. In the 1997 -version there was burned-in subtitles on the DVD, so I couldn't turn them off. But instead I tried to avoid those moments when there was text on screen, just to get the plain picture for this comparison. I also suggest the reader to zoom into the text file to get a closer look of the pictures. There are details that might go unnoticed without zooming in.

I have included 3 scenes that are called like this:

1. The egg scene
2. The shooting of the kid scene
3. The remote control scene

1. THE EGG SCENE (FIRST TURNING POINT)



This is the scene that begins with Peter coming to the door to borrow some eggs. As you can see the shots are pretty identical. The image from the remake is clearly kind of a replica based on the original image. There are some visible changes though, like the clothes of the actors. If we look at the son, his jeans overalls have been replaced with a t-shirt and jeans. Also Ann's dress is slightly different.



The compositions of both shots are nearly identical. We can notice that the remake has lighter colors, the kitchen is more white in its nature. For my eye it looks more elitistic than the first shot.



Peter is at the door and on his way into the apartment. These shots are really similar, the biggest difference being the props on the background. In 1997 Haneke decided to use a pile of wooden logs on the background, but ten years later the wood has been replaced with what seems to be a greenhouse. His reason might be that the greenhouse is more American and more believable/natural for the characters. Again it feels like the greenhouse is slightly more elitistic than the pile of firewood.



If we look at the colors in the shots, the original has a more yellow tone in the image. I don't know if this has something to do with the quality of the DVD.



This is the shot where Peter has entered Ann's house to borrow some eggs. The main differences that can be seen have to do with the styling of Ann's character. Naomi Watts' character doesn't have any lipstick or pearls, but has another kind of necklace though. Watts has a blue/white dress that has colder colors than the original. Also the hairstyles are different.



In these shots one can actually notice now that it looks like the original has warm colors, but the remake has cold colors. Ann's dress seems like a good example of this. Maybe Haneke decided to change the look of the film to a colder one, because the nature of the story is also dark and disturbing.



Peter has entered the kitchen. If we look more closely on his character, we notice that the remake Peter has a pike-shirt. Besides that he also has slightly longer hair than the original Peter. Minor changes/updates that do not have major impact on the story. See how the kitchen props are quite similar: the form of the sink, the clock on the shelf, the carpet hanging on the wall, the sallad lettuce lying on the table...





Peter has broken the eggs that Ann just gave to him. This shot is another clear example of how similar the shots are. The blocking of the actors is close to identical. The biggest difference between the shots is the props lying in the next corner. The original seems to have a couple umbrellas, but the remake has replaced the umbrellas with fishing rods.



This picture is followed by a close shot of Ann cleaning up the broken eggs from the floor. She goes back into the kitchen with Peter and gives him new eggs. Peter also manages to "accidentally" break the phone. Ann spends a short moment alone smoking a cigarette and then Peter is back inside, this time together with Paul. Things start to get uncomfortable. The shots are quite similar to the ones that I have already had, that is the reason why I'm skipping them in my analysis.



Meanwhile George has been fixing the boat, this is his reaction shot when he hears the dog barking to the strangers. Like before, the actions and the actors' reactions are very close to each other and the biggest difference seems to be on the background. While the original shows only green trees behind George, the remake shows a sky, woods and a little bit of the lake. The reason for this must be that it's nearly impossible to try to copy everything. This minor change doesn't mean much storywise.





This is George's point of view shot, which also shows their house from the pier. This is one of the few shots in the film that visualizes the cottage and its environment. The house in the remake looks maybe a little bit more modern with its white colors.



A close-up of the son, who is helping his father with the boat. Here you can see the differences in clothing and hairstyle.





This is the shot where George meets both of the perpetrators for the first time. George's clothes are really identical in both versions. This situation escalates to Ann getting really angry with the boys and leaving the room. Shortly after that George too realizes the boys' antagonistic natures. He slaps Paul and Paul takes revenge by hitting George in the leg with a golf club. George falls down on the floor and his leg is broken. The son and Ann come to help him. This is the first turning point in the movie. At this point the viewer realizes that the antagonists are there just to play their sadistic "funny games".



The sequence of Paul hitting George with the golf club is really similar in both films. There are no major changes in the shots or the amount of violence shown on screen.



After the golf club incident, Ann gets a hint that something has happened to their dog. She goes outside with Paul to find the dog. These are the first shots of that sequence. This is also a rare occasion between the films, where there's a slight difference between the shots. The shot used in the remake begins from a shed on the yard, while the original has a wider shot of Ann standing on the yard. The reason for the different shots might be the difference in the locations. Like before, this has no major impact on the storytelling aspect. The outcome of the search will be the same even though the shots are not identical.





This shot begins with a focus being on Ann before Paul walks into the frame. There's a focus pull to Paul who looks directly into the camera and gives a wink with his eye. This is the first time in the film when Haneke breaks the 4th wall. The composition in both shots is similar even though minor differences can be found from the background. The position of the car is different.



Focus pull back to Ann when she finds the body of the dead dog that falls down from the car. The dog falls down from the side door in the 1997 version, while in 2007 it falls down from the trunk. It is hard to say what is the reason behind this. But the change feels pretty insignificant for the course of the story. They have also updated the car. The 2007 car looks a little bit more posh, more expensive than the 1997 model.





The last shot in the scene. George and the son waiting inside for the bad news, being watched by Peter who makes sure they won't flee. This must be one of the best examples about Haneke's shot-for-shot - remake. Pay attention to the blocking of the actors and how exactly the same it looks ten years later. This shot shows again that the 2007 house is a bit more polished in its nature. The style of lighting plays also a role in the look of the home. Everything looks so clean in 2007.



2. THE SHOOTING OF THE SON (POINT OF NO RETURN)

At this point Ann and George are lying on the couch tied up. Their son has escaped and fled to the neighbors to get some help. He finds out that the neighbor is dead. Paul goes after him and eventually catches him. This is what happens to Ann meanwhile at their house.



When I screened the original and the remake separately, I didn't even notice the big change in clothes between the versions. I didn't simply realize that Naomi Watts' Ann barely has any clothes on in this scene. Did Haneke want more bare skin to the remake? It feels weird that he didn't go any further than this in the remake. Other than that everything is pretty much the same. Both versions have a TV on the background showing a car race.



A short while later Paul returns with George Jr. (the son) with him. The whole family is being held as hostage again. The son goes to hug his mother and Peter & Paul continues their games. Soon Paul says he's hungry and goes to the kitchen to make some sandwiches. Peter stays with the family.

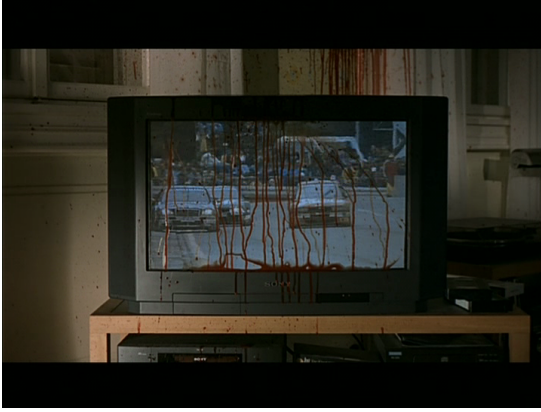


This shot shows again clearly the change in the use of colors between the versions. If you look at the wall in the background you can easily notice that the original has a warm color temperature, while the remake has cold color temperatures.



Paul is in the kitchen looking for ingredients for the sandwich. Shortly after he starts to cook, we hear a shot being fired offscreen. Haneke doesn't show any violence in here, he just plays with the audiences' imagination. Something horrible has happened in the living room while Paul is in the kitchen.





The next picture is a bloody television set. We can just hear the sound of the racing cars. It seems like the original shot is even slightly bloodier than the U.S. shot.



This scene is the "point of no return" in both Funny games -movies. At this point there's no turning back. Ann and George have lost their beloved son and the audience can be pretty sure that Paul and Peter won't back up now, because now they have actually committed a horrendous crime compared to the previous events. We know that Ann and George will carry their mission to the end. They will call for help and get justice or maybe take revenge on the antagonists.



This shot comes after the bloody television set. The shot lasts for approximately 10 minutes. It is quite the same in both films. There's no sign of the antagonists. We still hear the sound of the racing cars. Ann starts to slowly move towards the TV and then turns it off. We can barely see that the son is lying dead in the right corner. George is lying on the left side of the room. Ann goes slowly to help George, and then they untie themselves and sob. At this point the audience gets a glimpse of hope as there's no sign of Peter and Paul, plus George and Ann get a chance to call for help.



An interesting change in the remake seems to be the various paintings on the wall, this is a fact that suggests that the 2007 version of Ann & George have a higher income than in 1997. They are a richer family.



3. THE REMOTE CONTROL SCENE (SECOND TURNING POINT)

George is waiting indoors (with his broken leg) for Ann who went outside to call for help. Before this shot there's a short image of George putting some kind of sheet over the body of his dead son. The shot is really dark though and not very graphically violent.



The shot in the remake seems and feels darker. We can see the blood on the wall, which is not the case in the original. The lighting is also more dramatic and the background is not so heavily lit. Tim Roth's George seems to be more in pain than the Austrian actor.



Before this shot we see a golf ball rolling into the door opening in a close-up. There's a cut back to Georges' reaction and then there's this shot of Peter coming back with Ann being tied up again. Anns' quest for calling for some help didn't work out. The situation is that they are back to square one: being held as hostages again.



The U.S. version has replaced the fireplace with a bookshelf. The reason might be the differences of the locations. Or maybe Haneke wanted to make the 2007 couple more sophisticated, more into literature. The use of lighting still has a darker tone in the remake.



This shot shows the time gap between the films. In the first shot we see a cordless telephone and in the second shot a mobile phone. Paul checks if George managed to call for help, but he didn't cause the battery was so empty/ or the phone was still wet from falling into the sink in the beginning of the film.



This was one of the necessary changes in order to make the movie believable in 2007. Basically everyone in the United States owns a mobile phone, not a cordless home telephone that belongs to the 90's.



George & Ann lying on the sofa tied up. Notice that Ann has changed clothes.

This shot is followed by close-up shots of Ann, Peter and Paul. The antagonists make Ann to say aloud a prayer. They untie her a little bit, so she can perform this task.



Ann grabs the shotgun and shoots Peter. This sequence is done with a series of really quick cuts.



Peter lying dead on the floor after being shot by Ann. This is an example of the most graphically violent images in the film. A lot of the times the violence has happened offscreen or without blood, but here Peter really flies against the wall and collapses on the ground. The power of the shotgun shot is really over-exaggerated in the film. Hanke probably wanted to get some kick into the scene, because this is the first time Ann gets to take a piece of revenge against the perpetrators.



The shot hasn't had any radical changes in ten years. The original feels even a tiny bit bloodier. You can see that it shows more blood, also on the wall. But the 2007 picture is slightly darker in its nature.



The wide shot where Paul realizes what has happened. He has grabbed the shotgun away from Ann and is now searching for the remote control.





Paul finds the remote control and rewinds the actions back in time, so that he can change the course of events. This is a scene that breaks the 4th wall again. As a viewer you are struck by lightning. The characters in a movie can't just rewind and change the story! But this is what actually happens.



It looks like the remote control is a VHS-control in the picture above. Ten years later it seems to have been replaced with a dvd-player's remote control. This is something you wouldn't even notice without comparing the shots next to each other. I think this is the case with most of the changes in the remake. They are barely noticeable.



This final shot of Ann, before she is being taken to the boat, shows her desperation. In 2007 she has fallen even deeper down into the ground and she's lying in the shadows. I think the 1997 Ann has a slightly more disturbing face as Naomi Watts. Susanne Lothars facial expressions can be pure agony sometimes. With a closer look you can also see the heavier make-up on her face. Lothars eyes look more swollen and red than Naomis.



In the final boat scene Ann is just being dumped into the water, still being tied up. The antagonists win in the end.

4.3 Differences in the story

As you saw in the shot-for-shot -comparisons the visual style and language is really identical in the original and the remake, and so is the story. There seems to be a couple of changes though. The biggest change is the one concerning the telephone. In the original we saw Ann speaking on a cordless home telephone. Ten years later in 2007 there are barely any cordless telephones because people prefer to use mobile phones. So in the remake the cordless phone is replaced with a mobile phone. In today's horror films small things like the availability of mobile phones play an important role storywise.

When we see a protagonist in a today's film being trapped somewhere in the need of some help, our first thought is: Why doesn't she/he grab the phone from the pocket and call for some help. Like in *Funny Games* (the original) there was only one cordless phone, but in the remake there's two telephones. Ann has a mobile phone and so has George. If either of them had had access to the phone, they could've called for help right away. So in the U.S. version Ann's phone gets wet (just like in the original) and George has forgotten his mobile phone in the car that Paul & Peter took when they left the house (before returning back with Ann as hostage). So that's how the "mobile phone problem" was solved in the remake.

Another change concerning the same scene is a cultural one. In the original Ann & George can't really remember the number of the police, when they're trying to call for help in a panicking state of mind. In an American film it would feel quite ridiculous and unbelievable, if U.S. citizens couldn't figure out how to dial 911 - the emergency number. Even foreigners know it from watching films.

Other changes that appear in the films are really minor storywise. In the original the dog is a German shepherd, but in the remake it's some kind of a brown dog. And in the remake Ann finds the dead dog from the trunk of their car, while in the original the dead body of the dog falls down from backseat. We can draw a following conclusion about the changes in the screenplay. The changes that were made were things that had to be changed in order to make the movie believable. It seems that the only changes in the remake were the really necessary ones, like the mobile phone -dilemma.

4.4 Differences in the acting/characters

As I demonstrated in the last chapter, the blocking of the actors inside the frame is pretty much the same in both versions. Like said before, the clothing and hairstyles have minor differences as well. It is hard to analyze the acting and I am not going deeper into that part in my thesis. But one thing is for sure. Naomi Watts and Tim Roth as main characters are far more recognizable to the wider audience than the original Austrian actors Susanne Lothar and Ulrich Mühe. The choice of actors has a major effect on the viewers' common feelings about the film. According to left field cinemas web page (<http://www.leftfieldcinema.com/comparative-examination-funny-games-and-funny-games-us>) the choice of casting superstars like Watts and Roth breaks the illusion about that this is just a normal family having been attacked by two lunatic strangers.

Because the family in the original *Funny games* feels more like they could be real everyday people, it is easier for the viewer to forget that they are actors. You don't recognize their superstar faces right away. The feeling of a normal family is really important for the atmosphere of the film. That way the events on the screen feel a lot more horrifying, when you get the illusion about watching the lives of average citizens rather than famous Hollywood actors.

4.5 Differences in the visual style and sound

In this chapter I will summarize the facts that came up in the shot for shot comparison. I will start by mentioning the similarities. In terms of editing the remake and the original are really close. The remake feels a lot like a replica of the original when it comes to editing. The lengths of the scenes are approximately the same. The 10-minute single take is as long in 2007 as it was in 1997. The sound world hasn't changed either in 10 years. Haneke uses the same tracks in both versions. The same goes for the graphics and the font of the title and end credits.

There are differences though, mostly in the visual style. I made a list of the things that I came up with in the comparative section.

- The remake has cold color temperatures. The original has warm color temperatures.
- Some of the props on the set have been changed from the original. The remake has a greenhouse, paintings on the wall, a more expensive looking car, mobile phones instead of a cordless telephone, a bookshelf instead of a fireplace, and fishing rods instead of umbrellas. I would say that Ann's and George's belongings look slightly more elitistic in the U.S. version. Therefore the family also feels more upper class, than in the original.
- The blocking of the actors varies in certain scenes, but these changes seem to be really minor.
- There are some differences mainly between the clothing of Ann and her son. George, Peter and Paul wear pretty much identical clothes in both versions.
- Ann's hairstyle is slightly different

5.1 Conclusions

We have these two movies that are supposed to be almost identical, but they are not. Why is it like this? In this chapter I will try to find the answers to my research questions and why the original is considered as a better film than the remake that didn't get as good reviews in 2007.

The theory chapter in my thesis plays an important role when we draw conclusions. I will begin with the study of increased violence in films. As the study shows violence in movies has more than doubled if we look back to as long as 1950's. If we take a closer look at the figure on page 25 we notice that between 1997 and 2007 there has been an increase of about 1/3 in violent sequences per hour. To simplify things, this study tells us that if something were considered really violent 10 years ago; it's not as violent today. The comparison I made between the Funny games age certificates proves basically the same thing. In today's society the 2007 Funny games (which is exactly as violent as the original) isn't considered to be as nasty as it was in 1997. There were a couple exceptions where the age certificate was higher for the remake, but the huge majority of countries gave the remake a significantly lower certificate than the original ten years before. Funny games is a film that's supposed to disturb and shock its audiences. The remake doesn't succeed in this as well as the original, because today's standards for the

shock factor are higher. The film has also a very European style in editing. This means long takes and not so many cuts. There's one long take that lasts for nearly 10 minutes. The American audiences might find this specific way of editing odd and boring.

Another important point has to do with casting and characters. Robert McKee wrote about the nature of the protagonist: "*The protagonist must be empathetic*". In this case characters that feel like everyday average people are easier to empathize with than big names like Roth and Watts. Haneke's changes of the set design also underline the fact that the U.S. family feels a tiny bit more upper class and elitistic than the more average family from the original. "*If the production had chosen to use unknown actors instead of well known stars like Naomi Watts and Tim Roth it might well have been a closer call. But their glamour unfortunately detracts from the film and brings us too close to the understanding that we are watching a movie.*" This is what leftfieldcinema.com wrote about the remake. (<http://www.leftfieldcinema.com/comparative-examination-funny-games-and-funny-games-us>).

To conclude things I would say that the remake of Funny games is kind of a unique experiment that hasn't been done before. I think that my thesis proves the fact that you can't remake exactly the same film ten years later without losing some of the impact. Remakes need to have more upgrades in order to be successful. Things that were fresh a decade ago, might feel old and expired today. This thesis also shows the increasing amount of violence within the film industry. In today's society it seems like people have better tolerance for it too, the amount of violence keeps growing and the age certificates keep dropping down. It would be an interesting experiment if Haneke made a third (identical) Funny games 50 years from now. What would be the results? What would be the age certificate? Who would be the main actors? Would it feel totally outdated and lame in terms of violence?

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Gun Violence Trends in Movies



WHAT'S KNOWN ON THIS SUBJECT: Previous research has shown the following: the mere presence of weapons can increase aggression, dubbed the “weapons effect”; violence in films has increased over time; and violent films can increase aggression.



WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS: This study examines a potential source of the “weapons effect”: the presence of guns in films. In just 20 years, gun violence in PG-13 films (age 13+) has increased from the level in films rated G/PG to the point where it exceeds the level in R films.

abstract

FREE

BACKGROUND: Many scientific studies have shown that the mere presence of guns can increase aggression, an effect dubbed the “weapons effect.” The current research examines a potential source of the weapons effect: guns depicted in top-selling films.

METHODS: Trained coders identified the presence of violence in each 5-minute film segment for one-half of the top 30 films since 1950 and the presence of guns in violent segments since 1985, the first full year the PG-13 rating (age 13+) was used. PG-13-rated films are among the top-selling films and are especially attractive to youth.

RESULTS: Results found that violence in films has more than doubled since 1950, and gun violence in PG-13-rated films has more than tripled since 1985. When the PG-13 rating was introduced, these films contained about as much gun violence as G (general audiences) and PG (parental guidance suggested for young children) films. Since 2009, PG-13-rated films have contained as much or more violence as R-rated films (age 17+) films.

CONCLUSIONS: Even if youth do not use guns, these findings suggest that they are exposed to increasing gun violence in top-selling films. By including guns in violent scenes, film producers may be strengthening the weapons effect and providing youth with scripts for using guns. These findings are concerning because many scientific studies have shown that violent films can increase aggression. Violent films are also now easily accessible to youth (eg, on the Internet and cable). This research suggests that the presence of weapons in films might amplify the effects of violent films on aggression. *Pediatrics* 2013;132:1014–1018

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KEY WORDS

guns, violent films, violent movies, weapons effect

ABBREVIATION

CI—confidence interval

Drs Bushman and Romer conceptualized the study; Dr Jamieson directed the coding and analyzed data; and Ms Weitz analyzed the data. All authors wrote portions of the manuscript.

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In many shooting sprees, the perpetrator puts on a uniform (eg, hockey mask, trench coat, movie costume, military uniform), as if following a script from a movie. For example, on July 20, 2012, James Holmes bought a ticket to see the new *Batman* movie in Aurora, Colorado. Approximately 20 minutes after the show started, Holmes left the theater and returned dressed in full tactical gear, carrying several guns and a huge amount of ammunition. He launched 2 canisters that emitted smoke or gas and then began firing into the crowd, killing 12 and wounding 70 others. Holmes identified himself to the police as “The Joker.”¹

It is useful to consider a youth's life as filled with a succession of social problems that must be solved. Youth learn how to solve problems by observing how others solve similar problems.² By observing others, youth accumulate a set of programs, called scripts, for solving social problems.³ In theater, scripts tell actors what to do and say. In memory, scripts define situations and guide behavior; the person first selects a script for the situation, assumes a role in that script, and then behaves according to it. A script may be learned through direct experience or by observing others, such as violent characters in the mass media.⁴ The media provide scripts for gun use. Gun violence in films might also encourage an association between guns and violence. In the wake of recent shooting sprees, legislators and the lay public are discussing possible ways to reduce youth violence. What is conspicuously absent from these discussions, however, is the fact that just seeing a weapon can increase aggression, an effect dubbed the “weapons effect.”

Guns not only permit violence, they can stimulate it as well. The finger pulls the trigger, but the trigger may also be pulling the finger.

Leonard Berkowitz, Psychology Professor⁵

In 1967, Leonard Berkowitz and Anthony LePage conducted a study to determine whether the mere presence of weapons could increase aggression.⁶ Angered participants were seated at a table that had a shotgun and a revolver on it or badminton racquets and shuttlecocks in the control condition. The items on the table were described as part of another experiment that the researcher had supposedly forgotten to put away. There was also a second control condition with no items on the table. The participant decided what level of electric shock to deliver to an accomplice of the experimenter, ostensibly to evaluate his or her performance on a task. In reality, the shock was used to measure aggressive behavior. The experimenter told participants to ignore the items on the table, but apparently they could not. Participants who saw the guns were more aggressive than participants who saw the sports items or no items at all. More than 50 other studies have replicated the weapons effect, both inside and outside the laboratory in both angered and nonangered individuals.⁷ Weapons can even make people aggressive when they cannot “see” them. In one study,⁸ for example, participants who were exposed to words describing weapons (eg, gun) for only 0.17 second were more aggressive afterward than participants exposed to nonaggressive words (eg, water). These findings suggest that there is a strong link between weapons and aggression in memory. For decades, researchers have studied the effects of exposure to violent media on aggression in children and youth. The evidence from these studies has been reviewed numerous times, and nearly all researchers have reached the same conclusion: exposure to media violence can increase aggression.^{8–12} After reviewing the available evidence, 6 public health organizations (the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Academy of

Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Psychological Association) endorsed a joint statement that concluded: “The conclusion of the public health community, based on over 30 years of research, is that viewing entertainment violence can lead to increases in aggressive attitudes, values and behavior, particularly in children.”¹³ Research organizations, such as the International Society for Research on Aggression, have issued similar statements.¹⁴ Many government organizations also have issued statements, including the US Surgeon General, the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In summary, virtually all scientific and health organizations have concluded that media violence can increase aggression.

The current study tested a potential source of the weapons effect: the presence of guns in top-selling films. Given that the sight of weapons can increase aggression, and violent media can increase aggression, gun violence in films might be a “double whammy.” Seeing guns in films might also provide youth with scripts for using guns. In particular, we were interested in the presence of guns in violent scenes depicted in PG-13-rated films (ie, for viewers age 13+). The proportion of PG-13-rated films in the top 30 grossing films has increased greatly since the rating was introduced in 1985.¹⁵ Previous research has shown that violence is a common theme in top-selling films and that the amount of violence has increased over time,^{16,17} even in G (general audiences)-rated films considered appropriate for viewers of all ages.¹⁸ Research also shows that youth frequently watch extremely violent films.^{19,20} Moreover, such films are more accessible today to viewers of all ages than ever before, such as on the Internet and cable. However, previous

research has not examined the extent to which gun violence is portrayed in films and whether the use of guns has increased over time, especially in PG-13-rated films that adolescents are most likely to watch. We predicted that the presence of guns in violent scenes has increased in films with PG-13 ratings.

METHODS

We used the Coding of Health and Media Project's²¹ database of 945 films that were sampled from the 30 top-grossing films (based on annual box office sales as ranked by *Variety* magazine) for each of the years from 1950 to 2012. Trained coders identified violent sequences in those films, by using a definition adapted from previous research¹⁹: "Physical acts where the aggressor makes or attempts to make some physical contact with the intention of causing injury or death," excluding natural disasters, accidents, objects not attributed to a character, and expected physical acts in sports that are not intended to seriously injure (eg, tackling in football). Coders achieved a high level of reliability (0.80) for these sequences, using Krippendorff's α reliability formula, which controls for chance agreement between multiple coders.

Violent sequences performed by each character were coded for each 5-minute segment of each film. A "sequence" of violence is uninterrupted if the character uses 1 weapon or action continuously, regardless of the number of victims. There were 17 695 violent sequences in the 945 films we coded from 1950 to 2012. Violent sequences performed by each character were summed to get a segment's total, and the rate of violent sequences per hour in each film was computed. Due to skewness in these scores, we computed the annual mean of these rates using a log transform.

Our violence coding indicated that 396 (94%) of the 420 films since 1985 had 1 or more 5-minute segments containing

violence. Those segments with violence were subsequently coded for the use of guns. A gun was defined as a weapon that can be carried with 1 or both hands that fires a bullet or energy beam with the intention of harming or killing a living target. Weapons such as cannons and artillery were excluded because they cannot be carried with 1 or both hands. Rocket-propelled grenades, bullets on their own, and holsters without guns were also excluded. Gun violence was defined as shooting a gun and hitting a living target. Guns fired at shooting-range targets, skeets, or animals while hunting (eg, game birds, deer) were excluded.

Five independent raters coded films. Raters were trained by using 27 films not included in the database. Coders were blinded to each film's publication year and Motion Picture Association of America rating, and they achieved a high level of reliability (Krippendorff $\alpha = 0.91$) for identification of gun violence.

We identified 783 segments with gun violence in the 396 films with violence. The rate of gun violence per hour was

obtained for each film, transformed via a log transformation, and then averaged over films for each year. We examined the rate of gun violence by film rating. Because there were few G-rated films ($n = 21$), they were combined with PG (parental guidance suggested for young children) films ($n = 108$); there were also 166 PG-13-rated films, and 119 R-rated (restricted to viewers age 17+) films from 1985 to 2012.

RESULTS

Overall Violence Trend Analyses

Best-fitting trends were identified for linear, quadratic, and cubic trends. Robust SEs were used for all trend analyses to protect against violations of regression analysis assumptions (ie, normality, homoscedasticity, independence). The best-fitting trend for annual violent sequences from 1950 to 2012 was quadratic ($b = .005$ [95% confidence interval (CI): .0015–.0076] $P = .004$, $R^2 = .52$). As shown in Fig 1, the trend in the rate of violent sequences more than doubled from 1950 to 2012.

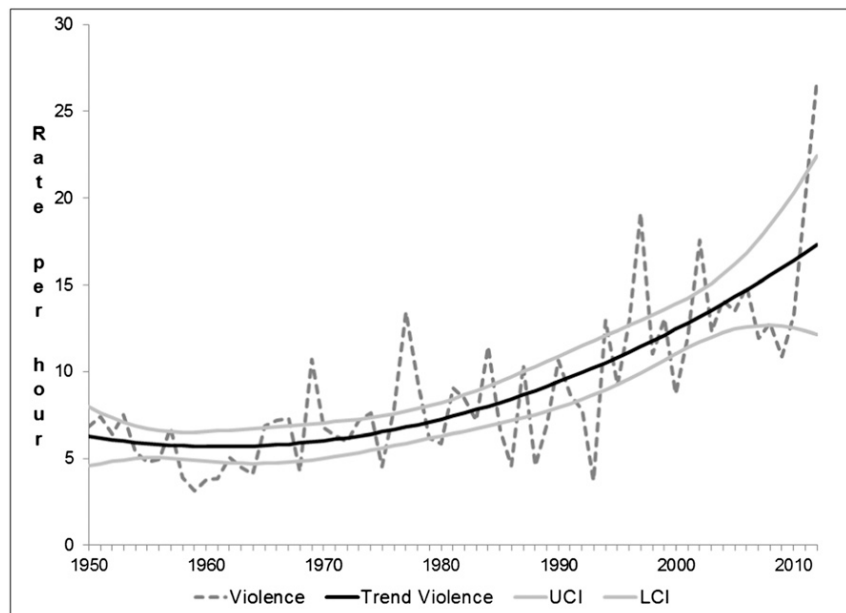


FIGURE 1

Rate of violent sequences per 5-minute segment for the top 30 ranked films, 1950 to 2012, along with linear trend and 95% upper CIs (UCI) and lower 95% CIs (LCI).

Gun Violence Trend Analyses

There was an overall annual increase in gun violence in the films from 1985 to 2012 ($b = .0003$, [95% CI = .00005 – .00050], $P = .021$, $R^2 = .17$). However, trends differed by movie rating. Among G/PG films, gun violence decreased linearly ($b = -.014$ [95% CI: $-.026 - .003$], $P = .015$, $R^2 = .16$), while among PG-13 films the rate increased with linear ($b = .267$ [95% CI: $.118 - .416$], $P < .001$, quadratic ($b = -.021$, [95% CI: $-.033 - .009$], $P = .002$, and cubic trends ($b = .0005$ [95% CI: $.0002 - .0008$], $P < .001$; $R^2 = .53$). There was no trend in gun violence for R-rated films during this period. As shown in Fig 2, the annual mean rate of gun violence in R-rated films was 2.15 segments per hour and was 1.26 in G/PG-rated film segments per hour. The rate for films in the PG-13 category started at 0 in 1985 to 1986 and rose over time. Although the PG-13 trend was within the 95% CI for G/PG-rated films for many years, since 2009 it has been as high or higher than R-rated films. In 2012, the level of gun violence in PG-13 films exceeded the mean in R-rated films.

DISCUSSION

Consistent with other analyses,^{15–20} we found that violence in top-grossing films has increased linearly since 1950. Since 1985, scripts containing the use of guns in violent segments have declined slightly in G/PG films but not changed overall in R-rated films. However, gun violence in PG-13 films has grown considerably since 1985, even exceeding the rate in R-rated films in recent years. Films with a PG-13 rating are popular, accounting for more than one-half of top-grossing film revenue,⁵ but unfortunately they are not restricted at movie theaters to youth. Film producers may therefore be strengthening the weapons effect by increasingly including guns in scripts that involve violence in the films youth are most likely to see. The presence of guns in films also provides youth with scripts on how to use guns. In addition, children no longer need to go to movie theaters to see films; films are readily available on the Internet or cable. Thus, children much younger than 13 years can easily view films that contain ample gun violence.

One limitation of the current study is that we did not code for guns in non-violent segments. However, these uses are likely to be rare. In addition, movies less popular than the top 30 were not coded, although the top 30 has represented >50% of the box office sales in recent years.⁵ We also did not distinguish between the use of guns for self-defense versus violence initiation, although this distinction was not relevant to testing our hypothesis that the presence of guns has increased in PG-13-rated films since 1985.

The findings from the current research are troubling given the large body of research evidence showing that violent media can have harmful effects on children and youth. Future research should test whether violence with guns is more likely to increase aggression in youth than violence without guns. Future research should also investigate whether films containing gun violence provide viewers with scripts on how to use guns. Previous research has shown that when exposed to movie characters who smoke, many youth are more likely to start smoking themselves²²; the same effect is true for characters who drink.²³ Similarly, we predict that youth will be more interested in acquiring and using guns after exposure to gun violence in films.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research found that violence in films has more than doubled since 1950, and that gun violence in PG-13 films has increased to the point where it recently exceeded the rate in R-rated films. The effects of exposure to gun violence in films should not be trivialized. Even if youth do not use guns, the current research suggests that because of the increasing popularity of PG-13-rated films, youth are exposed to considerable gun violence in movie scripts. The mere presence of guns in these films may increase the aggressive behavior of youth.

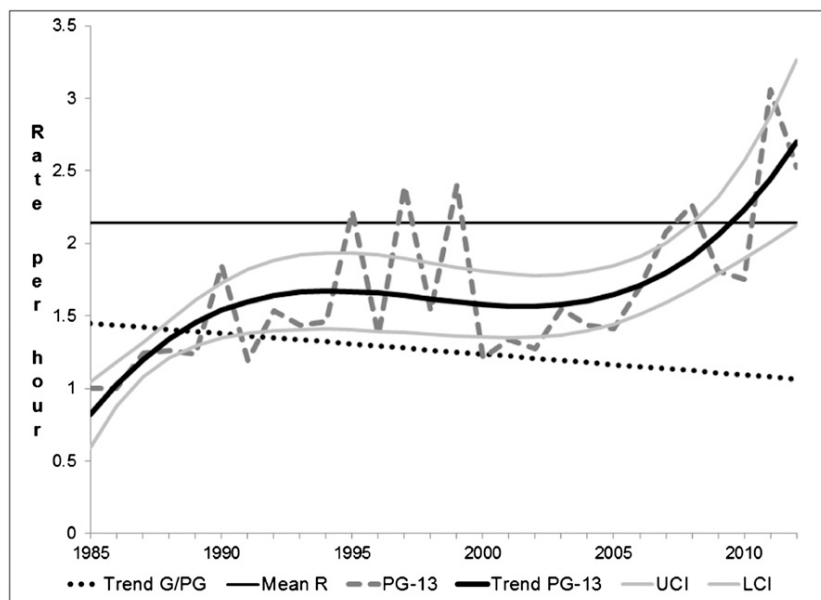


FIGURE 2
Rate of 5-minute film segments with gun violence for the top 30 ranked films rated G/PG, PG-13, and R, 1985 to 2012, along with best-fitting trend and 95% CIs for PG-13-rated films.

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