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MAD MEN IS HISTORY

Shawn Shimpach

Having ceased production in 2015, Mad Men is history. It remains, however, an apt example of the ways in which television has lately been offering a great deal of history through its programming. Television offers accessible and inviting imaginaries of historical periods and events, yet this programming is marked by different theories of historiography and very different assumptions about the role and purpose of history than that which animates the work of scholarly historians. Indeed the gulf between these approaches to history is significant not only for its size, but also for the divide it produces in historical knowledge and, in turn, the ways history can be called upon to inform political decision-making and to influence social practice. The history presented by television, therefore, is important to consider precisely because of the ways it can frame historical discourses and influence assumptions about the role of history. As a touchstone for reconsiderations of 1960s cultural history, Mad Men presented a form of history modeled on the makeover and influenced by an affinity for advertisements. This essay will interrogate the institutional, thematic, and cultural histories of the series itself in order to understand the ways it represented history to its viewers.

Television offers a form of history with ideas and meanings quite distinct from, and yet more broadly accessible than, the work of academic historians. Anglo-American television has lately been offering a great deal of history, ranging across vast eras and multiple genres, from *The Americans* to *Vikings*, from *Downton Abbey* and *Call the Midwife* to *Masters of Sex* and *11.22.63*, from *The Goldbergs* to Ken Burns's latest documentary, and from *The Tudors* and *Reign* to, even, *Outlander* and *Game of Thrones*. Yet, despite this proliferative attention to the past on our small screens, there remains a significant gulf between these popular accounts and the kind of history recognizable from scholarship and within the academy. While history infuses television programming, which in turn offers accessible and inviting imaginaries of historical periods and events, this programming is marked by different theories of historiography and very different assumptions about the role and purpose of history than that which animates the work of scholars. Symptomatic, perhaps, of the ongoing crisis in the humanities, the gulf between these approaches to history is significant not only for its size, but also for the divide it produces in historical knowledge and, in turn, the ways history can be called upon to inform political decision-making and to influence social practice.

As a recent example of how popular history is told and the ways it can frame historical discourses, the US cable channel AMC's recent program, *Mad Men* (2007–2015), is particularly apt. Set mostly in the world of a fictional 1960s Madison Avenue advertising firm, *Mad Men* became a primary site at and lens through which recent cultural history was inscribed and could be discussed (in both academic and popular arenas).¹ Having ceased production in 2015, *Mad Men* is itself now history. Yet, to this day it remains difficult to mention, for example, mid-

century modern design and fashion, business history, second-wave feminism, or indeed the 1960s, without *Mad Men* figuring into the discussion.

Mad Men achieved commercial success and gained critical and scholarly accolades based in significant part on its meticulous attention to historical detail. Multiple scholarly collections were produced during the program's run, typically including sections dedicated to analyzing the show's historicity, with titles such as, 'The Nostalgia of *Mad Men*,' 'Cultural Memory and the American Dream,' and 'The Way We (Never?) Were: Remembering the 1960s through *Mad Men*.'² The program's attention to period detail in particular became something of a fetish not only for fans but also for scholars. Jeremy Butler, for example, confessed that one struggles to find the appropriate metaphor for the 1960s objects and clothing that saturate *Mad Men*'s mise en scène. Are they archeological artifacts of the last century, Freudian fetish objects, commodities ('things') with 'cultural biographies' and 'social lives,' or talismans conferring supernatural diegetic power on [program creator and 'showrunner'] Matthew Weiner?³

The actual advertising industry trade press, meanwhile, shared a similar response to *Mad Men*, which took place within its own industry's (fictionalized) history. One trade journal emphasized the show's attention to period style, suggesting that 'the rich cinematography, evocative lighting and fantastic devotion to period furnishings and wardrobe could make a mid-century fetishist out of anyone watching.'⁴ Another marveled early on at how *Mad Men* quickly became 'part of pop culture, through fashion, design, the history of advertising, and even other TV shows.'

Noting this tendency, Dana Polan has proposed – perhaps understatedly – that 'some of what we might call the historicism of *Mad Men* is about getting the surface details right: [... those] markers that help contribute no doubt to the impression that somehow the series is serving as documentation of the times.' Such superficial historicity, moreover, was not limited to those things placed in front of the camera. As Polan further notes, '*Mad Men* also enters into its times through a concern with large-scale punctual events.'⁶ Indeed the series offered a veritable historical checklist, diligently ticking off a timeline of 1960s political, cultural and social events – from elections to assassinations to moonshots – in the background of the characters' daily lives (and the show's weekly episodes). This considered combination of punctual events and surface details is significant not only because they represent an era still remembered by potential viewers, but also because of the near-mythical place the decade of the 1960s holds in the US popular memory and its relationship to our present. Such details demonstrate the show's careful production of a type of historical verisimilitude that grounded the fictional events in an apparently recognizable cultural history.

In this context, the discussion of verisimilitude once proposed by Steve Neale is worth recalling.⁷ Neale describes verisimilitude as meaning 'probable' or 'likely' and as encompassing 'plausibility, motivation, justification and belief.'⁸ He goes on to argue that 'there are two broad types of verisimilitude applicable to representations: generic verisimilitude on the one hand, and, on the other, a broader social or cultural verisimilitude. Neither equates in any direct sense to "reality" or "truth."⁹ Citing Tzvetan Todorov, he suggests that for a narrative to sustain the interest and investment of its audience, it must comply with what is probable within its genre. Indeed, as Butler argues, *Mad Men*'s meticulous attention to mise en scène owes less to the

demands of recreating the era's actual furnishings than it does to subtly adhering to the era's Hollywood cinematic style.¹⁰ Thus verisimilitude establishes a relation not with an actual, historical referent, but instead with 'a scattered discourse that in part belongs to each of the individuals of a society but of which none may claim ownership.'¹¹ Neale's point is relevant to the way we think about popular representations of history, concluding, in part, by noting that 'the boundaries between the cultural and the generic [in popular culture] are blurred: the two regimes merge also in public discourse, generic knowledge becoming a form of cultural knowledge, a component of "public opinion."¹² The investments of popular narrative require that it adhere to one form of verisimilitude, generic, while reproducing the other, cultural. A verisimilar historical representation is bound by what we already know.

One therefore might be forgiven for inquiring as to the nature of historical representation *Mad Men* was offering. With what generic codes did *Mad Men* adhere? What social or cultural verisimilitudes did it rely upon to seem 'real' and in the process, reassert? Beyond the program's presentation of surface historicity, what theories of both narrative representation and history were at work (whether knowingly or implicitly) to organize its particular presentation of the past?

To be sure, the program's narrative of 1960s history inspired some viewers to actively blur the distinction between generic and cultural verisimilar representation. Backed by impressive research and careful textual exegesis, speculation emerged online about possible linkages between some of *Mad Men*'s fictional characters and some actual historical people and events. For example, during the later seasons the internet and social media were filled with comparisons between Don Draper's second wife, Megan, and actual actress Sharon Tate, suggesting Megan was fated to become a victim of Charles Manson.¹³ Another fascinating theory, complete with textual evidence culled from the close reading of multiple episodes and a creative literalization of the program's falling man opening title sequence, proffered that Don Draper would turn out to be mysterious real life hijacker D.B. Cooper.¹⁴

Such speculations, given the pedantry and the 'almost touching concern with factuality' with which they were supported and circulated through new media, offered an implicit theory of the kind of history *Mad Men* was narrating about the 1960s. The speculations' 'heroic strivings for evidence to prove that the unbelievable is the only thing that can be believed,' their efforts to link the fictional, serialized events of a cable television program to actual historical people and events might be thought of – to stay period-appropriate – as the 'paranoid' approach to popular history.¹⁵ Such audience speculations understood *Mad Men* to be producing a history in which all the minor details (of the show, of the past) ultimately fit together and add up to a clear, if heretofore concealed, master story, ultimately evidencing the influence of a knowing, attentive power controlling the (narrative, historical) events.

Such an understanding is not necessarily an unreasonable assumption of the historical approach of an authored, 'quality' program like *Mad Men*. This was a show, after all, centered on seeing 1960s US culture through the demonstrably blinkered eyes of privileged white men, working as advertising executives, amid retreating markers of their identity and cultural power. Nor is the paranoid approach an unusual interpretation in a media environment that delights in giving voice to pedantry and paranoia and that regularly elaborates conspiracy as a recurring

narrative device, in programs from the return of *The X-Files* (2016) to *Person of Interest* (2011–2016) to *Black Mirror* (2011–) to *The Blacklist* (2013–) to *True Detective* (2014–). Nevertheless *Mad Men*'s finale, alas, meant that the program ceased without ultimately legitimating these particular speculations, nor confirming the paranoid approach as the show's primary theory of history and effort at cultural verisimilitude. The proliferation and popular circulation of such contentions may, however, recommend that we think of *Mad Men* not simply as (albeit fictionalized) documentation of the times, but rather as an active form of writing history: a writing, moreover, that is, itself, historically situated.

Rather than a cult murder or a spectacular hijacking, in the end, *Mad Men* ended only somewhat less astonishingly with Don Draper's meditative smile, linked, through nothing more than a simple edit, to the actual Coca-Cola 'Hilltop' television advertisement from 1971 (featuring a song second, perhaps, only to Disney's 'Small World' anthem in the rankings of brand jingles producing corporate goodwill). Demonstrating the ongoing commercial efficacy of the early Soviet-era Kuleshov effect, transcendence was turned into product placement in an instant while our fictional protagonist was credited with an actual commercial: all in the span of single cut. In any other context – and if not for this particular jingle's iconicity for viewers (and television writers) of a certain age – it would seem the program's finale ended on a smash cut to commercial (but for a second of overlapped singing). Instead we are meant to understand through this visual juxtaposition that Don has found peace, and with it (or in the form of?) inspiration for the Coke account at his new agency, (the actual) McCann-Erickson (now actually part of the transnational Interpublic Group of Companies).

It is tempting to read this ending as *Mad Men*'s critique of the advertising industry, with the origin of one of the most memorably uplifting television spots in US media history re-imagined as the product of a sociopath in midlife crisis meditating at an Esalen Institute-like retreat. Don is presented as a visionary not only for masterminding this actual advertising spot, but also for doing so from a countercultural retreat in Northern California, linking New Age philosophy and effective commercial shilling decades before Silicon Valley would enshrine the two as one only a few miles away. Any promise of intended irony in a quality, 'premium' show ending with an advertisement evaporated, however, upon realization that this was meant to be the series' sincerely happy ending. If the meaning of that final cut to (vintage, but real) commercial was too ambiguous for some viewers (not unreasonably in a program about advertising, featuring fictional advertisements, whose actual sponsors frequently created vintage-looking spots specifically for the show), *Mad Men*'s creator/author, Matthew Weiner (who wrote and directed the finale episode), soon went public to clarify his intent.¹⁶ Sincerely offering that 'that ad to me is the best ad ever made, and it comes from a very good place,' Weiner explained that 'I did think, why not end this show with the greatest commercial ever made? [...] in terms of what is advertising, who is Don and what is that thing?'¹⁷

From an actor's point of view, meanwhile, Jon Hamm, who had portrayed Don Draper, elaborated in a way that begins to hint at the theory of history to which *Mad Men* was truly adhering. Hamm told the *New York Times* that Don 'wakes up in this beautiful place, and has this serene moment of understanding, and realizes who he is. And who he is, is an advertising

man.’¹⁸ The series’ history ends with the protagonist, having faced profound humiliations, isolated from everyone he knows, and reduced to his bare essence, undergoing (another) transformation and reemerging with peace and success, revealing and accepting, finally, his authentic self (an ad man). Thus, the happy ending: the authentic (advertising) man underneath it all has been revealed through this transformation and success. Acceptance, perhaps even normalcy, will follow.

Mad Men was not about paranoid conspiracy as the driver of history after all. It was a program about advertising and it turns out to have fully embraced advertising’s logic, recreating the verisimilitude of commercial advertising’s perpetual promise. Its vision of history was inextricable from its vision of the advertisement’s promise of a new you. Despite a connection to the real (in the form of a fictional character given credit for an actual commercial) predicted by many,¹⁹ *Mad Men* ultimately and always offered us popular history not as a paranoia, but as commercial promise. The final lines of dialog ever spoken in *Mad Men*, after all, were voiced by an unnamed guru, leading a dawn meditation session at the Esalen-like retreat.²⁰ The guru intoned: ‘The new day brings new hope. Lives we’ve led. The lives we’ve yet to lead. New day, new ideas, a new you.’ As a mantra, these words summarize *Mad Men*’s approach to narrating its historical moment. They combine the past with the possibility (even necessity) of reinvention. In so doing they end up sounding like nothing so much as the promise of a specific and prolific type of advertising pitch, always offering a (better) new you: the theory of history *Mad Men* offered, the verisimilitude of its popular narrative, was that of the makeover.

To understand how and why this came to be the historical verisimilitude of *Mad Men*, it is necessary to understand the history of *Mad Men* the program. *Mad Men*’s writing of history emerges from a specific institutional positioning that was ideologically coterminous with its production of value on twenty-first century commercial, cable television. Consider, for example, that since *Mad Men*’s debut in 2007, AMC, the US cable channel on which it was shown, transformed.²¹ From an industry standpoint it has been rejuvenated. When confronted with the reality of low ratings, the inability to negotiate higher carriage fees, and unimpressive advertising revenue, AMC eagerly sought to remedy these humiliations through transformations made possible by specific and somewhat extreme kinds of intervention – prestige-seeking, loss leader programming. Then, at industry award shows and within trade journals, AMC dramatically emerged, publicly revealed to be a changed, new, and better cable channel. AMC is now jubilant over the changes that have taken place during this transformation and eager to lead a new life as a ‘normal’ (read: profit growing) cable channel. In these terms, it is clear that AMC itself has had a makeover.²²

Recall that when *Mad Men* began in 2007, reality TV was the preeminent genre on television, bringing new attention to established cable channels and an immediate, must-see spectacle to broadcast networks. At the time the most prolific (if ultimately not enduring) sub-genre of reality TV was the makeover show. The makeover program is typically defined as a reality show (unscripted, non-guild people acting something like themselves before the camera) in which new characters are introduced each episode and, through the genre’s signature ‘reveal’ sequences, transformed (invariably for the better) by the end. As Brenda Weber has demonstrated, makeover shows function ideologically by investing non-normative status on a

clearly defined 'before' period such that a transformation is the preferable progression leading to an improved 'after,' dramatically 'revealed' and invariably allowing the subject access to a better and more 'normal' life.²³ To label *Mad Men* – a serialized narrative fiction – makeover television might strain credibility for those invested in policing the borders of reality television's prolific sub-genre. If *Mad Men* did not literally fall within the genre of reality TV makeover programs, however, the series performed the function of a makeover for the AMC brand as well as within the ideology of the series' text: in the stories the characters lived and the writing of history the series produced. *Mad Men* thoroughly embraced the informing ideology and basic logic of the makeover on a number of levels, including *institutionally*, *thematically* and *culturally*. Its own history reflects its work as a makeover show in its specific institutional context, which ultimately animated the symbolic work it performed as well. *Mad Men* presented history as makeover for our entertainment.

Institutional: AMC

Mad Men, in its structural institutional position within the commercial television industry, functioned as a makeover show. For starters, it helped to transform the channel on which it appeared. AMC needed a makeover for the usual reasons: styles had changed, new looks and practices became fashionable, and younger competition was everywhere: AMC looked (to the industry) like it was aging and had let itself go. Known for playing (mostly black and white) revival house motion pictures, uncut and uninterrupted, AMC was launched in 1984 as a premium subscription cable service. American Movie Classics attempted to monetize vaults of otherwise unseen old movies by attracting subscribers. Three years later it switched to cable's 'basic tier,' securing a much smaller monetary percentage from a much larger viewer base. By the twenty-first century, however, an era in which old movie libraries are now more profitably being reissued on Blu-Ray and licensed to streaming services like Netflix, Amazon and iTunes,²⁴ AMC's strategy of showing old movies on an increasingly crowded cable line up was no longer seen as the most profitable leveraging of a library of films, much less coveted bandwidth on cable. AMC had to consider the possibility of reinvention.

At first AMC's most valuable asset was its position on most multi-system cable operator's (MSOs) lineup of channels. Basic cable channels (as opposed to premium channels) in the US typically negotiate with cable system operators for a 'carriage fee,' usually a per/subscriber amount, to be paid to the channel in exchange for allowing the cable system to carry that channel as part of a 'basic cable' subscription package. As these fees are based on the number of subscribers to the cable system (potential viewers) rather than the number of viewers any single channel actually has, these fees represent a significant source of income for television channels on cable, where audiences can be widely dispersed. In some cases (such as AMC for much of its history), carriage fees replace advertising income. In most cases carriage fees supplement and often exceed the revenue from advertising (which is derived from the number of viewers measured to be watching a particular channel at a particular time). Just being on a cable system was a source of income. Indeed AMC still relies primarily on carriage fees from cable providers, with 62% of its revenue coming from such distribution fees.²⁵

However, since the 1980s, government regulatory oversight of the cable industry has been replaced by market logics, only to witness the field of market competitors merge, until by the 1990s just a few massive conglomerates had seized control of most of the television industry. With established carriage deals and shared ownership in many cable channels, MSOs had little incentive to give up part of their bandwidth and pay carriage fees to any emerging new channels that had, by definition, no customer demand. Market deregulation had resulted in a significant barrier to entry. As one cable executive put it in 1998, 'Most entrepreneurs have already gotten the word that the cable field is closed.'²⁶ AMC had launched early enough that it had already attained carriage on most cable systems throughout the country, before limited spectrum, channel multiplexing and corporate conglomeration led to significant scarcity of channel space. AMC's very existence on most cable systems was increasingly valuable for its rent-seeking potential, if not necessarily completely secure.

As this scarcity of access developed, very popular cable channels – the reasons consumers tended to subscribe to cable in the first place – were demanding increased compensation from the cable companies that carried them. AMC was not one of these very popular channels and found itself at a distinct disadvantage when the time came for it to negotiate carriage fee contracts. In light of this greater competition for cable company carriage fees and the resulting reduction in fees offered less popular channels, AMC felt obliged to explore supplemental sources of revenue.

The makeover AMC was pursuing began in fits and starts. The channel first surprised long-time viewers in 2001 by airing commercials for the first time. These ran, initially, between movies. In order to leverage its position on most cable systems through commercial spot sales however, AMC found it needed to expand and enhance its commercial viability in ways recognizable to advertisers.²⁷ In order to build upon its (small) audience of educated, male-skewing viewers, it began to alter its programming content.²⁸ By 2002, AMC announced an official change in format, from 'classic' movies to simply, movies. It moved toward programming more recent films from the 1980s and 1990s (rather than the 1930s–1950s). Soon it announced that 'AMC' would no longer stand for 'American Movie Classics,' it would just be those three letters.²⁹

Acquiring the rights to more recent titles (in order to attract a larger, younger audience) meant bidding against other, better financed, basic cable channels (e.g. TBS, USA, FX), significantly increasing operating expenses.³⁰ The initial result was, as the Associated Press snidely suggested, the absolute necessity of the channel's name change, since the titles it began showing (e.g. *Robocop 3*, *Hot Shots!*), 'wouldn't even be considered classics by the actors who starred in them.'³¹ Soon a spiraling practice of spending more to attract viewers that could help pay for spending more to attract viewers that could help pay emerged. A perhaps not entirely disinterested executive of (commercial-free) Turner Classic Movies said at the time, 'AMC has made a devil's bargain by accepting advertising.'³² By 2002, AMC announced that it would double the number of commercials it showed, from four to eight minutes an hour, and begin interrupting movies for scheduled commercial breaks.³³

Simply competing against much larger companies for the same movies was clearly not sustainable. AMC needed a strategy to distinguish itself from other channels while offering programming for which it could better compete. Following contemporary corporate practices of 'rebranding,' in order to expand and enhance its commercial viability and capitalize on its position on most cable lineups, AMC began a process by which it would alter its image, transform its viewership, introduce new revenue streams, and soon reintroduce itself to the cable and (now crucially) advertising industries. AMC was in for a makeover; one specifically designed to ferry existing viewers over to the new corporate identity while gaining new and new kinds of viewers along the way.

By 2005, AMC had therefore begun to seek out and commission its own scripted programming. It started by co-producing with the BBC a crime drama called *Hustle* and by commissioning *Broken Trail*, a four-hour Western presented as a mini-series. These programs proved effective in generating positive press coverage for the channel, making the channel less anonymous on cable systems, without losing the interest of long time viewers used to watching gangster movies and westerns. Building on these signs of effective transition, AMC now recruited new staff to oversee 'scripted development.' By August 2006, industry trade journals were announcing that AMC had ordered 13 one-hours of *Mad Men* for a premiere the following June.³⁴ Embracing the possibilities of makeover without losing its core audience, AMC announced 'TV for Movie People' in 2007 as *Broken Trail* won several Emmys and *Mad Men* continued its first season. 'We're seeking to bring a level of cinematic quality to the TV screen and bring our own take to some of the genres,' AMC's vice-president of programming suggested to trade press staple *Daily Variety*.³⁵ The makeover's 'reveal' came in the form of multiple industry awards, leading AMC executive Charles Collier to proclaim the Golden Globes awards show 'a transformative moment for the entire network';³⁶ but in fact it served to publicly reveal the transformation already taking place.

A program like *Mad Men* was well suited to draw audiences still expecting classic feature films into AMC's new, commercial-sponsored original series programming. 'It's retro but contemporary at the same time,' AMC told *Daily Variety*, linking the program's style to AMC's new branding.³⁷ Indeed *Mad Men* introduced stylistic and narrative devices familiar, as Butler has argued, to viewers of feature films from the 1960s.³⁸ Its 'contemporary' approach to classic style, however, meant it was also recognizable to viewers of subscription 'premium' cable channels like HBO and Showtime. This represented a deliberate and concerted effort to bring feature film and premium cable programming to a basic cable channel. For example, the tendency for shots to linger in *Mad Men*, well in excess of narrative need – what Vermeulen and Rustad have called *Mad Men*'s 'late cut' practices – even aligned some of the program's stylistic choices with those of international art films.³⁹ *Mad Men*'s 'slow-burn' storytelling, attention to period-appropriate (surface) detail, and morally complex – or at least ambiguous – characters distinguished it from network and basic cable programming at the time, instead aligning it both with the feature films already on AMC and the programming on premium cable channels.⁴⁰

For basic cable channels like AMC, however, such stylistic choices signal less an affinity for art film esthetics than the purpose of original series, which are about garnering industry and audience attention, respect, and, crucially, ratings that can translate into higher ad rates and

larger carriage fees. AMC was delving into 'quality' programming as a rebranding strategy. With *Mad Men*, AMC sought to distinguish itself on basic cable, making over its image into something more refined, prestigious and exclusive and in the process attract upscale viewers with programming 'discursively aligned with more culturally privileged media.'⁴¹

For AMC, *Mad Men* effected an important makeover. While it 'probably broke even at best on its own' in the first seasons on AMC, Collier suggested the real value was in the 'halo effect' *Mad Men* generated, noting, 'the entire network benefited from adding an original to its lineup.'⁴² The value of original programming, he offered, is that it 'allows you to look at your air in a different way. You can showcase your programming and you can showcase the advertising.' In the event, AMC's per-subscriber carriage fee rose from 22 cents in 2007 when *Mad Men* debuted to 33 cents per customer by 2013, a 50% increase.⁴³ This was demonstrable proof of *Mad Men*'s transformative power and tangible evidence of the reinvention AMC's makeover brought to the whole channel.

Madvertising

This evidence of a makeover was most earnestly aimed at the advertising industry's perception of the channel. *Mad Men* and AMC worked together to accomplish this. *Mad Men* intrigued and flattered advertising's past while AMC sought to makeover advertising's future. A stylish program centered on the advertising industry was certainly effective in getting the attention of Madison Avenue. *AdWeek*, an industry trade journal, rarely went a month without mentioning the alluring effect: '*Mad Men* makes the industry seem exciting and sexy again. There's a glamor in the trance-inducing visuals and smart narrative, and just enough facts in the story to sell us on Weiner's particular brand of Mad Ave. madness.'⁴⁴ Or, as an ad agency creative director put it: 'Because of a TV show, people you barely know are prepared to find you both less respectable and more interesting.'⁴⁵ Extending this self-regarding interest, *Advertising Age*, another trade journal, noted early on that '*Mad Men* may be one of the few shows doing something to interest [television] viewers in commercials,' accomplishing an important goal of AMC's makeover agenda.⁴⁶ In 2009, Weiner accepted an honorary CLIO at the 50th anniversary of the advertising industry's awards (which had a 1960s theme to suit the evening's tribute to a show featuring their fictionalized professional predecessors). In accepting the award Weiner said, 'I grew up loving advertising as a form of entertainment and I still enjoy it.'⁴⁷ As a makeover 'reveal', this one was received quite well on that actual Madison Avenue.

In conjunction with the advertising industry's flatteringly stylish (if often also ribald) portrayal attracting such coveted attention, AMC worked on a number of ways to makeover practices of advertising for the digital era. Attention to the surface styles in the program's mise en scène led to co-branding opportunities with clothing companies (e.g. Brooks Brothers, Banana Republic) and beyond (Mattel's Barbie Dolls). The period detail, the lavish attention (and extensive publicity of such attention) to fetishistic period accuracy of the things on display within the mise en scène ended up signifying not only a specific kind of 'quality TV,' the kind for which cable subscribers usually have to pay extra, but also one that could be readily translated into retail purchases.

More substantially lucrative for AMC, the channel's makeover extended to reimagining how the actual inclusion of advertising could be effective in the digital era. The advertising agency setting allowed for easy and verisimilar product integration, for example. As part of the program's narrative, viewers are unlikely to step away from or fast-forward through the show's inclusion of London Fog overcoats, Stolichnaya vodka, Heineken beer, Jack Daniels bourbon, or Jaguar automobiles in its storylines.⁴⁸ In fact, so seemingly discreet were these product integrations, that *AdWeek* described them as the show's 'secret product placement.'⁴⁹ Product integration was not limited to placing products within *Mad Men*'s diegesis. Early on, AMC facilitated *Mad Men*'s inclusion of regular (if less frequent) commercial breaks with something dubbed 'Mad-vertising,' in which five-second title cards were inserted between the program and the advertisement, offering trivia about the advertising industry.⁵⁰ As *Variety* explained, this 'thematically references the show you're watching while offering a factoid about the product in said spot. It's not part of the show. And it's not quite an ad. So what is it?'⁵¹ Mad-vertising intended this ambiguity, exploiting *Mad Men*'s ad agency setting for the purpose of creating enough confusion to discourage zipping and zapping, so that 'AMC's "dirty little secret,"' was that 'You're not blowing through the commercial. You're thinking, "What's going on here?'"⁵² As an AMC marketing executive explained, 'We thought if we could almost 'host' commercials with a piece of trivia that was in the *Mad Men* look, [audiences] would look at the commercial differently.'⁵³ The practice of creating confusion around the nature of the channel's content (Show? Ad?) was expanded by the fourth season to include brief vignettes of *Mad Men*-like characters developing pitches for the program's actual sponsors at the show's act breaks, immediately followed by the spot developed for that sponsor. Well into its final year, sponsors were airing specially produced, vintage-looking advertising spots during commercial breaks.

This makeover of a program's relationship to advertising extended even further to new and creative ways of, in industry lingo, harnessing 'digital dollars' and sustaining brand equity over digital media and social networking.⁵⁴ Thus, however counterintuitively, the show famous for its depiction of the 1960s provided AMC with an enhanced digital presence. This was a crucial aspect of *Mad Men*'s makeover of AMC, as Johnson argues that 'with the emergence of the digital era, the place of the television channel has been decentered within the television industry as new ways of delivering and organizing content have emerged.' AMC took the process of making itself over to include adherence to larger industry practices wherein television channels 'are attempting to reconstruct themselves as brands that are loyal and trusted guides through the cluttered media environment' and even more significantly, 'to position themselves as central parts of our social communities.'⁵⁵ From real and hijacked Twitter feeds to the '*Mad Men*-Yourself' social media profile picture generator,⁵⁶ AMC's *Mad Men*-facilitated makeover thus acknowledged and attempted to capitalize on the growing media reality that television channels must now become 'brands whose financial profitability is based on their ability to control and exploit the activities of viewers/consumers.'⁵⁷

Mad Men's very production drew on a history of the promise of the makeover to effect change. Understanding *Mad Men* as a kind of makeover show, therefore, offers much more than an explanation of industry practices, it also offers a means of linking these practices with the cultural and symbolic logics that informed the circulation and meaning of this program as it narrativized a historical period. *Mad Men* wrote history as national makeover.

Thematic: makeover nation

- This is America. Pick a job and then become the person that does it.
- That's true.⁵⁸

- *don*, verb, 1. *trans.* To put on.⁵⁹

To be sure, the logic of the makeover has been profound and far-reaching. A 'makeover nation,' to which Toby Miller, Brenda Weber, and others have variously referred while explaining the cultural logic and social impact of the makeover program, is an inhabitable space, not necessarily congruent with existing geopolitical borders. In it the makeover is a natural, even inevitable, condition of being – or certainly, at least, of citizenship. In the context of *Mad Men*, the relationship between the makeover's cultural history and currency and the actual forms of US national identity with which it interacts offers the makeover nation a striking specificity.

The notion of reinvention is, after all, one of the foundational myths of American exceptionalism. As Miller suggests, 'The grand promise of the United States is that what its people were born as need not define them ever more.'⁶⁰ Richard Slotkin has exhaustively demonstrated that the promise of reinvention grew from the possibility of indefinite expanse, marking the national character of the US through its Frontier Myth and ever-deferring the material consequences of rapidly growing capitalism. The nation's westward expansion marked a seemingly tangible, apparently mapable, space of reinvention. 'The Frontier' functioned as a literal line demarcating the possibilities and limits of 'before' and 'after' in multiple ways. America's frontier, Slotkin explains, 'was the border between a world of possibilities and one of actualities, a world theoretically unlimited and one defined by its limitations.'⁶¹ Crossing this border promised to transform the individual and diminish the consequences of the past.

Mad Men demonstrated this nation-defining logic in the context of historicized subjects. Consider *Mad Men*'s central character, suave advertising executive Don Draper, who, in fact, started life as working-class orphan Dick Whitman. The moment he chose to grab Draper's dog tags and assume his identity (in the heated aftermath of Draper's Korean War combat death from an accident Whitman caused), he was enacting precisely the transformation Slotkin describes: 'On one side of the line lay great wealth, and a suspension of normal limitations of law and probability, a dream world in which infantile omnipotence became a possibility for the grown man; on the other side lay relative poverty, the necessity of labor and sacrifice, the requirement of sharing.'⁶² Don Draper or Dick Whitman. As Siska observes, 'With this act [of assuming the dead man's identity], Don Draper becomes a quintessentially American figure, shedding his past to reinvent himself.'⁶³ It is in this context that Draper has been described as an iconic American character and compared to Gatsby.⁶⁴ Indeed this New York-based series returns again and again to California as the site of reinvention and the hazy, eternal dream of escape. This essentialist myth of national identity, marked by the very geography of the continent and defined by unlimited possibilities, came to symbolize the liberating potential of reinvention.

Since the start of the twentieth century, this dream of reinvention has been mobilized by government and by industry alike in efforts to manage people. As national populations became recognizable as consumers and mass production demanded reliable markets, nationalistic rhetoric and ad copy alike served the purpose of aligning promises of reinvention with specific possibilities of behavior. Jackson Lears has observed that ‘as rhetorical constructions, advertisements did more than stir up desire; they also sought to manage it – to stabilize the sorcery of the marketplace by containing dreams of personal transformation within a broader rhetoric of control.’⁶⁵ For our cultural history, so too for individuals’ bodies such as Weber suggests, ‘makeovers create a discursive culture that allows for a fixation on what is non-normative as a way of reinforcing the hope that we can identify and inscribe the normative on the body.’⁶⁶ Reinvention within this discourse became associated with seeking broadly defined forms of normativity as a means of citizenly belonging. Indeed even ‘the inventor of the focus group,’ Ernest Dichter, believed that ‘advertising and mass consumerism would reinforce civic values and make both citizens and society more stable,’ hence ‘normalizing’ market-based existence.⁶⁷ The complex logic of the makeover is about correcting humiliation and violence visited upon the non-normative by attaining a type of normalcy through extraordinary transformation. In invariably valuing the ‘after’ over the ‘before,’ it assumes the highest cultural value for what is deemed ‘normative.’

This ideology of frontier reinvention lives on symbolically with the promises of border crossing now encapsulated by the personal makeover. Offering ‘new and satisfying forms of individualism, equality, personal interaction, and cost-free progress within the emerging mass society,’⁶⁸ the makeover and the US national identity collude in a celebration of progress, access to restricted privileges, and an ‘insistence on a free-market meritocracy.’⁶⁹ The key to both economic and political belonging, the makeover promises indefinite reinvention and forward progress, inseparable from the promises of commodity culture.⁷⁰

Thus, as Weber suggests, ‘belonging functions as the most ardent goal of makeover subjects. [...] To have self-esteem, happiness, and confidence, what these shows take as a form of necessary precursors to personhood, also functions as the gateway to democratic citizenry.’⁷¹ Recall the penultimate episode of *Mad Men*’s first season. Young, ambitious Pete Campbell hopes to advance his position within the firm by outing Don Draper to founding partner Bertam Cooper with information about Don’s identity theft. After Pete insists, ‘Mr. Cooper, he’s a fraud and a liar. A criminal, even!’ Cooper simply responds: ‘Even if this were true, who cares? This country was built and run by men with worse stories than whatever you’ve imagined here.’⁷²

The normative (and successful) ‘after,’ Don Draper, is valued well above whatever the lesser ‘before,’ Dick Whitman, was. Siska immediately picks up on the show’s theme of lost authenticity embedded within the logic of the makeover, wherein ‘the tenuousness of the re-created self’ calls forth an impaired self-identity.⁷³ Yet Don’s makeover is real and significant, signaling more than merely that Don is *really* just Dick, it is a makeover that ultimately reveals the true self that was there all along. As Richardson has observed, ‘we cannot say that Draper doesn’t exist insofar as the man who was Dick Whitman has, via identification as/ with Donald Draper, assumed a particular symbolic mandate (husband, father, boss, lover, etc. –the perfect man).’⁷⁴

As these markers of 'the perfect man' identity retreat over the program's seven seasons, Don is forced to make himself over yet again, only to discover his true authentic self in the advertising executive who wants to teach the world to sing about Coca-Cola. Doubt over authenticity, therefore, centers less on the specific makeover and much more on the normative values achieved in the 'after': on 'the perfect man' – white, wealthy, heterosexual – as his (first) personal (and secret) makeover is revealed (first to viewers, later to some characters) amid rapid and profound cultural-historic transformations. These transformations (occurring just outside their executive office windows), moreover, are remembered, historically, for having forever imperiled the invisible normativity of precisely these 'perfect man' characteristics. After all it is not just Don, but Pete and Roger and indeed most of the recurring characters whose existences seem increasingly comprised of self-doubt. *Mad Men* does not question the authenticity of the makeover so much as it dramatizes and naturalizes its inevitability and its ongoing necessity. As Weber insists, 'the makeover [...] also speaks of optimism, happiness achieved, desires fulfilled, and confidence gained. Though fear and dissatisfaction fuel the makeover, the story of transformation itself appeals to the hope that we can [...] transcend such non-normative malaise.'⁷⁵

The reason Don Draper's perpetual existential ennui cannot be traced directly back to his identity theft/makeover (yet can be shared by Pete, Roger, et al.) is that the makeover does not really alter nor undermine his identity, which is conservatively presumed to be essential: before and after represent the same body and same self; the makeover is shown here, as in makeover reality shows, to enhance and reveal, but not to create from nothing, the better after. Dick Whitman is not 'performing' Don Draper. He is instead shown to have clearly stolen a concrete person's identity and by the end of the series confirms it to be his own authentic self. Dick Whitman is never seen again (except in flashback), only this new, improved Don Draper remains. As Weber insists, one of the central ideological tenets of the makeover sub-genre, after all, is that the makeover is not performative, merely revelatory. At most it can allow for the possibility of social construction (indeed advertising demands as much), but never a performativity of self and subject.⁷⁶ Crossing the line into performativity would undermine the continuity of before and after (i.e. authenticity), radically questioning the very essence of the makeover subject's identity, indeed the very nature of subject and of identity. The after must always have already been there, before, in one form or another. This is crucial to understanding the function of the makeover as it prevents it from exhibiting (on commercial television alas) any actually radical potential. It is therefore not surprising that even once nearly everyone important to him finally knows his secret, Don never refers to himself as Dick. His makeover is complete. That act of making-over unquestioned. By the end of the third season, the mysterious secret of his before-self is largely dropped from the narrative. It returns only during the final season as Don seeks one more transformation, signaled by that final smile. Don Draper is wealthy, successful and valued, a much more normative expression of the individual's true, authentic self after all. Dick Whitman no longer exists.

The makeover's 'power to fascinate' therefore emerges from a specifically national form of consumerism: 'self-invention via commodities.'⁷⁷ Don Draper, after all, is literally the product of (illicit) commerce (born to a prostitute who dies giving birth, raised in a brothel). He is revealed to be the thriving product of self-reinvention (if also identity theft). His power grows from his

successful negotiation of identity indebted to a neo-liberal ideology which positions ‘the subject as an entrepreneur of the self, who does and, indeed, must engage in care of the body and its symbolic referents in order to be competitive within a larger global marketplace.’⁷⁸ In this sense the program’s conditions of production are reproduced textually. The ideology of the makeover, embraced institutionally by AMC, the foundation of commodity sales through advertising and the basis for citizen identity, informs the very essence of *Mad Men*, both institutionally and thematically. It is an American program on AMC. It is a show about reinvention, set in an advertising agency at the dawn of the last century’s most famous era of social transformation, garnering acclaim for a movie-nostalgia channel whose own reinvention includes running advertising spots.

Cultural: historiography

By expressing the historic link between the makeover and identity as the center of its thematic, *Mad Men* invites us to consider the implications of the version of history it offers. As a makeover show, *Mad Men* rewrites (makes over) this crucial cultural history in the context of twenty-first century neoliberal consumerism. Indeed Cromb has argued that despite the celebrated historicity, ‘It seems inconceivable that *Mad Men* could have been produced in 1962, not only because of the sexual frankness, but because it seems pitched to allow viewers to compare and contrast the way things were in the 1960s with the way things are now.’⁷⁹ In general, *Mad Men* treats our relatively recent cultural history as a strange alien territory – a clearly defined, clearly non-normative, ‘before,’ complete with baffling social rules and incomprehensible attitudes. Scenes of casual racism, explicit misogyny, child neglect, homophobia, thoughtless ecological damage, and ubiquitous cigarette smoking and alcoholism, exaggerate a portrayal of our past’s explicit strangeness and sheer *difference* from our now.⁸⁰

Mad Men’s ideology of the makeover relegates the past to a non-normative ‘before’ while allowing viewers in the present to relish our supposedly normative ‘after.’ The ‘reveal’ is always right there, just beyond the edge of the screen (of whatever device is being used to view the show). In this sense, the detailed, fetishized mise en scène serves not simply to suggest a documentation of the times, but indeed to ground the alienness of the era in some kind of empirical reality (rather the way conventions of ‘reality’ show makeover programs do, if with a different set of signifiers of the real).

With a historicity pointedly comparing our ‘after’ to its represented ‘before,’ *Mad Men* provoked, with equal relish, two contrasting responses. On the one hand, a disbelief that our cultural ‘after’ could have been preceded by such a dismal ‘before.’ One writer for *AdWeek*, for example, has asked why *Mad Men*’s ‘characters seem so dim and cruel,’ not quite believing that ‘everyone could have been so highly misogynistic. After all, David Ogilvy famously said, “The Consumer is not an idiot. She is your wife.”’⁸¹ History is alien. On the other hand, responses may reflect a nostalgic lament for the authenticity of the ‘before’ as it may be recalled and as it is portrayed on the series. Another *AdWeek* writer, for example, lamented: ‘Have things changed in our business? Yeah. The booze, the sex, the suits and the cigarettes are mostly all gone. And in a

way, so is the fun.’⁸² Such bifurcated responses echo Marc’s observation that ‘In seeking the inner life of a guild that stands guard over American consciousness, Weiner has crafted a humane comedy of manners, leaving the viewer room to negotiate personal space between self-congratulatory spikes of moral superiority and giddy escapes into antisocial fantasy.’⁸³

This room to negotiate personal space was not infinite, however. Indeed the humane comedy of manners, adhering to the recognizable forms of historical verisimilitude, could prove quite limiting. This is clear in the program’s frequently noted representation of gendered difference in the 1960s American workplace. Amid the rise of Second Wave feminism, the transforming social roles of women (unlike African-American characters amid the Civil Rights movement) are at least presented within the narrative. Yet within this representation of gender, we are offered an almost exclusively white, upper middle-class milieu of male privilege and excess, philandering and lying. Nonetheless *Mad Men* has been described in academic and popular accounts alike as, in at least one case, the ‘most feminist’ show on television.⁸⁴ Mimi White has explained this seemingly paradoxical response, noting that

By and large, the program dramatizes masculinities in crisis and women who struggle with (and perhaps against) the prevailing feminine norms and the systematic sexism and misogyny that are ‘naturalized’ as being appropriate to the era and zeitgeist it depicts (though also possibly ‘denaturalized’ through the program’s play with history, nostalgia, irony, etc.).⁸⁵

Through this complex representational strategy, the fact that the program appears at times to revel in displays of gross misogyny has been taken as evidence by some that it is ultimately critiquing those moments, thus offering an ironic, feminist appraisal of how bad things were, ‘however alluring, fun, and attractive the program also makes it appear.’⁸⁶ The bad ‘before’ exists largely as evidence of the historic need for a makeover and against which the ‘after’ can be measured. The promise of the makeover, after all, is that it will allow the authentic real to emerge, in what is our present. The past is implicitly non-normative and thus inauthentic. Such a formulation of history follows the logic of the makeover such that White (who does not explicitly invoke makeover television in her analysis) concludes that ‘our responses from the vantage of historical distance in turn endow the representation of these appealing, struggling women characters with feminist resonance.’⁸⁷

It is the implication of a historical makeover, presented through the *Mad Men*’s rendering of a non-normative, alien past that allows for a feminist reading. For *Mad Men*, the ideology of the makeover means that ‘reading the program in this way makes it not only okay, but even pleasurable, for liberal critics/scholars/viewers to watch and enjoy the show.’⁸⁸ Situated comfortably in the ‘after,’ we may enjoy the program’s representations of a non-normative, if fascinating ‘before,’ secure in the knowledge that our true, better selves have since been revealed. As a form of historiography, this is certainly not a radical counter-history, but rather, at best, a Whiggish ‘tendency [...] to praise revolutions provided they have been successful, to emphasize certain principles of progress in the past and to produce a story which is the ratification if not the glorification of the present.’⁸⁹ Indeed, in its details and the particular travails of its female characters, *Mad Men* dwells in what Lynn Spigel has labeled ‘postfeminist

nostalgia,' a paradoxical relationship to cultural history that 'provides a vision of the past in which women of the 1960s were already hoping to be post feminists: independent, career-focused, yet hyperbolically 'feminine' in their embrace of fashion, shopping and dating.'⁹⁰

In its consumerist pursuit it closes off not only other possibilities but also actual history. It is not simply satisfied with the now, it rewrites the now (by rewriting the past) into what it considers better copy. It suits history to its target audience while remaining determined that reinvention, a new day, a new idea, a new product, produce a better after. This determination insists that the past it presents us is lacking compared to the present we inhabit and from which we watch its historical narrative. In other words, *Mad Men* is true to its *mise en scène* through and through, presenting us with an ultimately post-political, fully consumerist approach to narrating history.

In this kind of cultural remembering, as Melissa Deem has asserted in a different context, 'feminism's past is reclaimed, not for political possibilities within feminism, but in order to measure the 'growth' of feminism.' In such cases 'the past becomes a regressive nostalgia that limits the possibilities for feminisms in the public sphere.'⁹¹ *Mad Men's* return to the past through fictive representation both repeats and revises feminist history. In this case, feminisms are limited to what seems to have been achieved in comparison to what has been represented. Thus, as Mary Beth Haralovich contends, *Mad Men's* female characters 'live in the early 1960s yet they are designed for the twenty-first century. Their characters are infused with period verisimilitude, as well as hindsight about women's liberation, but skip over the Second Wave's censoriousness regarding sexuality [for example].'⁹² While this perhaps renders these women more palatable to the targeted, contemporary commercial television audience, it does nothing to ensure against what happens when, as Deem puts it, 'Feminism's multiple and diverse histories are collapsed to the erotics of prose for a masculinist, heterosexual audience and then measured against specific masculine standards.'⁹³ Skipping over the Second Wave's multiple and more radical calls means that while Helen Gurley Brown's *Sex and the Single Girl* is frequently invoked in discussions about *Mad Men*, there was left no room for Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*. It is clear by the end that Sally Draper, for example, did not join with the Students for a Democratic Society at school and it is left unlikely that she will even be attending a consciousness-raising group. Instead, ending in late 1970, just as network television in the US was learning to accommodate the rise of the Second Wave,⁹⁴ it is easy to imagine Don, Peggy, or Joan enjoying the debut of *Mary Tyler Moore* that September as Lou Grant famously grumbles to single, professional Mary Richards, 'you know what, you've got spunk!...I hate spunk!'⁹⁵ and each, perhaps for different reasons, chuckling and thinking 'that's true.' Yet, it is virtually impossible to imagine any of them nodding in appreciation as they read Jill Johnston's contemporaneous column in the *Village Voice*.

A historiography indebted to the logic of the makeover thus leaves little possibility for radical remembering. Whether or not *Mad Men* can be read as a feminist critique of the 1960s, then, it was certainly writing a history of feminism. Rather than writing the 1960s through the eyes of feminism, however, we might consider the ways it was writing radical feminisms out of history. The show offers little to interrupt a narrative which simply leads to 'now,' adhering, as Deem suggests, to 'processes of cultural amnesia [that] structures the mass mediated public sphere in such a way that cultural memory functions along masculinist logics which eroticize, tame and

elide the multiple practices of feminists and queer politics within the political.⁹⁶ *Mad Men* reproduces, through the logic of the makeover, and only with the slightest irony of superior foreknowledge, historical narratives which render certain bodies and politics not only deviant, marginal and mute (potentially in need of a makeover), but increasingly entirely absent (and thus without an 'after' in our present).

AMC's makeover began by announcing that the letters 'AMC' would no longer stand for anything. It was sustained by a show about an industry in transition, about the changing role of advertising in a new economy, about identity mediated through institutional relations, and thus, about (but alas, within the strict boundaries of) reinvention. The historical verisimilitude to which *Mad Men* adheres offers no alternative possibilities or re-identifications, only a non-normative 'before' in need of a good makeover to get us to our authentic 'now.' This is what is at stake in the gulf between approaches to history, when popular history relies on a recognizable verisimilitude. This is why popular history needs to be understood by historicizing its production and its assumptions. If the final line of dialog sounds like a corporate logo: 'New day, new ideas, a new you' the actual last words ever uttered on *Mad Men* are sung in what we are expected to understand was Don's idea: 'Coca-Cola, it's the real thing.'

Notes

1. Some of this has been promoted by the packaging of the program itself: AMC's website included a '1960s Handbook' explaining period references made in various episodes. Each DVD release of the program included 'special features,' such as 1960s time capsules, histories of style and cigarette advertising, and documentary 'featurettes' such as 'Birth of an Independent Woman,' 'Medgar Evers: An Unsung Hero,' 'We Shall Overcome: the March on Washington,' and 'Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out.'
2. See, for example: Anthony Smith, 'Putting the Premium into Basic: Slow-Burn Narratives and the Loss-Leader Function of AMC's Original Drama Series', *Television & New Media* XX, no. X (2011): 1–17; Timotheus Vermeulen and Gary C. Rustad, 'Watching Television with Jacque Rancière: US "Quality Television", *Mad Men* and the "late cut"', *Screen* 54, no. 3 (2013): 341–54; and such collections as Scott F. Stoddart, ed. *Analyzing Mad Men: Critical Essays on the Television Series* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011); Lauren M.E. Goodland, Lilya Kaganovsky, and Robert A. Rushing, eds., *Mad Men, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style & the 1960s* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2013); Gary R. Edgerton, ed., *Mad Men: Dream Come True TV* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011); and Danielle M. Stern, Jimmie Manning, and Jennifer C. Dunn, eds., *Lucky Strikes and a Three Martini Lunch: Thinking about Television's Mad Men* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012).
3. Jeremy G. Butler "'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes": Historicizing Visual Style', in *Mad Men Mad Men: Dream Come True TV*, ed. Gary R. Edgerton (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 57.

4. Barbara Lippert, 'It's a Mad, Mad World', AdWeek, August 16, 2009, <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/its-mad-mad-world-100110> (accessed 23 July 2015).
5. Kimberly Maul. 'AMC's Apostolou Gives "Mad Men" Crossover Appeal', PR Week, November 10, 2008, 4.
6. Dana Polan, 'Maddening Times: *Mad Men* in Its History', in *Mad Men*, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style & the 1960s, ed. Lauren M.E. Goodlad, Lilya Kaganovksy, and Robert A. Rushing (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 42.
6. Steve Neale, 'Questions of Genre', Screen 31, no. 1 (1990): 45–66.
7. Ibid., 46.
8. Ibid., 47.
9. Butler, "'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes'", 55–71.
10. Todorov in Neale, 'Questions of Genre', 47.
11. Neale, 'Questions of Genre', 48.
12. See, for example: Alex Williams, 'Raising a Style Icon: Does Sharon Tate Hold a Clue to the "Mad Men" Finale?', The New York Times, May 9, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/11/fashion/does-sharon-tate-hold-a-clue-to-the-mad-men-finale.html?_r=0 (accessed 23 July 2015); and Jason Fraley, "'Mad Men" Draper-Tate Ties Right to the End', WTOP.com, April 13, 2015, <http://wtop.com/fraley-on-film/2015/04/megan-draper-sparks-juicy-mad-men-conspiracy-spoilers/> (accessed 23 July 2015).
13. See, for example: Lindsey M. Green, 'Where Don Draper Ends, D.B. Cooper Begins: Clues to the Ending of "Mad Men" Have Been Embedded Within the Show Since its Very Beginning', TheLi.st@Medium, June 23, 2013, <https://medium.com/thelist/where-don-draper-ends-d-b-cooper-begins-e96804523838> (accessed 23 July 2015); Mark Frauenfelder, 'Mad Men Endgame Theory: Don Draper is D.B. Cooper', BoingBoing.com, May 7, 2015, <http://boingboing.net/2015/05/07/mad-men-endgame-theory-don-dr.html> (accessed 23 July 2015); Julia Turner, 'Will Don Draper Become D.B. Cooper? A Skyjacking Expert Weighs In', Slate.com, April 16, 2014, http://www.slate.com/blogs/browbeat/2014/04/16/don_draper_to_become_d_b_cooper_in_mad_men_finale_a_skyjacking_expert_weighs.html (accessed 23 July 2015); and Eric Zorn, 'Is Don Draper of "Mad Men" Really D.B. Cooper?', The Chicago Tribune, May 7, 2015, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/zorn/ct-don-draper-dbcooper-madmen->

perspec-zorn0508-20150507-column.html (accessed 23 July 2015).

14. Richard Hofstadter, 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics', Harper's Magazine, November 1964, 85.
15. Ashley Lee, "'Mad Men' Creator Matthew Weiner Explains Series Finale, Character Surprises and What's Next', The Hollywood Reporter, May 20, 2015, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/mad-men-series-finale-matthew-797302> (accessed 21 July 2015); Ashley Lee, 'Don Draper Wrote that Coke Ad, After All', Time.com, May 20, 2015, <http://time.com/3891861/mad-men-finale-don-draper-jon-hamm-matthew-weiner-coke-ad-recap/> (accessed 22 July 2015); Josh Duboff, 'Matthew Weiner Reveals Whether Don Wrote the *Mad Men* Finale-Closing Coke Ad', VanityFair.com, May 21, 2015, <http://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2015/05/matthew-weiner-mad-men-finale-coke-ad> (accessed 21 July 2015).
16. Lee, "'Mad Men' Creator.'
17. Dave Izkoff, 'Jon Hamm Talks About the "*Mad Men*" Series Finale', The New York Times, May 18, 2015, <http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/05/18/mad-men-finale-jon-hamm-interview/?smid=tw-nytimes&r=1> (accessed 22 July 2015). Hamm continued in that interview: 'And so, this thing comes to him. There's a way to see it in a completely cynical way, and say, "Wow, that's awful." But I think that for Don, it represents some kind of understanding and comfort in this incredibly unquiet, uncomfortable life that he has led'.
19. Tim Carmody, '*Mad Men* and the Coke Jingle Theory', Medium.com, May 18, 2015, <https://medium.com/message/mad-men-and-the-coke-jingle-theory-4a5bf1fbaf02> (accessed 20 July 2015).
20. The production was denied access to the actual Esalen Institute facilities. See: The Hollywood Reporter Staff "'*Mad Men*" Fans Scramble to Investigate Real-Life Don Draper Retreat Center After Finale', The Hollywood Reporter, May 21, 2015, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/esalen-mad-men-fans-scramble-797385> (accessed 23 July 2015).
21. Andrew Adam Newman, 'It's a *Mad Men* World: From Advertising to Programming, Furniture to fashion, There's No Denying AMC's Hit Had a Massive Impact on Our Culture', Adweek, May 11, 2015: 44–50, 50.
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23. Ibid.

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25. Newman, 'It's a *Mad Men* World', 44–50.
26. Leslie Cauley, 'Scripps Quickly Proves an Outsider Can Start a Cable-TV Network', The Wall Street Journal, November 13, 1998.
27. John Dempsey, 'AMC Unveils More Contemporary Slate, Extra Ads', Variety, May 13, 2002, 18.
28. Ibid., 18.
29. Associated Press, 'When TV Network Changes Name, Look Close,' March 3, 2003, <http://web.archive.org/web/20080417043745/http://www.cnn.com/2003/SHOWBIZ/TV/03/03/networkacronyms.ap/> (accessed 7 February 2011).
30. Dempsey, 'AMC Unveils', 18.
31. Associated Press, 'When TV Network Changes'.
32. Dempsey, 'AMC Unveils', 18.
33. Stephen Battaglio, 'Old-Movie Channels Nearing Showdown', Daily News, June 28, 2002; and Dempsey, 'AMC Unveils', 18.
34. Denise Martin, 'AMC Catches Spiel', Daily Variety, August 14, 2006, 5.
35. Michael Schneider, 'AMC Saddles Up to Big Night', Daily Variety, September 17, 2007, 1.
36. Quoted in: Dempsey, 'Movie Net Mixes "Mad" Moxie', Variety, January 21–27, 2008, 18.
37. AMC's first original program had similarly been designed to build on the channel's brand image of nostalgia for old media. Remember WENN (1996–1998) was a light drama original series that took place in a fictional Pittsburgh radio station during that medium's golden age. Although critically well received, the program was designed for AMC movie buff audiences and did not attract particular industry attention or new viewers to the channel. It was original programming designed to fit with American Movie Classics' brand, but it was not a makeover show for AMC.
38. Butler, "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes".

39. Vermeulen and Rustad, 'Watching Television with Jacques Rancière'.
40. Smith, 'Putting the Premium into Basic'.
41. Ibid., 10.
42. Michael Learmonth, 'Steaming "Mad"', *Variety*, October 22–28, 2007), 6.
43. Newman, 'It's a *Mad Men* World', 50.
44. Barbara Lippert, 'Lippert Critiques "*Mad Men*"', *AdWeek*, July 30, 2008, <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/lippert-critiques-mad-men-96538> (accessed 23 July 2015).
45. Steve Simpson, 'Why So Sad, *Mad Men*?', *Adweek*, December 9, 2009, <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/why-so-sad-mad-men-101078?page=1> (accessed 23 July 2015).
46. Even if Matthew Weiner did push early on to fully follow the premium cable model and have *Mad Men* uninterrupted by advertisement breaks. See: Ken Wheaton, 'Weiner's Desire for an Ad-Free "*Mad Men*" is Simply Mad', *Advertising Age*, October 15, 2007, 4.
47. Quoted in: Eleftheria Parpis, 'CLIO Honors "*Mad Men*" Creator Matthew Weiner', *Adweek.com*, May 13, 2009, <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/clio-honors-mad-men-creator-matthew-weiner-99268> (accessed 12 August 2015).
48. Todd Wasserman, 'Secret Product Placement of "*Mad Men*"', *AdWeek*, August 17, 2009, <http://www.adweek.com/news/television/secret-product-placements-mad-men-100128> (accessed 23 July 2015); Wheaton, 'Weiner's Desire for an Ad-Free', 52.
49. Wasserman, 'Secret Product Placement'.
49. Jon Lafayette, 'Originals Life Cable's Profits, Reputation: Nets See Return on Record Investment in Summer Lineup', *Television Week*, September 17, 2007, 3.
50. Mike Flaherty, '"Mad" Blurbs Blur Line', *Variety*, August 25–31, 2008, 6.
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