

**The Producer and ‘Running Naked’: A
production practice for micro-budget
regional filmmaking combining
professional and non-professional working
within a higher education setting**

BY
MICHAEL FRANCIS KNOWLES

Sep 2023. School of Digital, Technologies and Art. Staffordshire University.

SUBMITTED TOGETHER WITH THE FILM ‘RUNNING NAKED’ FOR PhD AWARD

This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

Abstract

This thesis seeks to establish a new model of production, centred around a more contextually specific role of the producer, one that is different from conventional models and theories for understanding the producer role in mainstream film. To do this the thesis explores the role of the producer in relation to the author's current production practice as it is situated in micro budget feature film production in the UK in the 21st century. The thesis uses the author's film, *Running Naked* (Buhler, 2020), and its production process, as a practice as research study. The thesis examines the producer's contribution to the creative and financial components of the filmmaking process in the context of a Culture 3.0 film produced within a university looking at the strengths and weaknesses of this model. Simultaneously, utilising the work of Sacco (2011) and Boehm (2022), the thesis explores similarities and differences to films produced by the author using more conventional financing models and the effect the funding structure and the education context of production has on the producer role and the film.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Andrew Stubbs and Carola Boehm who have helped me navigate through this process from filmmaker to academic. Thanks to everyone who was involved in the production of *Running Naked* in particular Victor Buhler, Andy Paton, Ray Boucher, Kate Gallow, Oli Walker and our two leads Andrew Gower and Matthew McNulty.

Thanks to my wife Jennifer for supporting me on this endeavour and my children George and Frances for putting up with their dad escaping to the garden shed to write this thesis.

Contents

1. Introduction	7
2. Methodology and Critical Frameworks	14
2.1. Cultures 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0.....	17
2.2. Value Chain Model	18
2.3. Self-Production vs Production Practice	19
2.3.1. Evidential data and practice as research journey	20
2.4. Research Methods	21
3. Literature Review	23
3.1. The Role of the Producer: Between Art and Commerce.....	23
3.2. The Role of Educational Partnerships in Film Production.....	34
4. The Producer in the Context of UK Independent Filmmaking	41
5. Case Studies 2009-2022	51
5.1. <i>A Boy Called Dad</i>	52
5.2. <i>Best Laid Plans</i>	59
5.3. <i>Book of Love</i>	65
5.4. Conclusions from Chapter 5 Case Studies.....	70
6. Case Study in Practice: <i>Running Naked</i>	78
6.1. Development of <i>Running Naked</i> : Towards a New Model of Production.....	79
6.2. Pre-pre-production: A New Stage Incorporating the Producer as Teacher in the Filmmaking Process	86
6.3. Preproduction	89
6.4. Production	95
6.5. Post-production	99
6.6. Distribution	104

7. Discussion	113
7.1. To what extent was <i>Running Naked</i> 's mode of production indicative of a Culture 3.0 model and how did this affect its development, production and distribution (compared with the case studies in chapter 5)?	114
7.2. What role did the university play in the education-industry partnership production of <i>Running Naked</i> and how could this be improved in future iterations?	118
7.3. How did the producer's role change in the making of <i>Running Naked</i> in an industry-education partnership model and how was this reflected in credits?	127
7.4. The Producer, Culture 3.0 Model and Considerations of Pedagogy	135
7.5. Self Representation in the Case of Culture 3.0	139
8. Conclusions	143
8.1. Closing Statement	147
9. Appendices	149
9.1. Films referred to as case studies	149
9.2. Budget tables and materials for <i>Running Naked</i> and case studies (chapters 5 and 6)	150
9.3. Screenshot of BuzzFeed review of <i>Running Naked</i>	150
10. Bibliography	152

List of Figures

Figure 1 Portland Film Festival Catalogue 2020.....	8
Figure 2 Modes of Practice (ed. R. Nelson, 2013, p.37).....	14
Figure 3 Independent Film Value Chain (Bloore, 2009)	29
Figure 4 Estimated Revenue by Source for the UK Independent Film Sector for Shoot year 2010-2020	47
Figure 5 Median Feature Film Budget in the UK from 2008 to 2019 by Production Type	49
Figure 6 A Boy Called Dad Finance Plan	52
Figure 7 A Boy Called Dad Poster- Edinburgh Film Festival	57
Figure 8 A Boy Called Dad Cinema Release Poster.....	58
Figure 9 Best Laid Plans Finance Plan.....	60
Figure 10 Best Laid Plans UK Poster.....	64
Figure 11 Best Laid Plans US Poster	64
Figure 12 Book of Love Finance Plan.....	66
Figure 13 Book of Love Posters from Around the World	70
Figure 14 Effect of Cultural Models on Producer Role	73
Figure 15 Running Naked Finance Plan.....	83
Figure 16 University-housed morning production meeting for Running Naked.....	99
Figure 17 Running Naked Festival Garlands.....	104
Figure 18 Stoke premiere of Running Naked, 2021	107
Figure 19 Running Naked UK artwork	108
Figure 20 Running Naked artwork -International.....	108
Figure 21 Running Naked review in Total Film.....	110
Figure 22 Running Naked Review, Daily Mail	110
Figure 23 Rory Bremner tweet re Running Naked, Jan 17 th 2021	111
Figure 24 Culture 3.0 Value Chain	129
Figure 25 Front roller of Book of Love showing the ‘Produced by’ credit	135
Figure 26 Buzzfeed Review of Running Naked	151

1. Introduction

This thesis reflectively analyses the work of a feature film producer as they are engaged in developing a new model of production practice for micro budget production, defined loosely as filmmaking costing below £150k, in the UK in the 21st century¹. This producer, Michael Knowles, is the author of this thesis and the producer of *Running Naked*, the micro-budget feature film that forms the primary case study for this practice as research PhD. More specifically, the thesis examines Michael Knowles' contribution to the creative and financial components of a filmmaking process in the context of a film produced in a university-industry partnership, one that combines professional and non-professional labour within a higher education setting. As this thesis will explain, this model of production is different from how the producer's other films were made with an involvement of state funders and/or commercial distributors, where particular remits were expected to be followed. Hence, the reflective work that this thesis engages in entails making comparisons to Michael Knowles' role as a producer in his other productions as well as to conceptions about the producer role more broadly in industry and critical discourse. For reference, therefore, all the films discussed in this thesis, and the main practice that is part of the PhD submission, are available from the links, usernames and passwords contained in the Appendix. Meanwhile, from here on in, Michael Knowles is referred to in this thesis in the third person as 'the producer' or

¹ *Economic Review of Independent Film*, 2022 excludes filmmaking under £250k from its review of filmmaking in the UK though Stephen Follows is more specific in labelling micro budget filmmaking as any film under 150k (Follows, 2014).

‘the author’, which is in line with general conventions that make objectivity a goal of any scholarly work.



Running Naked | Narrative

Mark and Ben have been friends since meeting as teenage cancer patients. Twenty years later, Mark is a successful, womanizing doctor while Ben has become a neurotic recluse. A dramatic piece of news upends their lives and challenges their friendship. To break Ben out of his shell, Mark drags him on an adventure that will change both their lives.

UK | 92min | Director: Victor Buhler



Vagrant | Narrative

The story of Frank, a homeless Black man subsisting on nightly alcohol binges to numb himself from the pain of guilt and regret he suffered from an earlier life. After one such bender Frank wakes up to find a puppy that was left to die in a garbage bin. Frank takes the necessary steps to care for the dog, unravelling his past while facing an uncertain future.

Canada | 83min | Director: Caleb Ryan

BUY TICKETS AT PDXFF.COM

15

Figure 1 Portland Film Festival Catalogue 2020

In the build up to the exhibition of *Running Naked* at the Portland Film Festival in 2020, the festival’s catalogue included a synopsis of the film along with the film’s runtime, country of origin and director’s name, the latter exemplifying the dominant culture of listing the director and making the producer role less visible (Figure 1). Typical of festival catalogues worldwide, the use of the director’s name is symptomatic of how film authorship discourses have developed around the director, how individual directors gain prominence in promotional and critical discourse, and how the creative input of the director is foregrounded over the rest of the crew. Moreover, the role of director’s has also been historically and overwhelmingly foregrounded in film education and this is evidenced through the substantial body of academic work on the director as opposed to producers, as discussed later in the literature review. This thesis, however, will break from director focused models of authorship to

explore the creative input of the producer in the case of a practice as research PhD and how this is reshaped by its particular model of production within a higher education context.

The PhD draws from the substantial experience and engages with the production practice of the author, a BAFTA nominated multi award winning film producer of 9 feature films and a part time film lecturer based in Derbyshire. Undertaking this practice as research PhD project was designed to have the cyclical effect of enhancing understandings of the unique positioning of producers and how this influences their production practice while helping to identify how to push the author's own practice forward within the context it is situated within. Simultaneously, by exploring the current definitions, concepts, industry norms and cultural practices around the role of the producer, the thesis aims to contribute new knowledge to the understanding of this role in a digitally supported and co-production economy in the early 21st century. The final portfolio will therefore include both a thesis and a portfolio of cinematic works.

This thesis reflexively examines the producer's work in the form of a practice as research PhD at a period of substantial industrial transformation for film production, one that the BFI Commission on Independent Film has termed an industrial revolution (2018, p.1). The emergence of digital and online technologies have opened up new distribution channels with implications for traditional business models and practice. Moreover, the business of cinema exhibition has faced new challenges and mid budget filmmaking is in decline (Follows, 2017). In this period of transformation, the producer made the decision to produce *Running*

Naked in partnership with private equity and Staffordshire University in a higher education context without the support of usual funders, such as Creative England, BFI, BBC and Film 4. Doing so was also intended to allow the producer to control the distribution of the film with the aim of independently securing distribution through a major streaming service such as Amazon Instant Video or Netflix. This thesis thus reflexively examines the producer's production of *Running Naked* as it was embedded within this wider context. While the thesis is focused primarily on reflexively examining the producer's role within this new model of production, as opposed to the pedagogy, the thesis also considers the formal integration of training elements into micro budget film production by focusing on *Running Naked* as it was developed, produced and post produced through the masters course at Staffordshire University.

At the heart of this line-of-enquiry is a production practice as part of a practice as research project. The research will follow the life cycle of a micro budget feature film shot in partnership with a university, from development to distribution from the perspective of a modern producer. Doing so, it will also compare the practice as research project to other films made by the author under more traditional structures to identify how these structures have implications for the producer's role. As a result, the thesis points to new understandings of producers as they carry out their role as creative professionals in the contemporary world of micro budget filmmaking, in different models of production, including and especially a model of production made in an educational context.

To summarise, the aims of this thesis and practice as research PhD are to:

- To look reflexively at the journey and work undertaken by the author/producer in making the micro budget feature film *Running Naked* in light of the description of the producer roles described in the literature review.
- To look at how the mode of production within an educational context has influenced the producer role and how this compares to their experiences and roles on other films.
- To assess the value that the producer brings to their productions by mapping their contributions against a ‘value chain’ model of the producer’s work in general.
- To develop an innovative model for the author’s practice, one that takes account of micro feature film production and the educational context.

The research questions stemming from these aims are:

1. To what extent was *Running Naked*’s mode of production indicative of a Culture 3.0 model and how did this affect its development, production and distribution?
2. What role did the university play in the education-industry partnership production of *Running Naked* and how could this be improved in future iterations?
3. How did the producer’s role change in the making of *Running Naked* in an industry-education partnership model? How did this change self perceptions of the producer?
4. What were the successes and failures of the pedagogy on *Running Naked*?

The structure of this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 2 outlines the methodology for this practice as research PhD. It describes how *Running Naked* was designed as part of a process of ‘doing thinking’. Chapter 3 examines the existing literature relevant to this practice as research project. Specifically, it examines literature around conceptualisations of the producer, the producer role in an educational context, and issues relating to industry practitioners’ self-representations. Doing so, the literature review provides a grounding for reflexively examining the author’s work in practice and gives an academic context for the work.

Chapter 4 outlines the context in which the filming of *Running Naked* took place in terms of the author’s own practice in the industry at the time of production in 2019. The chapter looks at the changing state of the UK film industry, the support available for filmmakers, investment into UK film and average budget levels of production, and changes in distribution. Chapter 5 then examines three case studies of films produced by the author with differing financial structures to *Running Naked*. Functioning to establish a means of comparison, the chapter looks at the effects of these structures on the author’s practice as a producer, from development to distribution.

Chapter 6 analyses the development, production, post-production and distribution of the practice as research core of this thesis, *Running Naked*. The chapter reflects on the production

process from the producer's standpoint, from script to screen for a micro budget film shot in a university. The chapter highlights key elements of this production practice for discussion in the chapter that follows. Chapter 7 thus discusses the findings from the case studies examined in chapters 5 and 6. The chapter considers to what extent *Running Naked* was an innovative production, discusses what role the university played in the education-industry partnership production of *Running Naked*, considers the producer's changing role, and discusses the producer's self-representations in the case of a Culture 3.0 model of production. Finally, Chapter 8 provides the main conclusions, revisiting the research question and considering the implications of the findings before presenting recommendations for further study.

2. Methodology and Critical Frameworks

The methodology used for this PhD is practice as research, as formulated by Robin Nelson, Smith and Dean, and others. Nelson describes the practice as research approach as ‘theory imbricated within practice’ (ed. R. Nelson, 2013, p. 5). Nelson compares the process of practice as research to someone describing how to ride a bicycle, in that it is something that you know how to do but you need to do it to be able to describe how you do it. To continue Nelson’s analogy, in this study the bicycle represents the skills and practices the author as a producer utilizes within the production of *Running Naked*. The author suggests that these skills utilised within *Running Naked* stand in contrast with common depictions of the producer’s role, as outlined in the literature review.

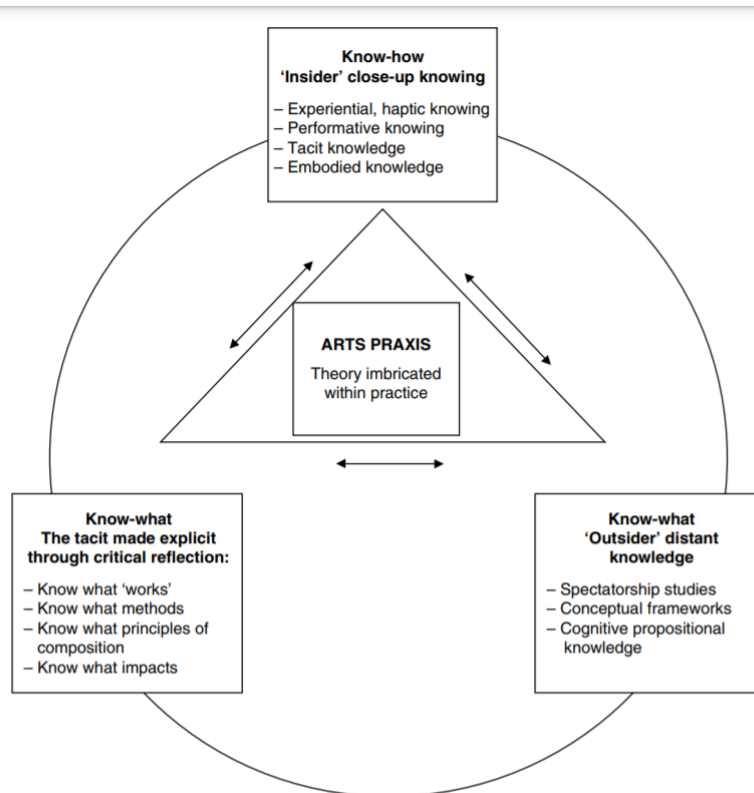


Figure 2 Modes of Practice (ed. R. Nelson, 2013, p.37)

Nelson's approach is clarified further by Figure 2. As a producer, the 'insider close up knowing' is the knowledge that is needed for the development, financing and distribution of a film. By making this kind of knowledge in the production practices explicit and noting the various rituals, performances and theoretical and conceptual underpinnings, a greater insight into the role is developed. Conversely, the 'know what' is the reflections made upon the role, once having done it.

As Nelson suggests, this 'practice as research' way of engaging in new knowledge production benefits the practice. As many producers will experience, reflection on production work is something that micro budget producers rarely have time for as they are constantly moving from one project to the next. There is a cyclical process here in engaging in a practice as research PhD, in that learning occurs as the work is being done, with the two processes (critical/conceptual and practical) feeding off each other and pulling each other along. The practice identifies more critical aspects to investigate and, in turn, insights can drive a new innovative practice.

According to Schon, 'when someone reflects in action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context' (Schon, 1983, p.68). Ryle describes this as 'doing thinking' and that 'one performance is a replica of its predecessors' (Ryle, 1949, p.42). The process of 'doing thinking' will be particularly useful in this context, given that the producer role, particularly in the context of UK micro budget film production, is so poorly understood. There will also

be new knowledge in terms of the reflection of this role in an educational context in comparison to the producer's roles in more traditional productions.

Nelson discusses the inter-relationships between 'theory' and 'practice' and the dangers of planting theories on to practice retrospectively. This is something to be aware of within this study to avoid retrospectively squeezing practice to match theoretical models. P. Rogers (2017), who authored a practice as research PhD, and referring to Nelson, describes the arts in practice process in relation to music:

creative practice is fluid and evolving, sometimes practice comes first, sometimes ideas come first, sometimes theories and concepts come first, but whichever starting point a composition takes, its journey is one of a multi-faceted and often parallel evolution across all modes of doing, reflecting, reading, articulating, playfulness, imagination, technical implementation, discovery, contextualisation, improvisation, structuring, consolidation and outcome. There is nothing linear or fixed in the [compositional] approach. The practice as research premise is the revealing of ideas in action and the research is an embroiled combination of 'doing' and critical thinking. (P. Rogers, 2017, p. 35)

Using a practice as research methodology to drive a line of inquiry about creative production practice in the context of producer roles has its challenges, as these roles can be fluid and changing. Joe Kerber wrote that:

...the 'producer' has always been relatively unstable, signaling a wide range of potential roles and functions within alternative film-making traditions (Kerber, 2014, p, 27)

This study and its methodology, therefore, is attentive to this instability and how the role of a producer changes under different cultural types of engagements and finance and production models.

Finally, there are critical and conceptual frameworks feeding into this practice as research project. Each of the critical frameworks will be unpacked in further chapters as they relate to specific case studies, however it is worth very briefly describing them here to outline how they will be used as a tool for analysis as they form an important part of the methodology.

2.1. Cultures 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0

Pier Sacco (2011) and Carola Boehm (2022) identify three models of production, which they label as Culture 1.0, Culture 2.0 and Culture 3.0. Culture 1.0 represents the arts as supported by a patron while Culture 2.0 represents the arts as supported by market players, which, in the case of film, is usually a publicly funded body and distributors, respectively. Culture 3.0, however, represents a new model of production where production takes place without the traditional gatekeepers of Cultures 1.0 and 2.0 and opens greater potential for co-creation. This thesis thus draws on the investigations and conceptualizations of Sacco and Boehm to

frame the producer's different productions and posits that *Running Naked* aligns with a Culture 3.0 model. More specifically, this thesis will look at how these cultural models of funding and production apply to film and how in turn they effect the producer role. A comparison between the 3 different models of producing and financing films will be made through reference to other work produced by the author. This comparison will involve considering the sources of the finance for each film, referring to the Sacco/Boehm model, and reflectively analysing the author's practice within elements of the life cycle of each film's production.

2.2. Value Chain Model

Peter Bloore's 'Value Chain' model (Figure 3) is another useful analytical tool that will be applied in the study. This model looks at who adds what value at each stage of a commercial feature film, from development through to distribution (Bloore, 2012). The value chain model will be applied here to look at a micro budget feature in an education context alongside Ortner's model of value and the producer's role. This will potentially be useful in charting the producer role against that of, for example, the director and other roles in *Running Naked*, the main portfolio element for this thesis.

2.3. Self-Production vs Production Practice

Also relevant here is the work of Paul Long and Simon Spink in ‘Producing the Self’ as they explore ‘how the nature of the producer’s work involves a mode of self-production as a creative professional as much as it does the making of films’ (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p. 96). By looking at the role of the producer as arts in practice, it is possible to look at this self, alongside the branding of the producer self, in relation to the production of *Running Naked* and in contrast to other films produced by the author. Long and Spink’s study builds on the work of John Caldwell’s work on ‘industrial reflexivity’ where media industry workers self-represent, critique and reflect on their own labour (2008, pp.4-5). As Caldwell states:

Interviews with and statements by producers and craftspeople in film can be conceptually rich, theoretically suggestive, and culturally revealing, yet we should never lose sight of the fact that such statements are almost always covered from some perspective of self-interest, promotion, and spin. (Caldwell, 2008, p.14)

In this study, therefore, the producer/author is what Caldwell describes in ‘Both Sides of the Fence’ (ed. V. Mayer, 2009) as an ‘observational participant’, being part of the study and observing.

Thus, this thesis seeks to reflexively examine dynamics between the producer’s own self-representations and practice and considers to what extent the author works within or against broader conceptualisations of the producer in scholarly and critical discourse.

2.3.1. Evidential data and practice as research journey

This practice as research study looks at how a film is made from the producer perspective from development, to preproduction, to production, post production and marketing and distribution. This process is the ‘doing-thinking’ as described by Ryle (1949, p.42). Each of these stages is reflected upon in relation to previous films produced by the author and the different models of cultural engagement inherent in them.

The thesis seeks to ground the producer’s work within a broader industrial and cultural context by reflecting upon this process in relation to previous films and by drawing on diary notes, emails and other forms of production correspondence, photographs and video footage surrounding *Running Naked*, as well as reflecting on the final film itself. These artifacts will be used to reflect upon the practice of the author – and the different types of relationships between producer, actors, director, and other stakeholders - while creating a narrative of the producer’s practice and of the production of *Running Naked*.

On average one hundred emails were received per day by the author in relation to the production of *Running Naked* (and the educational processes around the film) with the email volume peaking in pre production. These emails covered the ideation, development, pre-production, production, post-production and marketing of the film. The emails were reviewed, reflecting upon what they meant for developing the author’s own production practice in this novel context in particular with reference to:

- to the director/ producer relationship
- to the producer role
- to managing external forces (market, financial) with educational internal forces (production process)
- to the critical and cultural frameworks outlined above
- to other educational filmmaking models.

The review of these email materials comprised a constant process feeding into the reflection of a particular production practice forming the basis of the production model proposed as part of this thesis. Furthermore, materials produced in relation to the film and the course, including schedules, budgets and promotional materials, were reviewed using the same framework. In true practice-as-research fashion, the artefacts, represented by communications, emails, and such, are informing a personal, specific, practice, and the evidence for the new knowledge production lies in the iteration of the practice during the process of developing it – as such “building the camera, whilst making the film” (Patterson in Boehm, 2001, p.16).

2.4. Research Methods

In summary, this PhD uses a practice as research methodology, with methods including:

- Traditional critical elements, including a literature review and critical analysis.

- A creative production practice, making a film whilst engaging in the above and representing – in true practice as research style - the evidence of the research process.
- An analysis of *Running Naked* as a practice as research PhD project produced in an educational context.
- A comparison between *Running Naked* as a practice as research PhD project produced in an educational context and three other case-studies, in the form of other feature films, produced by the author.
- A consideration of the author's own practice and self-representations through the analysis of source text materials such as diary notes, budget spreadsheets, promotional materials, and email conversations as part of film production processes.

3. Literature Review

This literature review is divided into two parts. The first focuses on conceptualisations of the producer and their role in film production. The second focuses on the role of education-industry partnerships and structures for the production of films.

3.1. The Role of the Producer: Between Art and Commerce

Conceptualisations of film labour in scholarly discourse have historically tended focus on issues of authorship which have revolved around the director often at the expense of other film workers including the producer. This focus on the director can be traced back to at least 1954 when François Truffaut wrote in his famous essay 'A Certain Tendency in French Cinema' published in *Cahiers du cinéma* of the notion that the director is the true author of a given film (François Truffaut, 1954). This notion subsequently gained significant traction worldwide once it was translated into English by Andrew Sarris as 'the auteur theory' (1962). As Thomas Schatz says, this concept has led to an overwhelming focus on the director has had 'film history and criticism in a prolonged state of adolescent romanticism' (Schatz, 2015, p.5). Similarly, Eva Norvtrup Redvall states that 'even though everyone acknowledges that filmmaking is a collaborative enterprise, film scholars have tended to focus on theories about individual authorship and film directors as 'auteurs'' (McDonald, 2021, chap.19, p.224).

This focus on the director is reflected within recent academia in terms of the relative volume of literature on the producer and director. In researching through the *Open Screen* and *Media Industries* journals, for instance, there was little or no reference to the producer role in the UK and nothing specific to the author's area of work and study. There are several guides for performing producing work such as *The Producer's Business Handbook: The roadmap for the balanced film producer* (Lee, 2018), *The Independent Film Producer's Survival Guide: A business and legal sourcebook*, *Indie Film Producing* (Lyons, 2012) and *Becoming a Film Producer* (Kachka, 2021). Effectively functioning as 'how-to' books offering advice regarding basic terminology and practices, however, these guides lack the critical underpinning necessary to facilitate the deeper learning of the kind that this study is involved in. The guides are very broad as they aim to speak to the widest audience and lack the context specificity relevant to the author of this thesis' practice, while they also fail to be cognizant of the producer's own self-representations.

As initial research into the producer role, the author also read biographies of the producers Irving Thalberg (1994), Samuel Goldwyn (1989) and Christine Vachon (1999). Thalberg and Goldwyn's biographies discuss their work as producers in Classical Hollywood and present a romantic picture of the halcyon days of the star system and producer power. Producer biographies of the kind written on Goldwyn and Thalberg also have a tendency to function as a form of mythologising, creating what Amanda Lotz describes as narratives about the 'great man' fulfilling their 'master plans' (Lotz, A. 2014, pp. 29). As Lotz points out, such narratives are problematic as they tend to ignore the contexts in which the producer operates, obscure the important contributions made to production by a range of collaborators, and

ultimately risk swapping one model of authorship built around the director for another built around the producer. Vachon's biography, however, discusses her work in the American indie scene and contains much more insight into the business of modern producing, has somewhat more contextual grounding and shows some awareness of the producer's own self-representations. As would be expected, however, these books provide very limited insight into the producer role and micro budget film production (Vachon's work being more mid-budget and often financed and distributed by Hollywood studios and their subsidiary divisions) within America but especially within the UK. Accordingly, this thesis seeks to provide a more objective study of the author's work by grounding it in practice as research frameworks and reflectively analysing it in relation to different and broader models of production, as was discussed more in the methodology chapter. As James Fair writes in relation to micro budget filmmaking, 'this area of filmmaking is often underexplored in relation to more glamorous, mainstream or economically influential filmmaking' (Fair, 2017, p. 145).

One of the few scholarly texts that does examine the producer role is *Beyond the Bottom Line* (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014). The book is designed to fill the relative paucity of materials on the producer and is a useful for outlining different approaches to the producer and a typology of film producers. Spicer, McKenna and Meir explain in their introduction to the collection that before the auteur theory became the prominent mode of critical thought around film, the producer was the dominant off camera force. In the early days of the studio system in the USA until the dawn of TV, film was a 'producers' medium for its Golden Age' (Spicer et al, 2014, p.2). The book highlights how the issue at the heart of this scholarly and critical neglect

of the producer, however, is not merely the attribution of authorship but rather the challenges of balancing perspectives of film as simultaneously a creative medium and commercial product. Spicer et al (2014) state that ‘the financial side of art has always proved problematic for academics and critics alike,’ which they posit contributes to making scholarly work on the producer ‘remarkably sparse’ (Spicer et al., 2014, p.1). Often this has led, they elaborate, to an ‘underrating’ of the producer, who is often looked upon as focusing solely on ‘financial gain’ within the business side of filmmaking (Spicer et al., 2014, p.4). Historically, this has created something of a cigar smoking, Irving Thalberg archetype:

While the grubbiness of bottom-line concerns may be attractive in tall tales and lampoon, they are still not adequately addressed by scholarship which often fallaciously dichotomizes art and finance. The producer, then, such an essential component of any production, remains a largely misunderstood and under-analysed figure (A. Spicer et al., 2014, p.1).

As a result, Spicer et al argue that ‘much work needs to be done’ in this field:

With the producer being so closely associated with bottom-line concerns, this apparent distaste for money matters within the academy could go some way to explaining the producer’s relative absence from Screen Studies literature (Spicer et al., 2014, p.1).

As Spicer et al argue, however, a producer’s ‘skills as dealmaker, showman and promoter are difficult to quantify and assess but nevertheless indispensable’ (Spicer et al., 2014, p.12). Ryan, Goldsmith, Cunningham and Verhoeven, in the same collection, suggest that the producer role is an area for further study in that whilst ‘the auteurists provide a way of seeing

and understanding by using the director as a vantage point’, the producer ‘often provides a very useful vantage point for observation and interrogation of a much broader terrain,’ one factoring in the commercial as well as creative components of film production (Ryan, Goldsmith, Cunningham and Verhoeven, 2014, p.7). It is therefore the aim of this study to try to develop a more nuanced consideration of the producer role through the practice as research production of *Running Naked*. As Amanda Lotz indicates elsewhere in her discussion of creative managers working in the media industries more broadly, studying media producers or managers is challenging because their contributions cross from development to marketing through to the engagement with crew across all departments (Lotz, A. 2014, p. 29).

In terms of the role of the producer, there is an attempt in *Beyond the Bottom Line* to look at the distinctions between what Mervyn Le Roy called a ‘creative producer’ and a ‘business administrator producer’ (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p.10). The ‘creative producer’ role is as much of a constricting one-dimensional label obscuring the realities of the producer’s work as the cigar smoking ‘business administrator’ archetype. As Spicer, McKenna and Meir conclude: ‘labels actually obscure what most commentators consider to be the producer’s key quality: to *combine* an artistic sensibility with financial nous and therefore act as a bridge between commerce and art’ (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p.10). As Joseph Kember points out in ‘A Judge of Anything and Everything’, the term producer in early cinema was:

used flexibly to refer not only to production companies and to the range of managers involved in operational and financial management of them, but also to individuals directly involved in film-making practice (Kember, 2014, p.27).

The role of the producer extends beyond ‘the confines of the actual process of production’ to its exploitation and this means that the producer must be able to assess the film as a product with a market appeal and value (Spicer et al., 2014, p.11). Meanwhile, Spicer also argues that the ‘producer’s creativity has another dimension,’ specifically that of ‘piecing together the complex financial packaging necessary to make a film’ (Spicer, 2014, p. 13). Likewise, Simon Relph describes producers as ‘building a bridge between the artistic side of filmmaking and the logistical’ (Spicer, 2014, p.68).

In his article ‘The American Independent Producer and the Value Chain’ (2014), James Lyons also explores how producers add value to a production across its entirety in what Lyons, building on the work of Michael E. Porter (1998) that was subsequently redefined by Peter Bloore (2012), describes as a ‘value chain’ (Lyons, 2014, p. 200). Bloore’s value chain, as cited by Lyons, is represented below in Figure 3. As Lyons explains, there is a rebalancing of the director and producer’s contributions within this value chain relative to auteurist perceptions of the director’s role on most independent films. This rebalancing sees the director’s input limited to three of the seven segments and while they occupy a leading position in the production and post-production phases, in the development, financing and pre-sales phases they are relegated below a number of other individuals, notably the producer (or producers), whose influence may also extend beyond post-production into international

sales and licensing (Lyons, 2014, p. 200). Notably, Lyons emphasises that auteur-directors can play substantial role in helping to secure the finance for productions but that they do so in their capacity as a brand rather than directly through their own agency. As Andrew Stubbs demonstrates, however, producers and other talent intermediaries such as talent agents and managers play a substantial role in this regard as they manage and mobilise the auteur-directors' brands to help to secure said finance (Stubbs, 2023, pp.98-116). Thus, this thesis explores the complexities of the author's role as a producer across the entire value chain, from development to exploitation.

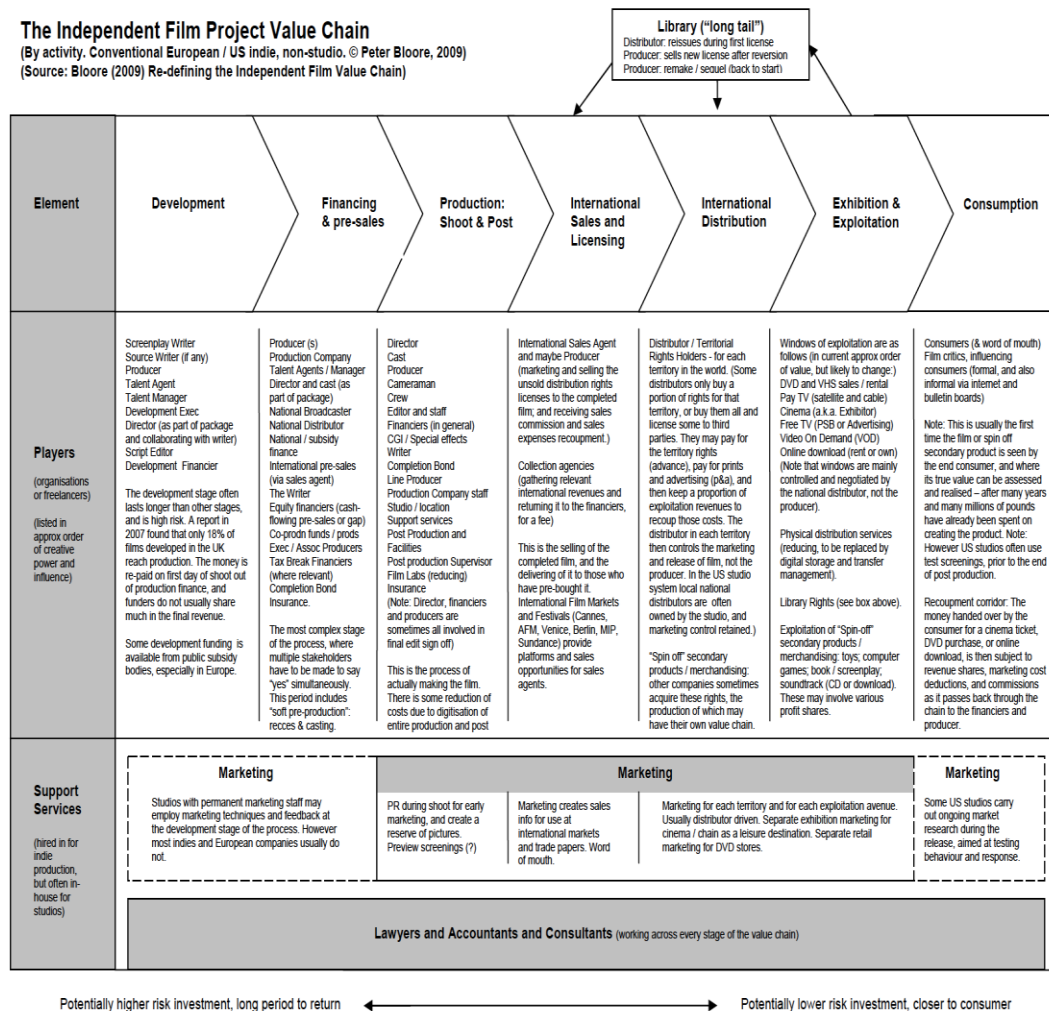


Figure 3 Independent Film Value Chain (Bloore, 2009)

Another substantial theme of *Beyond the Bottom Line*, one that is very pertinent to this thesis, concerns how producers in effect produce themselves through self-representations. The insights that the book offers in this regard builds on the work of Caldwell in *Production Culture* (2008). Caldwell explores the discourses of the media makers themselves; that is, ‘the way in which film and television workers construct their own self representations’ largely through how they talk about and mythologise themselves and their roles in the production of various screen media. Expanding on Paul Willis’ work (1981), Caldwell suggests a useful approach:

Critical theory embedded within the everyday of workers’ experience—that is, through the pursuit of a kind of indigenous cultural theory that operates outside of academia. I have been particularly drawn to this idea of “theorizing from the ground up” as an alternative to conventional approaches. (Caldwell, 2008, p. 5)

In *Beyond the Bottom Line*, for instance, Auden Engelstad and Jo Sondre Moseng (2014) discuss how some producers note how auteurist notions privileging the director have implications for their own roles. They suggest that the ‘cult of the director’, as outlined earlier in respect of Truffaut et al, has generally contributed to the producer being thought of as a project manager or an employer whose main responsibility is to package the film and control the finances, supervise the production, and eventually exploit the movie’s market potential (2014, p.45). Meanwhile, conducting a survey of Australian screen producers, Mark Ryan, Ben Goldsmith, Stuart Cunningham and Deb Verhoeven note how many producers claim that the main driver for them as producers is not money. In fact, they note how most of the

producer respondents described ‘satisfying [their] creative vision’ as their primary driver (Ryan, Goldsmith, Cunningham and Verhoeven, 2014, p.138). These findings are echoed by Paul Long and Simon Spink in ‘Producing the Self: The Film Producer's Labour and Professional Identity in the UK Creative Economy’ as they interview producers based in the West Midlands of the United Kingdom. While Long and Spink note that ‘pinpointing a definition of the producer [role] proved difficult for most interviewees’, they highlight how most producers generally do not see money as their primary driver also (Long and Spink, 2014, p.98). Of course, we must be aware that claims about disavowing commerce and profit may be part of producers’ own efforts to secure a creative legitimacy for themselves. Significantly, Long and Spink’s study is the only literature the author found specifically in relation to producing in the English regions, which points to a gap in research that needs to be filled.

As Caldwell and Spicer remind us, any study of producers and other media industry workers’ self-representations must be considered in relation to the complexity of the wider systems in which they work and as contributing to the wider production of culture. ‘Media producers make culture,’ Spicer says, ‘and, in so doing, make themselves into particular kinds of workers in modern, mediated societies ... people work through professional organizations and informal networks to form shared communities of shared practices, languages, and cultural understandings of the world’ (Spicer et al., 2014, p.8). These sentiments are echoed in the edited collection, *Making Media Work* (Johnson, 2016). This collection looks across the media industries at the management roles supporting media and argues that:

In a dialogue with critical industry studies, production studies are best suited to the study of management as a set of tactics by which labor is organized and (perhaps more importantly) made meaningful in the media industries (Johnson, 2016, p.12)

Several essays within the collection focus on how ‘self-perception and identification shape managerial praxes and procedure’ (Johnson, 2016, p.15); that is, how the perception of the producers’ own work shape this work itself. The aim of *Making Media Work* is to produce a more ‘nuanced understanding of management’ (Johnson, 2016, p.21), although, in terms of film, this is limited to looking at studio executives in Brazil. Many of the chapters in the collection also build on the work of Negus (2002) in relation to cultural intermediaries in the management of media as they link production and ‘play a critical role in connecting production to consumption in such a way that their practices can shape the product’ (Negus, 2002, p. 509). Negus (1999), in writing about corporate production in the music industry, looks at the nature of corporate production and cultural production and how this production is by nature unpredictable. Negus writes about how corporate managers try to manage this unpredictability by gambling upon what they *think*, as opposed to what they know, will be successful and how such judgements are reflective of culture. The management of the media industries is also addressed in *Managing in the Media* (Houseley, W. and Block, 2001), which pertains to amalgamate theories, film and television analysis, management theories and media production practice into one book.

The Routledge Companion to Media Industries (McDonald, 2021) is another very broad collection of essays on the Media Industries. Within the book, Eva Novrup Redvall's essay is perhaps the most pertinent. Her work looks at how TV studies have often looked at collective authorship whilst within film this is focussed, as is noted above, on the auteur director. She looks at film and the conflict between this auteurship and the 'genius of the system' (Schatz, 2015) where the mode of production shapes the film. Novrup also looks at the idea of 'agency' and how:

Media industry studies most often focus on the tensions between creative agency and the imposing external structures that create particular frameworks for the emergence, development, financing, and production of new works.

This concept of 'agency' is also referenced by Sherry Ortner (2013) in her book, *Not Hollywood*. Expanding upon the work of Caldwell and others, Ortner looks at Generation X American producers from the 1990s and identifies the key skills of a producer, which she describes as 'agency', 'relationships' and 'taste,' all of which she argues help to give a film 'value'. Ortner's work is significant because she highlights how these skills come from a producer's socialisation that is part of not only their experience in the film industry but also of their backgrounds. Ortner (2013) discovers that many of the producers in her sample come from high income families and went to high end universities, which echoes the work of Negus (1999) in relation to music executives. Ortner suggests that the qualities of the producers described in her study are thus a result of this educational background and of their socialization as part of their class. Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu points out that people from middle-class and upper-class backgrounds are more easily able to engage in cultural production due to the security that their backgrounds offer. As Bourdieu states,

The propensity to move towards the economically most risky positions, and above all the capacity to persist in them (a condition for all avant-garde undertakings which precede the demands of the market), even when they secure no short-term economic profit, seem to depend to a large extent on possession of substantial economic and social capital (1993: 67).

This all points to how producers' own self-representations can contribute to creating value for a film production. Consequently, it is essential to consider the author's own self-representations as a producer in the production of *Running Naked* and, in turn, the contribution to its value across the chain of its production.

3.2. The Role of Educational Partnerships in Film Production

James Fair's 'A Different Understanding of Low and Micro Budget Film Production in the UK' (2017) is a critique of the UKFC's 2008 report on microbudget filmmaking through a participatory action research project of the shooting of a low budget feature, *The Ballad of Des and Mo* (Fair, 2010), in 72 hours at the Melbourne Film Festival. Fair writes that the UKFC 'believed the filmmaking growth coincided with digital technology, as opposed to being caused by it' (Fair, 2017, p6-7). Fair questions the methodology of the report and posits that it was written from the perspective of the dominant industrial paradigm and that the structure of film production reflected in the report had not changed since the studio system. Fair tries to adopt new role titles within the production process of his film but notes that the crew went back to the traditional terms for roles leading to the new titles going

unused. Through feedback on the making of his film, Fair argues that the progression routes outlined in the UKFC report were not reflected in his film. Fair notes from his experience in making the film that there is a missing coverage within the UKFC report regarding the fluidity of crew roles in micro budget filmmaking and a lack of recognition that digital technology meant more people could afford to make films as skilled amateurs for fun and not for progression within the industry of financial gain.

Fair notes the paucity of scholarly research directly related to micro budget filmmaking in the UK in particular:

Most research into films focuses on the work which is more visible. Low and microbudget filmmaking is a career phase that some filmmakers may have to pass through to reach bigger work, while others may never move beyond it. It therefore requires wider consideration to understand its nature (Fair, 2019, p.67)

Fair's film was funded mostly through Staffordshire University, although this funding (£40,000) was initially for the research element only, thereby 'funding process, not product' (Fair, 2017, p. 68) with the shooting and the screening of the film taking place at the Melbourne Film Festival. There are bidirectional benefits from such partnerships. Being able to get exposure for a film shot in an educational setting is important for the students involved in terms of their future employability and credits but can also, if successful, be a useful marketing tool for the university's film courses.

Neil Fox (2014) looks at film education in the UK and how it addresses the needs of the film industry. He analyses and interviews several universities where film is studied both

theoretically and practically and draws comparisons with international universities and noting that American universities have a clearer link to the film industry and a notion of commerciality. Looking at the notion of employability in the UK, Fox concludes:

There is a need to retrain when graduates enter professional work, due to the disparity between professional production equipment and equipment used predominantly within higher education (Fox, 2014, p.48).

In shooting a film aimed for commercial distribution and in partnership with industry professionals, this is clearly addressed in the production of *Running Naked*. Fox also looks at film production courses themselves and concludes that:

The teaching of film production and practice is primarily focused on directors.... This approach, which stems from the impact of the auteur theory, is representative of the hierarchical structure in filmmaking and is problematic due to the inherent collaborative demands of filmmaking. This produces a false idea of the nuanced, practical reality of the process. The director as creative and logistical figurehead has permeated much of the thinking regarding production training and education (Fox, 2014, p. 90).

These conclusions clearly align with what this author has found in relation to academic studies. This is, however, addressed in the shooting of *Running Naked* with practical placements across crew roles not regularly focussed on at university and in a real film setting.

In his article, John William Mateer (2017) presents a useful overview of academic collaborations in filmmaking, breaking them down into three categories. First is the ‘University as a film production company with ‘soft’ investment’, which involves the university providing in kind support through equipment, staff and other services or resources. Second, the ‘University as a film production company with ‘hard’ investment’ where the university provides the above but also invests hard cash into the project. Third, ‘University as a film production service provider’ where the commercial partner initiates, funds and drives the project with the university partner only providing logistical or infrastructural support. (Mateer, 2017, p.6). Mateer looks at previous studies relating to industry/university collaborations, referencing a study from D’Este and Perkmann and flags potential issues:

University-industry collaboration are best attained by cross-fertilization rather than encouraging academics to become economic entrepreneurs. Collaboration is fruitful when it facilitates or contributes to both industry applications and academic research.” (D’Este and Perkmann, 2010, p 332).

This thesis considers how and to what extent Mateer’s models were adhered to in the production of *Running Naked*.

Placing Boehm and Mateer’s work in dialogue with one another demonstrates the complexity of cultural modes of production and the different ways of conceiving them as well as the underpinning cultural contexts of production. In ‘Triple Helix Partnerships for the Music Sector’ (2017), Carola Boehm arguably presents a useful and a more workable model than Mateer’s in respect of university partnerships. Boehm’s paper looks at how

universities have traditionally operated and how they can potentially work in a different way through external partnerships moving forward. Boehm looks at how universities ‘demonstrate a strong preference for basic research over enterprise’ and how ‘triple and quadruple’ helix partnerships involving universities, civil society, government and industry can allow innovation to happen in the context of necessary partnership work, as part of contemporary knowledge economies (Boehm, 2017, p.8). The quadruple helix can be useful in looking at the funding and partnership models behind *Running Naked*. Within this model, the exploitation of knowledge ‘demands (industry) participation in the knowledge production process’, and it is worthy of note that this process ‘does not follow the structure of an institutional logic of academic disciplines’ (Boehm, 2017, p.8).

Within her latest work, ‘Arts and Academia’ (2022), Boehm breaks down the structural and funding practices within the arts and looks at how the funding models can affect the art produced. As already touched upon in the methodology, Culture 1.0 represents the arts as supported by a patron while Culture 2.0 represents the arts as supported by the market. Within both Culture 1.0 and 2.0, the focus remains on the individual author rather than collective production. Expanding on the work of Sacco and his concept of Culture 3.0, however, Boehm describes new arts practices such as podcasts as acts of ‘co-creation’ rather than that of a single author. Boehm describes Culture 3.0 as being ‘without mediators’ on ‘open platforms’ and ‘without a value judgement or patronage model’. Culture 3.0 ‘minimises gatekeeping functionality’ and reframes ‘people as both cultural producers and users’, often with a ‘de-emphasis of the individual’ (Boehm, 2022, p.47).

The conceptualisations of cultural production models in these 3 ways is more useful to this study than the Mateer model. Such conceptualisations can and will be applied to the previous films of the author as well as the arts practice in *Running Naked* as they help to situate the films within broader funding structures while helping to unpack the subsequent effects on practice.

Whereas there have been significant studies on the Hollywood studio system, such as Janet Staiger's work in *'The Classical Hollywood Cinema'* (1960) and Thomas Schatz in *'The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era'* (1998), there has been very limited work undertaken on British micro budget film production, especially work focusing on the producer in this educational context. In conclusion, therefore, the producer's role has been largely overlooked in academic scholarly work, particularly in comparison to the director and especially in studies that deal with micro budget filmmaking in the UK regions, the author's main area of practice, and in the educational context. What the various studies reviewed in this review indicate is a graded spectrum of producers between the creative and financial components of filmmaking; that is the money-making Hollywood producer and idealistic, supportive, indie producer. At the same time, the previous section highlighted how producers can be involved through their own self-representations in maintaining these labels. The aim of this study, therefore, is to strike a balance that recognises that producers are responsible for *both* the financial and creative elements of filmmaking and, as such, are driven by profit *and* creativity. The problem with the auteur theory and romantic conceptions of art is that they see art as being possible only when separate from money-making. These elements are inescapably, and not necessarily negatively, intertwined, for both director and

producer. In fact, the producer's own reputation built and displayed through their own self-representations contributes to the value and commercial viability of a project. In turn, the financial framework of making a film influences how it is made and the producer role. The aim with this study is that, by looking at the producer role in the process of 'doing', which in this case is a practice as research study on a micro budget film shot in an educational context in England, a more nuanced understanding of the producer role can be reached.

4. The **Producer** in the Context of UK Independent Filmmaking

Running Naked was shot in 2019 in Stoke-on-Trent whilst the author was teaching part-time at Staffordshire University. This part-time production work helped to sustain the producer's livelihood and helped to enable them to invest their own time into film development, which is indicative of the instability and precariousness of film production work. As a producer, the author had produced 6 feature films by this point, the majority of which had received, or were developed with the idea of receiving, state Culture 1.0 support, either through North West Vision, East Midlands Media (EM Media) or the subsequent regional agency, Creative England. The author had just also produced *Birthday* (Michell, 2015) through SKY for television and was very much at a crossroads in terms of which direction to follow as a producer and how his subsequent films would be funded. The author realised that it was unlikely that he would continue to regularly receive Culture 1.0 funding for films as producing films in this way was becoming increasingly challenging and thus unlikely to be sustainable in the long term. This chapter provides a broader outline of the context in which the producer was operating up to the making of *Running Naked*.

Running Naked was shot at a time when the regionalised screen agencies, including EM Media and North West Vision, had been closed for 6 years, and Creative England, the subsequent agency for filmmaking outside of London, was being assimilated into the BFI, thereby increasing the centralisation of film funding in London with Regional Film Hubs run through the BFI replacing the regional agencies. Funding sources available at the time

of production included the Culture 1.0, Lottery Supported BFI and Creative England.

Whilst the author had a good relationship particularly with the latter body, the author was coming to the realisation that either body would be unlikely to support more commercial work and that, even if there was interest in supporting the work, the cultural remit of each agency to support and develop underrepresented work made by underrepresented groups would potentially limit any support moving forward for more commercially focused projects. Culture 1.0 regional agencies still existed in Wales and Scotland, but, without a strong Scottish or Welsh element, it would not be possible to receive support from them. Support through the European MEDIA programme was also unlikely to be attainable at this point due to the UK leaving the European Union, even if this support remained possible to attain when a producer works in partnership with continental European companies on a given project. State supported broadcasters such as Film 4 and the BBC were another source of potential support, but one which the author had very limited success in getting any traction with.

Market money from sales agents and distributors, Culture 2.0 funders, was also becoming less available at the time of production, with several smaller sales agents and distributors, including AV Pictures, Metrodome, The Works, and Revolver, with which the author had worked, going into liquidation as a result of the changing film distribution landscape and a move from traditional release windows towards new models of day and date releasing and streamer only releases. The collapse of these film distribution companies once points to the precariousness of small to medium sized enterprises in commercial film production and, as David Hesmondhalgh (2019) discusses, of an increased industry consolidation and

interdependency, as such companies come to be either acquired or increasingly rely on the major conglomerates as partners for their survival.

The state support in terms of the tax credit in the UK, at 20 per cent of a film's budget, was valuable for a film's finance plan, as were potential post-production deals. Without the support from the above Culture 1.0 and 2.0 sources, however, there remains a large gap to fill in terms of successfully financing a film even with tax support. The *BFI Commission On Independent Film* (2018, p.14) reflects this situation in terms of market investment as it states, 'Traditional sources of finance and revenue for independent film are in decline, including a sharp drop-off in the value of UK and international distribution deals' (2018, p.14).

In terms of the bigger picture of film production, at the time of the production of *Running Naked*, the production sector in the UK continued to flourish (McEvoy, 2019). This was mainly due to large budget productions financed with international investment choosing to shoot in the UK as a result of the UK tax credit and the attraction of a high-level experienced crew base. UK certified film production totalled £1.95 billion, a 17% increase on the previous year's £1.84 billion and the second highest figure since these statistics were first recorded (McEvoy, 2019). 2019 also saw the second highest level of spend by international filmmakers ever recorded in the UK, reaching £1.77 billion (Paul McEvoy, BFI, 2019). Major international films such as *Avengers: Endgame, A* (Russo, 2019), *Star Wars Story IX: The Rise of Skywalker* (Abrams, 2019), *James Bond: No Time To Die*

(Fukanja, 2019) and *Aladdin* (Ritchie, 2019) helped to generate growth in the UK film industry as a whole, by bringing investment, creating jobs, and helping film professionals develop new skills that arguably benefit independent productions too. In 2019, 94 films went into production (Paul McEvoy, BFI, 2019), including *Emma* (Wilde, 2020), *Last Night in Soho* (Wright, 2020), and *Ammonite* (Lee, 2020).

David Wilson, writing in *Global Film Market Transformation in the Post Pandemic Era*, notes this growth continuing into 2021 but significantly flags that such a demand is leading to a ‘shortage of crew’ and may impact on the quality of British-made production’ (Wilson et al., 2023, p.26). Moreover, while production in the UK flourished according to the above data, the *Economic Review of Independent Film* (2022) noted that the success of inward production as a result of the tax credit had a knock-on effect of increasing crew fees across the board and increasing the costs of production at a time when film finance was becoming increasingly difficult to secure for micro and mid-budget pictures. The report defined independent film in two ways:

1. Fully independent films: the tightest definition of independent film, including only feature films that are unambiguously produced and financed by independent organisations.
2. Supported independent films: this definition captures some of the ambiguity of classification as an independent film, reflecting that some films that would otherwise be considered independent may receive some production or financial

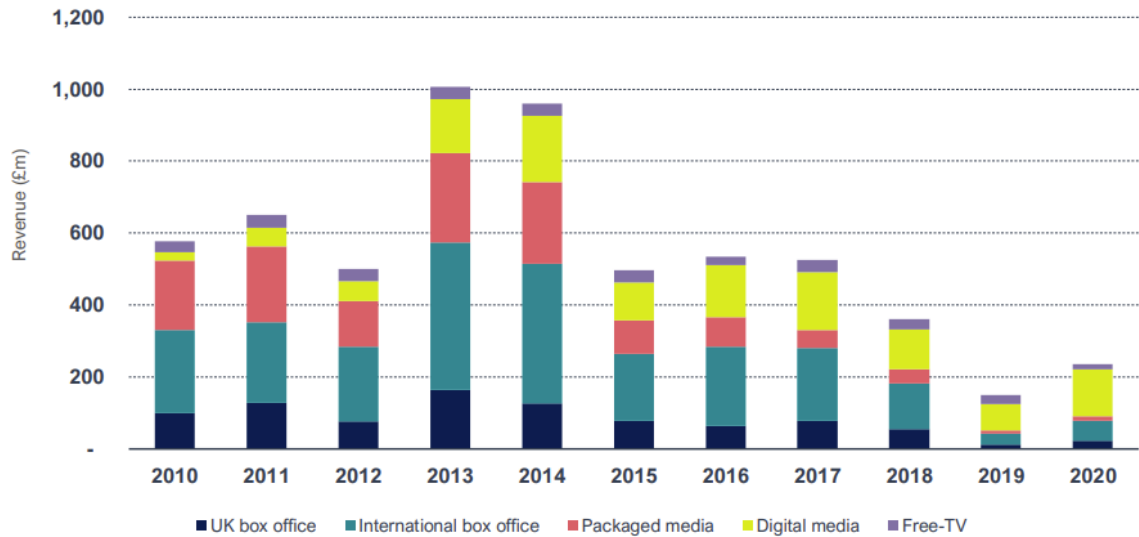
support from organisations not considered independent [such as studios, BBC/Film 4] (2022, p. 21)

The report considers film production within a context that has witnessed the decline of the traditional model of cinema release followed by defined release windows as subscription streaming services have increasingly begun acquiring the exclusive rights to titles. On one hand, the emergence of global streaming services such as Netflix and their increasing efforts to appeal to audiences in different international territories by commissioning and distributing locally made productions provided much needed finance for UK producers. On the other hand, and as the *Economic Review of Independent Film* points out, streaming services' insistence on acquiring the exclusive rights to titles by paying 'cost plus' deals, where the producer would receive the budget plus a premium for the purchase of a film, can decrease the profitability of a film to independent producers and financiers overall by removing their opportunities to receive residual payments by taking a share of the profits earned through traditional distribution (2022, p.4). This disruption of tradition models has meant that there is a knock on effect in the wider Culture 2.0 market as sales agents, distributors and investors risk losing confidence in their ability to achieve returns from the sale of films (*Economic Review of Independent Film*, 2022, p.4). Moreover, the report points out that this is occurring at a time when there is increased competition for audiences from high-end television and other sources of media entertainment (*Economic Review of Independent Film*, 2022, p.4).

The report shows an overall stagnation of independent film revenues as shown below in Figure 4. The graph shows a fall in revenue for both international and UK box office as well as packaged media. Whilst the revenue for digital media has increased, the cinema window for UK and international releases have collapsed over this period thereby decreasing revenues overall. The report concludes that:

While UK independent film revenue from digital media has increased significantly through the past decade, a trend which accelerated through the Covid-19 pandemic, these revenues have not been enough to reverse the wider trend of decline (2022, p. 3).

The rise of streamers such as Netflix, Amazon and Apple resulted from a convergence in technology from increasing streaming speeds to better phones (McDonald, 2016, p.2) but also has led to a convergence in film and television. The collapse of these traditional film windows, which impacts how films are watched, also influences the self-perceptions of film and TV producers. While film has often been perceived as the most esteemed screen medium in which to practice, the emergence of streaming means that producers and audiences are now less likely to see films on a cinema screen, which has arguably led to a decrease in film's cachet, while the growth of high-end television series and emergence of home cinema systems has contributed to a legitimization of television (Newman and Levine, 2012).



Source: BFI production tracking database. Alma Economics analysis.

Note: Packaged media sales include sales to both domestic and international audiences. Digital media revenue includes sales generated from subscription-based television channels such as Sky TV.

Figure 4 Estimated Revenue by Source for the UK Independent Film Sector for Shoot year 2010-2020

The *Economic Review of Independent Film* recommends a raft of measures to support independent film and distribution, including an increase in the tax credit, tax incentives for the marketing and distribution of independent films, and either a voluntary or, if required, mandatory financial contribution to UK independent films from the streaming service.

David Wilson, in *Global Film Market Transformation in the Post Pandemic Era*, notes that there is ‘a growing sense of maturity among some of the streamers and an acknowledgement that they need to do more to seek out new talent’ and to support independent talent across the board (Wilson et al., 2023. p.26).

Significantly for this study, micro budget independent films with production budgets below £250,000 were only included if they achieved box office revenue greater than £50,000.

Whilst the report proposes an increase in tax credit to films produced outside London and the Southeast, the report also proposes cutting tax credits to films with a budget under £250,000 to bolster larger scale production. A cut in the tax credit available to micro budgeted films pose even greater challenges. These challenges could increase the importance of Culture 3.0 models of production that rely on non-traditional financiers or providers of in-kind support, such as universities, in supporting film production. For a domestically produced UK film, this median budget level, indicated by the black line, is at £750k in 2019, which the UK Film Council's 2008 report defined as low budget filmmaking. This budget level is the area in which most of the author's filmmaking has taken place and is the level at which the majority of domestic filmmaking operates. The below graph (Figure 5) shows the average budget of a UK film from 2008 to 2019. Stephen Follows is more specific in terms of micro budget levels as he states that, 'Currently in the UK, many people will regard £150,000 (\$245,000) as the cut off for a film to be classed as micro budget film' (Follows, 2014).

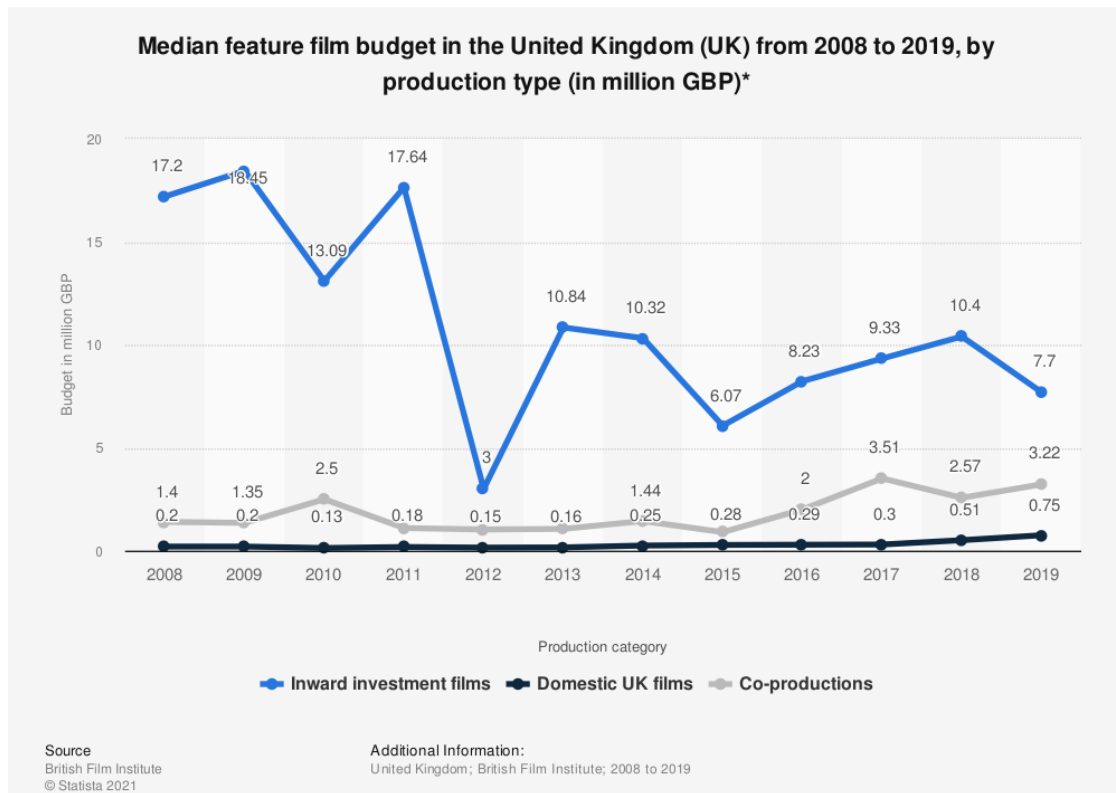


Figure 5 Median Feature Film Budget in the UK from 2008 to 2019 by Production Type

To conclude this section, *Running Naked* was shot at a time of substantial industrial change. These changes created substantial challenges for UK film production and in particular at a micro budget that meant that the producer was forced to look for new models of film production. The producer's work within a higher education setting, which was itself a means for supporting the producer due to volatility of the sector, enabled an opportunity to shoot a micro budget film in a different, Culture 3.0 way. The gap in finance caused by the withdrawal of commercial market investment in the lower budget end of UK film production, due partly to the collapse of sales and distribution companies, coupled with changes in state supported film finance, meant that the university sector was considered as an option for bridging that gap. Moreover, the author understood that whilst the market was

challenging, particularly in terms of securing theatrical film distribution, there was potentially an opportunity to shoot a micro budget film designed to be sold directly to streamers thereby minimising the ‘gatekeeping functionality’ (Boehm, 2022, p.47) of sales agent and distributors. All of this demonstrates how a producer needs to adapt to changes in industrial conditions to continue working. It demonstrates that new models of film production, in this case *Running Naked* through an industry-education partnership, sometimes stem from the tenacity of a producer in very difficult situations.

5. Case Studies 2009-2022

This chapter discusses the development, pre-production, production, post-production and marketing of three case studies, each of which are films made by the author producer made using more conventional production and funding models than *Running Naked*. These films are: first, *A Boy Called Dad* (Percival, 2009), the author's debut feature film was financed through regional film agency funding, private equity and the UK tax credit (Figure 6); second, *Best Laid Plans* (Blair, 2010), which was financed through private equity regional funding and a distribution advance from Sony (Figure 9); and, third, *Book of Love* (Cal Y Major, 2022) financed through the sales company XYZ and Sky (Figure 12). In looking at these case studies, the chapter will be able to compare and contrast the functions of the producer role across different models of production that broadly align with those of the Cultures 1.0 and 2.0 models identified by Sacco (2011) and Boehm (2022). In doing so, the chapter considers how and in what ways the producer's role shifts as it conforms to the modes or production that are characteristic of the Culture 1.0 state patronage and Culture 2.0 market led models. By reflecting on creative practice within these films as a producer and then within *Running Naked*, the intention is ultimately to make tacit knowledge explicit; that is, what Nelson calls 'knowledge in practice'. For reference, supporting materials in relation to these case study films, as well as materials for *Running Naked* can be requested from the author.

5.1. A Boy Called Dad

After the producer made a successful BAFTA nominated and multi award winning short film, *Talking with Angels* (Khan, 2004), the producer set up Made Up North Productions with two colleagues, Rob Wales and John Eddleston. These co-founders secured an investment of £250,000 from the North West Seed Fund, a government backed equity investment organisation, in exchange for a share of equity in the company. This investment funded the company's running costs and development of a new slate of films. The first film that was developed and made from this slate was *A Boy Called Dad*, which tells the story of a teenage father and his relationship with his child and was budgeted at over £1 million thereby making it a low, not micro, budget film, as shown in the finance plan below, Figure 6.

Financing / Funding source	Amount	% of budget	Funding type
UK tax credit -	£ 186,000.00	18.16%	Producer Investment
EM Media	£ 250,000.00	24.40%	Equity
Film Wales	£ 50,000.00	4.88%	Equity
North West Vision	£ 54,500.00	5.32%	Equity
Private Investment (Scarce Resources, Made Up North/ Seed Fund, other)	£ 232,000.00	22.65%	Equity
Editz Post-production	£ 50,000.00	4.88%	Equity
GAP finance	£ 202,000.00	19.72%	GAP
TOTAL	£ 1,024,500.00	100.00%	

Figure 6 A Boy Called Dad Finance Plan

The script for *A Boy Called Dad*, which was originally called ‘Wonderboy’ after a song by Tenacious D, was developed after David Katznelson, who director of photography for the author’s BAFTA nominated short film, introduced the author to Julie Rutterford and Brian Percival, with whom he worked previously on another short named *About a Girl* (Percival, 2002), who ended up becoming the writer and director of *A Boy Called Dad*, respectively. The initial aim in developing the film was to create a story that was both based in the North of England and looked at a subject that had not been explored before, namely teenage dads. As already mentioned, this development process was initially financed through the equity invested into Made Up North.

The script that was developed was one that was relatively upbeat in tone akin to *Billy Elliot*. At first, the BBC agreed to fully finance the film but, following a change of staff at the BBC, this offer was rescinded and alternate financiers had to be found. The film was then pitched as part of the Sundance Institute Producer’s programme and won the pitching event that climaxed the programme, winning a small cheque and being offered co-production opportunities from the pitching panel. Through this, the author began looking at how to put the film together with Cassian Elwes, a producer of *Dallas Buyers Club* (Valee, 2013), and Sunmin Park, the producer of *The Others* (Amenabar, 2001). This transatlantic development of the film, however, failed to materialise as Sunmin Park and Cassian Elwes wanted more control of the film than the author was prepared to cede. Similarly, in the UK, a co-production with Mark Herbert at Warp films was discussed but ultimately did not happen as Warp wanted too much control and too great a share of back-end profits.

The conventional film financing model in the independent sector is that the script/cast package attracts a sales or distribution company which produce sales figures that interest investors. In this case, a good film package and script was put together to get Metrodome, a film distributor, attached to the film with the intention of distributing the film in the UK, although at this stage the company provided no finance to produce it. The financiers who backed Made Up North, North West Seed Fund, agreed to invest equity and debt finance, also known as GAP finance. Made Up North managed to put a post-production deal in place (Figure 6) with a company called Editz where the post-production costs were partly covered by the post-production deal in the project. After the collapse of the potential co-production opportunity with Elwes and Park, the author made the decision to strategically target securing finance from regional state funded agencies with the view of them becoming the cornerstone financier for the project. A cornerstone financier is the individuals, body or institution that provide the key financial component that is integral to the finance plan. They may not necessarily be the individuals, body or institution that provides the bulk of the finance but their participation is key because it plays a strategic role in helping the project to be green-lit, including often by bringing other financiers to the table and binding them together.

North West Vision, which was the regional agency for where the business was based, initially turned down the opportunity to support the project. After the author moved to another area of the country, however, the company was eligible to receive support and investment from the regional film agency in that area, EM Media. EM Media became the cornerstone financier because not only did they end up providing the bulk of the finance but

that finance also came in the form of a ‘soft’ investment. This ‘soft’ investment meant that it had less arduous and potentially restricting terms than a private financier thereby creating less risk for other investors in the project and, in turn, greater potential reward. Yet regional agency funding, which is government funding, usually comes with certain requirements in relation to expectations of the investment in job creation within that region, the use of places and resources from that region, as well as social and cultural benefits relating, for instance, to diversity and inclusivity. This can be understood within a Culture 1.0 patronage model, with the patron being the regional film agencies driving certain characteristics of the process and output. EM Media’s investment thus came with certain caveats dictated in the form of script notes that had to be followed. This pushed the script to a darker area in terms of subject matter, moving it from a more joyous road movie, which is what the sales company wanted, to a film that touched upon abuse. At the time, the author’s focus was on getting the feature made at almost at any cost and, consequently, this path was pursued. At the same time, however, the fact that the story of *A Boy Called Dad* involved the protagonist, Robbie, travelling to Liverpool and Wales also enabled the producer to raise money from both North West Vision and Film Wales. Accordingly, *A Boy Called Dad* became an example of a film that was originally conceived to be supported by the market, and thus representative of a Culture 2.0 model, before moving towards a Culture 1.0 model supported by patronage as the cornerstone of its finance (Boehm, 2022).

The presence of state funding bodies within *A Boy Called Dad* also meant that the producer’s role ended up being confined to the ‘business administrator’ element. The financiers North West Vision, EM Media and Film Wales required so much servicing in the

form of constant updates and reports that it was hard to be actively involved in the actual preparation and shoot, despite the author being on set every day. There was barely any time to watch the rushes and it was only during post-production during the editing of the film that the producer was able to become more creatively involved. This greater creative contribution that the producer was able to make during post-production highlights the problems of compartmentalising the producer's role during production. It is also worth noting that *A Boy Called Dad* was shot on film and so the 'ubiquitously available production tools' described by Boehm (2016a, p.2) as characteristic of Culture 3.0 were not available here.

After competition, the film was screened for its private and public investors which were given an opportunity to offer their opinions on the cut. Metrodome, the sales company, were not part of this initial process as the author felt that the relationship with the regional funders and private investors were the most important. Metrodome, however, were shocked that the *Billy Elliot* film that they had invested in had become darker, which led to them deciding to pull out of the project and no longer release the film. As a result, author decided to cultivate exposure for the film to try to secure distribution by screening it at festivals. The film was subsequently accepted by the Edinburgh International Film Festival for a premiere and picked up there by the UK distributor Kaleidoscope with international sales from the Works, which had come on board with Metrodome at the development stage. Two posters for the film, one made for its screening at the Edinburgh Film Festival and the other created for its international distribution, are shown below in Figure 7 and Figure 8 respectively. These posters are significant as the first depicts *A Boy Called Dad* in a more

arthouse manner, capturing as it does some of the aura of a naturalistic setting associated with British social realism and featuring the festival's banner, while the second features Ian Hart, targets a more international audience as it features Ian Hart who starred in the *Harry Potter* franchise and includes a more playful style with hand drawn text reminiscent of American indie marketing. Accordingly, these posters capture how the film crossed between Culture 1.0 and 2.0 models as it moved from production to distribution with an eye on the marketplace.



Figure 7 A Boy Called Dad Poster- Edinburgh Film Festival

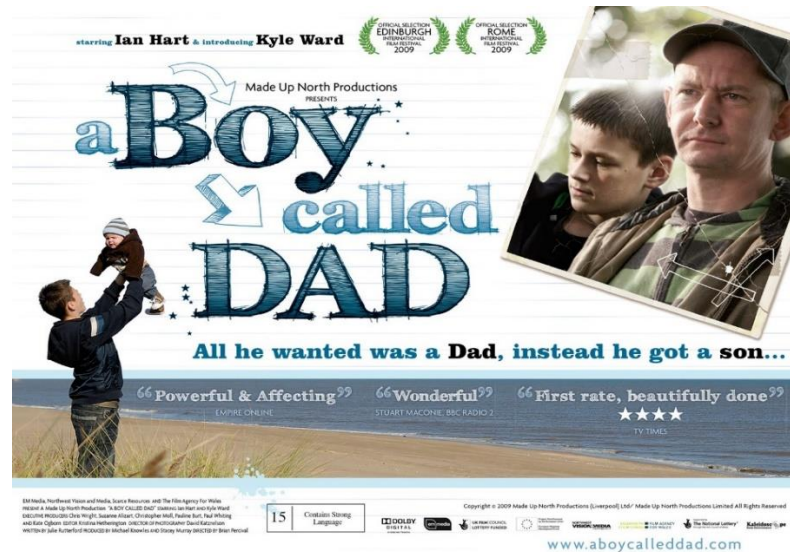


Figure 8 A Boy Called Dad Cinema Release Poster

A Boy Called Dad went on to receive a UK cinema release on around 30 screens, was sold to the BBC and Amazon, and premiered in Europe at the Rome Film Festival. The film toured across America as part of the ‘From Britain With Love Programme’ and was chosen to form part of an A Level sequence analysis through Film Education. The film was screened in schools, particularly those outside of London, to show film techniques in a regional film. Several of the author’s undergraduates have seen the film, which later helped in giving the author the authority to lead on *Running Naked*, and the quality of the film enabled further features to be produced through Made Up North. The film also contributed to growing the professional reputations of its cast and crew with, for instance, the director going on to direct the *Book Thief*. The feature was also illegally streamed on Youtube where it gained over a million views before it was taken down.

5.2. *Best Laid Plans*

The author's next film after *A Boy Called Dad* was *Best Laid Plans*. The production and financing model for *Best Laid Plans* again had a regional film agency acting as a financier, but this time had a cornerstone financier in the form of Sony, a major Culture 2.0 player, which invested alongside a private financier, Moli Films – making the film almost a Culture 1.5 model between patronage and the market. The film is set in the UK and is loosely inspired by *Of Mice and Men* (Steinbeck, 1937). The film depicts the relationship between Danny (Stephen Graham), a local low-level criminal and Joseph (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje), a giant of a man with a mental age of seven.

Unlike *A Boy Called Dad*, *Best Laid Plans* was not part of the original Made Up North slate but instead came to the production company as a full script with a potential financier attached. Specifically, the author was asked to produce the film alongside Mark Foligno who had executive produced the *Kings' Speech* and *Moon*, who invested in it through his company, Moli Films. The producer role here was to budget the film and pull together financiers and contract cast to get the film ready for production. The role also involved significantly editing the script with the director, David Blair, a BAFTA and Emmy winning veteran of high-level TV, so that the film could feasibly be shot within its limited budget.

Originally Stephen Graham was to play Curtis, another character in the film, but was recast as the lead, Danny, after it became clear that he was more suitable for, and wanted to play,

the larger role. Maxine Peake and Emma Stansfield, the latter cast later in *Running Naked*, were also attached, and Nonso Anosie was cast as the second lead, Joseph. On the basis of the premise and cast of the film, there was initial interest from Revolver, a UK distributor. At the time, Graham was considered a significant sales asset for DVDs based on his roles in gritty UK-based films such as *This is England* (Meadows, 2006) and *Snatch* (Ritchie, 2000) and was a trigger for this interest. Revolver offered to put a 100k Minimum Guarantee against the sale of the film in the UK. As the MG is paid on the completion and acceptance of a film, it has to be cash flowed by an external financier if it is being used to finance the film production. The sales agent, AV Pictures, subsequently offered the film to Sony Pictures, which led to Sony outbidding Revolver to acquire the rights. Sony partnered in their investment alongside Moli Films, Editz, some private equity and EM Media, the latter of which covered the tax credit in the financing of the film (see Figure 9).

Financing / Funding source	Amount	% of budget	Funding type
UK tax credit -	£ 24,125.00	4.19%	Producer Investment (cashflowed through EM Media)
Moli films – equity	£ 200,000.00	34.77%	Equity
Deferrals	£ 15,000.00	2.61%	Deferrals
Pre-Sales (Sony, Benelux)	£ 156,001.00	27.12%	Equity
Private Investment (Scarce Resources)	£ 20,000.00	3.48%	Equity
Editz / Savalas Post-production	£ 80,000.00	13.91%	Equity
GAP finance	£ 80,000.00	13.91%	GAP
TOTAL	£ 575,126.00	100.00%	

Figure 9 Best Laid Plans Finance Plan

EM Media were once again very supportive. The idea, going into the film, was not to include the tax credit to its full degree within the finance plan but to retain this within the production company for further development, as the tax credit was originally intended. However, between the production problems on the film and the pressure from the private financier, this was not possible so in the end the whole sum of the tax credit went into the production.

The film was relatively low budget – circa £600k – for quite an ambitious film. However, the film depended upon the attachment of its name-actors and the finance for the film was not formally secured until they signed their contracts, which ended up creating unforeseen problems. More specifically, Graham, who was performing in *Pirates of the Caribbean* (Marshall, 2011), was unable to be released from the film after it ran over schedule.

Consequently, the author made the decision to go into production without the finance of the film being closed. This meant that the author had to effectively cashflow the film or it would not have been made at all as the window of availability with the actors was very small. The preparation for the film commenced using the author's credit card until finally Graham was released from his filming commitments on *Pirates of the Caribbean*. When Graham was released from his filming commitments, however, Nonso Anosie dropped out to film *Brighton Rock* (Joffe, 2010). Again, this meant that the finance could still not be closed, which created significant pressure as there was a growing prospect that the film could collapse. The author felt that under this hybrid model of finance there was no other way to keep the film on track than to finance it himself, which, the author having opted to do, left him exposed should the film collapse. The sales agent investors were not obliged to

help and the state agency investor did not have a significant enough involvement or a mechanism to assist.

The internationally renowned casting agent John Hubbard (*Da Vinci Code*, Howard, 2006) was contracted the weekend before the film was meant to go into production and found a replacement for Anosie in the form of *Lost* (2004) star Adewale Akinnuoye Agbaje. Unfortunately, however, Sony used this recasting as an opportunity to lower their offer and to renegotiate their position. As the lead producer, therefore, the focus here was once again on the financial aspects of production as the author was taken away from the creative element of the film. The filming started without all the necessary money being available to shoot. The first week went by and no one could get paid. The actors were split in their support and condemnation with some feeling that the film should not have started if the finance had not closed and others understanding the problems of lower budget film production. As a producer, the goal was to keep the film going and yet at the same time close the finance. The author, however, finally decided to shut down production for an additional day after a weekend to focus on closing the finance, which was ultimately achieved. Whilst the author had been actively involved creatively with the writer and the director in the writing and editing of *Best Laid Plans*, the financial problems again here pulled the author away from the set and the creative element of filmmaking.

Like *A Boy Called Dad*, *Best Laid Plans* was released in cinemas as a small-scale traditional release and hit the top 10 DVDS in the UK. Once *Best Laid Plans* was ready for

distribution, Sony decided that their quickest route to a return on their investment was to sell it as a cockney gangster movie complete with a fake cockney voice-over narration and a poster that exhibited significant violence through the images that they chose to use and created a sense of heightened intensity by laying over the images a smashed glass effect - Figure 10. Graham featured prominently in the marketing materials as Sony sought to target the same, predominantly male, fanbase of the previous films that he had starred in. Indeed, Sony were clear about who their target audience was and although this arguably contributed to the film's success on DVD, they misrepresented the film to make a return on their investment. Accordingly, Sony refused to spend more money to market the film in a more complex and faithful way to a wider audience. Consequently, Sony omitted some important issues explored in the film, including mental health, and masculinised the film by removing any scenes that included the female characters. It took the American trailer and poster (Figure 11) to finally sell the film appropriately with the author's title song, unbeknownst to the author featuring on this. The adjustments in the marketing of the film for its U.S distribution shows how even once the film is delivered for sales the whole trailer can be reshaped and remoulded to the extent of reapportioning different elements. Meanwhile, the film also had some festival success as it screened at the Edinburgh Film Festival and at the Chicago Film Festival where it won the festival's narrative award. The film was also sold to Netflix and is now available for purchase through Amazon Prime Video.



Figure 10 Best Laid Plans UK Poster



Figure 11 Best Laid Plans US Poster

Link to UK Trailer: Best Laid Plans

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=best+laid+plans+trailer+2012.](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=best+laid+plans+trailer+2012)

Link to American Trailer: Best Laid Plans

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tf5KYmNS1Sk>

5.3. *Book of Love*

The producer's most recent film, *Book of Love*, was shot after the primary case-study, *Running Naked*, in Mexico in 2021 during the Covid Lockdowns and released in 2022. The film, a romantic-comedy about an author whose serious novel is mistranslated into a raunchy book by his Mexican translator, was written by Emmy-winning writer David Quantick and developed by the author producer. The film was then taken to BuzzFeed with which the author entered into a co-development agreement through NoW Films, the author's new production entity². As a rom com, *Book of Love* had a commercial premise and tone that was far removed from the previous films outlined in this section as it was intended to be marketable to a large audience from the start. In this regard, BuzzFeed helped the development of the project through data from their subscribers and through their American based development team.

It was interesting for the author to get notes from this very global market perspective, although often their notes and choice of language, in terms of Americanisms, sometimes jarred with the writer and the co-writer/director. Whilst the notes were thoughtful, often they did not sit well with the character as an Englishman abroad. Initially, BuzzFeed's involvement was based upon them raising the capital into the film. The author, however, then secured Sam Claflin to play the lead. As Claflin had a star profile owing to his roles in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Hunger Games* franchises as well as the hit television

² NoW films was launched after Made Up North Productions was wound down when the author's wife had cancer and I had to take off over a year to look after my wife and newly born daughter.

series *Peaky Blinders*, the author expected BuzzFeed to leverage his stardom as per the development agreement to secure the finance for the film. It subsequently became apparent, however, that BuzzFeed would be unable to pull this finance together with their sales partners within the timeline of the production window offered by Sam's agent. The author, therefore, brought in additional, new production partners in the form of Blazing Griffin and Al Niblo from Vertigo. The producers then secured XYZ as a sales company and financier, which acquired the rights to sell the film internationally in all territories, except Italy, the UK and Germany, which were held by Sky. Sky gave no further notes in development as this was a pre-buy only deal. The finance plan for *Book of Love* can be seen below in Figure 12.

As at 11th Mar 2021	
GBP to USD	1.39
USD to MXN	21

Item	Notes	GBP	USD	MXN	%
UK/Germany/Italy Sale	Sky	791,367	1,100,000	23,100,000	24.9%
UK Tax Credit	Cashflowed	315,000	437,850	9,194,850	9.9%
Intl/Equity	XYZ	1,223,022	1,700,000	35,700,000	38.5%
Equity	Blazing				
Producer	Keep Ltd	846,645	1,176,837	24,713,577	26.7%
Investment	Producers			-	0.0%
Total Budget		3,176,034	4,414,687	92,708,427	100%

Figure 12 *Book of Love Finance Plan*

The closing of the finance took the author away from pre-production as did uncertainties regarding stemming from the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic with created restrictions on travel that stopped the producers from being able to shoot in Spain, which was the originally intended shooting location. The author also spent a significant amount of time trying to make the schedule work for the lead actor who had a fixed date to commence shooting for the next series of *Peaky Blinders*. The realisation that the production could not go ahead and shoot in Spain left the author trying to find another place to shoot the film. Other countries with similar tax incentives to Spain, such as Malta and Fiji, were considered but it was difficult to put in place a service production and the tax credit requirements within the time frame of Sam Claflin's other commitments. The author and the creative lead producers finally decided to reinvest their fees to plug the gap in the budget that would have been filled by the Spanish tax credit and to shoot the film in Mexico where there were no tax credits. This movement of the shoot location resulted in a shortened prep period of three weeks. A service producer, Oscar winning Nicolas Celis, came on board to facilitate the production in Chiapas Mexico.

The production of *Book of Love* involved travelling to Mexico and shooting a film near the Guatemalan border in the height of covid. The film was shot in Chiapas. There were some communication issues with the Mexican crew but the Mexican service producer, Celis, was an excellent bridge. Script notes continued to come into production from BuzzFeed's development team in Los Angeles with notes also coming in from XYZ on the rushes.

Whilst the author drove the creative element of the development of the script, within the shooting of *Book of Love* the co-producers were all on set to give notes to the director. The market focus from BuzzFeed and the sales company XYZ, in terms of further script changes and notes on rushes, pulled the author away from set on occasion. Throughout the shooting of *Book of Love*, the author was keen to see that the film was made to reach as large an audience as possible but was keen to do that by working with the director as a creative rather than solely through market research from the BuzzFeed team. Indeed, the author formed a strong bond with the director on *Book of Love* and was alongside her for most of the production, which was extremely helpful to her as she was directing partly in her second language. Several elements that made it into the final film came about through suggestions that were made by the producer on set through this relationship between the producer, director and key cast.

During post-production, the author contributed to the editing of *Book of Love* alongside Blazing Griffin, the post-production company for the film. Each cut was also tested with BuzzFeed's test audiences to get their feedback. Notes were also received at some length from the sales company XYZ. Whilst there were some disagreements in this process and the author and indeed the director did not feel as central to this process as would have often been the case, there was a very short deadline to get the film complete for distribution as per the arrangements with Sky and XYZ. The post-production process of *Book of Love* was very much conducted, in effect, by a committee and, as a result, there are some elements in the film that the author would have changed if given the chance. However, the time

restrictions that stemmed from the Culture 2.0 model meant that further discussions and alterations were not possible.

XYZ sold *Book of Love* to Amazon for distribution via its streaming service in specific territories, including the U.S initially and later France and India. Amazon's acquisition was made on the very unusual condition that BuzzFeed offered its support by putting resources into launching a marketing campaign in the US to promote the Amazon launch of the film. This condition bore fruit because as a result of this campaign the film got to number 2 in America on Amazon. However, the film was not as successful in the UK with Sky, arguably because Sky has fewer subscribers. However, the film has been a significant commercial success overall as it has sold to additional territories around the world and has drawn interest from financiers keen to remake it for territories such as India and Italy. Notably, Amazon is also in the process of altering the film further following its initial release by adding advertisements in the form of virtual product placement, which gives the producers and investors the opportunity to receive further revenues. The reach of the film, in terms of territories sold, is indicated in the selection of posters from around the world (Figure 13).



Figure 13 Book of Love Posters from Around the World

5.4. Conclusions from Chapter 5 Case Studies

This narrative of the producer's wider film experiences highlights the push and pull between different models and the lack of clear, pure Culture 1.0 and 2.0 models that Sacco (2011) and Boehm (2022) identify. Out of the 3 films discussed, *A Boy Called Dad* was the one that most closely adhered to the Culture 1.0 model of production through its cornerstone financier, EM Media, acting as a kind of state funded patron. However, EM

Media and the other state funder's remits to support works perceived to be of cultural and social significance arguably limited the potential appeal of the film and led to the intended distributor pulling out. Ultimately, however, the film needed to be distributed in the marketplace and as a result this unavoidably brought the film into the purview of Culture 2.0 gatekeepers, creating a tension between the two models that was reflected in the different treatments of the film's posters. This tension between the Culture 1.0 and Culture 2.0 imperatives was also apparent in the production and marketing of *Best Laid Plans*, although in this case Sony, acting as the cornerstone financier, had a greater pull as was evident in its marketing. Sony's role in this regard ended up presenting the film in a less nuanced way by masculinising the film by foregrounding the male characters, violence and criminal elements while marginalising the female characters and treatment of disability.

Of the 3 films discussed in this chapter, however, *Book of Love* was arguably made in a way that was the purest in terms of the Cultural models that fit in with Sacco and Boehm's labels. Specifically, the film adhered to a Culture 2.0 model as it was produced and financed in partnership with BuzzFeed and XYZ with commercial imperatives at its centre. This centralising of these commercial imperatives gave the project a greater focus and clarity in that was reflected in the marketing materials for the film that did not display the same dissonance as was the case with *A Boy Called Dad* and *Best Laid Plans*. Across these three projects, however, a delineation can be made between the different distributors, and their market positionings, involved with the projects. For example, BuzzFeed and XYZ were clearly aiming for the widest possible target audience and this aim was underpinned by their use of data. Their strategy proved successful as they were able to sell the film

internationally, including in partnership with the major streaming service, Amazon Instant Video. Conversely, Metrodome, as a smaller UK distributor that lacked the resources of a BuzzFeed, was more hands off in the case of *A Boy Called Dad*, anticipated a *Billy Elliot* style film and was consequently unable to adjust to the completed cut that was driven by the cornerstone financier, EM Media. Given *A Boy Called Dad*'s subject matter and the lack of the presence of a marketable star, the film may have been better distributed by a distributor that had more experience of handling arthouse films, such as Protagonist. Similarly, Sony's UK distribution division sought to promote *Best Laid Plans* to a wide but predominantly young male audience when Sony Pictures Classics, which has expertise in distributing American indie and World Cinema films, may have been better placed to market the film to emphasise its narrative complexities. Accordingly, even within Culture 2.0 models, there are clear distinctions to be made between different distributor-gatekeepers.

Some broad differences exist in terms of the changes in the producer's roles across the 3 different models of production. These differences are summarised in Figure 14.

Cultural Model	Effect of Cultural Model on production and producer
Culture 1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over emphasis on reporting to Regional Bodies impacting on the producer role. • A tendency to have excessive creative involvement by the funding bodies. • Lack of market focus. • Emphasis on director as sole creative.
Culture 1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued emphasis on reporting • Contradictions between Culture 1.0 and 2.0 – market voices contradicted by the patronage model, that is it has a tendency to experience a push and pull between commercial and arthouse film contexts. • Emphasis on director as sole creative
Culture 2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting to commercial investors impacting the producer role. • Market forces influencing the creative element. • Focus on market as key creative driver over creative visions.

Figure 14 Effect of Cultural Models on Producer Role

Despite the differences in the films' production models, however, a key characteristic of the producer's role across all the models was how the producer adapted to the conditions set by the cornerstone financier and wider production. As Sherry Ortner explains, a producer's agency is developed in the process of doing and hence the author's agency is evident across all the productions, albeit within broader parameters (Ortner, 2013, pp. 158-160). Thus, the

producer's agency was developed through the making of *A Boy Called Dad* as the author learnt the fundamentals of the producer role on a feature film. The author learnt how to develop a script and the production of budgets, finance plans, sales pack and schedules. However, the producer did not yet have the authority to always command the cast and crew effectively on set and successfully navigate the Culture 1.0 and 2.0 gatekeepers. More specifically, the producer prioritised the needs of the regional agency, EM Media, over the market, believing that doing so was better for the company's development long term, yet this had an impact on the film's marketability. Reflecting on the distribution of *A Boy Called Dad*, it would also have been prudent to show the film in its early stages of edit to Metrodome and let them lead the funding bodies rather than the other way around. Having an eye on the market as well as the financing of a film is vitally important to the producer role and there is a constant balance between these elements. As Balcon states, the producer 'must be able to judge the progress of development from the point of view of the audience' (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p.11).

In fact, within the patronage Culture 1.0 model that *A Boy Called Dad* largely follows, there was a greater focus from the regional funders on supporting the director, as the sole creative, which is perhaps a hangover from romantic notions of a wealthy benefactor or patron supporting an individual artist. This dynamic is in contrast to *Book of Love*, where the director, who was less established in the industry, was sometimes seen by the financiers in the Culture 2.0 model as being dispensable. The author exerted his agency in the case of *Best Laid Plans* by moving the project forward and beginning production despite set-backs with Sony which led to the finance not yet being closed.

The importance of building relationships and networking was a constant theme across these different productions, and many of these relationships have fed into *Running Naked*. The producer, for instance, kept the director unaware of the financial situation on *Best Laid Plans* so that they could focus on the shoot. As a result, the producer role here was also one of nurturing and protection. As Spicer says in relation to Thalberg et al, ‘In performing [his] role, the producer creates space for the component creative personnel to focus on and fulfil their task more effectively’ (Spicer et al., 2014, p.3). The author went on to make two further features with the director, David Blair, for whom the film was a springboard to further features outside his TV career. The author also has recently completed another feature with its writer, Chris Green. In retrospect, however, in the case of *A Boy Called Dad* it would have been beneficial for the author to have worked with Warp or Sunmin Park. At the time, the author felt that it was important to exert agency by producing the film on his own terms, but a partnership and relationships with these seasoned producers may have helped to secure distribution to extend the commercial reach of the film and might have been beneficial personally and professionally longer-term.

Ortner writes that the ‘agency’ displayed in getting films started in difficult circumstances was a central characteristic of the producer respondents within her study. Ortner argues, in turn, that this ‘agency’ then becomes part of the producer’s own view of themselves and of their self-representations (Ortner, 2013, pp. 158-160). The experience of shooting *Best Laid Plans* was one of the author’s worst in filmmaking, becoming one of the tales of ‘agency’ told most often in broader industry discourse. However, the actions that the producer took in these circumstances were not driven by self-aggrandisement but through a determination

to make the film or else risk its collapse. In fact, across all the films discussed in this chapter, the producer deferred their own fee to ensure that the films could be made on schedule and budget. The producer was able to do so in the case of *A Boy Called Dad* and *Best Laid Plans* because of the investment that had been made into the company, Made Up North. While deferring the fees brought an immediate loss of income, the producer's delivery of films on budget brought long-term economic benefits as it contributed to the author's self-representations and industry relationships.

By the time of *Book of Love*, the author was able to exert greater agency as they moved the production between countries during the Covid pandemic and worked successfully in the Culture 2.0 model to meet the commercial demands. As a purely Culture 2.0 production, the author also learnt new skills on *Book of Love*. For instance, the author had to pay constant attention to the film's financial waterfall (how a film's profits are dispersed on receipt) to ensure that the correct amounts of money are received as to contract. The producer in the 2.0 model still must fulfil an intensive reporting role to the film's funders, though the needs of the funders here are a lot more market focussed. The author also has had to learn how to manage an intellectual property that has gained interest for remakes internationally.

Whilst several financiers would get producer credits on *A Book of Love*, the lead producers, the author, Blazing Griffin, and Al Niblo, had to carry the financial risk of the film with no greater reward and for the same credit. This contrasts with the cigar smoking profiteering

image of the producer that has circulated in critical discourse and screen media, as was highlighted at the beginning of the literature review. Here, to use the terms delineated in the literature review, the creative producer is taking the risk while the financial producer, in terms of the sales company and investor, XYZ has a less risky position. There is a contradiction here between different types of producers that is not reflected within film credits.

Finally, according to Ortner (2013), having a cushion of finance is important for balancing risk. Having the investment into Made Up North in place gave the company time to develop projects and offered the producer an opportunity to hone his skills and exert agency, which led to the production of *A Boy Called Dad* and *Best Laid Plans* as well as ultimately *Running Naked*. An argument can therefore be made that the availability of investment into a core company with a slate of films, rather than individual films as is often the case, may therefore provide greater stability and growth in the movie business.

6. Case Study in Practice: *Running Naked*

This chapter reflexively discusses the production of *Running Naked*, the primary case-study and practical output for this practice as research PhD. The film was completed in early 2021 and can be watched here:

Portfolio Element – Film: Running Naked

[Watch Running Naked | Prime Video \(amazon.co.uk\)](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gv/video/detail/B093888888)

An upbeat comedy drama about two childhood friends who met as patients on a cancer ward and the challenges that their friendship faces after one has their cancer return in later life, *Running Naked* was produced innovatively as part of an industry-education partnership through a Master's course at Staffordshire University. Situated at the intersection between the film industrial complex and the higher education sector, the film is arguably an example of a Culture 3.0 model of production, as described by Sacco and Boehm, and one that broke from the author's other filmmaking experiences. More specifically, the film was made with a combination of private equity and 'in-kind investment by the university and away from the Culture 1.0 and 2.0 gatekeepers such as state funded broadcasters and funders such as BBC, Film 4 and BFI, and big sales companies, respectively, and brought together professional and non-professional labour with a training element. Not being tied to the requirements within mainstream funding or bound to film agencies' own remits can, as Boehm indicates, allow potentially experimental, alternative and creative led projects to

emerge as well as a different producer role and potentially different crew roles and relationships.

Made as part of the PhD, with phases of critical work and writing interspersed with phases of filmmaking, *Running Naked*'s production combined with this reflective analysis is an example of the reflexive process was described by Rye (2003) as 'doing thinking'. The notions of taste, agency and relationships, as outlined by Ortner (2013), inherent within the producer role and necessary for making the film in this more innovative way, will be analysed in situ. The aim of this chapter is relatively modest, as the chapter provides a narrative and overview of the film's production and key events from development to distribution. Doing so, the chapter builds into the following Discussion chapter which explores the relationships and intersections between the different filmmaking models and the producer's roles on the different case studies, *A Boy Called Dad*, *Best Laid Plans*, *Book of Love* and *Running Naked*.

6.1. Development of *Running Naked*: Towards a New Model of Production

The development of *Running Naked* began in 2004, following the founding of the author's production company, Made Up North, and lasted until 2018, by which time the rights to the projects being handled by Made Up North were moved to the author's new production company, North of Watford. The development of the project was long owing to challenges in raising finance for the film and to personal issues involving the producer and his family.

Such a long development could only be supported by a producer having capital behind them, such as the original investment in *Made Up North* or, in more recently in the case of *Running Naked*, the producer having another means of income, through teaching and the production of other features.

The original outline of the film was drafted by Rob Wales and was optioned by the company. The origins of the script sprang from the Bafta nominated short film, *Talking with Angels* (Dir: Yousaf Ali Khan), which the author co-produced with Janey De Norwell, after discussions took place with the original writer, Matt Ehlers, at the Sundance Film Festival in 2004, where *Talking Angels* was screening. Ehlers subsequently joined the project and wrote the first draft script for the film based on the discussions around the idea for the story that took place. The director, Emmy nominated Victor Buhler, came on board following a chance encounter at Clermont Ferrand Film Festival. As a short film producer in 2004, key relationships were being nurtured that would lead to the film being produced over 15 years later. Networking and ‘relationships’ were key to the development of the film and are a key part of the producer’s role as outlined by Ortner (2013) and were key elements in the long historical development of *Running Naked*.

The ‘tenacity’ of the producer, a key component within Ortner’s work in respect of the concept of ‘agency’, is evident within the development process for *Running Naked*. The sheer persistence of the long development process inherent in the film is indicative of the agency of the producer role as described by Ortner (2013). Over the 15 years that followed

the original meetings in 2004, the script for *Running Naked* was developed from the original draft written by Matt Ehlers. Victor Buhler would draft, and then this would be redrafted by the author, doing so often with the author's wife, Jennifer Knowles. There was no outside support or involvement in this draft process from film agencies, script editors or sales companies. This meant that the finished screenplay was not shaped by a Culture 1.0 model of production with financial patronage or a Culture 2.0 model with commercial gatekeepers being led primarily by their market imperatives. Nevertheless, the remit of these gatekeepers had effectively been internalised by the producer at this point due to the producer's wider experiences on previous films, *A Boy Called Dad* and *Best Laid Plans*.

Part of a producer's job within the development process is to interest noteworthy actors in a project who creatively fit the roles but whose attachment helps in securing finance by tapping into sales agents' perspectives about what an actor's name might add in the marketplace. The producer's judgements in these regards are unavoidably informed by the producer's sense of taste, which, as Ortner (2013) elaborates, stems from the socialisation of their taste through their past experiences in working in the media industries, and of the perceptions that they have developed about distributor-buyer and audiences' preferences. Stephen Mangan was attached initially to star in *Running Naked* when the script rights lay with his company Slam films, which was an entity that the author partnered in temporarily. However, once the author left Slam, taking certain projects with him and folding them into NoW, the producer attached Rupert Evans to replace Mangan. For each iteration of the film, a sales pack was produced by the author to sell and advertise it to potential financiers and backers. Applications were made to Culture 1.0 state film financiers such as North West Vision, but no support was

received. Due to Evans' increasing profile following his work on Amazon's *Man in the High Castle*, however, his participation in *Running Naked* enabled the producers to raise some initial equity finance but not enough to make the film at the level that it was intended at that time.

Ultimately, the challenges of securing all the finance necessary to make *Running Naked* led the producer to begin devising an innovative production model that would involve making the film without the usual Culture 1.0 and 2.0 gatekeepers. This meant creating an industry-education partnership that involved pulling together the author's experiences of film industry production and higher education teaching experiences. More specifically, it meant setting up a Master's course at the university that trained students in feature film production that culminated, at several earlier modules, in students taking on roles in shooting a feature film project, which, in the first and only iteration of the course, was *Running Naked*. To do this, the producer revised the budget for the film from roughly £300k to £40k, which later rose to £88k as per the finance plan (Figure 15). This finance plan shows the budget to be made up solely of private equity and tax credit, which is still very low for a film of this scope and ambition. In addition to the finance that came in the form of the private equity and tax credit, the producer and their co-leader of the Master's course, Andy Paton, got Staffordshire University to provide 'in-kind' support necessary for making the film as part of the MA, which was comprised of accommodation, equipment, locations, offices, catering, and staff and student labour on the film, which could be estimated at about £200k. A full budget is also included in the appendices together with an alternate budget including the in-kind element.

Figure 15 Running Naked Finance Plan

Additional finance for making the film was raised through the author's company North of

Financing / Funding source	Amount	% of budget	Funding type
UK tax credit	£ 16,000.00	18.18%	Tax credit
Equity	£ 72,000.00	81.82%	Equity
TOTAL	£ 88,000.00	100.00%	

Watford Film Limited through an EIS (Enterprise Investment) tax scheme. This scheme offers tax breaks to investors and has unfortunately recently stopped in relation to single film projects. This tax break was of interest to investors, some of whom also invested because of the subject matter of the film. Some investment was also secured from investors who were keen to be involved with the film because of the educational component of the project. The level of in-kind investment that the university made into the project and the university's symbolic function in helping to draw in external investment effectively made the university the cornerstone financier. Private money investing in a film with university involvement and training, with some government tax subsidy support, in this Culture 3.0 model (Boehm, 2016a) could be an important, workable model for producing micro budget features. This model moves the finance and control of a project away from the traditional 1.0 and 2.0 gatekeepers outlined in the case studies relating to the author's previous films. Making *Running Naked* with students as part of a course meant that the film would exist

and find a way to fruition outside the usual funding models. Unlike student shorts, no feature films have been produced, financed, and structured in the UK, in the manner of *Running Naked* with private finance sitting alongside industry mentorship and university involvement through a masters course. Instead, the model of production in universities has often been that student fees cover the costs of production. As discussed in the literature review, John William Mateer (2017) presents a useful overview of academic collaborations in filmmaking, breaking them down into three categories. First is the ‘University as a film production company with ‘soft’ investment’, which involves the university providing in kind support through equipment, staff and other services or resources. Second, the ‘University as a film production company with ‘hard’ investment’ where the university provides the above but also invests hard cash into the project. Third, ‘University as a film production service provider’ where the commercial partner initiates, funds and drives the project with the university partner only providing logistical or infrastructural support. (Mateer, 2017, p.6).

Running Naked straddles the models outlined by Mateer as the university was not the production company, not even in an informal way (as in points 1 and 2), and not merely a service provider providing solely ‘logistical and infrastructural support’ (as in point 3) (Mateer, 2018, p.25). The university did, however, bring in soft investment and was involved in the master’s course as per point 1, although there were also undergraduates involved in the production. In the case of *Running Naked*, the production company outside of the university was North of Watford Films with the producer bringing in equity investment to produce a feature through this private company through the master’s course

at the university which, unusually, was co-led by the producer of the commercial film. The university had a training and creative involvement in the film, as well as providing some in kind support. There was, however, no hard cash investment into the film from the university and the university had no ownership of it.

As the finance did not come from a sales agent or film finance company as per Culture 2.0, there were no market requirements for the film from a creative perspective. However, the involvement of private finance in the film meant that there was an expectation that the film would make a profit and give the investors a return. This model of production meant that the producer, also acting at the time as a lecturer, effectively became the conduit for the finance as private investment flowed into the university-housed project. The idea behind shooting the film at this micro-budget level was also to control distribution and therefore potential returns too. The reason for this was because the collapse of smaller distributors made it more challenging to secure theatrical distribution while the emergence of streaming service created a new opportunity to distribute films that circumvented traditional gatekeepers. The author proposed that if the film can be produced at a high quality for a lower cost, then it would not be necessary to sign up early to a distributor to facilitate this. This would mean, in theory, that distribution channels could be controlled by the producer, investors could be paid back, and a greater share of the profits generated could be received by the producer. This model, it was hoped, would also generate some money for the cancer charities attached to the project, namely Teenage Cancer Trust and Weston Park Hospital, through the film's profits, should there be any. The students and Heads of Production Departments (known within the film industry as HODs) in the film were contracted to

receive a share of the film's net profits should the film make any. This is a way of managing and rewarding in-kind and low-cost labour that went into the film.

According to Ortner (2013, p. 155), the concept of 'agency' and of the 'idea of being able to make things happen in the world, around activity rather than passivity,' is central to the producer's role. Making *Running Naked* with students as part of a Master's course, therefore, meant that the film would exist and find a way to fruition outside the usual funding models. As Pierre Bourdieu explains:

Given that works of art exist as symbolic objects only if they are known and recognized, that is, socially instituted as works of art and received by spectators capable of knowing and recognizing them as such, the sociology of art and literature has to take as its object not only the material production but also the symbolic production of the work, i.e., the production of the value of the work or, which amounts to the same thing, of belief in the value of the work (Bourdieu, 1993: p.37)

Consequently, the production of the film in this unusual manner, and at such a micro budget level, thus becomes a facet of the producer's agency while the producer exerts that agency to, in turn, create a value proposition.

6.2. Pre-pre-production: A New Stage Incorporating the Producer as Teacher in the Filmmaking Process

This new Culture 3.0 model of production for *Running Naked* entailed a new stage of production, one that effectively incorporated the producer as a teacher in the filmmaking process by training students to work successfully on the film. This, of course, made the gestation of the film longer. Making use of a producer-teacher role in this production model develops and expands the parental nurturing element outlined by Ortner (2013) and Engelstad and Jo Sondre Moseng (2014). Whereas in Ortner and Mosengs' formulation the producer nurtures and protects the director to fulfil his or her creative contributions, in the case of *Running Naked* the nurturing element was expanded to the whole crew, including students on a film degree from Staffordshire University. Within this Culture 3.0 model, the author, acting as a teacher and producer, provides a bridge to the creative and financial processes of production while facilitating the learning of the students.

Ortner states that 'a large network of varied relationships is crucial to the [filmmaking] process' (2013, p. 161). The production of *Running Naked* was thus designed to combine professional and non-professional crew, as discussed in more detail later. Some of the professional crew were comprised of the author's industry contacts made on previous films and these figures took on the role of more senior positions on the film, such as the Heads of Departments. For instance, the production designer of *A Boy Called Dad*, John Ellis, took on the role of production designer on *Running Naked*, while the 1st Assistant Director of *Best Laid Plans*, Amanda Neal, assisted with the schedule of the production and advised Kate Gallow, a Staffordshire University technician, who became the film's 1st Assistant Director. The professional crew also acted as mentors and tutors on the master course with the majority participating in teaching the course through the delivery of masterclasses. The

ability to be able to bring in high level crew here from previous films at a low cost was key to the making of *Running Naked*, as was the recognition from the HODs that their help on *Running Naked* would lead to potentially more work in the future through employment on subsequent features. HODs were paid by the university for their work on the master's course and a flat fee was agreed for their work on the film. Alongside 'professional', full-time, HODs, lecturers such as Oli Walker from the university were selected as HODs in roles such as director of photography.

The first term of the master's course involved the author and senior lecturer, Andy Paton, teaching the students to develop their skills, knowledge and competencies to prepare them for feature film work. This also involved the HODs, as mentioned above, delivering masterclasses within their areas of expertise. These areas of expertise were as follows: location scouting, production design, producing, camerawork, sound recording and design, scheduling and scriptwriting. The students were set exercises relating to points during a film production process, such as shooting a scene from the script. Eleven students were enrolled who would work on the film as assistants to more experienced HODs from the family of filmmakers that had previously worked with the author in the films mentioned in the case studies. The students expressed a preference in the interviews as to the roles that they would like to fulfil, but this was not a given as, after the first term, roles would be re-evaluated and reassigned to their performance on the course.

In the role of producer-teacher, it quickly became clear that the processes and time needed to learn a production element often does not match the timescales of a mainstream industry production process, and this needs to be negotiated carefully. A university and curriculum calendar has a particular set of timescales and milestones that must accommodate teaching, independent study activities, assessment deadlines, and semester durations and breaks. Incorporating a professional production process that effectively maintains the timeliness and the urgency of the professional industry onto this academic calendar proved challenging. Successfully aligning the two is essential for creating an education-industry partnership with the aim of producing a quality output while providing authentic learning experiences informed by industry professionals. In this respect, whilst there is a nurturing element to the role of the producer, there can be challenges encountered when applied to training crew in a degree context, particularly when considering private cash may be at risk.

6.3. Preproduction

The film's actual pre-production and production formed the final semester of the Staffordshire University master's course. Getting the industry-education production model to run effectively by aligning industry expectations and timescales with higher-education expectations and timescales proved challenging, as mentioned above. That is, the dates of a film often move while the dates of a university semester remain fixed. For instance, Victor Buhler, the director, was and is based in America and had moved from his role at Dirty Robber, a highly respected documentary company, to Masterclass, which produces high level masterclasses largely on film. Whilst making the film had always been the joint dream

of the director and the author, the lives of both had moved in different directions and Victor Buhler questioned whether he would be able to direct the film, thereby creating a level of uncertainty that, while not unusual for film production, created another layer of tension within the industry-education partnership.

The producer's skills of persuasion, which are a manifestation of their agency, are essential here for getting the various components and players to align. Indeed, Ortner (2013) suggests that producers need to have the ability to be persuasive with the social skills to overcome difficult issues within the filmmaking process. In this case, the producer managed to get the educational elements to sit alongside the industrial ones with the film's key personnel – actors, agents, financiers – who moved to fit in with the university's timeline. The belief in the producer was firmly tested when Rupert Evans, the intended lead actor for the film, was cast as a lead in an American TV series and explained that he *probably* would not be able to be involved as he would have to leave the UK early as his wife was pregnant. Consideration was given to moving the shooting dates forward, but this would not work either with the restriction of the fixed academic dates or with Buhler's schedule. Ultimately, the role was recast with Matthew McNulty taking on the role that Evans was attached to play.

The educational context, however, also limits the ability of the producer to be persuasive as there tends to be less flexibility when working with large institutional norms and structures. Thus, on *Running Naked*, there were aspects that could be negotiated, and others that could

not. The cast for *Running Naked* were contracted through PACT/Equity³ on the Very Low Budget Production agreement, which meant that the actors and agents knew that the film was being produced to an approved precedent and that they would be paid accordingly. The PACT/Equity scheme sets a minimum level for actors' fees at various low-budget ranges and ensures payment to the actors by holding this in escrow. As the budget for this film was so small, the actor's fees could not be held in escrow for cashflow purposes and the producer negotiated an alternative with the actors being paid up front for their services. Whilst the production budget was at the micro budget level of £88,000, the budget presented to PACT and agents was flagged at £300,000, which took into consideration the 'in-kind' element provided by the university. The producer felt that flagging the film at a lower level to PACT, and in turn to actor's agents, would potentially discourage actors from being involved. A focus was also put into ensuring that the actors had professional facilities of a higher standard than most micro-budget films. This was to ensure that the 'relationships' with the established talent established in previous films were maintained in this film and into future films. Having an established producer gives the talent pool confidence that the production will happen to a reasonable level of proficiency, and it was important that the producer's professional network was not harmed by expecting their contacts to work on a production that was at a much lower level than they were used to. The track-record of a producer, which gives collaborators on a project confidence, is, as Ortner (2013, pp. 163-172) explains, another element in terms of the added creative and financial value that they provide.

³ The Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television / Equity (actors union) scheme refers to fee arrangements.

Another significant area in respect to the pre-production and casting of *Running Naked* surrounding key scenes that included nudity. For example, as a symbol of living life fully, the teenage versions of the main leads, Mark and Ben, needed to be running naked through a hospital in a particular scene. The key agents were spoken to in respect of the casting, and, in the end, it was decided to cast actors and to blur out any full-frontal nakedness. As the film is called *Running Naked*, the issue of nudity remained a strong and important one, which had to continually be discussed with actors and their agents and the director. Thus, the author, as producer, had to come up with a clause for the actors' contracts to enable them to feel comfortable with the elements of nudity in the film, protect them as individuals, while also protecting the vision for the film. The drafting of this clause is reflective of the language and linguistic skills outlined by Ortner but also reflective of a determined producer desperate to get a film into production. Equally, whilst shooting the film the two lead adult actors felt uncomfortable in being naked in one scene on a beach. The director and the author therefore met with the leads before shooting to talk this through in terms of the justification for its inclusion within the story and to come up with a suitable way forward.

There was a further creative intervention from the author in the pre-production phase, this time coming in respect of music on the film. Specifically, the producer approached Craig Potter from the band Elbow, with whom he had previously worked on a pop video and a comedy short, to work on the film by scoring the film. Given Potter's role in a well-known band, this is another element of how the producer adds value to a film by tapping into their

wider talent network. Craig was keen to write music for films and the production team and director felt that this would be an interesting addition both aurally and as a marketing tool for the film. The author's musical background, owing to his own role playing in bands, meant that the author could potentially work as an amanuensis with the director, who was not musical, in respect of the score.

Numerous conversations during pre-production took place to determine whether Victor Buhler would be directing the film or not. As an Emmy and Oscar nominated director, he was an asset to the project. Also, given Buhler's role in co-writing the project, the author perceived that it made sense for him to shoot it, although these perceptions were, in retrospect, perhaps underpinned unconsciously by notions of auteurship that sees the director adding their creative vision to a work of art. Buhler, however, had doubts as to whether he could shoot the film within the university's timeframe. Various alternatives to replace Buhler as the director were discussed, and these alternatives included Tamzin Merchant, one of the supporting actors. A short was shot with Tamzin during this period to test how this would work, but following the production of this short it was felt that this would not work with Tamzin as she clashed with the intended Director of Photography (DOP) of *Running Naked*, Oli Walker. Another director, Ash Morris, was also discussed, but ultimately his work felt too dark for the material. The idea of the author shooting the film, or even shooting half of it with Buhler shooting the other half, was also considered. This proposal of dividing the shooting of the film between the producer and director was given the most serious thought. Eventually, however, it was agreed that the author would lead the preparation and that the director would arrive to shoot the film later. As discussed

later, this solution, which is very unconventional in film industry production, would have knock on effects in terms of credit conversations at the end of the film. This set up would not have been approved if larger sales agents, financiers, or film agencies, were involved because under Culture 1.0 and 2.0 models the director would have to have been seen as being in sole creative control from the preparation phases onwards. The micro budget nature of a film at this level, as Fair (2017) suggests, gives flexibility within roles. The fact that the director was persuaded to ultimately shoot *Running Naked* shows the strength of the relationship that he had with the producer and was indicative of the persuasive skills that producers have, as discussed more widely by Ortner (2013).

The author and location manager led the master's students in finding locations and then confirmed these over Skype with Buhler maintaining that link with him in the creative process. The students also looked for supporting cast. The film was scheduled with the Assistant Director (AD), the author and the students. As mentioned above, Amanada Neal, an experienced AD from *Best Laid Plans*, was brought in to support the relatively inexperienced *Running Naked* AD team virtually. It was decided, as part of this process, to shoot flashbacks that occur in the film after the main shoot as part of a separate phase of production. This was an important decision as the flashbacks showed the two lead characters as young men in hospital. Shooting them separately ultimately gave the production team the ability to revise the script and flashbacks to fill in or 'comment' on any moments from the already shot 'present day' in the film. These decisions were indicative of the flexibility of the creative roles on the film and, as discussed later, of a blurring between the producer and director roles.

6.4. Production

On the first day on set, it was already clear that the production of *Running Naked* would be a different experience to the experiences of the previous films produced by the author.

Whilst Buhler is an excellent director, his arrival on the eve of the production meant that he was very much having to catch up from day one. This meant that he wanted his producer, the author, by his side to advise actors and liaise with an inexperienced crew with whom he was unfamiliar. The structure of the film and the lack of servicing and reporting to investors, together with the support on the course from the co-course leader, Andy Paton, meant that this was possible in a way that was not possible in the author's other films noted in the case studies. This also meant that there was a blurring between the director and the producer roles.

Whilst there was still some creative steering going on in terms of facilitating the director and 'the creatives', the creative role of the producer in relation to the director role became a little blurred. On the first shooting day, for example, the director wanted a line to show that the characters disliked but tolerated having to do annual blood tests. Having formed a bond with the actors through the casting process and co-writing the script, the author came up with the line 'it's like Eurovision' before feeding this to Mathew McNulty, the actor playing Mark. Liaising directly as a producer with the cast on set would normally be inappropriate but, given the relationship with the director, students, material, and actors,

this was accepted. This points towards the agility and tighter relationships of various role-holders in a production process, specifically when producing a low-budget film in a Culture 3.0 multi-sector partnership model that has an emphasis on co-creation. Furthermore, on the third day, 20th June, actor Andrew Gower explained to the producer that he was not sure about how to perform a scene in the film where his character, who suffers with OCD appears jubilant while painting his room. The author took Gower away from set and proposed that the jubilation of the character at that moment was akin to a famous scene in *Singing in the Rain*. Gower loved the idea and we see his character's transformation clearly as he begins dancing in the paint and drawing an 'S', the initial of the woman he loves, on the floor.

Buhler largely solely spoke with the DOP regarding shot selection, but frequently the author liaised with actors and often advised the director when a sequence was complete and when to move on. Normally this would fall to the 1st Assistant Director who is seen as the producer's representative on set. Being on set continuously, and given the mostly inexperienced crew comprised of students, this fell more naturally to the producer. This highlighted the conflation between the producer as facilitator and the role of a creator, which will later be explored as being an indication of using a Culture 3.0 model of film production. As the author had an existing relationship with the actors onset, it was often best to use that relationship when dealing with problems and difficult scenes. Therefore, when issues came up in relation to, for example, the reasons for their nudity on days 4 and 12, this was left for the author to deal with. This shows how the producer came to occupy a role that sat between the creative and the facilitator element of film production.

The facilitator element of film production was also evident on set in terms of dealing with logistical ‘producing’ problems such as on day 5 when we ‘lost’ our old people and dog because the shoot was over running. This was solved by the producer visiting a local pub and finding replacements for both. Similarly, on day 9 (Figure 16) when the gondola heading for the Stoke canal was delayed, this caused a lot of tension and frustration for the director and actors, which was exacerbated as this was a difficult shooting day with many complicated elements to film and the main actor was wearing an uncomfortable bald cap on a hot day. As this was a big scene, with Mark McNulty wearing an uncomfortable prosthetic, the producer role here was more of a traditional producing one that involved working more on organisational and administrative matters off set than on creative matters on set. The creative freedom that came from the Culture 3.0 rescinded somewhat to ensure that the wheels turned smoothly on production and that we got through the day rather than specific on set matters. That day, the production team also learnt that potentially one of the students had mistakenly lost a whole days’ footage. This information was hidden from the director to protect him and, when he was subsequently told about this, he commented that he would have walked away from the project if he had known about it at the time. While this is a clear example of the protective, nurturing mode talked about in relation to producers and directors by Ortner (2013), this experience also highlights the potential

pitfalls that can be involved when putting inexperienced student learners with experienced crew on an actual production.



Figure 16 the director and producer talk through the gondola scene with actors

As a producer-educator, the author also had to shift between roles to some extent to accommodate both the real-world production and educational context. Whilst the author was formally a teacher for the first element of the film before pre-production, the focus changed when the film went into production and the nurturing element became more focussed on the director and the film. Whilst the students were supported through daily morning sessions at this point, they were now being encouraged to perform as co-workers in a manner that was meant to simulate the industry experience of professional labour. Although the focus was predominantly on film production, however, additional educational processes were embedded. For example, in order to manage the complexity of a large

number of learners on the set, daily morning production briefings offered an opportunity to provide contextual information for student learning that supported both the learning journey as well as the production management for making the film (See Figure 16). These meetings, going through the day's activities, were key in talking through the previous days' work and managing expectations of the day ahead. The meetings were attended by the students, producer, director and the HODs. The meetings were useful in terms of getting information over to the HODS and the students alike but added additional hours onto already long days.



Figure 16 University-housed morning production meeting for Running Naked

6.5. Post-production

Immediately after the shoot, Victor Buhler returned to the U.S. Although the initial assembly edit was undertaken by students, there needed to be further quality processes

embedded. For the producer, there is a process of negotiation here embedded in his role, one that identifies a way through by both balancing the access of students to learning processes with the requirement of being able to produce high-quality products. In the case of *Running Naked*, the solution developed was for students to edit individual scenes, whilst overall editing processes were kept in the more experienced hands, specifically of Andy Paton, a filmmaker and lecturer at Staffordshire University. This process points to a need to be agile in finding solutions that balance the needs of industry and private investors seeking a return through the exploitation of an industry-ready product with the learning requirements of a HE provider. Even though there was less of a financial pressure than under traditional film financing structures, there was still a pressure from investors to see the result of their investment.

During post-production, the producer increasingly needed to mediate between the needs of two sectors; that is, between the educational needs of students on the one hand, and the film industry director's expectation of industry level production quality on the other. The director expected the editing work at a level that he was used to when producing mainstream films with processes more aligned to IP oriented Culture 2.0 production models, whilst the producer had to negotiate between these expectations and the educational settings and different levels of capabilities of learners. As a producer, the job was to manage the director's expectations and to bridge these two different requirements. The gap between different levels of expectation (professional vs learner) was bridged with in-kind work from various individuals, from the producer, co-producers or course directors. This 'in kind' work from educational staff employed by their higher education institution

added additional value to *Running Naked*. ‘In kind’ work is, of course, a valuable component of most micro-budget filmmaking but the education-industry partnership changes these dynamics, as is discussed more in the next chapter.

The author worked with film degree course director Paton in shaping the edit and then liaised with the director. Often it would be a case of Paton and the author shaping a scene and then Buhler amending or reshaping it. Like the writing process, it became difficult to see who had their creative DNA in each scene. Here, actively, we had trust in the ‘taste’ of the other (Ortner, 2013). Beyond the initial edit, the students were not involved in this process. The fact that there was a limit of students being involved fully in the whole process is a limitation of a Culture 3.0 model that balances the needs and timescales of an external investment model with students’ education.

Once there was an assembly, the casting of the actors to play the leads as young adults began. This was difficult as the kids had to be 15 but this also involved nudity. Through working with McNulty who played Mark, it was possible to find an actor who he felt resembled him who could play his younger self in the flashback scenes. Then, through speaking to the actor cast to play young Mark, it was possible to find one of his friends who had a resemblance to Ben. Both actors were 16, so this helped both with working hours and the nude elements. The author then rewrote the flashbacks to enhance the assembly we already had, adding a scene with them listening to music that reflected Ben dancing as an older man and a scene where they talk as young adults about their mortality. This would fit

alongside and parallel a scene when we see them doing the same as older men. Again, actively contributing to the edit and being on the creative side enabled the producer to make pertinent creative interventions.

The director felt that the film required a more experienced editor for the final edit and several editors who had worked on previous North of Watford Films were discussed. However, the time commitment to edit a film is more significant financially than, for example, an actor working at a low rate, so an alternative route had to be found. The possibility of the director finding an editor in the US was also discussed, but it was felt that the cost would be prohibitive. Finally, the producer approached Lioneyes, a post-production studio that North of Watford were working with on another film and they agreed to work on the film's final cut, VFX and sound. Lioneyes normally worked on TV with actors and directors such as Peter Kay and they were keen to be involved for the cache that film has. It was agreed that the author would lead post-production, working with Craig Leedham, the in-house editor at Lioneyes, in pulling together the edit. This was facilitated through edit meetings once or twice a week. The results of this edit were then discussed on a conference call with the director and, although this was a time-consuming process, there was not any pressure in terms of outside public financier or distributors as would be expected under Culture 1.0 or 2.0 models of production.

Concurrently with this, the author discussed with Craig Potter ideas for music. Having a producer here with a musical background with trusted 'taste' as amanuensis was useful in

the post-production process. The director came over for a final edit session in October 2019 and a sound mix was put together in December 2019. When a final edit of the film was almost locked down, the author felt that a further piece of music over the romantic ‘Venice scene’, shot on Stoke canals, was needed. Potter was contacted and he agreed to have another look. Whilst this slowed the completion of the post-production, this decision really helped the ending of the film creatively. As a producer, it was possible to use the ability to control the delivery of the film for creative ends.

At the end of the post-production process on *Running Naked*, the subject of credits came up between the producer and director as a result of the different work practices inherent in the film and as a result of the more innovative co-production processes inherent in this Culture 3.0 way of working. It was agreed that as we had developed, shot and produced the film together, the film should therefore carry the credit ‘A film by Victor Buhler and Michael Knowles’. However, Buhler was contracted by the author’s production company as being the sole director and had a sub clause as a co-producer, which was problematic given how the balance of work had played out on the film in actuality. The author suggested, via email, that if Buhler had a producer credit then this should be balanced by the author receiving a co-director credit since, within this new model, the author had worked significantly in the area of directing, essentially crossing between areas of labour, whilst the director’s production credit was a nominal one with no actual producer responsibility. The director agreed that whilst this was acceptable in terms of directorial work undertaken by the author, it was not contractually agreed or ‘accepted in the industry’ (Victor Buhler. 2019. Email to author). Wanting to finish the film in as good a spirit as it had been made, it

was agreed that Buhler's producer credit be downgraded and that the proportion of the back end of the film coming to the producer be increased by way of recompense, perhaps an example of the producer following potential returns rather than creative merits. A look at a potential solution to this credit issue for future Culture 3.0 films or other films experiencing this issue is included in the Discussion section in Chapter 7.

6.6. Distribution



Figure 17 Running Naked Festival Garlands

In 2008, the UKFC report into UK low-budget filmmaking concluded that low and micro budget filmmakers had not worked out the potential of digital technology for distribution and that 'real innovation and entrepreneurship on the part of producers will be needed to develop new business models and opportunities' (UKFC, 2008, p. 28). Upon completion of *Running Naked*, over 10 years on from this report, routes to market for the film were looked at. As per the Bloore's value chain, the producer led this process and came to similar conclusions to those above. The ideal 'plan' was to sell the film directly to a subscription streaming service such as Amazon or Netflix, but it was quickly discovered

that it is almost impossible to reach them directly. To engage with them effectively, a sales agent needs to be attached. This contradicts Amazon and Netflix' own promotional discourse where they claimed to be heralding a potential new model of distribution for filmmakers. Moreover, the benefits that a sales agent might have had for securing distribution through a streaming service highlights a potential benefit of the Culture 2.0 model where commercial imperatives and market needs are embedded more firmly from the beginning and, conversely, highlights a potential downside of the Culture 3.0 model.

For several distributors that were approached, the film also lacked scale for international distribution as it was described by some as 'very British', which was potentially an outcome of the development of the film through Made Up North's original film slate. The producer negotiated for a UK distributor, Lightbulb, to come on board to provide a small cinema release in October 2020, but the producer subsequently decided that a cinema release was not the correct route for distribution given the restrictions and closures in cinemas due to Covid. Lightbulb subsequently successfully released the author's next low budget film *The Pebble and the Boy* (2021) to over 100 screens. That film, however, was a mod film and had a built-in fan base of over 30,000 through its Facebook group.

Ultimately, alternative distribution models were explored as the best route forward. This was one of the goals when the Culture 3.0 model was originally contemplated. Mark Foligno, who Exec produced *Moon* (Jones, 2009), *Best Laid Plans* and *King's Speech* (Hooper, 2010), was contacted to reach out to some of his contacts on a lower percentage

than a 'normal' sales agent distributor (10% rather than 20-30%). He sold the film into China for \$30,000 which was, in terms of territory reach and sales, beyond expectations. In turn, the film screened at the Beijing International Film Festival (Figure 17). The team were invited to attend but unfortunately could not travel as a result of Covid restrictions. Some feedback from the screening of the film in China is available on request from the author.

Festival appearances also help to cultivate prestige which can be useful for increasing the value of a film to streamers. The producer thus spoke to the British Council about further festival submissions, which were difficult at this time because of Covid. The film was selected for both the Portland and the Barnes Film Festivals though the impact of these festivals again, because of covid, was limited from a sales perspective. The film finally had a belated, small and one-off premiere screening in Stoke in October 2021 (Figure 18).



Figure 18 Stoke premiere of Running Naked, 2021

For international sales, several sales companies were spoken to and the film was released through 101/ Trinity in partnership with Our Screen on 8th February 2021, excluding the presold China territory. Our Screen were also able to do an awareness screening in conjunction with the BFI and a virtual release. This enabled the producer to keep control of this element but also study the effectiveness of various marketing strategies on the release and sales. Our Screen then did an online screening to approximately 500 people followed by a Q&A. They were also able to do a virtual screening for Teenage Cancer Trust and the positive feedback from this group was affirming. The sales agent spoke to the producer regarding the release of the film and it was agreed that the artwork and the trailer would be

produced by the production company. Eventually, two designs were produced. One NHS styled design (Figure 19) and one international design (Figure 20).



Figure 19 Running Naked artwork - UK



Figure 20 Running Naked artwork - International.

Link to Running Naked Trailer:[RUNNING NAKED Official Trailer \(2021\) UK Comedy Drama - YouTube](#)

The film garnered some good press, with it being described as ‘the feel good indie movie that will restore your faith in absolutely everything’ by *Buzzfeed* (see Appendix A) https://www.buzzfeed.com/sam_cleal/running-naked-watch-online-movie-review. The film was also reviewed alongside significantly ‘bigger’ budgeted features on release. While the scale of a film based on its budget is often a primary concern for the industry, the critical reception of the film indicates that from an audience perspective budget becomes less relevant. Often within reviews comparables, meaning similar films, are referred to. In the case of *Running Naked*, reviewers compared the film to much higher budgeted films with bigger named talent, *Full Monty* (Cattaneo, 1997) and *Calendar Girls* (Cole, 2003) (Figure 21 and Figure 22). The film also gained some positive word of mouth on social media with tweets from Rebecca Front and Rory Bremner who watched the film as BAFTA voters (Figure 23)



Figure 23 Rory Bremner tweet re Running Naked, Jan 17th 2021

Working with the university students on a social media buzz around the film would have been useful, but as the students had dissipated by the time of release, this was not possible. The film is available for purchase on SKY/ Virgin/ iTunes and Amazon. The initial sales for the film have been modest and the film has not, to date, earned back its recoupable budget. *Running Naked's* long-term financial success will, however, ultimately depend on whether a UK broadcaster acquires the rights to it, which is something that, to date, has not been achieved. 101, the film's international distributor, have advised that they have struggled as a result of covid in not being able to have in person meetings that would drive a feature without major stars. They hoped that this would be rectified at their key festival market in Berlin in 2022.

Given the response to *Book of Love* starring Sam Claflin, having a true star clearly does drive sales no matter what the creative merits of the film. It would, however, have been almost impossible to attract a star of that calibre at this budget level. Also, *Running Naked* is very much a British film that straddles comedy and drama and having more focus on a specific genre might have benefited the film's sales. The initial sales projections from the sales company reflected low figures at £62k, mid at £90k and high at £132k. Actuals for the film are so far significantly lower than these projections with greater sales done independently, through Mark Foligno, than through the sales company. However, agreement has been reached with 101 that the film can be sold independently of them and this has resulted in a distribution agreement in Australia/New Zealand and a further independent AVOD deal through Big Media that has led to further sales to the CIS countries Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine. Whilst focus for sales is around the initial release period, it is hoped that the longevity of film can result in further sales over time as the film has been well reviewed. In terms of reviews and festival successes, in the time when screenings were possible, the film can be viewed as a success for a micro budget film, particularly given the training element within it. When looking back at *Best Laid Plans* and the successes and failures of that film, meanwhile, it is heartening that *Running Naked* at least had artwork and a trailer to reflect its content and that might attract future sales moving forward. This greater level of 'authenticity' is arguably a consequence of the greater level of control and flexibility afforded by the Culture 3.0 structure. That being said, the control afforded by the Culture 3.0 model arguably limited the film's commercial positioning and sales as the film's market focus was not defined.

7. Discussion

This chapter pulls together the thesis in its entirety by discussing the production of *Running Naked* in comparison with the author's other films, namely *A Boy Called Dad*, *Best Laid Plans* and *Book of Love*, that were explored in the case studies chapter. This discussion is anchored around five key lines of enquiry. First, the discussion considers to what extent *Running Naked* was an innovative production that adheres to the Culture 3.0 model of production, and the concepts associated with it, as espoused in the work of Sacco (2011) and Boehm (2022). Second, the discussion considers what role the university played in the education-industry partnership production of *Running Naked* and how could this be improved in future iterations. Third, the discussion looks at how the producer's role changed in the making of *Running Naked* in an industry-education partnership model, how far it really departed from the author's previous productions, namely those examined in chapter 5, and how was this reflected in credits. Fourth, the discussion explores the producer's role and the Culture 3.0 model of production in relation to issues of pedagogy, albeit it does so with the recognition that this is a thesis that is focused on the author's practice and not on their teaching. Fifth, the discussion explores the producer's self-representations in the case of a Culture 3.0 model of production. This chapter discusses these different considerations with the aim of working towards come clearer answers.

7.1. To what extent was *Running Naked*'s mode of production indicative of a Culture 3.0 model and how did this affect its development, production and distribution (compared with the case studies in chapter 5)?

What the case studies show, both in chapter 5 in relation to the author's previous films and in chapter 6 in relation to *Running Naked*, is that there is never a pure Culture 1.0, 2.0 or 3.0 model. While Boehm focuses on podcasts as the exemplar of the Culture 3.0 model of production, film productions tend to be much larger and more complex projects made up of different production phases that lean into different sectors and involve a wide variety of players of a type that may be associated more closely with Boehm and Sacco's Culture 1.0, Culture 2.0 and Culture 3.0 models. These different phases in filmmaking, particularly within Culture 1.0 and Culture 2.0 models, place different often conflicting demands upon the producer, as the case studies demonstrate.

To reiterate, *A Boy Called Dad* had a regional Culture 1.0 patronage funder as its cornerstone financier but there was also an element of private equity typical of Culture 2.0 while the market gatekeepers came to take on an increasingly prevalent role in the film's distribution. The *Best Laid Plans* finance plan also had Culture 1.0 and 2.0 elements, with private market finance from Sony as the cornerstone financier and EM Media, as the Culture 1.0 financier, taking a lower than market rate position cash flowing the tax credit. Of the three case studies discussed in chapter 5, *Book of Love* was arguably the purest model of production as it was made as a commercial product from the outset and one that was underpinned by data from BuzzFeed without any involvement from regional funders. In

the case of *Running Naked*, however, Staffordshire University was effectively the cornerstone financier. Although there was an element of private investment, Staffordshire University's role coupled with the educational context provide a strong basis for claiming that *Running Naked* was made according to a Culture 3.0 model of production. In his article on value chains, Peter Bloore notes that 'only 18% of films developed reach production' (Bloore, 2012). If the film had not been produced in an innovative way, with an industry-education partnership, then it would likely have fallen amongst the other 82%, that do not go into production as the film lacked the cultural elements to be supported through regional funders or the commercial talent attached that would satisfy a sales agent in order to facilitate presales.

The finance for *Running Naked* did not have any cultural or geographic requirements attached to it as is often the case with state agency funding in a patronage-style Culture 1.0, through bodies such as the BFI or Creative England. Often, as was the case with two of the author's previous films, *A Boy Called Dad* and *Best Laid Plans*, finance from regional bodies requires significant form filling and servicing in terms of, for example, shooting in specific locations or employing people from specific areas or backgrounds. Moreover, *Running Naked*'s industry-education partnership facilitated a collaboration between non-professional and professional labour and brought in-kind benefits that allowed the production to be shot at a cheaper cost thereby circumventing traditional gatekeepers or the need for bringing a sales agent or distributor on-board at an early stage to provide extra funds through pre-selling the film. In turn, the education-industry partnership with

Staffordshire University acting effectively as the cornerstone financier enabled a fluidity of roles, which was also necessitated both by the size and experience of the crew.

The lack of a formal financial gatekeeper, for example, enabled the author to adopt more of a creative producer role than the administrator producer role and allowed him to spend more time on set. The creative partnership that was started during the development process of the film, between the director and producer, was able to continue to flourish during production because of the 3.0 funding model. This was welcomed by the director given the relative youth and inexperience of the crew and the existing bond between the producer and director. In another example of co-creation, the students fed into the production design and scriptwriting process in a manner that would not normally be expected of junior crew members on more hierarchically arranged industry productions. The heads of departments (HoDs) in the production of the film engaged early in the preproduction process and were employed by the university to work with students scoping out their role in relation to the production of the film. Being involved earlier in the production and development process gave the HoDs a greater flexibility to influence and engage in the film. The teachers too had more flexibility, with Andy Paton, the co-head of the course, editing and co-producing the film, and Kate Gallow, a Staffordshire University technician, working within several roles in the AD (Assistants Director) department. There was, therefore, arguably a democratisation of roles with *Running Naked* with more ‘co creation’ taking place between the director and producer and between the professional and non-professional crew than within the case studies referred to in chapter 5 (Boehm, 2022, p.53).

Shooting and financing the film under a Culture 3.0 model with Staffordshire University as effectively the cornerstone financier instead of regional bodies or commercial distributors, enabled the producer and his collaborators to take a greater creative lead on the project without being led by traditional gatekeepers. Within the finance plan for *Running Naked*, however, there are still some hybrid elements with the Culture 1.0 tax credit and Culture 2.0 equity investment sitting alongside the in-kind investment from the university. On one hand, these private investors still sought a return on their investment. On the other hand, the higher education context coupled with the subject matter of the film meant that the investors' desire for a financial return was mitigated somewhat by their desire to 'do good'. In turn, the demands from investors on the producer to provide status updates on the film was less than in the case of the producer's other films. While this decrease in demands from the investors was partly because of the EIS benefits of the investment, the sense of good will created by the educative element highlights the symbolic role and benefits that the presence of a higher education institution has.

The aim for the producer was also to take a greater control over the film's distribution by selling it to streaming services without a sales agent. Doing so was not possible, however, as it is very difficult to sell to Netflix and Amazon directly without a sales agent or distribution partner on-board. So, whilst the production of the film is 3.0 in nature, the sales and distribution stages were still required to follow a 2.0 model. Thus, there was not quite the purity of model, be it Culture 1.0, 2.0 or 3.0, as indicated by Boehm and Sacco's work. Consequently, the production of *Running Naked* did not solve a key problem of *A Boy Called Dad* and *Best Laid Plans*, namely that of controlling distribution in a manner that

reflected the intentions of the producer and co-creatives. While there was a cultural dissonance between the aims of the regional financiers and commercial distributors in both of these films, the lack of a distribution partner from the outset in the case of *Running Naked* ultimately proved problematic as it led to the film finding only a limited audience and making minimal returns.

7.2. What role did the university play in the education-industry partnership production of *Running Naked* and how could this be improved in future iterations?

One of the challenges of making a feature film such as *Running Naked* under a 3.0 model of production and education-industry partnership is raising the private capital. The challenges and the potential risks of failing to raise the capital fell solely on the producer in the case of *Running Naked*. There was no contractual agreement between the university and the students that meant that the students were guaranteed to work on any specific film as part of the course. The university thus had a limited risk under the model undertaken for *Running Naked* as the masters course would happen, regardless of the outcome of the film, while the producer was contractually responsible for the investment of private equity. Whilst the university invested in the film by providing equipment and validating and promoting the course, and has potential reputational damage should any problems arise, it was not financially invested, beyond its in-kind investment, in the financial element of the film or proactively involved in terms of the long term development of the model. The university

receives the fees from the MA students and potential plaudits from the film being made without carrying any of the risk of being a partner in the film.

An alternative film production model with an MA element was the Filmbase award which was an early adopter on new technology in education to make features and was co led by James Fair. The award, like the course written about in this study, was approved through Staffordshire University and produced feature films. However, there were several key differences in the model compared with that used to produce *Running Naked*. Filmbase was a training provider, not a production company which franchised the course and kept the majority of the student fee and then crowdfunded rather than having to get outside investment from the market. Within the Filmbase course students took on key roles (including producing/directing) in the production (and not shadowing those roles of industry professionals). Fair commented at the time that:

there is a major gap between industry and academia and we need to close it. On one hand, there is an industry that is confronted by the paradigm shift of the internet and social media, and on the other, there is a relatively safe crowd of academics 'analysing the relationship'. Each side is suspicious of the other and both sides tend to hide behind their self-serving distinctions between 'art' and 'business' (Fair, 2011)

Fair argued that 'Debunking mythologies' such as those around the director as the auteur is what such film production courses should be about.

What the Filmbase model lacks in comparison to the *Running Naked* model is the Culture 2.0 market link giving the education-industry hybrid model. As Filmbase was financed mostly through income generated by student fees, it meant that it would exist in an educational ‘bubble’ without the external market pressures to make the production process more of a real-world experience. Also, with the Filmbase course taking place in Ireland, following the success of films the Oscar winning, micro budget *Once* (Carney, 2007), there is an evident different cultural emphasis on producing microbudget features.

Unfortunately, at Staffordshire University, as in many other higher education institutions, the management changes frequently. These managerial changes mean that it is difficult for the university to effectively assess and recognise the potential long-term value and legacy for the institution and region of investing in producing feature films. An active investment in the Culture 3.0 model, the author suggests, could increase the university’s reputation, attract students and increase fees. *Running Naked* arguably already has a value as a marketing tool for the university for attracting future students through its coverage in festivals and in media and has been utilised in workshops and open days. Whilst a post-92 university’s remit is usually firstly education and there are financial targets in terms of student numbers to hit, more investment from a university in this model of production could increase the value and demand for their courses. Partnering with industry institutions on commercial endeavours as part of research projects could also be part of a university’s revenue generation activities, as universities have themselves increasingly adopted Culture 2.0 models with more commercial focuses. It would be prudent, therefore, in future iterations of the model for Staffordshire University (or indeed another university) to work in tandem with the producer to try and find private commercial partners to finance the film.

If the university was to contribute to raising the finance in this regard, this would also alleviate the level of risk for the producer whilst maintaining the education-industry hybrid

Through the praxis in *Running Naked*, the author came to realise the value of the earlier investment into Made Up North's slate as opposed to individual investments into single films. The equity investment into a slate enabled Made Up North to develop films from arthouse to more commercial projects, from those ideally suited to Regional Film Finance support to more commercial films. This investment also supported the development of the initial drafts of *Running Naked*. The university could take a similar role working with producers to facilitate a slate of films to be produced under the Culture 3.0 model. This would increase investment in the region and would be led by the university. For this reason, the author has put the university into the micro budget education model in italics at the development stage as a potential future investor in further iterations of the model (see Figure 24). Indeed, the relative low cost of producing films through the Culture 3.0 model could enable the university to work with multiple producers on a slate of products as an incubation hub for new film businesses. Working across a slate in this manner would offset any reputational risk of a single film as well as increasing the influence of the university in this sector, linking and developing local businesses and bringing potential employability to the university's students from undergraduate to postgraduates. As core staff from the university who were involved in providing the educational scaffolding also took on roles on the film, this model of production also enabled academic staff to have an industry focussed creative practice as part of their academic identities. A university's investment in a slate of films could also then potentially lead to long-term partnerships with the commercial sector

in film studios. This could be particularly useful and lucrative in an area like Stoke-on-Trent where ‘levelling up’ is a priority. This could lead the development of creative clusters as outlined by Sacco (2008). Similarly, Sacco (2008) stresses the importance of universities reaching out into their communities. The production of *Running Naked* both enabled the university to be visible in the physical production of the film across various areas of Stoke but also through the casting of local unknown actors across various ages and socio-economic backgrounds.

Producing a film in tandem with industry gives students valuable on set work experience whilst providing support within an educational context, rather than the ‘in kind’ potentially exploitative work experience model that many students go through after university to get valuable credits. This ‘in kind’ work element has been frowned upon by some unions. Martin Spence, Assistant General Secretary from the Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union (BECTU) stated:

The most common business model on illegal/irresponsible micro budget films is for producers to compensate their failure to raise funds by getting crew/cast to work unpaid. I suppose that’s a ‘business model’ in the same sense that burglary is a ‘business model’ (UKFC, 2008, p.35).

Percival and Hesmondhalgh, meanwhile, in ‘Unpaid Work in the Film and Television Industries’ (Percival & Hesmondhalgh, 2014) reflect that younger people see unpaid work as a necessary evil at best. Asking students to work in an educational context on a feature film produced through an education-industry partnership, arguably makes lower and unpaid

work for junior crew members more palatable by framing it as a learning experience and a key step to getting an invaluable, saleable credit on a film. This work then has the dual impact for the producer of getting more production value on the screen while also giving students invaluable experience and a film credit at a time when there is a clear 'shortage of skills' due to the growth of film production in the UK (Wilson et al., 2023. p.26). This is a clear way that Culture 3.0 films such as *Running Naked* can have a key impact in taking students from university to the workplace, which is a stated aim for the university.

Moreover, as James Fair (2019, p. 67) states, 'Low and micro budget filmmaking is a career phase that some filmmakers may have to pass through to reach bigger work, while others may never move beyond it'. The latter part of this quote, in making students realise their strengths and weaknesses and perhaps even unsuitability for their chosen field by working on an actual film, and not just within theoretical frameworks of a university course, is also an important function of the education-industry production model. This model gives students the opportunity to gain industry-focused work experience but within the supported realm of education.

Whilst the university's involvement in *Running Naked* in providing in-kind resources, equipment, facilities and staff was vital to the production and financing of it, if the model were to run again, the university could utilise its staff and research expertise to provide further value. Such value could include, for instance, conducting market research, facilitating connections to trade bodies to secure more capital, or supporting with distribution. A university could, in future projects, look to work with the BFI and trade bodies such as PACT and BECTU to reflect their requirements in terms of training within

the marketplace into the courses at undergraduate level and also within any film produced at postgraduate level. It would also be useful to engage further with external researchers from the university to collect data on how the course ran and to liaise with these bodies.

Moreover, a university could utilise its research capabilities to support with conducting market research earlier in the process to ensure that the feature film that is produced is one that is ready for market. As films with external investment are expected to recoup, the model of self-distribution outlined by Boehm in terms of podcasts is ineffective here as Culture 2.0 models need to be utilised. YouTube, for example, is a platform with direct user access similar to podcast platforms in that it allows direct distribution, yet it does not deliver the financial returns required to recoup a film's budget. A university might also utilise its staffs' expertise to create an alternative model of distribution. As Stephen Follows points out (Follows, 2014a), there is the need for a new model for the distribution of low budget films. Moreover, in an interview with Mateer, Schatz, one the practitioners at the University of Texas who produced bigger budget films in a university context, concludes that it was worth producing films in a university context if viable distribution mechanisms could be found:

I remain convinced that [academic-industry production collaborations are] something film schools should be pursuing. Although original cable programming [or streaming] may make more sense these days than theatrical features (Mateer, 2018, p21).

In the development of an alternative form of distribution, it may be worth keeping in mind that Boehm advocates for an alternative distribution model in the vein of Culture 3.0 characterised by the ‘Mass distribution of content without mediators’ and ‘No pre-determined market channel bottlenecks’ (Boehm, 2016, p6). The university could potentially facilitate a steering group to include sales and distribution practitioners alongside academics to look at this. A university’s ability to create an alternative distribution model may be challenging, then, as one has not been found in the 15 years since the UKFC’s 2008 report.

This production model largely represents a sustainable, effective, and impactful model, repeatable, as demonstrated by delivering it as a re-occurring existing MA level degree course. Repeatability is important here for both the industry as well as the partnering Higher Education organisation. For industry, repeatability signifies a sustainable model of production that can produce high quality films that also trains the next generation, supporting long-term sustainability. For the universities, repeatability is desirable to ensure multiple iterations of one course can be taught.

In terms of its structure and shape, the production model was designed to be repeatable, in that it was embedded into an existing MA Module course, that could be run as part of various industry-focussed MA Level film production degrees (see course materials [available in request from the author](#)). The extent of this repeatability also depends on the different arrangements throughout the lifecycle of the film. For instance, formalising a relationship between a financier – distributor and the educational organisation produces a

more stable, contractual relationship that can potentially give a university more confidence in running future versions of this model. Another instance would be if the director came from the course itself, as in the FilmBase model, in which case there would likely be greater flexibility in terms of the push and pull between industrial and educational elements, as it is conducive to availability of key individuals. This, however, can in turn effect the quality of the final film, as the prestige of the course has an effective on the attractiveness, and therefore the talent that makes up the production team. Similarly, as has been discussed, if the university were to be involved more in terms of establishing a sales platform and training links to the industry, that would be beneficial in terms of routes to market. Identifying the projects that can have value in the marketplace can attract investment, which is key in establishing this unique education-industry hybrid model. Raising equity investment regularly for such a repeatable model is difficult without the route to market being identified, although the author has found potential sales partners for this from the relative success of *Running Naked*.

Speaking to several producers and academics at the 2023 Berlinale about the author's research, there was clear support for an alternative model beyond the Culture 1.0 model of state support for developing producers, writers and directors. This admittedly small straw poll felt that supporting often unsaleable films through state aid with a cultural gatekeeper would not lead to a sustainable industry, whether that be in the UK or Germany. Similarly, for first time practitioners, producing commercial Culture 2.0 films can also often be difficult due to market demands and pressure. The concept of a university involvement as an independent arbiter and incubator between these two elements was received positively at the festival. Finally, as a cornerstone financier, the university played a crucial role in the

making of *Running Naked* by helping through its in-kind support to finance the film. At the same time, the university as a cornerstone financier played a crucial role in legitimating the model as one that had more of a social value and less of a commercial imperative. This gave financiers comfort to invest in the project but the university's in-kind support, in turn, also enabled the film to have a scale beyond its budget which helped attract professional actors and HODS.

7.3. How did the producer's role change in the making of *Running Naked* in an industry-education partnership model and how was this reflected in credits?

Martin Dale distinguishes between 'true creators' who are originators, such as writers and directors, and the producer who is an 'enabling mechanism', practising 'secondary creation' by working on pre-existing material rather than originating it' (Dale, 1997, pp.96–97). Philip Drake, however, argues that creative choices and notions of independence work within wider institutional systems and contexts (Drake, 2012, p. 140). Drake states, 'Creative decision-making aims for 'true' or 'free' artistic choices rather than 'false' or 'constrained' market ones. This discourse suggests that independence requires creative control over the production process (2012, p. 140). Moreover, Drake argues that:

Creative decisions are often the result of institutional processes (such as rehearsals with actors, script conferences and such like) as well as the internalised requirements for producing work for a particular studio or market, rather than the unfettered creative vision of a single artist (Drake, 2012, p. 146).

In the praxis evidenced in *Running Naked*, therefore, the producer shows the qualities of a co-creator alongside those of secondary creation and facilitation from development through to post-production and marketing. These elements of co-creation were less prevalent in the other films made by the producer, referenced in the case studies chapter. It is useful to look at the value chain of independent film production alongside Ortner's work on producer agency to redefine this model for a micro budget feature film and to reflect the praxis of *Running Naked* and Culture 3.0.

Within his value chain (Figure 3), Bloore outlines who is involved at each stage of a production with a brief description of the activity at each stage. Detailed below (Figure 24) is a micro budget model drawn up by the author as an outcome of this PhD and based upon the experience of *Running Naked* as a micro budget Culture 3.0 feature shot at Staffordshire University. This model shows that the core team throughout the production process of *Running Naked* is a lot smaller than in Bloore's model, with the producer being engaged and driving this process for a longer time and having to support themselves outside of the film industry, in this case as a university lecturer. Within this model, the development and financing stage shows an absence of third-party financiers, distributors and agencies. The film developed in this Culture 3.0 way reflects the conception of the director, writers and producer alone during the initial development phase with the additional input coming from the students later in the development/pre-production phase. Within *Running Naked's* value-chain, the producer's focus is on the creative element with the administration elements of the role being less onerous and time consuming. This re-imagining of the producer role with this Culture 3.0 model gives the producer a new, bigger creative role.

Micro budget Culture 3.0 Value model

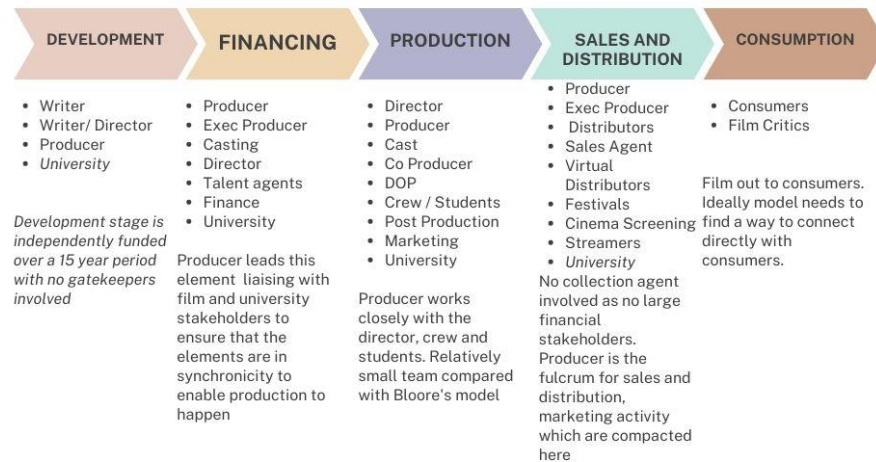


Figure 24 Culture 3.0 Value Chain

What is not clear within Bloore's model is just how much value in terms of agency and market recognition the addition of a producer to a script makes within the development process. The addition of a producer to a script enables the script to be viewed more as a property and therefore is the starting point to become a film. Often, an independent producer needs to support both the development of a film and themselves whilst maintaining the belief that there is still value in the film and that it will come to fruition. The producer is usually involved, as is the case here, before the director in the value chain and in getting the process of development started. It may be helpful to add to Bloore's model a visual emphasis that shows just how the producer kickstarts the whole process, as it is the adding of the producer that makes the script to be able to be taken to market to be

packaged. The producer is often involved, as in *Running Naked*, in liaising with writers, before the director in the value chain and in getting the process of development started.

The long length of development entailed in *Running Naked* would probably define the producer role here, according to Auden Engelstad and Jo Sondre Moseng, and Ortner, as that of a nurturing producer. As Engelstad and Moseng state, the nurturing producer invests ‘time and resources in people and in creative teams in whom they believe, perceiving themselves just as much as personal mentors as employers’ (Engelstad and Moseng, 2014, p. 54). It is significant too that in the early stages of development, whether a part of a Culture 1.0, 2.0 or 3.0 model, the initial outlining of a script is often instigated through the producer. This is not, however, to downplay the key creative role played by the writer, just to indicate the producer’s role within this process. It is worth noting that in Bloore’s model, the timing of each phase of the production process is longer except for the development phase. This may be due to the relative lack of partners at each stage and the lower budget of the film.

The creative role of the producer within a creative team is discussed by Adam Tandy below in relation to his comedy television work:

As a producer I think what you’re doing is you’re bringing everything to the party. And you’re letting the people with the vision – it may be the same person – but the person you’re allowing them to play in the sandbox, play with the train set, make the

thing that works. And you marshal them and you advise them. But fundamentally you're there to keep the train on the tracks. (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p. 170)

This passage demonstrates that Tandy clearly sees himself outside the creative bubble and more as a facilitator. As Tandy's concludes:

The producer occupies a position in which he or she is both part of a team yet also outside of it. While clearly a productive and resourceful role, producers are not understood to be creative to the same extent as, for example, writers, actors and directors. Yet the producers here insisted their job was creative, even if it was so in a manner different to the conventional understandings of the concept (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p. 170)

The thought reflected in the above is that, as a producer, you give 'someone else the tools to do what they do' (Lyons, 2014, p. 195). Michael Relph, meanwhile, commented that the producer is 'the strategical commander in control of the conception as a whole [who is] in strategic command of the film from an artistic viewpoint' (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p. 10). Relph's comment links the producer to the creative process more solidly than Adam Tandy's comments in the previous section, but still seems to have the producer letting the children play in the sandbox without particularly leading this creative process. Relph is describing the producer as a strategic commander but not as an active creative contributor. In the writing and development of *Running Naked*, however, the author was in the unusual position of being an active creator of the film. More specifically, the setup of *Running Naked* as a micro budget film in the educational context gave the producer more elements of creative involvement given that 'production roles may not be fixed' at this budget level

(Fair, 2019). As a result, and to use Tandy's analogy, this enabled the producer to be both within the creative sandbox as well as facilitating it.

Whilst there was a benefit in terms of the relative additional creative involvement afforded the producer, as the co-originator of the course, the producer was torn between the drive to produce an effective feature on budget while simultaneously managing the educational elements of the course. This could be easily navigated in further iterations of the model with more staffing on the course. It was possible, however, to give this mentoring and support in the development and pre-production stages as, at this point, there was not the strict schedules and time limitations of feature film production. The author, as the producer in this micro budget education 3.0 model, put themselves into a unique position as financier, educator, writer and producer, though the role of the producer here in terms of the pure financial management and structuring of *Running Naked* largely echoes that of the Australian Screen Producer Survey as 'someone who manages the financial, creative, technical and/or logistical challenges of making screen content' (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p. 127).

The continued presence of the producer in the value chain process from development to exploitation is common to both models outlined. In both models, the producer is engaged before the director and remains with the project for longer than the director or key creatives. However, within this micro budget Culture 3.0 model, as Bloore intimates at the end of his paper, the distribution model has changed and there is more hands on

involvement from the producer and less from outside parties. Yet the lack of engagement with distributors and outside financiers in the development stage of this new model ran the risk that the final film product was not what the market wanted when it is was completed. Whilst the author carried some market knowledge into *Running Naked*, in this instance of production this was not enough for the film to be sold successfully in the marketplace. Consequently, if this model were to run again, the producer and university could, as discussed in the previous section, utilise their collaboration to find an alternative distribution method and/or conduct more early market research.

Running Naked's Culture 3.0 model of production also had implications in terms of the taking of credits. As discussed above, Culture 3.0 model enabled the producer and the crew to have more freedom within their roles. The producer was able to spend more time on set actively working with the director and less time servicing the requirements of financiers. Similarly, in the postproduction of the film, the voices of the director and producer were not diluted by those of funding or sales agencies, which is not to say, of course, that these voices would not have valid input. These dynamics led to negotiations taking place regarding credits that more accurately reflected the producer and director's roles and in particular the producer's contribution to guiding the project on-set. Given the discussions in this thesis in relation to the flexibility of the roles, how do we reflect the value of the producer within credits within this model and general production? The creative role of the producer needs to be recognised in a manner that goes beyond common representations of the director as sole author in critical discourse and public forums such as film festivals. As

these negotiations revealed, industry norms enshrined in contracts by unions and agents to some degree prevent more flexible credit structures.

It would also be useful to look at the delineation between the different types of producers to redefine and clarify the clearly different producorial roles and to delineate the creative and financial elements accordingly. For example, if a producer purely is a financial investor in the film, then this should be made clear that this is the case i.e. 'Financial Producer' or the more usual 'Executive Producer'. A 'producer' credit should not be able to simply be bought, however, in the case of *Book of Love* this was precisely what happened with a sales company financier insisting on taking a producer credit for simply providing the finance. The view of several producers in response was that taking of a producer credit was unfair. Having thought about the issue of credits in relation to *Running Naked*, the author proposed a credit to differentiate the roles by giving the active hands-on producers a 'Produced by' credit, which was accepted by the financial producers. This is shown below in Figure 25. Whilst Ortner (2013) talks of the importance of the 'taste', 'relationships' and the 'agency' of the producer, none of this seems to be reflected within the credits afforded, as this study has shown. The director still is perceived as the creator, as is indicated by the festival credit that begins this thesis.



Figure 25 Front roller of Book of Love showing the 'Produced by' credit

7.4. The Producer, Culture 3.0 Model and Considerations of Pedagogy

While this project is not primarily an investigation of pedagogy, it is worth considering some areas where the model may have succeeded in supporting student development as well as pointing to areas that could potentially be improved in future iterations of the model.

The aim of the incorporating a feature film production into the master's course was, from a pedagogical perspective, designed to provide students with an authentic learning experience of working for 18 days on a feature length production. The private equity investment created pressures that drove the production as a commercial product with an Culture 2.0

element that meant that the production was not merely a simulation of a feature film production but was, rather, the real deal. These pressures created demands on the crew that were a shock to many of the students who had only made non-commercial short film work previously. After the course, a student commented that ‘the frenetic pace of the production process was a trial by fire’ (Anonymous. 2023. Email to author, 18 April). Nevertheless, working on the film gave the students an invaluable experience of the real world demands of the professional film industry; demands that included working for longer hours, at a quicker pace and to higher standards. Moreover, film teaching at university level often focuses only on the main roles of director of photography (DOP), director, sound and writing whilst less prominent roles such as script editor, grip, and assistant director are treated as secondary and often ignored. The real feature film production thus put these often ignored roles into the foreground and therefore created additional opportunities for students.

In the iteration of the course than ran in the production of *Running Naked*, only 2 full-time members of staff were employed on the course with each working one day per week on it. The heads of departments (HoDs) of the film engaged early in the pre-pre-production process and were employed by the university as guest lecturers to work with the students to lead masterclasses that involved explaining their roles on the production. This also entailed students being given the opportunity to shadow industry professional HODs, thereby providing an immersive and holistic learning experience by facilitating collaboration between professional and non-professional crew. Whilst the two core teachers were able to facilitate the initial workshop and development of the course, managing the masters and

undergraduate students alongside the production of the film meant that any individual sessions for students were difficult to facilitate. The author and Andy Paton acting as course co-leads led early morning feedback meetings with the students as a group, however feedback from the masters students suggested that having ‘a chance to sit down with the lecturer and discuss things on a 1-to-1 basis [during the shoot] would have been a huge help’ (Anonymous. 2023. Email to author, 18 April). This mentoring, though, is difficult to support within the restraints of shooting a film with authentic industry time pressures and with a fixed schedule with industry mentors. By the time that production began, the author was also not paid by the university as he was viewed as being a producer on a commercial film at this stage. In reality, although the author did become increasingly focused on making the film, he continued to straddle the film education-industry matrix as he still provided the group mentoring sessions mentioned above as well as ad hoc support. The author’s relationship with the students also changed under the time pressures of the production as he needed to engage with the students more firmly and this meant that some of the decorum and niceties of the classroom were sidestepped. This reveals that there is a blurring of the author’s role as a producer and teacher, and a clash between the industry and the educational components, in this Culture 3.0 model.

To work the model more effectively, the course probably needed more full-time members of staff. Indeed, the presence of a further lecturer, one not intrinsic to the filmmaking process, would be useful to support the students’ filming giving one to one support alongside the production experience. Moreover, in future iterations of the Culture 3.0 model, additional investment might be found to extend the shoot to facilitate one to one

sessions and to enable students to reflect on the processes and their work experience within an educational context, although this may hamper the aim of embedding students onto a production that worked to real industry timescales. As the master's course was running in its first year as a new course, there was also a relatively small number of students enrolled on it. In turn, this meant that there was a relatively low number of students to pick from to make the film. Repeating the model again, with the relative visibility and quality of the completed film, it would be hoped that, whilst remaining inclusive, the overall selection pool of students would increase with the long-term aim being that students could direct and produce the feature. Arguably, the master's course is more accessible from the point of entry to people of more diverse backgrounds and offers more opportunity than getting on a BFI run iFeatures film on which the selection process is a subjective one based upon individual projects. As James Fair notes:

The iFeatures scheme has selection procedures that reject most applications and shortlist a talented few.... Not only does this process have the potential to alienate those that are not successful in the selection process, it reinforces the dominant, industrial filmmaking ideology.... There is little to suggest that the products of this scheme are innovative or questioning, rather the training is focused on imitating the ways that industry works (Fair, 2017, p,139)

If the university could further democratise this process by offering a lower fees model, therefore, this could open up participation further.

7.5. Self Representation in the Case of Culture 3.0

Johnson and Caldwell talk, respectively, about how ‘self-perception and identification shape managerial praxes and procedure’ (Johnson, 2016, p.15) and of ‘the way in which film and television workers construct their own self representations’ (Caldwell, 2008, p.5). From the perspective of this study, their arguments are pertinent particularly in relation to how the producer builds his brand within the contexts of production within which he operates and, in turn, leverages this brand to act as a conduit for securing finance. Significantly, this means that the producer’s brand identity fluctuates across the different models of production. For example, the author moved from the self-representation of being a regional producer with an indie focus in *A Boy Called Dad* to the more hybrid model of *Best Laid Plans* to the more obviously commercially focused film *Book of Love*.

Along the way, *Running Naked* was produced in a Culture 3.0 model, which meant that the author’s brand became that of an educator-producer. This educator-producer brand was symbolically significant because the author was able to satisfy the requirements of the industry and higher education partners. This meant that the author, acting as educator-producer, convinced the partners that a commercial film could be delivered within a higher education framework. In the case of private investment, this meant that equity was procured and that the investors had faith to put funds into a project with an unusual educative remit, while the university held the belief that the feature film production would be delivered as a meaningful learning experience. As Bourdieu explains:

Given that works of art exist as symbolic objects only if they are known and recognized, that is, socially instituted as works of art and received by spectators capable of knowing and recognizing them as such, the sociology of art and literature has to take as its object not only the material production but also the symbolic production of the work, i.e., the production of the value of the work or, which amounts to the same thing, of belief in the value of the work (Bourdieu, 1993: p.37)

As discussed in the previous sections, then, the production was in reality complicated and not without its flaws, however what is important here in terms of self-representations was the producer's ability to convince the partners that the project was feasible and could be a success. Knowing when to give a commencement date and when to go into production is one of the key 'agency' functions of being a producer and the producer's conviction in a project is necessary for pulling all the various strands together.

The producer creates, as Long and Spink state, 'the conditions in which their productions can be realized – even if the possibility of making a living from their efforts is uncertain' (eds. A. Spicer et al., 2014, p.100). Decisions regarding the route to market can have an impact on the perception of the producer role. Caldwell states:

Newcomb and Alley were among the first to have recognized that it is the "writer/producer" (usually the executive producer) in prime-time television who functions as "auteur." This stands in stark contrast to film, where the director has always assumed (at least symbolically and publicly) the position of author (Caldwell, 2008, p.16).

This distinction is important to how work is viewed and is, in itself, a form of branding for the producer. Often the role of film producer, even if less financially rewarding, is seen as more desirable in terms of cache, despite often entailing less perceived power. Working at a micro budget level, there is often scant opportunity for the work produced to screen in cinemas. Even the biggest film produced by the author to date, in terms of budget and financial returns, *Book of Love* (2022), whilst conceived and budgeted as a feature, was premiered on SKY in the UK and Amazon in the US, as a result of its financing and distribution structure. Nevertheless, this author considers himself to be a film producer, which stems from the author's preference for single non-returning stories. This label of film producer is clearly one that is chosen by the producer based upon the positive artistic connotations of film against the negative commercial ones of TV, even if the producer role is seen to carry more power in TV and despite television's steadily improving reputation in the new millennium.

Finally, on the back of the success of *Book of Love*, the author is moving towards more commercial international co-productions that will involve partnerships across all of the previous models. The author has some less commercially focussed Culture 1.0 films on his slate, but these will benefit from being produced alongside the more commercial 2.0 projects, thereby highlighting how all the various models sit alongside each other both within a slate and individual projects. At the 2023 Berlinale, the author found that he did not have to sell himself or his projects as much as he has done in the past, and that financiers from regional bodies to commercial sales agents were more responsive to the

author's work given these recent successes. This is all testament to the author's growing brand.

8. Conclusions

This wonderful film is now playing in Canada on Tubi, and I just got to experience something so damned special, I wanted to take a moment to thank the film makers, cast and writers for putting this together. It's a wonderful film. I haven't seen anything this good since 'Little Miss Sunshine' year back. Awesome job you all did. Just amazing. I'm still trying to dry my eyes after that ending.

(Facebook comment on *Running Naked* 2023)

The aim of this thesis was to establish a new model of production, one centred around a more contextually specific role of the producer that is different from conventional models and theories for understanding the producer role in mainstream film. To do this, the thesis explored the role of the producer in relation to the author's current production practice as it is situated in micro budget feature film production in the UK in the 21st century. The Culture 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 models of production provide a way of thinking about production that leads to new ways of creatively and productively combining finance, education, talent development, and partnerships, to allow a specific new practice to emerge. The production and the praxis of making *Running Naked* utilising the conceptualisation of the Culture 3.0 education model has taught this author/producer numerous lessons in terms of his practice as well as providing a more nuanced view of the producer role. From this study, the author found that making films in an educational context enabled more creativity in the producer role across the production from pre-production to marketing and distribution. The lack of a

formal gatekeeper afforded the producer more agency and fluidity and therefore offered opportunity for co-creation with directors, crew and students. So, it follows that there is a potential that this model of production could be rolled out more widely on film degrees with the aims of supporting low-budget film production, driving investment in a region by supporting film slate development and filmmaking clusters, and facilitating the training of non-professional and semi-professional crew by offering real world production experiences.

The making of a film within an educational context offered more opportunities for co-creation. It fundamentally changed the relationship between the producer and director in that reporting and gatekeeper elements on a Culture 1.0 or 2.0 film was absent. There was, therefore, more opportunity to co-create with the director. Whilst this caused some issues with credits, the author suggests moving to the 'Produced by' credit to reflect the more creative role of a producer on films made in this model. This credit could be utilised across all film budgets to show the creative role of a producer as opposed to a pure financial producer in cases where this is appropriate. Likewise, the model offered more opportunities to non-professional junior crew members, namely students, to contribute to the production creatively from the redrafting of the script to location management than would normally be the case on most productions made under other models. There was, in turn, collaborations between professional and non-professional labour. The fluidity of roles and co-creation inherent in the model may, long term, require a shift in production practice and credits. It would be beneficial too if film education at university in theory and practice moved away from the focus on the director.

Whilst the author found the making of the film rewarding, there were clear challenges within the model of being both a teacher and a producer of the film that could be solved by additional staffing of the course if it were to run again. Equally making films work to the educational calendar is a challenge. Raising equity for a micro budget film shot in this manner is hard and it would be useful to work in partnership with the university in doing this. Moreover, the university helped to bestow an air of prestige and innovation on the picture that proved useful for attracting talent on the low-budget production. Overall, filmmaking in this context was cost effective and the presence of the university in effectively functioning as a cornerstone financier was valuable in filling the financial gap of Culture 1.0 and 2.0 financiers.

Overall, the making of *Running Naked* was a positive experience for the author and, from speaking to the students and staff, was an excellent experience for them that gave valuable real-world experience and real-world credits in a university context. Whilst the course itself could be finessed, as was noted in the discussion section, given the reflection undertaken since making the film through this study, it would be useful to reengage with the university to explore the opportunities to produce a further Culture 3.0 feature with these lessons in mind. Moreover, the act of writing the thesis has been immensely valuable for helping the producer to not only reflect on and develop their practice but also to reflect on and develop their own self-representations and branding. Fundamentally, filmmaking is complex in nature meaning that the cultural frameworks from Culture 1.0 to 3.0 often exist alongside and in relationship to each other, often not able to be completely untangled. Making a film in a Culture 3.0 context cannot happen without an awareness and a link into Cultures 1.0

and especially 2.0. As the producer, the author brought the awareness of all these contexts (marketing, commercial, educational, etc) into a production, creating a unique practice.

The Culture 3.0 model as outlined by Sacco (2011) and Boehm (2022) has scope to work reflexively across the other models (e.g. Culture 1.0 and 2.0) and as such would incorporate all the different educational filmmaking practices outlined by Mateer in the literature review and also give a cultural context which Mateer lacks. However, this overreaching, simple quality of Culture 3.0 also means that the model lacks nuance and definition in terms of intersections with models outside the educational/ community mode i.e. Culture 1.0 and 2.0 and is perhaps better focussed on regional or community projects.

Consequently, while Sacco's (2011) and Boehm's (2022) work provided a useful framework for the producer to conceptualise his practice in this practice as research PhD, these frameworks were revealed in this thesis to be an oversimplification for the use within a particular creative industry production lifecycle and had to be used in a reflexive and flexible manner to accommodate all types of relationships between industry and education.

The Culture 3.0 model as presented in respect of *Running Naked* creates opportunities for the universities themselves to be arbiters between the cultural regional/national funding Culture 1.0 (patronage) and the commercial Culture 2.0 model (IP exploitation).

Furthermore, the Culture 3.0 model, used in an educational context, affords opportunities that have the potential to be explored and studied further, particularly looking at:

- New distribution models and the targeting of specific film genres

- Company incubation
- Training for the industry
- Slate or portfolio development for film businesses
- Pathways for undergraduates

To make this model sustainable in the long term, the development of new distribution models is key but this has not seemed to have materialised since the UKFC report of 2008, which concluded that low and micro budget filmmakers had not worked out the potential of digital technology for distribution and that ‘real innovation and entrepreneurship on the part of producers will be needed to develop new business models and opportunities’ (UKFC, 2008, p.28). Those models largely have not materialised while the major streamers have increasingly tended to focus on larger budget productions with established talent or partners. This gap could be potentially filled by universities while university research could look at how best to resolve this. Equally given the centralisation of Culture 1.0 film funding and the proposal in the 2023 report into the *Economic Impact into Independent Film* that micro budget films lose the tax credit, there is an opportunity for universities to intervene by liaising with industry to support and develop producers and businesses while facilitating training.

8.1. Closing Statement

This thesis has shown a new understanding of the creative and financial elements of the producer role in the context of a film made through a university-industry partnership, one that combines professional and non-professional labour within a higher education setting. Utilising the work of Sacco (2011) and Boehm (2022) in relation to the author’s previous

films, the significance of various Culture 1.0 and Culture 2.0 gatekeepers on the producer role and film production was noted in contrast to the Culture 3.0, model - the effectiveness of the Culture 1-3 labels within the filmmaking context were also analysed. This thesis has shown a new model of production in the UK was established in the production of *Running Naked* around an education-industry partnership, as well as suggesting areas to improve and finesse this model for future iterations.

9. Appendices

9.1. Films referred to as case studies

Core film: *Running Naked* - chapter 6

Portfolio Element – Film: Running Naked

[Watch Running Naked | Prime Video \(amazon.co.uk\)](#)

Case studies - chapter 5:

Portfolio Element – Film: A Boy Called Dad

[Watch A Boy Called Dad | Prime Video \(amazon.co.uk\)](#)

Portfolio Element – Film: Best Laid Plans

[Watch Best Laid Plans | Prime Video \(amazon.co.uk\)](#)

Portfolio Element – Film: Book of Love

[Home - NOW \(nowtv.com\)](#)

9.2. Budget tables and materials for *Running Naked* and case studies (chapters 5 and 6)

Available on request from author

9.3. Screenshot of BuzzFeed review of *Running Naked*

https://www.buzzfeed.com/sam_cleal/running-naked-watch-online-movie-review

TV and Movies - Posted on 4 Feb 2021


"Running Naked" Is The Feel-Good Indie Movie That'll Restore Your Faith In Just About Everything

BuzzFeed News Quizzes TV & Movies Shopping Celebrity Videos Animals

By **Sam Lewis**
BuzzFeed Staff

Be one of the first to comment


When you hear the title *Running Naked*, you might imagine a movie somewhat similar to *The Full Monty* or *Magic Mike*, but you'd be wrong, sir!



New Film

WELL, technically the main characters Ben and Mark do run around a hospital together butt naked, but the film is so much more than its titular titillation! It's really a film about friendship, finding love, and seizing life while you still can.

This feel-good, family flick – which premieres tonight at 8pm on World Cancer Day – tells the story of Ben and Mark, two average joes who bond as teenagers battling cancer in hospital and become lifelong friends. You can watch the trailer below.



In a series of flashbacks, we learn how the boys became mates whilst sharing a ward and making mischief around the hospital. Meanwhile, the main story reveals what Ben and Mark have been doing since beating acute leukemia years ago.

Figure 26 BuzzFeed Review of Running Naked

10. Bibliography

- About A Girl* [Short film]. Percival, Brian. 2002.
- A Boy Called Dad* [Film]. Percival Brian. Kaleidoscope. 2009
- Aladdin* [Film]. Ritchie, Guy. Walt Disney Studios. 2019
- Avengers: End Game* [Film]. Russo, Anthony. Marvel Studios. 2019
- ‘Alec Baldwin Is Credited as a Producer on ‘Rust.’ What Does That Really Mean?’ 2021. Los Angeles Times. 27 October 2021. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/movies/story/2021-10-26/rust-alec-baldwin-producer-explained>.
- Ammonite* [Film]. Lee, Francis. BBC Films. 2020.
- ‘An Impressive Year for the UK Film Industry, Boding Well for Future’. 2022. Cineuropa - the Best of European Cinema. 13 May 2022. <https://cineuropa.org/en/newsdetail/421407/>.
- The Ballad of Des and Mo*[Film]. Fair, James. Hello Camera. 2010.
- ‘BFI Production Fund’. 2023. BFI. 2 January 2023. <https://www.bfi.org.uk/get-funding-support/create-films-tv-or-new-formats-storytelling/production-fund>.
- ‘BFI Commission on Independent Film’. 2018. 6 September 2023. [bfi-commission-on-uk-independent-film-2018-07-18.pdf](https://www.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/bfi-commission-on-uk-independent-film-2018-07-18.pdf)
- Best Laid Plans* [Film]. Blair, David. Sony. 2012
- Billy Elliot* [Film]. Daldry, Stephen. Universal. 2000
- Birthday* [TV Film]. Michell, Roger. SKY. 2015.
- Blair, Helen. 2003. ‘Winning and Losing in Flexible Labour Markets: The Formation and Operation of Networks of Interdependence in the UK Film Industry’. *Sociology (Oxford)* 37 (4): 677–94. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00380385030374003>.
- Bloore. Peter. ‘Redefining-the-Independent-Film-Value-Chain.Pdf’. <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/redefining-the-independent-film-value-chain.pdf>.
- Boehm, C. 2016. ‘Academia in Culture 3.0: A Crime Story of Death and Rebirth’.

- Boehm, Carola. 2022. *Arts in Academia*. Emerald Publishing.
- . n.d. ‘Triple Helix Partnerships for the Music Sector: Music Industry, Academia and the Public’, 16.
- BOEHM, C. (2001) *Between Technology and Creativity, Challenges and Opportunities for Music Technology in Higher Education*. University of Glasgow.
- Book Of Love* [Film]. Cal Y Major, Analeine. SKY/ Amazon. 2022
- Bouma, G.D., and G.B.J. Atkinson. 1995. *A Handbook of Social Sciences Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bourdieu. 1993. ‘The Field of Cultural Production’. 1993. <https://book.cc/book/959194/73dba5>.
- Brighton Rock* [Film]. Joffe, Rowan. BBC Films. 2010.
- Caldwell, J.T. 2008. *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*. Illustrated. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.
- Calendar Girls* [Film]. Cole, Nigel. Touchstone Picture. 2003
- Christian, Aymar Jean. 2012. ‘(PDF) The Web as Television Reimagined? Online Networks and the Pursuit of Legacy Media’. 2012. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258144629_The_Web_as_Television_Reimagined_Online_Networks_and_the_Pursuit_of_Legacy_Media?enrichId=rgreq-38b2ae02564c59b8cb76159c334ede21XXX&enrichSource=Y292ZXJQYWdlOzI1ODE0NDYyOTtBUzo4NTQ1ODUzMTI4MTcxNTJAMTU4Mdc2MDQyNDQ3MQ%3D%3D&el=1_x_3&_esc=publicationCoverPdf.
- ‘Culture as an Engine of Local Development Processes: System-Wide Cultural Districts I: Theory - Sacco - 2013 - Growth and Change - Wiley Online Library’. 2023. 31 January 2023. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/grow.12020>.
- Dallas Buyers Club* [Film]. Valee, Jean Marc. 2013. Focus Features. Valee, Jean Marc. 2013.
- Dale, Martin. 1997. *The Movie Game: The Film Business in Britain, Europe and America*. Cassell.
- Da Vinci Code* [Film]. Howard, Ron. Columbia Pictures. 2006.
- ‘Delphi Face to Face’. 2022. 24 June 2022. <http://www.aral.com.au/resources/delphi.html>.
- D’Este, P. and Perkmann, M., 2011. Why do academics engage with industry? The entrepreneurial university and individual motivations. *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, 36(3), pp.316-339.

- 'Economic Review of UK Independent Film'. n.d. BFI. Accessed 2 August 2023.
<https://www.bfi.org.uk/industry-data-insights/reports/economic-review-uk-independent-film>.
- Emma* [Film] . Wilde, Autumn De. GFD. 2020
- Engelstad and Moseng. 2014. 'Mapping a Typology of the Film Produce - Or, 6 Producers in Search of an Author'. In *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies*, edited by Spicer A., McKenna A., and C. Meir. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Erickson, J. Gunnar. 2010. 'The Independent Film Producer's Survival Guide: A Business and Legal Sourcebook'. London: Schirmer Trade.
- Fair, James. 2019. 'Can You See What I See? Differing Perspectives between Low and Micro Budget Filmmakers and Film Development Agencies'. *Studies in Arts and Humanities* 5 (2): 65–79. <https://doi.org/10.18193/sah.v5i2.183>.
- Fair, J. (2017) *A different understanding of low and micro-budget film production in the UK*. Staffordshire University.
- Fair, J. (2011). 72 Hours Later. *Film Ireland*, (138), 4 Jul., pp.28–29.
- . 2006. 'The Impact of Digital Technology upon the Filmmaking Production Process', 63.
- Flamini, Roland. 1994. *Thalberg*. Crown Publishers.
- Follows, S. 2017. 'Has the Mid-Budget Drama Disappeared?'
<https://stephenfollows.com/disappearing-mid-budget-drama-movies/>.
- Fox, Neil. 2020. 'Developing a Commercial Film Production Ecosystem in Academia with Pedagogy at Its Heart'. In . Online Conference.
<http://repository.falmouth.ac.uk/4124/>.
- Fox, Neil James. 2014. 'How Film Education Might Best Address the Needs of UK Film Industry and Film Culture'. University of Bedfordshire.
<http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.665730>.
- 'Full Details and Actions for Making Media Work: Cultures of Management in the Entertainment Industries'. 2023. 3 January 2023.
<https://www.vlebooks.com/Product/Index/711152?page=0>.
- Fully Monty* [Film]. Cattaneo, Peter. Channel Four. 1997

- Gant, Charles, and Mona Tabbara. 2023. 'Four Talking Points for the UK Film Industry in 2023'. *Screen International*.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2019) *The Cultural Industries*. 4th ed. London: SAGE.
- 'How Many Movie Producers Does a Film Need?' 2014. Stephen Follows. 17 March 2014. <https://stephenfollows.com/how-many-movie-producers-per-film/>.
- 'How Will Brexit Affect the UK Film Industry?' 2016. Stephen Follows. 26 June 2016. <https://stephenfollows.com/how-will-brexit-affect-the-uk-film-industry/>.
- Houseley, W. and Block, P. 2001. *Managing in the media*. 1st edition. Oxford, UK: Focal Press.
- 'International Co-Productions'. 2023. BFI. 2 January 2023. <https://www.bfi.org.uk/get-funding-support/create-films-tv-or-new-formats-storytelling/international-co-productions>.
- Izquierdo-Sanchez, Sofia. 2019. 'Managing The Supply Of Short-Life Products. A Duration Analysis Approach Using The UK Film Industry'. *Bulletin of Economic Research* 71 (1): 75–89. <https://doi.org/10.1111/boer.12179>.
- James Bond: No Time To Die* [Film]. Fukanaga, Cary. MGM. 2019
- Johnson, Derek Kompare, Derek Santo, Avi. 2016. *Making Media Work: Cultures of Management in the Entertainment Industries*. New York University Press.
- Kachka, Boris. 2021. *Becoming a Film Producer*. <https://www.simonandschuster.co.uk/books/Becoming-a-Film-Producer/Boris-Kachka/Masters-at-Work/9781501159459>.
- Kember, J. 2014. 'A Judge of Anything and Everything: Charles Urban and the Role of the 'Producer-Collaborator''. In *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies*, edited by Spicer A., McKenna A., and C. Meir. Bloomsbury Academic.
- King, Geoff, Claire Molloy, and Yannis Tzioumakis. 2012. *American Independent Cinema: Indie, Indiewood and Beyond*. London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/staffordshire/detail.action?docID=1092817>.
- Kings Speech* [Film]. Hooper, Tom. Weinstein Company. 2010
- La Torre, Mario. 2014. *The Economics of The Audiovisual Industry: Financing Tv, Film and Web*. Palgrave Pivot. Basingstoke: Springer Open.

<https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137378477>.

Lee, John J. 2018. *The Producer's Business Handbook: The Roadmap for the Balanced Film Producer*. Fourth edition. American Film Market Presents. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315168579>.

Lewis, Zachary A. 2017. 'A Dramatic Brexit? Why The United Kingdom's Eu Referendum Vote Could Send The UK Film Industry "Reeling."' *Syracuse Journal of International Law and Commerce* 45 (1): 83-.

Long and Spink. 2014. 'Producing the Self: The Film Producer's Labour and Professional Identity in the UK Creative Economy'. In *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies*, edited by Spicer A., McKenna A., and C. Meir. Bloomsbury Academic.

Lost [TV Series]. Bad Focus. 2004-10.

Lotz, A. (2014) 'Building Theories of Creative Media Industry Managers: Challenges, Perspectives, and Future Directions', D Johnson, D. Kompare and A. Santo (eds.) *Making Media Work: Cultures of Management in the Entertainment Industries*, New York: New York University Press, pp.25-38.

'Lower-Middle Class'. 2021. TheFreeDictionary.Com. 28 October 2021. <https://financial-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Lower-middle+class>.

Lyons. 2014. 'The American Independent Producer and the Film Value Chain'. In *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies*, edited by Spicer A., McKenna A., and C. Meir. Bloomsbury Academic. Kindle Edition.

Lyons, Suzanne. 2012. *Independent Film Producing*. Accessed 19 September 2023. <https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/independent-film-producing/9780240817637/>.

Mateer, John. 2018. 'A Fistful of Dollars or the Sting? Considering Academic-Industry Collaborations in the Production of Feature Films'. *Media Practice and Education* 19 (2): 139-58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2018.1464715>.

Mayer. 2022. 'Production Studies, The Sequel: Cultural Studies of Global Media Industries | Miranda Banks, Bridget Conor, Vicki Mayer (Eds.) | Download'. 18 October 2022. <https://b-ok.cc/book/3519552/e79507>.

Mayer, V., ed. 2009. *Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries*. New York: Routledge.

McDonald, Paul. 2021. *The Routledge Companion to Media Industries*. Milton, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group.

<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/staffordshire/detail.action?docID=6733218>.

The Netflix Effect: Technology and Entertainment in the 21st Century, edited by Kevin McDonald, and Daniel Smith-Rowsey, Bloomsbury Academic & Professional, 2016. *ProQuest Ebook Central*,
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/staffordshire/detail.action?docID=4542879>.

Moon [Film]. Jones, Duncan. Sony Pictures Classics. 2010

Morgan, Jane. n.d. 'Northern Alliance', 64.

Nelson, R., ed. 2013. *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*. Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Houndmills.

Negus, Keith R., 2002. The Work of Cultural Intermediaries and the Enduring Distance between Production and Consumption. *Cultural Studies*, 16 (4). pp. 501-515.

Negus, Keith R., 1999. *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*. Routledge

Newman, M.Z. and Levine, E. (2012) *Legitimizing television media convergence and cultural status*. London: Routledge.

Once [Film]. Carney, John. Fox Searchlight. 2007

Ortner, Sherry. 2013. 'Not Hollywood: Independent Film at the Twilight of the American Dream | Sherry Ortner | Download'. *Online*. <https://b-ok.cc/book/3707902/c2f82b>.

Others, The [Film]. Amenabar, Alejandro. Dimension Films. 2001

Percival, Neil, and David Hesmondhalgh. 2014. 'Unpaid Work in the UK Television and Film Industries: Resistance and Changing Attitudes'. *European Journal of Communication* 29 (April): 188–203. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323113516726>.

Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides [Film]. Marshall, Rob. Walt Disney Pictures. 2011.

'Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances | Robin Nelson | Download'. 2022. 20 May 2022. <https://b-ok.cc/book/2613046/bb5224>.

Rogers, P.J. (2017) *The beauty of sonic waste : the transformation of sound debris and junk objects within environmentally based compositional practice : a methodology*. Manchester Metropolitan University.

Running Naked [Film]. Buhler, Victor. 101. 2020

Ryan, Goldsmith, Cunningham, and Verhoeven. 2014. 'The Australian Screen Producer in

- Transition'. In *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies*, edited by Spicer A., McKenna A., and C. Meir. Bloomsbury Academic. Kindle Edition.
- Rye, Caroline. 2003. 'Incorporating Practice: A Multi- Viewpoint Approach to Performance Documentation'. *Journal of Media Practice* 3 (2): 115–23.
- Ryle, Gilbert. 2009. *The Concept of Mind*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Sacco, Pier Luigi. 2011. 'Culture 3.0: A New Perspective for the EU 2014-2020 Structural Funds Programming', 22.
- . n.d. 'Culture 3.0: The Impact of Culture on Social and Economic Development, & How to Measure It', 21.
- Schatz, T. 2015. *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era*. Henry Holt and Co.
- Schön, Donald. 1983. *The Reflective Practitioner*. New York. Basic Books/Perseus.
- Scott Berg, A. 1989. *Goldwyn*. Alfred A. Knopf
- Small, P. 2014. 'Producer and Director? Or, 'Authorship' in 1950s Italian Cinema'. In *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies*, edited by Spicer A., McKenna A., and C. Meir. Bloomsbury Academic. Kindle Edition.
- Snatch* [Film]. Ritchie. Columbia Pictures. 2000
- Spicer, A. McKenna, and C. Meir, eds. 2014. *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies*. Bloomsbury Academic. Kindle Edition.
- Stars Wars: Story IX The Rise Of Skywalker* [Film]. Abrams, JJ. Walt Disney Studios. 2019
- Stubbs A. 2022. 'Packaging the "Purest" form of Indie TV: Michael Sugar, Talent Management and Indie-Auteur Clients'. Tzioumakis and Lyons (eds.) *Indie TV: Industry, Aesthetics and Medium Specificity*. Routledge, pp.98-116.
- Steinbeck, John, and Susan Shillingaw. 2000. *Of Mice and Men: John Steinbeck*. 1st edition. London: Penguin Classics.
- Truffaut, F. 1954. 'A Certain Tendency of French Cinema (Une Certaine Tendence of Cinema Francaise'. Online. <http://www.newwavefilm.com/about/a-certain-tendency-of-french-cinema-truffaut.shtml>.
- This is England* [Film] Meadows, Shane. Warp. 2006

Vachon, Christine. 1999. *Shooting to Kill- How an Independent Producer Blasts Through the Barriers to Make Movies that Matter*. Avon Books.

‘What Is the Average Film Budget?’ 2014. Stephen Follows. 7 July 2014.
<https://stephenfollows.com/average-film-budget/>.

‘What Makes Low Budget Films Sell?’ 2014. Stephen Follows. 29 September 2014.
<https://stephenfollows.com/what-makes-low-budget-films-sell/>.

‘What’s the Average Budget of a Low or Micro Budget Film?’ 2014. Stephen Follows. 22 September 2014. <https://stephenfollows.com/average-budget-low-micro-budget-film/>.

Willis, Paul. 1981. *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Become Working Class*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wilson, Qiao Li, and Yanqiu Guan. 2023. *The Global Film Market Transformation in the Post-Pandemic Era: Production, Distribution and Consumption (Edition 1)*. 1st ed. China Perspectives. United Kingdom: Taylor and Francis.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003345251>.