

Pulp Vérité Dramaturgy Glossary/Notes

Prepared by Dan Smith

The name of the collective is drawn from the cinema vérité movement of the 1960s, merged with Quentin Tarantino's film *Pulp Fiction* from 1994. "Pulp fiction" refers to trashy novels of crime and sex, printed on cheap and possibly recycled paper; unsold copies of a print run are often "pulped." Cinema vérité (literally "Truth Cinema") attempts to use the camera lens as an objective eye, just showing what is captured without setting up shots or using a narrator to provide context. Tarantino and cinema vérité are kind of an odd mix. *Reservoir Dogs* is invested in some similar tendencies of realism in cinema, but *Pulp Fiction* uses quite a bit of artifice and some of Tarantino's later films like *Kill Bill* and *Death Proof* are heavily invested in style and genre.

Here's an interesting blog post about Werner Herzog's critique of cinema vérité:

<https://uwafilmsociety.wordpress.com/2015/03/16/read-werner-herzog-manifesto-minnesota-declaration-truth-and-fact-in-documentary-cinema/>

It might also be useful to consider the Dogme 95 Manifesto of Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg, though this applies to fiction films, not documentary: <http://www.dogme95.dk/dogma-95/>

Risky Business includes a famous scene with Tom Cruise dancing in his underwear. (p. 3)

The reference to Dim Sum for breakfast reflects the parents as wealthy travelers. They would likely have had Dim Sum (small plates) for dinner in New York City, but for breakfast on their trip to China. (p. 3)

Logan in the Boston airport (p. 4). Two of the hijacked flights on 9/11 departed from Logan airport.

"I went up to Beacon" probably refers to Beacon, New York. A quiet, rural community on the Hudson River. Houses for sale range from \$200K-\$800K

The diplomatic situation in Syria is complicated. The Islamic State is variously called ISIS, ISL, or Daesh. Here's a French diplomatic statement on this topic: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/syria/war-in-syria-understanding-france-s-position/>

It seems the Pulp Vérité members all attended Columbia University. The documentary filmmaking program at Columbia is in the Journalism School.

Talking to Terrorists: How to End Armed Conflicts is the title of an actual book published in 2014 by Jonathan Powell, a British diplomat. *Talking to Terrorists: Understanding the Psycho-Social Motivations of Militant Jihadi Terrorists* is a 2012 book by Anne Speckhard that sounds more like what Joy is reading. (p. 21)

Aleppo is a city in Syria. The Battle of Aleppo raged from 2012-2016. (p. 22)

Primary is a 1960 film by Bob Drew about the Wisconsin presidential primary election. (p. 29)

There is a Golden Fountain Chinese restaurant in Hyannis, so that might help pinpoint where on Cape Cod we are. Just over an hour drive from Boston. (Provincetown is all the way at the end of the Cape

and Google Maps is telling me it would be a two hour drive from Boston. It would be longer in the summer.)

Key Grip: I kind of enjoyed this video explaining gaffers and grips:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8MnTCly7XI> (p. 28)

Jane Fonda is known as a health crusader because of her series of workout videos in the 1980s. She apparently quit smoking cigarettes at age 30, though she admits to smoking pot occasionally as of 2015. (p. 38)

Anthropologist/filmmaker Jean Rouch and sociologist Edgar Morin collaborated on *Chronique d'un été* (*Chronicle of a Summer*), a 1961 documentary reflecting on the nature of acting in front of the camera. (p. 38)

It's really hard to find anything about Liam Neeson right now because of his recent racist comments, so I don't know if there is actually a retired cop on a French farm movie that shot on location in Connecticut or not. But there are some articles from around 2014 about his substance abuse problems, which started after a motorcycle accident in 2000.

The Police song "Bombs Away" is from their 1980 album *Zenyatta Mondatta*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6wiWXw3voY>

p. 44: Williamsburg is in Brooklyn. It's known as a hipster neighborhood. Columbia students would have a long subway ride to get there.

British journalist John Cantlie was featured in a series of ISIL propaganda videos from 2014-2016. He remains a captive of ISIL. (p. 52) [Not sure if Hunter calling him James is just a typo, or if she is conflating him with Scottish physician James Cantlie, which would be in character for her.]

"First Act, Second Act, Third Act"—the three-act structure is recommended by Syd Field in his book *Screenplay*. Pike's film *Letters for Lorenzo* is sort of *The Next Karate Kid* as directed by Pedro Almodóvar. It's also hard for me not to think of *Lorenzo's Oil* given the title and illness tropes. And Pike references *Kramer vs. Kramer* (1979, multiple Academy Awards including Best Picture).

"Fin" is the French word for "End." It shows up at the end of many French films, and occasionally at the end of non-French films.

Pike saying "Thank you for the eggs" reminded me of Michael Hanneke's film *Funny Games*, where two creepy guys in short shorts ask to borrow eggs and then torture and murder families.

Jackals

Dutch historian Perry Pierik wrote a book about the war in Syria called *Syria and Damascus' Jackals* (2014).

Nights of the Jackals (1989) is a Syrian film directed by Abdellatif Abdelhamid. His most recent film is *Solo* (2018), reflecting on art and culture in war-torn Damascus.

A famous terrorist known as Carlos the Jackal lived in hiding in Damascus during the 1980s.

Cinema Verite

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/cinema-verite-the-movement-of-truth/>