

“Hearing” the Music in War Films

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My interest here lies in presenting a limited and preliminary exploration of various issues related to the reception of music by two distinct populations of audiences for American war films. First, I consider those in the late nineteenth century who attended *Love and War* (1899; James H. White), a film about the Spanish–American War, and those who saw “Break the News to Mother” (1897/1899; Charles K. Harris), an illustrated song slide show about the Civil War. Then I discuss modern audiences’ experience listening to the music in Clint Eastwood’s *Flags of our Fathers* (2006), a film about the battle for Iwo Jima. There is no way of determining if anyone in 1899 saw both the film and the slide show. It is possible that a viewer of Eastwood’s film might have seen one of the earlier works. In a way it does not really matter, because what is important is realizing what occurs as a viewer/auditor “hears” certain music in war films. My speculative and provisional hypothesis is that the way music was used in the earliest war films establishes a kind of paradigmatic model, making music into a text, a site onto which various examples of cultural and political history are inscribed. Audiences hearing music in the works from the nineteenth century and in Eastwood’s from our own twenty-first can both be understood as experiencing the musical, auditory equivalent of a palimpsest. That is, like the mystic writing pad that retains traces of what was “written,” some music in war films continues to show impressions of the wars in which it figured and in some cases films in which it appeared, thus generating dynamic interaction between audiences and history.¹

As I have indicated elsewhere, the war film genre can be said to have begun in 1898 during the Spanish–American War, which was the subject of three kinds of film. First, “actualities,” such as *Burial of the Maine Victims* (1898), were essentially newsreel accounts of events. In at least one venue, New York City’s Proctor’s Theater, this film was accompanied by an orchestra and the playing of “Taps” on a trumpet. According to one report, this produced a powerful reaction in the audience:

In these days of excitement it takes a good deal to stir a big theater audience to any great display of feeling unless applause is drawn from it by patriotic songs and a liberal waving of flags, but the people last night showed that they appreciated the service the [New York] Journal has done

for humanity by giving to the simple black and white depiction of the Wargraph [Thomas Edison's name for the projecting device] the same outburst of applause that greeted the National anthem ... The orchestra hushed and a bugler behind the scenes began to play that last, sad call, 'Taps,' as a company of blue jackets swung around the corner of the pictured scene.²

Second, "reenactments" were films in which staged battles recreated specific encounters, such as *US Infantry Supported by Rough Riders at El Caney* (1899). Finally there were narratives, such as *Love and War*. This work can certainly be claimed not only as the first narrative war film, but, as far as I can tell, the first narrative film of any sort to use the word "war" in its title.³

This three-minute film, as it exists now in the Library of Congress print, has six scenes, each presented in a continuous shot from a stationary camera: (1) a youth leaves his anxious family to go to war; his brother holds the departing soldier's rifle; (2) his mother, sitting next to the brother, reads the newspaper for accounts of him; (3) his father and another man come in with news that the soldier has been killed or wounded, producing anguish for all; (4) the brave soldier engages in battle, is wounded, and is rescued by his courageous comrade who dies saving him; (5) he is taken to a field hospital where a nurse prays over him; (6) he returns home and reunites with his family and girlfriend.

Exactly what audiences in November in 1899 saw during the presentation of this film is difficult to determine since the film available to us now differs from the one described both in the Edison Catalogue and in the advertisement for the film published in *The New York Clipper*, a well-known trade publication, seven days after the film was copyrighted.⁴ According to the Catalogue, *Love and War* is

[a]n illustrated song telling the story of a hero who leaves for the war as a private, is promoted to the rank of captain for bravery in service, meets the girl of his choice, who is a Red Cross nurse on the field, and finally returns home triumphantly as an officer to the father and mother to whom he bade good-by as a private. The film presents this beautiful song picture in six scenes, each of which has a separate song, making the entire series a complete and effective novelty. PARTING. – "Our hero boy to the war has gone." Words and music. CAMPING. – "What! A letter from home." Words and music. FIGHTING. – The battle prayer. "Father, on Thee I Call." Words and music. CONVALESCING. – "Weeping, Sad and Lonely." Words and music. SORROWING. – The mother's lament. "Come back, my dear boy, to me." Words and music. RETURNING. – When our hero boy comes back again. Hurrah! Hurrah! "Star Spangled Banner." Words and music. The above scene can be illustrated either by a soloist, quartette or with an orchestra, and with or without stereopticon slides. This series of animated pictures, when properly illustrated or announced by stereopticon reading matter, should make a great success.⁵

The advertisement in the *New York Clipper*, a trade journal at the time, uses some of the language of the Edison Catalogue and adds two sentences:

LOVE AND WAR ... A wonderful song picture. *We have at last succeeded in perfectly synchronizing Music and Moving Pictures* [my italics]. The above is an illustrated song, telling the story of a hero who leaves for the war as a private, is promoted to the rank of captain for bravery in service, meets the girl of his choice, who is a Red Cross nurse on the field, and finally returns home triumphantly as an officer to the father and mother to whom he bade goodbye as a private. *The scenes are carefully chosen to fit the words and songs, which have been especially*

composed for these pictures [my italics]. LENGTH 200 ft., complete with words of song and music, \$45.00. (*The New York Clipper*, 18 November 1899, p. 801)

The disparity between the film we have and the printed descriptions in the Edison Catalogue and the *New York Clipper* is made even more problematic by the explanation offered by the Library of Congress: “Only four of the scenes described in the Edison Catalogue were submitted for copyright under the title *Love and War* and thus survive in the Library’s paper print copy; two other scenes were likely produced and, perhaps, copyrighted as separate films but then added to the Love and war picture sing and sold to fill out the description.”⁶ The advertisement does not mention the language from the Edison Catalogue about using soloists or presenting stereopticon slides. But both the Catalogue and *Clipper* describe the film as an “illustrated song” and “song picture.” According to Rick Altman, “illustrated songs” had begun to appear as early as 1863 when the producer “Tony Pastor bought lantern slide portraits of Civil War generals ... to illustrate his song ‘Heroes of the War.’” He explains their history:

By the end of the century, illustrated songs were a vaudeville feature. In this period, sixteen to twenty slides would be used to illustrate each song. Photographed in black and white with live models staged to represent the words of the songs, the slides would then be hand-colored and projected while a singer belted out the lyrics. Audiences would usually be invited to join in the chorus, reading the words off the screen. ⁷ (Altman, 2004, p. 107)

Since the illustrated song was focused on only one work, it is not clear why the Edison Catalogue gives this label to *Love and War* even as it identifies six illustrated songs *within* the film. In addition, the advertisement makes a claim that cannot be supported historically in regard to having “at last succeeded in synchronizing music and moving pictures.” Edison himself had already done this in the 1894 or 1895 short, *The Dickson Experimental Sound Test*, in which two men dance with each other. Shown originally on the kinetophone, the music was supplied by a wax cylindrical tube.⁸

An even more problematic assertion in the advertisement is the claim that “the words and songs ... have been especially composed for this picture.” Obviously “The Star-Spangled Banner” preceded the creation of *Love and War*. It was first introduced during the War of 1812. “Father on Thee I Call” duplicates the first line of Friedrich Heinrich Himmel’s “A Battle Hymn,” which dates from the 1860s. “Weeping, Sad and Lonely” was an immensely popular Civil War song by Henry Tucker and Charles Sawyer used by *both* Union and Confederate armies. Each side made the lyrics specific to itself. The Union’s version had: “How proud you stood before me in your suit of blue, / When you vowed to me and country ever to be true.” The Confederate’s went: “How proud you stood before me in your suit of grey, / When you vowed to me and country nevermore to stray.” Given the fact that Americans’ uniforms during the Spanish–American War were blue, it is more than likely that the version used in the 1899 film relied on the Union version.⁹ One source claims over 1000000 sales in sheet music (Ebsen, 1999, p. 66). “Our Hero Boy to the War Has Gone” may well be a version of a Civil War Song by John Ross Dix, “My Northern Boy to the War Has Gone” (1864).¹⁰ I can find no Civil War song titled exactly “Come Back My Dear Boy to Me,” although some post-Civil War titles seem possibilities: “When Will My Boy Come Back to Me” (1875) and “Dear Robin Come Back to Me” (1888).

Our lack of specific information about what occurred in 1899 is frustrating. We do not know if the projector was stopped at various points for the presentation of the songs or if the soloists and singers were accompanied by a piano or orchestra. But if there were slides, one of the options mentioned in the Edison Catalogue, it is most likely that the audience would have sung along, especially if accompanied by printed lyrics, given the presentational practices for illustrated songs at this time. In any event, some of the songs were sufficiently popular, especially "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Weeping Sad and Lonely," to allow one to speculate that some members of the audience would recognize them as parts of American history and culture. Even if, by chance, they did not, from our perspective we can see that the experience had a historical materiality for the audience, which was being given the opportunity to project the music being heard into the silent fictional world being observed. And in so doing, as they were hearing/singing a traditional patriotic song and a Civil War song while watching a film about the Spanish–American War, they were enveloped by and in history: the conflicts and the songs sung by soldiers and citizens during earlier wars.

The same year that *Love and War* appeared, McCallister and Co., which sold lantern slides, ran an advertisement for "Illustrations of Popular songs." The copy claimed: "The 'Songs of the People' are much more attractive when accompanied by pictorial illustration . . ." The songs listed are "all photographed from life-groups with appropriate accessories of furniture, etc., to give reality to the scene, and when enlarged and brilliantly projected on the screen by a fine Magic Lantern or Stereopticon, induce an audience to enter the more heartily into the sentiment of the song as rendered meanwhile by the vocalist." One set in the form of eighteen slides was "Break the News to Mother," available in "colored" or "uncolored" formats, for \$16 and \$8 respectively. (Altman, 2004, p. 107).

In 1897 Charles K. Harris, a successful publisher of sheet music and, more significantly, an immensely popular songwriter—most notably at the time for "After the Ball" published his "Break the News to Mother," a song he had composed earlier about a doomed Confederate soldier. Under his direction, sometime between 1897 and 1899, the work became an illustrated slide song about a Union soldier. This was not the first of his songs to be put into song slides, having been preceded by "I Love Her Just the Same" (Harris, 1917, p. 1520).¹¹ For the earlier number he asked members of a local vaudeville troop in Milwaukee to pose for the pictures suggested by the song. He recounts:

They were delighted to do so, and that was the birth, not only of the illustrated song slide but of the moving picture play scenario of the present day, as an article published ten years ago in the first issue of MOVING PICTURE WORLD will testify. By reading that article you will find that the same methods that we were using in making song slides are now being used by the greatest moving picture directors in making their scenarios. In making song slides for 'I Love Her Just the Same' I laid out the scene for each line. . . . I was compelled to look for locations, as well as the different types who were to appear in this song, and I was just as careful in selecting types and different locations as the most celebrated providers of picture plays at the present date. (Harris, 1917, p. 1520)¹²

Harris was incorrect in saying that "I Love Her Just the Same" represented the birth of the song slide. That distinction seems to belong to the 1894 song "The Little Lost Child."¹³ While it is not clear when "I Love Her Just the Same" was first shown, "Break the News to Mother" must have been created sometime between 1897, when Harris first published the

song, and 1899, when McCallister and Co. advertised it. Whether in 1897 or 1899, “Break the News to Mother” is the first visual work about war to provide a partially synchronized melding of song and image in color. To that extent, Harris has a partial claim to the work’s significance as “the birth of the moving picture of the present day,” at least in regard to war narratives with music. His candid description of its appearance is worth noting:

As I could not get the war scenes for the song, I was in a quandary for a while, when suddenly the idea struck me of painting backgrounds of soldiers fighting, and to have them photographed. I never will forget the rendition of the song with these slides. They were simply awful. I was scared to death when the song was put on for the first time ... but in spite of the crude pictures, it was a novelty and the audience took to it like a duck takes to water ... [T]he song slides were a sensation.

Assuming he followed the same pattern of creation for “Break the News to Mother” that he did in “I Love Her Just the Same,” he acted like someone making a film, finding actors and locations, and, in effect, storyboarding (Harris, 1917, p. 1520).

The song itself was enormously popular, according to M. Paul Holsinger, who calls it

the most popular ballad during the Spanish–American War ... Inspired by the dying request of a young Confederate drummer in William Gillette’s Civil War melodrama *Secret Service* to ‘break the news to mother,’ Harris, one of the nation’s most published songwriters, that same evening composed the words and music to the song. At first it got little attention. Harris’s friends told him that Americans simply no longer cared about the Civil War, and, indeed, sales of the new number’s sheet music seemed to bear out the truth of their assessment. The following spring, however, when the nation went to war with Spain, everything changed dramatically. Suddenly the possibility of death in battle seemed a certainty, and [the song] became an overnight smash success. During the summer of 1898, it was sung by the troops in Cuba and the Philippines and by citizens at home alike. (Holsinger, 1999, p. 181)

The initial slide, which indicates the title and manufacturer of the set, is followed by eighteen slides comprising the narrative that presents the story of a brave soldier who is fatally shot while trying to protect the Union flag.¹⁴ The blue color of the hero’s and soldiers’ uniforms clearly identifies them as Union forces. Here are the lyrics and indications of the slides coordinated with each section or line, as created by DragonflyEnt:

Slides nos. 1 and 2. While shot and shell were screaming
 Across the battlefield,
 The boys in blue were fighting,
 Their noble flag to shield.
 Then a cry from their brave captain
 Said, “Boys, the flag is down.
 Who’ll volunteer to save it from disgrace?”
Slide no. 3. “I will,” a young boy shouted,
 “I’ll save your flag or die!”
 Then sprang into the thickest of the fray,
 Saved the flag, but gave his young life,
 All for his country’s sake.

Slide no. 4. They brought him back and heard him softly say,

Slide no. 5. Chorus: "Just break the news to Mother—
She knows how dear I love her—

Slide no. 6. And tell her not to wait for me,
For I'm not coming home.

Slide no. 7. Just say there is no other
Can take the place of Mother,

Slide no. 8. Then kiss her dear sweet lips for me,
And break the news to her."

Slide no. 9. From afar, a noted general
Had witnessed this brave deed.

Slide no. 10. "Who saved our flag? Speak up, boys.
'Twas noble, brave indeed."

"There he lies sir," said the captain,
"He's sinking very fast,"

Slide no. 11. Then slowly turned away to hide a tear.
The general in a moment

Slide no. 12. Knelt down beside the boy,
And gave a cry that touched all hearts that day:

Slide no. 13. 'Tis my son, my brave young hero,
I thought you safe at home."

Slide no. 14. "Forgive me father, for I ran away."

Slide no. 15. "Just break the news to Mother—
She knows how dear I love her—

And tell her not to wait for me,

Slide no. 16. For I'm not coming home,
Just say there is no other

Slide no. 17. Can take the place of Mother,
Then kiss her dear sweet lips for me,

Slide no. 18. And break the news to her."

The slides show several sites: the battlefield (three scenes, nos. 1–3); the area in front of the hospital tent to which the fallen soldier is conveyed (nos. 4–7, 9–14), his Mother (no. 8), and his Mother's home (nos. 15–18). Obviously, there is no motion in the slides since all the "shots" are necessarily static, as if taken with a still camera. But there are definite examples of subject repositioning within the frame that suggest the illusion of movement. First, after an iris-like photograph of Mother (no. 8), we see the wounded soldier lying outside the hospital tent; one soldier holds a flag near his head and two are near his feet as one soldier appears to kneel before his body. In the next slide, the men seem to be trying to make the fallen man more comfortable. Then we see him on a stretcher, which has been put on a bier. In a thirty-second sequence (assuming that the construction has some claim to approximating that number temporally), the father appears, kneels at the bier as one soldier turns away to hide his tears, throws up his hands in surprise, identifies the soldier, ("It's my son!"), and cradles his head in his arm (no. 14). Then the general goes to break the news. In three shots comprising thirty seconds (nos. 15–17), again in line with *DragonflyEnt's* construction, he appears at the boy's home to break the news; comforts the Mother in an embrace; and sits with her on a divan. The last slide (no. 18) repeats the earlier iris view of Mother. Both the

scenes in front of the hospital tent and those with the Captain and the Mother can be seen to approximate an early form of subject positioning, or reframing. This is akin to, but not exactly the same as, what Noël Burch describes in British magic-lantern shows: “In many of these slide sequences, the spectator follows a series of movements in a single setting rendered by pictures of different shot scale and sometimes even from different angles.”¹⁵

Many copies of the 1897 sheet music can be seen on the web. Harris’ own company published it at least ten times. Most covers of the music include four black and white drawings. Three are in an oval frame: soldiers offering support to a comrade; a fallen soldier; an officer greeting his mother. The one without a frame has some color and shows the doomed soldier carrying the flag, a patch of red blood visible on his left side. There are also photographs of various performers of the song (several with a solo female, one solo male, two male duos, two male–female duos) and one with Harris’s photograph. The latter lacks any drawings.¹⁶ The sheer number of publications indicates the popular song’s success.

But one sheet music cover is radically different from those just mentioned. It shows a photograph of soldiers from the Great War, framed within the circle of a drum. This one was published in connection with the release of a film actually titled *Break the News to Mother* (1919). In his autobiography, Harris explains that he had been working on a story about the circus when he was asked to supply a story to a director: “This story going over so well, I fell back on my old song titles and wrote a scenario around my soldier song, ‘*Break the News to Mother*,’ and sold it” (Harris, 1926, p. 269).

The plot summary of the lost film *Break the News to Mother* (1919; directed by Julius Steger) does not suggest it had a great deal to do with the Great War. The hero, David Brey, is falsely accused of a crime in America and flees. Towards the end of the film, “Meanwhile Dave, a war hero in Europe, and sick with pneumonia,” survives and “After the armistice, Dave returns to his mother.”¹⁷ The reviewer in *Variety* recalled Harris’s song but could not see any connection between it and the movie (*Variety* 1919).¹⁸ Even so, information printed on the sheet music cover that appeared at the time makes a connection that demonstrates how important the song was to Americans. The caption mistakenly identifies the date of the Spanish–American War, but the wording indicates its significance:

This song was originally published in 1897, during the Spanish American war [sic], when it was virtually taken up by the entire nation. The author ... since the outbreak of the present war has been besieged by requests for copies of his one-time famous song, the human heart appeal of which has kept alive for these many years. In response to this appeal he has issued this new edition. The song remains unchanged with the exception of the title page. And will undoubtedly take its place as an immortal classic.¹⁹

In effect, as Harris “fell back on his old titles” and “wrote a scenario around [his] soldier song,” he was using the song as a slate or pad onto which new writing was put. The music’s historic materiality suggests a palimpsest, defined as a “very old document on which the original writing has been erased and replaced with new writing” and “writing material used one or more times after the earlier writing has been replaced.” Sigmund Freud’s theoretical use of the palimpsest is worth considering in the context as an analogy. One writes on the celluloid cover of a palimpsest. When the cover is removed, the writing on it disappears but

the residual impressions on the slate under the celluloid retain traces of the writing. For Freud, this is akin to what happens with our perceptions and memory:

The surface of the Mystic Pad is clear of writing and once more capable of receiving impressions. But it is easy to discover that the permanent trace of what is written is retained on the wax slab itself and is legible in certain lights. Thus the Pad provides not only a receptive surface that can be used over and over again, like a slate, but also permanent traces of what has been written, like an ordinary paper pad; it solves the problem of combining the two functions *by dividing them between two separate but interrelated component parts or systems*. But this is precisely the way in which ... our mental apparatus performs its perceptual function. (Freud, 1961, p. 230, italics in the original)

The concept of the palimpsest can be seen to relate to the idea of a kind of historical intertextuality. If we consider the older music, in this case appropriated from earlier wars, as being (or being on) the base slate, then the later use of it can be understood as being registered on the celluloid (literally and figuratively) that is overlaid on the original musical slate.

To summarize at this point: the creators of *Love and War*, a film about the Spanish–American War, appropriated and incorporated songs from earlier conflicts, the War of 1812 ("The Star Spangled Banner") and the Civil War ("Weeping, Sad and Lonely"). Charles K. Harris recycled "Break the News to Mother," his own song, originally about a doomed Confederate soldier, and constructed a slide show in which the hero is now a member of the Union Army. This song then became immensely popular during the Spanish–American War, sufficiently so to warrant recycling it during the Great War, the next major American conflict. Both film and slide show connect their viewers with music from earlier time periods and wars—an unusual kind of auditory palimpsest. The music in both the film and the original slide is akin to the writing pad on which narratives are written and then *overwritten*: Civil War, Spanish–American War, and the Great War. I would suggest that something like this phenomenon seems to be particular to music in the war film, because, more than is the case with other genres, some of the music we hear is often understood to be that which *audiences* at the time would have heard in the theaters and viewing spaces during an actual war. For the moment, we are connected experientially with people who were close to, if not actually immersed in, an actual war.

And what we hear is "real." Kathryn Kalinak speaks of "music's utility to silent film ... derived from its physical presence in the theater" and cites an advertisement for the Barton Orchestral Organ: "Out of the misty depths of the silversheet, shaking the shadows from them, come the people of the screen stories. They come dancing-running-fighting or with soul-weary steps—and music, *real* music, should always be with them" (Kalinak, 1992, p. 44, italics in the original). She observes that "silent film accompaniment, after all, was produced by live musicians whose presence lent credibility to the images themselves. The sight of live performers actually producing music transferred to the silent images a sense of here and now, a quality that the Barton Musical Instrument Company described in its advertisements as 'next to human,' a visual assurance that images on the screen are 'real'" (ibid.). The wording is similar to that found in another advertisement from a different source claiming that the Wurlitzer "One Man Orchestra" provides "The Music That Gives Realism to the Pictures."²⁰ To take Kalinak's conclusion one step further: It is not just that the music gives realism to the

image; it is that our *perception* of the image and war gains a degree of realism precisely because the sound itself is experienced as a real sound. If we know that what we are hearing is a real sound, then we are linked to earlier audiences that also “heard” what we are hearing now, whether they were living through a war or observing a film about it.

Michel Chion has explored the complex issue of music’s relationship to “reality” from a different angle. Differentiating diegetic from non-diegetic, he identifies “screen music” for film, and “pit music” for other entertainments such as opera or the circus. In the cases of film, when “the scene changes,” something extraordinary happens *vis-à-vis* music:

The scene changes, meaning what was first a palace becomes magically a forest, a boudoir, or the parlor of a convent. What does not change its imaginary placement for the audience, however, is the music. From beginning to end ... the music is emitted from the orchestra pit, the grandstand, from a place beyond all places, that contains all times and all spaces, and leads everywhere: to the past as well as the future, to the sea and the city, to depths as well as to the heavens, a place that has no *here* or *there*, neither *once upon a time* nor *now*. The place of music is both a pit, where the elementary principles of these mean streets called life muck around, and a balcony in the sky, from where we can view as detached observers—out of time, through instantaneous cuts—past, present, and future. (Chion, 2003, p. 412)

Music becomes the experiential base for narratives and envelopes us by virtue of its material reality beyond “here or there.”

Let me expand on this point by considering “I’ll Walk Alone,” an immensely popular song by Jule Styne and Sammy Cahn from 1944 performed in *Flags of our Fathers*. It is heard twice, first in an incomplete version sung by Eastwood during the opening credit sequence. Robert Burgoyne, drawing on the logic of Michel Chion’s theory, describes it in this manner:

Shortly after the introductory logo... a faint voice emerges from the darkness of the screen, a voice that has an old-fashioned texture and grain, singing a song that sounds like a fragment of a half-heard radio broadcast. The lyrics, which are barely audible ... set a mood of solitude, loss, and regret. The source of the song is ambiguous; it seems to float between the opening Dreamworks logo ... and the beginning of the diegesis, to be in both places at once, “haunting the borderlands.” The song is neither on-screen nor clearly off-screen, neither part of the credits nor part of the fictional world. It suggests the ghostly off-screen voice that Michel Chion describes as the “acousmetre.” (Burgoyne, 2003, p. 157)

Eastwood’s rendition begins five seconds into the film and ends at 0:56. But he presents the song again, this time as the Marines hear it over the intercom. One of the most striking scenes in the film occurs on the night before the landing on Iwo Jima. Sitting around a table in the barracks, the young men playing cards can hear Artie Shaw’s band playing his popular 1941 swing composition “Summit Ridge Drive” (DVD Chapter 5). They ask Ira Hayes (Adam Beach) who has been looking at photographs, about his “squaw.” When he shows them one image, it is of a blindfolded prisoner about to be beheaded; another photograph is of a G.I.’s body on a beach. Their banter stops as he explains that it is what the Japanese do to prisoners. At that moment, we hear the voice of Tokyo Rose, who taunts the men by talking about their girls back home, suggesting their infidelity: “Who do you think they are with tonight? Will they comfort you at your funeral?” While she speaks, we begin to hear

Dinah Shore singing "I'll Walk Alone"; her song actually enters momentarily into a bizarre kind of counterpoint to the voice of Tokyo Rose.²¹ The song was first introduced by Shore the year before in *Follow the Boys* (A. Edward Sutherland; 1944), a wartime drama-musical-review film in which she sings it before an audience. Here Shore's voice takes over, and we no longer hear Tokyo Rose as Eastwood pans around the faces of the anxious Marines. As she concludes, "Till you're walking beside me / I'll walk alone," instead of the vicious baiting, we have one of the Marines accompanying Shore on his guitar.²² While not singing along with the song, an action that could occur with the showing of the earliest war films I mentioned above, the Marine's accompanying of this song is certainly related to the principle of engaging with the music you hear. Moreover, the guitar accompaniment puts into relief Eastwood's own singing as the film begins. He literally *is* singing the part of the song we will hear shortly.

Tokyo Rose's counterpart in the European theater of war was Axis Sally, who is heard in *The Story of G.I. Joe* (1945; William Wellman) presenting propagandistic arguments of a similar kind to the soldiers listening on a radio to "Summit Ridge Drive," the same Artie Shaw number presented in Eastwood's film. One soldier is quite caught up and joins in with sound effects. After urging her listeners to give up and join with their German brothers, Axis Sally plays "Linda," a love ballad that lasts several minutes. Composed by Ann Ronell, it addresses men's loneliness and longing, and Wellman cuts from the longing faces of one man after another. At its conclusion, one soldier plays the ballad on his guitar. The parallels are interesting, not only on account of these being two films in which soldiers playing guitars join in with love ballads. Even more striking is the dual use of Artie Shaw's quintessential swing classic, which has remained a staple of modern American music since the 1940s. It too functions as a kind of palimpsest in *Flags*, bearing the impression not just of *The Story of G.I. Joe*, but of an entire cultural and historical tradition.

Two more songs in *Flags of Our Fathers* deserve mention in this regard, both performed by the Andrews Sisters. The first is another 1944 song by Jule Styne and Sammy Cahn, "Doing the Victory Polka," first featured in the film *Jam Session* (1944; Charles Barton), where it is sung by Ann Miller. In Eastwood's film, the Andrews Sisters sing it at the first of two bond rallies at which they appear. The next song, performed at the second function, is "Any Bonds Today," the virtually ubiquitous number urging citizens to support the war effort with their dollars. Written by Irving Berlin and first introduced by Bugs Bunny in the Warner Bros. cartoon *Any Bonds Today* (1942; Leo Schlesinger [producer]), it was shown in countless theaters. The Internet Movie Database (IMDB) lists its running time at 3:00 minutes. One entry available on You Tube presents a 1:27 minute version of the song. It begins with a title frame on a red curtain: "Leon Schlesinger presents 'Bugs Bunny' Produced in Cooperation with Warner Bros. and U.S. Treasury Dept. Defense Savings Staff." It is complete in regard to the animation (including the Al Jolson chorus in which Bugs sings in blackface) and concludes with a one-page advertisement, "For Defense, Buy United States Savings Bonds and Stamps."²³ A longer version available on You Tube (2:54), is closer in length to the time listed in IMDB. After the songs, we see the advertisement ("For Defense ..."), and another frame follows indicating "At this Theatre," and then another, "Ladies and Gentlemen Let Us All Sing Our National Anthem!" Then a series of eight images appears with the image of a musical staff and the lyrics of "The Star-Spangled Banner." When the rockets' red glare is mentioned, images of fireworks appear underneath the staff. The last

two images omit the staff, as the anthem concludes with two images of the waving American flag.²⁴ This version certainly brings us back to what might have well occurred in the presentation of *Love and War* were the audience singing along with a slide.

The contemporary audience for Eastwood's film is not singing along. Still, the performance by the Andrews Sisters acts in a similar manner to engage us in an experience by which a text, the song, has a double inscription. Heard as "real" sound, it bears the imprint of the historical directive that is at the narrative center of the film. We are brought into a fictional world enlivened (and animated, in terms of Bugs Bunny), heard as "real" sound.²⁵

The reference to Irving Berlin's "Any Bonds Today" leads to a concluding reflection. Berlin has to be considered as *the* ultimate composer of popular songs in the war film, not just for "Any Bonds Today," but even more for two songs whose first cinematic occurrence is in *This Is the Army* (1943: Michael Curtiz): "God Bless America" (the song many wish was indeed our national anthem) and "This Is the Army, Mr. Jones." The first, sung by Kate Smith with a full orchestra and chorus, is followed by scenes understood to be of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the death of a young pilot. The second is heard first during the credits and appears again in a production number in which army personnel performing it during World War I march out of a theater as they prepare to go to France to fight. The song is reprised later in the film, now sung by World War II soldiers who are interrupted (comically) by a group of Navy sailors.²⁶ Like "Any Bonds Today," it is instantly recognizable as another quintessential World War II song, appearing as it did in the most successful war-themed film made during the conflict.

As far as I can tell, its next appearance in film occurs as the accompaniment to Howard Hawks's comedy *I Was A Male War Bride* (1949). It is safe to assume that most of the audience seeing the film when it first appeared would have recognized the song. Interestingly, the song was used to accompany the trailer for the film shown in advance of its release. As the IMDB notes, no credit is given—particularly surprising since the studio producing it was not Warner Bros., which made the 1943 film, but Twentieth Century Fox. In the trailer and credits of Hawks's comedy can be seen another kind of inscription on the musical pad, here reprising a song and film six years after both cheered audiences at the height of World War II and four years after its conclusion. Even though the lyrics are not sung, the music underscores the difference between 1943 and 1949 by asserting that World War II is indeed over. While the 1943 film has comic moments, especially in its use of drag during some of the musical numbers, its ultimate generic status could be defined as musical war drama. We see destruction and the indication of at least one death. The high point of *I Was a Male War Bride* is Cary Grant's drag impersonation of a woman so that he can accompany his wife back to the United States. No one dies. The use of the song here adds a new layer on to the musical slate, not by figuring in a different war but by showing a world that can have the comic moments without death.

Notes

- 1 Obviously, my interest in what audiences "hear" will remind readers of the title of Claudia Gorbman's important study *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Gorbman, 1987).
- 2 For a detailed account of this from the *New York Journal and Advertiser*, April 26, 1898, see Musser (1991, pp. 129–130).

- 3 I discuss films about the Spanish–American War in *The War Film* (Eberwein, 2005, pp. 1–3) and in *The Hollywood War Film* (Eberwein, 2010, pp. 4–6). *Love and War* and other extant films about the War can be viewed at the Library of Congress <https://www.loc.gov/collections/spanish-american-war-in-motion-pictures/> (accessed 20 November 2015).
- 4 *The Astor Tramp*, a comic film with music from Edison directed by White, was released within the same week. No specific information exists about its music, only its plot. See Musser (1991, p. 150).
- 5 This is the description provided on the Library of Congress website cited above.
- 6 Entry for *Love and War* in www.locweb2.loc.gov/ammem/sawhtml/sawhome.html.
 Musser (1991, p. 151) suggests: "Only four scenes were copyrighted under this title, but two other films, including the concurrently made *Fun in Camp*, were apparently added to *Love and War* to fill out its advertised length. For both 'song films' the careful fit between words and picture required the production company to exercise a high degree of creative control." I have found no reference to *Fun in Camp*. There are two extant camp films from 1898, but none with that title. They are *9th Infantry Morning Boys' Wash*, and *Blanket-Tossing a New Recruit*. The latter seems like a probable version of *Fun in Camp*.
- 7 For more on the illustrated song, see Bergh and Bergh (1983), Abel (2001, pp. 143–155), and Wlaschin (2009, pp. 1–3).
- 8 See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6b0wpBTR1s> (accessed 23 October 2015).
- 9 For both versions, see <http://freepages.music.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~edgmon/cwcruel.htm> (accessed 23 October 2015).
- 10 See http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/songsheets_bsvg301119/ (accessed 20 November 2015).
- 11 Altman (2004, p.107) refers to Harris's claim as the first filmmaker but does not discuss any specific song slides. "I Love Her Just the Same" can be heard on You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWNNpL2-89Y> (accessed 20 November 2015).
- 12 See also Harris's commentary "The Rise of the Illustrated Song" in his autobiography (Harris, 1926, pp. 176–181).
- 13 For a recording with some visuals of this, see, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTCBtMPvuKQ> (accessed 23 October 2015).
- 14 For the song with slides, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEQZJTsnStE> (accessed 23 October 2015). The construction is posted on You Tube as being from "DragonflyEnt," with this explanation: "Here is a video made from Magic Lantern Glass slides dating from the [sic] 1899 to 1901. I rescued this box of hand painted glass slides from the trash back in the 1970s. These are sets of slides for the Magic Lantern show based on four popular songs of the day (but I never heard of them). I found versions of this song here on youtube. I hope to find versions of the other songs sometime. Enjoy." "DragonflyEnt" is identified on the site as "the channel of Dennis J. Woodyard, Creative Director of Dragonfly Entertainment. Creator and designer of Dragonfly Flipz™ Books, and a former Emmy nominated animation producer / director / story board artist with a wide range of experience in animation field."
- 15 In effect, we imaginatively supply the missing motions that are elided (rising, changing locations around the dying soldier). I am grateful to Jonathan Auerbach for drawing my attention to Noël Burch's observations about slide programs (Burch, 2008). Burch (1990, p. 87) also observes: "In many of these slide sequences, the spectators follow a series of movements in a single setting rendered by pictures of different shot-scale and sometimes even from different angles."
- 16 See <https://www.google.com/search?q=break+the+news+to+mother%2Cimage&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org> (accessed 23 October 2015).
- 17 For a plot summary, see: <http://www.afi.com/members/catalog/DetailView.aspx?s=&Movie=18247> (accessed 23 October 2015).

- 18 See *Variety* 30 May, 1919. <https://archive.org/stream/variety54-1919-05#page/n17/mode/2up> (accessed 23 October 2015).
- 19 See <http://cas.umt.edu/english/joyce/notes/010061breaknews.htm> (accessed 23 October 2015).
- 20 The ad is displayed in Cara Schreffler, "Music in American Film," in a blog by Mark Oates: "The History of American Film Through Silent Film Music," <http://www.markmusicproduction.com/blog.php?id=34> (accessed 20 November 2015). For a detailed discussion of the theater organs and "one man orchestras," see Altman (2004, pp. 321–343), "New role for keyboard instruments."
- 21 For commentary on Dinah Shore, see Woll (1983, pp. 49–50, 97).
- 22 She is heard yet again in *Destination Tokyo* (1943), although this time without any music. In his discussion of *The Story of G.I. Joe*, Wesley J. O'Brien (2012, p. 25) suggests that "the music in this sequence recalls scenes of home for the soldiers via the American swing music, and facilitates the soldiers' imaginations regarding the romantic scenarios that might follow the scenes via the love ballad. Through their own extra-diegetical associations with dance music, and through the conventional coding of the lush string orchestral music, the audience identifies with the associations that the soldiers experience." This vocal presence of Tokyo Rose (but not her appearance) was not at all unusual in World War II movies. Her voice is heard immediately after Dinah Shore's rendition of "I Can't Give you Anything But Love," in "*The Voice of Truth*," a government documentary from 1945 in which she presents the same propagandistic line to the G.I.s listening to the intercom/radio onboard a ship bound for Iwo Jima. An extensive treatment of music from this period is provided in Young and Young (2008). See also Smith (2013) and Jones (2006).
- 23 See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nh_oc5hQt-A (accessed 23 October 2015).
- 24 See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpCmyPdXGMw> (accessed 23 October 2015). For a discussion of the other major war cartoons, such as Walt Disney's *Der Fuehrer's Face* (1943; Jack Kinney), see Sheldon Winkler, 2013, pp. 105–109.
- 25 Many films from the time of World War II, not just war films as such, conclude with messages urging the audience to buy bonds.
- 26 For a fuller discussion of the film, see my collection *The Hollywood War Film* (Eberwein, 2010, pp. 48–50).

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