

Voice-over-Narration in *Trainspotting*

Maria Kristina Reinholt Kristensen

In 1996 the Scottish film *Trainspotting* was released. It was an immediate success and the critics showered it with reviews and even called it “the *Clockwork Orange* of the 90s”. But what is it that makes this film so special? No one thing can be credited for its success. It’s black gallows humour, its unique way of treating the controversial subject of drug-culture, the brilliant acting and overall high quality all play their part.

The one thing, however, most people will remember first and most clearly when asked about the film, is perhaps the opening monologue and its echo in the epilogue by the main character, Mark Renton. Throughout the film, Renton’s voice keeps appearing out of the blue commenting on or even narrating parts of the plot. This appears to be an example of voice-over narration, a cinematic tool that many associate with B-films or old nostalgic movies. These, however, are not the only places this narrative technique can be found. It’s just so common that we barely notice it anymore. In this paper, I will look closer into the use of voice-over narration in *Trainspotting* as well as in film in general.

In 1993 the three filmmakers John Hodge (Screenwriter), Andrew MacDonald (producer) and Danny Boyle (director) created the film *Shallow Grave*. Even before the film’s release and subsequent success, they decided to continue their collaboration.¹ Their next project was to be a screen adaptation of Irvine Welsh’s novel *Trainspotting* (1993). This, however, immediately presented some problems, in particular for Hodge, who claimed that *Trainspotting* could never be a film because:

1. It is a collection of loosely related short stories about several different characters. Only towards the end does it take on a continuous narrative form.
2. The characters, each with a distinctive voice, are defined by internal monologue as much as anything, and the language is uncompromisingly specific to a time and place.²

Yet, despite these objections, he finally agreed to try. The three sat down and made a list of characters, bits of language and incidents they wanted to include in the film. Then it was Hodge’s job to turn this into a script. Due to this process the film has managed to keep much of the fractured narrative structure of the book. The film is, just as the book a collection of “loosely related” scenes and sequences.

In this article I will show how the voice-over narration connects these scenes thus making the plot more comprehensible to the viewers, without ruining the overall effect of the film. Another use of voice-over narration in *Trainspotting* is connected to one of the other items on the list the filmmakers wrote: “bits of language”. Transferring a dialogue from novel to film is fairly simple. However, since the book consists (almost) entirely of internal monologues and 1st person narration by various characters, many of the “bits of language” that they wanted to include could not be transferred to ordinary film dialogue. But through the use of a voice-over narrator, they could preserve these particular bits they wanted, as well as keep the general narrative tone of the book.

Voice-over narration has been part of film narration from the earliest years of sound pictures. But it has not always been a popular technique. Many scholars and critics have either overlooked it, or influenced by prejudices, dismissed it out of hand. Some of these prejudices express the opinion that the cinema is a visual medium in which sound plays a minor part. Therefore the images should tell the story without the aid of sound. This prejudice is somewhat outdated. It originates from the days when silent movies and the new “talkies” were battling for supremacy. Though sound was immensely popular with the audience, some filmmakers and most critics found sound in general and dialogue in particular to be a low and unwelcome addition to the medium, something to be kept to a minimum if it could not be avoided entirely. This opposition to speech in films was even stronger towards voice-over speech, a cinematic tool that many critics found not to belong within the medium at all. This is connected to another prejudice against voice-over narration, which states that the technique does not belong in the cinema since its narrative style is literary. Another perhaps more common perception is that voice-over narration is a tool, which a filmmaker or scriptwriter can use when “no satisfactory solution can be found to the problems of dramatic structure.”³ Many people see voice-over narration as a cheap shortcut to connect a poorly structured plot, or to avoid having to show parts of the story, which could be hard to dramatise. This unfortunately is true in some cases.

The cartoon show *Earthworm Jim* has an ironic comment to this use. When two of the bad guys decide that it will be too hard conquering a certain kingdom, they hold the narrator at gunpoint and make him read a statement they have made, explaining how cleverly and bravely they have succeeded in the conquest ... and immediately it becomes true.

All prejudices aside, voice-over narration has become such an important part of our cinematic tradition and heritage that it neither can nor should be ignored. In films like Stanley Kubrick’s *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and Robert Rodriguez’ *El*

Mariachi (1993) voice-over narration is an essential part of what have made fans find these movies so fascinating. Voice-over narration is not only a tool for telling the story of a film. It helps build the atmosphere and feeling particular for the film.

In this article, I will define voice-over narration and give some examples of its uses in general and in *Trainspotting* in particular in order to show that it is not just some shortcut for filmmakers who are not competent enough to tell the story using the “proper” cinematic tools. I will demonstrate that voice-over narration when used correctly can enrich the film experience and even add elements to it that could not be achieved through any other means.

The simplest way to define voice-over narration is to look at the three words constituting the term. According to Sarah Kozloff, author of *Invisible Storytellers – voice-over narration in American fiction film*, “all three words are fully operative” and therefore carries part of the meaning.⁴ She explains:

“**Voice** determines the medium.” It has to be a voice we are hearing, as opposed to noise or music. “Voice” also separates voice-over narration from tools such as printed titles and captions.

“**Over** pertains to the relationship between the source of the sound and the images on the screen.” This means that a voice-over narrator cannot be doing their narrating *on* screen, nor *off* screen, that is situated in the scene but outside the view of the camera. Therefore the narrator must be placed in a different time and/or place than that of the scene.

Voice-over narration often takes place at a later time than the accompanying scene, either telling the story of the scene or providing background knowledge for it. In very few cases the voice-over narrator is describing future events while these unfold on the screen. An example of this relation can be found in the Danish *Olsen-banden* films, in which the leader, Egon, explains his plan for the crime they are about to commit, while the shot shows the actual crime taking place.

“**Narration** relates to the content of the speech.” Voice-over narration is not the only kind of speech found in films where the speaker is not present in the shot. Other examples are eavesdropping, interior monologue, subjective or delusional sound, telephone conversations, letters or telegrams (“reading aloud”) and in some cases even voice-over dialogue. Some of these, for example a letter, might actually be narrative, perhaps even telling part of the plot of the movie, so as with most things, the lines separating the different types of voice-over are not always clear.

Kozloff says that voice-over narration can be defined as “oral statements, conveying any portion of a narrative, spoken by an unseen speaker situated in a space and time other than that simultaneously being presented by the images on the screen.”⁵ I find this to be a very precise and useful definition and it is the one I will

be using as my basic definition in my work with voice-over narration. However, since it is fairly simple and to the point I would like to look at it in more details.

One of the key phrases is “any *portion* of a narrative”: If voice-over narration was nice little stories told from beginning to end it would be easy identifying them as narratives. However, most voice-over narration is fragmented into a few sentences here and there while the images and dramatic performance of the actors tells the main part of the story. The shorter the fragment, the harder it is to identify it as a narrative. Kozloff offers some methods for discerning whether a fragment is a narrative or something else. Most of these methods are developed by linguists and have to do with the grammatical tense and structure of a fragment. But since these linguists cannot agree on precisely what the tense and structure of voice-over narration should be, it seems rather impractical if not impossible to work with these methods.

Kozloff’s own conclusion on this is that it is not because of a certain grammatical structure that we recognise a statement as narrative. Instead, she explains, it is an entire “code of narration” and that we as “viewers, readers, listeners and narrators,” have “not only unconsciously learned narrative structure, but also the rules and conditions *surrounding* storytelling.”⁶ What she is saying is that we through watching, listening to and even telling stories ourselves have become so familiar with what it means to tell a story, to narrate, and also the circumstances under which a story is told, that we subconsciously recognises a narrative as such.

The use of voice-over narration in *Trainspotting* is rather extensive, and since most of it comes in rather large “portions” it is not hard to determine that most of these are narratives.

Richard Neupert suggests that narrating is “a process whereby a story, in varying degrees, can be told according to one point of view or another.”⁷ What is interesting in this definition is the notion of viewpoint. In order to understand this, it will be necessary to take a closer look at the voice-over narrator.

In literature, narrators are either 1st or 3rd person. This, however, does not apply for film narrators. Kozloff suggests the terms “authorial” and “character” instead.⁸ At first glance it would seem that the authorial narrator, that is a person who is not part of the story, but only telling it, is the same as a 3rd person narrator. But the problem is that in film, a voice will automatically become a character, even though the speaker is never seen. Some characters (e.g. Charley in *Charlie’s Angels*) are nothing but a voice and are still accepted as a character along with all the others.

Another way of distinguishing between the two types of narrators is by calling them homodiegetic or heterodiegetic narrators. The homodiegetic narrator is “of

the same order, homogeneous with the “diegesis”, the world of the story”. The heterodiegetic narrator exists outside of the diegesis, on another level.⁹

If we use these expressions it is possible to claim that all narrators are characters, even if they are not characters in the story they narrate. So, just as the man telling a story in a scene is a character, so is the unidentified voice, telling the story of the film itself. Thus many narrators can exist within the same film while operating on various levels. Since the authorial or heterodiegetic narrator is most commonly found in documentaries, I will mainly focus on the character or homodiegetic narrator from now on.

As mentioned above, narrators can operate on different levels. Sometimes a narrator is embedded within a frame story, while other times s/he is the one framing the story. In the case of multiple narrators, some narrators can be embedded in the stories of the other narrators. It can be illustrated thus:¹⁰

Frame narrator: framing, primary story[embedded narrator: embedded, secondary story[doubly embedded narrator: doubly embedded story]]

How deeply embedded in the structure of a film a narrator is, determines how much control he has over the story. A framing narrator has far greater opportunity of choosing what to tell and how, than an embedded narrator. This distribution of control is amplified by the fact that the framing narrator is “telling” the embedded narrator and therefore has control over what s/he tells. Sometimes the framing narrator appears to take over the film in the eyes of the viewer so that the images appears to be created by the voice, rather than the voice being created by the image maker, the director.¹¹

Renton is the frame narrator of the story. This is emphasized by the fact that the movie begins and ends with his narration. But in the movie there are also some cases of embedded narration. One of these is when Tommy tells his version of “Begbie’s story”¹²:

TOMMY

(voice-over)

... Begbie is playing absolutely fucking gash. He’s got a hangover so bad he can hardly hold the fucking cue, never mind put the ball. I’m doing my best to loose, trying to humour him, like, but it’s not any good: every time I touch the ball I pot something, every time Begbie goes near the table he fucks it up. So he’s got the hump, right, but finally I manage to set it up so all he’s got to do is put the black to win one game and salvage a little pride and maybe not kick my head in, right. So, he’s on the black, pressure shot, and it all goes wrong, big

time. What does he do? Picks on this specky wee gadge at the bar and accuses him of putting him off by looking at him. Can you believe it? I mean the poor cunt hasn't even glanced in our direction. He's sitting there quiet as a mouse when Beggars gubs him with the cue. He was going to chib him I tell you, then I thought he was going to do me. The Beggar is a psycho, but he's a mate, you know, so what can you do?¹³

While Tommy is narrating we are watching the story he is telling, interchanging with short clips of Tommy speaking. A few moments before, we have heard Begbie telling his version of it, in which he was playing like a dream and the guy bothering him was very large and tough. Renton then explains how he got the truth from Tommy, since Tommy always tells the truth. Watching Tommy's version somehow makes it more plausible because we are actually seeing it happen as opposed to Begbie's version during the major part of which we just watch his smug grin. Whether the viewer wants to believe Tommy's story is up to them, but as they say, there are three sides to every story, yours, mine and the truth.

Tommy exists on the same level as Renton, that of the story, but as opposed to Renton's narration which exists outside the diegesis of the story, Tommy's narrative is embedded in Renton's and therefore also subject to it.

Earlier I mentioned some prejudices against voice-over narration. One of these states that voice-over narration is a tool used by filmmakers who are unable to relate their story through image and dramatization. Unfortunately this use can be found in some films and it does not help promoting the "good" uses of voice-over narration, the reasons why experienced filmmakers, like Stanley Kubrick, will use it in a film.

There are in fact many beneficent uses of voice-over narration in fiction films. The first I would like to mention is the issue of the relation between the viewer and the film. Some film theorists and psychologists believe that part of the general attraction of films is that they spark people's voyeuristic tendencies. Watching a film gives the viewer the opportunity to observe other people, apparently without them knowing it. Most people are not even aware of this urge in themselves and its satisfaction through film watching, but some enjoy it and a few even feel embarrassed or guilty about it. All types of viewers will be jerked out of their usual way of watching a movie, when a narrator suddenly invites them to watch and offers the story to them freely. This does not necessarily make the watching experience better or worse but, used in the right way, it gives a different quality to the experience.

Another kind of intimacy related to voice-over narration occurs when the narrator speaks directly to the viewers. Alex in *A Clockwork Orange* addresses his viewers

“oh my brothers and only friends”,¹⁴ thus, not only dragging the viewers into his world, but also assuming them to share his violent and extreme value system. An unsettling assumption for many viewers. In other cases the narrator might directly ask the viewers to consider a certain aspect of the story and reach their own conclusion or pass judgement. At the end of *Don Juan DeMarco* (1995), Dr. Mickler invites the viewers to decide for themselves whether or not the ending (and therefore a large part of the narrative) is “truth” or imagination.

In *Trainspotting* Renton offers the story to us freely, but only at the end does he address us directly:

RENTON

(voice-over)

... I'm going to be just like you...

As opposed to the example from *A Clockwork Orange* this does not associate us with Renton, putting us on his side. Rather it does the exact opposite by using “you” as the opposition to what he is “now” that is at the time of the narrating.

Another way in which the narrator can be used to prompt the audience to think for themselves is in the cases where the narrator is of a questionable character. If an embedded narrator telling us a story in the story is a sailor, a con artist or some other stereotype of person known for exaggerating or lying, we will most likely regard that story as being questionable. But what if the framing narrator is a hardened criminal as in *A Clockwork Orange* or a thieving and lying drug addict as in *Trainspotting*? Then the viewer is forced to question whether the entire story is believable or if it might be coloured or entirely invented by the untrustworthy narrator.

In those cases where the narrator seems to be the creator of the whole story, s/he might actually succeed in expressing a personality behind the filmmaking that the director will not be able to show through “shooting, editing and staging.”¹⁵ Even when it comes to auteurs such as Hitchcock and David Lynch, though they might be able to express some kind of personality or style of filmmaking, the filmmaker will still seem “an odd, bodiless construction, difficult to assimilate to the rest of our experience of narratives and narrators.”¹⁶ Through the voice-over narrator, the director can express some sense of personality behind the film as well as supply the films point of view. This use of voice-over narration stresses “the individuality and subjectivity of perception and storytelling.”¹⁷

The voice-over narration in *Trainspotting* is used mainly for three purposes. Two of these I have already mentioned: connecting the scenes and maintaining the language of the book.

As explained earlier, the film has tried to copy the loose and fragmented structure of the book, but in films, it is harder to get the story told through such a structure. In the book we are granted insight into what the characters think and feel, while in the movie, we have to settle for what is apparent on the outside. Here the voice-over narration comes in, letting us know how at least one of the characters think. An example of this can be found the first time Renton tries to break with his heroin addiction. Previous to the scene Renton has been preparing for the ordeal, including getting a “final hit”. This sequence ended with the words: “Now. Now I’m ready.” Then, while listening to the voice-over, we watch Renton and Sick Boy meeting in a park, walking over to some bushes where they lie down and Sick Boy starts talking. This cut from the first sequence to the next makes little sense without the voice-over:

RENTON

(voice-over)

The downside of coming off junk was that I knew I would need to mix with my friends again in a state of full consciousness. It was awful: they reminded me so much of myself I could hardly bear to look at them. Take Sick Boy, for instance, he came off junk at the same time as me, not because he wanted to, you understand, but just to annoy me, just to show me how easily he could do it, thereby downgrading my own struggle. Sneaky fucker don’t you think? And when all I wanted to do was lie alone and feel sorry for myself, he insisted on telling me once again about his unifying theory of life.

Now the connection is made between the two scenes: Renton has been through the withdrawal and is now far from happy to be spending time with Sick Boy, who has done the same just to annoy him.

The second main use of voice-over narration in *Trainspotting* has to do with preserving the language of the book. The book has multiple 1st person narrators and a few cases of 3rd person narration, but very little actual dialogue, so in order to preserve the language, voice-over narration was a necessity. And in the end it turned out, that this particular element is one of the major reasons for the film’s success. An obvious example is the opening monologue:

RENTON

(voice-over)

Choose life. Choose a job. Choose a career. Choose a family. Choose a fucking big television, choose washing machines, cars, compact disc players and electrical

tin openers. Choose good health, low cholesterol and dental insurance. Choose fixed-interest mortgage repayments. Choose a starter home. Choose your friends. Choose leisurewear and matching luggage. Choose a three-piece suit on hire purchase in a range of fucking fabrics. Choose DIY and wondering who the fuck you are on a Sunday morning. Choose sitting on that couch watching mind-numbing, spirit-crushing game shows, stuffing junk food into your mouth. Choose rotting away at the end of it all, pishing you last in a miserable home, nothing more than an embarrassment to the selfish, fucked-up brats you have spawned to replace yourself. Choose you future. Choose life. But why would I want to do a thing like that? I chose not to choose life: I chose something else. And reasons? There are no reasons. Who needs reasons when you've got heroin?

The exact same words (except for a few minor details) can be found in the novel.¹⁸ In the novel the monologue is in no way connected to the chase scene it accompanies in the film. However, since this is more of a list than a narrative it can be placed at any point in the plot without seeming out of place. In fact the filmmakers admitted in an interview that the monologue was supposed to go somewhere in the middle of the film. But when they were editing the opening scene they felt something was missing. Hodge tried shifting the monologue to the front and it worked.¹⁹ It seems a bit ironic that one of the major elements people notice and remember about the film, was a last minute solution to a problem scene.

The last use of voice-over narration in the film has to do with the overall style. As I just explained, voice-over narration can be used to preserve the literary style of the novel on which the film is based, but it can also serve a deeper and subtler stylistic purpose.

The opening monologue, quoted above is matched by the closing dialogue:

RENTON

(voice-over)

So why did I do it? I could offer a million answers, all false. The truth is that I'm a bad person, but that's going to change, I'm going to change. This is the last of this sort of thing. I'm cleaning up and I'm moving on, going straight and choosing life. I'm looking forward to it already. I'm going to be just like you: the job, the family, the fucking bit television, the washing machine, the car, the compact disc and electrical tin opener, good health, low cholesterol, dental insurance, mortgage, starter home, leisurewear,. Walks in the park, nine to five, good at golf, washing the car, choice of sweaters, family Christmas, indexed pension, tax exemption, clearing the gutters, getting by, looking ahead, to the day you die.

After determining that he is a “bad person” he tells us he is going to be just like us and choose life. Then he embarks on a list very similar to the one in the introduction describing what he thinks “choosing life” involves. First he rejects all these things in favour of heroin, and in the end he claims to embrace them. This gives a circular structure to the film, which is made even stronger by the similarities of the scenes accompanying these two voice-overs. In both scenes Renton is leaving the scene of a crime accompanied by hard-rhythm adrenaline filled songs. It is these similarities that define the circular structure of the film. But it is the differences that tell the story of the film. During the introduction, Renton is pursued by store detectives while the insignificant outcome of shoplifting falls from his pockets, and in the end he is caught. During the epilogue he is walking away from the successful “theft” of 16.000£ from his ex-friends. The first scene is accompanied by *Lust for Life* by Iggy Pop, an icon of the 80s, the last scene by *Born Slippy* by Underworld, which at the time of the movie was brand new and very typical of the new trends in music. Iggy Pop is the old times, and throughout the movie associated with Renton’s old lifestyle, while Underworld is now and the future.

The differences in the two scenes indicate that Renton has somehow changed through the film, that he has grown more mature and is ready to live a “normal” life. But is he? His list at the end seems just as ironic as in the beginning. The way he’s describing modern life does not sound very tempting. In particular his final words are rather discouraging: “clearing the gutters, getting by, looking ahead, to the day you die.”

The expressions he uses for his changing: “I’m cleaning up and I’m moving on, going straight” are all clichés typically used in films about people like Renton who has led a life of crime. The fact that he is using *all* three clichés instead of just one draws attention to the fact that they *are* clichés. “Choose life” might not be a typical cliché, but the film has made it its own cliché. These four statements are what we have come to expect of movies: a young criminal protagonist either dies or “cleans up, moves on and goes straight” in the end. The fact that Renton uses these expressions shows that he is aware that this is what is expected of him. He *knows* he is in a story, because he is the one telling it. So he gives us what we want, letting us know that that is exactly what he is doing.

There are other examples of Renton treating his narrating as a *story*. By story I mean something literary as opposed to, for example, recounting personal experiences. Some voice-overs give the impression that the narrator is telling us this as if we were sitting across the table from him. Other voice-overs appear to “have been written” either as novels (often authorial narration) or as memoirs, diaries or letters (character narration).²⁰ Renton’s voice-over narration does not appear to be simple

unrehearsed story telling, some segments, especially the lists are too well thought through for that. But it does not take on any of the traditional forms mentioned above. In this case it seems as if the narrative *knows* it is a narrative.²¹ Other examples of this “awareness” are that Renton calls himself “Young Renton” instead of “I”, playing on the textual difference between 1st and 3rd person narration, and ends a statement with the words “dot dot dot” mocking the literary “...” used, for example, to create suspense. Had he been *reading* this as a text, he would have turned the three dots into a dramatic pause, but since he is *telling* us the text, he *speaks* the punctuation.

This *self*-awareness of being a text is a metafictional trade, and it is not the only one. According to Peter Schepelern’s article *Spøgelsets Navn* (1989) a typical metafictional (or in this case *metafilmic*) “trick” is to have the filmmaker appear in the film.²² In *Trainspotting* it is not the filmmaker(s) who appears, but the author of the novel, Irvine Welsh, who “guest stars” briefly in the role of the drug dealer Mikey Forrester.

These metafictional elements play with the viewer’s perception of the “reality” of the film. Also on the visual side, the film is dotted with unrealistic events (Renton diving into a toilet and swimming into the sea, Renton jumping of a back alley wall and landing in an apartment.) All this shows us that these are not “actual” realistic events we are watching while one of the participants is commenting. Instead it is an art product, a literary story related to us by an intelligent, sarcastic young man with a questionable credibility.

The lack of credibility and realism makes it evident that this film is not a truthful portrait of the life of a drug addict in Scotland today. Therefore the film cannot be expected to send out the same messages and emphasise the same aspects that films on such subjects usually deal with. This is a story, Renton’s story, and the way in which he is telling it is as important as what he is telling. His agenda is not to warn people about the curse of heroin. What he focuses on is the kind of life he leads and what kind of life he wants to lead. Heroin is just a part of it. It is not a “drug-story”, it is the story of a personal development, a *bildungsroman*, or considering the eloquence and literary consciousness of Renton’s narration perhaps even a *künstlerroman*. But most of all, the voice-over narration stresses one thing: this is a *story*.

Notes

- ¹ Finney, 1996 p. 174
- ² Hodge, 1996 p. ix
- ³ Foss, 1992 p. 40
- ⁴ Kozloff, 1988 p. 2
- ⁵ *ibid.* p. 5
- ⁶ *ibid.* p. 4
- ⁷ Neupert, 1995 p. 21
- ⁸ Kozloff, 1988 p. 6
- ⁹ *ibid.* p. 42
- ¹⁰ *ibid.* p. 43
- ¹¹ *ibid.* p. 50
- ¹² Boyle, 1996
- ¹³ *ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Kubrick, 1971
- ¹⁵ Kozloff. p. 48
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ *ibid.* p. 41
- ¹⁸ Welsh, 1993 p. 187
- ¹⁹ MacNab p. 10
- ²⁰ Kozloff, 1988 p. 52
- ²¹ Schepelemn, 1989 p. 8
- ²² *ibid.*

Boyle, 1996: Danny Boyle, *Trainspotting*, Polygram, 1996

Finney, 1996: Angus Finney, *The State of European Cinema – a new dose of reality*
Cassel, London, 1996

Hodge, 1996: John Hodge, *Trainspotting & Shallow Grave*, Faber and Faber
Limited, London, 1996

Kozloff, 1988: Sarah Kozloff, *Invisible Storytellers – voice-over narration in
American fiction film*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1988

Kubrick, 1971: Stanley Kubrick, *A Clockwork Orange*, Warner Bros., 1971

MacNab, 1996: Geoffrey MacNab, “The Boys are Back in Town”, *Sight and Sound*,
vol 6 issue 2, London, 1996

Neupert, 1995: Richard Neupert, *The End – narration and closure in the cinema*
Wayne State University Press, Michigan, 1995

Schepelemn, 1989: Peter Schepelemn, “Spøgelsets Navn”, *Kosmorama*, nr. 189, 1989

Welsh, 1993: Irvine Welsh, *Trainspotting*, Minerva, U.K., 1993