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Text, Image, Audience: Adaptation and Reception of Andrea Newman's *Bouquet of Barbed Wire*

Fran Pheasant-Kelly

Abstract:

Andrea Newman's 1969 novel, *A Bouquet of Barbed Wire* has been adapted twice for television: first in 1976, and later in 2010. Controversially, the novel and its adaptations inferred father–daughter incest, a subject that was considered taboo during the 1970s. Arguably, though partly arising as a result of available technologies at that time, the repressed nature of incest is reflected in the claustrophobic aesthetics of the 1976 television version. In contrast, the more diverse cinematography, panoramic settings and less populated frames of Ashley Pearce's 2010 version correspond with an increasingly transparent approach to incest and child abuse, consistent with the contemporary zeitgeist, which fosters openness across all social and cultural structures. In particular, the changed climate involves a mounting preoccupation with, and sensitivity to, child welfare and legislation, arising as a result of national and international media revelations of child abuse in both domestic and institutional scenarios. Engaging theoretically with Raymond Williams' concept of a 'structure of feeling', as well as referring to Freud's seduction theory, and television theorists including Karen Lury and John Ellis, this article locates parallels between the way that incest is represented and the socio-political and cultural contexts of the respective television adaptations of Newman's novel.

Keywords: *Bouquet of Barbed Wire*; incest; seduction theory; structure of feeling; television aesthetics.

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Introduction

Although Andrea Newman's 1969 novel, *A Bouquet of Barbed Wire* (Newman 2010), received largely positive reviews on its initial publication, it garnered immediate notoriety on its adaptation for television in 1976, when it was broadcast by ITV. The resulting seven-part series was, nevertheless, highly successful, attracting 26 million viewers. It was adapted again in 2010 and this time achieved thirteen million viewers over its three episodes. The furore surrounding London Weekend Television's 1976 production centred on Peter Manson's (Frank Finlay) apparently incestuous desire for his nineteen-year-old daughter, Prue (Susan Penhaligon). In addition to Manson's displays of jealousy towards Prue's husband, the drama's portrayal of sadomasochism and infidelity both attracted and scandalised audiences and reviewers alike. Penny Perrick in the *Sun* commented: 'Let's hope that plastic people with horrible habits like the Mansons are banished from the screen forever', whereas in *The Times*, 15 January, Michael Church assigned the series 'a curious magic'. Symptomatic of the rather different social mores of the mid-1970s is Michael Ratcliffe's comment in *The Times*, 17 January, that 'bright spots included . . . two sharp blows across the face for Prue, from the sorely provoked Gavin'.

While the first adaptation of *Bouquet* followed the novel closely, the second (ITV, 2010) differed both narratively and visually, with its less oppressive aesthetics seeming to reflect changed attitudes towards the subject of incest since the 1970s. In respect of the latter, Joan Lynch observes how 'the shroud of secrecy, silence, and lies woven by patriarchy was ripped in the late 1970s by feminists, many of whom were psychologists, who revealed their and others' pain as survivors of incest' (2002: 43). In a related vein, Euan Ferguson in the *Observer*, 12 September 2010, suggests that the unmentionable nature of incest was one of the reasons that made the 1976 version so popular: 'I know incest, even the thought of it, is still taboo, but in the mid-70s it was seriously taboo and thus entrancing viewing.'

The novel's narrative does not depict actual incest, but rather problematises a father–daughter relationship in which Prue actively invites the attention of her father and takes delight in provoking him emotionally. In many ways, the novel and its television adaptations explore the boundary between paternal affection and incestuous desire. Indeed, both Andrea Newman and the director of the second adaptation, Ashley Pearce, contend that Peter Manson would have been shocked by any suggestion of incest.¹ Nonetheless, the implication of mutual attraction between father and daughter is an undeniable

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central feature. More contentiously, the mode of its signification in both novel and first adaptation (through fantasised scenarios and imaginary dialogues), together with Prue's provocative behaviour, recall Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex, which describes a child's desire for the parent of the opposite sex (2001c).

Prior to proposing the Oedipus complex, however, Freud (2001a) postulated a 'theory of seduction' based on his studies of hysteria, whereby he contended that trauma arose because of repressed memories of sexual abuse by an older individual, usually a father figure. As Pamela Thurschwell points out, however, even at this point the term 'seduction theory' implies the child is motivating the abuse. By 1897, 'Freud found himself obliged to abandon his seduction theory [when] his almost simultaneous discovery of the Oedipus Complex . . . led inevitably to the realization that sexual impulses operated normally in the youngest children without any need for outside stimulation' (James Strachey, in Freud 2001b: 128). Significantly, the initiator of these desires was the child rather than the parent, such an attraction arising when the child realises that it is not the sole object of its parental affections, but that his/her parents are also important to each other. Accordingly, 'the desolate child encounters a new crisis of sexual desire and jealousy . . . [and] will develop an erotic love for the parent of the opposite sex and a rivalrous hatred for the parent of the same sex who seems to monopolise the other, desired, parent' (Thurschwell 2000: 46). If Freud's articulation of this desire shifted from the daughter (as implicated in seduction theory) to denote a male child's desire for his mother, he later provided a revised version that accommodated a young girl's desire for her father.

As Judith Herman reports, a number of surveys from the 1950s to the present day, including the 1953 Kinsey Report which was based on 4,000 interviews (2000: 12), discredit this suggestion and indicate that incest is, and has long been, a real and widespread phenomenon. Yet the information from these reports was suppressed at the time because, according to Herman, 'the public, in the judgement of these men, was not ready to hear about incest (ibid.: 18). In the 1970s, however, feminist social science scholars and psychologists again uncovered evidence of extensive child abuse, their work illustrating the contentious historical tensions of the incest debate which ranged from the patriarchal sensibilities promoted by Freud to these feminist responses that disclosed the ongoing suppression of child abuse reports.

If the first television adaptation of *Bouquet* appears to support the notion of the seductive daughter, its mode of representation—principally through claustrophobic settings, close framing and

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editing – also lends itself to analysis using Raymond Williams’ concept of a ‘structure of feeling’ (1973, 2003). Williams suggests that the dominant ideas in the culture at any given time are manifest pervasively across various forms of representation but may be recognised only retrospectively. He explains this phenomenon as ‘the continuity of experience from a particular work, through its particular form, to its recognition as a general form, and then the relation of this general form to a period’ (1973: 9). Even though it is not possible directly to correlate a single drama’s aesthetics with either generalised attitudes towards incest or with broader cultural emotions, there is nonetheless a continuity between the oppressive scenarios of the novel, the 1976 TV version of *Bouquet* and the censorship of similar concurrent controversial (but more explicit) television drama such as *Brimstone and Treacle* (BBC, 1976) and *Scum* (BBC, 1977) rooted in society’s ‘felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time’ (Williams 2001: 63). The unstable political landscape of the 1970s is telling in this respect. As Lez Cooke observes: ‘The cultural shift from the 1960s to the 1970s, from liberalism to conservatism and from consent to coercion, was reflected in the television drama produced during the decade’ (2002: 112). While Cooke goes on to explain how television programmes such as the period drama enabled viewers a means to ‘escape’ these political tensions, one might also correlate such conservatism with the visual strategies evident in contemporary television drama. Indeed, Williams himself specifies a correspondence between the enclosed aesthetics of the postwar televised play, the technological limitations of the period and the contemporaneous ‘structure of feeling’ (2003: 53).

Accordingly, the varying representations of father – daughter desire in the novel of *A Bouquet of Barbed Wire* and its two subsequent TV adaptations correspond with their respective zeitgeists, reflecting differences in attitudes towards incest. The 1976 version conveys the child figure as seductive and manipulative in line with Freudian concepts of phantasy, as if cohering with concurrent patriarchal perceptions of incest. Contrastingly, the more open aesthetics of the second drama, coupled with the portrayal of a less knowing and more innocent-looking child character, correlate with an increasingly child-sensitive socio-cultural milieu. In examining the differences between the three versions of *Bouquet*, this article will also consider audience response and critical reception, connecting these with the socio-cultural and legislative climate regarding child abuse at the times of their production and the overarching ‘structures of feeling’.

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A Bouquet of Barbed Wire: *the novel*

Andrea Newman's novel *A Bouquet of Barbed Wire* was first published in 1969, with later editions appearing in 1976 and 2010 as tie-ins with the respective television adaptations. Its storyline of incestuous desire, however, was not unique. A list of postwar fictions compiled by Janet Walker includes television fictional films, documentaries and talk show sessions that featured incest in an 'atmosphere of recognition and change' (2005: 52–3). *Bouquet's* most well-known postwar contemporary was arguably Vladimir Nabokov's 1955 novel *Lolita*, filmed in 1962 by Stanley Kubrick and again in 1997 by Adrian Lyne. But while *Lolita* featured a much younger child and unfolded mostly from the perspective of her stepfather, the protagonist of *Bouquet* was nineteen years old. And whereas *Lolita* involved actual abuse, the incest in Newman's novel was merely intimated by the interior reflections of its characters.

Despite its contentious subject matter, Newman's novel received good reviews. The *Sunday Telegraph* described it as 'enormously readable' and the *Daily Telegraph*, 19 October, as having a 'fizzling style' while the *Financial Times* stated that it 'forces on us with new vigour Andrea Newman's belief in the primitive animal savagery that lies so very near the civilised surface'. The later editions also attracted positive comments, the *Sun* in 1976 considering it 'tense, well written and utterly absorbing', and in 2010 Nancy Banks-Smith of the *Guardian* declared that 'Andrea Newman has an entertaining ability to shock.'²

The book's plot unfolds primarily through various third-person internal 'monologues', chiefly those of Manson and Prue, but also of Cassandra (Cassie), Manson's wife. It follows Manson's obsession with his daughter—revealed at the beginning of the first chapter, and his jealousy and disapproval of her marriage to Gavin, indicated, for example, when Cassie informs her husband of Prue's deliberate decision to become pregnant. Prue's internal reflections imply that she reciprocates Manson's desires, revealing at one point that she deliberately incites violence between husband and father.

While Newman states that she did not consciously internalise the various characters' musings, nonetheless their concealed form—in contrast to direct speech—is relevant and effective in exploring the theme of incest. In this way, the suppressed nature of much of the text echoes its taboo subject matter and signals a generalised reluctance to address the subject of incest openly, in line with the social conventions of the period. As well as disclosing Prue's inappropriate affections for

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her father, the internal revelations also inform the novel's reader of her desire for masochistic violence: Prue constantly inviting her partner, Gavin, to hit her as she fantasises about her father.

In a different vein, Manson's obsession with Prue associates paternal desire with loss, and there are persistent references to absence and grief throughout. Predominantly, this centres on a fear of ageing, with Manson's incestuous thoughts linked to a yearning for his lost youth. The connection to ageing may generate empathy on the part of the reader and to a degree circumvents the sexualisation of Prue. Moreover, while Manson's fascination with youth emerges primarily in his attraction to Prue, it later arises in relation to her 'substitute', his secretary, Sarah Francis. While Andrea Newman was 30 when she wrote the novel, she explains that this attention to age was 'how I imagined a midlife crisis would be'.

Although the novel does not depict actual incest between Manson and Prue, there are distinct articulations of their mutual desire through simile, metaphor and syntax, and, as indicated above, these often entail intimations of sadomasochism. At first sight, therefore, *Bouquet* does not appear to fit either seduction theory or the Oedipal scenario because, firstly, Prue does not express resentment of her mother and, secondly, Manson returns her feelings, suggesting their relationship to be something different. Given that there is no evident sexual contact between them, their relationship might arguably constitute emotional incest rather than its physical counterpart. In such circumstances, Patricia Love explains, 'a child is chosen by a parent to be a primary source of emotional support', with the result that the parent-child relationship becomes too close or 'enmeshed' (1990: 8). Regardless, the novel accentuates Prue's knowingness and seductiveness, and her representation, primarily articulated through internal reflection, coheres with those historical patriarchal assumptions concerning incest which were promoted by Freud. Likewise, Manson's reciprocated desire becomes apparent through his personal thoughts, the staccato pattern of their truncated rhythms suggestive of his repressed feelings.

Bouquet of Barbed Wire (ITV, 1976)

The first television adaptation of Newman's novel, produced by London Weekend Television (LWT) as a seven-part serial, was broadcast in 1976. Despite some negative reviews audiences responded enthusiastically to the series. In the *Sun*, Penny Perrick slated the series, stating: 'Andrea Newman ... thinks that watching these goings-on will help us identify our own problems and maybe solve them. But

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I'd say that *Bouquet of Barbed Wire* did more harm than good.' She then went on to declare that the characters 'behaved in a way that nobody else does. So they were as convincing as cardboard cut-outs.' This review provoked angry retaliation from a number of viewers, one stating that 'Penny Perrick's outburst against *Bouquet of Barbed Wire* made me and others furious. I have a very wide circle of friends who thought this serial was one of the BEST.' Another viewer remarked that 'if it included a bit of incest—well, if it exists, let's bring it out into the open.'³ Comments by Lynda Lee Potter in the *Daily Mail*, 18 February 1976, provoked similar retaliatory responses from fans of the series, with one supportive viewer writing to Newman: 'I think you have been very successful in conveying, in both an entertaining and thought-provoking way, the deep often tangled relationships people can become involved in with each other, and the intensity of feeling people can experience when those relationships are disturbed by external forces.'⁴ In the *Observer*, Clive James, also responded positively, stating that:

If you can accept the fact that *Bouquet of Barbed Wire* (LWT) is the house of Atreus transferred to Peyton Place on a long low loader, there are worse serials to get hooked on . . . There is plenty of solid middle-class adultery and incest. Sheila Allen is having a whale of a time as the Older Woman who has welcomed her daughter's husband into her bed, which is roughly what her husband (Frank Finlay) would like to do with the daughter. (1981: 153)

The 1976 version continues to be held in high regard. Damien Timmer (joint managing director of Mammoth Screen Productions which produced the remake) was quoted in the *Guardian*, 21 September 2009, as acknowledging that the original adaptation as 'was one of the most controversial dramas of its era, busting taboos which still have the power to shock decades later'. In a similar vein, Hermione Norris, who played Cassie in the 2010 remake, was quoted in the *Western Mail*, 4 September 2010, as saying: 'I was nervous of it, to be honest . . . because every time you mention *Bouquet of Barbed Wire*, people kind of gasp, and mention the 1970s' production which wiped the floor with people.'

Tony Wharmby directed and produced the drama, with Newman adapting her own novel. As she recalled in an interview in the *Daily Telegraph*, 4 September 2010: 'The late great Cyril Bennett was head of LWT then and once we had his blessing we were away. There was no interference.' Newman's involvement meant that the resulting TV drama followed the original closely, mobilising the same sense of

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suppressed emotion. This intensity proved attractive to audiences; thus in the *Mail*, 10 November 2010, Newman is quoted as stating: 'It wasn't the subject matter that was scandalous – if you study it there wasn't actually that much sex in it, certainly not in the book – but it was the atmosphere that was shocking. There was a very erotic feel to it.'

Partly replicating the protagonists' internal reflections by means of highly stylised flashbacks and voice-overs, the series further consolidates the claustrophobic atmosphere wrought by the relationship between Prue and her father through the use of the camerawork. Their connection and mutual desire is conveyed through the close framing and the use of two-shot compositions – rather than the more conventional shot-reverse-shot. For example, the first episode presents their first lunchtime meeting in a series of extreme close-ups, with both characters tightly framed together. The choice of camera angles is also important: one shot from immediately behind Prue, with Manson's face partially obscured by her hat, gives the appearance that he is almost kissing her. But this style of framing also stemmed from certain technological constraints, as the 1.33:1 aspect ratio employed at the time produced a 'squarer' image than the more recent widescreen format, with the result that there was inherently less space around the characters.

The use of the close-up, as Karen Lury (2005: 30) suggests, was vital to early broadcasting because of the smallness of the television screen. Moreover, the long shot is less common in television than cinema since close-ups enable a focus on talking and characters' faces (ibid.: 27). Yet the 1976 version of *Bouquet* features a number of long shots with their use serving several functions. Counterpointing the extreme close-ups deployed in filming Prue and her father (and by extension, their intimate feelings), the long shot enables a physical distance between other characters to convey their emotionally detached relationships. For example, in the first episode, 'Homecoming', cinematography and framing imply such a gulf exists between Manson and both Cassie (Sheila Allen) and his son-in-law, Gavin Sorenson (James Aubrey). The compositions featuring Gavin and Prue are also less constricted, while the disconnect between Cassie and Manson is suggested via the intercutting of discrete images rather than having them together in the same shot. On the rare occasions when the two are framed together, they invariably appear in long shot to further emphasise the physical – and by extension, emotional – gap between them.

The dialogue often supports this visual signification of detachment, typified in episode 2 when Cassie says to Manson: 'I feel as if

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everything is slipping away from us.’ She also states that ‘you can hardly bear [having Prue] out of your sight.’ Indeed, a constant motif during the scenes with Cassie is a photograph of Prue in the background, signifying her persistent presence in their relationship, while an early close-up of a photograph of Prue in Manson’s office hints at his obsession. Moreover, conversations between Manson and Cassie (as well as other characters) centre almost exclusively on Prue.

A second function of the long shot is to render Prue as childlike. In several scenes she appears in the background of the frame, rendering her physically much smaller in relation to both Manson and Cassie who dominate the foreground. Examples from the first episode include a scene in the kitchen with Cassie in which Prue is clad in a bikini, her semi-nakedness adding to her implied vulnerability. In another sequence, a series of long and medium shots display Prue sunbathing as Gavin massages oil into her abdomen and neck. These are intercut with a zoom in to a close-up of Manson’s sunglasses, suggesting he is secretly watching the couple, and the sequence proceeds via crosscutting between increasing close-ups of Prue’s body and Manson’s sunglasses, conveying a sense of the latter’s intense jealousy. Moreover, a low-angle close-up of Prue reveals her eyes opening slightly to glance first at Gavin and then Manson, indicating awareness that she is consciously manipulating her father’s feelings.

As well as compositional techniques that position her as a child, Prue’s behaviour and speech are also childlike; she refers to her parents as ‘daddy and ‘mummy’, and her verbal articulation is demanding, repetitive and often overly candid. For example, in the restaurant scene in the first episode, as she describes a fainting episode to Manson, Prue continually eats as she talks, much as a child would. These visual and narrative strategies enable the idea of incest to be suggested while mitigating the outcry that might have resulted had the character actually been younger. Indeed, as noted earlier, Lez Cooke acknowledges a particular sensitivity to the content of television dramas of the time, with pressure groups reacting to the ‘permissiveness’ of the 1960s (2002: 97). Consequently, the BBC production of Dennis Potter’s *Brimstone and Treacle*, also intended for broadcast in 1976, was withdrawn, ostensibly because of the Corporation’s concerns over its scene of the rape of a mentally afflicted young woman.

Related to Lury’s observations concerning the implications of the squarer and more confined image, Raymond Williams also correlates television’s technological limitations with its aesthetics and meaning, aligning it with the dominant structure of feeling. Williams suggests

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that in its early form, especially where the television play re-enacted the staged play,

the technical possibilities that were commonly used corresponded to this structure of feeling: the enclosed internal atmosphere; the local interpersonal conflict; the close-up on private feeling. Indeed these emphases could be seen as internal properties of the medium itself when in fact they were a selection of some of its properties according to the dominant structure of feeling. (2003: 53)

Tony Wharmby maximises this effect in *Bouquet* through his use of camera positioning and framing to express the repressed sensibilities of the drama which are consistent with the overall socio-cultural climate. Indeed, as John Walker notes, the 1970s was an interim period which saw the mood change from one of optimism to pessimism and whose art was characterised by a ‘repoliticization and feminization’ (2002: 2). It was at this juncture, a shift in the dominant structure of feeling, that *Bouquet* was produced.

John Ellis expands further upon the effect of technology on a drama’s aesthetics, noting that the change from video to film had an additional implication. Ostensibly, the change liberated the television drama from the studio because ‘the adoption of 16mm film extended the physical reach of television drama production into real locations. Video at that time was not the portable format that it became in the 1980s, so effectively producers had the choice between two production routes: studio/video or location/film’ (2005: 49). Certainly, much of the 1976 version of *Bouquet* takes place indoors, the protracted, static takes associated with videotape recording (VTR) contrasting sharply with the varied and kinetic cinematography of the 2010 remake. Even so, outdoor scenes in the earlier version also maintain a sense of repression and claustrophobia. For instance, an early sequence crosscuts between Manson walking home and Prue and Gavin’s return from honeymoon and comprises a series of ‘overpopulated’ frames, with Manson’s journey dissected by entrapping visual devices—including tennis court nets and mesh fencing—that contribute to a sense of enclosure that comes to pervade the series.

The difference between the serialisation of the two dramas, although primarily dictated by economics (Cooke 2002: 96), also has repercussions for their respective aesthetic and narrative qualities, especially in regard to characterisation. As Williams notes, ‘serials and series have advantages for programme planners: a time slot . . . can be filled for a run of weeks, and in their elements of continuity the serial

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and the series encourage attachment to a given station or channel' (2003: 57). A significant effect of the 1976 seven-part serialisation of *Bouquet* was the way that this narrative scope enabled the development of character complexity, as well as conveying a gradual intensification of suppressed emotion through the predominant visual tropes which, as Brian Viner pointed out in the *Independent*, 21 September, 'allowed room for the misery to develop properly' (2010). In contrast, the shorter three-part structure of the 2010 version has an inherently faster-paced narrative, while its 'mystery element changes motivation and to some extent character' (Newman 2010). In brief, the latter's faster pace effaces the sense of repressed desire mobilised by the slower, more intense version.

Aside from the implied incest between Prue and her father, the theme of incest is also relevant to the relationship between Manson and Sarah Francis (Deborah Grant), who becomes essentially a substitute for Prue. Manson's infidelity with Sarah even occurs in Prue's bed; such substitution, as Herman notes, being typical of incestuous relationships (2000: 94). Father–daughter incest is further intimated by Sarah's relationship with her father. In the second episode, 'Introductions', her father warns her about the dangers of boyfriends and, like Manson, displays a jealous disposition, replicating the motif of obsessive father–daughter relationships. Furthermore, the framing of Sarah and her father echoes the claustrophobia of the scenes featuring Manson and Prue. However, in the brief scene of their limited encounter, she has her back turned to him, reinforcing her dislike of him as he refers to Sarah and her sister as 'my two little girls', a comment which alludes again to the conflation of paternal feelings with incestuous desire (since both 'little girls' are in fact adults).

In its displays of mutual desire, the 1976 adaptation therefore follows the novel and similarly accentuates Prue's conscious seductiveness. Accordingly, it coheres with Freud's suggestion of the 'seductive daughter'. As Herman explains, this concept is one that has informed both literary and religious traditions as well as underpinned clinical literature, and she observes that 'in general, these investigators tended to focus on qualities in the child victims which might have fostered the development of an incestuous relationship. They, too, conjured up the image of the magical child, the nymphet, who has the power to entrap men' (2000: 39). Moreover, a significant element of the parent–child axis in all three versions involves Prue's masochistic tendencies, though these become more visually pronounced in the 2010 adaptation. As noted, in the novel Prue implores Gavin to hurt her while visualising her father's face. Freud elaborates on masochism

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in his essay ‘A Child is Being Beaten’, which specifically addresses the sexual pleasure associated with suffering pain. He explains this as one of a series of interrelated fantasies in which ‘the wording runs: “*I am being beaten by my father*”’ (emphasis in the original) and involves a ‘high degree of pleasure . . . of an unmistakable masochistic character’ (2001d: 185), with self-punishment arising because of guilt about desire for the father figure. This is relevant to all three versions of *Bouquet*, with Prue’s behaviour in the novel and 1976 drama especially conforming to concepts of the ‘seductive daughter’ and her guilt resulting in masochistic tendencies that mirror the feelings of real victims of incest. For, as Herman reports of incest victims, ‘in many cases, they seemed to feel that they deserved to be beaten’ (2000: 101).

Bouquet of Barbed Wire (ITV, 2010)

If the aesthetic properties of the novel and the 1976 adaptation constituted part of a broader structure of feeling—one that focused on the entrapment of interior life and feelings of enclosure as well as reflecting attitudes towards the suppressed topic of incest—so Ashley Pearce, the director of the 2010 adaptation/remake, exploits available technology and techniques to produce an ‘open’ aesthetic that, again, perhaps albeit unconsciously, draws on and reproduces the dominant concurrent structure of feeling. It is also notable that Pearce’s version deviates significantly from both the original novel and the first series. While these take place primarily in domestic settings and claustrophobic interiors, the latter series depends much more on outdoor locations, notably contemporary London cityscapes. The visual strategies of the 2010 version also include rapid editing, slow-motion flashbacks and scenes of graphic injury and explicit sexual activity. In addition, the lighting is more stylised, with noir-style illumination exacerbating the sense of threat that permeates its secondary plot. Pearce explains that these visual effects are part of a ‘deliberately bigger canvas’ in which ‘the back-story was more complex, part thriller and part family in crisis’. He further describes how the camerawork, while portraying the vastness of the city, often incorporates extreme low-angle shots and high-angle viewpoints that relate to Peter Manson’s (Trevor Eve) occupation as an architect. Pearce relates that he intended such viewpoints to convey the city as a ‘hollow place’ and the *mise-en-scène* often features vast cityscapes as a ‘deliberate stylistic motif’, with Manson depicted as an isolated and solitary figure.

Further, Pearce changes the characterisation of Manson, explaining that while he was ‘quite predatory in 1976, this is a new study

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of a man who didn't understand his desire and was a victim, driven by events ... Manson has laudable paternal qualities, the drama exploring what happens if he doesn't know where the line is and when his protectiveness becomes an inappropriate obsession.' Manson's open displays of anguish are also consistent with the less oppressive aesthetics of the second version, which Fisun Güner attributes to 'Trevor Eve's ability to play complex, nuanced characters far better than the stiff, granite-faced Frank Finlay' (*theartsdesk.com*, 7 December 2010).

Other principal characters also deviate in significant ways from the original television drama. While Prue had previously been controlling and manipulative, Imogen Poots' portrayal is less knowing. Pearce explains that the casting of Poots was influenced by her professional profile and constituted a 'significant coup for the production', although visually she conveys a more innocent version of Prue since she is more fragile-looking than Susan Penhaligon. Poots' long blond hair and innocent young looks heighten this sense of fragility, with Pearce suggesting that 'her pre-Raphaelite hair and fantastic smile helped us to see her from Manson's perspective'. The visual style contributes to this effect, exemplified in the opening scene where the camera observes Manson looking at Prue before there is a cut to a close-up enabling his point of view. The scene unfolds in slow motion, with backlighting enhancing Prue's innocence and beauty, and the way in which Manson reacts to that moment thus becomes understandable for viewers. Indeed, the use of slow motion to present Manson's memories of Prue, as well as fast motion and time-lapse effects, are distinctive visual strategies of the 2010 series. A recurring image is of Prue playing with blue balloons, seen in slow motion.

Manson's viewpoint of Prue persists throughout the series. In the first episode they go bowling together and, as she bends over, the viewer observes her from his perspective: she is eroticised as her short dress exposes the tops of her legs. Manson then sweeps Prue off her feet and twirls her round as a parent might a small child, the use of slow motion once more temporally extending the scene and thus focusing attention on the moment. When Prue returns home, her mother says: 'Please tell me you didn't wear that awful coat all through the evening.' 'It smells of Daddy,' responds Prue, hence replacing the obvious mutual inferences of desire that permeated the novel and 1976 TV version with vaguer suggestions of longing. In a later restaurant scene, the audience again shares Manson's sexualising gaze when Prue's dress slips off her shoulder. At the same time, she drinks through a straw and crunches her food noisily as she eats

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(akin to Susan Penhaligon's characterisation in the earlier version), and is thereby presented simultaneously as childlike. Therefore the viewer repeatedly experiences Manson's subjective viewpoint rather than an objective perspective that frames the two closely (as in the 1976 version). While this consistently eroticises Prue, the viewer is encouraged to understand Manson's feelings towards her. In other words, Prue's youthfulness and the distinctly sexualised perception of her as articulated through the father's eyes locate her as innocent victim rather than as conscious seductress. The drama thus removes from her any responsibility for the relationship by eschewing Freud's concept of the seductive daughter, suggesting rather that Manson incestuously desires her, albeit unconsciously. The relationship remains one of sexual ambiguity, and later, in the restaurant scene when Manson kisses Prue, their exchange approaches that of lovers rather than of father and daughter. Manson holds Prue's face while he kisses first one cheek, then the other, and then hovers centrally as if to kiss her on the lips, the slow unfolding of the sequence heightening its significance.

Prue's schoolteacher, Gavin Sorenson, is portrayed this time with a Yorkshire (rather than an American) accent, and, despite having similar financial concerns as the character in the 1976 version, a class difference seems more distinct in the 2010 version. Gavin is likewise presented as a sadomasochist but is now a traumatised character, both traits exemplified in the scene when he deliberately burns his arm and violently beats Prue. In the series' finale, we learn that he was subject to abuse by his stepfather, and the secondary plot this time centres on his stepfather's abuse of his sister, Paula, who is, in actual fact, Manson's daughter from another relationship. Sarah Francis once again functions as a substitute for Prue, indicated by Manson taking her to the same restaurant so that the substitution motif is replicated from the original series, the analogy perpetuated when he almost rapes her.

The 2010 version of *Bouquet* opens with a rapidly edited sequence of a car crash. We witness Manson walking towards the accident site, his approach filmed in slow motion. The narrative then unfolds in flashback, revisiting the events of the previous four months that preceded the crash. The *mise-en-scène* persistently moves beyond the home, with cityscapes and rural panoramic shots afforded by a more mobile camera that tends to follow the characters rather than merely frame them as in the static takes of the 1976 version. There is also a conspicuous deployment of diverse camera angles with multiple perspectives, especially canted, low- and high-angle shots, as well as

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framing of groups of characters outside the family. In contrast to the 1976 version, Pearce composes his images within a ratio of 1.77:1, which, as Lury notes, is ‘more close to the dimensions of the film image’ (2005: 23). Lury explains that the ‘wider aspect ratio may save money, as single set-ups and shots incorporating several actors at a time effectively substitute for the current practice of labour and time-intensive “single shots”’ (ibid.: 24). She concludes that a consequence of greater frame space is a ‘more populated image’ (ibid.). However, both television adaptations of *Bouquet* vary from this convention, and the 2010 version affords more space around its characters, suggesting a conscious strategy of ‘open’ framing. Furthermore, with recently expanded screen sizes rendering the close-up arguably more cinematic than televisual, this also facilitates Pearce’s particular visual style as well as suggesting that the use of the close-up is now one of aesthetic choice rather than visual necessity.

As in the earlier adaptation, certain scenes occur in Manson’s workplace, but this time locations external to the home now include Cassie’s workplace, disclosing her professional life as a marriage guidance counsellor (in the 1976 version and the novel Cassie was educated but stayed at home), reflecting the real-world circumstances of women going to work. Rather than framing conveying the closeness between characters, the oppressive intensity of concealed feelings detailed in the first series is transformed into animated expressions of anger and grief, especially in the depiction of Manson here as less self-controlled. But at the same time, there is a certain amount of visual and narrative connection with the first series. For example, Prue misses school to meet her father for lunch (paralleling her missing lectures in the 1976 version), and in the subsequent restaurant scene there are a number of shots that similarly situate Prue and her father in close proximity within the same frame. However, the aspect ratio of the 2010 remake offers a less constricted presentation. Additionally, the use of backlighting once more gives a ‘halo’ effect to Prue, portraying her as ethereal and angelic (and also as an innocent victim). Since the viewer observes her from Manson’s perspective, when he comments on her beauty, the viewer too is encouraged into taking this viewpoint. Thematically, the second series also lacks the focus on (and excuse of) the loss of youth that pervades the novel and the earlier adaptation.

If the representation of incestuous desire in the 2010 version derives from the director’s formal and aesthetic choices facilitated by newer technologies, it simultaneously reflects the less repressive socio-cultural contexts of its production and its more liberated audiences. The externalisation of the theme of incest, and the corresponding

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lack of internal feelings and voice-over, relate directly to the high media profile of recent incest cases as well as to increasingly widespread revelations of paedophilia in the public domain, which, while generating panic and anger, also engender a certain familiarity with such scenarios. In fact, as Brian Viner noted in the *Independent*, 7 September 2010:

These days the reaction would be, and indeed, is a lot more ho-hum ... Times have changed, and we've changed with them. It's early days in *Bouquet of Barbed Wire* mark 2, and I imagine there's plenty of sex, sado-masochism and incestuous yearnings to come, but it won't have the nation earnestly discussing it in banks and at bus-stops, in school corridors and supermarket aisles, like it did in 1976.

This is not to say that audiences have become complacent about child abuse or that incest is less taboo but that media coverage of victims, who are now more likely to come forward than they once were, has led to these issues becoming more familiar and openly addressed. And the remake received good critical reviews: in the *Observer*, 5 September 2010, Mike Bradley described it as 'a tense, engaging tale', while Fisun Güner in the review quoted earlier declared that 'age has not withered *Bouquet of Barbed Wire*'. Viner further notes of the first episode that

Guy Andrews has written excellent, and admirably sparse dialogue; Ashley Pearce's direction is clever without being over tricky; even the background music, which besmirches so much television drama these days by forgetting its place and crashing the foreground, is just about right. And most conspicuously of all, the casting is spot-on and the acting utterly splendid.

Conclusion

As I have shown, Andrea Newman's 1969 novel acknowledges mutual desire between a parent and child, the truncated rhythms of its text, together with significant internal monologue, whether deliberate or not, reflecting the taboo nature of incest. The 1976 television adaptation, which was also scripted by Newman, follows the novel closely, with camerawork, framing and *mise-en-scène* conveying the repressive aspects of the novel. The sense of suppression evoked by this imagery also corresponds with the fact that incest was barely spoken about at that time, while the characterisation of Prue conforms to perceptions of the 'seductive daughter' promoted first by Freud and subscribed to more generally by subsequent clinical practitioners as well as literary depictions. These aspects combine to reflect the

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atmosphere of inhibition and moral campaigning associated with the conservative zeitgeist of the 1970s.

By contrast, Ashley Pearce's 2010 remake conjures a much more open aesthetic in that it lacks the claustrophobic framing of the first drama and moves out of its domestic settings. Consequently it is more visually diverse, its tendency to use open spaces, kinetic camerawork and less cramped framing being enabled by new technologies, while the narrative itself is compressed into three episodes. As a result it is faster paced and limits the build-up of emotional intensity that characterised the earlier adaptation. At the same time, the production chimes with a heightened media focus on cases of incest and paedophilia in an increasingly child-sensitive society. Certainly, in recent decades, there has been an intensification of public consciousness surrounding issues of child abuse, both culminating in and stemming from a considerable increase in child protection legislation. If Newman's novel and its first adaptation came out at a time when incest and paedophilia were less conspicuous in the media, the 2010 drama followed decades of legal changes—starting with the 1989 Children Act—and numerous media revelations concerning child abuse.

While the most-discussed cases involved younger children, *Bouquet of Barbed Wire* centres on a nineteen year old. Yet Prue is conveyed as childlike in both the novel and the two dramas, in the latter both by the way in which she is filmed and by her appearance. Such representations enable the narratives to deal with sensitive issues of incest in a way that would have been unacceptable had young children been involved. Even so, the second version presents Prue as more innocent and vulnerable and less knowing than in the 1976 drama, in line with changed attitudes to and legislation concerning children and with a move away from the 'seductive daughter' trope that Freud instigated. Even if incest and child abuse are now more openly discussed, such crimes are also less tolerated today, and one might therefore suggest that Pearce's approach—representing the relationship between Prue and Manson as one of incest rather than seduction—reflects current feelings towards such abuse by reinvigorating the scandal associated with the original. The visual openness adopted by Pearce does not occur in isolation but follows other more general patterns of transparency and accountability: for example, in the uncovering of institutionalised racism and the dismantling of the male-dominated medical hierarchies that contributed to medical cover-ups. Arguably, this climate embodies a revised 'structure of feeling' that has emerged in recent decades and

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that, to reiterate Williams, continues from ‘a particular work, through its particular form, to its recognition as a general form, and then the relation of this general form to a period’ (1973: 9). Even as such uncovering stems from radical political shifts and demands for equal rights that occurred during the 1970s—which the journalist Norman Shrapnel characterised as the ‘decade of the determined minority’ because so many minorities demanded recognition and rights (quoted in Walker 2002: 19)—it reflects a swing in the dominant structure of feeling. More particularly, it parallels a change from a repressive, patriarchal society to one that is generally more liberated, transparent, equitable and, increasingly, child-sensitive.

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Notes

1. Unless indicated otherwise, references to or quotations from Andrea Newman and Ashley Pearce are drawn from interviews with the author on 2 November 2012 and 20 November 2012 respectively.
2. A number of the cuttings in Andrea Newman’s personal cutting collection, which she very kindly allowed me to consult for this article, are not fully dated.
3. Both of these comments, which were printed, along with others, in the *Sun*, are in Andrea Newman’s cuttings collection.
4. This letter is in Andrea Newman’s personal documents collection.

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