III. Transitions

Why do we change shots?
- show something new
- closer look
- emphasis
- intensify
- build or lessen tension
- establish or reestablish
- to confuse or to explain
- show reaction

It is easy to overcut--be sure you have reason to change
Transitions

• a. CUT--most common, least obtrusive, most natural
  • resembles changing field of eye
  • motivate cut--have a reason, not arbitrary
  • - cut on action
Cut on the Action
Transitions

• b. FADE--to or from black, says finality or big change
  • like curtain
  • speed varies effect
  • out then in may be passage of time
    • Crossfade
      • from image to black to image
Fade

- Fade then physical wipe-from Ryan
Transitions -

c. DISSOLVE—Blend of shots, don't overuse
  • compose shots
  • speed varies effect
  • smoother bridge than cut
  • minor change in time or place
  • creates connections
Dissolve

• From the *Famous Last Words*
superimposition--a kind of HELD dissolve

• comparison
  • --similarity or difference
    • baby and old person

• spatial montage
  • --events occurring concurrently in different places
  • --bombs falling over peace demonstration

• thoughts, dreams
  • ghost effect
Transitions

• d. WIPE--new pic replaces old, most artificial transition
  • calls attention to itself
  • split screen
    • compare events or images
    • interaction from different places (phone conversation)
      • more obvious separation than super

• Connection
• from *Star Wars*
IV. Alternatives to Traditional Transitions

- we expect the normal transitions
- do the unexpected
  - a. Cam movement
  - b. Performer movement
  - c. Focus/Depth of Field
  - d. Plastics (lighting, sets)
- The First Editor is the Director
Camera Movement--more than “cool” moves

- Swish Pan (Whip Pan)
Camera Movement--more than “cool” moves

- Pan from Breathless
Camera Movement--more than “cool” moves

- Tilt
Camera Movement--more than “cool” moves

- Zoom from the Stendahl Syndrome
Performer Movement + Camera Movement + Cut

• From Slumdog Millionaire
Rack Focus

• change focus from one focus plane to another—from *DaVinci Code*
V. Continuity and the logic of Editing

• Continuity
  • preserve the essential sequence of an event (without necessarily showing it all)
  • In many ways, the editing is done in the shooting
  • the shooter must think like an editor
    • must understand editing

• The Logic
  • control the viewer’s perception
  • Manipulate the experience
  • manipulate the rules
Continuity Editing

- Preserve Screen Direction and Location
  - a. AXIS
  - b. Jump Cuts-
    - can use for effect, intensify (Deconstructing Harry--Woody Allen)
      - size
      - angle
      - direction
      - position
      - mvt to stationary
      - discontinuous action
Axis
• The camera must stay on one side of the axis so that they appear in opposite sides of the frame (because 2D space)

• “Crossing the line” causes disorientation

• jump cuts

• Reason to break rule? Creates confusion/action

• If you must edit across the line, use a cutaway

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdyyuqmCW14
Axis and the 180 degree rule
Continuity Editing

• Cut ins and cutaways
• Matching Action
• Cut on the Action
  • movement hides the cut
The Logic of Editing--why?

Continuum of Intensity and Detail

• WS--establish, setting, minimal detail, context-low intensity (enter room)

• MS--relationships, add detail, build intensity (normal conversation)

• CU--focus attention, detail, maximize intensity (intense conversation)

How we view the world
The Logic of Editing

- Altering Viewer's expectations
  - don't cut to the expected shot.
    - momentarily frustrate expectations
    - give resolution
  - Effect before cause
    - fear on face before cause of fear.
The Rules
from “The Cutting Edge”
VII--The Art of Editing
Walter Murch
The Art of Editing
Walter Murch

• How do they talk about it?
• Intuition about where is the attention?
  • “carry it around like a cup--don’t spill”
  • invisibly controlling attention
• Anthony Minghella (Director--Cold Mountain)
  • Why do we not care about character?
  • Why did we lose the thread of development?
  • Why “feel” deceleration at end
• Like the immune system
  • allow in the body? Not if the wrong blood type
The Art of Editing

Walter Murch-from “In the Blink of an eye”

• “The Rule of Six”
  • 1. emotion------51%
  • 2. story--------23%
  • 3. rhythm-------10%
  • 4. eye trace-------7%
  • 5. 2 dimension--5%
  • 6. 3 dimension--4%

• 1 is worth more than others combined

Continuity
The Art of Editing
Walter Murch

- Ideal Edit--does all 6
  - true to emotion of moment
  - advances the story
  - rhythmically interesting--"feels" right
  - acknowledges the audiences “eye trace”
    - how we see and follow the screen elements
  - 2 dimensional plane--preserves stage line
  - 3 dimensional continuity of actual space
Emotion over Continuity
• Preserve emotion at all costs
• if you must sacrifice something, start at the bottom
• if an edit does the first 3, viewers will not be bothered by lower-order problems
• getting higher order elements right obscures lower order errors
  • unless catastrophic
• we care most about story and feeling