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Cultivation, Dissolution, and Continuation: A Study on the Deconstructive Cultural Effects of Movie Commentary Short Videos

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Abstract:
Driven by the rapid development of digital media technology and the formation of fragmented consumption habits, movie commentary short videos have quickly emerged as a new cross-media form, profoundly reshaping the field of movie transmission and reception. These videos are not simple retellings of content but are "secondary texts" produced through deconstruction, sacrificing depth for efficiency. Existing research mostly focuses on their production mechanisms or transmission characteristics, yet rarely systematically analyzes the deep logic of their generation and the complex cultural effects produced from a deconstructionist perspective. Based on deconstruction theory, this study employs experimental methods and in-depth interviews, taking commentary videos of Dead Poets Society as a case study, to explore their effects of cultivation, dissolution, and continuation on the original movie text. The study finds that movie commentary short videos, through "dimensionality reduction" editing and copywriting, dissolve the macro-narrative thickness and aesthetic conception of the original film, leading to cognitive bias and aesthetic blunting in audiences. Meanwhile, this deconstructive behavior shapes the audience's "pleasure-first" cognitive habits through labeled and entertaining processing, producing significant cultivation effects. However, in the process of deconstruction, the movie's core structure and strong symbols receive a contradictory continuation and reinforcement. This study reveals the characteristic of "coexistence of dissolution and continuation" in cross-media movie transmission in the digital age, offering a new theoretical perspective for understanding meaning reproduction in the "post-movie" era.

Keywords:
Cultivation Theory, Cultural Continuation, Deconstructionism, Movie Commentary Short Videos, Narrative Dissolution

1 Introduction

In early 2025, with the iteration of mobile internet technology, the deep integration of short video technology and fragmented consumption modes has spawned a brand-new cultural consumption ecology. This transformation of content consumption has global commonality. Fu (2024), in an analysis of the popular trends of movie commentary videos, pointed out that such videos are gradually evolving from marginal fan culture to a mainstream form of global digital content consumption, the core of which lies in satisfying users' extreme

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pursuit of "narrative efficiency" in an era of information overload. Huang Ying (2025) noted that with the dissolution of media boundaries, the social communication network has entered a "video-based" society where everyone is a medium, and movies are undergoing a profound process of "re-mediation," where their images are split, rewritten, and embedded into new communication contexts.

Such videos are usually seen as convenient tools to "finish a movie in a few minutes," but their essence is a profound deconstruction of the original text. Chen Yanjie (2025) described this as a cross-media form transfer of movies from "silver screen" to "screen," which implies not only a change in playback terminals but also a transformation of movies from a present artistic experience to a "fast-food culture" that is quickly swallowed under the logic of consumerism. The core view of this study is that movie commentary short videos actually create a "secondary text" that relies on the original movie but possesses independent cultural significance. This text sacrifices the depth, beauty, and polysemy of the original film in exchange for the dissemination efficiency of core symbols in a broader time and space. This deconstructive behavior not only dissolves the integrity of the movie as an artwork but also imperceptibly cultivates the audience's aesthetic habits.

In this regard, we are curious: What exactly is the production logic of this deconstruction? What specific cultural effects does such deconstruction produce? Does it shape specific cognitive habits of the audience while dissolving the macro-narrative and aesthetic system of the original movie? More importantly, in the seemingly destructive deconstruction, is there an implicit continuation of the original movie's core clues, thus forming a unique cultural phenomenon where "dissolution and continuation coexist"? This paper aims to answer the above questions through empirical research from the perspective of deconstructionism.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Movie commentary short video phenomena

The rapid growth of movie commentary short videos in recent years has attracted multi-perspective research from the academic community. Foreign scholars, within the theoretical scope of "post-movie," have discussed the challenges digital media pose to traditional film ontology. Domestically, Ji Peiyao conducted a more detailed study on Chinese movie commentary short videos from the perspectives of "post-movie" and cross-media, showing that the short-video expression of movies participates in movie reconstruction and changes the transmission form of movies. Zheng Zekun studied these videos from the perspective of decomposition and subversion, indicating that they subvert the original narrative and reconstruct the movie ontology by decomposing the movie's psychological time, shots, and characters. Lai Lijie's research from the perspective of encoding and decoding shows that the creator's subjective encoding and the audience's passive decoding lead to the loss of the original movie's meaning. Behind this transmission logic is the rise of algorithmic power. Wang (2023) revealed a personalized rating prediction mechanism based on user data: algorithms construct a closed feedback loop by precisely analyzing users' interaction behaviors with short videos. This not only determines "what users can see" but also imperceptibly reshapes users' viewing preferences through data filtering. In terms of production paradigms, movie commentary has undergone significant technical iterations. Zhao Yu (2021) earlier observed that the "prosumer" logic of the Web 2.0 era made platforms like Bilibili incubators for commentary videos, establishing the initial dissemination paradigm. With the further deepening

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of technology, Xie Juan's (2024) latest research found that AIGC technology and deep learning algorithms have intervened in creation. Creators use AI tools to optimize copy and dubbing, which, while improving production efficiency, also exacerbates the homogeneity and commercialization tendencies of content. At the level of narrative strategy, Deng Hao (2025) proposed the concept of the "fourth paradigm," pointing out that current commentary videos are transforming from objective "other-narration" to first-person "self-narration." Commentators conduct monologues by appropriating the identities of movie characters. Although this "character hijacking" enhances emotional resonance, it substantially constitutes a commercial appropriation of the original text symbols.

However, although these studies have conducted research from aspects such as post-movie and cross-media, decomposition and subversion, and encoding and decoding, they mostly focus on production mechanisms or transmission characteristics, ignoring the cultivation, dissolution, and continuation effects and deep mechanisms produced by deconstructive behaviors from the perspective of deconstructionism.

2.2 The application of deconstruction theory

Since Jacques Derrida proposed Deconstruction theory in the 1960s, it has received high attention from scholars at home and abroad and achieved many research results. Foreign scholar Roland Barthes proposed the "Death of the Author" theory in The Death of the Author in 1967, denying the author's absolute control over the text's meaning and emphasizing that the diversity of text meaning is created by readers in interpretation. John Fiske, in Understanding Popular Culture, taking shopping malls and the Madonna phenomenon as research objects, pointed out that the public deconstructs the ruling ideology through daily practices.

Domestically, Zheng Zekun applied deconstructionism to the study of movie short videos in Decomposition and Subversion: The Reconstruction of Movies by Movie Commentary Short Videos, pointing out that such videos form a subversion of movie narratives by decomposing and re-collaging psychological time, shots, and characters. Huan Xiaohong, in Discussion on the Communication Characteristics of Movie Commentary Short Videos in the Digital Age, studied the overall deconstruction and one-sided reconstruction of narratives, and the dual destruction and compressed planar collage of the original audio-visual space-time, indicating that these videos destroy the audio-visual logic and space-time consciousness of the original movie.

Current research shows that the deconstruction of movie commentary unties the binding between the director as the "holder of interpretation rights" and the standard answer to movie interpretation. However, existing research has not yet systematically explored its cultural effects from a deconstructionist perspective, especially lacking in-depth analysis of specific issues such as how commentary behavior shapes audience cognition, dissolves the meaning of the original film, and continues core clues.

2.3 Problem statement

Therefore, starting from deconstruction theory, this paper attempts to answer the following questions: What is the production logic of deconstruction in movie commentary short videos? Does this deconstruction dissolve the macro-narrative and aesthetic system of the original movie and shape audience cognitive habits? Meanwhile, is there an implicit continuation of the original movie's core clues in the deconstruction, and how does this feature of "coexistence of dissolution and continuation" affect the reproduction of movie meaning?

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3 Method

Based on deconstruction theory, this study proposes the hypothesis that "movie commentary short videos, in the process of deconstructing the original text, possess both narrative and aesthetic dissolution effects and the continuation effect of core symbols."

To verify the hypothesis, this study adopts a research path combining experimental methods and in-depth interviews, selecting the classic film Dead Poets Society and its commentary short videos as experimental materials. The study recruited 20 subjects with different ages, occupations, and educational backgrounds and randomly divided them into two groups: Group A (who had not seen the original film, watched only the commentary video) and Group B (who had seen the original film, subsequently watched the same commentary video). The two groups of samples aimed to comparatively analyze the impact of commentary videos on audience cognition and aesthetics. In addition, this study also conducted semi-structured interviews with 4 movie commentary bloggers and 10 high-frequency audiences to explore the cultivation mechanism of deconstructive culture on audience cognition. The subject sample covers different ages, occupations, and education levels, ensuring the heterogeneity and representativeness of the data. The basic information of the subjects is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Basic Information of Subjects

Number	Group	Gender	Age	Occupation	Education	Preferences
S1	A	F	22	Undergrad	BA (ongoing)	Drama/Romance
S2	A	M	28	Programmer	MA	Sci-Fi/Suspense
S3	A	F	35	Teacher (Middle)	BA	History/Doc
S4	A	M	19	College Student	AA (ongoing)	Action/Comedy
S5	A	F	42	Accountant	BA	Family Ethics
S6	A	M	25	Social Media Ops	BA	Thriller/Horror
S7	A	F	31	Civil Servant	MA	Drama/Art House
S8	A	M	21	Undergrad	BA (ongoing)	Animation/Gaming
S9	A	F	20	Grad School-bound	BA (ongoing)	Theatre/Art
S10	A	M	38	Exec	PhD	Biography/Animation
S11	B	F	26	Editor	MA	Art House/Drama
S12	B	M	33	Doctor	PhD	Suspense/Crime
S13	B	F	21	Undergrad	BA (ongoing)	Youth/Campus
S14	B	M	29	Sales Mgr	BA	Action/Gaming
S15	B	F	52	Hospital Admin	Tech Sec	TV Series
S16	B	M	24	Photographer	BA	Visual/Art
S17	B	F	30	Start-up Sec	BA	Workplace/Drama
S18	B	M	27	Engineer	MA	Sci-Fi/Animation
S19	B	F	22	Grad Applicant	BA (ongoing)	Classics/Lit
S20	B	M	36	Freelance Writer	BA	Indie Film

4 Research Findings

Through text analysis of the Dead Poets Society commentary video, statistical analysis of experimental data, and coding of in-depth interviews, this study reveals the complex deconstruction effects of movie com-

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mentary short videos at the narrative, aesthetic, and cultural levels. These findings verify the hypothesis of this paper: the deconstruction process triggers dual effects of dissolution and continuation simultaneously and reshapes audience cognition through cultivation mechanisms.

4.1 The logic of dissolving macro-narratives by short video commentary

4.1.1 Narrative dimensionality reduction-from polysemous structure to linear causality

Deconstruction theory emphasizes that to adapt to the efficient transmission needs of the digital age, complex texts are often simplified into easily understandable symbol fragments. Movie commentary short videos are a typical embodiment of this logic, implementing a “dimensionality reduction attack” on “narrative art” through “instrumental rationality,” compressing the originally rich and polysemous narrative structure into linear causal slices. In this study, this dissolution is specifically manifested in the omission of branch details and the simplification of causal logic.

4.1.2 Empirical performance-branch compression and simplification of tragic motives

Through text analysis and experimental data comparison of the Dead Poets Society commentary video, it was found that Group A (commentary only) was significantly lower than Group B (original film) in the accuracy of recalling branch plots, and their understanding of the protagonist Neil's suicide was mostly limited to a single “patriarchal oppression” logic, ignoring the multi-layered motivation shaping in the original film (such as the collapse of self-identity, obstruction of artistic dreams, etc.). To quantify this difference, this study established a “narrative integrity” index, including the integrity of branch details and causal chain logic, testing subjects' accuracy in answering key plot points through questionnaires. Specifically, in the examination of branch plots, Group B’s accuracy regarding details of character psychological changes was as high as 90%, while Group A was only 20%. Commentary video copy tends to simplify complex psychological games into single behavioral instructions. For example, when describing Todd overcoming cowardice to recite poetry, the copy stated: “The teacher called up the coward Todd in the class, then made him stand on the stage and roar... immediately after, the teacher went over and hugged him.” This expression omitted the eye contact from Mr. Keating, Todd's inner struggle, and the subtle changes in classmates' reactions in the original film, causing the audience to fail to perceive the rationality and depth of the character's growth arc.

Furthermore, in the examination of causal logic, questionnaire results showed that 80% of subjects in Group A attributed Neil's suicide to “impulse” or simply “rebelling against his father,” while 70% of subjects in Group B could point out multiple factors, including obstructed artistic passion and collapsed self-identity. The commentary copy directly stated: “After the father took his son home, he scolded him... in a fit of anger, he said he would send him to a military school... so he chose an extreme way.” This simplified attribution replaced the logic of human tragedy in the original film with sociological logic (patriarchal oppression), achieving the dissolution of the macro-narrative.

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Table 2 Comparison of Narrative Understanding Differences

Group	Accuracy of Recalling Subplot Details	Attribution Tendency for Core Conflict (Neil's Suicide)
A (Commentary-only)	20%	80% attributed to "patriarchal oppression"
B (Familiar with Original)	90%	70% referenced multiple psychological and social factors

His narrative simplification is not an isolated case; it is equally common in suspense or sci-fi films. For example, the space-time logic and emotional entanglements in Interstellar are often simplified into a task narrative of "father saving daughter"; the multi-line space-time structure of Dunkirk is straightened into a linear timeline, severely weakening the narrative tension and historical heaviness of the original film. These examples further confirm the universality of deconstruction logic.

4.2 Deprivation of audio-visual artistic conception and aesthetic blunting mechanisms

4.2.1 Dimensionality reduction and reconstruction of audio-visual conception

Benjamin once pointed out that in the age of mechanical reproduction, the "aura" on which artworks rely will inevitably fade. In the communication context of short video commentary, this problem is further manifested as the forced filling of the original "aesthetic blank space" by high-density information narration. Through dense verbal narration and fast-paced editing, commentary videos compress the audio-visual structure of the movie that relies on time to unfold, reducing the emotional depth and perceptual space constructed by the original film into plot information for rapid consumption.

Taking the "cave poetry reading" segment in Dead Poets Society as an example, the original film creates a poetic space with implied enlightenment ritual meaning through dim candlelight, lingering ambient sound, and the restrained use of close-up shots. However, in the commentary version, this segment is often reconstructed as a quick explanation of the behavior itself. The copy uses colloquial descriptions such as "Everyone quietly sneaked out of the dormitory and ran freely in the woods," "discussed women, told ghost stories," degrading a scene originally possessing sanctity and symbolic meaning into a daily, entertaining narrative fragment.

Similar treatment is also reflected in the compression of "blank spaces." For example, the silent shots before Neil's suicide assume important functions of emotional accumulation and aesthetic tension in the original film, but in the commentary video, they are often filled by voice-over: "He opened the window in the cold night, letting the biting wind pierce his body... immediately after, Neil's father seemed to hear a gunshot." This airtight narration weakens the expressive elasticity of the image, transforming the summons structure that should be left for the audience to realize and imagine into a clear, closed meaning direction.

4.2.2 Empirical results—aesthetic blunting and loss of immersive experience

To systematically investigate the above phenomena, this study constructed an "aesthetic implication integrity" index, assessing subjects' viewing perception from three dimensions: aesthetic atmosphere, symbol presentation, and rhythm experience. In the scoring of the aesthetic atmosphere for the "cave poetry reading" segment in Dead Poets Society, the average score of Group A (commentary only) was 2.4 points (out of 5),

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significantly lower than the 4.8 points of Group B (original film).

Table 3 Comparison of Aesthetic Perception Differences

Group	Aesthetic Atmosphere Score	Psychological Perception Keywords for Ambiguous Scenes
A (Commentary-only)	2.4	Compact, satisfying, lack of immersion
B (Familiar with Original)	4.8	Moved, suffocated, serene, tragic beauty

Interview results further confirmed this difference. Multiple interviewees pointed out that the commentary video deconstructed the originally solemn and symbolic "enlightenment ritual" into a plot of "students wandering at night to make trouble," making it difficult for them to generate awe or emotional resonance during viewing. Meanwhile, questionnaire feedback showed that subjects in Group A generally evaluated the commentary version as "compact rhythm" and "refreshing and easy to understand," but rarely mentioned aesthetic experience vocabulary such as "moved," "immersed," or "lingering charm," presenting a clear tendency of aesthetic blunting.

This is not an individual case; similar phenomena are equally significant in the broader dissemination of art films. For example, the emotional flow constructed by Wong Kar-wai's films relying on long takes and color metaphors, or the poetic experience formed by Tarkovsky's works through slow space-time unfolding, are often massively cut or presented at accelerated speeds under the "finish a movie in three minutes" communication framework due to platforms' algorithmic preference for high-rhythm, strong-stimulus content and creators' catering to audiences' rapid understanding and immediate feedback. At the same time, sound designs originally highly coupled with image rhythms are often replaced by background music with more pop appeal and emotional direction. Although this treatment lowers the threshold for understanding to a certain extent, it weakens the possibility for the audience to engage in deep aesthetic gazing and emotional immersion.

Overall, the deprivation of audio-visual artistic conception systematically weakens the aesthetic tension of movies through the filling of blank spaces, the compression of rhythm, and the secular reconstruction of symbolic meanings. This blunting mechanism at the aesthetic level, superimposed on the macro-narrative dissolution discussed earlier, jointly constitutes the overall deconstruction effect of short video commentary on film art.

4.3 Cultivation effects of deconstructive behavior on audience cognition: negative stereotyped cognition and positive information efficiency

Cultivation theory suggests that long-term exposure to specific media content imperceptibly shapes the audience's view of reality and values. In the context of movie commentary short videos, this cultivation effect presents a contradictory dual shaping: it causes the narrowing of audience cognition through labeling while objectively catering to modern society's pursuit of information acquisition efficiency.

4.3.1Negative cultivation effects: labeling of character cognition and solidification of simple direct logic

The most significant negative cultivation of movie commentary short videos lies in their labeled narrative strategy. To grab attention in an extremely short time, creators often simplify complex character relationships

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into facial makeup labels such as “scum,” “green tea” (manipulative), or “saint,” and summarize polysemous plots into simple direct logics like counterattack or revenge.

Interview data shows that most high-frequency audiences have internalized the labeled expressions in commentary videos. When describing Dead Poets Society, Interviewee S6 habitually interpreted it as a straightforward narrative of resisting authority, ignoring the tragic color of the game between ideal and reality in the original film. This long-term immersion causes audiences to gradually lose patience for interpreting complex human nature, becoming accustomed to seeking black-and-white moral judgments. This “pleasure-first” mindset leads to cognitive rejection when audiences face serious texts requiring deep thinking, thereby causing aesthetic perception blunting.

4.3.2 Positive cultivation effects: improving information screening efficiency and meeting social interaction needs

Viewing this phenomenon solely from a critical perspective would be biased. In the current era of extremely compressed life rhythms, movie commentary short videos objectively undertake the positive functions of information filters and knowledge compensation.

For modern audiences in high-pressure environments, the time cost of spending two hours watching an uncertain movie is too high. Commentary videos help audiences quickly screen content in a short, flat, and fast manner, reducing the trial-and-error cost of cultural consumption. Interviewees stated that a ten-minute commentary allows for the rapid acquisition of content key points, meeting their need for efficiency. In addition, this efficient information intake method enables audiences to master conversational capital for popular TV dramas and movies with extremely low time investment, satisfying topic needs in social interactions. From the perspective of audience psychology, this addiction is not accidental. Chen Chenyi (2025) indicated that audiences in an atomized survival environment reconstruct psychological order by watching such videos. Whether it is pure narrative “information compression” or “viewpoint collision” interspersed with narration and commentary, it is essentially a manifestation of the audience's transformation from passive viewers to active meaning producers, a psychological defense and compensation against modern anxiety. Therefore, the cultivation effect of deconstructive culture is actually a balance between the sacrifice of deep cognition and the acquisition of broad information.

4.4 Three continuation levels of core symbols in fragmented dissemination

Despite the “dimensionality reduction attack” style deletions implemented by commentary videos on macro-narratives, the core symbols in the original movies have not completely dissipated. The most vital parts of the movies have received multi-dimensional continuation and reinforcement in fragmented dissemination. This continuation no longer relies on a complete narrative context but manifests as independent survival at three levels: visual, linguistic, and emotional.

4.4.1 Visual level: independent dissemination and visual reinforcement of classic scenes

Shots with high visual impact or symbolic meaning in movies are often captured and played repeatedly by commentary videos, gradually detaching from the original film context and evolving into an independent vi-

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sual center point.

This study's experiment shows that the subjects' memory rate of the scene where students stand on their desks at the end of Dead Poets Society was as high as 100%. In the broader internet context, the bowing scene of Truman touching the exit wall in The Truman Show and the shot of Andy spreading his arms in the rain in The Shawshank Redemption have become universal visual symbols symbolizing freedom and awakening. Commentary videos strip away the foreshadowing plot and directly reinforce the visual tension of these highlight moments, making them indelible iconic scenes in the audience's memory.

4.4.2 Linguistic level: independent extraction and widespread circulation of classic lines

In addition to visual symbols, philosophical lines in movies are often extracted separately in commentary videos and transformed into guiding "golden sentences."

Experimental data shows that whether in Group A or Group B, the memory rate of the "O Captain, My Captain" famous scene at the end of Dead Poets Society was 100%, and the accuracy of extracting the meaning of the core line "Carpe Diem (Seize the Day)" was also over 80%, with no significant difference from Group B.

Table 4 Comparison of Core Symbol Memory and Understanding

Group	Famous Scene Recall Rate	Accuracy of Value Reception
A (Commentary-only)	100%	80%
B (Familiar with Original)	100%	90%

In the case of Dead Poets Society, the core line "Seize the Day" was stripped of its deep background and directly transformed into a motivational slogan. This phenomenon is equally common in other films; for example, the monologue about "ten thousand years" in A Chinese Odyssey was stripped of its original mockery and desolation in commentaries and reconstructed as a pure love vow. Commentary copy ensures the symbolic transmission of the core spirit by emphasizing these golden sentences, making the text meaning of the movie circulate widely on the network in a concise form.

4.4.3 Emotional level: continuation of emotional resonance brought by collective interactive behavior

In the process of deconstruction, the audience's feedback on core symbols often forms a collective interactive behavior, thereby continuing the emotional core of the movie.

In the bullet screens (Danmu) or comment sections of commentary videos, whenever classic background music plays or a famous scene appears, audiences will spontaneously engage in text spamming such as "all stand up" or "salute," building a virtual presence space. Although audiences may not have watched the full original film, by participating in this collective screen-swiping behavior, they indirectly experience and confirm the emotional value conveyed by the movie. This continuation based on emotional resonance greatly expands the coverage of the movie's emotional influence.

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4.5 Contradiction in audience consumption psychology: functional dependence and aesthetic concerns

To further explore the deep impact of deconstructive behavior on audience psychology, this study conducted in-depth interviews with five representative interviewees (A-E).

"Movie commentary is simply my 'digital comfort food' (electronic pickled mustard tubers)... but if I want to truly feel a good movie, like the time dilation and father-daughter emotion in Interstellar, that slow accumulation and shock, commentary can't give that feeling; I have to settle down and watch the original film myself." (Interviewee A)

"From a professional perspective... more commentaries are rude summaries plus meme-playing, completely destroying the audio-visual language and emotional foreshadowing of the original film... the strong impact and symbolic meaning conveyed by colors in the original film are all gone. This is the dissolution of film artistry." (Interviewee D)

"Once I watch the tone-setting of a certain commentary first, for example, if he says a certain character is 'green tea' (manipulative)... when I watch the original film again, it is difficult to get rid of this preconceived impression, and my independent thinking and feelings will be led astray." (Interviewee B)

Regarding changes in cognitive habits, Interviewees C and E provided deeper insights. Interviewee C admitted that this high-stimulus narrative rhythm made their "movie appetite" picky, leading to a loss of aesthetic patience for slow-paced classic movies. Interviewee E pointed out that although the comment section of commentary videos constructs an interesting meme-playing community, it often distorts facts in pursuit of reversal effects, leading to incorrect versions of spoilers. This phenomenon reveals that while deconstructive culture brings pleasure, it also implies the distortion and obscuring of the movie's true meaning.

4.5.1 Functional dependence on watching commentary: gaining companionship and alleviating anxiety of social backwardness

The audience's dependence on commentary videos stems essentially from the "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO) and loneliness in the digital age. In interviews, the concept of "leisure companionship videos" was repeatedly mentioned, revealing the companionship attribute of such videos. Regarding specific user motivations, Herlambang and Pradsmadji (2025) found in an empirical study of TikTok users that most users view movie clips as an efficient "cultural screening" mechanism. Users are no longer willing to pay time costs for unknown long movies but rely on short videos to quickly decide whether a movie is worth investing in; this "review before watching" psychology has become mainstream.

In fragmented scenarios such as dining, commuting, or before sleep, audiences need content that does not occupy too many cognitive resources but provides immediate emotional feedback. Commentary videos fill this psychological gap with their dense narrative rhythm and clear emotional direction. At a deeper level, this is a psychological compensation for culture; audiences hope to maintain a cultural image of themselves watching movies, but objectively cannot afford the full time cost, so commentary videos become a psychological substitute, alleviating the anxiety of falling behind popular culture by efficiently acquiring plot sum-

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maries. Besides information acquisition, emotional value is also a key driving force. Research by Nikghadam-Hojjati et al. (2018) indicates that short, interesting video content can effectively stimulate the audience's creative thinking and regulate emotions. In movie commentaries, this entertaining secondary processing, complaining (tucao), and meme-playing act as a "psychological massager" for modern people, making the originally heavy viewing experience light and providing immediate satisfaction.

4.5.2 Aesthetic concerns about commentary viewing: loss of original movie meaning and destruction of deep viewing experience

This dependence is not without cost. While enjoying convenience, interviewees generally showed a clear awareness of the destruction of the movie's artistic ontology.

Multiple interviewees pointed out that commentary videos often exaggerate and adapt the original plot in pursuit of dramatic reversals, leading to the complete destruction of the original film's color metaphors, audio-visual language, and blank space artistic conception. This aesthetic destruction is particularly evident in specific narrative symbols. Wang (2024) pointedly noted that when all complex movie protagonists are collectively referred to as "Xiao Shuai" or "Xiao Mei," the original rich character arcs of the movie are extremely flattened. This cookie-cutter labeled addressing is not only disrespectful to the original characters but also a typical high-intensity "dimensionality reduction attack," dissolving heavy image art into cheap traffic codes. This mode of directly instilling results not only deprives the audience of the ability to independently judge and perceive details but also causes deep aesthetic anxiety. Audiences realize that long-term intake of such high-stimulus and fast-paced content often comes at the expense of deep cognition. Keehr and Reardon (2025) issued a warning in their study on "speed-watching": when instructional or narrative videos are played at accelerated speeds, although viewers subjectively believe they have mastered the content, producing a "metacognitive illusion," their understanding and retention rates of complex information actually decline significantly. Similarly, the natural "speed-watching" form of movie commentary makes it extremely easy for audiences to fall into the cognitive misconception that "understanding the plot means understanding the movie," thereby thoroughly dissolving the polysemy of image art. A deeper crisis lies in the loss of viewing rationality. Yan (2024), by tracing the tradition of "Benshi" (narrators) in the silent film era, pointed out that the graphic forced intervention of short videos completely dissolves the proper "aesthetic distance" between the audience and the image. This zero-distance direct-giving mode deprives the audience of the right to ponder and think alone in the blank spaces, leading to the degeneration of cognitive aesthetic ability. This contradictory attitude of knowing the content is shallow but being unable to stop watching further highlights the duality of the deconstruction effect of movie commentary short videos.

5 Conclusion and Discussion

Based on the dual perspectives of deconstructionism and cultivation theory, this study, through experimental methods and in-depth interviews, systematically explored the dissolution and continuation of the original text by movie commentary short videos and their cultivation effects on audience cognition, taking the Dead Poets Society commentary short video as a case study. The results confirm that movie commentary short videos are not simple content reductions but secondary texts with independent communication logic and cultural

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functions. This text presents significant contradictions in the dissemination process: while destroying the artistic integrity of the movie, it also continues the movie's core symbols in a fragmented form, revealing the characteristic of “coexistence of dissolution and continuation” in cross-media movie transmission in the digital age.

In the narrative and aesthetic dimensions, commentary videos achieve the dissolution of the macro-narrative and aesthetic artistic conception of the original movie through narrative dimensionality reduction and audio-visual stripping. Experimental data shows that audiences who only watched commentary videos had significant deviations in understanding the complex causal logic and character psychological motivations of the movie, tending to simplify polysemous artistic texts into linear and single sociological texts. Meanwhile, the high-density linguistic filling and fast-paced editing of commentary videos smoothed out the blank spaces and rhythmic tension of the original film, leading to the blunting of the audience’s aesthetic perception and making it difficult to generate deep emotional immersion. Although this treatment lowers the threshold for understanding, it weakens the possibility for the audience to engage in deep aesthetic gazing and emotional immersion.

In the dimension of cognitive cultivation, deconstructive behavior produced significant two-way effects. Negatively, the labeled narrative prevalent in commentary videos solidified the audience’s binary opposition thinking, causing a lack of patience and independent judgment ability when facing complex texts; this “pleasure-first” mindset leads to cognitive rejection when audiences face serious texts. Positively, this deconstruction mode adapts to the survival laws of an accelerated society, greatly improving the audience's information screening efficiency and social topic acquisition ability, becoming a functional strategy for modern people to cope with information overload and the fear of missing out.

It is worth noting that in the process of deconstruction, the core structure and strong symbols of the original movie did not completely die out but achieved cross-media continuation. The study found that images with high visual impact, lines with maxim nature, and emotional nodes capable of triggering group resonance were stripped of their context and survived independently in fragmented dissemination. This continuation no longer relies on the narrative logic of the original film but evolves into an internet meme, establishing the movie’s presence in a broader time and space through the audience’s collective interaction and ritualistic screen-swiping.

Finally, the psychological contradictions shown by audiences in the consumption process reveal the deep logic of meaning reproduction in the post-movie era. Audiences both rely on the convenient companionship and cultural compensation functions provided by commentary videos and feel anxious about the degeneration of their own aesthetic abilities and the lack of deep experience. This finding indicates that the right of interpretation has shifted from creators to secondary creators and algorithmic mechanisms. Although movie commentary short videos are destructive at the aesthetic level, they objectively build a weak-tie cultural community. Future research needs to further pay attention to how this efficiency-first communication logic reshapes human deep cognitive structures in the long term and seek a balance between efficiency and aesthetics, and between deconstruction and construction in media literacy education.

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