



A *Misfit* Revision: Marilyn Monroe, Clark Gable and Transitional Stardom in Postwar Hollywood

Abstract

Director John Huston's *The Misfits* (1961) was one of the most volatile productions of his career, with its ensemble cast headlined by a trio of screen icons: Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, and Montgomery Clift. Drawing on new archival research, I argue that *The Misfits* illuminates the transition from old to New Hollywood in terms of its behind-the-scenes star negotiations of Gable and Monroe, who had varying levels of creative control to appear in the film. My analysis of their respective deals underscores how *The Misfits* anticipates the shift from the female driven star system of Classical Hollywood to the male lead talent of the New Hollywood era, in which men dominated creatively and financially in Hollywood productions. Nevertheless, even within this male centric production context, Monroe exerted her own creative influence in the film by using her star power to help secure United Artists and the A-list talent in the film and by utilizing her Method acting technique. In this way, *The Misfits* is a transitional film that points to the emerging gender gap that continues to impact Hollywood filmmaking to the present day.

When the highly anticipated film *The Misfits* premiered on February 1, 1961, it was defined by tragedy. Directed by John Huston and penned by Arthur Miller as a starring vehicle for his former wife, Marilyn Monroe, *The Misfits* was haunted by the untimely death of costar Clark Gable, who succumbed to a heart attack only ten days after shooting concluded. A year later, Monroe also passed away from an accidental drug overdose, and the film became one of the final noteworthy roles for costar Montgomery Clift, who died in 1967. Apart from symbolizing the loss of these Hollywood luminaries, *The Misfits* has been dismissed as a critical and box office disappointment: a star-studded anachronism that added another nail to old Hollywood's coffin.

To characterize *The Misfits* as a failure, however, is to misunderstand the film itself and this postwar period of American cinema culture. *The Misfits* exemplifies the fundamental changes that mark the transition from "old" to "New Hollywood" that occurred during the 1960s, in particular a production model that offered more control to stars, directors,

and writers, freelance contract negotiations that safeguarded creative agency, and a shifting star system. Drawing primarily on studio correspondences between executives sourced from the United Artists (UA) Studio collection,¹ as well as on-set accounts and interviews with the cast, this essay reconsiders *The Misfits* as a transitional film through which to understand how the American film industry was simultaneously on the cusp of conglomerate New Hollywood while also still contending with the legacy of studio-era Hollywood. In particular, Monroe and Gable negotiated varying levels of creative control during this transitional period. While the film's narrative onscreen gender dynamics, specifically regarding Monroe's performance, have been well-theorized,² the primary source production materials on *The Misfits* that underscore the creative bargaining behind-the-scenes have received limited scholarly attention. Both Monroe's and Gable's contractual agreements make clear how *The Misfits* anticipates the shift from the female lead star system of Classical Hollywood to the male talent dominion of the New Hollywood era that encompassed not just

male stars, but also writers and directors (in this case, Arthur Miller and John Huston), a trend that persists in contemporary Hollywood. Furthermore, analysis of the talent contracts from *The Misfits* highlights the creative and financial muscle flexed by A-list stars—in this instance Gable—who leveraged top billing, an impressive salary enhanced by a generous profit-sharing deal, and approval of the final shooting script. The magnitude of Gable's star power also represents how the postwar Hollywood star system prioritized male stars (and male audiences and genres) as opposed to the female-driven star system of old Hollywood

they perceived to be compelling projects separate from the stereotypical Hollywood fare by working with independent producers to develop their own material and to gain influence over their careers and artistic choices. For example, Monroe created her own production company Marilyn Monroe Productions in 1956 to make films apart from Twentieth Century-Fox, who exploited her sexuality and ruthlessly typecast her as a sexpot. Monroe was a top postwar star after making her reputation in musical comedies at Fox. The actress put her film career on hold in 1955 when she abandoned Hollywood to work with Lee Strasberg at the Actors



Figure 1. A behind-the-scenes promotional photo for *The Misfits*.

in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s that presumed women were its target audience. Understood in this context, Monroe's central role in *The Misfits* symbolizes the end of the era, particularly that of the cultural and economic dominance of the female star in Hollywood; male stars such as Steve McQueen, Warren Beatty, Paul Newman, and others,³ eclipsed their female peers in terms of box office popularity, cultural allure, and financial earnings in the latter half of the 1960s. My analysis of Gable and Monroe's off-screen contractual bargaining makes clear this discernable cultural and economic shift in the postwar Hollywood star system.

Even as Gable's financial and contractual stipulations eclipsed Monroe's, the actress leveraged her creative power in *The Misfits* in alternative ways that further signify the transition to New Hollywood stardom. These strategies include A-list stars seeking out what

Studio in New York; there, she closely studied his interpretation of the Method acting style. Penned by Monroe's husband, playwright Arthur Miller (whose work was often associated with postwar Method acting), *The Misfits* provided Monroe the strong dramatic role that she craved, one that would showcase her acting ability and allow her to deconstruct her Hollywood blonde bombshell image. As Amanda Konkle contends, Monroe utilized her Method training in her performance in *The Misfits* "to demonstrate that although she might look the part of sexpot, the sexpot could challenge what men expected from her" (173). Her character, Roslyn, bears a striking resemblance to the actress herself that invites a reflexive reading of her performance. Hence, my analysis also accounts for how Monroe's Method acting in *The Misfits* represents a new strategy of postwar Hollywood stardom—particularly for women—

that is to take ownership over one's career vis-à-vis their acting and complicate their established but limited Hollywood persona. Monroe sought to achieve professional dignity and respect through her Method acting and by taking on a role that deconstructed her sexpot image, even if this meant a lower salary or a reduced share of the box office profits; this was not choice that Clark Gable or any of her male costars had to make by comparison.

Accordingly then, *The Misfits'* talent negotiations indicate important industry changes for Hollywood stardom in the early 1960s, including the growing prac-

The company and producer had to agree on the basic ingredients—story, cast, director, and budget—but in the making of the picture, UA would give the producer complete autonomy including the final cut. Talent would defer much of their salary until the picture broke even [financially], but UA would help keep production costs down by not charging any administrative overhead, which at another company could boost budgets by as much as 40 percent. (42)⁵

However, these incentives were only partially responsible for the company's success; UA attracted top talent



Figure 2. A variant behind-the-scenes promotional photo for *The Misfits*.

tice of talent gaining influence over their artistic choices by developing their own personal projects. They achieved this primarily by working with producers to secure distribution deals through major studios. By the late 1950s, UA had revived its reputation as a studio distributor of independently produced films that attracted top Hollywood talent, making it an ideal studio for producing and releasing *The Misfits*. As Tino Balio explains, the revamped postwar UA led by Arthur Krim and Robert Benjamin embraced an alternative strategy for its distribution of independently produced features to appeal to talent: "...in return for distribution rights, UA offered independent producers complete production financing, creative control over their work, and a share of the profits" (42).⁴ Balio notes how UA appealed to talent-turned-producers by essentially "going into partnership" with them:

"by starting trends, by challenging the HUAC and the Production Code, and by investing in off beat pictures" (1). Miller and Frank Taylor, the publisher and soon-to-be-producer of *The Misfits*, had sent the script to director John Huston in July of 1959. Huston, who had already had prior experience releasing films through UA (*The African Queen*, 1951), tipped off UA executive Eliot Hyman, who was then president of United Artists Associated and purchased screen rights for the studio, about the Miller script. In 1960, Hyman became an independent producer by forming Seven Arts Productions as a subsidiary of UA and the studio produced and distributed the picture based on his recommendation, which also gave Miller more creative control over the finished film.⁶ A March 30, 1959 memo from UA executive Max Youngstein to his boss, Arthur Krim, reveals the potential that he saw in *The Misfits* project, especially in

terms of the talent attached:

...I love this property. I think it is short of action, but it is by far, the best character Western I have read. I feel that with very few changes, it is ideal for Monroe. In addition, the three male roles are tremendously interesting and this could be a real blockbuster picture, in spite of the fact that it could never be a great action Western.⁷

Youngstein's observations reveal the allure that came to define *The Misfits*: a Western bereft of action but steeped in character, with the promise to showcase the acting talent of its stars, mainly of Marilyn Monroe (a curious casting move given that Hollywood Westerns were typically headlined by and marketed to men). Furthermore, his comments also foreground this transitional industrial moment, when female stars like Monroe wielded top creative and economic power in Hollywood.

Monroe was one of the last long-term contract stars attached to a major Hollywood studio when she signed a standard seven-year contract with Fox in 1951 (with the studio's option to renew). The contract "called for a salary of \$500 per week in the first year, \$750 per week in the second year, and \$1250 in the third year, eventually reaching \$3500 per week in the final year" (Lev 168). Such a contract gave her no control over her image, her salary, script approval, or casting decisions. As Peter Lev contends, this contract was far from equitable for the actress because "Monroe earned far less than some of her costars...yet audiences were buying tickets to see Marilyn Monroe" (168).⁸ Increasingly over the 1950s, these long-term contracts were supplanted by a freelance talent system that offered a viable alternative to A-list talent seeking greater artistic and financial control of their work. This shift in actuality benefited the major studios, as they could not maintain lengthy exclusive (and expensive) contracts with the downturn in postwar film production. Monroe's career is demonstrative in this regard; when she renegotiated with Fox during her New York hiatus, her new 1956 contract granted her higher compensation (\$400,000 for four pictures in seven years), with approval over director (though not story) as well as costars, and the ability to make her own films with her newly formed production company (Konkle 12).⁹ As Miller recalled his autobiography, *Time Bends*:

Marilyn's hopes were immense for this arrangement which promised both decent roles and personal dignity. Naturally the then-powerful movie columnists were taking shots at Marilyn, the non-actor floozy, for the preposterous chutzpah of making artistic demands on the so great and no-

ble a corporation as Twentieth Century Fox. (358) Consequently, Monroe defied her "dumb blonde" sex-pot persona crafted by Fox in her proactive contract negotiations. Eli Wallach, her costar in *The Misfits*, also observed this, and commended her astute knowledge of film industry contracts:

I was impressed with her determination to remake her image, also with her professionalism. She once even helped me rewrite a contract to make sure that I got the best possible deal. I remember her putting on her little Ben Franklin spectacles to read the contract. 'All right,' she told me, 'take out clauses three and four. And make sure they clarify your billing.' (211)

By the time *The Misfits* project was in development at UA, Monroe had launched Marilyn Monroe Productions (which released *Bus Stop*, directed by Joshua Logan in 1956, and *The Prince and the Show Girl*, directed by Laurence Olivier in 1957). *The Misfits* was the third independent film made by the actress, who had reached a crossroads in her career in 1955 when she relocated to New York while bargaining for a new contract with Fox. Monroe vented her frustration with her career and sex symbol persona to fellow Actors Studio disciple Wallach: "That's all they want me to do in films. I told 20th [sic] Century-Fox and the press that I want to do Grushenka in Doestoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*. They all laughed, but none of them have read the book; I call them 19th Century Fox" (Wallach 210). Monroe's career expansion to an actor-producer exemplifies the transition from old to New Hollywood, specifically in her repudiation of being a contract star at a major Hollywood studio and desire for more creative discretion. In essence, she was a transitional star who spanned two distinct eras in American cinema, beginning her career under the old Hollywood studio long-term contract system and later adapting to the freelance talent-producing model of New Hollywood by the end of the decade. Along with her, actors-turned-producers who formed their own production company in the 1950s included Bing Crosby, Kirk Douglas, Burt Lancaster, Ida Lupino, John Wayne, and Kim Novak.¹⁰

The Misfits, along with *Bus Stop* and *The Prince and the Showgirl*, exemplified Monroe's newfound professional agency after studying at the Actors Studio with Strasberg. Her decision to study the Method both galvanized her decision to become a film producer and develop new roles to complicate her Hollywood sex-pot image. As Keri Walsh explains, Monroe's use of the Method represented a feminist professional awakening for the actress; she contends that Monroe and her contemporary female method actors used their screen per-

formance to both challenge and expand “Hollywood’s capacities for representing women’s lives” in the 1950s-1960s (37).¹¹ Specifically, Monroe “moved to New York, joined the Actors Studio, allied herself with one of its leading playwrights [Miller], and ended her career in a film role (*The Misfits*) that critically investigated the kind of Hollywood glamor she had previously represented (37).¹² Historian Lary May echoes Walsh, noting a distinct change in the “major films she made with Billy Wilder, John Huston, and her husband Arthur Miller” as she moved from a sex symbol to a “critic of official gender roles” in the 1950s (248). Hence, Monroe’s embrace of the Method was a defiant career move to counter her studio-crafted Hollywood persona, as evidenced by her performance in *The Misfits*.¹³

Furthermore, much of Monroe’s hard-won creative power spanned from the perceived value of the female-centered star system, since women were the presumed dominant audience for Hollywood movies during the 1920s-1940s. As I have argued elsewhere, female stars achieved independent stardom vis-à-vis their contractual negotiations with film producers that paved the way for Monroe’s generation.¹⁴ Monroe herself ranked as a top box office star several times in postwar Hollywood (in 1953, 1954, and 1956) and flexed her star muscle as a result in her renegotiations with Fox and by becoming a star-turned-producer.¹⁵ However, a discernable marketing shift began in Hollywood during the 1940s when male stars began to outnumber women in the top ten box office star-exhibitor polls. This trend continued into the 1950s, and by 1957, there were no women in the top ten ranking of money-making stars.¹⁶ Postwar Hollywood marketing shifted to presume its target demographic was male, and this corresponded not only to the dominion of men in the top-ranking box office star polls, but also to the postwar production increase of action, war, and Western genres (Carman 132). In this context, Monroe’s star agency illuminates what Paul Monaco has coined “the twilight of the movie goddesses” that had ruled Hollywood screens since the 1920s (120).

Analysis of Clark Gable’s contract reveals the changing power dynamics evident in the Hollywood star system in the casting of *The Misfits*, and the UA collection memos between executives exemplifies this gender realignment in the postwar Hollywood star system. Not only was *The Misfits* a Western, but as UA contractual memos underscore, Gable wielded the star bargaining power, creative input and top billing, even though Monroe was by far the bigger box office draw and major Hollywood star in 1960. A UA memo between executives Robert Blumofe and Jesse Skolkin,

dated December 30, 1959, details that the acting talent was budgeted at \$1.6 million, with the lion’s share going to Gable’s \$750,000 salary for the film, payable over a six-year period, with a ten percent cut of gross receipts after the film had earned \$7.5 million. By comparison, the same memo states that Monroe received a \$300,000 salary with a cut of the box office gross once the film had grossed over \$3 million.¹⁷ Gable’s salary also eclipsed his male costar Montgomery Clift, who earned \$200,000 for his work, and supporting players Eli Wallach earning \$50,000 and Thelma Ritter \$60,000 (both were given featured billing below the title).¹⁸ Gable also had director, female costar, second male costar, and cameraman approval, as well as “one iron-bound clause in his contract—at 5:00 PM, no matter where he was in a scene,” that his work concluded for the day (Wallach 223).¹⁹ Moreover, Gable’s contract specified a weekly overtime fee of \$48,000 for any work after September 15, 1960; his salary was estimated to exceed \$800,000 due to production time of *The Misfits* shoot being extended.²⁰ All of these provisions—high salary, profit sharing, creative input over the cast and crew, and specified work hours—were achievements that Gable attained relatively late in his career, after he finished his quarter of a century tenure as the longest serving studio contract star at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). Barry King discusses how Gable’s MGM contract player status rendered him a “low autonomy” star in Hollywood, revealing a striking disparity between his long-standing box office draw from the 1930s into the 1950s and his weekly salary of \$7500 for forty weeks (bereft of any financial or creative provisions) (173). Gable was effectively compelled by industry changes to become what King classifies as a “high autonomy” star who secured a degree of control over his career:

It was not until after his contract with MGM expired in 1954...that Gable was able to command what he had long been seeking: a flat fee and a percentage. Given that in Hollywood the association between earnings and prestige was high, this long suffering acceptance of lower earnings is striking. (173)

In regard to their negotiations to make *The Misfits*, while Monroe lobbied hard to attain creative provisions and function as a high autonomy star in postwar Hollywood, by contrast, Gable was much more passive as a formerly low autonomy star. Gable’s contractual power belies his “company man” background, as he was one of the longest standing actors to be on a studio contract until financial difficulties at MGM basically forced Gable to exit in the mid-1950s. His freelance career thus benefitted from the enhanced value of male stars in

postwar Hollywood.

The main reason why Monroe's contractual agency lagged behind that of her male costar is that the actress and her husband, Miller, pitched themselves as a creative team for their role in *The Misfits* contractual negotiations. Miller noted that his unusual amount of authorial control over the film was due to mainly to Monroe, who "wanted to do the film and she was a big star" (Miller and Toubiana 33).²¹ The couple's control over the project correlated to their selection of John Huston due to his respectful direction of Monroe in her small but memorable role in *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950). Explained Miller, Huston was the "only director who had previously been respectful and treated her like an actress" and "did not expect some kitsch from her...he had taken her seriously from the start" (36). Monroe also noted that "nobody would have heard of me if it hadn't been for John Huston" in terms of his impact on her career.²² Monroe's personal UA contract gave her approval of Huston as director and Gable as her costar, and stipulated that, should they drop out of the production for "any reason prior to the commencement of photography," she had "the right to terminate; after commencement of photography, she has the right to designate a director and male star of similar caliber."²³ Despite their salary and story approval disparities, Gable and Monroe (as well Huston and Miller) had equal choice over director and costar approval should any of the said talent drop out of the picture. While Gable earned substantially more money and maintained final screenplay approval, Monroe prioritized her artistry—utilizing her Method acting, playing a new dramatic role, and putting her faith in the original material written by Miller and directed by Huston.

At the same time, Monroe's professional behavior in Hollywood in the preceding years tarnished her star power and deal-making ability, and this may have impacted her contract for *The Misfits*. As Monaco explains, "her reputation had become increasingly negative" as an "unreliable" talent who was "difficult to work with" and "disruptive on sets" (123). However, her conduct should not be simplistically construed as merely unprofessional, or as victim of industry sexism and patriarchy. The change in Monroe's professional etiquette can be attributed to her health and increasing reliance on prescription medications, as well as her devotion to character motivation and the Method, both of which caused clashes with directors, costars, and crew in *The Prince and the Showgirl* and *Some Like it Hot* (Wilder, 1959).²⁴ As Carl Rollyson points out, her "extreme nervousness," despite the reassurance from her mentor Strasberg that this was a common characteristic for ac-

tors, "sometimes made her seem inept, withdrawn, and resistant to direction" (149). Monroe's chronic lateness did impact *The Misfits* set. Gable, the consummate professional, recalled working with Jean Harlow, who was always on time. He remarked, "It was a different era. In those days when stars were late, they were fired."²⁵ Nevertheless, Gable defended Monroe to the press about her tardiness: "It's part of her life, and I know she doesn't do it to upset anyone."²⁶ In fact, the only indication that her previous erratic behavior impacted her negotiations for *The Misfits* was UA executives' concerns about keeping the production on schedule. Jesse Skolkin highlighted UA's concerns, should Monroe's health, delay or preclude the actress from making the film:

If because of Monroe pregnancy [sic], photography cannot commence on that date, we have the right to postpone photography to a date between July 1, 1961 and June 30, 1962. Subject to his availability, Huston is obligated to go along. An attempt should be made to cover this in the Gable and Clift agreements.²⁷

Skolkin's remarks also underscore the importance of casting Monroe in the film, noting that any delay caused by her health would compel the director and her costars to reschedule so as to accommodate her. Closer scrutiny of correspondences between producer Frank Taylor and costume designer Dorothy Jeakins, archived at Indiana University's Lilly Library, attest to the substantial control that Monroe had over her image in the film. This resulted in the firing of Jeakins and hiring of Jean Louis for her personal wardrobe in *The Misfits*—apart from the credited costumes (Jesse Munden) and wardrobe (Shirlee Strahm).²⁸ These occurrences belie the notion that Monroe's unprofessionalism impacted her ability to leverage control over not only her image in the film, but also her acting.

Monroe's adoption of the Method was a strategic career move, one that fortified her star power precisely because her Hollywood sexpot image did not afford her the same financial earnings or professional respect compared to the male talent in *The Misfits*. Consequently, her contractual terms did not match Gable's star agency nor Miller's authorial control over the script, both of which had far-reaching ramifications on the finished film. Miller's UA contract gave him alone (and not Monroe) control over the final version of *The Misfits* script, and it further specified that director John Huston must accept all changes to the script made by Miller.²⁹ Likewise, Gable had final script approval, in that once he read the screenplay, as stated in his UA contract, "there are to be no further changes in it without his

consent.”³⁰ A confluence of sources ranging from UA memos to Jim Goode’s journalistic account from the set and Eli Wallach’s autobiography all verify Gable’s final script approval.³¹ Gable explained on set that he was dissatisfied with his character Gay: “I didn’t like the original ending of the screenplay but I didn’t know the solution. I think Arthur’s new ending is the answer...he [Gay] says if it makes you that unhappy, I’ll find another way of life. That isn’t breaking him...” (Goode 206). As Peter J. Bailey notes, the Gable-approved version of *The Misfits* ending gives Gay “the status of late-emerging protagonist and the hero of the film” (212).

In my assessment of the archival evidence provided by the Huston, Taylor, and UA collections, I conclude that Gable made final script approval a key contractual bargaining point so as to influence his character and make it more in line with his established screen persona. With the exception of *Gone With the Wind* (Fleming, 1939), Gable always “got the girl.” By contrast, Monroe was not pleased about the revised ending, nor with *The Misfits* script as a whole.³² Bailey asserts that Monroe understood the “overshadowing” of her character Roslyn in favor of Gay, but she attributed this shift to Miller and Huston, calling it “their movie”; explained Monroe: “It’s really about the cowboys and the horses. They don’t need me at all, not as an actress. Only for the money. To put my name on the film. To seduce people to...see another sex film about a dumb blonde” (Luitjers 18). As my analysis of the archival materials from *The Misfits* has illuminated, it was also Gable’s film. Monroe’s creative and star agency was dwarfed in favor of her aging male costar as well as her screenwriter-husband Miller; together their creative control enabled them to change the ending that appears in the final film. Nevertheless, Monroe was no shrinking violet—she abdicated contractual power to these men because she desired control over her acting and screen image, and she believed in the script written by Miller. Thus, *The Misfits* is a case study that complicates our understanding of the gender dynamics during this transition from the Classical Hollywood to New Hollywood, as the American film industry would increasingly revolve around male creative auteur and/or star power, a trend that continues to this current day.

This essay has argued for a reconsideration of *The Misfits* within the canon of postwar American cinema as a transitional Hollywood film between old and New Hollywood. Illuminated by archival materials from the UA papers, the behind-the-scenes negotiations for *The Misfits* highlights an important shift in the Hollywood filmmaking that prioritized male stardom (and authorship) economically, mirroring its renewed focus on

male-oriented genres during the 1960s and into New Hollywood. At the same time, these primary materials crystallize the creative priorities of Monroe: her artistry and professional recognition of her talent beyond her sexpot image, two attributes that would be key for female actors working in the New Hollywood era and beyond. My analysis of *The Misfits*’ transitional stardom off-screen points to the gender gap that persists in contemporary Hollywood in the twenty-first century, given the continued disparities in terms of pay, narrative screen time, and creative work behind the camera in feature filmmaking. The shifting creative bargaining and personifications of stardom in this postwar Western are two such examples that attest to rethinking *The Misfits*’ transitional Hollywood significance.³³

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End Notes

1. The United Artists Collection (UAC) is housed at the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research (WCFTR) Madison, WI. The studio memos between executives outline much of the contract deals struck for all of the major talent who appeared in *The Misfits*. Additionally, I consulted the John Huston Papers (JHP), the Frank Taylor Papers (FTP) at the Lilly Library at Indiana University, and Thelma Ritter and Joseph Aloysius Moran Papers (TRJAMP), Margaret Herrick Library (MHL), Beverly Hills, CA as well for this essay.
2. See Bailey 193-219; Salzberg, 78-87, and Konkle, *Some Kind of Mirror*.
3. See Monaco 139, his chapter 9 titled “Male Domination of the Hollywood Screen” discusses the aforementioned three actors as well as Robert Redford, Dustin Hoffman and Gene Hackman as to how the 1960s and 1970s “proved to be far more agreeable to male actors” (139).

4. As Balio points out in his introduction, the old UA (founded by Mary Pickford, Charles Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks and D.W. Griffith in 1919) depended on independent producers solely financing their films.
5. Balio also notes how these financial terms enabled the producer to attain advantageous tax incentives, and that talent were not compelled by long-term contracts – all agreements with UA were non-exclusive (42).
6. This included a cut of the film's distribution profits and approval of the final screenplay. For more about the film's arrangement with Seven Arts and UA, see Goode 21.
7. Memo dated March 30, 1959, UAC, WCFTR.
8. For example, Lev notes that Jane Russell in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and Lauren Bacall and Betty Grable in *How to Marry a Millionaire*, all earned more in salary than Monroe.
9. Konkle also cites Dorothy Manning's *Photoplay* article "The Woman and the Legend" that called this "one of the greatest single triumphs ever won by an actress against a powerfully entrenched major studio" in 1956 (Konkle 12).
10. This practice remains in place for A-list Hollywood stars, male and female, who seek to diversify their acting careers by developing their own material with their own production companies, apart from studio roles. For more examples of star-producers in the post-studio system, see McDonald 107-116.
11. In Walsh's compelling book, she examines the under-studied tradition of feminist Method acting in Hollywood (and by feminist she means second wave feminism). Although Monroe is not one of Walsh's case studies, she classifies her within this group of feminist Method actresses who "were determined to change the conventions governing women's screen performance and the idealizations Hollywood so often applied to women's lives" by employing the "realist values of the Actors Studio" as a "counterweight to Hollywood's default setting of glamor" (3).
12. Walsh, *Women*, 37.
13. In my book, tentatively titled *A Misfit Cinema*, I include a full analysis of the transitional acting styles of the leading cast members and Monroe's use of the Method in *The Misfits*.
14. See Carman, *Independent Stardom*.
15. By 1959, four female stars ranked in the top ten: Sandra Dee, Debbie Reynolds, Susan Hayward, and Elizabeth Taylor, but Monroe remained absent after 1956. See Lev 306.
16. See Schatz 469-71. From 1940 onward, male stars outnumber women 7 to 3. See also Lev 306.
17. Memo to Robert Blumofe written by Jesse Skolkin, dated December 30, 1959, page 2, UAC, WCFTR.
18. Salary terms outlined in memo written by UA executive Arnold Burk to Goldberg, February 5, 1960, UAC, WCFTR. The character actress Thelma Ritter earned \$40,000 for four weeks of shooting and \$20,000 as a deferment out of the Net receipts; see her contract dated June 30, 1960, page 3, TRJAMP, MHL.
19. Eli Wallach recalled that Gable would "leave the set, waving a polite goodbye as he drove away" promptly at 5:00 PM (223). While the exact duration of his on-set hours are not spelled out in the UA memos for Gable's contract for *The Misfits* (nor is a final copy of his contract in the file – since UA was a distributor-only studio), a December 7, 1959 specifies that UA must emulate his "working time, act of God contingencies, etc. as per "Run Silent," (*Run Silent, Run Deep* directed by Robert Wise was released by UA in 1958, costarring Gable and Burt Lancaster, whose HHL productions company produced the film). See UAC, WCFTR.
20. *The Misfits* filming did not conclude until November 4, 1960. Figures provided by *Daily Variety*, 31 October 1960 and his final earnings for *The Misfits* were noted by his obituary in *Daily Variety*, 18 November 1960, cited from *The Misfits* AFI catalog entry.
21. Miller also attributed his creative control to UA, who he referred to as "Greenwich Village. These people had genuine aesthetic interest. They were not only businessmen" (Miller and Toubiana 33).
22. Goode, *The Misfits*, 202.
23. The provision goes on to outline that any replacement director/costars "who are available and who will render services for the same or less compensation." Jesse Skelkin to Robert Blumofe, UA memo dated December 30, 1959, page 4, UAC, WCFTR. See also December 30, 1959 memo, provision 7, page 3, memo to Robert Blumofe and Jesse Skolkin, UAC, WCFTR.
24. For example, Monroe biographer Rollyson also notes how Laurence Olivier disregarded the advice of Monroe's previous directors, Joshua Logan and Billy Wilder, on how to best work with Monroe. See Rollyson 148-149. Miller and Olivier later admitted that Monroe's performance in *The Prince and the Showgirl*, in Miller's words, lent "the film a depth of pathos it did not really have" (Miller 422), which Keri Walsh suggests "that her acting preparations in fact may have contributed something new and valuable that

was lacking in the script" (38).

25. See Goode, *The Misfits*, 105. On this, Eli Wallach recalled that Gable was a "true professional, always on time and line perfect." See *The Good, the Bad, and Me*, 223.

26. *Los Angeles Times*, 13 November 1960, cited in *The Misfits* AFI catalog entry.

27. Jesse Skolkin to Robert Blumofe, UA memo dated December 30, 1959, page 4, UAC, WCFTR.

28. Dorothy Jeakins, letter to Marilyn Monroe, May 3, 1960, FTC.

29. See Jesse Skolkin to Robert Blumofe, memo dated December 30, 1959, UAC, WCFTR, page 1-2.

30. Memo dated December 7, 1959, titled "Re: Clark Gable—The Misfits," from Robert F. Blumofe to Seymour M. Peyser, page 1. UAC, WCFTR.

31. See December 30, 1959 memo, titled "Re: The Misfits," page 3, provision 7. Please note that Huston "approves screenplay and will accept any changes made by Miller." UAC, WCFTR. Eli Wallach in his autobiography also noted that Gable "contractually had the power" to veto a scene from *The Misfits* script (which Wallach claimed Gable did to a scene they would have played together); see Wallach 224.

32. Bailey points out that this sentiment was tragically expressed through Monroe's increasing barbiturate intake that later required her to be hospitalized in Los Angeles and shut down production for a week (206). Production was shut down August 30th to September 6th, 1960, according to industry trades *Variety*, the *LA Times*, and *The New York Times* coverage, as noted in the American Film Institute (AFI) catalog entry on the film.

33. Although the reception of *The Misfits* was mixed at the time of its release, with critics finding its perspective arcane and more European than American, Monroe herself thought that though the film had its problems, "it would eventually become a classic" (Banner 361).

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