

## Chapter V

### Conclusion

The issue of high culture versus popular culture is concerned more with cultural values rather than the disposition of one with the other. In the works of many high culture and popular culture, the aspects of supernaturalism and romanticism are the ones which are largely put to practice by the two binaries. From the ghost in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to the evil supernatural force in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, both literary canon and popular culture are apt to dwell in such genre, though they might serve different functions.

The film *Sleepy Hollow* does virtually show the adoption of the so-called predetermined rules often associated with the popular genre. The storyline and its visual (iconic) features are applied to deliver the occasional sensation among its audiences. It has no attempt to cover up the banality of its plot, but actually rejoices in its absurdity and marriage of a classical high cultural influence (the filmmakers said that the film is more inspired rather than based on Irving's original) with that of the contemporary taste in horror film genre.

The writer has also formulated the textual differences between the original story and the film version (see Analysis) and has pointed out that the two seemingly opposing sides are not to be taken in a positive-negative binaries but in a way that makes the popular culture deserve the inclusion of serious consideration. When the question of whether high culture is really better than the popular one, it actually depends on the preferment of its audiences. Each of the high culture and popular

culture forms its own domain of reign, market shares and this fact will provide the evidence of the strength of both sides.

*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* has its claim on the high culture not only because it is produced by the "Father of American Literature" and certainly not because it is established on the ground of commercial interests, but because the author feels that he has to write this one out. The film *Sleepy Hollow* is merely an attempt to borrow Irving's popular elements of American 'first' genuine folktale-esque story into a new interpretation which suits the taste and the flavor of today's cinema audiences. To borrow Irving's supernaturalism and romanticism and recycle them into a completely fresh material for mass consumption. Therefore it deserves the popular culture label in its existence.

# **BIBLIOGRAPHY**