

Introduction: Parallel Lines

Janet Bergstrom

The title of this book is taken from a line spoken in Jim Jarmusch's *Dead Man*: "Some are born to sweet delight, some are born to endless night." Endless night, that modality of timeless dark wandering, evokes the remarkably material dreamlike search for intelligibility sustained throughout *Dead Man* without ever being thematized as such or, indeed, as any identifiable state. *Endless Night* seems to me an appropriate designation for this collection of essays, since psychoanalysis and film theory, both, are drawn to the darkness in their quest for logics of meaning.

CONTEXT

The idea for this volume goes back to a conference called "Psychoanalysis and Cinema: Parallel Histories," which was sponsored by UCLA's Center for Critical Studies and the Human Sciences in November 1993 to mark the hundred-year anniversaries of these two endeavors that have exercised such a profound influence on our century. The event brought together practicing psychoanalysts with film theorists working from a psychoanalytic perspective and provided a forum for an exchange of views between these two disciplines that have encountered each other all too rarely. Crossing disciplines is never easy, but in this case, dialogue between constituencies seemed blocked to a surprising degree; in fact, one came away from the conference with the strong impression of nonconvergence, on the whole, of lines of inquiry and frames of reference, the sense that these "parallel histories" of cinema and of psychoanalysis were very far apart indeed and were likely to remain so for some time to come. The reasons that psychoanalysts reflect on the cinema are not the same as those that motivate film theorists to draw on psychoanalysis. It follows that the concepts from the cinema and from

psychoanalysis that enter into dialogue within each field are not the same either. We are nowhere near being able to provide a comparative overview which would explain the impasse between these two fields usefully, which might elucidate, for instance, how the history of psychoanalytic concepts has come to operate within each one. This task is all the more difficult because of the complex splitting and proliferation of psychoanalytic institutions within the United States and internationally, which involves—but is by no means reducible to—adherence to differing schools of theory and/or clinical practice. Even today, a cursory review of psychoanalytic journals turns up significant writings by psychoanalysts on literature and art, but not on the cinema.

Yet, I believe that psychoanalysts and film scholars should be able to speak together productively on a whole range of issues. I hope, therefore, that this collection of essays, which consists mainly of the writings of film scholars, will also find its way to psychoanalysts who may be drawn to the perspectives on cinematic representation to be found here. This, in turn, might help bring concepts and data from current psychoanalytic theory and clinical practice into discussions within Cinema Studies and encourage cross-disciplinary projects even as the two disciplines continue to evolve, producing their own internal countertendencies and subspecializations. The essays by psychoanalysts David James Fisher and Alain de Mijolla, M.D., in this collection represent avenues toward a future collaboration.

The “Parallel Histories” event did succeed in inspiring an impressive group of film scholars to present work-in-progress that demonstrated the current form of their engagement with “psychoanalysis and cinema” and, by that very fact, showed how much this field of study has changed since the hugely influential works of the early 1970s which initiated it during those same polemical years when Cinema Studies became an academic discipline. This volume is not a record of the conference proceedings, but all the contributors were participants in that event (either as presenters or as part of the audience) and all of the essays have been marked by the spirit that uniting these writers made possible. While several of the essays were delivered at the conference in draft form, to be reworked and extended later in the light of questions and discussions, the rest were conceived and written subsequently. As an amalgam, they testify to a shift from the 1970s to the 1990s in what we can call “psychoanalytic film theory.” They demonstrate how this vein of film theory has renewed itself over time and remains one of the most vital areas within contemporary film theory. For this project, then, the hundred-year parallel histories of psychoanalysis and of cinema operate as the “felt background” against which authors chart new directions in the much younger field of psychoanalysis and film theory.

The authors represented in this collection share a particular history of theory which they are trying to push ahead or test in this way or that.¹ Moreover, they are signaling “unfinished business” that needs to be addressed.

Synoptically, in order to provide a context for the new essays, we should recall the generative matrix from the 1970s that made this work possible, beginning with “Psychanalyse et cinéma,” the thick, groundbreaking special issue of the French journal *Communications*, published in May 1975, edited by Raymond Bellour, Thierry Kuntzel and Christian Metz. Almost immediately, in the summer of 1975, Metz’s lead essay, “The Imaginary Signifier,” was presented—not simply published—in the British journal *Screen*. Although *Communications* 23 was not the first to introduce psychoanalytic concepts into contemporary film theory—the *Cahiers du Cinéma* had been publishing articles for some years written from Lacanian and Freudian perspectives; *Screen*’s own commitment to psychoanalytic theory dated from its publication in 1972 of the *Cahiers du Cinéma*’s 1970 collective reading of *Young Mr. Lincoln*; Jean-Louis Baudry’s essay “Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus” had been published in *Cinéthique* in 1970²—it constituted a strong statement that the field of psychoanalytic semiotics had been established as such. In “The Imaginary Signifier,” Metz outlined categories within which psychoanalysis and film theory might come together, mapping the field, as it were, before proceeding to the motivating question of his own essay: “What contribution can Freudian psychoanalysis make to the study of the cinematic signifier?”³ (Those who assume that Metz was thoroughly Lacanian should take note of the way he worded this question.) The issue also contained Bellour’s “Le blocage symbolique,” a magisterial demonstration of multi-layered textual analysis through a 115-page study of *North by Northwest*; Kuntzel’s “The Film-Work, 2,” a somewhat different mode of textual analysis more directly inspired by Barthes’s *S/Z* and its model, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (hence the echo of Sigmund Freud’s theory of the dream-work in Kuntzel’s title); Metz’s “The Fiction Film and Its Spectator”; and a host of other essays which have had lasting significance.

These essays and many others written from within the same circles of French debate were quickly published in translation in *Screen*, *Camera Obscura* and other journals, often in conjunction with American and British contributions inspired by the French essays but filtered through their own highly debated and evolving editorial positions. The crucial “Milwaukee Conferences” on film theory succeeded in creating a yearly international forum in which people could see, in person, film theorists from distant cities and lands whose work they had been reading, which aided immeasurably in building an international community of scholars. I would hazard the generalization that work of this kind was focalized by *Screen* through its principal question—“What is ideology,”—by *Camera Obscura* and *m/f* (London) through their emphases on the representation of sexual difference and textual analysis, and by a host of other editorial positions put forward in bold strokes by nonprofit and largely volunteer-run journals such as *Jump Cut*, *Ciné-Tracts*, *Afterimage* (London), *Cinéaste*, *Discourse*, *Wideangle* and *Quarterly Review of Film*

Studies, which joined in the sharp debates for and against psychoanalytic film theory or “French” film theory or film theory at all.⁴ In recent times, one encounters blanket references to so-called Screen Theory (meaning essays published in *Screen* during the 1970s and 1980s), which I find both curious and unhelpful; according to this usage, positions that were highly contested, often at odds with each other and written from within a specific set of historical and social circumstances are reduced to stereotypes that can, for that very reason, seem easy to dismiss.

Endless Night emphasizes the history of psychoanalytic theory and demonstrates not only that “history” and “theory” have a strong bearing on each other, but that film theory must be written with a strong sense of historical consciousness, curiosity and archeological craft. If Anglo-American scholars insisted on prioritizing theory in the 1970s, it was because there was so much resistance to it. Cinema Studies in general has moved toward historical analysis over the past two decades. The archives (in many senses of the word) have been opening their vaults and catalogues, video has made repeated access to many films possible, interdisciplinary possibilities are richer than ever before, and the Internet has greatly facilitated collaboration and the exchange of information over great distances. During this same period, scholars have gained a better appreciation of what archives could yield in the light of the contemporary field of questions. The fact that so many film historians have been trained in contemporary film theory has had an enormously positive effect on the ways film histories are now being conceptualized, researched and written.

As Cinema Studies has grown as an academic discipline, it has produced specialized areas of research, like all other fields: the amazing quantity of high caliber, international research on “early cinema” is an outstanding example of such specialization, and some contributions to it may be found in these pages. But Cinema Studies has also been particularly vulnerable to dispersion, most obviously through the appeal of “cultural studies,” which has given us many brilliant works and continues to do so. The problem is that “cultural studies” has come to be used so broadly that it can encompass almost any approach or subject matter, thereby risking a loss of focus. In other words, cultural studies sometimes functions as a leveling device, and cinema or television or digital media, for that matter, can become difficult to address as such in depth at the very moment, ironically, when a critical mass of scholars finally exists in these adjacent academic fields. At the same time, and for a wide range of reasons, the power that film journals once had has diminished greatly so that they rarely serve to focus polemics or even issues in the way that they did in the 1970s and early 1980s.

It would be impossible to construct a comprehensive bibliography of “psychoanalysis and film theory” today because so much of Cinema Studies since the 1970s has been permeated with concepts drawn from a Freudian

and/or Lacanian framework. Even the literature written in opposition to the use of psychoanalysis has invoked this perspective in order to dispute it. In 1990, E. Ann Kaplan oriented the introduction to her anthology, *Psychoanalysis and Cinema*, to the imbalance between literature and film studies with respect to psychoanalytic theory, and the difficulty of trying to establish parallel lines of engagement between psychoanalysis and the other two disciplines. She presented a history of the literary conjunction, noting that several anthologies had been devoted to it which showed a diversity of methods, and specified that her collection was the first to do the same for Cinema Studies (meaning, the first to do so in English).⁵ Subsequently, in 1993 and again in 1995, Kaplan moved toward the analytic community by editing special issues of the psychoanalytic journal *American Imago* on “Psychoanalysis and Film” with the goal of juxtaposing the writings of psychoanalysts with those of film scholars.⁶ By now, several anthologies, books and special issues of journals have been published with this purpose (see Selected Bibliography). However, it seems that putting such writings (or speakers at either psychoanalytic or Cinema Studies conferences) side by side—providing “an opportunity,” as Kaplan put it, “for the reader to construct dialogues among the pieces”⁷—has not yet generated what we might call a joint project or shared points of reference. This problem may be fundamental. We should recall what Christian Metz had already stated in “The Imaginary Signifier”:

. . . anyone claiming to make any use of psychoanalysis, as I do at this moment for the cinema, is necessarily called on to say what psychoanalysis he is talking about. There are plenty of examples of “psychoanalytic” practices, and more or less explicit accompanying theories, in which all that is vital in Freud’s discovery, everything that makes it (should make it) an irreversible achievement, a decisive moment in knowledge, is smoothed out, pared down, “recuperated” as a new variant of ethical psychology or medical psychiatry (humanism and medicine: two great evasions of Freudianism). The most striking example (but far from the only one) is that provided by certain “American-style” therapeutic doctrines . . . , solidly installed more or less everywhere, which are in large part techniques for the standardization or banalization of character, for avoidance of conflict at any price.⁸

In the essays that follow, one will find “psychoanalysis and cinema” inflected in a number of unusual situations, virtually all of them placing an emphasis on the history of theory and, perforce, as de facto, diverse examples of contemporary historiographical inquiry which do not lose sight of cinematic specificity, whether it takes center stage or operates in the background. A return, if I may put it that way, to cinematic specificity does not mean that the consequences of this work necessarily hold only for the cinema; rather, they provide a firm grounding from which those reflecting on other media or in other disciplines may take measure of how any number of issues raised in these pages might translate to their own spheres of activity.

TEXTS

Those who have followed psychoanalytic film theory since the 1970s will doubtless see the essays in this collection in terms of the evolution of that field; those who have not followed this literature may be surprised to find a directness and lucidity of style and exposition which was not typical of 1970s film theory. Moreover, these essays pertain to new and perhaps unexpected subjects: Janet Walker takes on contemporary issues surrounding child abuse, recovered memories and fantasy to argue why it is crucial for feminism to recognize the interrelationship between actual events and fantasy. Ayako Saito initiates a strong critique of the Lacanian emphasis in psychoanalytic film theory on language and the gaze which, she argues, following French psychoanalyst André Green, has all but eliminated questions of affect from discussion. She invokes Green's structural description of affect in carrying out a textual analysis of the affective structures of Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, *North by Northwest* and *Psycho*. Stephen Heath invokes Kafka's cry—cinema is “too visual”—as he builds a powerful argument for “figuration” as the key issue to rethinking the conjunction “psychoanalysis and cinema.” Slavoj Žižek and Joan Copjec are often said to represent a “new psychoanalysis” in their Kantian/Hegelian rereading of Lacan. Here, Žižek uses a conceptual shock montage to evoke philosophical difficulties, traps and lures at the heart of the taken-for-granted term “interface” that constitutes the cyber-subject. Mary Ann Doane, as part of a larger project on modernity and technology, investigates Etienne-Jules Marey's and Freud's theories about capturing and storing photographic or mental data as a way to understand that early cinema's retreat (as I would call it) to narrative was a defensive mechanism designed to protect the subject from the anxieties of total, undifferentiated representation that the cinema had made possible. Marc Vernet studies how fetishism impedes the researcher's desire to know, given ready access to documents in the digital/electronic archive. Peter Wollen shows Freud's, Sartre's and John Huston's intellectual and fantasmatic paths converging with uncanny parallelism in the project for Huston's film *Freud*, and how each was carrying through on a belief held since childhood that he was destined to be a conquistador. David James Fisher argues that Sartre's screenplays for Huston's *Freud* are a key part of his intellectual history and how, implicitly and by way of analogy, Sartre advocated there what we would now call an intersubjective approach to psychoanalytic process. Dr. Alain de Mijolla posits that it is nearly impossible to represent the “psychoanalytic situation”—with its undramatic silences, transferential relationships and duration of the period of analysis—in a film. Joan Copjec puts forward a radical new reading of *Stella Dallas*, arguing that melodrama is a female-specific genre which must be understood in terms of free indirect discourse. My own essay examines a paradox in the representation of mother-daughter relationships in Chantal

Akerman's films in connection with interviews the filmmaker has given since the 1970s to show patterns of ambivalence characteristic of children of survivors of the Holocaust as well as of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's nomadic, "minor" literature.

It is not surprising that we are now seeing, thanks to the distance that the passing of time makes possible, many avenues toward questioning the Lacanian conceptual framework as it was more or less formalized in 1970s film theory, and the reconsideration of a handful of psychoanalytic terms that dominated that discourse and film theory, not only framing but limiting its questions. Stephen Heath takes on these issues directly in his essay "Cinema and Psychoanalysis: Parallel Histories." I quote a passage from his essay at length because it speaks directly to central issues that motivate this volume:

shifts and fluctuations can be seen in criticism from within psychoanalytic film theory of the conjunction of cinema and psychoanalysis developed in the wake of the journal *Screen*. Much of this criticism has been directed at what is regarded as a reduction of the spectator/film relation to one of pure specularity, effectively suturing cinema into an ideology of the subject that takes little account of the complexity of the latter's constitution (the notion of "suture" was too often limited to just some idea of the seamless effecting in dominant narrative cinema of the spectator-subject as contained unity, but the Lacanian-Freudian insistence is that there is no coherent subject to be thus simply accommodated). No doubt, in its concern to grasp the particular terms of subjectivity realized in a dominant cinematic institution, to demonstrate the subject positioning in which film-in-cinema involves the spectator (even as he or she may take their distances), *Screen* did at times put the weight so heavily on describing the representation made that it fell into an overdeterministic account, a theoreticist version of closure (already there potentially in the concept of suture itself, introduced as it was as part of an attempt to cast Lacan's work as "forming a system" and provide its formalization). *Screen's* point, of course, was an appropriation of psychoanalysis politically, insofar as it could be made conjuncturally useful, and notably as regards identifying and describing mechanisms of subject inscription for ideology. If such appropriation is open to charges of not being properly psychoanalytic, it remains that "cinema and psychoanalysis" necessarily opens up a field which will not be containable within some enclosure of psychoanalysis itself; as it remains too that attention needs to be given to what investment in the "properly" psychoanalytic carries with it in any given context. "Cinema and psychoanalysis" involves the specificity of psychoanalysis in a way that equally reconceives it, sets it at the distance from itself that its deployment in relation to cinema produces—and the same holds in reverse for cinema, reconceived by the psychoanalytic theory and concepts with which it is newly posed.

Heath begins with a vivid image of Lou Andreas-Salomé at the Urania Cinema in Vienna in 1913, who wrote: "cinematic technique is the only one

which allows a rapid succession of images approximating to our own imaginative activity, even imitating its volatility.” Her statement inaugurates a tour of early “questions of cinema” (the title of a collection of Heath’s essays) in the name of “figuration.” Heath’s essay reads, to my mind, as a powerful contemporary sequel to one of his most influential essays of the 1970s, “Narrative Space.” For Heath’s commitment to figuration as the basis of cinema has not changed—the editors of *Screen*, in their “Imaginary Signifier” issue, had already sounded a warning lest “knowledge [produced by psychoanalytic studies of film] will be of more value as corroboration of the theses of psychoanalytic theory than for its contribution to any understanding of the cinema.”⁹ It is this very point to which Heath, in one section of his essay, holds Slavoj Žižek these many years later in an effort to pull back reflection on psychoanalysis and cinema as a force for interrogating or pushing the limits of cinematic representation rather than using cinema to demonstrate Lacanian concepts.

Heath points out that Freud’s distrust of cinema, as exemplified by his famous refusal to lend his name to *Secrets of a Soul*, turned on the seeming impossibility for cinema to represent the theory and process of psychoanalysis. Reductiveness has not only been a problem for the representation of psychoanalysis in a film, it has presented a constant danger for psychoanalytic film theory which has been “eager to erect its own likenesses of cinema: whether as essence (the imaginary signifier, apparatus theory), as play of signifiers (available for ‘filmanalytic’ interpretation) or as reflection (offering a site for the display of psychoanalytic concepts).” Heath suggests a way out of this dilemma by citing unorthodox visions of cinematic experience and representation by which Freud’s modernist contemporaries, such as Virginia Woolf, Kafka, James Joyce and H.D., evoke questions that should still be at the heart of psychoanalytic film theory. In these writers, as in Freud and Lacan, psychoanalytic theory can never be reduced to static, “mastered” categories.

Žižek’s contribution to this volume, “Cyberspace, or the Unbearable Closure of Being,” considers cyber theory as it impacts psychoanalytic conceptions of the subject, principally through the vehicle of the “interface,” which he correlates with the frame and the Other Scene. Here we encounter the high-energy Žižek-effect at its most positively charged as Žižek leads us through a dizzying array of figures and cyber references on his inventive, convincing narrative trail, among them (retaining the order in which they appear in his text): J. G. Ballard, Plato, Lacan, Hegel, Schelling, Marx, Saki, *Star-gate*, Welles, Kafka, the Lascaux cave paintings, Virtual Reality (VR), Slovenia’s Cerknica lake as magic screen, Slovene author Janez Valvasor, *Terminator 2*, *Indiana Jones*, Deleuze, film noir and the *femme fatale*, Foucault, Chaplin, *pensée sauvage*, Eisenstein’s project to film *Capital*, Sherry Turkle, Heidegger, Internet Relay Chat (IRC) channels, Multiple User Domains (MUD), Allucquere Rosanne Stone, the Robocop, Judith Butler, John Searle’s

Chinese Room argument, artificial intelligence (AI), Kant, Marcuse, Freud, Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD), Malebranche as the philosopher of VR, Napoleon, Descartes, God, Aristotle, an Aztec priest, Schreber, Fredric Jameson, “Deep Ecology,” Stalin, *Othello*, de Gaulle, Dostoyevsky and Habermas.

Žižek asks: How do we get from Plato’s cave to a materialist dispositif? According to materialism, the status of true reality beyond the cave is an anamorphic fantasy which cannot be perceived directly, but only through its distorted reflection on the wall of the cave, its “screen.” The real line of separation is inside the cave, dividing the material reality the cavemen see around themselves from the elusive appearance of the “suprasensible” event reflected on the cave’s wall. As Lacan and Hegel emphasized, the suprasensible is appearance as appearance. To get from one sense of “interface” to another, Žižek reminds us that “in science fiction . . . a window or a door” is often used as the “passage into the fantasmatic dimension. . . . In the history of cinema, perhaps the greatest master of this art of elevating an everyday door or window into the fantasmatic place of passage was Orson Welles; in his version of Franz Kafka’s *The Trial*, for example, he systematically exploits the fantasmatic potential of the simple act of opening a door: Always they open onto bewilderingly different places. . . . The ‘next room’ in *The Trial* always suggests a repressed psychic horror.” Isn’t this, Žižek asks, the dispositif—the frame through which one can glimpse the Other Scene—of fantasmatic space from the Lascaux paintings to Virtual Reality? Isn’t the interface of a computer the last materialization of this frame? The key to the status of VR is the difference between imitation and simulation: VR doesn’t imitate reality, it simulates it. Where does that leave us? We occupy the space of “vanishing mediators.” We may be led to think of “consciousness” itself as a kind of interface, insofar as it is “the frame through which we perceive the universe,” but Žižek cautions that if we do so, we “foreclose the real.”

Marc Vernet’s “The Fetish in the Theory and History of the Cinema” speaks to utopian claims for digital audiovisual technologies from a different perspective. Vernet argues that there is a connection between the invisible in scopophilia and the unknowable in film libraries and archives. From his position as head of the new Bibliothèque du Film in Paris, he sees this as the basis of a desire “not to know.” Using Metz’s distinction between the perceptible and the visible, Vernet points out that digital technologies allow for physical and temporal advantages in film analysis, but they may have the unexpected effect of blocking the desire to do research because digitalized materials do not carry the same pleasure as looking at and handling rare originals. Vernet shows how “the unattainable text,” which Raymond Balfour described in an earlier technological era, is still pertinent in today’s digital environment.

Mary Ann Doane's essay, "Temporality, Storage, Legibility," brings us back to parallels between the prehistory of cinema and Freud's developing theories while invoking modernity, shock and developments in new recording technologies at the time of "early cinema." She refers, as Vernet does, to the concepts of retrieval and storage, but she does so in order to argue that Freud, the chronophotographer Marey and the cinema all grappled in importantly different ways with the concepts of time, storage, representation and legibility. While cinema was hailed in its early years as the perfect means of storing time, Marey's desire to represent time scientifically in objective and measurable terms led to illegibility when he recorded too many photographic traces in a single image. For Freud, time was antithetical to the notion of storage and the retention of traces in memory; instead, time emerged in his writing as discontinuity and as a secondary effect of the organism's need to protect itself from the increasingly intense stimuli of the outer world. While the early cinema would seem to be eminently readable, and thereby to escape the dilemmas of legibility facing Marey and Freud, it verged on meaninglessness in its desire to show the idiosyncratic, the detail and an opaque sense of here and now. This tendency generated anxiety because cinematic representation could potentially become the space of "real time" without significant demarcations that would provide its audience with a focus of attention. Despite the dominance of the actuality (films purporting to show "real events") in the first decade of the cinema, despite the extensive fascination with the camera's relation to "real time" and movement, and although the cinema was born of the aspiration to represent or store time, Doane argues that an important reason that narrative was quickly mobilized to structure cinematic time was to protect the subject from the anxiety generated by the idea that modernity's new technological media would move toward "total representation."

Doane's, Vernet's, Heath's and Žižek's essays, each one differently, turn on the historical direction which cinema and then digital media took, and they also look back to the founding premises of these developments which point to roads not taken. In fact, many of the essays in this volume show evidence of the increasing interest in the history of psychoanalysis and its relationships with the early history of the cinema: parallel histories instantiated in so many different ways over the past century.

This new art was mine, just as it was everyone else's. We had the same mental age: I was seven and knew how to read; it was twelve and it did not know how to talk. People said that it was in its early stages, that it had progress to make; I thought that we would grow up together. I have not forgotten our common childhood. . . . JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

The essays by David James Fisher, Peter Wollen, Janet Walker and Alain de Mijolla are, to a greater or lesser degree, involved with the famous history

of Sartre's "Freud scenario" and John Huston's film *Freud*. But their combined merits do not stand or fall on the cinematic or psychoanalytic value of the film; rather, that history is seen from four distinct perspectives as the nexus of unexpected historical, theoretical, clinical and textual concerns.

Psychoanalyst and intellectual historian David James Fisher, in "Sartre's Freud: Dimensions of Intersubjectivity in *The Freud Scenario*," argues that Sartre's screenplay for a film based on Freud, commissioned in 1958 by Huston and posthumously published in 1984, has been misinterpreted as a negligible work by scholars of Sartre and of Freud. Fisher, on the contrary, sees it as a key piece of writing which provides a humane, nonidealized biography of Freud during the first decade of his work, when he experienced his greatest anguish and made his most fundamental discoveries. Fisher analyzes Sartre's portrait according to three themes which he argues must be seen as interrelated and as key to Sartre's view of the simultaneous emergence of Freud the man and the discipline of psychoanalysis: (1) the dialectical relationship between anti-Semite and Jew in turn-of-the-century Vienna; (2) the relationship between physician and patient; and (3) the relationship between fathers and sons. Fisher's reading shows how Sartre proposed a concept of intersubjectivity which is central to all three of these points. An examination of Sartre's drafts for the Freud script as well as correspondence with Simone de Beauvoir shows that Sartre's research for this project and the long process of writing it led him to reverse, at least temporarily, his long-standing opposition to the theory and techniques of psychoanalysis.

In "Freud as Adventurer," Peter Wollen addresses the case of the "Freud scenario" differently, in order to show how Freud, John Huston and Sartre all saw themselves as adventurers seeking glory and an escape from the limitations of family life, as conquistadors. He quotes Freud's revealing and moving reaction upon seeing the Acropolis with his own eyes:

It seemed to me beyond the realm of possibility that I should travel so far—that I should "go such a long way." This was linked up with the limitations and poverty of our condition of life. My longing to travel was no doubt also an expression of my wish to escape from that pressure, like the force that drives so many adolescent children to run away from home. I had long seen clearly that a great part of the pleasure of travel lies in the fulfillment of these early wishes, that it is rooted, that is, in dissatisfaction with home and family. When first one catches sight of the sea, crosses the ocean and experiences as realities cities and lands which for so long had been distant, unattainable things of desire—one feels oneself like a hero who has performed deeds of improbable greatness.

Wollen points out how far Sartre's philosophy was from Freud's, as well as the gulf Sartre perceived between himself and John Huston. Quoting Sartre, "I readily subscribe to the verdict of an eminent psychoanalyst: I have no Superego," Wollen comments, "in other words, no guilt. (Is this so very different from Huston's remark about the unconscious, which Sartre derided:

‘In mine, there’s nothing at all’?)” Wondering how Freud and Sartre could become aligned, Wollen sees “the central issue at stake in any attempt to tell the story of Freud’s years of the discovery of psychoanalysis: the role played by the father in the life of his son.” In preparing his script, Sartre worked from four main sources: Freud’s letters to Fliess, *Studies on Hysteria*, *The Interpretation of Dreams* and the first volume of Ernest Jones’s biography. Wollen shows how Sartre managed to be amazingly faithful to these writings while at the same time “proposing and experimenting with his own method of enquiry, one which was radically different from Freud’s in its methodology.” Wollen demonstrates convincingly and elegantly that “the key to this achievement was Sartre’s assignment (by Huston) to the period of Freud’s early self-analysis, a period before Freudianism congealed into a system and psychoanalysis into an institution. Precisely, we might say, the period when Freud was still an adventurer, not yet (quite) a law-giver.”

Janet Walker turns our attention to a different subject in her essay, “Textual Trauma in *Kings Row* and *Freud*,” namely how these films handle the theme of incest. Walker examines them in the light of publicity materials and different versions of their scripts in connection with contemporary literature on post-traumatic stress and psychoanalytically informed film theory. She shows how incest affected both films’ operations of scenarization and censorship and resulted in the excision of certain explicit subplots and the oblique representation of others. Walker argues, however, that covert expressions of traumatic subjects remained in these films as “textual scars.” Psychoanalytic theories of dissociation are useful for the analysis of “traumatic (film) texts,” she continues, because they reject an either/or conception of real events versus psychic fantasies. This explains how the films are able to suggest simultaneously that incest really did occur and that it did not. In an age when incest accusations are often received as “false memories” based on mere fantasy, Walker emphasizes “the need to take back for feminism a conception of sexual assault that involves its psychic dimensions as well as its physical ones.”

In “Freud and the Psychoanalytic Situation on the Screen,” Alain de Mijolla addresses films that show Freud himself. These fall into two categories: home movies made by his contemporaries such as Philip Lehrman, Mark Brunswick, Princess Marie Bonaparte and René Laforgue, and fiction films. De Mijolla emphasizes that the psychoanalytic situation has almost never been shown in films of any kind: “nothing . . . is less cinematic, because nothing is less visual or less apt to provide the material for a dramatic scene. . . .” The tempo of analysis, for instance, is very different from that of the cinema. The events usually shown in films about psychoanalysis—the immediate fall into hypnotic sleep and the transference attached to hypnosis—are the opposite of the slow process of working through, including the significance of the breaks between a sequence of sessions and the duration of psychoana-

lytic therapy. The cinema has almost always failed to make psychic interiority meaningful on the screen.

*First touch me, astonish me, tear me apart, startle me, make me cry. . . .
You will please my eye afterward if you can.* DIDEROT

Excess is a familiar term in contemporary film theory, a term most frequently invoked, I think, in discussions of melodrama. In Joan Copjec's radical and explicitly feminist reading of *Stella Dallas*, "More! From Melodrama to Magnitude," excess is joined with a Lacanian notion of the structural logic of fantasy. Copjec maintains that the excess that distinguishes melodrama as a genre is female-specific and must be reconsidered in terms of free indirect speech ("in Pier Paolo Pasolini's words, with 'reanimated speech,' and with 'the purring of meditative thought, of grumbling, of regretting, of recriminating, etc.'"). Copjec argues that where "omniscient narration presents an objective world that is consistent because it lacks something" (life, contingency) to which a narrator brings intelligibility, free indirect narration represents a world that is profoundly ambiguous rather than incomplete. Countering both Peter Brooks, in his highly influential *The Melodramatic Imagination*, and film theorists of melodrama, Copjec suggests that melodrama constructs "an *indeterminate* reality" about which "nothing definite can be said" because melodramatic excess does not result from a prohibition that "closes off diegetic space by excluding something, but is . . . the cause of the inability of the diegesis to close itself off." Melodrama seems to comport an excess, "an unspecifiable 'more'," because something has not been prohibited or excluded. Rejecting the view that *Stella Dallas* and her world are antinomic, Copjec argues, counterintuitively, that the final scene presents us with a world that includes Stella, and that this is "an extraordinary accomplishment." Stella's passion is, in psychoanalytic terms, hysterical. The hysterical fantasy at issue, however, is not her union with Steven, but rather salvaging his relation to Helen and thereby forming a couple "from which she would be excluded."

Excess figures prominently in many of the essays in this collection. We find it at the beginning and at the heart of Doane's essay: "The advent of mechanical reproduction inaugurated a discursive thematics of excess and oversaturation that is still with us today. The sheer quantity of images and sounds is perceived as the threat of overwhelming or suffocating the subject." Heath invokes excess to describe Kafka's reaction to cinema: "'I can't stand it, perhaps because I am too visual.' Kafka pulls away from cinema as surface continuity of images, urges an excess in seeing, a more-visual of vision, the force, as Lacan would say, of the eye made desperate by the gaze." And later in his essay, excess describes what Heath calls "Žižek-film," the gesture toward figuration Žižek can perform, magician-like, in the lecture hall,

in which one perceives “cinema not as the vehicle of an exposition but as a matter of experience, on the edge of the real, at an extreme of psychoanalytic shock. Seen thus, film no longer subtracts from psychoanalysis . . . ; on the contrary, it exceeds it with the very excess with which psychoanalysis has to concern itself, that it faces, comes down to, impasses on.” Žižek’s essay is permeated with references to excess, for instance: “Insofar as the impact of VR is rooted in the dynamics of capitalism, no wonder that Marx’s analysis of capitalism, his emphasis on the necessary codependence between lack and excess, remains pertinent for our approach to VR.”

It’s too late. VERTIGO

Ayako Saito challenges the way Lacanian theory, as construed within film theory, has narrowed the field of possibilities of psychoanalytic approaches to cinema. Specifically, she draws attention to the question of affect and how it may be traced through textual analysis. In “Hitchcock’s Trilogy: A Logic of Mise en Scène,” she argues that affect has attracted little attention within psychoanalytic film theory because of the strong emphasis on the Lacanian psychoanalytic model, which revolves around the question of language and the gaze. Drawing on the writings of André Green (particularly his essay “The Question of Affect”), Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok as well as Raymond Bellour and Lacan, she examines *Vertigo*, *North by Northwest* and *Psycho* as components of a single filmic system in the light of three psychical structures: melancholia, mania and paranoia/schizophrenia. She demonstrates throughout the course of this textual and theoretical analysis the degree to which the narrative, visual style and dominant affectivity of each film (melancholic in *Vertigo*, manic in *North by Northwest* and paranoid in *Psycho*) are interrelated and are, in fact, determined by one another.

People of my parents’ generation told themselves: we are going to spare them the story of what happened to us. Because they did not transmit their histories, I searched for a false memory, a kind of imaginary, reconstructed memory rather than the truth, as if I had no access to the things that were true. . . . The jokes are part of the same thing, like a return of the repressed. The jokes were told because life was unbearable. It was a way of denying what happened through mockery, keeping it at a distance by making fun of it. When history becomes unbearable, you stage your own misery and laugh at it. CHANTAL AKERMAN¹⁰

My own essay, “Chantal Akerman: Splitting,” addresses a paradox in the representation of mother-daughter relationships in Akerman’s films by considering them in terms of André Green’s essay “The Dead Mother,” on the one hand, and literature on children of survivors of the Holocaust, on the other.

Mother-daughter relationships figure prominently in Akerman's films, and feminist film theory in the 1970s and 1980s took her films to be emblematic of many contemporary theoretical questions about the representation of women's subjectivity in film. Overwhelmingly this insistence was identified with Akerman's/the daughter's wish to show the crucial, positive importance of the mother and perhaps as a means by which the daughter might communicate indirectly with the mother, as suggested by the beautiful title of Brenda Longfellow's essay, "Love Letters to the Mother." But the questions of affect which Green poses in "The Dead Mother" allow us to consider Akerman's representation of the mother-daughter relationship from a different perspective, particularly when combined with literature on children of survivors of the Holocaust. For, since she began to make films, Akerman has emphasized in interviews that her mother had been in a concentration camp and that she would never speak about it. This essay addresses the contradictory feelings toward the mother experienced by a daughter of a survivor as represented indirectly in *Saute ma ville* (Blow Up, Town) and *Jeanne Dielman* which, taken together, represent psychological processes of splitting and ambivalence. Akerman described her distinctive approach to the cinema at the time *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna* was released by drawing an analogy with Kafka's "deterritorialization," his "minor literature," as it had been presented a few years earlier by Deleuze and Guattari. Her references to their reading of Kafka, as well as her own observations about Kafka's diaries and letters, provide a way to understand better two unique aspects of Akerman's films: first, her "voice" or her position of enunciation, which is presented to the audience as if it were split; and second, her unusual way—partly conscious and partly unconscious, I believe—of focusing her films on her personal experiences. These two aspects are related, for personal experience is presented through Akerman's mode of enunciation as if an invisible wedge had been forced between the represented experience and the audience: we look onto a stylized world that would not be called autobiographical in the usual sense, as we may observe of her more recent film, *Histoires d'Amérique*.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND REPRESENTATION:
THEME AND ENIGMA

"*She is crying, she is saved.*" LE MYSTÈRE DES ROCHES DE KADOR

Léonce Perret's 1912 *Le mystère des roches de Kador* was described as the first psychoanalytic film by the 1995 Pordenone Silent Film Festival. Here, the cinema itself is hailed as a tool for psychotherapy. Psychoanalysis and cinema join forces to cure a female subject—Suzanne—within a framework of conventional "mystery." According to the terms of her deceased uncle's will,