

This archive has been prepared by John Izod and Scott Feaster

Dear Colleagues,

Like everyone, I am cognizant of the boundary that separates clinical from academic work. But my *métier* allows me to offer a third by way of bridging the clinical and academic divide: the complete, entire, and subjective pleasure of film.

In “The Inner World of Trauma” (1996) Donald Kalsched writes that therapy provides a place for individuals whose self-care systems have broken down to play. By play he means co-creating with the therapist childhood’s lost “transitional object”. The T.V. series, “Brideshead Revisited” (BBC, 1992), allows the spectator to experience a transitional object first hand. When he arrives at Oxford, Sebastian Flyte carries with him a large teddy bear, named Aloysius. For the Anglo-Catholic Sebastian Aloysius refers to the wealthy Renaissance Italian youth who died young and still a virgin, the patron saint of students. The ten week T.V. series stopped most social intercourse in the United States on Sunday evenings for ten weeks. What viewers could not resist was Sebastian’s transitional object, which he carried to Oxford and then put back on the shelf (alas) when he made his first great friend, Charles Ryder.

Ideally, the lost transitional object in Jungian analysis is recreated for the traumatized individual through the transference. In his essay “The Psychology of the Transference”, (1946), Jung explicates the transference in the following way:

The unrelated human being lacks wholeness, for he can achieve wholeness only through the soul, and the soul cannot exist without its other side, which is always found in a ‘You.’ Wholeness is a combination of I and You, and these show themselves to be parts of a transcendent unity whose nature can only be grasped symbolically, as in the symbols of the *rotundum*, the rose, the wheel, or the *coniunctio* of Solis et Lunae. (16: 244-245).

In Jung’s words, the classic transitional object is a “transcendent unity”, bridging subjective fantasy and reality in the Eros of the consulting room. While some film art may be called by us “good” or “bad”, the concept of a film as a “transcendent unity” better accounts for the feeling of the spectator’s film going experience.

Take the example Clint Eastwood’s romantic love story, “The Bridges of Madison County” (1995). One can resist the love story. One can project one’s anxiety about the shadow upon the film. One’s projections come out as critical judgments and opinions. By contrast, if the spectator can sustain the images of Eros that we see in “Bridges of Madison County”, he or she may experience a “transcendent unity”.

The first flashback of the story depicts how Francesca meets the “National Geographic” reporter, Robert Kincaid, who stops to ask directions on a day that her husband and teenage children are away at the Iowa State Fair. Her separation from her

family is the psychological situation, analogous to the archetypal situation with which a fairy tale or myth begins, by which her character must be interpreted.

Francesca's character is revealed by how she first greets Robert on her front porch:

Robert: I have the distinct feeling I'm lost.
 Francesca: Are you supposed to be in Iowa?
 Robert: Yeah.
 Francesca: Well then you're not that lost.

The lines suggest that Robert is lost physically, but that it is the spirit that has gone out of Francesca's life. A G. I. wife who came to Iowa from Italy, Francesca has lost the meaning of Eros not as just biological sex but as spiritual connection. And the soul of this connection is evoked for the spectator by the art of the film.

Because she can show him better than tell him the way to Rossman Bridge, Francesca accompanies Robert there. While Robert sets up his camera to configure the next day's photo shoot (extravert sensation), Francesca stays on the bridge, reflecting on the experience (introvert intuition). Eastwood as auteur evokes her psychological situation by the diegetical (coming from the story) sounds. A fly buzzes around her face. She swats it. Otherwise silence, as Francesca walks to the shade of the bridge.

I read the bridge as a symbol of Francesca's need not to follow collective norms. But what is more important than my interpretation of the bridge is that I admit that my interpretation is subjective. The only "advice" I can give my colleagues as we embark on this seminar on a popular art form is to admit, lest we lose the pleasure, that how we read symbols is a matter of subjective opinion.

Cheers,
 Scott

Dear Leslie,

My point was that film is an art whose function is to entertain and give pleasure. Chief among the pleasures of film for me are symbols. I concur that symbols can be read different ways. What we must acknowledge is that how we interpret symbols is personal.

This I take to be equally important for academics and clinicians who purport to be Jungian. A discipline can be conceptually concise, but a film symbol can not be. Just as a Jungian analysis of an individual can't be, film symbols as a kind of therapy can't be.

That's why I propose that a film critic has to be like a therapist. Not because he can change society like a patient, but because the subject is the living art of our time.

In the context of IAJS, it may not be that "every view" is too subjective but that every view is not personal enough. You mention Quentin Tarantino. Some spectators find "Reservoir Dogs" (1992) irresistible. I'll have to order that on Netflix and get back to you because it's been a while since I saw it. Why did you pick it, and what do you feel about the images of torture?

It is not that different people like different films. The Jungian problem (to me) is that they do not reflect enough on what they like.

Cheers,

Scott

Dear Scott et al,

I would like to make a few observations about the relationships of films, symbols, archetypes and all the rest that I have found useful when teaching psychology of the media here in Adelaide.

As Scott says, different people like different films but don't reflect enough on what they like. And, one might add, when they do reflect they are content with too little - perhaps single-orientation interpretations. Von Franz (in her Introduction to the Interpretation of Fairytales) observed that fairytales, as examples of stories reflecting the collective unconscious, can and should have many interpretations. You can go into a tale from an almost infinite number of directions and get differing, but equally valid, sets of interpretations. This works for films, too, or at least for films that are psychologically 'dense' and not too rigidly controlled. The Silence of the Lambs, for example. The most obvious interpretation here is to take a 'Starling' orientation with the Starling character representing (more or less) a female ego undergoing development away from a father complex. This leads us in the direction of a Cinderella-like fairytale (as the makers of the film well knew): to me there is a strong resemblance to The Beautiful Wassilissa. Alternatively, one can take a 'Buffalo Bill' orientation and try to understand the motivations of the sort of complex or the sort of male he seems to represent. Yet again, one could even take a typological perspective: possibly here the message might be about the need for the protagonist (arguably a sensing type who is not fully functioning and is only in the top third of her class) being taught by Hannibal to use the intuition function - most notably in his little speech about Marcus Aurelius. (And to digress here, the various MBTI-centred type associations have produced an enormous number of film analyses, based usually on typology alone: reading them is rather like drinking only the top inch of a cup of coffee.)

Second, then, is the problem of concreteness. As already well described, the danger of 'seeing' archetypes in objects within a film. I have spent many hours trying to persuade students not to reduce the miasmatic feelings that a film (or play, or book) induces in them to a 'nothing but' piece of scenery. And I argue that the things that they introject from a

work of art are perhaps best regarded as no more than hooks for projection. (alternatively, invitations to projection). There are so many of these hooks. Arrangements and repetitions of language, music, indexical camera shots, the dynamics between actors and so on forever. Some are deliberately placed (vide the works of Lucas, Boorman, even Golan and Globus) some are not (?Casablanca) and there are all kinds of variants as to the creative responsibility for hook manufacture: from the single author of a book or painting to the inputs of writers, actors, camera gurus, directors, producers and the rest. The creation of hooks is perhaps most apparent in solo singing acts: from the multi-phallic invitations to erotic animus projections of a Julio Inglesias performance onwards.

Third, experiencing the performing arts involves of course something approaching a dreamlike state - as, again, well described in the literature. And the projections of the experiencer may well, often, resemble those discussed in therapy. But the difference is that (at least, without the help of film critics) there is no therapist. One brings up material in therapy so as, with help, to understand it and hopefully move on: at least in Jungian therapy. For me, a serious problem with psychoanalysis is the way that early (traumatic) memories are sometimes discussed so repeatedly: so that the danger surely is that one may be acting out complex-based material and reinforcing rather than removing it. And there is nothing to prevent a film goer from seeing a film that evokes unresolved and problematical material dozens of times: perhaps enjoying the process and reinforcing a neurotic configuration. Do-it-yourself stuck. One could argue that seeing a Rambo movie repeatedly may not help a male who had a problem with infantile rage and a neurotic need for father-love? I believe there is a very real danger of seduction by one's unresolved business when it is put into a film

Finally, it can sometimes be helpful to experience a creator's complete works. Most writers (of books, plays or films), for example, have only one important psychological configuration to reveal (Shakespeare is of course the exception). Among playwrights, for example, John Osborne's most famous play was *Look Back In Anger* -supposedly a left-wing political piece of work. Having played the lead role in this, I discovered that the protagonist's real motivation was best understood with reference to Jung's description of the manifestations of complexes based around the archetype of the abandoned child. Later on, reading all Osborne's works, it became apparent that this theme is present in every play (26 in all). The manifestations vary, the politics (and sociopolitical objects of hatred) go from left to right, the cruel parent may be father mother or wife: but the neurotic pain remains and does not diminish with time. Seen in context the oeuvre strongly represents an unresolved and archetypally-based complex. Another British playwright, Joe Orton, can be regarded as possessed by Trickster energy. And Peter Shaffer will be discussed in Zurich.

David Haynes

2 March 2008

Colleagues

I enjoyed the contributions to the discussion that reflected on my opening statement and found myself broadly in agreement with them all except where I was taken to have been arguing for a reductive reading of films. I had hoped to be doing the opposite and apologise if I had not expressed that clearly.

I want this week to reflect on an aspect of cultural heritage which first drew me toward the scholarly work which I attempt. It starts with a study first published half a century ago describing the evolution of a topos.

A key text that I read while researching for my doctorate was Maren-Sofie Røstvig's *The Happy Man* (2nd edition. Trondheim: Norwegian Universities Press, 1962). My own thesis focused on the image of the garden in English poetry for the century from 1590: the five-year labour which that demanded a minuscule endeavour compared with Røstvig's. She took as her terrain the metamorphoses of the *Beatus Ille* tradition from its origins in Horace and Virgil through the poetry of their Renaissance admirers and, in due turn, their successors to 1760.

What she recorded in finest detail was continuity and change in a single topos. That configuration celebrates what it presents as the richly deserved contentment of the man who retreats from the corrupt stews of city life to his country estate. There he enjoys the blessed life of the gentleman farmer who simultaneously serves and is served by his people (both family and estate workers) in an economy of notionally perfect circularity that (in its Edenic echoes) plainly has divine sanction.

Røstvig's magnum opus draws the links between the many poems that lionised the Happy Man and shows how each poet knew the work of some of his (rarely her) predecessors, varying the tradition to suit either his personal temperament or that of the times. As my own work evolved over a long course of study of the garden, it attempted to honour Røstvig's meticulous methodology, but eventually opened for me a rather different fascination.

Garden design for the wealthiest patrons changed constantly through the hundred years from 1590. The period commences with the last manifestations of the four-square knot garden, the *hortus conclusus*, cynosure of the eyes of Tudor gentlefolk. That swelled into the majestic Jacobean mount garden. And then in the Caroline era it aggrandised into Le Notre's and his British imitators, massive celebrations of landowners, power ^ long avenues and paths focusing on the Happy Man's terrace. These alterations were greatly admired by British gentry (i.e. that class of person who were writing, sometimes exquisitely and with passion, about that image).

For the interpreter of signs and symbols, the changing gardens spoke of great underlying ideological changes ^ and these in their broad outline were neither difficult to understand

or report on. Indeed, since (albeit altered to suit the circumstances of the young North American states) the *Beatus Ille* topos supplies a not insignificant fragment of the European heritage swept up by the West, I found occasion to explore it further in *Screen, Culture, Psyche*.

Here lay the puzzle that became a mystery the underlying parameters of which left a trace of disturbance in my imagination that happily is not to this day wholly resolved. Here, the thing: despite the feast of horticultural invention displayed in the grounds of the wealthy, the values inherent in the idea of the garden had not altered for Spenser, Donne, Jonson, Carew, Marvell, Milton, Vaughan and their many imitators. How could this be explained when the gardens of those who could afford them had unabashedly diverted their prime focus from the celebration of Christian piety to that of conspicuous wealth? To be sure there are answers to be found in the arena of cultural consciousness. They include an enduring admiration among the learned for poetry that imitated, the classical masters; and the sense that the *Beatus Ille* tradition was in tune with Christian values. Nonetheless the exuberant innovations on the ground blossomed with an energy that the later poets in my period could not have missed. Yet in their writing they either could not, or did not care to touch it.

My thesis, were I to rewrite it today, would argue that something more potent than the artistic conventions active in the cultural conscious draws poets, painters or filmmakers to topoi that are used recurrently over a long period.

As I have had occasion to remark elsewhere, I never teach my course on the western but some student writes about the meaningful distinction between male characters wearing black and white hats. My student is not discussing films released prior, let us say, to the Second World War, when such distinctions did sometimes hold, but those made in the last quarter century

Here, the question: when examining topoi that present over generations, do we find symbols arising from the cultural or the transpersonal unconscious, or both? When filmmakers have long since ceased to produce oppositions in the West that simplistic, what does the identification of the white hat/ black hat binary opposition as a current phenomenon reveal? I'm open to the view that my teaching is not up to scratch, but my hunch is that something else is going on here.

Enjoy the week!
John

Dear David Haynes,

I am responding to your message:

" Finally, it can sometimes be helpful to experience a creator's complete works. Most writers (of books, plays or films), for example, have only one important psychological configuration to reveal (Shakespeare is of course the exception). Among playwrights, for

example, John Osborne's most famous play was *Look Back In Anger* -supposedly a left-wing political piece of work.

Having played the lead role in this, I discovered that the protagonist's real motivation was best understood with reference to Jung's description of the manifestations of complexes based around the archetype of the abandoned child.

Later on, reading all Osborne's works, it became apparent that this theme is present in every play (26 in all). The manifestations vary, the politics (and sociopolitical objects of hatred) go from left to right, the cruel parent may be father mother or wife: but the neurotic pain remains and does not diminish with time. Seen in context the oeuvre strongly represents an unresolved and archetypally-based complex. Another British playwright, Joe Orton, can be regarded as possessed by Trickster energy."

I have a great interest in the performing arts and have considered the relative complex driven aspects of a performer and his/her performance, which may in turn affect the audience's response. So far my observations suggest that the performer who manages to have had many thoughts about how he/she will interpret the piece will be the one who convinces the audience of their performance as the best/very good interpretation. This argues against the complex driven performer who is limited to the one expression (unaware of other options - the complex narrows the vision). Perhaps this is a bit similar to how fairy tales have become fairy tales, by shedding the strictly personal complex. And perhaps reflects how long a work of art stays as an active/sought out piece of art within a culture (bravo Shakespeare and Mozart).

Best Wishes, Barbara Miller

Dear Barbara,

Thank you for your interesting response. I entirely agree that the psychologically whole and complex performer will produce the best performances - over a wide range of roles that is. One might compare Anthony Hopkins with the much driven Richard Burton from the same area of Wales!

My Honours Psych thesis rather long ago was actually a study of the personality parameters of actors, using the Adjective Check List (that yields 37 personality parameters). A group of local theatre directors were asked to assess the actors' abilities - that is to produce good performances in a wide variety of roles (directors assessments correlated about .75 - good reductive stuff). The major finding was that there is a 'typical' actors' personality profile - including high aggressiveness, high need for succorance and a desire to play adapted child roles, but that this profile was absent in the top one-tenth of actors, who were essentially psychologically balanced and liked to play 'free child'.

Do you have any thoughts on preparation for the actor? I have often felt that it is a form of descent into the unconscious, without a supporting therapist, to find those inner

structures that best correspond to the feelings, thoughts and then actions that constitute the current role. Then making use of these structures in performance: and not just once but maybe twice a day and for weeks. Potentially a dangerous process, one that may result in overwhelm, more or less, by the structures so disturbed. And one where it is all too easy to be seduced into roles that stir up one's active, unresolved complexes: to be complex-driven as you so precisely put it.

Best Wishes David Haynes

Dear John and all,

I want to start by saying how fantastic it is to have a seminar with yourself and Scott Feaster, and how it makes the difficulties of IAJS all the more worthwhile. Your previous message on transpersonal symbols versus the cultural unconscious using the Renaissance changes in garden design and modern westerns was so illuminating and scholarly.

For the question of the transmission of symbols is so pertinent and far reaching. Are they passed on materially as motifs and ideas in culture, energised by money or even as money, as the Marxists and post-Marxists say? Or is there in addition (for no one would deny the matter of culture *matters!*), a creative shaping, neo-biological, transpersonal element?

Andrew Samuels has done fascinating work on this from the political perspective in developing the idea of political forms. I believe it is in *Politics on the Couch*, but Andrew will correct me. I made use of this invaluable idea writing about Hamlet in Jung as a Writer.

Also, the question of the transmission of symbols must go to the heart of Don Fredericksen's provocative argument about popular culture. *Please* correct me if I am misrepresenting you, Don, but I think the very cogent and persuasive argument is that capitalist postmodern culture, in particular that of Hollywood, has drained the mythic symbol of any true numinosity and imaginative creativity in popular culture, and popular film in particular.

Allied to this view, it would seem to me, is Wolfgang Iser's that the soul of modern man is where his heart is, in money and technology. Does the soul survive in popular culture, in popular film?

My own instinct here is to try to argue against the pessimistic conclusion that the soul is dying in media technology. Although I do find Don's work very persuasive, and so, as I have publicly admitted to Don, do my students!

Here, it may be that research such as Luke Hockley's on cinema, Jung and affect, may be a way forward, or Christopher Hauke's pioneering study of the unconscious in the process of film making.

Personally, I have found the Coen brothers, *No Country for Old Men*, both mythical and symbolic. Is there a category of 'quality' mainstream cinema that is less subject to the degraded 'symbol' than the formula blockbuster?

Surely such a film as *No Country for Old Men* is part of what John Izod has just talked about in the subtle, knowing westerns in which a director knows that putting the bad guy in black (and in a bad hair cut!), is a quotation as well as a moral *sign*. Yes, Javier Bardem's clothes and hair are a sign in being a metonym of his evil role in the film, one wholly evident to the average film goer steeped in the simple codes of the history of film making. It is a sign in Jung's differentiation of sign and symbol (quoted by Fredericksen), because now the public is so media savvy, the dark clother stranger, carries no mystery. Yes, but no. Film is about process; it is still designed (or am I completely out of date in this DVD age) to be viewed in a darkened collective ritual space. What about a film, a director's vision and an actor's performance that takes the *absolute knowableness of the sign and makes it mysterious again*? I am haunted by Bardem's performance because the character defies our mythic categories and thereby actually come alive in them. Bardem's killer is death, is the obsession mobilised as money, is the banality of a wasteland of cultureless modernity, is even, as well come to see as the Vietnam references creep in, that which cannot be defeated by American imperial power. At the end, the woman tried to stop Bardem from embodying fate by refusing to toss a coin for her life. We assume she does not survive but in the ignorance of her fate, she, one who has come to stand for relationship against the blank deathly connection of the gun, in the audience's ignorance, I would argue that another symbol is born. Bardem exits the movie limping into suburbia having just not killed two young boys and insyead accepted their help. Does he corrupt their kindness with his money or is he forced into a human gesture, of weakness, by their innocence?

Is he the deadly violence of imperial America as the shadow of the suburbs or is he fatally maimed by them .

For me, the power of the film is transpersonal in ways that energised what is political and cultural in it.

To return momentarily to John Izod's Renaissance gardens, alchemy must have been part of the vision of paradise, the good place. Could we playfully over-turn the usual arguments in our respective disciplines and argue that the changes in garden design, the growth of wealth, power and ostentation behind them, are the worldly nigredo aspect of social alchemy? What if the *process* of the transformation of symbols was really the engine of culture in alchemy as a social process as well as a psychological and chemical one?

Just some thoughts!

Susan

Dear David and all,

I came in and found a number of letters on film today, to which I will respond tomorrow. Today, I will remark on yesterday's.

First, to David, my co-presenter at Zurich: now I plan to re-screen "Equus" and see what I think.

I am struck by the range of opinion the seminar has elicited, but particularly the comment that film is numinous. I may need an anti-depressant to deal with this vexed topic, but please permit me to try to distinguish between film as numinous and a numinous experience possible through film.

I read Jung to mean by the numinous an experience which formerly could be felt in organized religion but now has the form of individual experience as a spur to individuation. I think that is one potent area where film and Jung overlap.

When at the Academy Awards, I was struck and moved by the long lists of deaths of film makers and actors, including Michelangelo Antonioni, Ingmar Bergman and the young Heath Ledger who died this year, was that numinous? For me it was.

Last evening, I watched one of the most charming films, Federico Fellini's "La Strada" (1954). On the DVD, Martin Scorsese gives the introduction. He states that the humanity of the film was influenced by Italian neorealism and the debt it owed to the Franciscans. But, as Scorsese adds, "La Strada" goes beyond neorealism into the realm of the circus and what he calls "Felliniesque" style. I would call this style a vehicle of the individual perception of the numinous.

"La Strada" means "The Road". To me the road in Fellini's films symbolizes the individual as opposed to the collective path to self-realization. The suffering of Gelsomina represented for me the pain of the anima as function in our collective world. I felt her emotions and any part that I play in the repression of the feminine was purged, not because someone lectured me but because I could understand. As Scorsese aptly states: "One doesn't know if the music created the images or the images the music."

Cheers, Scott

Dear All,

John has introduced the image of the garden, perhaps somewhat unexpectedly, into a debate about cinema and psyche. It strikes me that one of the interesting things about

gardens is that as an image it has both personal and collective qualities. On the one hand we have the intimacy of the garden of our home, on the other there are the large formal gardens of which John writes so eloquently. As we know, gardens also have a religious and mythological aspect.

It is in the individual experience of the collective that we find part of ourselves which we sometimes term archetypal. Gardens can be like that. I want to suggest it is not always the grand geometrical garden, nor the great gardens of history, nor the mythological gardens

of our legends and religious stories which move us, although of course they can. Instead, perhaps it is the everyday experiences of our own backyards which can open and sensitise us to the profoundly psychological; certain aspects of the ubiquitous can be affective.

So too cinema is both personal and collective. Just like those grand gardens it is not necessarily the great film by the outstanding director that mobilise the most affect. If affect is in part the result of the encounter of the individual with collective, then in this awakening of hidden complex material the psyche seeks out and finds what it needs. This may not be beautiful, aesthetic or refined. Indeed, there is every possibility it might be the opposite - the dream and the underworld (to borrow a title from Hillman).

John has commented on how his students reduce the complexities of good and evil to the black and white colours of the hats worn by cowboys in the movies. My students have been known to do the same. In so doing, they reduce the symbolic to the semiotic. Sometimes they do the opposite and take the semiotic and try and turn it into the symbolic.

Film studies has taught them to do just that, so we should not be too surprised that students who are new to thinking in psychological and mythological terms use the tools at their disposal. The new edition of *The Cinema Book*, a copious 600 page volume, doesn't contain entries for affect, emotions, feelings but its index does list voyeurism, scopophilia and gaze theory.

If it is the individual in the garden which embodies the interplay between individual and collective then this is bringing something new into being. This new sense (I think image is a good a term as any for it) somehow encapsulates the meaning of the experience. I haven't resolved this in my own mind but I currently regard this as the 'third image' - not me, not the garden but something else. So too in the cinema our bodies, minds and imaginations contain and express these 'third images' and I like to think this gets us a little closer to understanding why fictional films have real meaning and power for us. Clinically, we are in the realm of the analytic dyad.

So I want my psychology and my understanding of movies to be rooted in the everyday. As Susan reminds us, symbols have a transformative quality and I remain optimistic that approached in the right frame of mind cinema can transform the everyday and reveal our role in shaping ourselves and our society.

Luke Hockley

Dear David,

I am now responding so specifically to your query that I am unsure if this still is to be sent to the whole discussion list, but I leave this as an option to those who moderate the discussion.

(Just an aside, I find it interesting to note how and when we are engaged enough to respond to the discussion.) The performing arts has engaged my interest most of my life, my own participation has been as a cellist. I continue to perform, additionally, I am a Jungian analyst (trained in Zürich), and recently received my Ph.D. from Leiden Univ. (the Netherlands) in Anthropology.

David: "the psychologically whole and complex performer will produce the best performances." Yes, interesting. In Masud Khan's introduction to *Holding and Interpretation - Fragment of an Analysis* by D.W. Winnicott, Khan writes that Winnicott was asked by a group of Anglican priests for his guidance on how to differentiate between a person who seeks their help because he is sick and needs psychiatric treatment, and one who is capable of helping himself through talking with them. Winnicott's answer: "If a person comes and talks to you and, listening to him, you feel he is boring you, then he is sick, and needs psychiatric treatment. But if he sustains your interest, no matter how grave his distress or conflict, then you can help him alright." Could we say that an expression of illness is boring, but a story (tragic or comic) about an expression of illness told by a healthy person is animating?

Do I have thoughts on the preparation for an actor? My sharing will need be as a musician, and we can see if there are similarities. Long ago a musicologist, who started out as a violinist, told me a dream that changed his course of study. In the dream he was standing on stage playing violin, he looked into the public and on each of the many seats sat his very critical father. What would he have needed to do to navigate his negative father complex so that he eventually performed successfully? I think he was wise to skip that lesson, it is even for the top one-tenth not easy to navigate. What appears to be necessary is to develop so that the most critical ear is one's own. For a musician there is always the structure provided by the musical instrument, wherever he/she may go for inspiration.

A distinction can be made between the listener and the performer: the listener is free to wander, the performer never. Perhaps I would say to a budding performing artist, "It is a discipline, go and perfect it."

Thank you for encouraging me to respond, with best wishes, Barbara

Dear Susan,

I could not help but respond to your provocative insights around *No Country* and the character Bardem plays so chillingly. You mentioned that "Bardem's killer is death" - I wondered how you meant that ... psychologically? I read an article in last week's New Yorker and the writer also stated he saw this character as "death". I saw the character as more of the epitome of raw violence. As we know, violence may or may not produce actual death and death is not always violent. Violence can produce psychological death that we do not always see and you seemed to allude to this in the observation of the woman at the end of the film testing fate as it were. Her ignorance of her fate I think is exactly what the Coen Bros show most profoundly in their films - that we as humans are ignorant or perhaps more naive to fate or even to destiny - and this (as the Greeks knew) is very dangerous.

The young boys at the end also illustrated this idea - that if we remain ignorant and / or naive to violence (for example) then we risk stepping into that which we are not prepared for nor do we have an understanding about - a violent action/behavior/relationship, etc. There were obvious choices the boys could have made - go call the police or get help from neighbors. Instead, they chose (out of ignorance /naivety) to step into relationship with this unknown dangerous field. Who affected who in this move? As you say: "Does he corrupt their kindness with his money or is he forced into a human gesture, of weakness, by their innocence?"

Following your thoughts on corruption of kindness, if I imagine the film or even these kid's lives forward, I wonder what ramifications this relationship with violence produces within or inflicts upon them? If I imagine the violent character forward, I do not see an affect or change upon him. He epitomizes violence so well in that he shows how disconnected he is from himself (he feels nothing) and certainly humanity. There is no limbic connection, as if he were a shark or reptile. I think violence does hold and exhibit this type of energy, therefore it cannot be moved by innocence....but it is very interesting psychologically and mythologically as it pertains to the culture.

I agree with you in that this particular character seems to defy our mythic categories and I wonder if this is due to the observation that violence (following the thread that this character is violence in the raw) has been traditionally seen through the image of war and now perhaps we see it as young boys (kids) with guns...our mythic categories are changing as the image changes. We follow the image. The violent acts we witness daily in the usa - kids with guns killing others - are they following the image of violence and stepping into relationship with violence out of ignorance and naivety, or are they creating a new image for us all around violence? I suspect both, but wonder what the thinking around this might be?

Am I reading your observations correctly? They are as always insightful and certainly produce a lot of thought/reflection.

Lori Pye

Dear All

These recent posts focusing on the performer has made me think about film as event, in contrast to, for example theatre as event, and to what extent it reflects 20th and 21st century ways of being.

Theatre is a profoundly reflexive form: by virtue of its *liveness* it makes us feel alive: in the present moment (and never again in precisely this way) actor enacts the text, interacts with fellow actor, interacts with audience and thus a participatory event is created in which the audience is emphatically a crucial element. Thus world is reflected back to us (the active witnesses) as “world”, but a world which we have co-created through our participation. It expresses beautifully the ontological coherence of our openness and the openness of the world to us, and the fullness of the intertwining of inner and outer, body and soul, I and other. If theatre holds up a mirror to nature, the mirroring is somehow two-way. Moreover, although the piece may have been directed, coordinated by one person in rehearsal, and although the text may have been written by one person, what we witness on the night is plural: various different artists display their different worlds, acting and interacting in a model of unity in diversity - and we there is a deep mimetic response in the plurality of our own inner world. And if we come back the next night we witness and participate in a different play.

As an event, Film seems strangely thin and univocal in comparison. We sit in the dark, establishing a private connection with what we are shown. Our attitude is passive, knowing as we do that we are watching a finished product, perfect, enclosed, untouchable... endlessly repeatable. No reaction of ours can affect what we see. Yet we are most certainly affected by the film. In contrast with theatre, the movement seems all one way. And so it is intended. The film has been manufactured to affect us in single ways, and, however many individuals may have contributed to its making, it is, in the end a single perspective, literally. Our essential psychic plurality ensures of course that no two individuals will see the same film, but the form itself militates against that pluralism. It is no coincidence that the concept of brainwashing is so frequently imaged as filmic (as in *Clockwork Orange* among many examples), there is something totalitarian about it (Stalin and Hitler were both film-lovers!). And it works extraordinarily well as propaganda, not just in its *Triumph of the Will* form, but more insidiously. Without the tidal wave of Hollywood product in the 20th century would American culture have succeeded in achieving such hegemony? This is a colonial tool whose power the British Empire could only have dreamt of. It's hard to imagine any kind of theatrical event achieving as much. Theatre seems to ask too much of us to make good propaganda (Brecht anyone?): it stimulates precisely the qualities which are offended by the kind of overwhelming engulfment which film subjects us to. (And it is theatre which invariably gets banned by the authoritarians, not because of its content but because its very form is somehow subversive to structures that want to exert control) In theatre the audience is always both in and out, aware of itself but simultaneously suspending its disbelief. No wonder Jung compares active imagination with theatre in CW14: “Although, to a certain extent, he looks on from outside, impartially, he is also an acting and suffering figure in the drama of the psyche”. For Jung this is the doubleness of attention required for the

work of bringing conscious and unconscious together, and it reflects the ambiguity of psyche. Film, as has been remarked many times, is closer to a dream experience, it overwhelms and washes us away, and we awake only when we emerge from the darkened room. The event lacks any participatory element.

Yet while theatre has been slowly dying for many years, film is not only the dominant art-form of the 20th century but, despite some rocky decades, seems yet again to be in rude health. This surely speaks volumes about what it is to be modern, and what we require in an art form in the modern world. And what about the post-modern? Where are the post-modern masterpieces of cinema. One can imagine how a meta-cinematic sensibility might be enormously fertile fed back into film: able to comment on precisely the problems I have drawn attention to here. There does seem to be a turn in the direction of playful self-referentiality in recent film, a self-conscious framing of cinema as cinema, but as in much post-modern art it too often seems clever-clever, an adolescent smirking spot-the-reference jokiness without real humour or depth.

I have chosen to take up a provocative tone in this posting. I don't mean to denigrate film as an art-form. There are undoubtedly great cinematic masterpieces which, like all great art, repay infinite re-viewings. As it happens I love the cinema, product, place and event. It's just that when I think of theatre, I can't help thinking about what film lacks.

Mark Saban

There is something very important I think that various participants are referring to, and that Susan articulates: i.e. that "transmission" and "transpersonal" are closely related, and this association may well have to do with "soul" and with John's allusion to "dreaming forward" that we experience watching films.

A "soul" is also recognized in its transformative powers and its collective powers – as Luke is saying too in the garden allusion – "soul" is always at the same time collective and personal, individual. Is that its archetypal nature? (After all a "soul" is not a thing.)

The shimmer of the back and forth is (perhaps) where the numinous lies. It is at our center as individuals and we share this sense with others as participants joined closely to a collective. We sense this sharing in the "places" where we apply personal energy to what matters to us (this is the political energy outside the narrowing "mainstream" of the malfunctioning civic collectivity of the world which I think Andrew talks about, no?). And also football games...pop music raves, etc.

The philosopher Vico describes this flickering of sensations too. He says it derives from our overpowering awareness of the contingency of individuality over against our embedded personal sense of a universal type in us: we suddenly sense the pre-articulate beings we always have remained, as undifferentiated from the world we abide in as

children are. This anxiety makes it a necessity to transform our culture; we apply ourselves to cultivate that differentiation as civic individuals, and as poets, to adapt the mysterious world. Vico called this providential, and while it was a very different capacity than a God's capacity (if you can even talk about that), it nevertheless rested on a world provided or "given". This interplay was creative and sparked with energies – numinous?

Leslie Gardner

Dear John and Scott,

Thanks so much for opening up this seminar. Interesting the discussion about the garden, I've just been to a launch of "Reading the Garden: The Settlement of Australia" by Katie Holmes, Susan Martin and Kylie Mirmohamadi (Katie and Sue are La Trobe University academics) – in response to Luke's comments on the backyard, there's a chapter here dedicated to 'Greening the suburbs' – the pride of family snaps taken in the backyard, the significance of land ownership (interesting in the light of our recent indigenous reconciliation pledge) and the moves to recapture a sense/smell of England particularly in 60s Australia. It seems to me only since 2006 have we here in Australia, on a more mass suburban backyard-inner city apartment level, been forced through the fear of draught, to cut the botanical umbilical cord and refocus our sense of aesthetics to the natives of our own country.

So how does this feed back to film? There a scene in John Hillcoat's, 'The Proposition', where the newly arrived English police captain (Ray Winstone) and his wife set up a small home and garden in the outback. There's a great shot that looks out from the captain's house to a seemingly endless expanse of raw, dirt-swept, red-brown, unbothered land. The most gut wrenching thing about this image is his wife's 'just' surviving garden - a desperate, sentimental attempt to capture England and a loathing for any form of otherness. This is of course my take on the scene, but in teaching terms the images can be approached from a range of theoretical positions and disciplines. For my work it would be related to Jung - to maya, to a desperate need for soul.

So is it an imposition to 'apply' a specific set of theoretical ideas to a visual text – is it an artificial, 'forced' reading? I get this all the time, and I'd have to say, of course yes it is. What am I trying to teach, Jung or film? I guess like others have said in this forum, it's the space between the text and the audience where we find meaning. There's also a space between the ideas we're applying to the text and the text itself. So it's a double whammy place/space of our own creation – that is where Jung and film become ours, just ours. And if this space is 'large' enough to hold us in a kind of rapture, no matter what the perceived cultural value of the text might be, then I believe we are changed (if only by degrees) and have grown a bit more. Is it an Eden of sorts – a way to green our own inner backyard?

Terrie Waddell

La Trobe University, Australia

Dear Colleagues,

In response to Mark's claim about the death of theatre I must say I hope that, like Mark Twain's, this demise is greatly exaggerated. Although Dionysos has been squelched numerous times by Apollo and by the church, he has arisen, anew, often within the confines of the church that attempted to destroy him. Witness the Mystery Plays that grew from the church itself after the Pope had succeeded in burying the theatre for 500 years. Look at Cromwell's brutal banishment of theatre that only made it spring up stronger and considerably randier in the Restoration. Just a couple of examples among many that testify to the power possessed by this oldest of the arts. I won't belabor the point, but the theatre is here to stay in one form or another, I'm convinced, because its universality might qualify it as an archetype.

About the other discussion, concerning the way in which actors can access the unconscious, certainly the sensory recall method works toward that end, allowing the feeling tone of the recalled experience to create the reality of a similar experience. Going through memory and accessing the unconscious associations is similar to Stanislavski's method, but there are many variations of the same process. Grotowski and to an extent, Suzuki use an opposite approach, finding the emotion through physical means that trigger the emotional response. Try stomping around like a storm trooper with clenched jaw and saying "I love you," with conviction. Then try "I hate you," and the correspondence between body, head, and heart becomes clear. Acting is a way of accessing the archetypes of your own unconscious and the fact that it is in many cases an instinctual process creates an instant connection with those mysterious inhabitants of your psyche.

This is easier for certain personality types than for others; for instance the feeling intuitive has a straight route. For primarily thinking types the character needs to be understood in an intellectual way before the process can take place, but neither type seems to be superior to the other in terms of finding the character. It does benefit the director to know how the actor functions though, since it allows him or her to approach the character according to the actor's dominant rational function.

These characters, by the way, sometimes erupt out of the unconscious and shock the actor with their reality, taking over and showing him or her precisely who they are. That can be a powerful and sometimes unsettling experience.

Best,
Sally Porterfield

Dear Lori and Susan,

"No Country for Old Men" is a lovely film. My students got it, but I didn't. Did they see something that I did not because it is their culture, movies? That is why I read of Susan's use of the cultural unconscious with such interest.

One way into the film, narrative sympathy, I confess did not work for me. Consequently, the protagonist, Sheriff Ed Tom Bell (Tommie Lee Jones) remained a mystery, limiting my both my understanding and empathy. (Whether he is the protagonist or not is another question).

I accept that Joel and Ethan Coen's (the film auteurs) serial killer genre expresses American anxiety about its complexes about freedom, individualism and innocence. Americans allow freedom to own guns but are then surprised when people use them in civil society. Energy from this complex accounts for why Anton (Javier Bardem) so fascinates.

How to apply the cultural unconscious to film remains an open question. Jung used the concept to help us get past our differences. Presumably, spectators of other nationalities and histories have their own cultural complexes about freedom and choice. The cultural complexes are the particular expression of a universal need. The animated feature, "Persepolis", does this well. But members may want to review Jung's diagram of the psyche and its cultural layers for themselves. A copy of it can be found in Kimbles and Singer's "The Cultural Complex" (2004).

Cheers,

Scott

Dear David and Colleagues,

Apropos of your interest in Peter Shaffer, David, I re-watched "Equus" (1977) with pleasure. Is IAJS depicted in this film?

Watching it, I reflected: we seem open to the light and dark of the numinous, like Alan Strang, yet tentative and "shut out", like Dr. Dysart.

Interestingly, I found the acting of Richard Burton "over the top", but then I was lucky to see him in person on my first trip to New York as a youth in his role of Prince Hamlet. On the stage Burton was extraordinary, gripping and charismatic. In the movie as Dr. Dysart, he delivered his lines beautifully. But, with all the talk about myth of by his character, the overblown performance made it unbelievable. Thus, the film falls short of a mythic thrill. Or perhaps for me it does, putting me in touch with thrills that lurk in my cultural and personal unconscious.

Cheers,

Scott

Dear Colleagues (including Terrie Waddell, Leslie Gardner and John Izod),

I am partial to film. I feel that each film is magic for someone and ought to be revered. This is what I have tried to do, I reflect, as we end our second week and enter our third. It is one of the hardest things I have ever done, to try to listen to what and how film moves you.

Take cultural complexes. I marvel how universally popular an "unsophisticate" like Charles Chaplin was in his time which was torn apart by cultural wars. Last night, when I re-screened my new DVD of Charles Chaplin's "City Lights" (1931) on my new Plasma TV, I marveled anew.

Incidentally, Chaplin, who was later persecuted by a particularly intolerant version of an American complex, released "City Lights" without spoken dialogue so that he would not contribute to intolerance. I can't imagine a greater act of love. How else do you explain that men as sophisticated as Albert Einstein and G. B. Shaw, at Los Angeles and London premiers of "City Lights" respectively, both vied to be photographed with "Charlie"?

Cheers,

Scott

Dear Terrie again (and Colleagues),

The obstacle of writing about films and conversing about them is that one has to have seen them first. How many people have seen "The Proposition"? But I think that media studies holds out the attractive prospect that if they do become spectators they may become more ideologically savvy.

Media studies' view that a film is a cultural text I have found a two-edged sword with regard to my paper at Zurich. My paper has been classified as about "images of masculinity". Hearing that this is my subject, might not my interlocutors run from the room? Unless either: a) they come prepared with vast stores (or I humbly supply) of empirical data about sociological trends in male aggression; or b) they have can compare numbers of films to know whether masculine stereotypes are embodied there? And if they ran from the avalanche of data, could I blame them?

Jung is at his best when used as "extra-textual" tool (cultural complexes or individuation are two), but Jung also reminds us that what one says is as much about one's self as about the film. Therein is situated a humanistic civics (politics with a capital rather than a small

"p"). I enjoyed your reading of Mrs Captain Stanley's cultural complex, i.e. the English garden, helped by the fact that I saw "The Proposition".

Cheers,

Scott

Dear Scott, (& others)

My thought exactly re. the need for having to see a film before discussing it. I missed "No Country For Old men", but did see "Atonement" and felt the role of Briony was well-played by Saoirse Ronan.

Although initially not attracted to the young girl, I recognized and felt for her loneliness, raised as she was in an upper class household with strict codes of behaviour and no peer group from among whom to find playmates & glean something of the mysteries of sex (unlike her "working class" counterparts). Besides which, surrounded by servants & so not required to contribute to the household she had time for her imagination to run wild; again, with no-one to test out her impressions (and misconceptions). I felt less empathetic with the character portrayed at the end of the story, who seemed to suffer from as much self-pity as well-earned guilt. Perhaps she was played as described in the book - I don't know.

A propos "masculine image", this is wonderfully portrayed in "Kitchen Stories" by Norwegian writer & director Bent Hamer, I feel. Looking back on it, I believe there were male characters only, except for the brief appearance of the project manager's girlfriend? I was touched by gradual warming between the two main characters - the one whose job it is to observe and make notes on the other, while keeping his distance - and the other, who becomes observer & whose innate sense of hospitality breaks through their separateness.

And the cultural complex was there - portrayed by the "properly dressed", determined to do-the-job-well, Swedish scientist and the Norwegian farmer, each (once they do start to communicate) insisting on using his own language. This difference is emphasized by reference to the Norwegians driving on the right side of the road and Swedes on the left (although this changed in 1967). And there is the lingering distrust because of different choices made by each country during the Second World War.

Thanks for an interesting & enjoyable seminar, Scott & John,

Jean Greenhill (Canada).

Dear Jean,

Two issues have come up in previous posts: can a movie be art and does our subjective response have philosophical validity? Now with your post, I can definitely say yes.

"Atonement" induces the spectator to understand two little girls on the verge of adulthood and who deal with the cultural complexes of their time with tragic results. It is art because of the layered textures. Take the music, which won an academy award. Not to give it away, but the typewriter integrated into the soundtrack is amazing. It is knowledge of a situation but not from information so much as understanding what each little girl suffered because of her historical situation.

Several people told me of their mixed feelings about the ending. I do not know how one can have mixed feelings about Vanessa Redgrave. But say one does. For that person, I have a question: if film is art, and art employs the imagination, does imagination redeem?

Cheers,

Scott

Dear Scott,

Re "two little girls". A moot point - but whereas Briony is 13, I understood her sister to be perhaps 18. This being a factor, I felt, in the younger girl's feeling of loneliness & the desperate interest in what was happening to her sister. Another being her own pubescent "crush" on the man to whom both are attracted.

No "mixed feelings" about Redgrave herself, but for me the hope of redemption was negated by her character seemingly having to tell us she was dying..... ("So what?") However there is an element of projection - anger/self-pity that the end was not as I had been led to believe.

Nevertheless an incredible film, amazing photography from the opening shot of the stately home onwards.

Best wishes,

Jean

. . . is the way a film is received enough to make it "revered"? you cannot mean that. you would therefore mean that any film that is a box office success is "magic" which is hardly the case.

I also would disagree with you about your assessment of Chaplin - he created cinematic ploys that were far from unsophisticated. the expressive face, the iconic clothing and postures, the visual jokes...innovative in their time and the "american" complex you refer to was certainly shared by British people too (Churchill was totally obsessed by it), and by many europeans at the time - it was called communism, and Chaplin subscribed to those politics - at the time it was as feared in its way as islamic terrorism is now.

I think you are using that concept and word "complex" in such a broad way as to render it meaningless.

Leslie

Dear Leslie (and Colleagues),

Thanks for the provocative rejoinder. You are the first to ask me to use more precise language, and I accept that your criticism may be valid.

I will aver something else about a complex: it is always changing because the psyche is.

I would be interested to know whether in viewing a film, you try to see what cultural complexes play out in the narrative? Also, is there a film that affected you just because it was magic?

Cheers,

Scott

First of all since "magic" has almost as many meanings as there are people and writers in the world, I cannot answer that question. Around me, I hear it used to express response to almost anything that catches someone's fancy; or else "magic" refers quite specifically to calculated *tromp d'oeuil* – tricks to deceive the eye – perhaps that is the coincidence with film, and was a feature as we all know in film's early days (we all recall those images of Lumière's moon).

As for the cultural coordinates that resonate with a viewer, we must always include accounting for the extremely technical nature of films, the huge number of people involved in putting it together, their costliness and the need to raise money to make it,

and the overwhelming nature of the marketing involved in film making – this marketing angle impacts on the creative elements of the film even at its inception, on its director, actors and technical people.

These are the most important cultural features of film, and it means that films have to pick up the most common forms in each culture – inevitably primarily the culture of Hollywood where producers mostly sit. They have to pick up the increasingly sophisticated engagements with audience as sellers, purveyors of the prevailing ethos of the site of the film making.

So how will a film strike me as an individual viewer within that culture? It will in a variety of ways. Increasingly, personally, I am finding the visual aspects of *The New World*, or *Sunshine*, or *Age of Innocence* – wherever a film maker recognizes that those visual aspects are the most important she has to offer – most appealing.

Scripts of persuasive interaction among characters which assume a world and so impart their reality to us – i.e. Stanley Cavell writes well about this. His essays on the television soap opera – although I know that TV is a world apart from cinema (and in many ways TV has to adhere more closely to audience) – teach me about the visual interactions with culture, and how an audience is accommodated and the significance of those coordinates. (I am beginning to think that films like “*In Bruges*”, which I saw lately, or “*There will be blood*”, which almost transparently include a realization that they are filmic commentary on the world we share with the participants we watch, are most rewarding – I don’t feel that the film makers think I’m stupid, you see. They are also visually effective, in my view.

The whole endeavor is far more evolved than I think you are presenting it, or thinking about it, Scott.

Leslie Gardner

Dear colleagues

There is much in the several sinuous responses stimulated by the intrusion of the cinema into Renaissance gardens that I have still to absorb (particularly commentaries from Susan Rowland, Luke Hockley, Terrie Waddell, Leslie Gardner and Mark Saban). Here are a few early, far from comprehensive thoughts.

Luke Hockley wrote: “It is in the individual experience of the collective that we find part of ourselves which we sometimes term archetypal. Gardens can be like that. I want to suggest it is not always the grand geometrical garden, nor the great gardens of history, nor the mythological gardens of our legends and religious stories which move us,

although of course they can. Instead, perhaps it is the everyday experiences of our own backyards which can open and sensitise us to the profoundly psychological; certain aspects of the ubiquitous can be affective.

“So too cinema is both personal and collective. Just like those grand gardens it is not necessarily the great film by the outstanding director that mobilises the most affect. If affect is in part the result of the encounter of the individual with collective, then in this awakening of hidden complex material the psyche seeks out and finds what it needs.”

This seems to me to be part of an answer to Don Frederickson’s provocative argument about mainstream cinema – to the effect, as Susan Rowland summarises it, “that capitalist postmodern culture, in particular that of Hollywood, has drained the mythic symbol of any true numinosity and imaginative creativity in ... popular film in particular.”

Nevertheless, in a frame of mind (which I share), for Susan symbols have an energising quality and we both remain optimistic that approached in the right frame of mind cinema can transform the everyday and reveal our role in shaping ourselves and our society.

As Terrie Waddell observes, “...it’s [in] the space between the text and the audience where we find meaning.” Luke develops this idea: “I want my psychology and my understanding of movies to be rooted in the everyday,” reminding us that for most members of the audience, the experience of movies is both personal in the first instance and innocent of the kind of framework we apply.

Terrie takes this theme into the realm that we Jungians populate with our own speculations – and where the familiar dangers are found that all researchers face, namely that in focusing on the detail with intensity we fail to scan the wider frame: “There’s also a space between the ideas we’re applying to the text and the text itself. So it’s a double ... place/space of our own creation [and] that is where Jung and film become ours, just ours.”

“And if this space is large enough to hold us in a kind of rapture, no matter what the perceived cultural value of the text might be, then I believe we are changed (if only by degrees) and have grown a bit more. Is it an Eden of sorts – a way to green our own inner backyard?”

Well yes, I for one find that it is – and that’s why I extend my imaginal limbs there with sensuous pleasure – but it is not inevitably a healthy locus. Dreamers like me do need to keep in mind the rotting garden that Terrie evokes so vividly in her account of “The Proposition”. It’s a fine metaphor for the dangers of forcing growth where the climate is unsuited for the specific plants you best know and treasure.

Susan invites us to consider a change of frame: “Could we playfully overturn the usual arguments in our respective disciplines and argue that the changes in garden design, the growth of wealth, power and ostentation behind them, are the worldly nigredo aspect of social alchemy? What if the process of the transformation of symbols was really the

engine of culture in alchemy as a social process as well as a psychological and chemical one?"

In the spirit of her challenge, let me ask another associated question, triggered obliquely by Mark Saban's comment (for which there is plausible anecdotal evidence) that "Artists fear analysis on the grounds that it might interfere with the purity of their inspiration." For my part – given the self-selecting constituencies that have participated (almost without cross-over) in concurrent IAJS discussions – I wonder whether many of our analyst colleagues fear discussing cinema on the grounds that it might interfere with the purity of their theorizing?

So my question this week is whether Jungian analysts and academics can link psychoanalytic work in the political sphere (one of the hot topics of the past decade in the post-Jungian field) with the cultural – or indeed whether we have the will to attempt the connection. It might have been easier if as seminar leaders we had chosen "media communication" as our topic rather than "film studies". Since the 1970s media theorists have been confident in ascribing ideological positions to media empires – both in generalized national contexts and in specific case studies. But the people who have done that work for the most part show no signs in their writing of having been touched by a lived experience of mythology, or of any notion of the unconscious other than as a repository of personal repressed horrors. On the other hand, they do know that culture is a socially transformative force.

Enjoy your week. Scott and I will conclude this discussion on Monday.

John Izod

Dear John,

I feel you have introduced an important idea about the need for us to address power and film.

The conundrum is that the individual can't do much alone because most problems are global and need change in large groups or with the help of large groups.

But groups have their shadow. Witness the life of expatriate, Krzysztof Kieslowski. In "Three Colors", Kieslowski acts as if he feels that cultural complexes of Poland only inhibited him and he had to have freedom to create. My question to you: isn't ideology not about politics but about a cultural complex in whose grip a group is?

Cheers,

Scott

in what respect is politics not cultural expression? how a group of people deploy power is all to do with the culture of those people. whatever do you mean?? and, before you use the word "complex" again, scott, please define it - it means nothing as you use it - you are not saying anything.

Yours, Leslie

Hi Scot

Thanks for your supportive comment. You write: "In "Three Colors", Kieslowski acts as if he feels that cultural complexes of Poland only inhibited him and he had to have freedom to create." I'm not able to comment on this unfortunately because I don't recognise the terms of your question. What I mean is that you are offering assumptions about the director's deeds and thoughts and I cannot get to them from the films because I don't think there is evidence to permit that.

On your question, I do think that ideology and cultural complexes may well be related, yes.

Thanks for your offering.

John

Dear All

Ideology, complex and cinema (which sounds suspiciously like a book title) present for me a difficult set of interactions. One of the reasons for this is that we haven't defined any of the terms in use. For example, using Althusser's terminology are there times when cinema functions as part of the repressive state apparatus ? certainly. Does it do so all the time, perhaps depending partly on ones understanding of hegemony. Then there is the question of whether this helps to understand the relationship of cinematic institutions and forms to cultural practices. Equally, to what extent can cinema (as a set of institutional practices and relations) be seen as an act of cultural production? Likewise, does the action of watching and understanding a film constitute ?production?? In summary, I'm suggesting, with others on this list, that we need to be careful with our use of technical language.

Let's take a step back. If for a moment we put such difficult matters to one side (with view to returning to them later) I wonder if the basic elements of genre analysis as it used in film studies can be helpful. In that model a genre is constituted from the circulation of meanings from audience, institution and text. What we are certainly not dealing with (to pick up a point from John) is authorial intention.

Working psychologically it is all too easy to overlook the function that institutional determinates play. It is also easy to lose sight of the text (film) as a site of contested meaning. It seems to me that we want to fix the meaning and I do wonder if an emphasis on subject engagement with films fosters that attitude.

I want to argue against such an activity. Instead I want to argue that we need to hold together some competing elements:

film as text (character, lighting, sound, camera, editing, narrative, mise en scene, positioning of the viewer);

the viewing experience (the current moment, affect, bodily response, engagement by film, identification, projection, suture location of the experience as part of a history of similar experiences ? generic expectations);

an awareness of the institution (commissioning, production practices, intertextual experiences [trailers, games, other films with the same star, director etc] marketing, trailers and so forth).

This might offer a way to hold together the collective, the personal and the institutional within a psychological approach. To work this way is to work transferentially and to be psychologically minded. It does not offer a model of aesthetic evaluation nor does it seek to explain or laud the outstanding film by the great director. What it does offer is a way to discuss and contain the complexity of the cinematic experience. It offers one model for looking at how meanings are created and subjectivity is constituted ? rooted as this is in depth psychology. I hope it is also cognisant of the debates which were present at the birth of film studies in the UK.

Luke

Dear Leslie and Luke,

You are right that the term "cultural unconscious" is obscure--to most Jungians. Jung did not use it. Post-Jungians, following Joseph Henderson, do.

You might check the current writing on the topic in "The Cultural Complex" (Kimbles and Singer).

An example of the cultural unconscious from "There Will Be Blood," (a film you liked, Leslie) is where Daniel Plainview converts to Christianity to get away with murder (in one way or another). As administered by the young minister, Eli Sunday, the "conversion" places obedience before true individuality and the conscious ethic Jung elaborates.

For explication of the obedience complex, I recommend M.V. Adams' article, "The Islamic Cultural Unconscious in the Dreams of a Contemporary Muslim Man," which is posted on Michael's website.

Cheers,

Scott

Dear Scott, Leslie and colleagues,

Thank you, Scott, for your reflections upon *Equus*, that make important points. Particularly about the film falling short of mythic thrill. Shaffer is a master wordsmith and many of his most important plays have been directed by his 'alter ego' John Dexter at the London national theatre (*Equus*, *Royal Hunt* and *Black Comedy* among others). Shaffer himself describes Dexter as giving vibrant life to his ideas and compares him to Brecht. In the original production (as now with almost all Shaffer plays) and almost always afterwards for *Equus*, the setting is minimalist. A few benches, on which the minor actors strut and fret a few minutes onstage and then are heard no more. Then there are some actors in minimalist *equus* costumes, literalism forbidden, stamping and humming, symbols of something inexpressible. And wonderful words that are expressed actor to audience, heart to heart.

But the film is a different matter and I have begun to feel a bit sorry for Burton. As Leslie has said so well, a film involves input from a large number of people, from writers of various sorts, to cameramen, to editors, to actors, to directors, to producers, to the money-holders, to the intentions of the studios, to the socio-political milieu and the times. There is a gradation of relationships in the arts between artist and receiver: in a poem or painting, perhaps a novel, you have the closest communication between one psyche and another. In theatre you have the intervention of director, actors and staging, but for me the communication is still immensely personal and powerful. But poor RB is saying the lines intended for theatre and a direct relationship with audience members absolutely engulfed in visual and aural distractions: real horses, street scenes, suburban house interiors, traffic, patients in a mental hospital, a real stables etc. etc. And directed by Sidney Lumet (*Serpico*, *Dog Day Afternoon* and *The Hill*). How can Burton retain and demonstrate the simplicity of the intended mythic element?

The other point is unbelievability. I believe Shaffer is the 'Mozart' of theatre. What he asks of his performers is nigh on impossible. More of this in July!

David Haynes

Dear David and Colleagues,

Your letter gives me the chance to state my opinion about this seminar. I view it as a virtual chat room. I do not see myself as an authority for anyone. Indeed, past attempts to make the seminar a matter of authority have not really succeeded. At the worst, the seminar eliminates our ecological footprint by letting us convene as colleagues. At its best, members inspire each other. So please take my views about "Equus" (1977) as those of a conversant.

I agree with your sentiments of the movie not doing justice to the play, but I want to defend "Equus", the movie.

My question is: can't film be equally personal as theater?

For example, you wrote that the vice of "Equus" is that the spectator is "absolutely engulfed in the visual and aural distractions". I would consider that the virtue of "Equus". I'd die to be engulfed.

I do not think that because film is mass-produced that it produces any less of a work of art and sometimes it makes something infinitely better. A million see Burton in film compared to a hundred thousand on Broadway. The number of spectators is not the point, but the chance to see a work of art and have a personal response.

To agree with Luke's point about collective vs. personal experience being important as criteria of value, I would mention that Sidney Lumet, the director of "Equus", is a genre director. Genre is the way many films get to myth, through collective themes, iconography, etc. Shaffer gets to myth cerebrally and genre intuitively. I just agree that "Equus" (for me) was far more entertaining than mythic.

Cheers,

Scott

i can only speak for myself, but having read many of Luke's publications in this field with their rather sophisticated understandings of Jungian concepts and terminology, i am pretty sure what his definitions are - but to swipe at all Jungians as thinking "cultural unconscious" is obscure, is not a helpful comment - these terms are used in ways that are meaningless and/or much under discussion - that's why i would concur with Luke's admonishment that we define our terms here - referring us to rather reductionist material is not helpful - please define what you mean- do you think these definitions are already settled? they are the subject matter of a lifetime of study - leslie

Upon further reflection, too, it irks me that Scott comments that I "like" a film as if that's all I said or as if that makes an argument. (It is similar to exchanges we've all had about whether or not we "like" Bush and/or why - "well, he is stupid; he started a deadly,

unnecessary war” – as if that is political discussion. Perhaps pollsters or the Democratic party might be interested, but, surely, no one else is.)

Whether I “like” or do not “like” *There will be blood* is irrelevant and boring. On what basis I mention it’s a powerful film is perhaps a more fruitful lead, and open to critique – because, for example, I’d have to think twice about seeing this film again, whereas a smaller film, *The Singer* with its affectionate portrayal of a rueful, aging performer, I might see again (but don’t count that against me). But that’s another issue too – what can an audience tolerate and why, that is not easy to grapple with.

I wanted to try to expand on what I meant about its being a film operating square-center in a filmic dimension. Sinclair Lewis, whose book “Oil” this film is based on, wrote there a polemical novel, full of strong direct commentary. He engages (albeit indirectly) with Max Weber’s ideas about the close association of the Protestant religious ethic with capitalism – and, here, you see, I am trying to get at how a collective underlying ideology, both conscious and, I suppose, unconscious, impacts on film making and audience response.

This so-called Protestant ethos pervades American business life, and hits on American cultural signposts to connecting associations. These Protestants are smug, good people. After all Plainview feels that he has done a great deal for the community, beyond money...capitalism’s claim. But I want to point to a formal issue of what I think has to do with film-making as opposed to novel writing.

Midway through the film, the rapacious Plainview, the oilman, beats the young preacher – he has come to him with a Bible clasped between his hands, asking for his money. The preacher passes this brutality on to his father, calling him stupid for not gaining all he could financially from Plainview. This preacher is of the evangelical type. Later on, the preacher returns from his tour away from home, and approaches Plainview again, saying that he’s learned a few things, and perhaps they could aggrandize the money Plainview is earning together, his Church in league with Plainview. Again, Plainview savagely beats him.

And, here’s my dilemma: strikingly, the words Plainview uses in this scene are the same words that the preacher had used earlier when he beat his father. How does he know what the preacher said to his father? He was not there.

Now you might say, these sentiments, in those exact words, are part of the commonplace business ethic I refer to above. It is part of a common vocabulary. But thinking about it formally, it also might be that in the novel, Lewis is able to avail himself of a narrative distance, typical of a novelist’s repertoire i.e. the omniscient narrator might elide over this anomaly of one character knowing what another said even though he was not present. However, how do we accept it in the film (if it even bothered us)?

The omniscience, I’d propose, is in the strong filmic presence of these moments, the images. And, that “presence” (and I am trying to refer here to the rhetorical term

“presence” which is about foregrounding point of view, or commentary) overpowers us in other ways than discursive argument, but which is equally powerful and communicative. I think we can also see here how a discussion of a specific kind of collective unconscious that a film might engage with – but there is no space here to expand on this. Does this make any sense?

Leslie

Dear Colleagues,

This is my valedictory letter to you, a most patient audience. In it, I shall attempt to sum up what we have learned.

We began with the question: "Why does the International Association of Jungian Studies (IAJS) resist film?" From this seminar, I conclude that we resist because Jung did not write about film.

Note how in the following passage in "The Spiritual Problem of Modern Man" (1928/1931), Jung disparages popular culture as only the domain of the shadow. Jung states:

"The cinema, on the other hand, like the detective story, makes it possible to experience without danger all the excitement, passion and desirousness which must be repressed in a humanitarian ordering of life. It is not difficult to see how these symptoms are connected with the psychic situation."

When I was in graduate school, media and film studies were under Freud and Marx's hegemony. In literary studies where Jung got his foot in the door, film took a back seat. In Richard P. Sugg's "Jungian Literary Criticism" (1992), no film criticism was included. When I wrote Richard and asked why he did not answer (nor return to our Jung Club), a perturbing situation not unlike some moments of this seminar.

The upsurge of Post-Jungian film criticism in the nineties and the founding of IAJS at the height of this resurgence created an unusual historical moment for Jungians to slough off Jung's neglect and reassess the beauties and import of cinema.

The best part of this Film Seminar was that we discoursed as friends. Our truths were the truth of friends. There were two high points. The first was the exchange on "Atonement", which showed that my premise of film as a subjective experience could be handled with tact and insight. The second was the dialogue about "No Country for Old Men", which showed that John's view of the collective and mythic force of symbolic images could be held in creative tension by members otherwise biased to the written word.

Post-Juglans use a concept, the "cultural complex", which Jung did not use, as a tool of film criticism. Jung appears to have asserted that a social group is the same as the shadow. The "cultural complex" says that the group is not the shadow. Neither is its identity nor nationality. It is the history of the group that comprises the shadow.

Briefly, the cultural complex is a tool that allows us to view the film's images as depicting the traumas of a group or individual, alive in the cultural unconscious, driving the fantasies that art makes into symbols.

I am not schizophrenic. I do not write about film as a member of IAJS only to criticize Jung. To illustrate this point, let me conclude with a Jungian take on this week's "Time Magazine" article, "Can Film Change the World?" (17 March, 2008).

The "Time" article makes many salient points, among which are: that a new breed of film maker has appeared, who calls herself a "film-anthropist"; and that "Sicko" (2007) has influenced the 2008 USA presidential race. But nowhere does the article state that freedom is not just about individualism but individuation. For "Sicko" really to change American's souls it must deal with the irrational complexes that drive us to act out. Solved in one moment only to resurface in another form, complexes demand vigilance.

In sum, there is another question IAJS might consider: by resisting film do we aid the materialistic spirit of the times and exclude ourselves from influencing it?

This, my final word on the subject, shall not be the seminar's last, for John Izod, who is out of town, shall send his closing letter early next week. The sword of wit is not yet sheathed.

Cheers,

Scott

Dear Colleagues

The posting that engaged me most in the past week was Luke Hockley's. It so skilfully picks up and complements issues that I had hoped to launch in these discussions, that I invite you to read it here again. Luke's punctuation was corrupted in transmission to my system and I have attempted a reconstruction. My apologies to him if I have mistaken his intent. He wrote - „Ideology, complex and cinema (which sounds suspiciously like a book title) present for me a difficult set of interactions. One of the reasons for this is that we haven't defined any of the terms in use. For example, using Althusser's terminology are there times when cinema functions as part of the repressive state apparatus? Certainly. Does it do so all the time? Perhaps, depending partly on one's understanding of hegemony. Then there is the question of whether this helps to understand the relationship of cinematic institutions and forms to cultural practices. Equally, to what extent can

cinema (as a set of institutional practices and relations) be seen as an act of cultural production? Likewise, does the action of watching and understanding a film constitute (re)production? In summary, I'm suggesting, with others on this list, that we need to be careful with our use of technical language.

„Let's take a step back. If for a moment we put such difficult matters to one side (with view to returning to them later) I wonder if the basic elements of genre analysis as it used in film studies can be helpful. In that model a genre is constituted from the circulation of meanings from audience, institution and text. What we are certainly not dealing with (to pick up a point from John) is authorial intention.

„Working psychologically it is all too easy to overlook the function that institutional determinates play. It is also easy to loose sight of the text (film) as a sight of contested meaning. It seems to me that we want to fix the meaning and I do wonder if an emphasis on subject engagement with films fosters that attitude.

„I want to argue against such an activity. Instead I want to argue that we need to hold together some competing elements:

„film as text (character, lighting, sound, camera, editing, narrative, mise-en-scene, positioning of the viewer);

„the viewing experience (the current moment, affect, bodily response, engagement by film, identification, projection, suture location of the experience as part of a history of similar experiences ^ generic expectations);

„an awareness of the institution (commissioning, production practices, intertextual experiences [trailers, games, other films with the same star, director etc] marketing, trailers and so forth).

„This might offer a way to hold together the collective, the personal and the institutional within a psychological approach. To work this way is to work transferentially and to be psychologically minded. It does not offer a model of aesthetic evaluation nor does it seek explain or laud the outstanding film by the great director. What it does offer is a way to discuss and contain the complexity of the cinematic experience. It offers one model for looking at how meanings are created and subjectivity is constituted ^ rooted as this is in depth psychology. I hope it is also cognisant of the debates which were present at the birth of film studies in the UK.

Well said, Luke!

Does the experience of the past three weeks leave me with any regrets?

Two in particular:

I wish I had been competent to join with appropriate theoretical confidence the debate on performance. It was fascinating watching that debate mature from random anecdotal subjectivity to attain, for a time, a high level of sophistication.

And I,m sorry not to have tempted more engagement with the concept of the cultural unconscious. I didn't define the term in the hope of drawing colleagues and testing my own use of the idea in Screen, Culture, Psyche.

My thanks are due to the committee and to Scott for patient support. It has at times seemed as if we were running two independent seminars whose participants occasionally nodded at each other across the ether. I'm grateful for Scott's tolerance of my moving through my own agenda as I discovered it, and for committee members, valiant attempts to bridge the gaps that opened up.

John Izod

Finished March 19, 2008