

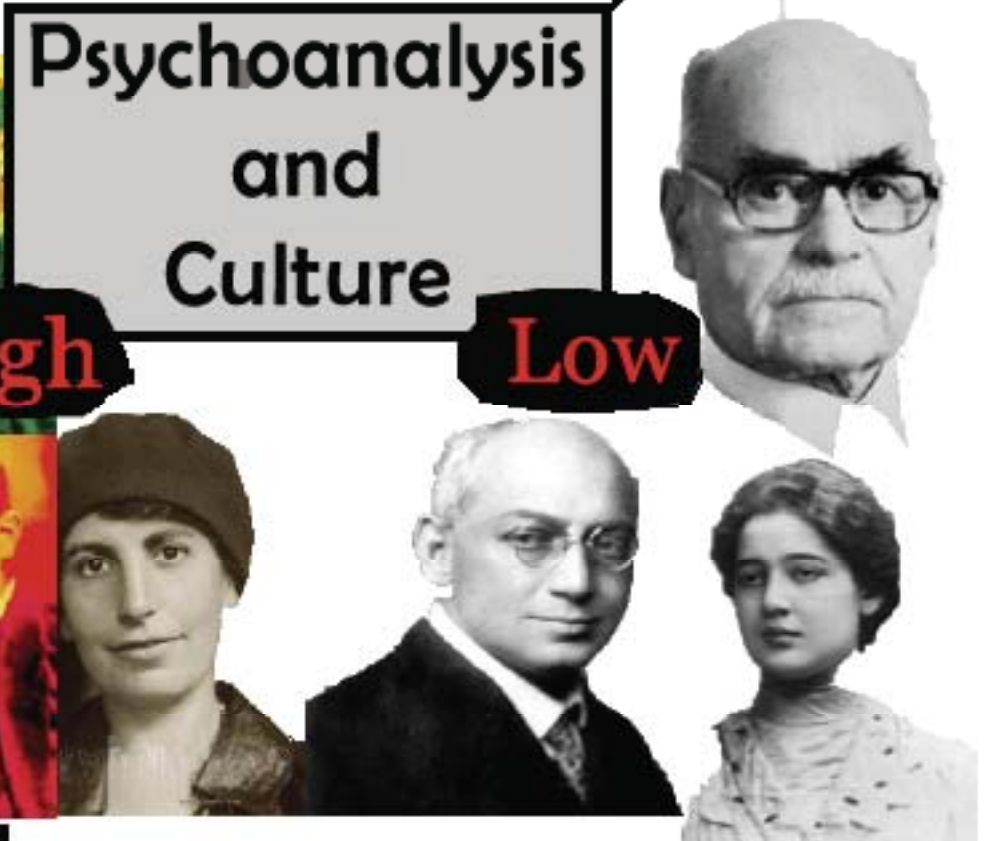
Off

The Couch
An Ezine of

Psychoanalysis
and
Culture

High

Low



Vol I Number I

O f f T h e C o u c h

“Psychoanalysis, unfortunately, has scarcely anything to say about beauty either. All that seems certain is its derivation from the field of sexual feeling. The love of beauty seems a perfect example of an impulse inhibited in its aim. ‘Beauty’ and ‘attraction’ are originally attributes of the sexual object.”

Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents.

“all creation is really a re-creation of a once loved and once whole, but now lost and ruined object, a ruined internal world and self. It is when the world within us is destroyed, when it is dead and loveless, when our loved ones are in fragments, and we ourselves in helpless despair—it is then that we must re-create our world anew, re-assemble the pieces, infuse life into dead fragments, re-create life.”

Hanna Segal A Psycho-Analytical Approach to Aesthetics.

**For beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror, which we are still
just able to endure,
and we are so awed because it serenely disdains to annihilate us.**

**First Duino Elegies
Rainer Maria Rilke**

**How can ugliness and disharmony, which are the content of tragic
myth, inspire an esthetic delight?**

Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy

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From The editor - Zines and Ezines

What is an ezine (pronounced e zeen)? Here is a brief history. “Zine” is short for fanzine or magazine. It came into use in the 1970’s. They were generally produced by one person or a small group of persons. They tended to be irrelevant, bizarre and/or esoteric, sometimes downright edgy. They were not commercial, they did not contain advertisements and they targeted a small audience. Early zines were cut and paste (literally) or mimeographed. One of the origins of zines were the ‘pulp’ Science Fiction Magazines starting in the 1930’s. Fans started to write lengthy letters to the editor and gradually started to write to each other with mailing lists generated by the published letters. Fanzines then became to be written by ardent fans in esoteric areas. Perzines evolved as personal letters about themselves. The more “fannish” fanzine publishers had a shared sensibility and at least as much interest in their relationships between fans as in the literature that inspired it. In the 1970’s, the punk zines emerged as part of the punk movement in the UK and the U.S.A.

During the 1980s and onwards, Factsheet Five, now defunct, catalogued and reviewed any zine or small press creation sent to it, along with their mailing addresses. In doing so, it formed a networking point for zine creators and readers. The concept of zine as an art form distinct from fanzine, and of the “zinesters” as member of their own subculture, had emerged. Zines of this era covered topics that today would be found on the web, which didn’t exist at that time. The early 1990s riot grrrl scene encouraged an explosion of zines of a more raw and explicit, more confrontational and definitely more gender-balanced nature. Following this, zines enjoyed a brief period of attention from conventional media and a number of zines were collected and published in book form. Zines started to fade in the late 1990s, as the internet started to explode.

Another more graphic influence were comic



books of the 40’s and 50’s that proliferated in style and content. The underground comics of the 60’s took on the drugs and the hippie culture of the time. Robert Crumb started Zap Comix in 1968, with such memorable characters as Mr. Natural, Fritz the Cat, and Devil Girl.

Ezines are a more specialized term appropriately applied to small magazines and newsletters dis-



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tributed by any electronic method. Some social groups may use the terms cyberzine and hyperzine when referring to electronically distributed resources. Similarly, some online magazines may refer to themselves as “electronic magazines” to reflect their readership demographics, and more importantly to capture alternative terms and spellings in online searches. Many large print-publishers now provide digital reproduction of their print magazine titles through various online services for a fee. These service providers also refer to



their collections of these digital format products as online magazines, and sometimes as digital magazines. Currently, ezines can take multiple forms. The sensibilities of the original zines lives on in personal blogs and fan blogs of all types. Many ezines are now published as small literary or academic areas of interest.

In an example of a recent trend, the New York Times reports that two former staffers of Domino, an interior design magazine, were mourning its demise and the demise of other magazines devoted to interior design. They decided to start their own on-line magazine called Lonny.



The first issue was put up in October. It is small by print

standards, having been read by 600,000 people. But it has caught the eye of the industry and advertisers. The two put up a \$1000 of their own money and bartered for equipment and space. Lonny is published every other month using Issuu, a Web platform. On the web pages, Lonny appears with pages to turn, a table of contents and full-page ads. But it has Web-only features like zoomable and clickable images. The cost is low as Ms. Adams styles and edits, and Mr. Cline photographs everything. They hired an assistant who attends shoots, and keeps track of various items in the photographs.

In creating this ezine, Off the Couch, I hope to retain some of the sensibility and the graphic style of the early zines. The cover is meant to mimic a cut and paste style that forms a collage of images and types. Individual letters and images are cut from other publications and pasted together. Can you identify the portraits on the cover? We will examine the intersection of psychoanalysis and culture in both images and essays. High culture could include the visual arts, literature, music, religion, theatre. I am particularly interested in including some of the lower arts of popular culture, rock music, comics, movies, pulp fiction. Both the style of the ezine and its content is meant to be a mixture of voices where no one voice is given precedence. I am interested both in beauty and its underpinnings of dirt and aggression. we will include both the best of International Psychoanalysis and original articles. I think the future of all publishing will be migrating on-line. This includes academic journals. The younger generation finds the advantages of searching within documents, the graphics rich environment, the immediacy of the web quite compelling. I hope to make this ezine an example of the future. We hope to experiment with styles and content to fit the new media age.

Robert S. White
Editor

In this issue

- From the editor: a history of zines and ezines, a polyphonic mixture of high and low.
- Movies: A review of Avatar, a popular movie, touching on deep analytic themes
- The Vanishing, a study of claustrophobia.
- Mulholland Drive, dream scapes
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- Photography: Images of therapeutic action from Jon Meyer



Avatar 2009

An original article by Robert White



I. The film

Avatar (2009) is a stunning, award winning film by James Cameron, starring Sam Worthington, Stephen Lang, Sigourney Weaver, Michelle Rodriguez and Zoe Saldana. For its stunning graphics, it is best seen in 3-D, a pantheistic vision of a physical world infused with spirit and life. The story line is pure Hollywood, with its exotic location, war and romance. The characters have been criticized for being cartoonish and one-dimensional. It is a movie made for and by scientists, with its own botany, zoology, linguistics and anthropology. The story takes place in 2154, three decades after a multinational corporation has established a mining colony on Pandora [note 1], a planet light years from Earth, a moon of a gas giant Polyphemus [note 2] in the Alpha Centauri star system. There is an outpost of humanity on Pandora to mine unobtainium [note 3], a substance essential for saving the earth from destruction. Pandora is inhabited by the the Na'vi [note 4], a ten-foot-tall blue-skinned species of sapient [note 5] human-

oids, who live in harmony with nature, worshipping a mother goddess called Eywa [note 6]. A clan of the Na'vi, the Omaticaya [note 7], live in Hometree, that sits on a supply of unobtainium that the humans covet. In the film, the action hero, Jake Sully, an ex-marine and paraplegic from a battle wound, is recruited to link to an avatar, a hybrid body of his own genetic material and Na'vi genetic material. The avatars, who physically resemble the Na'vi and are adapted to the Pandora environment, alternatively serve as scientists, ambassadors or spies, depending on different agendas in the mining colony. Predictably, the clash of human and Na'vi interests leads to war and destruction. Jake is saved by and subsequently falls in love with Neytiri, a daughter of the clan's leaders. He eventually switches sides, leads the Na'vi in a successful battle against the humans and assumes a full Na'vi identity through mind transfer.

II. Psychoanalytic Interpretations

I think one of the appeals of this film, apart from



the graphics, is a deep tapping into basic Western myths of creation and existence. I will discuss them as psychoanalytic fantasies.

1. The fantasy of a utopia, mystical fusion experiences with the maternal figure.

The whole planet serves as a utopia, a return to paradise, a prelapsarian (before the Fall) world in which Nature and Grace have not yet been divorced from each other, a pantheistic vision before Pandora's jar has been opened. When Jake wanders through the alien forests of Pandora, the sense of a world opening up — its lush orange flowers, its mysterious fragrances, its hissing animals that lunge at him from all angles — are brought to life in magical effects. Neytiri leads Jake to a place of prayer, the "tree of voices" where they bond with the tree. It's revealed that Pandora has a "network of trees" and that the Omaticaya will never leave Hometree. At the Tree of Souls, he looks into Grace Augustines' memories, realizing that humankind killed their mother (Earth), the entity that protects the balance of life. Are the Two Sacred Trees, the Tree of Voices (or Souls) and the Hometree an allusion to the two trees of the Garden of Eden, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of

Life? All living creatures are interconnected. The sentient beings can unite mentally with various creatures. Jake learns to bond with his direhorse, arguably the most important animal to the Na'vi. Jake must learn to mount the animal and connect his neural queue to its antennae. Then he can control the animal by his thoughts. In an initiation rite, the Na'vi must capture and connect with a Mountain Banshee, a flying creature, in the same manner they bonded with the Direhorse. Several factors (the height, the ferociousness of the untamed banshees) make this a dangerous lesson. Jake's lack of fear and successful bond with his Banshee impress the Na'vi warriors present. Jake, Neytiri, and the others then ride together to the Tree of Souls, the most sacred place to the Na'vi. When Jake comes back to the base, it's clear he's been changed by this latest experience, for he says, "out there is the real world ... in here is the dream". The Na'vi are saved by their faith in Eywa, the "All Mother," described variously as a network of energy and the sum total of every living thing. Eywa is an earth goddess in whom there are vast neural connections among the creatures, trees and sentient beings on Pandora. I am reminded of the story of Paul Gauguin, who, at the age of 43, left his family and European ex-



istence for Tahiti with its exotic environment and exotic women, where he painted and lived for the rest of his life.

This fantasy is an elaboration of the Gaia hypothesis. Gaea or Gea is the primal Greek goddess personifying the Earth, the Greek version of “Mother Nature”. The Gaia hypothesis is an ecological hypothesis proposing that the biosphere and the physical components of the Earth are closely integrated to form a complex interacting system that maintains the climatic and biogeochemical conditions on Earth in a preferred homeostasis. The hypothesis is frequently described as viewing the Earth as a single organism.

2. The fantasy of overcoming physical limitations

When we first meet Jake Sully, he is in a wheelchair. He lost the use of his legs during one of his tours of duty on Earth as a marine, and he cannot afford a cure. He is told that if he volunteers for the avatar program, he will have his operation paid for. In the scene after he enters the avatar body for the first time, we see his

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exuberance at his new body and freedom. He is jumping and running and doesn't care if he stumbles. Clearly throughout the film, one of his main motivations for staying in the avatar state is the physical freedom he enjoys. We see it in the physical joy of riding the direhorse and taming the Banshee.

3. Oedipal fantasy of becoming the powerful father figure and winning the best female

The film presents Jake with one oedipal triumph after another. After he is saved by Neytiri, she presents him to her people, the Omaticaya. Up to this point, the avatars had been unsuccessful in penetrating Na'vi life. Leading this group of men is Tsu'Tey, next in line to the throne, who represents a rival and remains somewhat suspicious of him. Neytiri lets them know that “there has been a sign” and that he should be brought to “tashik” (father) and “Eywa” (mother). Jake is presented to Neytiri's parents, Eytukan and Mo'at, who are the king and queen of the tribe, respectively. Jake tells the elders that he is a warrior -- a “dream-walker” -- and his intention is to learn from them. Mo'at tastes Jake's blood from a wound on his forehead and decrees that it is the will of Eywa



for him to live with the Omaticayan, and for Neytiri to be his teacher in their ways and customs. Then Jake is able to surmount the oedipal challenges of riding the direhorse and the Banshee. When Jake is on an aerial hunting mission, he is pursued by a creature known to the Na'vi as Toruk, which is larger than his Banshee. Neytiri says one name the beast has earned is "last shadow" and that her grandfather once rode one of the animals to unite the 5 Na'vi tribes. By the end of the film, Jake successfully rides the Toruk to lead the Na'vi in the final battle. Jake engages Colonel Quaritch, his human father figure in a deadly fight. With the help of Neytiri, he emerges victorious.

The Na'vi women have supermodel dimensions and catlike features. In the initiation ceremony, Jake is told he can choose a woman and he chooses Neytiri. She, of course, is a princess. After periods of mistrust, Neytiri saves Jake again at the end and they are reunited. They emerge at the film's end as the new King and Queen of the Omaticaya.

4. The fantasy of the ideal penis that is admired by all females.

In Jake's first trip as an avatar, he wanders away from the group and is confronted by dinosaur-like creatures, first a titanotheres and then a thanator.

He escapes by jumping into a waterfall but is separated from his group and left overnight. He notices a Na'vi who is about to shoot at him with a bow and arrow but stops when the seeds of Eywa appear, a sign of hope and love. After dark, Jake is attacked by a pack of Viperwolves. The Na'vi woman saves him by joining in the battle. She later tells him that she saved him because he has "a strong heart and a lack of fear". The seeds of Eywa reappear.

Here we are deep into the Pocahontas legend. "Pocahontas" was a nickname, meaning "the naughty one" or "spoiled child". Her real name was Matoaka. She was a daughter of Chief Powhatan in the Tidewater region of Virginia where the Virginia colony was established by John Smith. The legend is that she saved a heroic John Smith from being clubbed to death by her father in 1607 - she would have been about 10 or 11 at the time. The myth of a romance between them is only fictional but it contains a powerful fantasy. The important and adult White man is desired and saved by the dark, exotic and unimportant girl who finds him irresistible and prefers him over her own father. In his gratitude, the White man will bestow his love and care onto this girl.

Most later historians doubt this story as it was only recounted much later

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in John Smith's lifetime. In actuality, Pocahontas was captured by the English when she was 17 and held captive. She married one of the settlers, John Rolfe, and had a child with him. She traveled to England with John as part of a campaign to support the colony. While leaving Eng-

land, she died suddenly

can be attacked and overcome We see this conflict from the very beginning of the film in the person of Col. Quaritch. He embodies the colonial mindset: the White man is destiny, or the Calvary policy of scorched earth



land, she died suddenly.

The back story is that the Powhatan Indians were largely decimated, both by English attack and European diseases. For a period, Indians were treated as slaves by the English. Interestingly, there appears to be no textual analysis of the Pocahontas legend in the psychoanalytic literature.

This fantasy would appear to be a variant of male oedipal fantasies. The man is so attractive to the female that she falls instantly in love and saves his life. This oedipal fantasy overlays and defends against more primitive fantasies of attack and annihilation, detailed in the next fantasy.

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5. The fantasy of good and evil, where the evil is out there and

against the Indians. He wants the resources of Pandora and will stop at nothing to get them. If the natives get in the way, they will be destroyed. Jake, as an ex-marine, is initially sympathetic to this view. We are in the realm of Polyphemus, the greedy giant who will devour all who come to him. When we meet the Na'vi, they are portrayed as the innocent and noble Indians. They live in a rainforest paradise, in close harmony with nature. They

see the humans as "sky people". They hunt with bow and arrow. They welcome Jake, although with some mistrust (embodied in Tsu'Tey). They have no idea of what the humans want or of the destruction that awaits them. One can see that the Na'vi will suffer the same fate as American native people, to be largely decimated. Jake is quickly converted and "goes native" in the words of Col. Quaritch. This, of course, is the ultimate in disgrace among the colonialists. For Jake, it is personal and physical liberation. He is destined to be the new messiah of his chosen people, eventually uniting all the clan and other sentient beings to defeat and drive out the evil humans. From one psychoanalytic point of view, this can be understood as the Kleinian paranoid-schizoid point of view. The world is defensively split into all-good and all-bad. The all-bad is projected away from ourselves and seen as an evil in the world, which is threatening to attack us. We see ourselves or our group as having all the good.



Our choice is to retreat into a schizoid isolation or mount a paranoid counter-attack. Another analysis would see this as massive racial guilt, which needs to be atoned for by switching sides and identifying with the oppressed (a Nietzschean view).

Notes

1. In Greek mythology, Pandora was the first woman. Zeus ordered Hephaestus to mold her out of Earth as part of the punishment of mankind for Prometheus' theft of the secret of fire, and all the gods joined in offering her "seductive gifts". Her other name is Anesidora, "she who sends up gifts," up implying "from below" within the earth. According to the myth, Pandora opened a jar (pithos), releasing all the evils of mankind.

2. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus lands on the Island of the Cyclopes during his journey home from the Trojan War. He and his men are captured by the great Cyclops Polyphemus who starts to kill and eat Odysseus' men. Odysseus manages to escape by getting Polyphemus drunk, blinding him with a wooden stake and escaping on the undersides of sheep let out to graze.

3. Aerospace engineers have used the term unobtainium when referring to unusual or costly materials, or when theoretically considering a material perfect for their needs in all respects, except that it does not exist.

4. The Nav'i people's name resembles the Hebrew for prophets, Nevi'im

5. In science fiction, sapience describes an essential human property that bestows "personhood" onto a non-human. It is derived from the Latin word for wisdom.

6. It has been suggested that Eywa is taken from Yahweh, the God of the Hebrew Bible. Another possibility is Erda or Urðr in Norse mythology. Urðr makes up a trio of Norns that decide the fates of people. The Na'vi believe that Eywa acts to keep the ecosystem of Pandora in perfect equilibrium. All living things on Pandora connect to Eywa through a system of neuro-conductive antennae; this explains why Na'vi can mount their direhorse and ride them immediately without going through the necessary steps required to domesticate such wild animals. This interconnectedness, which on Earth is merely a spiritual concept, exists in a physical and tangible way



on Pandora, in the form of a strange, collective psionic consciousness embedded in the planet, drawn from all Pandoran life. It is, like a huge biological internet; the trees being computer servers that store information. The Na'vi can upload or download memories from it using their queues and it can even be used for mind transfers in certain cases.

7. The Omaticaya clan, otherwise known as “the clan of the Blue Flute”, has a “flute” serving as a guardian spirit that is played only on the most sacred of occasions. The “flute” serves as a concrete representation of the connection of the Na'vi with the Hometree and is of ancient ancestry. It is described by Na'vi mythology that Eywa plucked a branch from the Hometree, created the flute, and gave it to the Omaticaya clan as a device to communicate with her or the spirits of ancestors who have passed on.

been interested in the problem of the self or personal identity. Philosophy, in the question of personal identity, is primarily interested in numerical identity and numerically identity over time . Psychology, on the other hand, is primarily interested in what kind of person someone is or wants to be.

In the history of philosophy, there appears to be a general move away from the view of the self as an enduring substantial thing. In the classical period, the self was called soul and thought to be a simple immaterial substance. In the Phado, Plato speaks of immortal and indivisible souls. Aristotle considered nous (mind, rationality) as immortal and preexists its associated body. Augustine continues a Platonic view of two substances, the immortal soul and a material body. Descartes, wanting to separate science from theology, argued that the certainty of mental experiences makes the mental a separate substance from the body. While the body is a separate substance, he did think there was substantial unity of mind and body. With the advent of the British empirical school, there is a



move away from the view of mind as substance.

John Locke (1632-1704) first proposed an intrinsic view of personal identity – what determines whether a person at one time and a later time are the same person is how the two are physically or psychologically related to each other. He highlighted the importance of the continuity of memory. Whatever is in the mind must originate with the senses. For personal identity, only consciousness matters. Consciousness means memory over time. A person is the same as another person over time if the latter person can remember having the same experiences as the earlier person. A psychological relationship binds the two persons together. Consciousness is also reflexive and accounts for identity at one time.

Joseph Butler (1692-1752) made the claim that our bodies are not us, but things we own. We are like a pilot of a ship. While memory does provide intuitive evidence for continuity of personal identity, any episode of consciousness in time is not the same as another episode of consciousness at another time. While modes of consciousness change, the being stays the same. Then, if consciousness constantly changes, then personal identity is a fiction.

David Hume (1711-1776) thought that belief in a substantial persisting self is an illusion. The self is a bundle of perceptions, thoughts and feelings. The mind is like a theater in which there are actors that come and go. We forge a succession of perceptions into the sense of self through resemblance. Memory creates resemblances by showing a relation of causes and effects

Modern empiricists tend to be skeptical of a

persisting self. Derek Parfit (2003) agrees with Locke that a sense of self can be understood by psychological or physical continuity of body, but that a persisting personal identity is logically impossible. What we call personal identity is merely a description of the course of events in different ways, persisting for emotional reasons. Galen Strawson (2003), in a phenomenal analysis, finds the pearl view. Many mental selves exist, one after the other, like a string of pearls. It is a gappy series of eruptions of consciousness out of a persisting unconscious. There is not such a thing as a persisting consciousness. There's a new subject of experience every time there's a break in experience. There's no subject of experience when one is dreamlessly asleep.

Buddhism has always claimed the doctrine of non-self. We can distinguish between a person and a self. A person is a whole of all the parts that make up a body and mind. These parts can and do change during a lifetime and yet the person continues to exist. The self would be that part of a person which does not change over time. In Western terms, the self has an essence. In this view, the self is a permanent controller over other parts of the person. The Buddhist would reply that the idea of a self should be thought of as a convenient designator (Siderits, 2007). It is useful for everyday life; it is conventionally true. The self is a conceptual name. In fact, if we try to look for something permanent, we can never find it beyond the parts of the body and mind we do know. What seems to be a controlling self is only a shifting set of causal relations among the various parts of the person. Both the Buddhist argument of non-self and Hume's

argument of bundles are nominalist's arguments against the existence of abstract objects

At the same time, if we think of the self as something 'inner', the 'inner' seat of consciousness, this sense has grown throughout the history of philosophy and psychology. In the Homeric world, *psychē* means a life force rather than the site of thinking and rationality. The power of the life force often comes from the gods, infused in man. There is a fragmentation of where passions and responsibilities are located. By the time of Plato, reason is seen as an ordering of the soul. Reason is our capacity to see the larger transcendental vision of the Good and the order of the universe. The sources of the self are understood as outside us, in the eternal world. To be ruled by reason is to be turned toward the Ideas or forms. This is the Greek view of *kosmos* – an ordered harmonious universe that encompasses physical, moral and aesthetic values. All of reality, including values, consists of forms. The Greeks granted the soul a certain separateness but also participated in a universal soul-ness. Human beings belong first of all to a universal order (Taylor, 1989).

Augustine accepts the Platonic notion of the external Good but now transformed into God. However, the way to know God is in the 'inner light'. Truth is found in the activity of knowing. There is a radical turn to reflexivity in the first-person standpoint. It is the certainty of self-presence. In the late medieval period with the rise of nominalism, the subject comes into being as the traditional sources of meaning dries up (Dupré, 1993). It is these two turns that pushed the Western tradition toward inwardness and subjectivity (Taylor, 1989).

By the time of Descartes, the universe has become mechanical and materialistic, no longer a source of moral vision. Reality now has to be constructed from within, not found but built. Representations in the mind carry certainty of knowl-

edge. Self-mastery and construction of reason become central in man's lives. There is the assumption of an instrumental stance toward and disengagement from world and body. Cognition ceases to participate in the ideal reality and instead focuses on representation and its internal criteria. Locke completes the move to a completely mechanical universe where the self has complete rational control, through disengagement and objectification. Self-responsibility becomes important (Taylor, 1989). In the modern age, we see a concentration on the self as inward: Kant's transcendental self, Freud's or Nietzsche's self as self-deceiver, Kierkegaard's or Heidegger's authentic self and Husserl's phenomenal self. Psychoanalysis is one of the heirs of the self as inward understanding. Its emphasis on the unconscious as the seat of the self sets it apart from much of classical philosophy. Psychoanalysis, to my knowledge, has not taken up the question of an enduring self. Much of classical psychoanalysis assumes the solidity of mental contents and their endurance. While the id and the ego are conceived by Freud as concepts, they quickly assume the status of structures in theory. One structure, the ego, contains defenses that repress instinctual representations in the id. Freud conceives of the id as timeless and changeless, where nothing is destroyed. The ego, more responsive to reality, is also frozen in its defensive patterns and the grip of the superego. Modern object relations theory also assumes the solidity and durability of self and object internal representations. With the rise of relational psychoanalysis, the solidity and permanence of psychic structures are called into question. Here there is a more fluid exchange of inner and outer. If we consider psychoanalysis from a phenomenological point of view, when we listen to the flow of thoughts in the clinical hour and our own musings and reactions, the experience is perfectly compatible with the Buddhist no-self or Strawson's pearl view. Here we have transient states of consciousness broken up by defensive operations, the flow of associations and split off mental states. I think Charles Brenner (2006)

has this in mind when he states that “methods of defense include whatever the mind is capable of” (p. 29). Thus, there is no such thing in the mind as defense mechanisms. All mental contents can at times be used for gratification and at other times can oppose gratification. This dissolves the usefulness of the concepts of ego and id, the division of the mind into structures. The dynamic unconscious is much more fluid and transient, much more in line with the view of self as not substance.

Donnel Stern (1997) proposes a novel view of the dynamic unconscious that also eliminates solid structures. He replaces the Freudian unconscious with unformulated experience, mentation that is characterized by lack of clarity and differentiation, familiar chaos. Unformulated experience is the primary matrix of all thinking. To make something conscious is to construct the experience in words. Consciousness is not a passive container but an active shaping and representing. Instead of repressed content, we have familiar chaos and the refusal to allow prereflective experience to attain full-bodied meaning. Clinically we look for absences, gaps, contradictions, stereotypes, repetitions and dead spots.

Part III - The Avatar as a thought experiment

The word Avatar comes from the Sanskrit Avatāra for “descent”, translated into English as “incarnation”, but more accurately as “appearance” or “manifestation”. It is used to refer to a deliberate descent of a deity from heaven to earth in Hinduism. The word avatar came into usage in cyberspace where avatars refer to pictures, drawings, or icons that users choose to represent themselves in video games and virtual spaces.

The first use of an avatar was in Lucasfilm’s 1986 influential online role-playing game Habitat. Avatars had to barter for resources within the Habitat, and could even be robbed or “killed” by other avatars. Initially, this led to chaos within the Habitat, which led to rules and regulations (and authority avatars) to maintain order. Neal Stephenson in the 1992 novel Snow Crash popularized the term to the extent that avatar is now the accepted term

for this concept in computer games and on the World Wide Web. In 1995, Worlds Chat became the very first three dimensional virtual world to appear on the Internet, complete with avatars moving around in a simulated space station and talking. Since Worlds Chat, there has been an explosion of virtual worlds on the Internet with hundreds of thousands of people discovering what it is like to be an avatar in cyberspace.

In the film, The Avatar Program scientists take DNA from a Na’vi and from a selected human volunteer. On Earth, in genetics labs, they create an in-vitro embryo, which is a genetic composite of the alien and human donor. The cost of each Avatar is roughly five billion dollars (\$5,000,000,000). The recombinant embryo is grown in-vitro during the flight to Pandora, which takes 3 years ship-time (5 years Earth time due to relativistic effects). In that time it reaches near adult size, since the Na’vi mature fast. When it is “born” as a post-adolescent, it looks like a Na’vi, and can live comfortably on Pandora, but it has enough human neurophysiology to be used as an Avatar, or surrogate body. The human volunteer then becomes a controller. Using Psionic Link technology, the human controller can remotely control the avatar body out in the wilds of Pandora. The human body remains in the base. The controller receives all sensory input and provides all motor control to the body. He or she also experiences life -- every sensation, feeling and emotion -- through the eyes of the hybrid, as if consciousness were transferred. The controller lives through the avatar, and is completely unaware of his own body while linked. When the human unlinks from the avatar body, the avatar body is inert and lifeless. There are several points in the film when the Avatar body is left unlinked when out in Pandora.

Avatars differ from Na’vi is that the Na’vi have four digits on their hands (three fingers and a thumb) and feet, whereas the Avatars, due to the influence of human DNA, have five. They also have eyebrows, which the Na’vi lack. Avatars display slightly more human-like body structures than the Na’vi. This is especially apparent when comparing the build of Jake Sully to that of the



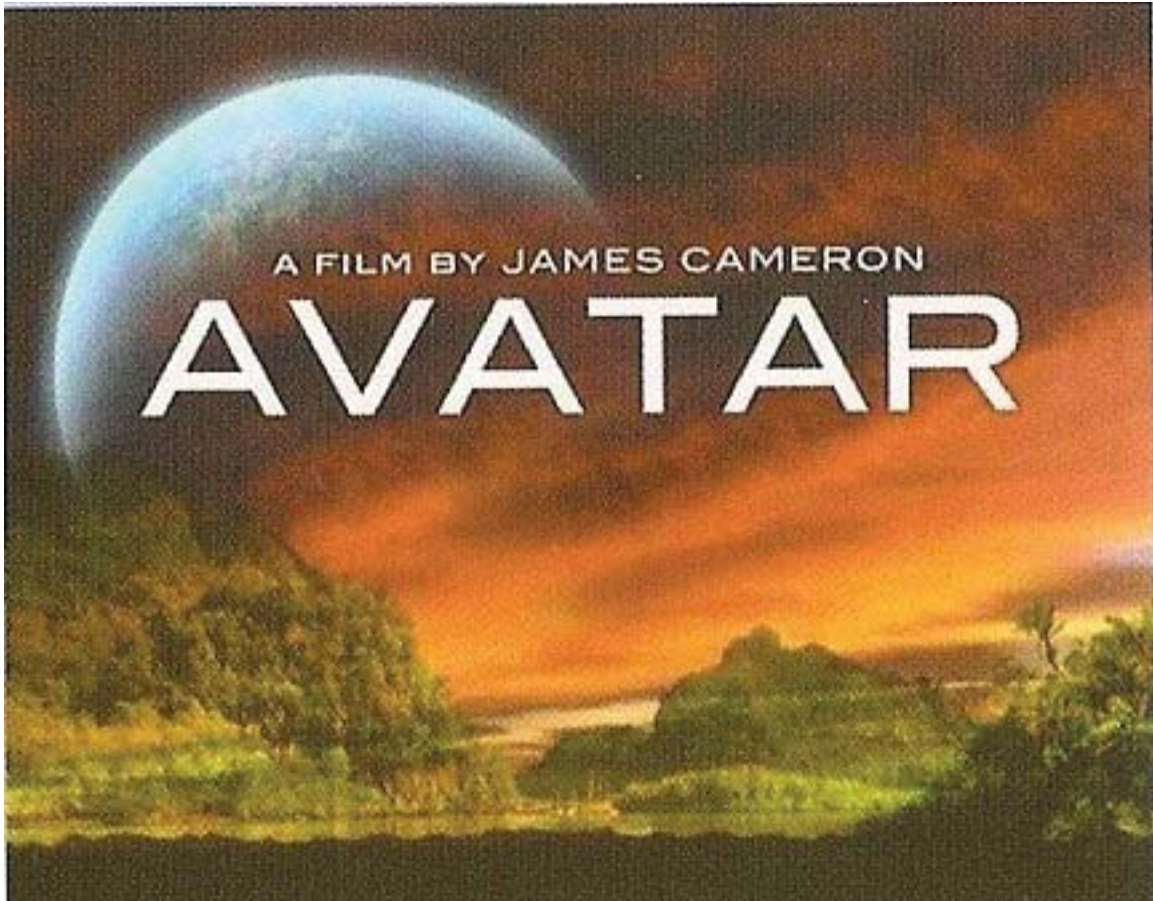
male Na'vi of the Omatiyica Clan; Jake's body structure is sturdier than those of the more willowy Na'vi. Additionally, the eyes of an avatar are usually smaller and more human-like in contrast to the large, lemur-like eyes of the Na'vi. The nose of the avatar is also different; it has a more pronounced central ridge, much like the human nose. The Na'vi nose is much flatter and cat-like. The character traits of the human controllers are expressed in the bodies of the avatars they inhabit. Norm Spellman's avatar is a macho action man. Dr. Augustine's avatar sports a belly-baring Stanford T-Shirt and beaded dreadlocks. Each avatar, then, expresses something of what each of the humans would like to be.

What the Na'vi think of the avatars is relatively unexplored in the film. They are aware that the avatars are not themselves. The Na'vi refer to them as "Dream Walkers" or "Demons in a false body." Presumably, they have been tracking the avatars, explaining why Neytiri is present when

Jake gets lost and attacked. There has been contact between the avatars and the Na'vi before the film opens but the avatars have been kept at a distance. It is unclear how the Na'vi might conceive of these bodies that resemble themselves but are clearly alien. It is also unclear why the clan decides to accept Jake at this point. Tsu'tey, the son of the king and queen represents the suspicion of outsiders and remains skeptical of Jake's allegiance to the clan.

What does the avatar program suggest about personal identity and selfhood?

1. The mental contents of the human are copied and projected into the avatar.
2. The avatar, because of its dual genetic load, is fully human and fully Na'vi. It retains the full human consciousness while at the same time is completely open to Na'vi consciousness. The avatar retains the full consciousness of its human controller yet at the same time is fully open to experiences from the point of view of the Na'vi.
3. Consciousness cannot be shared. Either



the avatar or the human controller can have consciousness at any one time.

4. When either the avatar or the human is without consciousness, they are completely helpless to any dangers in the environment.

5. The film suggests that the human consciousness can be enlarged by the new Na'vi experiences. A new hybrid consciousness is born, retaining the technical skill of the humans and the eco-consciousness of the Na'vi. When Jake returns to his human body, he retains his new hybrid consciousness. Jake's return as the rider on the Toruk suggests his superior consciousness that has been born anew.

6. In an act of mysticism, the human consciousness is transformed permanently into the avatar body at the end of the film. It is not stated but presumably the human consciousness remains in the avatar after the permanent transfer.

7. What happens to the human body after the permanent transfer is not explored.

To explore the idea of personal identity, I will take two details of the Avatar Program for further examination.

1. What happens when the mental contents of the human are projected into the avatar? There are two possibilities. The first possibility is that the mental contents of the human are copied and thus reside in both the avatar and the human controller at the same time. Following Parfits (2003) in assuming that both persons cannot both be considered identical to each other at the same time, then we would have to conclude that there is no personal identity in common.

The second possibility is that the mental contents are projected from the human controller and thus exist in only the human or the avatar at any one time. The film seems to suggest this possibility as either the avatar Jake or the human Jake is lifeless and unresponsive when not possessing consciousness. Would we consider that personal identity is transferred in this scenario? In the Lockian view, there is a similarity in consciousness and memories, so that personal identity is preserved. The psychoanalyst would privilege the importance of the body in the mental representations, so that a new body would lead to a new personal identity.

2. The question of the hybrid body is intriguing. A fully formed human mind is projected into the avatar. What is the state of the Na'vi mind that already exists in the avatar? Presumably the avatar starts out with Na'vi instincts (potentials, capabilities) but has no actual Na'vi experiences or memories when it is first actuated. Thus, there is the curious situation of one adult mind and one infant mind. This probably accounts for Jake bouncing around like an overgrown child when he first enters the avatar. The Na'vi mind must experience and grow as the film progresses. We see him being taught as a child and undergoing initiation rites as an adolescent. With what part of his mind does Jake identify? In the first scene outside the compound, Jake is still fully human. Once he meets Neytiri and the Omatiyicaya clan, he steadily shifts his inner sense of self toward the Na'vi. He 'goes native'. The lure is powerful - physical freedom, a beautiful princess, the exotic environment and the ability to merge with neural network of the planet. Here we have a substitution problem, what Parfitts (2003) calls the combined spectrum. Physical or mental aspects of the self are replaced with physical or mental aspects of non-self. The sense of self is thus diluted. At what point do we call the new being a different self? In the film, Jake's mind in the avatar (H-Jake) is gradually replaced by Na'vi experience (N-Jake). At what point does H-Jake cease to exist? In the reductionist's view (Parfitts, 2003), the degree of concern between H-Jake and N-Jake is proportional to the degree of psychological connectedness. There would be a region of indeterminacy where there is no clear answer if 'I' continue or not. This leads to the argument that personal identity is not important, rather the facts of psychological connectedness alone matter. Future directed concern will be progressively weakened. Mark Johnston (2003) argues against reductionism as the only determinate of future concern. He adds the human questions of friendship, intimacy, social relationships and future execution as additional aspects of personal identity. In these cases, we might actually prefer those beings

we feel closest to or value the most to the beings more psychologically identical to us. In the case of the combined spectrum pictured in the film, Johnston would argue that who we value as a future executor of our personal projects would be as important as psychological continuity. In this sense, H-Jake might well care deeply about N-Jake because H-Jake has begun to care deeply about ecological concerns and the preservation of the Na'vi. N-Jake will carry on that mission. In that sense, it matters little if aspects of H-Jake are progressively diluted in N-Jake. Psychoanalysis would be much more sympathetic to the latter point of view. Psychological connectedness consists of need, care and love (sometimes hate) between persons. We see Jake at the end of the film willing to sacrifice H-Jake so that N-Jake can continue. He sees N-Jake as the future executor of his project of eco-consciousness.

This brings us to another fascinating problem. What is the effect of the avatar body on the mind of H-Jake? De Vignemont (2007) argues for the primacy of the body schema in the sense of ownership of the body. The body schema is an unconscious functional sensori-motor map of the body based on the information one needs in order to move one's own body. The body schema defines the felt boundaries of the body. The body image, on the other hand, is more visual and affective, involved more in identification with the body. The sense of ownership arises from the spatial content of bodily sensations that localises bodily properties within the body schema. Ownership of one's own body is thus linked to one's own movements and actions.

When H-Jake enters the avatar body, he is suddenly confronted with a completely new body schema. He is much taller, he has a tail, he is no longer crippled. In addition, his sensory inputs are much different. He can see, smell and hear the environment of Pandora much differently than before. The H-Jake must develop a completely new body schema in order to operate the avatar. How might he manage two different bodily sche-

mas, when he switches back and forth between his human body and the avatar body? What is portrayed in the film is the gradual acquisition of the Na'vi bodily schema as the H-Jake progresses into the N-Jake. It is likely in this view that the role of action and practice facilitated the transition of the personal identity.

Finally, I would like to suggest that the film portrays a kind of liberation in the Buddhist sense. In the beginning, H-Jake is caught up in human desires, the desire not to be crippled, the desire for resources, the desire to succeed in the avatar program. He is caught up in the human feelings of greed, aggression, rivalry, etc. There are hints of self-loathing. From the Buddhist psychology, we would say that he is attached to his suffering. This begins to change when he enters the avatar body and is exposed to Pandora. He is faced with the childish wonder and the heightened sensory awareness in the planet. As he enters more fully into N-Jake, he can sense and plug into the interconnectedness of all beings. Categories and desires become less important and he becomes less attached to what was formerly valuable. He lives more fully in each moment. The Na'vi live much closer to the environment, to the other living beings on the planet than H-Jake had known about. Indeed, the whole planet is a living organism. There is movement away from a strict subject/object dichotomy. In completely assuming the Na'vi personality, Jake has broken from Samsara and achieved his personal Nirvana.

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The Vanishing

(1988)(Dutch Spoorloos translates as Traceless) is a Franco/Dutch film about a Dutch

woman named Saskia Wagter (Johanna ter Steege) and her lover Rex Hofman (Gene Bervoets) who are on vacation in rural France. Saskia suddenly disappears at a rest stop along the highway and Rex becomes obsessed with finding her.

The triangle is completed by Raymond Lemorne (Bernard-Pierre Donnadiou) who enters

into both lives, The film is based on a novella by Tim Krabbé called The Golden Egg. The film is directed by George Sluizer. The film was a major

success in Europe. It won the Golden Calf for the best full-length feature film at the Netherlands Film Festival and was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film for 1988 Academy Awards. Johanna ter Steege won a European Film Award for Best Supporting Actress in 1988. An American adoption of the film was also directed by George Sluizer in 1993 and did not do well.

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The Golden Egg: Narcissism and Intimacy in "The Vanishing" by Anita Weinreb Katz

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Any intimate relationship includes fears and desires around connecting and separating. As many writers have noted, these are the hardest parts of life. Equally challenging are conflicts between the desire for power and the fear of it, and between the ability to relinquish power and surrender to another and the fear of surrendering (Ghent, 1990; see also Katz, 1988, 1991). This paper is a close study of the first fifteen minutes of George Sluizer's extraordinary film "The Vanishing" (the original 1988 Dutch version). This classic is not only a masterpiece of psychological suspense, but also a compelling depiction of these conflicts. It examines the delicate balance between the pleasures of free engagement with another person and the terrors of involuntary engagement once control has been lost. To my mind, it reaches straight to our deepest longings and fears, satisfying and terrifying -- even after almost 25



years -- in a way that few films are able to do.

I have written about this rich and fascinating work before (Katz, 1991), but in this paper I take a different approach, focusing on its two young lovers, Saskia and Rex. I will concentrate especially on the way the young woman Saskia's conflicts -- about intimacy, separation, desire, rage, action, and reaction, as delineated in the film's very first minutes -- drive the events of the whole.

As the story begins, we see Saskia and Rex driving down a highway. They are on their way from Holland to a vacation in France. That this will be a tragic journey for the lovers is foreshadowed early by nonverbal elements. Even before the opening credits appear on the screen, we see a shot of a praying mantis perched on a tree. That image, of an insect species notorious for the fact that the female devours the male after copulation, warns us right away that sexual intimacy can be fatal. The minor key of the music underlines and enhances the actual words that the characters speak. Even for the many of us who do not understand the French and Dutch in which the movie was filmed, our attunement to the language of the unconscious is heightened by Sluizer's attention to the other senses.

When we first meet Saskia and Rex, they are very lively. They are playing childish word games involving animals whose names begin with the letter "C" and laughing joyously. But the music is in a minor key, poignant and bittersweet, and the mood begins to change when Saskia asks Rex to turn off of the highway and onto a smaller road; she is less interested in a quick way to their destination than in local color, the beauty of nature, and the intimacy of their rolling cocoon. Rex, however, refuses -- unless she is willing to drive. It appears that he is tired, and he is disinclined to gratify her desire for adventure unless she will gratify his for relaxation by taking on the responsibility of driving for a while and giving him a chance to rest. But in the next scene, they are indeed on the local road, and Rex is still driving. Clearly Saskia has not agreed to his terms, and



clearly he has given in, relinquishing his wish to be passive and dependent for a bit. (In the novella upon which this movie is based, the author Tim Krabbe (1993) explains that Saskia is afraid of driving. She has gotten her driving license, but has not yet mustered up the courage to take the wheel. This is implicit in the movie, but not stated directly.)

Rex has not used -- perhaps he does not even experience -- his own power to defy her and insist on his own way. We do not see any sign of interest in why she rejected his request. What we do see is him in a resentful, persecutory mood. We also see Saskia retreat from his annoyance, and presumably her own fearfulness, into a reassuring narcissism, pulling down the visor and smiling at herself in the mirror as she freshens her lipstick.

Rex gets further irritated by her self-involvement, perhaps feeling it as another rejection. He pulls the visor up. When she expresses concerns about the gas running low, he dismisses them. She'd see the gas gauge better if she were driving, he points out, rubbing in the fact that she gave up the right to

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his -- the driver's -- perspective when she refused to drive. He has given her the power to determine the route, but he now seems determined not to give her anything else.

In the face of his silent withdrawal, she tries to reconnect. She says in practice French, "Je vois une arbre" (I see a tree). He asserts himself by correcting her -- "Je vois un arbre," indicating that



arbre is masculine, not feminine -- and asking her to peel an orange for him. She resists his efforts to control her, saying in French, "Unbelievable, I see another tree," deliberately making exactly the same mistake in gender as before. "Feminine" and "masculine" are a point of contention in this

interaction. She bites into the orange, seductively looking at him, and he laughs. He seems to be enjoying her tempting him, and resisting him all at

the same time. He is dismayed that he can't control her, but also impressed by her ability to resist him. He seems to be enjoying vicariously her ability to express aggression directly, which, as far as we can see, he does not feel free to do with her. Perhaps he is relieved that she remains separate from him. She is neither destroyed nor engulfed by him, but remains feisty in a playful way, refusing to be corrected, like a rapprochement child (Mahler 1975).

There is an ominous silence -- no music, no speech -- as they enter a long tunnel. Both their faces are in darkness. Then Saskia tells Rex that she had her nightmare again last night. He recounts it without hesitation -- "You are enclosed in a golden egg, and can't get out; you fly all alone through space forever." But his manner suggests that not only has he heard this nightmare before, he has thoroughly distanced himself from the terror it holds for her. She says, "The loneliness is unbearable. But last night, there was another golden egg flying through space. . . . And if we collided" She smiles wistfully, conveying some cautious interest in this possibility. The beauty that attracts men to her is a protective shell, and she gets a lot of pleasure from it. But it is also a trap. Within it, she is too alone. The grandiosity and beauty of the gold protects her and masks her vulnerabilities -- like her fear of driving. But it also means that what lies beneath the precious surface is not seen, not understood, and not accepted, and that no one can get close enough to help her become stronger. She longs for someone with enough strength and resourcefulness to penetrate her shell, but as her wistful smile indicates, she isn't sure what that would mean. If her shell is broken, will she shatter too? And what will happen to the soft Saskia so newly hatched? As we will see, Saskia walks a very dangerous line between the fear of abandonment and the fear of being engulfed. Her ambivalence shows in her alternation between seductive en-

gagement of Rex, and obliviousness to him. Telling him her dream is an attempt to open up the golden shell and let him in, but she can't break it for herself, and so far he has not been willing or able to break it for her.

Rex cannot maintain himself sufficiently with Saskia to be able to pierce her armor. He can't let himself "collide" with her, as the dream has it, even in a brief angry exchange; instead he gives up his powers in the face of her needs, as he did in the failed negotiation over the route. Saskia's wistful smile suggests that she understands the imponderables of such a collision. It could hold many possibilities, both creative and destructive, for their relationship. The piercing of an egg can be an intimate connection leading to fertilization, or a fragmenting assault. But Rex holds himself aloof from this discussion. Beneath their obvious sexual bond and their pleasure in each other, their reactions to Saskia's nightmare alerts us to an underlying fragility in their relationship. They are maintaining their narcissistic separateness out of fear of the alternative. Saskia's gorgeous shell is both a lure and a trap, and indeed Rex seems to feel both captivated and captured by it. They play exciting games of seduction, and they flirt with the promise of sexual merger, but they maintain a sado-masochistic distance. They vacillate between a tense separateness and an awkward search for connection.

Then they do run out of gas, still in the narrow two-lane tunnel. A huge truck comes barreling down on them. We hear its screeching wheels and see its two huge oval headlights, making clear their danger. "The golden eggs," whispers Saskia, terrified. She rages at Rex for not having listened to her, imploring him not to leave the car until she finds a flashlight so they can light their way safely out of the tunnel together. He screams at her not to panic, telling her she is hysterical, and tries to pull her out of the car. She says, "I am not hysterical; I am scared," (Hurvich, 1989) and urgently, insists on finding the flashlight. It is Rex who has become hysterical, as she

points out. While she frantically searches for the flashlight and screams for him to wait for her, he leaves the car alone.

She cries, "Rex, don't leave me!" over and over again, but Rex leaves without her. She resisted the controlling engulfment of his efforts to pull her out of the car, but she now feels abandoned. He, on the other hand, smiles as he hears her calling "Rex, wait!", but he does not turn around; he continues his walk out of the tunnel. (The director, in a personal communication, told me that Rex needs to feel less dependent upon Saskia; she is so attractive that she could be desired and taken from him by another man. His smile is a sign of pleasure that she is wanting him while he is safe in his independence.)

Rex accomplishes his mission without Saskia's flashlight, but when he returns to the car with a can of gas, Saskia is gone. He drives out of the tunnel and sees her by the road, small, bereft, and alone, clutching the flashlight to her chest.



The golden egg of her self-sufficiency is temporarily shattered.

She gets into the car, but she scrunches against the door, as far away from Rex as possible. She cries silently, still clutching the flashlight and looking crushed. Rex looks sad, helpless, and forlorn. They come to a rest stop and fill up the gas tank. Saskia says, "If you want we can go back to Amsterdam." Rex says "I'm sorry about earlier. I didn't know what to do. I shouldn't have left you alone."

When I heard you call me, I felt I loved you more. "I hated you!" she says, staring at him, but upon seeing the pain in his face, her rage quickly becomes a loving laugh. Not comfortable with open anger either, she is trying to undo their feelings of alienation and to reassure him (and probably herself) that she still loves him. He, relieved, laughs also. They kiss, and she says "We're going to have a wonderful holiday together in my little house." He asks "Shall we go then?" and she kisses him again, and says "First I have to go to the toilet."

Saskia goes into the convenience store and buys Rex a Frisbee. At first he is annoyed that she spent a lot of money on it, but she smiles, saying that it will help him stretch his arms after all his driving. He smiles too, and she kisses him. Now Saskia takes charge, laying down her conditions for their staying together. Paradoxically, her first condition is that she drive. This surprises and thrills him. But we can see that their attempts to respond lovingly to each other's needs are still hedged around by struggle and resentment. She gratifies his original request, but as though the idea were her own, as though his wishes had made no impact on her -- just as he, earlier, had dismissed her warnings about the gas and her pleas that he wait for her before setting out into the dark tunnel. It is as if they are both saying to each other "I will give you what you want when I am in control." Before, we recall, he had given her what she wanted (the local color route) in a resentful manner, and at a cruel price. Now he happily gives her his car keys, but in return she criticizes his shabby key chain, which "does not befit a lovely lady." If she is going to love him, she implies, he must be a powerful king and worthy of a beautiful queen. She pushes him down on the grass, gets on top of him, pins his arms down (he looking surprised and delighted), and names her

second condition: that he never again abandon his "exquisite, always sweet Saskia." He jokes -- for this brief moment he manages to express his love and anger directly -- "My sometimes sweet Saskia." But she does not accept this, and insists on the always. We can see that despite her ambivalent wish for a liberating collision, Saskia has problems of her own with Rex's autonomy. It is hard for her to let him criticize or hate her, and she is not at ease with her own mean, hateful, aggressive (that is, not so sweet) side.

Saskia's decision to remain with Rex can be seen as a masochistic clinging to a man who has cruelly abandoned her. (Katz, 1991). But the negotiations between the lovers is also a heroic attempt to repair the rupture between them by creating a transitional space of play (Winnicott, 1960) in which to restate their love and master the trauma of the tunnel. One theme in this movie is the issue of predestination versus free choice. A person who too greatly fears being engulfed or abandoned is terrified of losing control of the space between self and other, yet at the same time cannot freely move into or out of that intimate psychic or physical space.

Saskia leaves Rex again to go back into the convenience store for drinks. She refuses his offer of money, saying that she will pay. She walks away; she turns back to him. She and Rex hold up two fingers towards each other, signifying "peace," perhaps, or the two conditions she gave to Rex, or the two of them together. Then, oddly, she falls. I see this fall as yet another warning of the dangers of narcissistic grandiosity. Saskia is now feeling very powerful in her position with Rex, and she does not watch her step. In her childlike self-absorption and brand-new confidence, she pays too little attention to the hazards of the real world of people and things. She is still relying on the invisible protection of the golden egg, which

defends against her underlying anxieties about not being strong enough. In any case, she smiles and quickly gets up. This is an ominous foreshadowing of the tragic events to follow.

Rex is now behaving as though the world were his oyster. He joyously kisses the Frisbee Saskia gave him, smiles at the other travelers, takes pictures with his camera. Her loving gestures and the promise of peace between them reassure him that it is possible to feel lovingly engaged with her and safe at the same time, and that she will value and idealize him as long as he values and idealizes her as “always sweet.” But this, we know, is the kind of deal that couples cannot usually keep. We know too that despite all the promises that the two lovers make, nothing has really changed within their psyches, and that they, and their relationship, are both still at risk.

Saskia disappears into the convenience store, and although Rex becomes more and more frantic when she does not return, he never sees her again. His story is a subject for another paper. We learn the rest of her story -- or most of it -- in a flashback later in the film.

In the convenience store, she asks a fellow traveler for change for the vending machine. As he gives it to her, she sees his shiny new key ring with the letter “R” on it. His name, we learn in time, is Raymond. She tells him in her proud and childlike broken French that she is going to drive on the highway. Her boyfriend’s name also begins with R, she says, and she would love to have a beautiful key ring to replace his shabby one. Saskia is suddenly carried away with narcissistic excitement. Raymond finds her charming. Unlike Rex, he does not criticize or correct her, but responds to her in his own perfect French, relaxes in her warmth, and becomes less wooden and more appealing. He tells her that he sells these rings, and when she asks if he has another with an R on it, he invites her to go out to his car with him so they can look.

Saskia is now fully in the grip of the golden wish to give Rex the key ring. It is the symbol of the powerful kingship she longs for in her mate. She is also still traumatized by Rex’s cruel abandonment in the tunnel, and is craving a man’s attention, support, and protection. In her childlike grandiose way, she naively trusts this stranger to empower her. Now, in the manner of a practicing child (Mahler, 1975), it is she who is treating the world as her oyster. She briefly hesitates about getting into the stranger’s car, but she is reassured by a picture on his dashboard of him with his wife and two daughters. And again, as in her fall outside of the convenience store, she fails to watch her step. She jumps to the conclusion that he is a family man, a good father. She enters his car and is trapped in his space.

Discussion.

Saskia and Rex are both trapped in the golden eggs of Saskia’s nightmare. Their own desire and rage, and the desire and rage of the other, frighten them too much to allow them to inhabit a comfortable intimate space with each other. Saskia longs to be lovingly connected to her lover. She enjoys being excited and exciting with him, and she hopes that a passionate connection will enhance her sense of self and of her own power. Her nightmare contrasts the terror of eternal loneliness with the possibility of “collision,” but she can’t yet really understand what collision in this context would mean. She cannot relinquish her need for admiration enough to tolerate herself and Rex as they truly are. Rex, in his insistence that she is his “sometimes sweet Saskia,” has for the first time directly challenged her golden self-absorption, and stood up for his right to challenge it. But she encounters his challenge with a passionate defense of her golden shell. Does she want that collision more than she fears it? Is the threat of eternal loneliness more frightening than the risk of shattering altogether?

Caught as they are by their fears

Of The Couch

-- fears of their own desire and the desire of the other, and fears of their own rage and the other's rage -- they are only just learning to modulate rage and desire, to give up magical control. In Kleinian (1940) terms, neither has integrated the depressive position. They cannot accept and mourn their own limitations, or know their real powers. Neither knows how to negotiate the nurturing but constraining confines of an intimate space with or within a beloved other. They can't enjoy it when they are in it, or get out of it when enjoyment wanes. Saskia can imagine only the narcissistic claustrophobia of self-sufficiency or the emotional claustrophobia of submission. For Rex, the price of intimacy is engulfment, and the terror of the long dark tunnel the price of freedom. She feared that she would never be able to have her surface penetrated, or penetrate the surface of another. He feared the destructive potential of rage and desire, both hers and his own.



The fear of abandonment and the fear of being trapped are poles on a continuum. One end represents the wish to be safely nurtured in the womb, safe from abandonment, and the other the fear of never emerging from this enforced safety to become a separate, independent person.

Each of us has a comfort zone that falls somewhere along this scale; our issues with it underlie our love relationships, as I hope I have demonstrated in this paper. But it is also true that in our love



relationships there is always also another, whose place on the spectrum may be different. To be able to sensitively respond to the other without feeling that the self has been lost or taken over is an extremely desirable developmental achievement.

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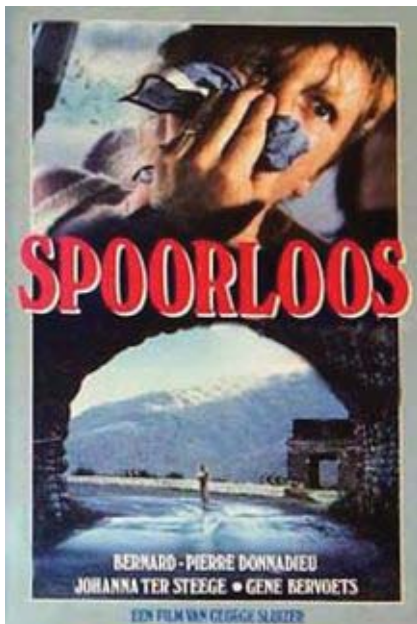
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David Lynch

Lynch was born in Montana in 1946. He attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. During his stay in Philadelphia, he made his first short film, *Six Men Getting Sick* (1966). In 1970, he turned his attention primarily to film. He won a \$5,000 grant from the American Film Institute to produce *The Grandmother*, a short film about a neglected boy who "grows" a grandmother from a seed. In 1971, he moved to Los Angeles, to study filmmaking at the AFI Conservatory. He worked intermittently until 1977 on his first feature-length film, *Eraserhead*. It tells the story of a quiet young man living in an industrial wasteland, whose girlfriend gives birth to a constantly crying mutant baby. After several more commercial films, he filmed the 1986 *Blue Velvet*, the story of a college student who after investigating a severed ear he finds in a field discovers his small, idealistic hometown hides a dark side. Turning to TV in 1990, he created a show entitled *Twin Peaks*, a drama series set in a small Washington town where the popular high school student Laura Palmer has been raped and murdered. To investigate, the FBI Special Agent Dale Cooper is called in, eventually unearthing the secrets of many town residents and the supernatural nature of the murder.

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Mulholland Drive

In 1990, Lynch approached ABC with an idea for a television drama. The network pulled the plug after a two-hour pilot was shot for the series. Later, Lynch completed the pilot as a film, *Mulholland Drive*. The film, a non-linear narrative surrealist tale of the dark side of Hollywood, stars Naomi Watts, Laura Haring and Justin Theroux. The film was released in 2001 and performed relatively well at the box office worldwide and was a critical success, earning Lynch a Best Director prize at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival and a Best Director award from the New York Film Critics Association. Naomi Watts plays both Betty Elms and Diane Selwyn. Justin Theroux plays Adam Kesher. Laura Elena Haring plays both Rita and the later Camilla Rhodes. Lynch said,

"One night, I sat down, the ideas came in, and it was a most beautiful experience. Everything was seen from a different angle ... Now, looking back, I see that [the film] always wanted to be this way. It just took this strange beginning to cause it to be what it is." He gives the film only the tagline, "A love story in the city of dreams". One of the key themes in many of Lynch's films is the usage of dreams and dreamlike imagery within his works, something they related to the "surrealist ethos" of relying "on the subconscious to provide visual drive". Another theme is the idea of a "dark underbelly" of violent criminal activity within a society. Lynch also tends to feature his leading female actors in multiple or "split" roles, so that many of his female characters have multiple, fractured identities. The film was highly acclaimed by many critics and earned Lynch the Prix de la mise en scène (Best Director Award) at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival as well as an Oscar nomination for Best Director.

A Psychoanalytic Tour of "Mulholland Drive"

By Herbert Stein

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Originally published in the PANY Bulletin

How does a film evoke our emotions? I found my own emotions buffeted about as I watched David Lynch's film, *Mulholland Drive*. It can be a difficult film to watch. It appears to be a suspense/mystery story about two young women in danger. But there are strange intrusions into that story that are at times macabre. About three quarters of the way in, the plot dissolves, the characters change identity, and we experience a melange of scenes that suggest a very different story. Interestingly, amidst the confusion, I found myself responding

with shifting affects, anxiety for the most of the first part of the film, with a strong feeling of sadness at the end.

Mulholland Drive is structured much like a dream, except that there is no clear identification of a dreamer. It is like a dream experienced rather than a dream remembered. There is no waking up, no available remembered day residue. A film and a dream have something important in common. They each must maintain our involvement. Freud pointed out over 100 years ago that dreams hold our attention, in part, with a coherent story created through what he called "secondary revision." Films routinely use coherent plots to prevent our "waking up" to our personal worries and desires. A film that has dream-like structure may lose this hook. *Mulholland Drive* maintains the interest of the susceptible viewer, like myself, with a suspenseful plot, but it is disturbed by intrusions. It is as if we are watching a conflict in which a defended surface is used to ward off some repressed, disturbing material.

That surface is made up of two parallel plots. We shift back and forth between them, with occasional points of overlap. The main plot concerns a young woman who is amnesic after a terrible car crash, but with a sense of a terrible mystery and a need for her to hide from sinister pursuers. She is befriended by another young woman, who tries to help her recover her memory. The secondary plot concerns a young male film director who is being coerced by gangsters—the same ones apparently pursuing the young woman—into choosing a particular actress for the lead role in his next film. The women are presented more sympathetically than the film director. We experience their story as drama, whereas the secondary story sometimes has a slapstick quality. In a dream, Freud has told us, affects that come from what is being repressed may be defensively incorporated into the surface of the dream. Each of these

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stories conveys a sense of imminent danger, of dark, violent forces. We are made to feel that these feelings have to do with danger within the story, but there are also brief intrusions that suggest the danger lies outside the storyline. The film creates an illusion of affects that cannot be repressed, but can be temporarily separated from their repressed source.

The film's opening has little meaning for us when we see it, but will later prove to be part of what is being kept hidden from us. We see teenagers jitterbugging, with a young woman and an elderly



couple, all three smiling, superimposed. At the end of this "scene" we hear cheering. We move to a closeup of something at first unintelligible, but which resolves into an unmade bed with pink sheets and pillowcase. We do not necessarily expect to understand the context of the opening of a film, but a subtle seed has been planted in our minds that there is more to this story than meets the eye.

31 Now, we enter the main plot. As the credits roll, it is night and we see a car moving slowly up Los Angeles's

Mulholland Drive. The music is dirge-like, with occasional minor chords that add tension. In the back seat of the car is an attractive brunette in evening dress. She becomes distressed (and we sense danger), saying to the two men in the front seat, "What are you doing? We don't stop here." The driver turns, points a gun at her, and tells her to get out of the car, while the other man gets out to open her door. We can sense her helplessness, easily empathize with her fear of impending death. But, we see two cars of screaming adolescents driving wildly down the drive side by side. Their loud noise makes them seem disconnected from the quiet of the car with the young woman. Suddenly the people in the car hear them and we see the woman staring into their bright lights moments before impact. She is saved from one fate and thrown into another. Once again, we have a sense of approaching, inevitable death, this time with blinding speed. We are barely into the film, but already we are aware of the dominant affect, fear, and of an overwhelming imminent danger.

That sense of tension continues as we see the brunette stumble out of the car. The teens' car is in flames and she appears to be the only survivor, barely scratched, with a streak of blood trailing from the side of her mouth. This may stretch the viewer's credulity, but most likely tension and curiosity will keep us engaged as we watch her climb down the hill into the city below, momentarily blinded again by the flash of headlights, her eyes showing fear. She hides behind a hedge overnight and in the morning sneaks into a house whose owner, a middle aged woman, is leaving for a trip. We believe that we are watching the beginning of a mystery/suspense drama, but in fact we are being drawn into the "secondary revision," the creation of a coherent story that incorporates the underlying fear and tension.

At this point we get the first break in the plot, the first eruption of the "repressed." We are in a

“Winkie’s” Diner where two men are talking over breakfast. As they talk, we realize that they have no obvious connection to the dark haired woman. One man explains that he has come to this particular Winkie’s because he has had a recurring nightmare about it.

“... I’m in here, but it’s not day or night, it’s kind of half night, you know? ... And I’m scared like I can’t tell you. [We have experienced fear, now we hear about it.] Of all people, you’re standing right over there (looks back) by that counter. You’re in both dreams, and you’re scared. I get more frightened when I see how afraid you are. Then I realize what it is. There’s a man. In back of this place. He’s the one that’s doing it. I can see his face. I hope that I never see that face ever outside the dream. That’s it.”

“So, you came to see if he’s out there.”

“To get rid of that God-awful feeling.”

The other man goes to pay the check and the dreamer looks back at him at the counter, seeming to realize that it is recreating the dream. They walk slowly around to the back of the diner. There is a wall blocking their view. Suddenly, with a rush of noise a grotesque man with a soot covered face, a monster, comes out from behind the wall. The dreamer screams in fright and falls unconscious to the ground, his friend bending over him. He appears to be dead.

This jarring scene comes completely out of context. It breaks through the defensive structure of the story. It is a dream within a dream which then becomes a reality. As viewers, we are disoriented and then shocked. We are no longer sure what kind of film we are watching. It is as if a horror movie has intruded into a suspense thriller. It is the film version of conflict. Something is breaking into the story, a warning of danger. It tells us that a dream may be more than a dream, that the dangers we dream about may be real.

Just as suddenly, we are back into the main storyline, the defenses rising to cover over our distress. We see the young woman sleeping. The scene shifts to a series of men making phone

calls. An older man gives the message, “The girl is still missing.” This is relayed to another man who makes a call to a phone sitting beside an ashtray with a cigarette butt in it. That phone keeps ringing as we move to the next scene. Someone is looking for her. We are back in the story. The fear and danger, which momentarily seemed to be coming from outside the plot, is again incorporated into it.

At this point, there is a shift in voice, to use Gray’s expression for a subtle affective shift that suggests a defensive covering over. We see a young blonde woman, Betty and an older woman, Irene, coming out of the airport wearing big smiles. The musical chords suggest something inspiring. The old woman and her elderly male companion say goodbye to Betty and wish her well on her hoped for acting career. These are the three people who had been superimposed



over the jitterbuggers in the opening scene. Betty’s response to Irene’s wishes to see her on the screen is innocent and a bit archaic, “Won’t that be the day.” There is a moment of anxiety breaking through when Betty thinks her bags are missing, but they are with a cab driver ready to take her to her aunt’s home. We see the elderly couple in their own cab wearing exaggerated smiles and looking unnaturally happy. Betty is innocent, wide-eyed, free of guile and except for her curiosity and ambitions to be an actress, devoid of any signs of sex or aggression. She is

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a defensive construct, in contrast to the mysterious brunette, who appears to be mixed up with something sinister.

Of course, Betty is heading to the very home that the brunette (Rita) has sneaked into. Betty is let in by the manager of the complex, Coco, who is upbeat and friendly except for a sudden outburst of rage at dog poop she finds in her courtyard, a subtle breakthrough of aggression. As Betty, now



alone, walks through her aunt's apartment, we are made to feel some tension in anticipation of her finding Rita. She finds her naked behind the frosted glass of the shower door.

Rita is suffering from amnesia. She takes her name from a Rita Hayworth poster she sees. Betty is innocently accepting, telling Rita about her plans to be an actress. She becomes concerned about Rita and wants to call a doctor, but Rita does not want to be discovered. Through her amnesia, she maintains a sense of danger. We see Rita fall asleep and then move to another plot intrusion, the beginning of the secondary plot.

It involves a young film director, Adam Keshner, whom we see on a very bad day. In a scene that evokes a sense of strangeness and fear, two Italian gangsters show him a picture of a girl named Camilla Rhodes and tell him that she will be the star of the film

he is making. When he refuses, they tell him he is no longer in control of the film. He smashes their car window with a golf club before driving off, but soon finds they are making good on their threat. They "shut everything down." His studio is closed down. This has been ordered by the same elderly gangster who made the call about the missing girl. This is the only obvious connection between the two plots. Nevertheless, we move back and forth between them, waiting to see how they will relate to one another. Each story maintains the sense of lurking danger.

A gunman kills someone who appears to be his friend in an attempt to get hold of a book of phone numbers (presumably looking for the missing girl), but he accidentally shoots a strange woman in the next room and then has to shoot a janitor who is a witness in a scene that is both gruesomely violent and slapstick comedy. It is another strange intrusion in tone, a mix of open violence and defensive humor.

As they try to figure out Rita's identity, Rita and Betty find a large amount of money in Rita's pocket book along with a strange looking blue key. Rita is frightened and feels she needs to hide and to keep her identity from the police. We see the gunman outside the Winkie's Diner, asking about a brunette. Rita remembers that she was in an accident and recalls, "Mulholland Drive," but does not know anything else, including her name. Betty is sympathetic and somewhat excited by the mystery.

Adam's bad day continues. He goes home to find his wife in bed with a muscle bound pool cleaner, who throws him out after he pours paint over his wife's jewelry.

Rita and Betty go to the same Winkie's Diner to call the police from a phone booth for information about an accident on Mulholland Drive. Rita sees the name "Diane" on the I.D. badge of the waitress at the diner and remembers the name

“Diane Selwyn.”

The “Winkie’s Diner” that was so important a part of the shockingly intrusive “horror” scene keeps returning as a site of the action. Although we are safely lulled by the moving plot lines, we can detect derivatives of the repressed material.

A very large man comes looking for Adam at his home, easily knocking out the pool cleaner and the wife when they try to get him out. Adam stays at a dirty hotel, but is told they have tracked him there to let him know his credit has been cut off. Finally, he is directed to meet a man called “the cowboy” in the mountains. The characters in this second plot seem to be grotesque exaggerations, the gangsters more powerful and malevolent than life, the violence with an exaggerated slapstick style.

Nevertheless, we are again comfortably absorbed in these competing plots, drawn into a double mystery, when there is another intrusion, a break in the “dream.” A strange older woman wearing a hood comes to Betty’s door at night. For me, the hood gave her an other worldly appearance, not unlike the monster behind the Winkie’s. She says to Betty in a slow drawn out style of speech, “Someone’s in trouble. Who are you? What are you doing in Ruth’s apartment?”

“She’s letting me stay here. I’m her niece. My name’s Betty.”

“No, it’s not!. That’s not what she said. Someone is in trouble. Something bad is happening.”

Although it is not as jarring and is better contained by the plot than the scene with the monster behind the diner, we once again get a message that things are not what they seem. The strange woman is a kind of “seer.” Her denial of Betty’s name appears to be a challenge to the story we are being told, a breaking through of something past the defensive structure. It is partly smoothed over as Coco comes to the door and explains that the intruder is another resident in the complex with strange ideas, and lightens the mood by giving Betty faxed pages of a scene for an audition the next day. But even then there is

a last warning by “Louise,” “No, she said it was someone else who was in trouble,” as Coco pulls her away. As Betty comes back into the room, Rita has a scared, far off stare, leaving us with a greater sense of something ominous, terrible lurking, something beyond the ordinary suspense plot.

The sense of something odd, unreal, continues in the next scene. Adam drives to a deserted corral in the mountains where a flickering light signals the arrival of “The Cowboy.” The Cowboy, speaking in riddles, finally orders him to go back to casting the lead role.

“Audition many girls for the part. When you see the girl that was shown to you earlier today, you will say, ‘This is the girl.’ The rest of the cast can stay, that’s up to you, but that lead girl is not up to you. Now, you will see me one more time if you do good, you’ll see me two more times if you do bad. Good night.”

We are still within the plot-lines, but with a growing sense that something strange is happening, that the story may be about something different than what we’d expected, that it may take strange turns. The rupture in the plot line continues into the next scene, but momentarily and covered over well enough so that we may only see in retrospect that there has been an eruption of repressed material.

Betty: “You’re still here?”

Rita: “I came back. I thought that’s what you wanted.”

Betty: “Nobody wants you here.”

The camera pulls back and we see that Rita is reading from a script. They are rehearsing a scene, a scene in which Betty brandishes a kitchen knife and says, “Get out of here before ... before I kill you, “ and ends with her saying, “I hate you. I hate us both.”

The film to this point has been replete with violence and aggression, but never between the two women, and particularly never coming from the fresh faced Betty. The film disguises this break-

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through of a drive derivative as play acting. It is much the same as a dream incorporates the sound of an alarm clock or phone into its defensive structure. The same technique continues into the next scene in which Betty goes for her audition and plays the scene with an oozily charming older man. Betty is telling him to go away, but their actions belie the words as they embrace and kiss. She is unsuccessfully warding off her sexual desire, and again in a partly disguised way bringing a drive derivative to the surface, the first appearance of overt sexuality.

It is after this scene that the two plots intersect momentarily. Betty is taken from the audition by an actor's agent and her female assistant to the set where Adam is choosing "Camilla Rhodes" for the lead role. (In retrospect we might or might not look at her being whisked away from the audition by these two women as a possible subtle breakthrough of homosexual material.) He and Betty stare at each other for a moment across the room, but then Betty runs out to join Rita to look for Diane Selwyn, the name Rita had remembered after seeing the waitress's ID.



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They had found an address in the phone book. When they go to it, Rita and Betty see ominous looking cars outside the complex, possibly men

waiting to find Rita. Betty decides to enter Diane's cottage through a window when there is no answer to their knock on the door. Rita is frightened, and we are apprehensive with her, but Betty persists. They enter the cottage to discover a terrible odor. Rita starts to scream when they find the woman's decomposing body on the bed, Betty trying to muffle Rita's screams with her hands. We realize only later that the defensive structure has been breaking down with each little revealing element—the names, Diane Selwyn and Camilla Rhodes, the Winkie's diner, the body that the two women discover. After that discovery, Betty and Rita return to Betty's aunt's home. Rita decides that she must change her identity. She starts to cut her hair, but Betty says she knows what she is doing and offers to help. We next see Rita with blonde hair much like Betty's. The women have become sisters, twins. Betty, still seemingly innocently, invites Rita to sleep in the bed with her instead of on the couch in the other room. Rita takes off her blonde wig and enters the bed naked. She thanks Betty and they kiss, then begin to make love. The entire structure of the film has changed with this overt eruption of sexuality. Rita opens her eyes in the middle of the night, reciting repeatedly in a trance-like way, "Silencio! No hay banda! No hay orquesta!" She takes Betty to a strange little theater in which the master of ceremonies repeats these words. In a dramatic way, he is telling the audience that what they see and hear is an illusion. The music they hear is from a tape, the performers only going through the motions. This is a major undermining of the film's defensive structure. We are being told to distrust the surface.

At one point, there is thunder and Betty begins to shake. The performance ends with a woman with tears painted on her face singing a sad song in a foreign language. She falls to the floor, not unlike the man behind the Winkie's, while the singer

goes on. Rita and Betty are weeping. Betty then finds a blue box in her pocketbook that appears to match the key they'd found earlier.

They take it home. Betty puts it down on the bed. Rita goes to get the key from the closet. When she turns around, Betty is gone. She calls for her and looks for her, then takes the key to open the box. As she opens it, we are swallowed up into its blue interior and the box falls to the floor. We see Betty's aunt looking into the room as if she'd heard something, but no one is there. It is as if the two women have disappeared.

With this shift, the mood has changed. We begin to feel not so much fear as bewilderment and sadness. Where are the young women with whom we'd become identified? They are gone, at least as we have known them. Brenner has differentiated anxiety and its related affects from depression and its related affects by their temporality. Anxiety has to do with what will happen, depression with what has happened. The film to this point has been constructed to give us a sense of something imminent, something terrible, something to be avoided. In the second part of the film, we are made to feel that that terrible event has already happened, that the sense of imminent danger was an illusion ("There is no band, there is no orchestra"), that what we have been warding off is the awareness of a tragedy that has occurred.

Now, our need to have the divergent pieces come together is gratified. They could not be put together in the first part of the film because their interconnectedness was part of what we are made to feel was being warded off. The appearance of sexuality between the women is a catalyst. This sexual attraction, it will develop, is the prime mover that has been pushing the action. Now that it has broken through the repression, our "dream" changes from an anxiety dream to a true nightmare.

Now, we see "Betty" in Diane Selwyn's cottage, except that she is not Betty but Diane. She looks

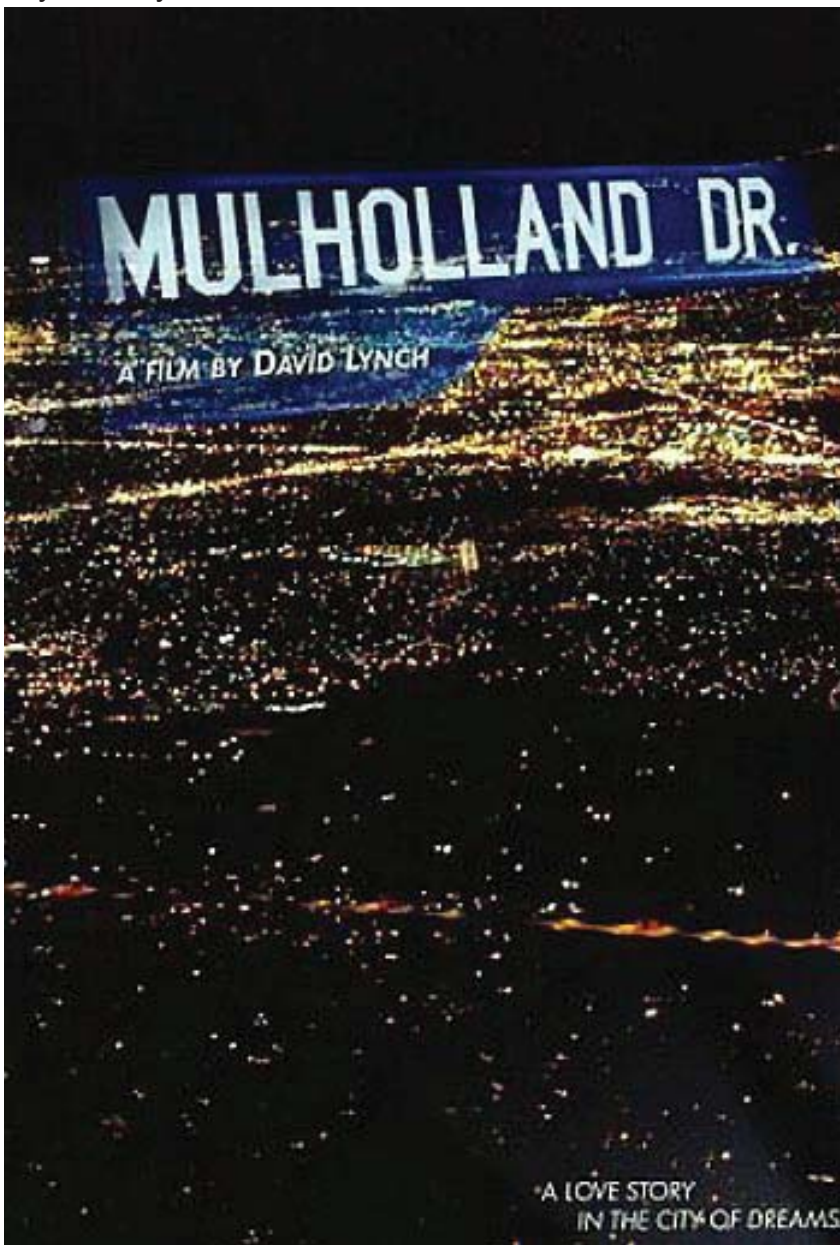
haggard and depressed, no fresh-faced innocence. We see her making love to "Rita" who is now Camilla Rhodes. In the film's structure, this makes sense to us because we wondered how the name, "Camilla Rhodes" fit into the plot. Diane is jealous of Camilla's relationship with Adam. In retrospect, we can see that Adam's very bad day, all the violence directed at him, was a breakthrough of aggression. Now, we see Diane/Betty in the back of the limo driving up Mulholland Drive. She is anxious. She repeats Rita/Camilla's opening line, "We weren't supposed to stop here," but this time the driver turns to say, "It's a surprise." Camilla meets her and takes her to a party where Adam is the host. Coco is now his mother. We see some of the other characters from the earlier plot. The cowboy walks by in the background. The original Camilla Rhodes (the girl in the picture) gives Camilla a kiss, making Diane jealous. Diane tells her story, that she won a jitterbug contest in Ontario (giving us a context for the opening scene) and used the money to come to LA where her aunt tried to help her with an acting career. She met Camilla on the set of a TV show in which Camilla was the star and Diane jealous. Camilla and Asher announce that they will be married.

The film still has a surreal dreamlike quality as we move from scene to scene, but these scenes bring enough together from the earlier plot to give us a sense of a new story, a "day residue" if you will. We see an ashtray by a ringing phone, but now the call summons Diane to Camilla's party. The film-makers have used our need for structure, our penchant for making things fit so that we now grab onto this new story in which the various pieces fit together with a sense that it is closer to "reality" than the earlier one. We see Diane in the Winkie's diner seated at the same booth that we've seen twice before (with the man who had the dream and his friend and with Betty and Rita). Now, she is with the hit man, obviously paying him to kill someone. She gives him the picture of

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Camilla Rhodes (we don't actually see the picture) making sense of the earlier scenes in which the picture was shown with the same name. He tells her she'll know "it" was done when she finds a blue key (which he shows her) in the place he'd told her. At one point we see the blue key in Diane's apartment. Now, the waitress's name tag says, "Betty" and the man with the dream is at the

register looking back at Diane in the booth. Although it is told in a somewhat confusing manner, our need for fit and closure pushes us to accept this new story of jealousy and revenge between two women. To the extent that we have been carried by the earlier story, we are now ready to be sad to find that the Betty and Rita we knew do not exist. They have been replaced by two women locked in a tragedy of jealousy. The formerly innocent Betty/Diane has paid to have Rita/Camilla killed in a fit of depression and sexual jealousy. The monster behind the diner, with whatever symbolism of death or darkness that he carries, is also a vehicle to displace Diane's aggression. We can only be saddened by our awareness of this loss of innocence.



We watch helplessly as a tormented Diane is driven by laughing, screaming images of the elderly couple (parents? grandparents?) to take a gun from her bedside drawer and shoot herself, presumably to leave the corpse we'd seen earlier. (I was reminded of the loud noise and blinding light of the car crash.) The images fade to the jitterbug contest and the beautiful, innocent Betty that we can no longer believe in superimposed over the LA skyline from Mulholland Drive. With both Camilla and Diane seemingly dead, we are left with an empty feeling, a sense of irretrievable loss that we cannot seem to fully explain.

David Lynch and his collaborators have made a film that for some can successfully reproduce features of defense, drive and affect to create a sense of our having had a nightmare, driven by fear and culminating in sadness and a deep sense of loss. In a way that could

probably not have been accomplished with a straightforward story of jealousy and betrayal, we have been led to a feeling of having tried to ward off a terrible truth which ultimately overwhelms us with a sense of grief and distress.

We are left with a dream without a dreamer, the two central characters apparently dead. We can invent all kinds of scenarios to explain it: it is the dream of one of the women, an expression of homicidal/suicidal fantasy; it is Adam's dream, the dream of the man in the Winkie's, the director's dream etc. The answer, of course, is that it is not a dream. It is a film. We react to it with our own fantasies, wishes and speculations, adding to it, perhaps, in our minds. That is the artistry.

The Angriest Dog in the World

A graphic strip by David Lynch that ran in alternate newspapers from 1983 to 1992.

The strip is always the same form. There are usually 4 panels. The first panel contains the caption: The dog who is so angry he cannot move. He cannot eat. He cannot sleep. He can just barely growl.

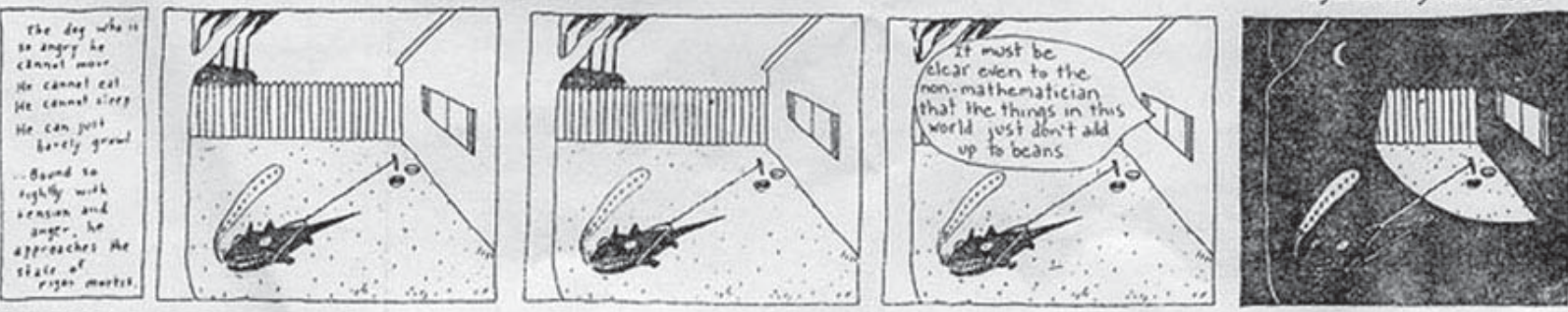
He is so bound with tension and anger, he approaches the state of rigor mortis.

The next two identical panels feature the black dog growling, tied to a post in a yard by a chain. He is between a tree on the left and one wall of a house with a window on the right. The fourth panel is the same, but at night with a circle of light coming from the house's window.

A word balloon appears in one or more of the panels, indicating speech from a member of one of the house's unseen family, either Bill, Sylvia, Pete or Billy, Jr.

THE ANGRIEST DOG IN THE WORLD

By David Lynch © 1990



From the window - It must be clear even to the non-mathematician that the things in this world just don't add up to beans

THE ANALYST AT WORK

THE TERRORS OF CHILDHOOD

JON MEYER PHOTOGRAPHIC ART - APRIL 2009

**These panels were exhibited at the winter meeting of the APsaA in January, 2010. Jon has organized the show for the past 2 years. His photography can be seen at <http://www.jonmeyerphotographicart.com>
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PANEL I: INTO THE DARK



PANEL II: THE NIGHTMARE BECOMES ALIVE

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PANEL III: FROM THE DARK INTO THE LIGHT



SELF-ANALYSIS

Contributors

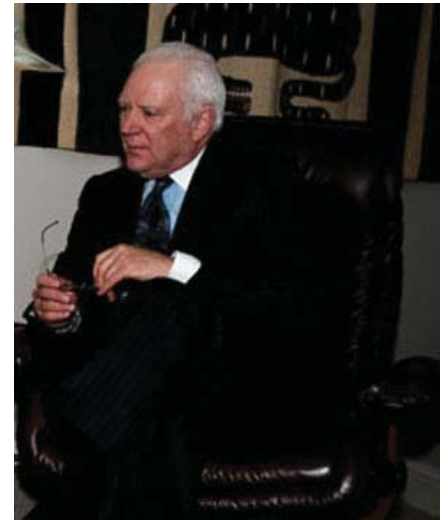


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The cover was created in Illustrator. The graphics were created in Fireworks. The magazine layout was set up in InDesign. All of these programs are Adobe products.