

DOI: 10.7560/VLT7702

The Velvet Light Trap Number 77 spring 2016

© 2016 by the University of Texas Press

Blind Spots and Mind Games: Performance, Motivation, and Emotion in the Films of Stanley Kubrick

by Aaron Taylor

Abstract

The acting style in Stanley Kubrick's films can be regarded as a symptom of the "other minds problem" and its ramifications for the cinema. Performances in Kubrick's work reveal the complications involved in positing narration as a rhetorical system with *a priori* claims to direct and accurate evaluative knowledge of characters. For Kubrick, narrative discourse is not a systemic correlative for authorial mastery over characters, and so, his actors help establish narrational patterns that collide with the intricacies of fictional subjectivities. The performative techniques that complicate our ability to conceptualize and engage with characters' emotions are itemized with the aim of precisely conceptualizing the director's unique approach to performance. These strategies include strategic improvisation, excessive ostensiveness, expressively neutral action, and artificially immobilized expressions. Such techniques allow us to appreciate Kubrick's "skeptical classicism": a mode of narration whereby we negotiate various avenues and impediments surrounding our longing for knowledge of an other's mind.

This is a normal acting phenomenon where you do a scene and someone says, “Well you should play this fearfully in this scene.” And you look at him and you think, “But that’s what I was doing.” It becomes a very complicated problem. Why wasn’t what I was doing seen?

--Jack Nicholson¹

One of the principal characteristics of classical cinema, it is said, is that the films that adhere to this group style “should be comprehensible and unambiguous.”² Accordingly, the possible people who populate its dramas are “defined characters acting to achieve announced goals,” thus lending the narrative’s action a clearly discernible “psychological causality.”³ The characters’ meaningful exploits are correspondingly articulated through a representational system that is “moderately self-conscious,” ultimately communicative, and broadly omniscient.⁴ As a formal element, then, performance in classical cinema has an informational function: it reinforces the narration’s aim to provide optimal narrative clarity for viewers. Such lucidity is most commonly thought to be achieved through the employment of so-called naturalistic acting techniques. Concisely stated, naturalism “generally relies upon the aesthetic assumption that psychologically rich characters, authentically portrayed, are those who interact deeply with their fictional worlds in ways that can be read by the viewer as realistically familiar.”⁵ In this vein, actors’ performance choices--deliberately selected and stylized manifestations of character via the medium of their own bodies--are intended to render action intelligibly, demonstrate graspable motivations, and externalize coherent interiorities.

As storytelling vehicles, actor’s bodies in classical cinema are employed to intend minded characters. These are possible people whose meaningful beliefs and desires can be intuited not simply through functional action but via the actor’s own careful and creative physical comportment. In this sense, the material dimensions of acting--appearance, expression,

gesture, movement, posture, voice--can be conceived of as corporeal elements of narration.

Within classical traditions, these dimensions have a crucial twofold function. Most directly, they are employed in the service of understanding the emotional and mental situation of protagonists.

Less obviously, they serve as signifiers of an authorial intelligence that boasts a comprehensive knowledge of and control over the diegetic reality represented on-screen, which includes the people who populate the fictional world.



Figure 1. Jack Nicholson in The Shining. © Warner Home Video, 1980.

And yet certain films working within the Hollywood tradition resist classical cinema's "excessive obviousness."⁶ Stanley Kubrick's genre outings are amongst the more celebrated of these narrationally obtuse films. The Shining (1980) is no exception. Under the guise of a hoary ghost story adapted from Stephen King's best-selling novel, it upends numerous horror clichés, particularly the uncanny visualization of the imperceptible. The creature at the center of the Overlook Hotel's labyrinth, for example, is no bull-headed monstrosity but rather a spectral absence. While this entity remains invisible to us, in one of the film's many celebrated moments, we glide toward one who is transfixed by a privileged apperception of this unseen menace. Jack Torrance (Jack Nicholson) gazes out a window--jaw slack, brow furrowed--evidently seeing

nothing and yet still enthralled by a force only he seems capable of perceiving. What directs Jack's attention? Proximity yields no insights, no access to a troubled interior. We hear nothing; Legiti's chilling "Lortrano" serves as a nondiegetic sonic barrier. We see nothing but only note Jack's own private attunement: his eyebrows arc slightly, his eyes upturn, and the ghost of a smile flits about the corners of his mouth without materializing (fig. 1). Jack projects his own mounting absence outward to comingle with the hotel's malignant privation. We are to intuit not a mind but rather the appalling void of visible mindlessness. Nicholson's performance here is an unsettling triumph of expressive economy. By maintaining a ghoulis rictus and employing only the minutest of expressive transitions, he simply but unforgettably violates a typically unquestioned classical tenet: that the actor's body is an expressive medium for transparent signification. We might say instead, contra Wittgenstein, that the human body here is most decidedly not the best picture of the human soul.⁷ Rather, "it is not so much the mind we see as it is the face."⁸

"To whom is Jack smiling, and for what reason?" asks Mario Falsetto, indicating that "Jack takes secret pleasure in some mental image, a feeling he cannot possibly share with the spectator. Yet, at the same time, the shot hints at the possibility of a complicity between Jack and the spectator; that we know and he knows what must be done."⁹ Nicholson's ghastly opacity is instrumental to our appreciation of The Shining's preoccupation with shared versus secreted subjectivities. But more broadly, this celebrated performative instance also tidily exemplifies one of Kubrick's most important aesthetic accomplishments: the undermining of classical narration as a communicative rhetorical system. The value of Kubrick's approach to performance, then, lies in the recurring ways his performers use their bodies to destabilize fundamental classical precepts involving character motivation, emotion, and narrational authority.

In Kubrick's mature films--particularly from 1962 onward--the performance style can be regarded as a symptom of the other minds problem and its ramifications for the cinema.

Following Anita Avramides, the problem may be paraphrased as follows: how is it possible to accurately conceptualize and attribute mental states to others when we lack direct experience of their interiority?¹⁰ If others' mental states truly are occluded in some fashion, then the concern with classical narration's claims to omniscience is that our knowledge of characters' subjectivities is similarly troubled by an inherent uncertainty. A novel's omniscient narrator might provide us with a concise description of a character's inner life and thus apparently circumvent the skeptical other minds problem via a literary device. By contrast, however, it is said that films that avoid first-person voice-over narration or manipulated optical POV shots instead rely on indirect presentation and inference to provide viewers with subjective access.¹¹ But if our own inferential mind-reading activities are circumscribed by an unavoidable ambiguity, how could filmic narration--the product of similarly blinkered creative agents--truly provide us with the complete means to imagine accurately another's interiority?

This essay purports to show that performances in Kubrick's films question a central implied assumption of classical cinema: that its assumed narrational omniscience and the presumed communicative function of naturalistic acting are sufficient to overcome the other minds problem. Contrarily, Kubrick employs performance to undercut assumptions that classical narration has a priori claims to direct and accurate evaluative knowledge of fictional characters. Instead, the recurring performance choices of his actor-collaborators frequently serve as affronts to Hollywood's assumptive equations between narration and communicativeness. Moving forward, then, the first section of this essay will offer a brief account of the other minds problem and its particular relevance to classical narration and performance and will also review some

basic real-world tactics used to contend with this problem. The second section will describe how Kubrick's later films dramatize some effects of the other minds problem on classical narration, particularly the disruption of our ability to comprehensively know and morally judge characters. In the final section, we will conceptualize and catalog a number of performance techniques that render salient Kubrick's aesthetic contention with this philosophical problem.

Two qualifying notes are required before beginning. First, if we are to better understand how actors' bodies are employed to complicate illusions of minded subjects, one might ask why we ought to turn to Kubrick's films to illustrate these notions. Certainly, the director's employment of performance has been well represented already in the critical literature on film acting, The Shining in particular. However, the subject is far from exhausted, and not only because Nicholson's nonnaturalist performance in that film is as much a cinematic landmark as Marlon Brando's exemplary naturalist turn in A Streetcar Named Desire (1951). A number of admirable essays also closely consider The Shining's intriguing performances.

First, Mario Falsetto gives a striking description of Nicholson's creative activity in The Shining, but his account of the actor's performance is strictly formalist in its concerns, limited to how it is "integrated into the film's overall design."¹² Sharon Marie Carnicke's two excellent close analyses of Nicholson's and Shelley Duvall's work serve to neatly exemplify the collaborative relationships between actors and directors and also demonstrate how these two performers employ naturalist and nonnaturalist styles in accordance with The Shining's depiction of gender relations.¹³ However, neither of these essays considers how the actors work to articulate the director's ongoing preoccupation with the presumptions and limitations of classical narration, which is the object of our interest here. In another close consideration of the film, Dennis Bingham examines Nicholson's and Duvall's performances as exemplifying certain

Brechtian tactics.¹⁴ While some of Nicholson's performance choices will be shown to reflect his acquaintance with Brecht (at least on a surface level), it will also be argued that characterizing Kubrick as a wholly "Brechtian" director amounts to a category mistake. Finally, Jason Sperb offers an intriguing account of Kubrick's propensity for unsettlingly blank faces (exemplified by Nicholson)--the countenances of "doomed narrator[s] who can no longer make cohesive sense of the surrounding story world."¹⁵ However, his analyses are limited to the phenomenological "intensities" generated by these connections and don't really consider the actors' performances as such.¹⁶ In sum, it is becoming increasingly clear that Kubrick and his collaborators achieved a highly distinctive performative style, and it is our contention here that this style is best understood via its relation to broader and now widespread approaches to filmic narration.

Second, and more to the point above, Kubrick's innovative use of actors has an enduring legacy. The tactics under discussion are indicative of an acting style that has now become a hallmark of certain varieties of postclassical storytelling. Why "postclassical" and not "modernist"? Contrary to other characterizations of his work, it would be inaccurate to describe Kubrick's style as being wholly aligned with art cinema, parametric narration, anti-illusionism, or any other wholly modernist mode. Despite his independent status in his early and later career, Kubrick typically maintained professional affinities with Hollywood (i.e., production and distribution deals with the major studios) throughout his working life. Moreover, he often worked within recognizably classical genres, even when entering the mannerist phases of his later career post-Dr. Strangelove (1964). And although typically deified as the ne plus ultra of American auteurs, he was also a self-identified showman, one who was always deeply committed to commercial success.¹⁷ Due to his residual association with Hollywood, it would be erroneous to describe Kubrick's approach to acting as wholly anticlassical--that is, entirely

devoted to antinaturalism, Brechtian alienation, and/or the reflexive exposure of characters as socially determined types (e.g., Bresson's "models," Godard's presentational tactics, and Warhol's "stars").¹⁸ While his later films make some of the presumptions of classical narration more evident, they do not seek to dismantle them entirely in the name of ideological progressiveness or avant-gardism. But should we attribute the designation of "postclassical" to his work? After all, David Bordwell has already made a persuasive case that the "intensified continuity" of poststudio Hollywood is really just a newfangled version of classicism.¹⁹ And the postclassicism we have in mind certainly does not exhibit the highly self-conscious, totally omniscient, and wholly communicative narration described by theorists who follow Bordwell's lead.²⁰

Rather, the suggestion is that poststudio era American filmmaking also admits a degree of skeptical classicism--a mode that adopts many of the structural parameters of traditional narration while admitting some of their problematic assumptions and epistemological limitations. Because practitioners like Kubrick maintain many of the trappings of classical rhetoric even while they explicitly test classicism's tacit presumptions about knowledge and communication, we might characterize this mode as a form of "nervous" classicism. It is a mode that lies between classical cinema's omniscient, communicative, and largely transparent narration and art cinema's fallible, uncommunicative, and obtrusive presentational tactics. As discussed earlier, then, skeptical classicism adopts a number of working principles informed by epistemological ambiguities associated with the other minds problem. A few shorthand suggestions for skeptical classicism's parameters are as follows:

1. It cannot be assumed that filmic narration has a priori claims to direct and accurate evaluative knowledge of fictional characters.

2. Filmic narration--the byproduct of inherently limited creative subjectivities--cannot completely, or even adequately, provide us with interior access to represented mentalities.
3. Narrational omniscience is impossible and possibly hubristic, and the communicative function of narration is inherently curtailed.²¹
4. By extension, naturalistic acting cannot provide us with sufficient information to claim conclusive, and certainly not complete, understanding of possible people within a fiction.

Kubrick's lasting influence on this mode is readily discernible in the highly influential performative tactics that recur throughout his mature films, tactics that have never before been cataloged. These tactics include (1) strategic improvisation, (2) excessive ostensiveness, (3) expressively neutral action, and (4) artificially immobilized expressions. Each of these tactics--all of them working in accordance with the principles of skeptical classicism--will be discussed at length in this essay's final section. Suffice to say for now that many contemporary auteurs employ the bodies of their actors to render the inadequacies of classical narration in corporeal terms. Thus, Kubrick's collaboration with his actors paves the way for the partnerships between Scorsese and De Niro in Taxi Driver (1976), Lynch and Hopper in Blue Velvet (1986), Altman and Moore in Short Cuts (1993), Anderson and Day-Lewis in There Will Be Blood (2007), and Glazer and Johansson in Under the Skin (2014), to name but a few inimitable examples of this nervous classicality.²² Future researchers are invited to explore this collaborative influence more extensively, just as the attempt to provide a more exhaustive account of skeptical classicism would also be welcomed.

The Other Minds Problem, Classical Narration, and Performance

Why should the reality of others' minds be posed as a "problem" for us? Two philosophical

versions of the other minds problem exist: (1) the epistemological problem (how do we know others are minded?) and (2) the conceptual problem (how can we know if others' minds are like our own?).²³ Both problems occur due to our inability to observe others' minds in the same way we observe other phenomena--that is, via direct access to the thing itself. In Hanna Pickard's more precise terms, there seems to be an ontological distinction between visible behavior and inaccessible experience: one's direct observation of the former does not presuppose one has (or can have) direct knowledge of the latter.²⁴ In this section, it will be suggested that in order to attend to the actor's body as an expressive medium for transparent signification, we must first contend with this problem to some degree. Our initial task is to show that cinema needs to contend with a third and more practical version of the other minds problem rather than the two traditional philosophical versions of this dilemma. In addition, we will make note of how classical narration purports to dismiss this problem before finally raising the crucial question of just how well the naturalistic acting of classical cinema allows us to "know" others.

At first glance, our lack of direct access to another's interiority does not seem to be a terribly insoluble dilemma. Indeed, John Stuart Mill archly dismisses the epistemological and conceptual problems by simply observing how the behavior of others mirrors his own and then deduces their presence of mind (so to speak) by analogical inference. Because your behavior is similar to my own, he reasons, and I know that I am minded, it follows that you have a mind like mine.²⁵ But this argument from analogy does not take care of the problem so tidily. Mill's inductive reasoning leaps from his own singular case to assumptions of universal mindedness in general. Moreover, observing others' behavior and assuming that it is generated by a mentality--one that we might be able to identify or characterize with some degree of accuracy--isn't enough. As Duncan Pritchard puts it, "We also have to infer that there is something underlying that

behavior and giving rise to it.”²⁶

Lest our discussion here devolve into a digressive defense against solipsism, let us wave away both the epistemological and conceptual problems via a simple suggestion. For argument’s sake we can adopt the reasonable view that it would be near impossible to develop and assign psychological descriptors of external behavior if we were to assume that others were actually automatons. The same impossibilities would apply if I were to assume that others were actually beings whose mentalities were radically dissimilar to my own. That is, “the intersubjective world [in which] we live with other human beings and the public language-system that we must master if we are to think at all are the primary data” for the existence of other minds that are like mine.²⁷ For this reason, we ought to concur with the notion that we can observe another’s mind without inferring its existence. That is, other people’s emotional states are visible, and therefore their mental states are directly discernible. If I can observe a person’s tears and attribute to these indicators the intersubjectively held concept of distress, “then presumably I can also come to know this person is a creature with a mind that is capable of experience in the first place.”²⁸ Indeed, this deduction is applicable even if my knowledge of the other’s situation is fallible.

In what sense, then, could experience be equivalent with behavior? Simply put, our experience of emotions solves the other minds problem. Emotions are “whole bodily states consisting of bodily changes which feel . . . a certain way from the inside” and are observable from the outside.²⁹ The other minds problem assumes that experience and behavior are distinct and that bodily changes are separate from feelings. But this assumption is ultimately mistaken. For one, bodily changes are not incidental to feeling; experience of these changes belongs both to the subject who feels it and the object in which the feeling is experienced (i.e., the body).³⁰ In a way, the various training sequences in Full Metal Jacket (1987) represent the absurdity of trying

to rend the experience of feeling from the body of the feeling subject. As the panting marine cadets slog their way through endless, grueling training exercises, the demonic Sergeant Hartman (R. Lee Erney) forces the grunts to repeat idiotic marine cadences (“1-2-3-4, I love the Marine Corps!”). These incantations not only deny the cadets’ pain (agony is reformulated as patriotic devotion) but seek to produce robotic behavior that is autonomous from the experience of feeling.

Second, the separation of experience and behavior by the other minds problem also overlooks the fact that our bodies communicate our emotions to others. You intentionally direct a sense of your experience to another via bodily signals, and others are able to intuit your state of mind through observation even if “another cannot have your bodily feeling or experience” directly.³¹ As above, these signals would be unintelligible without our participation in the intersubjectively shared stratum of the everyday world and its public language system. Indeed, there are evolutionary and functional reasons to assume that others are intentional agents with minds like our own. The inferences we make about others’ motives--often based on external expressive signifiers--“allow people to comprehend the meaning of events and better understand how the different aspects of an individual’s personality fit together.”³² Occasionally, this adaptive assumption is literally a matter of life and death. For instance, one might propose that Sergeant Hartman meets his demise in Full Metal Jacket because his own militaristic programming prevents him from acknowledging Private Lawrence’s (Vincent D’Onofrio) obvious expressive markers of psychotic distress (fig. 2). As the more sympathetic Private Davis (Matthew Modine) looks on cautiously, Hartman’s violent confusion (“What is your major malfunction, numbnuts!?”) provokes Lawrence to gun the sergeant down.



Figure 2. Vincent D'Onofrio in Full Metal Jacket. © Warner Home Video, 1987.

This brings us to the impudent point that the epistemological and conceptual other minds problems are only really troublesome for philosophers (or maniacal drill sergeants). The rest of us are capable of making “rapid and routine inferences about others’ thoughts, feelings, intentions, motivations, attitudes, impressions, and goals” quite well.³³ Given that our interest here is in performance, we are concerned not so much with either abstract version of the other minds problem but rather with how we are faced with the practical problem during our everyday encounters with others. Therefore, the “real” problem of other minds is a matter of pragmatics: being able to accurately identify others’ mental states. Such cognitive activity is known as mind reading and involves “reason[ing] about others’ beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, thoughts, or emotional states and also . . . mak[ing] predictions about another’s behavior based on their underlying mental states.”³⁴ In everyday terms, mind reading entails a variety of cognitive endeavors, including emotion recognition, empathy, perspective taking, in-his-shoes imagining, motive seeking--all of which are based on inferring inaccessible mental states via indirect means. Classical narration and naturalist performance rely heavily on our everyday mind-reading aptitudes in order to render behavior sensible. As we shall see, though, Kubrick’s skeptical

classicism heavily problematizes these capacities and challenges the extent to which we can “know” characters.

What faculties enable us to engage in these integrated processes of trait attribution and motive seeking? Accounts tend to vary, but two of the more well-rehearsed notions are simulation (imagining how it is for another) and implicit theory (invoking general, abstract knowledge about people).³⁵ Regardless of which account one prefers, the quasi-solipsistic problem of potential egocentrism is common to both theories. A popular notion in the literature on mind reading is that we reason about others’ mentalities in accordance with a technique known as the anchoring and adjustment heuristic.³⁶ Numerous experiments have demonstrated that “one’s own perspective is likely to serve as a common default or starting point when reasoning about others . . . and that individuating information is likely to be accessed only subsequently to adjust or correct an initial egocentric assessment.”³⁷ We are evidently quick to project our own experience onto others, only making adjustments to this bias when we are afforded the time to do so, and we terminate the adjustment process once we have arrived at what we perceive to be an acceptable judgment. Our penchant for projection seems to be the quick and easy default option when predicting how others would feel in analogous situations.³⁸ Contrarily, perspective taking requires the time, motivation, and ideal circumstances to make conscious adjustments to your initial assessment of another.³⁹

Accordingly, then, we can characterize the discursive tactics of classical narration as providing just these kinds of ideal circumstances. Indeed, we come to understand fictional characters via narration: a rhetorical system that “solicit[s] story-constructing and story-comprehending activities from spectators.”⁴⁰ Classical cinema typically draws on our ability to infer others’ mental states, constructing a sophisticated system whereby we are apparently

enabled to make more or less reliable assessments of the personality and motivations of characters. As F. Scott Fitzgerald's oft-repeated dictum, "Action is character," remains a mainstay of contemporary screenwriting manuals, Hollywood clearly relies on our propensity for trait attribution.⁴¹ These are the very rapid inferences we make about another's assumed personality, which are informed by the motivations we spontaneously and sometimes impulsively assign to observed behavior.⁴² Just as perceivers of others' behavior are said to "infer both the motives and traits of a person, integrating the different types of information in a meaningful way," so too does classical cinema invite us to make general assessments of characters via the information provided through deliberate stylistic choices.⁴³

For an example of this system's formal elements at work, we can turn to a film from Kubrick's early career in which these classical tendencies were particularly pronounced. In The Killing (1956), we intuit the meekness and neutered devotion of George Peatty (Elisha Cook Jr.) by his hangdog, unblinking attention to his wife, Sherry (Marie Windsor), as she manipulates him for information about the heist he is helping to plan. The composition graphically reinforces our inferences, as Sherry is always placed dominantly within the frame, even when reclining, and the camera tends to trail after her like the puppyish George. Both George's motives (wanting to mollify Sherry) and traits (his besotted simplemindedness) are economically signaled by Cook's performance choices and Kubrick's compositional decisions, as well as Jim Thompson's hard-boiled dialogue. So, both performance and narration simplify evaluative scenarios whose real-life analogues would be comparably less structured.

In this way, classical cinema presents us with ideal scenarios that apparently allow for straightforward processes of trait attribution and motive seeking. Ostensibly, the narration of and performances within these scenarios minimize factors that would mitigate against adjustments to

our initial, egocentrically biased appraisal of a character. While we might debate the particulars of a given motive or trait, classical films typically intend for us to ultimately acknowledge them with a minimum of ambiguity. Such acknowledgment can only be enabled by “an omniscient narration that ‘voluntarily’ restricts itself for specific purposes (e.g., the need to conceal story events) but which can at any instant diverge from its confinement to character knowledge.”⁴⁴ The crucial question, however, is this: Given the many difficulties involved in accurately reasoning about the mentalities of others, just how is it that the film’s narrative discourse professes to know comprehensively a fictional subjectivity? Or to put it another way, skeptical classicism wonders how narration could ever comprehend its represented characters with such thoroughgoing authority that it allows us to make accurate claims or judgments about their interiorities.

Dirty, Pretty Things: Knowing and Judging Lolita and Other Wayward Angels

The next two sections contend that Kubrick’s skeptical classicism undermines the totalizing knowledge claims of classical narration and performance. As his actor-collaborators’ distinctive performances are privileged components of this skeptical classicism, it is necessary to situate them within a broader rhetorical system before discussing their material dimensions. We will first review how his narrational tactics destabilize our ability to comprehensively know and judge characters. Subsequently, in the final section, we will consider the analogously similar means by which his actor-collaborators use their bodies expressively to achieve the same end.

We recall that we come to make inferences about character traits and motivation via the narration’s selective presentation of information. In order to solicit such story-comprehending activity, the system must possess a totalizing knowledge about the fictional events it represents. Bordwell asserts that such knowledge is structured via five variable aspects: (1) range (the

degree of knowledge available); (2) depth (the extent to which external and internal worlds are revealed); (3) self-consciousness (the apparentness of the film's rhetoric); (4) communicativeness (the willingness to disclose information); and (5) judgment.⁴⁵ This last dimension entails the film's evaluative attitudes toward characters and is the most relevant for our purposes.

Gérard Genette describes judgment as narration's "testimonial function."⁴⁶ It is the filmic analogue of a novel's narrative "voice," which includes the possibility of attitudinal inflection, evaluative slants, or moralistic tones. The assumption is that the camera and other inflective techniques are indexes to the mental attitude of a metadiegetic presence: the extrafictional narrator, the implied author, the film's evaluative axis, and so on. With classical narration we are enabled to "construct a denotative, univocal, integral" diegesis populated by accessible, comprehensible characters with whom we are invited to sympathize or critique.⁴⁷ Actors working in the naturalistic style are tasked with exhibiting clear and simple corporeal exemplifications of the narration's testimonial function. It is not simply that actors enact markers of affective behavior (e.g., emotional reactions to situations) but that their performance choices also solicit our moral judgment of their characters. That is, we are intended to "see" goodness or badness not simply in the characters' actions but also in the physical registers of the characters' bodies as they undertake virtuous or villainous endeavors. The substantial degree of the narration's communicativeness ensures that "information is accumulated, until at the end we know everything"--including the sum totality of the psychological factors that drive the story's principal causal agent.⁴⁸ Whether or not a classical film's narration could ever boast such a complete range and depth of knowledge about a diegesis is exactly what skeptical classicism explores. And this incredulity also extends to the narration's judgment of characters, probing

how deeply, comprehensively, and/or reliably they can be known.

Throughout his work Kubrick maintains a heretical relation to classical narration's alleged communicative and empathic potentialities--a skepticism that grew even more pronounced later in his career. Others have attended to these narrational perversities more thoroughly than can be allowed here.⁴⁹ However, we can note briefly a few relevant tendencies:

- unreliable narrators--the occasional errors of time made by The Killing's voice-of-God narration; the discrepancies between the protagonists' voice-over self-evaluations and their actual behavior (Humbert in Lolita [1962], Alex de Large in A Clockwork Orange [1971])
- clashing narrative voices and styles--the schizoid juxtaposition of combat film documentaries and slapstick and the varied manias of the principal, interest-focused characters (General Turgidson, Brigadier Ripper, Major Kong) in Dr. Strangelove
- trick or double-perspective POV shots--the ironic crosscutting between Colonel Dax's purposeful stride through the trenches and the POV of the soldiers who await his fatal orders in Paths of Glory (1957); David Bowman impossibly entering a shot that was previously established as his POV near the conclusion of 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)
- skewed chronologies and the eschewal of cause-effect logic--the repetitions and fractured plot in The Killing; The Shining's recursive time loop; the gaps in crucial story information available to the blinkered Bill Harford in Eyes Wide Shut (1999)
- obliquely motivated action--Davey Gordon's undermotivated lust in Killer's Kiss (1955); the somnambulist expressions of Ryan O'Neal in Barry Lyndon (1975)

These are the signs of a filmic system dedicated to undermining our faith in narration as a communicative system. For Kubrick, communicative narration and transparency of character are

presumptuous forms of one's will to knowledge.

What concerns us most directly is the prevalence of antiheroic filters in Kubrick's work and how his actors' representations of these characters are signs of his skeptical classicism.⁵⁰ Kubrick typically focalizes his diegetic worlds through the experience of morally compromised or psychologically inscrutable protagonists. Indeed, Kubrick's predilection for unsympathetic filters is often invoked by those who characterize the director as a ruthlessly alienating clinician committed to calculated, game-like narrational manipulations. At its most strident, such criticism attributes to the director "a near psychopathic indifference to and coldness toward . . . human beings."⁵¹ Other critics castigate him for his studied ambiguity, arguing that his films are mere exercises in vacuous formalism.⁵² Accordingly, most of the critical literature on his antiheroes revolves around a moral problematic: How does a filmmaker represent an antiheroic protagonist without endorsing his contentious value system? This underlying "immoralist" problematic is acutely felt in much of the worried responses to the unsavory protagonists spotlighted in Lolita, A Clockwork Orange, and Eyes Wide Shut.⁵³

But such a concern is ultimately unnecessary. Rather than portraying these unseemly figures as singularly villainous or psychological vacuums, Kubrick's actors actually undermine attempts to establish stable grounds from which to evaluate them straightforwardly. In other words, the distinctive enactment of antiheroic protagonists typically erodes classical narration's tendency to adopt straightforward evaluative attitudes toward characters. It is not that these films ask us to adopt the allegedly morally compromising project of sympathizing with unsavory characters. Instead, the actors who portray them frequently make performance choices that disturb what ought to be straightforward moral judgments solicited by the narration--an ambition in alignment with the broader goals of skeptical classicism. As they curtail the range and depth

of information available to us and also work in concert with the narrational systems' lack of communicativeness, the actors work to circumvent our simple, moralistic, or reductive judgment of their characters as well.

While the protagonists of earlier films such as Killer's Kiss and The Killing are decidedly unheroic and antiheroic, respectively, Lolita is a more instructive case study. It is the first Kubrick film in which the immoralist problematic becomes an explicit area of critical concern. Rather than entertain the possibility that the film invites sympathy for the values of its lecherous narrator, Humbert Humbert (James Mason), the trend in the critical literature surrounding Lolita is to reclaim it as a moralist work. The film is frequently described as an inevitably sanitized version of its more ecstatically ribald source material. Granted, these amendments were necessitated by historical circumstances of production. The alterations attributed to Kubrick, producer James Harris, and author-screenwriter Vladimir Nabokov are posited as preemptive concessions made in order to avoid more drastic censorial interference by the American Production Code Administration and the British Board of Film Censors. However, the overall tone of these adaptation critics is that of disappointment. Kubrick's Lolita is frequently described as a pale shadow of Nabokov's uncompromised "masterpiece," a film made "too soon" for its historical moral clime.⁵⁴

What is worth pointing out, however, is that commentators frequently argue that Kubrick's adaptation minimizes Nabokov's wild eroticism and transforms the novel into the familiar story of an obsessive older man destroyed by a licentious femme fatale. These critics are unanimous in their view that the film is at some pains to appraise Lolita (Sue Lyon) as a calculating temptress and Humbert as her pathetic victim. Specifically, adaptation critics tend to make the following assertions: that Lolita's actual age is left crucially ambiguous (unanimously

surmised as being a more “palatable” fourteen or fifteen rather than twelve); Humbert’s rapturous lecherousness is drastically attenuated; and the repugnancy of Humbert’s foils is amplified. Specifically, his paedophilic rival, Quilty (Peter Sellers), is a whirlwind of chameleonic perversity, and his rapaciousness outstrips Humbert’s sad obsessions. Also, Lolita’s “vulgar” mother, Charlotte (Shelley Winters), is a bundle of feeble pretensions and sulky animosity. Neither, it is said, tallies very high on the film’s ethical scale, and both are far less sympathetic than Humbert—a flawed but otherwise amiable protagonist whom Kubrick apparently wants us to pity.⁵⁵ Interestingly, such evaluations precisely echo the sentiments of the film’s self-deluding narrator himself.

As noted above, Lolita features a narrator who frequently seems prone to misperception. The gap between Humbert’s voice-over narration and the reality of his own actions implies that he has deliberately blinded himself to aspects of his situation that do not comply with his fantasies. But it is not simply that diegetic details do not always adhere to Humbert’s voice-over descriptions, nor is it entirely correct that Lolita offers an ironic perspective on its protagonist. Rather, we can never give credence to the narration’s attitudinal inflections because everything is represented through the filter of Humbert’s self-pitying confessional discourse. Thus, we cannot make conclusive evaluative statements about other characters because we cannot be sure that these characters are not being represented as Humbert wants his idealized narratee to see them.

For example, it has been asserted both that Charlotte Haze is pathetically transparent and that the film represents her as a comic foil. Certainly, her amorous desperation is evident in the scene in which she jealously rages at Lolita for unintentionally interrupting her attempts to bed Humbert. Winters constructs a pitiful portrait of a gauche seductress whose plans are unravelling before her eyes. She begins her rebuff of Lolita with restrained desperation (her eyes silently

willing her daughter to leave, her fists clenching involuntarily), then shifts to familial supplication (cozying against the shelf next to Lolita and meaningfully meeting the latter's insolent gaze), before completing her entreaties that Lolita should "go to bed" with barely contained eagerness (rocking forward and rubbing her hands). Lolita's obstinacy finally compels Charlotte to propel the "miserable little brat" up the stairs, lambasting her along with one of Winters's marvellous signature brays (fig. 3). Clearly, Winters's brazenness here is in alignment with the interdiegetic narrator's determination to see Charlotte as a repugnant hausfrau with delusions of sophisticated charm.



Figure 3. James Mason and Shelley Winters in *Lolita*. © Warner Home Video, 1961.

But what do we make of the camera that lingers in the parlor after Humbert extricates himself from Charlotte's fantasies of pink champagne and a late-night drive? Humbert retreats to the bedroom, and an abandoned Charlotte breaks down privately, arms laden with the detritus of her spoiled dinner party. Initially, she bravely returns his thanks "for a charming evening." But as soon as he is out of sight, she waddles despondently toward the kitchen sink, alternately casting about for somewhere to deposit the handful of walnut shells he has carelessly deposited in one of her outstretched hands and glancing hopefully back over her shoulder. When it is clear

he isn't returning, she breaks into uncharacteristically girlish sobs and plunks the champagne bottle into the ice bucket with dejected finality (fig. 4). What sort of privileged view is being offered here? Kubrick's further unsympathetic exposition of her wretched desperateness--an authorial slant? Or are we privy to one of the few moments when Charlotte's own intimate yearnings are given credence, unsullied by the filter of Humbert's sneering distaste?



Figure 4. Shelley Winters in *Lolita*. © Warner Home Video, 1961.

Other narrational uncertainties abound, particularly the role of the musical score. Nondiegetic music often seems to correspond with Humbert's mood. After Charlotte is accidentally hit by a car, Humbert celebrates his unexpected freedom with a martini in the tub to the incongruously jaunty strains of "Lolita's Theme." Earlier, a gushing string section provided a lachrymose melody as he sobbed into Lolita's pillow, snivelling over his separation from his beloved nymphet, shipped off to Camp Climax for the summer. On the one hand, we cannot conclusively characterize these melodies as discomfortingly sympathetic motifs. The bounce of "Lolita's Theme" is a little too comically buoyant, the syrupy strings of the separation theme a little too sentimental. But on the other, we cannot be entirely sure that ironic distance is the music's intended effect either.

From a classical standpoint, one of the film's "problems" is that its narration does not provide us with the consistent cues required to make definitive evaluations about its characters. Humbert's introduction to Lolita is an interesting case in point, as the camera and the performers work in tandem to thwart clear judgment. The medium shot of a languid Lolita lounging in the garden anticipates Humbert's arrival (fig. 5a). She is posed somewhat suggestively here--another one of Charlotte's prize-winning flowers, perhaps? But for whose eyes is she being presented, his or ours? The camera's gaze precedes Humbert's stunned gawk, after all. What are we to make of Lolita's observance of Humbert as he makes the vulgar Freudian slip about "cherry pies" and studiously avoids looking at her again (fig. 5b)? Do we read bemusement? Recognition of Humbert's lust? Anticipation of a future conquest? In the shock cut from this close-up to Christopher Lee unwrapping his hideous face in The Curse of Frankenstein (1957)--the movie playing in the subsequent drive-in scene--whose monstrosity is being prophesized (fig. 6)? Is this a comment on Lolita's willingness to invite quasi-pedophilic lechery? Is it a revelation of the depredation behind Humbert's Old World civility? Or is it the covert reflection of a cretinous viewer, caught in the act of ogling (just as Humbert is later "caught" by Charlotte's camera as he ogles a hula-hooping Lolita)? Is there a clue in the reaction shot of our drive-in viewers--something to be found in their individual responses to depravity: Charlotte's fear, Humbert's amusement, Lolita's fascination (fig. 6)?





Figures 5a & 5b. Sue Lyon (returning the gaze) in Lolita. © Warner Home Video, 1961.



Figure 6. Lyon, Mason, and Winters (and Christopher Lee) in Lolita. © Warner Home Video, 1961.

Faced with such ongoing ambiguity, two main conclusions present themselves. First, to argue that Lolita avoids immoralism by strategically attenuating and augmenting specific character traits is to overlook the fascinating disconnect between the narration's professed "knowledge" of the characters and other cotextual features of the film. Some of these features may even preempt narrational authority. Even if a metadiegetic narrator knows that Humbert is deluded, our investment in Mason's star persona as a cool sophisticate has the potential to undermine the narration's evaluative authority, creating "a more sympathetic form" for the character nevertheless.⁵⁶ That is, there can often be a discrepancy between the knowledge offered by a film's narration and our own interests in the characters within it. It is possible that a viewer simply might not be interested in evaluating Lolita's array of perversions but is much more invested in an appreciation for the dynamics of the characters' power games instead. Perhaps a film's rhetorical positioning only holds interest for that mythical construct, the "ideal viewer."

Second, and more broadly, Lolita initiates its director's subversion of certain classical norms, particularly the assumption that characters are bundles of easily identifiable traits revealed by an omniscient narrative discourse. Kubrick posits the classical paradigm as an unwarranted reductionist approach to narrative--as if Humbert's blinkered and self-interested vision had found its objective correlative in classicism's unreflective assertiveness. By insisting on transparency of motivation, the delimitation of mimetic traits, and the conceptual bundling of subjectivity and textual function, the classical tradition is in the indirect service of homiletic allegory. Humbert Humbert, Alex de Large, Barry Lyndon, Jack Torrance, and Bill Harford are characters who refute simplicity as the central maxim of allegorical realism. They move within fictions that deny being used as exemplars for right action and sink Gregory Currie's hope that narratives might allow us "to see our own lives as connected wholes capable of being structured

in a planned way.”⁵⁷ Rather, the travails of these characters signal the contradictory and inseparable untidiness of desires, emotions, and values. Humbert, Quilty, and their coy mistress are not mere pawns within a tragicomic parable on degenerative lust; their little betrayals and petty savageries offer no instruction. Instead, our interest in the debauched protagonists of *Lolita* reveals the limitations of classical style--for Kubrick, a filmmaking tradition that traffics in the deceptive illusion of mastery and offers false promises of totalizing knowledge.

What’s My Motivation? Kubrick’s Performance Tactics and the Other Minds Problem

Now that we have examined the skeptical classicism of Kubrick’s narration and the role played by his antiheroic filters, we can better appreciate how the bodies of his actors are used to opaquely render the mentalities of the characters they portray. If the performances of Kubrick’s actors often generate “ambivalent feelings” within us, it is a testament to the difficulty of attributing traits to their unknowable subjectivities.⁵⁸ Such ambivalence is the prime directive of Kubrick’s “grotesque aesthetics,” whereby actors provoke “a clash of emotions” via an intensely controlled style.⁵⁹ Their performative techniques are appreciable via the practical other minds problem--tactics that complicate our ability to engage confidently in trait attribution and the assignation of motives. While the distinctiveness of the performance styles in Kubrick’s late films is the object of much critical commentary, this will be the first attempt to provide a comprehensive taxonomy of the strategies at work. The common thread across all of these tactics is the foregrounding of the body as pure physicality--a corporeal surface whose mindedness is not readily discernible.

The first technique under discussion here is strategic improvisation--actors’ limited and calculated creative additions to or deviations from scripted dialogue or action. This tactic is born

out of Kubrick's notorious penchant for multiple takes of a single setup, avoidance of discussions of character psychology, and reticence to give specific instructions about the intentionality behind a given scene. His method is simultaneously exploratory--allowing actors uncommon creative and collaborative freedom--and obscurantist in that it provides actors no answers at all about their characters' interiorities. Nicholson, for example, learned early that typical actor-director discussions about characterization would not be profitable. "Stanley and I would be discussing behavior," Nicholson recounted, "and many times he'd say, 'Well, you're a lunatic, you know. . . . That's the reason.'"⁶⁰ Anne Jackson reported receiving next to nothing in the way of instruction (even after twenty-five takes of her master shot in The Shining).⁶¹ Brian Cook, first assistant director on The Shining, claimed that Shelley Duvall's futile requests for "detailed and specific instructions" would be met with Kubrick's reply, "You're the actress; do something brilliant."⁶² And Malcolm McDowell is fond of repeating an anecdote about Kubrick's reticence to discuss character motivation or psychology: "'Well, gee, Malc,' he said, 'that's why I hired you.'"⁶³

Kubrick's insistence on repeating takes is also mentioned in every interview with The Shining cast members, usually with considerable exaggeration. Scatman Crothers claimed to have climbed out of his Sno-Cat forty times. Nicholson reported he "had to be good to do a scene fifty times." Duvall stated that she had been used to only shooting one to seven takes prior to working on The Shining.⁶⁴ While the director's "perfectionist" tendencies are typically invoked as explanation, Kubrick countered accusations of anal retentiveness by placing the blame on ill-prepared actors. "An actor can only do one thing at a time," he claimed, "and when he has learned his lines only well enough to say them while he is thinking about them, he will always have trouble as soon as he has to work on the emotions in the scene or find camera marks."⁶⁵ The

Shining's continuity reports often validate this complaint. In the shooting schedule's first twenty-seven days, thirty-three scenes (113 slates) were filmed, with an average of eleven takes per setup. By far, the setups with the most takes involve Stuart Ullman (forty-one takes in slate 24's tracking shot of him and Nicholson crossing a corridor) and Crothers (fifty-two takes in slate 104's close-up of his conversation about the shining).⁶⁶ Both actors are frequently reported to have experienced trouble remembering their dialogue precisely, as the notes in the continuity reports consistently testify.

Thus, Kubrick's multitake, minimally instructed approach served as fertile ground for the flowering of unexpected and/or counterintuitive performative contributions. Kubrick provided his actors with extensive opportunity to play around the parameters of their established characters--typically without providing them with clear-cut directions or intentions. Brian Cook claimed that "the real takes were probably the early ones" and that actors were "not very different on take one than . . . take eighty one."⁶⁷ And yet, he seems to have missed the crucial methodological point. While the repetitive takes may have been in the interest of ensuring optimal performances, "the large take ratio [also] allowed Kubrick to create a library of character reactions and emotions for any given shot."⁶⁸ Such variety through strategic improvisation afforded the director a uniquely large variety of options in editing together performances that were surprising and ambiguous rather than predictable and emotionally transparent. Consequently, many of his actors' more unpredictable interpretations or counterintuitive gestures and line readings could be selected for inclusion in the final prints. George C. Scott's more manically broad "warm-up" takes during the shooting of Dr. Strangelove, for example, were chosen (allegedly without the actor's knowledge!) to provide a composite portrait of a general whose hawkishness devours all semblance of good sense. Memorable examples include Scott's

abrupt slip that morphs fluidly into a backward somersault and ends with a gangly gesticulation toward “the Big Board”; his boyish, wide-armed emulation of a B-52 bomber (“VA-ROOOM!”); and the escalation of his contained and modest “one or two points” regarding nuclear defensiveness to a cock-eyed, grinning, gum-chomping, six-point endorsement of a preemptive strike (fig. 7).⁶⁹ Roger Ebert singles out Scott’s “tics and twitches, grimaces and eyebrow archings, sardonic smiles and gum-chewing” as inspired comic performance choices, the material evidence of an actor approaching a role “as a duet for voice and facial expression.”⁷⁰



Figure 7. George C. Scott in Dr. Strangelove. © Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment, 1963.

While usually impatient with actors who deviated from the script, Kubrick also afforded a few select performers more extensive creative liberties--particularly Peter Sellers and Malcolm McDowell--only after they demonstrated that their dialogue was “word perfect.”⁷¹ In Lolita, Sellers depicts Humbert’s pedophilic rival, Quilty, as a mercurial trickster--constantly shifting through various comic accents and performance registers in order to undercut Humbert’s hypocritical moral outrage at seducing “his” nymphet. Sellers also plays a number of hollow men in Dr. Strangelove: a milquetoast American president, a diffident British captain, and a maniacal

ex-Nazi scientist. In each of these roles, his unscripted riffing establishes each man's individual brand of robotic senselessness. Likewise, McDowell's infamously violent soft-shoe number during A Clockwork Orange's rape scene was a spontaneously devised disruption of our ability to respond cohesively to Alex's incongruous behavior.⁷² His joyous sadism serves as an impenetrable barrier to his interiority. Crucially, like Mason's depraved aesthete and Seller's quicksilver pervert in Lolita, McDowell's thuggish aficionado is empathically unimaginable.

Excessive ostensiveness refers to an actor's commitment to the presentational facet of his or her performance. Rather than represent the illusion of a possible person different from their own selves, actors can ostensibly display the techniques by which they come to embody a fictional character.⁷³ For some, such ostensiveness is considered "theatrical" or "over the top" due to its violation of classical norms of illusionism and verisimilitude. The pacing, energy, weight, directedness, fluidity, and prominence of an actor's expressions, gestures, movements, postures, and/or utterances seem to exceed expected styles of behavior warranted by a given situation. Consequently, we are unable to conceptualize the represented individual as being "minded" in a recognizable way, or their ostensive display acts as a resistant surface that belies a withheld experience (i.e., they are perceived only as a performing body).

Jack Torrance's monologue to Lloyd the Bartender (Joe Turkel) in The Shining is a good example here. Kubrick describes Nicholson's craft in this scene: "Jack's performance here is incredibly intricate, with sudden changes of thought and mood--all grace notes. It's a very difficult scene to do because the emotional flow is so mercurial. It demands knife-edged changes of direction and a tremendous concentration to keep things sharp and economical."⁷⁴ In conjunction with Kubrick's earlier account of his multiple-take method, he goes on to claim that "in this particular scene Jack produced his best takes near the highest numbers."⁷⁵ Nicholson

himself seems to corroborate this view. Refuting Cook's earlier claim about early takes, Nicholson asserted, "No matter what anybody says, I'm seeing those takes on video too, and the last one's usually the best one."⁷⁶

In the scene, Torrance--a reluctant teetotaler--falls off the wagon in spectacular fashion. Ordering up his first drink in "five miserable months," Torrance spews forth a torrent of bile about his wife, Wendy, and his son, Danny, to Lloyd, the ghoulish bartender who may or may not be a figment of Torrance's imagination. Blocking any attempt at empathy, however, Nicholson grimly parodies generic and misogynist bar-side tales of domestic woe through his ostentatious performance choices. He languidly stretches out individual moments, dragging his fingers down his face (wringing out marital exhaustion as if from a sponge) (fig. 8) or taking a zombified, extended swallow of bourbon (the fog of his former alcoholism consuming him) (fig. 9). Abrupt moments of explosiveness are inserted without warning. "Little slow tonight, isn't it?" is followed by a manic laugh directly at the camera (fig. 10). The cackling incantation seems to summon forth the demon-servant Lloyd, who is revealed in the shock reverse shot.



Figure 8. Nicholson exhausted in The Shining. © Warner Home Video, 1980.



Figure 9. Nicholson falling off the wagon in *The Shining*. © Warner Home Video, 1980.



Figure 10. Nicholson summoning the bartender in *The Shining*. © Warner Home Video, 1980.

Such unexpected bursts of energy are in keeping with Nicholson's unpredictable alternations between sluggish and lithe movements, and he gestures purposefully, but not always with a discernible target. He surveys the Gold Room for potential judgmental eavesdroppers in a slow torpor, licking his chops and patting the bar as if spoiling for a fight (fig. 11). No challengers forthcoming, he sighs with enormous disappointment and suddenly explodes into confessional mode. "I did hurt him once. Okay?" is accompanied by wildly beseeching hands, a seismic shrug, and eyebrows with vertices like dagger points, all of which pugnaciously implore

Lloyd's sympathy (fig. 12). Throughout the scene, Torrance vacillates erratically between moods: his beleaguered despondency ("I'd give my goddamn soul for just a glass of beer") sharply yields to relaxed familiarity ("Hi, Lloyd!"); his conspiratorial bonhomie ("Just a little problem with the ol', ah, sperm bank upstairs, heh, heh") veering into lethality ("Nothing I can't handle, though").



Figure 11. Nicholson surveying the Gold Room in *The Shining*. © Warner Home Video, 1980.



Figure 12. Nicholson explaining himself in *The Shining*. © Warner Home Video, 1980.

Torrance's every mien is aggrandized by Nicholson's ostentatious expressivity. His recounting of his accidental, drunken injuring of Danny's arm is particularly rife with conflicting

and affected gestures. Fatherly annoyance is supplanted by homicidal fury as he first emulates how “the little fucker had thrown [his] papers all over the floor” but then savagely yanks up while describing how “all [he] tried to do was pull him up . . . !” (fig. 13). He then briefly collects himself. But this contrite pause is undermined by his immediate wheedling for Lloyd’s sympathy again, as well as the brutally callous, mimed measurement of “a few extra foot-pounds of energy per second” that gives way to the finger-snapped signification of a child’s bone breaking. Fascinatingly, Nicholson never clarifies Torrance’s attitudes toward Danny. At one moment, he grins comically that he “love[s] the little son of a bitch.” At the next, he intones with grittily frank sincerity, “I’d do anything for him. Any . . . fucking . . . thing,” his blazing eyes daring Lloyd to disagree (fig. 14). Little wonder that Kubrick puzzled over their relationship during preproduction, asking his screenwriting partner, Diane Johnson, “How do we show Jack’s affection for Danny?”⁷⁷ In each interaction with Danny, Nicholson complicates Torrance’s every attempt at demonstrative paternal feeling.



Figure 13. Nicholson revisits a traumatic moment in The Shining. © Warner Home Video, 1980.



Figure 14. Nicholson expressing paternal devotion in The Shining. © Warner Home Video, 1980.

Nicholson's extremely watchable craft is evident here. He seems to flit through signifiers of the various acting styles with which he apparently had first-hand acquaintance, including those associated with François Delsarte, Brecht, and Lee Strasberg.⁷⁸ Delsarte's "applied aesthetics" are evident in Nicholson's precise, held postures that signal bursts of singular feeling. Brechtian "gests" also seem to be employed. Nicholson fractures the continuity of his movements, telegraphing self-enclosed units of meaning rather than allowing them to flow sequentially through circuits of cause and effect.⁷⁹ This fracturing was likely facilitated by the fact that the bar sequence was shot repetitively over the course of three weeks.⁸⁰ With such deliberate repetition, Kubrick violates his own tendency to shoot scenes of grand passion in "complete takes to allow the actor a continuity of emotion, [because] it is rare for most actors to reach their peak more than once or twice."⁸¹ Finally, it seems likely that Nicholson is also using vocal techniques he learned at the Actors Studio, which Strasberg created to locate and eliminate minute physical tensions in one's body.⁸² The crisp staccato of Nicholson's delivery on "per second, per second" emphasizes the violent plosives of his final consonants. Nicholson's

methodological versatility supports Carnicke's notion that actors develop techniques according to their own physiognomy and the film's specific demands rather than in accordance with a particular theory.⁸³ And as Nicholson claimed of his own technical adaptability, "All the Method teachers that I ever worked with said a method is simply what works."⁸⁴

The end result is that his portrayal of Jack Torrance takes us far afield of plausible human behavior. Even the assumptions about underlying motives and feelings that buttress the above analytical descriptions of his behavior are speculative at best. It is a scene of continually surprising and counterintuitively fluid motion. Alexander Walker asserts that "Nicholson keeps one looking--what will he do next?--casting and recasting his expressive face and body language to fit the emotional and physical requirements of the moment. Small tics of mouth, eyes, or brows enlarge, become seismic shifts of attitude as Torrance slides from teeth-gritting frustration . . . to the fury of a murderer under the influence of supernatural controllers."⁸⁵ Thus his performance concurrently reinforces the film's fantastic hesitation between natural versus supernatural explanations for his inscrutable behavior. Above all, his perpetually oscillating performance renders our ability to mind-read here difficult. It is the paragon of "unpredictability," which, in Nicholson's own words, "is the vital element of any performance."⁸⁶

Expressively neutral action also scuppers the communicative capacity of narration. Not unlike Robert Bresson's famous conception of actors as "models"--"mechanized externally, internally free"--Kubrick's actors frequently adopt affectless facial expressions that are nearly impossible to scan in order to intuit identifiable mental states.⁸⁷ Such blankness is typically contingent on the philosophical preoccupations of a given film. Thus, astronaut David Bowman's near absence of discernible emotion in 2001--even when faced with the murder of his colleagues--

-is a symptom of technologized numbness. Keir Duella's impassive face finds its aural correlative in the measured dispassion of HAL--the computer responsible for said murders.

Similarly, Ryan O'Neal takes on the appearance of a "mannequin" in Barry Lyndon, and his performance "often lacks interiority or . . . has an impenetrable interiority with little external expression."⁸⁸ O'Neal's vacant gaze signals the character's befuddled commitment to the tyranny of aristocratic decorum. Reaction shots of Barry in close-up frequently reveal a disquieting blankness, as if his preoccupation with wealth and title has rendered him insensible to human feeling. For example, during the climactic pistol duel with his stepson, Lord Bullingdon, he registers no discernible reaction whatever to the distress of his nemesis, even as his peers avert their eyes from the vomiting duelist in disgust (fig. 15). After Barry spares the pitiful wretch's life by firing into the ground, Bullingdon declines to return the favor and orders the duel to continue. Incredibly, Barry's reaction changes not in the slightest from the previous close-up. One almost suspects a mischievous Kubrick of using the same shot. Barry's mindlessness here gives the impression that mercy and betrayal are naught but abstract principles for him, received soporifically from one of John Wesley's dusty Methodist treatises on manners.



Figure 15. Ryan O'Neal in Barry Lyndon. © Warner Home Video, 1975.

Interestingly, such blankness also explicitly reinforces the limitations of the voice-over narration, which labors to describe Barry's inscrutable emotions. "The information conveyed by the narrator would be impossible to decipher from Barry's expression, which is essentially blank," and so "we must take the narrator's word that this is what Barry is thinking."⁸⁹ But why should this narrator, who has already proven to be oblivious to Barry's incremental moral development, have any greater insight into the character than we do? Regardless of intentional particularly, both actors demonstrate a performative technique that refutes attempts at mind-reading; we are denied cues that would otherwise allow us to accurately intuit mental states.

Similarly, artificially immobilized expressions empty the face of its phenomenological capacity to convey experience. The emblematic "Kubrick Stare"--head tilted downward, heavy-browed eyes looking upward--is the iconic exemplar of this strategy. Through its artificial prolonging of a potentially malignant or disturbingly vacant countenance, this stare does violence to the face's potential for expressive variegation. And thus it serves as an assault on our presumption that we might come to intuit the experience of others via the graspable (because changeable) medium of their bodies. A petrified glare is disconcerting because its immutability signifies nothing at all. We retreat from one such face (McDowell's) in A Clockwork Orange's opening zoom out, as if frightened by this dandified thug who gazes out at us with such unblinkingly ominous impudence (fig. 16). His expressive paralysis is horrific because it appears to indicate an objectified subject, one who takes in nothing from the subjects around him nor from his immediate environment, remaining unchangeable and impenetrable. McDowell even seems to time the lowering of his moloko-plus cocktail so that his movement keeps pace with the zoom, creating a disquietingly mechanical congruence. Aside from this sluggish draft and his labored breathing, Alex remains as petrified as the nude mannequin tables upon which he rests

his combat boots. The incline of his head suggests a predatory animal sizing up prey, and his downturned brow ensures that the flicker of a smile can only signal a surfacing malice. In turn, the upturn of his eyes connotes secreted, unseemly knowledge to which we have no access. Alex's direct gaze registers as an assault not simply because we are confronted by a character who seems to look out at us in the very first shot of the film but also because it belies a furtive subjectivity that repels rather than invites scrutiny.



Figure 16. Malcolm McDowell in A Clockwork Orange. © Warner Home Video, 1971.

Other repellent instances of mindlessness are conveyed by Vincent D'Onofrio prior to his act of murder-suicide in Full Metal Jacket, Nicholson during his aforementioned wordless communication with the Overlook's invisible forces, and Tom Cruise, who is driven by sexual jealousy to self-destructive pursuits in Eyes Wide Shut. We have the impression of faces becoming masks--redundantly doubled by the sinister application of literal masks by threatening figures in many of Kubrick's works. The literal and figurative can even fuse--as with Nicholson's dead, frozen visage at the conclusion of The Shining. Thus, the Kubrick face "is a façade overwhelmed by the experience . . . [and] with this look . . . the character becomes detached and isolated--acknowledging the failure to relate to, or engage with, the other

characters in the experience of the story, or to think about the events in a constructive way.”⁹⁰

It has been astutely argued that there are gendered dimensions to Kubrick’s use of these machine-men. For example, Carnicke asserts that female actors in The Shining and Eyes Wide Shut tend to employ comparatively more naturalistic acting styles. They “inhabit the fictional worlds of [their characters] more richly” than their male compatriots and create women who are “more sympathetic” than the male ciphers on display.⁹¹ On the other hand, however, it is difficult to completely sympathize with Brechtian accounts of these “detached” characters, which posit them as mere agglomerates of ideological precepts. Kubrick lacked a consistent, explicitly stated political agenda that would lend credence to this view. Instead, it may be more conducive to make more metaphorical analogies to epic theater. “The standard Kubrick man . . . [is] a collection of roles with no thought, just conditioning,” and, not unlike Brechtian figures, he is also “lacking in self-knowledge, compelled to repeat his patterns all the way back to the primordial scene.”⁹² Again, Kubrick’s overt feminism is debatable, but it is safe to say that both of these films dramatize men who catastrophically will not (Torrance) and cannot (Harford) acknowledge the interiorities of their wives.

Some concluding assertions are now in order. The point here is that no definitive evaluative conclusions can be reached about the characters instantiated through these performative techniques. Such deliberate haziness is not indicative of that hoariest of art film clichés--that people are ultimately mysterious. Rather, the ambiguity of performance can be understood as a deliberate affront to the presumptuousness of narration’s testimonial function. Kubrick’s later works trouble our efforts to see characters from the inside, and their narratives are “played out at such a level of abstraction and unreality that the notion of character empathy is virtually impossible.”⁹³ More precisely, Kubrick actors help to reconfigure narration as a system

of game-like modulations of a viewer's desire for knowledge. Following Edward Branigan's conception of a camera as "a dispersed and depersonalized . . . effect of watching a film," we can begin to think of narration as something other than an effect of the text, something other than an organizational intelligence.⁹⁴ Instead, the narration of skeptical classicism can be a pattern of engagement whereby a viewer negotiates various avenues and impediments circumscribing our longing for knowledge of another's mind.

Why should this modulatory conception of narration be preferable to thinking of classical narration as a rhetorical system with a priori claims to omniscience? For one, inviting a comprehensive evaluative position presupposes that one can have an accurate, complete, and direct understanding of an other's mind. Such a presupposition characterizes narration as the systemic correlative for authorial mastery over a film's characters. Claiming that narration can provide complete "understanding" of a fictional subject risks reductionist or misattributed accounts of that subject's experience. "Drawing out the ambiguity of his films is . . . to reveal first a specific act of failed narration in the film," Jason Sperb writes, "which thus forces us to confront the possibilities of an emerging chaos outside the grasp of the narrative."⁹⁵ And while it is preferable to characterize Kubrick's narration as a nervous discourse rather than a failed one, Sperb's notion is accurate. Improbable as it sounds, the intricacies of a character's mind might paradoxically exceed the knowledge of a film's narration. Such intricacies are admitted by skeptical classicism as it acknowledges the practical limitations to the kind of knowledge that narration can provide. This is not to be regarded as the utter epistemological failure that Sperb has in mind nor as evidence of some kind of transcendent affect beyond narrational rhetoric. Rather, attending to performance in Kubrick's films makes palpable the director's influential interrogation of classical conventions. If he manifests an ironic detachment from the unsavory

types who populate his work, it seems to be a symptom of his acute awareness of the other minds problem. This awareness would explain those disquieting ciphers that drift through his later films, bodies utterly devoid of knowable subjectivities.⁹⁶

About the Author

Aaron Taylor is an Associate Professor of New Media at the University of Lethbridge. He is the editor of Theorizing Film Acting, and the author of numerous articles on screen performance.

¹ Jack Nicholson, interview by Iain Johnstone, transcript, 1980, ref. no. SK/19/1/2/4/1, 6, Kubrick Archives, University of the Arts London.

² David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson, The Classical Hollywood Cinema (New York: Routledge, 1985), 3.

³ Ibid., 17.

⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁵ Sharon Marie Carnicke, "The Material Poetry of Acting: 'Objects of Attention,' Performance Style, and Gender in The Shining and Eyes Wide Shut," Journal of Film and Video 58, nos. 1-2 (2006): 28.

⁶ Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson, The Classical Hollywood Cinema, 3.

⁷ Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 4th ed., trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte (1953; repr., Malden: Blackwell, 2009), 131.

⁸ Jason Sperb, The Kubrick Facade (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 4.

⁹ Mario Falsetto, "The Mad and the Beautiful: A Look at Two Performances in the Films of Stanley Kubrick," in Making Visible the Invisible, ed. Carole Zucker (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1990), 353.

¹⁰ Anita Avramides, "Other Minds," in The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mind, ed. Brian McLaughlin, Ansgar Beckermann, and Sven Walter (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 727.

¹¹ See Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics (London: Methuen, 1983), 61.

¹² Falsetto, "The Mad and the Beautiful," 326.

¹³ Carnicke, "The Material Poetry," 21-30; Sharon Marie Carnicke, "Screen Performance and Directors' Visions," in More Than a Method, ed. Cynthia Baron, Diane Carson, and Frank P. Tomasulo (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), 42-67.

¹⁴ Dennis Bingham, "Kidman, Cruise, and Kubrick: A Brechtian Pastiche," in More Than a Method, 247-74.

¹⁵ Sperb, The Kubrick Facade, 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 99-124.

¹⁷ For Kubrick's own account of his showmanship, see Michael Herr, Kubrick (New York: Grove Press), 31-32. A more frosty interpretation of these exhibitionist tendencies can be found in Pauline Kael, "Stanley Strangelove," New Yorker, 1 January 1972, 53.

¹⁸ These qualities are shared in numerous accounts of modernist acting, including Andrew Higson, "Film Acting and Independent Cinema," Screen 26, no. 5 (1985): 2-25; Frank P. Tomasulo, "'The Sounds of Silence': Modernist Acting in Michelangelo Antonioni's Blow-Up," in More Than a Method, 94-125; and Bart Testa, "Un Certain Regard: Characterization in the First Years of the French New Wave," in Making Visible the Invisible, 92-142.

¹⁹ David Bordwell, The Way Hollywood Tells It (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 180-89.

²⁰ Eleftheria Tanouli, Post-classical Cinema (London: Wallflower, 2009), 170-72, 181.

²¹ Following an SCMS presentation of a section of this article, an objection was proffered that Bordwell's account of classical narration doesn't claim that narrational omniscience is ever all-expansive. But this objection isn't altogether convincing. For one, it would be difficult to claim that a narrational system that wasn't all-expansive should still be called "omniscient." Second, as above, Elfhtheria Tanouli's Bordwellian characterization of postclassical cinema actually makes the claim that narrational omniscience is, in fact, "total." And Bordwell does seem to imply that classical narration is all-knowing; otherwise he wouldn't assert that its momentary restrictions or limitations are "voluntary." For more details, see David Bordwell, Narration in the Fiction Film (London: Routledge, 1985), 65.

²² Other contemporary directors with a penchant for skeptical classicism combined with uncommunicative performances and/or to whom the adjective "Kubrickian" is frequently applied are Darren Aronofsky, David Fincher, Richard Kelly, Michael Mann, Steve McQueen, Christopher Nolan, Mark Romanek, and Nicholas Winding Refn. For examples, see Joshua Gaul, "The Definitive Kubrickian Films," Sound on Sight, 19 March 2014, www.soundonsight.org/the-definitive-kubrickian-films-40-31/.

²³ For a more complete articulation of these problems, see Thomas Nagel, The View from Nowhere (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 19-22.

²⁴ Hanna Pickard, "Emotion and the Problem of Other Minds," in Philosophy and the Emotions, ed. Anthony Hatzimoysis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 88.

²⁵ John Stuart Mill, An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, 6th ed. (1865; repr., London: Longmans, 1889), 243-44.

²⁶ Duncan Pritchard, What Is This Thing Called Knowledge?, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2010), 130.

²⁷ Stephen P. Thornton, "Solipsism and the Problem of Other Minds," Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 24 October 2004, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/solipsis/>.

²⁸ Pritchard, What Is This Thing, 134.

²⁹ Pickard, "Emotion," 97.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 101.

³² Glenn D. Reeder and David Trafimow, "Attributing Motives to Other People," in Other Minds, ed. Bertram F. Malle and Sara D. Hodges (New York: Guilford Press, 2005), 107.

³³ Nicholas Epley, "Solving the (Real) Other Minds Problem," Social and Personality Psychology Compass 2, no. 3 (2008): 1455.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1457.

³⁵ Pioneering accounts of each perspective can be found in Robert Gordon, "Folk Psychology as Simulation," Mind and Language 1 (1986): 158-71; and David Premack and Guy Woodruff, "Does the Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind?," Behavioral and Brain Sciences 1, no. 4 (1978): 515-26. For an interesting promotion of a hybrid of simulation and implicit theory, see Alvin I. Goldman, Simulating Minds (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 43-45.

³⁶ Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases," Science 185, no. 4,157 (1974): 1128-29.

³⁷ Epley, "Solving," 1459.

³⁸ See, for example, Leaf Van Boven and George Loewenstein, "Social Projection of Transient Drive States," Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin 29, no. 9 (2003): 1165.

³⁹ Reeder and Trafimow, "Attributing Motives," 115.

⁴⁰ Bordwell, Narration, 335.

⁴¹ One such influential manual is Syd Field, Screenplay, rev. ed. (New York: Bantam Dell, 2005), 206.

⁴² Reeder and Trafimow, “Attributing Motives,” 106.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁴⁴ Bordwell, Narration, 65.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 57-61.

⁴⁶ Gérard Genette, Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method, trans. Jane Lewin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 256.

⁴⁷ Bordwell, Narration, 165.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁴⁹ A commendable example can be found in Mario Falsetto, “Patterns of Filmic Narration in The Killing and Lolita,” in Perspectives on Stanley Kubrick, ed. Mario Falsetto (New York: G. K. Hall, 1996), 100-123.

⁵⁰ Filters are distinguished from the narration’s broader attitudinal “slant” in Seymour Chatman, Coming to Terms (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 143.

⁵¹ A condemnation expressed by Paths of Glory screenwriter Calder Willingham in John Baxter, Stanley Kubrick: A Biography (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1997), 7.

⁵² See the condemnation of Eyes Wide Shut as “a somnolent load of wank” in David Edelstein, “The Naked and the Dead,” Slate, 16 July 1999, www.slate.com/articles/arts/movies/1999/07/the_naked_and_the_dead.html, as well as the fierce denunciations of A Clockwork Orange and The Shining in Pauline Kael, “Stanley Strangelove,” 50-53, and Kael, “Devolution,” New Yorker, 9 June 1980, 130.

⁵³ See the ideological condemnation of Eyes Wide Shut in Christopher Sharrett, “False Criticism:

Cinema, Bourgeois Society, and the Conservative Complaint,” Film International 12, no. 6 (2004), <http://filmint.nu/?p=1656>; and the Freudian defense of A Clockwork Orange in Hans Feldman, “Kubrick and His Discontents,” in Falsetto, Perspectives, 191-200.

⁵⁴ Richard Corliss, Lolita (London: BFI Publishing, 1994), 86-87.

⁵⁵ These conclusions are drawn in the following: Baxter, Stanley Kubrick, 143-44; Corliss, Lolita, 2-3; Falsetto, “Patterns,” 112; Greg Jenkins, Stanley Kubrick and the Art of Adaptation (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1997), 68; Thomas Allen Nelson, Kubrick, expanded ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 66; Constantine Santas, “Lolita--from Nabokov’s Novel (1955) to Kubrick’s Film (1962) to Lyne’s (1997),” Senses of Cinema 10 (November 2000), <http://sensesofcinema.com/2000/novel-and-film/lolita/>.

⁵⁶ Nelson, Kubrick, 75.

⁵⁷ Gregory Currie, “Realism of Character and the Value of Fiction,” in Aesthetics and Ethics, ed. Jerrold Levinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 170.

⁵⁸ Falsetto, “The Mad and the Beautiful,” 352.

⁵⁹ James Naremore, On Kubrick (London: BFI, 2007), 40.

⁶⁰ Jack Nicholson, interview with Leon Vitali, transcript, 1980, ref. no. SK/19/1/2/4/1, take 1a, 4, Kubrick Archives.

⁶¹ Jackson’s comments are from Vincent LoBrutto, Stanley Kubrick: A Biography (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), 428, and the takes of her scene are enumerated in the continuity reports for The Shining, 2 May-6 May 1978, ref. no. SK/15/3/1/2, Kubrick Archives.

⁶² Duvall, sound roll with Leon Vitali, take 2, 4. Cook is quoted in Staircases to Nowhere: Making Stanley Kubrick’s “The Shining,” directed by Howard Berry (Hatfield: Elstree Project, 2012), http://theelstreeproject.org/?page_id=236.

⁶³ Quoted in Jeff Labrecque, “Malcolm McDowell on Stanley Kubrick: An All-Too-Human Genius,” Entertainment Weekly, 29 November 2014, insidemovies.ew.com/2014/11/29/malcolm-mcdowell-stanley-kubrick-clockwork-orange/.

⁶⁴ Crothers’s and Nicholson’s comments are from Jack Kroll, “Stanley Kubrick’s Horror Show,” Newsweek, 26 May 1980, 96. Duvall’s comments are from Duval, video interview with Leon Vitali, take 2, 5.

⁶⁵ Michael Ciment, Kubrick: The Definitive Edition, trans. Gilbert Adair (1980; repr., New York: Faber and Faber, 2001), 188.

⁶⁶ Continuity reports for The Shining, 2 May-5 June 1978.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Staircases to Nowhere.

⁶⁸ LoBrutto, Stanley Kubrick, 424.

⁶⁹ See Baxter, Stanley Kubrick, 187; and James Earl Jones, “A Bombardier’s Reflection on ‘Strangelove,’” Wall Street Journal, 16 November 2004, www.wsj.com/articles/SB110055719231074627.

⁷⁰ Roger Ebert, “Dr. Strangelove,” in The Great Movies (1999; repr., New York: Broadway Books, 1999), 154.

⁷¹ LoBrutto, Stanley Kubrick, 434. By contrast, Nicholson claimed that “I had almost no room for improvisation on [The Shining]. It will be a finely rendered thing ultimately.” See Nicholson, interview with Leon Vitali, take 2e, 7.

⁷² LoBrutto, Stanley Kubrick, 365-66.

⁷³ For more on ostensiveness, see James Naremore, Acting in the Cinema (Berkeley: University of California Press), 17.

⁷⁴ Ciment, Kubrick, 188.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Nicholson, interview with Leon Vitali, take 2e, 2.

⁷⁷ Stanley Kubrick to Diane Carson, handwritten memo, 14 October 1977, ref. no. SK/15/1/12, Kubrick Archives.

⁷⁸ Dennis Bingham, Acting Male (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 116.

⁷⁹ For a similar notion, see Bingham, “Kidman, Cruise, and Kubrick,” 256.

⁸⁰ Continuity reports for The Shining.

⁸¹ Ciment, Kubrick, 188.

⁸² Ron Rosenbua, “The Creative Mind; Acting: The Method and the Mystique of Jack Nicholson,” New York Times, 13 July 1986, www.nytimes.com/1986/07/13/magazine/the-creative-mind-acting-the-method-and-mystique-of-jack-nicholson.html.

⁸³ Carnicke, “Screen Performance,” 48.

⁸⁴ Nicholson, interview with Iain Johnstone, 32.

⁸⁵ Alexander Walker, Sybil Taylor, and Ulrich Ruchti, Stanley Kubrick, Director, rev. and expanded ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000), 298.

⁸⁶ Nicholson, interview with Iain Johnstone, 36.

⁸⁷ Robert Bresson, Notes on Cinematography, trans. Jonathan Griffin (New York: Urizen Books, 1977), 25.

⁸⁸ Falsetto, “The Mad and the Beautiful,” 327.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 335.

⁹⁰ Sperb, The Kubrick Facade, 10.

⁹¹ Carnicke, “The Material Poetry,” 29.

⁹² Bingham, “Kidman, Cruise, and Kubrick,” 252 & 253.

⁹³ Mario Falsetto, Stanley Kubrick: A Narrative and Stylistic Analysis (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), 171.

⁹⁴ Edward Branigan, Projecting a Camera (New York: Routledge, 2006), 18.

⁹⁵ Sperb, The Kubrick Facade, 9.

⁹⁶ My thanks to Margrethe Bruun Vaage, Carl Plantinga, and Johannes Riis for their suggestions while I was drafting this article. I am also grateful to the excellent staff at the Stanley Kubrick Archive at the University of the Arts London for their assistance and hospitality.