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Film 40: Theories and Methodologies of Film

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I would like to start this by mentioning the idea of film as a medium and a mediator of information. For me, the film ‘mediates’ knowledge, information, and stories in a way that is so immersive and attention-grabbing (whether people like it or not, due to its multi-sensory stimulating nature) that it holds influence over the information, sometimes without intention or even awareness of the fact. Thus, the way a film ends up framing a topic or story can have very different effects on the viewers and the actual feel of the story.

Rear Window (Alfred Hitchcock 1954)

- A man (Mr Jefferies) is bed bound due to a leg injury so to keep entertained people watch his neighbors from his rear window. He then accidentally witnesses a man murdering his wife and follows the interactions between him, his close friends/girlfriend, and the neighbors as the movie and mystery unfold

A part of films that I think goes understated is the initial intro and title sequence. At the start of the movie there almost needs to be a transition period for the viewer, with the title sequence generally taking on this role. For Rear Window, this title sequence is weirdly calming but it also slowly, and subtly introduces the viewer into the story, as it is a simple shot of the view outside a window. It is a simple introduction, because at first it almost seems like just a basic, almost random shot of the view from a window, but without really realizing it is slowly immersing the viewers into the world and setting of the film.

The use of simple shots is a common theme then used throughout the entire film, with the most complex shot sequences being either over-the-shoulder conversation sequences or slightly faster panning across the view. The shots' simplicity seemingly adds to the film's simple and complex nature. The film is simple, in that it is a simple idea – a man who can only look out of his window for entertainment – and it is complex in that it is about solving a murder mystery. The simple shots and simple baseline plot allow the viewer to place all of

their attention onto the more complex aspects of the plot, and almost feel as if they are sitting with Mr Jefferies and Lisa solving the mystery alongside them, truly creating an immersive story experience. Furthermore, outside of the direct storyline the shots shown, even though arguably technically simple, the information they were presenting was very complex. The scene where the lady is having a date with a man that doesn't exist is seemingly paired with the immediately prior conversation that Mr Jefferies had about how he doesn't want to marry Lisa. The two scenes paired together created a very subtle, but very interesting dialogue, a theme that is seen as the movie progresses. On top of this, the interconnectedness of the neighbors is seemingly only really truly addressed around the 1hr 24min marker when the dog is found dead and it is the first time that all of the neighbors are addressed as a collective and brought together. This seemed a little significant to me because up until that point, the interaction between neighbors had always been from this barrier of through the window, without any real other interaction, however, now everyone has been brought together as a result of the dog death, at what seemed to be a mild pace change in the nearing of the films conclusion. Lastly, something I want to mention about the whole movie is how the shots themselves seemingly mimicked what Mr Jefferies would have seen, reinforcing the reality of the movie, and forcing the viewers to attempt to follow along with the plot as if they were a character.

For a film as a window and a film as a frame, this movie does an interesting job of facilitating both at the same time. For a film as a window, it provides the audience with the same perspective as MR Jefferies and the main characters, meaning that we are seeing everything from the same perspective he is and thus have been granted a window into his experience of the story. For film as a frame – at least for me – it provided me with a new perspective on what living in a neighborhood could be – not the murdering part but rather the simplicity of

every person having their own days and unique lives, all while living essentially in the same space.

Vertigo (Alfred Hitchcock 1963)

- John - a former SF detective who retired due to gaining acrophobia after a rooftop chase gone wrong - is hired by his college friend to follow his wife, as he believes he is possessed by a dead young woman called Carlotta Valdes. He follows her and ends up falling in love with her. He can't save her and she jumps off the top of a church. He later finds a woman who looks exactly like her. It turns out she was the 'wife' and was payed by the husband to help cover up a murder and showcase it as a suicide. She also dies from jumping off the church.

It's interesting to watch this movie from both a formalist and realist perspective. It almost seems that the first half of the movie fits best into realist theory, while the second half into formalism. The first half of the movie seems to force people to follow what they see is what's real, and at that point there is no evidence to suggest that she is being haunted. However, slips into a more formalist lens upon the suicide of Madeleine. The reason for my split critique styles for this movie is in relation to what seems to be emphasis. In the first half there is lots of emphasis on montage and following events as they happen, and how the mystery and story is constructed. However, after Madeleine dies and Scottie goes through his mental breakdown there seems to be a shift in how the movie is to be watched, most notably with the animated montage and special effects moment, which ties to formalist theory, as there is heavy use of effects, and editing that breaks up the 'montage-like' way of editing that has been presented up until then. I think that it could be suggested that after this one montage scene it shifts back to simple realist montage, but I would argue that there is a lasting effect of that scene which keeps it more comfortably within the realm of formalist theory than realist theory.

The concept of 'open' and 'closed' films – in relation to the way the audience watches it and the way the director involves the audience in the story – can also be applied to this movie, with for me it seeming like more of a closed film. The reason I argue for it being an open film comes from the definition we mentioned in class. In an open film the audience is the guest, whereas in a closed film the audience is the 'victim'. As the film goes on it seems that the audience are brought along for the ride – like a guest – with the final twist not really having a massive impact on the audience, rather it is just being a shocking twist that is witnessed.

In relation to our topic of film as window and frame, I think the way this movie is filmed lends itself to both concepts. For the film as a window, we directly follow the main character – 'Scottie' – throughout the entire movie, thus we are provided with a window into his life, and his perspective on the unfolding of events. Only very rarely are the audience provided with a perspective that isn't that of Scottie. As a result, I would like to bring back my framework of argument which I applied to the discussions of formalist versus realist theory within this movie. In this case the first half – and majority of the movie falls under 'film as window'. However, as the story continues and truly begins to unwind, 'film as frame' becomes all the more applicable. For me this transition happened most notably when we have the scene of Judy admitting her guilt and writing a letter to only then rip it up and not use it. This scene was significant in the shift between window and frame for me, because it is the point in the movie where we are no longer seeing the situation from the perspectives of Scottie, but now we – as an audience – have been provided with a significant extra piece of information, which then alters and frames the way we watch the rest of the movie, as we are no longer trying to solve the mystery alongside him, but rather we are now witnessing him figure it out.

The Searchers (John Ford, US 1956, 119 min)

- A western where the main character Ethan comes back from the war and ends up on a journey trying to bring back his niece Debbie who had been taken by a group of Native Americans who previously attacked the house of Ethan's brother. Ethan goes on this journey with Debbie's brother Martin and after initially finding Debbie and her refusing to come back with them, Martin eventually 'saves' Debbie from the Native Americans.

The opening scene of *The Searchers* already provides a beautiful case study for the theory of cinema as doors. The scene quite literally starts with a doorway that leads us as the viewer into the world of the movie. The way the camera slowly glides through the door frame is almost reminiscent of the curtain pull seen in theaters and in cinemas. The contrast between the sunny exterior and the dark interior make it seem like the frame is growing, and thus makes it seem like us as the viewers are walking into the world of the film along with the characters. On top of this, the exterior scene seems to almost de-emphasize the main character Ethan's arrival, and instead almost encourages the viewer to look at the setting and surroundings, emphasizing the crossing of a threshold, which is emphasized in cinema as door theory. This opening scene could then also fit in with cinema as window theory as the audience is crossing a threshold into the world of *The Searchers*, thus implying that the world is ongoing and complex, separate of what the film is presenting, making the audiences guests within this world, as opposed to frame theory where the audience would be the 'victims'. Something else that the opening scene also creates is a threshold between the 'civilized world' and the 'wilderness', showcasing how cinema as a door is not limited to the relationship between the film and the audience, but also relates to aspects of the film and narrative presented against each other. It is also interesting to bring the concept of para-texts into the creation of thresholds, especially in this case of a western movie. Para-texts are

pieces of information that the audience might be exposed to and take into a film they are watching, and as such be able to make decisions about what is being implied or shown throughout the film. In this case para-texts help fuel the narrative and various cinema as door aspects, as it is through understanding particular preconceived cues that allow for thresholds to be made e.g. the establishing shot of the Utah which is used to signify a western, and some cases typecast actors such as John Wayne in the case of *The Searchers*.

As the movie continues there seems to be an interesting discourse between what is projected as the dominant reading of the movie and the negotiated and oppositional readings. It seems that the dominant reading can be argued a bit, in the sense that there is the idea that Ethan and the 'Westerners' are the protagonists, with the Native Americans being the antagonists. However, the complexities with the character of Ethan and the seemingly juxtaposing actions of Debbie create almost flaws in this dominant narrative, as they question the simple binary of who is the good guy and the bad guy. Ethan as a character and the main protagonist, has some shady aspects to him that – at times throughout the film – almost makes the dominant viewer questions their 'loyalty' to him e.g. the fact that his brother seemed to not really get on with him, and the fact he was paying with unmarked money. Debbie's actions can also harm the dominant narrative as they also question the dominant good v bad binary, notably when she is found the first time, yet refuses to go back with Ethan and Martin claiming that the tribe is her family now.

Cléo from 5 to 7 (Agnès Varda, France/Italy 1962, 90 min)

- Follows a woman called Cleo who is a singer, as she goes through life waiting to hear if she has cancer or not.

Something I took away from this film is the feeling of panicked disorientation. This feeling of disorientation begins immediately in the opening scene, thanks to the use of close up shots I

felt like I could never really place myself fully in the space of the film as I was constantly trying to find information rather than it all being presented immediately. Furthermore, in the scene where Cleo is walking down the stairs the editing choices of POV and buffered shots furthered this feeling of disorientation. It is because of the feeling of disorientation that this opening sequence and then the rest of the movie placed me in, that I would be inclined to suggest it is best looked at through a cinema as frame perspective. The reason I suggest cinema as a frame is to do with the fact that I as an audience member felt more like a 'victim' than a 'guest', because of the choice of shots, notably close-ups, it felt very curated to produce these feelings as if I was Cleo myself. However, that exact statement made above is why the movie should then be seen through the concept of cinema as a mirror. The way that I am interpreting cinema as mirror in the case of Cleo is the way a film can be interpreted as a reflection of the viewer, in that I can look at the film or a specific character, identify with them and then interpret it as a mirror of myself, which then leads to feelings and emotions of myself and the character becoming intertwined. The use of cinema as a mirror can also extend into the way scenes are interpreted in the way they are set up. For example, in the scene at the coffee shop where Cleo is eavesdropping on another couple at another table, but the way the shot is set up it could suggest that the scene is mirroring something that Cleo has gone through/is to experience.

The Mary Tyler Moore Show, s.1 ep.13: "He's All Yours" (w. Bob Rodgers, d. Jay Sandrich, US 12/12/1970)

- Follows the titular character Mary as she deals with inappropriate advances and the rumors created by them by her co-worker Alan.

This was a really interesting watch, and I say interesting in the way that I was surprised but also not surprised by the way that workplace sexual assault was depicted as something funny.

I say this because of the way cinema as a mirror doesn't just encompass the individual viewer,

but also includes the popular opinions of the time of a film – or in this case TV episode – and reflects them in the theme of the show. Ultimately this is a Tv episode in a sitcom, and as Feuer mentions a technique that sitcoms center around is this idea of equilibrium, with each episode breaking it and then fixing it by the end of the episode. Furthermore, Feuer also suggests the analogy of family to be applied onto sitcoms with this idea of equilibrium being broken and then fixed, being similar to that of a family experiencing an argument but then being able to come back together as one. Feuer’s family analogy is really clear within *He’s All Yours*, with the family being created by the people working together in the workplace, and strangely enough the actual family ties in this episode are what ‘threaten’ the ‘narrative family’. It is this notion of threatening the family that then leads into the interesting discussion of the representation of sexual harassment in the workplace.

As previously mentioned the sexual harassment is both showcased in an ok ad accepted way but also in an unacceptable way – with it being the threat to the family’s equilibrium this episode. Even Though it is the ‘problem’ of the episode, the reason it is presented as the problem is not reflected in the fact that what Alan does to Mary is inappropriate, but rather it could harm the workplace family. This framing of the problem then really highlights Feuer’s point about the structuring of family within sitcoms, and also the reliance on seemingly simple melodrama which might undermine serious topics through the application of a laugh track. Furthermore, something we have touched on in class is the idea of the spectator in relation to the male and female gaze, with most media being created through the male gaze, and this episode being another example of that.

Blade Runner (Ridley Scott, US/Hong Kong 1982/2007, 118 min)

- Set in a dystopian ‘future’ it follows the main character ‘Deckard’ who is a bounty hunter charged with ‘retiring’ replicants (android beings)

I would like to start this by bringing back a theory previously discussed, that theory being cinema as a window. The reason I want to present *Blade Runner* as fitting into the cinema as window theory, is mainly due to the world building included with the movie. The way the movie is presented is as a dystopian alternate future or reality, and one that exists outside of what the viewer is seeing. Furthermore, the feeling of watching it ties very much into the voyeuristic aspects of cinema as a window describing the spectator as the guest. The feeling of being the guest to this movie is fuelled through the way the movie directly follows Deckard with limited POV shots, but touches on the stories of others in a very wide ranging world, unlike in *Rear Window* where it seems more of a closed film made for the spectator and just for the spectator (cinema as frame). A good example of the way *Blade Runner* fits into window theory can be seen in the scene where he follows the replicant Zhora who worked at a pleasure house, with the aim of retiring her – which he eventually does. In this timeline of shots and camera angles we are not just privy to the perspective of Deckard, but are often provided with extra information as if we were a disembodied being simply spectating on the sequence – much like in the second half of *Vertigo* when we see the scene of ‘Madeleine’ admitting she is not actually ‘Madeleine’.

By transitioning from looking at *Bladerunner* as a candidate for window theory into other theories, the other theory that stands out is cinema as eye – look and gaze. It almost seems too obvious to attribute *Bladerunner* to this theory, especially as one of the first scenes and then a continued major theme throughout the movie centers the eye, most notably the way the eye reacts and processes information. Thus, the spectator is already drawn to the eyes of the characters, but also can become hyper aware of their own eyes. Furthermore, with cinema as eye highlighting both a more transparent and almost enlightened opinion – with the eye being the window to emotion – but also a more negative tone in relation to inquisition and self-examination. The power dynamics associated with cinema as eye – look and gaze –

are then further emphasized by the replicant test, as to take the test is to be judged by your eyes. Furthermore, the way the characters react to being a replicant or not, highlight that there is a good and bad result to gain, especially when Rebecca suggests – or rather inquires – to Deckard that he might be a replicant, and his reaction is negative.

Cinema as eye – look and gaze – within *Bladerunner* can also relate to the notions of dominant gaze, and also the theory of castration anxiety. As we watch this movie there is a clear hierarchy between the men and the women, notably between the characters of Deckard and Rebecca. The way Deckard treats and almost subjugates Rebecca highlights the main or rather dominant gaze of this film being the male gaze. Furthermore, because the spectators attention has been brought to eye and viewership, there is already this hyper awareness of the looks and information conveyed by them within the movie. Another scene where this dominant gaze is prevalent is in the scene where Deckard approaches Zhora in her dressing room. It is at this point that the spectator seems most integrated into the narrative. When Deckard is talking to Zhora about the lengths that men go to see a women the camera shots seem to switch from being with Deckard to almost making the spectator the ‘men’ in question, as we watch Zhora shower from what could be described as a ‘subtle’ angle, feeding into Mulvey’s ideas around film portraying a ‘voyeuristic fantasy.

The notion of castration anxiety then elevates evenmore into the following sequence where it seems that the female character should be punished to the ultimate degree for degrading and upsetting the hierarchy – Zhora attacks Deckard and runs away. The gender hierarchy created through castration anxiety is again repeated in one of the later sequences where Deckard fights the replicant– and retires – Pris and then fights the replicant – and is saved by – Roy. It is here I make the distinction that potentially highlights the implications and also prevalence of the theories of castration anxiety within *Blade Runner* as the difference in outcome between the two fights draws significance. The first fight in this

sequence that Deckard is a part of is with the female replicant Pris with the outcome being the retirement of Pris. The second fight is between Deckard and the male replicant Roy, however rather than this ending in Deckard retiring Roy it actually ends up with Roy choosing to save – spare – Deckard before he then retires on his own. The fact that the female character meets a brutal end could be seen as her punishment for questioning the authority of the man, while the more equal ending with the male because there is no heir hal difference between the two as they both have the phallus and thus do not envy on or the other, nor do they preside over the other.

The above point can also speak to the disruption thesis as Pris acts almost as a hurdle which Deckard must get over in order to fight the real antagonist Roy, thus she is disrupting and causing trouble to the main – male – protagonist. *Blade Runner* also has clear examples of both the repression thesis and the containment thesis. While Pris seems to represent ‘disruption’ it seems that Rachel represents ‘repression’ and Zhora represents ‘containment’. Rachel represents the repression thesis due to the side-character nature of her role in the narrative, but it seems to be highlighted in a scene that she isn't in, where Tyrell speaks to Deckard after he has administered the replicant test on Rachel. Tyrell tells Deckard that Rachel is a replicant but doesn't know, which itself seems like a metaphor for the repression thesis as her real nature is hidden from her, much like how the narrative of repression thesis seeks to cover up the fragility of having a female character. Zhora represents the containment thesis due to the previously mentioned scene where Deckard ends up retiring her. In the retiring scene Zhora refuses to give information to Deckard and attacks him, making her a form of ‘turbulence’ that helps fuel the narrative, and she must be ‘contained’ in the way of being retired.

The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (Robert Wiene, Germany 1920, 74 min)

- A weird hypnotist uses a young man who sleeps during the day to kill people

I will not lie, I did find this film weird, something that was probably not helped by the fact I didn't have english subtitles. However, through not having the context readily provided it did provide a weird viewing experience where I was seeking as much context as I could simply from the visuals. Furthermore, I found that the places I was getting the most information from were the faces of the characters. I would also like to look at this movie predominantly through the theory of cinema as eye – look and gaze, specifically how the movie and the theory raises potential themes of homosexuality.

Something which was talked about in class which I found very interesting was the suggestion that the relationship between the Dr and the guy was actually representative of a more intimate relationship. I found this interesting because when I was watching it I kind of joked to myself that the movements and way the man carried himself felt a little bit camp. The way this movie deals with the potential intimate relationship between the two men seems to be mainly through symbolism. The most notable point raised in class – and which I found most interesting – was how the symbolism of the knife can portray this. So rather than just simply looking at the relationships themselves between the characters, highlighting the actions.

When the hypnotized man goes to kill the woman, he is unable to, and the fact that he is unable to kill her by stabbing her, could speak to the sexuality of the man. As with castration anxiety and the idea of the phallus, it is the knife in this scene that takes on that role, almost more than the characters. The reason I would say the knife takes on this role is to do with the seeming femininity of the hypnotized man, and the fact that the only other person in the scene is a woman. Therefore, by applying Mulveys ideas around the visual pleasures a spectator gets from a movie – especially in relation to gaze and ideas of castration anxiety – it leaves the knife as the ‘masculine’ aspect of the scene.

Furthermore, as I previously mentioned when I was watching this I thought that the hypnotized man seemed a bit ‘camp’ and as such a little more feminine than what is typically expected from a male character, especially within the confines of the male gaze. The feminisation of the one male character leaves the relationship between him and Dr Caligari as a dynamic that actually fits into the castration anxiety aesthetic. The reason the proposed relationship fits is because of the power dynamics, it is Dr Claigari – the more masculine – that holds power over the other man – the more feminine – so even though they are two men it somewhat speaks to heteronormative expectations within the male gaze.

Daughters of the Dust (Julie Dash, US 1991, 113 min.)

- Follows the Gullah women – and men – as they prepare to leave their island and head north to the USA. It is narrated by the future child of one of the main Gullah women – who end up staying on the island.

This film deals very strongly with the themes of family, and historical legacies of racism, especially the generational difference and toll of it. It is the passing down and highlighted differences of experience that would lead me to suggest this movie fits into cinema as skin – body and touch. Film is an expression of experiences created by those creating it, as is storytelling, and within this film we are able to see 3 generations worth of experience and thus attitudes towards different themes. Furthermore, the fact that the narrator is an unborn child speaks to the idea of cinema as a body because – at least for me – it drew attention to the way it is not just the mind that experiences a story but the body. A notable part of the movie is the notion that the Grandma's hands are stained blue from the indigo, and when this was mentioned I remember feeling aware of my hands. Cinema as the body suggests this, that due to the way people experience life through all senses, the body will almost attempt to simulate the experience of the movie onto the body – something that could arguably pair with

mirror theory as the body almost mirrors the physical feeling as well as the emotional in a film.

Furthermore, Shohat and Stam highlight how representation outside of the dominant represented people is found, especially how that does not conclude with just the actors on the screen being representative, but also the writers. Film provides a place for representation, and a form of representation that covers more of the senses. For a film to be representative and also be considered within the theory of cinema as a body, it is not just representing the bodies, skin, and relationships between people, the film is inviting the spectator to experience it – albeit in a way that is curated by the filmmakers and actors.

I did find this film to be a little confusing, with this confusion not just coming from the different forms of English, but also from attempting to identify the narration, and the narrator – something which I have talked about a lot and will continue to because it seemed so interesting. The way the narration is incorporated and the narrator included is unlike anything I have seen before, and very much seems to fall under the theory of cinema as brain – mind and body. A part of cinema as brain – mind and body – is the idea that film doesn't just end when the film ends, but rather the film has a lasting impact much like a memory. Furthermore, they are complex pieces of art that deal with time, narrative, relationship, consciousness etc. The narrator for *Daughters of the Dust* is arguably a timeless being, who simultaneously conforms to time. A complex statement, but the nature of the narrator being the yet to be born daughter of one of the women provides an interesting relationship between both time, mind, and consciousness within the movie. Furthermore, the sometimes active role of the narrator actually appearing alongside the characters continues to highlight the complex relationship between time, mind, and consciousness, because the spectator could argue that the narrator is there, and thus the narration is diegetic but in a way that feels incredibly personal.

It is also interesting to think about this movie as a time - movement movie – in relation to ideas presented by Deleuze and the way the film carries the narrative. The way the narrative is presented is simultaneously linear in time, but also not. On one hand we have the clear montage of time moving on as we see the women talk about and prepare to leave the island, but we also have the addition of the narrator, which – if not obvious right at the beginning but as the film develops – confuses the timeline of the narrative to an extent, where the spectator is spending some time figuring out where the narrator fits in as an actual diegetic character.

Even though the movie arguably takes on a more structuralist or even realist and expected montage approach to the actual plot and storyline, I would argue that it is actually much deeper than that and speaks more to what Deleuze was suggesting, that the way time is presented, although seemingly linear, is actually incredibly complex. A notion which can be further emphasized by the subtle transition of narration between the unborn child to the Grandmother, almost as if the time has changed, and it is instead the Grandmas turn to become this mildly disembodied voice, and the child to become real.

King Kong (Cooper and Schoedsack, US 1933, 104 min.)

- A filmmaker – Carl Denham – wants to make an ‘exotic’ movie and enlists the help of the boat ‘Venture’ and the actress Ann Darrow to make it. On their journey they end up going to Skull Island and – after Ann is kidnapped to be a sacrifice – they discover Kong. Denham brings Kong back to NYC to show off but Kong escapes and kidnaps Darrow. It ends with Kong on the Empire State Building with Ann and Kong dies by being shot by multiple planes.

King Kong for me felt as though it could be categorized within the category of cinema as window, notably due to how I felt watching the movie more as a voyeuristic spectator than a

guest. Furthermore, to me it almost felt like an insertion into actual history – which could be fueled by the fact that it was filmed over 90 years ago – and thus is an actual alternate reality created by the filmmaker.

When I think about films and their components there is one aspect that can most effectively change the emotions and manipulate the way a spectator interprets a scene, that aspect is sound. Within *King Kong* there is significant non-diegetic as well as diegetic sound design which not only helps fuel the narrative but provides insight into subplots and deeper emotional connections with the characters and narrative. Cinema as ear – acoustics and space – fuels the way we watch *King Kong*, with non-diegetic music almost taking the space of a narrator to imply what is going on in the scene and deciding whether it is good, bad, happy, sad, or even romantic. The scene where Kong scales the Empire state building is overlaid with non-diegetic music in the minor key and almost sinister sounding, and through applying the idea that film might actually be sound first then visuals second, it is predisposing the spectator to attach those emotions to the image being shown – in this case Kong.

Furthermore, Gorbman would suggest that the music at this point is actually integral to the continuity of the narrative emotional experience of the film because without it it would just be a big ape climbing up the Empire State Building, but because of the sinister music there is significantly more information being provided. Furthermore, it fuels narrative queuing as it produces the emotion and almost frames the scene in a negative way, that warranted the massive response in the following scenes of planes being deployed to kill Kong, thus providing significant context.

It is interesting to think that sound sits in for spoken narrative, but it is also interesting to think of it as a stand-in for experiencing the emotions of each character, providing a more personal/intimate experience with the movie. In the scene where Ann and Jack kiss there is very dynamic use of music included. As the scene cuts back and forth between Ann and Jack,

and the Captain the music provides us with more information and hidden clues as to the feelings and narrative being presented. When the scene is showing Ann and Jack the music is more romantic, however, when the captain is shown there is no music. This could highlight how Ann and Jack are caught up in the moment and how the Captain must remain focused and therefore no music is applied suggesting complete focus.

Cinema as ear doesn't just pertain to the non-diegetic sounds but also the diegetic. In *King Kong* the most interesting use of diegetic sound comes from Kong himself, with his roars. This is because Kong does not exist so therefore foley artists and the filmmaker had to come up with and decide on what they wanted Kong to sound like. Kong ended up with this aggressive and sort of scary almost screech to keep in fitting with the fact he is the antagonist of this movie and thus needs to appear intimidating. If he had been given lets say a cat's meow then he would have appeared less intimidating and there would have potentially been need for more visual storytelling to persuade the spectator that he is this scary dominating creature.

Something that we talked about in class that I would like to add to this, is the potential for *King Kong* to also be representative of cinema as a body, in relation to symbolism of the African American slave history and experience and Kong's experience. Through applying this to the movie Kong becomes a bodied representative of the slave trafficking histories and embodies some of the emotions for the spectator to not just witness but experience.

Gladiator (Michael Scott, US 2000, 155 min.)

- Follows the story of Roman General Maximus as he is disgraced and is turned into a Gladiator. It ends with him fighting Emperor Commodus – who is the one who disgraced him – and dying.

I wanted to add this movie after *King Kong* for its relation to the theory of cinema as well as the effect the soundscape had on me as a spectator. Specifically, I want to highlight the final scene and the impact of the music on me as a spectator. In the final scene we see Maximus fight – and kill – Emperor Commodus and then succumb to his own wounds. After he has passed we see his friend – and also a gladiator – honor him as he ascends into Elysium. The scene itself is incredibly emotionally charged with just the imagery, but it is heightened by the integration of the non-diegetic soundtrack. Another personal point I would like to add is how my own paratexts of the music then further heightened the emotions within the scene. This is because of the way the three final pieces by Hans Zimmer – Elysium, Honor Him, Now We Are Free – both fit in with the transitions of the scenes musically and in name. Therefore for me, this scene showcases the exact ideas of how cinema as an ear fuels narrative, cues emotions, adds to the continuity and unifies this scene as an arguably perfect and beautiful end to a somewhat gruesome story.

Furthermore, the transition from solely diegetic sound as Maximus stabs the emperor provides a transition that focuses on the acute sounds of reality and death, into the more ethereal side, which keeps up with the other plot of him waiting to join his family in Elysium. The way the diegetic and non-diegetic music works together in volume also adds emotion and emphasizes certain aspects. Notably the beginning of the non-diegetic music is more subtle and quiet, yet grows to be louder after he has given his spoken orders, almost to highlight his journey to Elysium much like someone would say they are walking into the light when dying. The choice to place a piece with no lyrics between two with, showcases how the diegetic works with the non-diegetic, because Lucille's words 'honoring him' almost become the lyrics to the piece, highlighting the integrated approach of the movie and the scene in creating emotion with both sound and image.

Another weird thing is how the music then bleeds into the credits and seems to act as a vessel on which the spectator is transported both into and then out of the story, as the music covers the film and the narrative but also the part of the film that isn't the film anymore, allowing that seamless transition back to reality.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (Michel Gondry, US 2004, 108 min.)

- Joel Barish breaks up with his girlfriend Clementine and goes to a doctor to erase the memories he has with her. While the memories are being erased he realizes that he doesn't want to forget and tries everything he can to remember Clementine.

Clementine has had the same procedure.

I was actually surprised by this movie, because I really enjoyed the narrative and the way the story was told. I especially liked the themes and creativity that it utilized to present the abstract in a clear way. How it is presented and the bases of the narrative makes it an excellent candidate for the theory of cinema as brain – mind and body – because we are literally going into this man's mind.

Something I would like to do for this is go through how the movie pertains to Munsterberg's 4 functions of the mind which then pair with cinema to really create an argument for the theory of cinema as brain – mind and body. The first of these 4 being attention and the way movies development and editing has created a possibility for even more stimulating images. This attention piece can be really seen in the scene where all of his memories seem to briefly jumble into the waiting room scene. Within this scene there is so much going on, it is almost an overstimulation, but in overstimulating there is attention being gained as the spectator tries to decipher what is going on within the scene.

The second is memory, and this movie deals with this explicitly, going through each of Joel's memories. However, I think the most effective use of the spectators memory in

relation to the narrative of the movie, comes in the first and last scenes/sequences. The movie starts off essentially with the ending and then ends with the beginning of the end, and it is through the spectators memory of the first scene that as they are watching the movie the clues being dropped allow this to be deciphered as the film reaches its end.

The third is imagination, and in Munsterberg's excerpt he talks about how film as an artform should not limit the opportunities of imagination to the fantasy films, and this film certainly does not. Through watching this movie it is clear to see how the filmmaker is utilizing the imagination of the spectator, most notably for me is how the scenes in the mind mimic the style I almost dream in. Thus, for me, it seems that the filmmaker is relying on the imagination of the spectator to see how this is a memory and become fully immersed.

The final one – and arguably the most prominent – is feeling and emotion. The reason I would argue that feelings and emotion is the most prominent in this even with all of the complex editing and storylines, is due to the emotionally charged narrative. The scene which is almost the turning point for this is when Joel realizes he doesn't want to forget Clementine and the way he goes about trying to 'hide' her is to go through memories of his that provoke a wide array of emotions such as embarrassment. Through doing this the filmmaker is directly contrasting emotions within Joel's memory. Furthermore, as his memories become more and more broken the final 'memory' scene in the house seems to mimic how a person remembers. I say that because when a person remembers a memory they don't remember the event, instead they remember the last time they remembered it and as such the memory slowly becomes more and more 'personalized'. Furthermore, the personal questioning and analysis of the moment by Joel is similar to memory and can also represent this 'personalization' of the memory field by emotions.

The temporal complication of this movie also speaks to cinema as brain, especially when thinking of Deleuze's ideas of a time - movement film. This movie is based on the

narrative, but does not take on a usual temporal narrative, as it simultaneously presents the viewer with the past, present and future. I would argue that this is a time - movement image, as it is the time that drives the narrative rather than the image in my opinion. It is the confusion of memories paired with the admission of guilt that make the narrative interesting. Yes the movement and image is interesting, but without the context of time, and the idea of it being lost it wouldn't be as strong of a movie.

I think it is also worth mentioning how cinema as the brain, especially the mind aspect ties into the ideas around cinema as mirror, notably in the relationship between the spectator and the screen. This movie seeks to replicate Joel's experience and impose it onto the viewer, something the viewer does through mirroring themselves onto Joel and his experience. It is arguable with suture theory that because this is a curated piece made specifically in the way it is that it makes it harder to mirror, however it is not possible to speak to each individual spectator and create the movie in the way they see and experience movies. Thus, through almost combining mirror and brain it is able to create the full intended cinematic experience.

Toy Story (John Lasseter, US 1995, 81 min.)

- Woody – a toy cowboy – tries to maintain his position as Andy's favorite when he is gifted Buzz Lightyear for his Birthday. Buzz doesn't think he is real until he sees an advert for him. Because of their funding they end up getting lost and have to get back to Andy before he moves.

It is interesting to think about traditional film and the transition into digital film. Some people might argue that it was a big leap from 'live-action' or rather traditional film into digital film however I would argue that with the ever growing development of effects and editing it was actually a much more gradual process. *Toy Story* is without doubt a digital film however that is not the only thing that defines it, because at the end of the day a digital film is still a film

“Christian Metz wrote in the 1970s that “Most films shot today, good or bad, original or not, ‘commercial’ or not, have as a common characteristic that they tell a story; in this measure they all belong to one and the same genre”” (Manovich 1060). Thus it is important to not get hung up on the digital aspect of a digital film when trying to look at the narrative. That being said, it is interesting to look at how *Toy Story* seemingly managed to juggle this discussion within a very typical movie narrative.

The way the discussion was represented can be argued as seen in the two main characters of Woody and Buzz Lightyear. Woody represents the older cinema and more obviously the Western, while Buzz represents the new – which in this case is *Toy Story* – and the developing category of digital cinema. As *Toy Story*’s narrative builds it places Woody and Buzz in direct competition with each other with Buzz being the one placed in the leading position. However as the movie progresses we see how the two slowly come to realize they can work together – not forgetting the breakdown that Buzz goes through when he realizes he is a toy. This narrative arc could be seen as the group of traditional – or old cinema in this case – initially being wary of what digital cinema might mean for them, to then realize that there is actually a place for both within the film world.

Regardless of *Toy Story* being a digital movie, the narrative and experience it provides seems to fit within the cinema as door category. I won't lie that I could be applying my own paratexts in relation to Pixar to this – consistent easter eggs and their own cinematic universe – however, even without them I would argue the same as the movie is a door into this cinematic universe. The very basic montage style narrative that leaves a clear ‘breadcrumb trail’ for the viewer to follow and watch and is very in keeping with the structuralist approach to film. Furthermore, the narrative itself is somewhat simple, and could arguably be compared to that of a western with the human world being the ‘wild west’ like in *The*

Searchers. Through having a more simple narrative with a clear purpose and not too many complex plot twists it sits comfortably within the structuralist cinema as door theory.