

and nasty. In the US, the carnage in Vietnam could be seen on the evening news; the Manson family had recently confirmed the worst conservative fears that hippies were devils; and US Vice-President Spiro Agnew was making appeals to the right-wing 'silent majority' about the need to establish 'law and order' (i.e., the need to suppress potentially revolutionary street demonstrations against war and social inequality). Near the beginning of the picture, in a scene taken directly from Burgess's 1962 novel, a homeless old alcoholic (Paul Farrell) bemoans the fact that there are 'men on the moon, and men spinning around the earth and there's not no attention paid to law and order no more'. This accurately expresses the regressive political atmosphere of 1971, when the youth rebellion of the previous decade was becoming perverse and increasingly commodified. *A Clockwork Orange* at least has the virtue of being a deliberately harsh and provocative vision of its times. The relative darkness of 1970s' cinema would soon give way to Ronald Reagan's 'Morning in America' and, in the brave new world of entertainment that followed, Hollywood would avoid producing any film as unrelentingly disturbing as this.

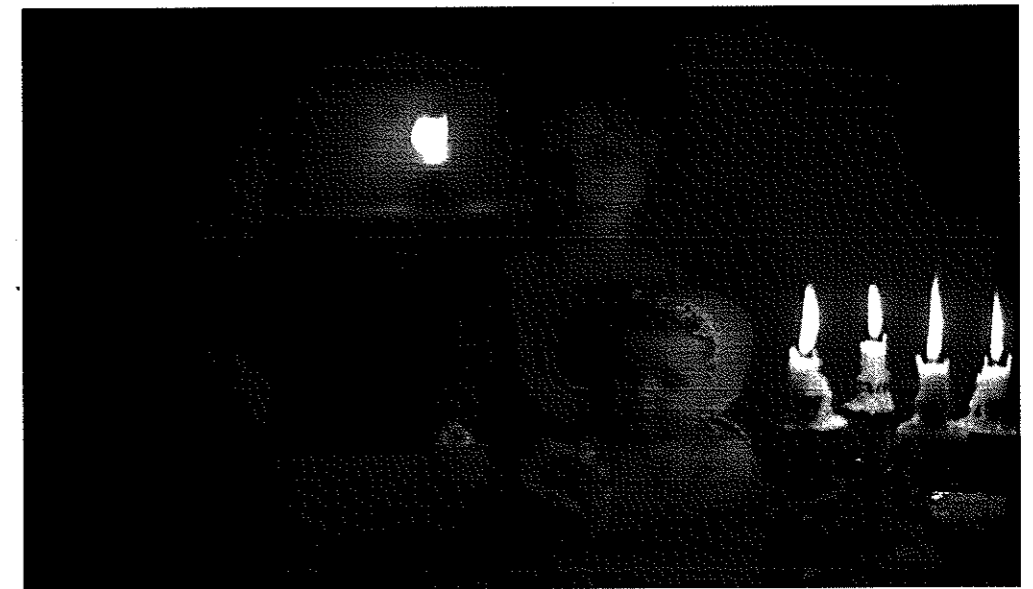
#### IV. Duellist

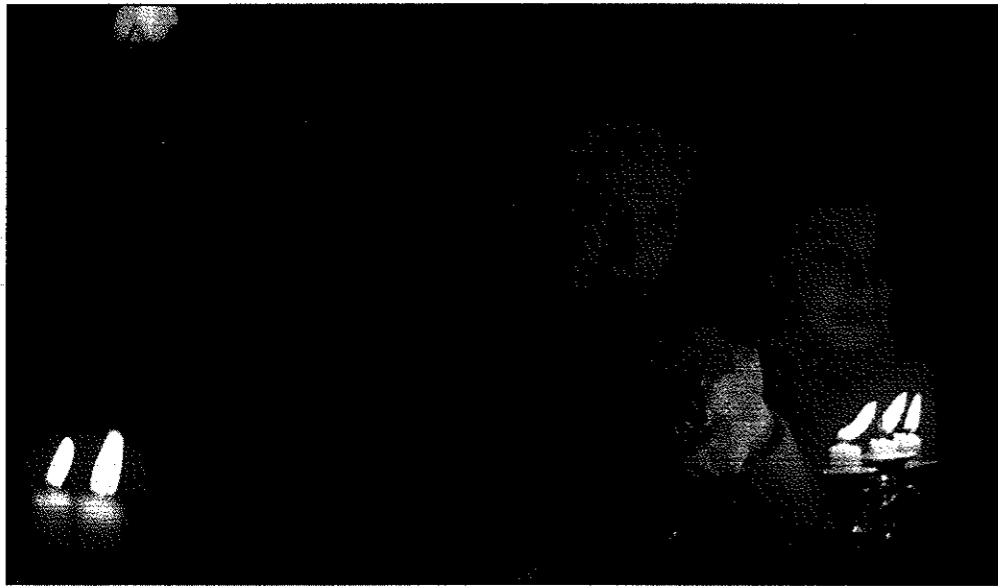
*A Clockwork Orange* was both a *succès de scandale* and one of Warner's most profitable releases of the 1970s, securing Kubrick's relationship with the studio and enabling him to return to his long-deferred idea of filming an historical epic to rival *2001's* epic of the future. Because his Napoleon project remained too complex and costly, he briefly considered an adaptation of William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847–8), which had been filmed three times in Hollywood, but not since the 1930s. Subtitled *A Novel without a Hero*, Thackeray's satiric narrative offered a panorama of middle- and upper-class struggles for power in early nineteenth-century England, and it probably had special interest for Kubrick because its anti-heroine, Becky Sharp, is explicitly compared with Napoleon – indeed, Becky's downfall coincides with the Battle of Waterloo, and the story as a whole ends in 1830, shortly after Napoleon's death at St Helena. Kubrick nevertheless decided that *Vanity Fair* was too difficult to compress into a three-hour film and instead turned his attention to Thackeray's earliest work of fiction, *The Luck of Barry Lyndon: A Romance of the Last Century*, which was first published as a magazine serial in 1844 and then revised and reissued in a single volume in 1856 under the title *The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon, Esq., of the Republic of Ireland*. This novel tells the story of an eighteenth-century Irish rake, loosely based on an actual historical character from the lower levels of the Anglo-Irish gentry, who seduces his way into the British aristocracy but comes to a bad end; little known outside the academy, it was a relatively minor fiction that could be freely adapted, and was in the public domain. In 1973, on the strength of an outline that concealed the title of the novel and the names of its characters, Kubrick convinced Warner to finance a film version. For the next two years, he set about making *Barry Lyndon*, one of the most remarkable and unorthodox costume pictures ever produced, and one of his most impressive artistic achievements.

*Barry Lyndon* won several technical awards from the Motion Picture Academy and its first impression on most viewers is one of breathtaking photographic beauty. Its distinctive visual qualities were determined first of all by Kubrick's long-standing interest in realistic, available-light photography. During his work on the Napoleon project, he had become excited by the idea of making an historical film set in a period before the invention of electric power, using as little motion-picture lighting equipment as possible. He also wanted to shoot in real historical locations, somewhat in the manner of the chateau sequences of *Paths of Glory*, avoiding studio sets and modern interpretations of historical costumes – in other words, he wanted to make a film antithetical to *Spartacus*. His motivation was aesthetic and intellectual, but he tried to convince studio executives that a quasi-documentary approach would save money. In 1968, he spelled out his intentions in a memo to potential investors in the proposed film about Napoleon:

I plan to shoot all interiors of the film on location, instead of building sets, as has always been previously done in big budget epic films. Very great savings of money together with an increase of quality can be achieved . . . . Because of the new fast photographic lenses we intend to employ, very little lighting equipment will have to be used, depending instead on ordinary window light, which incidentally will look more beautiful and realistic than ordinary light.<sup>41</sup>

At roughly the same time, Kubrick shot 468 metres of colour test sequences showing a young man lit by candlelight; but ordinary camera lenses, combined with the relatively





low film speeds of the period, produced unsatisfactory results. By the time of *Barry Lyndon*, he was able to obtain an f 0.7 Zeiss lens that had been developed by NASA for lunar photography. He commissioned Ed di Giulio of Cinema Products Corporation to engineer an old Mitchell camera from the Warner studio so that it would accept three different focal lengths of the Zeiss lens and, with this equipment, photographer John Alcott was able to shoot the candlelit, golden interiors we see at various junctures in the film. Alcott often used booster lights, reflectors and various other types of equipment for the daylight interiors, but always in a fashion that imitates the effect of natural light. For the daylight exteriors, which were shot mostly in Ireland and England, he and Kubrick favoured an Arriflex camera, but eschewed diffusion filters. The landscape images, beginning with the opening shot of a distant pistol duel, have an almost tactile clarity and an exquisite sensitivity to changing patterns of air, clouds and sunlight.

Part of the fascination of the film lies in its documentation of castles, country estates and enormous rooms where we hear shoes clattering on wooden floors and view tapestry and leather-bound books in the light from high windows. The production achieved its air of authenticity not only by virtue of location shooting in Britain and second-unit photography in Germany, but also through minute historical research into every aspect of eighteenth-century life, including clothing, wigs, face powder, military hardware, playing cards, magical paraphernalia, shaving equipment and even such unseen matters as toothbrushes and contraceptives. Kubrick's rage for reality, however, was counterbalanced and even contradicted by an intense aesthetic historicism, which gives his film a quite unreal, painterly effect. He composed many of the shots to resemble images by eighteenth-century



artists such as Hogarth, Reynolds, Chardin, Watteau, Fragonard, Zoffany, Stubbs and Chodowiecki, and he insisted that production designer Ken Adam use these artists for inspiration. He filled the sets with eighteenth-century artefacts and frequently posed the costumed actors and extras as nearly still figures, arranging them in patterns suggested by genre or landscape paintings. (The ex-fashion model Marisa Berenson, who plays Lady Lyndon, and who hardly speaks a word, looks as if she had stepped out of a Gainsborough portrait.) In these and other respects, the film seems to acknowledge that the past is always mediated by historical discourse and artistic representation.<sup>42</sup> The ordinary Hollywood costume picture, which Kubrick regarded as unrealistic, usually assumes that history can be faithfully reproduced; the ostensibly more accurate *Barry Lyndon*, on the other hand, resembles what Fredric Jameson describes as a pastiche – in this case a detailed imitation of landscapes, architecture, and art, intended to evoke 'eighteenth-century-ness'.<sup>43</sup>

The film's painterly feeling is intensified by its exceptionally slow, stately pace and tendency to subordinate action to ritual. Kubrick draws out conversations and domestic scenes to the point where they take on the quality of *temps morts*; he dwells upon formal entertainments or state occasions; he requires most of the actors – especially Berenson and Ryan O'Neal, who plays Barry – to maintain highly controlled masks of social decorum; and he builds very quietly to the few scenes involving emotional outbursts and paroxysms of violence. Baldly summarised, Barry's life is filled with adventure, especially in the first half of the film: he fights a duel for the woman he loves and is sent away from home; he is robbed by highwaymen; he enlists in the British Army and survives a grim battle; he escapes from his unit by stealing a uniform and horse from a homosexual officer; he spends a



romantic evening with a young German mother whose husband is away at war; he meets a unit of the Prussian Army and poses as an officer on a mission; his imposture is quickly discovered and he is forced to become a foot soldier; during a battle he saves the life of his commanding officer; as reward, he is taken to Potsdam and assigned to spy on the activities of an Irish gambler; finally, he and the gambler become comrades, escape the Prussians, and live the life of itinerant cardsharps. All this picaresque activity, however, is presented in an extremely leisurely fashion and in an unvarying pace, almost as if it were a series of brilliantly colourful tableaux.

In the second half of the film, after Barry marries an aristocrat and settles into domestic life, things slow even more. The mannered dialogue suggests eighteenth-century neoclassicism, and is spoken with heavy pauses to mark the punctuation. For example, the following simple conversation between the young Lord Bullingdon (Dominic Savage) and Reverend Runt (Murray Melvin), is played at such a calm, steady rhythm and with such regulated silences that it could be written out as lines of verse:

RUNT: My Lord Bullingdon, you seem particularly glum today. / You should be happy that your mother has been married.

BULLINGDON: Not in this way, / and not in such haste, / and certainly not to this man.

RUNT: Do you not like your new father?

BULLINGDON: Not very much. / He seems to me little more than a common opportunist. /

I don't think he loves my mother at all. / And it hurts me very much to see her make such a fool of herself.

In keeping with this stylised retardation, Kubrick's most striking camera effect, which becomes a motif, is a long, slow zoom out from a significant detail to a wide shot composed like a painting. The many zoom shots, together with the various long-distance views of gardens, estates and landscapes, are compelling not only for their beauty and sense of the eighteenth-century picturesque, but also because they register minimal movements within the stillness: the stirring of leaves in the wind, the ripple of water, a dog turning its head, a distant human figure aiming a pistol. Significantly, the zoom isn't a camera movement, but an alteration of the focal length of the lens, which creates a very different impression from Kubrick's signature tracking shots: in *Barry Lyndon* the image often looks flat but then slowly widens and takes on the depth of an illusionist painting. Frequently Kubrick will start a sequence with a zoom outward into an establishing shot, which he dissects with conventional close-ups and shot-reverse shots. Ralf Michael Fischer has persuasively analysed this technique in terms of dialectic between painting and motion pictures, or between a pre-photographic historical period and the present day. As Fischer puts it, 'Kubrick wishes to establish whether he can use moving pictures to visualize an age that did not know photography. Therefore, and this has often been ignored, *Barry Lyndon* develops into an exciting oscillation between cinematic and painterly/graphic representation strategies.'<sup>44</sup>

It follows that the technique makes viewers more than usually aware of stillness versus passing time. As in *2001*, but by a slightly different means, motion is slowed and a feeling of transience creeps into the images, as if a clock were ticking behind the still, orderly compositions. The live-action painterly effects are sometimes poignant in their beauty, suggesting that the past is both inaccessible (except through art) and dead. This implication is reinforced at the dramatic level; the passage of time is increasingly freighted with sadness and death, and people eventually take on a ghostly appearance. Something similar happens at the purely cinematic level, with the steady replacement of one image by another. Very few historical films (Welles's *Magnificent Ambersons* and John Ford's Westerns are good examples, though imbued with a nostalgia that Kubrick rejects) give us such a powerfully self-conscious sense of the motion picture as a temporal medium – an experience unlike a painting in the sense that a series of apparently substantial compositions as evanescent as a beam of light pass through the projector, each of them disappearing and 'dying' along with the world they represent.

In other ways, *Barry Lyndon* is deliberately anachronistic. Consider Kubrick's use of hand-held, *cinéma vérité* effects for scenes of violence, including the boxing match between Barry and a fellow soldier, Barry's attack on Lord Bullingdon during a concert and Lady Lyndon's attempted suicide. Consider also the music score. Once again Kubrick draws from the classical repertoire, this time commissioning Leonard Rosenman to select, arrange and conduct several of the orchestral pieces. (Rosenman won the Academy Award, but he told an American Film Institute seminar that he thought the film was 'incredibly long and boring' and that Kubrick's continual replaying of a passage from Handel's 'Sarabande' made

a 'mess' of the music.)<sup>45</sup> The score favours the baroque over the neo-classical, featuring, among others, Handel, Bach, Mozart and Vivaldi; but it also gives us a modernised version of 'Sarabande' and makes considerable use both of Schubert, a nineteenth-century composer, and the Chieftains, a twentieth-century group that plays updated renditions of traditional Irish tunes. Much the same thing could be said of the many allusions to paintings. Eighteenth-century artists dominate, but certain images seem to be inspired by the nature scenes of the proto-romantic John Constable (1776–1837) and by the candlelit interiors of Adolph Menzel (1815–1905), a nineteenth-century painter of historical subjects.<sup>46</sup>

Whether or not Kubrick intended us to notice these anachronisms, they have an interesting relationship to Thackeray's novel, which is already a pastiche. A great admirer of Henry Fielding, Thackeray had written a picaresque, satiric, self-reflexive narrative, in imitation of eighteenth-century literary conventions. The book claims to be an autobiography, somewhat in the vein of Casanova's more jaw-droppingly adventurous and socially corrosive *Memoirs*, written by Barry from debtor's prison and addressed to his mother; and the manuscript is 'edited' by 'G. S. Fitz-Boodle', a man-of-the-world persona Thackeray frequently adopted for his magazine publications. Some of Fitz-Boodle's footnotes and editorial interventions were cut when *Barry Lyndon* was issued as a novel, but he remained a presence, functioning rather like a Victorian moralist who points out Barry's unreliability and the general wickedness of the eighteenth century. In the concluding pages, he steps forward to summarise Barry's life after being tossed out of Castle Lyndon and to inform us (in lines Thackeray wrote a few years before the Irish potato famine) that 'the thrifty, cleanly, orderly, loyal peasantry of Ireland . . . still entertain the stranger with stories of the daring, and the deviltry, and the wickedness, and the fall of Barry Lyndon'.<sup>47</sup> In other words, like Kubrick's film, *The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon* is a self-conscious experiment in historical fiction, creating an eighteenth-century world but viewing it through the lens of a later period.

There are, in addition, other ways in which Thackeray and Kubrick might be said to have a deep-structural relationship. Thackeray originally wanted to be a painter and was keenly interested in visual art; in fact, he drew illustrations for the first edition of *Vanity Fair*, which he subtitled *Pen and Pencil Sketches of English Society*. Essentially a caricaturist, he once described the people in his novels as 'puppets'. (At one point Barry remarks, 'I can hardly believe myself to have been any thing but a puppet in the hands of Fate' [p. 42].) In the magazine version of *Barry Lyndon*, he expressed strong admiration for the satires of William Hogarth, whose most famous work – 'A Rake's Progress' and 'Marriage à la Mode' – takes the form of image sequences that tell a story. Kubrick is, of course, also a caricaturist and satirist, and he often treats his characters as puppets. His film uses every opportunity to juxtapose ravishingly beautiful figures with satirical stereotypes that might have stepped out of an illustrated novel. Some of the most memorable moments involve character actors who introduce a grotesque quality into a serenely gorgeous *mise en scène*. Murray Melvin as Reverend Runt, the sly, effeminate cleric who owes his living to the Lyndons and barely contains his disapproval when he reads the marriage vows to Barry;



Patrick Magee as the Chevalier de Balibari, the decadent, aging gambler whose fancy wig, heavy make-up and eye patch make him look like a figure at a Halloween party; and most of all Leonard Rossiter as Captain Quinn, whose preening, cock-of-the-walk behaviour when he leads troops on a parade ground and dances an Irish jig with Nora Brady (Gay Hamilton) is as bizarrely funny as anything in *Dr. Strangelove*.

All this is not to suggest that Kubrick was striving to preserve the spirit of the novel. On the contrary, the film utterly transforms its source. The greater part of Thackeray's *The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon* is narrated by Barry, whose eventful life, filled with characters that the film omits, is told in a loose, digressive fashion. A handsome and clever fellow, Barry is also a boastful, loquacious scoundrel who calmly admits to beating his wife and probably lies about his more spectacular adventures. His wife is a vulgar woman of no great beauty, and yet she's a difficult conquest; she has lovers of her own and divorces Barry when she can no longer tolerate his behaviour. Kubrick's film is exactly the opposite in all these respects: it has an omniscient narrator and a unified, carefully patterned plot with a three-act structure; it depicts Barry as a quiet, inarticulate man who speaks in a soft Irish accent and seems to feel a certain guilt after he cheats on his wife; and it portrays Lady Lyndon as a fragile, melancholic beauty, easily seduced by Barry, who must be 'rescued' from the marriage.

Equally significant, the film's tone is different from the novel. Thackeray gives us a sometimes shocking but basically humorous tale written by a stage-Irish cad; the attitude of the implied author towards the characters is darker and more judgmental than Fielding's in *Tom Jones*, but the narrative has a rollicking atmosphere. Whether or not the original viewers of Kubrick's film were aware of this, they probably expected something swift,

amusing and romantic, more in the vein of Tony Richardson's highly successful 1963 adaptation of *Tom Jones* (which today looks dated compared to *Barry Lyndon*). Instead, they were given a slow-paced film that builds towards a tragic dénouement, dealing with a relatively sympathetic social outsider who is observed from a godlike perspective. Even when Kubrick takes language directly from the novel, he often moves it into new contexts, making it seem less breezy, more serious. To choose a particularly significant example: in the early pages of Thackeray's first chapter, Barry explains how he and his ancestors were cheated out of their supposedly aristocratic pedigree and how his father, 'Roaring Harry Barry', died a natural death of dissipation while attending the Chester horse races; he then brushes the family history aside in order to move on to his more immediate concerns: 'It was in the reign of George III that the above-named personages lived and quarreled; good or bad, handsome or ugly, rich or poor, they are all equal now; and do not the Sunday papers and the courts of law supply us every week with more novel and interesting slander?' (p. 6) Kubrick appropriates, edits and slightly revises the first two sentences in these lines, placing them in a title card at the end of the picture, where they become the ultimate authorial comment, grimly philosophical in tone, on death as the great leveller: 'It was in the reign of George III that the aforesaid personages lived and quarreled; good or bad, handsome or ugly, rich or poor they are all equal now.'

Much of the tone of the film derives from Kubrick's decision to drop the novel's first-person narration and put its language into the mouth of a godlike narrator, beautifully played by Michael Hordern, who addresses us more in the fashion of nineteenth-century realism than in the archly playful style of a Fielding. Pauline Kael was annoyed by this device, in particular by the way the narrator sometimes tells us in advance what's going to happen; and, given the fact that many critics and film-makers have attacked movie narrators in general as 'un-cinematic', Kael probably wasn't alone.<sup>48</sup> (There's an interesting connection between arguments against narration in movies and strictures against 'telling' vs 'showing' in novels; the latter were thoroughly debunked by Wayne Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* [1950], and the former have been effectively criticised by Sarah Kosloff in *Invisible Storytellers* [1998].) Most subsequent commentators, however, find the narration in *Barry Lyndon* unusually effective. Mario Falsetto describes Hordern's voice as a sort of aristocratic character, not always perfectly reliable, who represents 'an individuated, privileged point of view' (p. 100). But for all his urbanity and individuality, this narrator expresses many opinions that Thackeray had given to Barry, and as a result he doesn't always seem to be speaking for the ruling class. When he says, 'It would take a great philosopher and historian to explain the causes of the famous Seven Years War,' he sounds more knowingly ironic than Barry in the novel; and when he remarks that the war was the product of kings 'doing their murderous work in the world,' his judgment is more authoritative by virtue of its relative objectivity.

Among his many functions, the narrator helps to create the effect of premodernist fiction by putting us at a distance from the characters and offering commentary on their

motives. Sometimes his remarks are in counterpoint with what we see, as in the first scene between Barry and Nora Brady; sometimes they make explicit what the image suggests, as when Lord Bullingdon is introduced as 'a melancholy little boy, much attached to his mother'; and sometimes they inform us of things not shown, as when we learn that the young German *Frau* with whom Barry enjoys an evening of sex has been enjoyed by other soldiers. Repeatedly, as in the traditional realist novel, the lofty, cosmopolitan narrator invites us to think of the diegetic world as co-terminus with the world we inhabit as readers/viewers; thus he speaks in maxims or truisms ('No lad with freedom and twenty guineas can be unhappy'), and he encourages us to draw on our own wisdom in making judgments (the 'young love' speech at the beginning of the film is a good example of the latter strategy; it's partly ironic and partly meant to draw us into a kind of paternalistic sympathy with Barry).<sup>49</sup>

Occasionally, the narrator also makes us aware of the art of storytelling itself. My favourite example occurs during Barry's seduction of Lady Lyndon, when the narrator appears to be joking about Kubrick's glacial pacing of the action. In the novel, Barry's sexual conquest involves a great deal of busy effort; in the film, it occurs at first sight but almost in slow motion. Schubert plays in the background as Lady Lyndon and Barry exchange long, meaningful glances across a candlelit gambling table; she excuses herself, walks outside and stands in the moonlight, her breasts rising and falling in anticipation. Barry follows and approaches very slowly. She turns to face him. He takes her hands, gazes longingly into her eyes and kisses her delicately but ardently. This wordless, moonlit seduction takes almost a minute and forty seconds of screen time. Kubrick ends it by cutting directly from blue moonlight to daylight on a lake, where the red sail of a boat crosses gracefully from left to right and a second boat, bearing the two lovers, moves towards us. 'To make a long story short,' the narrator says, 'six hours after they met, her Ladyship was in love.'

The narrator isn't simply a wit who provides exposition and passes judgment. He plays a very important role in maintaining the audience's sympathy for the central character, even when that character behaves foolishly or cruelly. When the narrator explains Barry's sudden emotional outburst upon first meeting the Chevalier, he's almost like a barrister defending a client charged with ludicrous or self-serving behaviour; and when he tells us that 'Barry had his faults, but no man could say of him that he was not a good and tender father', he's more convincing than the boastful first-person narrator of the novel. One of his most important functions is his foreshadowing of the action, as when he tells us that an accident will soon take Barry out of military service with the Prussians, or when he introduces a lady who 'will henceforth play an important role in the story'. By giving us more information than the characters possess, he creates suspense and an air of inevitability. This effect is especially powerful during a scene in which we see Barry instructing his son Bryan in the art of fencing. The narrator comments, 'It is impossible to convey what high hopes he had for the boy; and he indulged in a thousand fond anticipations as to his future success and figure in the world. But fate had determined that he should leave none



of his race behind him, and that he should finish his life poor, lonely and childless.' Suddenly, in the midst of a sunlit, cheerful action, the whole outcome of the picture is foretold and an aura of pathos surrounds Barry. The image of young Bryan proudly brandishing a wooden sword takes on a painful, fleeting quality, like a happy memory clouded by the portent of disaster.

The narrative structure of the film is equally interesting. *Barry Lyndon* condenses its source, eliminating incidents and characters; but Kubrick also adds new material, in the process achieving a greater formal refinement and thematic coherence. For example, the pistol duel that kills Barry's father in the beginning is clearly intended to 'rhyme' with the pistol duel between Barry and Lord Bullingdon (Leon Vitali) near the end of the picture, and both scenes are Kubrick's invention. In the editorial coda to the novel, Fitz-Boodle summarises Barry's life after the Lyndon marriage and simply notes in passing that Bullingdon tracked Barry to the spa at Bath and 'administered to him a tremendous castigation in the Pump-room' (p. 225). Kubrick makes duels a prominent motif throughout: we're given three pistol duels, a fencing duel, a practice swordfight between Barry and his son and a bare-knuckle boxing match. The fencing and the fist fight require strength and skill, but the pistol duels are largely wars of nerves, similar in some ways to the film's most spectacular representation of military combat, in which men bearing rifles and dressed in colourful uniforms march straight into the face of opposing gunfire.

The film also has a motif of card playing, a contest more open to chance, guile or deception. The erotic card-game between Barry and Nora at the beginning rhymes with the desolate game between the legless Barry and his mother at the end, and in the middle we're

given several scenes of Barry and the Chevalier cheating at cards. In a fine analysis of this structure, Marvin D'Lugo has argued that *Barry Lyndon* has a 'ludic' view of society, and that the card-game is more significant than the duel in representing the underlying contest to acquire money and power:

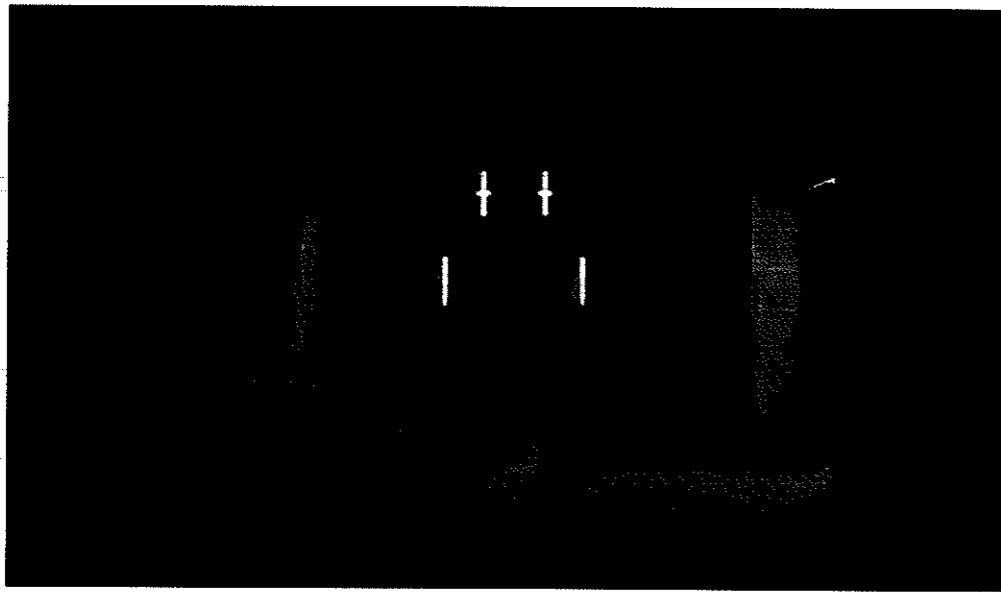
Though the menace of physical aggression and violence embodied in the duel and its grander version, the battle, seem dramatically at the center of events, it is . . . the card game, in which the adversaries struggle with fortunes and not lives, where the true spirit of this world is made manifest.<sup>50</sup>

Without denying that economic forces are at the centre of everything we see and that certain of the card-games involve money, I would argue differently. The outcome of the all various contests is predetermined by the class system, so that games are seldom equal. Duels, moreover, are at the social centre of the action. They may be less obviously economic than the card games, but are more completely gendered and more strongly grounded in social privilege. No matter how much skill is involved or what weapons are used, every variation of the trial at arms provides Kubrick with a stark means of illuminating the ironies and hypocrisies of the British squirearchy.

As an admirer of Max Ophuls, Kubrick could not have failed to recognise that duels have both theatrical value and considerable historic and cultural meaning. (He was also an admirer of Howard Hughes's *Hell's Angels* [1930], which contains a silhouetted pistol duel viewed from a great distance, rather like the one at the beginning of *Barry Lyndon*.) He seems aware that the elaborate rituals and regulations of eighteenth-century duels were vestigial remnants of Europe's feudal society, in which church-administered duels were fought for judicial purposes; no longer fully legitimate in the 'Age of Reason', they nevertheless continued to be supported by an ideology of chivalric virtue and manly 'honour'. In theory, they were supposed to be fought by members of the ruling class, not by peasants or shopkeepers. Kubrick puts great weight on their aristocratic quality: the combatants are described as 'gentlemen' and a formal ceremony, watched over by a referee and 'seconds', positions them as equals who are expected to show grace under pressure. He also depicts a boxing match, which might seem to represent the opposite end of the social scale. (He shoots this match with a low-level, hand-held camera and Foley effects reminiscent of the fight in *Killer's Kiss*; Ryan O'Neal, who had once been a boxer, helps make the action look realistic, but the big fellow who loses to O'Neal keeps swinging haymakers two feet over the star's head.) Interestingly, however, boxing assumed its modern form during the mid-eighteenth century, when Jack Broughton invented a skill-based, largely spectator sport guided by 'Broughton's rules'. At the time there were boxing academies in London in which young gentlemen could learn fisticuffs alongside fencing. Like duelling, boxing was presided over by a referee and, even though it sometimes had a kind of proletarian aura, its standards of conduct were established by the upper class.

The principal irony of the film is that Barry, an Irish *arriviste* who is looked upon with barely concealed contempt by the British lords, exhibits manly virtue in every sort of duel, even the boxing match, which he wins through skilled manoeuvre rather than brute strength, as if he had attended a gentleman's training school. In a sense he's more aristocratic than the aristocrats. His victories on the duelling field, however, take him only so far, since the duel, like warfare and gambling, is at bottom a predatory and barbaric mechanism ruled by hereditary money and power. A social outsider can't truly win (at least not in pre-Napoleonic Europe), no matter how much he masters the rules of the game. Barry and the Chevalier can rig the cards, but even when they cheat they earn relatively little. Barry can seduce Sir Charles Lyndon's wife ('Let those laugh that win,' he tells the dying lord), but he never gains a title from the Lyndon family. The same is true in the case of the supposed 'fair play' of armed battle: unbeknown to Barry, his pistol duel with the blustering, cowardly Captain Quinn is faked so that Nora Brady will be able to marry a British man of property. Near the end of the film, when Barry, devastated by his son's death, gallantly shoots a bullet into the ground and allows the terrified Lord Bullingdon to live, Bullingdon doesn't return the gesture.

The climactic duel with Bullingdon is milked for suspense and played in such slow fashion that it threatens to tip into absurdity (it's amusingly parodied in *Cheech and Chong's The Corsican Brothers* [1984]). Kubrick stages it in what he described to Michel Ciment as a 'tithe barn which also happened to have a lot of pigeons nesting in the rafters . . . . The sound of the pigeons added something to this, and, if it were a comedy, we could have had



further evidence of the pigeons' (p. 175). The atmosphere is vaguely religious, with light streaming through crucifix-shaped windows and white doves fluttering in the roof, as if Kubrick wanted to suggest the medieval origins of European duelling; and the slow pacing is justified by the fact that this particular confrontation represents the dramatic culmination of the film in both social and sexual terms: Barry and Bullingdon are a dual or tandem characterisation – rivals not only for what the latter calls a 'great family estate', but also for the possession of Lady Bullingdon.

This is another great difference between the film and the novel. In Thackeray, the Lady isn't especially interested in her son, but Barry repeatedly makes affectionate comments about his own mother, whom he describes as 'Lady Barry'. Thackeray often wrote about young men who are attached to their mothers (the theme reached its fullest expression in *Henry Esmond* [1852], his most brilliant pastiche of eighteenth-century fiction), but Kubrick pushes the mother-son relationship into more obviously Freudian territory, just as he had intended to do in his film about Napoleon. In the process, he greatly heightens the tension between Barry and his unlikely nemesis, bringing the two figures face to face in an over-determined duel. The result is a sharpening and condensation of the film's leading themes. The first half of Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* is a picaresque narrative, but the second half zeroes in on what William Stephenson calls a 'tragedy of manners', featuring a pair of mother's boys who can be viewed as mirror images or ironic doubles, but who represent fundamentally different social types.

In one corner we have Redmond Barry, who, at an early age, loses his virile father in somewhat romantic fashion. Barry forms a strong bond with his mother (Marie Kean) based on their mutual affection and shared conviction that their shabby-genteel family has been deprived of its proper place in society. The mother takes no lovers, even though she's voluptuous and sexually attractive in a matronly, rather earthy way; instead she devotes herself to Barry's welfare and ultimately goads and instructs him in his attempts to achieve ascendancy over the Lyndons. Her son grows up to be a strong, handsome, vigorously heterosexual male who believes that his father was equally strong and who never faces a rival for his mother's attention. When Barry has a son by Lady Lyndon, Mrs Barry tucks the child into bed at night and sits nearby as Barry tells him adventurous bedtime stories. A tough, resilient woman, she becomes Barry's only trusted ally, and she's his single companion at the end, just as she was at the beginning.

In the other corner we have Bullingdon, who also loses his father at an early age. But Bullingdon's father is aged and emasculated – another of Kubrick's paralysed or wheelchair-bound males. Even before Sir Charles Lyndon's death, the son and his exceptionally beautiful young mother form what the narrator suggests is an excessively close attachment; she's a delicate, lonely woman, imprisoned in a dynastic marriage, prone to nervous 'distraction', and he's an equally melancholy youth, unable to resolve an Oedipal conflict that (as conventional Freudian theory would have it) thwarts his ability to achieve normative heterosexuality. When Bullingdon grows up to become a slight, 'feminine' young man, he faces a virile,



opportunistic rival for his mother's affection and a competitor for his patrimony. At the lavish birthday party for Barry's son, we see Barry and Mrs Barry laughing heartily at a magic show, while on the opposite side of the screen the fully grown Bullingdon sits languidly at Lady Lyndon's feet and holds her hand like an aestheticised child/lover.

In Bullingdon's eyes, Barry is not only an Irish adventurer who mistreats Lady Lyndon and lavishly spends her money, but also a 'manly' figure, frightening in his strength, who asserts a castrating power. More than once Barry whips Bullingdon's buttocks with a cane. Bullingdon retaliates by publicly denouncing Barry as a low-born adulterer; and in response, Barry attacks Bullingdon with animal fury. In the climactic duel, however, Bullingdon is able to score a primal victory. The outcome is clumsy and accidental and Barry is already a broken man; nevertheless, Barry suffers a symbolic castration. Legless, he's banished from Castle Lyndon, and Bullingdon recovers his old place beside his sad, lonely mother.

As I've already suggested, one result of these formal and substantive transformations of the novel is that Kubrick creates a much more sympathetic picture of the eponymous hero than Thackeray had done. Barry in the film is portrayed as a romantic young swain of considerable glamour and phallic power who discovers the underlying brutality of eighteenth-century Europe and is transformed by the experience into a ruffian, a trickster and a fortune hunter. It comes as a shock when, during a rich carriage ride with his new wife, he blows pipe smoke into her lovely face, but we know the sources of his cruelty. His inevitable downfall has less to do with his acquired ruthlessness than with his proud and mistaken belief that he rightly belongs to the ruling class. The death of his beloved son (a chip off the old block, in contrast to the effete child of the Lyndons), is also the death of

what Barry presumes will be a dynasty. The film pulls out all the sentimental stops when the boy dies, treating his passing in the manner of Victorian fiction and any number of novels in which a similar event signals the fall of an aristocratic family (for two very different twentieth-century examples, see Evelyn Waugh's *A Handful of Dust* and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*). But Barry has never been an aristocrat insofar as the British are concerned. Despite his skill and nerve as a duellist, despite his extravagant campaign to buy his way into a title, he remains a colonial subject who is easily duped, conscripted and exiled. He seems always aware at some level of his outsider status. His tears during the protracted death-bed scene with Bryan – a rare moment of full-out pathos in a Kubrick film – are similar to those he sheds when his friend Captain Grogan (Godfrey Quigley) dies on the battlefield and when he first encounters the Chevalier de Balibari in Prussia. In all three cases, Barry weeps because of his intense love for his Irish countrymen and family, without whom he is completely alone.

Critics have generally undervalued Ryan O'Neal's portrayal of Barry. At the time the film appeared, he was a major Hollywood star (his tears in the saccharine but wildly popular *Love Story* [1970] are as copious as the ones in *Barry Lyndon*) but, despite or perhaps because of his box-office appeal, he was regarded as little more than a handsome leading man with a talent for light comedy. His open, innocent-looking face and sturdy, athletic build were ideal for the role in this particular film, and his off-screen reputation seemed to feed his performance – an ex Golden-Gloves fighter, he had a reputation as a Hollywood bad boy and was notorious for cheating on his wives with his leading ladies. His star image apart, however, he exhibits considerable range and subtlety. The character of Barry as Kubrick conceives him is courageous, resourceful, charming, but not highly intelligent or articulate. The social world he inhabits, whether as a common soldier, a gambler, or a wealthy husband, often requires him to be silent or to operate behind a mask. He and Lady Lyndon barely exchange words, and in some of his most important scenes with the other characters, he merely listens. For an actor, this sort of work is more difficult than it looks. O'Neal is on screen at nearly every moment of the lengthy film and must indicate different stages of Barry's life – the callow youth, the unscrupulous adventurer, the loving father and the tragic loner – chiefly through unspoken reactions and minimal facial expressions. He nicely conveys Barry's contradictory aspects – his quick temper and subdued cleverness, his cruelty and tenderness, his emotional shifts from pride to despair. His seduction of Lady Lyndon is convincingly romantic; his fury at Bullingdon in the concert scene is unnerving; and his awkwardness when he tries to behave like an aristocrat – as when he admires the 'the colour blue' in a painting or listens in smiling, eager silence to the conversation of a nobleman at a garden party – is perfectly calculated.

Our last view of this skilfully acted and many-faceted character is different in style from the rest of the film – a freeze frame in the manner of the French New Wave, showing him from behind as Mrs Barry assists him into a carriage.<sup>51</sup> One of his legs is amputated at the knee and he leans on a crutch. The relatively banal, almost snapshot-looking



composition seems to enhance the atmosphere of desolation. Next we see a self-consciously beautiful, painterly shot of Lady Lyndon in her gilded cage at Castle Lyndon: gaunt, almost sepulchral, barely having survived her attempted suicide after the death of Bryan, she sits in the pale light of a window, hovered over by her son and her retainers, and signs a bank draft with a quill pen. An insert shows that she is paying Barry an annuity of 500 guineas – a not inconsiderable gift. The attentive viewer will also notice that the date on the draft is 1789, the year of the French Revolution.

Much has been made of the date. Critics usually argue that Kubrick wanted to end the film by subtly announcing the advent of revolution and democracy. An equally strong motive might have been a desire to make the film resemble the novel, which is a story viewed in retrospect, from the other side of an historical divide. Whatever Kubrick's intention, it should be pointed out that his implicit attitude towards European society and politics is somewhat different from Thackeray's. (And in any case, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era were highly prosperous years for the British landowning class.) The author of *The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon* and *Vanity Fair* was a sort of anti-Dickens, critical of the eighteenth century but instinctively attracted to the pre-revolutionary world. His early fiction is contemptuous of the bourgeoisie, virtually oblivious of the peasants and working poor and unsympathetic towards social upstarts like Barry and Becky Sharp. He might admire the daring of his swashbuckling rogues, but he doesn't pity them when they meet disaster. Above all, he's against Napoleon. Late in *The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon*, when the aging narrator looks back on his adventures, we can almost hear Thackeray's voice breaking through the fiction: 'Yes, the old times were the times for gentlemen, before Buonaparte brutalized Europe with his swaggering Grenadiers, and was conquered in his turn by our shopkeepers and cheese-mongers of England here' (p. 99).

Thackeray and Kubrick are alike in their refusal to depict the eighteenth century as either an Age of Sensibility or an Age of Enlightenment (this last despite Kubrick's tendency to see the period in terms of elaborate manners and the suppression of emotion). Instead, they place emphasis on the harshness and brutality beneath the period's façade of aristocratic beauty. But Kubrick, a Jewish-American who eventually settled into a British country house, found it much easier to identify with a social outsider like Barry Lyndon, whom he depicts as an unwitting and unsuccessful rebel against his times. For roughly similar reasons, Kubrick identified with the Corsican upstart Napoleon, who gained ascendancy over France's old regime and became one of the founders of the modern world. Compared to Napoleon, Barry is an ordinary fellow, a soldier rather than a general, swept along by history; but in certain ways, Kubrick uses Barry's brief rise and fall as a foreshadowing of Napoleon's historically momentous adventures. I suspect that Kubrick's entire interest in the late eighteenth century is rooted in his desire to explore the conditions that give rise to Napoleon. I also suspect his reference to 1789 functions less as an optimistic tribute to democracy than as a portent of the Napoleonic era and a nod to a film he never made. Kubrick had intended to portray Napoleon as a tragic superman – both a dictator

and a force of Enlightenment liberalism, worthy of being placed in structural relation to the killer ape and the Star Child in *2001*. He was unable to realise that ambition, but it became a kind of structuring absence in *Barry Lyndon* and one of the chief reasons why he was inspired to turn Thackeray's unruly novel into a film of such beauty, strangeness and emotional force.

## V. Horrorshow

In 1975 Kubrick was among five directors that Warner approached for the upcoming production of *Network* (1976); he expressed interest, but screenwriter Paddy Chayefsky, who wanted to be the film's auteur, rejected him (LoBrutto, pp. 410–11). Perhaps because *Barry Lyndon* had encountered a lukewarm reception from the US press and was a relative disappointment at the box office, Kubrick next thought of something more commercial: a generic horror picture in the vein of *The Exorcist* (1973) and *The Omen* (1976), both of which had generated huge profits and contributed to a cycle of Hollywood pictures about gross-out, supernatural terror. Given the noirish tenor of his previous work, horror was certainly not an unexpected theme for Kubrick to explore. He was unable to find a suitable property, however, until Warner's production chief, John Calley, sent him the page proofs of Stephen King's *The Shining*, which tells the story of a psychologically troubled family of three trapped in a huge, demonic hotel during a winter storm. King's popularity was on the rise (when it was published in 1977, the novel quickly shot to number eight on the US best-seller list), and for the leading role in the film adaptation Kubrick was able to attract a major star – Jack Nicholson, whom Kubrick had at one point considered to play Napoleon.

Kubrick rejected a screenplay that King himself had written, choosing instead to develop a script in collaboration with Diane Johnson, the author of, among other books, *The Shadow Knows* (1974), a psychological mystery novel Kubrick had at one point been interested in adapting. *The Shadow Knows* is the alternately sad, wryly amusing and frightening story of a divorced mother of four who lives with her children and nanny in a housing project and who fears that an unknown person wants to kill her. Like *The Shining*, it makes the reader wonder if the central character is mentally disturbed or truly in danger (ironically, 'The Shadow knows' is a line of dialogue in an early chapter of *The Shining*). Given its female point of view, it would have been an unusual project for Kubrick; but, as Diane Johnson herself once noted, her novel also has certain features in common with Arthur Schnitzler's *Traumnovella*, which later provided the basis for *Eyes Wide Shut*.<sup>52</sup>

The script Johnson and Kubrick ultimately wrote for *The Shining* differs from King's novel in several respects. It dispenses with most of the family's history before arriving at the hotel, it kills off the kindly hotel chef and it ends with the father freezing to death in a maze rather than dying in a fire that destroys the hotel. When the film was released, King publicly criticised it on the grounds that the tone was satiric and the depiction of the father almost completely unsympathetic. In an interview with *Playboy* magazine, he described Kubrick as 'a very cold man' who had 'great difficulty conceiving, even academically, of a

supernatural world,' and who 'couldn't grasp the sheer inhuman evil of the Overlook Hotel'. He concluded that Kubrick had 'looked for evil in the characters and made the film into a domestic tragedy with only a few supernatural overtones'.<sup>53</sup> Leaving aside his remarks on Kubrick's personality, his description of the film was essentially correct. The novel is, in fact, much more extravagantly supernatural and animistic, and certainly more forgiving of the doomed, alcoholic father, whose last words to his son are 'Run away. Quick. And remember how much I love you.' (In 1996, King produced a bad adaptation of the novel in the form of a five-hour TV miniseries that featured King in a cameo role, wearing garish make-up and conducting a ghostly orchestra in the hotel; it ended in sentimental fashion, with the father's benign ghost appearing at his son's college graduation to declare paternal love.)

For all their differences, however, King and Kubrick were alike in thinking that *The Shining* provided what King described as 'a chance to blur the line between the supernatural and the psychotic'.<sup>54</sup> Kubrick said much the same thing in an interview with Michel Ciment, in which he emphasised the importance of King's plot:

It seemed to strike an extraordinary balance between the psychological and the supernatural . . . . This allowed you to suspend your doubt of the supernatural until you were so thoroughly into the story that you could accept it almost without noticing . . . .

The novel is by no means a serious literary work, but for the most part the plot is extremely well worked out . . . . I've never been able to decide whether the plot [in any film] is just a way of keeping people's attention while you do everything else, or whether the plot is really more important than anything else, perhaps communicating with us on an unconscious level which affects us in the way that myths once did. (p. 181)

The film maintains a balance between the psychological and the supernatural chiefly in the way it treats two characters: Jack Torrance (Nicholson), an alcoholic, would-be writer who has recently sworn off drinking and is reduced to doing menial work; and Jack's son, Danny (Danny Lloyd), a five-year-old who in the past has been the victim of a violent 'accident' at the hands of his drunken father. When Jack takes a job as the winter caretaker at the luxurious Overlook Hotel, he begins to experience what appear to be hallucinations and psychotic symptoms. By the end of the picture, however, we have no choice but to conclude that the ghosts who urge him to murder his wife and child are not simply in his mind. Danny, for his part, seems at first to be a disturbed little boy who suffers from horrific fantasies and a split personality; but early on, after he meets hotel chef Dick Halloran (Scatman Crothers), we suspect that he has a gift of 'shining' or ESP, which enables him to see directly into the hidden past and the traumatic future.

The is-this-happening-or-is-he-crazy quality that Kubrick tried to sustain for much of the film is precisely the quality that Tzvetan Todorov and other literary theorists have described as the 'fantastic'. According to Todorov, fantastic narrative isn't simply a story containing supernatural occurrences, but one that challenges the reader's ability to explain events

as either imaginary or supernatural. He describes the form as follows (for the sake of readability I've refrained from entering 'sic' after the masculine pronouns):

An inexplicable phenomenon occurs; to obey his determinist mentality, the reader finds himself obliged to choose between two solutions: either to reduce this phenomenon to known causes, to the natural order, describing the unwonted events as imaginary, or else to admit the existence of the supernatural and thereby to effect a modification in all the representations which form his image of the world. The fantastic lasts as long as this uncertainty lasts; once the reader opts for one solution or the other, he is in the realm of the uncanny or of the marvellous.<sup>55</sup>

Todorov's analysis suggests a continuum of effects involving three different ways of handling causal explanations in fiction: first is realism ('known causes'), then what Todorov's translator, Richard Howard, terms the uncanny (psychological causes, though it should be emphasised that Todorov isn't a Freudian and uses psychology in a more general sense) and, finally, the marvellous (supernatural causes). Two-thirds of the way down this range, at the point where the uncanny is on the verge of becoming the marvellous, we find what Todorov names the fantastic 'genre'. His exemplary text is Henry James's 'The Turn of the Screw', in which the uncertainty about how to explain events is never resolved – in other words, *pace* Edmund Wilson's famous interpretation of James's story, we never know whether the ghosts are real or figments of the governess-narrator's sexually repressed imagination.

Kubrick was always interested in grotesque combinations of the commonplace and the wildly satiric or fanciful, and he was instinctively drawn to any kind of story – Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* and Schnitzler's *Traumnovella*, for example – that blurs the line between reality and dream or fairy tale. One of the interesting aspects of his adaptation of *The Shining*, however, is that it runs the entire range of narrative possibilities described by Todorov. An aura of weirdness or outright derangement haunts the film from the very start, but everything is motivated by the typically realistic situation of a 'nuclear' American family undergoing economic and psychological stress. The early scenes show us Jack's job interview with the corporate manager of the Overlook Hotel (Barry Nelson), a lunch-table conversation between Wendy (Shelley Duvall) and Danny, and a visit to Danny from a paediatrician (Anne Jackson). These and a few later scenes are so firmly grounded in down-at-heels, quotidian materials of domestic drama (the mother chain-smokes, the son eats a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich, a TV set plays in the background) and so inflected by touches of deadpan humour (the ash on the mother's cigarette keeps getting longer as she talks with the paediatrician) that, in 2005, a clever group of film-makers was able to construct a mock trailer for *The Shining*, choosing clips that make the picture look like a slightly whimsical family comedy.<sup>56</sup>

The early sequences also invoke the Freudian uncanny, which always depends upon a background of domestic realism: when Danny eats his sandwich, he speaks to 'Mrs Torrance'



in the gravelly voice of his apparently imaginary friend Tony, who 'lives' somewhere in his mouth; and when he brushes his teeth, he has a terrifying vision and an apparent seizure. As the plot develops, bizarre events proliferate (for most of the film, only Wendy seems immune from ghostly visitations) until we reach the point where it becomes difficult to decide whether or not we should suspend disbelief in the supernatural. When Jack walks into the Gold Ballroom and orders a drink from the satanic bartender, Lloyd (Joe Turkel), we reach a crisis of interpretation and enter the zone of the pure fantastic. Somewhat later, when Jack is set free from a food locker by the ghost of the former caretaker, we encounter the film's first unambiguously supernatural event (unless we want to assume on little evidence that Jack or somebody else is dreaming everything from here until the end) and we move into the zone of Todorov's 'marvellous'. The climactic scenes never entirely release their hold on realism or Freud, and some of the repeated images, such as the elevator of blood, retain an ambiguous status; but the film ends with a carnival of ghostly sadism and sexual decadence (chiefly homosexuality and a hint of bestiality), and with several allusions to myths and fairy tales.

Among the many commentators on *The Shining*, only Michel Ciment has noticed the degree to which the film can be understood in terms of what he, like Todorov, calls 'the genre of the fantastic', which for him constitutes a 'shock between what is real and what is

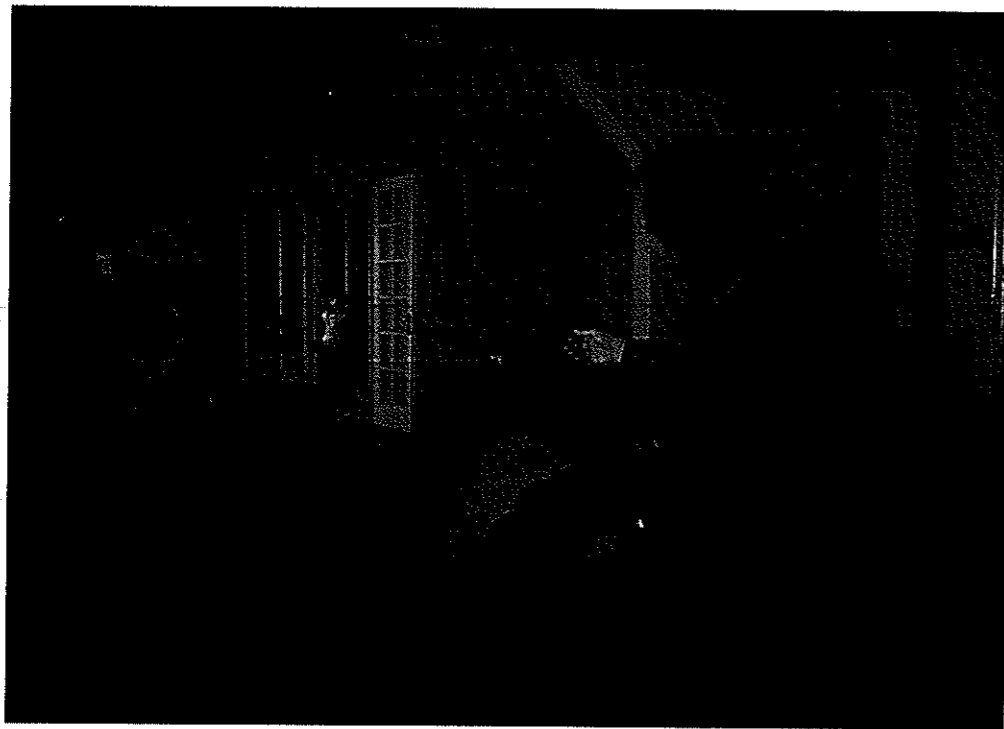
imaginary' and a 'breach in the recognized order of things' (p. 125). Ciment argues that, for this reason, *The Shining* belongs in the same generic category as *2001*, and he points out a remarkable number of things that the two apparently unrelated films have in common: they both eschew off-screen narration in favour of intertitles (in *The Shining* the titles announce events or mark the passage of time in increasingly short intervals); they both use a mixture of modernist and romantic music (*The Shining* mingles Ligeti, Penderecki and Bartok with a 'Dies Irae' derived from Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, which is orchestrated by Wendy Carlos and Rachel Elkind); they both take place inside large man-made structures controlled by non-human entities (the extremely large and fascinating sets for the two films were constructed at the same British studio); they both tell stories of characters who are trapped between a hostile outside world and a murderous figure on the inside who destroys their technical equipment; and, most significantly, 'In either film, the spectator is incapable of supplying a rational explanation for what [she or he] has witnessed' (p. 125).

Viewed in this light, a number of scenes in *The Shining* seem to echo *2001*. For example, the aerial photography at the beginning of the film bears a certain resemblance to the famous 'star gate'. Danny's wide-angle journey on his tricycle down the corridors of the Overlook, culminating in an astonished gaze into an impossible world, is not unlike Dave Bowman's climactic journey aboard the *Discovery* (at one juncture, Danny wears a sweater decorated with a NASA rocket ship). By the same token, the scene in which an ambiguously 'subjective' camera roams around the sickly green-and-purple room 237 in the Overlook, accompanied by the muffled sound of a heartbeat, is similar to Bowman's exploration of a mysterious, interstellar hotel suite. But when Ciment describes the two films as belonging to the same 'genre', he creates confusion, since we normally think of science fiction and gothic horror as distinct generic types. Fortunately, we have Rosemary Jackson's modification of Todorov's theory, which helps to clarify the situation. 'Fantastic narratives,' Jackson writes, 'confound elements of both the marvelous and the mimetic. . . . They pull the reader from the apparent familiarity and security of the known and everyday world. . . into a world whose improbabilities are closer to the realm normally associated with the marvelous.' The key to the fantastic has less to do with generic features than with the instability of the narrative's internal logic or rules of probability. It therefore becomes possible 'to suggest a definition of the fantastic as a *mode*, which then assumes different generic forms'.<sup>57</sup>

To explain the specific instability of the fantastic mode, Jackson appropriates the optical term 'paraxis', which is a region where refracted light rays seem to converge in the formation of an image – the region inside a camera obscura, for example, or in the reflected depth of a mirror. 'In this area,' she remarks, 'object and image seem to collide, but in fact neither object nor reconstituted image genuinely reside there: nothing does.' The paraxial area can serve as a metaphor for 'the spectral region of the fantastic, whose imaginary world is neither entirely "real" (object), nor entirely "unreal" (image), but is located somewhere indeterminately between the two' (p. 19). Interestingly, *The Shining* gives us several

instances in which Kubrick, like many horror-movie directors before him, plays with this kind of spectral ambiguity. As Mario Falsetto has pointed out, there are several times in the film when we are unsure whether a shot is 'subjective' or 'objective'. A similar effect is created by the long tracking shot (somewhat reminiscent of *The Killing*) in which Jack walks down a hallway in the Overlook and enters the Gold Ballroom, where he encounters a large party: in a single movement, we travel from the 'real' into the 'unreal', with no clear boundary between the two and no way to determine if both are truly 'there'. Notice also that a dressing-table mirror in the Torrance family bedroom is used to create a sort of confusion between reality and image: when Wendy serves Jack his breakfast in bed, much of their conversation is photographed in the mirror, and the perspective is evident only because the writing on Jack's T-shirt is reversed; when Danny later sneaks into the bedroom to get his toy truck, we see Jack sitting on the edge of the bed in a sort of trance or depression, his image doubled by the mirror; and towards the end of the film, Wendy looks into the mirror and sees the hidden meaning of REDRUM, a word Danny has written backward on the bathroom door.

The genre, as opposed to the mode, of *The Shining* is gothic horror. Jackson contends that this type of fiction, which originated in Europe during the late eighteenth century, was developed in reaction against a dominant rationalism; for that reason, she believes the



gothic, like the grotesque, with which it participates, has often functioned as 'an art of estrangement' and a critique of 'capitalist and patriarchal orders' (pp. 175–6). Perhaps so; *The Shining* can certainly be read along those lines, and has been.<sup>58</sup> But as Robin Wood and others have pointed out, a good many horror films are ideologically reactionary.<sup>59</sup> In this regard, we should also recall that some gothic fiction tends to express a latent, romanticised nostalgia for a lost aristocratic world, symbolised by ruined castles and old dark houses. From Horace Walpole and Henry Maturin to Henry James and Daphne du Maurier, a certain kind of upper-class architecture has been essential to the spooky but fascinating *mise en scène* of ghost stories – indeed the very term 'gothic' derives from that architecture.

One of the clever aspects of *The Shining* is the way it updates the traditional style, eschewing gothic design and expressionistic lighting while at the same time emphasising the architectural splendour of a dead aristocracy. (The only place where Kubrick alludes to old-fashioned horror-movie lighting is the scene in which Jack has a conversation with the hotel's bartender; a row of soft lights along the bar illuminates the men's faces from below, giving them a demonic look.) The Overlook is a thoroughly modernist building modelled partly on the Timberline Lodge in Oregon and partly on art director Roy Walker's research into twentieth-century hotel architecture across America (the men's room in the bar is based on Frank Lloyd Wright's design for the Arizona Biltmore), but it's also a kind of castle perched atop a mountain. It has a high-ceilinged lobby, a dumb-waiter that Danny regards as a 'secret passage', a maze of haunted hallways and numerous locked rooms. In typical *moderne* style, it mixes streamlined materials with 'primitive' artefacts, in this case from native-American culture; indeed we learn from the hotel manager that the building sits atop what was once an Indian burial ground. One almost expects clichéd horror music to accompany this sort of information, but it turns out that the hotel is haunted not by Indians but by descendants of the white barbarians who destroyed the Indian culture – in particular by jazz-age sophisticates. As the manager tells Jack, the Overlook was 'one of the stopping places for the jet set before anyone knew what the jet set was'. All the 'best people' have stayed there, including four presidents and 'lots of movie stars'. In the lobby, a gallery of photos of the rich and famous from the old days (most of which Kubrick found in the Warner studio's archives) serves as a modern version of the spooky family portraits on the walls of gothic castles.

Nearly all the modern variants of gothic horror turn their haunted buildings into expressions of the characters' mental states – outward manifestations of individual isolation and unconscious sexual fears. In the Stephen King novel, the Overlook is both a psychological space and an organism with its own mind, complete with topiary shrubs in the grounds that come alive to menace the characters. Kubrick takes a more realistic approach, strongly emphasising the ways in which the building's luxury feeds Jack's resentment of his family and his fantasies of becoming a playboy author in the mould of Scott Fitzgerald. During his job interview, he seems to relish his surroundings and easily waves aside any concerns for Wendy and Danny. Twice in the early scenes, as the camera tracks

around the hotel, we see him turn and look back at pretty girls who are leaving for the winter. Except for a few perfunctory endearments he addresses to Wendy in the presence of the hotel manager, he never shows affection for his mousy wife, and he never plays with his son, who spends a good deal of time watching TV. Jack becomes lively and sociable only when ghosts appear; they recognise him, call him 'sir', and, despite his flannel shirt and work boots, immediately accept his credit at the bar. In room 237, the classic locked chamber of spooky stories, always symbolic of sexual knowledge, he encounters a naked ghost in a bath (a twist on the shower scene in *Psycho*) who embodies all his desires and disgust for women; at first she's lithe and beautiful, but then she's an aging hag covered with oozing scabs. Not long afterward, in the blood-red toilet of the ballroom, he becomes the hotel's supreme 'caretaker', making direct contact with his feelings of white male supremacy and murderous rage.

Fredric Jameson has made the interesting point that Stephen King's novel depicts Jack as 'a writer of some minimal achievement and a classical American *poete maudit* whose talent is plagued and stimulated by alcoholism' (a sort of there-but-for-the-grace-of-God version of King himself), whereas the film depicts him as 'someone who would like to *be* a writer' (p. 93). As Jameson notes, Jack in the film certainly produces what the French would call 'du texte', but the result, depending on your point of view, is either the ultimate dada novel or an 'empty auto-referential statement' (p. 93). As a writer, Jack can only repeat himself – an appropriate action for a man who loves the storied, leisure-class atmosphere of the Overlook and who wants, as he tells Danny, to stay there 'for ever and ever and ever'. This obsession with the hotel gives a materialist spin to King's novel and to the conventions of occult or supernatural horror movies of the 1970s, transforming what Jameson calls their 'nostalgia for an absolute Evil' into nostalgia for the class certainties of 'the still Veblen-esque social system in the 1920s' (p. 97). Here again the film invites comparison and contrast with 2001. Like the Star Child at the end of the earlier film, Jack experiences Eternal Return, but with a vengeance; frozen inside the hotel maze, he becomes an emblem of 'repetition, with all its overtones of traumatic fixation and the death wish'. At the last moment, he's absorbed into a 1920s' photo on the lobby wall, where his spirit remains forever in 'the space of thralldom to the past' (p. 98).

But the Overlook isn't simply the physical manifestation of Jack's desires for wealth and fame; it's also an ironically domesticated space – a terrifying 'home' that makes the entire Torrance family feel what the novel calls 'cabin fever'. At this level, the film invites Freudian interpretation; and, in fact, when *The Shining* was released, Diane Johnson told interviewers that, as preparation for writing the screenplay, she and Kubrick had read Freud's essay, 'The Uncanny' (1919), which attempts to explain the sources of what Freud calls the 'common core of feeling . . . in certain things which lie within the field of what is frightening'.<sup>60</sup> In his essay, Freud notes that the German word *Unheimlich*, meaning 'unhomely', is akin to the English word 'uncanny', which has an Anglo-Saxon etymology meaning 'unknown' or 'unfamiliar'; he goes on, however, to argue that uncanny feelings,

which we experience more strongly in art than in life, are stimulated not by strange or unearthly phenomena but by unconscious fears of a quite 'homely' kind, originating in the family and often expressing themselves as symbolic fantasies of castration at the hands of a father figure. Kubrick's film makes darkly humorous allusions to this theory. When the hotel manager shows the Torrance family their humble apartment in the staff quarters of the Overlook, Jack looks around the place with a slightly ironic grin and says, 'It's very homey.' Near the climax of the story, Jack bashes in the door of the apartment with a fire axe and calls out, 'Wendy? I'm home!'

Like King's novel, the film shifts its point of view from one member of the family to another; but it distributes the greater part of the subjective shots almost equally between Jack and Danny, maintaining a balance between two apparently Freudian perspectives. On the one hand, we have the father's narcissism, violent frustration and death wish; on the other, the son's latent sexual desires and emotional conflicts. From the latter viewpoint, the plot seems flagrantly Oedipal, dealing with a male child's struggle against a castrating father who, even though he is absent much of the time, inhibits full access to the mother. At one point, Danny and his mother watch Robert Mulligan's *Summer of '42* (1971) on TV, becoming absorbed in the scene of a beautiful older woman inviting a handsome boy into her kitchen; and, at the end of the movie, when Danny escapes the hedge



maze where Jack is trapped, he runs straight into Wendy's arms and kisses her on the lips.

In the interest of giving some of these events the atmosphere of a child's imagination, Johnson and Kubrick supplemented their reading of Freud with Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment* (1973), a Freudian analysis of fairy tales, which argues that certain kinds of grisly stories provide children with therapeutic ways of dealing with primal anxieties. Thus, the film contains several references to fairy tales and violent cartoons such as 'Road Runner'. As she's shown around the Overlook, Wendy comments, 'This whole place is such an enormous maze I'll have to leave a trail of bread crumbs every time I come in.' Later, when things become menacing and violent, Jack resembles a half-sleeping giant that Danny fears to disturb in the bedroom, and he acts out the role of the big bad wolf ('little pigs, little pigs, let me come in') when he chops down a locked door to get at Wendy and Danny.

In one of the best commentaries on the film, William Paul discusses most of these details, but also makes the important point that *The Shining* uses Freud for revisionist ends. The most radical and disturbing aspect of the film is that Jack Torrance isn't, as Freudian analysis would have it, an imaginary menace or a fairy-tale monster created by a child's projected anxieties; he's a realistic character who despises his wife, who feels ambivalence towards his son and who actually becomes a crazed axe murderer. This situation is quite rare.



The villain in horror movies is usually a stepfather, as in *Night of the Hunter* (1955) and *The Stepfather* (1987); a mother, as in *Psycho* (1960) and *Mommie Dearest* (1981); or a demonic child, as in *The Exorcist* and *The Omen*. Significantly, Robin Wood's influential psychoanalytic theory of the horror film, which argues that the monster or the demonic 'other' represents a return of the repressed and a key to any individual film's ideological purpose, contains not a single example of a motion picture in which the monster is a white male patriarch.

One of the distinctive features of Steven King's fiction is that it contains several monstrous fathers or father figures. Kubrick's film seizes on this quality and, to a greater degree than King, locates the propensity towards evil in a father's psychology. Jack Torrance appears to be guided and assisted by ghosts but, at the ideological level, it hardly matters whether the ghosts are real or figments of his imagination; he's urged to do what he already wants to do. Furthermore, nearly all the ghosts who have speaking roles or significant scenes, including the sexual revellers we see near the end, are white males. (The exceptions are the Grady sisters, who are victims of their father, and the voiceless woman in the bath, who seems to have been a suicide.) Jack's male rage and the mainsprings of his violence are vividly revealed in his speech to Lloyd in the Gold Room – a frightening scene, but also a parody of a bar-fly's confession, played by Nicholson in a broad, squirming style. Tormented



by writer's block and guilt, Jack explains that he suffers from a 'white man's burden' caused by 'the old sperm bank upstairs':

JACK: I never laid a hand on him, goddammit . . . I wouldn't touch one hair on his god damned little head. I love the little sonofabitch. I'd do anything for him. Any fucking thing. That bitch! Long as I live she'll never let me forget what happened. [Pause] I did hurt him once, okay? It was an *accident!* Completely unintentional. Coulda happened to anybody. It was *three god damned years ago!* The little fucker had thrown all my papers over the floor. All I tried to do was pull him up! A momentary loss of muscular coordination!

An equally chilling moment comes when little Danny sits in his father's lap and asks, 'Dad, you would never hurt me and Mommy, would you?' In a dreamy tone, Jack replies, 'I love you, Danny. I love you more than anything in the *whole world*. I would *never* do anything to hurt you. You know that, don't you?' Here and elsewhere, as Paul argues, Kubrick 'redirects Freud's Oedipal drama to the original myth'.<sup>61</sup> Freud's version, as everybody knows, begins with Oedipus killing his father Laius at the crossroads; Paul reminds us, however, that the Greek myth begins earlier, with the parents abandoning the child and



the father mutilating his son by piercing his ankles and tying them together (hence the name Oedipus, which translates as 'swollen foot'). Freud seems to repress or conveniently ignore the incident of paternal abuse, but Kubrick faces it squarely, dramatising 'something so insistently repressed in Western culture, the hostility of the father toward his own son' (Paul, p. 344).

The film's play with the myths of psychoanalysis, as well as its uncanny emotional atmosphere, are reinforced by its visual design, which everywhere invokes the symbolic/allegorical implications of a maze: the aerial shots of the Torrance family Volkswagen travelling up a mountain towards the Overlook give the impression of a maze; a literal hedge maze is situated on the grounds of the Overlook; a model of the maze sits on a table inside the building; the numerous hotel hallways create a maze; and a maze pattern can be seen on the carpet where Danny plays with his toy truck. By virtue of this design, the film provides many opportunities for Kubrick's characteristic wide-angle tracking shots down tunnels or corridors, intensified here by sudden twists around corners to reveal new passageways. The idea for the twisting and turning probably had its origins in 1974, when Kubrick first saw test reels photographed by Garrett Brown's Steadicam, a gyroscopic device that maintains a stable image in hand-held or other kinds of previously impossible circumstances. When he came to make *The Shining*, Kubrick wanted the Steadicam to move at extremely low levels representing the viewpoint of a child, and he hired Brown to come to England as the camera's operator. Hence we have the exhilarating, amusing and suspenseful shot of Danny on his streamlined tricycle, pedalling furiously across the grand rooms and deserted hallways of the Overlook, his wheels alternately rumbling and muffling as he passes over floors and carpet. We travel along behind him, skimming just above the floor in his wake, fearing what we might see at the next turning. We also have the climactic chase sequence through the hedge maze, which cuts back and forth between the travelling viewpoints of Danny and his axe-wielding father (limping along incongruously as the 'swollen-foot' character), and culminates with a close-up of the father frozen in the snow. After the more-or-less subjective 'tunnel' shots that move swiftly down hedgerows and hotel corridors, the film concludes with an 'objective' camera movement reminiscent of Alain Resnais's *Last Year at Marienbad*, Michael Snow's *Wavelength* (1967) and a typical episode of Rod Serling's *Twilight Zone*. The eye of the camera slowly tracks, zooms and then cuts into the photo of Jack at a fourth-of-July party at the Overlook in the 1920s.

The image of Jack frozen inside the maze may be intended as an allusion to the Minotaur, as several critics have suggested, although this mythical creature (a half-man, half-bull who ate children) is said to have inhabited a labyrinth, not a maze. The labyrinth, some form of which exists in virtually every culture, is normally a circular pathway that spirals towards a centre; the maze, an equally familiar construction, is box-like, filled with dead ends and a bewildering array of passageways. You can't truly get lost in the average labyrinth, but the whole purpose of a maze is to trick you. The former is 'unicursal', leading in and out, a metaphor for an eternal return or a journey towards understanding; the latter is a puzzle, a metaphor for entrapment

and death; hence *The Shining* makes an interesting contrast with Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), which ends with a girl being pursued into a labyrinth by her evil stepfather. The two forms, however, sometimes become interchangeable, not only in critical writing (Michel Ciment refers to the hedge maze in *The Shining* as a labyrinth), but also in the Greek myth of the artist-technician Dedalus, who constructed a labyrinth, who was imprisoned there with his son Icarus and who built wings with which they could escape. Dedalus's labyrinth was designed to conceal the Minotaur, who demanded human sacrifice; Theseus entered the labyrinth to slay the monster and was helped by Ariadne, who gave him a ball of string to mark a way out. *The Shining* evokes several of these associations and, like the Greek myth, seems to combine the implications of labyrinth and maze. Christopher Hoile has remarked that, by the end of the film, several myths and fairy tales are bound up together: 'the father, son, and mother, who before isolation show the tensions psychoanalysis has identified with Laius, Oedipus, and Jocasta, once trapped in the Overlook Hotel take on a fairy-tale version of Minotaur, Theseus, and Ariadne or Ogre, Jack the Giant Killer, and the Ogre's kind wife'.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to Theseus and Jack the Giant Killer, the film (like the novel) alludes to Hansel and Gretel. All three stories involve cannibalism, a theme introduced early in *The Shining* by means of the Torrance family's conversation about the Donner party. The three stories also concern children or young men who cleverly manoeuvre through unfamiliar surroundings to defeat monstrous antagonists, just as Danny, aided by his mother, uses analytical skills and exploration of the hotel and its hedge maze to defeat his murderous father. For Danny, the maze/labyrinth leads to growth rather than death. William Paul has pointed out that the conclusion to the film is prefigured when Jack stands over a model of the maze and seems to look down at Wendy and Danny, who are exploring the actual maze outside. The overhead camera angle condenses the different possible meanings of 'overlook': it gives Jack a spectacular view and makes him seem an omnipotent 'overseer' or 'caretaker' (in an earlier scene, he tells Wendy that during his job interview he felt as if he 'knew what would be around every corner'); but it also 'overlooks' important lessons that can be learned at ground level (Paul, pp. 347–8). The focal and spectral ambiguity of the shot (Is it subjective or objective? Animated or photographed?) is appropriate to its double symbolic implication: it portends Jack's gradual descent into the imprisoning maze of his own mind, and at the same time his son's victory over a menacing environment.

Danny has an ally not only in Wendy but also in Halloran. During the writing of the film, Kubrick was unsure how to deal with these characters. In his notes on the screenplay, he observed that King had made Wendy 'strong and uncomplaining', and he asked himself, 'Why does she stay with [Jack]? Decide. Weakness? Physical? Love?'<sup>63</sup> In the end he took a satiric approach, dropping a good deal of dialogue that Diane Johnson had written for Wendy and transforming her from a relatively 'rounded' personality into a naive, almost laughably fragile and fearful character who clings to a troubled marriage. To play her, he chose Shelley Duvall, an eccentric performer best known for the off-beat comedy, sexiness and pathos she brought to several of Robert Altman's best films (she's a long-legged LA biker

in *Nashville* [1975], a ditzzy and fascinatingly weird young single in *Three Women* [1977] and the perfect Olive Oyl in *Popeye* [1980]). On the set, at least from what one sees in Vivian Kubrick's documentary about the making of *The Shining*, he treated Duvall with almost as much contempt as Jack treats Wendy, thereby contributing to the skittish quality of her performance. Some of her scenes were cut from the released film, but enough remain to make it clear that she's playing the sort of wife who might defer to Jack and at the same time drive him crazy. Her limp hair, string-bean body and trailer-park twang are an affront to Jack's sense of himself, and her timidity fuels his sadism. When she holds him at bay with a baseball bat, his elaborate condescension and darkly funny threats (he's a bit like an exasperated husband in a TV sitcom) tap into a vague irritation the audience has been encouraged to feel about Wendy, almost pushing the film into overt misogyny. Even so, Kubrick upsets our assumptions about the two characters. Despite Wendy's wilting anguish and horror-movie screaming, she subdues Jack fairly easily: she knocks him out, drags him into a storage room and locks him away for the winter; when he escapes and chops down her door, she nicks the back of his hand with a butcher knife and he runs away whimpering.

No such luck for Halloran, Jack's only victim and the subject of the film's only direct representation of grisly violence. In the novel, Halloran helps to defeat the forces of evil and becomes Danny's surrogate father. Kubrick and Johnson initially planned to invert this role, turning the gentle, affable chef into a secret ally of the hotel's ghosts, a killer who helps to murder the entire Torrance family. Instead they retained King's original conception of the character but killed him off to demonstrate Jack's ferocity and undercut the audience's expectations of a last-minute rescue. Pauline Kael was rightly disturbed about this strategy: 'The awful suspicion pops into the mind,' she wrote, 'that since we don't want Wendy or Danny hurt and there's no one else alive around for Jack to get at, he's given the black man'.<sup>64</sup> The only subsequent critic to discuss the issue in any detail is Dennis Bingham, who, in a long footnote to an essay on the critical reception of *The Shining*, points out that the theme of racial genocide is introduced early in the film, when we learn about the Indian burial ground beneath the Overlook; this detail reinforces Kubrick's Freudian approach to the story (Freud compared the unconscious history of the individual to the buried, archeological strata of historical sites), but also lends an air of primitivism to the film. According to Freud, primitive man, child and neurotic adult are alike in their propensity to animistic thinking. Halloran's conversation with Danny in the Overlook kitchen seems to imply a link between blackness and childlike animism, and therefore makes Halloran a kind of primitive. The situation isn't helped by the strange pictures of nude black women with big Afros on the walls of Halloran's Florida bedroom – pictures which, as Bingham remarks, resemble the kitschy art collected by Alex's family in *A Clockwork Orange*.

The film's treatment of Halloran originates with King, who more than once wrote about what Spike Lee describes as the 'magical Negro'. (See, for example, *The Green Mile*.) It might also be noted that Diane Johnson had written about un-supernatural black characters in *The Shadow Knows*, which is told from the point of view of a middle-class white woman.



Kubrick was perhaps aware of the 'magical' problem, and his plan to make Halloran into a killer might have been a subversive, if risky, way of treating it. But no matter which way Kubrick turned, he was likely to fall into a trap. When a working-class black character communicates with ghosts or demonstrates ESP in the context of a Freudian-inflected, supernatural story about white people, he can't avoid seeming like a product of racist imagination. Bingham argues that Kubrick, who wasn't a deliberate racist, may have wanted to treat the stereotype of black atavism ironically and somehow mixed it up with 'the satiric attitude toward the noble images of 1950s and 1960s white liberalism that moved him to cast James Earl Jones as Major Kong's bombardier in *Dr. Strangelove*'. If so, the joke doesn't work. Bingham concludes that 'Kubrick's confused attitude toward women is compounded with his confused attitude toward blacks: he seems not to have thought very much about either (perhaps the only modern issues he hasn't thought about very much).'<sup>65</sup>

Paradoxically, although the audience roots for Danny, Wendy and Halloran, Jack dominates the film. This is partly because the monster is always the most compelling character in a horror movie and partly because Jack is played by a gifted star performer. Nicholson's acting style in the latter part of the film, however, is almost camp – as when he puts his head through a hole in a door and shouts an improvised line, 'Heeere's Johnny!' In keeping with the mixed modes of *The Shining*, he begins as if he were working for Roman Polanski and ends as if he were working for Roger Corman. Richard T. Jameson has emphasised the way he boomerangs back and forth between character and star and between good acting and bad acting: 'Jack Nicholson plays Jack Nicholson playing Jack Torrance playing Jack Torrance as King of the Mountain.'<sup>66</sup> The result is a killer clown and a particularly evil Lord of Misrule, but also a somewhat pathetic bum-madman-bully, an inept actor who leers with Nicholson's trademark nasty grin, tries to behave like the rebellious inmate of a mental hospital in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) and flings crude insults like a parody of the oil rigger-artist in *Five Easy Pieces* (1970). In other words, Jack is a bad version of Nicholson, played cleverly by Jack Nicholson.

In interviews when the film was released (one of which can be seen in the Vivian Kubrick documentary), Nicholson recalled a conversation with Kubrick in which the director told him that actors try too hard to make the performance 'real', when 'real' isn't always interesting. This idea originates not with Kubrick but with Stanislavsky, the ultimate realist;<sup>67</sup> nevertheless, it serves as an appropriate motto for the unusual effects Kubrick seems to be trying to achieve. In film after film, his performers veer back and forth between realism and caricature; often the starring actor (James Mason in *Lolita*, Ryan O'Neal in *Barry Lyndon* and Tom Cruise in *Eyes Wide Shut*) is a straight man who works alongside bizarre supporting players, but sometimes the star gives a comically stylised performance. Nicholson obviously belongs in the second category. During his bar-room speech to Lloyd, he behaves like a homeless schizophrenic who has been given one great moment in the dramatic spotlight; when he comes to the phrase 'a momentary loss of muscular co-ordination', he mimics smallness and quietness, drawing out the words with embarrassingly broad

sarcasm, whining and making big derisive gestures. During his later conversation in a men's room with a surreal English butler (Philip Stone, who had played subservient characters in Kubrick's two previous films), he seems like a vaudeville comic. 'What do they call you around here, Jeevsie?' he asks with elaborate cheerfulness. When the butler identifies himself as Delbert Grady, Nicholson does a double-take and arches his eyebrows: 'Uh,' he says, clearing his throat and grinning as if he wants to share his amusement with the audience, 'Mr Grady, haven't I seen you somewhere before?' Grady says no, but then weirdly claims that he has always been at the Overlook, where Jack has always been the 'caretaker'. In another crazy reversal, Grady adds that he had to 'correct' his family in order to fulfil his duties as caretaker. Then his mask of servility drops, revealing a steely disciplinarian who quietly but forcefully exhorts Jack to 'correct' his own family and do something about 'an outside party, a nigger, the nigger cook'. Nicholson pauses for a beat, lifts his eyebrows again, and asks, 'a nigger?' The reaction suggests that Jack's suppressed racism, already revealed in the earlier conversation with Lloyd, has been given a new outlet.

At several points, Nicholson conveys a barely contained violence – when he throws a tennis ball against the walls of the Overlook, for example – and his mouth and eyebrows work overtime when Jack enters his manic phases. The expressive extremes of his performance aren't to everyone's taste, and his dark portrait of fatherhood may be one of the reasons why *The Shining*, after a profitable opening, never achieved the ticket sales the studio expected. On the other hand, his work is very much in keeping with the conventions of popular horror, which usually mingles bloody terror with carnivalistic comedy. His anarchic jokes and repeated evocation of his star persona are so memorable that they potentially subvert the film (as scary monsters often do in more conservative pictures). In the last analysis, however, his portrayal is well suited to Kubrick's absurdist style. When the picture was released, Kubrick indicated that he wanted to make one of the most frightening movies of all time. If that was the case, he didn't succeed. What he made is an intellectualised, formally rigorous, genuinely disturbing satire of American paternity – a film that runs somewhat against the grain of King's novel and the horror-film cycle of its day. The satire is all the more troubling when Jack Torrance's misogyny, racism and bad-boy grin are enshrined in the hotel picture gallery, haunting the audience until the very end.

## Notes

1. Stanley Kubrick, letter to Anthony Harvey, in Harvey's papers at the Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana.
2. Pauline Kael, who seemed never to have read Jonathan Swift, argued that *Dr. Strangelove* 'opened a new movie era' because 'it ridiculed *everything* and *everybody*' and 'concealed its own liberal pieties'. It was dangerous, she argued, because it didn't 'tell us how we are supposed to regain control'. As a result, the 'new generation enjoyed seeing the world as insane; they *literally* learned to stop worrying and love the bomb'. See *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (New York: Bantam, 1969), p. 78.

- Andrew Sarris thought that *Dr. Strangelove* was 'not a bad movie by any standards', but that it was 'grossly overrated'. See *Confessions of a Cultist: On the Cinema 1955/1969* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970), pp. 119–22.
3. Robert Brustein, 'Out of This World', reprinted in Mario Falsetto (ed.), *Perspectives on Stanley Kubrick* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1996), pp. 136–40.
  4. Henry Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), p. 15. All other references are to this volume, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
  5. Quoted by Louis Menand, 'Fat Man: Herman Kahn and the Nuclear Age', *The New Yorker* (27 June 2005), p. 96. All other references are to this article, and page numbers are indicated in the text. See also Sharon Ghamari-Tabrizi, *The Worlds of Herman Kahn* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).
  6. The quotes in this and the previous paragraph are from Fred Kaplan, 'Truth Stranger than Strangelove', *The New York Times* (Sunday, 10 October 2004), p. 21. Almost twenty years after the release of the film and shortly before Kahn died, Kaplan asked him what he thought of *Strangelove*. Assuming that Kaplan was talking about the character and not the movie, Kahn replied, 'Strangelove wouldn't have lasted three weeks in the Pentagon. He was too creative.'
  7. Ed Sikov, *Mr. Strangelove: A Biography of Peter Sellers* (New York: Hyperion, 2002), pp. 196–7.
  8. See James Naremore, *Acting in the Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 68–82.
  9. Blocker's agent quoted by Billy Budd Vermillion, 'Dr. Strangelove', in Gene D. Phillips and Rodney Hill (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Stanley Kubrick* (New York: Checkmark Books, 2002), p. 91.
  10. Roger Ebert, *The Great Movies* (New York: Broadway Books, 2002), pp. 154–6.
  11. John Belton, *Widescreen Cinema* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 89–92.
  12. Volker Fischer, 'Designing the Future: On Pragmatic Forecasting in *2001: A Space Odyssey*', in Hans-Peter Reichmann and Ingeborg Flagge (eds), *Stanley Kubrick*, pp. 103–19.
  13. Olaf Stapledon, *Last and First Men and Star Maker* (New York: Dover, 1968). I am grateful to Jonathan Rosenbaum for acquainting me with Stapledon's work.
  14. Quotations in this paragraph are from the screenplay of 'Journey beyond the Stars' in the special collections department of the Margaret Herrick Library of the Motion Picture Academy, Los Angeles.
  15. Quotations in this paragraph are from the 31 August 1965 screenplay of *2001* in the special collections department of the Margaret Herrick Library of the Motion Picture Academy, Los Angeles.
  16. Quotations in this paragraph are from the 14 December 1965 shooting script of *2001: A Space Odyssey* in the special collections department of the Margaret Herrick Library of the Motion Picture Academy, Los Angeles.
  17. Michel Chion, *Kubrick's Cinema Odyssey*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (London: BFI, 2001), p. 71.
  18. Production Code Administration files, Margaret Herrick Library of the Motion Picture Academy, Los Angeles.

19. For an interesting description of the prologue and a discussion of scientific theories that interested Kubrick throughout his life, see Anthony Frewin, '2001: The Prologue that Nearly Was', in Reichmann and Flagge, *Stanley Kubrick*, pp. 129–35.
20. Kael's review is collected in Stephanie Schwam (ed.), *The Making of 2001: A Space Odyssey* (New York: Modern Library, 2000), pp. 144–6.
21. Andrew Sarris, 'Science Fiction: *The Forbin Project*', in *The Primal Screen: Essays on Film and Related Topics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), pp. 201–3.
22. See R. Barton Palmer, '2001: The Critical Reception and the Generation Gap', in Robert Kolker (ed.), *Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 13–27. See also Tom Gunning, 'An Aesthetic of Astonishment', in Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (eds), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, 5th edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 818–30.
23. Max Kosloff, in Schwam, *The Making of 2001*, p. 180.
24. Annette Michelson, 'Bodies in Space: Film as Carnal Knowledge', in Schwam, *The Making of 2001*, pp. 212–15.
25. Charlie Kohler, 'Stanley Kubrick Raps', in Schwam, *The Making of 2001*, p. 247.
26. David G. Stork (ed.), *Hal's Legacy: 2001's Computer as Dream and Reality* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997). All other references are to this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
27. 'Playboy Interview: Stanley Kubrick', in Schwam, *The Making of 2001*, pp. 274–5.
28. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, trans. Thomas Common, in Willard Huntington Wright (ed.), *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (New York: Modern Library, 1954), p. 6.
29. Andrew Sarris, *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions, 1929–1968* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1968), p. 196.
30. Alexander Walker, Sybil Taylor and Ulrich Rachtli, *Stanley Kubrick, Director* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), p. 162. Raymond Durgnat, 'Paint it Black: The Family Tree of Film Noir', *Film Comment* vol. 6 November 1974), p. 6.
31. Carl Freedman, 'Kubrick's *2001* and the Possibility of a Science-Fiction Cinema', *Science Fiction Studies* vol. 23 (1996), pp. 300–17.
32. Ray Kurzweil, *The Age of Spiritual Machines: When Computers Exceed Human* (London: Penguin, 2000).
33. Janet Staiger, 'The Cultural Productions of *A Clockwork Orange*', in Stuart Y. McDougal (ed.), *Stanley Kubrick's A Clockwork Orange* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 37–60.
34. Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 16. All other citations are from this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
35. Colin Burrow, 'Not Quite Nasty', *The London Review of Books* vol. 28 no. 3 (9 February 2006), p. 20.
36. Peter J. Rabinowitz, 'A Bird of Like Rarest Spun Heavenmetal', in McDougal, *Stanley Kubrick's A Clockwork Orange*, pp. 109–30.
37. Kevin Jackson, 'Real Horrorshow: A Short Lexicon of Nasdat', *Sight and Sound* (September 1999), p. 27.

38. John Alcott, interviewed in Michel Ciment, *Kubrick: The Definitive Edition* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2001) p. 214.
39. David Bordwell, *Figures Traced in Light: On Cinematic Staging* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 1–7.
40. Sade quoted by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 69–70.
41. Quoted in Eva-Maria Magel, 'The Best Movie (N)ever Made: Stanley Kubrick's Failed *Napoleon* Project', in Reichmann and Flagge, *Stanley Kubrick*, p. 159.
42. For a discussion of how Kubrick interprets the past through the present and at the same time makes us feel that the past is inaccessible, see William Stephenson, 'The Perception of "History" in Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*', *Literature/Film Quarterly* vol. 9 no. 4 (1981), pp. 251–60.
43. Fredric Jameson uses 'pastiche' to describe *Barry Lyndon*, and tends to equate the technique with postmodernism. See 'Historicism in *The Shining*', in Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible* (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 91–2.
44. Ralf Michael Fischer, 'Pictures at an Exhibition? Allusions and Illusions in *Barry Lyndon*', in Reichmann and Flagge, *Stanley Kubrick*, pp. 169–83.
45. Rosenman quoted in Falsetto, *Perspectives on Stanley Kubrick*, pp. 404–5.
46. See Fischer, 'Pictures at an Exhibition?', pp. 176–7.
47. William Makepeace Thackeray, *The Luck of Barry Lyndon; a Romance of the Last Century*, ed. Edgar F. Harden (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 226. All other references are to this edition, and page numbers are given in the text.
48. Pauline Kael, 'Kubrick's Gilded Age', *The New Yorker* (29 December, 1975), p. 51. For a dissenting view, see Jonathan Rosenbaum, 'The Pluck of *Barry Lyndon*', *Film Comment* (March–April 1977), pp. 26–8.
49. Writers on the film have disagreed about whether the narrator is reliable or unreliable. See Mark Crispin Miller, 'Kubrick's Anti-Reading of *The Luck of Barry Lyndon*', in Falsetto, *Perspectives on Stanley Kubrick*, pp. 226–42. For a different view, see Sarah Kosloff, *Invisible Storytellers: Voice-Over Narration in American Film* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
50. Marvin D'Lugo, 'Barry Lyndon: Kubrick on the Rules of the Game', *Explorations in National Cinemas, The 1977 Film Studies Annual: Part One* (Pleasantville, NY: Redgrave Publishing Company), p. 40.
51. Ryan O'Neal isn't the actor we see in this last shot; Kubrick uses an actual amputee who doubles for the star.
52. Diane Johnson's comments on her work with Kubrick in 'Writing *The Shining*', in Geoffrey Cocks, James Diedrick and Glenn Perusek (eds) *Depth of Field: Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), pp. 55–61. This essay describes a significant scene that Kubrick seems to have cut from the film for reasons of length: as in the novel, Jack discovers an old scrapbook containing fairy-tale plots and details that help him in his writing. The scrapbook is a 'gift' from the hotel ghosts, motivating Jack's sudden transition from deep depression to manic energy; it can be glimpsed sitting beside Jack's typewriter at one point in the release

- version of the film. Other cuts from the original release print included a scene near the end in which we see Wendy and Danny recovering in a hospital. For detailed information on this and other trims, see *Monthly Film Bulletin* vol. 47 no. 562 (November 1980).
53. Stephen King quoted in Ursula Von Keitz, 'The *Shining* – Frozen Material: Stanley Kubrick's Adaptation of Stephen King's Novel', in Reichmann and Flagge, *Stanley Kubrick*, p. 187.
54. Stephen King, 'Introduction', *The Shining* (New York: Pocket Books, 2001), p. xvi. All further references are to this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
55. Tzvetan Todorov, 'Henry James's Ghosts', in *The Poetics of Prose*, trans. Richard Howard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 179. All further references are to this edition, and pages numbers are indicated in the text.
56. <www.liquidgeneration.com/content/a55hat.aspx?cid=1680>
57. Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (London: Methuen, 1981), pp. 34–5. All further references are to this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
58. See Michael Ryan and Douglas Kellner, *Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 172–8. See also David Cook, 'American Horror: *The Shining*', *Literature Film Quarterly* vol. 12 no. 1 (1984), pp. 2–5.
59. Robin Wood, 'American Nightmare: Horror in the 70s', in *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 70–94.
60. Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, vol. 17 (London: Hogarth Press, 1929), p. 226. All subsequent references are to this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
61. William Paul, *Laughing/Screaming: Modern Hollywood Horror and Comedy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 343. All further references are to this volume, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
62. Christopher Hoile, 'The Uncanny and the Fairy Tale in Kubrick's *The Shining*', *Literature/Film Quarterly* vol. 12 no. 1 (1984), p. 8.
63. Quoted in Von Keitz, 'The *Shining* – Frozen Material', p. 190.
64. Pauline Kael, 'Devolution', in *Taking It All In* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1984), p. 6.
65. Dennis Bingham, 'The Displaced Auteur: A Reception History of *The Shining*', in Falsetto, *Perspectives on Stanley Kubrick*, pp. 304–5.
66. Richard T. Jameson, 'The *Shining*', in Falsetto, *Perspectives on Stanley Kubrick*, p. 251.
67. 'I recall a comment recorded in a book called *Stanislavski Directs*, in which Stanislavski told an actor that he had the right understanding of the character, the right understanding of the text of the play, that what he was doing was completely believable, but that it was still no good because it wasn't interesting'. Kubrick interviewed in 1972 by Philip Stock and Penelope Huston in Gene D. Phillips (ed.), *Stanley Kubrick Interviews* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), p. 131.

## Part Five

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# LATE KUBRICK

### I. Warriors

Alan Dwan's *The Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949) stars John Wayne as a battle-scarred Marine sergeant who sacrifices himself for his unit and in doing so earns the respect of John Agar, a young recruit who had been trained by Wayne and who previously regarded Wayne as a heartless bully. The film ends with a sentimental tribute to the fallen Wayne and a recreation of the famous *Life* magazine image of the Marines raising the US flag on Mount Suribachi. Like many American boys of my generation, I saw this movie in re-release when I was about eight years old. The tear-jerking plot, however, interested me not at all. I was fascinated with the combat scenes (some of which were made from newsreel footage) and especially with the military gear – the helmets, ammo belts, canteens, carbine rifles and machine guns. Afterward, I played war with other kids, imagining I was a Marine. I remember thinking that, if I owned a movie camera and the right military equipment, I could frame the action so as to screen out clothes lines, telephone poles and anything else that would interfere with my imaginary world. I suspect that Stanley Kubrick may have had a similar experience; in any case, his last war film deals with a generation of soldiers fighting in Vietnam who had seen Hollywood combat movies of the 1940s and 1950s, and who absorbed their warrior spirit.

The Vietnam War was a logical subject for Kubrick but, like most other Hollywood directors (with the exception of John Wayne), he waited until the war was over before he made a picture about it. In 1983, just prior to the success of Sylvester Stallone's reactionary *Rambo* series and towards the end of a cycle of darker films about Vietnam that included Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* (1978), Francis Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1986), Kubrick began work on an adaptation of Gustav Hasford's

spare, often surreal novel, *The Short-Timers* (1979), which is loosely based on Hasford's experience as a Marine newspaper correspondent and sometimes combatant during the Tet offensive and the battle of Khe Sanh. Kubrick commissioned Michael Herr, the author of *Dispatches* (1977), a much-admired collection of battlefield reports from the war, to help write the screenplay and serve as associate producer. According to Herr, who had also written the voice-over narration for *Apocalypse Now*, Kubrick developed the treatment of the film, which he entitled *Full Metal Jacket*, a term he found in gun magazines; Herr composed the first draft of the script; and the two men collaborated on subsequent revisions.<sup>1</sup> Gustav Hasford was consulted during the process and came to London to do some of the writing but, even though the basic plot and a good deal of the language of his novel were used, he contributed little new material.

The film was shot chiefly at Bessingbourn Barracks in Cambridgeshire, which 'played' the US Marine training station at Parris Island, and at the disused Beckton Gasworks factory in East London, which art director Anton Furst designed to look like the bombed-out city of Hue. (Unlike previous Vietnam movies, this one centres on urban combat; a few palm trees were flown in from Spain to provide landscape, and aerial views of tropical jungle were photographed by a second unit.) John Olson's *Life* magazine photos of Hue influenced some of Furst's designs but, as Thomas Doherty has pointed out, the film creates something more akin to a 'hallucinatory dreamscape, not a geographical space'.<sup>2</sup> Shooting in primary locations began in 1985 and took slightly more than a year, partly because of Kubrick's many retakes, but also because two of his principal actors, Vincent D'Onofrio and Lee Ermey, were injured in separate accidents and needed time to heal.

The completed film has an unorthodox, two-part structure, linked by the narration of the leading character, Private Joker (Matthew Modine). The first part, which I've described in some detail earlier in this book, expands on a relatively short section of the novel, treating daily life at a single Marine barracks in almost as detailed and documentary a fashion as Frederick Wiseman's *Basic Training* (1971), at the same time telling the story of a conflict between a frightening drill instructor, Gunnery Sergeant Hartman (Ermey), and an inept hillbilly recruit, Private Leonard Lawrence (D'Onofrio), whom Hartman dubs 'Gomer Pyle'. The climax is staged in the barracks toilet: Pyle, clad in underwear and holding a loaded rifle, lowers his head and gives the drill instructor a 1,000-yard stare; grinning and sighing with feral pleasure, he murders Hartman and then commits suicide.

As critic Brad Stevens has noted, these killings resemble the violent Oedipal scenarios in *A Clockwork Orange*, *Barry Lyndon* and *The Shining*, and as a result the film almost stops cold.<sup>3</sup> Part two begins abruptly in Da Nang, where the camera follows a miniskirted prostitute as she sashays across a street to the music of Nancy Sinatra's 'These Boots Were Made for Walking' and approaches Joker and a military photographer, Rafterman (Kevyn Major Howard), at a sidewalk café. Joker has been assigned an alienating job writing newspaper propaganda for the Marines and he takes a cynical but easygoing attitude towards the

Vietnamese hustlers and thieves who live off the American troops. Longing to see action, or, as he puts it, to be 'in the shit', he deliberately offends his smarmy editor (John Terry), who retaliates by sending him into the most dangerous zone of the Tet offensive. The film meanders in this section, not picking up steam until Joker reunites with his friend Cowboy (Arliss Howard) and joins the Lust Hog squad, who ultimately confront a deadly sniper in the ruins of Hue.

Bill Krohn has observed that the unexpected elimination of Hartman and Pyle, who were the only characters capable of sustaining a story, condemns us for a time to 'wander into regions bordering dangerously on nonsense'.<sup>4</sup> Kubrick told interviewers that he wanted to 'explode the narrative structure' (quoted in Krohn, p. 2) and, in the aftermath, he gives us not only fragmentation and aimlessness but also a mixture of styles or modes. The opening scenes of the second part, beginning with Joker's negotiation with the prostitute and extending to the point where he meets the Lust Hogs, are essentially realistic, if darkly absurdist. When the Lust Hogs approach Hue, however, the film makes an overtly self-reflexive, 'Brechtian' gesture: a TV crew executes a hand-held 'track' along the length of the squad (photographed by Kubrick's crew with a Steadicam), who joke about starring in 'Vietnam: The Movie', a Hollywood Western in which the 'gooks' play Indians. Next we're given a scene reminiscent of the psychological allegory in *Fear and Desire*: looking up from the subjective point of view of two US corpses on the ground, the camera pans around to individual members of the squad, who address the movie audience as if speaking to their fallen comrades. ('Goin' home now', 'Semper fi', 'Mean Marines', 'Go easy, bros', 'Better you than me', etc.) Then we return to activities of the TV crew: each member of the squad looks into Kubrick's camera, which stands in for the news camera, and responds to unheard questions from an interviewer. ('In Hue City, it's . . . you know, like what I thought a war was supposed to be; there's the enemy - kill 'em.' 'I don't think there's any question about it, I mean we're the best . . . When the shit really hits the fan, who do they call?' 'Do I think America belongs in Vietnam? I know I belong in Vietnam.' 'Personally I think they don't want to be involved in this war . . . They'd rather be alive than free, I guess. Poor dumb bastards.') Finally, as the squad enters Hue, we shift back into a more realistic mode and then into vivid expressionism when the sniper is discovered.

One consequence of the anti-classical narrative is that Joker seems less like the film's central consciousness than like a marginal observer who sometimes steps forward to take part in events. The character's somewhat recessive quality may also have to do with the casting of Matthew Modine, who lacks the movie-star charisma of Ryan O'Neal and Jack Nicholson. Kubrick said that Modine reminded him of a cross between Gary Cooper and Henry Fonda but, even if the intelligent young actor had brought a well-established star persona to the film, he would have found it difficult to assert himself. Joker is given few point-of-view shots and his sparse narration, which has been pruned down considerably from the original shooting script, doesn't begin until after the long opening sequence. We're given no psychological 'back-story' or personal information about him, or indeed about

any of the other characters, most of whom, as in Hasford's novel, are known simply by their nicknames.

In part one Joker plays second-fiddle to the conflict between Hartman and Pyle, and in part two he seems feckless. He tells us that the Marines want 'killers, not robots', but he tends to move in unison with a group. His personality becomes interesting only in retrospect. As his name implies, he's a wild card with a shifting identity. 'Is that you, John Wayne?' he repeatedly asks himself. 'Is this me?' He both takes part in the Marine community and stands back to view it cynically. When the recruits sneak up on Pyle and attack him with bars of soap wrapped in towels, Joker strikes the last blow but then covers his eyes with shame. In Vietnam, he wears a peace symbol and yet has 'Born to Kill' written on his helmet (a detail taken from Herr's *Dispatches*). In his cynical interview with the American TV crew, he claims that he joined the Marines because 'I wanted to see exotic Vietnam, the jewel of Southeast Asia. I wanted to meet stimulating people of an ancient culture and kill them. I wanted to be the first kid on my block to get a confirmed kill.'

In this last regard, notice that Joker's adventures in part two have a certain affinity with Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which was the source of *Apocalypse Now*. Like Conrad's romantic but ineffectual Marlow, Joker narrates the story of his trip to an exotic country and his subsequent journey inward – geographically, psychologically and politically – during which he witnesses a series of imperialist barbarisms: he meets prostitutes and pimps; he is instructed to write fake stories about how the US is killing the enemy and winning hearts and minds; he takes a helicopter trip with a trigger-happy psychopath who fires cheerfully at peasants and, when asked how he can shoot down women and children, cracks one of the film's sickest jokes ('Easy – you just don't lead 'em so much!'); he sees a mass grave of Vietnamese villagers covered in lime and is informed by a smirking lieutenant that they were killed by the enemy; and he's lectured by a pompous US colonel who tells him, 'inside every gook there is an American trying to get out'. When the colonel asks him to explain the contradiction between the peace sign and the motto on the helmet, Joker replies, 'The duality of man. The Jungian thing, Sir.' At the end, he has an intimate experience of Jung's 'shadow' and Conrad's 'horror'. He comes face to face with the enemy and gets his confirmed kill – but it isn't the sort of thing he can joke about.

To achieve the odd shape of the film, Kubrick followed his usual procedure of making significant changes to the script during shooting and post-production. Lee Ermey's improvised obscenities were added, and a good deal of Joker's narration, much of it taken straight from the novel, was cut or shortened. By comparison with the film, the shooting script, written in a discursive style somewhere between a novel and a movie, is in some ways much more raw and disturbing. After Gunnery Sergeant Gerheim (Hartman in the film) punches, chokes and slaps a couple of his recruits, Joker's voice tells us, 'Beatings, we learn, are a routine element of life on Parris Island. And not that I'm-only-rough-on-'um-because-I-love-'um crap in Mr John Wayne's *The Sands of Iwo Jima*.<sup>5</sup> During the Parris Island

section, one of the recruits tries to commit suicide by cutting his wrist with a bayonet and Gerheim orders him to clean up the mess he has made. Pyle suffers truly sadistic humiliations: at one point Gerheim forces all the men in the barracks to pee in a toilet and then pushes Pyle's face into it; in another scene, Gerheim fits a Trojan condom with a hole in it over the mouth of a canteen and orders Pyle to suck milk through it at mealtimes – cut to the mess hall, where the other drill instructors make 'crude and derisory remarks' as Pyle nurses from the canteen. The most brutal moment of all, however, comes near the end of the script, just after Joker administers a *coup de grâce* by shooting a wounded female sniper at his feet:

Sutton says, 'Joker, that's well done. You're hard.'

Animal Mother spits. He takes a step, kneels, zips out his machete. With one powerful blow he chops off her head.

He picks the head up by its long black hair and holds it high. He laughs and says, 'Rest in pieces, bitch.'

Animal Mother laughs again. He walks around and sticks the bloody ball of gore into all their faces. 'Hard? Now who's hard? Now who's hard, motherfuckers?'

Animal Mother pauses, spits, throws the head into a ditch.

He picks up his M-60 machine gun, lays it across his shoulders, struts over to Joker.

'Nobody shits on the Animal, motherfucker, nobody' (pp. 111–12).

In his diary of the production, Matthew Modine tells us that Kubrick spent gruelling hours shooting and re-shooting this particular scene, requiring Adam Baldwin, who plays Animal Mother, to throw a rubber head off screen to a crew member who caught it and saved it for the next take. 'The circle of actors around [Baldwin] agonizes with him,' Modine wrote. 'The mystery of the repetition is lost to us . . . We're glad it's Adam and not us.'<sup>6</sup> When the scene was completed, however, Kubrick cut it from the film without informing Baldwin. He also cut a nude scene that he and Modine had invented: a Vietnamese prostitute (Papillon Soo Soo), was shown in post-coital conversation with Joker in the bedroom of a French Colonial house: 'Oh! Me want more boom boom,' the prostitute says. 'Me love you long time, G.I. Me so hooornny!' Joker lights two cigarettes and delivers a variation on Bette Davis's famous line in *Now, Voyager* (1942): 'My darling, we have the moon. Don't let's ask for the stars.'

In the shooting script, Joker has a much more active and potentially sympathetic role to play. (The same could be said of Joker in Hasford's novel.) During his helicopter ride to Hue, for example, he becomes so outraged at an Arvin captain and sergeant who are murdering prisoners that he machine-guns both of them. And at the end, he dies in almost heroic fashion while running through a hail of gunfire. His voice-over narration, italicised in the script, would have been accompanied by rapid cross-cutting between images of him as a man and as a boy:

JOKER, THE MARINE, RUNNING.

JOKER, 8 YEARS-OLD, ARMED WITH A PLASTIC RIFLE, RUNNING IN A FIELD.

'Keep moving, keep moving, keep moving!!!'

*People tell you what to do. Keep moving, keep moving, keep moving. If you stop moving, if you hesitate, your heart will stop beating. Your legs are machines winding you up like a mechanical toy.*

JOKER, THE MARINE, RUNNING, FIRING HIS RIFLE.

JOKER, THE 8 YEAR-OLD, FIRING HIS TOY RIFLE.

*You feel like you could run around the world. Now the asphalt is a trampoline and you are fast and graceful, a green jungle cat.*

JOKER, THE MARINE, RUNNING.

JOKER, THE 8 YEAR-OLD, RUNNING.

*Your feet take you up . . . up . . . over the rubble up . . . up . . . you're loving it . . . you're not human, you're an animal, you feel like a god . . . you scream: 'DIE! DIE! DIE, YOU*

*MOTHERFUCKERS! DIE! DIE!'*

JOKER, THE MARINE, IS RIDDLED WITH A BURST OF AUTOMATIC FIRE.

JOKER, THE 8 YEAR-OLD, CLUTCHES HIS CHEST IN MOCK AGONY AND STARTS TO CRUMPLE TO THE GROUND. HIS IMAGE WILL SLOW DOWN UNTIL WE HOLD ON A FROZEN FRAME, IN A POSE SOMETHING LIKE CAPA'S FAMOUS SPANISH CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPH OF A MAN WHO HAS JUST BEEN FATALLY SHOT BUT WHO IS FOREVER SUSPENDED IN MID-FALL BY THE CAMERA.

BUT THIS PICTURE IS OF AN 8 YEAR-OLD BOY. (pp. 115-16)

In the script this sequence is followed by a brief scene at a military cemetery where Joker's father reads an A. E. Housman poem at his son's graveside. Michael Herr says that it was Kubrick's idea to conclude in this way and that, when Herr argued against it, Kubrick defended the idea passionately if somewhat jokingly: 'It's the death of the Hero. It'll be so powerful, so *moving* . . . We've seen it in *Homer*, Michael' (Herr, p. 40). But during the filming Kubrick worried that Joker's death was sentimental. He repeatedly asked Matthew Modine what he thought, and was unresponsive when Modine said that he loved the way the script ended. Kubrick then asked several of the other actors to offer alternative endings and, when Modine derided their suggestions, Kubrick treated him coldly. Eventually, in frustration, Modine told Kubrick, 'You want to know what should happen? [Joker] should live. He should have to spend the rest of his life thinking about Pyle blowing his brains out.' According to Modine, Kubrick pondered a moment and said, 'That's the ending' (Modine, n.p.).

The ending Kubrick devised is vaguely similar to Hasford's novel, in which Joker and his decimated platoon simply 'hump back down the trail' after a bloody encounter with the enemy.<sup>7</sup> The last images of the film show Joker and a number of other Marines marching through a blasted nocturnal landscape, silhouetted against the burning city of Hue. Kubrick

breaks the 180-degree rule, causing Joker's column to move first screen right and then screen left. 'We have nailed our names to the pages of history enough for today,' Joker's voice-over says. 'We hump down to the Perfume River to settle in for the night.' As they trudge along, the band of soldiers begins singing the marching song from Walt Disney's 'Mickey Mouse Club', occasionally imitating the voices of children. (In the shooting script, the song appears at a much earlier point.) Joker smiles as he sings, and again we hear his narration: 'My thoughts drift back to erect-nipple wet dreams about Mary Jane Rottencrotch and the great Homecoming Fuck Fantasy. I am so happy that I am alive . . . I'm in a world of shit, yes, but I'm alive. And I am not afraid.'

These last moments have been described by one writer as conveying a feeling of 'muted optimism'.<sup>8</sup> To me they seem intended to ironically convey Joker's relief and exhilaration at having survived combat, but they also have a good deal in common with the closing of *Dr. Strangelove*, in which a pop tune is sung over strangely beautiful images of apocalyptic destruction. Joker's smile is troubling, especially on the heels of his mercy killing of the female Vietnamese sniper. He may have survived a baptism of fire, but at some level he remains a child, speaking the catchphrases of the 'phony-tough and crazy-brave'. The ending also returns us to several of the film's more disturbing motifs. The Mickey Mouse Club song is the culminating instance of many ironic references to US pop culture, transforming the devastated Vietnamese landscape into a grotesque Disneyland. As Paula Willoquet-Maricondi has pointed out, the song's lyrics express a colonising impulse: 'Who is marching coast to coast and far across the sea? . . . Come along and sing this song and join our family.'<sup>9</sup> (Mickey Mouse is referenced in two earlier scenes: at the end of part one, Hartman storms into the latrine and shouts, 'What is this Mickey Mouse shit?' During the editorial conference for the Marine newspaper at the beginning of part two, a Mickey Mouse doll sits on the windowsill behind Joker.) Notice as well that we are once again in a 'world of shit', this time lit by glowing flames – an interesting comparison and contrast with the expressionistically designed, blue-lit toilet at the end of part one. Joker seems ambivalent about this world, wanting to be in it and yet recognising its threat to the protective 'full metal jacket' of hardened masculinity. It has something in common with Sergeant Hartman's earlier evocation of 'Mary Jane Rottencrotch', who is both desirable and foul.

The equation of war with shit isn't unusual. In *Rambo*, for instance, Sylvester Stallone immerses himself in a sewer so that he can evade the enemy. But, as I've already pointed out, Kubrick's film goes further in this direction. Its language is pervaded with excremental imagery, which is linked to women, queers and communists and set off against everything we see at Parris Island: the clean surfaces of the military barracks; the shaved young recruits; the obsessively polished toilet; and the well-oiled rifles that become sexy machines and substitutes for Mary Jane. (As Pyle goes slowly mad, he speaks to his rifle in loving tones: 'It's been swabbed and wiped. Everything is clean. Beautiful. So that it slides perfectly. Nice. Everything cleaned. Oiled. So that your action is beautiful. Smooth, Charlene.') I've also mentioned in passing that similar imagery features in Klaus Theweleit's *Male Fantasies*, an

analysis of the fantasy life of proto-fascist soldiers in the German *Freikorps* of the 1920s. In making the connection I don't mean to suggest that Kubrick was influenced by Theweleit, whose work was published in German in 1977 and in English in 1987. My point is simply that Kubrick and Herr have an intuitive and critical grasp of a familiar warrior-male psychology, and that Theweleit can help us understand its workings.

A brief description of the first volume of *Male Fantasies* will help to clarify the point. Subtitled *Women, Floods, Bodies, History*, it provides an extensive analysis of popular literature, memoirs, diaries and propaganda by and about the men of the *Freikorps*, a volunteer private army of World War I veterans who engaged in domestic repression of organised labour and communism in the 1920s and early 1930s. In the course of his analysis, Theweleit generates what amounts to a full-scale psychological picture of a warrior caste. Throughout, he emphasises that the imaginative life of the *Freikorps* is filled with images of blood and shit, which are strongly associated with the 'Red flood' of communism. Consider Rudolf Herzog, a *Freikorps* novelist who equates the Rhineland separatist movements of the period with a 'wave of excrement' that 'rolled over the glorious cities of the Rhine, and when it paused and bubbled up, it was red with the blood of brothers' (p. 397). For Herzog and the other writers in question, the morass of slime and pulp carried along by the Red tide always has a female quality and needs to be combated with 'erections', which are represented by stalwart men and strong, hard weapons (p. 402). In fact, as Barbara Ehrenreich observes in her introduction to the US translation of *Male Fantasies*, the soldiers of the *Freikorps* are motivated less by how they feel about the Fatherland, communists, or Jews than about how they feel about women's bodies: '[The *Freikorps*]' hatred – or dread – of women cannot be explained with Freud's all-purpose Oedipal triangulation . . . . It is a dread, ultimately, of dissolution – of being swallowed, engulfed, annihilated. Women's bodies are the holes, swamps, pits of muck that can engulf' (p. xiii).

The women encountered by the *Freikorps* range from the relatively safe to the extremely dangerous: mothers and girls who are left behind when soldiers go to the front; 'white nurses' who serve on the battlefield; prostitutes who carry disease and can't be trusted; and – most threatening – 'Red women' who are armed with rifles and who face the soldiers in angry mobs or single combat. In one of the recurring scenes at the heart of *Freikorps* literature, a manly German soldier meets and kills a Red woman – a working-class communist who carries a rifle under her skirts like a penis substitute. Her death has sexual implications. Ehrenreich describes it as a 'brief moment of penetration – with bullet or knife', in which the soldier comes thrillingly close to the woman and the 'horror of dissolution', but then survives; he remains 'erect (and, we must imagine, clean and dry)', while she is a bloody mass. 'With her absent, the world becomes "safe" and male again' (p. xiv).

For anyone who has seen *Full Metal Jacket*, the relevance of the material discussed by Theweleit should be obvious. The action of the film is set in a metaphoric and sometimes literal world of blood and shit, and it climaxes with the killing of a 'Red woman'. (The shooting script, unlike the film, gives us all four types of women imagined by the *Freikorps*: in



addition to 'Mary Jane Rottencrotch', two prostitutes and an armed communist, we have a brief sequence involving a couple of battlefield nurses.) The killing scene is especially significant because, during the first part of the film, Gunnery Sergeant Hartman orders the recruits to 'marry' their weapons of 'iron and wood', which have been given girls' names. Hartman explains that only the 'hard heart' kills, and he repeatedly inculcates physical hardness and steely determination as defences against softness, femininity and excrement. He also indoctrinates the troops to think of his 'beloved Corps' as the natural home of superb riflemen; in one of the most disconcertingly funny scenes, he boasts that two of history's most infamous snipers, Charles Whitman and Lee Harvey Oswald, 'showed what one motivated Marine and his rifle can do!' His training backfires, however, when the softest and flabbiest of his recruits becomes a talented shot and gets his revenge in a toilet. In a similar reversal, Joker and Cowboy face their greatest challenge when a talented young female sniper – a version of what the *Freikorps* called a *Flintenweiber* or 'rifle woman' – gets them in her gun sight.

Until this point, as in Kubrick's previous war films, the enemy has been nearly invisible: we've seen only a few silhouetted figures breaking through the perimeter of the base at Da Nang, plus the corpse of a North Vietnamese soldier. Also as in Kubrick's other pictures about war, the close encounter with the 'other' is with a female. She's photographed in





expressionist slow motion as she spins around from her hiding place to face Joker, whose gun jams. Rafterman, the most patriotically zealous of the young Marines, whom Joker has treated condescendingly, shoots her down. From Joker's point of view, we see her face in the bloody muck, writhing in an almost sexual fashion. She begs to be released from pain. Rafterman gloats and Animal Mother wants to 'let her rot', but Joker, after an appalled hesitation, puts her out of her misery. The other Marines interpret this action as an assertion of masculinity: 'Hard core, man,' one of them says, 'fucking hard core.' Next we see Joker marching away with his Mickey Mouse Club brethren, smiling and free of fear.<sup>10</sup>

Of course, the men in *Full Metal Jacket* are in some ways different from the proto-fascist ideologues in *Male Fantasies*. Most are provincial, poor and ill educated, and few seem to be motivated by appeals to Jesus and the USA. Rafterman claims to be fighting for 'a good cause', Animal Mother is engaged in 'slaughter' for the sake of 'poontang', Eightball is carried along by a confusing war and Joker enjoys the existential testing of his courage. Their repeated challenges to one another are like school-yard taunts or testosterone-driven displays of toughness in the midst of a brutal contest for survival. Notice as well that Joker's shooting of the rifle woman is an act of mercy, not the exultant violence against women imagined by the *Freicorps*. On the other hand, the US military, as represented by Hartman and every officer we see, is ruled by white Christian males and is a place where misogyny,



racism and ultra-nationalism are rules of the day. In this environment you can always indulge in a little hate speech as long as you maintain that the Corps is fair and that the uniform makes a brotherhood of the men who wear it. 'I am hard, but I am fair,' Hartman says at the beginning, 'I do not look down on niggers, Kikes, wops or greasers. Here you are all equally worthless!' The soldiers' enemies are 'gooks', but so are their ostensible allies. Even their 'beloved Corps' is internally fraught with racial tension. Thomas Doherty has nicely described the way contradictions are managed: 'the huge white grunt Animal Mother hassles and slurs his black comrade Eightball. But when Eightball lies wounded, stranded in an open field, it is Animal Mother who disobeys orders and makes a heroic rescue charge' (pp. 313–14).

In addition to exposing a kind of fascism at the heart of warrior male sexuality (as *Dr. Strangelove* had already done), *Full Metal Jacket* also satirises the culture industry's efforts at sustaining morale for the war. A major theme of the film is what Kubrick described as the US attempt to 'fine tune reality like an advertising agency' (Ciment, p. 243). Joker's editor wants stories with a 'weenie' – reports of American soldiers who 'give half their pay to buy gooks toothbrushes and deodorants' and of 'combat action that results in a kill'. The colonel who lectures to Joker speaks in the stale metaphors of advertising and business: 'What don't you get with the program? Why don't you jump on the team and come on in for the

big win?' Lawrence Welk and Ann Margaret plan to entertain the Marines with schmaltz and sex; network TV visits the battlefield, blurring the boundary between war and show business; the action in Vietnam is played off against a background of American pop tunes (juxtaposed with an eerie score by Abigail Mead, the *nom de plume* of Vivian Kubrick); and in Da Nang even a petty thief gets into the act by imitating Bruce Lee.

The most significant cultural icon is John Wayne, the Hollywood hawk whose voice and name are evoked at several points. This motif has spectacular expression in the film's shooting script, in a scene taken from Hasford's novel: Joker and a group of Marines visit the 'Freedom PX Movie Theater' to watch Wayne's production of *The Green Berets* (1968), which Joker describes as 'a Hollywood soap opera about the love of guns'. As the film is screened, Joker comments in voice-over: 'We watch John Wayne leading the Green Beanies. John Wayne is a beautiful soldier, clean-shaven, sharply attired in tailored tiger-stripe jungle utilities, wearing boots that shine like black glass. Inspired by John Wayne, the fighting soldiers from the sky go hand-to-hand with all of the Victor Charlies in Southeast Asia' (pp. 39–40). The marines in the PX laugh uproariously at the film, especially at the Asian actor George Takei, who plays an Arvin officer in *The Green Berets* but who is most famous for playing Sulu in TV's *Star Trek*. When Takei says with great conviction, 'First kill . . . all stinking Cong . . . then go home,' one of the Marines shouts, 'You fuckin' asshole, you kill stinking Cong. I wanna go home now!'

The references to Wayne that remain in the film function as short-hand for the super-patriotic myths of cowboy masculinity and American triumphalism that were often purveyed by Hollywood in the years leading up to the US involvement in Vietnam. These same references also function to make *Full Metal Jacket* look authentic, edgy and honest in comparison with traditional combat movies. It's important to recognise, however, that despite Kubrick's sardonic portrayal of military conflict, not everyone has interpreted his film as an anti-war statement or 'used' it as a satire of proto-fascism in the US military. Samuel Fuller, no stranger to gritty war movies or indeed to war itself, angrily described *Full Metal Jacket* as a 'recruiting film' (quoted in Krohn, p. 1). An even more damaging description can be found in Anthony Swofford's memoir of combat, *Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War* (2003):

Vietnam War films are all pro-war, no matter what the supposed message, what Kubrick or Coppola or Stone intended . . . The magic brutality of the films celebrates the terrible and despicable beauty of [military] fighting skills. Fight, rape, war, pillage, burn. Filmic images of death and carnage are pornography for the military man.<sup>11</sup>

No one can predict all the perverse pleasures individual viewers might take from movies, and no director can ensure her or his film won't be enjoyed for reasons other than the ones intended. Even so, Swofford's observation and my own childhood experience lead me to ask whether Kubrick himself might love the masculine brutality he is satirising. This is a

question many viewers have asked about *A Clockwork Orange*, and I think the answer is a qualified yes. Even though Kubrick was a nerdy-looking intellectual, he was a highly competitive fellow who was attracted to violent sports like boxing and football, and as an artist he gave careful attention to the phallic hardware of bombing planes and spacecraft. Michael Herr remembers that, during a break in working on the script of *Full Metal Jacket*, he and Kubrick took 'a few of Stanley's guns' to a local gun club and practised firing them (p. 42). In interviews, Kubrick was fond of a remark he attributed to Robert E. Lee: 'It is fortunate that war is so terrible or we should grow very fond of it.'<sup>12</sup> He clearly appreciated what Swofford calls the 'magic brutality' and 'terrible and despicable beauty' of combat, and he recognised a dirty little secret about young men in the military: there's a bit of Alex in even the best trained soldiers – a desire to '[f]ight, rape, war, pillage, and burn'.

I would argue, however, that Kubrick's ambivalence towards war isn't an artistic failing. Indeed the tension between the eroticism of warfare and the horror of warfare (symbolised by the peace emblem and the 'Born to Kill' motto) is precisely what makes *Full Metal Jacket* a compelling and disturbing film. This quality is especially evident in Lee Ermey's portrayal of Hartman, who is both hateful and charismatic, and who may have prompted Samuel Fuller's 'recruiting poster' comment. A Marine veteran and former DI who had been injured in combat during the Vietnam War, Ermey played a bit part in *Apocalypse Now* and worked as an advisor on that and several other films, including *Full Metal Jacket*. He wasn't originally cast in the role of Hartman, but his Marine Corps training sessions with the other players convinced Kubrick to use him. He's in sharp contrast with the sentimental, tough-love DIs in previous movies – especially with Louis Gossett Jr in *An Officer and a Gentleman* (1982), but more interestingly with Jack Webb in *The DI*, a film about a drill instructor who puts a spoiled, unwilling recruit through a kind of frat-house initiation and transforms him into a manly soldier. (Webb's *The DI* is explicitly referred to in Hasford's *The Short-Timers*.)

Ermey told reporters that his conception of the character was derived from 'the ten worst drill instructors I knew', who were combined to make 'the nastiest human being that could ever walk the earth'.<sup>13</sup> But Hartman became a less nasty fellow during the shooting, when Kubrick became enamoured of Ermey's improvisations. Ermey was no Peter Sellers, but he had a similar ability to crack the director up, and he contributed a good deal of brilliant profanity to the dialogue. His weird charm and grotesque wit assert themselves despite his wooden facial expression and his one-note performance, which consists mostly of abusive yelling. He's the most authentic-looking figure in the film, completely overshadowing Modine and D'Onofrio, whose work is more shaded and technically skilled. If, in spite of his almost cartoon-like sadism and jingoism, he can be seen as a character in a 'recruiting film', that may be because he has something in common with Alex in *A Clockwork Orange* and Jack in *The Shining*, who have a similarly seductive aura, and who invite us to laugh and thrill at cruelty. Ermey conveys the blend of military glamour and absurdist horror that lies at the core of the film, and this paradoxical quality seems to me an improvement over the purely monstrous drill sergeant that we find in the script. Hartman is bizarrely

funny and, to some degree, admirably self-disciplined; his attractiveness, if one can call it that, may have prompted Kubrick to balance the dramatic scales by making Joker less active or heroic. As a result, Hartman is too fascinating to be truly hated and Joker too ineffectual to be fully sympathetic.

It would be difficult to conclude from all this that Kubrick approved of US policy in Vietnam or wanted to make the conflict seem tragic rather than criminally foolish. Kubrick's vision of military indoctrination and combat is distinctly unsentimental and unmelodramatic, especially compared with the patriotic distortions of *The Deer Hunter*, the operatic pretensions of *Apocalypse Now* and the emotional manipulations of *Platoon*. The action in the second half of the film is noticeably unspectacular, lacking the suspense we normally expect of the genre. Kubrick's refusal to pull heart-strings or arouse vengeful emotions is particularly evident in the way he stages a scene we've seen many times before in Hollywood war movies: the death of the hero's friend. In Hasford's novel, Joker kills the stranded Cowboy in order to stop the platoon from making suicidal attempts to save him. Kubrick is much less dramatic: Cowboy dies in Joker's arms and Joker bends his head to weep – but the camera is set at a distance and Joker is surrounded by so many figures that we hardly see him.

The most unusual aspect of the film is that it uses many familiar generic ingredients and yet never generates a lucid, conventionally unified plot with a forceful protagonist. The first part is a closet drama dealing with a failed ideological indoctrination and the second part a relatively aimless and sometimes emotionally flat series of episodes in ravaged Vietnam. Kubrick keeps the war-loving viewer off balance, waiting for a thrill that never comes. He does, however, offer the convulsive violence of two closures, the first staged in the blue latrine and the second in the flame-red factory. The emphasis in both cases is not on the heroic or pathetic sacrifices of US soldiers, but on the last, barely articulated expressions of two outsiders – an unmanly Marine and a teenage girl who use weapons of steel and wood, and whose deaths rebuke the warrior-male ethos.

## II. Lovers

Twelve years went by before Kubrick's next and final film, a period when he worked with writers and designers on the development of two projects, *The Aryan Papers* and *A. I. Artificial Intelligence*, which, for reasons having to do with Warner's assessment of the market and Kubrick's own doubts about the scripts, were never brought to completion. In the end, he secured approval from Warner for *Eyes Wide Shut*, a modernised retelling of an erotic Arthur Schnitzler novella of 1925, scripted in collaboration with Frederic Raphael and starring Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, who were the most famous married couple in America. Kubrick died shortly after completing the lengthy production of the film; he probably didn't supervise the final sound mixing, and he had no opportunity to fine-tune the editing after the initial release. But *Eyes Wide Shut* is substantially what he aimed to accomplish and is a remarkable last testament.

Kubrick had been fascinated with the Schnitzler novella since at least 1968, when he asked his wife to read it. At about the same time, he briefly discussed with Terry Southern the possibility of making a sleek pornographic movie featuring major stars (Southern wrote *Blue Movie*, a novel about a Kubrick-like director who tries to make such a picture), and he told the potential backers of his Napoleon film that the central character would have a 'sex life worthy of Arthur Schnitzler' (quoted in LoBrutto, p. 322). Christiane Kubrick could easily have read the novella in its original German version, entitled *Traumnovella* ('Dream Story'), although Kubrick probably showed her the 1926 English translation by J. M. Q. Davies, entitled *Rhapsody*. The fact that he knew the text at all is an indication of his wide-ranging interests. By the middle of the twentieth century, Schnitzler, whose career began in the 1870s and lasted until 1931, seemed a bit dated as a writer, probably because most of his work was set in *fin de siècle* Vienna and involved characters who fought duels and spoke in formal language. Even in *Traumnovella*, in which the characters use telephones, the atmosphere is reminiscent of an earlier era. During the period between the 1890s and the 1920s, however, Schnitzler had been at the forefront of European literature. He was among the first novelists to employ internal monologue (in the third-person, free-indirect form known in Germany as *erlebte Rede*), and his writings were almost as sexually scandalous to their original audience as those of James Joyce or D. H. Lawrence.

Schnitzler's insights into bourgeois sexual psychology, most of which resulted from his personal experience as a medical student and self-confessed womaniser, attracted the interest of no less a contemporary than Sigmund Freud, who described Schnitzler as his 'double'. Schnitzler never returned the compliment, but he became part of an Austro-Hungarian cultural revolution that produced, in addition to Freud, Hugo Hofmannsthal, Gustav Klimt, Gustav Mahler, Karl Kraus and Arnold Schoenberg. The vibrant art world of 'Young Vienna' also influenced a later generation of film directors, including Fritz Lang, Otto Preminger and Billy Wilder. In fact, Schnitzler himself was a lover of movies. His diary, in addition to describing roughly 600 of his dreams, indicates that he saw at least three films a week in the late 1920s. His work was adapted by several film directors, including Cecil B. DeMille (*The Affairs of Anatol* [1921]), Paul Czinner (*Fraulein Else* [1929]) and Max Ophuls (*Liebeli* [1932] and *La Ronde* [1950]). G. W. Pabst was at one point interested in making a film based on *Traumnovella*, for which Schnitzler prepared an incomplete screenplay. (He believed the novella would make an interesting sound film without dialogue.) Finally, in 1969, *Traumnovella* was adapted for Austrian TV, directed by Wolfgang Glück.

*Traumnovella* differs from most European fiction of the previous two centuries in that it concerns fidelity rather than adultery. Its chief characters are Fredolin, a successful Jewish medical doctor in Vienna, and his decorative wife, Albertine. The couple has a 'flax-haired' little daughter and lives in bourgeois luxury, assisted by a maidservant. One evening at a fashionable masked ball, Fredolin is greeted warmly by two amorous young women while, at another place in the room, Albertine is almost seduced by a stranger 'whose blasé

melancholy air and foreign-sounding – evidently Polish – accent had at first intrigued her'.<sup>14</sup> At home later that evening, the husband and wife fall into one another's arms 'with an ardor they had not experienced for quite some time' (p. 176). On the next evening, however, the memory of their 'missed opportunities' causes them to feel a 'need for mild revenge'; in the bedroom, they begin to confess 'scarcely admitted desires', exploring 'secret regions . . . towards which the irrational winds of fate might one day drive them, if only in their dreams' (p. 177). Albertine tells of an incident that occurred during their previous summer's vacation in Denmark, when she was so attracted to a passing naval officer that she would have been willing, had he asked, to run away with him. Fredolin recalls that on the last day of that same vacation, as he was walking near the sea-shore, he saw a naked girl of no more than fifteen with 'loose, flaxen hair', who looked at him with 'joy and abandon', leaving him on the point of swooning (p. 181).

On the heels of these troubling confessions, Fredolin is called away to meet with the family of a patient who has just died. For the rest of the evening he wanders the city, encountering sexual opportunities that he either rejects or is unable to seize: he hears a bizarre declaration of love from the dead patient's daughter; he is approached by a seventeen-year-old prostitute; he has a chance meeting with an old acquaintance who tells a fantastic story about playing piano blindfolded for a masked orgy; he makes a hasty visit to a costume shop where the proprietor acts as a pimp for his underage daughter; he travels by night to a mysterious estate where a secret password ('Denmark') gains him admission to the orgy; his masquerade is discovered and he is on the verge of being punished when a beautiful masked woman announces to the gathering that she will 'redeem' him; and he returns home to his marriage bed, where Albertine laughs in her sleep and, upon waking, explains that she has been dreaming of having sex with the Danish naval officer and a crowd of others while Fredolin was being crucified.

On the next day, Fredolin retraces his path through the city and tries to discover the identity of the beautiful woman who was ready to sacrifice herself for him. In a newspaper, he reads about the apparent suicide of 'Baroness D.', a lady of 'remarkable beauty' (p. 267) and fears this might be the woman at the orgy; he visits a mortuary to view her body but, when he sees the naked corpse, he realises that he can never know for certain who she is and perhaps doesn't want to know. Returning home in the evening, he finds Albertine asleep beside the mask he had worn to the orgy. When she wakes, he tearfully admits everything that has happened and asks what they should do. Albertine says they should both be grateful that 'we have safely emerged from these adventures – both from the real ones and from those we dreamed about' (p. 281). Before Fredolin can promise to be true forever, she places a finger over his lips and whispers, 'Never enquire into the future.' The story ends as the new day dawns and the couple's child is heard from a nearby room.

Although *Traumnovella* is a product of the *fin de siècle's* 'dreamy' aestheticism, it also has certain affinities with well-known examples of high-modernist fiction. It occasionally resembles Kafka, partly because it introduces a note of perverse, unhealthy sexuality into

an otherwise straightforward and rather polite narrative and partly because it blurs the boundaries between dreams, fantasies and reality. It also has a few things in common with James Joyce's most celebrated short story, 'The Dead' (1914), which, like *Traumnovella*, is told mostly from the point of view of a husband who learns that his beautiful wife once felt passionate desire for another man. Like Joyce, Schnitzler employs a free-associative 'inner speech' to reveal hidden aspects of the husband's character. In both stories the husbands are cautious men, clinging to respectability in a decadent or moribund society, who come to realise, in Schnitzler's words, that 'all this order, balance and security' are really 'an illusion and a lie' (p. 259). The two husbands are also subtly attracted to death. When Fredolin leaves his dead patient, he feels as if he has 'escaped, not so much from an experience as from some melancholy enchantment that must not gain power over him' (p. 193). When he visits the mortuary to view the naked body of the 'Baroness', he imagines that the corpse is trying to move and touch him and, as if 'drawn on by some enchantment', he bends down and almost kisses the dead woman on the lips (p. 276). The pull towards dissolution has something to do with Thanatos, but is also related to a more general insecurity and lack of moral courage in the face of social life. For example, when Fredolin first sets out to wander the nocturnal streets, he sees a homeless man sleeping on a park bench and struggles to avoid identification with him:

What if I were to wake him, thought Fredolin, and give him money for a night's lodging? But what good would that do, he went on to reflect, I'd then have to provide for him tomorrow too, otherwise there would be no point and perhaps I would be suspected of some criminal association with him . . . Why him, specifically? He asked himself, in Vienna alone there are thousands of such miserable souls. Supposing one were to start worrying about all of them – about the fates of all those unknown people! The dead man he had just left came into his mind, and with a shudder of revulsion he reflected how, in compliance with eternal laws, corruption and decay had already set to work in that emaciated body . . . He was glad that he was still alive, that for him such ugly matters were still probably a long way off; glad that he was in his prime, that a charming and lovable woman was there at his disposal, and that he could have another one, many others, if he so desired. Such things might admittedly require more courage than he could muster; and he reflected that by eight o'clock tomorrow he would have to be back at the clinic. (pp. 193–4)

Whether or not Stanley Kubrick was aware of the similarities between Schnitzler and Joyce, he at one point considered setting his adaptation of *Traumnovella* in Dublin. Before that, he contemplated a black-comic version starring Steve Martin. Eventually he recognised the voyeuristic and commercial possibilities of giving the leading roles to major film stars who were married in real life. The participation of Cruise and Kidman also helped to confirm another of his ideas: the story could be moved to contemporary Manhattan. Kubrick strongly believed that Schnitzler's characters and themes would make sense in

a late twentieth-century context. He was not alone in this conviction. At almost the same moment as the release of *Eyes Wide Shut*, and purely by coincidence, British playwright David Hare transformed Schnitzler's *Reigen* (1897) into a modern-day drama entitled *The Blue Room*; the London production starred Nicole Kidman, who, as in Kubrick's movie, appeared nude in some of her scenes.

By casting Cruise and Kidman, Kubrick invited the audience to speculate about their real-life relationship (their divorce not long after the release of the film fuelled even more speculation), but *Eyes Wide Shut* is also filled with 'inside' references to the director and several of the people close to him. The Manhattan apartment where the fictional married couple lives is loosely based on an apartment where Kubrick and his wife lived in the late 1960s. The paintings on the walls of the apartment are by Christiane Kubrick and Katharina Kubrick Hobbs, both of whom make cameo appearances as extras later in the film. The granny glasses and upswept hair Nicole Kidman wears in her domestic scenes bear a strong resemblance to the glasses and hair of Christiane Kubrick in photographs taken at the time when the film was made. The husband in the film watches pro football on TV, as Kubrick was fond of doing. When the wife watches TV, she sees *Blume in Love* (1973), a movie about the break-up of a marriage, directed by Paul Mazursky, who was an actor in Kubrick's *Fear and Desire*. When she wraps Christmas presents, we see her wrapping a boxed edition of Van Gogh's paintings much like the one Kubrick gave as a Christmas present to screenwriter Frederic Raphael during the making of the film. When the husband wanders the New York streets, he passes a storefront called 'Vitali's' – a reference to Leon Vitali, Bullington in *Barry Lyndon*, who plays a small role in this film and who worked as Kubrick's assistant on this and other pictures. There are also links to Kubrick's family history: his father, like the husband in the film, was a doctor, and his ancestors emigrated to America from Austria at about the time when Arthur Schnitzler was at the height of his fame. All these connections may not constitute a full-fledged *film-à-clef*, but they provide a good deal of evidence to suggest that *Eyes Wide Shut* is Kubrick's most personal project. The result, as Jonathan Rosenbaum has observed, is 'personal filmmaking as well as dream poetry of the kind most movie commerce has ground underfoot'.<sup>15</sup>

Where the development of the screenplay was concerned, Kubrick's relationship with his co-writer appears to have been different from his previous collaborations – more distant and impersonal, at least if one can judge from Frederic Raphael's *Eyes Wide Open: A Memoir of Stanley Kubrick* (1999). A prolific author with a scholarly background, Raphael was no doubt hired for the job because he had written the screenplay for Stanley Donen's *Two for the Road* (1967), a realistic film about modern marriage. He made a few lunch-time visits to Kubrick's home but conducted most of the script conferences over the telephone, reluctantly sending Kubrick pages of work in progress via fax from various places in Europe. Kubrick made revisions to the first draft of the script, Raphael polished Kubrick's work and other changes were probably made by Kubrick during production. Although Raphael has described Kubrick as a 'genius', he seems to have felt a good deal

of suspicion, resentment and intellectual defensiveness towards his employer, as if he and Kubrick were combatants in a chess match: 'If we sometimes acted like buddies,' he writes, 'there was between us an intimacy without commitment and, at times, heat without warmth.'<sup>16</sup>

Despite its subtitle, Raphael's memoir is chiefly about himself and needs to be used with caution, especially when it gives us lengthy, verbatim reports of his conversations with Kubrick in the form of a mock screenplay. Nevertheless, it contains some useful information. Raphael disliked the title *Eyes Wide Shut*, which was Kubrick's idea, and thought Schnitzler's treatment of sex would look dated if it were transposed without much change into the present day. He also thought – correctly – that an important issue in the novella was the married couple's Jewishness, a feature Schnitzler establishes early in the story, when several young men from a Viennese fencing fraternity deliberately bump against Fredolin in the street and make anti-Semitic remarks.<sup>17</sup> Kubrick insisted that the husband and wife should be a WASP couple, probably because he wanted to cast Cruise and Kidman. In the film they become Bill and Alice Harford, a surname created from the first and last names of Harrison Ford, a thoroughly middle-American star. Bill is abused in the street by American fraternity boys who call him a queer, and in a later scene a gay hotel clerk tries to flirt with him. As if to make things look even more Gentile, everybody in the film celebrates Christmas. I'm not sure what to make of the irony that the character who is coded as Jewish – Victor Ziegler (Sydney Pollack), Bill's super-wealthy patient – is also the most morally corrupt character.

Raphael initially tried to give Bill Harford a back-story, writing scenes in which we would see him in his student days and learn something about his relationship to his father. Later in the process Kubrick rejected these scenes and repeatedly asked Raphael to follow Schnitzler's 'beats', deviating as little as possible from the events in the original story. Most of the changes in the plot are relatively minor: for example, the party attended by the married couple is shown rather than reported upon; the husband's story about an encounter with a teenaged girl on the beach is eliminated; the husband doesn't pass a homeless man in the street; and the wife's passionate desire for the Danish officer seems to obsess the husband in the film a bit more than it obsesses Fredolin in the novella. The most significant change is the addition of an entirely new character – Victor Ziegler, an invention of Raphael's, who appears at the beginning and end, creating a slightly noirish aura and acting as a sinister *deus ex machina*.

Although the transformation of Schnitzler's characters into contemporary Manhattanites is cleverly achieved, the completed film often alludes to the Viennese origins of the story. The eclectic musical soundtrack includes 'Wein, Du Stadt meiner Träume' by Rudolf Siczynski. 'Sharkey's', the coffee shop where Bill Harford reads a newspaper with a minatory headline ('Lucky to Be Alive'), has frosted windowpanes, dark wooden furnishings and *fin de siècle* artwork reminiscent of the cafés in Schnitzler's world. The Beethoven opera *Fidelio*, which serves as a password to the masked orgy, had its premiere in Vienna in the



nineteenth century. A more prominent allusion can be seen in the dazzling curtain of gold lights decorating the ballroom at Ziegler's Christmas party – a reference to Gustav Klimt, a Viennese contemporary of Freud and Schnitzler, who began as a painter of bourgeois theatrical scenes but soon became what Carl Schorske describes as a 'psychological painter of women'.<sup>18</sup> A controversial figure in his lifetime, Klimt suffered a loss of patronage from official museum culture and evolved into a proto-modernist whose erotic images were characterised by a flat, golden luminescence and, in Schorske's words, a 'crystalline ornamentality' (p. 264). Notice also that *Eyes Wide Shut* opens with 'Waltz # 2' from Dmitri Shostakovich's *Jazz Suite*, which, although written in the 1930s, evokes the sexy glamour of Viennese culture at the beginning of the twentieth century. As Claudia Gorbman has observed, the timbre of the saxophone passage conveys 'nostalgia or even melancholy', creating a slightly decadent, Old-World sense 'of texture, of history, of knowing' that seems at odds with the married couple we see in the film. (Because of its fullness and presence, we initially assume the Shostakovich music is non-diegetic, like *The Blue Danube* in 2001; but Bill abruptly stops it by turning off a stereo.) Besides all this, Kubrick gives us a number of gracefully executed Steadicam shots of characters walking through rooms or dancing around ballrooms reminiscent of the films of Max Ophuls – a director who was born in Saärbrücken but who is usually regarded as quintessentially Viennese.

Like the novella, the film has an oneiric quality. Apart from a few stock shots of traffic on Manhattan streets, the city is vaguely like a stage setting, with street names that don't exist and a jazz club that looks like a nostalgic recreation of places Kubrick might have habituated in his youth. (Kubrick went to considerable lengths to achieve an accurate representation of New York, even hiring photographers to secretly snap pictures of people on Manhattan streets so that extras in the film could be garbed appropriately; but the subtle, deliberate unreality of the sets confused some of the film's original reviewers, who thought the director had been living abroad so long that he had forgotten what the city looked like.) Night-time scenes in the Harford apartment are designed and lit in a colour-coded, stylised manner: the golden bedroom is decorated with flaming-red drapes, and through an open doorway the adjacent rooms look mysteriously blue. The bedroom of the luxurious Park Avenue apartment where Bill goes to pay his respects to a dead man has a sickly, somewhat greenish quality; the secret orgy looks like a mixture of ancient ritual, Venetian carnival and perverse fairy tale; and the climactic conversation with Ziegler takes place around a strangely expressive, blood-red billiard table. Masks can be seen in several rooms, and the ubiquitous Christmas decorations take on a magical aura.

What gives the film an especially strange feeling, however, is the weird comedy of a few of the scenes, such as the ones involving the costumer and his daughter (Leelee Sobieski), plus



the associational or 'rhyming' relationship between certain events. Two beautiful models at Ziegler's party invite Bill to follow them to '[w]here the rainbow ends', and later Bill visits a shop named 'Rainbow Fashions' with a basement called 'Under the Rainbow'. During the party, a vaguely dangerous-looking associate of Ziegler calls Bill away from the two models and, during the Somerton orgy, an ominous man calls Bill away from a sexy masked woman. When Bill returns home from the orgy, where he was simply an observer of the action, Alice tells of a dream she's had in which she takes part in an orgy while he stands by and watches. Mandy, the naked call-girl who is saved by Bill early in the film, may or may not be the naked masked woman who saves Bill at the orgy and the naked woman whose body Bill later views at the morgue. (For the record, Mandy, the masked woman, and the woman in the morgue are played by two different actors – Abigail Good is the mysterious masked woman and Julianne Davis is Mandy and the woman in the morgue.)

These repetitions and transformations create a problem of interpretation similar to the one we've seen in *The Shining*. In the earlier film, we're constantly invited to ask: is this real or is he crazy? In *Eyes Wide Shut*, the question is only slightly different: is he awake or is he dreaming? Once again, we've entered the narrative mode of the uncanny as it verges on the fantastic. As previously, the story concerns a nuclear family and produces the spooky or eerie effects that Freud attributed to the intimate appeal of 'what is familiar and



agreeable' mixed with anxiety over 'what is concealed and kept out of sight' (pp. 224–5). Freud's essay on the uncanny was in fact written only a few years before Schnitzler's *Traumnovella*,<sup>19</sup> and Kubrick's film seems to emphasise the deep connection between the two texts, almost systematically touching upon the events and situations Freud had described as giving rise to uncanny feelings. Among these are the fear that a puppet, doll or lifeless body might become animate (as in the scenes involving the dead patient, the body in the morgue and the mannequins in Milich's shop); the fear of a mirror-image or *doppelgänger* (as in the two models at the party, the two prostitutes, the two dead bodies and the peculiar doubling effect that Michel Chion has noted in the scene of the grieving and neurotically love-struck daughter, in which the arrival of the daughter's fiancé is represented with exactly the same sequence of shots and movements that were used for the arrival of Bill Harford); and the fear of having one's eyes put out (in this case the purely metaphorical fear of having one's eyes wide shut – in Freudian terms, being symbolically castrated by a father-figure like Zeigler or a woman like Alice).

Freud also puts great stress on the uncanny effect of mysteriously recurring events, which he attributes to a neurotic 'repetition compulsion' and later analyses at length in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). In the essay on the uncanny, he compares these recurrences with the 'helplessness experienced in some dream-states', and he gives an example from his personal experience:

As I was walking, one hot summer afternoon, through the deserted streets of a provincial town in Italy, which was unknown to me, I found myself in a quarter of whose character I could not long remain in doubt. Nothing but painted women were to be seen in the windows of the small houses, and I hastened to leave the narrow street at the next turning. But after having wandered about for a time without enquiring my way, I suddenly found myself back in the same street . . . I hurried away once more, only to arrive by a *detour* at the same place yet a third time. Now, however, a feeling overcame me which I can only describe as uncanny, and I was glad enough to find myself back at the piazza I had left a short while before, without any further voyages of discovery. (p. 237)

Freud's 'voyages of discovery' have something in common with Bill Harford's wanderings through New York, all of which return him uncannily to the same places, including the apartment of a prostitute. In one sense, Bill is an ironic version of Odysseus, experiencing dangerous adventures while Penelope remains at home; but he's also a Freudian everyman, led along by unrecognised wishes, confounded by the interpenetration of dreams and everyday life, neurotically repeating himself. Diane Johnson has described this psychological atmosphere perfectly: 'As in a dream, a texture of fears and wishes unfold – a lover waltzes away with one's wife, a patient's pretty daughter confesses her passion, a prostitute both beckons and threatens death, the erotic fantasies of men about little girls are made frighteningly specific. The wallet always has money in it . . .' The result, she concludes, is 'a ground

plan of the male psyche, mapping the fear, desire, omnipresence of sex, preoccupation with death, the connection of death and Eros, the anxiety in men generated by female sexuality' (Cocks *et al.*, p. 61).

The feeling of eerie repetition also insinuates itself into the film's dialogue. During the development of the screenplay Kubrick emphasised to Raphael that the language should be plain to the point of minimalism. (Schnitzler's novella tends to report speech rather than giving it directly.) He particularly wanted to avoid the witty give-and-take associated with theatrical or cinematic depictions of middle-class sex – Neil Simon's *Plaza Suite* (1971), for example, and even Raphael's *Two for the Road*. As a result, most of the language in *Eyes Wide Shut* is utterly banal – a significant phenomenon given Kubrick's high regard for verbal stylists like Nabokov and Burgess and the obvious pleasure he takes in the elaborate formal locutions of *Barry Lyndon* or the flamboyant vulgarity of *Full Metal Jacket*. Even in 2001, in which all the human characters speak in banalities or technocratic jargon, the HAL computer sounds almost eloquent. In *Eyes Wide Shut*, however, the speeches are usually so monosyllabic and quotidian that they constitute an anti-style. The qualified exceptions are the epigram that Alice's potential seducer borrows from Oscar Wilde ('Don't you think one of the charms of marriage is that it makes deception necessary for both parties?') and some of the longer speeches, such as Alice's story about the naval officer, her tearful recounting of her dream, and Ziegler's disquisition near the end of the film. But even these monologues are marked by hesitations and repeated words. The only artful touch, though at first it doesn't seem to be, is the extremely large number of what Michel Chion calls 'parroted' lines – instances when a character repeats what another character has just said.<sup>20</sup> In one crucial place, as Chion points out, a delayed parroting has an ironic effect: near the beginning of the film, Bill tells Mandy, the young woman who has nearly died of a drug overdose in Ziegler's bathroom, 'You're going to need some rehab. You know that, don't you?' And near the end, Ziegler tells Bill, 'Life goes on. It always does until it doesn't. But you know that, don't you?' The other repetitions are less weighty. A few of Chion's examples will suffice to reveal the pattern they create:

BILL: What did he want?

ALICE: What did he want? Oh . . . what did he want?

DOMINO: Come inside with me?

BILL: Come inside with you?

MILICH: He moved to Chicago.

BILL: He moved to Chicago?

SALLY: HIV positive.

BILL: HIV positive?

ZIEGLER: I had you followed.

BILL: You had me followed?

BILL: What do you think we should do?

ALICE: What do I think we should do?

BILL: Forever?

ALICE: Forever?

BILL: Forever.

One might think that the actors would dislike this sort of thing, but I suspect they enjoyed it. In the jargon of professional linguistics, it enables them to demonstrate the 'performance' functions of language; they often convert simple declarative statements into questions, thus performing what the linguists describe as an 'illocutionary act', or they change a statement's inflection, performing a 'perlocutionary act'. (One of the most obvious instances of the latter technique is Alice's 'What did *he* want? Oh . . . what did *he* want?') Sometimes the repetitions achieve a kind of wit, as in the conversation between the slightly tipsy Alice and Sandor Szavost (Sky Dumont), who is one of the cinema's most aggressively seductive lounge lizards: 'My name is Sandor Szavost. I'm Hungarian.' 'My name is Alice Harford. I'm American.'

The repetitiousness induces a 'subtextual' style of acting, a tendency to communicate meanings chiefly through inflections, tones of voice, facial expressions or small gestures. Kubrick enhances this quality by giving the actors very little business to perform and seldom allowing them to walk around a room or execute complicated movements in relation to the camera. He paces everything in characteristically slow fashion and sometimes photographs simple actions (walking down a hall, crossing from A to B) in wide shots that create empty space and dead time. The effect is almost Antonioni-like, except that the framing is extremely precise and relatively little use is made of off-screen areas. With the notable exception of the Steadicam shots in the opening sequences and at the masked orgy, most scenes involve actors who face one another across a table, a desk or a small room.

A good example is Bill's conversation with a hotel desk clerk (Alan Cumming) who smiles, looks Bill up and down, rolls his eyes, flutters his hands and turns every line into a coy insinuation. A less comically ostentatious example is Bill's second visit to Domino's apartment, where he encounters Sally, Domino's attractive roommate (Fay Masterson). The conversation is filled with echoed lines and suggestive glances: 'So, do you have any idea when you expect Domino back?' 'No, I have no idea.' 'You have no idea?' 'Well, to be perfectly honest, she . . . she may not even be coming back.' 'She may not even be coming back?' At the beginning of this exchange, the two actors stand close together in the tiny room; an erotic charge passes between them and they smile or laugh each time they speak. By the time we reach 'She may not even be coming back', Bill is fondling Sally's breast.





'Well, umm . . . I, erh,' she murmurs, and Bill responds, 'You, erh.' Awkwardly, Sally finds her voice: 'I think some . . . something that I should tell you.' 'Really?' 'Yeah . . . but I don't know.' 'You don't know? What is it?' Forcing herself to break free, Sally asks Bill to sit down. A brief silence falls. Bill laughs softly. Sally's discomfort begins to show: 'Oh . . . I don't quite know how to say this.' Bill is still amused: 'You don't quite know how?' Sally grows serious, creating a beat-change in the emotional tenor of the conversation: 'I think it would be only fair to you, to let you know that, umm . . . [Domino] got the results of a blood test this morning and, erh . . . it was HIV positive.' Bill reacts quietly: 'HIV positive?' A longer silence descends. 'Well,' Bill says, and adopts his best bedside manner. 'I am very . . . very sorry to hear that.'

Within the film's deliberately narrow stylistic constraints, both Cruise and Kidman give impressive performances; but, even though the action is presented chiefly from Cruise's point of view and is almost entirely about masculine fantasy, Kidman makes the stronger immediate impression, contributing to the most complex female characterisation in Kubrick's career. (Not that it has much competition.) This is true despite the fact that, in traditional movie fashion, Kidman is offered up for the visual pleasure of the male audience. From the very beginning, in a temporally ambiguous shot, she sheds her party dress, revealing her coltish legs and beautifully shaped *derrière* for the eye of the camera. An

obvious signifier of what Laura Mulvey has described as 'to-be-looked-at-ness', she overshadows a gallery of young women with more voluptuous figures but less interesting or entirely masked features. Her porcelain skin and delicate lips connote propriety, and she plays the maternal scenes with convincing sweetness; but her red hair and vixen eyes connote sexual passion. She's a fantasy figure – the mother and the whore, a baby who, in the words of the Chris Isaak song, might 'do a bad, bad thing'. But she's also much more modern, independent and sympathetic than the equivalent character in Schnitzler's novella – a woman who might feel trapped and resentful in her marriage.

During the course of the film, Bill performs no household duties and Alice has no apparent purpose except to be decorative, wrap Christmas presents and help her daughter with schoolwork or the arts of beauty. (One of the toys her daughter wants to buy in the closing scene is a fairy-tale Barbie doll.) Everyone Alice meets, from her baby-sitter to Zeigler, compliments her on her beauty and says nothing else. When she explains to Sandor Szavost that the gallery where she once worked went broke and she's still looking for a job, Szavost is amused. 'Oh, what a shame!' he says, looking deep into her eyes. 'I have some friends in the art game. Perhaps they can be of help?' Then he tries to lure her upstairs, ostensibly to view Renaissance bronzes in Ziegler's private gallery. On the next day she reads newspaper ads, puts on a bra, combs her daughter's hair and prepares to go out (Job hunting? Shopping?). Kubrick cross-cuts between these scenes and Bill at his office, where, assisted by his female secretary and nurses, he examines a series of patients, including a bosomy young woman clad in bikini pants.

The film very swiftly establishes that Bill and Alice have been married for some time and that Bill takes her for granted. As they prepare to leave for the Christmas party, she sits on a toilet in their bathroom and urinates while he studies himself in a mirror. 'How do I look?' she asks. 'Perfect,' he replies, without glancing at her. Eyes wide shut, he leaves his ravishing wife alone at the party, never doubting her fidelity. Having no one to talk with, Alice drinks too much champagne and is pleased and amused by the flirtation that develops with Szavost. At home afterward she stands naked in front a mirror, wearing glasses and admiring her body as she moves seductively to music. Kidman expertly conveys the character's momentary pleasure in the power of her sexuality. As her husband embraces her, she looks away from him, into the mirror and almost into the camera, as if she were indulging her narcissism and at the same time offering herself to male viewers.

Kidman has nearly all the scenes in the film that showcase acting ability. She feigns two kinds of intoxication (champagne and marijuana) and delivers two monologues in different emotional registers (a vengeful confession of desire for another man and a tearful account of a sexual dream). Her most important scene is the one in which she tells Bill about the naval officer. First we see Alice studying herself wearily in the bathroom mirror, taking out a stash of marijuana and beginning to roll a joint. Cut to the bedroom, which is bathed in a golden light, again evoking Gustav Klimt. The camera zooms out from Alice, who reclines on the bed in sexy, pale lingerie, drawing deeply on the joint while Bill, in

black boxer shorts, leans over her. Both characters are stoned, and Alice's resentments surface immediately. She asks if Bill happened to 'fuck' the two women she saw him with at the party. As an argument develops, Kubrick cuts to medium close-ups on every line of dialogue, then to a wide shot as Bill engages Alice in sex play and teases her about Szavost. When Bill says it's 'understandable' that another man would want to have sex with her, she becomes angry and moves to the other side of the room. In a series of shot-reverse shots we see Alice at full length and Bill seated on the bed. Alice's initial outburst seems almost comically excessive; she stands unsteadily, framed in a blue doorway in semi-transparent underclothes, her entire body on view. 'So,' she asks loudly, 'because I'm a beautiful woman, the only reason a man wants to talk to me is he wants to fuck me?' Faced with this evidence, it's difficult not to sympathise with Bill, whose woozy attempt to avoid a quarrel pushes him deeper into a hole: 'Well, I don't think it's quite that black and white,' he says lamely, 'but I think we both know what men are like.' Seizing on the point as if she were a lawyer, Alice reminds Bill that he chatted with two beautiful models at the party and that he examines beautiful women in his office every day. 'This pot is making you aggressive,' he says. 'I'm not *ar-gu-ing*,' she cries as she plops down drunkenly on a dressing-table stool, 'I'm just trying to find out where you're coming from!'

The sources of Alice's resentment have less to do with Bill's flirtations or her own missed sexual opportunities than with an understandable feeling of inequality in the relationship. She stands and begins pacing back and forth, the red drapes on the bedroom window subtly suggesting her passion and anger. After millions of years of evolution, she says, men 'stick it in every place they can', while for women marriage is supposed to be about 'security and commitment'. 'If you men only knew,' she taunts. When Bill tells her that he's sure of her faithfulness, she laughs uncontrollably and falls to her knees. The critic Christian Appelt has pointed out that, until this point, Kubrick's framing and staging has been meticulous but unobtrusive, but when Alice doubles up laughing we have the only visibly hand-held shot in the film: the camera quivers slightly, 'evoking the feeling that the foundations of the marriage have been shaken'.<sup>21</sup> Recovering her composure, Alice sits on the floor with her back to a radiator and begins telling him about the last summer in Cape Cod. A close-up frames her face in three-quarters profile and her expression takes on a sadistic quality as she slowly describes the moment when the naval officer glanced at her. 'I could hardly move,' she says quietly, giving stress to every syllable. Then she confesses that throughout the rest of that day, even while making love with Bill, the officer was never out of her mind. With almost ruthless conviction she says she 'was ready to give up everything', but then in a dreamy voice admits that her love for Bill also made her feel 'tender and sad'. When she discovered on the next day that the officer was gone, she found herself 'relieved'.

Four times during Alice's long speech, Kubrick cuts to large close-ups of Bill, who sits completely still. Despite everything that has been said about the Kuleshov effect and its ability to create meaning, Cruise's performance in these tightly framed shots is important. Motionless, gesture-less, he nevertheless conveys subtle gradations of emotion that Kubrick

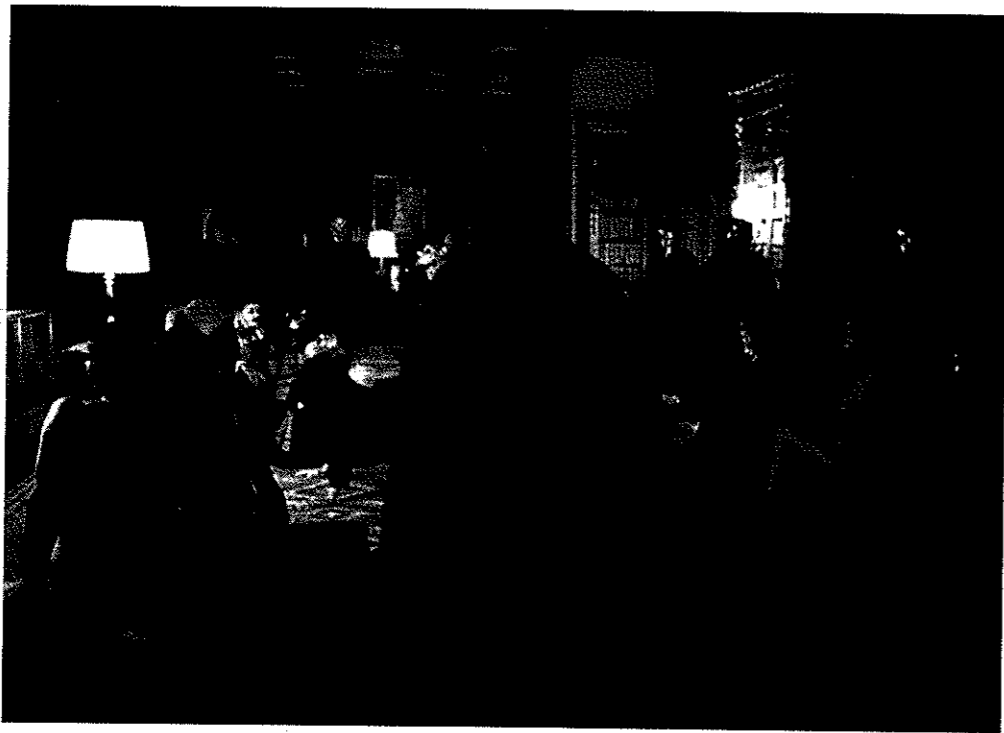
can use to chart the progress of Bill's feelings: a stunned, wounded look mixed with a slight frown of anger; a determined, stoic resistance to pain; a defeated glance downward, as if his bearings were gone; and, finally, as Alice mentions feeling 'tender and sad', a suggestion of tears. When Alice comes to the end of the story, Kubrick cuts to a more distant close-up that makes Bill seem isolated on the edge of the bed. Silence descends and the expression on Bill's face seems both hurt and resentfully angry. Suddenly, in time-honoured dramatic fashion, the telephone rings. Without changing the look on his face, Bill waits for three rings before he answers it.

Cruise's work in the film is consistently excellent but, as in this scene, relatively thankless. Most of the time he simply reacts quietly to what other people say and do. At Zeigler's Christmas party, where Bill tries to play the role of the successful young doctor, we glimpse the trademark energy and vitality of the Cruise persona – the action-hero intensity, the 1,000 kilowatt grin, the hearty back-slapping and hugs, and the sexual charisma. After Alice tells the story about the naval officer, however, Bill becomes a kind of sleepwalker, who seems to drift into a series of sexual encounters and near-comic sexual frustrations. Except for the blue movie running through his head at several points (literally blue: it consists of black-and-white, blue-tinted views of the naked Alice making love with a uniformed naval officer) and a point-of-view shot in which Alice smiles at him while he mentally 'hears' her voice from an earlier scene, we seldom know exactly what Bill is thinking. Or is most of what we see intended to suggest his dream thoughts? If so, exactly when does his dream begin and end? These questions are unanswerable and perhaps unimportant because, unlike the Schnitzler novella, which consists mostly of the central character's internal monologue, the film gives the story an entirely ambiguous ontological status.

Kubrick decided to cut Bill's extensive voice-over from an early draft of the script; instead he shows the character almost completely from the outside, relying on the *mise en scène* and Cruise's understated reactions to create psychological effects. This technique contributes to the feeling that Bill is being carried along impassively, rather like someone in a dream. In effect, his aimless journey is both a fantasy of sexual revenge and a guilty response to his own sexuality. Nearly everyone he meets comes on to him sexually, but his chief response is attempted dignity in the face of all kinds of fears, including infidelity, homosexuality, HIV-AIDS, incest/paedophilia and punishment from a father-figure such as Ziegler. At the orgy, where we might expect him to display at least a few excited reactions, his face is covered by an ornate but inexpressive mask that barely shows his eyes; he's a nearly ridiculous little man who wanders blankly through a strange sexual fun-house and then (as in a typical anxiety dream) suffers the embarrassment of having to remove his mask in front of the entire crowd.

The orgy was a major concern for Kubrick throughout his preparation for the film. Despite the anything-goes, pornography-on-demand environment of late twentieth-century media, some viewers expected a kinky sexual shock they had never seen. The Warner publicity campaign for *Eyes Wide Shut* and Kubrick's reputation as the director of

*A Clockwork Orange* obviously contributed to this expectation and may have led to disappointment in certain quarters. In fact, Bill's masked walk through the Somerton mansion was designed to show glimpses of fucking and sucking but, in order to obtain an R rating in the US, Kubrick placed computer-generated figures in the *mise en scène* for the North American market, blocking out the more explicit sexual details (his first use of CGI, which would figure more importantly in his plans for *A. I. Artificial Intelligence*). His concession to censorship, however, doesn't have a significant effect. Even without the computerised fig leaves, the orgy is coldly detached, involving none of the techniques – pulsing music, close-ups of genitalia, lingering views of lithe and sweaty bodies, moans and cries of satisfaction – that are the *sine qua non* of movie pornography. In a series of travelling shots from Bill's point of view, we see all sorts of sexual positions and a variety of heterosexual and homosexual activities, but the action is viewed from a relatively discreet distance and has a ritualistic quality that makes both participants and voyeurs seem bored. The entire panorama is intended as an allusion to fashion photographer Helmut Newton's fetishistic, semi-pornographic images in *Vogue* and other magazines during the 1980s. Newton's mostly black-and-white photographs featured half-naked, glamorous models standing or lying beside other, fully clothed models in extravagantly luxurious or formal settings, in poses suggestive of sadomasochism, zoophilia and other kinds of forbidden sexuality; one



of their most distinctive traits, a sign either of Newton's decadence or of his subtly satiric attitude towards the fashion world, was the jaded, blasé or drugged look of the models, who vaguely resembled the stone-faced socialites in *Last Year at Marienbad*.

Kubrick pays as much attention to the eclectic design and decor of Somerton as to the orgy itself, viewing the sexual activity in the context of ornate, rather Moorish architectural designs, marbled and carpeted floors and a richly furnished library. Everything has the feeling of a confused dream about ancient and modern cultures: the interiors look like a cross between Xanadu and the Playboy mansion; the invited guests resemble Catholic monks dressed as Venetian revellers; and the music, written and conducted by the British avant-garde composer Jocelyn Pook, sounds like a religious ritual filtered through post-modern performance art. One of Pook's compositions, 'Backward Priest', was created by recording the voice of a Romanian priest, running it backward and adding a repetitive, percussive musical chord that supposedly comes from Nick Nightingale's piano; another, 'Migrations', sounds vaguely Arabic or North African in origin. To this *mélange* Kubrick adds a kitschy dance tune, 'Strangers in the Night'. He also intended to incorporate chanted verses from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, but removed them when Hindu fundamentalists threatened to protest against the film.<sup>22</sup> In *The Da Vinci Code*, author Dan Brown absurdly opines that Kubrick was trying to send hidden messages about a grail society but got the details wrong. Actually, the point of all the wildly clashing cultural references isn't to create puzzles or secret symbols, but to lend an aura of all-purpose demonic ritual to a slightly weird erotic pageant. Like some types of dream, the orgy is both sinister and silly. Filled with details that would presumably make Jung and Freud jump for joy, it often looks like what Ziegler later claims it to be – an event staged to frighten Bill.

Kubrick's alienating treatment of the Somerton orgy points up the fact that *Eyes Wide Shut* is as much about money as about sex. As Tim Kreider has observed, the first words in the film are 'Honey, have you seen my wallet?' and the last scene is a shopping trip to FAO Schwartz; in between, we meet several prostitutes – one of whom is a girl working her way through college who owns a textbook entitled *Introducing Sociology* – and we're constantly reminded that Bill Harford is a prosperous doctor who serves extremely wealthy patients.<sup>23</sup> The importance of money is somewhat less evident in *Traumnovella*, which has no character like Zeigler, and this may be one reason why Jonathan Rosenbaum feels that Kubrick is more of a 'moralist' than Schnitzler (p. 265). In various ways the film suggests that Bill's guilt and shame when he returns home isn't simply the result of his potential unfaithfulness. In fact, for whatever fearful or accidental reasons, Bill hasn't committed adultery; his greater failing has to do with a tacit acceptance or complicity in Victor Ziegler's behaviour. At the big Christmas party, he jokingly tells Alice that they've been invited because of his willingness to make 'house calls'. Not long afterward Ziegler summons him upstairs to the fancy bathroom to help with a prostitute who, while having sex with Ziegler, has nearly died from a drug overdose. When Bill revives the woman, Ziegler tells him, 'You saved my ass', making it clear that the fate of the woman isn't the real concern. Bill replies

ambiguously, 'I'm glad I was here.' Ziegler pointedly asks Bill to keep quiet about the incident. 'Of course,' Bill says, in a man-to-man tone.

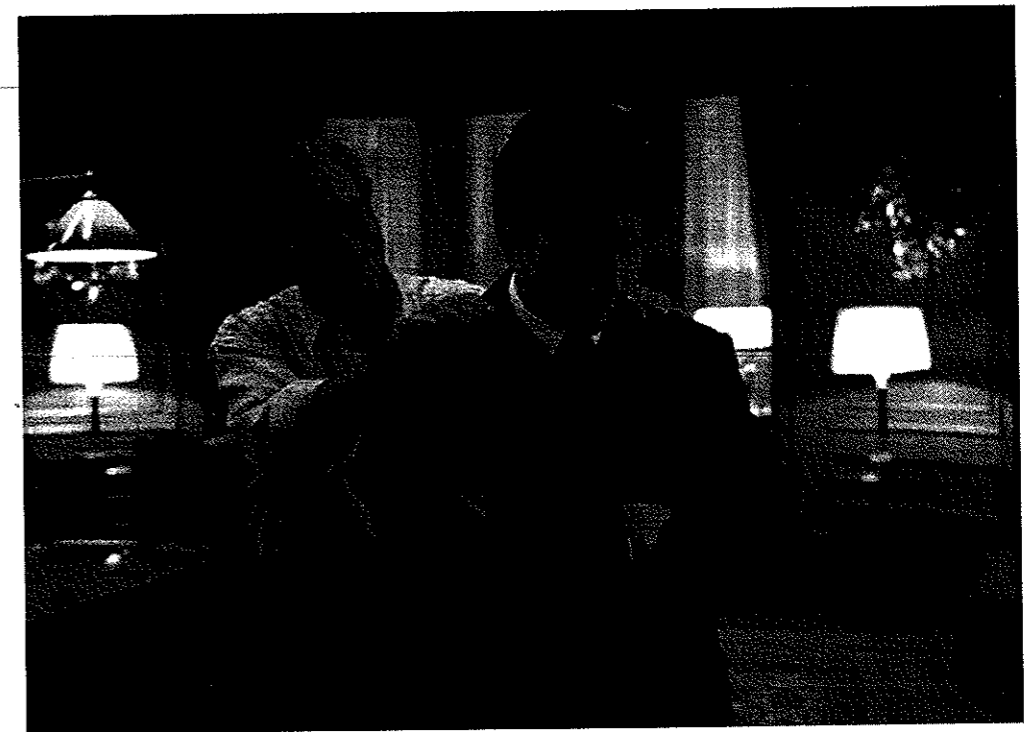
The lengthy conversation in Ziegler's library/billiard room near the end of the film brings these moral issues to roost – although, as Rosenbaum has pointed out, Ziegler seems like such a nice fellow that audiences might not fully grasp the situation. Kubrick originally intended to cast Harvey Keitel in the role, probably because Keitel often plays gangster or low-life characters and is roughly the same size and body configuration as Cruise. Sydney Pollack is a completely different type; tall and burly-chested, he's best known as an actor for playing a small role in *Tootsie* (1982), a film he directed. He gives the impression of an intelligent, kindly and rather earthy father-figure, and his performance creates a disjunction between the character's outward charm and actual corruption.

In this regard and others, the scene between Pollack and Cruise makes a nice contrast with the one between Kirk Douglas and Adolphe Menjou near the end of *Paths of Glory*. In both cases a monstrous but almost likeable representative of prestige and power has a private conversation with a younger man who is concerned about injustice, and in both cases the characters are surrounded by leather-bound books and emblems of 'culture'. In *Eyes Wide Shut*, however, the scene is less dynamically blocked and the star can't give vent to moral outrage. Here as elsewhere in the film, Bill Harford is a relatively passive figure. Immediately after viewing the body in the morgue, he's called to Ziegler's mansion, where, escorted to the library by a tall, strong-looking male 'secretary', he arrives in a state of exhaustion and guilt. Ziegler pours him a glass of twenty-five-year-old Scotch, pleads unsuccessfully with him to accept a full case of the whisky as a gift and toys uneasily with an ivory ball on the red surface of the billiard table (the only instance in the lengthy scene when an actor is given the opportunity to convey emotion by manipulating a prop). The Steadicam follows Ziegler as he paces around the table and struggles for words. 'I... I was just, erh... Listen, Bill, the reason I asked you to come over, I, I... I need to talk to you about something.' At first, the older man is deferential, suggesting that Bill 'might have the wrong idea about one or two things' but, as the conversation develops, he makes veiled threats. Explaining that he was one of the people at the orgy, he denounces 'Nick whatever-the-fuck his name was' and reveals that Bill has been followed all day.

Bill says little and hardly moves; in close-ups, he reacts to Ziegler's long speech with puzzlement, surprise and muted anger, finally putting his hands on the edge of the billiard table and slumping over in embarrassment. 'Victor, what can I say?' he asks. 'I had absolutely no idea you were involved in any way.' Ziegler crosses to the drinks table, pours more Scotch, says that if Bill knew the names of the people at the orgy he wouldn't 'sleep well', and walks to the other side of the room to sit in a chair. In an extreme deep-focus shot Bill turns his back on Ziegler, folds his arms and walks a couple of paces into the foreground. 'There was a woman there,' he says, 'who tried to warn me.' Ziegler gets up and walks forward, describing the woman as a 'hooker' and claiming that everything at the party was a 'charade'. Bill slumps into a chair, briefly holds his forehead in his hand,

clutches both hands together almost prayerfully and then asks Ziegler if the hooker is the dead woman described in today's newspaper. When Ziegler says yes, Bill shows his only flash of anger: standing, he turns and asks, 'Do you mind telling me what kind of fucking charade ends up with somebody turning up dead?' Ziegler's genial mask almost drops away: 'Let's cut the bullshit, alright? You've been way out of your depth for the last twenty-four hours... She got her brains fucked out, *period*... She OD'd. There was nothing suspicious. Her door was locked from the inside. The police are happy. End of story.' Then he becomes paternal, telling Bill that it was only 'a matter of time' before this particular woman died from drugs. 'Remember, you told her so yourself? Remember the one with the great tits who OD'd in my bathroom?'

Kubrick photographs the last shot of this sequence expressionistically. As Bill hangs his head and Ziegler steps up behind him to put reassuring hands on his shoulders, an unmotivated blue light falls mysteriously across the left side of both men's faces. 'Life goes on,' Ziegler says. 'It always does until it doesn't. But you know that, don't you?' Cut to Bill and Alice's bedroom, which is bathed in the same blue light, ostensibly from the moon. Alice lies sleeping, with Bill's mask from the orgy resting on the pillow next to her. (In the Schnitzler novella the husband's failure to return the mask is inadvertent, rather like a Freudian slip; in the film, the presence of the mask is unexplained.) When Bill sees the



mask he puts his hand to his heart, and on the soundtrack we hear the piercing piano notes of Ligeti's 'Musica Ricercata II'. Bill breaks into tears, curls up in a foetal position on the bed next to Alice and promises to tell her 'everything'.

Cut to a close-up of Alice on the next morning; her eyes red from tears, she smokes a cigarette while Bill looks remorseful. She remembers the shopping trip they've promised their daughter and we cut to the toy store, which again has no equivalent in Schnitzler. Bill, Alice and Helena walk in a circle, the Steadicam retreating in front of them as numerous extras walk past like figures in a play or a dream. Bill has a hangdog look and asks Alice what they should do. As in the Schnitzler novella, she tells him to be grateful that their marriage has survived its 'adventures', whether they were 'real or only a dream'. Bill remarks that 'no dream is ever just a dream', and wants to be awake 'forever'. Alice rejects this idea and responds in existential terms: she loves Bill now and thinks that as soon as possible they should 'fuck'.

This last word, which we've heard at several other junctures in Kubrick's last film, is significantly given to a woman. A grotesque term for what is sometimes an act of love, 'fuck' has a sucking, lower-body sound and derives from an Anglo-Saxon word that connotes violence or repeated blows, as when Ziegler says 'she got her brains fucked out'. Kidman delivers it in a soft, wryly amused voice that conveys both tenderness and a tough awareness of how much the unsteady edifice of everyday, companionate marriage is built on primal urges. One could argue that, by ending the film in this way, Kubrick shows himself to be a sexual conservative, since he confirms the importance of monogamous married relations and the heterosexual, nuclear family. One could also argue by the same logic that *Eyes Wide Shut* has a 'happy' ending, which would mean that it differs from any Kubrick movie, with the possible exception of *Killer's Kiss*. Without doubt the film honours Kubrick's third marriage, which was long and apparently happy. But his implicit view of sexuality is by no means simple or complacent. The Spanish critic Celestino Deleyto offers what seems to me an accurate summation of the film's sexual themes:

it explores in complex and convincing ways the links between love and sex, between affective relationships and sexual fantasy, between sex as a male construct signifying anxiety, guilt and death and sex as a crucial ingredient in a healthy relationship, between sex as commodity and sex as emotion.<sup>24</sup>

As Rosenbaum has argued, *Eyes Wide Shut* also shows the tenuous, conflicted and always complicated links between dreams and responsibilities. Whatever optimism there might be in the last scene is extremely hard won, and the film has the courage to leave its characters relatively unchanged: Bill remains the successful, compromised doctor and Alice the beautiful, jobless wife, and their lives still involve guilt and resentment. Tomorrow and the next day they will have similar adventures, which they may or may not survive.

## Notes

1. Michael Herr, 'Foreword', in Stanley Kubrick, Michael Herr and Gustav Hasford, *Full Metal Jacket: The Screenplay* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), p. vi.
2. Thomas Doherty, 'Full Metal Genre: Stanley Kubrick's Vietnam Combat Movie', in Mario Falsetto (ed.), *Perspectives on Stanley Kubrick* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1996), p. 315. All further references are to this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
3. Brad Stevens, "'Is That You, John Wayne? Is This Me?'" Problems of Identity in Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*, *Senses of Cinema* <www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/02/21/full\_metal.html>:2.
4. Bill Krohn, 'Full Metal Jacket', *The Kubrick Site* <www.visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/0104.html>:2. All further references are to this posting, and page numbers are indicated in the text. A longer version of Krohn's essay can be found in Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter (eds), *Incorporations* (New York: Urzone, 1992), pp. 428–35.
5. Stanley Kubrick and Michael Herr, *Full Metal Jacket: A Screenplay* (undated), p. 8. All further references are to this script, and page numbers are indicated in the text. I'm grateful to Jonathan Rosenbaum and Bill Krohn for providing me with the manuscript. Matthew Modine's diary of his work on the film, plus reviews and news reports from the time when the film was released, provide strong evidence that this is the final shooting script. It shouldn't be confused with the published screenplay listed in Note 1, which is based on the released picture. See Krohn, 'Full Metal Jacket', and Aly Sujo, 'Was Full Metal Jacket Even Bleaker before Trims?', *Chicago Sun-Times Weekend* (11 September 1987), p. 28.
6. Matthew Modine, *Full Metal Jacket Diary* (New York: Rugged Land, 2005), n.p. All further references are to this edition, which is without page numbers.
7. Gustav Hasford, *The Short-Timers* (New York: Bantam Books, 1983), pp. 175–80.
8. Gene D. Phillips and Rodney Hill (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Stanley Kubrick* (New York: Checkmark Books, 2002), p. 160.
9. Paula Willoquet-Maricondi, 'Full-Metal Jacketing, or Masculinity in the Making', *Cinema Journal* vol. 33 no. 2 (1994), p. 19.
10. For a roughly similar analysis of the gender politics of Kubrick's film, see Willoquet-Maricondi, 'Full-Metal Jacketing'.
11. Quoted by Mark Bowden, 'The Things They Carried: One Man's Memoir of the 1991 Persian Gulf War', *The New York Times Book Review* (2 March 2003), p. 8.
12. See Kubrick's 1987 interview with Gene Siskel, in Gene D. Phillips (ed.), *Stanley Kubrick Interviews* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), p. 186.
13. Ermeijer is quoted from an interview with the *New York Daily News* in Phillips and Hill, *The Encyclopedia of Stanley Kubrick*, p. 103.
14. Stanley Kubrick and Frederic Raphael, *Eyes Wide Shut, a Screenplay*, and Arthur Schnitzler, 'Dream Story', trans. J. M. Q. Davies (New York: Warner Books, 1999), p. 176. Subsequent quotations are from this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
15. Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Essential Cinema: On the Necessity of Film Canons* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), p. 270.

16. Frederic Raphael, *Eyes Wide Open: A Memoir of Stanley Kubrick* (New York: Ballantine, 1999), p. 160. Subsequent quotations are from this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
17. Frederic Raphael further discusses the film (indicating his contempt for Cruise and Kidman, whom he describes as 'coldly calculating') in 'The Pumpkinification of Stanley K.', in Geoffrey Cocks, James Diedrick and Glenn Perusek, *Depth of Field: Stanley Kubrick* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), pp. 62–73.
18. Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1981), p. 223.
19. For additional discussion of this topic, see Peter Lowenberg, 'Freud, Schnitzler, and *Eyes Wide Shut*', in Cocks et al., *Depth of Field*, pp. 255–79.
20. Michel Chion, *Eyes Wide Shut*, trans. Trista Selous (London: BFI, 2002), pp. 70–6. All further references are to this edition, and page numbers are indicated in the text.
21. Christian Appelt, 'The Craft of Seeing', in Reichmann and Flagge (eds), *Stanley Kubrick*, p. 261.
22. N. C. Menon, 'Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* slights Hinduism, feel US Indians', *The Hindustan Times* (26 July 1999), <[www.media-watch.org/articles/0799/220.html](http://www.media-watch.org/articles/0799/220.html)>
23. Tim Kreider, 'Introducing Sociology: A Review of *Eyes Wide Shut*', in Cocks et al., *Depth of Field*, pp. 280–97.
24. Celestino Deleyto, '1999, A Closet Odyssey: Sexual Discourses in *Eyes Wide Shut*', <[www.atlantisjournal.org/HTML%20Files/Tables%20of%20contents/28.1%20\(2006\).htm](http://www.atlantisjournal.org/HTML%20Files/Tables%20of%20contents/28.1%20(2006).htm)>

## Part Six

# EPILOGUE

### I. Afterthoughts

In the absence of a grand synthesis or a key to Kubrick's work, which I believe would be impossible, it may be useful to offer some remarks on the themes that have emerged from this study. From the beginning I've emphasised that Kubrick's position as an author is paradoxical and almost unique. For most of his career he seemed both inside and outside the American film industry. In some ways he might be compared to Martin Scorsese or Woody Allen, who made their home in New York rather than Hollywood; but Kubrick, after shooting three early pictures in California, moved much further than Scorsese and Allen from the centres of US entertainment and managed to keep a greater control as producer. Even though his career was enabled by historical conditions – the breakdown of the classic studio system, the advent of 'art' cinema, the rise in foreign productions of American movies and so forth – his position in history is unusual. He can't be placed among the classic auteurs, or among the New York television directors who entered movies in the 1950s and 1960s or among the directors of the 'New Hollywood'. Part of the aura surrounding his name and much of the argument I've made for his late-modernist attributes derives from his special status and apparently aloof individuality, coupled with the sense that nothing in his films (with the exception of *Spartacus*) happened unless he allowed it to happen.

Unlike many directors, Kubrick never suffered the experience of having his projects re-cut, re-shot, or abandoned by the organisations that financed and distributed them. *Dr. Strangelove*, 2001 and *The Shining* were slightly revised after their premieres, but Kubrick did the revisions. He left no 'director's cuts' or alternative versions to signify a conflict between the artist and the money men. By the end of his career, the US movie industry was moving into the digital era and being absorbed into home entertainment, but Kubrick