

Ridley Scott: *Blade Runner*
David Lynch: *Blue Velvet*

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English 4300: Film
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Blade Runner: Frankenstein Redux

- Tyrell as Victor Frankenstein
 - God complex
 - Responsibility
 - Near-sightedness
 - Prisons, madness, control issues
- Roy Batty as the Monster
 - Satan / Adam / Eve / Christ reflections
 - Orphan & Tabula Rasa
 - Genius in the School of Hard Knocks
- Deckard as Walton
 - *Döppelgangers*: Tyrell, Batty, and Deckard: reflections of the other.
 - My shadow, myself.

Lynch: born in Missoula 1946

- *Blue Velvet* (1986): mystery thriller that reveals moral morass of American suburbia.
 - Dennis Hopper told Lynch, "I am Frank."
 - "Indie": De Laurentis Entertainment Group
- 2001 Oscar for *Mulholland Dr.*
- Characteristics of auteurship:
 - Eerie, nightmare atmosphere (shots, lighting, cuts)
 - Unsettling characters (watch narrative & camera perspective)
 - Avant-garde imagery, shadowy palette, surreal sequencing & mise-en-scène

Laura Mulvey: "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975)

- We swim in the "languages" of our social systems.
 - Unconscious is structured like a language, using "familiar" patterns.
 - Those patterns structure our pleasure.
 - Fascination of film reinforced by "patterns" already at work in the individual subject and in the social system that forms her or him.
- Woman displayed as sexual object is the leitmotif (pattern) of erotic spectacle.
 - "She" represents what the hero desires, what motivates him, the distant goal.
 - Defiance of his (subject) desire becomes more erotic: "we" expect him to
 - Win her over to "good": marriage, compliance (Laura Dern?)
 - Nullify her: kill, defeat, remove as threat to the order of things (Isabella Rossellini?)

“scopophilia”: pleasure in looking

- Looking itself can be a form of pleasure
 - Pleasure in looking and in being looked at
- Mainstream films focus attention on the human form as object (fetish)
 - Taking other people as objects subjects them to a controlling and curious gaze.
- Curiosity & the desire to look intermingle with likeness and recognition--self as subject.
- Two ways of “looking”:
 - Pleasure in looking at something not you, the Other
 - stimulates sexual pleasure in unconscious
 - Narcissistic looking: the film image is myself / not myself
 - Stimulates power pleasure: control over environment, others, self

Misrecognition: s/he is / is not you

- You conceive mirror image as reflected body of your “self” but...
 - Misrecognition as “superior” projects itself outside itself as an ideal which, when reintrojected prepares the way for identification with others in the future.
 - The ideal image constitutes the matrix of the imaginary, of recognition/misrecognition & identification, & of the first articulation of the “I” of subjectivity.
- *Unlike* a mirror, cinema has structures of fascination strong enough to allow temporary loss of ego while simultaneously reinforcing it.
 - Who is in the closet “watching” Dorothy & Frank: you-as-Jeffrey / Jeffrey-as-you.

The fantasy of the screen

- Kaja Silverman: “male subjectivity is founded on castration.” Partial object / fetish restores the “power” of the phallus/male misidentification
- Screen is subject to the “law” of the libidinal economy that produces it.
 - Conflicts with this law defy verisimilitude.
- The look, pleasurable in form, can be threatening in content.
- Its (mis)representation of “other” as representation / image crystallizes this paradox.
 - Who reveals the Dorothy Valens story?
- Is Dorothy’s sexuality contained / controlled?