

## **Epistemological Futures & Film Scanning**

By Alex Burns (alex@disinfo.com). Australian Foresight Institute/Disinformation®, September 2002.

### **Abstract**

The academic legitimatization of Futures Studies has often been publicly defined by reference to popular film imagery and problem-oriented cycles. This essay explores the depth perspective offered by combining the Spiral Dynamics® model of human values systems with 'DIY' DVD commentaries. It differentiates between pop futures and critical/epistemological perspectives, and considers how the Film Scanning methodology may be applied in academic teaching and consultancy environments. Current debates within Cinema Studies about the 'auteur' hypothesis, authorship, genre, interpretation and New Hollywood's political economy are briefly considered. A case study on the subjective effects of Ridley Scott's *Alien* (1979) is outlined. All DVD clips that are cited in this essay are for Australian editions from the author's private research collection. The DVD clips used in this essay are only a sample of the possible clips that could be used in the 'Film Scanning' process.

### **Author's Note**

This essay represents an initial 'primer' in an ongoing project. Check for in-depth theoretical sections, new DVD clip analyses, and appendices (30 October 2002).

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I alone am responsible for the interpretations and opinions expressed here.

## Minority Reportage

*Minority Report* was touted as *the* futurist film of 2002: its ‘above-the-line’ ingredients included a moody director (Steven Spielberg), a controversial star (Tom Cruise), a legendary source (Philip K. Dick), and a team of dedicated futurists who created a compellingly dystopian vision (Kennedy, 2002). The blockbuster’s press coverage soon diverged into different structural layers: ‘stars’, 1to1 marketing and the redesigned *Lexus* car (pop), and the Department of Pre-crime as metaphor for the perceived attack by U.S. Attorney-General John Ashcroft on civil liberties (problem-oriented). *Minority Report*’s coverage also reflected the uncertainty inherent in the post-9/11 world, where Hollywood’s finest minds have been hired by the Pentagon to devise pre-emptive scenarios for the War on Terror (McCarthy, 2002).

Yet reviewers largely overlooked any critical/epistemological issues which the film raised. They mystified *Minority Report*’s critique of harnessing trans-rational foresight for law enforcement purposes. Few reviewers discussed the futurist roots of iconography such as the Dataglove, Pre-crime’s asymmetric threat visualisation system, and the Precogs’ flotation tank facility (Lilly, 1977). This minority reportage was the outcome of the commercial pressures faced by film critics. It also reflected how commercial ‘futurology’, in the past, had critiqued film content imagery.

## Speculative Films & ‘Futurology’

1970s ‘futurology’ was defined, in the public consciousness, by guru-like exemplars (Hines, 2001), their theories, and film content imagery. Classical Hollywood’s production system had created *Things to Come* (1936) and *Forbidden Planet* (1956), yet speculative films with ‘futurology’ themes became prominent with New Wave science fiction (hence the film genre label), the rise-to-power of the ‘Movie Brats’ generation (Biskind, 1998), and New Hollywood’s innovations in vertically-integrated distribution and multiplex exhibition practices (Wasko, 1994). The mass appeal of this period’s speculative imagery was captured by *The Sci-Fi Files* (Winstar Entertainment, 1997), an American television series on key themes (aliens, artificial life, cities, future environments, robots and spacecraft). Science fiction and speculative imagery partly defined futures discourse (Miles, 1993) and the limits to its powers of ‘hard’ predictability (Phipps, 1999; Calder, 1998—2002).

Problem-oriented futurists appreciated science fiction writings and films as a thematic source for policy-work (Clarke, 1987; Miles, 1990). Genre conventions and literary tropes were content for age-cohort and trends analyses, forecasting, and scenarios (Livingston, 1969; Suedfeld and Ward, 1976; Strick, 1979). One of the most thoughtful analyses was Dennis Livingston’s ‘Science Fiction Survey’ in *Futures* journal (1970—1989). Four notable *film cycles* have been influenced by problem-oriented and policy-work: responses to the ‘global problematique’ (1969—77), the KGB-SDI ‘nuclear war’ scare (1982—85), ‘tech noir’ films (1979—Present), and post-9/11 ‘pop geopolitics’ (2001—Present). They are briefly summarised in **Appendix 3 (Key Film Cycles)**. Speculative imagery was also regarded as an ‘early warning system’ for looming existential crises and civilizational challenges (Hay, 1973). This elaborated on Frederik Polak’s insight that the growth trajectory of societies was guided by ‘images of the future’ (Polak, 1961; Morgan, 2002).

## Critical Futurist Responses to the ‘Imaging Dilemma’

Critical and epistemological futurists had also responded to the dystopian imagery of the first three film cycles and the perceived ‘imaging dilemma’ (Slaughter, 1991; Slaughter, 1995) created by crises like the growing proliferation of nuclear weapons (Slaughter, 1987). Cultural theory, social construction, postmodernist and post-structuralist perspectives had, by the late 1980s, also become popular in cinema studies (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 209).

This interdisciplinary synthesis enabled critical futurists to critique the American empirical tradition’s conceptual limits. A series of articles and books examined the dark side of the Western ‘network society’ (Sardar, 1995), the co-option of futures studies by trans-national conglomerates (Sardar, 1993), multicultural perspectives (Dean, 1999), and inter-generation *ur*-texts: *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991) for Generation X (Sardar, 1992) and *The Matrix* (1999) for the Millennials (Slaughter, 2001). Yet this ‘postmodern turn’ had been derailed in the mid-1990s by free-market challenges to academic norms (Rhoades and Slaughter, 1997; Nelson, 1995) and a series of wars between science and ‘belles lettres’ (Michael, 1996; Carroll, 1988, 32).

Common approaches to fusing film-and-futures echoed traditions in cinema studies. Genre studies (Neale, 2000) enabled futurists to critique social imaging through Westerns (Sardar and Davies, 2002), Science Fiction (Kuhn, 1990; Kuhn, 1999) and Film Noir (Krutnick, 1991; Naremore, 1998; Hirsch, 1999; Silver & Ursini, 1996; Silver & Ursini, 1999). Technology orientations touted the growth of digital filmmaking (Kenyon, 2001; Ohanian & Phillips, 2000; Kindem & Musberger, 1997; Hayward & Wollen, 1993), new media (Manovich, 2001), and the lure of Internet-based research (Deivert, 1995). Yet the dominant approach still focused on canonized texts (Calder, 2002), which still kept most analyses in the pop and problem-oriented domain of futures studies, halting responses to the ‘imaging dilemma’ that shifted from individual to social capacities (Slaughter, 2002).

### Perspective I: The Rise and Fall of Epidemiological Memetics

While futurists were fighting the limits of trends-tracking and forecasts, other scholars were facing their own fears about the future of cinema and media studies (Allen, 1985). ‘Contemporary film theory’ in U.S. colleges had been defined by the post-1968 popularity of ‘Althusserian-derived Marxism, Barthesian textual criticism, and . . . Lacanian psychoanalysis’ (Carroll, 1988, 226). The agenda-driven politicising of these perspectives only became more vocal with cultural theory and postmodernism.

The ‘viral’ spread of the Rodney King tape and ‘reality TV’ imagery (Rushkoff, 1996) made an epidemiological form of memetics (Lynch, 1996; Blackmore, 1999) briefly popular in media studies. Oliver Stone evoked this period with a ‘media virus’ montage (01:49:30—01:50:22) at the close of *Natural Born Killers* (1994), while Terry Gilliam traced the co-evolution of bio-politics and epidemiological memetics in a *Twelve Monkeys* (1995) scene that traces the path of a ‘killer virus’ (01:25:24—01:27:27).

Pop memeticists cited ‘the old shoe’ spin-doctoring scene (01:00:32—01:01:54) in *Wag The Dog* (1997) which was recycled by Team Bush in the War on Terror (Fahey, 2002). Oliver Stone’s *JFK* (1991) focused its testimony on the Zapruder film of U.S. President John F. Kennedy’s assassination (02:36:39—03:08:33), while *Thirteen Days* (2001) chronicled JFK’s speech on the 1962 Cuban missile crisis (00:48:46—00:50:16). *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) opened with a fake *verite* documentary sequence on social rumors (00:02:45—00:08:49); the filmmakers also harnessed the Internet for a ‘viral marketing’ campaign (Telotte, 2001). Memes also embodied subcultures: *The Filth & The Fury* (1999) featured John Lydon’s sneer “Ever get the feeling you’ve been cheated?” (01:38:30—01:39:00) which signaled the Sex Pistols’ demise.

The battleground between pop and scientific memeticists meant that this new science is still undergoing a Kuhnian revolution. Yet some films, such as Steven Spielberg’s *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1978), offer case-studies in how cultural information propagates. The film’s plot is linked by the discovery of a “basic tonal vocabulary”: a five-tone meme (00:39:23—39:27) which is decoded (00:43:20—43:29) as a likely extraterrestrial communication that can alter the Earth’s morphogenetic field and pass from person-to-person (00:46:28—00:47:12). Spielberg links the tone to an abduction scene (00:51:34—00:51:41) and passing spacecraft (01:41:30—01:43:29). The closing quarter of the film plays with inter-communication (01:48:13—01:48:50 and 01:52:50—01:56:08) during the final landing. Spielberg and composer John Williams indulged in self-parody with references to the *Jaws* theme (01:55:31—01:56:08) and melodramatic soundtrack flourishes (02:08:14—02:08:31). Perhaps the most poignant scene featuring this meme is the wordless communication between researcher Claude Lacombe and an extraterrestrial (02:06:30—02:07:36).

Epidemiological memetics answered some of the reasons why certain scenes replicated across our ‘ecologies of mind’. The shower sequence (00:44:17—00:47:35) from *Psycho* (1960), which used ‘a formalist strategy of montage editing’ (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 113) and ‘the emotive content of the music’ (Carroll, 1998, 222) to influence our minds. The breathtaking chase sequence (01:07:17—01:14:28) in *The French Connection* (1971) that bended the ‘cop thriller’ genre (Berliner, 2001). Or using Richard Wagner’s ‘Ride of the Valkyries’ as a psychological operations tactic in a gritty helicopter attack (00:35:15—00:43:11), during *Apocalypse Now Redux* (2001), which ends with the speech ‘I love the sound of napalm in the morning’ (00:47:04—00:48:01).

‘Auteur theory’ (actually ‘politique des auteurs’), which migrated from French New Wave polemicists to Hollywood via *Village Voice* critic Andrew Sarris (Sarris, 1995; Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 168), exalted the ‘technical competence’ and ‘distinguishable personality’ of the director in service of ‘interior meaning, the ultimate glory of the cinema as an art’ (Abrams, Nathan, Ian Bell, and Jan Udris, 2000, 69). From an epidemiological memetics perspective, the cinema studies traditions of ‘auteur theory’ and critical analyses (Collins, Radner and Collins, 1993, 15; Bordwell, 1988) that drew on theories of Kenneth Burke (‘the social structure of literature’), Claude Levi-Strauss (‘the conceptual structure of tribal myths’) and Vladimir Propp (‘the narrative structure of Russian folktales’), were brave attempts to explain the deep structure of films.

## **Auteur Homages and Meme Migration**

One of cinema's most affecting sequences is Sergei Eisenstein's 'Odessa Steps' sequence in *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925), which uses montage editing to express 'the meaning of the events through the choice of shot content and the way he edited the shots together' (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 113). Notably Eisenstein used geometric patterns, 'straight-line diagonals' for the 'advancing Cossack soldiers' and 'curved lines or circles' for the 'defenceless women, children, and students' (Kindem and Musburger, 1997, 275), to control the audience's gaze. Years later an excerpt from this sequence (00:53:50—00:55:43) turned up as an auteur homage in Brian De Palma's *The Untouchables* (1987) during a shootout on the railway station's steps (01:28:43—01:30:47). Both sequences highlighted 'how time is managed within narratives, how it is manipulated and rearranged in films' (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 136). Both also relied on the suggestive power of Soviet montage techniques (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 259).

New Hollywood's content management systems enabled cinematographers to copy German Expressionism's non-Euclidian camera angles (00:42:52—00:44:04) from *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari* (1919) in the bomb defusing sequence (01:44:00—01:44:41) of *Die Hard* (1987). During a visit to a cinema playing Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1957) in *12 Monkeys* (1995), Cole claims that 'the movie never changes' (01:42:12—01:44:30). *Shadow of the Vampire* (1999) rewrote the production history of *Nosferatu* (1922) as postmodern pastiche. New Hollywood's penchant for remakes 'problematize the very notion of originality' and disrupt the 'recognizable patterns of repetition, novelty, and resolution' required by human developmental psychology (Horton and McDougal, 1998, 4, 6).

## **Perspective II: Cognitive Neurobiology**

While epidemiological memetics foreshadowed a more scientific approach of film spectatorship and role-identification, it was only part of a larger shift in cinema studies, which occurred with the cognitive viewpoint proposed by David Bordwell, George Currie and Noel Carroll.

Although some were aware of 'optical switch' experiments in gestalt and social psychology (Wright, 1975, 197), many cinema studies scholars still focused on psychoanalytic writings on dream states (Carroll, 1988: 13), Freud's Oedipal Complex, semiotics, and Marxist scholarship (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 215, 217, 219). The cognitivists were critical of this 'hermetic, inflated, and tautological discourse', rejecting as dogmatic the Freudian's unconsciousness, the Semiotician's film-as-language, the Modernist's reflexivity and the Postmodernist's narrative (Stam, 2000, 236). Earlier responses including Chatman's model of 'sender' and 'receiver' (Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis, 1992, 113) and Cawelti's analysis of how character traits and genre 'story patterns' became stereotypes (Neale, 2000, 209) had tried to resolve these conceptual paradoxes.

Carroll observed that 'film viewing is a natural pretext for sociability' and that 'to evaluate, one categorizes' (Carroll, 2000, 265, 267). Classical film theorists erred, Carroll argued, because of a 'hypostatization of certain period-specific film styles' (Carroll, 2000, 272) that mistook surface imagery for deep metapatterns. They

mistook film's ability 'to exploit generic, recognizable abilities' as genuine psychological effects (Carroll, 1988, 144). Movies appealed 'to our cognitive faculties by virtue of their forms' and answered spectator's questions by 'making relevant details salient' (Carroll, 1988, 211).

Film viewer-ship and the spectator's sense of unified identity become intertwined as 'gaps and absences' are sutured (Carroll, 1998, 185). Spectators internalised the narrative film's 'whole structure' and 'alternative outcomes to various lines of action'—which occurred by 'tacitly projecting the range of outcomes as subconscious expectations which we can represent as questions' (Carroll, 1988, 173). Further research on audience responses found they used 'as-if emotions' (Gerrig & Prentice, 2000, 397), as a way to predict particular outcomes, such as Alfred Hitchcock's famous anecdote about a hidden bomb under a table (Truffaut, 1984, 73).

Thus the cognitivist school viewed spectator-ship as an artificial environment that intertwined the neurobiological systems involved in foresight with existential problems in a simulated world (the film being viewed). The mind's foresight capacity is portrayed in Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (02:12:14—02:17:29). Just as the shift from 'futurology' to foresight gave a new perspective, the cognitivist school's findings helped inaugurate a shift from futures-oriented films to a broader appreciation of film and foresight's inter-relationship. Instead of focusing on surface content imagery this appreciation arises from knowledge of the dynamic human values which interlock neurobiological systems and the foresight cycle (Jantsch, 1975; Judge, 1993).

### **Perspective III: Human Values Systems**

Cognitivist scholars who surveyed cinema studies literature often found few references to current perception research. 'Over the next several years we slowly came to understand that we needed a metatheory' (Anderson & Anderson, 2000, 349). Yet Carroll and others were wary of the 'totalizing' or 'top down' approach 'where contemporary film theory presents itself as The Theory of Film' (Carroll, 1988, 8). Rather he advocated 'piecemeal theorizing' or 'theories about film' which might 'be organisable into larger, systematic and theoretical constellations' (Carroll, 1998, 232).

One such dynamic model of human values systems, which encompassed insights from epidemiological memetics and the cognitivist approach to cinema studies, was developed by Union College professor of psychology Clare W. Graves from the mid-1950s until his death in 1986. It has subsequently become commercially available, through the work of Graves' students Dr. Don Edward Beck and Christopher C. Cowan, as the Spiral Dynamics® model (Beck & Cowan, 1996). Other perspectives on the Gravesian system (Wade, 1996; Wilber, 1999, Wilber, 2000) have also recently become available.

Graves' research into what he called the 'emergent cyclical double helix model of mature adult biopsychosocial systems intelligences' found eight complex adaptive systems of human values (which Beck and Cowan termed <sup>V</sup>Memes or 'values-attracting meta-memes'). These are summarised in **Appendix 1 (The Eight <sup>V</sup>Meme Codes/Systems)**, and in many studies (Beck & Cowan, 1996; Wilber, 1999, 480-484; Wilber, 2000, 19-16; Burns, 2001). It is not my purpose here to revisit this territory.

Beyond its proprietary assessment instruments, one overlooked aspect of Graves' model was its exploration using action research and ethnographic interviews of lifespan development. These are presented as a series of psychohistorical 'snapshots' (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 34-39). A comparable film series is Michael Apted's *7Up* (1964) to *42Up* (1998). In-depth analyses of film scenes and sequences using the Spiral Dynamics® methodology is given in the **Field Guide** section and this continues to evolve. An outline of the Film Scanning method is given in **Appendix 2** ('**Film Scanning**' **Knowledge Cycle**). These interpretations are probabilistic filters of the filmmakers' final product, not direct analyses of objective reality (even in non-fiction films).

Spiral Dynamics® certification offers several exercises, including viewing the film *Pleasantville* (1998), and an ethnographic meme hunt using disposable cameras and self-reporting descriptions, that offer learning experiences in an 'action research' context. The 'Film Scanning' process builds on this approach, adding insights from cinema and new media studies, and critical/depth futures tools.

Several common learning problems have been noted within the Spiral Dynamics community: 'nominalizing' Spiral colours as character styles/personality types, instead of as a fallible description of emerging human values; a quasi-religious focus on Second Tier systems as god-like, at the expense of the Spiral, appropriate **Life Conditions**, and overall context; the clashing 'two cultures' of academic researchers and business consultants; unawareness of subjective filters, mental models, and lifespan experiences; and an unfamiliarity with the history of key terms which transforms discourse into sloganeering. Resolving these problems is part of an ongoing debate. There is growing recognition that Gravesian systems need to migrate from two-dimensional paper representations to a four-dimensional information visualization system. Recent proposals on environmental scanning and notation (Voros, 2001), the Film Scanning process, and other initiatives are a step towards this goal.

## **New Media Learning Pedagogy: 'DIY' DVD Commentaries**

Technological innovations in DVD commentaries, MP3 audio software and Open Source distribution platforms have created a viable new learning pedagogy in new media. Roger Ebert's *Yahoo! Internet Life* column (Ebert, 2002) on the possibility of creating a 'DIY' DVD commentary sparked Patrick Stein to develop *DVD Tracks* (Stein, 2002), a site devoted to housing these commentaries in MP3 audio format. These initiatives have attracted interest from online publications (Yarm, 2002) and commercial software developers (Wiml, 2001).

Cinema studies courses have a long tradition of *mise-en-scene* analysis (Welsch, 1997, 102-103). Common introductory essays ask students to identify films that have personally resonated with them and the historical reasons why, and to track three films over discontinuous time periods and their viewer's experiences (Bates, 2000, 84).

Unlike commentaries in live seminars (Burns, 'Integral Futures & Film Scanning', 2002) the recording process enables re-recording and precision. If undertaken with appropriate support levels (after cost-benefit analysis), and within the context of a knowledge management system, these commentaries also help to create an institutional memory.

Critical and depth futures perspectives are integral to this new pedagogy. Richard Slaughter noted the prevalence of 'violence in youth media' (Slaughter, 1995, 119; Slaughter, 1999, 58) and 'the proliferation of negative futures imagery' (Slaughter, 1995, 88) within Generation X and the Millennials. Critical and depth futures perspectives provided a 'critique of futures images' (Slaughter, 1999, 60-61), a way to 'deal with fears' (Slaughter, 1999, 64-65) and a way to 'renegotiate worldview meanings and assumptions' (Slaughter, 1999, 65-66). The new media component of this pedagogy is designed simply to be a delivery system, not the pedagogy's core focus. Alternate depth perspectives, notably Sohail Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis (Inayatullah, 2001; Ramos, 2002) and the 'Wilber-4' model (Wilber, 1999; Wilber, 2000) should also be utilized.

The proposed combination of 'DIY' DVD commentaries, informed by depth approaches to critical futures, and deliverable on the MP3 format, enables the real-time and global propagation of foresight perspectives to a world that remains engaged in a desperate search for new solutions.

## A Spiral Dynamics® Field Manual For Film Scanning

### Problems of Existence

Clare W. Graves' dynamic *biopsychosocial systems* became activated in response to **Problems of Existence** that faced individuals, groups and entire societies (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 29). Although older systems remained online, these crises prompted the adaptive search to cope with new conditions. They awaken **Mind Capacities** and **Multiple Intelligences** within. The discovery of 32 Soviet surface-to-air missiles in Cuba by a U2 overflight (00:12:41—00:16:30) began the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis in *Thirteen Days*. Clashes between different morals provoke a bitter argument (00:45:57-00:48:44) in *Spy Game* (2001). The loss of a forest map in *The Blair Witch Project* (00:36:44—00:40:01) triggers group in-fighting. *Run, Lola, Run* (1999) opens with a sequence (00:01:57—00:03:13) that describes how existential crises simultaneously define our identity and are a process of questioning. *Run, Lola, Run* then quickly establishes its plot through a series of escalating mistakes (00:06:43—00:10:36) involving Mani, his girlfriend Lola, the gangster Ronnie, a lost money-bag, plans to rob a department store, and a 20-minute deadline. Just as Graves anticipated, the characters' individual solutions awaken different values systems. **Problems of Existence** also provide 'plot points' in structuralist models of screen-writing (Field, 1995).

### Life Conditions

<sup>V</sup>**Memes** form in response to **Mind Capacities** within and **Life Conditions** (LCs), the historic times, geographic places, existential problems, and social circumstances (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 52-55). 'This interface of existence *conditions-without* (from nature and human activity) and latent *capacities-within* is what Graves called the 'double helix aspect of his theory' (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 52).

LCs are usually depicted to establish settings and provide character back-stories. They are 'scanned' in scene establishing shots. LCs in films based on historical events often convey the narrative approach of the director and screenwriter. *Apollo 13* (1995) opens with a montage (00:00:45—00:1:51) about the U.S. space program and geopolitical pressures. *JFK* (1991) also opens with a lengthy 'historic montage' (00:00:00—00:07:04) on the Kennedy, Johnson and the Vietnam War, and later segues into a dialogue by Mr. X (01:45:20—02:02:11), based on the 'power critique' of the late Colonel Fletcher Prouty. *Casino* (1995) establishes the grim reality about Las Vegas (00:04:56—00:07:53). The dual narration by Rothstein (Robert De Niro) and Nicky (Joe Pesci) reveals their different worldviews. *The Filth & The Fury* (1999) opens with a startling montage (00:01:19—00:04:43) about 1976 England; *The Clash: Westway to the World* (2000) offers an alternate perspective on the same period (00:01:32—00:03:13). The latter documentary also highlights how The Clash were inspired by their daily existential problems (00:15:15—00:15:54), such as being 'bored with the U.S.A.' (00:13:33—00:14:46). The shift in textual interpretations such as Shakespeare (Boose, 1997; Brillstein, 1999; Buhler, 2002) may reflect different LCs.

## **OPEN—ARRESTED—CLOSED Continuum**

An overlooked Spiral Dynamics® tool is the **OPEN—ARRESTED—CLOSED** continuum (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 76-82), based on Milton Rokeach's book *The Open and Closed Mind* (Basic Books, New York, 1960). Checking for OAC status involves scanning for **OPEN** ('potential for more complex level functioning'), **ARRESTED** ('caught by barriers in self/situation') and **CLOSED** ('blocked by biopsychosocial capacities') during a situation intervention (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 77). OAC status may be unmasked during psychologically stressful events, such as Heather's on-camera confessions in *The Blair Witch Project*: 'I'm going to die out here' (01:07:07—01:09:13).

*Falling Down* (1992) provides examples of **OPEN**, **ARRESTED** and **CLOSED** states in its triumvirate of William Foster/D-Fens, police officer Prendergrast and Surplus Store owner who is a Holocaust Revisionist. During a confrontation with D-Fens, the Surplus Store owner regresses to **CLOSED** psychological blindness and ideological rigidity (00:58:21—01:03:43). D-Fens has **ARRESTED** passive-aggressive behavior (00:39:37—00:43:54) during an argument with Whammy Burger manager Rick (whose management style is too **blue/ORANGE**). During the final confrontation between D-Fens and Prendergrast, the police officer remains calm under pressure, follows the 'rules of engagement', adjusts to a new **Problem of Existence**, and offers D-Fens alternate possibilities (01:38:33—01:42:13), signs of **OPEN** state thinking.

## **Five Steps in the Pathway of <sup>V</sup>Meme Change**

Initiatory (Vogler, 1998) and character-driven (Horton, 1996) scriptwriting paradigms have explored structures for dynamic change in contemporary films. The Spiral Dynamics® method for tracking <sup>V</sup>Meme change (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 85-92) offers a dialectical method useful for Film Scanning. Graves noted shifts from **ALPHA** equilibrium, to **BETA** questioning, to **GAMMA Trap** dystopian imagery and hopelessness if the Reform Option is unachievable, to the **DELTA** surge of new possibilities/utopian ideals and a **New ALPHA** equilibrium. This dialectic echoes Hegelian narrative approaches (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 133) and Tzvetan Todorov's three-stage equilibrium-disruption-new equilibrium pattern (Abrams, Nathan, & Bell, 2000, 136-137). Pop futurists combine a half-step from the current **ALPHA** with some **BETA** questions and the utopian appeal of the **DELTA** surge; problem-oriented futurists focus on **BETA** and the search for a Reform Option to **GAMMA Trap** crises; while critical futurists cycle between **BETA**, the Reform Option and opening up conceptual space for a **DELTA** surge to **New ALPHA** (always revealed by the critical theories being used).

The Nine Inch Nails concert film *And All That Could Have Been* (2001) features this five-stage cycle in a three-song sequence designed by Trent Reznor and video artist Bill Viola to 'pace-and-lead' the audience midway through the industrial band's performance. The concert segues from the **DELTA** surge of 'Gave Up' (00:30:00—00:31:14), where claustrophobic lighting effects obscure the release of three large video display screens, into a moment of silence. The jazz-influenced drum, bass and piano syncopated introduction to 'La Mer' (00:31:19—00:32:22) signals the beginning of Reznor and Viola's sequence, the **New ALPHA**, and evolves towards

the closing image of the ‘feminine daemonique’ (00:33:36—00:36:00). **BETA** lyrics and sea imagery signals a shift to ‘The Great Below’ (00:37:01—00:37:48). The Reform Option is briefly considered (00:38:43—00:39:22) before plunging into the **GAMMA Trap** of ‘The Mark Has Been Made’, where guitar power chords underpin **BEIGE** fire and water imagery (00:42:19—00:43:52). Finally the sequence ends by segueing into ‘Wish’ (00:44:20—00:45:42) and back to **DELTA**. Nine Inch Nails’ music, like most heavy metal and dystopian imagery, captures the viewer by **BETA** hooks spends much of its time in **GAMMA Trap/DELTA** oscillations, but never achieves the **New ALPHA** closure.

## **BEIGE: The Instinctive <sup>V</sup>Meme (*Survival/Sense*)**

*Microcosmos* (1996) surveys the pre-**BEIGE** world of Darwinian natural ecosystems. **BEIGE** systems unfolded with the Palaeolithic mutation in deep brain systems, instinctual responses and genetics that ‘bootstrapped’ human consciousness (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 197-198). Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) portrays this process in the famous ‘Dawn of Man’ prologue (00:04:27—19:02), influenced by the *en vogue* ‘killer ape’ hypothesis. The bone-to-spacecraft cut (18:55—19:02) ‘eliminates millions of years of story time’ (Bordwell & Thompson, 2001, 277) and reveals how **BEIGE** territorial imperatives underpin the **ORANGE/green** drive to colonise space.

We rarely experience a ‘pure’ form of **BEIGE** after early childhood development. Neo’s ‘slimy rebirth’ in *The Matrix* (1999) samples birth/perinatal imagery (00:33:26—00:33:43). Ripley’s frantic escape in *Alien* (1979) during the *Nostramo*’s self-destruct sequence (01:34:57—01:38:00) illustrates how **BEIGE** systems take-over during life-threatening events. Andy Dufresne’s escape (01:52:50- 01:59:30) in *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994) combines **BEIGE Problems of Existence**, “Red” Redding’s **PURPLE—BLUE** memories and Dufresne’s **BLUE—ORANGE** revenge on the Prison Warden.

## **PURPLE: The Clannish <sup>V</sup>Meme (*Kin Spirits*)**

The **PURPLE** system underpins cartoon, fantasy, and science fiction content imagery. Past cinema studies approaches have defined **PURPLE** myths as ‘universal, biological, and therefore static’ (Collins, Radner and Collins, 1993, 8), a view not shared by Spiral Dynamics® practitioners.

In this alternate universe, the usual rules don’t apply: *Chicken Run* (2000) features a humorous debate about the **BLUE—ORANGE** strategic planning skills of chickens (00:13:05—00:14:25). Ginger’s story of a **New ALPHA** paradise provokes a **CLOSED—BETA** response (00:15:57—00:17:23) from other chickens who cannot perceive new options.

A flashback about the **PURPLE—RED** persona of villain Keyser Soze (00:56:38—00:59:39) provides a **PURPLE** turning point in *The Usual Suspects* (1995). A hallucinatory Navaho Indian ritual (00:38:41—00:44:00) in *Natural Born Killers* (1994) evokes the shamanic power of tribal Elders and the spirit world (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 208-211). This **PURPLE** thread also features in *Apocalypse Now Redux*, when the editing cuts between Captain Willard terminating Kurtz ‘with extreme prejudice’ and the ritual sacrifice of a buffalo, as The Doors’ *The End* plays on the soundtrack (02:58:29—03:02:21). Bands from Pink Floyd and Jefferson Airplane to Depeche Mode and U2 have incorporated **PURPLE** imagery and aesthetics into their live stage design.

## **RED: The Egocentric <sup>V</sup>Meme (PowerGods)**

Spiral Dynamics® practitioners have noted that few healthy (‘for-better’) portrayals of the **RED** values system exist in contemporary culture, and Hollywood films only reinforce this deficit in social imaging.

Perhaps the most resonating scene the opening confrontation in *Dirty Harry* (1971) when Clint Eastwood snarls: ‘Do you feel lucky, punk?’ (00:12:54—00:14:11). This line became a sound-bite which overlooked how the Dirty Harry character evolved from the first film until *The Dead Pool* (1988). Detective Jimmy ‘Popeye’ Doyle’s question ‘Did you ever pick your feet in Poughkeepsie?’ (00:04:42—00:07:05) highlights the strategic **BLUE—ORANGE** ruse of a ‘tough’ **RED** persona in *The French Connection* (1971). *60 Minutes* journalist Lowell Bergman intervenes, using a **RED** persona (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 216-217), in a pre-interview debate about **BEIGE** proxemics and **RED/blue** cultural differences, at the beginning of *The Insider* (1999). Most film portrayals are either of **RED** outlaws to **BLUE—ORANGE** society or strategic masks.

## **BLUE: The Purposeful <sup>V</sup>Meme (TruthForce)**

**BLUE** values systems amplify the Traditional perspective of Manichean dualism, regimented order, rightful authority and hard work. This system resonates with themes in Alfred Hitchcock’s films, the Pre-Code era and melodramatic film conventions. The oscillating swing from individual/elite to a collective/communal focus means that group dynamics become crucial. Two notorious examples are the **PURPLE—BLUE** group hypnosis of Leni Riefenstahl’s *Triumph of the Will* (1934) and Philip Zimbardo and Ken Musen’s documentary *Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Study* (1992). The **BLUE** world, as Mickey explains during the Superbowl television interview in *Natural Born Killers* (01:12:25—01:17:31), is ruled by Fate.

Despite its avowed individualism, contemporary culture remains influenced and supported by **BLUE** social structures. In the past, these structures and norms included the duel for personal honor (00:52:47—01:00:21) in *Onegin* (2000). The Paris Island sequence of *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) highlights why the U.S. Army needs regimented order for combat situations (00:07:14—00:09:34). The Chosen in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* attend a final church service before departing (02:04:02—02:04:44). The Traditionalist focus of city libraries and knowledge of literary classics and moral tales (00:24:07—00:28:14) proves necessary to tracking the serial killer in *Se7en* (1997).

Yet **BLUE** systems can have their gnawing limits, too. In *The Clash: Westway to the World*, the band members note the failure of traditional authority (00:04:35—00:05:28) yet adopt hard-line tactics to maintain group-cohesion (00:14:46—00:15:14). Choices are simple: as Andy Dufresne explains to “Red” Redding in *The Shawshank Redemption*, ‘It comes down to a simple choice: get busy living, or get busy dying’ (01:36:17—01:42:45).

## **ORANGE: The Strategic <sup>V</sup>Meme (*StriveDrive*)**

**ORANGE** values systems have brightened with the growth of neo-liberal economics and globalization. Hence **ORANGE** advertising and distribution dominates the global media (Nichols, 1994). The increasing collusion of news editorial and legal departments is examined in an *Insider* scene (01:36:25—01:39:56) about the mergers and acquisitions risk of ‘torturous interference’. Gordon Gecko’s ‘Greed is Good’ speech (01:12:11—01:15:44) imprinted many viewers with the suggestion that financial speculation was an **ORANGE** strategic remanifestation of **PURLE—BLUE** Manifest Destiny. In this speech Gecko set-up a dichotomy between **BLUE—ORANGE** stereotypes and the **ORANGE/red** individual investor.

Gecko’s real philosophy, and Oliver Stone’s critique of rampant Corporatism, is revealed in a later scene (01:30:40—01:34:24) when Budd confronts him with arguments centered on **BLUE** icons (family, company, tradition), and Gecko ends the conversation with a **RED/blue** gambit. Gecko’s **ORANGE/green** perspective on the construction of social reality is mirrored by the popularity of strategic thinking and scenarios in pragmatic futures. The EXCOM team in *Thirteen Days* deploys **ORANGE** multiplistic option-generation (00:25:18—00:26:41) when it shifts from a pre-emptive strike (‘there is more than one option here’) to other scenarios (‘the scenario calls for a blockade of Cuba’). Later the EXCOM team uses **orange/GREEN** ‘tit-for-tat’ insights from game theory (‘what if this is a series of accidents?’) to defuse the international crisis (01:55:48—01:56:55).

Many **ORANGE** depictions focus on empirical technology and intelligence augmentation, such as the National Security Agency’s intelligence-gathering and data-mining system (00:31:29—00:33:54) in *Enemy of the State* (1997). Political spin-doctors in *Primary Colors* (1998) use **ORANGE** image management techniques (00:59:51—01:03:18) in a sequence based by *Newsweek* journalist Joe Klein on Genevieve Flower’s allegations about former U.S. President Bill Clinton. This technological thread is exemplified by the *Enemy of the State* credit sequence, a montage of surveillance video and ‘reality TV’ images (00:04:15—00:06:04), and the *Spy Game* credit sequence (00:08:00—00:08:13), which ends with a hyper-fast zoom in on the Central Intelligence Agency’s headquarters in Langley, Virginia (00:09:42—00:09:48). Years later, programmer Jim Doyle will wreak revenge on Centrabank icon Simon O’Reilly (a Gecko copy) in *The Bank* (2000) by engineering a calamitous equities trade (01:22:23—01:30:14).

Peak **ORANGE** is portrayed in the documentary *Startup.com* (2000). The dotcom entrepreneurs battle over a name during a concept pitch session (00:09:02—00:10:07) and ‘the vision thing’ (00:16:19—00:17:59). They face rejections from the venture capital firms Kleiner Perkins Caulfield & Byers (00:12:10—00:13:24) and General Atlantic Partners (00:13:42—00:14:59), before almost closing an investment round, *sans* legal counsel and laptop, with Hyland Capital Partners (00:22:23—00:27:13). This unapologetic **ORANGE** business culture is reflected in Hollywood script markets (Taylor, 1999), industry ‘tell-all’ biographies (Vachon, 1998; Linson, 2002) and the doyens of the ‘high concept’ film: Don Simpson (Fleming, 1996), Jon Peters and Peter Guber (Griffin & Masters, 1996) and David Geffen (King, 2000).

Yet upsurges against **ORANGE** systems are appearing on the horizon. Some of these can be traced to ‘late capitalism’ critiques in films like *Alien* (1979), where the *Nostramo*’s doomed crew unmask The Company’s true mission, discuss how to kill the Alien, and compare different values systems (01:20:45 – 01:24:00). The most emotionally searing scene in *The Filth & The Fury* comes when John Lydon speaks out about the commercialism surrounding Syd Vicious’s murder-suicide (01:35:00—01:36:28). The **ORANGE** solution is co-option of surface imagery: *Fight Club* (1999) warns on the one hand about ‘Planet Starbucks’ and how corporations will ‘colonize the future’ (00:03:41—00:05:24), yet its protagonist is not immune to the ‘IKEA nesting instinct’ and white-collar blues (Giroux, 2002, 259, 263).

An ambiguous example of **ORANGE** values systems is Morpheus’ ‘Blue or Red Pill’ proposal to Neo in *The Matrix* (00:24:42—00:31:43). To appreciate this ambiguity, consider that audiences have different responses (Abrams, Bell & Nathan, 2000, 248, 276): *dominant* readings (accepting the preferred reading), *negotiated* readings (agreeing with dominant values but disagreeing with specific points), *oppositional* readings (where dominant values are disavowed) and *aberrant* readings (when unusual values are ‘decoded’). Most viewers took the *dominant* reading of an initiatory ordeal, *negotiated* readings noted the **PURLPE** horror conventions during Morpheus’ interview of Neo, and *aberrant* readings focused on the LSD-like imagery during ‘waking up’ as a sign of dual psychosis. Yet an *oppositional* reading is ultimately the most disturbing. Morpheus and his colleagues find a highly suggestible human (Neo). During the interview Morpheus uses Neuro-Lingustic Programming and Ericksonian hypnosis techniques to persuade Neo of his convictions. Having undergone a ‘conversion experience’ Neo now continues with Morpheus’ mission to embody ‘The One’. Sometimes your ‘own right mind’ is really another’s text.

## **GREEN: The Relativistic <sup>V</sup>Meme (*HumanBond*)**

Over the past few years the **GREEN <sup>V</sup>Meme** has been the most controversial Gravesian values system within sections of the Spiral Dynamics® community. Its relativistic mode of thinking has underpinned the ‘postmodernist turn’, which, in the author’s opinion, is probably more accurately described as a **CLOSED BLUE—GREEN** response to **CLOSED ORANGE/green** attempts to ‘upshift’ to the Second Tier. This fallout is mirrored in a *Startup.com* scene when the mother of ‘fired’ govWorks.com cofounder Tom Herman says, ‘Caring for people and how they feel—is not part of this new world’ (01:31:23 – 01:33:00).

The epistemological revelations in *The Matrix* provide a glimpse of Second Tier *gnosis* amidst the social constructionist critique of artificial intelligence (00:38:19—00:42:43). Yet the reasons given for this future dystopia fall apart under lengthy analysis (Slaughter, 2001). Perhaps answering critics who judged *Videodrome* (1983) as an **orange/GREEN** synthesis of Marshall McLuhan's media and Jean Baudrillard's simulacra (Bukatman, 1990, 196-213), David Cronenberg ends *eXistenZ* (1999) with a jarring question about what happens when game violence and immersive environments overlay the subjective universe (01:21:40—01:22:28). This scene viscerally illustrates the dangers of extreme post-conventional relativism (Wilber, *Theory of Everything*, 2000, 27), and its nested Chinese boxes (01:21:40—01:30:01), without the need for confusing 'Mean Green Meme' jargon.

Video game logic also forms the multi-strand narrative structure (Thompson, 1999; Cowgill, 1999) of *Run, Lola, Run*, one of the most interesting depictions of **GREEN** relativistic structures, which the film explores through slight variations of repetitious scenes. These branching points represent 'alternative futures' (Bordwell & Thompson, 2001, 67, 91) as flashbulb-like memory fragments. Lola bumps into a pedestrian, who responds with 'stupid slut' (00:12:47—00:13:06); 'fucking bitch' (00:35:10—00:35:10); and enigmatic silence (00:53:53—00:54:04). Later in her trip, Lola is approached by a bicyclist who asks 'Could you use a bike?' (00:15:17—00:15:44); reveals in another story trajectory that the bike is 'stolen' (00:36:15—00:36:35); and in a third possibility, sells the stolen bike to the street tramp who stole Mani's money-bag (00:54:53—00:55:47). When Lola arrives at her father's bank, she first bumps into Ms Jager (00:18:40—00:18:50); is under surveillance in the corridor (00:38:14—00:38:20), confronted (00:40:30—00:40:45), and counteracts by holding her father hostage (00:42:33—00:42:39); and in the final sequence Ms Jager is passed by Lola's father (00:57:25—00:57:34). Each story trajectory in *Run, Lola, Run* captures how the **GREEN** system discovers the uncertainty inherent in everyday choices (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 270).

The **ORANGE** appropriation of **GREEN** perspectives and **PURPLE** iconography is evident in Baz Luhrman's *Moulin Rouge!* (2001), whose melodramatic storyline is dominated by a series of loosely connected **orange/GREEN** music videos. Opening with the *Sound of Music* (1965) theme, Luhrman proceeds to sample Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit* (00:11:32—00:13:40); Marilyn Monroe's *Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend* routine (00:13:40—00:18:10), via Madonna's *Material Girl* (00:15:42—00:15:52); David Bowie's *Diamond Dogs* (00:23:03—00:23:43); Elton John's *Your Song* (00:26:31—00:30:04), Madonna's *Like A Virgin* (00:59:31—01:03:01) and The Police's *Roxanne* (01:14:58—01:18:29). While some of these interpretations are audacious, they also illustrate the difficulties in finding 'pure' **GREEN** imagery.

### **Moral Crises: Depicting The Gravesian 'Great Leap'**

Clare W. Graves contended that humans often faced a 'great leap'—a life-changing experience, moral crisis or direct confrontation with a global crisis—before Second Tier systems came online within the human brain (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 274). Many speculative and futures-oriented films have focused on these crises, such as the Cold War spectre of Mutually Assured Destruction in the title sequence (00:00:23—00:02:06) for *Thirteen Days*.

Film characters may not necessarily awaken Second Tier systems, but some kinds of moral crises that *might* bring these systems online. The Cassandra Complex ('I want the future to be unknown') and breakdown of consensus reality (01:32:29—01:34:46) in *12 Monkeys* captures the jarring and instantaneous 'change in worldviews' that a personal confrontation with the 'global problematique' often brings. Rutger Hauer's improvised 'Time to Die' speech (01:41:57 – 01:43:05) in *Blade Runner* (1981) reflects Erik Erikson's research on psychological crises in lifespan development. The painful 'firing' sequence (01:15:29—01:27:37) in *Startup.com* is a real-world example that may prompt psychological evolution to greater complexity or regression to 'safer' environs (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 61-63). Finally, although it was a **Problem of Existence** for the crew of *Apollo 13* (1995), the technical malfunction (00:47:48—00: 00:51:41) also forced National Aeronautics & Space Administration staff to use systems thinking and crisis response mechanisms to bring the astronauts back safely.

## Searching For The Elusive Second Tier

While depictions of Second Tier **Problem of Existences** have existed in speculative and futures-oriented films since the early 1970s, realistic depictions of Second Tier responses to these crises have been fleeting. *Baraka* (1992) highlights the anthropology of different human cultures and interconnected milieux. *Earthlight* (1998) documents how astronauts perceive the Earth as an integrated system from outer space, yet features a **GREEN** 'sensitive' New Age soundtrack.

Depictions of Second Tier consciousness, perhaps because of the co-evolution of the 'Movie Brats' and the Age of Aquarius, has been dominated by psychedelic and science fiction imagery. The Stargate trip (01:56:58—02:06:07) and Star Child imagery (02:13:14—02:14:42) in *2001: A Space Odyssey* was, thanks to Douglas Trumbull's effects and Arthur C. Clarke's eschatology, one of the first depictions that resonated with a mass audience. The enigmatic answer to 'life, the universe, and everything' (00:13:18—00:17:50) in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1981) parodied the post-de Chardin/*2001* tradition of representing the Hegelian Overmind with oblique religious imagery. *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* offered the ultimate *deus ex machine* to dystopian imagery: rescue of the fragile individual by a future civilization (01:50:57 – 01:53:36).

## Appendix 1: The Eight<sup>V</sup> Meme Codes/Systems.

(Adapted from Don Beck and Christopher C. Cowan's *Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership, and Change*. Blackwell University Press, Oxford, 1996).

Level	Color Code	Popular Thinking Name		Cultural Manifestations System & Personal Displays
8	Turquoise (HU)	<i>Wholeview</i>	Holistic	ecological thinking; holistic structures; collective individualism; planetary spirituality; communitarian sense; minimalist living; macro-view perspective; whole-Spiral networking
				“Sacrifice self now for larger, conscious, spiritual whole that networks globally and focuses on the good of all living entities as integrated systems.”
7	Yellow (GT)	<i>FlexFlow</i>	Ecological	integrative and open natural systems; self-principle; multiple realities; experiential never at knowledge
				“Express self as self desires, but the expense of others or the earth.”
6	Green (FS)	<i>HumanBond</i>	Consensus	community structures; consensus-driven leadership; egalitarian feelings; authenticity; sharing; caring; liberate from greed & dogma
				“Sacrifice self now, to obtain now, for self and others.”
5	Orange (ER)	<i>StriveDrive</i>	Strategic	enterprise structures, success-driven leadership; materialism; consumerism; image/status; personal growth; search out best solutions; tried-and-true experience
				“Express self calculatedly to achieve what self desires, but so as not to arouse the ire of others.”
4	Blue (DQ)	<i>TruthForce</i>	Authority	moral compasses; authoritarian structures; meaning; discipline; traditions; rules; chain-of-command; lives for later.
				“Sacrifice self now to the one true way and obey rightful authority so as to deserve reward later.”
3	Red (CP)	<i>PowerGods</i>	Egocentric	egocentric personalities; empire structures; power-centered leadership; immediate gratification; conquest; action; impulsive; fights remorselessly to break constraints; glitz; lives for now
				“Express self impulsively and without guilt lest one suffer unbearable shame.”
2	Purple (BO)	<i>KinSpirits</i>	Animistic	animistic beliefs, tribal orders, harmony, rituals; taboos superstitions; tribes; folk ways & elders lore.
				“Sacrifice self to the wishes of the and the ways of the ancestors to placate the spirits.”
1	Beige (AN)	<i>SurvivalSense</i>	Instinctive	survival senses and deep brain systems; undifferentiated self-sense; food; water; procreation warmth; protection; stays alive
				“Express self instinctively and automatically for biological survival.”

## **Appendix 2: ‘Film Scanning’ Knowledge Cycle.**

- A critical method of media synthesis.
- A lens/tool for simulating the nested values systems *within* people.
- A way to open up greater conceptual space and discuss new strategic options.
- A way to challenge mental models, subjective filters, and organizational memory.
- A way to ‘chunk’ critical/depth perspectives in a Knowledge Management system.

### **1. Situation Analysis.**

- What is your current situation? (Opportunities—Threats brief).
- What are your strategic goals? (Strategic Anticipation/Foresight capabilities).
- What is your time-limit?
- Decide what to analyse.
- Decide which clips and films to utilise.
- Step outside your mental models, subjective filters, and organizational memory.

### **2. ‘Film Scanning’.**

- Watch the clips (usually several times).
- Note key scene and sequence times.
- Note any relevant *mise-en-scene* elements.
- Remain self-aware and ‘awake’ during viewing process.
- Use several different critical perspectives during viewing process.
- Be aware of General Semantics errors (‘to be’, ‘is’) that mis-map territory.
- Use depth perspectives (SD, CLA) and notation during viewing process.
- Where are the gaps? What strategic information is missing? (Milton Model).
- Transfer notes to Information Visualization/Knowledge Management system.

### **3. Analysis and Synthesis.**

- Study any included supplementary material (notably production commentaries).
- Research film production, interviews, and political economy (context).
- If fiction: Source text? Adaptation issues?
- If non-fiction: Source events? Press coverage? Adaptation issues?
- Map film structure (contours and discontinuities) using script and scenario models.
- Chunk key information (Pareto’s 80/20 rule) from critical and depth perspectives.
- Connect film ideas to Situation Analysis.
- Reframe options from Opportunities-Threats brief and Strategic Anticipation brief.

### **4. Dissemination.**

- Assemble seminar notes and report summary.
- Discuss with relevant ‘community of practice’.
- Review critical feedback and update summary ‘on-the-fly’ if needed.
- Disseminate via ‘DIY’ DVD commentaries and PowerPoint presentation if possible.
- Repeat ‘Film Scanning’ cycle if necessary.

### **Appendix 3: Key Film Cycles.**

The time-period of these cycles was correlated with key theories and ‘stimulus events’. Imagery and thematic content has continued to influence the cultural memepool. The films cited are only as an introductory guide. Films marked with an asterisk (\*) had a theatrical re-release during the cycle’s estimated time-period.

#### **Responses to the ‘Global Problematique’ (1969—1977).**

- Paul Ehrlich’s *Population Bomb* (1969).
- Rolling Stones’ Altamont concert (1969).
- The Club of Rome’s *Limits to Growth* (1972).
- OPEC oil crisis (1973).

*THX-1138* (1970).  
*Silent Running* (1971).  
*The Andromeda Strain* (1971).  
*Zero Population Growth* (1971).  
*Doomwatch* (1972).  
*Soylent Green* (1973).  
*The Final Programme* (1973).  
*Westworld* (1973).  
*The Cars That Ate Paris* (1974).  
*A Boy and His Dog* (1975).  
*The Man Who Fell To Earth* (1975).  
*Futureworld* (1976).  
*Logan’s Run* (1976).  
*The Last Wave* (1977).

#### **‘Nuclear War’ Scare (1982—85).**

- Nuclear Utilization Theory.
- Central Intelligence Agency’s Operation RYAN (1982-83).
- Ronald Reagan’s *Evil Empire* speech (1983).
- Strategic Defence Initiative (1983) and MX missile deployment (1984).
- Paul Ehrlich and Carl Sagan’s *The Cold and the Dark* (1984).
- J.G. Ballard’s *Hellow America* (1984).
- The ‘Nuclear Winter’ meme (1984—Present).

*The War Game*\* (1965).  
*Edge of Darkness* (1983).  
*Special Bulletin* (1983).  
*Testament* (1983).  
*The Day After* (1983).  
*WarGames* (1983).  
*One Night Stand* (1984).  
*Red Dawn* (1984).  
*Threads* (1985).  
*Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (1985).

## **Tech Noir (1979—Present).**

- Cyberpunk genre (1984—Present).
- Critiques of ‘Late Capitalism’.
- Growth of Biotechnology and Nanotechnology industries.
- Postmodernist, Post-structuralist and Critical Realist discourses.
- William Gibson’s *Neuromancer* (1984).
- Charles Perrow’s *Normal Accidents* (1984).
- John Shirley’s *A Song Called Youth* trilogy (1999).
- Anthony Giddens’s *The Third Way* (1999).
- Ulrich Beck’s *World Risk Society* (1999).

*Alien* (1979).

*Blake’s 7* (1979—1982).

*Blade Runner* (1982).

*Brazil* (1984).

*Dreamscape* (1984).

*Akira* (1987).

*Robocop* (1987).

*The Running Man* (1987).

*Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1988).

*Tetsuo: Body Hammer* (1991).

*Wild Palms* (1991).

*Jurassic Park* (1992).

*Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1992).

*Johnny Mnemonic* (1995).

*Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995).

*Strange Days* (1995).

*Twelve Monkeys* (1995).

*Gattaca* (1997).

*Minority Report* (2001).

## **Post-9/11 Pop Geopolitics (2001—Present).**

- 9-11 terrorist attacks on U.S. (2001).
- U.S. Bush Administration’s ‘regime change’ plans for Iraq (2002).
- Francis Fukuyama’s *The End of History* (1989).
- Samuel P. Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations* (1993).
- Paul Krugman’s *Pop Internationalism* (1996).
- Robert Kaplan’s *The Coming Anarchy* (2000).

*Deterrence\** (1999).

*Behind Enemy Lines* (2001).

*Black Hawk Down* (2001).

*Spy Game* (2001).

*Collateral Damage* (2002).

*The Sum of All Fears* (2002).

## Appendix 4: Case Study: *Alien* (1979).

### Situation History

**1979.** One afternoon the author's step-mother, knowing of his interest in science fiction films, bought him a copy of the photo-novel (Anobile, 1979) for Ridley Scott's dystopian film *Alien* (1979). This material's horrifying nature (for a five-year-old) became apparent during a subsequent discussion at a Mentone supermarket. The author's interest in science fiction films had been sparked by seeing *Star Wars* (1978) and a trailer for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1978) shortly before his mother's death in a car accident. H.R. Giger's imagery becomes, for the author, a baseline psychosexual imprint and the source of both fascination and nightmares throughout the early 1980s.

**1989.** While reading *Danse Macabre* (King, 1981), the author noted Stephen King's comments on *Alien*: 'I think of it as Lovecraft in outer space; mankind finally going to the Elder Gods rather than they coming to us' (King, 1981, 210) and 'dawn never comes in that Lovecraftian gulf between the stars' (King, 1981, 215). The author had recently discovered H.P. Lovecraft (Davis, 1995) after seeing the cover of Iron Maiden's album *Live After Death* (1986).

**1993.** The author attends Cinema Studies lectures by then-La Trobe University lecturer Barbara Creed, who discusses *Alien*, the 'monstrous-feminine', and the 'chestburster' scene as an example of 'male birth' and anxieties about reproduction (Creed, 1989; Creed, 1990).

**1996.** The author joins the U.S.-based Temple of Set, a pre-eminent 'Satanic' institution that has studied the psychodramatic effects of Lovecraftian imagery (June 1996—April 1998).

**1998.** After a very Lovecraftian nervous breakdown, the author studies the perinatal roots of H.R. Giger's imagery (Wade, 1996) and Stanislav Grof's work on the 'death-rebirth' struggle of the Birth Perinatal Matrix III (Grof, 1985, 116-122).

**2000.** The Leviathan nature of The Company is mentioned in debates about trans-national corporations, 'late capitalism' and the spectre of corporatism.

**2002.** Brief discussion of 'The Discovery of Ash' scene in Spiral Dynamics® I seminar on 'Film Scanning' (19 July 2002).

## Key Sequences

1. 'Chestburster' (00:52:22—00:54:34).

Perhaps *Alien*'s most famous sequence, comparable in effect to *Psycho*'s shower sequence (00:44:17—00:47:35). A leitmotif for the film: 'within a dark claustrium filled with real, simulated, or symbolic vitals, a supremely potent menace lurks, waking to tear apart and devour its unsuspecting victims' (Greenberg, M.D., 1986, 100).

The key image that became a 'narcissistic wound' for the author was of the 'chestburster' exploding out of Kane's disembowelled chest (00:54:04). The *Humpty Dumpty* effect (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 20-22) as accidental imprinting *in extremis*.

2. 'The Discovery of Ash' (01:17:16—01:24:00).

The 'unmasking' of Ash's true identity as a synthetic robot planted by The Company to ensure the retrieval of the Alien for its 'weapons division'. 'His morality is pre-programmed, a cog-and-wheels Darwinism engineered by others' (Greenberg, M.D., 1986, 104).

Three *key images* confused the author in 1979: why Ash's head was on the floor (01:20:25 and 01:21:35), which the author misinterpreted as a person being trapped in a quicksand-like vat, and Ash's final immolation by fire (01:23:50). The first two images were examples of cognitive errors that 'mis-mapped the territory'. The latter image was subsequently reinterpreted through the lenses of the Judeo-Christian apocalyptic tradition, Muslim esoteric schools of the 'eternal flame', and, most effectively, through the Hindu Aghori tradition involving the Kali archetype of 'devouring mother'.

3. 'The Death of Lambert and Parker' (01:28:28—01:30:50).

The Alien resurfaces to kill Lambert and Parker as Ripley hunts for the cat Jones. Anobile's photonovel (Anobile, 1979) left little to the imagination, whereas Ridley Scott's editing was more suggestive (Greenberg, M.D., 1986, 96).

The key image that frightened the author was of Parker's brain being garrotted by the Alien (01:29:52). This image lasts only one second in the film. It mirrored both the author's post-crash nightmares (noted in psychiatric reports) and certain Hindu Aghori meditations on death.

## Case Synthesis

The ‘accidental imprinting’ of the author in 1979 had ramifications for years to come: a brooding, dark, and uncertain universe re-emerged into being. In comparison to other children, the event distorted the author’s perceptions of the future (Page, 1995).

The ‘situation history’ cycles between the **BETA Condition**’s time of uncertainty (1979), **Gamma Trap** hopelessness (early 1980s, 1998) and several self-reflective **Delta Surges** (1989, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2002) based on assimilating new knowledge and critical insights (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 87-92). It might also be framed as an unfolding process of Jungian ‘shadow’ therapy (Hockley, 2001) about fears of ‘identity dissolution’ which *Alien* series explores (Constable, 1999).

*Alien*’s thematic imagery tapped the pre-literate **PURPLE** mind (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 205-206) of the author, and fuelled an interest, throughout the 1980s, in science fiction and Grand Guignol horror imagery. This ‘command to look’, based on Giger’s evocation of **BEIGE** aesthetics and survival senses (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 199-201), later matured in the mid-1990s when the author rejected his **BLUE/purple/ORANGE** Anglican upbringing and sought out dark imagery and antinomian traditions. This impulse may best be understood as a response to organizational ‘identity neurosis’ and an attempt to heal existential depression and feelings of inauthenticity (Wilber, 1999, 124-127). The film was the first critique of a **CLOSED ORANGE/red/BEIGE** form of free-market hypercapitalism (Byers, 1990) that the author encountered, and was noted with the post-Seattle growth of the anti-globalist movement. The *Nostromo*’s computer room for ‘Mother’ (01:15:34—01:17:16), along with the NORAD ‘nuclear strike’ displays in *WarGames* (1983), spurred on an interest in computing and information technology.

Throughout 1998 to 2000, the author undertook cognitive and transactional analysis therapies. These provided new opportunities to reinterpret the *Alien* ‘accidental imprinting’ event and a trans-rational experience (Burns, 1998) that, due to being a ‘beginning practitioner’ in specific practices (Wilber, 1999, 144-146), suddenly became a nervous breakdown and fugue. The author was disturbed to discover, during this period, two psychoneurotic sub-personalities: a ‘trans’ prescient about the ‘global problematique’ and a ‘pre’ that wanted to avenge kill those who had tried to seriously harm him in earlier life (Grossman, 1995). The therapies revealed how these traumatic experiences, along with the death of the mother’s author, a bitter family divorce, and early suicide attempts, had contributed to ‘role’ and ‘rule’ pathologies (Wilber, 1999, 123-134, 138-139) within the family and organizational systems, and to a prolonged feeling of existential dread. Finally the therapy sessions had ‘surfaced’ maladaptive coping patterns (unhealthy dynamics of several romantic relationships).

Thus the author’s subjective reactions to *Alien*’s thematic imagery has ebbed and flowed over the lifespan of this imprinting. Yet this random event cannot simply be summarised in deference to the ongoing debate about childhood exposure to violent imagery in the media. Its ‘blowback’, as briefly outlined above, was far more complex.

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