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The MacGuffin

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EDITORIAL

FIRST THINGS first. Our recent issues have been below standard! My own analysis of *The Manxman* in issue 18 was particularly *laboured*, a word I use advisedly. I wrote the piece in what I call my 'labouring-at-the-coal-face mode', and I regret that no-one (me!) removed the detritus from what was dug out. Accordingly, I've decided to both declare that issue permanently out-of-print and to extend by one issue everyone's subscription that was then current. (So if your subscription was due to expire with the present number, you've actually got one more issue coming to you.)

Now, I need to indicate something of what happened, though I'll spare you my several horrendous experiences with computers (I touched on that last time!). Just as I began to write about *The Manxman*, someone contacted me and said that he wished to contribute his own Hitchcock article which would come close to filling the next issue - but that it had to *be* the next issue. Weakly, I compromised. I told the person that I'd both rein in my *Manxman* analysis and would run his article. In the event, the latter wasn't used, while my own article now shows (to me) every sign of where I was constantly avoiding needed explication. (As I also noted last time, that didn't stop the result from being called 'overlong'. Which surely goes to show how the length of an article is judged on its readability.)

Here's an example of where my article fell down. In it, I noted the scene set in Old Caesar's pub where among the fishermen attending a noisy meeting is an ancient fellow with a hoary beard. I remarked that the scene reminded me of an Ealing comedy, but didn't stop to specify how or why. Consequently my point seems arbitrary and even silly. What has a 1928 melodrama to do with (circa) 1950s comedy? Actually, I'd now insist on the 'connection'. The inclusion of the bearded fellow in the scene gives an excellent example of Hitchcock's pointed wit. The fellow's appearance is exaggerated not for, say, a satiric purpose à la the depiction of the priest with the crucifix in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), but rather out of a sense of sheer good fun - yet fun that manages to imply something important about the Manx fishermen's cause. The old fellow represents, as it were, the *tradition* of the fishermen whose very livelihood we've just learnt is under threat from foreign trawlers. And, yes, the best parallel I can suggest is with the scene set in the pub in *The Titfield Thunderbolt* (1953) where the Titfield villagers meet to oppose a threatened closure by the railway authority in London of their beloved local branch line. Into the sea of faces inside the pub director Charles Crichton works those of a retired engine driver (crusty Hugh Griffith) and a little old lady, the village's oldest member - played by wizened Edie Martin, a quintessential Ealing character if ever there was one.

Nor is that all there is to the 'Ealing connection'. For instance, Hitchcock's screenwriter friend Angus MacPhail worked for Ealing for a while. Further, we know that Hitchcock kept an eye on the British film scene after he moved to Hollywood (see previous 'MacGuffins'), and he definitely seems to have enjoyed comedies like *The Titfield Thunderbolt* and *Genevieve* (a box-office smash, about a vintage car) of the same year. So much so, that you can detect elements of both in Hitchcock's own *The Trouble With Harry* (1956). And as I hinted - but unfortunately *only* hinted - in the *Manxman* article, there are further interesting resemblances between *Harry* and *The Manxman* ...

At this point, I think of a passage in Agatha Christie's 'The Murder at the Vicarage' (1930) where someone says, 'I wish you'd solve the case, Miss Marple, like you did [when] Miss Wetherby's gill of picked shrimps disappeared. And all because it reminded you of something quite different about a sack of coals.' (Chapter XI) Miss Marple sees that the topic concerns intuition, and she says: 'Intuition is like reading a word without having to spell it out. A child can't do that because it has had so little experience.'

Well, much of Hitchcock's filmmaking was of a high-intuitive order - a point I'll come back to. But what I'm really thinking of now concerns how I was taken to task in the last 'MacGuffin' for having insufficiently argued a case! I accept the reproach, if perhaps for other reasons than the writer intended. To me, who practises meditation (after a fashion), argument sometimes seems almost uncalled for, at best a rather piecemeal way of *sharing* an experience, which is already a form of knowledge, with one's readers. But of course there's another take on all of this, and it's probably a whole lot *

wiser than mine. When, in *Torn Curtain* (1966), someone says of Professor Manfred (Günter Strack) that 'he has a unique line in argument', I imagine Manfred may actually have been following Hitchcock's own credo. The speaker continues: 'he combines mathematical logic with romantic inconsistency'. In Hitchcock's case, his films *are* constructed with near-mathematical precision, i.e. they're 'well-argued' after their own fashion, even as they uphold their director's favourite aphorism, 'Logic is dull'. I promise to henceforth try and make 'The MacGuffin' follow a similar 'line' ...

Some hidden themes run through this 'MacGuffin'. One is precisely Hitchcock's romanticism, mentioned in the past by, notably, both François Truffaut and Professor Lesley Brill (my respected critic who said I didn't use sufficient argument). It was the Romantics, and especially the English Romantic poets, who taught us all to question mere ratiocination and to draw on things like intuition. Hence Camille Paglia can write: 'in Romanticism after Blake, femininity is never repressed. If the Romantics repress anything, it is masculinity.' ('Sexual Personae', 1991, p. 372) Much of Hitchcock's richest material comes from Romanticism; further, no-one more than the Romantic poet John Keats (1795-1821) despised what he called 'consequitive reasoning'. Previous 'MacGuffins' have suggested some Keatsian strains operating in Hitchcock, and this issue touches on others.

I trust readers enjoy the long article on *The Wrong Man* (1957). An earlier version appeared in 'MacGuffin' 6. I revised the article for publication in the book 'What Mensans Think', edited by Dr Geoffrey Marnell of Melbourne. Unfortunately the book was scuttled by American Mensa bureaucrats. I've chosen to leave the essay with minimal further changes.

To everyone, good viewing.



P.S. The 'MacGuffin' Web Page has been overhauled lately.

NEWS

(Readers are urged to send in reports and cuttings for this feature. Both general interest and Hitchcock-specific items are sought.)

Vertigo 'restored'

As noted on the 'MacGuffin' Web Page, Alfred Hitchcock's masterpiece, *Vertigo* (1958) - often voted one of the ten greatest films - has been refurbished. A preview of the new-look print was held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in June. Universal Studios will reissue the film at selected cinemas in the US this fall.

The restorers are James Katz and Robert Harris, the team that has already restored *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Spartacus*, and *My Fair Lady*. (Is Robert Harris, we wonder, the Robert A. Harris who in 1976 co-authored with Michael S. Lasky the informative book, 'The Films of Alfred Hitchcock'?)

'What we're doing here is unique', Katz said. 'We're creating a new preservation negative in 65mm from all the original large-format [VistaVision] elements. But instead of reduction printing in 35mm, we're transferring to 70mm. This has never been done before.'

No part of the restoration process proved to be straightforward. According to Harris, 'The camera negative is faded, the opticals weren't that great, the focus is soft and contrasty, and 1300 feet of rear projection process shots contributed to the deterioration.' Sadly, too, Bernard Herrmann's original music tracks, when found in a Paramount vault, had 'turned to vinegar'. Nonetheless, the soundtrack has now been reworked in DTS Stereo (digital sound) from a surviving 35mm composite optical print.

'The MacGuffin' is sure that our readers will be gratified to hear of the restoration. We have just one nagging doubt, and it concerns that description of the film's 'focus' as being 'soft and contrasty'. At several points in the original film - and not just the Mission Dolores scenes - Hitchcock clearly *intended* shots or whole scenes to be in soft-focus. (He used a similar technique in *Marnie* and *Torn Curtain*, amongst other films.) Have the restorers considered this and taken it into account?

Hitchcock and the centenary of cinema

As noted last time, a poll by London's respected 'Time Out' magazine, of directors, producers, actors, programmers, and critics, voted Alfred Hitchcock the best director in cinema history.

Meanwhile, the Hayward Gallery in London celebrated the centenary of cinema with an exhibition called 'Spellbound', exploring the relationship between film and art. The exhibition was named after Hitchcock's film for which Salvador Dali (1904-1989) designed the dream-sequence, and included an exhibit called '24 Hour Psycho' which proved to be no less than the Hitchcock classic, *Psycho*, slowed down to three frames per second so that you needed a whole day to see it.

Clive Huggett, who is a regular contributor to the British Mensa Film SIG's newsletter, 'Motion Pictures', writes: 'Other exhibits included a gallery done up to look like the props room in a film studio, paintings by Paula Rego based on early Disney features, an animated film about popcorn, films by Steve McQueen and Damien Hirst, a display of filing cabinets [?!] by Terry Gilliam, shooting scripts and storyboards from Ridley Scott's *Alien* and *Blade Runner*, scripts from *Apocalypse Now* and *Full Metal Jacket*, and the best exhibit, called 'In the Dark', designed by Peter Greenaway. The latter exhibit was like walking onto the set of one of Greenaway's films, and was built up over the 75 days that the exhibition was on.'

Coming back to Hitchcock now, Professor Sidney Gottlieb has sent us an email message to say that he's working on a multimedia essay about Hitchcock and Germany for the Hitchcock Multimedia Project. He's also 'becoming intrigued by the relationship between Hitchcock and early cinema' generally, and is starting to list whatever allusions/homages/ references he can spot in Hitchcock's films to D.W. Griffith, the Brighton School (G. Albert Smith and James Williamson), etc. 'I suspect that an unexplored aspect of Hitchcock's wit has to do with these subtle echoes and allusions!'

The Unabomber and Joseph Conrad

United States prosecutors believe they have found the man who inspired the Unabomber: novelist Joseph Conrad (1857-1924).

In particular, federal authorities have been struck by the parallels that can be drawn between Theodore Kaczynski - charged with the 18-year killing spree attributed to the Unabomber - and the character called the Professor in Conrad's 1907 novel, 'The Secret Agent'.

(Alfred Hitchcock filmed Conrad's novel and play of the same title in 1936, as *Sabotage*. There, the Professor had become the owner of a petshop which served as a 'front' for his anarchist-activity of making explosives. Behind the shop, too, lived the man's grown-up daughter whose child had been deserted by its father - reflecting the film's theme of 'unhappy families' and at least something of Conrad's worldly pessimism/realism.)

In the novel, the Professor is brilliant but deranged and unkempt. Like Mr Kaczynski, he had loathed technology and quit academia to live in a one-room hideaway, where he built a bomb whose target was an institution of science - in the novel, it's the Greenwich Observatory.

'I've the grit to work alone, quite alone, absolutely alone', says the Professor. Mr Kaczynski went for years with virtually no human contact.

Investigators believe the alleged Unabomber idolised the novelist, sometimes registering at a hotel - where he is believed to have posted his bombs - under the names Conrad or Konrad. The author's original name was Teodore Jozef Konrad Korzeniowski; the accused's full name is Theodore John Kaczynski.

Breathe Right, all right!

Alfred Hitchcock wanted to film a scene for *North by Northwest* (1959) inside Lincoln's nostril at Mount Rushmore. But his family insist that Hitchcock's own nose isn't up for grabs, and recently sued the makers of Breathe Right nasal strips for using it in advertising.

Hitchcock's daughter, Patricia Hitchcock O'Connell, and granddaughter, Kathleen O'Connell Fiala, filed a federal lawsuit saying two Minnesota companies made consumers believe that the famous director, who died in 1980, was 'speaking to readers of the advertisement and promoting the Breathe Right product'.

The advertisement allegedly showed a nasal strip across Hitchcock's distinctive nose, and was said to have been printed in many major publications. The lawsuit seeks unspecified damages and an injunction barring further unauthorised use of Hitchcock's image.

New publications

These are taken straight from the 'MacGuffin' Web Page.

1. One of the more interesting recent books on Hitchcock is Paula Marantz Cohen's 'Alfred Hitchcock: The Legacy of Victorianism' (pb). It's reviewed in this 'MacGuffin'.
2. The May issue of 'Sight and Sound', pp. 28-31, contains an article on *Rebecca* by Alison Light. She argues that Hitchcock's mournful film about jealousy is a man's movie after all ...
3. In 'CineAction' #40, pp. 32-37, Deborah Thomas writes on "Confession as betrayal: Hitchcock's *I Confess* as Enigmatic Text". 'Despite its considerable complexities, *I Confess* has often been referred to in ways which don't fully take these into account. ...'
4. Professor Thomas Hemmeter has written a short article on "Hitchcock's Melodramatic Silence", claiming that 'Hitchcock's films demonstrate a defined but tenuous connection between silence and truth'. You can find the article in the 'Journal of Film and Video', 48.1-2 (Spring-Summer, 1996), pp. 33-40.
5. The publication, 'Projections 4½', issued in association with the French 'Positif', includes a long and brilliant essay on *Vertigo* by one of that film's greatest fans, the director Chris Marker, plus an article on *Psycho* by Jean-Claude Brisseau. This issue of 'Projections' is edited by John Boorman and Walter Donahue, and published in English by Faber and Faber.
6. Following on its splendid Hitchcock-issue (#21), the latest 'Scarlet Street: The Magazine of Mystery and Horror' concludes its two-part interview with screenwriter John Michael Hayes. Issue #22 has other Hitchcock-material too. A year's subscription to the magazine costs \$20 US, and the address for all correspondence is P.O. Box 604, Glen Rock, NJ 07452.
7. The 1995-96 'Hitchcock Annual' (172 pp.) is still available. An article in it we rather liked was Sarah Street's "Hitchcockian Haberdashery". The new address of the 'Annual' is P.O. Box 2568, New London, NH 03257, and individual subscriptions for individuals in the US cost \$7 for one year, \$12 for two years. Outside the US, a single copy (individual rate) costs \$9.

(Readers are urged to send us brief details if they come across further interesting recent articles or publications.)

LETTERS

J. Lary Kuhns, Woodland Hills, California, USA

Thanks for the British National Film Theatre 'Early Hitchcock' program you sent me. Did you notice the absence of *Young and Innocent* and *Elstree Calling*? Here are my observations:

The titles. I suppose they're still using Peter Noble's wretched 'Index' for their authority on film titles. The same mistakes arise: e.g. *The Secret Agent* instead of *Secret Agent*, the incorrect US title of *Sabotage* (it should be *The Woman Alone* and not *A Woman Alone*). I have never seen any actual performance citations, release listings, or reviews under any of the titles *When Boys Leave Home* (for *Downhill*), *The Shame of Mary Boyle* (for *Juno and the Paycock*), *East of Shanghai* (for *Rich and Strange*). Ironically, they don't have an 'aka' for *The Lodger*, which was shown and reviewed in the US as *The Case of Jonathan Drew*. And they don't give *The Lodger* its subtitle (*A Story of the London Fog*). (Why don't they just leave out all of these aka's and go with the original British titles?!) Can you imagine a Shakespeare Festival where they don't get the names of the Poet's plays right? And here is the National Film Theatre showing the early works of their greatest director with wrong and irrelevant titles - what idiots!

The schedule. The program planners have done their cruel viewer-torturing and brain-numbing pairing of the two versions of *Blackmail* and the two versions of *Murder!*. (The Palo Alto, California, Hitchcock festival of 1993 committed a similar

barbarism.) We should have a symposium on the programming and recommended pairings of Hitchcock films! In the London presentation, the National Film Theatre attempted to show 24 feature films plus the two Ministry of Information films on 18 evenings. Thus they had to pair six feature films. That was the problem.

I think that by stating some general principles, some logical pairings will emerge. Here is a first cut on the principles:

- a. A dramatically heavy item, such as *Juno and the Paycock*, *The Skin Game*, or *The Manxman*, should be shown by itself.
- b. Rarities, if they must be paired, should be paired with the classic and familiar.
- c. Similar themes could be paired, if they were stylistically different; and conversely. (As an example of 'c', an ideal pairing is *Waltzes From Vienna* with *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.)
- d. Light item with contrasting light (e.g. *Champagne* with *Number Seventeen*).

[Editor's note. As a former programmer for a university film group, and a former film teacher - giving attention to matters like the order in which films were screened in a syllabus - I empathise with Lary Kuhns in these matters. Lary's letter contained more: e.g. about how the two versions of *Blackmail* - silent and sound - should always be thought of as separate, indeed as works in separate art forms. See also 'Bloopers' in this issue, where I apologise to Lary for errors I made in printing his views last time.]

Adrian Martin, Glen Iris, Victoria, Australia.

'MacGuffin' 19 was a bit of a surprise - all 'bits and pieces' pretty much; personally I missed the standard 'long article' by Ken Mogg, which never seems 'overlong' to me! (I agree completely with your comments on the need for in-depth pieces.) But it's certainly an interesting issue, especially (for me) the letters and the Conference report.

On the matter raised in 'MacGuffins' 18 and 19 concerning Hitchcock's 'emotional range', I respect the points you have already made about this topic. But one day I would like to read you tackling this issue more directly - simply because, when push comes to shove, I think a lot of film fans (myself, at moments, included) do find Hitchcock's work a bit cold, mechanical and limited. Such heresy for a 'MacGuffin' subscriber, I know! (cheque enclosed).

[Editor's note. In the first place, Adrian's letter is too kind, or too silent, about things I wrote in 'MacGuffin' 18 - see Editorial this issue. Adrian, let me say that, as we're supposed to be pals, I'd like you to be even more forthright in any future feedback! As for the matter of Hitchcock's 'emotional range', by now I've already had the chance to say to you - and Philip Kemp - in private that I agree with you in one way, but not in another. I'll go public on this when there's space in these pages to do so. Meanwhile, did you notice Dr Garrett's comment last time on the essential difference between Hitchcock and Brian De Palma? Oh, and everyone again please see 'Bloopers' this issue, where we acknowledge some slips picked up by Adrian.]

Andrew Crowley, 4 Somerville, Carrigaline, Co. Cork, Irish Republic. Email: <andrewc@indigo.ie> .

I wonder if you can help me? I'm looking for postal addresses of Hitchcock fan clubs or societies anywhere in the world. I would be grateful if you, or your readers, could send me any.

Philip Kemp, London, England.

More on the 'Early Hitchcock' season! *The Farmer's Wife* [1928] isn't top-drawer Hitch, perhaps - like quite a few of his early play-derived movies (*Juno and the Paycock*, *The Skin Game*) it feels constrained by the original, and I did find myself getting rather impatient as the action creaked on towards its grindingly predictable conclusion. Hitch might have done well to drop [Farmer Sweetland's] wife-hunting episode no.4 (the barmaid), which doesn't really add much; and given the story's basic premise, it's hard to see how anyone could avoid making the farmer seem a complete dolt. (I couldn't help thinking I'd love to see a version where Minta turns round and says, 'Too late, you great lummo! I got fed up waiting for you and now I'm shackled up with Churdles Ash.') Still, there's a lot of enjoyable humour, especially the fine set-piece of Thirza tapper's tea-party, and sly little touches like all the by-play with the farmer's various jackets. (By the way, I think I recall reading somewhere that Lillian Hall-Davies' career fell apart a few years later and she killed herself. Sad, if true.)

Talking of early Hitch, during a recent trawl through the BFI's files of 'Kinematograph Weekly' I came across a couple of items I thought might interest you. One is Miles Mander's account of making *The Pleasure Garden* in Munich. The other is a review of the same film which, since it's of a trade showing (preceding the film's release by almost a year), may well be the first review of a Hitchcock film to appear anywhere. Copies of both items enclosed.

Very interesting to read what Lary Kuhns had to say [in 'MacGuffin' 19] about *Waltzes From Vienna*. Maybe I misjudged it; I must try to see it again. Alas, I was abroad when the NFT showed it this time.

[Editor's note. Thanks hugely, Philip. The 'Kinematograph Weekly' review of *The Pleasure Garden* follows immediately. I'll try to fit in the Miles Mander piece at the end of this issue, but will otherwise include it next time.]

Extract from 'Kinematograph Weekly', March 25, 1926, p. 54:

Reviews of the Week

The Pleasure Garden

W. and F. (Gainsborough-Emelka). Anglo-German. 7,808 feet [about 90 min]. Released January 14, 1927.

Story - Patsy Brand, chorus girl, befriends a new-comer, Jill Cheyne, who is engaged to Hugh Fielding. Hugh goes East, and Jill angles for a prince, leaving Patsy's care. Patsy marries Levet, who is also going East. In the East Levet keeps a native girl, and Patsy, borrowing money, pays a surprise visit, to find him drunk in her embraces. Hugh is down with fever, having learnt that Jill is to marry the Prince. Patsy goes to nurse him. Meanwhile, Levet murders the native girl, and drags Patsy off to his bungalow, where he attempts to kill her. She is rescued in time, and Levet is shot. Hugh and she face life together.

The main feature [of this film] is the excellent first production of Alfred Hitchcock. The story is unpleasant and rambling, but the new director makes the most of it.

Acting - As Patsy, Virginia Valli is quite good, and Miles Manders [sic] plays excellently as the human wreckage, Levet.

John Stuart has little to do as Hugh, but does it well, while Carmelita Geraghty is satisfactory as Jill Cheyne.

Some light relief is very well supplied by Ferd. Martini and Florence Helmingen in character parts of a landlady and her husband.

Production - Considering the indifferent story, which is a weak edition in effect of 'White Cargo,' Alfred Hitchcock has done marvels. There is nothing conventional about his methods, and he manages to hold the interest with clever detail work and suggestive touches.

The death of Levet is a fine piece of work, and there is a naturalness about the way he [Hitchcock] handles the varied scenes, whether back-stage[,] in humble lodging-house or in extravagantly set flat.

In spite of the fact that there is little real connection between the two chorus girls' story [sic], Hitchcock keeps the continuity smooth and well developed.

Settings and Photography - Settings vary from palatial hotel to Patsy's lodging-house, and C. Wilfred Arnold has done his work extremely well. The atmosphere of theatre and tropical bungalow are alike excellently conveyed. Baron Ventimiglia's photography is good, although night lighting is somewhat weak.

Box-office Angle - Quite good booking of its type, particularly on the production merits. It is not a picture for family halls, as the effect-generally is sordid.

[Editor's note. It's interesting that Hitchcock's film is described as a - 'weak' - version of the 'White Cargo' story. That warhorse of a play, which itself seems to owe something to Somerset Maugham's 'Rain', was written in 1924 by Leon Gordon. In it, various white rubber planters in the tropics go literally crazy over the scheming native girl called Tondelayo. At least three film versions of the story were made - in 1929, 1930, and 1942 - and in the last of these Hedy Lamarr played Tondelayo. The latter version also incorporated elements of a novel called, significantly enough, 'Hell's Playground', by Vera Simonton, the adaptation being done by Leon Gordon, i.e. the play's original author.]

BOOK REVIEW

Cohen, Paula Marantz: 'Alfred Hitchcock: The Legacy of Victorianism' (The University Press of Kentucky: Lexington, 1995; 198 pp, pb)

This work of the artist, this struggle to discern beneath matter, beneath experience, beneath words, something that is different from them, is a process exactly the reverse of that which, in those everyday lives which we live with our gaze averted from ourself, is at every moment being accomplished by vanity and passion and the intellect, and habit too, when they smother our true impressions, so as entirely to conceal them from us, beneath a whole heap of verbal concepts and practical goals which we falsely call life.

- Marcel Proust, 'À la recherche du temps perdu',
in the Terence Kilmartin translation (1992), p.392

Dickens and other Victorian novelists had insisted upon the uniqueness of each of their most ordinary characters, setting the stage for the comprehensive unmasking of individual motives that would characterise later novels like Conrad's. Hitchcock, one might say, was trying to effect a return from a new place - to reproduce those universal values that psychological novels had picked apart, and to reweave those values with images rather than words.

- Paula Marantz Cohen, pp. 42-43

If only Cohen had gone on with her perception here, her book might have been incisive. She has just noted how Hitchcock, the son of lower middle-class Cockney-Catholics, came from the very masses described with such fear and loathing by Joseph Conrad in his novel 'The Secret Agent' (1907). And she has noted Hitchcock's ambivalence towards such masses.¹ At the end of *Sabotage* (1936), adapted from Conrad's novel, 'Hitchcock has his hero and heroine disappear into the crowd, testifying to their affinity with ordinary people and their eagerness to return to an anonymous existence' (42). But the tone of that ending is far from triumphant.²

What Cohen *doesn't* give us here is any description of 'those universal values' which Hitchcock would now try to reweave in 'images rather than words'. By taking 'universal values' for granted - or, rather, by simply not asking what they might be - I think Cohen misses a chance to go to the heart of much of Hitchcock's future filmmaking technique - a technique involving his use of 'subjective-style'. Let me start, then, by indicating what I mean by that term. When a 'New York Times' journalist visited the set of *Marnie* (1964), Hitchcock told him that he was currently doing 'mental processes'. The scene in question showed the Rutland main office, and involved shifting points of view. In general, I see subjective-style or subjective-technique as referring to how the film makes the audience undergo sets of responses exactly analogous to ones experienced by the characters. Often Hitchcock would manage this in surprisingly bold ways. For instance, an entire film (or half a film) might be told from a particular character's *psychological* viewpoint, regardless of whoever's literal viewpoint prevailed in a given scene.³ Or a mix of composition and camera-movement might be used to convey a specific emotion, as when in *The Birds* (1963) the camera pulls slowly back across the Brenners' living-room, leaving an expanse of blank ceiling. Various people rise into the frame in turn, each in a separate close-up, and it hardly needs someone to say of the hostile birds, 'They're gone!', such is our *palpable* relief. The audience's near-visceral emotion corresponds to what is felt - individually and collectively - by the characters.

Very little of this sort of thing is noted by Cohen. (To be fair, she makes some good points about Hitchcock's purposeful use of neutral or ambiguous images, as in *Sabotage* and *Family Plot*.) You get the impression that had Hitchcock in the mid-1940s sought her advice on how to emulate the novelistic depiction of character, she would simply have told him to hire himself an actress like Ingrid Bergman and then take the camera in close. Which, though it's excellent advice as far as it goes, would still have been doubly ironic. As Cohen herself writes, David Selznick, who 'managed' Bergman, 'helped Hitchcock achieve a greater appreciation of the *limits* of cinematic representation with respect to inner states of mind and emotion' (88, my emphasis). By the same token, I believe that Hitchcock was thereby stimulated to find *new* ways of extending the expressive powers of the camera. Unfortunately, because Cohen hardly sees this salient development that occurred in Hitchcock's cinema, her analysis of *Spellbound* (1945) in her book's Chapter 3 is very meagre.⁴

Related to all of this is something else about 'those universal values' that Cohen mentioned but didn't stop to define. I have no quarrel with her description of the basic difference between 'The Secret Agent' and *Sabotage*:

... Conrad was ultimately less interested in the way social institutions and roles can be corrupted or compromised than in a deeper kind of confusion at the heart of all human action. This is where Hitchcock, in making the adaptation, parted ways with his source. (32)

But this time what Cohen doesn't report is that though Conrad's theme of 'muddle' or confusion scarcely enters into Hitchcock's current film, it very arguably provides the basis of several of his films from the 1940s onwards. To put that another way, Conrad's brand of 'pessimism' only appears in Hitchcock's work from about the time of *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943). Coincidentally or not, that was also the film about which Hitchcock said that at last he had a story that gave him time to incorporate plenty of character details.

Now we approach the crux of my argument. As scholars have lately come to see, Conrad's pessimism was in no small measure derived from his reading of the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860).⁵ So, too, was Proust's, whose scepticism about 'verbal concepts and practical goals' I've quoted at the head of this review. Accordingly, it's no accident that Conrad's 1907 novel and Proust's 1913 one both concern themselves with what Cohen calls 'a ... confusion at the heart of all human action'. But don't misunderstand me! Though I've suggested that Hitchcock's *Shadow of a Doubt* marks the onset in his work of a new pessimism, I'm far from claiming that film to be thoroughly 'Conradian', much less Proustian! What I would like to note is the innovation of what I've called Hitchcock's subjective-technique allied to the 'universal values' his films manage to invoke visually without actually stating. (How could they *state* them? None of the characters knows in an intellectual sense what they are.) And the lessons to be drawn therefrom do seem to me to be similar to those implicit in Schopenhauer's twin-concepts of Will (roughly, life-force) and Representation (mere appearance - that which, as Proust says, 'we falsely call life') ...

Earlier I left out Cohen's comment on Hitchcock's likely path after *Sabotage*: how he would need for the time being to curtail certain of his 'indulgences' (such as showing us young Stevie Verloc and a puppy being blown up in a bus) if he were to continue 'to reach and shape a mass audience' (43). Cohen comes back to this point a few pages later. In *Frenzy* (1972), she tells us, another brutal moment occurs - a strangulation - but now death 'seems not just jarring and unsettling, the destiny of the vulnerable and the weak, but true and inescapable, part of a larger pattern of deaths that will include our own' (49). What has happened is that Hitchcock has made a film whose 'entire fabric supports the gratuitousness of the death'. But then, you could say that just as Hitchcock's films from *Shadow of a Doubt* onwards become more pessimistic, so they also begin to include hands-on encounters with death (like the deathly struggle of the two Charlies on the moving train) that serve increasingly as palpable tokens of the world's destructive Will.⁶ In turn, Hitchcock increasingly finds ways of engaging the very Will - in both its malign and benign aspects - of his audience.⁷

True, at the end of each film he invariably cools things down again, so that you feel vaguely aware that something of consequence has vanished.⁸ Yet I wonder if he isn't at this moment doing no more and no less than simply restore us to our normal state of 'confusion', to our 'everyday lives which we live with our gaze averted from ourself'?

* * *

Cohen's main thesis can be simply stated. She suggests that Hitchcock 'spent his career juggling the two faces of Victorianism: the feminine legacy of feeling and imagination associated with the domestic novel and the masculine legacy of law and hierarchy ... associated with dominant institutions and values' (3). In particular, she identifies the period 1939-c.1960 as that in which Hitchcock sought 'to reclaim, for cinematic use, the novelistic concept of character' (2). As the same period roughly coincides with when Hitchcock's daughter, Patricia, was growing up, appearing in three of her father's films, and getting married, Cohen suggests that some sort of direct influence was operating here - she calls it 'the daughter's effect'. She defines the daughter's effect as 'a tendency to represent women as pressures on the plot, symbols of a subjectivity that both entices and threatens men' (8).

None of this is very contentious. By the same token, nor is it very convincing. For example, instead of claiming the influence of a daughter's effect on Hitchcock's work, Cohen might (you feel) just as well have looked at the evolution of the English crime novel and claimed that as an influence. In 1944 Christianna Brand's 'Green for Danger', set in a military hospital in Kent at the height of the Blitz, was published. It was an immediate success, leading to it's being filmed a year later by Sidney Gilliat, when it starred Alistair Sim as Detective-Inspector Cockrill. About the novel, H.R.F. Keating wrote:

*It is a splendidly worked-out detection puzzle, as good as any in the field. It also has substantial characters in acknowledgment of the gradual move in detective fiction away from mere mechanical figures and towards characters who evince the darkneses of real life; in effect, the move from the detective story to the crime novel.*⁹

This could almost be Cohen describing the deepening in Hitchcock's work that took place after he moved to America with his family in 1939. Here's my point. Several years earlier, the shift from the detective story to the crime novel had already begun, and the instigator had been another woman, Dorothy Sayers. To quote H.R.F. Keating again, Sayers 'made her characters increasingly like the figures-in-depth to be found in the pure novel, a development soon well taken up'.¹⁰ That development continued, even to the present day. In large measure, women writers like Brand, Patricia Highsmith, P.D. James, and lately Ruth Rendell, have seen to that.¹¹ So it seems permissible to ask whether the content of Hitchcock's American films wasn't as much the sign of an attempt to keep his work 'English' - and thus distinct from the 'hard-boiled' American crime story - as it was the reflection of 'pressure' exerted by his daughter, which is what Cohen suggests.¹²

For my part, I often see Hitchcock as working in English 'grotesque' and 'thriller' traditions pioneered by Charles Dickens (1812-1870). Cohen makes a fair point about Dickens when she says that his 'late novels, if only by their sheer heft, signal an obsessive drive ... to write against the grain of his conventional plots' (16). She cites his sympathetic treatment of the adulterous Edith Dombey (née Granger), to which I would add his no-less sympathetic and understanding portrayal of the 'fallen' Lady Dedlock in 'Bleak House' (1853). That's a novel, by the way, full of 'Hitchcockian' effects (for instance, a possible precursor of the pointing jester in *Blackmail*). As for sympathetic treatment of female characters who find themselves ostracised or beyond the pale, isn't that also a mark of Hitchcock's work? Think of (arguably) Maddalena Paradine (*The Paradine Case*, 1947), Charlotte Inwood (*Stage Fright*, 1950), and the heroine of *Marnie*. I've little doubt that Hitchcock's portrayal of the streetwalkers in the unfiled *No Bail for the Judge* would have been discreetly 'sympathetic', too.¹³

Now, Cohen implies that the 'sheer heft' of Dickens's late novels brought him to a position embracing the 'feminine' as well as the 'masculine' outlook. And yet, more fundamental still than masculine and feminine identities is the identity that a person experiences on those - admittedly rare - occasions when individual will is surmounted or suspended. Aesthetically (and/or ethically), that's a Schopenhauerian idea, of course, though I'm also tempted to cite Walter Pater's dictum, 'All art tends to the condition of music'!¹⁴ In the first chapter of her book, Cohen writes:

The idea of an internal life is what literary prose is able to deliver; it can depict a place hidden within the self that connects to a world of action and things. (6)

But she shies away from describing the significance of that 'place hidden within the self' whose essential nature surely *isn't* exactly the same as (feminine?) descriptive prose, just as it certainly isn't the same as a (masculine?) world of action and things ...¹⁵

I've a reason for mentioning this largely unacknowledged aspect of Cohen's book (apart from the fact that I think it's *there*, and can be pointed out). I've already said that, though Cohen sees certain developments and patterns in Hitchcock's work, I find her actual explanations of them not very convincing. Perhaps it would be truer to say, 'not very helpful'. For example, she observes (24) that Hitchcock's movies exemplify how narrative film tends to effect 'a kind of compromise between ... two conceptions of character - one fixed (allied to a traditional male identity), the other in process (allied to a female novelistic identity)'. Which I dare say is broadly true, yet *not* basic. After all, a long time ago Schopenhauer's concepts of 'intelligible' (noumenal) character and 'empirical' (phenomenal) character could already have told us that a part of character is indeed fixed, but that it is virtually fixed at or before birth - for either sex. (Schopenhauer allows for a third type of character, which he calls the 'acquired' character.)¹⁶ I think that anyone who has observed very young babies or even, say, kittens, and then watched them grow up, will sense that Schopenhauer is right in this. And because the 'intelligible' character virtually partakes of the Will itself, everything that I've reported above about Conrad's and Proust's (and Hitchcock's?) most fundamental insights seems to me to be supported and confirmed.¹⁷

* * *

Mind you, Cohen's book in effect responds to my criticism of it! In her analysis of *Rope* (1948), Cohen writes:

Whereas nineteenth-century novels strove to depict character as driven by multiple, often contradictory, motives, nineteenth-century philosophy sought to give voice to 'truth,' either in the form of reasoned argument or by oracular pronouncement. (91)

As examples of the 19th-century philosophers she means, Cohen cites Nietzsche (who was much influenced by Schopenhauer) and Carlyle. She notes that both of these thinkers decried a 'feminised' culture that had lost touch with an

ideal of manly heroism (92). In Hitchcock's film, of course, the two gay murderers 'justify' their crime by appealing to (a travesty of) Nietzschean doctrine. Cohen draws this conclusion:

The film does not condemn homosexuality or Nietzschean philosophy. What it does condemn is a certain kind of relationship to these ideas ... that would find in them a whole meaning, an answer that blocks out other, alternative forms of interpretation and relationship. Homosexuality thus becomes a code for ... imagining the world with the women dropped out. (95)

Earlier in the chapter Cohen had made a statement that I suspect might offend some homosexuals: 'In Lévi-Strauss's terms, ... women are indeed ordering functions in society, and without them, men regress into barbarism' (90). But she also notes astutely that Janet (Joan Chandler) is characterised by the film as somewhat fickle and is dressed in an unflattering dress that makes her look pinched and uncomfortable (98).

What Cohen has done here is put her finger unwittingly on Hitchcock's use of subjective-style. Everything about the film's design, including the rather gaudy set and the 'continuous' and showy movement of the camera, and also a hinted patronising attitude not *just* to women but to the lives of most other people, is intended to draw the viewer into the psychological world of its main characters - the better to shatter that world later with the opening of the window and the firing of the (symbolic) gun. Yet, as I've tried to suggest, the mounting suspense of the film and the use of more direct techniques provide an analogue of the invisible presence and working of Will; and the opening of the window to let in fresh air is no more than a hopeful gesture. In other words, the underlying problem of man's inhumanity to man - further evoked on a broad scale by the film's references to the War - remains unsolved. And as Schopenhauer insisted, that problem and Will go hand in hand.¹⁸

Accordingly, if Cohen should want to accuse this review of being too metaphysical, or of 'blocking out' her own interpretation, I would respond that the metaphysics seems to me to be right there in the film, and can be felt. Moreover, the film works hard, as I've tried to show, to implicate us in that metaphysics, not least by making the viewer's own line-of-inquiry resemble at so many points that of the ambiguously-presented Rupert (James Stewart).¹⁹

* * *

In at least three of the four films that James Stewart made for Hitchcock, his character until just before, or just after, the film begins has been rather *too* virile. Or perhaps the character has just been too much like the typical open and trusting - yet manly - James Stewart persona. In any event, I much appreciated part of Cohen's reading of *Rear Window* (1954). There, she takes issue with Donald Spoto's description of the film as a lesson in introspection, by which Spoto means that Jefferies's window-shopping is an enactment of the nurse Stella's remark that we should 'get out of our houses and look in'. Cohen says that this interpretation 'assumes that there has been all along something for Jefferies to look into' (112). She adds:

As Peter Middleton has argued in his discussion of masculinity and subjectivity in modern culture, where masculinity has been defined as an active and externally directed expression of power, 'the inward gaze is a vacant one.' (112)

This fits with how certain other male characters in Hitchcock's films visibly grow and become potentially, or incipiently, more inward. Thus you have the trajectory undergone by Roger O. Thornhill (Cary Grant) in *North by Northwest*, where the significance of his middle initial is realised in the film's central scene - a vast emptiness that suddenly becomes very threatening. (Later in the film, ambiguous signs of emergent life occur.)²⁰ Similarly, the encounter by Armstrong (Paul Newman) mid-way through *Torn Curtain* (1966) with a huge mandala in the Berlin Museum marks a turning-point that may see him finally acknowledge his need for spiritual growth. And of Scottie (James Stewart) in *Vertigo* (1958), Cohen points out that whatever his underlying patriarchal power fantasy, which finally kills Madeleine/Judy (Kim Novak), he himself is refashioned by their relationship, losing his basic scepticism and sarcasm and gaining a new willingness to feel deeply and tolerate the irrational and the ambiguous (138).

So this book is not without its stimulating passages plus an appreciable effort at 'staying honest' about the films.²¹ On the other hand, it isn't what I'd call an inspired read. Victorianism isn't brought to life or made interesting, something which I would have thought hard for an author on that topic to manage! The book also lacks all sense of Hitchcock's having gone to school in the German Expressionist cinema of the 1920s (though this had its roots in the 19th century), indeed of having gone to school in the cinema at all. I particularly can't agree with Leonard Leff that the chapter on *The Wrong Man* (1957) and *Vertigo* is a highlight. And, speaking now of a broader expressiveness in Hitchcock's work, I miss an appreciation by Cohen of how the later films don't *just* represent a 'dissolution' of his earlier preoccupations, such as the

idea of the family. If it's indeed true that all art tends to the condition of music, then it seems to me that Hitchcock's under-appreciated last film, *Family Plot* (1976), is a charming piece of 'music', and altogether too elusive and scintillating for the sort of theory that Cohen wields here.²²

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Notes

1. In this, Hitchcock was typical of many intellectuals and others of their circle at the time. Catholics were certainly not exceptions. In 'The Intellectuals and the Masses' (1992), pp. 82-83, John Carey cites the cases of writers Hilaire Belloc and Graham Greene. Belloc advised fellow Catholics to 'spread the mood that we are the bosses, the chic, and that the man who does not accept the Faith writes himself down as suburban'. Of Greene, Carey says that he constructed his masterpiece, 'Brighton Rock' (1938) around the idea that by comparison with Catholics ordinary mass mankind does not truly exist at all.
2. Analysing *Young and Innocent* (1937) in 'MacGuffin' 13, I noted how a very principle of the film's suspense involves an oscillation between 'exposure' and 'modesty', public spectacle and privacy/retreat. (Having now read Marcia Landy's account of Hitchcock's 1933 *Waltzes From Vienna*, with its strong voyeuristic motif, in 'British Genres: Cinema and Society, 1930-1960', pp. 72-73, I suspect a precedent exists in that film.) The motif seems playful enough as we watch, of course, but it may indicate something in Hitchcock's thinking. There's a similar motif operating in *North by Northwest* (1959) - see a note about that film on the 'MacGuffin' Web Page.
3. Here we may glimpse the significance of Hitchcock's comparison of a film to a piece of music or a short story, rather than a novel. He was referring to how we experience a film in one sitting. It has its own 'subjectivity', into which the generally rising curve of suspense locks us till the end. I see here an analogue of the working of 'Will' (see text), which Schopenhauer all but equated with music. Of Wagner's use of the effect called 'the suspension', Schopenhauer wrote that it was 'clearly an analogue of the satisfaction of the will which is enhanced through delay' ('The World as Will and Representation', Volume 2).
4. My analysis of *Spellbound* in 'MacGuffin' 15 sought to extend some excellent observations on that film made in 1986 by Andrew Britton in 'CineAction!'. The film is underrated (like much of Hitchcock's work, even now!). I seriously wonder whether the essay on *Spellbound* that is scheduled to appear in the 'MultiMedia Hitchcock' project will significantly reverse that situation. I hope it does. The chapter by Cohen in 'Alfred Hitchcock: The Legacy of Victorianism' does not!
5. As Christopher Janaway, 'Schopenhauer' (1994), pp. 100-101, reports: 'In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries [Schopenhauer] was at the forefront of European culture: his books were widely read, ... and were seized upon with enthusiasm by intellectuals and artists' (e.g. Thomas Hardy, Thomas Mann, Marcel Proust). A typical recent essay discussing Schopenhauer's influence on Conrad has appeared on the World Wide Web: see Owen Knowles, "'Who's Afraid of Arthur Schopenhauer?': A New Context for Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'", at <<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu:8080/>>, or use the link provided on the 'MacGuffin' Web Page!
6. Compare my analysis of the killing of Herr Gromek in *Torn Curtain* (1966), in 'MacGuffin' 8. Another precedent is perhaps the struggle of Guy with Bruno on the carousel in *Strangers on a Train* (1951) ...
7. Not for nothing did Hitchcock liken his manipulation of an audience's emotions to an organist playing his instrument. Note the further musical analogy. What I'm suggesting, of course, is that this instrument is nothing else but the Will in humans. See also note 18 below.
8. Even *Rear Window* (1954), for all its cheeriness at the end, manages to suggest that the seeds of likely further discord are already sown ...
9. H.R.F. Keating, 'Crime and Mystery: The 100 Best Books' (1987). p. 73.
10. H.R.F. Keating, "Crime Fiction: A History", in Martin Seymour-Smith (ed.), 'Novels and Novelists' (1980), p. 52.
11. I appreciate that Patricia Highsmith was, strictly speaking, an *American* writer (born in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1921). Still, her books were always more appreciated in Europe, where she eventually settled (including some time in England).

Julian Symons thought her 'the writer who fuses character and plot most successfully ... the most important crime novelist at present in practice.'

12. In any case, Theodore Price, 'Hitchcock and Homosexuality' (1992), handles the father-daughter theme better than Cohen. See my review of that book in 'MacGuffin' 12. Hitchcock's American films, from *Rebecca* (1940) to *Family Plot* (1976), were typically adapted from *English* novels and plays, of course.

13. In one respect, at least, I see Agatha Christie as sharing a quality in common with Hitchcock here. Like him, she could detach herself admirably from the prejudices of her time. In 1920, when she wrote her first novel, 'The Mysterious Affair at Styles', which is set during the War, and other writers like John Buchan and 'Sapper' were evincing much of the typical anti-Semitism of the period, her depiction of the character named Dr Bauerstein both allowed for and critiqued that prejudice. When the doctor proves to be a German spy, Hercule Poirot's not particularly bright offsider, Hastings, calls him a 'blackguard'. Poirot immediately corrects that notion: 'Not at all. He is, on the contrary, a patriot. Think what he stands to lose. I admire the man myself.' Hitchcock's depiction of Fisher (Herbert Marshall) in *Foreign Correspondent* (1940) leaps to mind, naturally.

14. About Dickens, Cohen conveniently fails to note how, though he could be the most robust and particularising of novelists - describing London's people and locales, for example - he was also very capable of seeing things in a detached and at times almost cosmic perspective. 'Bleak House' exemplifies all of this, I suggest. Notice also the passage from 'Our Mutual Friend' that I quote elsewhere in this 'MacGuffin', at the beginning of my article on Hitchcock's *The Wrong Man*.

As for the notion, indeed the possibility, of a non-gendered 'life-force', I do seem to be offside even in raising it! So much are we all conditioned to think of sex roles as basic! Yet I persist in seeing that 'force' as something more than an abstraction. Indeed, about my only, as yet barely-formulated, criticism of Camille Paglia's brilliant book, 'Sexual Personae' (1991) is that it so closely follows Nietzsche in identifying 'life' with the Dionysian/chthonian, which is strangely taken to be invariably (and fundamentally) female. Yet that is surely a 'mythopoeic' understanding only (compare another reference to 'mythopoeic' in note 17 below) ...

15. I find Cohen's whole reduction of approaches to life and art, whereby inward-oriented = feminine, and outward-oriented = masculine, to be simplistic or at any rate unhelpful (as I say in the text). And not all prolix male authors, as Cohen appears to suggest, were necessarily 'feminine' (e.g. Scott, Thackeray), though some undoubtedly were (e.g. Henry James, Sir Hall Caine). By and large, that idea surely just reflects one more popular prejudice! Another point is this. It does seem to be true of English Romantic *poetry*, most of it written by men, that '[i]f the Romantics repress anything, it is masculinity' (Camille Paglia, 'Sexual Personae', p. 372). To me, that single statement throws more light on Hitchcock's Romanticised cinema, with its many 'perversities', than all of Cohen's circuitous theorising about the ambivalent relation of film to - specifically - the 19th-century *novel*. (Besides, many of Hitchcock's films, including *Sabotage*, were actually adapted from *plays*!) Again, the Romantic movement saw a positive fascination with the private lives of individuals, resulting in the adoption of *autobiography* as an introspective literary form by such (virile) writers as De Quincey, Lamb, and Hazlitt. At the same time, inner space was being further explored, by both men and women, using dream-analysis, drug-taking, and dabbings in the occult. These preoccupations continued right into Victorian times and beyond. So again I'd say that Cohen has over-simplified matters.

16. See Schopenhauer, 'The World as Will and Representation', Volume I.

17. But even if it weren't - please note - what I am constantly describing when I draw certain parallels between Hitchcock and Schopenhauer is a *metaphysics* that I detect operating in Hitchcock's films. Such a metaphysics, though rather effusively and unsystematically stated, was long ago noted by writers on Hitchcock in 'Cahiers du Cinéma', like Douchet, Fieschi, and Rohmer and Chabrol - who tended to attribute it solely to Hitchcock's Catholicism. (That I find so much of Schopenhauer to be true - the world *is* very like what he says it is! - is largely beside the point here. Except, of course, that his clear-eyed understanding of things, at times defying orthodoxy, is something I often see in Hitchcock, too.)

There's an interview with Hitchcock, by Charles Higham and Joel Greenberg (in their book, 'The Celluloid Muse', 1969) that I find salutary and enlightening. Hitchcock explains that he finally decided not to film Buchan's 'The Three Hostages' because he felt that the public wouldn't appreciate its central situation involving hypnotism: 'I don't believe people can feel or sense it. It's something outside their experience.' (The operative word here would appear to be 'outside'.) Yet in the next breath he discloses that he still hopes to film J.M. Barrie's fey and mystical 'Mary Rose': 'I regard that as almost a science fiction subject. I think it can be put over, not only as a sentimental Barrie story, but also as an illustration of the proposition - in which I believe - that a person can be atomically disembodied, made to disappear

and then be reassembled. I think there will come a time in the future when either we will be disembodied, taken apart by someone or be able to do it ourselves, and transfer ourselves that way to another place and come together there again.' (p. 103) This *isn't* exactly Schopenhauerian, of course - Schopenhauer held a rigorously 'mythopoeic' attitude to notions like reincarnation and the transmigration of souls - but the reasoned explanation from a basically 'materialist' position is ...

18. Suspense and sheer stagecraft are linked, and I think of a remark by Eric Bentley about what he calls 'the theatrical occasion'. 'There are directors in the New York theatre', he writes, 'who invite actors to pour out "love, *real* love" into the auditorium. The hope is that the audience will reciprocate. And it actually can respond with a warmth that has as good a claim to the word love as what the actor feels.' Bentley comments that the philosopher of such a 'ghostly' occasion is Luigi Pirandello - the 20th-century playwright (with Samuel Beckett) probably most influenced by Schopenhauer. (Bentley's remarks can be found in his very fine 'The Life of the Drama', 1965, p. 181.)

Well, I've remarked before on the erotic nature of suspense (in 'MacGuffin' 10, where I quoted Pascal Bonitzer's essay on that topic.) What I would now add is how all of this concerns simply one side of Will, whose other side is man's inhumanity to man. Though Schopenhauer emphasised that 'the genitals are the focus of the will' ('The World as Will and Representation', Volume 2), he further insisted on the truth of the expression *homo homini lupus* ('man is a wolf to man'), contending that it was in the nature of Will that one man must be 'the devil of another'. In 'MacGuffin' 8, I suggested how that (rather Hobbesian) theme operates in *Torn Curtain* ...

One last point I offer for exploration at another time. I suggest it's possible to see the 'closed' world depicted in *Rope* as analogous to the one created by a Romantic poet like Keats (1795-1821), which Hitchcock's film first indulges, then critiques. (I hold a similar understanding of the procedure of *Vertigo* concerning 'the transcendental pretence' - see 'MacGuffin' 8.) Camille Paglia concludes her chapter on Shelley and Keats by saying that in Keats's 'To Autumn', 'woman is unneeded, for she has been internalised by the poet, with his capacious ... imagination. The feminised male self becomes all-encompassing and self-sufficient. Keats's poems, opening the reader to nature, close off the poet in his own rigorous ritual precinct.' (Paglia, p. 388.) Only, if *Rope* also opens its audience to 'nature', that nature is to be seen as the very two-edged one I've characterised above as Will ...

19. 'The MacGuffin' has yet to analyse *Rope* in detail. Some preliminary remarks on it, including on the lamed Rupert's 'implication' in the murder, will be found in 'MacGuffin' 10, pp. 7-8. Cohen's analysis of the film rightly notes how we are often 'ahead' of Rupert in his investigations - which should only encourage us to be the more critical of his position. (However, Cohen's point is rather that 'we can be in no danger of succumbing to the imitative attitude of Brandon' - p. 93.)

20. In terms of subjective-technique, notice how once again, in entering into the film, we are effectively wearing Thornhill like one of his immaculately-tailored suits - only this one proves to have a hole in it!

21. In the book's Acknowledgments, Cohen thanks her sister 'whose critical spirit and humor have kept me honest'. There are several occasions in the book's text where you are conscious of just such a praiseworthy endeavour to be honest on Cohen's part.

22. Just as Schopenhauer thought of music as being very nearly pure, orchestrated Will, so Hitchcock's conception of 'pure film' often invoked an analogy with music. Compare notes 3 and 7 above.

OZ-REPORT

Budget blues

As we predicted, cultural and arts-related funding was cut quite savagely (see 'Oz-Report' in last issue) in the Liberal (conservative) federal government's first budget in August, although the film industry escaped relatively lightly, with most organisations getting no more than a 10% cut, and some activities actually receiving the same funding as before. But the film community is expecting the worst for next year; a global review of its funding is to commence soon. The idea is to eliminate any areas of duplication and overlap between organisations, and between federal and state funding. This could be serious; up until now, such funding has been seen as complementary rather than competitive. So, despite the fact that most people in the film community are convinced that the current mix of federal and state, and public and private, funding is working well, that the latest crop of films shows a welcome range of styles and diversity, and that Oz films are attracting expanding interest from US and European distributors, there is an atmosphere of resignation approaching gloom about the

future. At every change of government, both state and federal, incoming ministers seem determined to play around with the existing support mechanisms, no matter how they are performing.

Pleasures of the past

If there's gloom about the future, the past, at least, has been well served lately. To celebrate the centenary of cinema, the Museum of Contemporary Art earlier this year presented the eye-opening Dawn of Cinema screenings curated by Dr Barrett Hodsdon: ten programs of films made between 1895 and 1915 in the USA, France, England, Germany, Sweden, and Italy, including wonderful selections of the work of Méliès, Porter, and the early Griffith. Then, in August, the Dawn of Cinema Conference presented a packed program of papers and panel discussions which addressed issues to do with early films, pre-cinema, and the changing impressions of both as more research is done. The overseas guests - Professor Tom Gunning from the University of Chicago, Ian Christie, author of the fascinating Channel Four/British Film Institute TV series on early cinema, 'The Last Machine', Yuri Tsivian from Moscow en route to the University of Chicago, and Dr Andreas Rost from Munich - were all energetic and enthusiastic. A number of papers were given by local participants as well, proving that interesting and ground-breaking work is taking place here, and that the wealth of early Oz cinema has much to offer. Those attending the conference ranged from film and media students, film buffs and film society members to academics, bureaucrats and filmmakers, and the general opinion was that this was one of the most satisfying and enjoyable conferences for years.

A really BIG screen

October will see the opening of an Imax Theatre at Darling Harbour in Sydney. Those in the know claim that it will be the world's biggest, with a screen 30 metres high and 38 metres wide, and seating 540 people. (The screen for Melbourne's Imax, which opens next year, is said to be wider than Sydney's, but not as tall - so there's likely to be some argument between the two cities over whether height or width is more important!) That's to say, the screen is as high as an eight-story building. A restaurant and function centre adjoins, and a spectacular film of undersea exploration, *Into the Deep*, will be the opening attraction. The company behind the theatre, Cinema Plus, has launched a public share-offer to raise finance for its planned expansion into New Zealand and the Asia Pacific region, where it has the exclusive rights for erecting Imax screens.

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BLOOPERS

Apologies x 3 to Lary Kuhns. It isn't Lady Bracknell ('MacGuffin' 19, p. 5) in 'The Importance of Being Earnest' who has never seen a spade, but Gwendolen.

In Lary's letter about *The Wrong Man* ('MacGuffin' 19, p. 7), we managed to change the phrase 'true story' to 'true event'. Actually, we did this deliberately, for various and complicated reasons. But the short of it is that we were wrong.

Also, Lary has pointed out that in one of his letters and email messages to us concerning the stills from *The Mountain Eagle* held by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, he indicated that the stills form part of the collection of Hitchcock's personal papers, etc., donated by Patricia Hitchcock O'Connell. So we were wrong to say ('MacGuffin' 19, pp. 13-14) that 'it isn't exactly clear how the Academy came by the stills'.

* * *

In our 'Bloopers' last time (p. 21), as Adrian Martin has written to tell us, there were further bloopers! The director of *Fresh* is Boaz Yakin (not Yakim), and *Caro Diario/Dear Diary* is directed by Nanni (not Nano) Moretti. These errors were 'typos', which we regret.

Ditto, our spelling of the surname of that fine author and critic David Thomson ('A Biographical Dictionary of Film', etc.) as 'Thompson' ('MacGuffin' 19, p. 4).

On the same page 4, in the same letter (from the ubiquitous A. Martin), it was said that the Australian Film Institute library only holds the 1992 and 1993 editions of the 'Hitchcock Annual'. That's no longer the case, as the 1994 and 1995/6

editions have been on the library shelves since at least February. (Oh, and the official title of the AFI library is the AFI Research and Information Centre.)

The Man Who Knew Too Little: Alfred Hitchcock's *The Wrong Man* (1957) compared with Charles Dickens's 'Bleak House' (1853)

The majority of men are subjective towards themselves and objective towards all others, terribly objective sometimes ...
- Søren Kierkegaard¹

IN THE novel 'Our Mutual Friend' (1865), by Dickens, the principal character is thought to have drowned; for some time after that, he goes about London incognito. This gives him a peculiar sensation.² 'A spirit that was once a man', he says, 'could hardly feel stranger or lonelier, going unrecognised among mankind than I feel.' But soon he sees how 'this is the fanciful side of the situation'. His life has a 'real side', one which he determines to face. 'I know I evade it, as many men - perhaps most men - do evade thinking their way through their greatest perplexity. I will try to pin myself to mine ...'.

The above passage typifies the later Dickens, for it shows the author's imagination tempered by a new seriousness. Basically, of course, what we're being given is a ghost's-eye view. Years before, in 'A Christmas Carol' (1843), Dickens had used the device of a ghostly watcher to teach his character, Ebenezer Scrooge, a simple moral lesson: look, this is what people really think of you, and hadn't you better do something about it?³ But in the major novels, like 'Bleak House' and 'Our Mutual Friend',⁴ he now put the device to more sophisticated effect. One such effect was to make the people watched themselves seem like spirits - as if it took a ghost to see a ghost.

In turn, notice what that does. It helps turn the central Dickensian problem of an intractable self into a general phenomenon, one where *everybody* is all too visibly mortal. I'm necessarily playing on words here. By a 'problem of ... self', I mean both a simple physiological matter and a moral one, both matters stemming in Dickens from our imperfect human nature.⁵ In the case of 'Our Mutual Friend', if not all the characters choose to confront their 'perplexity', even fewer of them prosper, and all will die; still, the novel hints at how, on a symbolic level, the waters of the Thames are at least potentially healing ...

Mind you, Dickens's London is often blighted from the start; in 'Our Mutual Friend', you have dust-obscuring whole stretches of sky and landscape. Here Dickens's iconography resembles that of William Blake (1757-1827), whose poem 'London' refers to 'the chartered Thames' (originally 'the dirty Thames') and 'Every blackning church'.⁶ Between them, these two writers helped fix a vision of a bleak metropolis which their successors would exploit with varying degrees of insight and types of effect. Most famously, you have T.S. Eliot's evocative description in 'The Waste Land'

~~Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,~~
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.

I'll return to that passage (with its echoes, in addition, of Baudelaire and Dante)⁷ below.

Clearly indebted to Dickens's atmospheric novels, and soon to follow them, were the countless detective tales and 'thrillers' showing a city gripped by its notorious 'London particular' fog. The best of these included Joseph Conrad's 'The Secret Agent' (1907), Mrs Belloc Lowndes's 'The Lodger' (1913), Thomas Burke's 'The Hands of Mr Ottermole' (1931), and Margery Allingham's 'The Tiger in the Smoke' (1952). (The first two were destined to be filmed by Alfred Hitchcock, in 1936 and 1926 respectively.) Even American writers got into the act: typical stories were Richard Harding Davis's 'In the Fog' (1901), Earl Derr Biggers's 'Behind That Curtain' (1928), and Philip MacDonal's 'Warrant for X' (1938). The last-named was eventually filmed by Hollywood, in Eastmancolour and Cinemascope, as *Twenty-Three Hours to Baker Street* (1956). Its title, of course, alludes - rather opportunistically - to the famous fictional detective, Sherlock Holmes, who resided at 221B Baker Street, and whose exploits (along with the horrendous crimes of Jack the Ripper) have always been associated in the popular mind with foggy London and gaslight.

As for the cinema generally, it very early tapped into the same literary stream I've been describing. For example, *Broken Blossoms* (1919), directed by the legendary D.W. Griffith, took its story from another book by Thomas Burke, a collection called 'Limehouse Nights'. (Significantly, that story in turn seems to have appropriated its unredeemably brutal character known as 'Battling' Burrows from 'Our Mutual Friend' - whose 'Rogue' Riderhood is a scavenger in the Thames. Note the characteristic 'Dickensian' case of human nature failing to rehabilitate itself.) Under Griffith's direction, the story's riverside fogs were artfully realised, and the film's performers (Lillian Gish, Richard Barthelmess, Donald Crisp) all helped further establish a sense of ineluctable gloom.

Now, I want for convenience to call the convention, or motif, I've just outlined 'English expressionism' or 'English noir' (terms equally applicable to literary or visual media). Cockney film director Alfred Hitchcock was drawn to it early in his career, with his adaptation of 'The Lodger', sub-titled for the cinema 'A Story of the London Fog'. Four decades later, back in London from Hollywood, he virtually re-worked that story's 'Jack the Ripper' plot, in *Frenzy* (1972). But now his tone was ironic. The film begins on a topical note with views of a *cleaned-up* Thames. A snatch of Wordsworth's 'Prelude' ('Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive'), intoned by a glib politician, hints at the director's contrary leaning, i.e. to the more pessimistic Blake and Dickens.⁸ Sure enough, next moment a body washes ashore! Soon we learn that London is in thrall to a Necktie Murderer, and that the city is 'littered' with the corpses of his/her victims ...

Frenzy is relatively lightweight Hitchcock and not, perhaps, one of its director's most satisfying films. But at the height of his career, in America, he'd made *The Wrong Man*. For much of its length, that film is a near-masterpiece. It's the true account of a man's wrongful arrest on charges of larceny, and his resulting fears for the loss of everything that constitutes his identity: his family, his job, his (and his wife's) sanity. Though the setting is New York City, Hitchcock would have seen straight away how the story's wintry images and downbeat theme could be inflected according to the 'English noir' model he knew so well (and which lately had been brought back to the screen in Henry Hathaway's *Twenty-Three Paces to Baker Street*). For, clearly, the parallels with a clammy and even 'ghostly' London were there waiting to be exploited, which is exactly what Hitchcock now set about doing. As the film turned out, even its structure followed major precedents. And though critics sometimes evoke, in this respect, Franz Kafka's 'The Trial' (1925),⁹ I don't doubt that more numerous and more exact parallels are to be drawn with Dickens's 'Our Mutual Friend' and 'Bleak House', especially the latter. Hitchcock had studied both those novels at school.¹⁰

* * *

[Kierkegaard] is the only modern man who has so profound a sense of the solidarity of the race that original sin makes any sense to him.

- Walter Lowrie¹¹

Let me be clear. Kafka himself had read 'Bleak House'¹² and in nearly every major respect I think it's the *Dickens* novel that underpins *The Wrong Man*. Now, there's a splendid study of Dickens, by Taylor Stoehr,¹³ which argues that at the heart of that novelist's art exists a sense of wholeness restored, a by no means trivial 'dream' for the reader to savour and ... into. Thus Stoehr's estimation of Dickens's intent differs hardly at all from film scholar Robin Wood's notion of there being a 'therapeutic' purpose to Hitchcock's films.¹⁴ I want now to examine *The Wrong Man* as a 'Dickensian' text, starting with the film's opening scenes:

For a certain kind of imaginative artist, time and space are major raw materials to be reworked. Such an artist is Hitchcock, who introduces himself at the start of *The Wrong Man*. A shadowy figure, he addresses us across an empty sound-stage ('This is Alfred Hitchcock speaking ...'); paradoxically, while he appears distant and diminutive, his voice seems close at hand, confiding. The effect is suggestive: it's as if we were being given privileged 'interior' information that transcends the space of its telling. Which, of course, having been recorded on film, it does. Significantly, Hitchcock distinguishes between the present film and his past work: what we're about to see 'is a true story, every word of it' Everything here, including the bare and deserted set, and a musical motif consisting of a few menacing notes plucked on a double-bass, contrives to suggest one of the essential ingredients of (literary or visual) expressionism: a man bringing himself to judgment in his own mind.¹⁵ Yet, if Hitchcock quite literally puts himself at the centre of this first scene, that's not the end of the matter. The double-bass isn't only Hitchcock's instrument (which we saw him struggling to load on a railway car in *Strangers on a Train*, 1951), it's also that of the film's main character, whom we're about to meet. Moreover, the same expressionist stylisation that accompanies the film's start will envelop everything that follows right to the last shot.¹⁶ In effect, we're being told that all the world's a sound-stage, and that Hitchcock is both master of ceremonies and, like us, just one more participant.

The film cuts to New York's famous Stork Club, where musician Christopher Emmanuel ('Manny') Balestrero plays in the Latin band. Another master of ceremonies presides here: on the right of screen hovers the Club's maitre d'hotel.¹⁷ Likewise, there's another double-bass, which we both hear and see being played by Manny (Henry Fonda). But also, there's again a sense of dislocation. Belying the generally festive connotations (note the patrons dining and dancing under bunches of balloons; and the band's rumba accompaniment), what the sequence shows via a series of near-invisible dissolves is these people seemingly being *spirited away*. This 'Dickensian' effect provides at once a foretaste of others to come and a link to the deserted sound-stage of before. Equally, because *the dissolves condense an evening's festivities into a few seconds of screen-time, the sequence is a correlative of the first: instead of space being primarily what is transcended, it's time*. As critic William Pechter felt, the effect is positively eerie - and much facilitated by composer Bernard Herrmann's reedy modulations of the rumba score.¹⁸

The foreshadowings multiply. Even the distinctive lettering of the film's credits, which overlie this sequence, will be echoed later when Manny and his wife, Rose (Vera Miles), visit the office of the attorney, Mr O'Connor (Anthony Quayle). That is, you can see the same style of lettering spelling out the words 'Law Offices' on the window behind O'Connor's desk. Such cosy 'closure' may be comforting, but it also *suggests entrapment in someone else's nightmare* - presaging, in this case, the attorney's inept defence of Manny in court. Again, during the credits sequence, Manny's band is heard by the film's audience playing *continuously*: there are no sound-dissolves to match the visual dissolves. The effect is one of a 'wholeness' being found in - or imposed on - flux, and thus may or may not reflect a certain wilful blindness on the part of Manny and his fellow musicians.¹⁹ Both aspects of this ambiguous effect anticipate issues in the film. But, crucially, their near-paradox (prompting the question: who, if anyone, is in control here?), which exactly matches the vein of Hitchcock's introduction, again manages to implicate *us*.

When Manny leaves the Stork Club in the early hours of the morning, the camera frames him in such a way that he appears to have been taken into custody by two passing foot patrolmen. Of course, he's oblivious of this; that is, he doesn't (yet?) see himself through an outsider's eyes, in relatively objective terms. Also, though he soon descends to his customary subway station and boards his usual train,²⁰ after a station or two he ascends again: the film is telling us that he's innocent of the trauma ahead. Then he'll be plunged, like a Dickens character, into very murky depths indeed, where he too will struggle for his life. And so on. These opening scenes constitute one long foreshadowing - and thus, given the protracted nature of everything that follows, a kind of meta-foreshadowing.

Let's run the film forward to the point of Manny's actual arrest. Here begins a key sequence in which he's taken by local detectives, after initial interrogation, to visit the places he's alleged to have robbed. Much of the area, in downtown Queens, is familiar to him. As the police car starts out with him inside, through a window he can see Rose waiting for him in the house, unaware of anything wrong. *Wherever he looks, people are going about their usual business.* But soon we notice *something else about these passers-by with their pinched faces in the wintry streets.* Typically their faces show the 'Marks of [human] weakness, marks of woe' evoked by Blake's 'London' (compare Dickens's vast gallery of 'grotesques'). Still, I don't agree with critic Donald Spoto that there's anything 'suspicious' about them:²¹ basically such faces express *just a preoccupation and busy-ness that are common enough. And, yes, mortal: caught in car headlights, people hurrying across the road look like wraiths.* This scene's 'ghostly onlooker' effect anticipates aspects of Hitchcock's next two films, i.e. both *Vertigo* (adapted from a French novel called 'D'entre les Morts'/'Among the Dead') and *North by Northwest* (whose eerie credits-sequence itself owes much to the passage from 'The Waste Land' I quoted above).²²

* * *

The bourgeois mind is really the inability to rise above the absolute reality of time and space, and as such is therefore able to devote itself to the highest objects, e.g., prayer, [only] at certain times and with certain words.

- Søren Kierkegaard²³

Manny's nickname tells us that he's *just an average fellow, a capable musician liked by his colleagues but no genius* like the immortal Mozart - whom both of Manny's boys, aged 8 and 5, say they want to emulate. An Italian Catholic, he puts his faith in God and lives his life accordingly. Early in the film (notably, in the few moments I skipped over before), Hitchcock goes to great lengths to establish the Balestrero family's ordinariness. At the same time, we're made aware that death-in-life (a Hitchcock theme since *Blackmail*, 1929)²⁴ is already prowling ...

Arriving home from work in the early morning, Manny closes the front door - which the tracking camera 'miraculously' *penetrates. Here, and again later, both the camera and the ubiquitous double-bass refuse to be kept out. In an important sense, they again assert the wholeness, the bigger picture, that Hitchcock's film is about, and which Manny never seems to grasp.* (If he did, he might have less need of miracles - something for which he and members of his family later pray: see below.)²⁵ *But in another important sense, it's death itself which enters Manny's home.* This particular morning, in a reprise of the mournful oboe and double-bass motif from the pre-credits sequence, the latter instrument, especially, sounds

as if it were stalking Manny down the hall.²⁶ The motif functions like Albinoni's/Giazotto's famous 'Adagio'²⁷ in both Orson Welles's *The Trial* (1962) and Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* (1981) to suggest fatality: in all three cases, the double-bass is singularly expressive. At the same time, Hitchcock is here establishing a context that will serve to mock later attempts by the Balestrero family to deny reality, as when Rose wants to lock all the doors and turn people away.

Inside the house, it's still dark and the two boys are asleep. But in the main bedroom Rose is lying awake and is anxious to talk to her husband. She's been suffering from impacted wisdom teeth, something her dentist explained in a 'little lecture' he gave her 'on evolution'. As Rose puts it: 'Seems the human race is growing smaller jaws and having fewer teeth, but the teeth are ahead of the jaws ...', i.e. everything moves so slowly. It's not the only such lecture we hear, or hear about, in the film. After Manny's drawn-out day in court ends in a mis-trial, and a new trial is ordered, the judge sententiously tells the jurors about the American system of justice, which has evolved from the famous Code of Hammurabi. 'In Babylonian days ...'. Against the sort of time-scale evoked by these references, that of Manny's and Rose's lives is modest indeed: for example, they have enough problems making month-by-month repayments of money they've borrowed on the instalment plan. The scene in the bedroom ends when Rose says she sometimes feels frightened at night as she waits for Manny's return, and a small bedside clock chimes the hour.

That tinkling sound – so puny compared to the film's omnipresent roar of trains – confirms the various messages we've been getting. The outer world whirls around the immediate, and fragile, domestic world, threatening to crush it. ~~Then~~, Manny can comfort Rose by saying without apparent complacency, 'We're in love, we've got two good bright boys, I've got a job I like ...'. Nonetheless, their sense of what constitutes reality (which philosophers would define in terms of a time-space-causality nexus)²⁸ is not only ordinary, it's blatantly utilitarian and 'bourgeois', i.e. both routine and circumspect. When, next afternoon, Manny joins his sons beside the piano (note the metronome on top), it isn't surprising to hear him offer this piece of homespun advice: 'You mustn't let anything throw you off the beat ...'.

* * *

The opposite of the bourgeois mentality is really the Quaker religion (in its abstract significance), where it includes the uncertainty and chance which is found in the life of so many; altogether it is an annihilation of the historical process.
- Sören Kierkegaard²⁹

What now happens to Manny plays itself out like a nightmare against a backdrop we've already noted: specifically, New York in the winter of 1952-53.³⁰ In this nightmare, human need finds itself cut off, as if by a time/space warp,³¹ from a support which had always seemed available; now, other people come and go, but they appear preoccupied or unheeding. In short, the atmosphere resembles that of 'Bleak House', whose famous opening includes the following passage:

Implacable November weather. As much mud in the streets, as if the waters had but newly retired from the face of the earth, and it would not be wonderful to meet a Megalosaurus, forty feet or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill ... Foot passengers, jostling one another's umbrellas, in a general infection of ill temper, and losing their foot-hold at street-corners, ... adding new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud, sticking at those points tenaciously to the pavement, and accumulating at compound interest.

The foggy weather that, one imagines, is implied in the very title of 'Bleak House' is richly symbolic, the equivalent of the dust in 'Our Mutual Friend'. That is, the 'problem of self' is evoked on a national, indeed universal, scale - though it's most artfully realised in the localised descriptions of London and its inhabitants, as in this passage. Notably, the passage hints at various forms of combativeness and greed, and the slow if not totally failed role of evolution in ending human imperfection. Also, it foreshadows the lumbering lawsuit that will take centre-stage in the story and affect many lives, several of them terminally.

Other imagery here is 'generic' in the sense that it recurs as a set of parallels in *The Wrong Man*: for example, the tenaciously clinging mud (compare the film's memorable close-up of Manny's soiled hands after his fingerprinting), the ill-tempered pedestrians losing their foothold (compare Manny's injunction to his quarrelling sons not to lose 'the beat'), the implicit contribution made to the 'general infection' by commerce with its 'deposits ... accumulating at compound interest' (compare Manny and Rose's struggle to pay back money they've borrowed on the instalment plan). As I've said, the parallels to be drawn between Hitchcock's film and Dickens's novel are more exact, as well as more numerous, than can validly be drawn between the film and Kafka's 'The Trial'.³²

Indeed, it's scarcely forcing matters to add that in *The Wrong Man* there are several 'bleak houses': the precinct station (with its pitted concrete walls), the cheerless tenements visited by Manny and Rose during their search for witnesses to

establish Manny with an alibi, the sanatorium (to which Rose is committed late in the film), the Balestrero house itself (after Rose's departure from it). The early hints of mortality and coming tribulation are just that, no more than hints. But soon they are confirmed, as when Manny and Rose go looking for the witnesses I mentioned and find that the persons concerned have all either died or moved away without trace. Seeking these people, Manny and Rose visit parts of the city they're clearly not familiar with; in the same way, characters in 'Bleak House' visit little-known parts of London (for example, the foul slum called Tom-all-Alone's). Manny and Rose even travel out of the city to an upstate holiday resort where, the previous summer, they had spent happier times; now the resort is under snow and as much in the grip of winter as the city itself - a parallel to how in 'Bleak House' there's little to choose between muddy London and drizzly 'Chesney Wold' in Lincolnshire.³³

Also, in both works hopes are constantly being quickened, then dashed. Manny strides purposefully across the snow at the resort but achieves nothing definite. Back in the city, he and Rose visit a tenement block and hear animated sounds in the apartment they're seeking, but the giggling young girls who answer the door can't help them. (The two girls, whose parents aren't at home, mirror Manny and Rose's two boys - who at this moment are also home alone.) Even Manny's trial begins for him with some hope that the truth will quickly come to light, for he would seem to have one (at any rate) excellent alibi, from his dentist, who can testify that his face was visibly swollen on one of the robbery dates; but the proceedings end in anti-climax. In all these instances, you could be reminded of a passage from Chapter 2 of 'Bleak House' (and an excellent analysis of the passage by Professor C.B. Cox):

My Lady Dedlock (who is childless), looking out in the early twilight from her boudoir [at Chesney Wold] at a keeper's lodge, and seeing the light of a fire upon the latticed panes, ... and a child, chased by a woman, running out in the rain to meet the shining figure of a wrapped-up man coming through the gate, has been put quite out of temper. My Lady Dedlock says she has been 'bored to death'.

As Professor Cox shows, the effect here depends on the sudden contrast between the generally damp and deathly scene (there's even a paved terrace at Chesney Wold called 'the Ghost's Walk') and the warmth and darting movement across the way.³⁴ Let's note, too, the continuity with other parts of the novel: for example, with the ill-temper of the Londoners in Chapter 1. By such 'noirish' means, both 'Bleak House' and *The Wrong Man* characterise their particular closed worlds, to immense cumulative effect.

Again, at times people and events in *The Wrong Man* seem to have an underwater quality about them, as if we were seeing them exhibited in an aquarium. When Manny is arrested and locked up overnight, in effect he nearly drowns. As the camera begins to whirl around him in his cell, Bernard Herrmann's *most* 'underwater' music (for harp, strings, muted brass and *stifled* woodwinds) echoes the suggestion of a vortex. For a while afterwards, Manny finds that his whole conception of time and space, and of values, has shifted. Released on bail, he tells his wife and his in-laws, who put up the money, 'I'll never forget this, never.' To Rose, he hints at the ineffable, telling her, 'Oh honey, you'll never know how much I needed you.' Perhaps most significantly of all, as he pauses on their doorstep where just the previous day the police had accosted him, he says it feels like it happened 'about a million years ago'.

* * *

Even if, juristically speaking, we were not accessories to the crime, we are always, thanks to our human nature, potential criminals. In reality we merely lacked a suitable opportunity to be drawn into the infernal melée. None of us stands outside humanity's black collective shadow. Whether the crime lies many generations back or happens today, it remains the symptom of a disposition that is always and everywhere present ...

- C.G. Jung (1957)³⁵

Sadly, Manny doesn't fully, or lastingly, incorporate the insights his ordeal has offered him. His 'bourgeois' outlook remains essentially unaltered, confined in spite of everything to his particular time and place.³⁶ As we'll see, he fails a crucial test. Even so, Hitchcock's compassion, especially for a fellow Catholic, allows a final ambiguity ...

Hitchcock called his film's dénouement merely an 'ironic coincidence', but nonetheless one he 'liked'.³⁷ As Manny prays to a religious picture, the real holdup man materialises onscreen, to be caught soon afterwards. Here, I think even a viewer who is a non-believer feels a frisson. For a start, the materialisation of the real criminal *reverses* a trend: recall the 'dissolving' Stork Club patrons, the dead or vanished witnesses, Rose's breakdown. Manny himself has lately seemed headed the same way, having just told his mother (Esther Minciotti), 'You'd all be better off without me'. (Note: *dematerialisation* is also very much a motif of 'Bleak House', as epitomised most dramatically in the death of a character by 'spontaneous combustion'.)

Further, the way in which the film's dénouement is constructed and played suggests in fact a new wholeness and integration. This time, our sense of that wholeness has less to do with a feat performed by Hitchcock's camera, and more to do with 'an act of God' which the film dutifully presents. After Manny's despairing remark to his mother, quoted above, she tells him to pray for strength. What we then see is a succession of four 'heads': that of Manny's mother (who prays in an adjoining room), that of the Christ-image in the religious picture, that of Manny, and (after a single most *emphatic* dissolve) that of the real criminal who will be caught as he tries to rob a delicatessen. This visual 'chain effect' shows us a continuity not yet known to Manny, though he may infer it later. What he may never fully infer are all the other continuities, i.e. 'ironic coincidences', that have led up to it.

The crucial such coincidence isn't just that Manny has a 'double' but also that the latter operates in Manny's neighbourhood and holds up the insurance office where the Balestrero family have accounts. (Later, it even turns out that Manny and his double print alike and make an identical spelling mistake.) Actually, the film contains *several* near-doubles of Manny and the real criminal, some more 'alike' than others: Manny brushes against one of them - probably the real criminal - on the fateful afternoon he visits the insurance office to arrange a loan on Rose's policy.³⁸

Again, Manny lives in Jackson Heights, in Queens,³⁹ which happens to be where the attorney Mr O'Connor also lives. Yet Mr O'Connor's office is located in the Victor Moore Arcade Building, some kilometres away, just up the passageway from the insurance office. This, in a city the size of New York! Once more you may think of Dickens, of whom his friend and biographer John Forster wrote:

*On the coincidences, resemblances and surprises of life Dickens liked especially to dwell, and few things moved his fancy so pleasantly. The world, he would say, was so much smaller than we thought it; we were all so connected by fate without knowing it and people supposed to be far apart were so constantly elbowing each other; and tomorrow bore so close a resemblance to nothing half so much as yesterday.*⁴⁰

That's indeed the stuff of both 'Bleak House' and *The Wrong Man*. In Manny's case, he glimpses a state of heightened awareness that might embrace it (compare his 'million years' remark, and his new knowledge of the city), but even that insight dissolves like most everything else in the film. In fact, the arrest of the real criminal seems only to cause Manny more setbacks in the here-and-now:

(1) As I've indicated, the first of these setbacks is crucial: a test which he fails. When the two men come face to face at the precinct station, Manny's response is to *assume* the other's absolute guilt, as various people had earlier assumed his own. Manny shows no magnanimity. But, reverting to old form, nor does he show understanding. 'Do you realise what you've done to my wife?' he asks, peevishly. Which is no doubt human of him, and true-to-life, but also self-alienating in a Jungian sense. And what of this *other* man's wife and family, mentioned in the dialogue earlier? In particular, what is now going to happen to *them*?

(2) With grim 'poetic justice', Manny himself encounters non-understanding when he tries to explain the turn of events to Rose. As in 'Bleak House', when the seemingly interminable lawsuit ends but leaves behind a trail of devastation and madness,⁴¹ so Hitchcock's film contains its own victims. Notably, there's Rose. Blaming her impacted wisdom teeth and her inadequate housekeeping for what has happened, i.e. employing the same immured thinking to which Manny is given, she retreats still further, into catatonia. When Manny comes to the sanatorium to tell her he's been cleared, she only murmurs, 'That's fine for you'. Here, what looks like one more variant on Dickens's 'problem of self'⁴² declares itself, with no immediate solution in sight. Manny admits to a nurse that he'd been 'hoping for a miracle', and mentions how his sons pray each night for their mother's recovery. The nurse smiles. Miracles happen, she says, 'but they take time'. (Nobody in the film acknowledges its earlier 'miracle', when prayer *had* seemingly been efficacious.)

A final title, placed over a long-shot of a family strolling down a Florida street, tells us that after two years Rose left the sanatorium, 'completely cured'. (Likewise, in 'Bleak House', its heroine returns to the actual, henceforth ironically-named, Bleak House, in Hertfordshire, where she marries the young surgeon who loves her, and who is newly-returned from overseas.)⁴³ This seems in keeping with certain fantasies of Manny's, for early in the film we'd seen him studying the form-guide and race-results for Hialeah racecourse, in Miami. Yet now a last, plummeting chord sounds a disquieting undertone. The essential Hitchcockian ambiguity remains.⁴⁴ The ordeal of one man and his family may be over, but the deeper-lying problem remains unsolved. And though a possible answer may occasionally be glimpsed beyond what I've called the philosophers' time-space-causality nexus, who among us can really expect to do better than Manny and penetrate to that awesome region of the 'thing-in-itself'?⁴⁵

The perfect has no need of the other, but weakness has, for it seeks support and does not confront its partner with anything that might force him into an inferior position and even humiliate him. This humiliation may happen only too easily when idealism plays too prominent a role.

- C.G. Jung⁴⁶

To cite such a (perhaps) God-like entity as Kant's thing-in-itself is to raise the question: should any of us even *want* to presume knowledge of it?⁴⁷ At any rate, that's a theme whose fullest exploration in Hitchcock occurs in his very next film, *Vertigo*. You might call the theme the 'tragic pursuit of perfection'. In *Vertigo*, the highly intelligent, unmarried policeman called Scottie, confronted by proof of his own mortality and weakness, thereafter seeks to escape from the mundane world - with tragic results. By contrast, the average family-man Manny in *The Wrong Man* seems positively rooted in the mundane world, and eschews a sense of the (Nietzschean) tragic altogether. In each case, though, the viewer is left feeling that the character has missed out on something.

Indeed, I think it's possible to feel an ambivalence, similar to the one I've just implied, informing some key sequences of *The Wrong Man*. For instance, after Manny's initial court hearing, he's taken back to prison, pending bail. Throughout the journey, he's handcuffed to another prisoner. Hitchcock strongly empathises with Manny in his humiliation here, apparently basing the sequence both on the real Christopher Balestrero's ordeal and on the recent arrest and trial for murder of respected Ohio physician Dr Samuel Sheppard.⁴⁸ The sequence is filmed subjectively, i.e. showing only those things of which Manny himself is directly conscious. As Hitchcock explained: 'since he's ashamed, he keeps his head down staring at his shoes, so we never show the guards ... only [their] feet, their lower legs, the floor, and the bottom parts of the doors'.⁴⁹ But despite thus entering so closely into Manny's situation, the sequence also provides one more evocation of the passage I quoted earlier from 'The Waste Land', which in turn sees fit to liken its commuters crossing London Bridge to the legions of the damned in Dante's 'Inferno' ...⁵⁰

Now, a coda. For the element of nightmare in *The Wrong Man*, there's one more real-life precedent - an English one this time - of which Hitchcock was undoubtedly aware.⁵¹ I'm thinking of what is still probably the world's most famous case of mistaken identity, that of an Alfred Beck. In 1896, Beck was arrested in a London street on the say-so evidence of a woman who claimed he'd once swindled her of money and jewellery. On being 'identified' by several witnesses, including two policemen, he was found guilty and spent five years in prison. Three years later, in practically identical circumstances, he was arrested again! Once more he was found guilty. But this time he was awaiting sentence when police on the case learned of the arrest of another man who had been using a familiar-sounding technique. One of the police visited the man and immediately saw his resemblance to Beck. It turned out that this man had committed *all* the swindles. A. d. s. i. f.

Thus the Beck case probably gave Hitchcock the idea he used in *The Wrong Man* of showing a detective's sudden chance realisation of Manny's innocence: a scene near the end of the film which effectively completes the earlier 'four heads' sequence. Here the close-up of the detective provides a fifth 'head'. Need I add how this further ambiguous emphasis on the working of fate fits the film's constant evocation of our everyday world, one in which both mundane *and* extraordinary forces operate largely unseen?

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Notes

1. Quoted in W.H. Auden (ed.), 'The Living Thoughts of Kierkegaard' (1963), p. 25. The present article will refer to works by Charles Dickens and Franz Kafka - both of whom have given scholars occasion to cite the great Danish thinker (1813-55) called 'the father of existentialism'. See, in particular, Ada Nisbet, "Charles Dickens", passim, in Lionel Stevenson (ed.), 'Victorian Fiction: A Guide to Research' (1964); and Jean Wahl, "Kierkegaard and Kafka", passim, in Angel Flores (ed.), 'The Kafka Problem' (1946). As for Alfred Hitchcock, I've found Kierkegaard particularly illuminating of his films *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) and *The Wrong Man* - though I only discuss the latter film here.

2. The passage from 'Our Mutual Friend' quoted and discussed here comes in Book the Second, Chapter XIII.

3. A similar device, put to similar purpose, is used in the Frank Capra film, *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946), starring James Stewart. Curiously, that film has gained in America a huge popular following, associated particularly with Christmas, very like the following Dickens's tale enjoyed with the British public of its day, and afterwards.

4. 'Our Mutual Friend' was Dickens's last complete novel. It has been called 'one of his densest and most comprehensive accounts of contemporary society, as well as perhaps his bleakest'. See Ian Ousby (ed.), 'The Wordsworth Companion to Literature in English' (1994), p. 696.

5. A play on words roughly parallel to mine is used by Kenneth Burke in 'The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action' (1957), p. 249, where he calls role in drama 'salvation via change or purification of identity (purification in either the moral or chemical sense)'. Quoted by Camille Paglia, 'Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson' (Penguin Books edition, 1991), p. 198. This sort of duplex meaning is, I think, characteristic of works by both Dickens and Hitchcock - and is very 'cinematic'.
6. The version 'dirty Thames' occurs in the so-called Rossetti manuscript, Blake's notebook in which he wrote his first drafts of 'The Songs of Experience' and associated poems. Whether Dickens actually read Blake is uncertain: all that Dr F.R. Leavis will venture to say (in a chapter called "Dickens and Blake: 'Little Dorrit'") is that ~~the~~ question is that [Dickens] was familiar with Wordsworth and with Romantic poetry in general ... See F.R. Leavis and Q.D. Leavis, 'Dickens the Novelist' (1970), p. 228. Also of relevance here are some of Camille Paglia's comments on Blake. She writes: 'Blake prefigures Baudelaire and Kafka in his vision of the dead night-world of the modern city, today an arid grid of glass and concrete.' See Paglia, op. cit., p. 279. Her book, which has perceptive things to say on both Dickens and Hitchcock, might have cited those two artists, too, in the context of her remarks on Blake. Compare notes 7 and 22 below.
7. Eliot's own 'Notes on "The Waste Land"' points out the echoes of Baudelaire, and Dante's 'Inferno', contained in these lines. The Baudelaire passage reads: 'Fourmillante cité pleine de rêves, / Où le spectre en plein jour raccroche le passant.' Further, I suspect that Eliot is here mocking, consciously or unconsciously, Wordsworth's paean to London in 'Composed Upon Westminster Bridge' (1802), which begins, 'Earth has not anything to show more fair ...'. Compare notes 8 and 22 below.
- cf. France
8. Hitchcock's own mocking of Wordsworth (not without irony, for it's clear he always felt a degree of affection for his home city) is in keeping with other passages in his films that seem to take their inspiration from T.S. Eliot. Again compare note 22 below.
9. See, for example, Donald Spoto, 'The Art of Alfred Hitchcock: Fifty Years of His Motion Pictures' (1992), p. 261.
10. See Donald Spoto, 'The Life of Alfred Hitchcock: The Dark Side of Genius' (1983), p. 28 and p. 422. Spoto notes on p. 28 that 'particular attention was paid [at Hitchcock's school] to "Bleak House", a novel that seems to have engraved itself on Hitchcock's memory'. The excellent pioneering article on Dickens and Hitchcock is Edward Buscombe's "Dickens and Hitchcock", in 'Screen', Volume 11, Issue 4-5 (July-October, 1970), pp. 97-114. One of Buscombe's main points concerns the notion of a 'desecrated Eden' in both artists' work.
11. W. Lowrie, "Introduction", in Søren Kierkegaard, 'The Concept of Dread' (1944), p. xi.
12. See Mark Spilka, 'Dickens and Kafka' (1963), which contains, inter alia, a comparison of 'Bleak House' and 'The Trial'. Also, it's interesting to note Geoffrey Thurley's remark, in 'The Dickens Myth: Its Genesis and Structure' (1976), p. 189, that in a final analysis the lawsuit in 'Bleak House', 'and Chancery itself, [may] have a transcendent identity, their malignancy being projected onto them by the suitors. (This at any rate is what Kafka made of the novel.)' Compare note 32 below.
13. T. Stoehr, 'Dickens: The Dreamer's Stance' (1965), passim.
14. In the third edition (1977) of his 'Hitchcock's Films', Wood wrote: 'I still feel that the Hitchcock films I most admire are centred on a movement towards health via therapy and catharsis' (p. 20).
15. I owe this definition to Dr Margery Morgan, who gave it in a lecture she delivered at Monash University, Melbourne, on aspects of German Expressionism. (Compare note 35 below.) Philip Kemp has pointed out to me that G.W. Pabst's *Secrets of a Soul* (1926) treats such a theme, and must be one of the earliest (and most expressionistic) of films to do so. Still, I detect at least elements of the theme in Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (1919).
16. The film's *penultimate* shot shows a corridor in a sanatorium, where back-lighting duplicates that of the first scene. The *final* image is of a Florida street, ostensibly signifying 'release'. But even here, converging footpaths form a wedge-shape which repeats the typical expressionist 'need to bring yourself to judgment' motif. Also, as I'll note in the text, there's an alarming chord on the soundtrack at this point ... As for the idea, mentioned in the text, of how all the world's a sound-stage, Philip Kemp points out that Hitchcock would certainly have seen Max Ophüls's *La Ronde* (1950),

which also begins in such a manner. Anton Walbrook in that film is, as Philip Kemp says, at his most smoothly urbane as the master-of-ceremonies/participant.

17. Hitchcock often liked to carry over a motif from the credits-sequence of a film into the main action: for example, sliding horizontal lines in the credits of *Psycho* (1960) are later echoed visually by a line of type on the sliding glass door to Mr Lowery's inner office ...

18. Pechter's article, called "Hitchcock in Retrospect" - one of several at times perceptive pieces Pechter wrote on the director - appeared in 'Commentary', November 1976, pp. 75-78. In contrast to it, an article by Marshall Deutelbaum, "Finding the Right Man in *The Wrong Man*" (printed in M. Deutelbaum and L. Poague, 'A Hitchcock Reader', 1986), is often either beside-the-point or wrong, as when it says that 'the lap dissolves [in this sequence] function in a purely conventional manner'.

19. This represents an instance of Hitchcockian ambiguity, one which typically shows the director taking advantage of the non-specific nature of film story-telling: compare my point about 'duplex meaning' in note 5 above. Here, the question is: are Manny and his fellow musicians to be seen as heroic for their 'conquering' of flux (however briefly), or as guilty of not submitting themselves to its essential flow? Of course, how you answer that may depend on whether you hold a 'Western' or an 'Eastern' outlook. (Or, perhaps, on whether you prefer to attempt an even more philosophical or 'detached' position, approaching that of the great Arthur Schopenhauer, 1788-1860. It's the latter position which I suspect corresponds closely to that of Hitchcock, the universal filmmaker.)

20. Both the subway station and the train are practically deserted, with the same 'man needing to look at himself' connotation as before.

21. Spoto makes this claim in the first edition (1979) of his 'The Art of Alfred Hitchcock', p. 288. It's missing from the revised (1992) edition ...

22. ~~An essay might be written about the credits-sequence of *North by Northwest* (1959).~~ An initial 'ghostly' green, itself a carry-over from *Vertigo*, dissolves to a dusty-red-brown view of a glass office-block (the newly-erected Seagram Building) which eerily reflects home-bound New Yorkers swarming into the streets and subways below. It's almost inconceivable that Hitchcock wasn't thinking here of T.S. Eliot's 'The Waste Land', and specifically its lines evoking an 'Unreal City' swarming with the living dead. (Professor John Carey, 'The Intellectuals and the Masses', 1992, p. 10, has shown how it was largely through Eliot's influence that, by the 1930s, the Nietzschean assumption that most people are dead had become 'a standard item in the repertoire of any self-respecting intellectual'.) ~~In view of the many poetry references I keep attributing to Hitchcock, in the present article and elsewhere, it's worth noting that he was a friend of Professor C. Day-Lewis, the English Poet Laureate (1968-72), who wrote crime fiction under the surely significant pseudonym, 'Nicholas Blake'. For confirmation of that friendship, see David Castell, "Such Interesting People ...", in D. Castell (ed.), 'Cinema '76' (1975), p. 126. See also note 50 below, and the main text at that point (re possible allusions to Dante in the credits of both *Vertigo* and *North by Northwest*).~~

23. Quoted in Auden, op. cit., p. 37.

24. When Hitchcock was preparing to film *The Lodger*, he may have noticed then how Mrs Belloc Lowndes's novel climaxes at the top of a great staircase inside Madame Tussaud's waxworks in London (Chapter XXVI). The 'curious, still, waxen figures' suggest to the startled Lodger 'death in life' - much as Egyptian statues and mummies inside the British Museum startle the characters at the climax of *Blackmail*. Certainly it was an idea that came to haunt Hitchcock, for he later filmed variants of it in the climaxes of *Saboteur* (1942) and *North by Northwest*.

25. ~~In Professor Stanley Cavell's 'Pursuits of Happiness: The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage' (1981), he cites Ibsen's 'A Doll House' (1879) as a paradigm-case of where a couple's marriage might only be successfully reconstituted if 'a miracle of change' were to occur (p. 23).~~ I think that, deep down, there's a similar circumstance prevailing in *The Wrong Man*. Compare notes 42-44 below.

26. ~~Some time after I originally wrote this, in 1992, I read Steven C. Smith's 'A Heart at Fire's Centre: The Life and Music of Bernard Herrmann' (1991). On p. 211, Smith notes how pleased the composer of *The Wrong Man*'s score had been to come across a 1957 review from Australia (of all places) which spoke of how the film's 'gaunt sound-track ... is a series of plucked low notes from the musician's own double-bass, always in a rhythm to suggest footfalls of a ghost ...'. (The exact source of the review isn't given but may be the estimable 'Film Journal', sadly long vanished.) Smith gives the further information (p. 189) that Herrmann had recently worked on a musical production for television of Dickens's 'A~~

Christmas Carol', with lyrics by playwright Maxwell Anderson - who would be hired by Hitchcock to write the scenario of *The Wrong Man*.

27. The popular 'Adagio', often ascribed to Tomaso Albinoni (1671-1751), was actually composed by his biographer, Remo Giazotto (1910-). Or so I have lately read. See 'The Wordsworth Dictionary of Biography' (1994), p. 7.

28. Hugo Münsterberg, an early film theoretician, anticipated an aspect of *The Wrong Man* when he wrote in 1916: 'The photoplay tells us the human story by overcoming the forms of the outer world, namely, space, time and causality, and by adjusting the events to the forms of the inner world, namely, attention, memory, imagination and emotion.' (Quoted in S.S. Prawer, 'Caligari's Children: The Film as Tale of Terror', 1980, p. 209.) Readers may like to compare Münsterberg's observation to one by Bryan Magee, 'The Philosophy of Schopenhauer' (1983), p. 125: 'In inner sense I have direct knowledge of a great many things besides my acts of will - feelings, emotions, moods, all sorts of things - and when what we are considering is the inner knowledge we have of ourselves all these will have to be taken into account. But acts of will ... are the sole examples of empirically observed movements of physical objects in space and time which are also ... known simultaneously and directly from within in a way which is not mediated through the senses.' I think it is part of Hitchcock's genius, expressed through his characteristic ambiguity (compare in particular note 19 above), to recognise the equal status of inner *and* outer reality. The critique of the Balestrero family offered by *The Wrong Man* gains its simultaneous weight and quality of empathy from such a position - which I would indeed call 'Schopenhauerian'.

29. Quoted in Auden, op. cit., p. 37.

30. Hitchcock's film is based, via a treatment by Maxwell Anderson and Angus MacPhail, on Herbert Brean's "A Case of Identity" which appeared in 'Life', 29 June, 1953. Brean's article deserves to be anthologised one of these days for its fine reportage and its intrinsic interest.

31. Inter alia, I'm thinking of parts of H.G. Wells's 'The Time Machine' (1895) - but also of moments in some stories by Jules Verne, such as 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea' (1870)! (On an 'underwater' nuance in *The Wrong Man*, see main text.) Equally, compare the passage from 'Our Mutual Friend' I quoted at the start of the present article.

32. Still, I leave open the matter raised by Mark Spilka of the difference between Dickens's and Kafka's basic religious assumptions. For Dickens, says Spilka, op. cit., the unjust social order shown in 'Bleak House' has been generated in part by a false notion of people's natural sinfulness. The fog clinging to the Court of Chancery would disappear if society would accept the fact that God is beneficent, and people naturally good. (I think Professor Lesley Brill holds a roughly comparable view of *Hitchcock*. See his 'The Hitchcock Romance: Love and Irony in Hitchcock's Films', 1988.) Kafka, on the other hand, accepts the notion of a distant, inscrutable God, apparently unjust, who condemns all of us to a state of 'sinful innocence'. (This is perhaps closer to my own, 'Schopenhauerian' understanding of a notion held by Hitchcock the filmmaker.)

33. The novel's actual Bleak House is in Hertfordshire. See Chapter 3. (What's potentially confusing about this is that Dickens based the house on one he knew at Broadstairs, in Kent. See photograph in J.B. Priestley, 'Charles Dickens: A Pictorial Biography', 1961, p. 82.) It comes to seem ironically named, inasmuch as the weather there is relatively well-disposed, and for other reasons. I see a parallel case in the references in *The Wrong Man* to Florida, something I discuss later in the present article.

34. Professor Cox's "A Dickens Landscape" first appeared in 'The Critical Quarterly', Spring 1960, pp. 58-60. It is reprinted in Robert O. Preyer (ed.), 'Victorian Literature: Selected Essays' (1967), pp. 122-25.

35. C.G. Jung, 'The Undiscovered Self' (1957), pp. 108-09. The essential meaning of this passage seems to me to be echoed in the 'noirish' look of *The Wrong Man* itself, including Hitchcock's own 'cameo' appearance on the shadowy sound-stage at the start. Compare note 15 above, and note 36 which follows.

36. Jung's 'The Undiscovered Self' (see last note) was published in America just as *The Wrong Man* appeared. Both works arguably reflect some Cold War attitudes then prevailing widely in society. Fittingly, therefore, Patrick Humphries's 'The Films of Alfred Hitchcock' (1986), p. 139, quotes noted critic Colin McArthur: 'the film which perhaps best conveys the underlying unease of 50s America is *The Wrong Man*'. See also Robert J. Corber, 'In the Name of National Security: Hitchcock, Homophobia, and the Political Construction of Gender in Postwar America' (1993), p. 171. There, Corber notes Norman Mailer's feeling 'that the only way in which Americans would give up their faith in consensus politics was if they experienced a violent shock to their subjectivity, so deeply rooted was their faith in their identities as Americans'. That seems to me what Hitchcock's *The Wrong Man* (and *The Birds*, 1963) is also about in part.

37. See François Truffaut, 'Hitchcock' (updated edition, 1978), p. 302.

38. Marshall Deutelbaum, *op. cit.*, says that 'the real thief is often visible in the film as he and Balestrero cross paths'. In fact, Deutelbaum fails to distinguish between actual look-alikes and people who are merely similarly dressed. In Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956) we see a woman dressed like the Doris Day character arriving at the Albert Hall: this is presumably Hitchcock's way of telling us that such attire was being generally worn (and that Day, despite not being formally dressed to attend a symphony concert, would be admitted by the Hall doorman). For the record, in *The Wrong Man* I think that the man who bumps into Manny in the Victor Moore Arcade *is* the real criminal, but that the other men seen in the street are merely wearing a similar style of overcoat.

39. Queens is where another Italian-American, and an admirer of *The Wrong Man*, Martin Scorsese, lived as a boy. Scorsese recently discussed in a television series ('American Cinema', episode 1) how he and composer Bernard Herrmann based some of the street scenes in *Taxi Driver* (1976) on ones in *The Wrong Man*. Noteworthy, too, is how Scorsese's *Cape Fear* (1991) deals with the breakdown of a family under pressure in ways that offer some parallels to Hitchcock's film. Compare note 44 below.

40. Quoted in W.J. Harvey, "Chance and Design in 'Bleak House'", in John Gross and Gabriel Pearson (eds), 'Dickens and the Twentieth Century' (1966), p. 156.

41. Victims of Chancery in 'Bleak House' include the hapless 'man from Shropshire', Mr Gridley, and the crazed Miss Flite; likewise, the deaths of Lady Dedlock and Richard Carstone are bound up with it.

42. The 'problem of self' in Dickens is often one of a character's psychological regression and/or inability to adapt. Probably 'Our Mutual Friend' explores that aspect most fully. But if one seeks parallels for Rose's condition as we see it late in *The Wrong Man*, Dickens characters who come readily to mind include Mrs Clenham ('Little Dorrit', 1857) and Miss Havisham ('Great Expectations', 1861).

43. Something I find significant in Esther Summerson's marriage to Dr Allan Woodcourt is that it requires the stepping aside, albeit with evident reluctance, of the patriarchal-figure, John Jarndyce. I'm reminded of how Renata Salecl, "The Right Man and the Wrong Woman", in Slavoj Žižek (ed.), 'Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Lacan (But Were Afraid to Ask Hitchcock)' (1992) sees Manny in *The Wrong Man* as guilty of an unconscious patriarchal (or paternalistic) attitude - to which Salecl attributes the basic cause of Rose's breakdown. See, in particular, p. 190. Also, Dr Theodore Price, in 'Hitchcock and Homosexuality: His 50-Year Obsession with Jack the Ripper and the Superbitch Prostitute - A Psychoanalytic View' (1992), attributes to Hitchcock himself a similar patriarchal attitude, both oppressive and possessive. In this respect, a key chapter is the one on "The Father-Daughter Theme", pp. 229-42.

44. The 1992 edition of Spoto's 'The Art of Alfred Hitchcock' reports (p. 257n) that the film's final shot was added by the studio 'over Hitchcock's loud objections'. Spoto adds: 'In fact the Balestreros never recovered from the lived nightmare ...'. Such an outcome is in line with, for example, the one in Australia's real-life 'dingo-baby' case, filmed by Fred Schepisi as *Evil Angels/ A Cry in the Dark* (1988), where Lindy and Michael Chamberlain were divorced soon after their ordeal. Still, Hitchcock's film *is* accurate in reporting Rose Balestrero's release after two years spent in a sanatorium (whether or not she was 'completely cured'): see "Court Turned Into a Movie Set", 'New York Times', 9 April, 1956.

45. Cavell, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-80, has some rather preachy remarks to offer on this topic. He suggests, for example, that 'I [certainly] cannot reach this [noumenal] realm *alone*' (p. 79).

46. Jung, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

47. The question goes back at least as far as Plato, of course. It continues to divide opinion - something on which Hitchcock's films, with their ambiguity, thrive. Cavell, for instance, sounds somewhat chiding when he observes (p. 74): 'Two of the fundamental human properties that human societies have been most anxious to limit are the capacity to relate oneself to the world by knowledge and the capacity to relate oneself to others by marriage.' (Note that I'm interpreting 'knowledge' here to mean *all* kinds of knowledge, including knowledge of what constitutes the noumenal, or at least our relation to it.) On the other hand, and admittedly with perhaps a different emphasis, Friedrich Nietzsche was concerned that we keep our proper sense of the mysterious and the tragic. 'Knowledge kills action', he declared in 'The Birth of Tragedy', 'action requires the veils of illusion.' My point is that Hitchcock (two of whose films bear the title *The Man Who Knew Too Much*) built several of his films on this and related themes, such as a questionable search for perfection in *Spellbound* (1945) and *Vertigo*. See main text.

48. On 21 December, 1954, Dr Sheppard was convicted, on somewhat contentious evidence, of murdering his wife. Meanwhile, newspaper photographs and newsreels had dwelt on his humiliating circumstances when, for example, he was taken to and from prison handcuffed to some resentful- or hangdog-looking felon or other. (Some of the newsreel footage was recently aired on television in an episode, about the Sheppard case, of 'Great Crimes and Trials of the Twentieth Century'. Sheppard was finally acquitted of murder, and given back his freedom, in 1966. He died in 1970.)

49. Quoted in Truffaut, op. cit., p. 296.

50. There's a further possible Dante reference in the credits-sequence of *Vertigo*. There, the camera moves towards a woman's eye, at which point the screen turns red. Then the camera appears to enter the eye and we see a succession of nine revolving spirals of various colours. Finally, the camera exits the eye and at that moment the screen again turns red. It's as if we had been taken on a voyage recalling the nine circles of 'The Inferno'.

51. This article has concentrated, indeed, on 'English' aspects of *The Wrong Man*. Even so, I've omitted to mention the likely influence of some of John Galsworthy's social dramas, especially 'Justice' (1910). As regards trans-Atlantic input, I've had to omit almost entirely reference to the influence of playwright Maxwell Anderson ('Winterset', 1935) whom Hitchcock employed to work on the film's screenplay, and of several other American dramatists and their works, such as Arthur Miller with 'Death of a Salesman' (1949) and Paddy Chayevsky with 'Marty' (1953). For comparison of Henry Fonda's role in *The Wrong Man* to his roles in films for Fritz Lang and John Brahm, see Michael Kerbel, 'Henry Fonda' (1975), pp. 95-98 and passim.

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ODD SPOT: MOVING PICTURES (EVEN WHOLE SCENES!)

There's the classic story of how an Australian film censor back in the days of silent pictures took objection to the fact that in the first half of E.A. Dupont's *Variete/Vaudeville* (1925) an unmarried couple are shown living together. The censor decided to move the couple's marriage ceremony from the end of the picture to the beginning!

Something similar once happened to a print of Hitchcock's *Marnie* (1964) when it was shown on Australian television by the Channel Nine organisation. Someone obviously felt that audiences might not enjoy being puzzled by Marnie's strange behaviour early in the film (a source of suspense). So, soon after Marnie meets Mark, her future husband, the Channel Nine people took a scene from late in the film, in which Mark receives an investigator's report on Marnie's background, and inserted it into this first part of the film. Presto, Marnie's relation to her mother was instantly disclosed! (The 'amended' version of *Marnie* was shown by Channel Nine in Melbourne on at least two occasions.)

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