



REMBRANDT,

THE ANATOMY LESSON

OF DR. NICOLAS TULP

(1632)

AN EROTICS OF SPACE: THE CINEMATIC APPARATUS IN THE AURA OF SCIENCE

JANINE MARCHESSAULT

*That the destruction of an illusion does not
produce truth but only one more piece of ignorance,
an extension of our “empty space,” an increase of
our “desert”— Nietzsche*

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The year is 1632. Eight men of science stand around an anatomy table. The body of a petty thief from Leyden is stretched out in front of them, lifeless. Except for a cloth draped over its genitals, the male body is exposed—open to the gaze; its left arm appears partially dissected, the skin pulled back to reveal a greenish mass of muscle tissue. Aris Kindt pays retribution to the society he has wronged; beyond his death he becomes the servicing agent for a nascent Enlightenment.

The scene is famous. Rembrandt's moribund painting *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaas Tulp* depicts the ceremonial penetration of death in the name of a science which seeks to multiply the order of its reasoning.¹ Endeavoring to know death by making its body clear and distinct, the reputed surgeon Tulp extends the previous public execution to the spectacle of science.

The Anatomy Lesson documents an important shift in the relation between power and life (“power over life”) in the West. One which Foucault identifies as a shift from *the sovereign right to administer death to a life-administering power*: “a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them”². In *The Anatomy Lesson* punishment is justified and redeemed by a science whose sacred mission is to shed light where darkness prevailed in order finally to better administer life (and extend its own limits).

Punishment and pedagogy work hand in hand to define the spirit of a rational epistemol-

ogy—synonymous with mastery—that will dictate the social and economic meanings of progress. Inscribed in a science of precision—based on ‘pure’ and ‘native’ reason—creation and understanding find perfect harmony in one truth: “Man as God.”

In many ways Rembrandt, renowned for his choice of truth over beauty, influenced no doubt by Carravagio’s naturalism and that mathematical perspective born of the Renaissance, represents this science in a manner that approaches its very goals. Yet, as Francis Barker and others have analyzed, there are some aberrations in Rembrandt’s depiction. The men who stand around the table including Tulp are “blind” to the body in front of them. Their attention is directed in each case away from the body, onto its discursive dressings: on the anatomy book at the edge of the table, on Tulp’s forceps, on each other, out to the invisible spectators in the anatomy theatre—towards all those things that will guide their knowledge. This to such an extent that they seem oblivious to the one glaring ‘abnormality’ of the body: the left hand of the thief which is cut away, sliced open and objectified, is identical to the right hand.³

In as much as this hand is cut—made clear and distinct—it’s strange abnormality goes unnoticed; once the body is laid bare, it is no longer visible. Descartes, in Amsterdam at the time, would have explained the oversight thus:

when a blind man is feeling bodies, nothing has to issue from them and be transmitted along his stick to his hand; and the resistance or movement of the bodies, which is the sole cause of his sensations of them, is nothing like the ideas he forms of them...⁴

Rembrandt’s painting speaks to that division which renders the body transparent by subjecting it to the pure reason of the mind’s eye. Thus, the body no longer sight of knowledge is cut into pieces, enclosed within partitions—reduced and made to order. If Rembrandt’s painting opposes a particular epistemology of the body, it is in its resistance to the idealizing-normalizing function of science during the classical age.

Space during the 17th century is perhaps most subject to scientific conversion. This is the age of the telescope and the portable camera obscura—devices that confined the infinite celeste to the dark chambers of one internal perspective. Both da Vinci and two centuries earlier Roger Bacon describe a technology of vision which, by means of mirrors, enables someone ‘inside’ to witness ‘outside’ occurrences. This is the phenomenon that led Giovanni Battista della Porta in his popular *Magia Naturalis, sive de Miraculis Rerum Naturalium* (1589) to warn readers that what he was revealing should probably be kept secret.⁵ Kept secret precisely because of the secrets it might reveal and the trickery it might enlist.

Just as Descartes would internalize God—“[our ideas] are not made by ourselves but come from elsewhere”⁶—so too would the secret of scientific progress be dictated by arresting the sun. Galileo’s mathematicization of space is the light of reality contained or rather

ascertained. As Foucault has remarked, space in the 17th century is no longer a matter of “extension” as previously conceived but, “starting with Galileo,” one of “localization.”⁷

It is no accident that the ‘painted gallery’ emerges as a genre during this period; a period of extreme economic growth for the European art markets; a period during which the ownership of vision (of its images) is the ultimate signifier for power both scientific and economic. Like the different parts of some large machine, the painted gallery holds each frame in tight symmetry; each view, competing for greater mastery, is swallowed up by the proprietorial gaze. A gaze, often present in the depiction itself, which defies our own.

Archduke Leopold Wilhelm’s picture gallery painted by David Teniers The Younger (1650) is exemplary in this respect. The Archduke is seen at the center of the gallery peering in through a half-opened door. If what strikes us about the painting is its all-encompassing interior, we are also taken aback by the profound ambiguity of its view. Framed by the door and the hallway to gallery as well as by our own frame of vision, the Archduke’s gaze mirrors the spectator’s precarious mastery. Contained by the gallery, its ceiling and its floor, the spectator becomes the space of ownership to which the Archduke casts his glance. Yet half-way in and half-way out, the owner of the gallery is like us, imprisoned within the interior space. The effect of depth, his only possibility of escape, is undone by the presence of yet another wall beyond the door. Like the “observed spectator” Foucault discerns in Velázquez’s *Las Meninas*, the subject of the gaze is also its object—representing and represented, proprietor and property.⁸

Yet Teniers’ painting, like all publicity, is intended to arouse a desire for the original.⁹ The painted gallery (the emergence of which coincides with an outbreak of forgeries) paradoxically embodies the movement towards, and limits of, a science of unmediated vision.

Not surprisingly, the rise of the natural sciences is marked by a radical break with the technologies of vision so important to early mechanism. The scientific gaze, no longer blind, is set on discovering nature’s order through direct observation, and on reconstituting this order through a *general grammar* of identities and differences.¹⁰ Nonetheless, as Foucault has convincingly argued, the shift from *mechanical* to natural science should be understood not as an epistemological rupture but as the progressive unfolding of an economy of vision based on restricting the frame of its knowledge. That is, an economy bent on making “History Natural” by reducing reality to one omniscient seeing and one omniscient seeing to what can be said.¹¹

By the end of the 17th century the optical devices that had expanded the scientific gaze are discredited and reduced to exotic toys or magic shows.¹² So stridently does classical rationality define its visibility, that all else is consigned to lunacy (or popular culture). But it is precisely to this lunacy that 19th century science would turn in romantic desperation.

From the appearance of the photograph on 'Wanted' posters (the basis of Galton's criminal composites), to Charcot's photographic symptomology of female hysteria, from the mass production of photographic pornography to the family portrait, the 19th century is marked by "nothing less than the entry of life into history."

It is LIFE as an object of study that, according to Foucault, caused the "universal expanse" of the previous *taxinomia* to crumble. The search for knowledge of the human body (how to discipline it) and its species (how to regulate its populations), so fundamental to the economic processes that seek to govern it, leaves "DISCOURSE as mode knowledge" (natural history) to be revealed as LANGUAGE. As discourse orders itself, language is set free from representation:

Thus, European culture is inventing for itself a depth in which what matters is no longer identities, distinctive characters, permanent tables with all their possible paths and routes, by great hidden forces developed on the basis of their primitive and inaccessible nucleus, origin, causality and history. From now on things will be represented only from the depths of this density withdrawn into itself, perhaps blurred and darkened by its obscurity, but bound tightly to themselves, assembled or divided, inescapably grouped by the vigour that is hidden down below, in those depths.¹³

Modern science no longer relies on MAN whose vision has been progressively problematized—unreliable and too much a part of the whole. Blind again, but without the mind's eye to guide, science invests in a complex technological vision the very principles that allowed Descartes' blind man to see in the first place. It is this circularity that will be forever unclear as science waits for technology to unearth the whole picture. In a circus of desire, mechanical reproduction replaces the previous *taxinomia* only to reinscribe the mystery of creation—our historical amnesia.

Eadweard Muybridge, a somewhat dubious adventurer and photographer by trade, ventures for twenty-five thousand dollars to uncover the secret (the more than meets the eye) of a horse's suspension in full gallop. Muybridge's technique (a battery of 24 cameras placed at equal intervals along a single track) breaks up space through still photography and reconstitutes it in a circular illusion of continuous movement. If History triggered the downfall of a previous science, then a new science would learn how to master its flow.

Physiologist Jules-Etienne Marey is the first to consolidate and perfect Muybridge's views into one 'Photographic Gun.' Despite his successes, Marey is not interested in reproducing the common sense of movement but in expanding it:

What such pictures show after all, our eye could have seen directly. They add nothing

*to our ocular powers, they remove none of our illusions. Now the true character of scientific method is to remedy the inadequacies of our senses or correct their errors. In order to achieve this, chronophotography must renounce showing things as they really are.*¹⁴

Lost to the movement of history, invisible truths are arrested and mastered by an illusion of history, as the negation of the negation provides science with its new correctives. Chronophotography aligns the body of history (the worker) to the perfection of a technological time-machine.

By the end of the 19th century, the science of the motion picture sheds all claims to magic: from Magic Lantern to Thaumatrope (Wonder-Turner) to Phénakistiscope (Fantascope) to Chronophotography (time-image) to ZOOPRAXINOGRAPHOSCOPE. The more complex the apparatus, the greater its illusion, the closer its nomination will come to the secular world of science.

If Marey's chronophotography sought to uncover hidden vistas of truth, then Muybridge the adventurer cum-scientist, cum-showman understood how to narrate them. As Linda Williams has analyzed, Muybridge's *Animal Locomotion* (1887) includes a veritable emporium of scientific erotica. Though Muybridge's human subjects are photographed mostly without clothing and in sparse 'scientific' environments, Williams points to the many instances in which women are the sight of "gratuitous fantasization" not equalled in the representation of men.¹⁵ The tasks, props and movements carried out by the female models in Muybridge's photographs are imbued with an excess of narrative detail which exceeds scientific accuracy—they blow kisses, smoke cigarettes and look at each other longingly. Moreover, there is a marked tendency to cover and uncover women's bodies (with scarves, veils, blankets, water), investing them with a "surplus of erotic meaning."¹⁶

And yet Muybridge's artful postures are, in the last instance, not erotic. The scopic regime is a long-shot reduced to three points of view (side, front and back) aimed not at breaking the body into parts but at reconstituting those parts in their totality—in their truth. The scientific gaze claims to recollect the whole picture in all its tumultuous beauty, in all its unspoken horror: a woman getting into bed and a 'double amputee' getting up on a chair; one woman 'unveiling' another and a 340 pound body 'rolling over'; a mother kissing her child and a 'multiple cerebral-spinal sclerosis victim' trying to walk. The construction of sexual difference, the standardization of human appearance and movement, the division between subject and object are all part of this regime.

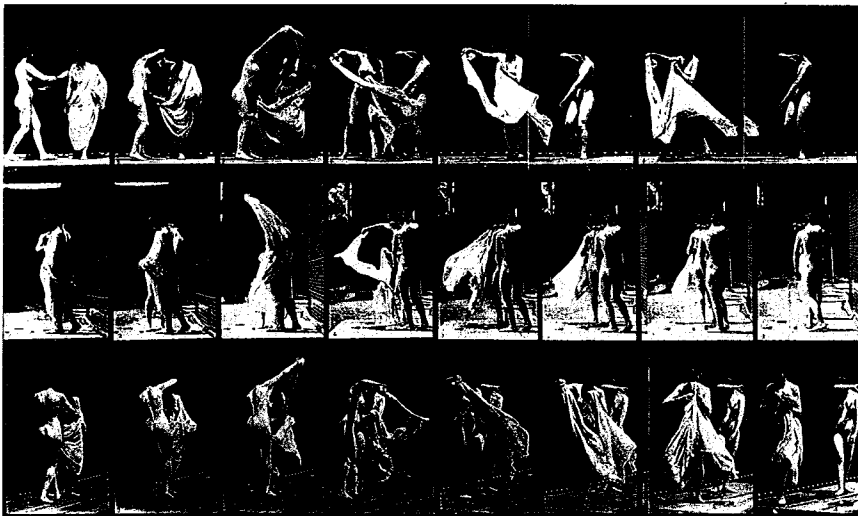
If Muybridge's *mise en scène* slips, if its resolution seems seductively hazy, it is always framed and clarified by a technological will to know. The paragon of its economy is the woman objectified by a blinding light: hands over eyes and genitals. This drive—to penetrate

and discover all those hidden places in hospitals, in prisons, in schools, in ourselves—like pornography, will stop at nothing. And it is here, at its most objective, that it must anticipate its own collapse; hence: the veils, the glistening bodies, the woman getting into bed.

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The Chicago World Fair (1893), organized to celebrate the achievements of science and industry, would pay homage to Muybridge. It would also feature another attraction that would cause some distress. Drawn out from the detritus of a now distant *ars erotica*, Fatima, an exotic belly dancer from the *Far East*, would enact the oldest of techniques with the greatest economy of means. Muybridge might well have served as inspiration for those men who, not long after the fair, would endeavour to ‘capture’ her on film.

For just a penny the kinoscope revealed the ‘wonders of the world’: Niagara Falls and Fatima. Though Fatima danced fully costumed and heavily veiled, white censor bars appeared over ‘those suggestive parts’ of her gyrating body.¹⁷ Produced just before the turn of the century, this marks one of the earliest instances of censorship in the cinema’s pre-history. It is of course only the beginning of an elaborate system of narrative codes and devices that would inform the cinematic apparatus as a socio-sexual technology.



EADWARD MUYBRIDGE

“WOMAN DISROBING ANOTHER”

ANIMAL LOCOMOTION (1887)

Unlike Muybridge's bodies whose unveiling in the last instance exposes the specularization for what it is, the apparatus of the cinema works towards a narrativization of the concealment. Making its veils and labyrinths ever more complex, the apparatus learns to conceal what the image is essentially lacking. If modern science medicalized the confession and constructed a body of secrets as it bid them speak, then in its turn the cinema makes the body mute—no longer unspoken but *unspeakable*.

In his essay "Eroticism and the Cinema," the great realist critic André Bazin maintains that the cinema is the technology of desire *par excellence*: "It is of the cinema alone that we can say that eroticism is there on purpose and is a basic ingredient."¹⁸ This "basic ingredient" is rooted in the tension between "what we deeply desire to see on the screen" and "what could never be shown."¹⁹ Thus eroticism in the cinema is produced through the perpetual promise to show 'it' all. And the cinema, unlike the novel, unlike the photograph or even the theatre can promise 'it' all, in all 'its' contours and textures, in all 'its' rhapsodic movements, in all 'its' temporal splendour.

Just as the transgression needs the taboo, Bazin insists that the cinema's erotic essence must be understood in relation to the censorship imposed not by institutional sanction but by the "image itself." Thus, according to Bazin, "the cinema can say everything, but not show everything"—this is its erotic power.²⁰ It with this emphasis that the idealist foundations of Bazin's eloquent contributions make their forceful appearance.

The cinema can create the impression of everything by not representing everything: the screen is a "mask" which hides part of a scene and prior to that, the frame of the image cuts and parses out each of moment the real. It is precisely through the limits of its access that the image can reference a "hidden" outside, an off-screen space through which the imaginary unity of the cinema will take its shape.

Early cinematic 'innovations' in the narrative cinema are premised upon the principle that the sensation of filmic continuity is created paradoxically in skillful negation. The signifying practice so essential to classical narrative cinema is constituted through what Kaja Silverman has called a "castrating coherence":

[Only] with the disruption of imaginary plenitude, does the shot become a signifier, speaking first and foremost of that thing which the Lacanian signifier never stops speaking: castration. A complex signifying chain is introduced in place of the lack which can never be made good, suturing over the wound of castration with narrative. However, it is only by inflicting the wound to begin with that the viewing subject can be made to want the restorative of meaning and narrative.²¹

The desire to see beyond the frame, to fill in the gaps, works to *suture* the spectator into the fictive reality unfolding on the screen. The operation of this signifying system necessarily

places the spectator at the centre of it all; paradigmatically reproducing the *Quattrocento* in its construction of masterful place—that *princely perspective* where you can forget your self.

This principle was overlooked in early experiments to achieve greater realism in cinema. The Cinéorama pioneered by Grimoin-Sanson at the turn of the century, attempted to expand technological vision to include spectatorial space. The flat screen was replaced with a circular one that would, with the help of twelve synchronized projectors, create a cinema in the round. But, as Noël Burch has remarked, Grimoin-Sanson's successes were not very popular because audiences did not know where to look.²²

Current experiments with Canada's *Imax* ("the largest screen in the world") are directed towards overcoming these very problems. Conceived as the 'ultimate' in cinematic realism, the curved screen overwhelms the viewing space to such an extent that it disperses the spectator's point of attention. Despite experiments with composition and point-of-view cutting the *Imax* can only accommodate landscape or 'experimental' films; that is, cinematic forms not dependant upon an identification with one camera.

The history of the cinema's technological expansion foregrounds the obsessive desire to eliminate the space between spectator and representation (floating holograms are the latest embodiment of this desire). The paradox is that in order to conceal the precarious origins of its mastery, the cinematic apparatus must keep the spectator in the dark, cut-off and always one step behind.

By discerning between external and internal censorship, between social institutional censorship and the censorship imposed by the cinema's machinery, Bazin fails to note their mutual dependance. At any rate it clear that without one the other would lose much of its impetus. Fatima's 'threat' is perceived as *real* precisely because it has been covered over.

It is through the cut—the cut imposed by the property of the image and the cut into the illusory flow of images—that the film spectator is made to believe in the 'more' of the image. It is in conjunction with this belief, its necessary support, that institutional censorship works to solidify the presence of the represented body: for it is in their absence that those "suggestive" parts become most present. Just as the censorship imposed by the image, its masking, is exactly what makes it seem transparent, the bar which attempts to cover over difference, Fatima's sexuality, is what marks it out.

Hidden from our vision but present in our imaginary, hidden but present, that off-screen space endlessly supplies the erogenic scenario with its flesh and blood. The cinema's basic 'ingredient' is nothing more than the old familiar play of presence and absence: the genus of fetishism. And it is here, in the seemingly seamless fusion, in the unifying body of the cinema, in the blinding impression of the image that the desire to see "what could never be shown" AGAIN finds its most perfect expression.

Like the sheet which raises over the dead and like the one that shields lovers from the outside world, the screen promises some ultimate fusion, playing out the limits of expenditure by disavowing its own. The cinema with its reproductions more real than life, carries out the undertaker's sacred fetish: the masking of death. The frame grafting desire to death, transforms the sensual experience of the specular into a kind of necrophilic perversion.

This can be detected in the barely distinguishable codes used to signify 'sex' and 'death' in the classical narrative cinema. The Hays Code instigated the development of a highly elaborate system of metaphors necessitating the refinement of the cinematic imagination. But more than this, the apparatus of the cinema, in its laborious elaboration of a signifying system, did not simply invent but rather was prefaced by the unconscious associations of its culture. Hence, the train moving into the tunnel (the site of so many murders and so much love), the fade to black, the strange meditations on nature, the emphasis on timelessness all point towards a beyond, towards the ineffable spasms of passion and death.

Georges Bataille maintains that this relation defines eroticism in the West: sex and death, the antipodes of pleasure, are profoundly contiguous. Undoubtedly influenced by Freud's theorization of the death instinct, Bataille maintains that the sexual act satisfies a primal desire for a "lost continuity."²³ This is the continuity of all existence outside, beyond and prior to LIFE: a lost origin. The aim of eroticism is understood to be the opposite of reproduction which emphasizes the inherent fragmentation of all life. Eroticism is a desire for complete fusion, the dissolution of all barriers, the loss of self.

But, and this is crucial for Bataille, eroticism is the experience not of death but of the limits of death, the limits of reproduction: "What we desire is to bring into a world founded on discontinuity, all the continuity such a world can sustain."²⁴

In order for Eroticism to be experienced—fleeting as a kind of living paradox, of death in life—reproduction must be (can only be) temporarily forgotten. So the erotic movement down the path towards death is never completed, never satisfied, censored by the fact of reproduction. Eroticism is the articulation of a yearning, it is a "tormenting desire": it is *nostalgia*.

Eroticism as defined by an impossible desire to recapture something forever lost, as a desire for unity fettered by the truth of reproduction; eroticism as the disavowal of an absent unity, a disavowal which nominates and structures the terms of/as lack; eroticism which needs its censorship and its death—its sacrifices—in order to conceal and construct the fiction of origin; the CINEMA then, as science's deepest incarnation: the undisclosed face of its truth.

Implanting and enjoining at once, the science underlying the cinematic apparatus is both erotic and pornographic. In the West eroticism arises out of the pornographic; it ushers in the X-rating, the censorship, that marks its own mystery.

It is in this sense that Stan Brakhage's autopsy film *The Act of Seeing With One's Own Eyes* (1973) embodies the problematic of modern science's cinematography. By all accounts the film is pornographic. It suggests that obscene uncovering that, as Stephen Heath has suggested, can only be at the *end of cinema*: "the cinema come to that."²⁵ (And what else could be at the end of cinema but the morgue...)

The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes (auto/opsis: autopsy) is a seeing which collapses the dialectic of the cinema's structured blindness by looking upon the face of death. The tearing open of its body is the site of an impossible looking: *because absence has no body and death no one face*.

A difficult seeing is set up both at the level of content and stylistic presentation. Brakhage chooses images which are painful to watch precisely because their horror is overdetermined, while the constant coiling of the camera does not allow for one coherent vision. As male and female bodies are laid out on tables, as faces are peeled away, as skulls are opened, as organs are removed, as insides are washed out, the intricate and yet seemingly random kinesis of the camera becomes increasingly noticeable. The breaking down of different identities, of bodies into anonymous parts coincides with a breaking down of vision. Our gaze, no longer extended through the camera, is thrown back, expelled from the scene we could not watch, we could not help but watch.

Moving in and out of focus, from darkness into light, the camera steers over and across objects which cannot be identified, are too magnified for classification proper. At first it would seem that the anguish of this impossible looking (a desire for origin) is fuelling the camera's dizzying movements—decentering the gaze by stopping at nothing in its search. At first it would seem that the act of seeing is a painful splintering—the bodies in *bits and pieces* reference to some orthopedic totality (some off-screen space). At first it would seem, in the overbearing silence at the limits of cinema, that nostalgia is finding its bearings—its ultimate narration. But it is precisely with the collapse of an epistemology grounded in representation, that the film begins to dissect the innermost recesses of X.

The crisis instigated by the progressive difficulty in seeing is integral to the movement of the film, to its foregrounding of a particular history of desire which needs markers and rulers—which needs mystery without uncertainty.

Slowly we are made aware of our own looking, of the thrill and the horror of it. If at first

we are devastated by the invasion of a sacred privacy that, for most of us, has remained invisible, *unspeakable*, we are not long after repelled by what is revealed beneath surfaces of the represented body: our own eyes. In this sense, as in Lyotard's *acinema*,²⁶ the spectator (that Cartesian subject) is the victim; yet this is not the film's ultimate purpose.

The Act of Seeing is a difficult film to watch; difficult until the desire to see the 'thing itself' revealed in truth is transformed. Here the power of the image is unfolded in all its contradiction and beauty: this is not a body. Piece by piece, a desire for truth, a desire to see—the will to knowledge—is brought to an uneasy rest. For in the vibrant secretions of reds and blues lies death not transcended but exposed. The cinema not as death nor as life, nor as some inverse ideal of abstract lyricism but as *something else*; something which exposes the gaps between those constricting terms; something of a document which historicizes the 'delicious terror' of absence. Not 'acinema' but simply a cinema.

NOTES

1. Information regarding *The Anatomy Lesson* is drawn from two sources: William Heckscher, *Rembrandt's Anatomy of Dr. Nicolaas Tulp* (New York: Bantam, 1958). Francis Barker, *The Tremulous Private Body: Essays on Subjection* (London: Methuen, 1984).
2. Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), p.136.
3. Barker, *The Tremulous Private Body*, pp.77-78. Barker suggests that this "crass error" might be understood as a Rembrandtian "joke." Given the painstaking realism of the painting, it is unlikely that Rembrandt could have overlooked such a mistake (p.79).
4. "Dioptrics," *Descartes Philosophical Writings* (London: Nelson Books, 1954), p.242.
5. Martin Quigley, *Magic Shadows* (New York: Biblio & Tannen, 1948), p.32.
6. "Letters," *Descartes Philosophical Writings*, p.269.
7. Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* (16:1), p.14.
8. Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books), p.312.
9. Art collectors and dealers commissioned painted gallery scenes to 'document' their collections. These copies were circulated either as way to advertise or to impress friends. cf: Niels Van Holst, *Creators, Collectors and Connoisseurs* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), p.139.
10. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p.133.
11. *Ibid.*, p.130.
12. cf. Quigley, *Magic Shadows*, p.75.
13. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p.252.
14. Translated in: Noël Burch, "Primitivism and the Avant-gardes," *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology* ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p.483.

15. Linda Williams, "Film Body: An Implantation of Perversions," *Ciné-Tracts* (Winter 1981:12).
16. *Ibid.*, p.23.
17. cf. Arthur Lennig, "A History of Censorship of the American Film," in Thomas R. Atkins ed. *Sexuality in the Movies* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1975), p.36.
18. André Bazin, *What is Cinema?* vol. II (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), p.170.
19. *Ibid.*, p.171.
20. *Ibid.*, p.174.
- 21 Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p.204.
22. Noël Burch, "Primitivism and the Avant-Gardes," p. 491.
23. Georges Bataille, *Eroticism: Death and Sensuality* trans. Mary Dalwood (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1986) p.11.
24. *Ibid.*, p.13. In an earlier version of this essay I delineate the connection between Freud and Bataille more extensively. Bataille's conception of eroticism is not dissimilar to the myth of the androgyne proposed by Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*. Freud references this myth in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: the lost unity of beings is reinstated through sexual union. cf: "In Search of It All," *CinéAction!* (Fall 1987:10), pp.7-12.
25. Stephen Heath, *Questions of Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), p.185.
26. Jean François Lyotard, "Acinema", trans. Paisley Livingston, *Wide Angle*, vol.2, 1978. Jean-François Lyotard attempts to locate a new libidinal economy in the cinema, a new erotics of presentation. Lyotard's "acinema" is non-representational; fantasised bodies ("victims") are replaced by the simulacrum's supports—the screen and the film strip take on the task of "agitation and libidinal expense." This is not a cinema of identification or memory, but a cinema which "thwarts mnemonic instances" and forgoes all references to the unified body in the image. Emotion is transformed into motion through lyrical abstraction as the spectator experiences the breaking down of his/her own body; the loss of unity is transferred onto the spectator "making the client the victim".