Abstracts

Anne Friedberg, *Les Flâneurs du Mal(l)*: Cinema and the Postmodern Condition   419

This essay provides a historical prologue for theorizing the cinema in postmodernity. The origins of the mobilized gaze are situated in the nineteenth-century *flâneur*, that paradigm of modernity. As the department store supplanted the arcade, space opened for a new urban subject, a female *flâneur*—a *flâneuse*. The mobilized consumer gaze led in turn to an apparatus that simulates spatial and temporal mobility: the cinema. The most profound symptoms of the postmodern condition—the disappearance of a sense of history, entrapment in a perpetual present, the loss of temporal referents— stem in part from the implicit time travel of cinematic and televisual spectation. The shopping mall—the present-day extension of the arcade—has the multiplex cinema and the VCR as apparatical exponents. The title of the essay is thus an appropriative double pun (on *fleurs* and on *mal*), locating the *flânerie* of the postmodern cinema spectator in the shopping mall. (AF)

Leonard J. Leff, The Breening of America   432

In 1930, to blunt attacks from legislators, social reformers, and investors, the American movie companies adopted the Production Code, a skein of dos and don'ts that regulated, among other things, the screen treatment of sex and crime and that, by 1934, had its own executive apparatus. Though Joseph I. Breen, the director of the Production Code Administration, was called "the Hitler of Hollywood," Production Code censorship operated through negotiation and compromise; even Breen himself was less repressive or moralistic than reporters or historians imagined. From 1934 to 1941, the Production Code Administration, the West Coast studios, and the East Coast corporate offices formed a machinelike network whose power Breen used not only to license but to facilitate the production of controversial films, including those presumed most harmed by the code—sex comedies and social-problem pictures. (LJL)

Susan E. Linville, Retrieving History: Margarethe von Trotta's *Marianne and Juliane*   446

Marginalized herself in discussions of the New German Cinema, Margarethe von Trotta sets out in her film *Marianne and Juliane (Die bleierne Zeit)* to recover the experiences of women as subjects in history. Using feminism as her lens, von Trotta deconstructs and re-visions history through a fictionalized version of the lives of Gudrun Ensslin, a member of the Red Army Faction, and her sister Christiane, a feminist journalist. Von Trotta presents their story from the perspective of Juliane-Christiane, whose memories reveal parallels between public and private, past and present forms of repression and who rediscovers the importance of sororal and maternal bonding. The film emphasizes that the political and the historical are indivisible from the personal. In doing so, *Marianne and Juliane* politicizes spectatorship and destabilizes the economies of violence and gender on which many visual accounts of German history depend. (SEL)

Marcie Frank, The Camera and the Speculum: David Cronenberg's *Dead Ringers*   459

Feminist film theory sees the instruments of both gynecology and filmmaking as tools for examining women; this equation is made in a different register by David Cronenberg's *Dead Ringers*, a film that subordinates the examination of women to the relationship between twin brothers who are gynecologists. *Dead Ringers* imagines that

622

the camera and the speculum extend each other's province, thus drawing our attention to the way women are figured in the film even when they do not appear. Cronenberg also uses the camera, however, to establish identities where they do not otherwise exist. His film therefore occasions questions about the analogous status that film theory has given to its various analytical devices. By making us ask about the similarities and differences between the functions of the camera and those of the speculum in investigation and representation, *Dead Ringers* interrogates the ways feminist film theory can integrate psychoanalysis. (MF)

Peter S. Hawkins, Divide and Conquer: Augustine in the *Divine Comedy* 471

Dante's vision of history in the *Divine Comedy* is a radical reworking of both Vergil and Augustine, generating a notion of the earthly city to supplant the quite different Roman constructions of his two Latin forebears. What has not been noted, however, is the strategic placement of this revision at the center of the poem. Undergirding *Purgatorio* 13–17 is Augustine's meditation on Cain and Abel taken out of the anti-Roman polemic of the *City of God* and translated into Dante's own political vernacular. It is in *Purgatorio* 15, moreover, that Augustine is introduced to us—not in person, but through an extended paraphrase of *City of God* 15.5 that is placed in Vergil's mouth. While Augustine surfaces textually at this point, he does so through the mediation of the poet of empire. The maneuver reveals yet another dimension of Dante's power over his authorities—the politics of his poetics. (PSH)

**Britton J. Harwood,** *Gawain* and the Gift 483

Using the noble obligations to give, receive, and repay, the *Gawain* poet makes pharisaism real. In the gift, prestige is at stake; likewise, those who would submit themselves to the Law would glory before God. The poet links two exchanges to end reciprocity itself. The one in the middle of the poem, where Gawain plays courtesy matches with Bertilak's wife and where hunters make return gifts to the forest, involves Bertilak's and Gawain's presenting each other with whatever wealth each acquires during the day. In this exchange, Gawain finally declines to repay—to trump the fox skin. The other exchange, at the ends of the poem, is the submission to blows. Gawain's failure and his beheading of the Green Knight, each exchanged for the "tappe," are exchanged for each other. Thus, Gawain owes the Green Knight a death, which the Green Knight pays. Forgiveness absorbs the subtle self-assertion of the gift. (BJH)

Geraldine Heng, Feminine Knots and the Other *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 500

Missing from the tradition of scholarship on the fourteenth-century alliterative romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are distinctly feminist forms of critical attention, an insufficiency only beginning to be redressed. This essay attempts, by way of a contribution, to tease out the poem's feminine text: another romance within this romance, one in which a feminine desire is recoverable at the limit of the masculine narrative, where the logic of the poem as the stage of its masculine characters slips and fails. The critical status of the pentangle and "luf-lace" is reimagined in the context of this other theater, where desire circulates among female figures in a relay of filiative and contestatory relations legible in traces, marks, and signatures at multiple textual levels. The argument restores, in part, a locus of strangeness to a 600-year-old text made familiar by settled conventions of reading and by the consolidation of criticism over time. (GH)

Leland S. Person, Jr., Henry James, George Sand, and the Suspense of Masculinity   515

Essays that Henry James wrote in 1897, 1902, and 1914 make clear that George Sand destabilized his authorial identity by appearing to be a more masculine writer than he. She forced him to suspend his idea of the masculine, to accept a plurality of masculinities and the freedom to construct a "plural" male self. In a 1902 essay James incorporates Balzac's masculine authority to broaden the concept of masculinity, enabling him to improvise a new masculine position for himself. In *The Ambassadors* James's solution to Lambert Strether's suspense between genders resembles Balzac's solution to James's own identity problem. In rejecting Maria Gostrey's proposal, Strether rejects one masculine role for another, aligning himself more with Balzac than with Sand. Overall, however, coming to terms with George Sand challenged James to define masculinity in what he calls the plural term. (LSP, Jr.)
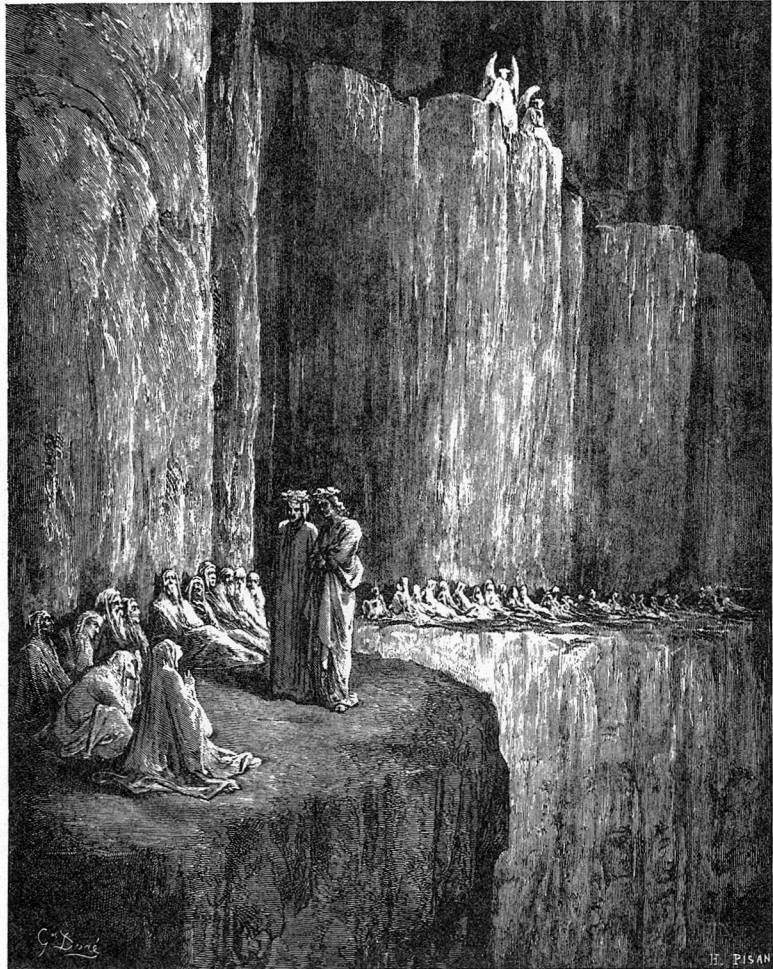
"Io fui sanese . . .": Dante and Vergil encounter Sapia. Illustration by Gustave Doré for Purgatorio *13.*