

Elisa Aaltola

The Animal Monsters in Horror Films: A Constructivist Viewpoint

Although our ideas about animals are changing, cultural studies has until recently ignored animals as an object of study. Analysis of animals is thought to be uninteresting and unfruitful, and it is not seen as serving any moral or political purpose. Paradoxically, this claim itself is based on and reproduces a cultural understanding of animals that emphasises their difference in respect of humans. This paper analyses the emphasis on that difference, animals as "other", by investigating animal monsters in recent Hollywood horror films. It demonstrates that analysing the images we have of animals is, contrary to what has been claimed, morally meaningful.

The paper concentrates on three different animal groups (the wild animal, the pet and the primate), that have been (in)famously portrayed as monsters in films such as *Jaws*, *Cujo*, and *Congo*. Each of these categories represent a different understanding of animals and this effects greatly the way its monstrosity is made meaningful. Therefore, behind the animal monsters we can discern pre-existing conceptions of animals that determine their monstrosity. Despite these differences in the context, the animal monster constructed in movies turns out to be very stereotypical in its reliance on distinctions and binary opposition between humans and animals.

Emmi Itäranta

Nothing More to See? Melodrama, Emotions, and Ideology of Gender in *Dancer in the Dark*

This article focuses on melodramatic characteristics and ideology of gender in Lars von Trier's controversial musical *Dancer in the Dark*. The first part of the essay takes a close look at the generic devices of melodramatic narration as a strategy aimed at producing emotions in the spectator. The theoretical framework is based on cognitivism that sees the spectator as an active participant in the viewing experience, not a passive or involuntary receiver "positioned" by the textual strategies or her/his unconscious impulses. This part of the article draws from Torben Grodal's concepts of the melodramatic structure of emotions, as well as the work of writers such as

David Bordwell, Steve Neale, and Flo Leibowitz.

The second part of the article concerns itself with analysing the culturally produced view of women as emotional, irrational, infantile, and possibly self-destructive, as well as how *Dancer in the Dark* recycles and reproduces this construction. Here I take as my starting point a framework suggested by Cynthia A. Freeland for analysing films from a feminist point of view without a need to rely on the dominant psychoanalytic feminist approaches to film studies. Finally, the article suggests a possibility of a co-existence of a powerful emotional response and a critical distance in viewing a film. There is to be no reason, I argue, why these two should be seen as mutually exclusive; instead, they can be regarded as two sides of the same coin, operating in constant interaction and supporting each other.

Markku Lehtimäki

The Author and the Novel in the Audio-Visual Media Culture: Self-Reflexivity and Visuality in Norman Mailer's Work

Drawing from contemporary discussions of "visual turn" or "visual poetics" and their role in literary practices, this article explores the enormous influence that visuality and especially film has had on modernist and postmodernist novels. An even larger context tells us that the work and status of writers, including novelists, has changed because of the impact of the expanding audiovisuality and artistic reflexivity in our culture.

In the age of visual and electronic media, the novel faces a cultural challenge which makes it almost impossible for it to remain "purely" literary. However, as products of language literary works are verbal artefacts, and thus their "visuality" can be found mainly on a metaphoric level, more concretely, as allusions to filmic and televisual practices. On a deeper level, novelistic self-reflexivity implies consciousness of apparently changing conditions of representation, and thus novelists, just like filmmakers, must reflect on the tools and media they use.

During the latter part of the twentieth century, Norman Mailer has worked as a novelist, journalist, and filmmaker. He employs several optic and visual metaphors in his writ-

ing, constructing a novelistic space filled with allusions to seeing and looking through devices such as camera, lens, telescope, microscope, spectacles, and filter. Through his ideological use of the metaphor of "filter", especially in his non-fiction novel *The Armies of the Night*, Mailer argues that complex reality is always mediated and presented through different filters (like those used in cameras). Thus the author also invites his readers to reflect on the surrounding world and how it is always represented through specific media with specific intentions.

Petri Saarikoski

Against the Mainstream - Demo Scene and Finnish Home Computer Culture

The Demo Scene, which so far has remained a rather unexplored part of the audiovisual culture, can be defined as multimedia programming culture located primarily in Scandinavia and Northern Europe. This article discusses the history of the Demo Scene in Finland from the 1980s to 1990s, concentrating on its relationship to other parts of computing culture, such as hackers.

In many ways the Demo Scene can be understood as emerging from hackers' culture. They share following elements, among others: experimental and enthusiastic programming, importance of competition and rivalry, community spirit, and idealist view of human-computer relations. During the early years of its history the Demo Scene had a close relationship to computer piracy as an (illegal) hobby, but after the 1980s Demo Scene began to develop as an independent subculture, in which fame and success were based on participants' ability to show creativity in multimedia programming.

The Demo Scene shares also some features with other "Scene" cultures, such as the Graffiti Scene and certain subcultures related to popular music. However, in particular, the demo programming should be studied as an important subculture of home computing. It is a form of social-technological experimentation by active home computer devotees. The main motivation of demo programmers has always been the challenge to explore not only technological limitations of computers, but also boundaries of their own creative imagination.