

The Director-function:

Auteur Theory and Poststructuralism

In recent years film theory has generally dismissed auteur theory from serious consideration. Many theorists will argue that auteur theory is not even a theory, but simply a listing of one's individual preferences regarding film. Such a view is not without foundation. The *Cahiers du Cinéma* writers from the fifties, with whom auteur theory originated, admitted that their views tended to reflect a subjective preference for one director over another, and that it was not based on any theoretically established criteria. This lack of theory within auteur criticism has been recognized from nearly the time auteur criticism started. André Bazin, for example, complained that despite the fact "that our finest writers on *Cahiers* have been practicing it [auteur criticism] for three or four years [they] have yet to produce the main corpus of its theory."¹ It may not be surprising then that many of the new books in film theory pay little, if any, attention to auteur theory.²

One of the more influential intellectual currents which has contributed to the criticism and rejection of auteur theory is structuralism, and following it poststructuralism. Both structuralists and poststructuralists reject one of the implicit (and often explicit) assumptions of auteur theory: that is, the belief that the author is the unifying, creative source for the meaning and value of a unified work of art, whether that work be a film, a novel, etc. Michel Foucault expresses this sentiment well in his essay "What is an Author?": "The word *work* and the unity that it designates are probably as problematic as the status of the author's individuality."³ In echoing Nietzsche's announcement of the

¹ André Bazin, "On the politique des auteurs," in *Cahiers du Cinéma: The 1950's*, edited by Jim Hillier (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 257.

² To give an illustrative example, the first edition of *Movies and Methods*, a widely used book in film theory courses, there is a section on auteur theory; in the second edition (1985) this section is dropped.

³ Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 104.

death of God, Foucault announces the death of Man as unified subject, or, in short, he announces the death of the author.

These criticisms, as well as others, have been widely and perhaps justifiably accepted today; however, it would nonetheless be premature to dismiss auteur theory out of hand. In fact, in the essay which is widely recognized to be the one which initiated auteur criticism, François Truffaut's 1954 essay for *Cahiers du Cinéma*, "A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema," Truffaut makes a claim that goes to the heart of one of the primary concerns of poststructuralism. In this essay, Truffaut criticizes what he refers to as the "Tradition of Quality." The tradition of quality, according to Truffaut, considers the value of a film to be based upon the screenplay. A film is therefore nothing more than the visual transcription of a written work. This is not to say that a good film should not be an adaptation of a written work. Truffaut is perfectly content to have a film version of a novel, for instance; however, for such a film to be a good film an important requirement must be met: "I consider an adaptation of value only when written by a man of the cinema."⁴ An auteur's film is therefore one which was written and directed by a "man of the cinema," and this is to be contrasted, for Truffaut, with the scenarist's film, whereby "when they [the scenarist] hand in their scenario, the film is done; the *metteur-en-scene*...is the gentleman who adds the pictures to it and it's true, alas!"⁵

Implicit within Truffaut's critique of the scenarist's film is the claim that the relationship between a narrative of word and a narrative of image is not one of simple correspondence, whereby a director need simply to film what is written. Cinema has its own visual logic, syntax, and method which is not the same as it is for writing. For this reason a film, even if it is an adaptation of a written work, will be best if done by a man of cinema. This was not what was being done, according to Truffaut, and the unfortunate tendency he saw in French cinema was that it was dominated by *metteurs-en-scene*.

The underlying basis for Truffaut's critique of French cinema, i.e., the implicit recognition of the non-correspondence between word and image, becomes, by the time of

⁴ François Truffaut, "A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema," in *Movies and Methods*, first edition, edited by Bill Nichols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 229.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

poststructuralist theory, an explicit theme. Michel Foucault, for example, argues in *The Order of Things* that

the relation of language to painting [and by extension cinema] is an infinite relation. It is not that words are imperfect, or that, when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to the other's terms: it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. And it is in vain that we attempt to show, by the use of images, metaphors, or similes, what we are saying.⁶

Gilles Deleuze will also stress the point that images and words cannot be reduced to each other's terms, and this will remain a theme throughout much of his work. The point for Deleuze and Foucault is not that words and images cannot be related to one another. Clearly they can, and are. The point is rather that this relationship is not one of simple transparency, wherein the relationship is a given. If it were then it would be the case that once the scenarist had written the screenplay, the film would for all intents and purposes be done, ready for the *metteur-en-scene*. Instead, the relationship between word and image has to be created or constituted, and it is precisely at this point, when they attempt to explain the manner in which these relationships are constituted, that the relevance of poststructuralism to auteur theory becomes evident.

The poststructuralists, however, are not simply repeating Truffaut's insistence that it is the director (the "man of cinema") who is to establish the relationship between a written narrative and its visual presentation. The reason for this is that, as noted previously, they reject Truffaut's belief in a unified subject that functions as the sole source of creative output. This rejection stems from the poststructuralists' more general critique and rejection of all metaphysics. In other words, part of the poststructuralist project entails a critique of many long-cherished metaphysical assumptions. For example, many of the poststructuralist analyses attempt to undermine the belief in metaphysical unities, such as Being, God, and the Subject or Cogito. Insofar as auteur theory presupposes a unified, creative subject, it too will fall prey to the poststructuralist's critique.

⁶ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. 9.

In the wake of the poststructuralist critique of metaphysics, however, one is left with the problem of accounting for the relationship between image and word (although this is certainly not the only problem which needs to be accounted for), and it is this problem which has been one of the primary concerns of poststructuralists. It is nevertheless an intractable problem. On the one hand, Foucault and others have tried to avoid a solution which would reify the metaphysical unity of the subject. Foucault saw Hermeneutics as one attempted solution which did not avoid subjectivism, and as such it fails to account for other factors - e.g., economic, unconscious, etc. In much the same way, therefore, a poststructuralist would attempt to avoid an auteur theory which places the value of a film solely on the shoulders of the director as creative source (i.e., subject). This is the form of auteur theory which was to be formulated by Andrew Sarris, Sarris himself clearly following in the footsteps of Truffaut. On the other hand, poststructuralists have also tried to avoid the type of structuralism which posits transcendent, timeless, and objective metaphysical rules. Such a position does not adequately account for how subjects come to understand and apply these rules, and it also ignores the dynamics of historical change. In much the same way, a poststructuralist auteur theory would try to avoid the auteur-structuralism as set forth by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith. In this theory, Nowell-Smith has argued that auteur theory should not concern itself with the subject as creative source of a film's unity; rather, the auteur is simply a set of structural relations and patterns as found in the body of a director's work. Thus for Nowell-Smith, "The purpose of criticism becomes therefore to uncover behind the superficial contrast of subject and treatment a structural hard core of basic and often recondite motifs."⁷ Peter Wollen will take issue with Nowell-Smith's claim that one can find a "core of basic and often recondite motifs" within the work of a director, and will argue instead that the "great directors must be defined in terms of shifting relations in their singularity as well as their uniformity."⁸ Despite this attempt to account for the historical change and variation of a director's work, Wollen will continue to argue for a structural uniformity which transcends the

⁷ Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *Visconti* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1968), p. 10.

⁸ Peter Wollen, *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), pp. 102-4.

director as subject; and insofar as Wollen calls for a transcendent structural unity, the poststructuralist's critique of metaphysics will come to bear on this position as well.

If auteur theory is to be reconsidered from a poststructuralist perspective, therefore, the problem to be resolved is how we are to account for the constitution of the relationship between word and image without recourse to either of the two aforementioned alternatives. This problem has received much attention from both Foucault and Deleuze. The writer Deleuze will most often cite as he confronts this issue is the famous linguist Louis Hjelmslev, and in particular Hjelmslev's notion of the sign-function. In sketching out how Deleuze uses Hjelmslev's idea of the sign-function to resolve the problem of word and image, we will lay the foundation for an understanding of the director-function - i.e., an understanding of director or auteur which accounts for the constitution of the relationship between word and image without reducing this relationship to a dependency upon either the creativity of a subject or the objectivity of transcendent structures.

In Deleuze's analysis of the work of Foucault, he finds there an effort to account for the relationship between discursive and non-discursive practices, or, by extension, practices of words (e.g., writing screenplays, novels, etc.) and practices of images (e.g., directing films). As Deleuze understands Foucault's attempt to give such an accounting, he believes Hjelmslev's notion of the sign-function both clarifies and facilitates Foucault's project. In particular, Deleuze develops Hjelmslev's notion that the distinction and relationship between expression (i.e., discursive) and content (i.e., non-discursive) *is made possible by* what he refers to as the sign function: "We have here introduced *expression* and *content* as designations of the functions that contract the function in question, the sign function."⁹ Expression corresponds roughly to what Ferdinand de Saussure referred to as the signifier, and content corresponds to what he had called the signified. Hjelmslev, however, will break with Saussure's claim that there is an amorphous, unformed meaning or content which precedes the language which will mold and form it.¹⁰ Thoughts do not precede their expressions. For Hjelmslev the meaning or purport is always already formed by a

⁹ Louis Hjelmslev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), p. 48.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

language. For this reason Hjelmslev will further subdivide expression and content, a division which occurs by virtue of the sign function alone, into content-form/content-substance, and expression-form/expression-substance.¹¹ Thus, for example, the content-substance of the English expression “I don’t know,” is the meaning or purport which can be expressed in other languages - e.g., “jeg véd det ikke” (Danish), “je ne sais pas” (French). This content-substance, however, does not exist independently of a content-form, or as an amorphous, unformed meaning. The language itself, therefore, already presents a given content-substance with a particular form, a form which Hjelmslev points out can differ dramatically from one language to the next - i.e., grammatical structures or forms can vary greatly (e.g., the difference between French and English with respect to negation, “I do not know”, “Je ne sais pas”. On the other hand, the expression also has both a substance and a form. The expression-substance of the word “Berlin,” for example, is simply the word itself as expressed by different people in different languages; and the expression-form is the word “Berlin” as expressed with the phonetic habits and traits of a particular language - i.e., it is “Berlin” expressed with English or Spanish *accent* for example.

Deleuze finds this same pair of distinctions in Foucault’s work. In particular, Foucault’s distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices is understood by Deleuze to be made possible by a function analogous to Hjelmslev’s sign function. There is thus a discursive practice concerned with discipline, the substance of which is, among other things, the criminal/delinquent; and there is a form to these discursive practices, i.e., the expressed aims, purposes, and procedures for punishing the delinquent. The same holds for non-discursive practices: the substance for example would be the concrete structure of the prison where criminals and delinquents are held; and the form would be the manner in which such people are held, such as Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon design for the prison.¹²

¹¹ Ibid., p. 57.

¹² See Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 33.

The effort to give an adequate account of the function which gives rise to the distinction between discursive and non-discursive practices is therefore the hinge upon which Foucault's attempt to overcome the dilemma of subjectivism and structuralism turns. Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, as well as Deleuze, recognize the importance this has for Foucault's project. Dreyfus and Rabinow see Foucault's account, or his version of the sign-function, emerge with the notion *dispositif*:

The problem is: How to locate and understand a set of coherent practices which organize social reality when one has no recourse to a constituting subject (or a series of practitioners), to objective laws, or to the sort of rules Foucault once thought avoided these alternatives. The *dispositif* is an initial attempt on his part to name, or at least to point to the problem.¹³

Deleuze finds the same attempt in Foucault's work, but uses the word "diagram" rather than *dispositif* to express it. Furthermore, one of the key factors Deleuze feels enables the notion "diagram," or *dispositif*, to clarify the relationship between discursive and non-discursive practices, is that it is not to be confused or identified with discursive or non-discursive practices. This is precisely what Deleuze finds Foucault emphasizing. In thus elaborating upon Foucault's claim that the Panopticon "is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle restriction or friction...[and] detached from any specific use"¹⁴; Deleuze claims that "It [referring to the diagram, or what he will also call the abstract machine] is defined by its informal functions and matter in terms of form [and] makes no distinction between content and expression, a discursive formation and a non-discursive formation."¹⁵

The system of expression and content, or the system of discursive and non-discursive practices, should be understood then as products of the more primary function of the

¹³ Michel Foucault, p. 121. The reference Dreyfus and Rabinow give for this term is from a conversation published in *Power/Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 194. Foucault will also use the terms "apparatus" and "structure of heterogeneous elements" as equivalents to the term *dispositif*. These terms are equivalent to Deleuze's choice of the word "diagram."

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 205.

¹⁵ Foucault, p. 34.

diagram (or *dispositif*), and for this reason an understanding of the diagram will clarify the relationship between the two systems without presupposing the priority of one system over the other (as in subjectivism and structuralism). This is the new reading which Deleuze gives to Hjelmslev's claim that expression and content are functives of the sign function. The sign function is not to be confused with its functives; likewise, the diagram is not to be confused with the systems or strata it makes possible. As Deleuze puts it, "the diagram always represents the outside of the strata";¹⁶ or it is always outside identifiable discursive and non-discursive practices. The term diagram in Foucault's work therefore plays an important role, and its importance should not be underestimated; furthermore, the terms diagram (or diagrammatics) and abstract machine play an equally important role in Deleuze and Guattari's chief works. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, for example, they too situate their own term "abstract machine" in the context of their effort to understand, *à la* Foucault, the fundamental condition for the possibility of the relationship between discursive and non-discursive systems:

...the two forms [of content and expression] are in reciprocal presupposition, and they can be abstracted from each other only in a very relative way because they are two sides of a single assemblage. We must therefore arrive at something in the assemblage itself that is still more profound than those sides and can account for both of the forms in presupposition, forms of expression or regimes of signs (semiotic systems) and forms of content or regimes of bodies (physical systems). This is what we call the *abstract machine*, which constitutes and conjugates all of the assemblage's cutting edges of deterritorialization.¹⁷

The effort to give an adequate accounting of the relationship between word and image, discursive and non-discursive practices, is thus one which received considerable attention from two of the major figures in poststructuralist theory; and with the function of the abstract machine we are on territory closely akin to film theory. In particular, what

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 85.

¹⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 140-1.

Deleuze and Guattari will argue is one of the primary functions of the abstract machine is that it functions as a mediator which allows for the possibility of order out of chaos. In short, the abstract machine transforms chaos into the dual strata of form and content, expression and substance, discursive and non-discursive. It is not that chaos is a pre-existent stratum upon which an abstract machine works; rather, chaos is an immanent possibility of each strata, a possibility the abstract machine, when it is functioning well, staves off by mediating between this possible chaos and the actual strata. It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari claim that “Stratification is like the creation of the world from chaos, a continual, renewed creation.”¹⁸

An argument very similar to this was set forth by Italian film director Pier Paolo Pasolini. In fact, with Pasolini’s essay “Cinema of Poetry” we find an understanding of the role of the director which is analogous to Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of the abstract machine; or we find Pasolini developing the idea of what we might call the director-function.

Deleuze admired Pasolini’s theory of a “cinema of poetry,” whereby Deleuze takes this to mean that “Pasolini discovered how to go beyond the two elements of the traditional story, the objective, indirect story from the camera’s point of view and the subjective, direct story from the character’s point of view, [and Pasolini was able] to achieve the very special form of a ‘free indirect discourse’, of a ‘free, indirect subjective.’”¹⁹

Moreover, what allows for this “free” indirect discourse is that, unlike normal indirect discourse (i.e., someone enunciates another’s enunciation, such as “John told me I had better be careful”), when the camera communicates what another has said, it is not limited to the rules and grammar of spoken language. As Pasolini puts it:

The cinema author has no dictionary but infinite possibilities. He does not take his signs, his im-signs [i.e., image sign, *imsegni*, in contrast to linguistic signs, or *lin-segno*], from some drawer or from some bag, but from chaos, where an automatic or oniric communication is only found in the state of possibility, of shadow...the filmmaker...must first draw the im-sign from chaos, make it possible...he must then

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 502.

¹⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 148.

accomplish the very work of the writer, that is, enrich the purely morphological im-sign with his personal expression.²⁰

The filmmaker, therefore, has a dual function; or, to carry forward our earlier analysis of the sign-function as developed in Deleuze and Guattari's theory of the abstract machine, the director-function is realized or actualized in two distinct strata, or in what Deleuze will often speak of as a "double articulation."²¹ The director-function thus mediates between chaos and both the strata of the im-signs and the strata of personal expression, or the linguistic signs of the traditional written narrative. Because the director-function mediates between chaos and these two strata, the strata of the im-signs is not dependent upon the grammar and rules of language. The director-function allows for the possibility of the im-signs, but because they are drawn from the chaos, the narrative which is built upon them, i.e., the indirect discourse, is free from the rules and structures of language; or it is *free* indirect discourse.

This notion of the director-function has important implications for auteur theory. First, just as Hjelmslev argued that the sign-function was not to be identified with the expression and substance it brings into relationship with one another; and as Deleuze and Guattari argue that the abstract machine (or *dispositif* for Foucault) is not to be identified with the discursive and non-discursive practices it brings into relationship with one another; so too the director-function is not to be identified with the written narrative and the visual narrative that it brings into relationship with one another. Moreover, the director-function is also not to be identified with either the director as subject, nor with the director as transcendent, objective structure of relations; rather, the director-function, as with Deleuze's use and understanding of the sign-function, is what allows for the possibility of distinguishing between the subjective and the objective while it is not to be identified with either. As the mediation between chaos and the dual strata of expressions and substances, the abstract machine is the condition for the possibility of the continual

²⁰ Pier Paolo Pasolini, "The Cinema of Poetry," in *Movies and Methods*, p. 545.

²¹ In other words, just as the sign-function has a double articulation, i.e., it is articulated in expressions and substances, so too does the abstract machine have a similar double articulation; and it is important to note that Deleuze also recognized the double articulation Pasolini attributes to the director (See *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, pp. 72-6).

transformation and modification of the strata; and as the mediation between chaos and the subjective and objective the abstract machine also allows for the interplay and relationship between them, but as their condition of possibility the abstract machine is not to be confused with subject or object. It is in this way that the director-function, although it allows for the possibility of identifying subjective and objective elements in a director's work, is not to be confused with them.

As the function which transforms chaos into im-signs and linguistic signs, the director-function is the condition for the possibility of creating unique new strata, and of creating new relationships between im-signs and linguistic signs. It is in this sense that a poststructuralist reading of the director-function remains faithful to Truffaut's claim that it is the man of cinema who is to adapt a written work. From our perspective, then, it is the director-function which brings the written and the visual inter relationship with one another. Furthermore, as the transformation of chaos into identifiable strata, the director-function clearly operates by selecting against many of the infinite number of other possibilities. Pasolini was obviously aware of such a selection process, but in a parallel manner Foucault, in his essay "What is an Author," argues that there is an author function which serves to select against everyone being considered an author. An author is thus, for Foucault, "a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses."²² The result of this selection process, at least with respect to the director-function (our position is somewhat different from Foucault's on this point), is that there can be a unique, novel creation, and to this extent it is not inappropriate to say that the director-function is the condition for the possibility of novel creations. However, the director-function is not to be confused with the metaphysical notion of a unified, self-identical subject. The director-function is simply the condition for the transformation of chaos into order. The results of such transformations, the strata, can and do exhibit certain common traits and characteristics, traits which can become part of the structure and rules of filmmaking. D.W. Griffith's use of cross-cutting as a visual device to build suspense in the viewer perhaps started as one of a number of possible techniques Griffith could have

²² "What is an Author," p. 119.

employed. This technique has since become a standard and almost obligatory rule in filmmaking, even though the director-function could have transformed the chaos into another rule or technique. The work of an individual director, likewise, can similarly exhibit certain basic themes, techniques, and motifs; and to this extent the auteur-structuralists are not wrong to recognize such basic motifs in a director's work. Their mistake is to identify the director, or the director-function, solely with the structural pattern of motifs. The director-function allows for the possibility of settling into a pattern of basic themes, and such a tendency is perhaps inevitable and necessary, but the director-function is not to be identified with such structural patterns.

Another consequence of our theory of the director-function is that we can avoid some of the problems which persistently plagued traditional auteur theory. One such problem is that traditional auteur theory has been accused of failing to consider other factors besides the director which might have contributed to a film, and hence to understanding the value and worth of the film. Pauline Kael, to take a well-known example, accuses the auteur theorists of being so committed to understanding *Citizen Kane* solely in terms of Orson Welles that they are blinded to the important contributions of others such as Greg Toland and Herman Mankiewicz. From our point of view, because we argue that the director-function is not to be identified with a single person or subject, it is certainly possible that the director-function is actualized in a film by means of more than one person. This brings us to a second criticism often made against auteur theory, i.e., that auteur theory fails to consider external and/or historical factors and circumstances which contribute to the final product (the film). It is true that the director-function, for us, transforms chaos into an ordered, identifiable strata; however, this is not to say that pre-existing strata have no contributory effect upon what is put into a film. We already saw how previously developed techniques, such as Griffith's cross-cutting, can become an expected and perhaps unconsciously used procedure by other filmmakers, but we can be more general than this and discuss the expectations of the producers of a film. Because a film requires a significant expenditure to be completed, the producers and executives who set forth the money are thus going to have a vested interest in producing a film that will recover their investment, and then some of course. Producers will therefore attempt to gauge the

interests and likes of the paying moviegoers, and they will produce movies which cater to these interests. One such gauge is the historical record - i.e., what types of movies have done well in the past. The producers will then try to re-create such past successes (the tendency to create sequels is the most obvious of such efforts at re-creation). Federico Fellini recognized the significance of money to the final product on the screen when he said: "When there is no money left, the film will be finished."²³ More importantly, for a film that is too risky, or a film the producers feel will lose money, such movies are not likely to be there in the first place. It is therefore clear then that pre-existing strata (e.g., established habits, techniques, money requirements, etc.) do influence the form the final film takes. Our point has not been to deny this, rather it has been to argue that if an unprecedented relationship between narrative and image is established, if a new and creative film is produced, then this was made possible by the director-function. The director-function may indeed settle into the habits and expectations of the pre-existent strata, and such strata will in fact constitute part of the finished product; however, as the transformation of chaos into such strata, the director-function remains the condition for the possibility that the strata or film which is drawn from the chaos can be a unique, creative one, though it clearly does not guarantee that this possibility will be realized. The obstacles to creativity the expectations of pre-existent strata lay down are immense, and few be they who can successfully navigate between them.

In concluding we should note that not all creative works are necessarily good works. The director-function may transform the chaos into an unprecedented, truly creative film, but this by itself does not assure the aesthetic worth of the film. The fact, for example, that something has never been done before in just the way that a particular movie does it, does not mean that the way this particular film did what it did was good or successful. To hold such a view would be to repeat the aesthetic dogmatism typical of the worst forms of auteur theory. Setting forth the standards and criteria whereby one can judge whether a new and creative work is good or not would require another essay. Nevertheless, we have established the starting-point for such an analysis. In particular, if the director-function is the condition for the possibility of constituting an unprecedented order out of chaos, the

²³²³ Quoted by Deleuze in *Cinema 2*, p. 77.

good work would avoid cliché - i.e., it would not simply repeat tired and worn themes, even if arranged in novel fashion - and the good work would avoid chaos - i.e., it would establish enough order out of the chaos that this movie would say something, something new, and do so without slipping into the chaos of confusion and incomprehensibility. In a future essay we will explore further the manner in which our notion of the director-function can contribute to an aesthetic understanding and appreciation of film. Our purpose here has simply been to establish a place for auteur theory within poststructuralism, and to demonstrate, if only in outline form, the directions a poststructuralist auteur theory might be taken.