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Information and Entropy: The Disorganisation of Narrative in Cronenberg's *Videodrome*

In *Narration in the Fiction Film*, David Bordwell explores the fundamentals of organising information in narrative cinema. He describes an active viewer who thinks, and in watching a film draws on schemata derived from experience of the everyday world, and of other artworks, and films. On the basis of these schemata, "we make assumptions, erect expectations, and confirm or disconfirm hypotheses. Everything form recognising objects and understanding dialogue to comprehending the film's overall story utilises previous knowledge."[1] The spectator applies schemata to a film, and is encouraged to do so. Bordwell writes that in narrative cinema,

> the film offers structures of information—a narrative system and a stylistic system. The narrative film is so made as to encourage the spectator to execute story-constructing activities. The film presents cues, patterns, and gaps that shape the viewer's application of schemata and the testing of hypotheses.[2]

Film narrative, as Bordwell describes it, is both a system of organising information that is given ("syuzhet"), and the imaginary construct (or "fabula") the viewer creates in order to organise the information that is received. The fabula is constructed "on the basis of

prototype schemata (identifiable types of persons, actions, locales, etc.), template

schemata (principally the 'canonic' story), and procedural schemata (a search for

appropriate motivations and relations of causality, time and space)."[3] Bordwell states

that, "to understand a film's story is to grasp what happens and where, when, and why it

happens."[4]

In the cinema, the canonic story is the dominant template schema against which the

spectator tests information gained from the narrative, reorganising this information into a

fibula; Tzvetan Todorov describes this format as a causal "transformation" of a situation

though five stages:

1. a state of equilibrium at the outset;
2. a disruption of the equilibrium;
3. a recognition that there has been a disruption;
4. an attempt to repair the disruption;
5. a reinstatement of the initial equilibrium.[5]

It is the symmetry of this format that Raymond Bellour describes as the "principle of

classical film:" "the end must reply to the beginning; between one and the other

something must be set in order; the last scene frequently recalls the first and constitutes

its resolution."[6]

In this essay I argue that the science fiction films of David Cronenberg from

Shivers (1975) to *Dead Ringers* (1988) describe the evolution of a system from a state of

order to a state of chaos. Such systems might be societal, for example, Starliner Towers

in *Shivers* or the family in *The Brood* (1978). A system might be biological, such as the

human body in *The Fly* (1986). A system might be stylistic, such as the development of

mise-en-scène in *Dead Ringers* (1988) from an ordered state to a disordered one. Alternatively a system might be formal, such as the development of narrative from a state that corresponds to the organisation of "classical" narrative demonstrating spatial, temporal and causal order, to a state of confusion where the spectator is unable to engage in the same process of fabula construction due to the increasing chaos of the narrative. I explore the break down of narrative order in *Videodrome* (1982), and describe an asymmetrical narrative schema that can be applied to Cronenberg's other films.

Videodrome

It is the theme of information and the struggle to gain control of information that lies at the heart *Videodrome*. Central to my exploration of these themes are the ideas of Marshall McLuhan, Michel Serres and Jean Baudrillard. The combination of these minds, along with that of Cronenberg, creates a media conspiracy designed to control the minds and bodies of North America that shows the influence of William S. Burroughs's "Nova conspiracies."

Underpinning Burroughs's mythology is a power structure described as the "Algebra of Need." The dealer-junky construct stands in for all power relationships, with bureaucracies, parties and their agents seeking to control society through "junk," which is narcotics, the law or the media. As Eric Mottram states, "the junk world is the image of the real world as a structure of addictions and controls."[7] Those who seek to control society do so by imposing a false and parasitic control mechanism, and Burroughs's most famous agent, Dr. Benway, fulfils this role twice over as a prescriber of drugs and as a

media controller: "Benway is a manipulator and a co-ordinator of sign systems, an expert on all phases of interrogation, brainwashing and control."[8] Burroughs attacks this power structure in *Naked Lunch, The Soft Machine, The Ticket That Exploded,* and *Nova Express*, reacting against the torpor of addiction, habit and control.[9] The central aim of Burroughs's writing is to undermine the media's claim to objectivity and truth. The sign systems under the control of Benway must be exploded if we are to be free from junk. The cut-up and fold-in methods used by Burroughs are such an attempt to do violence to the power structure. The organisation of the text is broken down by the active rearrangement of many texts, rendering them ever more chaotic. Thus, as Robin Lydenberg points out, the reader becomes overwhelmed in a random text, the construction of which is largely governed by providence:

> Burroughs's experiments with narrative deny the reader all continuity, even that of a narrative persona, and the temporal dislocations of his style cannot be framed or explained by an omniscient narrator or by the scope of any single character's subjective perception.[10]

Burroughs does violence to the "Algebra of Need" by removing the ability of a text, as produced by an author designed for a specific purpose, to speak. Language, in the tradition of the Symbolists, speaks: "The key to symbolist perceptions is in yielding the permission to objects to resonate within their own time and space…. The symbolists freed themselves from visual connections into the visionary world of the iconic and the auditory."[11] Tony Tanner sees this as the link between Burroughs and McLuhan:

> McLuhan's first work about communications, *The Mechanical Bride,* is in effect a Burroughs-type exercise. He starts by alerting the reader to the intention of the media controllers. 'To get inside in order to manipulate, exploit, control is the object now.' To counter this, says McLuhan, 'it seemed fitting to devise a method

for reversing this process.' It would not be too much to call his method a cut-up technique. By extracting a large number of news items and advertisements from their contexts and making us really see how they work on us and influence our perceptions, McLuhan is to some extent freeing us from their thrall. This is also the aim of Burroughs.[12]

It is also a theme of Cronenberg to show us how the media controllers Spectacular Optical "get inside" Max Renn. The scientist at the heart of the conspiracy, Professor Brian O'Blivion, carries in his name the mark of Burroughs's Nova philosophy. The essence of this conspiracy to control is the power to feed information to the receiver. This idea of information is described by Michel Serres in *Le Parasite*.[13] Serres puts forward the view that the key to our culture, our modernity, is the parasitic relationship as described by Burroughs in *The Job*:

> Dr. Kurt Unruh von Steinplatz has put forward an interesting theory as to the origins of this word virus. He postulates that the word was a virus he calls a "biologic mutation" offering a change in its host which is then genetically conveyed....[14]

Cronenberg continues the natural course of Burroughs's "word begets image, image is virus" chain as Max Renn is subjected to this type of "biologic mutation." By transforming Max, Spectacular Optical proceeds with its conspiracy. For Serres the metaphor of information as parasite lies at the origin of all cultural institutions and the operation of bureaucracies, which establish their power by imposing structures of inclusion and exclusion. A central problem occurs in defining who is the host and who the guest? The binary opposition of host/parasite dissolves into indeterminacy, and the parasitic control of bureaucracy is founded upon the control of the information that allows us to define our position in relation to the medium.[15]

In *Videodrome* the descent into narrative disorganisation leaves the spectator
without a determined position. Is this reality? Or is this television? This effect is achieved
by withholding information from the viewer. Here we turn to a specific concept of
disorder in a statement of the second law of thermodynamics given by Tom Stonier.
Entropy describes the level of disorder within a system, and the second law of
thermodynamics states that entropy always increases. Thus the level of chaos within a
system also tends towards a maximum. Stonier argues that, like energy, information
should be considered a basic property of the universe, and should be defined
operationally as *the capacity to generate organisation*. Any system that exhibits
organisation contains information, and this is as true for the arrangement of molecules in
a crystal as it is for the pattern of letters printed on a page. Entropy is thus "a physical
measure of the absence of information."[16] Joseph Ford clarifies this statement, stating
that, "it is instructive to regard the source of chaos as missing information, for chaos is
what humans observe... when they lack the information to perceive the underlying
order."[17]

Scott Bukatman has identified an evolutionary schema to *Videodrome* based around
the spectator's increasingly indeterminate position that, "comes strikingly close to
moving through the four successive phases of the image characteristic of the era of
simulation that Baudrillard described."[18] The first phase of the image is as "reflection as a
basic reality." In the second phase, image "masks and perverts a basic reality." The third
phase sees the image "mask the absence of reality." Finally, in the fourth phase the image
"bears no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum."[19] In
Videodrome this four-phase structure represents an organisation of syuzhet information

that comes to restrict and disorganise the story information made available to the

spectator, rendering the process of fabula construction null and void.

The first phase (I) of *Videodrome* is composed of the following seven narrative

units:

A. Max's apartment: a video message from Bridey informs us of Max's meeting.
B. Max meets with the pornographers at the Classic Hotel where he is shown "Samurai Dreams."
C. Max and his partners watching "Samurai Dreams."
D. Max is shown "Videodrome" for the first time in Harlan's laboratory. Max asks Harlan to get more "Videodrome."
E. i. Backstage at the Rena King Show: Nicki and the Professor are introduced to us.
   ii. The Rena King Show. Max asks to meet Nicki later.
F. Max watches "Videodrome" again in Harlan's lab.
G. Max meets Nicki at the CRAM radio station.

This phase of the film has two main functions. Firstly, the viewer is trained to recognise

the marks of narration, exploiting his or her familiarity with the classical cinema. The

narrative at this point is highly self-conscious and communicative, making us very aware

of the process of narration. For example, I.A sets up I.B through Bridey's video message,

communicating causal, spatial, and temporal information about what is to come. We are

told what will happen (a meeting), where it will happen (the Classic Hotel), when it is to

happen (6:30 am). An establishing shot of the Classic Hotel demarcates these scenes and

prepares us for what will follow. Establishing shots are used repeatedly to make us aware

of a new space: for example, the Classic Hotel, Harlan's laboratory, and the radio station.

A standard classical device then links us from I.B to I.C with "Samurai Dreams"

providing a visual bridge between the spaces of the hotel and Civic TV. The Rena King

show introduces us to the Professor and Nicki Brand, and also initiates the causal chain of

the latter's relationship with Max: he asks to meet her later, and in I.G the narrative fulfils our expectations.

The syuzhet in this phase also trains the spectator in distinguishing between the diegetically "real" world and the media. The Rena King sequence provides us with the best example of this difference in the syuzhet organisation, dividing the scene into two parts. The first establishes the location of the television studio, preparing us for what is to come. The second part consists of the Rena King show itself, the narration bisecting this scene with the highly self-conscious use of the TV inter-title for the show and the voiceover from the announcer. Scenes I.A to I.F all show various people watching television, establishing a physical distance between spectator and image in two ways. In I.C Max and his partners look off-screen to the right as they watch "Samurai Dreams," the television set never appearing simultaneously on-screen with these viewers. Alternatively, in I.A the camera pulls back to reveal the distance between Max and the television, establishing a dividing space within the frame. It is also in this first phase that Cronenberg hints at the future development of *Videodrome*, as in I.F Harlan describes the "Videodrome" show as having "no plot or characters." It is through "Videodrome" that *Videodrome* is disorganised.

The perversion of *Videodrome*'s "reality" comes with the onset of Max's hallucinations. The syuzhet separation between "reality" and hallucination takes over the division between "real life" and television. The first of Max's hallucinations comes whilst he is having sex with Nicki Brand. Their bodies are shown first in Max's apartment and then in the "Videodrome" arena. As this first hallucination ends Cronenberg cuts to a close-up of Max's face, clearly implying, via this stylistic device,

that this is an internal fantasy or hallucination. The next scene follows logically: the darkness of Max's apartment is replaced with the light of the next day, and the scene proceeds according to the classical pattern by establishing location (the Civic TV building) and action (Max's meeting with Masha). Reality is separated from hallucination through space: Max and Nicki cannot be in the "Videodrome" arena when we know them to be at Max's apartment. Further to this, the hallucination is marked off from subsequent narrative action via the movement from one space and time (Max's apartment at night) to another (the Toronto skyline in the morning). In this pattern we are led from a real space (Max's apartment) to an imagined space (the "Videodrome" arena) to a real space (Civic TV). It is this type of movement between scenes that Cronenberg later undermines in the third phase of the narrative.

Alternatively, the narrative cues us to the hallucinations by making efforts to explain them, such as the video messages of Professor O'Blivion, or the reality of the action is denied, for example, when Max believes that he has hit Bridey but she tells him otherwise. The narrative acknowledges this perverted phase of the film when Professor O'Blivion informs Max that his reality is already "half video hallucination." This marks a disruption of Max's life as a boundary has been transgressed, with TV and "real life" beginning to merge on a physical level, whilst the syuzhet maintains a formal distance between these two states.

The pattern of this second phase (II) accelerates the loss of a focal point in the real world by shortening the number of scenes between hallucinations, as this plan shows:

A. Max hallucinates whilst having sex with Nicki.
B. Max meets with Masha at Civic TV and asks her to investigate "Videodrome."
C. Max and Nicki in Max's apartment after sex.

D. Max meets Masha at the restaurant to her report on "Videodrome."
E. Max goes to the Cathode Ray Mission, where he meets Bianca O'Blivion and asks to speak to the Professor.
F. Max hallucinates that he hits Bridey in his apartment. Whilst watching the videocassette he has received from Bianca O'Blivion he hallucinates that his television becomes flesh.
G. Max returns to the Cathode Ray Mission and confronts Bianca about what he has "witnessed."
H. Max returns to Civic TV and quizzes Harlan.
I. Max hallucinates that his gun disappears into his belly. Barry Convex contacts Max.
J. Max meets with Barry Convex at Spectacular Optical.

The number of scenes between hallucinations, from II.A to III.A, decreases by a standard ratio from four to two to one. From the moment the helmet is placed over Max's head at Spectacular Optical and he begins to hallucinate, it becomes impossible to distinguish between "reality," television and hallucination. As we enter the third phase (III) the syuzhet information is disorganised and insufficient to allow the spectator to construct the fabula:

A. Max hallucinates that he is in the "Videodrome" arena whipping the television set.
B. Max wakes up in his apartment to find Masha's battered body next to him. Harlan cannot see the body.
C. Max confronts Harlan at the laboratory. Barry Convex "programmes" Max with videotape.
D. Max assassinates his partners at Civic TV.
E. Max goes to the Cathode Ray Mission to kill Bianca O'Blivion, but is persuaded to assassinate Harlan and Convex.
F. Max kills Harlan at Spectacular Optical.
G. Max kills Barry Convex at the Spectacular Optical trade fair.
H. Max commits suicide aboard the derelict boat.

Although we can plan out this final phase, we find that it becomes merely a list of on-screen action as the strength of the causal connections is weakened. The supposed covert war between Spectacular Optical and the O'Blivions is never fully elaborated and only hinted at briefly, and Max is very easily turned from one to the other without any proper

justification. These events are further undermined by the fact that they may or may not take place.

The act of placing the helmet over Max's head clearly separates "reality" from hallucination. When Nicki appears and the location transfers to the "Videodrome" arena we know that we are witnessing one of Max's hallucinations: Max is whipping a television set that first shows an image of Nicki, and then Masha. The narrative then moves from this imagined space to what we have previously understood to be a real space: Max's apartment. Based upon the information gained from the previous phases of the film we believe the hallucination to be over. However, when Max looks in his bed he sees the battered body of Masha next to him. What has happened? Is the hallucination over or not? The previous pattern of isolating the hallucination within the "Videodrome" arena, thereby separating it from the "real" world, is replaced with the movement from a real space (Spectacular Optical) to an imagined space (the "Videodrome" arena) to a real space (Max's apartment) where the hallucination persists. Up to this point *Videodrome* has trained the spectator in determining at which points "real" and imagined begin and end. By moving to a new space at the close of the hallucination we have become accustomed to stylistic markers (establishing shots, dialogue) dividing up the syuzhet space and time. By breaking with this pattern Cronenberg disrupts our construction of fabula space and time. We can no longer tell if the film continues in a real space, and the duration of the hallucination is impossible to gauge. The syuzhet no longer demarcates the types of narrative action and the denotative clarity of film style is undermined, as the technical devices we have come to recognise are no longer trustworthy.

Once the helmet is placed over Max's head the most startling narrative

developments are under-motivated. No explanation is given for the change in television

image from Nicki to Masha. Nor do we discover what has happened to Masha. Has she

been killed or was she never there in the first place? Max's motivation in killing his

partners is suspect as we cannot be sure if he has been programmed by Barry Convex.

The sub-plot of television as a cathartic outlet for sex and violence is ignored as soon as it

is begun. Max's own insecurity with regard to such images is mentioned, hinting at some

psychological motivation, and then forgotten.

We witness the violence Cronenberg inflicts on the classical narrative format in the

killing of Barry Convex at the Spectacular Optical trade fair. Marcelin Pleynet has argued

that the film camera, as a bourgeois machine, is to be associated with the code of

perspective of Renaissance Humanism:

> The film camera is an ideological instrument in its own right, it expresses bourgeois
> ideology before expressing anything else… it produces a directly inherited code of
> perspective, built of the model of the scientific perspective of the Quattrocento.
> What needs to be shown is the meticulous way in which the construction of the
> camera is geared to 'rectify' any anomalies in perspective in order to reproduce in
> all its authority the visual code laid down by Renaissance Humanism.[20]

Convex, whose name implies a correction of perceptual anomalies (or from Pleynet's

ideological position, a distortion), is pitted against Max Renn, the physical embodiment

of Cronenberg's anti-narrative. In this opposition we find Burroughs's efforts to

undermine the "objectivity" and "truthfulness" of parasitic narratives, with Cronenberg's

cutting disorganising information about cause and effect, and narrative space and time, in

much the same way as Burroughs's cut-ups. It is an assault on the "stylistic clarity" of the

classical narrative cinema. Where the author attempts to work against the agents of the

"word virus," the filmmaker operates against an "image virus" transmitted by O'Blivion and Convex.

The transformation of narrative continues at pace until we reach a threshold beyond which we must re-orient our experience of representation in order to embrace something new. As Cronenberg states: "at a certain point chaos equals destruction."[21] For Max Renn the point of destruction comes with his apparent suicide, urged on by the image of Nicki Brand to "go on to the next phase" through the annihilation of the "old flesh." This brings about the annihilation of narrative, a de-struction of the text in the sense intended by Martin Heidegger: "to destroy the traditional content of ancient ontology until we arrive at those primordial experiences in which we achieved our first ways of determining the nature of being."[22] Only once we have passed through this point of de-struction will we be able to approach a new narrative structure, the "new flesh."

The Unformed World

It is important to acknowledge that the various systems that we encounter in Cronenberg's films are equivalent and inter-linked. Subject matter and style are both guided by the principle of ever-increasing chaos; thus, the narrative system of *Videodrome* and the body of Max Renn are simultaneously and symbiotically types of "biologic theatre." This allows us to recognise the four-phase structure in a variety of the films, albeit a structure that operates on various and particular levels. A schema for Cronenberg consists of the following stages:

1. a state of order;
2. a disruption of that order;
3. a process of evolution;

4. the emergence of something new into the environment.

This schema may apply to only some of the systems in any given film, with others proceeding according to more general schemas. As a narrative schema some similarities with Todorov's pattern are apparent, particularly in the first stages of establishing characters and locations, and in the phase of disruption. It is also possible to identify the point at which the disruption is recognised, and the attempts made to reinstate the initial order. However, these moments in the narrative cannot be separated from the process of evolution and show that all attempts to return to the initial state of order are futile.

The transformation of Starliner Towers as a societal system in *Shivers* follows this pattern, with the introduction of the parasites disrupting the order of the island. The parasites transform the residents of the Towers into sex-crazed zombies, who literally emerge from the underground car park to spread their disease around the world. *The Brood* does not feature the initial order of the Carveth family, or the point at which this system is disrupted. We are launched *in medias res* into the evolution of family relations into something monstrous. With Candy carrying this monstrosity in her genetic code the next generation will represent a family of monsters, a family of the new flesh. The Mantle Clinic in *Dead Ringers* is transformed from a highly ordered state, in every sense of the word "clinical," to utter chaos, mirroring the impact of science and sex upon Elliot and Beverly. Drugs, surgical instruments and other debris consume their sterile, geometric furniture.

In *The Fly* the four-phase evolution is enacted upon the body of the protagonist, Seth Brundle. In his first phase Brundle is a biologically ordered system: a healthy human being. Through a freak accident, a chaotic and random act, he becomes gene-spliced with

a fly. This is the moment of disruption that sets in motion the process of evolution. He emerges from the telepod a new being, which marks his second phase as Brundle-Fly, where he is more human than fly. As the process of transformation continues he becomes less and less human, literally shedding his human features until at the climax he bursts free of his skin to become Fly-Brundle. Now the fly part of his physiology dominates, although he retains human emotions. The process of evolution does not end here as through his attempts to reinstate a human structure Fly-Brundle becomes fused to the telepod, creating a final phase of evolutionary development: Fly-Brundle-Telepod. This fourth phase is further implied through Veronica's pregnancy, where the child will be more than man or fly, carrying within its DNA the genetic code of its mother: it will be born as the "new flesh."

Naked Lunch (1991), *Crash* (1996) and *eXistenZ* (1998) exist in the final phase, beginning where the text of *Videodrome* ends. These films are the "new flesh," a new entity on the evolutionary horizon. Where *Videodrome* works towards disrupting our experience of the cinema, these films offer no possibility for constructing a determined narrative. *Naked Lunch* begins with a brief introduction to Bill Lee before launching itself into the bizarre world of Interzone. Here nothing holds true, with talking insect-typewriters and Mugwumps appearing in supposedly "real" locations. Mixing elements of William Burroughs's own life with the themes and characters of his fiction generates this effect of confusion. For example, Burroughs is Bill Lee (his pseudonym for his first novel *Junky*) and he is not (Bill Lee is a character in *Naked Lunch*). Everything is at once real and imaginary. In viewing *Naked Lunch* as an extension of *Videodrome* we can also see Bill Lee as an extension of Max Renn and the physical similarity between James

Woods and Peter Weller is remarkable. In *Crash* the prophecies of Brian O'Blivion have been fulfilled. Man exists as a purely technological animal, a being that cannot be conceived without his modifications and additions. Whereas in *Videodrome* the television was to become the "retina of the mind's eye," in *Crash* we see the human body given over to the automobile or the camera. The phrase "camera-man" takes on new meaning when we see an individual wearing a steadicam frame.

eXistenZ, like *Videodrome*, addresses our ontological relationship to the media and alternative forms of realism, but there exists no point of reference against which to measure these different concepts. In the words of Ted Pikul: "I don't know what's going on. We're both stumbling around together in this unformed world, whose rules and objectives are largely unknown, seemingly indecipherable, or even possibly non-existent." It is not possible to assume a position towards the narrative, or at least the appearance of narrative, and say "this is reality," as every possible alternative is to be considered viable. Characters, such as Nersh, occupy several roles serving numerous interests; they are double agents, triple agents, game characters, "real people," workers in trout farms, or not, as the case may be. We believe events to have occurred but can assign no cause or effect to them due to their temporal displacement: when is the flesh-gun created? Cronenberg plays out the battle between realism, in the shape of the "Realists," and those who prefer the games, but whereas in the earlier film it is possible to identify Convex as being opposed to Renn, in *eXistenZ* we cannot say who is a Realist when there may not be a real.

As in *Videodrome* the absence of pertinent narrative information is also evident on many occasions throughout Cronenberg's career. For example, in *Rabid* a scene

explaining the presence of Rose's penile barb was removed at the editing stage, leaving

the spectator with no causal connection between Rose's first appearance as biologically

ordered system and her evolution into a rabid, vampire-like zombie. Michael Grant has

further observed that in *Dead Ringers*,

> certain crucial moments seem to have minimal motivation, a feature that becomes
> more marked as the film progresses. Elliot's desire to synchronise himself with
> Beverly on the matter of their drug taking; his collapse and disintegration which
> Beverly discovers on his return to the clinic; his submission to Beverly at the end;
> and Beverly's failure to speak to Claire, are all without a clear explanation in the
> sense one would look for in Hollywood narrative film of the classic type.[23]

In *Crash* the motivation behind James and Catherine Ballard's sexual promiscuity is

never identified. Nor do we learn why James becomes involved with Helen Rimmington

or Vaughan, or the nature of Vaughan's plan. *Crash* is specifically denied a closure; with

James Ballard assuming the role of Vaughan the cult of the crash continues. Climaxes are

denied throughout the film with sex being interrupted or never brought to orgasm.

Conclusion

We see in the films of David Cronenberg a type of scientific exploration of the future of

our world as described by J. G. Ballard:

> [T]he writer knows nothing any longer. He has no moral stance. He offers the
> reader the contents of his own head, a set of options and imaginative alternatives.
> His is the role of the scientist, whether on safari or in his laboratory, faced with an
> unknown terrain or subject. All he can do is devise various hypotheses and test
> them against the facts.[24]

However, in disrupting the presentation of narrative information as syuzhet and in

rendering once-reliable stylistic markers untrustworthy, in *Videodrome* Cronenberg

undermines the processes of applying schemata and testing hypotheses that underwrite

the spectator's construction of the fabula in the classical cinema, and if we are to engage

in the testing of the emergent world in Cronenberg's films these classical narrative

schemata must be discarded. We must become accustomed to a "new flesh" of the

cinema, and like Max Renn go on to the next phase in order to find a new way of

perceiving and experiencing images.

Notes

1. David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (London: Methuen, 1985), 32.
2. Ibid., 33.
3. Ibid., 49.
4. Ibid., 34.
5. Tzvetan Todorov, "The Two Principles of Narrative" (*Diacritics* 1.1, 1971), 39.
6. Raymond Bellour, 'Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversioin,' trans. Nancy Huston, in Marshall Deutelbaum and Leland Poague, eds., *A Hitchcock Reader* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1986), 311.
7. Eric Mottram, *William Burroughs: The Algebra of Need* (London: Marion Boyars, 1977), 34.
8. William S. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch* (London: Flamingo, [1959] 1992), 31.
9. William S. Burroughs, *The Soft Machine* (New York: Grove Press, [1961] 1966); William S. Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded* (New York: Grove Press, [1962] 1967); William S. Burroughs, *Nova Express* (New York: Grove Press, [1964] 1992).
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11. Marshall McLuhan, "Notes on Burroughs" (*The Nation* 199, 1964), 517-519.
12. Tony Tanner, *City of Words* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1971), 441.
13. Michel Serres, *Le Parasite*, trans. Lawrence R. Scher (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).
14. William S. Burroughs, *The Job* (New York: Penguin Books, [1970] 1989), 13.
15. Lydenberg, 127; Serres, 23.
16. Tom Stonier, *Information and Meaning: An Evolutionary Perspective* (New York: Springer, 1997), 183.
17. Ford, 351.
18. Scott Bukatman, *Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Post-Modern Science Fiction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 97.
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20. Quoted in Jean-Louis Comolli, "Technique and Ideology: Camera, Perspective, Depth of Field," in Bill Nichols, ed., *Movies and Methods, Volume 2* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 43.
21. Quoted in Chris Rodley, ed., *Cronenberg on Cronenberg* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), 29.
22. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 44.

23. Michael Grant, <i>Dead Ringers</i> (Trowbridge: Flicks Books, 1997), 43.
24. J. G. Ballard, <i>Crash</i> (London: Vintage [1975] 1995), 5.