6-29-2016

Bringing out the Meaning: Deacy, Nolan, Scorsese, and what films 'mean'

Robert Ellis

University of Oxford, rob.ellis@cableinet.co.uk

Bringing out the Meaning: Deacy, Nolan, Scorsese, and what films 'mean'

Abstract

In this paper I continue a discussion implicit within the pages of a recent book, Flickering Images, and (1) examine some of the ways in which theologically oriented enquirers search for meaning in film, (2) indicate some principle areas of disagreement, and (3) then illustrate some of the interpretive consequences by reference to one particular film. In my introductory article in *Flickering Images* I refer to some trends in film studies, including auteur theory and star studies, suggest particular ways in which theological meaning might be said to be present within film, and also discuss three ways of 'reading' film as identified in the literature by Oswalt and Martin – theological, mythological and ideological criticism.

In this paper I continue a discussion implicit within the pages of a recent book, Flickering Images,[1] and (1) examine some of the ways in which theologically oriented enquirers search for meaning in film, (2) indicate some principle areas of disagreement, and (3) then illustrate some of the interpretive consequences by reference to one particular film. In my introductory article in *Flickering Images* I refer to some trends in film studies, including auteur theory and star studies, suggest particular ways in which theological meaning might be said to be present within film, and also discuss three ways of 'reading' film as identified in the literature by Oswalt and Martin – theological, mythological and ideological criticism.

As in most books concerned with theology and film, nearly everything in *Flickering Images* comes under the first of those three headings (theological criticism), as does my own piece there on the film *Sliding Doors*. However, in the chapter following my overview, Steve Nolan argues that this is exactly the wrong approach, and that an approach to film more congruent with 'secular' film studies would be more 'ideological' in manner. A further, and valuable, aspect of Nolan's critique is that the predominant theological approach tends to use tools borrowed and adapted from textual criticism (treating films as texts) rather than in using more clearly 'visual' or cinematic tools. In this paper I explore a theological and an ideological approach to film, relating them to auteur and star studies, and testing them on one movie, *Bringing out the Dead*.

Nearly all mainline theological film criticism tends to be dialogical and to expect film to raise theological issues (usually implicitly). Underlying it there appears to be a version of the correlational method often associated with Paul Tillich. The film raises a question which theology tries to answer or, in what is sometimes called a revised correlational method, upon which theology enters into a more or less open dialogue.[2]

However, even within such a correlational method the scope for differences of emphasis and approach is considerable. Some theological readings of film appear facile and unconvincing, and the attempt to see saviour figures in all sorts of unlikely places sometimes goes to ridiculous lengths. A common approach is to raise questions about themes, redemption for example, and then to map the film's hints and suggestions against Christian understandings of the concept. This may illumine the latter or point up tensions within it. It may expose what are seen to be flaws within the film's account and trace their origins to imperfect renditions of Christian understandings. Most often we may see how commonly held 'societal' understandings of redemption (or whatever theme is in view) might be critiqued by a richer Christian understanding with the film being taken to express widely held and groped for aspirations that nevertheless find a problematic expression or resolution.[3]

Common to most of these theological readings of texts is a concentration on thematic parallels, on character, or more usually plot, raising the questions to which theology offers an answer. Elsewhere I have argued that the 'meaning' offered by film emerges somewhat accidentally from it. Christian viewers of film, especially those completely unfamiliar with developments in hermeneutics, will perhaps assume that what a film 'means' is a function of the intent of the scriptwriter or director. The closest we get to this in film studies is probably in terms of what is commonly called auteur theory. Auteur theory, which arises from French film criticism, sees the director as the film's 'author' and seeks to discern his/her creative hand through a film or series of films. Thus themes common to a number of films, or prominent in one, are examined and their development traced. Such an approach views the director as a creative talent wielding considerable power, the master or mistress of the process of film-production. The film is his/her 'text'.[4]

However Auteur theory founders on the complexity of the film production process, directors work within all sorts of pressures, and often a film's final form is not that preferred by the director. In the cult sci-fi film *Blade Runner*, for instance, a key line of dialogue was inserted into the final edit against the wishes of the director, and only later was the 'director's cut' issued with the ending he favoured.[5] Such stories are legion and when one considers the complexity of the process of film production it would seem foolish to ascribe too much power to the director.

Whereas a novel is usually the work of one hand (though an editor may contribute to the shaping process), a film is the work of many hands. The situation is even more complicated that the theatre. Not just writer(s), actors, directors, various technicians involved in lighting and stage management, etc. – but also editors, cameramen, continuity people and producers, and increasingly special effects technicians are involved in the process of production. Decisions about a film's release form are made in the 'politics of production' as various stakeholders compete and cooperate within the constraints of time and money. Often audience focus groups are shown different versions of the film to test commercial responses to storylines and endings. Sometimes the producer overrules everyone, even the director, and is sometimes in turn overruled by those holding the purse strings more directly. Reflecting on this process Richard Maltby speaks of Hollywood's 'commercial aesthetic' as the criterion that governs the production of films.[6] So, when one considers the complexity of filmmaking, whose 'text' is the film? With how many voices does it speak? Will it, can it do more than utter fragments of sense?

Some directors do seem to have the clout, the ego, and the sheer determination to get their way a great deal of the time. If, like me, you sit through a film's final credits in the cinema, usually waiting to see where the film's exotic-looking locations turn out to be, the credits can be revealing. When Martin Scorsese

directs a film, his name will regularly appear elsewhere on the credits too – as writer or co-writer, as producer or co-producer, and so on. His collaborators will also re-appear in several films indicating partnerships judged to be creatively fruitful. James Cameron, Stanley Kubrick and Steven Spielberg also typically have multiple credits.[7] Perhaps these are the great auteurs of our age? Certainly they seem to exercise a greater control over film production and this may suggest to us that sometimes it is proper to speak of a film as a text with an author – if only in a qualified sense.

Certainly apart from these directors, and maybe even also within their work, a realization of the complexity of films and the many hands involved in film production leads me to another conclusion regarding a film's 'message' – however we go on to construe that. How does a message emerge from this apparently chaotic process? Accidentally, it would seem, for no one person is wholly responsible for the film's thematic cohesion. Often such a 'message' as is discerned will express (accidentally or deliberately) some commonly held or widely assumed sort of truth. The collaborative venture of filmmaking often gives up a shared and possibly 'unmeant' meaning! Meaning happens. It emerges in fragments. It is, we might say, unscientific and unsystematized. No wonder that theological readings of film frequently find layers of ambiguity, hints and suggestions that sometimes lead us off in different and sometimes apparently contradictory directions.

Christopher Deacy's *Screen Christologies* is a fine example of a theological approach to film, correlating question and answer in a dialogue that illumines both the viewers' appreciation of film and the theologian's appreciation of her ideas. Deacy examines prevailing ideas of redemption and vets those apparently nominated in film as 'redeemers.' Drawing upon the wisdom literature, understood as a realistic but affirming engagement with life's challenges, Deacy rejects all escapist pictures of redemption offered in mainline Hollywood film and turns to the genre film noir for a fruitful dialogue. Film noir, he says, has special resonances with Christian themes of alienation and estrangement. 'Both Ecclesiastes and film noir thus bear witness to the fact that, in the final analysis, any effort a human makes "seems to make no difference" and to have no bearing on our eventual destiny.'[8] Such films are marked by a sense of disaffection, disorder, despair, and moral ambiguity; meaningful human endeavour, and redemption seem impossible. In pursuing this dialogue, he uses the language of correlation; explicitly speaking of a 'tenable and legitimate correlation between the characteristically alienated and fatalistic landscape of such films and many of the insights and precepts pertaining to the concept of redemption as adduced within the Christian tradition.'[9]

When Deacy considers the redeemers in film, he discounts what he considers to be the prevailing 'Apollinarian' Christologies of many filmic Saviours: Indiana Jones in Raiders of the Lost Ark, the anonymous hero in Pale Rider, the

character of Jesus in *The Greatest Story Ever Told.* These 'Christ-figures' are too aloof, too super-human. Instead he prefers a lower Christology with whom the viewers can more easily identify. Here he is, I suppose, reflecting a contemporary preference for flawed heroes – for George Bests and Princess Dianas. Film noir, he argues, functions in this fruitful way because of the way it mirrors our own experience of life: one in which we are hemmed in with limited capacity for creative expression. The feelings and predicaments of the heroes of film noir are apprehended by us as our own,[10] and while their redemptive activity on the screen is limited often to a relatively small circle, Deacy suggests that the cinema event needs to be thought of in bigger terms – as an event encompassing its audience. The film then may not depict religious themes explicitly or 'be religious' in any obvious way – rather the film has the capacity to become a religious experience for those who watch it.[11] Travis Bickle, the Taxi Driver, does not redeem everyone else in the film – but he may transform all those in the cinema who are open to transformation (who have ears to hear?). Says Deacy:

> 'Scorsese's noir protagonists may be seen to be performing a religious function not because they purport to emulate the religious life, ideals and teaching of Jesus Christ, but because, as authentically human individuals who are engaged in an innately human struggle, such figures may be seen to bear witness to the inextricably human nature and orientation of Christ's redemptive work.'[12]

The correlational method is employed here with some subtly and Deacy is not as vulnerable as some to the charge that theological parallels are too easily found, or

that redeemers are too quickly identified. He does draw quite heavily on Scorsese's own interpretation of his work, showing, perhaps, a preference for the auteur approach. By implication he suggests that, away from the canon of work of this particular film maker, in the ordinary Hollywood run of things, redemption is portrayed too much as an escape from reality rather than a living fully within it, with all its tensions and difficulties. As an approach to 'mission', Deacy's argument suggests that theological realism will meet the world as it 'really is', and suggests a depiction of Christ as a fully human figure with whom we can identify and connect. Christ figures that resonate are likely to be found not in Superman but in more ordinary loci. Such figures may yet help some people to access the gospel's message of redemption.

Deacy's approach, subtle though it is, has come under fire from Steve Nolan. In his '*Understanding Films: Reading in the Gaps*,'[13] he takes Deacy to task for being too disconnected from mainline film studies. In this fault, Nolan argues, Deacy reflects almost all theological criticism of film, which tends to use methods borrowed from theological disciplines and extrapolated from the reading of texts, rather than connecting with the prevailing approaches of film studies departments that tend to work from politically and psychoanalytically informed ideological premises. Nolan complains that theological criticism is thus subject to a self-imposed futility of subjectivism, rather than being grounded in the Lacanian

scientific methods of film studies. Certainly Nolan may have a case that theologians doing film criticism cannot really complain about the lack of notice taken of them by others in film studies if their methods seem entirely different and their concerns similarly disconnected. Whether Nolan is right to suggest that theological readings of film are more subjective than those readings offered by those underwritten by politico-psychoanalytic accounts is perhaps a moot point. But another of Nolan's implied criticisms is surely a little unfair: that theological engagement with film, like their mainline film studies counterparts, should concern itself not with the film's production but with its consumption, not with what the film means so much as what the audience makes of it. After all, in considering Scorsese's films in *Screen Christologies*, Deacy ends each section by considering 'the role of the film audience.'

Nolan's approach to theological film criticism works from just the same base as the ones he observes in mainline studies, drawing on the work of Lacan, Baudry, Oudart, Heath and others. One of the key ideas he examines is that of 'suture', arising from the use of the camera to create suspense or anxiety in the viewer. Typically the viewer sees a scene that they cannot immediately make sense of, then the next scene indicates that the viewer is looking through the eyes of a character in the film, often the main one. In this way the suspense or anxiety is resolved and the viewer is sutured into the narrative in what Heath calls 'the

effecting of the join of the subject in structures of meaning.'[14] This suturing process according to Heath, and Nolan after him, shows a lack in the spectator's sense of identity which is made good by identifying with the film's character(s).

In contrast to Deacy, Nolan is offering a generalised theory of how all films affect all viewers. This is based, not on quasi-literary functions such as narrative or character, but on cinematic and visual functions embedded in the way a film is shot. He suggests that this approach has three planks: (1) the first is a recognition of the place of the screen character-actor-star in the process of identification by the viewer; (2) then there is the way in which the viewer colludes in being 'sutured into' the film; (3) finally that this reality into which they now insert themselves is ideologically laden. To illustrate his point Nolan goes on to discuss a number of films which he claims fall into the post-Cold War 'terrorist hijack' sub-genre. These films tend to have strong lead characters, make clear statements about 'western' (specifically American) values, and often feature a 'religious' other (that is, Muslim).

In order to do this Nolan needs a brief excursion into Star Studies. This approach to film studies is, alongside auteur theory, another that I summarize in my article 'Movies and meaning'. It considers the nature and appeal of star performers, and why particular types of star, and particular individual stars, appeal to fans – and is perhaps particularly pertinent in the increasingly celebrity-oriented culture which

we inhabit. The history of Hollywood has in certain respects been the history of stars, and an analysis of their changing relationship to audiences, and indeed the changing audience and what it requires in its stars, may be illuminating. Star studies can lead off in interesting directions. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis, Mel Gibson and Harrison Ford tend to play (as stars have always done) similar sorts of roles, and each present their audiences with different types and images of masculinity with which to identify or reject. The persona of a star comprises both on-screen and off-screen elements and they merge in complex ways. 'Stars articulate what it is to be a human being in contemporary society; that is, they express the particular notion we hold of the person, of the 'individual' … they articulate both the promise and the difficulty that the notion of individuality presents for all of us who live by it.'[15] Richard Dyer suggests that they represent less and less ideal ways of being human and more and more typical ways of being human. I end my summary of it in that article with these words – 'But star studies becomes speculative and unconvincing when it pushes its categories of interpretation (often drawn from semiotics and psychoanalytic-derived theories) too far' – and one sometimes wonder whether the 'scientific methods' of film studies always convince anyone apart from its own participants. Sometimes it would appear to be based as much upon faith-principles as any theological work.

Nolan turns to consider *Die Hard* (1988) a huge box office hit in which John McClane (Bruce Willis) is the flawed hero with the rocky marriage who travels to LA to see his wife at a Christmas party. While the party begins in a city skyscraper, terrorists strike. McClane affects a violent and improbable act of salvation, and gets his wife back. More to Nolan's point, one of those remarkable dialogues with the terrorist leader Bruce Willis (aka John McClane) narrates the very process of identification that he exemplifies suggesting that he has modelled his own identity in some way on Roy Rogers.

But what all of these films in this new sub-genre do, claims Nolan, is present a picture of the world-as-we-know it as under a particular kind of threat from an 'other.' He documents how Hollywood moved from the demonizing of communism to the demonizing of Islam, though it is less clear whether he believes Hollywood is reflecting someone else's ideology or generating its own ideology. Surely it must be the former? – Hollywood manifesting the ideology of the capitalist western industrial complex. Nolan highlights the 1973 oil crisis, the Iranian revolution of 1978-79, and then more recent terrorist attacks linked to Islamic groups – culminating in the 9/11 attacks. He quotes Edward Said saying that the main purpose of such movies is 'to first demonize and dehumanize Muslims in order; and second, to show an intrepid western, usually American, hero killing them off.'[16] 'What matters,' argues Nolan, 'is that … film narrativizes the perceived threat of

the other and so reinforces the ideology of Hollywood realism… Holding the values of American culture at its narrative centre, spectators of post-Cold War "terrorist hijack" films are able to identify with an ordinary guy hero and be "stitched" into a narrative that is structured around protecting the American way of life against the perceived threat of the Muslim other.'[17]

Such theories of film that Nolan employs do have certain advantages. Grounded in the way such artifacts are studied in the wider academy, they do have more genuinely cinematic – or at least visual – conceptualities. Nolan ends with the suggestion that theological reflection on film should be concerned with practice rather than with ideas, and there is something attractive about this too. However, it does seem speculative and to be trailing theories which may make perfect sense in some university departments, but less sense elsewhere. For instance, we might question the suggestion, implicit in Nolan's treatment, that everyone who watches Hollywood films is a passive viewer, a kind of cinematic sponge soaking up ideologies which they are spoonfed. Can all cinema goers - apart from Nolan - be reduced to such cultural dupes so easily?

In order to bring some of the issues presented by Deacy and Nolan, and everyone else, into focus, I want to conclude by considering one particular film. I have chosen it because I believe that both Deacy and Nolan would hope to find it conducive to their particular approaches. It is the Martin Scorsese film *Bringing out*

the Dead. We have already seen that Deacy considers Scorsese's films to be helpful ways of exploring themes of redemption. For Nolan, Scorsese has succeeded in distancing himself far enough from the mainline Hollywood brands to represent an attempt to shake off Hollywood's ideologies. What might these two approaches, the one theological and more literary; the other ideological and more cinematic, make of this film?

Bringing out the Dead is the story of Frank Pierce, a New York paramedic. We follow Pierce through three night shifts on successive nights as he patrols the seediest of New York's streets. Pierce is exhausted, near the end of his capacity to continue emotionally and physically. The voice-over at the beginning tells us what an extraordinary feeling it is to save someone's life – in the words of the film's strap line 'saving a life is the ultimate rush'. It also how this has not happened for a while now. In the opening two chapters of the film on DVD, the process of suturing is clear, as the viewer is drawn into the narrative, seeing the first call through Pierce 's eyes; we also see clearly the desperate circumstances in which Pierce attempts to make a difference.[18]

Pierce is haunted by his failures, by those who he has not saved, and in particular, it slowly emerges, by a young woman, Rosa.

On the three nights three different partners accompany Pierce and they seem to represent three quite different ways of coping with the dreadful work they are summoned to do. Larry is workmanlike, dutiful, and laconic; Marcus is born again, cynical, and on the make; Walls is demented and violent, beating up those they are called to assist, all misguided adrenalin and misdirected energy. Meanwhile in his lonely life Pierce seeks forgiveness and connections. The very first incident they attend on the first night provides most of the threads which run through the remainder of the film: a family in which the elderly father suffers a heart attack, and the daughter seems also to be looking for a way of coping with what urban life does to ordinary people, and the various characters who run and are tended by the ludicrously overburdened Emergency Room at the local hospital. This is all familiar Scorsese and film noir territory: life with no room to maneuver where ordinary decent people struggle just to keep going but strain to make any impact.

Finally Pierce moves towards a resolution. He has viewed with increasing perplexity the fate of Mr Burke, that first heart attack victim, whom the doctors fight to keep alive, reviving him after many cardiac arrests. Frank imagines that he hears Burke wanting to be released, to be allowed to die, and in a rather odd scene Pierce goes behind the curtains around his bed, transfers the monitoring equipment to his own body so that the next arrest can pass without the alarm sounding and Burke can die before he reattaches the equipment, and the staff rush in too late.

Sometimes, success may not be survival, he seems to discover, but another kind of dignity.

Meanwhile, becoming closer to Burke's daughter Mary, Pierce also finds forgiveness. Going to tell Mary that her father has finally died (though not how), Pierce's imagination is once more active. This time it is Rosa who speaks to him from around Mary's door, pronouncing forgiveness in a playful kind of way. And at last Pierce is able to sleep soundly, resting on Mary's shoulder. Twice his imagination has made a leap of perception, at last he is at peace.[19]

Viewers do not have to look far in *Bringing out the Dead* for obvious religious themes. The cinema poster and the DVD box, with their cross shaped windows, already suggest to some more than an ambulance, and the theme of saving life is often expressed in theological language. There are allusions, may be, in the three day long descent into the hell of the streets, before resurrection to the possibility new life on the final morning. The Hollywood Jesus web site discussion shows how discussion is stimulated, with the most interesting contribution theologically being the comparison with C.S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce* – though there is also something solid about the response from the real-life paramedic. The script often uses language with a theological feel, as when Frank says 'after a while, I grew to understand that my role was less about saving lives than about bearing witness. I was a grief mop. It was enough that I simply turned up.'

And Frank's saving work is referred to God as Frank marvels upon it:

> 'Saving someone's life is like falling in love. The best drug in the world. For days, sometimes weeks afterwards, you walk the streets, making infinite whatever you see. Once, for a few weeks, I couldn't feel the earth - everything I touched became lighter. Horns played in my shoes. Flowers fell from my pockets. You wonder if you've become immortal, as if you've saved your own life as well. God has passed through you. Why deny it, that for a moment there - why deny that for a moment there, God was you?'

There is also the need for, and the finding of, forgiveness. Frank finds this in the end not in his striving to save life – to make amends and to justify himself by playing God – but in becoming more at ease with things beyond his control (God playing God?) and accepting forgiveness as a gift from another beyond himself. The forgiveness comes to him in the midst of the desperate film noir world he has inhabited, striven in, made the best of. This is the world of his working struggle. The brief glimpse of his flat is interestingly and tantalizingly pleasant with a view of the city quite different from that he gets from his cab – airy and spacious, green and full of bright sky.

Is Frank Pierce the kind of Christ-figure that Deacy might suggest to us? Is it possible that, while not redeeming all those in the film (though he has, incidentally, had a positive effect on lots of those he has encountered) his discovery of forgiveness might redeem those in the cinema open to this message? That a film not conspicuously religious might yet become religious for us? Perhaps it is. And I note in passing that the only explicit references to religious themes in this film –

directed by one raised a Catholic and written by Paul Schrader, a Protestant Christian – are amusing and slightly irritating!

But what might Steve Nolan say about *Bringing out the Dead*? He might go more easily on it than he does on *Die Hard*. It does not seem regular Hollywood fare. There is no alien other here – or is there? Perhaps if we apply Nolan's ideological reading to the film we might – surprisingly and awkwardly perhaps – come up with a rather uncomfortable challenge.

What ideologies might be presented by *Bringing out the Dead*? If there is an 'other' it may be the heartless system of American basic healthcare providing a desperate context within which Pierce works; or it may be the underworld inhabiting the streets where he works. Who cannot look at such a world, peopled by hopeless cases, and not feel both powerless and even sometimes a little guilty in their powerlessness? If this is so then it is surely possible that we might get 'sutured' into this film too. Maybe *Bringing out the Dead* invites us to identify with the exhausted Frank Pierce in seeking forgiveness because we cannot make this world a better place than it is. As such, we are presented with the rather discomforting possibility that what the film offers those who take a deep breath of relief at the end of the film and go back out into the real world is forgiveness for not changing that over which we feel we have no power. We are absolved. Hollywood forgives us and we do not need to lobby our politicians to change this world by other means.

We can 'be' Pierce seeking release, and also his partners – dutiful, manically religious, violently ranting – and we can be assured that all is well when we are finished.

Such a reading of the film is clearly not what Scorsese had in mind if the interview with him on the DVD extra is anything to go by. Neither is it what Joe Connolly, whose book and paramedic work the film takes as it basis, intends. But maybe, if it is possible for theological themes to emerge unannounced in movies, as unscientific fragments, as theological 'readers' have long assumed, maybe those same films might betray our other needs and anxieties. As Nolan suggests, this is still a theological reading but one which addresses practice, which roots out false absolution for synthetic guilt and directs us to political action. In the end, I suggest we should not have to choose between these two types of reading, but should work with the fragments unscientifically yielded by both to reflect upon the practice of faithful Christian living in our day.

---

[1] eds. Anthony J. Clarke and Paul S. Fiddes, *Flickering Images: Theology and Film in Dialogue* (Macon, Georgia: Smith & Helwys, 2005; and Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2005).

[2] See Lynch, *Understanding Theology and Popular Culture*, pp. 101ff.

[3] Sometimes, and perhaps this is when the dialogue is at its most interesting, there is an ambiguity about the voice of the film that is patient of various readings. This is so with one of the most widely discussed recent films, at least in popular theological discourse, *The Matrix*. There are striking correspondences with the Christian narrative – a number of reviewers spoke of it as a kind of Sci-Fi *Narnia*. (See the web discussion at http://www.facingthechallenge.org/matrix.htm (accessed 5 December 2006); almost immediately Internet reviewers were hailing the film as a

Christian allegory, though considered reflection (and two sequels) have muted this somewhat.) The Wachowski brothers appear to want to make their film as open as possible in meanings: a truly postmodern product that is available to a range of consumers from sci-fi fans to a variety of religious viewers! As one Internet reviewer remarks, 'for every part Christian allegory, there's equal parts Buddhism, Greek mythology, Alice in Wonderland and The Terminator—a contemplative stew lacking any purity of focus.' (http://www.pluggedinonline.com/movies/movies/a0000128.cfm, web site of *Plugged In Online*, accessed 11 December 2005.) Is the final shoot-out a departure from Christian allegory for the 'myth of redemptive violence' – the illusion that violence, as long as its perpetrated by the good side, can yet keep us safe and win the day? Or is it instead a particular interpretation and showing forth of the Christus Victor story of atonement? The Matrix proves both allusive and elusive.

[4] See my 'Movies and Meaning: An Introduction to Reading Films,' in eds. Anthony J. Clarke and Paul S. Fiddes, *Flickering Images: Theology and Film in Dialogue*, pp. 7-24.

[5] Richard Maltby, *Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 32 & 56 n. 52.

[6] Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction, pp. 27-31, et al.

[7] In a TV documentary about the late Stanley Kubrick we saw that he had an editing suite in his own home and would invite the editor there so that he could supervise the editing process. We were also given insights into the degree of control he that tried to exercise over writers. *The Last Movie: Stanley Kubrick and 'Eyes Wide Shut',* produced and directed by Paul Joyce, Lucida Productions for Channel Four Television, 1999.

[8] Christopher Deacy, *Screen Christologies* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2001), p. 61. Deacy here quotes R. B. Y. Scott, *The Way of Wisdom in the Old Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. 170.

[9] *Screen Christologies*, p. 35.

[10] *Screen Christologies*, p. 91.

[11] See Conrad Ostwalt, 'Religion, Film and Cultural Analysis', in eds. Ostwalt and Joel Martin, *Screening the Sacred: Religion, Myth and Ideology in Popular American Film* (Boulder Colorado & Oxford: Westview Press, 1995), p. 157.

[12] *Screen Christologies*, p. 113.

[13] In eds. Clarke and Fiddes, *Flickering Images*, pp. 25-48.

[14] Stephen Heath, 'Notes on Suture', in *Screen* 18/4 (Winter 197-78), pp. 48-76; this quotation is from p. 74, quoted in Nolan, 'Understanding Films,' p. 34.

[15] Richard Dyer, Heavenly Bodies (London: British Film Institute, 1987), p 8; quoted in Paul MacDonald, "Star Studies", in Approaches to Popular Film, p 83.

---

[16] Edward Said, Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World (London: Vantage, 1997), pp. xxvi-xxvii, quoted by Nolan, 'Understanding Films,' p. 41.

[17] Nolan, 'Understanding Films,' pp. 42f.

[18] Readers may find it helpful to view chapters 1 and 2 of the movie on DVD at this point.

[19] Chapters 28 and 29 may be helpfully viewed at this point.