

# **Interpretation and Analysis of Literature and Film: A Series of Essays**

## **Contents**

### **Film**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| Eraserhead         | 2  |
| A Clockwork Orange | 5  |
| The Shining        | 10 |

### **Literature**

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| A Country Doctor           | 18 |
| The Trial                  | 21 |
| Notes From the Underground | 25 |

### **Biography**

|                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| Franz Kafka     | 27 |
| David Lynch     | 28 |
| Stanley Kubrick | 29 |

### **Recommendations**

|            |    |
|------------|----|
| Literature | 30 |
| Film       | 31 |

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| <b>References</b> | <b>33</b> |
|-------------------|-----------|

## Eraserhead

David Lynch's 1977 debut feature-film, *Eraserhead* is a linear abstract, surrealist story set in a desolate industrial wasteland as Henry Spencer is left to take care of his deformed newborn, a sordid extension of himself. Starring Jack Nance, Charlotte Stewart, Jeanne Bates, Judith Anna Roberts, Laurel Near and Jack Fisk. The film operates by contrast, of relationships, fear and happiness, dream-like states, and reality. An oppressive ambience of wind, a hissing radiator, and restless cries of a baby, embodies the dreadfulness of an unwanted child, responsibility, and technology. The scenery is unwelcoming, claustrophobic and suffocating when the characters are crammed in small spaces, while other times, they seem impotent and insignificant in comparison to the commodious spaces surrounding them. Many absurdities stem from activities we indulge in throughout our quotidian lives, such as going to work, and feeding children. Lynch unveils what lies beneath the surface of the civilized façade. Similarly, to Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, the protagonist's psychological state becomes their agonising reality. This story is one of sexual temptations followed by resentment, while Henry is timid, yet completely entranced at the idea of sexual desire.

*Eraserhead* opens with imagery of Henry's pale face floating through a tangent void, with a decrepit man, pulling levers while glaring out of a window. A figment of his delusion, to absolve himself of fatherhood responsibility, it is the man who is controlling him. The Man in the Planet is seen once again later on in the film, though struggling to control them. Spencer's aimlessness is eminent, as he walks home with groceries through an industrial landscape of factories, plumes of smoke and puddles of chemical waste. This world is devoid of life, though he repeatedly checks over his shoulder, as if he's anticipating someone behind him. The elevator of his dim apartment complex takes an uncomfortably long time to close, referring to the technological aspect, in which individuals are out of control of their lives. As Henry steps into the hallway, he is stopped by the Beautiful Girl Across the Hall, who tells him his girlfriend, Mary, invited him to dinner. Later at the dinner table, Mary's mother confronts him about having sexual intercourse with her daughter, informing him that she had given birth to his baby, which hardly resembles a

human child. Henry is uncomfortable, and the communication involves lengthy pauses between their already sparse dialogues. The father asks, "Well Henry, what do you know?" he replies "Oh, I don't know much of anything". As dinner arrives, Henry is asked to cut the chicken which squirms and bleeds.



Soon, Henry and Mary move in together, and as tension and aggression between them rises due to their endlessly weeping, nascent child, she abandons him. Henry is taunted by visions in which his head is made out of an eraser, displaying a wish to erase what is indelible, his awfully deformed child. This adumbrated

his descent into depravity. Spencer is unprepared for parenthood and desperately tries to escape it. There are a few symbols of lust hidden in plain sight, such as a small picture of a mushroom cloud that hangs in Henry's room.

Henry's apartment is confined, as a brick wall on the outside of his window prevents any light from seeping in. Spencer attempts to seek out the Beautiful Girl Across the Hall, when she asks to stay the night after being locked out of her apartment. He allows her inside while covering the mouth of his crying child, not providing appropriate childcare. She symbolises his freedom, which he hopelessly tries to return to. Another night, Henry lays on his bed glaring at the radiator. Inside, is a theatre in which The Lady in the Radiator, whose cheeks are sculpted into a smile, stomps on and kills miniature replicas of the baby, therefore destroying Henry's fear. After being faced with rejection by his wife, this lady who sings gracefully is his only hope, even though he is profoundly confused by her, by the vacuous expression on his face.

Once again, when Henry tries to avoid the state of his current life of adulthood responsibility, he is ridiculed by the fact that the salacious Beautiful Girl Across the Hall is already involved with another man. Desperate, he grabs a pair of scissors and removes the child's swaddling only to find that the

bandages were holding its internal organs together, therefore spilling them, as the child gasps. Henry continues to stab it repeatedly. His face, painted with a look of consternation. Henry's jejune character and abstruse, child-like mind are the source of his self-damnation. All alone, he must reckon with the turmoil. The film taunts Henry by his fears that he may be an inadequate father. Each subtle mannerism communicates to larger ideas, as many of them are not expressed verbally. Once again, in the theatre which lies beyond the metal bars of the hissing radiator, the lady sings.



As the film's denouement, Henry's head falls off and is replaced by one of his offspring's, specifically what looks like the limbic system, a part of the brain that processes emotions. In an endeavour to seek liberation from commitment, he detaches himself from the restraints of desire, ultimately killing himself and the child. After Henry's decapitated head falls from the dull sky, a boy picks it up and delivers it to a pencil factory where the head is turned into erasers. For the last time,

Spencer is seen in a billowing cloud of eraser shavings. He comes to realise he was disgusted with himself. Perhaps, the baby isn't his baby, but rather a manifestation of his flawed blemished emotional state.

After the screening, Eraserhead was met with a handful of critics, but with many positive reviews from well known filmmakers like John Walters, Mel Brooks and Stanley Kubrick. In fact, Kubrick adored it so much he requested the cast of his "The Shining " would watch it before the shoot of his upcoming movie.



## A Clockwork Orange

Published in 1962, *A Clockwork Orange* is a dystopian satirical novel written by the English writer, Anthony Burgess, which was later adapted into a film in 1971 by Stanley Kubrick. The novel is separated into three sections, each containing seven chapters, a total of 21 chapters, significant to the age of human maturation. In this definitive critique of modern societies, themes of violence are explored in sociological, philosophical, and psychoanalytical contexts. The necessity of perversity in human nature was one of the major themes in the novel as well. The title refers to the machine-like state of the individual when they are deprived of their self-consciousness and volition, sanctioning that human nature is dispensable. One of the explanations offered by author Burgess of where he came up with the title, is accidentally overhearing it while sitting in a pub in 1945.

The novel is set in a totalitarian, peremptory society where violent youths reside. The protagonist is a 15-year-old Alex, who lives in a residential suburb with his parents. He is a devout enthusiast of classical music and often speaks in Russian slang, such as друг or droog, meaning “friend”. A fabricated language, influenced by



Russian, functions as a way to convince the audience that this is set in the future, and to resemble a teenager’s vocabulary. Alex is the leader of a vicious gang of criminals in England, who engage in brutal acts against defenceless people. The audience experiences this world through Alex’s eyes, as he describes sensations and the suffering he endures. The first movement describes the acts of cruelty which Alex condemns other people to. An example of such is when the group trespasses into a cottage, where they beat a writer and assault his wife, who passes. The gang’s uniforms consisting of white overalls, military boots, and strange hats, reinforce the discrepancy between their refined looks and vicarious actions. Alex is aware that his

criminality is immoral, yet repeats it regardless, simply because he enjoys it. Alex comes from a stable family, therefore we must assume that he was born the way he is, and is not a product of his environment or abuse. This is unlike other typical movie villains whose behaviour is justified by abuse, illness or oppression. Alex stands out above all as it is his elegant, intelligent, cultured and charming character that appeals to the audience.

During their crime spree, Alex's group betrays him and leaves him behind to be apprehended and sentenced to fourteen years in prison for the murder of an elderly woman.

Mankind yearns for a sense of structure in order to find stability and a place in the world. On the one hand, this involves integration, strength, and development of human reason, though, this individuation thereby opens the doors for doubt concerning one's role, meaning of life, powerlessness, and insignificance. In prison there is structure, yet Alex is not inclined to be good. His mental state is unrestricted, and so the congested prison drives him to beat a new cellmate to death. The authorities intervene and subject him to receive the Ludovico technique. In order to reduce his prison sentence, Alex agrees to undergo this form of psychological rehabilitation, which aims to reform him by clearing his mind of violent and sexual impulses. The Ludovico's Technique is a brutal form of aversion therapy that works by the subject watching films of Nazi iniquity and barbarity. Alex's new treatment causes him to feel physically nauseous and unwell at the mere thought of crime and violence. He no longer enjoys classical music. He's "*cured all right.*" Alex continuously attempts to liberate himself from the "tortures of the damned" instead of trying to incarcerate himself. He tries to resolve the dialectical unity of opposites by changing his restrictions from being physical to mental. One man's freedom is another's suffering, in this case, Alex's victims are harmed by his choices in freedom. One opposite offsets another, therefore they become balanced.

*"They have turned you into something other than a human being. You have no power of choice any longer. You are committed to socially acceptable acts, a little machine capable only of good."*

*“But, sir, sirs, I see that it’s wrong. It’s wrong because it’s against society, it’s wrong because every veck on earth has the right to live and be happy without being beaten and tolchoked and knifed. I’ve learned a lot, oh really I have.”*

Alex’s use of Russian slang is emphasised in this quote: Tolchock comes from толчок, which means “push,” however, here “hit”. Veck derives from the second half of человек for “human”, here “man.” This is a prime example of Alex’s appreciation of language as he speaks in a combination of old english and russian slang. In his dystopian world, the spoken word holds great power. Alex also holds a passion for beauty, which is rare in his world of conformity.



The government sees this procedure as a great success, never less, a prison chaplain who stood by Alex questions the ethics of taking away one’s power of volition, as good actions should be acted out by choice. A conflict arises when society’s desire to order and individualism is threatened. *“You felt ill this afternoon,”* he said, *“because you’re getting better. When we’re healthy we respond to the presence of the*

*hateful with fear and nausea. You’re becoming healthy, that’s all. You’ll still be healthier this time tomorrow.”* Alex only stopped stirring up violence because it did not fulfil him anymore and only went with what felt well to him. The treatment turned him into “a clockwork orange,” that is, something natural-looking, yet mechanical on the inside, incapable of moral choice.

*“If he can only perform good or only perform evil, then he is a clockwork orange—meaning that he has the appearance of an organism lovely with colour and juice but is in fact only a clockwork toy to be wound up by God or the Devil.”*

After two years, free at last, Alex’s behavioural conditioning leaves him defenceless. He finds himself on the streets where he is the helpless prey of his

former victims. He returns home to find everything has changed. His belongings have been sold to raise money for the old lady's cats after she passed. Alex tries to Mozart, but finds that, as a result of his treatment, he associates classical music with the atrocities he witnessed, therefore it makes him nauseous once again. His parents' lodger, Joe, replaced him in his own home, where he is treated like a son by Alex's parents, living in his bedroom.

Later, Alex unexpectedly runs into his former friend, Dim, accompanied by an old rival, who are now both policemen. Gravely beaten by them Alex is left on the outskirts of town where an old man in a cottage takes him in. The man and his helper provide shelter and breakfast for him. Alex soon realizes he is in the home of the man whose wife he and his droogs raped. Sexuality is a theme emphasised in this novel, with furniture-like nude women sculptures and other intimate imagery. This functions as another factor of the origin of violence portrayed by Alex's behaviour. The man only realises this, after he



commiserates with him, wanting to publish his story as a means of turning the public opinion against the government. Alex rests in the room the men have left him. He wakes up to discover he has been locked and classical music is being played at a loud volume through the walls. This display is the old man's endeavour to exact revenge upon him and drive him to kill himself. In desperation, Alex leaps out of the window, but survives the fall, landing himself in hospital. Doctors reverse his conditioning. Alex returns to his old self.

The final sublation is the contradiction of freedom and restriction. One freely chooses to restrict oneself from doing wrong. It is pivotal to have a society that understands the need to have a combination of freedoms and restrictions. Choosing to give up on crime on his own initiative, Alex demonstrates that he will use his freedom from restrictions, including both, physical and mental, to become a productive member of society. How may a culpable, pledged society



inculcate a sense of conscience and individual responsibility in those who are incapable of either? “it is as inhuman to be totally good as it is to be totally evil”. If their way is by means of the Ludovico treatment, which is as uncivilised and primitive as the crimes committed, then the government and authorities are no better than the criminals they wish to ‘cure’. This novel forms a vision of a world where the righteous citizens taunted by Alex appear more castrated than free. Police officers are former offenders, the social workers are resentful, and the policies are portrayed as cunning and devious. There is an absence of idealism in *A Clockwork Orange*.



## The Shining

“The Shining” is a 1980 psychological film starring Jack Nicholson and Shelley Duvall. It was directed by Stanley Kubrick and co-written by Diane Johnson, based on Stephen King’s novel of the same name. The novel, written and published in 1977. The budget for the film stands at nineteen million dollars. The running time of the American version is one hour and forty-four minutes, while the European version is an hour and fourteen minutes. It is regarded as a masterpiece of a classic horror film with several memorable lines such as *‘Here’s Johnny’* which Nicholson improvised on set. A “perfect” horror film that consists of a balance of mystery, tension and an unsettling atmosphere.

The film’s protagonist is Jack Torrance, a recovering alcoholic and aspiring writer. Torrance has accepted the role of a caretaker at the Overlook Hotel in Colorado for the off-season. He is accompanied by his wife Wendy Torrance and son Danny. His son is gifted with psychic abilities that allow him to see visions into the brutal past of



the Overlook, which is built upon burial grounds. Jack is heavily influenced by the hotel as it begins to take a toll on his sanity. Perhaps it is the restless spirits that have inhabited a curse. Both Jack and the overlook embody the perceived villain in this story. The story revolves around themes of the supernatural, family, alcoholism, isolation and second sight.

We meet Jack at a job interview, still unemployed and desperate to get the job even after Mr. Ullman has warned him of “cabin fever”. Nonetheless, Jack dismisses this without taking into consideration his family's feelings or the troublesome past of the Hotel. As back in 1970, another winter caretaker by

the name of Charles Grady killed his wife and two daughters with an axe. Wendy and Danny sit at a table having lunch, when she asks him if he's excited to be moving here for the winter. Danny and his imaginary friend "Tony" reply no. However, Tony is also more of a part of Danny as his guide who gives him the ability to "shine". Shortly after, Danny experiences a vision of a wave of blood flowing out of the elevator and blacks out which causes concern to Wendy as she calls a doctor. She mentions an incident during one evening that his drunken father jolted Danny away with such force he dislocated his shoulder. Even though this resulted in him being taken out of school, Wendy insists it was only an accident. While Mr. and Mrs. Torrance are on a tour of the Overlook, Danny is left alone to throw darts, where he encounters two ghost girls in matching blue dresses. These girls are Grady's daughters. Soon, the family meets head chef Dick Halloran, who has the power of the "shining" just like Danny. Halloran refers to Danny as "Doc", a nickname only his parents call him. Wendy questions as to how he would know it. In a scene where he and Danny both communicate telepathically, there are knives on the wall hung directly above the child's head as a way of foreshadowing of what is to come. In their conversation, Dick mentions that only those with their gift can see into past events.



Danny rides his tricycle through the repetitive halls and points to his Apollo 11 sweater as he glances at the door of Room "237". He claims the number 237 symbolises the distance from the Earth to the Moon and that the pattern of the carpet represents the launching pad of Apollo.

As days pass, Jack spends his time at his desk attempting to write, although he does not appear to be a good writer as he isn't able to come up with any ideas. Wendy occasionally checks in on Jack, but in return he scolds her for disrupting him and accuses her of limiting his writing

potential. Each time, he progressively gets more aggressive and isolated. The isolated location of the Overlook and senseless spatial layout, mentally traps the characters leading them to brutality. Later on in the film, the rarity of seeing Jack and Wendy in the same frame adds to the growing feeling of loneliness by separating them. The family is also cut off from the outside world and are left to escape Jack Torrance alone, without help. For around twenty minutes we follow each character separately with a Steadicam, a camera that seems to glide around low to the ground, which makes it seem something is always watching over their shoulders. A detail that gives life to the Overlook Hotel. It is only forty-five minutes into the film that conflict begins to rise, and an hour and forty-five minutes as Jack inevitably loses his grip on sanity. The mysterious forces of the hotel are certainly not the main factor in Jack's descent. Socioeconomic class, failure as a writer, and deep-rooted insecurity of his authority as a provider, are all underlying movies.

One evening, Jack is seated at an empty bar longing for at least a single sip of alcohol. To his luck, a bartender named Lloyd appears with a large variety of drinks stocked behind him. Jack greets him by saying he liked him better than the others, insinuating they have met before. The bartender is just another trap that lures Jack to fall back into his destructive tendencies. Lloyd inquires how it is going for Jack, to which he begins to rant about his wife. Jack accepting a drink from the bar is him accepting what he's becoming. He also confesses he hasn't drunk for the last 3 years even though Wendy had told the doctor that he hadn't touched a drink ever since hurting Danny. This implies he had been drinking for years in secret. These chronologically inconsistent statements establish Jack as a liar. He is interrupted as Wendy rushes to him with a concern about a woman in Room 237 who managed to hurt Danny. The woman is an old spirit that still resides in the hotel. Evidently, the supernatural forces are now becoming more dangerous as they have shown the power to inflict physical harm. When Jack enters the room, he is enticed by the attractive woman who leans in and hugs him for a kiss. Jack falls for this immediately, and she transforms into her true self of rotting flesh. This evokes fear in Jack as he associates this with the typical mother. However, Wendy never encounters her. When he returns, he tells Wendy it must have been

Danny's imagination as he had not found a woman inside. An argument between the couple arises as his true feelings of hatred come to the surface. Jack avoids further conflict by returning to the "Gold Room" (the bar) where he sees a party full of people, presumably spirits. He makes his way to the bathroom where he meets a man named Delbert Grady who he confuses with Charles Grady, the axe murderer. He questions Delbert about his murdered family but D. Grady responds by saying that Jack has "always been the caretaker". This is one of many instances of the film hinting at reincarnation. Jack is only further confused by Delbert's statement but begins to disclose his plans of killing his family as he believes that Danny is plotting against him.

Wendy discovers nearly five hundred typewritten pages that repeatedly say "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy". All of a sudden, Torrance appears and threatens: "*I'm not going to hurt you, I'm just going to bash your brains in*". This is the turning point of the story as it has reached its climax. From now on, Wendy and her son must survive. She manages to hit him in the head with a bat, causing him to tumble down the stairs. He has fallen unconscious, therefore she has bought herself some time which she uses to lock him in the storage freezer. In this time, Jack has regained consciousness and informs her that the snowcat has been damaged, leaving them without a means to escape. While alone in the cold storage room, Jack is tormented by the voices of the spirits who pester him that he must go through with murdering his family.

Possessed by Tony, Danny writes REDRUM with red lipstick on the door. His shrill scream wakes Wendy up as she sees that the reflection in the mirror, spells murder. Now, Jack is hacking away at the bedroom door with an axe. It seems as if Tony tried to warn them. Mr. Halloran returns to the Overlook as he feels something is deeply wrong. He is greeted by Jack with an axe to his chest. Meanwhile, Wendy experiences strange visions such as the bloody elevator which her son had seen before, and the Gold Room but with the guests now visibly dead. Danny tries to evade his deranged father by fleeing into the hedge maze. An intense chase scene follows as Jack yields and swings his axe. Wendy runs into Danny just in time as he finds an exit to the maze, while Jack grows

weaker and weaker. Ultimately, freezing to death, making the maze the only real threat to him.

Once again, we return to the hotel as the shot zooms into a specific photograph out of the many picture frames on the wall. However, this one is singled out because Jack appears to be in it with a beaming smile on his face, stretched from ear to ear. Oddly enough the photograph dates back to 1921, meaning it cannot be Jack but might as well be an incarnation of him. This is closely similar to Delbert Grady's and Charles Grady's case, where one reincarnates into the other leading us to believe the same is occurring with the Torrances. The family is presented with the various factors which tear it apart, such as Jack's alcoholism abuse and unstable financial situation due to having lost his job. This is symbolic of the abuse and trauma cycle passed down generation by generation.

### ***Danny is the force behind Jack's madness theory***

Danny exhibits multiple signs of childhood neglect and psychological abuse such as; increased anxiety, hyper activity, academic problems, social issues and flashbacks. All of which are common in childhood trauma. Unlike Jack, he has a close relationship with his mother displayed by authentic affection and playfulness. Whenever Danny shows up with bruises, Wendy is quick to blame Jack even though kids get injured frequently. In a scene where Jack tries to hug Danny, he looks uncomfortable and does not hug him back. At this time, Danny also commands Jack that he must not hurt Wendy. Just like he asked, Jack is never able to physically get to her. There are instances where she overpowers him which is unlikely, leading the viewer to believe Danny's powers are far more advanced than previously shown. Perhaps Danny uses the isolation of the Hotel to use his abilities as a means of getting back at his abusive father. This is a more sensically and plausible explanation for these occurrences, rather than the verdict that the Overlook is aiming to ruin its occupants' lives for the sake of it.

## Cinematographic techniques

Kubrick uses a wide variety of powerful techniques that make the film suspenseful by the creation of complex patterns, such as the iconic carpet, or the hedge maze outside. Mickey-mousing is an old-fashioned film and animation technique that includes synchronised scoring as movement matches to music. It has been mostly abandoned in newer films because of its over usage in the early days of animation and connotation as slap-stick comedy. However, Kubrick used this to incite horror instead of comedy. The director had mastered lighting in film, and developed a style unique to him and not seen elsewhere. For example, he avoided horror film cliches by filling his more frightful scenes in light so that everything could be seen, instead of enveloping his characters in darkness.

The bizarre and senseless spatial layout of the Overlook is Kubrick's way of trapping the viewer by creating a subconscious sense of dread and unease as what exactly is off is not immediately noticeable. This enhances the dream-like atmosphere as well. The sound design is also very deliberate in adding to this atmosphere as you cannot only see the terror but hear it. Kubrick has chosen the third movement of *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* to be present in three distinct scenes. It is first heard as Jack looks down upon the scale size replica of the maze outside, watching his family like little toys, hinting at their separation.



The music has been designed with symmetry similarly to the hedge maze. It is specifically a palindrome (a sequence such as a word or number that is read the same forward and backward) with an ABCDCBA note arrangement. This is just one example of symmetrical iconography shown in the film alongside mirrors, the ghost twins, and patterns that psychologically resonate with the audience. The second time the classical piece is heard is when Danny cycles past Room 237. This is also where the mickey-mousing begins as each of Danny's head movements and steps are synchronised with the violin. The last scene where the piece is heard is the two minute, uncut scene of Jack and Danny having a conversation where the music seemingly influences their dialogue as the pitch falls and rises along with their intonation. When looking back at the many iconic moments of *The Shining*, the moments are not purely visual, but are inseparable from the music and sound effects that accompany them. The soundtrack occasionally includes a thumping sound, reminiscent of a heart beat, making the Overlook more alive. The constant dark undertones of sound are used to remind the viewer of the nightmare they are viewing.

Another method that Kubrick utilises to invoke eeriness is the subtle moving of furniture like chairs. These small effects can be found in a large number of scenes which shows that the Hotel almost has a mind of its own. In terms of transitions, Cross Dissolves, in which the current frame dissolves into the next, so that both frames overlap for a solid second, are used repeatedly. In some scenes, Jack melts into the hotel while in others, he melts into Danny which is symbolic in the way their stories are linked together. The colours white, blue and red are a recurring colour palette that is displayed in all of the character's clothing and the American flag.

The final strategy of creating dreadful horror is the obscurity of the film. It remains highly ambiguous as the viewer is left with many unanswered questions such as, if the hotel is truly supernatural, or if any of the hallucinations experienced were real. The story only hints at the true meaning of it all and leaves plenty of room for interpretation, hence why many theories about it have emerged. One of which is that Danny is the malicious influence in the hotel. Though, he merely sees visions of violence and terror but does not perpetuate it. Or so, the audience is made to think...



## **Comparison of the novel and film**

The novel and film have several distinct differences, that they could be seen as separate all together. The key difference is the weapon used by Jack as in the novel, he uses a hammer mallet to break Wendy's leg and back. Soon after, he attacks Mr Halloran though, he does not get killed and even he appears in King's sequel "Doctor Sleep". In the film, Mr. Torrance is portrayed as an already mentally unstable man who attempts to keep his remaining sanity, unlike the normal man driven to lunacy in the novel. The film's most famous scenes; the two ghost girls in the hall, the blood-filled elevator, and pages that repeat "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy", which do not appear in the novel. It is speculated that Kubrick typed all the 500 pages himself, although that has not been confirmed. Along with anything else directed by Stanley Kubrick, everything is placed deliberately. However, Stephen King was not a fan of the film as he criticised that it deviated too far away from the original story.

In the end of King's version, Jack manages to regain control over himself long enough to let Danny escape. Soon the hotel takes full control of Jack as he, being the caretaker, heads to the boiler room to complete one of his duties. However, the pressure of the boiler causes it to explode and the hotel burns down to the ground along with Jack inside.

## **A Country Doctor**

Written in 1917 by Franz Kafka, "A Country Doctor" is a short story in which a country doctor visits an ill patient and endures odd predicaments. The story begins with a scene of a snowy winter night, when the doctor has received the message that there is a sickly boy who needs his immediate assistance. The night before, the doctor's horse has died from overexertion, and his servant, Rose, is yet to find another one to make the miles to his patient. He walks to his pigsty where he unexpectedly stumbles upon a groom with two horses. The groom crawls out on all fours and prepares the horses for the journey. He attempts to kiss Rose, who had been standing nearby but instead, bites her. The doctor does not want to leave her with this stranger, but he quickly slaps the horse on its behind and it takes off with the doctor. The horses take him there almost instantaneously through the blizzard, hunting they might be supernal. The doctor arrives at the patient's door in a suspiciously short period of time, where he is greeted by the parents and sister and is led to the ill boy's room. As the doctor examines him, he sees the boy is quite thin, but has no fever and appears to be fine. The doctor is caught off guard when the patient whispers that he wishes to be deceased. The doctor looks through his instruments and begins to approach the bed when a horse that managed to open the window from the outside, neighs loudly, startling him. Suddenly, the underpaid doctor decides the boy may not be unwell at all. Therefore, he prepares to leave the premises. The parents quickly express their disappointment in the doctor, which convinces him to remain, the horses neigh once again in approval.

As he scrutinises the boy, he finds he is definitely severely ill, with a large wound on his right hip, full of worms inside. Although the family is glad the doctor has stayed to help, he has decided he cannot save the patient's life. He believes those who have lost their faith in religion turn to the physician with hopes they are able to heal them. Out of nowhere, the singing of a choir is heard as the villagers gather to undress the doctor and place him beside the boy. The patient himself tells the doctor he has little hope in his ability to save him. The doctor is apologetic, reassuring him, the wound is not uncommon

and will not be what harms him most. Once again, the doctor is ready to leave after he feels he has done everything he can for the patient. He calls the horses, this time commanding them to travel slowly. As the and the horses plod through the snow, the choir chimes in again. The doctor begins to think he won't make it home as the horses refuse to take him where he wishes to go. He remembers the odd groom with Rose in his home. Immense guilt overcomes him, when he thinks she may be at risk, and he cannot help her. He feels betrayed by the village, naked and exposed to the frost.

The two horses are reminiscent of Plato's allegory of the Chariot used to explain the human soul and nature. The chariot is pulled by two winged horses, one immortal, the other mortal. The mortal is described by Plato as deformed animal of dark colour, plagued with pride and insolence. The immortal is proposed as noble, clean, white, and acquitted with modesty and honour. With the horses being such polar opposites of each other, it is difficult to manoeuvre them. The charioteer wishes to rise above and beyond the heavens with the goal to experience divine visions. The dark horse pulls the chariot towards earth, refusing to let the charioteer reach his destination. He

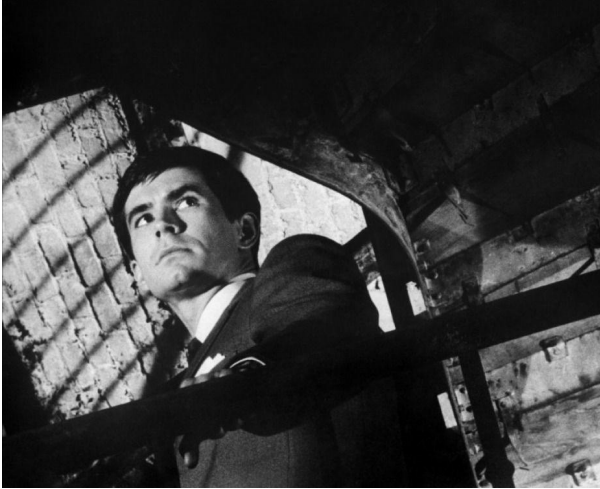


ends up falling back to earth. The ridge of Heaven beholds eternal wisdom, celestial beauty, and righteousness. Plato divided the soul into three parts; reason, spirit, and appetite. In Kafka's story, the doctor is the charioteer torn between two courses of action, either staying to aid the sick boy or returning home to rescue Rosa.

There are several ways to interpret the allegory. Perhaps it is a way of becoming godlike by pursuing transcendence or the progression of personal psychological and physical health. One theme present in *A Country Doctor* is responsibility as the doctor blames his horses on his inability to choose between two courses of action, though not indifferent to the suffering of his patient. A story so abstract, it shifts into a nightmarish dream. The way the story is told, it seems to have an unordinary concept of time as the horses arrive at the patient's home within a second but take forever to return.

Psychology is a tool commonly used to understand Kafka's work as the author was often inspired by Freud's ideas surrounding the human condition. This method does not apply to all authors as many separate themselves from their writing. This type of writing displays the ability to identify with a different perspective. By applying a psychoanalytical approach, several parallels with Sigmund Freud's dream interpretation can be observed in this story. The doctor's state of mind remains quite rational in contrast to the other characters with whom he interacts with. The family, the boy, and the choir all act ineptly which contributes to the country doctor's inner conflict.

## The Trial



“The Trial” is a surrealist novel written by Franz Kafka and posthumously published in 1925. It is of the philosophical, absurdist, dystopian and paranoid fiction genre. A drama mystery film inspired by the book and directed by Orson Welles was released in December of 1962 in France. This essay will explore both the novel and film simultaneously. Kafka took inspiration from Dostoevsky’s “Crime

and Punishment”. *The Trial* is the embodiment of the term ‘Kafkaesque’ which refers to the state of disorientation of an individual in a mindless bureaucratic society. Characters are typically placed in a nightmarish setting. This story follows the pessimistic life of Josef, a successful chief of a bank. The setting is rather gloomy and oppressive with perplexive buildings surrounding him.

On the early morning of Josef’s thirtieth birthday, two mysterious agents arrive at his door and arrest him without providing any explanation. “*Someone must have been telling lies about Josef K. He knew he had done nothing wrong but, one morning, he was arrested.*” (Kafka, 3) He is taken in for an unreasonable interrogation but is later sent back to work and allowed to continue living his life as usual. Nonetheless, it is mandatory he shows up in court on Sunday, however he is not informed of the precise location it is to take place. Eventually, Josef manages to locate the room in the attic where the judge announces he is late to the meeting. As he attempts to defend himself, the authorities take offence to this and state that only officials are gathered in this court. Josef goes through a distressing trial during which the charges against Josef are not made known to him. He is continually harassed and persecuted by the court that is plagued by corruption. Josef represents the victim’s of legal injustices. The abrupt beginning is Kafka’s way of disorienting the reader, so that they are able to understand the position Josef is in.

The character of Josef K. is rather ordinary, as well as slightly arrogant and judgemental. Josef is at no point coerced or driven to do anything against his will. He arrives in court unescorted. He has the ability to flee, but instead, with such overconfidence in law enforcement, lets himself be dominated by the unlawful jurisdiction. He openly shares his opinion of the absurd, almost laughable situation he finds himself in. Josef K's willingness to abide by the

law questions the general public's compliance to law enforcement. Blind obedience to authority is exactly what causes Josef to get wrapped up in so much trouble. Even though wrongfully accused, he begins to doubt his own innocence as he is influenced by those around him. Later he finally allows himself to be convinced that he is guilty, sealing his fate. At first he only



carries on due to curiosity but gets swept up in all of it. If he had simply stayed in bed and refused to cooperate, seemingly he would have not endured any consequences. Even in the end, when he is offered the chance to kill himself but does not take it. This is his way of rebelling against the confinements of the law and standing up for himself. However, he had plenty of opportunities to quit following their instructions. Modern man prefers to be killed as the world in which he lives has become completely hostile towards him. The trial remains frustrating yet intriguing. After the judge's wife attempts to seduce Josef, he is taken on a tour of the offices. They stumble upon the same two agent's who had arrested him, now being whipped because of Mr. K's statement during his hearing.

The story implies that it is a duty of the citizen to know their rights to avoid being deceived by higher authorities. Throughout the novel, several people give him advice concerning his issue. Those people include his uncle, the priest, a lawyer, and his past client who faced a similar case. As for him, it has

been going on for nearly five years with many losses such as his business, morals and money. The only purpose their advice served was submerging Josef deeper into the pits of injustice of which he could no longer allow himself to crawl out of. Josef's uncle introduces him to lawyer Herr Huld, who is confined to his bed and taken care of by Leni. She is a nurse who manages to seduce Josef, and when his uncle finds out his nephew accepted her advances, he is displeased. It appears that Mr. Huld is not a suitable or reliable advocate for him and so he turns to the court painter for help, who agrees to do so. Yet, they recognize that they are unlikely to succeed before such power. Ultimately, Josef K. decides to represent himself.

In the end of Kafka's novel, Josef is executed in a quarry on his birthday. *"But the hands of one of the gentlemen were laid on K.'s throat, while the other pushed the knife deep into his heart and twisted it there, twice. As his eyesight failed, K. saw the two gentlemen cheek by cheek, close in front of his face, watching the result. "Like a dog!" he said, it was as if the shame of it should outlive him."* (Kafka, 167) In the final segment of the film, Josef is thrown into a pit by two inspectors, and a dynamite with him. He laughs manically, and dies in the explosion. Mr. K's execution adds to the complexity of the bizarre workings of the law. Many in real life are unaware of their legal rights and assume the detectives, policemen and judges are correct.



Upon first glance, this is a critique of the law and bureaucracy of Mr. K's dystopian society. Kafka writes with the intention of making the reader feel uneasy and powerless. The story expresses fundamental notions of

what justice is and what it is not. It draws the line between law-abiding and criminality, beyond good and evil. Additionally, it ties into themes of innocence and control as Josef is unable to focus on his work and becomes powerless.

## The Myth Of Sisyphus



The story is reminiscent of the Greek myth of Sisyphus in which a human is punished by the Gods for cheating death. By his trickery and deception, he convinced Hades, the God of the underworld, to set him free. Sisyphus's escape from his mortality infuriates Zeus and so he condemns him for all eternity. The man is assigned to push a boulder up to the top of the mountain, however as he gets close, it rolls back down and he

has to start over. The man is stuck continuously rolling that boulder. All of his great efforts will eventually get him nowhere. French philosopher, Albert Camus, interprets this as the representation for endless human toil that in the end, is futile. However, he also states that regardless of this, Sisyphus is able to pursue happiness. Sisyphus' punishment is meant as the highest form of torment as it is a meaningless task, impossible to be completed. By Camus, Sisyphus is an absurd hero as he rejects the Gods, scorns death and pursues life. He recognizes his suffering and accepts it. Similarly to the real world, where man does not know his purpose but puts in endless efforts. The awareness that nothing matters is the only thing that matters in an existence which does not matter. Absurdity lies in man's endless efforts to find meaning. Though man is incapable of finding it with any certainty.



## Notes From the Underground

“Notes From the Underground” is an existentialist novella of modernist literature written by Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky in 1864. It presents itself in the form of a monologue by the 40-year-old man underground. The first-person narrative is a clever way to convince the reader to side with the narrator. The protagonist does not introduce himself by name, nor is he given a name by other characters; therefore, he is referred to as the Underground Man. Fyodor Dostoyevsky tells the story of the Underground Man, a retired civil service worker living in the 19th century Saint Petersburg, Russia, who is “too conscious” for his own sake. His heightened perception of self makes him overly self-critical and invidious. Indecisiveness is fundamental to his character as he second guesses and over analyzes everything, making him incapable of making decisions. The underground, from where the man claims to be writing, is representative of his life in society, where he feels immensely isolated and rejected. Nevertheless, he claims to prefer it more than the real world. The Man Underground abuses his bureaucratic status by attempting to make others' lives miserable, as he resents the world around him, including himself. He describes himself: “I am a sick man ... I am a spiteful man. I am an unattractive man. I believe my liver is diseased.” (Dostoevsky, 1864, p. 3). He repeats that his liver is diseased, though refuses to see a doctor out of spite. He is a nihilist, with a strong self-destructive nature. The antagonist is the man himself due to his constant state of contradiction. The first evidence of this is when he says: “To live longer than forty years is bad manners, is vulgar, immoral. Who does live beyond forty? Answer that, sincerely and honestly I will tell you who do: fools and worthless fellows.” (Dostoevsky, 1864, p.6), while he himself is forty years of age. The Underground Man believes man is utterly foolish and impotent. As the novella progresses, The Underground Man details his social anxieties, such as eye contact, humiliation, shame, and discomfort as presented in *“I dropped my eyes almost every time I met anyone. I even made experiments to see whether I could face so and so's looking at me, and I was always the first to drop my eyes.”* (Dostoevsky, 1864, p.33). The Underground Man's self-esteem fluctuates dramatically *“In fact, it happened at times that I thought more highly of them than of myself. It somehow happened*

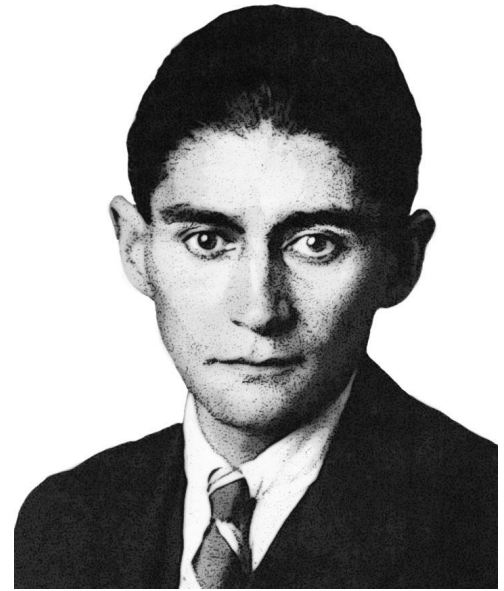
*quite suddenly that I alternated between despising them and thinking them superior to myself.” (Dostoevsky, 1864, p.33).*

*Notes From the Underground* ends abruptly and leaves a substantial amount unresolved. The Underground Man’s notes end as a fictional editor steps in and claims the man had written enough; *“The notes of this paradoxalist do not end here, however. He could not refrain from going on with them, but it seems to us that we may stop here.”* (Dostoevsky, 1864, p. 87). With all that he has written, the Man Underground has challenged and critiqued the ideologies of his time.



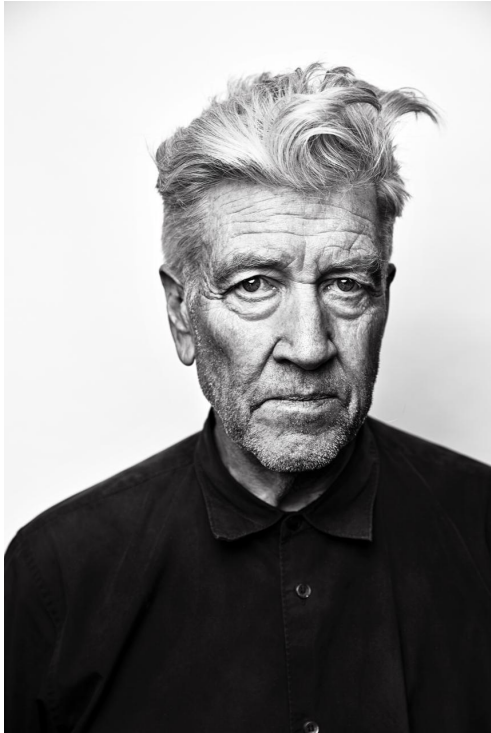
## Franz Kafka

Franz Kafka was born as the eldest son to Herman Kafka and Julie Kafka on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1883, in Prague, Czechia, what was then Austria-Hungary. Out of his five siblings, two younger brothers died as infants, and so he grew up with his three sisters, who were killed in concentration camps during World War II. Kafka's relationship with his father, who grew up in poor conditions, was difficult. H. Kafka earned a status by great efforts, and despised weakness. However, his son did not live up to his expectations of a man and did not understand his need to write. Kafka grew up to be a German speaking novelist, his works often described as highly influential in western literature. 'Kafkaesque' was a name attributed to writings particular to his style of a nonsensical bureaucratic society in which the individuals are disoriented and are lost in the difficulties of the world around them. The protagonists face unjust circumstances, struggling to move forward, without ever succeeding. A Kafkaesque scenario involves an illogically complex or irrational scene. His famous stories all exhibit these characteristics. The author's own life of internal conflict between identity and work are reflected in his stories. While unsatisfied with his job, he was a highly trusted employee. Although his writings reflect the negative aspects of his life, such as the strain of constant stress, they are quite exaggerated. Kafka enjoyed going to the cinema, swimming, and he was interested in Yiddish theater and literature, after seeing a Yiddish play in a theater. Kafka retired in 1923 due to the severity of his tuberculosis, which he passed away from at the age of forty, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June in 1924. Before his death, he asked his friend, Max Brod to burn his manuscripts. However, M. Brod did not follow through with his wishes.



*Franz Kafka*

## David Lynch



On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1946, in Missoula, Montana, David Keith Lynch was born to his father Donald Walton Lynch, a research scientist, and his mother, Edwina Lynch, an English language tutor. Lynch studied the arts and painting, before pursuing a career in cinematography in the late 1960s. While attending the Pennsylvania academy of Fine Arts, Lynch developed his first experimental short film by the name of “Six Men Getting Sick (Six Times)”, initially released in 1967. It was created as a student project with a budget of \$200. “Eraserhead” (1977) was his first-feature film. He went on to direct and produce; “The Elephant Man” (1980), “Dune” (1984), “Blue Velvet” (1986), “Twin Peaks” (1990-1991), “Lost Highway” (1997), and “Mulholland Drive” (2001), and “Rabbits” (2002). These films are only the most well known. The style known as ‘Lynchian’ is attributed to his surreal works, which include elements of dream-like imagery, symbolism, absurdity, and use of meticulous sound design.

A handwritten signature of David Lynch in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive, stylized font. Below the signature are several horizontal dashes of varying lengths, suggesting a signature line or a decorative flourish.

## Stanley Kubrick

Stanley Kubrick was an American film director and screenplay writer born on the 26th of July, 1928 in New York City. His films are mostly adaptations of short stories or novels, all of which are remarkable for their unique visuals, humour and realism. They typically involved expressions of negative human emotions from different perspectives. Kubrick stayed away from including his own understanding of the meaning, instead leaving it for interpretation.



Kubrick attended William Howard Taft High School from 1941 until 1945. He was an average student with an interest in photography and literature. After graduating, he taught himself the aspects of film production and directing. Stanley worked as a photographer for the *Look* Magazine in the early 1950's, then made his first film *Fear and Desire* in 1953. His first major Hollywood film was *The Killing*. Kubrick moved to the United Kingdom after a growing dislike towards the Hollywood industry and rising crime in the United States. His new home in Hertfordshire became his main workplace which allowed him to have nearly full artistic control over his work. Alongside this, he had an advantage of financial support from Hollywood studios. Kubrick maintained a high standard for the production of his films, being a perfectionist in editing, staging, directing, and collaborating with his crew. He would demand many retakes of scenes. At that time, Kubrick's films were controversial, but were nominated for Golden Globes, Oscars and BAFTA Awards. *Eyes Wide Shut* was his last film shot shortly before his death. He passed away on the 7th of March, 1999 in England.

*Stanley Kubrick*

**Enjoyed this genre of literature and film?**

*Below are recommendations of similar works*

**Recommended Literature**

*Crime and Punishment* (1866) by Fyodor Dostoevsky

*The Idiot* (1868-69) by Fyodor Dostoevsky

*Death Of Ivan Illych* (1886) by Leo Tolstoy

*The Brothers Karamazov* (1879-80) by Fyodor Dostoevsky.

*Master and Margarita* (1967) by Mikhail Bulgakov

*Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) by Fredrick Nietzsche

*The Psychology of the "Unconscious"* (1912) by Carl Jung

*The Doors of Perception* (1954) by Aldous Huxley

*The Stranger* (1942) by Albert Camus

## **Recommended Film**

*A Space Odyssey* (2001) by Stanley Kubrick

*When A Stranger Calls* (1979) by Fred Walton

*Blue Velvet* (1986) by David Lynch

*Twin Peaks* (1990) by David Lynch

*Lost Highway* (1997) by David Lynch

*The Elephant Man* (1980) by David Lynch

*The Red Balloon* (1956) by Albert Lamorisse

*Eyes Without A Face* (1960) by Georges Franju

*The Night of The Hunter* (1955) by Charles Laughton

*Rear Window* (1954) by Alfred Hitchcock

*By Adrija Večenaitė*

*2022*



## References

- (PDF) *Notes from the Underground*. (n.d.). Books. Retrieved January 13, 2022, from <http://www.livrosgratis.com.br/ler-livro-online-127603/notes-from-the-underground>
- McKay, K. B. (2021, September 26). *What Is a Man? The Allegory of the Chariot*. The Art of Manliness. Retrieved February 16, 2022, from <https://www.artofmanliness.com/character/manly-lessons/what-is-a-man-the-allegory-of-the-chariot/>
- Samuelson, J. (1983, December 22). *Eraserhead (1977)*. IMDb. Retrieved February 24, 2022, from [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0074486/?ref\\_%3Dref\\_ext\\_justwatch](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0074486/?ref_%3Dref_ext_justwatch)
- Carlyle, N. (1972, April 20). *A Clockwork Orange (1971)*. IMDb. Retrieved February 24, 2022, from <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0066921/>
- Kafka, F., Hascall, G., & Realms, S. (2015). *The Country Doctor*. Spoken Realms.
- Wikipedia contributors. (2022, 24 januari). *Plato's theory of soul*. Wikipedia. Geraadpleegd op 23 maart 2022, van [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato%27s\\_theory\\_of\\_soul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato%27s_theory_of_soul)
- McKay, K. B. (2021, September 26). *What Is a Man? The Allegory of the Chariot*. The Art of Manliness. <https://www.artofmanliness.com/character/manly-lessons/what-is-a-man-the-allegory-of-the-chariot/>
- Danko, M. (2020, May 23). *25 Facts About Stanley Kubrick's The Shining*. Mental Floss. <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/55893/25-things-you-might-not-know-about-shining>

*The Shining Quotes by Stephen King*. (n.d.). Good Reads. Retrieved March 24, 2022, from <https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/849585-the-shining>

*The Shining (1980)*. (n.d.). IMDb. Retrieved March 24, 2022, from <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0081505/quotes/qt0461239>

*The Trial | Summary, Legacy, & Facts*. (n.d.). Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved March 28, 2022, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Trial-novel-by-Kafka>

Halley, C. (2019, July 2). *Franz Kafka's The Trial—It's Funny Because It's True*. JSTOR Daily. Retrieved March 28, 2022, from <https://daily.jstor.org/franz-kafkas-the-trial-its-funny-because-its-true/>

Kafka, F. (n.d.). *The Trial by Franz Kafka Plot Summary*. LitCharts. Retrieved March 28, 2022, from <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-trial/summary>

Stout, J. (2022, January 16). *A Clockwork Orange*. Top 100 Sci Fi Movies. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://100scifimovies.com/a-clockwork-orange/>

Macnab, G. (2020, May 22). *The Shining at 40: How tantrums and torment built a horror classic*. The Independent. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/the-shining-film-kubrick-40-anniversary-horror-jack-nicholson-making-of-a9525881.html>

*'Daydreaming Is So Important To Me': How David Lynch Fishes For Ideas*. (n.d.). ArtReview. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://artreview.com/daydreaming-is-so-important-to-me-how-david-lynch-fishes-for-ideas/>

*The Myth of Sisyphus*. (2022, January 22). The Examined Life. Retrieved April 12, 2022, from <https://www.theexaminedlife.org/library/the-myth-of-sisyphus/>

Camus. (n.d.). DHS Priory. Retrieved April 12, 2022, from

<http://dhspriority.org/kenny/PhilTexts/Camus/Myth%20of%20Sisyphus-.pdf>

### **Sources for images:**

*Investigations of a Dog & Other Creatures by Franz Kafka.* (2017, May 2). Europe Now.

Retrieved April 3, 2022, from

<https://www.europenowjournal.org/2017/05/02/investigations-of-a-dog-other-creatures-by-franz-kafka/>

*Eraserhead: 10 Behind-The-Scenes Facts About David Lynch's Surreal Masterpiece.*

(2020, September 19). BlogSpot. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from

<https://paglutv.blogspot.com/2020/09/eraserhead-10-behind-scenes-facts-about.html>

Lavey, P. (2022, April 3). *Eraserhead movie review.* BlogSpot. Retrieved April 3, 2022,

from <http://paul-lavey.blogspot.com/2010/12/eraserhead-movie-review.html>

Mirmobin, S. (2015, November 30). *Interpretation of Dreams and Kafka's A Country*

*Doctor: A Psychoanalytic Reading.* International Letters of Social and Humanistic

Sciences. Retrieved April 7, 2022, from <https://www.scipress.com/ILSHS.63.1.pdf>

Pascual, A. (2021, August 30). *What is Mickey Mousing in Film Music? - Team Beverly*

*Boy.* Beverly Boy Productions. Retrieved April 7, 2022, from

<https://beverlyboy.com/filmmaking/what-is-mickey-mousing-in-film-music/>

Miska, B. (2015, February 27). *Accurate Replica of Stanley Kubrick's 'The Shining'*

*Hedge Maze! Bloody Disgusting!* Retrieved April 7, 2022, from

<https://bloody-disgusting.com/videos/3333989/accurate-replica-stanley-kubricks-the-shining-hedge-maze/>

Foote, J. H. (2019, June 30). *Revisiting A CLOCKWORK ORANGE (1971) - Foote & Friends on Film*. Foote & Friends on Film - Any Film You Haven't Seen -- Is a New Experience! Retrieved April 9, 2022, from

<https://footeandfriendsonfilm.com/2019/06/30/revisiting-a-clockwork-orange-1971/>

Gallagher, P. (2021, December 30). *Guilty! Orson Welles' Film of Franz Kafka's 'The Trial'* Flashbak. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from

<https://flashbak.com/guilty-orson-welles-film-of-franz-kafkas-the-trial-434518/>

*Orson Welles The Trial Blu-Ray Review*. (2012, September 5). The People's Movies. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from

<https://thepeoplesmovies.com/2012/09/orson-welles-the-trial-blu-ray-review/>

*Sisyphus* by Jeffrey Hummel. (n.d.). Fine Art America. Retrieved April 14, 2022, from

<https://fineartamerica.com/featured/sisyphus-jeffrey-hummel.html>

Sasek, Z. (n.d.). *Antique Illustration Of Man Writing On Desk Illustraties en vectorbeelden - iStock*. Stock Images. Retrieved April 15, 2022, from

<https://www.istockphoto.com/illustrations/antique-illustration-of-man-writing-on-desk>

