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Womanliness as animal masquerade

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For thinking concerning the animal, if there is a such a thing, derives from poetry.
– Jacques Derrida [1]

We begin with two film stars of the first order: Catherine Deneuve and Isabella Rossellini, two actors as famous for their beauty as for their talent, but also, crucially, their innovative creativity in negotiating the treacherous terrain of film and media stardom. The interplay between femininity and masquerade in producing the public persona of each actor across their respective careers is, even at first glance, unique. Who can forget Deneuve's searing performance in Roman Polanski's *Repulsion*, followed by her portrayal of an elegant yet lifeless upper class beauty in Luis Buñuel's *Belle du Jour*, balancing the demure vacuity of the mannequin with bouts of sudden ferocious sexuality and perfectly complemented by the sensuous tactility of Yves St. Laurent's wardrobe?

Two decades later Isabelle Rossellini would take *mise-en-scène* for an equally rough ride: like Buñuel, David Lynch takes the surface of the feminine masquerade to a level and intensity of signification that encompasses sexual fervor, longing, loss, and violence, threatening to collapse all narrative coherence in the film and bring it to a standstill.[2] In this case the objectification of the star's body is countered by the blue velvet which escapes its pedestrian role within costume and expands across the screen in opening credits that signal that blue velvet is a signifier of not only sexuality, but of a forbidden, perhaps bestial dimension of sexual desire now coupled with spectacular power.[3] These two films provide an index of the unique nature of both careers, balanced between satisfying conventional expectations of femininity (that is, functioning successfully as a commodity) and working on the

cutting edge of cinematic style and narrative to undercut those same conventions (a balancing act most difficult, indeed). Inevitably, and most intensely, given their status as women, the challenge to convention, put broadly, must involve vision and the apparatus of objectification and desire of which they are inevitably a part.

Both women took the chance to push these parameters even further, by undertaking roles which involve the intermingling of the animal and the feminine in masquerade, thereby destabilising the conventional relationship between dress and identity and with it the normative strictures which preserve the basic parameters, strategies, structures, and discourse through which the categories of femininity and the animal are sustained. One of the central ways this destabilisation occurs is in the confluence of overt sexuality, the active look, and the dissembling of the mechanisms of objectification. Quoting Jacques Derrida, he

describes a series of metonymical associations between sexual difference and animal difference through which hierarchies are maintained that privilege man over animal and over woman. These metonymies revolve around the notion that man is distinct from animals in his upright posture or erect stance which recalls man's erection as being what distinguishes him from woman. [4]

This ongoing, pervasive separation of man from animal and man from woman (and child) is philosophically embedded in our culture. Screen theory and its feminist formulations can provide a potentially refreshing new approach to the analysis of traditional structures of gender, identity, and performance and, alongside this, an opening to the 'animal' world.[5]

The special confluence of femininity, animality, and masquerade is found in two unique instances of 'femininity as animal masquerade'. The first, Jacques Demy's 1970 film *Donkey Skin (Peau d'âne)* starring Deneuve, could not have been made without her support and participation, which allowed for the director to find the funding necessary to stage his elaborate fairy tale, packed with French stars such as Jean Marais and Delphine Seyrig; the second instance is *Green Porno*, the 2009 Sundance channel series directed by and starring Isabella Rossellini.[6] Two very different screens, forty years apart, yet their similarities to each other and their uniqueness from the rest is compelling.

Donkey Skin is a cinematic re-telling of the 17th century fairy tale by Charles Perrault. Restored by Agnes Varda after Demy's death, the film is at once playful and deadly serious, like many fairy tales, and its generic strengths surely emerge in part from the potent period of the reign of Louis

XIV and the rise of capitalism, which saw far-reaching changes in social and sexual identities, among many other elements of life. While we cannot dwell on this larger issue at length, it is nonetheless of note that the fairy tale provides, at least in part, a narrative structure through which to negotiate some of the radical shifts occurring culturally at this time and that its approach towards basic themes of identity and home and their counterparts is of alienation and the *unheimlich* or uncanny. We might view the fairy tale, indeed, as a privileged site to work through the loss of our ancient relations with the animal, when animals were with man 'at the center of the world', in John Berger's elegiastic words.[7]

But *Peau d'âne* is more than a fairytale – it is a film as well. Its cinematic intertextuality extends most strikingly to the 1949 filmic masterpiece by Jean Cocteau, *La Belle et La Bête*, as Jean Marais (who played the original 'beast' in Cocteau's film) returns as the sovereign king (whose beastly qualities are modulated but not altogether excised). Deneuve plays three roles: a brief appearance as the Queen, who dies as the film begins (making the king promise he would only marry someone more beautiful than she), and the other two, an explicit doubling and split in identity between the beautiful princess and the ugly 'donkey skin' scullery maid. After the king makes the decision that Deneuve the princess be his next wife he attempts to win her by satisfying her every (impossible) wish, until she finally asks for his magical donkey, who defecates jewels and gold coins. Advised by her faerie godmother, played by Delphine Seyrig, she flees the king's incestuous appeals by masquerading in the donkey skin which was his last and greatest gift. Her adoption of the skin (and a few symbolic smudges of coal on her cheeks) is at once humiliating and liberating, as she travels away from the palace to a small magical hut in the woods. The animal skin (complete with head) hides Deneuve but also renders her 'naked'; outside the law, she is stripped of the fantastic layers of the Symbolic her father had so recently proffered in his efforts to gain her as his bride.[8]



Fig. 1: Deneuve's Donkey Skin Masquerade leaves her face fully visible, giving an indication that the masquerade is about something else.

While *Peau d'âne* portrays this overlay of animal and human, animal and beautiful woman, it is more the multiple positions Deneuve occupies in the film which comprise the freedom that role obtains for the princess she plays, who is transformed through this classical fairytale journey. Jack Zipes tells us that the fairy tale produces a kind of uncanny estrangement, and notes that Bruno Bettelheim views this as a mechanism for working through deep anxiety and psychic problems. In other words, the confrontation with the unfamiliar, the estrangement from the norm, forces the child to identify with the 'dislocated' protagonist, who must reconstitute the home on a new plane.[9] We can read what Rodney Hill calls the 'quasi-Brechtian' nature of the film[10] as a critical factor in its successful production of an ironic distance towards (here, not towards Bettelheim's child's fears but) the ideal of 'essential' femininity (and all of the claustrophobia that entails). Further we can note how this film retains the proto-feminist origins of the genre (Perault was an advocate of women's rights and this period of the fairy tale corresponds with the beginning of radical transformations in the composition of society and the role of women).[11]

Green Porno is the title of not one but a compilation of short films in which Rossellini masquerades as a broad range of non-human entities such as shrimp, spiders, whales, and so on. Not restricted to a Disney-approved spectrum of nature or of its representation, she does not hesitate to take on animal sexuality, consistently repressed in American (and human!) media. In each

she performs an act of empathy, by overlaying her own identity with that of the being in question, and in so doing distancing herself from her 'own' sexual identity or (as it has been inscribed across the public realm as stardom) as a woman, and as a particularly objectified woman – a film star and cover magazine model. This occurs across numerous examples, in which she adopts bisexual or male positions frequently wearing penises (of bees, or whales, to name two extremes) as well as taking on positions of beings without any sexuality which can be anthropomorphised, such as barnacles or sea stars. Across the series, she utilises several rhetorical techniques to elicit empathy, and in the third season is much more explicit about the link between various animals and human behavior, marking a deliberate eco-critical link between animals and their destruction at human hands.



Fig. 2: Rossellini's Masquerade is one non-objectifying empathy.

Rossellini's animal masquerade is like Deneuve's in that each show their face simultaneous with that of the animal, producing a doubling and a potential destabilisation of the status of each star's face. However, it is useful to point out their broad differences, as they both have a distinct profile, so to speak. Deneuve dons the donkey skin because it is a sign of ugliness and abjection, the opposite of the beauty which drove her father the king to pursue her with adulterous lust. Crucially, this donkey skin is also an empowering mask which allows the young princess access to the (otherwise dangerous) forest (as a

beast); she moves from the road to the forest in slow-motion leaps, which is a direct quote from Cocteau's film (when the scullery maid enters the beast's castle and is transformed into a princess). Here, the donkey skin functions as a form of complex dissimulation providing her with access to power (the forest, and the magical spaces she controls within it) and provides a cover for this power. Deneuve's princess has no empathy for the donkey (which in any case, she has had killed as a last impossible request to ward off her father). Rather, she takes on the power which is inherent to the French language, as Derrida notes: *la bête, la femme*.^[12] She also provides a face to that which, in Western philosophy and culture, has none. As Emmanuel Levinas has famously elaborated, the 'ethics' of the face requires that the face be naked. An animal cannot be naked, as it is never clothed and, in any case, is presumed to lack the self-consciousness for the shame this would entail (recall, this is the same shame that justifies mankind's dominion over all animals – and women). The 'face', here, is comprised of two objectified beings, caught in an apparatus both visual, cultural, and philosophical. Together they combine to form a new face, so to speak, and with it, perhaps, a new ethics, an ethics outside the 'law' and its violence.

The human face, as Tom Gunning explains, comprises the foundational moment of the cinema, and also has its own extra-cinematic genealogy (from portraiture and the development of the subject in the 17th century to the intersection of photography and science in the 19th century, the face comprises a privileged place in the inscription of the human identity in the modern era).^[13] Of note for us is the confluence of the origin of the modern age in the 17th century and the elaboration of a theory of portraiture which was devised by Louis XIV's^[14] premier painter Charles Lebrun. LeBrun developed a system of facial expressions for painters to reference when painting, a system of visual patterns which denoted emotion and also character.^[15] LeBrun linked character and facial structure and 'further developed traditional analogies between human faces and those of animals and the qualities they represent'.^[16] This kind of linkage of the human and animal character was not uncommon at this time (prior to the development of more subtle mechanisms of observation of the human face, beginning with photography). The human face has a history, and one with a deep and expansive non-human genealogy as well.

As we consider how to approach these very special examples of masquerade, one might first turn to the use, placement, and function of the word

'mask' in the generic sense of hiding one's identity beneath another (something which is not the same as merely hiding, or absence). It is immediately clear the mask does not function at all in this way. The masks here call attention to themselves even as they conceal, because of the importance of the eyes, and in both *Green Porno* and *Donkey Skin* the look of each woman is deliberate, indeed, it is *doubled* by the look of the animal visage.

What is this animal look? Derrida writes in his extraordinary study *The Animal that Therefore I Am* that 'the gaze called "animal" offers my sight the abyssal limit of the human ...'[17] It is this animal look which emerges from a visage – but not a face, which is the crux of our analysis here of 'femininity as masquerade'. The animal look has the potential to intervene in the power relations governed by the objectifying 'male gaze', but can the reverse also be true? It is worth noting that Derrida's observations arise from an encounter between himself and his (female) cat who stares at him as he stands naked in his bathroom. Derrida writes that he is

caught naked, in silence, by the gaze of the animal, for example, the eyes of a cat ... the single, incomparable and original experience of the impropriety that would come from appearing in truth naked, in front of the insistent gaze of the animal, a benevolent or pitiless gaze, surprised or cognicent. The gaze of a seer, a visionary, or an extra lucid blind one ... [18]

Derrida is open to this (other) look, and he is open to this (other) feminine look as well. Unlike the philosophers who continue to use the word 'animal' to 'corral all living creatures' under the single term 'animal', regardless of all differences, including sexual differences, an animal, in Derrida's words is 'whose sexuality is as a matter of principle undifferentiated'. [19] Insisting on the absolute singularity of the cat and her sexuality, Derrida embraces the breadth of animal sexualities in their absolute difference.

So, what is happening when Deneuve looks out from beneath her Donkey skin? She peers out, but her Donkey head 'looks' also. Rossellini looks, sometimes with her eyes alone, sometimes with multiple eyes (as when she presents herself as a spider). Her look, too, is mediated by her masquerade – it has become, like the gaze of the cat, a look outside of the socially and culturally-designated space of human relations. These relations, we must recall here, are in no way balanced but just the opposite. There is a way that both of these *returned looks* disturb the paradigmatic alignment of gender and the gaze, gender and the 'to be looked at' quality of the feminine and the masculine *human*, whose look masters what it calls the animal. [20]

While feminist film theory has long established how the woman's body is routinely objectified as an object of fascination for the 'male gaze',[21] it is important to remember that the female star's image is also (or because of this) potentially very powerful. The cinematic apparatus both empowers and undercuts the female actor, and part of this occurs through narrative (the role played by female characters within the trajectory of the film's storyline) and part through the objectification of the female body through excessive attentiveness to her dress (jewelry, hair, hats, shoes), an attention routinely expressed through a fragmentation of the female body through editing and reinforced through the intra-diegetic look by male protagonists at female characters.

The whole language of whole/part or self/other, language-speech-civilization/mute-nature (and so forth) has been easily transferred from woman to animal and vice-versa, a situation which is both structural and historical; the woman so endlessly, in the cinema and elsewhere, aligned with some component of 'nature' which is both outside of the law (animals have very few 'rights') and *beyond* the law (the literal and metaphoric space of the 'wild' is the space outside of the law – animals do not obey laws). As elaborated first in Thomas Hobbes theory of the Leviathan this space outside of the law is also the space from which the sovereign emerges; thus, the fascinating connections between animality and human sovereignty, as Jacques Derrida presents in his last seminars on *The Beast and the Sovereign*. [22]

For a whole school of feminists, the alignment of women with nature in general and the animal in particular in patriarchal ideology is something to be embraced and re-articulated in a positive fashion. Here eco-feminists such as Carol Adams come to mind, and generally the philosophical stance that women should embrace and identify with animals and reject the violent, objectifying alignment of a patriarchy that justifies the whole range of 'brutal' practices from industrial slaughter to hunting animals to extinction.[23] So, in answer to the Cartesian split between subject and object (human and non-human, thinking being and non-thinking being, indeed the split within the human herself) which has implicated women as much as other non-white European humans and non-humans, we might also look for another way to describe the spectrum of beings in its fullness and outside of this model.

Derrida can help. Inadvertently, he helps us understand the interplay between human and animal that is opened up in masquerade. If we move back to Derrida's encounter with his cat, as he stands naked in his bathroom, the cat's look is one that is capable of great power – that cat's gaze emerges from

a face which is not a face, nor a mask. What, relatedly, can we further surmise about the cinematic paradigm and the introduction of the animal into its architecture, one described by Jean Baudry as an ‘apparatus’ which places the individual viewer in a state of radical misrecognition (similar to Lacan’s mirror stage), assuming a god-like omniscience in relation to the scene before him, yet, in fact, trapped in something much more like a Platonic cave?[24] This gaze (of the camera), if we recall, is one which objectifies the female body, and this is reproduced by the gaze of the spectator. Derrida’s foundational scenario in his bathroom is also one which involves the look, but here the animal *returns* the gaze, blunting, at the very least, the normative mechanisms of vision and knowledge or mastery. What we see, what Derrida attempts to capture, in his life-long battle against the certainties of Eurocentric truths, is the possibility of an empathy, but *not of identification*. [25]

‘Womanliness as Masquerade’ was published in 1929 in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* by Joan Riviere, one of the very few women in Freud’s early circle; Melanie Klein, who she worked with him on child psychology, was the other. Riviere’s place in any feminist history of intellectual thought would be undisputed, but her work lay in obscurity until it was picked up by Jacques Lacan in the late 1950s and subsequently discovered by feminist film studies in the 1970s, as theorists confronting the systemic objectification of woman/women on screen and the impossible place they held as spectators sought to find an operable psychoanalytic framework for a new orientation to film studies. [26]

One of the components that was so attractive about this theory for film theorists was the way that Riviere describes the interplay between performance and femininity, something of great importance in the cinema. Riviere’s thesis is of enormous interest because she shows femininity *is* a performance – or masquerade. The performance is meant, on one level, to avoid the suspicion that she possesses power (psychoanalytically, the phallus); it is a profound dissimulation. To help clarify this, we might turn to Riviere’s case study involving a professional woman who is very successful speaking in public. Afterwards, however, she puts on an excessive display of femininity, as if to reassure her (male) colleagues that she has, in Riviere’s words, ‘nothing in her pockets’, testifying to her own castration (she does not ‘have’ the phallus). But there is something not quite right about this display of femininity:

[w]hen lecturing, not to students but to colleagues, she chooses particularly feminine clothes. Her behavior on these occasions is also marked by an inappropriate feature: she becomes flippant and joking, so much so that it has caused immediate comment

and rebuke. She has to treat the situation of displaying her masculinity to men as a 'game', as something not real, as a joke. [27]

Stephen Heath reminds us of the comparison made in the 1970s by *Cahiers du Cinéma* between Marlene Dietrich in *Morocco* and Joan Fontaine in *Rebecca*. In it they observe that Dietrich wears

all the accoutrements of femininity *as* accoutrements, does the poses *as* poses, gives the act as an act (as in so many films she is a cabaret performer) ... Dietrich gives the masquerade in excess and so *proffers* the masquerade, take it or leave it, holding and flaunting the male gaze; not a defense against but a derision of masculinity (remember the bric-à-brac of male attire that Dietrich affects in her most famous poses – top hat, dress jacket, cane). [28]

This comparison is so potent because of Fontaine's radical refusal of masquerade, and Hitchcock's trademark sadistic handling of her within the film because of this (from the oversized doors she grasps like a small child to her wardrobe and make-up, to the basic arc of the narrative itself), offering up the dead Rebecca as 'real' (fake!) femininity – that is as spectacle and performance – and pleasure. If we return to Riviere's essay for a moment and to one of her most famous passages, it all becomes much clearer:

[w]omanliness therefore could be assumed and worn as a mask, both to hide the possession of masculinity and to avert the reprisals expected if she was found to possess it – much as a thief will turn out his pockets and ask to be searched to prove that he has not stolen the goods. The reader may now ask how I define womanliness, or where I draw the line between genuine womanliness and the 'masquerade'. My suggestion is not, however, that there is any such difference; whether radical or superficial, they are the same thing. [29]

Since this is all based in the psychoanalytic debate about sexuality, it is not surprising that it all feels a bit like a Möbius-strip. Without pretending to adequately address the spectrum of complex issues raised by the theory of masquerade, it may be enough to merely point out the oscillating nature of sexuality when it is encountered as play and performance and, even, to see how this provides an (re-) opening toward the animal.

If we return now to our two screens, our two examples of 'womanliness as animal masquerade', we can begin to see the power of the intersection of two globally-known constructs of 'femininity' endorsed and branded by the names Chanel and Lancôme, to see these two actors each embrace the animal in a radical way and through this, and in the context of each performative frame, to find their own freedom while taking the phallus and blocking the

otherwise abyssal movement of identity as lack. They do this, each in their own distinct way, by 'playing' with the symbolic, by rejecting the veracity or power of the whole panoply of strategies which designate 'human', 'authenticity', 'ethics', 'morality', and so on. It is a blatant refusal of Levinas' 'ethics' of the 'naked face' or the cultural denial of animal sexuality or individuation.

In the case of *Peau d'âne*, Deneuve's beautiful princess flees the solitary, vulnerable, and claustrophobic position of a perfectly-performed femininity. She, like the donkey which before its demise is valued by the king. Her flight from her father the king requires her to masquerade, in a sense paralleling the masquerade described by Riviere (in her refusal of her previous, passive, Fontaine-like persona as passive daughter). Instead, Deneuve's character takes on a semiotic mobility which has the quality of the second-order masquerade performed by Dietrich, a doubled-alienation and awareness of, in semiotic-psychoanalytic terms, the lack which forms the basis of subjectivity. It is also, in terms of the animal, the appropriation of the sovereign's position beyond the law (and therefore no longer subject to it). The key point here is that Deneuve's journey is one that teaches her how to take on multiple subject positions, to learn how to manipulate and to control her surroundings, and one which also undercuts any simple idea of happiness in Demy's post-modern rendering of the ending (in which Deneuve is clearly still in love with her father despite winning the prince).

For Rossellini, the adoption of the myriad beings to whom she lends her famous face (while her body, on the other hand, is constantly taking on the signs of animal 'nudity') is very much for education, for a viewer who will understand, somehow, the plight of a shrimp if it is offered by Rossellini, dressed as a shrimp (and the information that for every one shrimp caught in vast corporate nets, ten others are lost: 'These lost lives', Rossellini/shrimp tells the viewer, 'are called by-catch.'). Rossellini's masquerade is at once classically psychoanalytic (she inverts the passive position of 'true' femininity in her active relation to the signs of sexuality) but is also very philosophical. When Rossellini states, as she does repeatedly, across each film, 'If I were (any animal)', she is taking on the classical Cartesian model of defining life. Derrida has demonstrated how Descartes manages to keep all life away from the statement 'I am', [30] in a chilling confirmation of the foundational nature of Eurocentric separation of human and nature. Rossellini contests this with her assertion 'If I were...' and, at the same time, performs the 'play' of masquerade across species as well as sex, embracing the 'I' as shifter, without the solidity of custom, violence, and fear.

In one of her films she is dressed as a whale, and shows how whales mate. She takes both sexual positions at certain points in the series, but the image of her ‘proffering’ the whale penis caused many, including the Sundance label itself, to caution viewers because of the ‘explicit sexual content’! This nervousness around animal sexuality is only matched by the degree of denial a whole culture has maintained regarding ‘animal’ sexualities, which as a matter of principle have been ‘left undifferentiated’.[31] This animal masquerade (and arguably Deneuve’s as well)[32] now appropriates elements of the assertive version of this formulation, one that finds its own identity outside of the phallic, symbolic (male/human) realm.

We might conclude with this quote from Virginia Woolf’s *Three Guineas*, which oddly matches Rossellini’s whale masquerade as it presents the ‘naked’ animal, yet now ensconced in the symbolic, ironically displayed through Rossellini’s encoding of costume and performance as ‘nature’. In the meantime, the assertion of the ‘natural’ metonymy between man’s erect posture and his erect phallus leads Derrida to conclude this is what provides the (justification for the) moral basis of man’s sovereignty: his capacity for shame.[33] So the doubling of femininity as masquerade performed by Dietrich (of the symbolic guarantees of male superiority) has, then, much to do with the doubling of masquerade performed by Rossellini and Deneuve. ‘Woman’ and ‘animal’ disrupt the stability of their placement within the regime of power – here, as it is visually mediated. Stephen Heath quotes Virginia Woolf along a similar vein, as it conveys a returned look which dismantles the certainties of patriarchal identity:

[y]our clothes in the first place make us gape with astonishment ... every button, rosette and stripe seems to have some symbolic meaning. [34]

Limoine-Luccioni writes of the phallus and feathers:

[a]ll the trappings of authority, hierarchy, order, position make the man his phallic identity: ‘if the penis were the phallus, men would have no need of feathers or ties or medals ... Display [*parade*], just like the masquerade, thus betrays a flaw: no one has the phallus.’ [35]

We leave the last image to Rossellini-as-Whale, as she ‘plays’ with identity and with the line between human and animal as much as the other ideological and political structures which nail subjectivities and lives to claustrophobic

or objectified positions. The sexuality denied animals is placed front and center, and with it the sexuality so often denied to women. Time to take up the phallus, even if no-one 'has' it.



Fig. 3: Rossellini's whale penis shows that 'no one has the phallus'.

Author

Isabelle Freda writes about intersections between screen culture and power, with an eye to revealing strategies for resistance. Her published essays include work on Ronald Reagan at Bitburg and Bergen-Belsen; American film culture, the Bomb, and 9/11; drone warfare, spectatorship, and knowledge; eco-critical cinema and the restoration of nature; Cold War biopolitics and the presidential campaign film. She lives in New York City, where she teaches in the film studies and production program in the Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University.

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Notes

- [1] Derrida 2008, p. 7.
- [2] Lynch's film *Blue Velvet* (1986) features Rossellini in a femme fatale/victim role which defies easy narrative explanation or psychological summation.
- [3] In both cases the narrative/patriarchal 'balance' to this power of performance is achieved through an assertion of masochism which feels obligatory and empty, a common structural quality to films with powerful female leads.
- [4] Oliver 2009, p. 145.
- [5] The ascription of all non-human beings as 'animal' is put under erasure in the title (in homage to Derrida's *Grammatology*, among other works). In the interests of not distracting the reader by this or other methods (such as Derrida's proposed replacement term, 'animot') I continue to use this word, under protest – and under erasure.
- [6] Rossellini 2009.
- [7] Berger 1980, p. 12.
- [8] A dress the color of the sun, the moon, and the weather. There is no room here to discuss Demy's choices of color and mise-en-scene, as it is overtly animistic and natural, with castle blending with garden and thrones of lions.
- [9] Zipes 2011.

- [10] To complicate what he describes as the 'vener of the traditional fairy-tale' (implying a lack of critical distance in the genre). Duggan 2013.
- [11] The position of the king is of much interest in this regard, as his pursuit of his daughter parallels Louis XIV's numerous sexual conquests of all ages. More important though is the nascent emergence of a public sphere outside of the court of Versailles, and one that was developed by women, who developed the 'art of conversation'. See the fascinating account of this century-long development in France by Cravert 2006.
- [12] Derrida writes '[o]n the one hand, first oscillation, the sexual difference marked at least by French grammar (la ... le), which seemed by chance ... to confirm that the beast was often the living thing to be subjected, dominated, domesticated, mastered, like, by a not insignificant analogy, the woman, the slave, or the child.' (2008, p. 66).
- [13] Gunning 1997, p. 3.
- [14] See Greg Mitman's (1999) marvelous study of this and other aspects of 'staging' wildlife on film and television (because, well, wildlife is, in its native state, 'boring'). Of note is the post-war development of Sea World as a form of commodified entertainment, and the suppression of all natural sexual and aggressive behavior, here reading the dolphin 'face' as one that 'laughs'. One might benefit greatly from a study of the mis-reading of human and animal faces in the modern period, as the individual subject, newly mobile as both a worker and consumer, turns a newly legible (and newly vulnerable) face towards a hostile public sphere. The construction of the feminine face in make-up and through photography is a tale which has been told, but not well enough. The idealised face as it changes over time is always one small step away from the grimace of the mannequin or the mechanically-confused smile of the cyborg.
- [15] The face would later be scrutinised by the photographic apparatus (most famously, by Charcot), which developed alongside a developing psychology which had abandoned the 18th century system of character 'types' as much as it acknowledged the new, and bewildering, mobility of individuals within capitalist society, now no longer pinioned to their locale or livelihood for life.
- [16] Gunning 1997 p. 47.
- [17] Derrida 2008, p. 12.
- [18] Ibid., pp. 3-4.
- [19] Oliver 2009, p. 147.
- [20] Pick 2011, p. 104.
- [21] See for example the classic feminist theory essay in this regard, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' by Laura Mulvey. Mulvey describes how the female body is objectified both within and without the cinematic narrative, the object of diegetic as well as extra-diegetic looks (that is, the woman is looked at within the film, most overtly, if she is performing on stage, when the film spectator is aligned with the diegetic spectator in the audience). The female spectator is left with only two choices: a masochistic identification with the objectified woman, or a sadistic identification with the male position. The theory of masquerade helped Mulvey reconsider this binarism.
- [22] Derrida writes: '[t]he point was not merely to study, from Aristotle to contemporary discussions (Foucault, Agamben), the canonical texts around the interpretation of man as a "political animal". We had above all to explore the "logics" organizing both the submission of the beast (and the living being) to political sovereignty, and an irresistible and overloaded analogy between a beast and a sovereign supposed to share a space of some exteriority with respect to "law" and "right" (outside the law: above the law: origin and foundation of the law).' (2008, p. xiii).
- [23] See for example Adams & Donovan 1995.
- [24] Baudry & Williams 1974-1975.
- [25] Here I am referring to 'identification' as it occurs through the codes of classical narrative, including the focalisation of character through the 'male gaze'. The alignment of this gaze with that of the male/human 'look' which objectifies the animal is both obvious and in need of much more detailed analysis than is possible to accomplish here in any but the most provisional way.

- [26] See Johnston 1975. Mary Anne Doane would make the most significant impact on the field with her essay 'Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator' (1982).
- [27] Riviere, p. 39.
- [28] Heath 1986, pp. 57-58.
- [29] Riviere p. 307.
- [30] Derrida 2008, p. 72. Derrida shows how Descartes provides a basis for a denial of all living things in his determination that thinking provides evidence of existence, *not breath*.
- [31] Derrida quoted in Oliver 2009, pp. 147.
- [32] The sexual implications of Deneuve's 'donkey skin' remain to be adequately mined. The hair, the smell, and her mobility in the woods all suggest a transgressive sexuality.
- [33] Oliver 2009, p. 145. Derrida does not discuss the inability of human males to dissimulate their erections, linking this to the larger debate he has with Lacan regarding animal's ability or in ability to dissimulate (lie, fake, pretend – all components of the Symbolic Lacan presumes to lie outside the realm of animality).
- [34] Quoted in Heath 1986, p. 56.
- [35] Ibid. He is quoting Lemoine-Luccioni 1983.