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Sex, Violence & Kubrick:
The representation of Gender and the Treatment of
Violence in Three Stanley Kubrick Films.

by

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Introduction

In this thesis I wish to look at the representation of gender and treatment of violence in some of Stanley Kubricks' most recent films. I have chosen Kubrick as he is a mainstream film-maker who has managed to hold onto his independence and artistic freedom. He is extremely popular and at the same time controversial, tending not to speak at length about his work. His films span generic and historical boundaries; he likes to work with not-too-distant futures and with ambiguous pasts, each one of his films being totally individual. I have decided to concentrate on three of his four most recent films, *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *The Shining* (1980), and *Full Metal Jacket* (1987). *Barry Lyndon* (1975) was not as popular as the other three, was not a commercial success and is unfortunately not available in this country.

My first chapter deals with *A Clockwork Orange*, which was greeted with mixed reviews, with feelings on the film running high, (see appendix). One of the elements that may have caused 'high-brow' offense was the link the film made between high art and violence, which I will discuss in relation to Robert Hughe's article "The Decor of Tomorrow's Hell". Then I will go on to discuss how a film is made of more than words, and how by employing the techniques of Brecht, Kubrick is trying to keep us at a distance from the violence on screen. I will then relate the film to Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", a near contemporary of the film. One of the main problems with *A Clockwork Orange* is the fact that it is not available in the British Isles, and in my appendix to the chapter I will take a brief look at the controversy surrounding the film.

My second chapter will deal with *The Shining*, a 1980 horror film, which has often been seen as a parody of the whole genre. The male protagonist takes his wife and child out of their normal environment to where they are isolated from the outside world, and subsequently all communication breaks down. I will discuss the bond that Jack makes with Lloyd and Grady, and how the woman who appears in room 237 represents Jack's attitude to

women. I will go on to discuss the film in relation to Carol J. Clover's writings on the horror/slasher genre.

My third and final chapter is *Full Metal Jacket*. The film shows the Vietnam War from the white, male soldier's perspective. I will discuss the two part nature of the film. In the first half the boys are transformed into killers and in the second they are let loose in Vietnam, the two halves being very different from each other. I will discuss the film in relation to Selig and Modleski's writings, the link the film makes between sex and violence and how contact with femininity is portrayed as a threat to the integrity of the soldiers.

Chapter One **A CLOCKWORK ORANGE**

Stanley Kubrick opened his 1971 film, *A Clockwork Orange* in New York on Monday 20th. December. The film, which was made in Britain, was Kubrick's most controversial and was greeted with both acclaim and disgust. Based on Anthony Burgess' 1962 novel, it is set in a not too distant future, which Philip French describes as "an Orwellian, and Orwell-influenced, dystopia that combines the worst of both socialism and capitalism."¹ It was voted best film by the New York film critics. Vincent Canby, in the New York Times said "it even dazzles as it turns the old red vino to ice"², whilst Clayton Riley claimed the film encouraged a position that was "both criminally irresponsible and stupidly naive."³ The film received Academy Award nominations for Best Picture, Best Screenplay and Best Direction. In 1972 it won Best Foreign Film at the Venice Film Festival, all this before it went on general release in Britain in 1973. It was immediately banned by some local authorities, Louth and Accrington being the first two. Peregrine Worsthorpe in the Sunday Telegraph called it "muck in the name of art"⁴, and said it was a "sick film for a sick society", while in the same paper Margaret Hinxman hailed it as a possible masterpiece.⁵ *A Clockwork Orange* ran in London's West End for 61 weeks before Kubrick, who was bitterly affronted by the response to the film, withdrew it from circulation in all 16mm and 35mm prints, It was not even available to private film groups. The film is still not available in the British Isles.⁶

1. French, 1990,
p.85.

2. Kagan, 1972,
p.182.

3. Kagan, 1972,
p.182.

4. Robertson, 1989,
p.147.

5. Robertson, 1989,
p.147.

6. Robertson, 1989,
p.149.

The relationship between art and violence plays an important role in *A Clockwork Orange*. Kubrick has used art object in several of his other films. In *Paths of Glory* late 17th. Century and early 18th. Century paintings decorate the chateau; in *Lolita* Humbert Humbert shoots Quilty through an 18th. Century portrait; paintings also feature in *Barry Lyndon*.

In the Karova Milkbar Alex and his droogs get ready for, and relax after, bouts of ultra-violence. The furniture consists of white fibre-glass nudes reminiscent of the sculpture of Allen Jones. Most of the scenes in the film involve some form of violence, and most occur within a theatrical or artistic context. The tramp who is beaten sings 'Molly Malone', the attack on Mr. and Mrs. Alexander is to 'Singin' in the Rain'. A Rococco landscape hangs over the derelict theatre where Billy Boy and his gang attack the girl on the dis-used stage. The camera first shows us the Rococco splendour before it slowly moves down on the violent act underneath. This links the two contrasting elements, implying that our culture is built on aggression, linking art and violence. Perhaps the most interesting of these scenes is the Catlady's murder. We first see her in a position similar to one of her paintings. The room is decorated with pop-art images of women and on the dresser is a huge phallic sculpture. When Alex and the Catlady fight, he wields the phallus, she defends herself with a small bust of Beethoven: Male aggression and creativity, violence and rationality doing battle. When he finally delivers the fatal blow, her open mouth takes on the appearance of one of her paintings. Her murder could be seen as a metaphorical rape, as he kills her with the giant phallus.

Alex's love for ultra-violence equals only his love for Beethoven; it accompanies him on his murderous rampages and brings on his most violent fantasies. Cagin and Dray write "whether violence is like Beethoven, a cultural taste, or Beethoven is like violence, an animal drive, it is provocative to regard them as equals, as Alex does."⁷ Alex's own creativity is manifested in music and violence: the two are linked. When he is scientifically cured of his criminality he is simultaneously deprived of his response to art and beauty. Robert Hughes writes,

what might seem gratuitous is very pointed indeed. At issue is the popular 19th. century idea that art is good for you, that the purpose of the fine arts is to provide moral uplift. Kubrick's message, amplified from Burgess' novel, is the opposite: art has no ethical purpose. there is no religion of beauty. Art serves, instead to promote ecstatic consciousness. the kind of ecstasy depends on the person who is having it.⁸

7. Cagin & Dray,
1984, p.92.

8. Hughes, 1971,
p.59.

When Alex rocks the white phallus and the Catlady shrieks "don't touch that, it's a very important work of art", her cry sounds redundant and ridiculous. Hughes feels that the film creates a very deliberate impression of cultural objects cut loose from any power to communicate or be noticed. They have no reality with which to connect.⁹

Kubrick has often been criticised for his amoral treatment of violence. In *A Clockwork Orange* he pits a corrupt Alex against a corrupt state and ultimately Alex is the winner. The film comes full circle like any mainstream Hollywood model, though with a difference: instead of going from order, to disorder, and back to order; we start with vicious Alex terrorising society, and finish with vicious Alex, only this time he is free to commit his crimes with the blessing of the minister for the Interior himself. The film portrays freedom in such a way that for one person to be free, many must suffer. Kubrick portrays aggression as an inherent part of human nature, and ultimately his view of the world is pessimistic. Kubrick believes in the fatedness of evil and the unredeemability of a violent being: "even 'good', 'normal' people who live in a house called 'Home' are portrayed as capable of a violence equal to Alex's 'abnormal' behaviour."¹⁰ Kubrick told a Times reporter that man is an ignoble savage,

he is irrational, brutal, weak, silly ... I'm interested in the brutal and violent nature of man because it is a true picture of him. Any attempt to create social institutions on a false view of the nature of man is probably doomed to failure.¹¹

In the first part of the film we detest what Alex is doing, yet we admire his vitality and honesty, when he is imprisoned we cannot avoid sympathy. Kolker feels that by the time Alex is reborn to his former self, "response is so thoroughly on his side that it is hard to tell whether Kubrick is amused by his own powers of manipulation or agreeing with the admirability and good fortune of his character."¹²

A Clockwork Orange is itself a discourse on violence, a fable about individual and state violence, about freedom of choice.

9. Hughes, 1971,
p.59.

10. Ryan & Kellner,
1988, p.49.

11. Cagin & Dray,
1984, p.93.

12. Kolker, 1988,
p.135.

The film suggests it is better for a person to choose to commit a crime than to be forced to be good, reiterating what T.S. Elliot wrote in his 1939 essay on Baudelaire: "So far as we are human what we do must be evil or good; so far as we do evil or good, we are human; and it is better, in a paradoxical way, to do evil than to do nothing."¹³ The film is violent in nature - it must be, as the subject is that violence. What Kubrick is emphasising is the beauty that Alex sees in that violence. It is portrayed in a highly stylised manner, we see very little real blood and no actual rape or murder is shown. Kubrick reduces the violence to dance-like movements, and at one point Alex comments how "the colours of the real world only seem really real when you viddy them on the screen."

There have been several decades of research attempting to examine the effects of viewing violence, the findings are not conclusive. The authors of 'Women Viewing Violence', after much research, claim they are uncertain about whether the depiction of violence for popular consumption actually increases the occurrence of violence in daily life.¹⁴ Burgess himself said that a piece of literature cannot have this effect,¹⁵ a point he stresses with Alex's use of the Bible: a book that is supposed to provoke acts of goodness from people. The Bible, which is the founding text of Western culture, is extremely violent. Alex concentrates on that evil, bringing on fantasies of whipping Christ "dressed in the height of Roman fashion." Kubrick is bringing Burgess' point a step further providing us with a violent film which we are free to use as we wish, but which can not *make* us act violently.

Kubrick, by using music and setting in a bid to keep us at a distance from the rape and murder, is employing the techniques of Brecht, "with its emphasis on intellectual scrutiny and alienation techniques to prevent indiscriminate emotional identification."¹⁶ Instead of having a passive response to the work, the audience must be made conscious by separating the elements of that work. But Kubrick's distancing methods perhaps do not work in the way they are intended. Burgess used the teenage 'Nadsat' to act as a screen to separate the reader from the violence in the book. On screen, combined with Alex's 'look', and his vitality, the language draws us in. After the initial few minutes, when we are used to the

12. Kolker, 1988,
p.135.

14. Schlesinger,
Dobash, Dobash,
Weaver, 1992,
p.169.

15. Parsons, 1993.
Without Walls

16. Titterington,
1981, p.120.

meaning, it helps to include us in the action. Kubrick is also employing distancing techniques during the stage-rape scene. The scene is mostly in long-shot, therefore we are viewing from a distance, the unusual music and setting being used in a bid to keep us at that distance. Our position as one of the audience is emphasised by the use of the stage, and the act is offered up to us as an entertainment (later we see Alex victimised on a stage). Perhaps Kubrick is intending us to question our own interpretation of entertainment.

Ironically it is images of violence that turns Alex off violence. As Alex undergoes the Ludovico technique he wears the "electronic plugs of a Frankenstein crown of thorns transforming him into the ultimate Clockwork man, a two way mirror, at once an object for others to contemplate and a voyeur."¹⁷ The Ludovico scientists who sit behind Alex and watch the same films that are making him sick, remain unconcerned by both the screen violence and the violence they are perpetrating against Alex. The scientist's violence is premeditated and rational, therefore more cruel.

Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" is a re-worked version of a paper given in 1973, just two years after *A Clockwork Orange* was first released. It was the starting point for a large body of writing on gender identification and representation in film. Before looking at it in relation to *A Clockwork Orange*, I feel it is important to note that Mulvey's article is specifically looking at mainstream Hollywood models, a category into which this film does not fit. Mulvey writes that cinema plays on the socially established interpretation of sexual difference, "which controls images, erotic ways of looking, and spectacle."¹⁸ She talks of two contradictory aspects of the pleasurable structures of looking in conventional cinema. One, scopophilic

17. Nelson, 1982,
p. 156.

18. Mulvey, 1975,
p.803.

19. Mulvey, 1975,
p.808.

arises from pleasure in using another person as an object of sexual stimulation through sight. The second developed through narcissism and the constitution of the ego comes from identification with the image seen.¹⁹

Mulvey talks of how man is reluctant to gaze at his exhibitionist like, "hence the split between spectacle and narrative supports the man's role as the active one of forwarding the story, making things happen".²⁰ In *A Clockwork Orange* there is only one developed character, Alex, the only person it is possible to identify with. He is the one who moves the story along, he is 'our friend and humble narrator'. Although we detest his actions we have no choice but to identify with him, male or female, a general point of cross gender identification that at this stage Mulvey does not take into consideration. Although Clover writes of how we continually identify across gender lines,²¹ in this film the notion of cross gender identification is not as clear as in the horror genre that Clover is dealing with. In the 'slasher' films the portrayal of gender is not as defined as in *A Clockwork Orange*, the females have traditionally masculine traits and the male's masculinity is very often in question. In *A Clockwork Orange* Alex and his droogs' masculinity is exaggerated to the extreme: they wear codpieces over their trousers, masks with phallic noses and their favourite weapon is the club. Though Kubrick may be offering us parodies of male aggression, it could also be seen as a barrier to female identification. A voice-over is used to establish the primacy of Alex's point of view (as in *Full Metal Jacket*). At one point Alex refers to us, the audience, as "my brothers and only friends", pointing to the fact that Alex lives in a world where he can only relate to other males. Pauline Kael feels that Kubrick tricks us into identifying with Alex, by making his victims less human and likable than their attacker.²² There are many ways to justify identifying with Alex: he is alone against the system, fighting repression; he is also not quite as bad as the government and its scientists. Kael feels that Kubrick intentionally, removed many of Alex's nasty habits that appeared in the book, so there are fewer obstacles to our identification with him.²³ Silverman rejects the notion that masculine pleasure involves mastery²⁴ and though Alex is in control for the first part of the film, he is manipulated, beaten and humiliated in the second half, we continue to identify with him although he is experiencing pain and loss.

Alex lives in a world where his images of women are his dutiful mother and rapable objects. The images of femininity that

20. Mulvey, 1975,
p.810.

21. Clover, 1992,
p.46.

22. Kael, 1975,
p.374.

23. Kael, 1975,
p.375.

24. Silverman,
1979,p.2.

surround him are the erotic, inviting nudes at the Karova Milkbar and the erotic paintings that decorate his room and the Catlady's house. Dim goes as far as to mockingly apologise to "Luz", a Karova nude, as she dispenses her milk-plus. Mulvey writes

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness.²⁵

The stage-rape in the dis-used theatre is executed in a strip-tease, dance-like style. "Women displayed as sexual object is the bit motif of erotic spectacle: from pin-ups to strip-tease"²⁶ (Mulvey). Pauline Kael goes as far as to say that we have the pleasure of watching the gang strip the struggling girl, that she is stripped for our benefit and it is the purest exploitation.²⁷

Mulvey talks of the male spectator projecting his look onto his screen surrogate, "so that the power of the erotic look, both giving a satisfying sense of omnipotence."²⁸ When Alex enters the record shop the marching music compliments his confident stride, we are impressed as are the two teenage onlookers, anyone identifying with Alex can share his control, even if only temporarily. Through the narrative his screen surrogate gains control and possession of the woman. Her eroticism is subject to the male star alone and by identification with him the spectator can indirectly possess her too.²⁹ In the last scene in *A Clockwork Orange* Alex is free, in control and he 'gets the girl'. His last fantasy is himself and a semi-naked woman being applauded by two lines of spectators dressed in Ascot fashions. This is the image of Alex that we are left with. Kubrick has played with his audiences' expectations, the film's vicious protagonist gets a happy ending.

25. Mulvey, 1975,
p.808-9.

26. Mulvey, 1975,
p.89.

27. Kael, 1975,
p.377.

28. Mulvey, 1975,
p.810.

29. Mulvey, 1975,
p.811.

Appendix to Chapter One

A Clockwork Orange caused uproar in Britain and was only allowed to run for 61 weeks. The debate on the film at the time was thrust into the political arena when Labour MP Maurice Edelman attacked it in public.¹ Mary Whitehouse on behalf of the new National Viewers and Listeners Association called on the Home Secretary Robert Carr to ban the film.²

In 1972 the Secretary of the BBFC wrote to the City of Leeds town clerk defending the decision not to ban the film. The letter read:

Censorship of this film would undoubtedly be seen publicly as the censorship of ideas. The film is, in its stylised way, simply a vehicle for all kinds of speculation about the human spirit, and about the nature of western society. Disturbed though we were by the first half of the film which is basically a statement of some of the problems of violence, we were nevertheless satisfied by the end of the film that it could not be accused of exploitation: quite the contrary, it is a valuable contribution to the whole debate about violence.³

As Tony Parsons pointed out, the film appealed to the British teenagers' tribal soul. In a country which produced mods, rockers, skinheads and punks, the film was even good enough to suggest a new teenage cult.⁴ In Britain, attacks, rapes and murders were committed in the name of *A Clockwork Orange*, nicknamed 'clockwork crimes'. People were beaten by Droog 'look-a-likes'. A tramp was beaten, and later died from his injuries, by teenagers who blamed their actions on the film. In 1974 Jill Knight, a Conservative MP from Birmingham wrote to the BBFC blaming a murder on *A Clockwork Orange*. Again in 1974 a man battered a 79 year old woman to death and claimed that the film had influenced him.⁵

It is ironic that Burgess was making the point that a piece of literature cannot *make* you act violently. It is questionable whether these attacks would have happened without the films

1. Robertson, 1989,
p.148.

2. Robertson, 1989,
p.148.

3. Robertson, 1989,
p.147.

4. Parsons, 1993,
Without Walls.

5. Robertson, 1989,
p.148.

influence, nobody will ever know.

The film is shrouded in myth and mystery, it remains controversial and even at this stage has not been forgotten about. As the film is not available, it is impossible to have open debate about its possible effects. Kubrick has never publicly announced his reasons for withdrawing the film, but rumors claim he received death threats. If this is true it emphasises how high the feelings surrounding the film were.

Chapter Two

THE SHINING

Stanley Kubrick completed *The Shining* in 1980, an adaptation of Stephen King's 1977 novel. The combination of Kubrick's reputation, King's book and Jack Nicholson starring seemed like a recipe for a very interesting horror film, and long before the film emerged Kubrick predicted it would be one of the scariest horror films of all time. It was not surprising that horror fans were disappointed. P.L. Titterington felt that the years of work seemed inexplicable, that all the time and labour seemed to be devoted to a trivial project that collapsed under the weight of the attention it received.¹ David Robinson in *The Times*, acknowledging that Kubrick is one of the most gifted and ambitious film-makers of all time, talked of "the sad mystery" of his latest film.² Derek Malcolm felt that the Stephen King novel finally cheapens and distorts Kubrick's vision, and Alan Brien talks of how Kubrick "as so often has become so infatuated with his own baroque visual effects as to neglect story or character."³ Kubrick does not believe in ghosts or an afterlife, as King's novel does, and therefore did not focus on the evil of the hotel. Instead he concentrated on its inhabitants, the family, therefore not creating an authentic story for horror fans. Kubrick neglected many of the supernatural happenings that appear in the book. King said of Kubrick's adaptation that "Kubrick knew exactly where the scares should go and where the pay-offs should come", he found that too simple and decided to abandon the genre codes for his own construction.⁴ King sees the film as "a domestic tragedy with vague supernatural overtones."⁵ Kubrick said himself "One of the things that horror stories do is show us the archetypes of the unconscious: we can see the dark side without having to confront it directly."⁶

1. Titterington, 1981, p.117.
2. Titterington, 1981, p.117.
3. Titterington, 1981, p.117.
4. Conner, 1987, p.16.
5. Conner, 1987, p.16.
6. Conner, 1987, p.16.

Kubrick concentrates on Jack who sees his escape to the

Overlook as a way to leave behind his failures as a father, and as a teacher. He knows that he has put his family in jeopardy and needs to leave his normal world. Like in *Full Metal Jacket* the soldiers want to be "in the shit", to fuse with the Other, but the alien environment is disorganised and subsequently the male is lost. When Wendy admits to Jack that she was initially scared of the Overlook, he says he loved it from the beginning, and felt like he had been there before. This is the "unheimlich" place, the female Other. Carol J. Clover talks of the terrible place where the killer lives or lurks, and where he stages his most terrifying attacks, though here it is not dark or damp. "It often happens", Freud wrote,

That neurotic men declare that they feel there is something uncanny about the female genital organs. This 'unheimlich' place, however, is an entrance to the former heim (home) of all human beings, to the place where each of us lived once upon a time and in the beginning... in this case too then, the unheimlich is what once was heimisch, familiar; the prefix 'un' is the token of repression.⁷

The nuclear family with father at the head is seen as a claustrophobic, destructive unit. Communication breaks down within the circle of three and simultaneously with the outside world. Kubrick presents us with a series of individuals totally isolated from each other. Danny, who has no friends his own age to play with, talks to Tony. Kolker sees the way Danny uses his finger like a ventriloquist's dummy, as a "parody of human communication that never breaks out of the circle of the self".⁸ Eventually it is only Tony who is capable of communication. Jack forces his wife and child to stay away, so that he can be alone to concentrate. Wendy tries to fight her loneliness by taking any opportunity for human contact, for example her radio conversation punctuated by unnecessary 'overs' and her excessive TV watching. Halloran is also shown alone, in his Miami room, watching television.

7. Clover, 1992, p.48.
quoting Freud, p.245.

8. Titterton, 1981, p.119.

9. Titterton, 1981, p.119.

The interview which Jack has shows "the degraded level to which people talking to one another has been reduced".⁹ In a very touching scene where Jack tries to talk to Danny, they just end up sitting in silence, Danny obviously feeling awkward and scared.

The only people Jack can talk honestly with are the ghosts from the hotel's past. Even Jack's power to communicate through his writing has broken down. The phone lines go down, the roads from the Overlook are blocked, Jack then destroys the radio and the Snow Cat. The only remaining contacts with the outside world are Danny's psychic powers and the television. On the T.V. news we hear of missing people, of life sentences, of more cut-offs, the snow stopping air, road and rail transportation. Titterington sees the notion of "coldness" bringing a halt to all forms of communication being an important part of the film.¹⁰

Jack finds himself terrified of the obligation placed on him by a patriarchal society, he hates his role of father and as the domestic situation breaks down " he attempts to live out a male fantasy of the destruction of the wife and child he is supposed to love and protect."¹¹ Kolker sees that

like all of Kubrick's men , jack is trapped. Trapped by the hotel and the supernatural remnants of its past (a former caretaker killed his own wife and family). Trapped by a obligation to be father and husband that he finds untenable. He imprisons himself and his family in the hotel for a winter, a space so huge and labyrinth that it engulfs them while intensifying their already unbearable proximity. Unable to break out, like all of Kubrick's characters he seals the trap so tightly that it collapses and destroys him.¹²

In this oedipal configuration the family is a battleground for affection, and when Jack realises his family are not giving him the respect he feels he deserves, he considers "correcting them." Grady plays on Jack's masculine insecurities by commenting on Wendy's unexpected resourcefulness and wondering if Jack has the "belly" for this sort of work. So this father and boss must be destroyed (like in *Full Metal Jacket*), to ensure the survival of Wendy and Danny. This form of "cannibalism" refers back to the remark Danny makes in the car about the Donner party tragedy, where Jack characterises it as a necessary means of survival, a prediction of the events to follow. During this conversation Jack suppresses an urge to ridicule Wendy over her mistake on the location of the tragedy. Once at the hotel he openly ridicules and torments her. Kolker feels that

10. Titterington,
1981, p.119.

11. Kolker, 1988,
p.153.

12. Kolker, 1988,
p.153.

in the vastness of their fears and oppressions, Kubrick's male characters extend the effects of their oppression and repression to everything and everyone they contact. Their inability to act upon the world they create, the world that finally destroys them to enact violence upon each other and very often ... upon women.¹³

When Danny comes back from room 237 in a state of shock, after being attacked, Wendy accuses Jack of the brutalisation. We watched through Danny's eyes as he walked in the door, but then we cut to Wendy, who in turn leads us to Jack who is having "the worst nightmare" he ever had, which is the murder of his wife and child. Jack who is technically innocent, has been implicated in whatever happened in room 237. When Jack goes to the room to investigate we see a silent naked woman emerge from behind the shower curtain, she walks to Jack and they kiss, she then turns into a monstrous old hag, cackling and grabbing for Jack. This woman is presented as a beautiful sex object and simultaneously as a clinging monster, showing Jack's own fear of, and desire for women. He then lies to Wendy about what he saw, announcing that Danny must have caused his own injuries. This is where Jack seals the trap, his bond with Lloyd and the hotel is now more important than Wendy and his family. He blames his own failures on Wendy, "I've let you fuck up my life so far, but I'm not going to let you fuck this up." He talks about his responsibilities to the hotel owners, even though we have seen that Wendy is doing the work that Jack was employed to do (e.g. running the boilers). He talks of the "contract" he has signed, but Jack's contract is with himself, "with ambition, power and history, as his climactic declaration about sacrificing everything to his responsibilities to the hotel makes clear."¹⁴ Kolker writes "before his death he comes back as a demonic parody of the dutiful husband."¹⁵ As he breaks down the door he announces "Wendy, I'm home." He becomes the cliché of the long suffering, woman-hating male, the slob at the bar complaining about how his wife does not understand him swapping misogynist clichés with Lloyd. "Women, can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em". "Jack drinks his phantom drink to this phantom truth."¹⁶

In an earlier scene where Wendy and Danny comfortably

13. Kolker, 1988,
p.152.

14. Kolker, 1988,
p.152.

15. Kolker, 1988,
p.154.

16. Kolker, 1988,
p.155.

figure out the hedge maze, to find its centre "beautiful", Jack stands bored in the centre of the other maze, the hotel.

He stands over a model of the hedge maze and from a god-like view looks down on his dwarfed family which he has trapped in the maze (literally he does have them trapped in the hotel) but they, unlike Jack, have learned to negotiate the corridors of both the hotel and the hedge maze. When Wendy was initially shown around by Halloran she tells him she will need to leave a trail of breadcrumbs to find her way out. Also, Wendy and Danny are often seen outside the hotel, we first see them in their Boulder apartment, and then they take walks and play in the Overlook's grounds. Jack is never seen outside the hotel from the time he arrives until he chases Danny out at the end. Nelson writes that

Jack imitates what Borges characterises as the death-in-life of the 'North'- that yearning for a totally rationalised world without whose crevices of unreason that arouse despair in some and imagination in others - rather than the 'Souths' desire to traverse the maze and engage its multiplicity, to confront fate and choice, and to out face oblivion in an act of creation. To covet the centre of the maze as permanent resting place leads not only to death but to madness.¹⁷

P.L. Titterington in *Sight and Sound* talks of "this central image that comes to unify all the films many concerns draws on the associations of myth, and in particular the myth of the labyrinth, with the minotaur roaming its corridors .. As Nicholson becomes possessed he becomes a minotaur figure ... half man, half beast, not horned, but with an axe."¹⁸ It is in the maze that Jack, himself, is finally trapped by his son and dies. All the mazes in the film, the corridors of the hotel, the maze-like patterns on the carpet that Danny plays his cars on, are all closed circles. P.L. Titterington also notes 'the circle like movements of the camera within the corridors, the linked associations of the closed circle of the self in isolation and the closed circle of madness.'¹⁹

17. Nelson, 1982, p.207.

18. Titterington, 1981, p.119.

19. Titterington, 1981, p.120.

Carol J. Clover, writing on gender in the modern horror film, is mainly discussing the low budget, down market slasher film: films that tend to follow set patterns, usually involve

teenagers, have a high body count and many have a masculine looking, female victim-hero - the Final Girl. Kubrick's contribution to the horror genre is estimated to have cost \$18,000,000, and is far from the films Clover is concerned with. The characters are a couple and their child and the body count amounts to two. However there are two major similarities between *The Shining* and other films within the genre, which bring the film into line: the haunted or possessed house and the Final Girl. The Overlook is a setting that carries on from the tradition of *The Bates Motel*, *Amyitville Horror* etc. An oversized haunted house, it was built on an old Indian burial ground and the builders had to fight off Indian attacks. Frederick Jameson talks of the ghost being at one with a building of some antiquity, and goes on to say "the grand hotel itself, with its successive seasons whose vaster rhythms mark the transformation of American leisure classes from the late 19th. century down to the vacations of present day consumer society."^{19a} Jack is told of the Grady tragedy at his interview and promises nothing like that will happen to him and that Wendy, a ghost story and horror film addict, will love the story. Clover notes that the "conventional task of the genre to register in close detail the victim's dawning understanding as they survey the visible evidence of the human crimes and perversions that have transpired there."²⁰ Through Danny's, then Jack's 'shinings' we see the effects of the past events. Clover also talks about a very popular moment in post-1974 slashers, a scene which *The Shining* includes,

is the scene in which the victim locks herself in and waits with pounding heart as the killer slashes, hacks or drills his way in. The action is inevitably seen from the victim's point of view; we stare at the door and watch the surface open to first the tip and then the shaft of the weapon.²¹

19a. Jameson, 1992, p.90.

20. Clover, 1992, p.31.

21. Clover, 1992, p.31.

22. Clover, 1992, p.31.

23. Kolker, 1988, p.155.

In this case Wendy has locked herself in the bathroom and Jack is hacking his way in with an axe. Clover notes that usually this is the stage where the Final Girl realises she must fight back.²² Kolker notes that

on the generic level, Wendy is a stereotyped horror film character, she gets the upper hand, finally protects herself and destroys the monster. The figure oppressed by the phallus steals it [the baseball bat] in order to control it. Later when Wendy uses the knife against Jack it is an act of



displaced castration that further reduces Jack's potency and threat.²³

Clover in discussing the final girl says she is the one who will linger in our memory, the one who did not die. She is the one who is "chased, cornered... whom we see scream again: she is abject terror personified."²⁴ She looks death in the face and is strong enough to last until she is either rescued, or saves herself.²⁵ Here, though Wendy puts up a strong fight and does injure Jack, it is finally Danny who is responsible for his death. Clover also notes that the final girl is 'boyish', not fully feminine, and usually not seen as being sexually active.²⁶ Wendy, though married to Jack is not shown in a sexualised way: Nelson goes as far to say that Wendy is sexually unattractive.²⁷ Usually the Final Girl has a masculine name, Laurie, Stetch etc. Early on in the film Halloran asks Wendy if she is a Winnie or a Fred. Unlike Clover's Final Girl who is the girl scout, the bookworm, the mechanic, Wendy's role is clearly defined as that of mother and wife. She is first seen in the kitchen of their Boulder apartment and many times in the huge kitchen of the Overlook. When the family are first been shown around the hotel, Wendy is 'borrowed' to be shown the giant kitchen. Clover talks of the link that puts the killer and Final Girl on terms, at least briefly, is a shared masculinity "materialised in 'all those phallic symbols', and it is also a shared femininity, materialised in ... the castration, literal or symbolic, of the killer at her hands."²⁸ "The Final Girl has not just manned herself, she specifically unmans an oppressor whose masculinity was in question to begin with."²⁹ She feels that the Final Girl is a double for the adolescent male. "She is feminine enough to act out in a gratifying way, a way unapproved for adult males, the terrors and masochistic pleasures of the underlying fantasy, but not so feminine as to disturb the structures of male competence and sexuality."³⁰ Clover goes on to say that the slasher film is a genre with a strong female presence, but it is a thoroughly male exercise, one which has little to do with femaleness and a lot to do with phallocentrism.³¹ *The Shining's* male audience can identify with Wendy in order to live out their sadomasochistic fantasies in what Clover characterises as an act of timeless dishonesty.³²

Even though Wendy and Danny escape from Jack's

24. Clover, 1992,
p.35.

25. Clover, 1992,
p.35.

26. Clover, 1992,
p.40.

27. Nelson, 1982,
p.216.

28. Clover, 1992,
p.49.

29. Clover, 1992,
p.49.

30. Clover, 1992,
p.31.

31. Clover, 1992,
p.31.

32. Clover, 1991,
p.53.

madness, and the monster is destroyed, Kolker feels that Kubrick does not offer final triumph to anybody, male or female.

"Misogyny and misanthropy survive. The image at the very end of the film, a photo on the wall that suggests Jack has always been there, that this scene of madness and violence is forever acted and re-enacted, confirms the notion of an eternity of despair, of oppressive systems to destroy them".³³

33. Kolker, 1988,
p.56-7.

Chapter Three

FULL METAL JACKET

Full Metal Jacket is Kubrick's most recent film, following on from his other war films, *Fear and Desire*, set in an unidentified 20th Century war, *Paths of Glory*, World War I, *Spartacus*, the Roman civil war, *Dr Strangelove*, World War III, *Barry Lyndon*, The Seven Years war, and now the Vietnam War.

The first half of the film is set in Parris Island training camp, South Carolina, the second, Da Nang and Hue, Vietnam, around the time of the 1968 Tet offensive. Although set in America and Vietnam, the film was made completely in Britain, and released in 1987. This film has been banded together with other films dealing with the Vietnam War, in a group that has been loosely called the Vietnam genre. This group of films tends to show the war from the white, male soldiers perspective, and usually makes out that the main victim of this war is the male American soldier. A voice over is commonly used to establish the primacy of the soldiers point of view e.g. *Apocalypse Now*, *Boys in Company C*, *Platoon*, and *Full Metal Jacket*. J. Hoberman in "Vietnam: The Remake", writes that the American side of the war was fought by working class teenagers, half of them black or hispanic. They knew that their educated peers were beating the draft, therefore they were resentful. Hoberman accepts that the "grunt ensemble films" acknowledge that the war's human cost was borne largely by the disadvantaged. Poor blacks do feature in these films but the protagonists are generally middle class whites.¹

The first scene of the film, to the patriotic country song "Goodbye Darling, Hello Vietnam", is of the marines having their heads shaved - they are being stripped of their individuality and freedom, this could also be seen as their de-feminisation. Their own clothes, hair and pride are taken away, Sergeant Hartman even gives them new names, Private Joker, Cowboy, Gomer Pyle etc.

1. Hoberman, 1989,
p. 188-189.

Kubrick emphasises the uniform nature of the marines, the actors he chose, apart from Pyle, have a certain sameness about their appearance. Hartman subjects them to a barrage of insults, one of the most commonly used is the term "ladies", femininity being the strongest insult he can throw at these would-be killers. "Hartman defines masculinity in crude heterosexual terms, as being superior to and dominant over people who are less-than-men; women and gays."² His job is to take these 'women and queers', as he sees them, and transform them into killers. "You're not even human fucking beings" (Hartman), he refers to them as 'unorganised', but with the potential to become men, "You will be a weapon" (Hartman). This transformation takes place at the training camp which variously suggests a laboratory, a giant incubator and an operating theatre.³

Full Metal Jacket is compromised of two very different halves. Firstly the boys are made uniform and trained in their sterile, anti-septic, unnatural training camp, by an exaggerated, controlling father figure. In the second half they are turned loose in a very alien, disorganised, Other place. In the first half the boys have no female company. Order and strength are the most important things in their lives, as they are subjected to Sergeant Hartman. The soldiers fear Vietnam, to be in combat is to fuse with the Other; but still they express a wish to "be in the Shit" (e.g. as Rafterman tells Joker). Tania Modleski, in discussing Theweleit's and Kristeva's writing, notes how images of the "swamp, streams,...dirt, morass, pulp, shit, rain and floods", are "a powerful evocation of the maternal/ feminine as that which threatens the integrity of the subject."⁴ In *Full Metal Jacket* to be in Vietnam is "to be in the world of shit", and the first words of *Apocalypse Now* are "Saigon. Shit." Teresa De Lauretis talks about "the defining distinction which ... narrative establishes is one of sexual difference, predicated on the single hero who crosses the boundary and penetrates the other space. In so doing the hero, the mythical subject, is constructed as human being and as male." De Lauretis argues that the obstacle is not always a woman, but is female. "As the passage into subjectivity involves entry into a closed space... interpreted as "a cave", "the grave", "a house", "woman" ...

2. Newsinger, 1993, p.132.

3. Rafferty, 1987, p.257.

4. Modleski, 1991, p.67-68.

whatever its personification [as] morphologically female."⁵ In Freudian terms, the boys must destroy their father so that they can usurp his power. They then can go on into Vietnam, possess the 'mOther' and destroy her. So at the very end of the first half Hartman is killed so that the boys can cross the boundaries into Vietnam.

When in Vietnam, we hear female voices on the soundtrack, women are constantly seen trying to bargain with, steal from and finally kill the boys. The first shot of Vietnam in the film is of the back of a prostitute with the song "These Boots are Made for Walking", as accompaniment. Selig notes the threatening nature of Vietnam is thus represented by a prostitute, whose boots will "walk all over you". Selig goes on to say "The displacement of the threat of death into the sexual promised on the metonymy of the prostitutes 'boots' with those of the Vietcong".⁶ The image of women and of female sexuality is constantly represented as a threat or an obstacle to the integrity of the male subject. Joker comments on the fact that half of the prostitutes are actually Vietcong soldiers. Women feature as sexual objects, references of ridicule and the mysterious, finally pitiable, embodiment of the unknowable enemy.

In order to survive, the soldier-subject must subjugate femininity and destroy it. Modleski in discussing Theweleit's findings writes, "the war fantasies he studied invariably built up to a climax in which the woman / enemy is rendered a bloody mass".⁷ *Full Metal Jacket* fits in with this fantasy perfectly, as the end of the film is the death of Vietcong sniper who is both woman and enemy. The soldier to finally kill her being Private Joker, who had not been in combat before he attached himself to the marine squad to which Private Cowboy belonged. His entry into the squad involved a confrontation with Animal, a huge, aggressive marine who carried the biggest weapon of the group. The confrontation does not go beyond a display of male aggression in which Joker holds his own.⁸ While Animal agrees Joker can "talk the talk", he cannot "walk the walk", as he has not been in combat and therefore not had a kill. Finally, he becomes one of the "hardcore".

Mary Daly observes "... the secret bond that binds the warriors together... is the violation of women, acted out physically

5. DeLauretis, 1984,
p.108.

6. Selig, 1988, p.9.

7. Modleski, 1991,
p.62.

8. Newsinger, 1993,
p.133.

and constantly replayed on the level of language and of shared fantasies... Thus the bonding of trained killers requires the semantic degradation of women..."⁹

Much of the conversation between Cowboy and Joker refers to "getting any" with their mothers and sisters and the group react to the Vietnamese prostitutes with the same casual misogyny.

"In the war fantasies, sexuality is manifested in violence, and violence carries an explosive sexual charge."¹⁰ The relationship between sex and violence, sex and war is emphasised throughout the film. As mentioned above, the creation of killers involves the routine degradation of women. In their training camp, the soldiers are made give their guns girls names, they also must sleep with them. Pyle takes this to the extreme, and actually talks to his gun (Charlene) as if it were his 'sweetheart'. As Hartman sees it, by giving them a rifle and a woman to sleep with, he is creating men and killers at the same time. In a marching routine in the squad bay, they sing: " This is my rifle, this is my gun, this is for fighting, this is for fun", while alternatively holding their rifle and their crotch. This seemingly points to Hartman's endorsement of the rapist mentality that reigns in wartime. While in combat, the common accompaniment to rifle fire is "Fuck You". When Rafterman takes the first shot at the sniper he asks "am I a life taker, am I a heart breaker?". When Joker and animal are pondering over what to do with the dying sniper who is pleading for a mercy killing, Animal says "Fuck her", obviously meaning let her die slowly, in agony. Joker decides on a compassionate shooting.

Like many of Kubricks' films there is an anti-authoritarian strain running through *Full Metal Jacket*. *A Clockwork Orange* takes this to the extreme, every character in a position of authority (apart from the chaplain) is ridiculed. In the training camp Hartman has total control, we never see other officers or his superiors. Hartman (played by Lee Ermey, a Vietnam veteran who actually was a gunnery sergeant himself) cites Lee Harvey Oswald and Charles Whitman as great marks-men, who were a credit to their marine corps training. He physically and mentally abuses his

9. Daly, 1987, p.357-358.
(from Selig, 1988, p.8)

10. Modeleski, 1991, p.62.

charges for the time they are subject to him. Selig observes that the "fictional soldier subject in Vietnam is rarely represented as an adult, but rather as a boy whose war experiences form the back-drop for his coming to manhood, or his passage into subjectivity".

Selig also notes that

the soldier subject's survival is almost always linked to his acquisition of knowledge and thus the uniqueness of his perspective - a perspective the willing spectator is positioned to share and which serves as the conduit for the films political preoccupations.¹¹

(this being particularly true of *Platoon*). Also the soldier's survival depends on his maturation and the death or symbolic death of the father figure, cf. *Apocalypse Now*, *Platoon*, *Casualties of War* and *Full Metal Jacket*.¹² Modleski feels that here Kubrick is undermining male authority as he does not resurrect the father after he is killed off¹³, as other Vietnam films do, particularly *Apocalypse Now*. The Soldier who kills himself and Hartman is the one who found it the most difficult to learn the masculine, killer code of behaviour. After Joker painstakingly helps and teaches Pyle, he finally gives up and is involved in a night-time attack on the whimpering Pyle. After which Pyle retreats into madness and becomes one of the best marksmen of the squad. A well trained gunman who backfires on the man who created him. This being the Frankenstein motif, the creator losing control of his own creation, referring back to Alex in *A Clockwork Orange*, HAL in *2001*, and the Doomsday Machine in *Dr. Strangelove*. As Joker says on the voice-over, "The drill instructors are proud to see we are growing beyond their control."

The suicide and shooting in the film take place in a gleaming lavatory, instead of in the squad bay as in Hasfords book. "As if it were a shrine to the body and its most basic demands." Several of the key scenes in *The Shining* took place in lavatories too. "Its a place where human beings are equalised by their needs, where our physical nature, in Kubrick's view, gives the lie to our myths of individuality - where, in *Full Metal Jacket*, the creator and the creation, the father father Hartman and the baby Pyle, achieve the absolute equality of dead matter, brains and guts

11. Selig, 1988, p.4.

12. Selig, 1988, p.4.

13. Modleski, 1991,
p.74.

smear on the chamber's wall like illegible graffiti."¹⁴

Raymond Bellour, speaking in general about Hollywood films said

The American cinema... finds itself enacting... the classic paradigms elaborated by the subject of western culture by Freudian psychoanalysis. Its massive attempts to socio-historical representation is basically shaped by the type of subjectivity, whose logic was first recognised and imposed by psychoanalysis... a classic Oedipal scenario.¹⁵

Selig adds that the threat to the soldier is often shown in Oedipal terms as either real or symbolic castration, represented by the fear of, or actual loss of, limbs. Selig feels that there is an overwhelming proportion of injured, paralysed or amputated legs in the *Deer Hunter*, *Born on the 4th of July*, *Coming Home*, and also the castrating sniper fire in *Full Metal Jacket*.¹⁶ At the end of the film Joker announces that "I am so happy that I am alive, in one piece."

To return to the critique of authority, Kubrick sustains this into Vietnam, where the Officer in charge of "Stars and Stripes", and the Colonel in Hue By, are shown as exaggerated caricatures, "Inside every gook there's an American trying to get out." At one point when the squad become literally lost, Cowboy having misread the map, thus implying that the authoritarian nature of military training is not actually helpful in Vietnam, but disabling. Modleski notes that

the critique of authority is sustained right to the end of the film, where in the last shot, we see the soldiers on the march, we hear them softly singing the Mickey Mouse Club song: 'Who's the leader of the gang that's made for you and me? M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E.'¹⁷

Marching off with his squad and dreaming of home, Joker announces that he is no longer afraid.

14. Rafferty, 1987, p.257.

15. Bergstorm, 1979, p.93. (in Selig, 1988, p.4.)

16. Selig, 1988, p.4.

17. Modleski, 1991, p.73.

Like Kubrick's other war films, *Full Metal Jacket* is anti-war, anti-militarism and anti-system, showing us the humiliating nature in which the boys are trained, the pointlessness of the war itself, how ridiculous is rationale behind the war. Like *The Shining*, where Kubrick shows the breakdown of the normal nuclear family,

and *A Clockwork Orange*, the breakdown of society altogether, *Full Metal Jacket* shows the mess the Vietnam War has become - communications broken down (as in *The Shining*) and how objectives that were only ever dimly perceived are now totally lost. The soldiers strive to survive themselves, not to win the war. Everything boils down to acts of revenge: when the boys know they have already lost Eightball, Doc Jo, and Cowboy, Animal says "Lets go get some payback." Selig sees that though these films are anti-war, they do not examine the corruption of foreign policy or the specific military strategies which were not in the interest of the Vietnamese people. He feels that's the films' criticisms of the war predominantly focus on individual cases of corruption and bureaucratic blundering. The films then merely have to provide a perspective which condemns individual cases of excess and malfeasance in order to re-establish the illusion of a democratic national identity - one which fights for the underdog, saves women and children, and respects cultural and racial difference... this re-establishment of a democratic national identity is accomplishment by the Oedipalization of the soldier subject, a narrative process dependant on making the USA the underdog, and through brutalising images of women, portraying sexual and racial difference as a corrupting Other.¹⁸ *

As Richard Corliss points out that unlike *Platoon*, with which *Full Metal Jacket* will be compared, Kubrick's film does not want to say every last word about Vietnam. He just wants to isolate a time, a place and a disease.¹⁹

Modleski talks of Gustav Hasford's book "The Short Timers", on which *Full Metal Jacket* is based, in which the phrase "there it is", is used throughout, whenever something ironic or telling is said about war. She talks about war being the ultimate male referent, "that state of affairs which in Wilden's view, provides a language enabling us to understand all human events, or, in Hasford's, makes all other experiences pale into insignificance by contrast."²⁰ Modleski feels that at the same time the film is critical of male sexual attitudes in war, that it is like most patriarchal representations, in complicity with the attitudes it attacks. She feels that the camera lingers on the dying Vietcong woman in agonising length, as she writhes on the floor in agony, begging to be put out of her misery.²¹ Kaja Silvermam would

* On two occasions America is referred to as the 'world', the USA is considered to be the real world and Vietnam another.

18. Selig, 1988, p.5-6.

19. Corliss, 1987, p.126.

20. Modleski, 1991, p.66.

21. Modleski, 1991, p.62.

disagree with Modleski. In her article "Masochism and Subjectivity". she takes as starting point Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", and feels that Mulvey leaves "unchallenged the notion that for the male subject, pleasure involves mastery."²² She talks of the "lure both for the male and female subjects of negation, passivity and loss."²³ So by identifying with the sniper we experience a masochistic pleasure. Kubrick invites us to identify with the sniper before she is shot, as we actually look down on the soldiers from the sniper's point of view. Although Carol J. Clover points out that the relationship between camera point of view and viewer identification is poorly understood, Steven Spielberg can film a Jaws attack from the sharks point of view, this does not mean that we identify with Jaws.²⁴ Silverman accepts that it is more often women than men who are textually placed in positions of passivity, and more generally men than women who occupy positions of aggressivity. She goes on to say that "the masculine subject viewing a film or reading a novel in which the passive position is occupied by a female enacts, through displacement, the compulsory narrative of loss and recovery." She generalises that it is always the victim, "the figure who occupies the passive position - who is really the focus of attention, and whose subjugation the subject (whether male or female) experiences as a pleasurable repetition of his/her own history." ²⁵ In the first half of the film it is the boys (not yet men) who are the victims, after they reach maturity and go to Vietnam, it is the Vietnamese women who become their victims. From Silverman's reading of identification, we would identify first with the boys, then with the women. As Carol J. Clover wrote "gender is less a wall than a permeable membrane."²⁶

22. Silverman, 1979, p.2.

23. Silverman, 1979, p.8.

24. Clover, 1992, p.45.

25. Silverman, 1979, p.5.

26. Clover, 1992, p.46.

27. French, 1987.

Philip French in writing on *Full Metal Jacket* said "like the war itself, possibly like life too, the action is absurd. But the troops go relentlessly on. Evoking the end of *Paths of Glory*, a young woman briefly intrudes to question a morally numb male world before they march off once more, singing into battle. This is bravura film-making that gets the adrenaline pumping. We enjoy ourselves vicariously while receiving our regular, liberal, anti-war inoculation."²⁷

Conclusion

I have discussed in my chapters, the three films in relative isolation from each other. This is the point where I will try to link them, and also evaluate what they have to say about violence, gender and the nature of human beings.

There are many similarities between *A Clockwork Orange*, *The Shining* and *Full Metal Jacket*. Kubrick is a pessimist, and his belief in the fatedness of evil and the innate need to destroy within humans shines through in these films. Formally *A Clockwork Orange* and *Full Metal Jacket* are very similar in their two part structure. In *A Clockwork Orange* we go from mayhem to order, in the first part Alex is free, showing us spontaneous male aggression, then in the second he is imprisoned, showing us cool, calculated aggression perpetrated against Alex first by the State, and then after his release by Mr Alexander. We then get a glimpse into a third part, Alex free again, back to mayhem. In *Full Metal Jacket* the sequence is reversed, we go from order to chaos. The first part shows us premeditated, authoritarian aggression, inflicted on the boys by Hartman, the second spontaneous male aggression, let loose in Vietnam. the act that links these two very different halves is the destruction of the father by Pyle, the boys can then take his power and venture into Vietnam. Then they destroy the feared and repudiated Other; the tale is one of total destruction, like *A Clockwork Orange*. *The Shining* also is a story of total destruction, the family unit is destroyed, links with the outside world are severed, Halloran is killed by Jack, and finally Danny, with Wendy's help destroys his father.

Kubrick portrays aggression as an inherent part of the nature of males. In the 17 years that these films span, Kubrick's attitude to aggression has not changed, it remains a male prerogative. In *A Clockwork Orange*, the females show very little aggression, the Catlady vainly tries to defend herself with a bust of Beethoven, but none of the female characters wronged by Alex are seen to seek their revenge, as the male characters do. In *The Shining* Wendy is fairly resilient in the nature of the Final Girl, she

defends herself well against Jack and escapes, but is not responsible for his death. In *Full Metal Jacket*, a squad of tough women-hating marines are fired on by one lone frightened woman as she tries to defend herself and her country.

All three of these films are anti-authoritarian and anti-system. In *A Clockwork Orange* everyone who holds a position of authority is ridiculed (apart from the prison chaplain who is on Alex's side). In *The Shining* the notion of the father/boss as head of the family is portrayed as a destructive power, for Wendy and Danny to survive they must rid themselves of Jack. In *Full Metal Jacket* the authoritarian aspect of military training is portrayed as particularly destructive (e.g. Pyle), and when in Vietnam, as useless, the soldiers get lost and many of their squad are killed. The figures who hold positions of authority are shown to be ridiculous e.g. Hartman and other officers.

Kubrick's male protagonists are trapped. Alex is trapped in a society which encourages male superiority and aggression, but punishes him for acting out his fantasies. Only through the manipulation of Alex by others does he finally become free. Jack is trapped by the constraints of family life, by the obligation placed on him to fulfil his role as father and husband. He is also literally trapped in the hotel, and finally in the maze and the picture frame. Joker is trapped and confused, forced to be a fighter in a war he does not believe in. He talks of the duality of man, wears a peace badge and 'Born to kill' on his helmet. He wants to be the first kid on his block to get a confirmed kill, but after he becomes one of the 'hardcore' he is no longer afraid.

The notion of femininity being an alien 'Other' features heavily in *Full Metal Jacket* and *The Shining* and to a certain extent in *A Clockwork Orange*. In *Full Metal Jacket* Vietnam is dirty, disorganised, alien, the threat to the boys integrity is an external one, contact with femininity. The boys must bond in their bid to subjugate femininity and destroy it. In *The Shining* the Overlook is the "unheimlich" place, the hotel and the disorganised, unstructured lifestyle it induces are seen as the female, corrupting Other. It is there that Jack bonds with Lloyd and Grady in a plot to destroy his wife and child. In *A Clockwork Orange* the women are punished. Laura Mulvey writes that she "connotes something that

the look continually circles around but disavows: her lack of penis implying a threat of castration and hence unpleasure. Ultimately the meaning of woman is sexual difference."¹ Mulvey goes on to say that this is counterbalanced by devaluation or punishment.²

I have mentioned three writers who deal with identification, Mulvey whose article does not take into consideration cross gender identification, Clover who believes we identify across gender lines and Silverman who claims we identify with the person experiencing loss.

In *A Clockwork Orange* we have no choice but to identify with Alex as he is the only developed character and as Kael points out, Kubrick tricks us into identifying with him by making his victims less likable than their attacker. Kaja Silverman's claims also fit in here as when Alex is imprisoned, beaten by his Droogs, and tortured by Mr Alexander, we still identify with him although he is experiencing pain and loss and is now the passive victim. When we see Alex will be free again it is an affront to our sensibilities and realise that Kubrick has used his power of audience manipulation. In *The Shining* we have the choice of identifying with both Jack and Wendy. Wendy, *The Shining's* Final Girl is in Clover's view set out from beginning as the one we should identify with. She is the phallic woman, a stand in for the adolescent male, which makes it possible for the males in the audience to identify with her. We see her experience pain, scream, fall, and scream again, which also fits in with Silverman's view. She helps in the destruction of Jack and stays alive to finally escape. In *Full Metal Jacket* we are with Joker throughout his training as he is victimised by Hartman, then we stay with Joker into Vietnam until the sniper is introduced. We can gain a masochistic pleasure by identifying with her and then we leave the film with Joker again, no longer afraid.

All three films are tales of total destruction. At the end of *A Clockwork Orange* Alex is reborn to his former self, a happy ending for him, he is free to continue his life of ultra-violence if he chooses. At the end of *The Shining* we are left with Jack's smirk, trapped in the photo on the wall from 1921. Danny has killed him, but Jack has always been there, and Danny is free to follow in

1. Mulvey, 1975,
p.811.

2. Mulvey, 1975,
p.811.

Jack's footsteps. At the end of *Full Metal Jacket* the boys go marching into battle, they are now 'hardcore', and Joker is no longer afraid. In Kolker's words "only misogyny and misanthropy survive."³

3. Kolker, 1988,
p.156.

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