



SCREEN TO SCREEN

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On January 25, 2004, Diane Keaton shows up on TV for the Golden Globe Awards and wins for Best Actress. We are told that excitement is in the air and that Diane looks better than ever. I agree with the latter. Her nose is radically different, but she's stuck to her guns about wearing what she wants to wear. Wearing what others are not wearing. Gloves, hats, a shadow is always cast over her body. While everyone else is dripping with made-over flesh, Diane's body is nowhere to be seen. Off the map, Diane wants us to look to her clothes, not to her body, and she's always been this way.

The other night, I YouTubed her and found her stuck in time on a 1974 episode of Johnny Carson, draped in several sheets like a window. Other Hollywood actresses use clothes to point to the body. Bras and low-cut dresses direct like arrows and guide the way road signs on the way to the Body do. In a *60 Minutes* interview with Diane, Leslie Stahl notes that Diane "works hard to hide herself." So what came first the award or the amendment of the body? Can you have one without the other? If you get one can you get another one without switching everything around for next time? Acting becomes a fully integrated state. Every single thing in your life and on your body is showbiz.

On TV, the sun limbos. It is seventy-six degrees in Los Angeles, but in New York it is five. The heat of the cameras and the power of yarn make the weather feel the same on both coasts. The awards ceremony begins while the volume of light is still turned up high. Diane is sheathed from head to toe in a white Edwardian-style dress jacket. It's long, with buttons from top to bottom. Like a bride, she is a clean slate, white like a dove, a blanket of snow the industry can piss a new script on: white pearls, white gloves, white shoes. Probably white bra and panties too. White like the snow Diane runs

through with Mel Gibson in *Mrs. Soffel*, which sounds like *Soulful*. A week later on *Oprah*, Diane, remarkably effusive, gushes about Mel; the way, take after take, he, a lone-wolf, climbed after her in the make-believe snow, or she after him, and then one of them collapsed into the other, and real-life lust spilled over into make-believe lust, melting Diane prematurely like the glaciers in Antarctica.

In fact, she gushed romantically about everyone but Al Pacino and Woody Allen, both of whom she worked with and dated, but neither of whom she's willing to talk about on *Oprah*. Put together by *Oprah*'s producers, there is a list, with Mel Gibson and Jack Nicholson at the top. They are her favorites, she says. Diane crosses the other two men off, refusing to spill the beans on Al, who after two *Godfathers* and thirty-four years, makes her go silent.

In case I was seeing or hearing things on *Oprah*, I double-checked, looking at the Carson clip again, backpedaling thirty-four years, where I discover that Diane has always hated Al. Fresh off the set of *The Godfather: Part II*, and there she is clearly ticked off, her body under that lilac blanket. What he'd done to her on camera, laid on thick within the hyperbole of cinematic (mafia) chauvinism, left a dent off-camera. Did the movie marriage lend itself to a non-movie romance, or did the movie matrimony make any un-scripted desire or pleasure impossible? Diane couldn't encode her disgust and knowing how to act is about being able to equivalently hide and conjure what you don't really feel. But since this is before Reality TV, where TV and reality both become shamelessly self-conscious categories, "real life" is not the point, or is only the point when you're acting that too. Would an actor's repulsion ever make it on the air now, or would it have been caught in time and removed during the pre-interview?

On Carson, Diane says, "I just made *Sleeper* with Woody and *Godfather II* with 'those' guys,'" so bad they don't

even get a name. Then, “I’m married to the same guy... Pacino,” like she really had to be, sighs, looks down. What is there to say that won’t expose the stitching in the story and move the story off the screen? It’s a marriage she regrets even on film. When Diane says this it’s as though she is still playing Kay or that her/Kay’s female entrapment by the male tribalism of the movie/mafia is simply one of many female incarcerations.

The Godfather is a movie that kept going. That changed its mind and started over. Rewinding and backtracking from its initial version of “beginning” to incorporate things it didn’t the first time around. As a result, the two films caught Diane somewhere in-between her fictional relationship with Al and her real relationship with Al. In her glowing 1972 review of *The Godfather*, Pauline Kael notes, “the story moves back and forth between a hidden, nocturnal world and the sunshine that [the men] share with the women and children,” while in *The Broad Picture*, Lynne Tillman asks, “Given life-in-patriarchy, is *The Godfather*, I wonder, as much a ‘woman’s picture’ as a ‘man’s picture’?” What Kael, who had no interest in feminism, doesn’t take into consideration is space in relation to gender. Space in film and space in life and the way one space carries over into the other all the time. Nor does Kael consider the gender of the viewer or the gender of time. The time assigned to “universal narratives” and collective looking, a looking that Kael argued requires everyone to miraculously read at the same pace. When Johnny Carson asks Diane if it was as much fun working on the second *Godfather* as it was on the first, Diane can’t hide the fact that it wasn’t. “It was fine,” she doesn’t bother to assure (bad acting?). But she is acting, acting contained, and she wants us to dive down into the oceanic subtext to figure out what she really means. To read between the lines where there is no role, no character, just omission.

In *Something To Talk About*, also known as *Game of Love*, *Grace Under Pressure*, and *Sisters*, and taglined as “A story about husbands, wives, parents, children and other natural disasters,” Dennis Quaid plays what he plays best and plays it from life. Life becomes script and script makes life easier to play. Movies are one infrastructure where life gets treated as script. There are two possibilities: Quaid plays what’s written on paper and does not stray from his lines, or Quaid chooses parts that he knows how to play without having to explain how he’s learned to play them. Working from life, where cheating figured as a recurrent character the entire time he was with Meg Ryan, real life becomes material that is easily reproduced and turned into impersonal fiction. Infused with an authenticity that is never spoken about: cold mornings on set, night sky, pre-dawn, Dennis spent too much time away from home, but with most of the year on film locations, what and where is home? Like those cameras that can capture the color of your aura, Quaid shows up on film as Quaid, except in the movies he is converted and becomes a different man for everyone but Meg.

Neither now nor then, did Diane shed a tear over *Annie Hall*; “What’s the big deal? It’s not like that was it for me.” She’s right – men don’t cry over their roles, movies, or awards. They know there’s more to come, that an award for a white actor opens up a can of worms, so they become less grateful, more expectant. They don’t talk about one role for the rest of their lives. They live for the next one.

Back in 2004, still unmarried, tonight is Diane’s big night – the academy giving her away at the age of nearly sixty. Up at the podium, with the Golden Globe award for Best Actress in her hand, Diane is laughing as usual, shooting the award away with her smile and her jokes. She is saying, but not saying, “I don’t deserve this. This is silly.”

Richard Gere, who starred with Diane in *Looking for Mr. Goodbar* as a pushy and conceited hunk twenty-seven years earlier, makes it up to her by calling her name, presenting her with the award, and then escorting her off the stage. Buddha-like. His hair as white as her dress, white like the Himalayas he chants for.

Jack Nicholson is also nominated for Best Actor for *Something's Gotta Give*, but doesn't win, so Diane spends her entire two minutes on stage making it up to him by handing him the award instead. Not literally, of course. Diane has always been nervous, self-deprecating, so maybe in the world of character, this communitarian gesture, this self-effacement, this hierarchal set-up, is also in character, which makes Diane an even better actress than I thought she was. Maybe this is yet another example of good acting, of collaboration; of roles overlapping, intertwining; things going back and forth, and then ending up somewhere else, in someone else's body. But I wish she could have just reveled in the moment, as they say.

During her acceptance speech, Diane keeps saying the award isn't really hers, that it's Jack's, and although Jack doesn't technically win it, no matter what happens tonight, Diane wants everyone to know, in case they don't know already, that Harry Sanborn, the character and Diane's love interest in *Something's Gotta Give*, and Jack—a real life fusion of on-screen and off-screen—had won both of hers—Diane's and Erica's—hearts. And this perfect synchronicity of fact and fiction, reel and real, me and you, what's mine is yours, is a great night for showbiz. It just doesn't get any better than this, says Diane. It just can't.

In photographs of Heath Ledger and Michelle Williams, Michelle always forgets the camera and looks up into Heath instead. Whether she's looking at him instead of the camera *for* the camera, we don't know. But Heath never

takes his off the camera. He knows it's recording him in his new role and he never forgets that he is a man of roles. His body is work for the people who shoot it and people are shooting all the time. The camera is his lifeline. Michelle forgets what she is when she becomes his girlfriend. Each photo reveals a food chain. When they breakup, Sarah Horne writes a lament in *Radar Magazine*, calling the article "The Ballad of Heath & Michelle." "I could just imagine [Matilda's] parents stuffing the Smeg fridge with organic greens, growing tomato plants in their ample backyard, or baking their own bread—and thereby imagine my fellow and I doing the same." Horne's desire is a hand-me-down. It is turned on by the desire Heath and Michelle are said to have for one another. In her mind, Horne tries to replicate the relationship she wants Heath and Michelle to have, not the relationship she wants for herself. She is immured in a desire that isn't hers. Her is whatever they want next. There is no her. Her comes from them, and them is never us.

The real subject of Horne's article is not avariciousness or straightforward lifestyle mimicry, but rather being as an amalgamation of impersonated wants: desire as assemblage and desire based on the desire one imagines other people having. Individual desire goes out into the world of Hollywood bodies to look for a fantasy host to feed it ("*She had hypnotized herself into thinking, as they did, that her mind was part of their mind*" Jean Rhys). This particular desire has already been worn and donated. When a visible national paradigm of desire changes, shifts, or breaks, so does the desire around and outside it: "Oh, well. No sense of living in the past—not with Jennifer Garner, Ben Affleck, and little Violet to crush on," writes Horne. Private desire responds to what it hears about official (visible) desire.

For weeks after Heath Ledger's death, Michelle Williams avoids, runs away from, the cameras that move after her

and undulate through space and time. They don't stop. They keep rolling. They have sophisticated spines like the red dragons in Chinese New Year parades. We feel the years go by in images. Our feelings and emotions about our lives and our faces are in other people's faces. Changing movie faces are our feelings and emotions about our feelings and emotions. Confessions well up like images. Michelle Williams ducks, covered in coats; disappears into a building the way Heath disappears into one when he dies. After their split, accommodation, his in particular, becomes a metaphor. An obsession. Williams' Brooklyn townhouse is besieged, wrapped in a panorama of cameras and surrounded by people the way Heath's empty Manhattan bachelor pad is after word of his death gets out.

The romantic time-travel comedy *Kate & Leopold* reminds me of the red-carpet pictures of Heath and Michelle, with Heath looking at the camera, Michelle looking at Heath, and Heath looking at the world as if it were a camera. A ray of light from the red-carpet flashbulbs obscures and entangles, shuffles, as though these faces, these red and black arrangements, were a deck of cards, and I lose track of time, as if this is all there is, which is the point. For the 19th century Leopold in *Kate & Leopold*, time travel into the early 21st Century is merely a way of getting the 21st Century career-woman Kate to return to her 19th century career-less past. The movie is a fight over time, which of course is always gendered. History doesn't happen without people. Or rather, it doesn't happen, can't happen, without men.

While the interior Kate can and must return to her past (with Leopold) in order to be truly happy, Leopold, a famous inventor whose individual history is posterior—later in time—and therefore synonymous with history, cannot. The exterior Leopold both marks and is marked

by a history that is intransigent because it belongs to an indispensable meta-narrative (official history has always been about people who are indispensable); a totalizing schema. The movie is therefore a profoundly convoluted spin on, *Wherever my man goes, I go*. Or, in Michelle's case, *Whenever my man looks at the world, I look at him*. Unlike Leopold, Kate (or in the case of Michelle Williams, who looked into Ledger as though he were her past, her future, her portal into the world), whose history, or future, is bound up in Leopold's, can sacrifice her place in the time-like curve, whereas Leopold cannot. In *Kate & Leopold*, the motif of time travel and the theory of relativity is applied to everything from language to parallel reality; specifically space-time loops and word lines (word lines, explains the encyclopedia of science, "are a general way of representing the course of events, the use of which are not bound to any specific theory. Thus in general usage, a world line is the sequential path of personal human events—with *time and place* as dimensions—that mark *the history of a person*." Another term for word line is closed time-like curves that form closed loops in space-time, "allowing objects to *return to their own past*").

When Heath Ledger dies of a drug overdose on January 22, 2008, I am running up New York City's Broome Street to celebrate the Chinese New Year with my Malaysian friend Goretta at the Guan Gong Temple on Elridge Street. While Ledger lies dead above the Nanette Lapore clothing boutique at 421 Broome, I pause to catch my breath. It's cold. I didn't know Ledger was living there, by himself, in an enormous loft, a "bachelor pad" that a film studio was paying for and that reportedly cost \$22,000 a month to rent. Ledger was a kept man. In my head, I still have the picture Sarah Horne has drawn of Ledger and Michelle Williams in their Brooklyn Shangri-la. At the Guan Gong temple, Goretta instructs

me to address all the Buddhist deities in the room with wishes and prayers. She also tells me to ask for whatever I want as long as it isn't something unnecessary. "Don't waste a wish," she warns tersely.

In Michelangelo Antonioni's color trilogy (*Blow-Up*, *The Passenger*, and *Zabriskie Point*) identity, doubling, and dissolution go hand in hand. The body of someone else is always a kind of glamour—an excuse not to be in one's own body—and the glamour comes in the form of death, both literal and figurative. In *The Passenger* — whose tagline is, "I used to be someone else, but I traded myself in" — color marks breaks in time, ties with time; the chameleonic body in and out of time. In the film, David Locke (Jack Nicholson), a war correspondent in the Sahara, meets an English arms dealer, David Robertson, who dies suddenly. Robertson bears such a striking resemblance to Locke, that frustrated with his own life, Locke decides to switch identities with him. Becoming someone dead, Locke thinks, will bring him back to life. The body in *The Passenger* is a kind of tabloid. A story that lets us forget ourselves. *The Passenger*, 1975, is echoed five years earlier in Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* (also in the desert), where Mark, foreshadowing Locke, tells Daria, "Once I changed my color but it didn't work, so I changed back." In Antonioni's color trilogy, bodies live and die in color changes. Color marks the passing of time.

Instead of being the ultimate obstruction or finale, death in celebrity culture is a passageway to the bowels of borrowed identity like the portal in *Being John Malkovich*. When it comes to the famous, death is the tunnel into someone else's life. After he dies, hundreds of people stand in front of Ledger's building all night long. Holding vigil, talking to reporters, crying. Ledger's building becomes a surrogate body and fans leave things at his door, the same way that people lay their prayers

and flowers at the feet of the gilded Buddhist statues at Guan Gong. On the news, I watch people who'd never met Ledger rush to buy him flowers, leave notes, hang drawings. The equivalent of a backstage pass, they gain access through being on camera and entering a medium that had belonged to Ledger. Housed him and excluded them. Now they are where he has been. Now they are instead of him. Now they are themselves. There is a film over everything. Interior becomes exterior, and vice versa. Out becomes in. Death access, rather than finish. Time is camera, camera is world, the link between inside and outside. Onscreen and offscreen. Something he was and wasn't. That was there and not there. Something he had and didn't have. Something only a camera can say or make about someone. The beloved is always the ultimate place to store oneself and also the most difficult to go in and out of. What happens on film is not even close.

Reports start to come out about Ledger's body. The outside we saw did not match the inside we didn't see. Fans treat Ledger's body as if it were their own. They want to know what was inside of it. The media vacillates between interior and exterior truisms; flashing the either/or, inside and outside versions of Ledger like the interior and exterior shots of a movie: the images of Ledger living and acting versus the un-filmable narrative contents of his body. One Fox spywitness treats Ledger's autopsy like unseen footage. "They'll find everything," he warns, which translates to, "They'll see everything." And, later, Fox follows up with: "When they do the autopsy it will all come out." But others say Ledger's death means the coveted reel is lost forever and now we'll never know who or what was inside.

In the documentary *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, filmmaker Thom Andersen examines the way Hollywood has fictionalized the real Los Angeles, observing, "In a fiction film, a real space becomes fictional...If we can appreciate

documentaries for their dramatic qualities, perhaps we can appreciate fiction films for their documentary revelations.” The idea on display, like Andersen’s assertion that Los Angeles has been forced “more often than not, [to play] some other city,” is that some part of Ledger hadn’t been playing itself and that some parts onscreen were more him than someone else. In *The Dark Knight*, Ledger’s Joker declares, “Wait till they get a load of me.” Does this mean that the Joker is the real that Ledger couldn’t help being? Was his Joker the real in the fiction—the real mixed in with the fake—or, to go back to Andersen’s point about Los Angeles, a real space becoming fictional? In a 2009 interview with *Wired* about *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus*, Ledger’s last film, Terry Gilliam states that he “loved Heath on (*The Brothers Grimm*) because “he was so funny all the time.” Ledger was apparently even funnier on *Parnassus* because, Gilliam notes, he “had evolved as the Joker.” Gilliam claims that Ledger seemed “liberated” by playing the Joker, which, allowed him to “se[t] up the foundation for what he was going to do on the other side of the mirror...he was becoming everything, anything he wanted. The one thing I would have given anything for,” Gilliam laments, “would have been to see what Heath was going to do on the other side. But he never got there.” This is an interesting choice of words given that “the other side” is a popular euphemism for death, and because Ledger did die, did cross over; was a mirror and in a mirror.

In *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus*, Ledger’s character first appears as a figure from the Tarot, The Hanged Man. Film critic Ray Pride notes that “Tony is a Trickster, a fancy-pants and escapee from the higher reaches of society (as well an actor with only weeks to live, we know).” Gilliam’s solution “to a missing leading man,” writes Pride, “was simple and works unexpectedly

well: the scenes that had not yet been shot all took place behind the mirror of Dr. Parnassus’ Imaginarium, so the writer-director divided the three scenes (tarot readers usually require a person to divide a tarot deck into three sections) between Ledger’s colleagues, Johnny Depp, Jude Law, and Colin Farrell. Each actor wears their own fitting of the costume that Ledger wore.”

The Italian film director Pier Pasolini took a similar *Goldilocks and The Three Bears* “just right” approach (which involved morphing its original heroine—an “ugly” and “antagonistic” old woman—into a pretty little girl) with *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (1964). Pasolini reportedly chose Matthew because “John was too mystical, Mark too vulgar, and Luke too sentimental.” Pride, too, creates distinctions between the Ledger representations. “[Colin] Farrell...is the least of the Tonys” the way that Matthew, according to Pasolini, is the least of the gospels. Gilliam believes that because Ledger’s character in *Parnassus* is so “liquid and light” (recalling *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*’s shape-shifting liquid android assassin, the T-1000, who consists of “mimetic poly-alloy”), because he was “becoming everything and anything he wanted,” everyone and anyone could and did become Ledger: “It allowed Johnny, Colin, and Jude,” says Gilliam, “to move in and be different faces and do different things,” which makes it fitting that Ledger, and not his character Tony, was replaced in *Parnassus*. Sharing the same homosocial body, and thus the same male body of representation, allows multiple men to share one role; to take each other’s place, resulting in a “just right” hybridization. Mirror is copy, and liquefying to the point of shape-shifting, to the point of dissolution and ruin, is not only in the mythos of Ledger’s Joker, but in the stylization: the smudging, corruption, and cultural assimilation of makeup. The liquid of identities stepping in for you.

The actor is also the clown with the painted grin. In the 1965 movie *Inside Daisy Clover*, Natalie Wood's rising star Daisy Clover sings, "The clowns don't smile. That's just a painted grin." The painted grin conjures up two iconic faces: Betty Davis' over-rouged cheeks and crooked red mouth in *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?*, and the open-mouthed 80s teenage heartthrob Corey Haim, who died in 2010, not yet 40. Both Jane and Haim were washed-up child stars. In *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?*, Jane wears the crimson horror of her Grand Guignol face much the same way that Leatherface wears a human-flesh quilt in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*—his own horrific red mouth poking through ("That's just Libby. The big, red scar on her face called a mouth," Polly tells Priss in *The Group*). Jane's painted-on face and Haim's commissioned smirk is a way of embalming time.

In a *Daily News* article about Haim's death, Soraya Roberts notes that, "signs of decline were etched on the doomed star's face." On the cancelled reality TV series *The Two Coreys* (2007), Haim had the overcast hue of mold, or worse, a dead body. A kind of Hollywood living dead, Haim was the dingy shade of something spoiled. "Sitting down with the actor, the first thing I noticed was his skin," Roberts notes. "What was once flawless with a sprinkling of freckles was now corroded, creased and discolored. He looked to be in his 40s, rather than his mid-30s. His lips had taken on the same hue as his skin, making him look even more unhealthy... The worst part was Haim's smile. His trademark lopsided grin had been stripped of any joy. Now, whenever his mouth turned up, it seemed Joker-esque."

As an adolescent, Haim barely captured my attention (I didn't see *Lucas* until this year), but his death affected me more than the death of actors whose work I do admire and whose faces I did love. For days, I felt sick to my stomach

whenever I saw pictures of Haim, or thought of his deathly color before his death.

The Dark Knight director Christopher Nolan says he wanted a more realistic approach to Batman, so Ledger's Joker grin contains a realistic touch. Less makeup than scar, more makeup mixed with scar, or scar masquerading as makeup, the real is mixed in with the fake. The Joker has always been the one with the painted grin—the grin that doesn't come off. The Joker's Grand Guignol mouth is the world askew, unsalvageable. Similarly, at the funhouse, the mouth is how you enter the world and is big enough to fit the entire body, leading Hal Hartley's heroine, Fay Grim (on a quest to find her fugitive ex-husband Henry Fool), to tell a Turkish Baazar shop owner, "there's always this character; the one with the big mouth."

Ledger's Joker and Baby Jane's smudged faces, as well as Leatherface's red lips and Haim's septic skin and cocked mouth, are faces of ruin and commercial atrophy. They are also physiognomies of a death that only capitalism can produce. "Some men," Pennyworth tells Bruce Wayne in *The Dark Knight*, "just want to watch the world burn," though it would be more accurate to say that all three faces are the world already on fire. For while Haim's permanent teen-idol smirk signifies ultimate commercial accessibility, the Joker's brutally hacked-into mouth-on-mouth in *The Dark Knight* signifies its devastating geopolitical cost. Batman is only relevant for what he can't do, for the world he can't save, for the world (there is no world, there are only corporate systems) in which heroes are powerless and obsolete.

At Barnes & Noble the other day, as I scanned the magazine rack, my eye ran across the image I've been seeing in transit all week. The caption "A List Nip/Tuck"

The old Scarlett is rattier, less composed, not as blonde. Then a yellow blonde, now a snow white Kim Novak blonde. But the biggest change of all is her nose. Noses are all over the place these days, emblems of a morphological order restored. The face is a war zone. Walking home, I wonder what all these Before's & After's really mean when none of it alters how we see things and what we do about the things we see. In an essay in *Bookforum* called *Nikons and Icons*, David Levi Strauss writes: "Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites rightly point to the larger problem identified by Peter Sloterdijk that modernity has entered into a terminal phase of 'enlightened self-consciousness' whereby all forms of power have been unmasked with *no change in behavior*." This recalls Brecht's, "As crimes pile up, they become invisible," Jacques Derrida's, "In this century, monstrous crimes ('unforgiveable' then) have not only been committed—which is perhaps itself not so new—but have become visible, known, recounted, named, archived by a 'universal conscience' better informed than ever," and *The Master and Margarita's*, "Maestro Woland is a great master of the technique of tricks, as we shall see from the most interesting part, namely, the exposure of this technique and since we are all unanimously both for technique and for its unmasking, we shall ask Mr. Woland." To those who aren't familiar with Mikhail Bulgakov's great Russian novel, Mr. Woland is the Devil and shows up in Moscow.

In exchange for studying what each fraudulent cell looks like under a merciless commercial and commodified lens, viewers enable late-capitalism to run more smoothly by calling in with their votes, as is the case with reality TV. From the inside, secrecy appears eradicated, as though secrets or branded transparencies comprise the totality of injustice, rather than just one

part. Justice is reduced to a vantage point. To simply seeing or hearing something. We see and we see and we see ad infinitum.

On Centre Street in New York, a block north of Broome Street where Ledger died, a new ad from Samsung takes up a perfect corner and announces: "There's more to director Joe Wright's extraordinary film *Atonement* than meets the screen." Recording a radical shift in being, the eye/I is now totally eclipsed by screen, leaving us, and our eyes, completely out of the picture. Instead of eye/I to screen, and screen to eye/I, two screens make eyes at each other, like the artist Douglas Gordon's famous screen double of *Taxi Driver*. As a metaphor for seeing, the ad evokes a technocratic orgy; a discourse of vision so bleak even the *Blade Runner* replicants had the heart to fear it.