

32. Leni Riefenstahl on West German television, interviewed by Hansjürgen Rosenbauer, October 30, 1976.
 33. Harry Sokal was the producer of *The White Hell of Piz Palù*, *Storm over Mount Blanc*, and the *White Frenzy*.
 34. *Berliner Tageblatt*, December 21, 1923.
 35. Letter from Leni Riefenstahl to author, November 17, 1976.
 36. Charles Ford: *Femmes Cinéastes*, Paris, 1972, p. 60.
 37. *Film Culture*, No. 56-57, Spring 1973, p. 130.
 38. *Filmkritik*, August 1972, p. 398. In Riefenstahl's letter (November 17, 1976) to author she writes that Balázs "stayed with me and my small staff (altogether 6 people) exactly 4 weeks in the Dolomites. Later he spent another day of the two it took for the shooting in the studio, again to control my own acting scenes."
 39. For Balázs's Moroccan impressions while filming there, see "In Algir," *Weißbühne*, 1931, No. 17.
 40. For an interesting description (by Henry V. Javorsky, assistant cameraman on *The Blue Light*) of Riefenstahl suggesting Schneebeger use red plus green filter, see *Film Culture*, Spring 1973, No. 56-57, p. 131.
 41. In *Filmkritik*, op. cit., p. 427, Herman Weigel gives Riefenstahl's and Balázs's credits as they appear on the film today: "Story, Direction, Image Composition (Bildgestaltung): Leni Riefenstahl." Then comes Bela Balázs as *Collaborator on Script*. Weigel, in his filmography on Riefenstahl (Ibid., p. 436), evaluates the credits as "Script: Bela Balázs, Leni Riefenstahl. Direction: Leni Riefenstahl in collaboration with Bela Balázs (not named on the titles)."
 42. Charles Ford: *Femmes Cinéastes*, op. cit., p. 64.
 43. "Riefenstahl reports that Chaplin told her that he was much taken with the character of Junita," writes Richard Meran Barsam in his program note for *The Blue Light*, p. 2 (issued by the Museum of Modern Art, Dept. of Film, August 5, 1975).

JOHN L. FELL

Vladimir Propp in Hollywood

Propp's analysis should be useful in analyzing the structure of literary forms (such as novels and plays), comic strips, motion picture and television plots, and the like.

—ALAN DUNDES

A member of the Russian Formalist group, Vladimir Propp published a monograph in 1928 which English-language students know as *Morphology of the Folktale*. Apparently the Russian

title more specifically denotes "fairytale," and Propp's work involved the analysis of a hundred-odd Russian fairytales, largely drawn from a single collection.

From this corpus, Propp described approximately 1500 examples of plot constituents which he termed "functions." By functions he meant elements following chronological, linear sequence which served as fundamental components, stably constant, independent of how or by whom (in

13. Ibid.
 14. *Politkavka*, *Der Tag*, 1923, No. 259.
 15. B. Balázs: *Kinoregisszer i kinomatertal*, Moscow, Kinopo-
 chat, 1926.
 16. Paul Tabort: *Korda*, New York, 1966, p. 78.
 17. Magda K. Nagy: *Balázs Béla világa*, Budapest, 1973, p. 323.
 18. Ibid.
 19. "UFA-Direction schneider," *Die Rote Fahne*, September 25, 1927.
 20. B. Balázs: *Theory of the Film*, op. cit., p. 160.
 21. "Balázs warnt," *Film-Kurier*, December 7, 1929.
 22. B. Balázs: *Theory of the Film*, op. cit., p. 150.
 23. Ibid., p. 149.
 24. B. Balázs: *Der Geist des Films*, Halle, 1930, pp. 216-217.
 25. Latislaus Valda wrote and/or coscripted for G. W. Pabst: *The Love of Jeanne Ney* (1927), *Pandora's Box* (1928), *The White Hell of Piz Palù* (1929), *Westfront 1918* (1930), *The Beggar's Opera* (1931), *Comradeship* (1932), and *The Mistress of Atlantis* (1932). Vajda died in 1933.
 26. Lotte H. Eisner: *The Haunted Screen*, London, 1969, p. 343.
 27. M. K. Nagy: *Balázs Béla világa*, op. cit., p. 299.
 28. Bertolt Brecht: *Texte für Filme*, Frankfurt am Main, 1969, p. 663.
 29. B. Balázs: *Almodó típuság*, Budapest, 1967, p. 63.
 30. Balázs wrote the foreword to Arnold Fanck's book, calling Fanck "the greatest portrayer of nature in film." (see Arnold Fanck: *Stimme über dem Montblanc*, Basel 1931, p. v). Fanck respected Balázs so much that more than 40 years later he chose a sentence from Balázs's foreword for the title of his memoirs: *Regie mit Geistesern, Stürmen und Lawinen*. (Letter from Mrs. Ute Fanck to author, October 28, 1976).
 31. Letter from Leni Riefenstahl to author, November 17, 1976.

BÉLA BALÁZS

BÉLA BALÁZS

...vitation from the Soviet Union, he
 ...come to Russia too. Balázs even
 ...consent of Soviet authorities, he
 ...ing for her political loyalty. But
 ...t that she could best express herself
 ...country, and elected to stay there.
 ...September when Riefenstahl was
 ...editing the film. They parted as the
 ...It was only after *The Blue Light*
 ...1932, when Leni Riefenstahl read
 ...and met Hitler, that she changed
 ...ght, "a mountain legend," became
 ...m. Lukewarmly received in Ger-
 ...countries, it proved to be a success
 ...e, including America. After its
 ...Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie
 ...knew Riefenstahl in person—sent
 ...telegrams to her. And one might
 ...uch of a role Chaplin's admiration
 ...played in his making Paullette
 ...modern *Times* a social outcast, as
 ...of *The Blue Light*; he gave Goddard
 ...of tattered dress and the same
 ...fenstahl had.
 ...Riefenstahl never met again. Thus,
 ...s ended 12 years of German exile
 ...one of the most famous romantic
 ...story of cinema, and by departing
 ...society. Béla Balázs was always a

NOTES

...70, p. 11.
 ..."Ein schönes Buch," *Neue Freie Presse*.
 ...y: *Word and Image*, Budapest, 1968, p. 19.
 ...is Korda edited were *Pesti Mozi* (1912);
 ...rd and Image, op. cit., p. 55.
 ...rd of the Film, op. cit., p. 17.
 ...kulture Mensch, oder die Kultur des Films,
 ...pp. 11-12.
 ...vator cikkek és tanulmányok, Budapest,
 ...74, No. 2, p. 61.
 ...Béla Balázs," *Bianco e Nero*, June, 1949,
 ...v of the Film, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

terms of a character's name) they were fulfilled. An example would be, Hero and Villain join in combat. Through all the stories examined, Propp found such functions quite limited in number: 31, in fact, with some alternate variations. Different stories would omit particular elements or sections, but no tale contained additional ones; moreover, functions always followed the same chronological order. Sometimes functions were assimilated together; sometimes they were doubled or trebled. Thus, the Propp study describes an astonishing uniformity of structure among all its apparently various primary sources.

Morphology of the Folktale has a peculiar fascination for students of genre because of parallels that can be seen between Propp's functions and elements of narrative material that has no direct connection with either Russia or the fairytale. In this proto-plot of a Quest, a Hero responds to deceitful villainy which has worked harm and loss on a "family." Tested, branded, often pursued, and aided by a helper or sometimes a magical agent, the Hero exposes and defeats the Villain and accomplishes his task. In consequence he may win the Princess or Sought-for-Person; a family's lack becomes a Hero's reward.

Such a design lends itself to westerns, detective stories, horror, science fiction, and simple adventure tales, particularly as these forms, like their nineteenth-century pulp derivations, are dominated by energetic, visibly active plots which make efficient use of all their material.² There is precedent for relating Propp to the movies. In *Six Guns and Society*,³ Will Wright indulges a method of narrative analysis which he describes as a "liberalized version of . . . Vladimir Propp," enlarging the Russian's system of categorization while arguing for more economic itemizations of functions. Similarly Peter Wollen has proposed that Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* fits a Proppian mold.⁴ Indeed, Wollen finds the application of Propp to Hitchcock surprisingly easy, although he suggests some reformulation of analytical techniques, perhaps viewing the hero's tasks in terms of a system of exchanges; as will be amplified later, Proppian actions are most often motivated by lacks. (In traditional Hollywood scriptwriter's lore, the Hero—or Hero and Heroine—had a Problem, which also was generally a lack.)

Umberto Eco applies somewhat like measures to

Ian Fleming's espionage adventures of James Bond,⁵ although his categories are not strictly Proppian, but rather conceived as good-bad polarities, epitomized by confrontations between Bond and assorted villains; these are, of course, basic to the Proppian drama, but subsumed within his 31 constituent story elements. Both Eco and Wollen, each in his own way, seem to lean toward the variations on Propp conceived by A. J. Greimas.⁶ Greimas groups Propp's characters in dualities: Hero/Sought-for-Person; Dispatcher/Receiver (these are less clearly demarcated in Propp); Helper/Opponent.⁷

Greimas underlines the value-laden elements of his system, something like Roland Barthes's Referential or Cultural Codes in *S/Z*,⁸ at the expense of plot, i.e., the Proppian function. The seesaw balance between these two aspects of narrative can be practically evidenced if we seek to apply the Proppian system to other Hollywood material.

Like *North by Northwest*, a Mickey Spillane easily adapts, so long as, like Wollen, we are willing to stretch a few characterizations so that one figure may serve two or more roles. *Kiss Me Deadly*⁹ eases into the scheme, both in its prose form and as Aldrich's film. Mike Hammer is absent from home (driving down the road), receives an interdiction (the FBI warns him off an investigation), violates the interdiction (he seeks a murdered girl's address), is branded (burned by radioactive material), etc. Once a comic-book *auteur*, Spillane seems to have particular affinity toward fantasy-prone Russian fairytale narrative, thinly overcoated with naturalistic detail for the sake of generic convention. In Spillane's book, Mike is permitted to burn Lily, the villainess, to death by lighting her hair. She is clearly disclosed as a witch.

She was a horrible caricature of a human! There was no skin, just a disgusting mass of twisted, puckered flesh from her knees to her neck making a picture of gruesome freakishness that made you want to shut your eyes against it.¹⁰

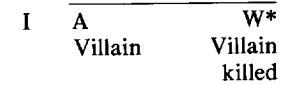
Overviewing fairytale design, Propp diagrams its organization in terms of time, motive, and cause-inflected behavior.

Morphologically, a tale may be termed any development proceeding from Villainy (A) or a lack (a), through intermediary function to marriage (W*), or to other functions employed as a denouement. Terminal functions are at times

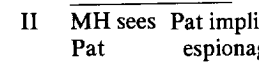
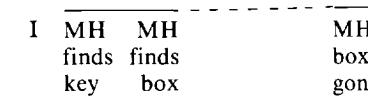
a reward (F), a gain or in general the liquidation (K), an escape from pursuit (RS), etc. development is termed by us a *move*. In villainy, each new lack creates a new move. Moves have several moves, and when analyzing the first of all determine the number of moves that consists. One move may also interweave.¹¹

Applying Propp's alternative, diagrams of constructions to *Kiss Me Deadly* present more curiously *à propos*. Here are some examples.

1. One move immediately follows another; the villain necessarily introduces new villainy; the move because he kills them so rapidly.



2. A new move ensues prior to the first. (Hammer discovers a new active material. Leaving it, he goes to the agent, who mentions the Manhattan Alamos, Trinity. Returning to the club at the Hollywood Athletic Club, attendant killed, the box stolen.)



3. An episode may be interrupted. (When first tortured, Mike searches for shoes.* He later searches for the villain's beach house. The final scene, worn by the villain, Dr. Soberin.)

*What Hitchcock calls a Maguffin, and writers a Weenie.

I MH tortured sees shoes
MH sees shoes in beach house

III Shoes found on Soberin

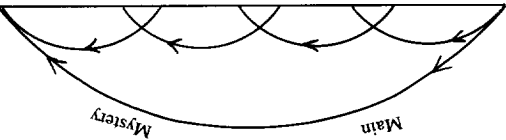
II MH seeks shoes in dressing room

I C and MH kills tortured thug and Carl

II MH finds Soberin present
Soberin present but unseen
Px bottle

5. Two moves may have a common ending, a plotting uncommon in Spillane, who avoids cross-cutting, preferring a straightahead sequence of moves, as in numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 above. More commonly it appears in melodramas where the actions of Hero and Villain receive equal attention, as in Alfred Werner's *Adventures of Sherlock*

*This plotting device is basic to detective stories, an uncommon passing mystery sustaining the episodic succession of cumulative discoveries. Edgar Wallace diagrammed it in this fashion:



Minor mysteries

(After Margaret Lane, *Edgar Wallace The Biography of a Phenomenon*, London, 1938, P. 233).

PROPP IN HOLLYWOOD

Applying Propp's alternative, diagrammed plot constructions to *Kiss Me Deadly* proves to be even more curiously *a propos*. Here are the arrangements:

I. One move immediately follows another. (Spillane necessarily introduces new villains for each move because he kills them so rapidly.)

II A Villain killed
W* Villain killed

II A New Villain
W? Villain killed

2. A new move ensues prior to the termination of the first. (Hammer discovers a box with radioactive material. Leaving it, he goes to Pat, the FBI agent, who mentions the Manhattan Project, Los Alamos, Trinity. Returning to the box's location at the Hollywood Athletic Club, Mike finds the attendant killed, the box stolen.)

I MH MH
MH finds MH finds
MH gets info from
MH finds box gone
MH sees Pat implies espionage

3. An episode may be interrupted in its turn. (When first tortured, Mike sees the Villain's shoes.* He later searches for them in a subordinate villain's beach house. The shoes appear in the final scene, worn by the highest-priority villain, Dr. Soberin.)

*What Hitchcock calls a Maguffin, and old Hollywood script-writers a Weenie.

PROPP IN HOLLYWOOD

With his categories are not strictly rather conceived as good-bad polar-drama, but subsumed within his villains; these are, of course, basic on Propp conceived by A. J. elements. Both Eco and his own way, seem to lean toward as groups Propp's characters in /Sought-for-Person; Dispatcher/ are less clearly demarcated in /Opponent?

defines the value-laden elements of something like Roland Barthes's *Referential Codes in S/Z*,¹⁰ at the expense of the Proppian function. The seesaw on these two aspects of narrative can be evidenced if we seek to apply the

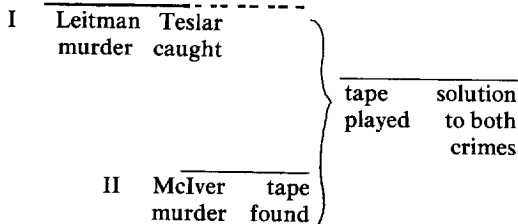
to other Hollywood material. *Northwest, a Mickey Spillane* so long as, like Wollen, we are with a few characterizations so that serve two or more roles. *Kiss Me* into the scheme, both in its prose

Alritch's film, Mike Hammer is (driving down the road), re-jection (the FBI warns him off an violation of the interdiction) he seeks a address), is branded (burned by material), etc. Once a comic-book seems to have particular affinity

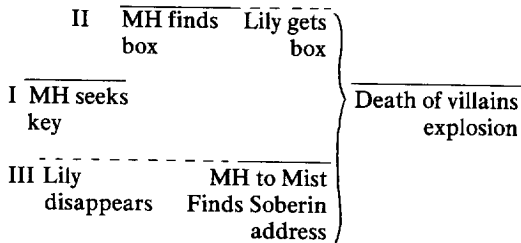
ed with naturalistic detail for the prone Russian fairy tale narrative, convention. In Spillane's book, ed to burn Lily, the villainess, to g her hair. She is clearly disclosed

le caricature of a human! There was no the mass of twisted, puckered flesh from neck making a picture of gruesome freak- you want to shut your eyes against it.¹⁰ fairytale design, Propp diagrams in terms of time, motive, and behavior. A tale may be termed any development Villainy (A) or a lack (a), through inter- to marriage (W*), or to other functions movement. Terminal functions are at times

Holmes in which Moriarty receives his due. Another version sustains many Ross MacDonaldis and, for example, Gordon Douglas's *The Detective*. An initial crime, often occurring some time before the story proper, is finally solved simultaneously with the later offense. (In *The Detective*, one murder had been apparently resolved with the execution of the seeming criminal. A second case leads to the discovery of information that finds another man guilty of both deaths.)



6. Sometimes a fairytale contains two seekers. Both Mike Hammer and Lily are after an unknown object (the radioactive box) which Mike terms the Great Whatsit.



Breakdowns of pulp novel and film design in terms of Proppian distinctions are easy to accomplish, although a single time-continuity (what the pre-syntagmatic era termed a sequence) may contain more than one function. In the detective idiom, an example would be the moment in *The Maltese Falcon* (novel and film) when misfortune is made known to Sam Spade (Brigid has disappeared) just when he desires to have something (the notice of the *La Paloma* docking).

Other comments by Propp demonstrate further applicabilities to the detective genre. All his auxiliary elements for the interconnection of functions commonly require that one character find out something from another.¹² The deceiver is

characteristically unmasked at a feast.¹³ Generally, a villain appears twice; first suddenly, then disappearing (the murder), later at the time of his defeat.¹⁴ With the overcoming of each obstacle, the Hero receives further help toward the attainment of his goal:¹⁵ Mike beats up an art dealer, Billy Mist, and discovers Soberin's phone number on a prescription bottle.

Interestingly, Propp notes that the attributes of the dramatis personae, their external qualities, are greatly affected by a society's actual experience, which "creates new, vivid images which supplant tale personages":¹⁶ an antecedent to the patina of naturalism which coats melodramatic formula. Propp defines something very like the detective's clues, noting that a lacking object may unwittingly give itself away by betraying some bit of news about itself or leaving behind a clear trace. Needed objects are sometimes located by spyglasses, or supplementary characters with specially keen senses: sharp ears and quick eyes.¹⁷ Propp recounts a tale in which a ball of thread leads the way from Donor to destination,¹⁸ and we are reminded that *clue* derives from Ariadne's spool which guided Theseus from the Labyrinth.

It should be emphasized that Proppian analysis provides a rough measure of formal likenesses between Spillane's novel and Aldrich's film, but it cannot discern their qualitative differences. These are extreme and rest largely in the character of Mike Hammer. Whatever he may be to Mickey Spillane, Mike in the film is a shabby, divorce-case detective, sadistic, manipulative, brutishly suspicious and loutishly vulgar. Except as it is defined in formularized behavior, characterization escapes the Proppian sieve.

What are the attributes of Propp's dramatis personae? Propp describes them within individual spheres of action:

1. *The Villain* (fights and pursues the Hero).
2. *Donor or Provider* (provides Hero with a magical agent).
3. *Helper* (effects escapes and movements of Hero, overcomes misfortune or lack, solves tasks, transfigures Hero).
4. *Princess* and/or her *Father* (assigns tasks, brands Hero, recognizes Hero, punishes second Villain, marriage).
5. *Dispatcher* (sends Hero off).
6. *Hero* (departs on search; if a Seeker-Hero, he

reacts to demands of the Donor (Victim-Hero).

7. *False Hero* (departs on search; Donor's demands, has special function).

When one departs from the common generic idiom, the Proppian high becomes narrower and steeper. Let us now look at it through a trio of Hollywood films: *To Have and Have Not*, and *Rio Bravo*. The latter is customarily associated with high Hollywood figures, but if asked to identify a person who participated in each version, the name a less notorious agent, Jules Furthman,* collaborator with Mickey *Underworld*, with Leigh Brackett and William Faulkner on *To Have and Have Not*. It is probably for this reason that we are presented with different kinds of films, with different directors, but obvious story lines. We are presented with commonality in the structural analyst, while—when trying to admit rather sobering discrepancies.

On their faces, *Underworld*, *To Have and Have Not* and *Rio Bravo* share few generalities. The von Sternberg production, *Not a Hero*, concerns three central figures: (George Bancroft), Feathers (Clive Brent), and Rolls Royce (Clive Brook). Chicago gangster, Feathers his moment of rehabilitation by Bull to become a lieutenant. Bull is imprisoned for a time. He escapes, reaches the hideout, it out with the police. When Feathers come to his aid, Bull sends the

*Jules Furthman, real name Julius Grineer, commenced as a scriptwriter in 1915, changing his name to Jules Furthman when he joined Fox for a short period after World War I. He had a strong sentiment toward Germany. He wrote *Hotel Stiller*, *The Outlaw* for Howard Hughes, *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Furthman worked with Maurice Tourneur, Clarence Brown, and most extended collaborations were with two parsimonious in credit sharing, Josef von Sternberg and Hawks. Besides *Underworld*, Furthman worked on *York*, *Morocco*, *Shanghai Express*, *Blonde Crazy*, *Shanghai Gesture*. For Hawks he scripted *Only Angels Have Wings*, *To Have and Have Not*, and *Rio Bravo*. *Rio Bravo* was Furthman's last film. He died in 1960, a year after its completion.

unmasked at a feast.¹³ Gen-
 appears twice; first suddenly, then
 the murder), later at the time of
 further help toward the attain-
 Mike beats up an art dealer,
 discovers Sobertin's phone number
 bottle.
 Propp notes that the attributes of
 none, their external qualities, are
 by a society's actual experience,
 new, vivid images which supplant
 'an antecedent to the patina of
 coats melodramatic formula.
 something very like the detective's
 a lacking object may unwittingly
 by betraying some bit of news
 being behind a clear trace. Needed
 sometimes located by spyglasses, or
 characters with specially keen
 and quick eyes.¹⁷ Propp re-
 which a ball of thread leads the
 or to destination,¹⁸ and we are
 live derives from Ariadne's spool
 excess from the Labyrinth.
 emphasized that Proppian analysis
 th measure of formal likenesses
 their novel and Aldrich's film, but it
 rest largely in the character of
 Whatever he may be to Mickey
 in the film is a shabby, divorce-case
 ically manipulative, buttishly suspi-
 ighly vulgar. Except as it is defined
 behavior, characterization escapes

reacts to demands of the Donor. Weds if a
 Victim-Hero).
 7. False Hero (departs on search, reacts to
 Donor's demands, has special functions).
 When one departs from the conventionalized
 generic idiom, the Proppian highway becomes
 narrower and steeper. Let us nonetheless pursue
 it through a trio of Hollywood films: *Underworld*,
To Have and Have Not, and *Rio Bravo*. They are
 customarily associated with highly visible Holly-
 wood figures, but if asked to identify the one
 person who participated in each venture we would
 name a less notorious agent, namely Jules
 Furthman,* collaborator with Ben Hecht on
Underworld, with Leigh Brackett on *Rio Bravo*,
 with William Faulkner on *To Have and Have Not*.
 It is probably for this reason that we are presented
 with different kinds of films, with different actors
 and directors, but obvious story likenesses. Thus
 we are presented with commonalities that gratify
 the structural analyst, while—we shall see—com-
 ing to admit rather sobering discrepancies.
 On their faces, *Underworld*, *To Have and Have*
Not and *Rio Bravo* share few generic common-
 alities. The von Sternberg production, we remem-
 ber, concerns three central figures, Bull Weed
 (George Bancroft), Feathers McCoy (Evelyn
 Brent), and Rolls Royce (Clive Brooks). Bull is a
 Chicago gangster, Feathers his moll, Rolls a drunk
 rehabilitated by Bull to become the gangster's
 lieutenant. Bull is imprisoned for killing a rival
 hood. He escapes, reaches the hideout and shoots
 it out with the police. When Feathers and Rolls
 come to his aid, Bull sends them away. First
 escapes during an exchange of prisoners. With his
 friends' help, Chance kills or captures the oppo-
 sition and admits his love for a visiting gambler,
 Angie Dickinson. Her name in the picture is
 Feathers.¹⁹

ambittered that they have betrayed him, Bull
 finally realizes his two friends are loyal even to the
 point of denying for his sake their attraction
 toward one another. Bull Weed is warm-hearted
 and violent. Feathers's loosely constructed trap
 which seems continually to release feathers from
 heights like a balloon machine at a Republican
 convention, predates Sternberg's eroticism of the
 Hollywood Dietrich image. Rolls Royce has seen
 better days as a lawyer, and his raised right
 eyebrow signifies the world-weariness, cynicism
 and fatal charm of the silent's romantic failures.
To Have and Have Not pairs Harry Morgan
 (Bogart) with Slim (Lauren Bacall) in Martinique.
 As in the Hemingway novel, Morgan owns a
 fishing boat. Little else resembles the book except
 for an introductory fishing sequence. Eddie
 (Walter Brennan) is an alcoholic aide to Harry.
 Unalloyed to political causes, Harry is attracted to
 the Free French in the persons of a French agent,
 de Bursac, his wife Helene, and an ardent patriot,
 Frenchy. With the island under Vichy, Harry
 consents to smuggling Gaullists ashore on his
 boat. This deed is undertaken for money, but at
 picture's end, Morgan, Slim, Eddie and the de
 Bursacs are setting out to free a Resistance leader
 from Devil's Island.
Rio Bravo has Sheriff John Chance (John
 Wayne), a one-legged deputy Stumpy (Walter
 Brennan), and a drunk in the agonized process of
 reform, Dude (Dean Martin). Their town has been
 blockaded by the brother of an arrested murderer.
 With the death of his trail boss, Colorado (Ricky
 Nelson) throws in with the Sheriff. Although Dude
 is captured and hostages by the badies, he
 escapes during an exchange of prisoners. With his
 friends' help, Chance kills or captures the oppo-
 sition and admits his love for a visiting gambler,
 Angie Dickinson. Her name in the picture is
 Feathers.¹⁹

What happens if we try to apply Propp's
 dramatic personae and their spheres of action to
 these movies? Heroes and Helpers seem most
 easily to fall into line. Harry Morgan and John
 Chance react to demands; weddings, or what pass
 for weddings any more, are implied. Bull Weed
 poses something of a problem. Besieged by police,
 he fails to conclude the story on any promising
 note except for his emotional generosity toward

*Jules Furthman, real name Julius Grinnell Furthmann, com-
 menced as a scriptwriter in 1915, changing his name to Stephen
 Fox for a short period after World War I because of national
 sentiment toward Germany. He wrote *Hotel Imperial* for Mauritz
 Stiller, *The Quilaw* for Howard Hughes, and Frank Lloyd's
Mulvey on the Bounty. Furthman worked for John Ford,
 Maurice Tourneur, Clarence Brown, and Henry King, but his
 most extended collaborations were with two directors sometimes
 partisanous in credit sharing, Josef von Sternberg and Howard
 Hawks. Besides *Underworld*, Furthman wrote *Docks of New*
York, Morocco, Shanghai Express, Blonde Venus and *The*
Shanghai Gesture. For Hawks he scripted *Come and Get It*,
Only Angels Have Wings, To Have and Have Not, The Big Sleep
 and *Rio Bravo*. Furthman's last undertaking; he
 died in 1960, a year after its completion.

Rolls Royce and Feathers. It's Rolls who gets the girl and he's supposed to be the Helper.

In *To Have and Have Not*, Eddie is an ineffectual support to Harry Morgan. One of the few lines preserved from Hemingway is, "I want you rum-brave. I don't want you useless," measuring the basis for Eddie's dependability. A more pulled-together one-time helper is Cricket (Hoagy Carmichael), Dooley Wilson with dialogue. Like Dude in *Rio Bravo*, Cricket is commissioned to put the girl on outgoing transportation. Both fail.

Dude fits the more easily into Propp's definitions, for, pouring booze back into the bottle when the Villain fortuitously plays "No Quarter," an old Alamo trumpet call, Dude overcomes misfortune or lack. But Dude does not effect escapes and movements of the Hero, nor does Dude transfigure the Hero. Chance brings about Dude's escape.

Further, there are two other Helpers in *Rio Bravo*, Stumpy and Colorado. A late-comer, Colorado facilitates Chance's escape from capture, but in this he seems to partake more of the Donor's role. The magical agent is a rifle which Colorado pitches the Sheriff, himself gunning down two minor villains while the piece is in the air. Stumpy continues the questionable efficiency of Eddie in *To Have and Have Not*, although Eddie's alcoholism is deeded to Dude. Further, Stumpy shares with the Mexican hotel manager, Carlos, a conventional role of comic relief. Essentially, he is Walter Brennan, eccentric speech-patterns serving to advance story line with harmless garrulity and to draw out the character of other players by their reactions to himself. We know Slim to be okay when she asks Eddie if he was ever bit by a dead bee. About to lapse from abstinence, Dude is at his worst when Stumpy's monologues make him nervous.

The Princess or Sought-for-Person exists throughout, if we can tolerate her change of heart in *Underworld*. Everywhere she is a shopworn prize, her past overcome in the von Sternberg by sensuality and innocence. Lauren Bacall ensnares Bogart with that insolent sharp-tongued confidence that blends Hawks's male-male and male-female relationships into like camaraderie. Slim's low, mannered voice vaguely evokes Dietrich and Mae West.

Feathers in *Rio Bravo* is a widow, which rationalizes her experience and her confidence in a frontier setting. Like Slim she guises the energetic pursuit of her man with humor. From the Hero's myopic perspective, the Princesses are not so much won as they are acquired. The women's recognition of the Heroes really amounts to realizing the man's humanity behind apparent cynicism (Rolls), neutrality (Harry), and suspicion (Chance).

Robin Wood has remarked on another female role element in *To Have and Have Not*, an obvious variation on *Casablanca*. In doubling the woman's part—Slim and H el ene de Bursac—Hawks's film allows the protagonist to equate patriotism with sexuality finally, while yet giving him the girl at the end, rather than forcing another of those bathetic Rick-Ilse airport renunciations. Everybody has it both ways if they can just get that poor fellow off Devil's Island.²⁰

Villains tend to greater obscurity in the films, or else the apparent enemy personifies larger forces. A rival gangster killed by Bull Weed is too weak to pose real danger. In the end Bull shoots it out with "the cops." His own moral ambiguity fuzzes Hero-Villain demarcations.

To Have and Have Not, like *Casablanca*, enjoins traitorous Vichy, and actor Dan Seymour plays equally despicable P tainists in each film, but the central conflict occurs within Harry Morgan. Will good motives overcome self-protective neutralities which are no more than the residue of a disheartening past? "Who was the girl, Steve?" Bacall asks. "She must have been something." (Unaccountably Bacall calls Bogart Steve throughout the film.)

Villains in *Rio Bravo* are more interestingly doubled. The murderer, Joe Burdette, acts with such callous brutality in the picture's first sequence that moral polarities are defined for good and all in the remaining two hours. Imprisoned, Joe's fate rests upon the confrontation between Chance and brother Nathan Burdette, and this is more a contest of professional skills than one with ethical inflections, although Nathan Burdette of course has to perform certain requisite evil acts in the process. Nathan is far less filially bound to Joe than he is concerned about the maintenance of power on which his business enterprise rests.

In summary, we can identify the characters in our three films:

<i>Hero</i>		
Bull Weed		F
Harry Morgan		F
John Chance		F
<i>Helper</i>		
Rolls Royce		The P
Eddie		
Cricket		
Dude		Joe
Colorado		Nath
Stumpy		

The employment of these figures, what Vladimir Propp describes as action poses considerable difficulties. Characters often seem defiantly unwilling to appropriate Proppian behavior patterns, their unreliabilities, checkered pasts, and ineffectualness of function when characters are called upon to be trebled.

A pivotal difficulty is sexual. In the Princess shifts her affection in the films, she is less sought after than in the films. von Sternberg and Hawks seem to have their male-female relationships supported by expository support.

A major sequence in *Underworld* is the Princess's hideout. Rolls Royce works as a butler, and Bull brings Feathers to the hideout abruptly leaves the two together with the Princess to "get something" Feathers had hidden in a store window).

Feathers flirts with Rolls. The Princess's one another is obvious—too obvious. Finally, he rejects her advances and she leaves. With great skill, von Sternberg works out the relationship by compositions which balance the some and threesome against picture elements on the walls. When Rolls and Feathers have only themselves in mind, the Princess foregrounds the pair against two pictures. Bull enters their thoughts or is present in the combination is readjusted to fit the picture.

*The Boetticher Randolph Scott westerns, in other respects, fit Propp's patterns far more closely.

Rio Bravo is a widow, which experience and her confidence in her man with humor. From the perspective, the Princesses are not as they are acquired. The women's the Heroes really amounts to realizing the Heroes really amount to realizing (Harry), and suspicion (Chance). *To Have and Have Not*, an obvious *sablanca*. In doubling the woman's Héline de Bursac—Hawks's film antagonist to equate patriotism with a forcing another of those bathetic renunciations. Everybody has it they can just get that poor fellow

to greater obscurity in the films, or enemy personalities larger forces. r killed by Bull Weed is too weak inger. In the end Bull shoots it out "His own moral ambiguity fuzzes *marcatons*." *Have Not, like Casablanca*, enjoys the Pétainists in each film, but the occurs within Harry Morgan. are no more than the residue of a have overcome self-protective neu- "Who was the girl, Steve?" "Bacall calls Bogart Steve through-

Rio Bravo are more interestingly murderer, Joe Burdette, acts with remaining two hours. Imprisoned, upon the confrontation between other Nathan Burdette, and this is of professional skills than one with *ms*, although Nathan Burdette of perform certain requisite evil acts in than is far less filially bound to concerned about the maintenance with his business enterprise rests.

In summary, we can identify these like characters in our three films:

<i>Hero</i>	Harry Morgan	<i>Princess</i>	Feathers
<i>Helper</i>	John Chance	<i>Villain</i>	Feathers
<i>Rolls Royce</i>	Police	<i>Police Inspector</i>	Police
<i>Eddie</i>	Police	<i>Vichy</i>	Police
<i>Cricketer</i>	Police	<i>Joe Burdette</i>	Police
<i>Dude</i>	Police	<i>Nathan Burdette</i>	Police
<i>Colorado</i>	Police		
<i>Stumpy</i>	Police		

The employment of these figures in terms of what Vladimir Propp describes as spheres of action poses considerable difficulty; in fact, characters often seem defiantly unwilling to undertake appropriate Proppian behavior patterns because of unreliability, checkered pasts, and the splintering of function when characters are doubled or tripled.

A pivotal difficulty is sexual. In *Underworld*, the Princess shifts her affections. In Hawks's films, she is less sought after than seeking. * Both von Sternberg and Hawks seem to recognize that their male-female relationships require special expository support.

A major sequence in *Underworld* takes place in Bull's hideout. Rolls Royce works there as a kind of butler, and Bull brings Feathers home, then abruptly leaves the two together when he goes out in a store window). Feathers flirts with Rolls. Their attraction to one another is obvious—too obvious, in fact. Feathers flirts with Rolls. Their attraction to one another is obvious—too obvious, in fact. Finally, he rejects her advances and Bull returns. With great skill, von Sternberg defines the relationship by compositions which balance the two-some and threesome against pictures and light fixtures on the walls. When Rolls and Feathers have only themselves in mind, camera setups foreground the pair against two pictures. When Bull enters their thoughts or is physically present, the combination is readjusted to introduce a third other respects, fit Propp's patterns far more easily.

*The Boeticher Randolph Scott westerns would, in this and hotel room in *To Have and Have Not*.

visual element. The emotions are underlined and amplified by every screen area. An actor once said of von Sternberg that he "thought no more of the actors than he did of the pictures on the walls," which is quite correct.*

Hawks's disposition runs more toward oblique exposure of feeling through speech and action. Feathers sits up all night with a rifle to guard Chance's sleep. Dialogue between Slim and Harry proves not so much to indicate a developing relationship as it does power-gaming, revolving about an attraction evident from the beginning. Hawks characters do not change but only succeed or fail and on rare occasions become themselves more completely. John Wayne leans on Angie Dickinson's hotel room door as Bacall had against Bogart's. In certain respects, sex roles are interchangeable.

If like characters behave differently, incidents show the same work as a janitor in a *Underworld*. Rolls works as a janitor in a *speakeasy* frequented by Bull, Feathers, and Bull's criminal rival played by Fred Kohler. Kohler amuses himself by throwing a silver dollar into a spittoon, then urging Rolls to remove it to buy himself a drink. Rolls's temptation is interrupted by Bull, who rescues him from the difficulty by demanding the same indignity of his enemy.

Rio Bravo finds Dude, the town drunk, in a saloon, broke and barred from credit. Joe Burdette throws a bill into a spittoon and invites Dude to retrieve it. Chance interrupts the proceedings. Swinging a stick, Dude stuns Chance with a blow from behind. Burdette bears Dude, who is held by henchmen, then kills a man trying to stop the violence.

It may be said that in each case the spittoon scene serves to confront Hero and Helper, introduce a Villain, and initiate the Helper's rehabilitation, but villainous actions differ radically in each case. Heroes intervene for quite different motives. Feathers's relation to the action cannot be compared. In *Underworld* she and Rolls both "work for" Bull. In *Rio Bravo* she has yet to appear.

*A like employment of props (no pun) is apparent during the sitting-room scene between Emil Jennings and Evelyn Brent in *The Last Command*. Compare either to Harry's picture-filled hotel room in *To Have and Have Not*.



In UNDERWORLD (see text on preceding page), as Rolls reminds Feathers of Bull (top left), the composition changes from paired figures and pictures to three elements (top right). When Bull returns with the jewelry (bottom left) we get three against three. Later, in the shootout (bottom right) Bull smashes one of the pictures in his rage.

More broadly, a similar inquiry might be mounted toward the pattern of besieged Heroes in each film: Bull exchanging bullets from his second-story window; Harry and Eddie fired on by a patrol boat in their fishing vessel; Chance, Dude, Colorado, and Stumpy holed up in the jailhouse while Nathan Burdette lays siege to the town. In each case plot functions differ. Bull has found refuge after his escape from prison. Harry Morgan is smuggling patriots; they were revolutionaries in Hemingway's novel. Sheriff Chance guards a prisoner.

Each action, moreover, resolves differently. Bull surrenders. Harry escapes in the dark after shooting out a searchlight. Carefully located at a dead end street, the jail design in *Rio Bravo* is most completely developed. Both the "No Quarter" bugle and an Alamo storefront sign resonate conventional responses. At last Hero and Helpers overcome Burdette and his gang by trapping *them* in another building and forcing capitulation with gunfire and dynamite.

Finally, what generalizations, if any, can be made about the usefulness of Proppian breakdowns of the films in question? Here are a few suggestions.

1. Motives skew moves. The fairytale dramatic personae ally intention and behavior so closely that

each figure quite literally is what he is: a man, conversely, does what he is: a man's gotta do. In contrast, the fit of motive give rise to broader variations in behavior. Propp's strengths reside in a generic pattern that does not court complication or discrepancy between intention and action.

2. Conflicts must be acted out. Dude catches criminals. Cowboys are to resolve issues violently through superior skill. In *Underworld*, conflicts are internalized, behavior becomes tactically evidential rather than a matter of moral polarities. Harry Morgan escapes the Vichyites because he opposes people who "pick on a person who never hurt anyone, and slap A. J. Greimas's scheme more smoothly than the value-conflicts, but it abdicates the responsibility for formularizing characters' behavior.

3. To keep faith with Propp, characters must stay in one piece. When personae undergo mitosis and divide into separate parts, they muddle the conventional formulae of relationships with one another. In *Underworld* and *Colorado* are all the Helpers, envious of the others because they lack mobility. Dude wonders how his skill stacks up against Colorado's. Colorado seizes control into the group. And Sheriff John Wayne deal with all of them.

4. The meaning of incidents must be defined by character. All spitoons are not created equal. Structuralists are ultimately concerned with *how* a movie means, not just what. Propp provides is clearly revealed in the sphere of plot and character.

5. Likeness obscures difference. The same geographies, and speech in enterprising, may betoken someone's dearth of resources; they may betray conservative aspirations for commercial success, but they can also signify distinctions. Like Slim's, Feather's path directly across the hall from the woman tells the man, bitterly, he has put his mind about her on first sight. He takes a job in the hotel. Each character has an escape. But Bogart and Bacall escape through laconic, emotional pellets while John Wayne's Aw Shucks f



In *Unlawful* (see text on preceding page), as *Rolls* reminds *Feathers of Bull* (top left), the composition changes from paired figures and pictures to three elements (top right). When Bull returns with the jewelry (bottom left) we get three against three. Later, in the shootout (bottom right) Bull smashes one of the pictures in his rage.

More broadly, a similar inquiry might be mounted toward the pattern of besieged Heroes in each film: Bull exchanging bullets from his second-story window; Harry and Eddie fired on by a patrol boat in their fishing vessel; Chance, Dude, Colorado, and Stumpy holed up in the jailhouse while Nathan Burdette lays siege to the town. In each case plot functions differ. Bull has found refuge after his escape from prison. Harry Morgan is smuggling patriots; they were revolutionaries in Hemingway's novel. Sheriff Chance guards a prisoner.

Each action, moreover, resolves differently. Bull surrenders. Harry escapes in the dark after shooting out a searchlight. Carefully located at a dead end street, the jail design in *Rio Bravo* is most completely developed. Both the "No Quarter" bugle and an Alamo storefront sign resonate conventional responses. At last Hero and Helpers overcome Burdette and his gang by trapping them in another building and forcing capitulation with gunfire and dynamite.

Finally, what generalizations, if any, can be made about the usefulness of Proppian breakdowns of the films in question? Here are a few suggestions.

1. Motives skew moves. The fairytale dramatic personae ally intention and behavior so closely that

each figure quite literally is what he is: a man conversely, does what he is: a man a man's gotta do. In contrast, the field of motive give rise to broader variations in behavior. Propp's strengths reside in a generic pattern that does not allow for complication or discrepancy between intention and action.

2. Conflicts must be acted out. Dude catches criminals. Cowboys are to resolve issues violently through superior skills. When they are internalized, behavior becomes more tactically evidential rather than a matter of moral polarities. Harry Morgan escapes the Vichyites because he opposes people who "pick on a person who never hurt anyone, and slap them." A. J. Greimas's scheme more smoothly resolves the value-conflicts, but it abdicates the responsibility for formularizing characters' behavior. 3. To keep faith with Propp, characters must stay in one piece. When personae multiply, they divide into separate personae that muddle the conventional formulaic relationships with one another. In *Unlawful* and *Colorado* are all the Helpers, and the others because they are so mobile. Dude wonders how his struggle against Colorado's. Colorado separates himself into the group. And Sheriff John deals with all of them.

4. The meaning of incidents must be character. All spittoons are not equal. Structuralists are ultimately concerned with how a movie means. The more than Propp provides is clearly revealed in the sphere of plot and character.

5. Likeness obscures difference. The geographies, and speech in entrance, may betoken someone's dearth of identity; they may betray conservative aspirations for commercial success, but they can also mark distinctions. Like Slim's, Feather's path directly across the hall from the woman tells the man, bitterly, how his mind about her on first sight. Each takes a job in the hotel. Each escapes. But Bogart and Bacall communicate through laconic, emotional pellets while John Wayne's Aw Shucks!

each figure quite literally is what he does or, conversely, does what he is: a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do. In contrast, the films' gradations of motive give rise to broader variations of behavior. Propp's strengths reside in locating a generic pattern that does not cope with either complication or discrepancy between intention and action.

2. Conflicts must be acted out. Detectives are to catch criminals. Cowboys are to resolve ethical issues violently through superior skill. When issues are internalized, behavior becomes problematically evidential rather than a confrontation of moral polarities. Harry Morgan subdues and opposes people who "pick on a poor old rummy who never hurt anyone, and slap girls around."

A. J. Greimas's scheme more smoothly supports the value-conflicts, but it abdicates responsibility for formulating characters' behaviors.

3. To keep faith with Propp, characters need to stay in one piece. When personae commit human mitosis and divide into separate personalities, they muddle the conventional formulae by developing relationships with one another. Dude, Stumpy, and Colorado are all the Helper, but Stumpy is envious of the others because they have greater mobility. Dude wonders how his skill will measure against Colorado's. Colorado seeks acceptance into the group. And Sheriff John Chance has to deal with all of them.

4. The meaning of incidents must evolve from character. All spitoons are not the same. If structuralists are ultimately concerned, as they so often say, with *how* a movie means, a finer tool than Propp provides is clearly required, even in the sphere of plot and character.

5. Likeness obscures difference. Similar names, geographies, and speech in entertainment films may betoken someone's dearth of imagination or they may betray conservative appeals to tried commercial success, but they can also clothe fine distinctions. Like Slims, Feather's hotel room lies directly across the hall from the Hero's. Each woman tells the man, bitterly, he had made up his mind about her on first sight. Each woman takes a job in the hotel. Each helps her man escape. But Bogart and Bacall communicate through laconic, emotional pellets of dialogue, while John Wayne's Aw Shucks frustration with

Such a system is immensely adaptable to subtle relationships, but its very richness implies a potential arbitrariness which, in "deconstructing" actual films rather than hypothetical models, may deny the systematic rigors of more orthodox structural analyses. Perhaps this is not such a bad idea.

Our conclusion is cautionary. Before fitting a measure to a film, we must be alert both to what it measures and to why we are measuring it. As films depart from predetermined dynamics the question must be raised as to whether they can still be marked off by one meterstick standard.

At this point in time, another, more flexibly employable approach is evidenced by Julia Le- sage,²¹ who applies Barthes's S/Z design to Renoir's *Rules of the Game*, a film in which Heroes and Villains, if they appear at all, assume only ironic importance. In Barthes's scheme, plot (what he terms the hermeneutic or enigmatic code (structure) is withdrawn from actual behaviors, abstracted back to the level of tension provoking-and-resolving patterns. (What will happen to Jurieu's love for Christine? Where do Christine's affections really lie?) On the other hand, character is confronted obliquely through systems of signs, symbolization, cultural reference and the film's decisions about how to show action.

Such a system is immensely adaptable to subtle relationships, but its very richness implies a potential arbitrariness which, in "deconstructing" actual films rather than hypothetical models, may deny the systematic rigors of more orthodox structural analyses. Perhaps this is not such a bad idea.

language requires a campaign of verbal pyrotechnics from Angie Dickinson; and in the face of Wayne's distrust of words, she must evidence loyalty and skill through action.

6. Even if it leads to the same consequence, thought is not identical with dramatic action. Contrast a Mickey Spillane, which is picaresque-detective in the corrupted-tough-guy tradition, with the puzzle-detective: Agatha Christie stories or Margaret Ruthertford as Miss Marple; Earl Derr Biggers or Sidney Toler. For several reasons, the latter examples adapt far less easily to Propp: First, the detectives are disinclined to go places and do things. Second, the Villain, although unknown, does not inflict direct injury in ways to elicit counteractions. Third, since the major event, the crime, occurs before the narrative commences, exposition is less chronologically bound. Episodes, the Proppian moves, lack cause-effect connections because the puzzle-solving behavior of the detective operate in a cognitive, i.e., spaceless, domain.

PROPP IN HOLLYWOOD

PROPP IN HOLLYWOOD



Moreover, resolves differently. Bull Y escapes in the dark after shoot- all design in *Rio Bravo* is most Wamo storefront sign resonate nses. At last Hero and Helpers e and his gang by trapping them ng and forcing capitulation with nite. generalizations, if any, can be usefulness of Proppian break- ns in question? Here are a few moves. The fairytale dramatis tion and behavior so closely that

NOTES

1. Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*. Austin, University of Texas Press, 1968 2nd ed.
2. Cf. John Fell, *Film and the Narrative Tradition*. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1974. Ch. 3.
3. Will Wright, *Six Guns and Society: a Structural Study of the Western*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1975.
4. Peter Wollen, "North by North-West: a Morphological Analysis," *Film Form*, V.1, n.1 (Spring, 1976).
5. Umberto Eco, *The Bond Affair*. London, 1966.
6. A. J. Greimas, *Du Sens*. Paris, Seuil, 1970.
7. For a discussion of Propp and Greimas, plus related aspects of Claude Bremond and Tzvetan Todorov see Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1974. Ch. 4.
8. Roland Barthes, *S/Z*. New York, Hill and Wang, 1974.
9. Mickey Spillane, *Kiss Me Deadly*. New York, 1952.
10. Spillane, Ch. 12.
11. Propp, p. 92.
12. Propp, p. 73.
13. Propp, p. 73-4.
14. Propp, p. 84.
15. Propp, p. 90.
16. Propp, p. 87.
17. Propp, p. 73.
18. Propp, pp. 74-5.
19. Neither *Underworld* nor *Rio Bravo* is accurately described in Georges Sadoul, *Dictionary of Films*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1972, which does not list *To Have and Have Not*.
20. Robin Wood, *Howard Hawks*. Garden City, Doubleday, 1966.
21. Julia Lesage, "S/Z and Rules of the Game," *Jump Cut*, n.12/13, n.d.

JUNE M. GILL

The Films of Gunvor Nelson

Gunvor Nelson is a West Coast woman filmmaker whose works are currently receiving critical attention from such diverse sources as Pauline Kael and the editors of *Playboy*. Her films, which have been circulating quietly for several years in the West and East Coast underground, have now begun to attract national public coverage, thanks largely to her film *Take Off*, an inspired satire on the strip tease.

Nelson has thus far made seven major works: *Schmeerguntz*, *Fog Pumas*, *My Name is Oona*, *Kirsa Nicholina*, *Take Off*, *Moon's Pool*, and *Trollstenen*. In the West Coast tradition at its best, these films reveal the organic forces in the lives of their characters and develop an intimate communication with nature. Like Bruce Baillie and James Broughton, two San Francisco filmmakers she admires, Nelson uses a highly crafted style to explore nature and the interior. Superbly shot and meticulously edited, her films rely on a variety of carefully conceived optical effects to expand the audience's vision.

Although Nelson denies any specific feminist intent in her films and avoids the narrow tradition of the pamphleteer, they are significant to the Women's Movement in that they describe with accuracy, sensitivity, and humor the paradoxes of women's experience in contemporary America. Her films are "feminist" in the largest sense of the word: they search for what is original, instinctive, and natural in womankind—the human face hidden behind the masks imposed by cultural stereotypes.

A central theme in Nelson's work is her meditation on the nature of female beauty. She contrasts the contemporary American definition of female attractiveness with the more universal principle of feminine beauty perceived in nature. She sees these two definitions as irreconcilable because the cultural model is based on the direct repression of instinctual and natural female behavior and appearance. Her films suggest that the technological society is as dedicated to the eradication of the organic in modern woman as it is to

the eradication of the natural environment. The modern woman today is trained to purify herself against all of her natural functions: to disguise her body's odor, pills to suppress her reproductive cycle, undergarments to cover her body, and cosmetics to discolored skin. Somewhere beneath it all, a natural woman remains; Nelson helps us to rediscover and redefine her beauty on a human scale.

Yet, in dealing with childhood, adolescence, and self-hood, her films have universal appeal. Like Doris Lessing, Nelson believes that the most deeply personal often connects with what is most widely shared in human experience. "I want," says Nelson, "to give as much as possible and hopefully to be universal."

Nelson's first film, *Schmeerguntz*, deals with the now familiar conflict between the ideal image of the American woman and the reality. Interestingly enough, however, her collaborator Dorothy Wiley chose to make this film more or less independent of the ideology of Women's Liberation. Instead, they drew their inspiration for the film from the work of the filmmaker who had wanted to make a 16mm movie, but had no subject. And one day I watched her throw that gunk in the sink and thought about the difference between what we do, and what we 'should' be—in ads and things—between the idea right there—from the sink. *Schmeerguntz* is a carefully edited collage film made from original footage shot by Nelson and Wiley in their own homes with television, movie camera footage, photo animations, and sound sequences. They juxtapose poised images of Miss America contestants side by side with the bier realities of the American home: a pregnant mother vomiting with rage, a woman or struggling to heave her unwieldy body from her garter belt. They juxtapose television images of Johnson and Johnson madonnas with idyllic infants with shots of Wiley and Nelson's infant from her baby's behind. The film's image, they jolt us into laughter at the incongruity between the false media image of the American woman and the contrasted reality.

Nelson and Wiley certainly do not stop at making an early, forceful statement