Towards a Psychological Theory of Close-ups

By Per Persson

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TOWARDS A PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY OF CLOSE-UPS: EXPERIENCING INTIMACY AND THREAT

This article takes a functionalist perspective to cinema. It is insufficient only to describe textual features without awareness of how these function in co-operation with cultural-psychological-behavioural structures in the spectator. It is the experience of cinema a reception study seeks to elucidate. It is maintained that threat and intimacy are two generally widespread spectatorial effects of close-ups. The reason why these effects emerge might be explainable from a theory of personal space, which in social psychology refers to the intimate sphere surrounded by every individual regulating distance behaviour in interpersonal situations. This behavioural pattern is said to have two functions. In the protective function an intrusion into personal space warns the individual about potential threats and generates protective behaviour (backing off, leaving the situation). In the communicative function manipulating distance during conversation (for example by letting someone into your intimate space) is a way to flag desire for deeper involvement and intimacy. It is maintained that the two functions of personal space in many ways correlate to the two functions of close-ups; the close-up evokes similar socio-psychological processes as would a real interpersonal situation. This theory is substantiated by exemplifying close-ups from a wide spectrum of genres. It is concluded that some cinematic conventions (such as the use of close-ups) are not totally arbitrary. They are designed with careful consideration to the socio-psychological makeup of the spectator in order to produce specific effects.

> Intimate space, for example, is the distance of both lovemaking and murder! *(Meyrowitz, 1986:261)*

Introduction

The basic tenet of reception studies might be formulated something like this: the cinematic discourse cannot be described without considering the biological-psychological-social-cultural-individual dispositions in the spectator. Describing the discourse in itself - objectively - is not only impossible but also uninteresting, since it is the *function* of the text that we want to explain. It is in the interaction between spectator and text that meaning, interpretation, experience and understanding arises (tab.1). Such effects are a function of the text and the dispositions in the spectator. Surely a film exists apart from someone perceiving it, but only in the most trivial and uninteresting way. *Close-up* might be defined in at least two ways - objectively and functionally.

An objective definition might say something about the properties of the image itself. Such a definition would probably at least include size enlargement of objects depicted, close distance between camera and objects and a specific type of framing (with people, generally from around shoulders and upward). Such a definition not only excludes the spectator experience of close-ups, but seems to be riddled with difficulties.

Firstly, how to define *enlargement*? One answer could be something like this: if the measured screen-size of the object is larger than the real object, then it is an enlargement. To this we might riposte that a close-up object on a television screen probably is smaller than the original object, but we still call it a close-up. The objective size of the image violently fluctuates depending on screening conditions, seemingly without affecting our use of the word close-up. Secondly, the proximity between camera and object seems not to be an important issue, since close-ups can be accomplished with a variety of lenses, including telephoto lenses. Thirdly, specifying framing properties of a medium shot, close-up and extreme close-up - for all kinds of objects depicted - seems to be an impossible task. When we talk about the most common object on the screen - the human body - there appears to be reasonably consensus, but even here there will be no given limits between medium shots and close-ups.

An objective definition of course has an instrumental function; it enables scholars and filmmakers to talk about and refer to certain types of images (Bordwell & Thompson, 1993:213). But it will not, even if it could be established, give us any deeper insight to close-ups *effects*. In analogue with film devices in general, the close-up has to be defined *functionally*, i.e. how it works within the text and in interaction with the

spectator. The phenomenon to be explained is not the image/close-up *per se*, but the human experience of this stimulus. Close-up effects can thus be triggered by different sorts of framings, enlargements and lenses. A functional definition places emphasis on the necessary prerequisites for the function to occur, and in this paper I will argue that a functional explanation of close-ups will have to take into account a certain spectatorial behavioural pattern, known in social psychology as *personal space behaviour*.

Now, close-ups do undoubtedly have several functions. Directing attention is perhaps the most obvious (Carroll, 1996:84; Balázs, 1924:74-5; Epstein, 1921:239). This paper will, however, deal with another function, or rather two, which I argue are closely related. They are what I call the functions of *threat* and *intimacy*.

Threat

Many scholars have testified to the threatening and shocking effect of close-ups. The terminology centres around "the threat and the anxiety"(1) (Dubois, 1984-85:14), "effect of horror"(2) (Dubois, 1984-85:18), "jolting and excessive" (Gunning, 1994:294), "aggressive"(3) (Olsson, 1996:34), "confrontation" (Gunning, 1990:101) or "shock" (Bordwell & Thompson, 1993:216). Also Eisenstein (1940/1974) identified this effect: "[A] cockroach/hypocrite [cafard] filmed in close-up seems on the screen a hundred times more terrible than a hundred elephants captured in a long-shot."(4)

Examples of images that produce these effects are not hard to find. In most action scenes in modern mainstream cinema the quick use of medium shots and close-ups is an important instrument to generate a feeling of tension and 'vividness' in the viewer. Fig. 1a-1d try to exemplify this phenomenon from a *Die Hard* (1988) fighting sequence.

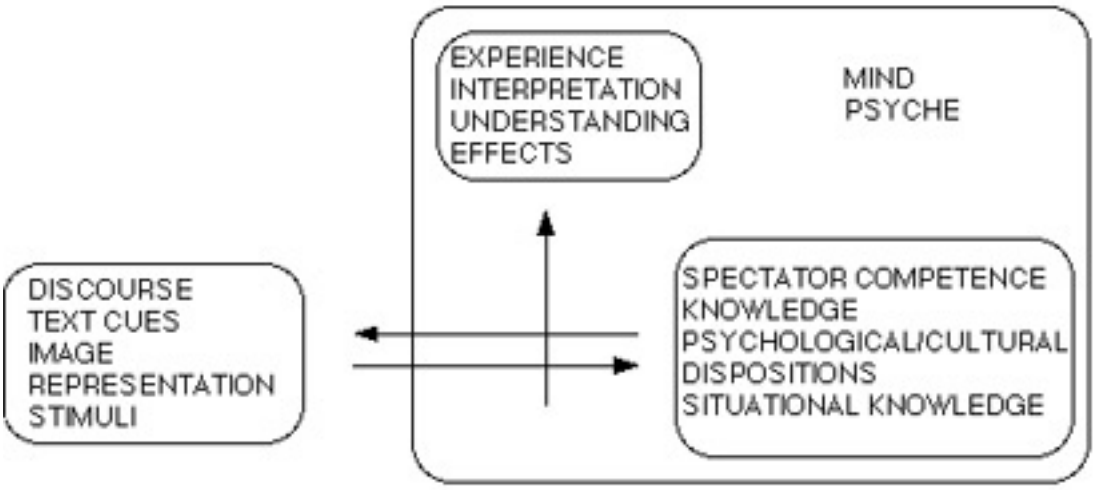

Figure 1: Tab. 1

Here the close-up (of course in tandem with many other parameters) indeed is "threatening to transgress its frame, to burst the screen in order to invade the space of the spectator"(5) (Dubois, 1984-85:22) in a quite forcible way. In contrast, a similar event represented in long shots - e.g. in *The Life of Charles Peace* (1905) - does not seem to engage the viewer in the same way (fig. 2).

Splatter movies and thrillers often use sudden close-ups in order enhance the frightening effect of the object depicted (a knife or an assassin), for example in *Psycho* (1960) in fig. 3.

The close-up might have the same function in un-narrativized contexts. Many examples in early cinema production testifies the curious exploration of these effects. *How it feels to be run over* (1900) is composed of one shot where a motorcar is driving towards the camera (fig. 4) ending in a close-up of the front followed by black leader.


FIG. 1A


FIG. 1B


FIG. 1C


FIG. 1D


FIG. 2

Figure 2:

The big swallow (1901?) is also a one shot film depicting a man approaching the camera to the extreme close that he is able to swallow the lens, camera as well as the photographer (fig. 5). In *The Empire State Express* (1896) and *L'Arrivée d'un Train en Gare à La Ciotat* (1895-6) the camera is put right next to the tracks and a train approaches and passes the camera. According to myth the threatening effect of the latter (fig. 6) was so great that spectators, if not rose from their seats, at least quivered.(6)

The threatening close-up effect might also be found in television genres. In nature programs close-ups of small dangerous animals (snakes, spiders, scorpions) are in some viewers provoking fear and dread. And many people take offence at close-ups in medical documentaries. In these cases it is mainly the objects depicted that brings forth the experience of fear and shock, but the close-up device undoubtedly has an intensifying function.


FIG. 3


FIG. 4

Figure 3:

Close-ups thus seems to generate a mental state of threat which in its turn, if it is powerful enough, might generate different kinds of outer behaviour on part of the spectator. This might include looking away, leaning backwards or to the side, to use other's or own bodies as barriers, or simply walk away etc.. With a few exceptions (Williams, 1996) the research within cinema studies about viewer behaviour is a neglected field.

Intimacy

On the other hand scholars have placed emphasis on the effect of intimacy that close-ups seem to produce. In these observations the vocabulary focus on, for instance, "greater 'involvement'" (Branigan 1984:6), "intimacy" (Gunning, 1994:210) and "intensity" (Epstein, 1921:235). In contrast to the threat function, these effects are very often associated with facial/bodily close-ups.

We must however differ between two types of intimacy. On the one hand intimacy refers to the processes of psychologicalization connected to perception of character faces/bodies. A face in close-up makes it possible for the spectator to generate hypotheses about the mind and feelings of the person depicted and hence get 'psychologically intimate' with him/her. The tears and facial expression of the mother in *Napoleon* (1927) gives the viewer hints at what she feels at this moment of reunification with her son (fig. 7). Since faces are one of the most important cues in the emotion attribution process (of course together with verbal behaviour), facial close-ups are very important in some modes of cinema. However, it must be emphasised that it is not the close-up that generates this kind of intimacy, but the face itself. Undoubtedly the close-up makes it *possible* to discern the facial details of the mother, but the intimacy effect is produced by the face and the viewers face-reading competence. Eventually I hope to describe these processes but they will not be my main concern here.


FIG. 5


FIG. 6

Figure 4:

However, we might also use intimacy in a more straightforward sense. The close-up seems to produce a more direct effect of *spatial* or *optical* intimacy. The camera lets us 'come close' to the objects/characters depicted. The term *close-up* catches this effect rather eloquently. In fig. 7 we not only get psychologically intimate with the person behind the face but, perhaps foremost, feel *spatially* close to the mother. This effect might of course also be experienced with objects other than faces, for instance the foot in *As seen through a telescope* (1900) or the match in the documentary *Ten Modern Classics*[7] (figs. 8 and 9) although the effect is seemingly most prominent with faces. In all these cases the feeling of being *physically* close to another body/thing is central. This is however not threatening (as a threat close-up would be). It might be too intimate to some people and hence turn vulgar or "grotesque" (Burch 1990:89) but it certainly does not make the spectator turn his head in fear.

Threat and intimacy thus seem to be crucial effects of close-ups. Surely, as we have seen, the syntagmatic

context of the close-up and the objects depicted play a chief part in these effects, but the close-up form does however presumably operate as an ""intensifier" of content" for most viewers (Messaris, 1994:91; cf. also Meyrowitz, 1986:261). The question then arises why do people associate close-ups with intimacy and threat. That is, although there have been claims for and *descriptions of* these effects, very few have tried to *explain* them. It is to this enterprise we now turn.

Personal space

If experiencing cinematic discourse emanates from the interaction between text and spectator we have to specify the constitution of this spectator. To this end we have to make a slight digression into the socio-psychological research on *personal space*.

Distance in real life interpersonal communication is of crucial importance. Depending on different factors, for example type of conversation, people establish an appropriate distance to the interlocutor. Often we feel uncomfortable when someone gets unmotivatedly close or stands too far away and in such cases we unconsciously regulate the distance by moving away or closing in. This regulation of micro space in daily transactions is referred to as *proxemic behaviour*. The intimate sphere surrounding an individual is most commonly labelled *personal space*. Both have been studied within social psychology.

There are several methods to establish the presence of and measure personal space. Informally, the phenomena can be studied by everybody:

> You may want to start paying attention to the amount of distance which you establish between yourself and others when you speak. Does it vary with relationships? Try to consciously change the distance during a conversation. Move closer, move further away. What does the other person do? Do you feel uncomfortable moving during an interaction? If so, why? Perhaps you are changing the "meaning" of the interaction. See how close you can come to a stranger in an open space without feeling uncomfortable or obligated to speak to him. [...] Try to talk to a close friend about intimate personal matters while standing fifteen, or more, feet apart. Try to speak to someone about grand schemes and great expectations while standing nose-to-nose. (Meyrowitz, 1986:256)

There are however more 'scientific' methods. One laboratory method is to set up hypothetical situations with dolls and miniature figures, where the subject has placed marks on a prepared form to indicate preferred distance from others. Another procedure is to use real people, but still within a laboratory setting. In *stop-motion* experiments, for instance, subjects are approached by the experimenter or a confederate and are asked to stop the approach when he/she begins to feel uncomfortable. A third group of experiments take place in the field or under naturalistic and unobtrusive conditions. Here spatial behaviour is observed in real settings or subjects may be asked to engage in social interaction (unaware of the real interests of the investigator). Another frequent method is to survey behaviour when personal space is invaded. This might include different sorts of stress symptoms (e.g., increased heart rate, elevated levels of skin conductance) or motor responses (leaning back, looking away, leave the place).

Personal space is said to have at least two functions. On the one hand, early research emphasised the *protective* function of having a personal boundary. Human spatial behaviour research was initially influenced by ethology and analogous to animal preserves the personal space was thought to regulate intraspecies aggressiveness and reduce stress. Having a protective boundary *outside* the body of the organism might for example anticipate an enemy attack before it affects the organism itself. Such a behaviour might have had a survival value and thus persisted through evolution. Environmental psychology dealing with inappropriately close spacing (e.g., in architecture and city planning) often takes this function as a point of departure to explain spatial over stimulation and stress.

But although it is acknowledged that humans do seem to have a built in biologically rooted 'spatial mechanism', the acquisition of specific personal space norms and behaviours is almost invariably explained within the context of cultural experience and with a reference to a theory of social learning. That is, through the process of imitation and reinforcement, children learn the accepted cultural patterns of appropriate proxemic behaviour. This brings us to the second primary function of spatial behaviour, which is *communication*.

Generally, by moving closer to someone we signal our wish to establish closer contact and by moving away we

indicate a desire to limit accessibility and intimacy. Actively using and manipulating interpersonal distance is an important behaviour pattern to achieve preferred degrees of closeness. The anthropologist Edward Hall was the first to postulate different distance zones depending on the situation and relation between the interlocutors. Aiello's description is clear and short:

> **Intimate distance** ranges from 0 to 18 inches and is characterised by strong and intense sensory inputs. The voice is normally held at a very low level or even at a whisper. Sight is a bit distorted, heat and smell from another is inescapable and involvement is unmistakable.
>
> **Personal distance** ranges from 1.5 to 4 feet and another is within "arm's length." The voice level is moderate, vision is no longer distorted, and body heat and olfaction are either no longer or minimally perceptible. This distance is more likely to be used by friends and aquaintances [sic!].
>
> **Social distance** extends from 4 to 12 feet. Nobody touches or expects to touch another person. Voice level is louder and transactions are more formal and businesslike.
>
> **Public distance** extends beyond 12 feet. This distance is more characteristic of speakers and their audience or interactions with public figures. The voice and everything else must be exaggerated or amplified. (Aiello, 1987: 392)

Each of these zones provides a different level of sensory information with the intimate distance involving almost all senses. Although these measured distances are not to be taken in a rigid fashion since these spheres operates differently depending on culture, sex and personality, it is still fair to say that these zones are respected by most people. Transgressing from one zone to another (in or out) signals a shifting of expectations on the situation and the relationship between interactants.

Each of these zones thus has a double function. On the *protective* side, they all work as warning areas to move back if something negatively valued or unknown enters the space. In this respect, the intimate distance zone functions as the last warning area with high degree of alert. On the *communication* side, the zones operate as markers for desired interpersonal relation. By letting the interlocutor inside the intimate distance zone, we flag trust and confidence *vis-à-vis* that person and a wish to get more intimate.

With these multiple studies in mind we might conclude that personal space behaviour differs between individuals, situations, culture, age and gender. But it is also true that the spatial behaviour *as such* is a universal phenomena. We find it everywhere although its particular form varies.

Close-up effects and personal space

My general claim would thus be formulated something like this: *The intensifier-of-contents effects of the close-up device, are results of the interaction between image and spectator's real world interpersonal distance behaviour.*

What would such a hypothesis be able to explain concerning close-up effects? Firstly, I believe, the protective function of personal space may suggest clarification on the threat function of the close-up. More specifically I claim that the image triggers the same or similar mental processes and behaviour as would a real world invasion into the spectator's personal space. That is, the image *simulates* a personal space invasion. Such a thesis would fit nicely with the observations on the threat function made above.

First of all, the auditory and visual character of the cinematic medium has the potential to simulate some of the intense sensory input we correlate with personal space intrusions or objects being too close. If we in a real life situation can discern the scales of a scorpion, we know for sure that we ought to back away. The same is true if we can hear the animal crawling around. The cinematic close-up has the potential of presenting exactly these stimuli to the spectator. Of course some dimensions are missing: we don't smell or taste anything, but the auditory and visual input seems to be sufficient to evoke the personal intrusion effect. If we in real life situations perceive facial details and whispering, which are sensory modes associated with Hall's *intimate distance zone*, of a person *negatively* valued, we conclude that the distance is too close and compensate for this by moving back. We feel intruded upon by that person. The sound close-up has the capacity to present precisely this kind of sensory input. It is thus the collaboration between certain properties of the carefully

designed cinematic text and real world proxemic competence on part of the viewer that makes the effect of threat possible and seemingly natural. This is a *functional* description of (threatening) close-ups.

If the fight in *Die Hard* seems more shocking/frightening than the turbulence in *The Life of Charles Peace* (figs. 1 and 2), this might in part be explained by a theory of personal space. If some close-ups manage to trigger similar or the same mental effect as would a real world space intrusion, the *Die Hard* sequence is constantly evoking these intrusion effects, and hence succeeds in producing effects of tension, shock and vividness. In the *Charles Peace* scene, this never happens. In fact, the long shot instead perhaps evokes feelings of being at a 'safe' distance from the fight and the spectator never feels threatened by it. (By this of course, I do not mean to degrade early cinema as artistically primitive or inferior. The presence/absence of the threat close-up effect in these two examples might instead be seen as a indication to the widely differing narrative traditions which these films are operating within.)

A personal space theory of close-ups might also explain certain image composition properties. If the purpose of the protective function of personal space is to keep people or objects at *arm's length* and thereby avoiding the potential or threat of being struck, the 'aggressive' close-up effect can be seen as an exploitation or use of this function. Often the design of content and form of the close-up combine to simulate *arm's length* fear, as is the case in *Psycho* (fig. 3) and *Friday the 13th: The final chapter* (fig. 10). The same content in a larger framing would not, I believe, trigger the same emotional effect; see for example *Nosferatu* (1922), fig. 11.

Perhaps character looks in the camera (and thus at the spectator) amplifies the effect of arm's length threat by reminding the spectator of his/her own bodily presence (fig. 10). If there is one mainstream genre that frequently uses character looks in the camera, it would be the splatter movie. This anomalous procedure would perhaps be collaboratively explainable by, on the one hand, the genre's purpose of frightening the audience and, on the other, a theory of personal space.

FIG. 7

FIG. 8

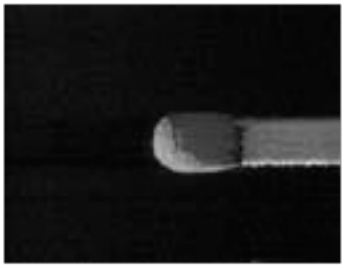

FIG. 9

Figure 5:

Although studies on theatre behaviour of cinema viewers are very much absent, (again) intuitively, the behaviour in personal space invasion situations seems to overlap with some viewers' conduct during close-up effects. Leaning/sliding away, averting ones gaze, using the body (arms and hands) as visual/physical barriers and leaving the situation (Lombard, 1995:292; Aiello, 1987:485) are all behaviours we also recognise in the cinematic situation (as well as using other people sitting nearby as barriers).

And lastly, a personal space theory of threatening close-ups harmonize with academic and ordinary vocabulary. *Threat*, *anxiety*, *horror*, *confrontation*, *aggressiveness* and *shock* are terms related to close-ups as well

as real world personal space invasions.

But if the cinematic medium is able to supply the kind of sensory inputs that are associated with the *protective* function of the intimate zone, this of course also apply to the *communicative* function. Discerning facial details and low level voice and sounds (e.g. clothes rustling) are the kind of impressions we expect from being in the real intimate distance zone of another person. In this sense close-ups have the potential to invoke the similar or the same mental processes that we execute during real world interpersonal behaviour.

So while the protective function of personal space might explain threat close-up effects, the communicative function of personal space may shed some light on the intimacy effects of close-ups. However, whereas the threat close-up seems to invade the personal space of the *spectator*, the intimacy close-up enables the spectator to invade the *characters'* personal space. The movement seems to me be different in the two instances.

A theory of personal space might thus shed some light on the (spatial) intimacy effect of close-ups discussed above. Why does the close-up work as an intensifier of dialogue/emotions (as for instance in analytical cutting)? On my perspective the answer is, of course, that cutting in (to a close-up) simulates a real world personal zone transgression. Being admitted into another person's intimate distance zone, *means* greater intimacy. I maintain that close-up triggers very similar mental processes. By using the viewer's proxemic competence, the close-up signifier manages to evoke intimacy effects (tab. 1) which are in their turn utilised to enhance verbal and emotional intimacy of the scene.

Examples of this might be found in most genres. In a *Dallas* scene[(8)] JR and a female business partner discuss future economic transactions in a medium shot-reverse-shot sequence (fig. 12a and b). Then JR changes to a more intimate topic (their love affair) and the framing immediately gets closer (12c). The frame shift reflects *and* enhances topic change, and thus simulates the spectator's real world movement from Hall's 'more formal and businesslike' zone of social interactions to an intimacy distance. The excessive use of close-ups in soap-operas/sitcoms and their plethora of private and intimate topics are, I think, deeply entangled.

Figure 6: Fig. 12a

However, invading a character's personal space in visual fiction differs in several instances to real life intrusions. The perhaps most obvious is that the spectator is able to intrude a personal space, *without the person noticing it*. In real life an intrusion would in the normal case be detected and dealt with appropriately (eye contact, moving away etc.), whereas the close-up simulates an intrusion and still most often (e.g. in mainstream narration) do not *respond* to the invasion. In real life, eye contact in an intrusion might signify

both protection and an invitation to deeper involvement and moving/leaning away means that the intrusion was inept, but characters in the diegesis exhibit no such behaviour at all (Meyrowitz, 1985:223). In this sense the close-up functions in the same perceptually abnormal fashion as binoculars where visual intrusions into people's personal spaces pass unnoticed and hence simulates an illicit, sneaking or voyeuristic intimacy.[(9)] A theory of personal space would thus elucidate why cinema in general and close-ups in particular are associated with such emotional effects.

Figure 7: Fig. 12b

The claim that personal space has got something to do with intimate close-up effects, is also validated by scholars describing the phenomenon. Here is a clear example from Jean Epstein.

> The close-up modifies the drama by the impact of proximity. Pain is within reach. If I stretch out my arm I touch you, and that is intimacy. I can count the eyelashes of this suffering. I would be able to taste the tears. Never before has a face turned to mine in that way. (Epstein, 1921:239)

Notice here the emphasis on the potential for touching (*If I stretch out my arm....*) and on sensory input exclusively displayed within the intimate distance zone (*count the eyelashes...taste the tears...*). It is also interesting to see that Epstein uses *you* about the individual depicted, as if he describes a personal encounter. These formulations points to the fact that experiences of interpersonal encounters and close-ups belongs to the same category, although Epstein certainly is not aware of theories of personal space.

Conclusions

As always, the theory is nothing but sketchy and tentative but it seems to open up a field of further questions to be answered. If the theory is correct and if personal space has a cultural, sexual and developmental variance, this should reasonably be reflected in the experience of cinematic close-ups. How does a child, with no or tighter personal boundaries than grown-ups, apprehend the close-up format? Will the threatening and intimate functions alter in any way, and if so, how? Is there a difference in experience between individuals from different cultures? Aiello's review of the research clearly indicates that males tend to use more interaction space than females (Aiello, 1987:413). Would such findings be able to explain gender difference in protective theatre behaviour during screenings (Williams, 1996; Klein, 1980)? Apparently, there is more empirical work to be done to corroborate the thesis.

However, as I have tried to suggest, there is reasonable justification to take the theory seriously. If it could be verified there are several conclusions to be drawn from this.

Conventions of cinema are not totally arbitrary. Surely, there might be devices motivated by arbitrary reasons, but some of them definitely are designed in careful consideration to the psychological makeup of

the spectator in order to produce specific visual effects. That is, at least some conventions exploits *extra*-cinematic, real world competence/behaviour of the spectator. This means two things.

First, because it uses the everyday perception/cognition competence of the spectator the convention does not have to be 'learned' to be understandable. It will be easily picked up. To construct and perceive objects in a photographic image takes no particular skills outside those of our everyday perception (Messaris, 1994; Anderson, 1996:10) - which however are extremely intricate. The same is true with close-up effects. Everybody with a personal space behaviour that experience threat and intimacy (in some form) when exposed to close-ups, do so not because they have learned to associate close-up images with those effects, but because image and personal space competence interact in an automatic fashion. The image is articulated enough to simulate (that is to trigger the similar/same mental processes as) a real interpersonal situation.(10)

Secondly, the more universal such competence is (in a geographical or 'contingent' sense - see Bordwell, 1996), the more people in the world will experience the effect intended. If the purpose of producing films is to render the discourse as accessible as possible - in order to attract a genuinely mass audience to insure profitability - the natural way is to use very general spectatorial dispositions (Carroll, 1996:133; Anderson, 1996:11). Since The Movies is a mass-medium it is not particularly surprising that the conventions established within this tradition often appeal to widely spread or universal psychological/behavioural patterns. By studying these patterns, for instance personal behaviour, we might not only explain the design of the convention in question, but also account for why a particular convention has been stable over quite many years (and in different parts of the world).

A proxemic theory of close-ups will however not give us answers to why we feel close-up intimacy and threat *pleasurable*. Why the spectator pays money to get frightened is a question maybe best answered by deep-psychological theories such as psychoanalysis. The description of the *mechanisms* generating these effects, however, is not appropriately accounted for by a psychoanalytical model.

Figure 8: Fig. 12c

Notes

1. "de la menace et de l'angoisse" (author's transl.)

2. "effect de frayeur" (author's transl.)

3. "aggressiva" (author's transl.)

4. P. 112, author's translation. "[Un] cafard filmé en gros plan para"t sur l'écran cent fois plus redoutable qu'une centaine d'éléphants pris en plan d'ensemble."

5. Author's translation. "Il menace d'exceder son cadre, de *crever l'écran* pour envahir l'espace du spectateur."

6. Sadoul (1949:20) is the earliest record of this anecdote I have found.

7. The still frame is from the episode on Pirandello, written and produced by Nigel Wattis and broadcast on Swedish Television 1989.

8. Taken from episode no. 100 to be broadcast in Sweden.

9. It is thus not a coincidence that many of the earliest closer-ups were motivated by the diegetic use of binoculars, for instance in Seen through a telescope (1900). Here the intrusion into the couples' intimate space is not initially responded to (in the field of vision). Afterwards, however, the peeping-tom is disclosed and punished for his illegitimate behaviour.

10. This is of course not the same thing as saying that the image looks like the referent. The interesting thing about images and reality is not how they look *objectively*, but for us. Diegesis as well as reality emanates in the interaction between image/world and beholder. Some of these construction processes are overlapping, some are not (see below).

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Author Information

Per PERSSON is presently pursuing a Ph.D. on cinema and different aspects of spectator psychology, at the Department of Cinema Studies, University of Stockholm, Sweden. He is also affiliated with Swedish Institute of Computer Science (SICS), exploring the potential for narratives and cinematic visualization techniques in interface design.