

Chapter 2 – Cinematic engagement, avant-garde film

Cinematic worlds

Imagined worlds come together for many reasons:

1. Imagination
 - a. “Every film is an adventure into a world seen from a distinct perspective” (Nichols, 72)
2. To gain a feeling of magical control or power over an existing world
 - a. In films, we can identify with characters who are admirable and overcome obstacles
3. To join individuals together in participatory rituals of aesthetic and ideological significance
4. To represent possible ways of seeing and being in the world itself
 - a. Cinema shows the world around us in fresh, revealing eyes
5. To propose a political idea or ideology

Experiencing cinematic worlds involves 3 common categories of participation:

1. Emotional investment
2. Intellectual engagement
3. Ideological involvement

3 domains of language and the purposes they serve

1. **Reason**
 - a. Relies on **logical procedures**
2. **Aesthetics** – relies on the conventions of either
 - a. **Poetic form** or
 - b. **Narrative structure**
3. **Persuasion**
 - a. Relies on **rhetorical strategies**

6 forms of emphasis

1. **Expressive**
 - a. Emphasis on feelings, tone, point of view of the filmmaker
2. **Persuasive**
 - a. Emphasis on moving or persuading the listener/viewer
3. **Poetic**
 - a. Emphasis on the form of the film itself
4. **Referential**
 - a. Emphasis on some aspect of the world outside the film
5. **Meta-communicative**
 - a. Emphasis on the nature of the film
6. **Phatic**
 - a. Emphasis on maintaining contact between filmmaker and audience or between characters

Avant-garde cinema

- Explore questions of form
- Non-narrative
- **Collage**
 - Mixing together various elements from different sources or media to create a new effect

- Eg. Mixing raw materials together
 - Cigarette butts or newspaper clippings to a painting
 - Taping dead moths to a strip of film
- **Found footage**
 - Footage originally shot for a different purpose

2 different avant-gardes:

- Formal avant-garde
- Political avant-garde