Introduction

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In the emotional landscape of the modern world, the movie theater occupies a central place, as one of the predominant spaces where societies gather to express and experience feelings. The cinema offers complex and varied experiences; for most people, however, it is a place to feel something. The dependability of movies to provide emotional experiences for diverse audiences lies at the center of the medium’s appeal and power, yet the nature of these filmic emotions is one of the least-explored topics in film studies. Emotions are carefully packaged and sold, but they are rarely analyzed with much specificity.

This anthology is devoted to discussing some of the ways films cue emotional responses, and these discussions are from an explicitly cognitive perspective. On first impression, a cognitive approach seems an unlikely choice to provide insight into emotional processes. After all, its theories deal with cognitions, and thinking is clearly separated from feeling according to the Cartesian coordinates that govern much of Western debate. An emotional state can potentially interfere with rational thought; therefore emotion has often been seen as the enemy of thinking. From the 1950s to the 1980s, it would seem easy for scholars studying the processes of thought to dismiss such irrational phenomena.

Many academic fields once neglected the emotions. Cultural anthropologists using traditional methods of observation had difficulty reporting such highly “subjective” states of mind in other cultures. Instead they focused on more externally observable differences, such as those in language and ritual performances. The agenda of sociology led academics to areas in which socialization was most clearly at work. These thinkers recognized that emotions were manipulated by society, and so they tended to view emotions in a purely instrumental fashion, as a means of socialization. Socializing processes relied upon fear or love to create prejudice or empathy, but few sociologists examined the basic nature of these emotions. Emotions existed as
bodily states that could be “managed” socially, but the social nature of their origins remained virtually unexplored. In psychology, the influence of behaviorism led theorists away from such subjective states within the “black box” of the human mind. Similarly, the emphasis on reason within the philosophy of mind kept many philosophers away from such “messy” states as emotions.

At first, cognitive research also ignored emotion. When cognitive psychology emerged, it emphasized human functions that could be modeled after the logical linear processing of a computer. Subjective states such as the emotions were not on the early research agenda for cognitive research, since they were thought to be too unpredictable to be modeled using classical logic. It was conceivable to think of computers as being able to model memory, but it was more difficult to conceptualize a computer-based model of emotions. When modern cognitive theory emerged with the development of the computer, it considered the emotions to be a source of interference.

More recently, however, cognitive researchers are discovering the inadequacies of a strong Cartesian division between the mind and the body. As neurophysiological research becomes increasingly more sophisticated, the mind and the brain become more closely linked. Also, researchers are discovering the complex interrelationship between bodily states (such as stress and mood) and thought processes. As the study of cognition begins to consider more and more bodily processes, it no longer seems strange to discuss emotions from a cognitive perspective.

A key assumption for the authors in this volume is that emotions and cognition are not necessarily enemies. A cognitive understanding of emotions asserts exactly the opposite: that emotions and cognitions tend to work together. Putting Western prejudices against the messy emotions aside, cognitivists emphasize the way that emotions and cognitions cooperate to orient us in our environment and to make certain objects more salient. Emotions help us to evaluate our world and react to it more quickly. Fear or love provides a motive force that more often than not works in tandem with thought processes.

The cognitive perspective, therefore, tends to depict emotions not as formless, chaotic feelings but as structured states. The assumption that emotions are structured is another key one for cognitivists. Cognitivists tend to describe emotion as a combination of feelings, physiological changes, and cognitions. Emotions direct both mind and body toward an object and tend to provoke action toward that object. Love drives me toward the loved one, fear moves me away from the fearful object. Understanding how we conceptualize an object goes a long way toward understanding how we feel about that object. Cognitive scholars emphasize how certain salient characteristics in an object lead us toward certain emotions. When we cognitively evaluate objects to determine their significance for us, we assign characteristics to them, and this evaluation leads us toward particular emotions. What characteristics of monsters make us respond with fear and disgust? What qualities are most salient in a comic situation, and why do these qualities encourage us to laugh? A cognitive understanding of the emotions helps us to pay close attention to the stimuli that evoke an emotional response.

Cognitive scholars tend to discuss emotion states in terms of goals, objects, characteristics, behaviors, judgments, and motivations. Necessarily this means that these scholars tend to break down emotions into component processes, and this process of dissection is central to a cognitive perspective on emotion. Emotions are commonly conceptualized as gestalts; I can feel them, but these feelings cannot be dissected without doing violence to the emotional experience, according to such common usage. But the cognitive perspective believes that there is much insight to be gained by breaking down processes into subprocesses. Even processes as seemingly simple as visually recognizing an object can be usefully understood as a series of component processes. A cognitive scholar believes that complex processes can be modeled. Although such scholars understand that not all processes can be modeled using the rational logic of a computer, we still share a faith in using conceptual models to dissect complex processing. The authors in this volume posit explicit models for how we process films and experience emotions, and we believe that such specific attention to film emotion gives a richer and more detailed understanding of audiences’ emotions in the theater.

With this emphasis on modeling and subprocesses comes an added benefit of a cognitive approach: its specificity. Cognitive scholars tend to examine phenomena in quite precise detail. We believe that this specificity will help give a clearer understanding of the emotional process of watching a film. Instead of dealing with broad emotional concepts such as pleasure, the authors in this volume tend to discuss particular kinds of emotion cuing. These authors tend toward examining specific emotion phenomena such as sentimentality or comedy. They examine narrational and stylistic devices designed to elicit emotion, such as film music and facial expression. Some authors in this volume do articulate broad frameworks for explaining, say, the way narrative films are constructed to cue emotions. However, they do so by specifying distinct subprocesses that interact to shape more global experiences. A cognitive approach, whether describing a global system or a specific phenomenon, never strays very far from specific attention to subprocesses.

In summary, a cognitive perspective on emotions asserts that cognitions and emotions work together. Instead of conceptualizing emotions as formless, a cognitive scholar emphasizes the structure of emotions. They are processes that may be broken down into component processes, thus reveal-
ing their underlying structures. These structures might include scripts or a set of distinguishing characteristics or descriptions of typical goals and behaviors. This close analysis, we believe, will be invaluable in gaining a more precise understanding of how films cue emotions.

Finally, a cognitive perspective is an interdisciplinary one. Cognitivism is not a field or a discipline; it is a set of assumptions held by researchers across several fields and disciplines. Linguistics, artificial intelligence, anthropology, neurology, psychology, and philosophy all contribute insights from their particular fields toward cognitive research, and the perspective encourages such cross-fertilization. It is in the spirit of this interdisciplinary work that this volume exists. The work in this volume is rooted primarily in two of the dominant areas in cognitive study: cognitive philosophy and psychology.

**Emotion and the Arts in Philosophy**

Throughout the long history of Western aesthetics, the arts have been consistently linked with the expression or elicitation of emotion. Such a linkage dates back at least to Plato, who thought that the emotions elicited by the arts could weaken or mislead the young citizens of his republic, and to Aristotle, who described tragedy as arousing beneficial and pleasurable emotions. Philosophers of art have long been concerned with the functions of the emotions in the arts. In literature, theorists and philosophers have attempted to understand the means by which certain genres elicit specific emotional responses. Aristotle claims that tragedy arouses pity and fear, clarifying and purifying those reactions in such a way that it brings us pleasure and understanding. While Aristotle’s work on tragedy is most famous, philosophers have also explored the emotions associated with other genres of literature (e.g., the sublime, humor) and the other arts.

Although it has long been recognized that the emotions have a central function in the experience of arts and artists, evaluation of the purposes and importance of the emotions has been a controversial activity. During the Romantic period, the enjoyment of feeling and emotion was promoted as the chief pleasure of art. Romanticism brought a more intense awareness of the felt qualities of the hearing or viewing experience. In fact, one prominent way to define art, often allied with Romanticism, has been to find its essence in the expression or embodiment of feeling; such theories were held by prominent thinkers, for example, Leo Tolstoy, R. G. Collingwood, Benedetto Croce, Susanne Langer, and John Dewey. For expression theorists (broadly speaking), the purpose of art is to express emotions, and especially those emotions that through their nobility, novelty, suggestiveness, and/or intensity had something to teach us.

The New Critics were some of the most vehement in denouncing the Romantic attachment to feeling. Prominent New Critics W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley tell a story to support an opposing position on the place of emotion in art. The German novelist Thomas Mann and a friend emerged from a movie theater “weeping copiously.” Mann recounted this (probably apocryphal) incident to support his view that, whatever they are, movies are not art, since art is “a cold sphere.” For one thing, the Romantics decreased the value of the objective work of art by emphasizing the emotions of both artist and spectator. The New Critics sought to direct attention from the emotions of the artist and the reader back onto the text itself, and onto the tradition out of which it emerges. T. S. Eliot sounds something like a cognitivist when he claims that we express emotion in art “by finding an ‘objective correlative’; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events, which shall be the formula of that particular emotion.” However, Eliot made this intriguing observation not to suggest a means to study the emotions elicited by literature but to dissolve such emotions into the study of meaning, structure, and style. Since emotions have reasons, or in more modern parlance, “objects” or “causes” embodied in the text, why not focus on these rather than on the subjectivity of the viewer or artist? As Eliot says, “Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion.”

In aesthetics, another topic of debate revolved around the “aesthetic attitude,” the stance or perspective necessary to attend to the aesthetic qualities of objects. Such a stance, it was sometimes said, requires a psychical or emotional distance that blocks impulses to action and “practical” thoughts. The concept of aesthetic distance, with its implication that art occupies a realm hermetically sealed from “real life,” has been controversial.

Another strand of thought attempted to identify an “aesthetic emotion,” that is, an emotion or emotional experience qualitatively different from those of everyday life and peculiar to the contemplation of great works of art. Such theories stemmed from the “art for art’s sake movement” and thus attempted to locate aesthetic experience outside the realm of the practical world. As Clive Bell claims, one who contemplates a work of art inhabits “a world with an intense and peculiar significance of its own; that significance is unrelated to the significance of life.” “In this world,” Bell goes on, “the emotions of life find no place.” However, aesthetic emotion theorists failed to satisfactorily identify either the causes or the nature of such aesthetic emotions. For Bell, it was almost a case of “you’ll know it when you see it.” Bell claimed that these profound emotions resulted from the contemplation of “significant form” (significant because it elicits aesthetic emotion) and that the aesthetic emotion was difficult to describe, but once experienced it would never be forgotten and could never be confused with the “warm tilth and quaint nooks of romance.”

The more contemporary cognitive approach, characteristic of all of the essays in this volume, begins with the opposite assumption, that the emo-
tions that fiction films (and other fictional texts) elicit have their roots in the same kinds of processes that generate real-world emotions. Emotions consist of (at least) physiological changes, feelings, and thinking. The cognitive philosopher emphasizes the thinking part of an emotion, with thinking consisting of the emoter's evaluation or judgment about the object of the emotion. We should not let the concreteness of the term “object” mislead us. Cognitive philosophers of emotion hold that an object of an emotion need not be physical. It can be a false belief, or it can be something with regard to oneself. Most cognitive philosophers agree, however, that whatever form it takes, an emotion always has a particular object—a thing, person, animal, the content of one’s own beliefs or imaginings, and so on—that is the focus or target of an emotional state.7

The most recent developments in philosophical thought about emotions in fiction arise directly from this cognitive perspective. One preoccupation of late has been with the nature and possibility of our emotional responses to fictional characters and events. Colin Radford originally raised the issue with his claim that emotional responses to fiction are irrational and incoherent. His argument is as follows. Having an emotion depends on our having a belief of a certain sort. I believe that the rabid dog chasing me is trying to bite me, so I experience fear. When we read or view fictions, Radford assumes, we do not believe that either the fictional characters or situations exist. Thus we either do not have the requisite beliefs, and thus have no emotions, or we experience irrational beliefs (believing that what we see is real) and thus irrational emotions.8 This issue has attracted significant attention, and various solutions to this seeming paradox have been offered. Among them is the claim that we can respond emotionally to mere unasserted thoughts such as imaginings.9 Alternatively, Kendall Walton makes the argument that emotions at the movie theater are quasi-emotions, and that when Charles feels fear when he sees the green slime, he could not have been actually terrified. He felt something, but it was not actual fear.10

One promising development has been the interest in mental simulation as it relates to our experience of fictions. Philosopher Gregory Currie’s formulation of the “Simulation Hypothesis” is particularly useful for our purposes because it is developed within an overall psychology of film viewing. Currie says that our basic access to the minds of others comes from a form of imagination we may call mental simulation. When we see someone in a situation and attend to what is occurring, we take on the beliefs and desires we imagine they must have. Unlike our own beliefs and desires, however, these are run “off-line.” As Currie writes, they are “disconnected from their normal perceptual inputs and behavioural outputs.”11

When we experience fictions, then, we engage in a similar process. We have imaginings that simulate belief, and our mental processes are engaged

“off-line.” Yet such simulations retain belief-like connections to other mental states and to the body, in part accounting for the emotional power of movies despite our knowledge that they represent fictional characters and situations. This can also account for the benefits of fiction; fictions allow us to exercise our capacities for mental simulation, and thus have adaptive significance. Currie also suggests the possible destructive and moral dangers of mental simulation in film viewing, a warning that he develops more fully in his essay in this volume.

The interest in the arousal or expression of emotion in film and the other arts has recently attracted growing attention in the field of philosophy. In part this resurgence of interest can be attributed to the cognitive theory of emotion, an approach that offers intriguing new ways to think about age-old problems.

The Psychology of Emotion

Unlike the philosophers surveyed above, psychologists do not have a long tradition of examining aesthetic experience. Questions about the aesthetic experience are less central to psychology than they are to philosophy. A few psychologists have attempted a comprehensive discussion of the arts, although researchers in related subfields (such as musicology) explore their specialties using the empirical methodologies that dominate psychology. Psychologists are concerned with the mechanisms important in aesthetic experience, such as empathy, identification, visual recognition, and the emotions. However, they tend to emphasize these mechanisms either as self-contained processes within the human being or as interactions with other humans, instead of emphasizing interactions with fictional film characters. If one believes that there are continuities between the real-world experiences studied by psychologists and the spectacular experiences examined by film scholars, this body of empirical evidence can provide rich insight. The cognitive approach stresses the continuities between typical emotions and those experienced in relation to fictions, and this makes available the broad range of psychological research concerning how emotions function.

Psychologists studying the emotions tend toward one of four broad theoretical emphases in their researches. The oldest approach is to emphasize how important the peripheral nervous system (the nerves connected to the muscles and the visceral organs, such as the heart, lungs, and stomach) is to emotions. This research agenda began with William James, who believed that emotion is the perception of bodily changes. James argued that although the bodily expression of emotion seems to be caused by a mental state (we cry because we are sad), this causal sequence is actually reversed. We are sad, according to James, because we cry.13

Peripheral theorists, following James, emphasize the feedback that we get
from various peripheral systems. In particular, many of these theorists have recognized the unique contribution played by the face. "Facial feedback" theorists, noting the high concentration of nerves in the face and the importance of the face in emotional displays, argue that the information provided by the face is particularly important in determining emotional experience. Elaborating on the folk wisdom that smiling will make you feel happier, these theorists believe that information from facial muscles and nerves can either determine emotions, distinguish among various emotions, or modify an emotional state.14

Not long after James proposed his theory emphasizing the importance of the periphery to emotion, another psychologist proposed an alternative: that the emotions are based in the central nervous system. Walter Cannon challenged what came to be known as the James-Lange theory, stating that the seat of the emotions was in the thalamic region of the brain. Cannon noted that the emotions underwent much more rapid changes than did the viscera (the periphery). Emotions can change more quickly than heart rates or breathing patterns, and so the peripheral areas such as the heart and the lungs could not be responsible (as James hypothesized) for the emotions.15 Cannon's attention to the central nervous system has been elaborated by several researchers who take advantage of neuropsychology's increasingly sophisticated understanding of the brain's chemistry.16

A third psychological approach emerged as a theoretical outgrowth of Magda Arnold's appraisal theory and an experimental outgrowth of Stanley Schachter's and Jerome Singer's 1962 study.17 Schachter and Singer gave subjects an injection of adrenaline, telling them that they were involved in an experiment on the effects of vitamin supplements on vision. The injections caused the subjects to have bodily arousal that they could not explain, and the subjects labeled their feeling states according to the emotional cues provided by their environment. This experiment reinserted the importance of cognitive appraisal of the situation into the psychological study of emotion, and a large body of work followed. Such appraisal theorists have produced elaborate models of how we process situational cues and respond emotionally based on our assessment of these situations. Arnold examined how we appraise our situation and determine if objects may harm or benefit us, and this appraisal urges us to approach or avoid these objects. Richard Lazarus's understanding of emotional appraisal asserts that cognition is both necessary and sufficient for emotion. Cognitions that he calls "core relational themes" help distinguish emotions from each other. Anger, for instance, is a matter of believing that a "demeaning offense"18 has been committed against you or those close to you. Nico Frijda posits a series of "laws" which govern the appraisal of stimuli and which produce action-oriented responses.19 For a cognitive appraisal theorist, emotion depends on how people characterize objects and how they assess their relationships with those objects.

A fourth psychological perspective accentuates the social nature of the emotions. Social constructivists assert that cultural forces are not merely overlaid onto more essential biological foundations of the emotions, as a modifier might inflect a noun. Instead, they argue that emotions cannot be understood outside of culture and the shaping forces of society. The rules of emotion are learned through socialization, which guides us toward a preferred set of responses. Emotions serve social functions; they help us occupy roles within society overall. For Averill emotions are a special kind of role we inhabit briefly. We are socialized to know what the experience of sadness is like and when we should inhabit this "role."20 Emotional experience cannot be examined independently of the way a society constructs the emotion. This emphasis on social construction helps this perspective privilege cultural differences in emotion.21 Language has an important socializing function in shaping how we conceptualize our experiences, and social constructivists study the way language parses our world into different configurations. Social constructivism reverses the individualistic emphasis of the other three perspectives and situates the emotions within a broader context.

Although certain psychologists have created integrative approaches which attempt to synthesize a range of perspectives,22 most research occurs within one of these perspectives: the peripheral (Jamesian) theories, the central neurophysiological theories, the cognitive appraisal theories, and the social constructivist theories. In addition to choosing a theoretical perspective, most researchers must choose what portion of the emotional spectrum they will study.

Psychologists choose an object of study from the spectrum of emotion phenomena. Most emotion research emphasizes either emotion experience or emotion expression. Emotion experience is the subjective-feeling state consciously perceived by the individual, which is often studied using self-report measures. Researchers concerned with more complex levels of cognition tend to emphasize this facet of emotion. A social constructivist, for instance, tends to study emotion experience and the cognitions required to guide that experience. For those who study emotion experience, there can be no emotion without conscious awareness of the subjective state. By their definition consciousness is necessary for emotion experience, and so emotional experience is always subjective. Using more complex processing, emotion experience involves an object of the emotion, a cognitive appraisal of that object, and a desired goal.

Those concerned with less complex structures emphasize emotion expression, the physiological or behavioral response to an emotion stimulus.
Emotion-expression researchers concerned with responses from the autonomic or central nervous systems need not be concerned with conscious processing. They can examine emotion by studying these physiological responses, and so for them the issue of conscious experience is not crucial for their understanding of emotion. In such research, emotion states need not have objects, cognitive appraisals, or goal concepts.

Choosing one object of study over another necessarily lends certain advantages and disadvantages to research. Researchers studying emotion experience find it difficult to study emotion in subjects who cannot communicate verbally (animals and infants, for instance). Researchers studying emotion expression may be unable to study the “subtler” emotions whose physical expressions may not be so clear without consulting conscious thought processes. However, most ordinary emotions involve both expression and experience, and so both kinds of research have value.

The breadth of this work in psychology, in conjunction with the philosophical inquiries discussed earlier, provides a rich source of insight for the study of film. This breadth is not purchased at the price of specificity, however. Psychologists and philosophers have labored long to make their understandings of emotion precise and clear. We believe that these advantages provide a much sounder foundation for studying filmic emotion than the current leading model within film studies.

Film Studies and Psychoanalysis

By following the perspectives provided by cognitive psychology and philosophy, we differentiate our approach from the dominant understanding of cinematic affect in film studies. Like most academic pursuits, film studies has tended to avoid direct contemplation of the potentially messy concept of the emotions. Contemporary film theory of the 1970s concentrated on issues of meaning and representation and their ideological implications. When contemporary film studies did examine the affective experiences of spectators, it tended to frame its discussion in terms of “pleasure” or “desire.” What pleasure does the cinema afford, and what desire motivates our viewing? Beginning with Christian Metz and Laura Mulvey, film studies has asserted that cinematic pleasure and desire can best be explained by a Freudian/Lacanian psychoanalytic approach.

Linking Althusserian theories of ideology with theories of Freudian/Lacanian subject formation, Metz foregrounded identification as the principal emotive effect of film. Identifying with the camera positions viewers as cohesive subjects, reminding us of our earliest experiences of wholeness. Luring spectators with the pleasure of visual mastery over a world, mainstream films ask us temporarily to reconstitute our identities by taking up the cohesive all-seeing position offered to us.

This is not the only pleasure that the cinema yields, Metz argued. Film also gives us the possibility of secondary identifications with onscreen characters. Mulvey emphasized the way that these two identifications frequently coincide to give subject positioning in the Hollywood cinema a particular ideological force. Mulvey noted that the two “looks” of the cinema (the camera’s and the character’s) frequently join forces to ally us with certain characters, parallelizing our desires with theirs. According to Mulvey, one cannot isolate the narrative structures of classical cinema from their history of ideological usage, making the desire for Hollywood pleasures complicit in structures of domination.

An enormous body of film feminism has emerged from the Freudian/Lacanian tradition pioneered by Metz and Mulvey. Feminist film theory has pursued questions of how men and women might desire differently, how the film apparatus structures those desires, and if spectators might possibly gain pleasure without reiterating the structures of patriarchy. In all this discussion of pleasure and desire, however, there is a conspicuous absence of the word emotion. Psychoanalytic scholarship rarely talks about the particulars of filmic emotion, and instead concentrates on articulating the filmic mechanisms of subject positioning and on labeling the mechanisms of desire. Psychoanalytic film theory, with its joint emphasis on identification and ideology, has tended to discuss the politics of identity in much more detail than it does the nuances of a film’s emotional appeal.

The distinctions among pleasure, desire, and emotion are not purely terminological. The choice of pleasure and desire over emotion is symptomatic (to use a Freudian term) of a larger theoretical neglect of the emotions. E. Ann Kaplan recognizes that psychoanalytic film theory’s reticence about emotion has deep roots: “It was largely our anti-realism theory that made it difficult to use the word ‘emotional’ in recent feminist film theory: we have been comfortable with the ‘cool,’ theoretical sound of ‘desire’ . . . We were led to advocate a cerebral, non-emotional kind of text and corresponding spectator response.” While discussing “desire” and “pleasure,” psychoanalytic film theory could appear to be dealing with questions of emotion without having to pay closer attention to the specifics of emotional experience.

The concepts of pleasure, displeasure, and desire used in film studies are too broad to provide specific insight into how a particular film makes its emotional appeal at any given moment. If the range of emotion in the film theater is reduced to some point on the continuum between pleasure and displeasure, we lose the flavor of individual texts. Similarly, if we claim that the mainstream film viewing emerges from the same scenario of desire, we ignore the diverse motivations driving the spectator’s interest and emotion. The ambiguity and spaciousness of these concepts, as currently used, compromise their usefulness. A significant difficulty with psychoanalytic con-
cepts of desire and pleasure is that they do not encourage close attention to the means by which individual films elicit emotion.

Recent psychoanalytic theory has attempted revisions to correct its reductive, overly broad approach. It has posited various positions of desire, rather than the former one or two positions. It has also articulated contradictory pleasures in an effort to make discussions of emotion more nuanced and specific. Current psychoanalytic theory situates spectator desire within history as an interaction between the social and cinematic structures of the day. One could argue that the best of recent psychoanalytic theory is attempting to elaborate and enumerate pleasures instead of "pleasure," desires instead of "desire."

However, when psychoanalytic film theory inherited these concepts from Freud, it also inherited many of Freud's assumptions about emotions, and these assumptions contribute to the continued lack of specific attention to the emotions. Although film scholars have treated Freud as a primary source of insight into emotional experience, psychologists generally agree that Freud's writings do not contain a well-developed theory of the emotions. Freud provides a comprehensive theory of the instincts and sexuality, but there is no correspondingly rigorous body of Freudian theory dealing with emotion, creating an absence that Jerome Wakefield calls the "Achilles' heel of theoretical psychoanalysis."

For Freud the emotions are a discharge phenomenon. In his economy of psychic energy, emotional actions and expressions were ways to release and dissipate this energy. Psychic dysfunction occurred when Victorian morality encouraged an unhealthy restriction of emotional expression, thus bottling up the emotions. If the emotions were improperly discharged, they could cause physical symptoms and affective disorders.

For Freud, the foundation of human behavior is the instincts, particularly the sexual instincts. These instincts provide the energy that drives his psychic economy. Libido (sexual energy) is the motive force behind dreams, creative expression, and attachments to other people. Though he nuances his description of the instincts across his career (for instance, the conception of "life" and "death" instincts that emerges in his later work), throughout his writings Freud consistently maintains the centrality of the instincts as prime movers. His work can be seen as a longstanding defense of the importance of sexuality and the instincts as the key factors explaining human behavior.

With the instincts and sexuality at the core of the psyche, Freud finds little room for the emotions as another foundational concept, and so emotions become less central to his research agenda. They become symptoms of the more basic factors, which are the more important object of study. Wakefield argues that in the Freudian system, "affects do not seem in the end to be very important in themselves; they are only of interest as a side-effect of instinc-
tual processes." This orientation in his practice led Freud to confine himself to reporting the emotional details of the clinical data, neglecting them in his theories in favor of "deeper" explanations.

The difficulty of a theory of cinematic emotions based on instincts and drives is that it tells the same story over and over again, regardless of differences between particular examples. The differences in various stimuli eliciting this discharge are matters of detail, not of deep explanatory power. To understand a cinematic pleasure, in such a model, it is ultimately more important to understand the instincts and drives behind the emotion than the specifics of the emotional situation itself. By reducing cinematic emotional response to its drive component, Freud's followers in psychoanalytic film theory deemphasize the richness of that response.

Freud, therefore, is a poor choice for a theory of emotions. Since his emphasis is elsewhere, he tends to treat the emotions as a byproduct of more central behavioral determinants: the instincts. The important function of emotions for Freud is that they discharge energy from the psychic economy, and so it is not particularly important to study the specifics of how they discharge this energy. These assumptions lead to the broad concepts of "pleasure" and "desire" which psychoanalytic film theory has inherited. The problem with these concepts is not that film theorists have applied them too broadly. The Freudian concepts of "desire" and "pleasure" themselves lead theorists' attention away from the emotions.

In turning to cognitive philosophy and psychology, we choose an intellectual inheritance very different from psychoanalysis. Both cognitive philosophers and cognitive psychologists have focused their attention specifically on the study of emotions, and so we rely upon theories which, unlike psychoanalysis, are centrally concerned with emotions.

Film and Emotion

In film studies there have been precursors to the study of film and emotion from a broadly cognitive perspective. Hugo Munsterberg, for example, wrote in his still-important The Film: A Psychological Study that to "picture emotions must be the central aim of the photoplay." Munsterberg combined Kantian faculty psychology with the psychology of his Harvard colleague, William James. The sixth chapter of Munsterberg's interesting book deals with the expression of emotions and with the emotional experience of the spectator. His theory of identification, if not in accordance with contemporary thought in some respects, is nonetheless as sophisticated as many more current theories. He writes, for example, that spectator emotions are of two broad types—those identical with the emotions of the protagonist and those "which may be entirely different, perhaps exactly opposite to those which the figures in the play express," and which stem from the spectator's "indep-
dent affective life." For Munsterberg, the former, empathic type of emotional response is by far the most prevalent. The emotions a film elicits, he writes, are central because they bring "vividness and affective tone into our grasping of the [film's] action."  

V. F. Perkins, in his 1972 book *Film as Film: Understanding and Judging Movies*, argues for film criticism that takes account of and values the spectator's involvement and emotional experience. Perkins challenges critical theories that would disengage our emotional experience in favor of a film's abstract meaning. Perkins also offers insights into how to think about spectator experience. In particular, his chapter on identification deserves more attention than it has received. Here Perkins presages many current discussions of screen emotion. For example, he suggests that the term "identification" is too narrow because, strictly speaking, it "refers to a relationship which is impossible in the cinema—namely an unattainably complete projection of ourselves into the character on the screen." Perkins also has insights into the nature of our emotional reactions. He denies that emotional reactions submerge intellect and judgment. On the contrary, they often involve a kind of second-order, reflexive response even while we experience them. Perhaps most refreshing about Perkins is his refusal to denigrate the experience films offer. He argues that the experience we have in viewing films is not just an escape from our "real lives" but an addition to them. Film experiences are real experiences; moreover, they are often worthwhile and occasionally profound.  

To build on the insights of Munsterberg, Perkins, and others, however, film studies first required a challenge to the dominance of psychoanalytic theory. This challenge initially came in the form of cognitive approaches to film theory, first introduced by David Bordwell, Edward Branigan, and Noël Carroll. In the mid-1980s Bordwell and Branigan developed alternative ways to think about spectatorship, proposing constructivist approaches that emphasized the cognitive activities of the spectator. Then Carroll and Bordwell presented more straightforward critiques of "psychosemiotic" film theory and the conventional critical practices of the field. In the meantime, the development of various cognitive approaches continues. A recent collection of essays edited by Bordwell and Carroll attempts to solidify an alternative and broadly cognitive perspective. The perspective is characterized not only by its cognitive orientation but also by a piecemeal approach to theorizing and its encouragement of vigorous debate.  

Within this context come cognitive approaches to film and emotion. When we initially decided to put together this collection, the only book-length study of the topic was Noël Carroll's work on the horror film, which dealt with the emotions elicited by that genre and also provided ways of thinking about film emotions in general. Since that time, however, general studies of filmic emotion have begun to appear with some regularity. *Passionate Views: Film, Cognition, and Emotion* appears at a time when interdisciplinary interest in the emotions and affects elicited by films is growing rapidly. The interdisciplinary and international scope of this interest is reflected in the contributors, who hail from six countries and represent the disciplines of film and media studies, philosophy, and psychology. Needless to say, the perspectives here, though united by an overall cognitive approach, differ in many ways, and are not meant to represent a single theory of film and emotion. Thus we call the cognitive perspective an "approach" rather than a "theory." The cognitive approach does not presume to answer all pertinent questions; history, criticism, and other theoretical perspectives are vitally important. Neither does it offer a group of scholars who work in lock-step.  

The essays of the first section, "Kinds of Films, Kinds of Emotions," examine the relationship among genre, emotion, and emotion types. Noël Carroll presents a general outline of the relationship between genres and the particular emotions they elicit. After a discussion of the nature of the emotion, Carroll goes on to argue that films are "criterially prefocused" to activate our subsumption of characters and events under categories appropriate to given emotion states. This, together with the encouragement of "pro attitudes" toward certain story developments, is apt to elicit specific emotional responses from the audience. Carroll goes on to demonstrate how such processes function in relation to the genres of melodrama, horror, and suspense.  

The dominant "feeling tone" of a genre frequently defines the corpus and gives it its name (e.g., suspense, horror). The three other essays in this section each take a particular genre or kind of response and identify the conditions that make particular responses possible. Ed Tan and Nico Frijda investigate the arousal of sentiment in film viewing, approaching the subject from the standpoint of Frijda's well-known theory of the emotions and Tan's systematic analysis of film and emotion. Cynthia Freeland provides a new theory of the grounds of the sublime, shows how specific films elicit such a response, and examines the very possibility of a cognitive approach dealing with the sublime. Dirk Eitzen approaches film comedy from a functionalist/evolutionary perspective, arguing that film comedy has become widespread because it serves human adaptation in varied and significant respects.  

The second section concentrates on film narration and style, examining how different film devices elicit affective response. Cinematic narration is usually thought of as communicating narrative information to an audience, but the essays by Greg Smith and Torben Grodal emphasize the narration's important role in guiding the audience through a sequence of emotional reactions. Smith proposes an approach to analyzing film structures which emphasizes stylistic emotion cues as much as character-oriented informa-
tion. Relying on an associational model of the emotions, he discusses how film narration cues an overall emotional orientation to the film, a mood that is bolstered by brief bursts of emotion. Grodal's discussion of how narrative elicits emotion builds on the systematic treatment of film and emotion presented in his recent book *Moving Pictures: A New Theory of Film Genres, Feelings, and Cognition*. In the essay, Grodal begins with a general discussion of how film narratives in particular elicit affect and then goes on to describe some of the diverse means by which films manipulate or filter affective response through, for example, various kinds of "activations," "feelings of reality," or genre conventions. The essays by Jeff Smith and Susan Feagin shift focus from narrative to various uses of film style and technique. Smith argues that cognitive theories of film music are well equipped to deal with the expression and evocation of emotion. After a discussion of emotivist and cognitive theories of emotion and music, Smith elaborates on the functions of the film score in relation to emotion, and in addition describes two important functions of film music: "polarization" and "affective congruence." Film is a manifestly temporal art, one that, like music, binds the spectator to the rhythm and tempo of its presentation. Feagin explores how the temporal aspects of film, and more specifically, timing, affect emotional response.

The third and last section deals with issues that have been the province of psychoanalytic theory until recently—desire and identification. As Noël Carroll has argued, psychoanalytic film studies has tended to treat desire as a Platonic concept: "All different sorts of desire, such as a male viewer's sexual desire for a movie character and any viewer's desire that a movie be intelligible, are slotted under the abstract noun *Desire.*" Carroll suggests that it would be more productive to think of specific desires for this or that, rather than "instances of some unified, univocally named force." Gregory Currie recognizes that desires play an important role in our responses to film narrative, and offers a framework for thinking of the relationship between desires and narrative. His essay develops further his initial discussions of desire and emotion in his recent book *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy, and Cognitive Science*.

The next three essays all deal, in some way, with the notion of "identification," that controversial term that denotes the spectator's response to film characters. Berys Gaut notes that in response to psychoanalytic accounts of identification thought to be vague and/or misconstrued, theorists such as Gregory Currie, Alex Neill, and Murray Smith have rejected the notion and supplanted it with other formulations of spectator response to film characters. Gaut argues that such a rejection is premature and goes on to revive "identification" by developing a more nuanced account of its processes. Murray Smith, in his *Engaging Characters: Fiction, Emotion, and the Cinema*, has proposed a promising alternative to notions of identification, advocat-