

THE HOTEL IN POSTMODERN LITERATURE AND FILM

By

shelley
Yvette Margaret Blackwood

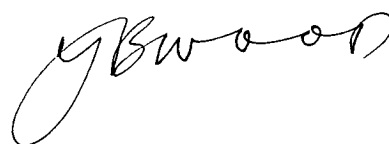
B.A. (Hons)

**Submitted in fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

University of Tasmania

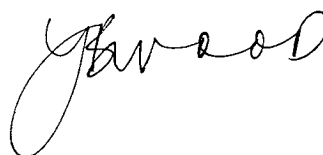
March 2005

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University of Tasmania or any other institution, except by way of background information which is duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Y Blackwood', with a large, stylized initial 'Y'.

Yvette Blackwood

This thesis may be made available for loan and limited copying in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Y Blackwood', with a large, stylized initial 'Y'.

Yvette Blackwood

PhD Abstract:

The Hotel in Postmodern Literature and Film

This thesis examines postmodern literature and film set in hotels. It argues that the hotel— in its fictional and cultural manifestations —is a privileged site in the playing out of postmodern anxieties. In particular, it demonstrates that novels and films set in the hotel use this space to explore concerns of multiplicity (both in narrative and subjectivity); the uncanny; gender; the (post-Freudian) unconscious; and the search for intimacy and authenticity in a globalised late-capitalist society.

The argument is informed by a number of postmodern theorists, whose work is outlined in the introduction and the first chapter. Fredric Jameson's infamous experiences in the Bonaventure Hotel, Marc Augé's theory of "non-places," Anne Friedberg's notion of the "mobilized and virtual gaze," concepts from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's work such as territorialisation and the monad, and Deleuze's theories of cinema are used throughout the thesis to facilitate an investigation of the hotel's function within the primary texts and within postmodernity in general. Postmodern thinking on the hotel is largely based on male spatial experience. I use feminist theorists such as Friedberg, Janet Wolff, and Alice Jardine to counter this and to explore the notion of a "room of one's own" in the hotel.

A range of hotel-based literary and filmic texts from the last half-century are examined. Whilst I largely use postmodern narratives, I also draw on some modernist texts (such as the film *Last Year at Marienbad*) because of their close relationship to postmodern thought. Relevant works by film-makers such as David Lynch, Stanley Kubrick, the Coen brothers, Jim Jarmusch and Sofia Coppola are analysed, along with written texts by Haruki Murakami, Kazuo Ishiguro, Steven Millhauser, Michael Cunningham, Michel Houellebecq, Lucy Frost and Marion Halligan. Through detailed readings of these texts, I explain why explorations of postmodern concerns are repeatedly housed in the hotel.

The hotel narratives analysed in this thesis provide evidence that the hotel is a key site in the interaction of subjectivity and space in postmodernity, and is an "analogon" (to use Jameson's term) of contemporary experience. Movement from home is a

dominant experience in postmodernity and the narratives analysed in this thesis evoke both the anxieties and pleasures of being away from home. Stories of the hotel highlight the complexity of homeliness in postmodernity where, as Augé claims, home is “everywhere and nowhere.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It seems ironic that I have written a thesis about hotels and homelessness, when, at the end of my thesis, I am someone who spends a great deal of time at home, whether working at home or caring for children. Nevertheless, I understand, more than ever before, the need for a “hotel room of one’s own.” Many people have helped me — both intellectually and practically — to write this dissertation and they deserve my thanks.

Elle Leane has been a kind and tireless supervisor. I am grateful for her constant support that has helped me complete this thesis. I am also extremely thankful to Ian Buchanan, who supervised my work particularly in the beginning of my dissertation, and continued to offer guidance when he moved to the other end of Australia. My thanks also go to the University of Tasmania, who funded my research trip to the Bonaventure Hotel in 1999.

My two children were born in the middle of my PhD candidature. Whilst they have added an enormous amount to my life, they have also required much time and headspace. I cannot express the gratitude I have towards my parents, Peter and Dianne Blackwood. They have been understanding and generous parents and grandparents, and continue, in my adult life, to provide me with confidence and boundless support in what I do. Fiona and Robert Blackwood have been terrific in their roles as siblings and aunt and uncle. Abi Binning has also granted me many hours of work through caring for my children. Emily Hansen has been a fellow “scholarship girl” from the time we were twelve, and has been a wonderful friend. I am also grateful to have met Andrea Collis and Fiona Polack — postgraduates who became stellar friends.

I am particularly thankful to my husband Matt Coyle, who has put many drawings (and hours of sleep) on hold to allow me to finish my work.

I dedicate this thesis to my daughters, Zola and Persia, who have shown me (along with the wonderful world of Disney), a whole new set of practices of everyday life.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One: The Theoretical Hotel	44
Chapter Two: The Parallel Hotel	64
Chapter Three: A Hotel Room of One's Own	98
Chapter Four: The Unheimlich Hotel	129
Chapter Five: The Unconscious Hotel	165
Chapter Six: The Supermodern Hotel	197
Conclusion	234
Bibliography	240

INTRODUCTION

“ . . . the present is more and more the day of the hotel . . . ”

— Henry James, *The American Scene* (102)

We keep coming back and coming back

To the real: to the hotel instead of the hymns

That fall upon the wind. We seek

The poem of pure reality, untouched

By trope or deviation, straight to the word . . .

— Wallace Stevens, “An Ordinary Evening in New Haven” (471)

The hotel is a privileged site from which to view the playing out of tensions between globalisation and homeliness in postmodernity. In this thesis I will establish this claim in two main ways. First, I will examine the anxieties generated by movement between home and hotel as expressed in literary and filmic texts, using these texts as symptomatic of the times. Secondly, I will show how the hotel is used as a literary device, as a space required to house narratives of multiple, unmappable or unknowable worlds, enabling these worlds to sit side by side. The texts in this thesis are narratives that not only employ the hotel to tell their stories, they structure their stories like hotel rooms: multiple stories sit side by side, chapter by chapter, with merely murmurs or quiet references running between them. The hotel also provides a

concrete solution — a beginning and end, arrival and departure — to the problem of how to write stories in postmodernity.

The characteristics of the hotel — both the expectations it arouses and its spatial arrangement — solve the difficulty of where to stop when away from home. The hotel is central to the postmodern experience; even though it is an institution that has existed for hundreds of years, it is always mutating, adapting to new concepts and changing modes of living. This thesis argues that literature and film located in the hotel use the space to deal with anxieties of home, mapping, gender and subjectivity in postmodernity. The hotel is a highly contested space in postmodern theory too, and the fact of its contestation can be read as an indication of its importance.

My work refers to Western experience in postmodernity, rather than making statements about global existence. Just as theories of postmodernity ignore large sections of the world's population, so too my argument, by necessity, deals with those in postmodernity who travel and use hotels. However, it should be acknowledged at the outset that not all travel is the same. Not all travellers are arriving in five-star hotels and not all arrive by plane. As Janet Wolff points out, "equal mobility is itself a deception, since we don't all have the same access to the road" ("On The Road Again" 235). Doreen Massey in *Space, Place and Gender* concurs, emphasising that we must not forget that people are still at bus shelters in postmodernity. Her point is that not all people in this era are in cyberspace. Whilst I agree with Massey, this thesis focuses on those who do travel to hotels, using literature and film as the lens through which this experience is recorded.

Marc Augé in his book *Non-Places* indirectly supports the hotel's centrality to postmodernity: he argues that in postmodernity we are always and never at home. Augé claims this is due to the fact that many Westerners spend an increased amount

of time in “non-places” such as highways, airports, trains and planes. Whilst Augé rarely writes about hotels directly, it is precisely this space that both supports and complicates his notion that we are always and never at home. This thesis will show that the space that encapsulates this “transcendental homelessness” (Lukàcs’ term) is the hotel. Certainly the hotel is not the only space or place from which to view the tensions between globalisation and home in postmodernity, but it is a highly significant one, as Westerners in postmodernity are required to move constantly for work, or feel compelled to move and travel for pleasure.

The hotel presents an unusual opportunity, or lens, through which contemporary anxieties can be played out. Much has already been written in cultural studies on spaces such as the museum, the shopping mall, the supermarket and the highway. And these are indeed significant spaces through which we can also chart tropes and concerns of postmodernity. The hotel, however, is a space about time, a chronotope in Michel Bakhtin’s sense of the term. The supermarket, museum and shopping mall are spaces experienced for a certain amount of time too, but the time and investment in the supermarket and museum are much less involved than the time spent in the hotel. The hotel wants to be like home, whereas the other spaces mentioned are deliberately unhomely. Thus, the hotel is a space in which the problems of home in globalised culture are raised.

Hotel and Home

Now, more than ever, people (in Western culture) are away from home. Westerners begin their lives away from home, in hospitals, and often come to the end of their lives by moving into what is ironically termed a “Home.” The dominance of these spaces at the beginning and end of peoples’ lives, coupled with the vast amount

of travel that goes on in postmodernity (for necessity and pleasure), means that people increasingly spend time in spaces between home and return. As David Harvey points out, the flow of capital in postmodernity means that contemporary existence is characterised by movement (231). The hotel is a prime example of these spaces *between* home and return that are increasingly dwelt in. A five-star hotel is both a symbol of capitalist success for the individual guest and a capitalist coloniser around the globe. In closed communist countries such as Cuba, hotels are often the only American-owned territory. Hotels, then, are dominant assistants in a culture that needs a bit of (Western) homeliness everywhere. They are advanced agents of Western culture.

The hotel is a building that receives and accommodates paying guests. The guest arrives to pass through and eventually leave the hotel. Although it is a space for passing through, the hotel stay means that for a few days or weeks, travel and movement stop. As a paying guest (payment being a crucial distinction between a hotel and home or shelter), one receives space and service. The space is at least a single room with a bed, and the service comes in the minimum form of a desk clerk directing the guest to his or her room. The point of upper-bracket hotels is that they go beyond minimum requirements and service and provide something beyond home comforts, offering care, luxury, glamour and status, emphasising pleasure and efficiency. The luxury five-star hotel, then, is a libidinal apparatus in Frederic Jameson's sense of the term.

At first glance, it could be argued that the hotel is, as James Clifford calls it (*Routes* 17), an "occidental" (Western imperialist) space, reminiscent of a manor or castle with its grand foyer and mannered façade. Indeed, the hotel is linked in both its architecture and affect (manners and interiors) to times past, to mansions and castles.

But it will become clear in this thesis that it is also the space that houses the complexities and characteristics of postmodernity. This is evident on a number of levels ranging from individual theorists pondering postmodern space and thought within a hotel, to countless films and stories located in hotels to the use of the hotel by Western countries as the new phase of colonisation all over the world. “Global” hotel chains enable efficient and calm movement of money and people, thus enabling late capitalist globalisation to occur. The effect of this globalisation on Western consciousness is a complex one. With homeliness via sameness possibly being everywhere, one of the effects is a dizzying confusion of the lines between home and elsewhere.

The hotel lies in the middle of the loop between home and home’s return. Because of this oscillation of home-hotel-home, the hotel provides an understanding of what home is, and how homeliness is commodified and reified in postmodernity. Earlier I mentioned Augé’s point that now more than ever, people are increasingly reliant on what he terms “non-places”; as a result, notions of “cocooning” (lining one’s home with objects of comfort and pleasure) become increasingly important. Current architecture of the home emphasises cocooning too, with large living spaces and tiny bedrooms. The dynamics and proportions of these kinds of home spaces are like those of hotels, with large lobbies and small rooms. The quest for an “authentic” home, furnished with hand-made antiques and old, distressed furniture is also transplanted onto hotels. One five-star luxury hotel (the Museum Hotel) in Cappadocia, Turkey, resides in a cave system. This hotel has converted parts of the cave into tasteful and luxurious rooms. Thus we see in the Museum Hotel a conflation of the primitive and the luxurious in a quest for an authentic, but comfortable, experience of shelter. Ice hotels in Greenland are also examples of the

way in which an “authentic” experience is sought when travelling. These hotels emphasising their primitive locations are responses to the ever-present non-places in postmodernity.

Home, for middle-class Westerners, is a difficult concept when movement is the dominating experience (Rapport 268). Local social organizations are dismantled by international capital, and this one-world system sees the “massification of man” (268). Home then is no longer the “stable centre of one’s universe, a safe place to leave and return to. Home comes to be found as a set of practices” (268). These practices include the repetition of habitual interactions. For Nigel Rapport, home becomes static, limited idioms that

come to provide beacons of consistency and recognition through which familiar social order can hope to be secured and stable collectives of rhythms maintained. One becomes at home in interactional routines, and these are fixed as one’s experience is fluxional, straighten as one’s itinerary is used. (269)

Workers, Harvey notes in *The Condition of Postmodernity*, must be increasingly adaptable and flexible to suit capitalism’s accelerating nature. The subsequent increase in migration sees people making home through rhythm and routine, through habits and familiarity, rather than relying on a single space to call home. The shift in living habits for many in the West is due to the fact that movement to other cities or countries is often inevitable. Not only does home become formed through rhythm and habits, it is also easily shifted with collapsible furniture, and an increasing number of storage spaces throughout Western cities. Portable existences, even down to small laptop computers, are indicators not only of increased migration, but the

“hotelization” of existence: life, by necessity, needs to be quickly packed up and moved on.

Familiarity, in the midst of movement from one place to another, comes in the form of habits and stereotypes. Hotels, particularly chain hotels, provide a kind of homeliness through sameness, where we trade excitement for comforting. The same kind of lobby and room in chain hotels throughout the world provide a comfortable way of coping with change; stereotypes become “cognitive resorts.” The “cognitive resort” is the place in which the brain goes on holiday, and switches off in the comfort of familiar images, slogans and practices. Thus chain hotels ease the complexity of new, unfamiliar countries. In the first chapter of this thesis, I look at the reliance on and complication of home in spatial theory, and the effect this has on considering anomalous spaces such as the hotel. For whether or not workers on the move stay in serviced apartments, caravans, temporary rental accommodation or hotels, they are all experiencing conditions of movement that dominate postmodernity. The need for and experience of the hotel, as a worker or a guest, then, corresponds to the state-of-being in late capitalism.

This thesis sees a variety of needs placed onto the hotel, ranging from shelter and privacy to answers to existential angst. The hotel provides (ideally) a smooth passageway between home, airport and new city; at least, it should. But this is not always the case. The hotel embodies the fragility of those on the move, and the complicated relationship between hotel and home. Slash, a member of the rock group Guns ‘n’ Roses, is an excellent example of the conflation between hotel and home: Slash had a hotel room built into his home, claiming that he didn’t feel at home in his home, as he was so used to staying in hotels. So there is a complex relationship to home when one is perpetually away. Home is what we lack. This

complication is explored throughout the hotel-based texts in this thesis. The hotel can provide sanctuary from home's work, provide homeliness and comfort, but most frequently in narratives the hotel is a complex space that produces an uncanny relationship with home.

Hotel vs. Motel

“Hotel/Motel, make you wanna cry.”

— AC/DC, “It’s a Long Way to the Top if You Want to Rock and Roll,”

by Angus Young and Bonn Scott

Not every theorist considers the hotel to be the exemplary space of postmodernity. There are some who would assign that position to motels. Both the motel and hotel have to do with speed and location, but they are socially and architecturally structured as completely different spaces. A motel is generally much cheaper than a hotel, and is a space designed to pass through more quickly than a hotel. The motel is a product of interstate freeways rather than the railways which originally produced the hotel. A motel usually consists of a long chain of co-joined rooms, without a passageway or lobby in which guests can congregate. Thus a motel provides spaces that are more private than a hotel, but does not offer the same facilities as a hotel. Yet internally it is more homelike in as much as it has a kitchenette, and does not usually have room service, so guests are required to look after themselves. A guest in a luxury hotel, in contrast, is a much more passive one. Whilst a motel is usually new, or at least built in the last half of the twentieth century (the age of the freeway), a hotel building has a much more complex relationship to history: often five-star hotels pride themselves on their long tradition, and,

paradoxically it may seem, their technological advances. Thus the motel's and hotel's relationship to bodies, work and time seem to be opposite ones, despite the fact that both kinds of spaces accommodate people on the move.

In fictional contexts, the presence of a motel often raises suspicion: Orson Welles locates the most gruesome scene in *Touch of Evil* in an abandoned motel. David Lynch uses both the hotel and motel in his films; when he locates scenes in a motel, in *Lost Highway* and *Wild at Heart*, for example, something debauched and corrupt is usually going on. Hotels, by contrast, tend to generate narratives about parallel worlds and complex mapping of space and subjectivity, and narratives that deal with the problems of homeliness in the late twentieth century. Thus hotel narratives deal with topics that are more postmodern than motel stories.

James Clifford in *Routes* agrees with Meghan Morris's argument that the hotel is modernist in its embracing of "occidental, gentlemanly travel" (17). Along with Jane Jacobs (quoted by Clifford), Clifford and Morris argue that the hotel alienates those who are not white, middle class and male. The motel, Morris claims, is much more postmodern in its emphasis on speed and location. And if we are to take from Morris' and Clifford's writing that the motel stands for certain positive, egalitarian aspects of postmodern movement, where the motel is a kind of non-judgemental, easily accessible accommodation, then we have a kind of positive theory of postmodernism in which the hotel is defined as something that does not fit with the times.

Yet to argue that the hotel is modernist and therefore not postmodern is to deny the complexity both of the hotel space and postmodernism itself. The texts throughout this thesis indicate that the hotel shapes labyrinthine narratives that perpetually question the relationship between home and elsewhere in postmodernity,

as well as concerns about subjectivity in contemporary culture. The hotel is both public and private space, historical and new space, democratic and colonial all at once. Thus the way in which the hotel enfolds several kinds of spaces is reflective of its intersection between various epochs and spatial experiences. The hotel, rather than the motel, encapsulates more varied and complex aspects of postmodernity.

Characteristics of Postmodernity

I have argued so far that the hotel is a central defining postmodern experience, but to support this, some relevant postmodern concepts and complications need to be outlined. Postmodernism is described by Jameson as, firstly, a moment in history, in late capitalism. The postmodern era is considered to have begun in the late sixties and some have suggested that it is already over. Jameson, Lyotard and others argue that postmodernism follows on and responds to modernism. Secondly, postmodernism has its own particular styles, including the use of pastiche, irony, fragmentation, and post-colonial voices, the death of the “grand narrative” and the dominance of the simulacra.

Another significant characteristic of postmodernity is the break from Freudian thought. Deleuze has been provided groundbreaking work on the move from psychoanalysis in postmodernity. Whilst Deleuze never used the term “postmodern,” he writes of contemporary space, capitalism, film and literature (to name but a few of his topics) using ideas that have been taken up throughout writing on postmodernism. Indeed, his work, it can be argued, helps define postmodernism. Through Deleuze, we can see something at work less reductive than psychoanalysis, not simply reducible to the “mummy-daddy-me” relation that has dominated twentieth-century thought. Deleuze’s break from an aborescent and Freudian-based way of thinking

about culture and narrative has shaped contemporary philosophy and, conversely, describes the epoch we are now in. As Daniel Smith points out in his introduction to *Essays Critical and Clinical*, “One of the essential theses of *Anti-Oedipus* is that delirious formations are not reducible to the father-mother-child coordinates of the Oedipus complex; they are neither familial nor personal but world historical” (xxxviii). Each text examined in this thesis expresses ideas about subjectivity and space that contribute to a wider understanding of postmodernism. Or paradoxically, these narratives tend to express an absence of comprehension of totality, along with ideas of transforming, becoming other. Deleuze’s concepts are used throughout this thesis to articulate these complexities of postmodernity, and are examined in detail in Chapter One.

Many postmodern theorists, including Deleuze, deal with the complex relationship of the virtual and reality in postmodernity. Jameson expands on the concept of the simulacrum in *Postmodernism* through Sartre’s notion of the

derealization [original emphasis] of the whole surrounding world of everyday reality... The world thereby momentarily loses its depth and threatens to become a glossy skin, a stereoscopic illusion, a rush of filmic images without density. But is this now a terrifying or exhilarating experience? (34)

This commentary on the virtual and visual dominance in postmodernity provides grounds for my own argument that the hotel, with its emphasis both on spectacle and physical care, is central to understanding postmodernity. At the same time, the hotel wedges a crack in the “all virtual, all spectacle” description of postmodernity. The hotel is an ever-present reminder that despite the “derealization” of the everyday experience in postmodernity, the body requires private space when travelling. It is at

this disjunction between the real and virtual, the material and the spectacle, in postmodernity that the hotel is situated.

A crucial feature of postmodernity is the dominance of the mobilized and virtual gaze, a term taken from Anne Friedberg's *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*. In the introduction to her book Friedberg states, "The gradual shift into postmodernity is marked, I argue, by the increased centrality of the mobilized and virtual gaze as a fundamental feature of everyday life" (4). *Window Shopping* draws on theory, film and space as a way of arguing the case for the dominance of cinema in postmodern culture. Friedberg traces rise of the mobilized virtual gaze as a form of perception that has come from "increased cultural centrality of an integral feature of both cinematic and televisual apparatuses . . . The virtual gaze is not a direct perception but a received perception mediated through representation" (2). The mobilized aspect of the postmodern gaze arose through the late nineteenth century with the construction of automobiles and cars. Exhibition halls, department stores, photography and museums also facilitated this kind of gaze. The mobilized and virtual gaze, a term Friedberg takes loosely from Deleuze, can be thought of as the "shopper's gaze," a gaze that arose through the nineteenth century, and dominates postmodernity. It is present in the "spatial and temporal displacements" of shopping malls and cinemas as well as at home, "with the television and the VCR" (4).

Just as the mobilized and virtual gaze is dominant in these kinds of public/private spaces, it is also relevant to the hotel. The hotel shares with these spaces an emphasis on consumption and the spectacle. My argument is in consonance with Friedberg's: the centralisation of the mobilized and virtual (and commodified) gaze has resulted in a parallel movement to the hotel experience being at the centre of everyday life, rather than as an exception to it.

The hotel, epitomising the mobilized and virtual gaze, works to impact upon both the eyes and the rest of the body, providing us with a dichotomy between the film's gaze, and the gaze, or presence (for the eyes are connected to a body, not a tripod) of an "actual" guest, walking through the hotel corridor without an overhead camera facing him or her. The hotel is a spectacle that is theatrical, cinematic, very often a 'feast for the eyes' and frequently a film or television location. However, when one is there, actually a guest in a hotel, one is not tracking the hotel with a gaze that is freed from a point of view, like the camera, but is grounded by legs, abdomen, torso, arms, neck and head. The hotel is designed to care for the body. This is its primary and most primitive function, and it is largely this function of physical care that distinguishes the hotel from other public/private contemporary spaces. Whilst Jameson correctly argues that life in postmodernity is "derealized," life continues to be manifested by a body. It is necessary then to insist on bringing the body into the concept of the mobilized and virtual gaze when examining hotel narratives.

The mobilized and virtual gaze is also a result of capitalist society, and is, therefore, a commodified gaze. The presence of a commodified gaze in postmodernity is indirectly supported by Sharon Zukin's concept of "Disneyfication" outlined in her book *The Cultures of Cities*. The way consumption is organised is as important as the production of goods to consume, Zukin argues (Preface). Zukin's "Disneyfication" refers to the way in which Disney World is an "emblem of the service economy and flagship of a certain kind of urban growth: orderly, well-mannered, placing individual desire under corporate control" (Preface). Disney World, for Zukin, is a model of the complexities of tourism, as well as public and private space in late capitalism. Zukin, like Friedberg, refers to capitalist space in her examination of "Disneyfication." She argues that new spaces (private parks,

shopping malls and so on) in postmodernity intersects with public and private space, and create more private, commodified space. Thus it must be acknowledged that whilst the mobilized and virtual gaze is one born from cinema and flaneurie, it also arises out of and within capitalist space. The commodified, or “Disneyfied,” gaze is therefore part of the mobilized and virtual gaze.

The rise of the mobilized and virtual gaze through the twentieth century supports my argument that the hotel is a central part of postmodern experience, and this is particularly evident in the texts examined in Chapters Two and Six. Friedberg historicises the mobilized and virtual gaze, locating its roots in the late nineteenth century. This supports my claim that modernism and postmodernism are linked, but stylistically separate. Zukin’s “Disneyfication” adds commodification to the mobilized and virtual gaze, another vital part of the way in which capitalist space (particularly the hotel) is consumed. Zukin and Friedberg provide new terms to consider new, largely capitalist spaces that intersect between the public and private.

Whilst Friedberg’s mobilized and virtual gaze is common to masculine and feminine experiences of postmodernity, her work, like that of other postmodern feminists, places women’s experiences at the heart of postmodernity. *Window Shopping* then, partly redresses the largely masculine understanding of what constitutes postmodernism. Jameson and others (such as David Harvey) have been widely criticised for their phallogentric positions (see Rose; Deutsche and Massey). Similarly, the various struggles with hotels encountered in this thesis are largely masculine, and can be critiqued for the same reason. The image of a lost, lonely man wandering around hotel corridors is repeated throughout many of the hotel texts and theories in this thesis. Yet postmodern experience is not only characterised by such concepts as unmappability, the simulacrum and multiplicity. As I argue in Chapter

Three, when (Western) women go to hotels, they celebrate the privacy, isolation and removal from identity that the hotel provides. An analysis of contemporary experience needs to include women's experience, as Alice Jardine points out when outlining her concept of gynesis. She highlights the need for

the putting into discourse of 'woman' as that process diagnosed in France as intrinsic to the condition of modernity; indeed the valorisation of the feminine, women and her obligatory, that is, historical connotations, as somehow intrinsic to new and necessary modes of thinking, writing and speaking. (25)

Similarly, Wolff in her introduction to *Feminine Sentences* argues for the reinstatement of women's relationship to modern and postmodern culture, to defend feminist cultural politics and to challenge the division between sociological and textual analysis. Whilst Wolff wants to avoid the "women and" syndrome that pervades feminist/postmodernist writing, this thesis shows that a genderless experience has not yet arrived. On the contrary, my thesis observes the dominance of gender when subjects experience hotel space. The texts in this thesis say collectively or generally that women and men experience the hotel in ways that indicate a different engagement with spaces. This is supported by many feminist theorists who have noted that women and men move through and experience space differently (see Butler; Grosz). The difference in responses to the hotel articulates the difference of gender in postmodern culture.

It might be possible to argue, as some feminists have, that men searching for knowledge of space in postmodernity is "all about mummy," as womb and room have been connected in philosophy since Plato. If we are to put on feminist psychoanalytic glasses to look at the trope that persists in this thesis of "man-lost-in-hotel," we might find this rejection of complex, labyrinthine space symptomatic of the male longing to

appropriate the female privilege of maternity. Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway and Leslie Kanes Weisman's introduction to *Sex and Architecture* points out that Western architecture observes sex as a recurrent theme:

Thus the insistence, in ancient and contemporary discourse, that male architects "give birth" to their buildings. Implicated in man's inevitable state of childlessness, which gives rise to an obsession with "reproducing himself," is the systematic erasure of woman and her contributions. (11)

Experiencing — whether this involves constructing or moving through — both public and private space is clearly still a gender-dominated experience in postmodernity. This thesis provides evidence for this in contemporary hotel literature, film and philosophy.

The Postmodern Portman Experience: Signs of the Times

Jameson has sparked a whole body of writing on postmodern space, specifically through his extended commentary on the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in his book *Postmodernism*. The Bonaventure, designed by John Portman, is located in downtown Los Angeles. The Bonaventure Hotel is a space that is neither inside nor outside downtown L.A, according to Jameson. He describes the Bonaventure as instantly alienating, through its "repelling skin" (reflective glass walls) and its three confusing points of entry. Norman Klein points out that the Bonaventure "was built specifically in a zone wiped out, then sealed from the east by tunnels and huge parking structures – to the point where nearby residents were almost impossible to find" (85). Klein notes that the three entries initially built in to the hotel were so difficult to locate that an extra entrance was added on in the late eighties, "simply to allow the businesses inside to find *some* street traffic" (85; original emphasis). The

existence of the homeless camps at Bunker Hill (close to the hotel) — something explored by Mike Davis in *The City of Quartz* and Edward Soja in *Thirdspace* — highlights the extreme contrasts of living spaces in close proximity in capitalism. The Bonaventure has come to embody all that we understand to be postmodern in Jameson's formulation of the term. Many of the debates on postmodernism come from responses to Jameson's account of his experience of the Bonaventure (first published in 1982). His commentary on this experience is "probably the most quoted discussed, and debated article of the last decade," according to Douglas Kellner (2). It is the hotel, specifically the Bonaventure, that houses debates about what constitutes postmodern experience.

In the first chapter of *Postmodernism*, which reprints the 1982 essay, Jameson examines what he calls a "full-blown postmodern building" (39) which "offers some very striking lessons about the originality of postmodern space" (39). His argument, using the Bonaventure as the prototype postmodern space, is that we do not yet "possess the perceptual equipment to match this new hyperspace . . . because our perceptual habits were formed in that older kind of space I have called the space of high modernism" (39). Jameson begins his close textual analysis of the Bonaventure via its three original entries, all of which he finds confusing, and "curiously unmarked" (39). Jameson then unfolds his Bonaventure experience as something that is emblematic of a wider concern of postmodernity, and that is a failure of language to articulate a postmodern spatial experience: "I am tempted to say that such a space makes it impossible for us to use the language of volume or volumes any longer, since these are impossible to seize" (43). Jameson's attempts at "conveying the thing itself, the experience of space you undergo when you step . . . into the lobby or atrium" (43) become the principle point of the experience. With this difficult

articulation of experience by Jameson comes the immediate connection between the failure of narration and confusing space.

Jean Baudrillard's experience in the Bonaventure is similar to Jameson's. The undefining "glass skin" of the outside also alienates Baudrillard: "It's just like people who wear dark glasses. Their eyes are hidden and others see only their reflection" (59). Like Augé, Baudrillard shows a surprising sentimentality for buildings and people that have clear distinctions between outside and inside. He is repulsed by the anonymity of the spaces and people around the Bonaventure and the resulting isolation. Soja also pays a visit to the Bonaventure, taking Lefebvre with him, and finds that once inside "it becomes daunting to get out again without bureaucratic assistance" (199). There is an emphasis in the Bonaventure architecture on what John Urry describes as Baroque space: "the fascination with opacity, unreadability, and indecipherability, which has functioned as an alternative ocular regime within modernity" (79). Soja and others resist this kind of space. Ian Buchanan, on the other hand, calls the unmappability of the Bonaventure Hotel "delightfully bewildering" (168) as "its primary effect seems to be the suppression of inquiry, which is not to say false consciousness so much as the diminution of that political awareness we call conscience" (168). Thus for Buchanan, it is precisely the confusing nature of the Bonaventure space that lures in visitors.

Whilst Buchanan argues for the pleasure of the unmappable Bonaventure, it is unusual to have a positive account of this hotel from a male commentator. Typically, as we have just seen through Jameson, Soja and Baudrillard, men visiting the Bonaventure lament the indecipherability of postmodern space. This is perhaps indicative of the loss of male power over space. Judith Goldstein describes Jameson and David Byrne (another Bonaventure commentator) in the Bonaventure as

imagining themselves “coming up against the Bonaventure Hotel or facial images as radically isolated heroic individuals seeking new dimensions” (159). She sees Jameson’s response to the Bonaventure as a familiar one of the “romantic individual undergoing a transcendent aesthetic experience” (160). She places Jameson’s definition and experience of postmodernity against women’s experiences of postmodernity and subjectivity.

These two vastly different aspects of contemporary experience are connected by Goldstein through ideas of subjectivity: Goldstein disagrees with Jameson’s theories of postmodernity, such as the death of individualism, and the removal of the boundaries between high and mass culture. She claims that “more analytical attention has been paid to what we can consider the high-culture aspects of mass culture, such as film and architecture, than to advertising, women’s magazines, or fashion” (144). This claim leads Goldstein into an ethnography of late capitalism analysed through make-up advertising. An ethnography of cosmetics advertising seems a long way from Jameson in the Bonaventure Hotel, and that is precisely Goldstein’s point. Make-up discourse maintains the hermeneutics of outside and inside, something that has disappeared in late capitalism, according to Jameson. Goldstein points out the absence of women and consumers from Jameson’s consideration of the Bonaventure, arguing that whilst Jameson is wandering around the Bonaventure, “I imagine other people on the escalators and the elevators checking each other out” (161).

I concur with Goldstein’s claim that Jameson’s broad theory of postmodernism does leave out a female experience of the everyday, and that Jameson’s experience of the Bonaventure fails to take into account the interaction of individuals in the space, and the consumer culture within it (although he does speak of a hypercrowd). Certainly Jameson does not take into account the range of people who

inhabit spaces of postmodernity, spaces of consumer culture. However, what Jameson does provide is the notion of the hotel as an exemplary space of postmodernity that is also played out in many fictional experiences of the hotel. There is a correlation between Jameson's experience in the Bonaventure and hotel narratives in this thesis. We can determine from different gendered experiences (discussed above) that men and women experience postmodern space differently, and Jameson's account of the Bonaventure experience is testimony to this.

My own experience of the Bonaventure in 1999 did contain the kinds of interaction Goldstein suggests in her article. Due to the nature of the elevators and stairs in the Bonaventure, everyone in the lift talks about what floor will take you where. Thus despite being space where individuals don't really "fit," this kind of complex baroque hotel space actually encourages social interaction. It is a friendly space: staff need to spend time with you to explain how to reach your room, which elevator to take, handing you detailed, colour-coded maps for the journey to your room.

The Bonaventure is not now the exemplary consumer utopia, however. At the time of my visit there were many empty lobby shops, just as the hotel, because of its vast size, seemed empty even though there was a large conference taking place. The Bonaventure basks in its glory days of early-eighties postmodernism. There are little plaques all around the hotel telling guests about the films shot there: "This elevator was used in a scene in *Forget Paris* starring Billy Crystal," one sign reads. We are reminded from two angles that the Bonaventure is a virtual, cinematic space: this occurs firstly in cinema (the films set in the hotel) and secondly within the surrounding, "actual" space. The oversized grass animals, flags, and deafening fountains in the vast foyer make one feel dwarfed by the self-importance of the hotel.

At the same time, the dominance of the spectacle means that the experience of the Bonaventure is largely a cinematic one, concurring with Friedberg's argument that postmodernism is characterised by an increasing emphasis on the mobilized and virtual gaze, and with Jameson's claim that postmodernism "derealizes" everyday reality.

Despite the grandeur and self-importance of the Bonaventure in both postmodern theory and popular culture, it is a fading spectacle: the enormous concrete pillars in the Bonaventure have deep cracks through them. The cracks, the empty shops, the creaking glass elevator, and the small, hot guest rooms (from all that "glass skin" and LA sunshine beating in), suggest that the party is over for the Bonaventure. With the cracks appearing in the Bonaventure, do we have an emblem of the end of postmodernism? Yet even if the party is over for the Bonaventure, and for postmodernism, the hotel is still a dominant site in which "the times" are contained.

The new times of globalisation are located in hotels elsewhere. The Portman Shanghai Centre, appearing as a giant hotel lobby, is another of John Portman's grand postmodern institutions that perhaps is more analogous to the increasingly complicated presence of global (or rather, American) capitalism twenty years after Jameson's first commentary on the Bonaventure. Portman's Shanghai Centre is located amongst the rows of prestige stores on Nanjing Road in Shanghai, and, as a Western capitalist building in a Communist country embracing capitalism, it has colonised the city through its title "Shanghai Centre." Whilst the Centre contains many spaces, including the Ritz Carlton Hotel, the Centre's own centre is akin to a giant lobby, indicating the "hotelization of space" that is occurring in many parts of the world. The Centre, like the Bonaventure, has several exits and entry points. As a result, its relationship with the city outside is a complex one: it is not glassed or

walled-in, but has open-air ceilings with circular, labyrinthine designs and no signs to anywhere, except the entrance of the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Like Portman's Bonaventure, the Shanghai Centre is still akin to a minicity. Also like the Bonaventure, the Centre has a feeling of oversized space and also has deafening noise from a giant Aztec replica fountain, just as the Bonaventure lobby is saturated with noisy waterfalls. These elements of the Shanghai Centre do not appear to have the effect of alienating visitors. Rather, the centre of the Centre provides a place in which to stroll, an alternative to the surrounding shopping malls and streets.¹

This circular complex houses a thousand-seat theatre, the Ritz Carlton Hotel, a safe and operational automatic teller machine, a Western-style mini-supermarket, a sheltered and organised taxi rank, and a Starbucks café. The Shanghai Centre is conceived as a safe-haven for Western expatriates and business travellers, offering an easy way of dealing with the complications of Shanghai. Despite the labyrinthine appearance of the centre, it is designed to provide relief and contrast for foreigners from the city outside: unlike the grid-based street system of Shanghai, the Centre is circular. Whilst Shanghai as a city is clearly mappable in blocks, much like New York, the Centre is not clearly marked, not clearly part of the city or separate from it, and not clearly inside or outside space. The centre is neither opaque nor transparent space. Yet it is clearly built as a refuge for Westerners (often on business) in China. The Shanghai Centre reproduces the dynamic of wealth and poverty, just as the

¹ Hunter S. Thompson describes another Portman hotel when he writes of his experience of delivering a "sermon" at 2a.m. from one of the indoor balconies. Like the Bonaventure, the Houston Hyatt Regency is

a stack of 1000 rooms, built around a vast lobby at least thirty stories high, with a revolving 'spindletop' bar on the roof. The whole centre of the building is a tower of acoustical space. You can walk out of any room and look over the indoor balcony (twenty floors down, in my case) at the palm-shrouded wood and naugahyde maze of the bar/lounge on the lobby floor. (51)

Thompson makes this vast hotel his platform for a drunken rant at 2a.m., inverting Jameson's experience of being lost and bewildered in Portman's designs. Nevertheless, the Portman hotel induces an extreme response for both men. Thompson's account reminds us of both the proliferation of Portman's hotels, and the similarity of their designs.

Bonaventure lies a short distance from Bunker Hill, a site of poverty and homelessness. The walls of the Shanghai Centre only lightly conceal the dilapidated apartments behind the glamorous indoor/outdoor Centre. Moreover, the Centre is the only place on Nanjing Road where beggars never dare to enter, due to the presence of guards. The street and the Centre highlight Harvey's argument that "free-market populism puts the middle classes into the enclosed and protected spaces of shopping malls . . . but does nothing for the poor except to eject them into a new and nightmarish postmodern landscape of homelessness" (77). The rise of beggars and homelessness has increased sharply with the rise of capitalism in Shanghai.

The not-so-discrete monitoring of people in the Centre is intensified in the lobby of the Ritz Carlton. Like the Bonaventure, the lobby is circular, but the ceilings are lower. Guests and visitors are immediately greeted and questioned by staff (who seem to be neither doormen nor concierges but "guest relations personnel") about where they want to go. Simply wandering around the lobby is not encouraged. One must have a purpose for entering the hotel, as it is a private, enclosed space. Thus whilst the structural relationship between the Centre and Nanjing Road is a manifold one, the privacy and separation of the Ritz-Carlton hotel is much clearer. The Centre then works as a giant lobby, akin to the grand-scaled Bonaventure lobby, and the Ritz-Carlton hotel is like a private room.

Portman's Shanghai Centre presents us with the same complication of inside and outside space that Portman's Bonaventure does. Jameson argues that the Bonaventure "does not wish to be a part of the city but rather its equivalent and replacement or substitute" (*Postmodernism* 40). This idea is equally or more appropriate for the Shanghai Centre. Implicit in the Centre's design is the hotelization of space: it competes with the street and offers, particularly for Westerners, the

comfort of private automatic teller machines, a Western supermarket and a Starbucks. These labyrinthine structures within the Centre's lobby echo those in the Bonaventure, and create the effect of secret space as well as difficulties in cognitively mapping the space. The Centre operates as one giant lobby, with circular corridors, staircases and escalators, with an even more private space —the Ritz-Carlton hotel — contained within it. The consequence of this secret space is that it is private space within semi-public space. The Centre, with its absence of signposts and guides, creates a division between those who “know” the space, and those who do not. Thus, whilst the Shanghai Centre is not entirely a hotel, it operates using the philosophy of a hotel, reproducing the same kind of dynamic of wealth and poverty, privacy within public space, that Portman's Bonaventure does in L.A. Hence the Shanghai Centre further exemplifies the way in which hotels are increasingly significant spaces in globalised capitalism, via the gaze, architecture and labyrinthine structure. These hotel structures are reproduced throughout the world and enable global capitalism to take place.

The Hotel as Analogon

Jameson describes his experience in the Bonaventure Hotel as an analogon of postmodernity (*Postmodernism*). Following Jameson's understanding of the term (that he takes from Sartre), I will argue throughout this thesis that the hotel in general (as opposed to the Bonaventure in particular) operates in postmodernity as an analogon. The analogon is defined by Jameson in *Signatures of the Visible* as

that structural nexus in our reading or viewing experience, in our operations of decoding or aesthetic reception, which can then do double duty and stand as the substitute and representative within the aesthetic object of a phenomenon

on the outside which cannot in the very nature of things be 'rendered' directly.

(53)

In the context of the Bonaventure Hotel, the analogon explains what cannot be rendered or articulated directly via language in postmodernity. Jameson's Bonaventure adventure, in which he experiences a vast gulf between his modern body and postmodern space, and wanders lost and bewildered through the circular hotel, is now infamous and widely criticised. Getting lost in the hotel is a problem Jameson describes as an inability to cognitively map self and space. This is a "radical incompatibility between the possibilities of an older national language or culture ... and the transnational worldwide organization of the economic infrastructure of contemporary capitalism" (44). The inability to cognitively map self and space in turn

stands as the symbol and analogon of that even sharper dilemma which is the incapacity of our minds, at least at present, to map the great global multinational and decentered communicational network in which we find ourselves caught as individual subjects. (*Postmodernism* 44)

This "latest mutation in space" for Jameson is termed "postmodern hyperspace" (44). Thus the Bonaventure Hotel is the key symbol, the analogon, for postmodern experience. This particular hotel comes to stand for the impossibility of understanding totality in postmodern space. Totality in postmodernity can be imagined but not represented.

Colin MacCabe's introduction to *Geopolitical Aesthetic* defines cognitive mapping as:

A way of understanding how an individual's representation of his or her world can escape the traditional critique of representation of his or her world because

mapping is intimately related to practice – to an individual’s successful recognition of urban space. [It is] a metaphor for the process of political unconscious, and the model for articulating the local and the global, a way of linking the most intimately local — our particular path through the world, and the most global — the crucial features of our political planet. (xiv)

The inability to cognitively map is not only seen in Jameson’s experience in the Bonaventure, but is also present in postmodern hotel literature. Thus we have some synchronicity occurring between postmodern theory and narratives, where the literary experiences of hotels are symptomatic of wider problems with space and subjectivity in the late twentieth century. The struggle with cognitive mapping is, in Jameson’s words, “the thing itself, namely, how the local items of the present and the here-and-now can be made to express and to designate the absent, unrepresentable totality” (10). The hotel’s resistance to comprehension conveys the complexities of postmodernity in tropes that are crucial both to hotel narratives particularly and postmodern thought generally.

Yet the urge to convey, or uncover, unrepresentable totality in late capitalism dominates many hotel narratives. The opening scene of the film *Snake Eyes*, for example, has a camera tracking over the top of an unroofed floor of a casino hotel in Las Vegas, like a lid lifted off a doll’s house. A medium tracking shot sweeps over the top, so the audience briefly sees various scenes being played out in each room. This shot gives us an understanding of all kinds of events simultaneously going on in the hotel. Multiple worlds exist in each room, side by side. This shot of the hotel reveals precisely what we can never see even though we understand that it exists. The real paradox is it is that the hotel that enables complexity to be represented: its inner complexity is an analogon of the complexity of the postmodern world.

The Friendly Face of Capitalism?

Jameson's argument that the (Bonaventure) Hotel epitomises an epoch is not completely new. The hotel is perceived as a microcosm of the inequalities and evils of capitalism for modernist writers such as George Orwell and Henry James. Orwell spent several years living in impoverished hotels and working in luxurious ones, and documented the experience in *Down and Out in Paris and London*:

For, after all, where is the real need of big hotels and smart restaurants? They are supposed to provide luxury, but in reality they provide only a cheap, shoddy imitation of it. Nearly everyone hates hotels . . . No doubt hotels and restaurants must exist, but there is no need that they should enslave hundreds of people. What makes the work in them is not the essentials; it is the shams that are supposed to represent luxury. Smartness, as it is called, means, in effect, merely that the staff work more and the customers pay more; no one benefits except the proprietor . . . Essentially, a 'smart' hotel is a place where a hundred people toil like the devils in order that two hundred may pay through the nose for things they do not really want. (119 – 120)

A comparable observation is made about hotels in late capitalism by Ian Buchanan, who describes the many itinerant workers employed by the hotel — workers that Mike Davis fails to describe in his account of the Bonaventure. Moreover, Buchanan argues, the hotel “facialises itself” through the smiling staff (150). Orwell's and Buchanan's accounts demonstrate the sharp divide between the two kinds of people that exist in the hotel: the staff and the guests. The hotel is also the space in which luxury is definable: in the modern and postmodern eras, it is defined by excessive work and friendliness by its staff. Thus the idea that the hotel acts as a kind of Petri

dish for the way capitalism (unfairly) works is present in both modern and postmodern thought.

The hotel is again the site in which the stark contrasts of capitalism are condensed in the 2003 film *Dirty, Pretty Things*. Okwe, the concierge, works at the desk of a four- or five-star hotel. The split between guests and workers, between rich and poor in a highly capitalist institution, the hotel, could not be more obvious. These inequalities are particularly highlighted through Okwe's inability to find a home, or at least somewhere to sleep. In the end he seeks refuge in a mortuary. His existence in the hotel provides an Orwellian commentary on the extremes of capitalism and the multiple, fragmented lives in postmodernity: Okwe is a doctor and a refugee, with a daughter living in Africa, but he has a completely separate existence as a hotel concierge and taxi driver. In the narrative, the hotel is the space in which both the old and new aspects of his life are forced to come together. The corruption and inequalities of capitalism are condensed in the hotel. Thus it is the hotel for both Orwell and James, as well as postmodern film, that acts as a microcosm for the complexities and inequalities of capitalism. Moreover, the hotel stands as a paradoxical allegory of the West's lack of hospitality.

The "friendly face of capitalism" in the hotel is often, in its fictional manifestations, a mask disguising horror beneath. One of the effects of capitalism, Deleuze and Guattari argue, is schizophrenia. As Eugene Holland says, this is because "the quantitative calculations of the marketplace replace meaning and belief systems as the foundation of society" (2). Every extension of capital, whether it is geographical or psychological, "entails the simultaneous elimination of extant meanings and beliefs, and hence the extension of schizophrenia" (2). The hotel is a prime extension of capital, and does invoke at least a partially schizophrenic response

in hotel narratives. Characters in many of the hotel narratives in this thesis are unable to pin down meaning and sense in their home away from home. Capitalism, embodied in all of its complexities in the hotel space, both produces and requires schizophrenic energy, Deleuze and Guattari claim. Deleuze and Guattari's alignment of schizophrenia with capitalism and vice-versa is significant for this thesis, particularly in Chapters Four and Five, which deal with the hotel's induction of various levels of psychoses. The entwining of schizophrenia and capitalism is evident in a number of hotel texts in this thesis.

The Hotel: The Space Between

Part of the complexity of the hotel, and the schizophrenic effects it can have in narratives, is due to the way in which the hotel sits between various binaries. The hotel is at once public and private, modern and postmodern, real and unreal. The hotel as the space between the journey from home and return to home has already been discussed in the first part of this introduction. The examples below indicate the way in which the hotel disrupts notions of public and private space, "real" and virtual space, modernism and postmodernism.

Historically and structurally, the hotel provides a complicated intersection between public and private space. The hotel lobby is a space of display; both to guests within the hotel, and to the outside world of the street. Hotel rooms provide complete privacy. The tension between this dynamic of the hotel is raised in an incident in a hotel in Algeria in 1895. André Gide is about to leave his hotel, when he sees the names of two new guests: "suddenly my heart gave a leap; the two last names . . . were those of Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas" (qtd in Dollimore 3). Quickly, Gide "erases his own name from the slate and leaves for the station" (3).

Jonathan Dollimore uses this dramatic moment as a way of examining contrasts between Gide's and Wilde's understanding of subjectivity and sexuality (Gide is an essentialist and Wilde is an anti-essentialist). This incident is just as easily read as a spatial one — one that highlights the complexity of public and private space in the hotel.

Nearly seventy-five years later, John Lennon and Yoko Ono deliberately confused private hotel space in 1969 when they staged a “bed-in for peace” in the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Canada. John and Yoko stayed in bed for ten days, holding press conferences to highlight the need for world peace. In choosing to stage the demonstration in a hotel bed, they complicated the idea of privacy that governs hotel rooms.

The need for private space has increased in the last fifteen years, according to Nan Ellin in *Architecture of Fear*: Space in postmodernity is increasingly private, increasingly closed and secure. The rise of the utopian miniature city prevails in postmodernism. Ellin notes that shopping malls and their surrounding car parks turn back on their surroundings: “‘Public’ places in America now have the right to refuse service and are increasingly places of inclusion and exclusion” (34). Gated communities are also on the rise in America, Ellin points out. The rise of fortified homes simultaneously sees a rise in nostalgic interior design in late postmodernism. French designer André Putman changed the interiors in the Morgan Hotel in Manhattan: in 1984 the interiors of the hotel were high-tech, minimal and used black leather with grey and white walls. In 1996, however, the interiors changed to antique, worn armchairs in the lobby, cord and wool fabrics in the beige guestrooms and barstools made from trees in Central Park (Ellin 31). These changes in interiors signify the shift to homely, comfortable and nostalgic space in the mid 1990s.

The rise of nostalgia and gated communities in late postmodernity would suggest that the world of the miniature city in the Bonaventure Hotel and Shanghai Centre would be considered ideal, utopian spaces. Yet the fictional enactment of these spaces finds horror in hotels that are complete, closed worlds. This dialectic expresses the paradox inherent in many hotel narratives in this thesis, as well as the easy slide between the utopian and dystopian natures of gated, miniature worlds.

The hotel operates as a real and unreal space. The concepts of memory, reality and time become confused in hotel narratives. For example, the 1974 film *The Conversation* (a film [about surveillance] directed by Francis Ford Coppola) uses straightforward realism through most of the film until the scenes in the hotel. A hotel room is arrived at as a possible murder site. All of a sudden the speed of the film slows down. In the white bathroom a toilet is flushed and the floor becomes awash with blood, much like the slow-motion blood shots that appear in *The Shining*. The blood shots in *The Conversation* are hallucinatory, unreal moments in a film that otherwise follows a sense of verisimilitude. It is particularly poignant that a hotel is the only space in which this hallucination takes place. This depiction of the hotel as a space between real and unreal will be examined in Chapter Two, which looks at Haruki Murakami's novels and David Lynch's films.

Another boundary which is blurred in many hotel texts in this thesis is that between the modern and postmodern. *Last Year At Marienbad* is an example of a hotel narrative that sits between concepts and styles of modernism and postmodernism, (and also features characters that are at once virtual and actual). Resnais' film is chronologically a late modernist text, but one which will be drawn on in various chapters because it uses postmodern ideas. The same complexity of modernism and postmodern is present in David Lynch's work: Lynch takes images

and themes from modern film noir and places them in a postmodern context. Not only is this an indicator of the interactive nature of modern and postmodern narratives; it is also evidence that the hotel provides a centre for this kind of complication of and link between postmodern and modern experience. Jameson's comments on the modern subject in postmodern space in his argument on cognitive mapping in the *Bonaventure* encapsulate this. The hotel then is a site that straddles reality and fiction, public and private space, as well as modernism and postmodernism.

Hotel Criticism in Academic Thought

Given the centrality of the hotel to recent theoretical thought, it is not surprising that a number of articles have examined hotel space in literature and film. As a microcosm of capitalism and Western culture, the hotel has been a vehicle for a number of writers, cultural theorists and designers to explore ideas about space, gender and the nature of reality in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I have already outlined various theoretical arguments related to the hotel, but a brief survey of critical writing on hotels in literature, culture and architecture is also necessary context for the following chapters.

Carolyn Brucken's analysis of nineteenth-century women in the American Luxury Hotel uses the hotel space to demonstrate "how gender was essential to the production of middle-class public space in antebellum America" (203). Brucken looks at the way in which hotels attempted to "include women within urban public space and . . . maintain a prescriptive ideology of separate spheres" (205). Using evidence of women's magazines, diaries and literature, Brucken argues that the hotel offered a form in which middle-class women could experience public life.

Nevertheless, women were put on public display in the hotel, epitomised by the ladies' parlour. "In an analysis of this space," Brucken argues, "we can see how an architectural specialization based on gender and the material display of market capitalism came together" (215). The dominance of gender in spatial experience continues in late capitalism too, as I argue in Chapters Two and Three.

J. A. Ward in his analysis of Henry James's, Edith Wharton's and Theodore Dreisner's hotel literature pulls together texts from the three authors to argue that each writer "finds horror in a life centred in hotels" (151). Yet the hotel simultaneously functions in these nineteenth-century novels to provide an antidote to loneliness and to "remedy the profound discomfort with privacy" (151). A clear intersection between early modern and postmodern hotel narratives is evident in the concept of the hotel as a microcosm of America, as a space that is "a world in itself, a totally autonomous commercial and social order; a metaphor for America itself" (152). Ward quotes James in *The American Scene*: "The present is more and more the day of the hotel" (151). This indeed is something Jameson comes close to restating eighty years later about his experience in the Bonaventure hotel, an experience he refers to in *Postmodernism* as the loss of historicity in postmodernity. Jameson and James both tap into the hotel as the space that offers the clearest symbol or analogon of the times.

There is thus a historical continuity of twentieth-century critical thought of the hotel as an image of a parallel world, of an utopian/dystopian space that is both emblematic of and separate to the city. Ward notes James's observations of the hotel as a labyrinthine, mysterious space. To enter a grand hotel, for James's character, is indeed to enter a complete but strangely unfamiliar world, both traditional and modern, aristocratic and democratic, miscellaneously baroque and dazzlingly futuristic. In both its attention to all human needs and comforts and

its liberation from contemporary history, the hotel provides a more inclusive social atmosphere than the actual world outside its doors. (Ward 154)

The postmodern hotel's complicated relation to the world outside is taken up in Jameson's writing on the Bonaventure too:

The Bonaventure aspires to being a total space, a complete world, a kind of miniature city . . . In this sense then, ideally the minicity of Portman's Bonaventure ought not to have entrances at all . . . for it does not wish to be a part of the city but rather its equivalent and replacement or substitute. (40 *Postmodernism*)

For both James and Jameson, this "total space" is highly problematic, and both writers explore the labyrinthine, unmappable, unfamiliar space with a sense of confusion. Discontinuity and the problematics of outside/inside the hotel are features of hotels in early modern literature as well as in postmodernity.

Modernist texts from the 1930s are examined by Charlotte Bates in "Hotel Histories: Modern Tourists, Modern Nomads and the Culture of Hotel-Consciousness." Here, Bates analyses the concept of "hotel-consciousness" in modernist literature by Jean Rhys and Elizabeth Bowen. "Hotel-consciousness" is a term Bates takes from Paul Fussell to mean that many writers of the 1930s had hotels in mind when writing. Bates's purpose in her article is to uncover how this "imaginative obsession manifest[s] itself" (64). Bates uses a historicist approach to literature, in which she argues that the rise of Railway Hotels in the thirties, along with many cheap hotels opening in that period, "played their part in the cultural construction of a 1930s hotel-consciousness" (66). The hotel, in both its poverty-stricken and excessive forms, dominates Bowen's writing, and is perpetually "factionalised" by a number of writers in the period (67). Particularly relevant to my

own writing on hotels in postmodernity is Bates's argument that "the hotel [is] a place where reality and metaphor slide seamlessly into one another" (69). This, Bates claims, is hotel-consciousness: "inherent in this literal understanding of hotel-consciousness is a more figurative understanding of the hotel as a place where metaphor and reality are as one" (70). The nomadic figure invoked by the hotel in the 1930s is also a significant aspect of hotel-consciousness for Bates. Whether Bowen's protagonist Portia resides in a home or hotel in *The Death of the Heart*, her life is marked by homelessness. The same sense of homelessness in the hotel is experienced in Rhys's *Good Morning Midnight*, leading Bates to argue that the "fascination with the hotel and hotel-consciousness proposes modern nomadism as a way of life and state of being at the decentralised heart of a 1930s *zeitgeist*" (73). As my own investigation of postmodern literature (particularly in Chapter Six) attests, the figure of the nomad and the hotel continues to remain at the heart of narrative and thought in the late twentieth century.

The intersection between the reality and the fiction of the hotel is highlighted in Siegfried Kracauer's article "The Hotel Lobby," written in the 1930s. This article aims to compare the church with the hotel lobby in detective fiction, but the article often refers to real rather than fictional space. It seems that Kracauer is writing from his own imaginings of the hotel, arguing the "typical character of the hotel lobby [in detective novels] indicate that it is conceived as the inverted image of the house of God. It is a negative church and can be transformed into one (290). The article refers to the spatial and temporal limitations of both spaces, that the church and hotel are there to hold guests. The difference for Kracauer is that the church has a collectedness, full as it is of those encountering God, whereas the "togetherness in the

hotel lobby has no meaning.” In the hotel, guests are “meeting no-one. It has no other function than to encompass them” (290).

Kracauer’s piece is symptomatic of two things that typify much thought on the hotel. Firstly the hotel is some negative “other,” loathsome, ahistorical twentieth-century space that stands in opposition to all that is good in communal space. Such a depiction resonates with Augé’s writing on non-places, and Baudrillard’s comments on the Bonaventure building. Secondly, what makes Kracauer’s piece so interesting is the “natural” crossover Kracauer seems to make between the fictional hotel and how it is perceived in “lived” experience. Kracauer’s article is one of many cases where the simulated and the real are blurred in a postmodern manner, even though he was writing in the 1930s. The deft and easy crossing over from literature to life, from one parallel world to the next, from one identity to another is indeed enabled by the hotel space itself. This idea has already been raised through the mobilized and virtual gaze, and is taken up further in Chapter Two.

James Clifford, in *Routes*, agrees with other postmodern theorists when he notes the increasing displacement of home within local/global situations. He argues that as a result of increased movement, the binary oppositions between “home and abroad, staying and moving... need to be questioned. They have been naturalised along the lines of gender, class, race/culture” (84). Clifford opens *Routes* by writing of hotels (“Or begin with hotels” [17]), of how they have been discussed and used and imagined by Fredric Jameson, June Jordan, Paris Surrealists and Joseph Cornell in his constellation of hotel objects. But then Clifford dismisses the hotel by arguing that the problem with its image is its “nostalgic inclination,” and that it remains colonial when dealing with race, class and sociocultural location. My work counters Clifford’s argument that the hotel belongs to the realm of the modern rather than

postmodern, as I argue throughout this thesis that the hotel is emblematic of the absence of homeliness in postmodernity.

Rem Koolhaas in *Delirious New York* focuses on the hotel as a site where reality and the imaginary have been entwined since early capitalism. The Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York in the early modern period, Koolhaas argues, exemplified the modernist strategy of “production of vicarious history, ‘age’ and respectability” (110). The philosophy behind the development of the Waldorf-Astoria was to keep it as a ‘house,’ without the typical features of a hotel displayed, and this semi-public space was considered in the 1920s to be the unofficial palace of New York. It declined, Koolhaas notes, “due to self-destruction” (111). The real problem with the original Waldorf-Astoria was that it was not a skyscraper, and therefore lost popularity. Koolhaas’ outline of the modernist concept of the residential hotel in New York demonstrates the way in which the hotel redefined habitation: a hotel resident was at once a guest and tenant, and could enjoy the pampering provided by the hotel, or treat his or her space as his or her own apartment. In the luxury residential hotels, an “inhabitant is his own house guest” (150). Communal, theatrical and labour-free existence (particularly for wealthy women, called by the tycoon B. C. Forbes, “hyperemancipated creatures” [150]) was the promise of the residential hotels. Koolhaas also notes the merging of hotels in life and movies in the 1930s. The hotel, he claims, “becomes Hollywood’s favourite subject,” and a plot in itself. The cross-over between cinema and reality is omnipresent in this period, where “guests are stars, staff are extras,” and where buying a room means “buying into an ever-expanding script” (150). This blurring of the fictional and real in the hotel space in the 1930s has parallels with Kracauer’s commentary on the hotel space, but is developed throughout the twentieth century. The hotel as a “virtual reality” continues in late

postmodern narratives. As Chapter Two argues, the hotel provides a narrative structure, housing multiple stories that would otherwise lack form and logic. The fictional reality of the hotel means that it is a space, both in fiction and in life, that hovers between the virtual and the real.

This brief review exemplifies the way in which literary and cultural criticism has already focused on the hotel in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writing. And nearly all these examples locate the hotel as the site in which reality and fiction are merged. Some of the arguments made about the modernist hotel experience resonate in postmodernity — the dominance of gender in spatial experience, blurring of the real and fictional, and the sense of homelessness made acute by hotels. The hotel then serves as a microcosm for these Western anxieties across the twentieth century.

Whilst the criticism outlined here is useful for this thesis, my own work on hotels is markedly different from purely literary or cultural analysis. Instead, I argue that the ideas present in hotel narratives are borne out of the space itself, and that these anxieties are symptomatic of dominant postmodern concerns. This thesis uses contemporary hotel narratives, in the forms of fiction and film, as evidence of postmodern experience. My work, like Anne Friedberg's "insists on reconnecting text with *context*" (6) [original italics]. As Jameson points out in *The Political Unconscious*, there is an "expressive causality" (28) through individual stories that connect directly to history.

When a text chooses to locate its narrative in a hotel, that text is tapping into a wider cultural consciousness about hotels that involves the paradoxes of comfort and estrangement, multiple, parallel worlds, struggles with comprehending self and space, a search for intimacy, and a room of one's own. By focussing closely on these texts I will show the vital role the hotel plays in postmodernity, and the way in which hotel-based texts contribute to an understanding of the Western subject and space in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

If multiple or parallel worlds, a persistence of gendered experience in negotiating space, and a problematic relationship with home and elsewhere are all key features of postmodernism, then we find their 'natural' playing out in the hotel, as it is a space that structurally and psychically lends itself to these complexities. This thesis considers the concepts of postmodernity through hotels, and sees continuity of thought — in architecture, narratives and philosophy — from modernism to late capitalism. Ideas from modernism remain in postmodernity, hence I draw on some modernist texts (particularly Resnais' film *Last Year at Marienbad*) that are relevant and/or speak to postmodern hotel texts.

Hotel stories are present throughout contemporary culture, and whilst I touch on many hotel narratives in the twentieth century, this thesis does not claim to exhaustively survey hotels in literature and film. The hotel texts analysed in each chapter are included because of their alliance with dominant postmodern tropes, ranging from anxieties about homeliness, to gender-based spatial experience, to searches for intimacy in supermodernity. There is a critical mass of these texts in this thesis, enough to support my argument that the hotel is central to postmodernity, but not every postmodern hotel-based text directly supports the claims made here. D. M. Thomas's *The White Hotel* (1981), for example, is not included in this thesis as it is a

novel centred on psychoanalysis, the Holocaust and sex rather than the postmodern tropes considered in my work. *The Hotel New Hampshire*, by John Irving, is a comic, Freudian family saga located in a hotel, but again is not particularly relevant to the concepts in this thesis. Obviously, due to word and time constraints, I cannot explore every text located in a hotel. Many characters in films (such as *The Graduate* and *One Night Stand*) use hotels to conduct illicit affairs, but to focus on the “sexuality” of the hotel would be to produce another thesis. My text selection has covered a wide range of important postmodern and (occasionally relevant modernist) hotel narratives. Not only are these texts important for cinematic and literary reasons, they collectively present the hotel as an analogon of the complexities of postmodernity. These hotel narratives encapsulate the characteristics both of postmodernity, and of the hotel’s spatial arrangement.

Each chapter in this thesis takes a dominant feature of postmodernity and looks at hotel texts that deal with the same concept. The chapters build towards a more general idea that the hotel is an analogon of postmodernity. With each feature of postmodern spatial experience I use Deleuzian concepts to articulate the complexities of space in the texts examined. Deleuze’s concepts of space, literature, film are central to my arguments in each chapter.

The first chapter, “The Theoretical Hotel,” establishes the theoretical framework for the thesis. I argue in this chapter that spatial theory emphasises the home to such a large degree that articulating other spatial experience is complicated. The concepts of the uncanny and cognitive mapping are analysed in detail in the first half of this chapter. I then outline the relevant Deleuzian terms used in subsequent chapters, particularly emphasising Deleuzian philosophy of the fold and the monad. The concepts of home and hotel are then revised through these constructs.

Chapter Two looks at narratives that use the hotel to house multiple stories and parallel worlds. The same kind of struggles to map self and space that Jameson experienced in the Bonaventure are present in postmodern fiction. Focusing particularly on the works of David Lynch and Haruki Murakami (using their texts filmed and written in the 1990s), I argue in this chapter that the hotel comes to serve as an analogon for the impossibility of comprehending totality in postmodernity.

In Chapter Three, “The Hotel Room of One’s Own,” I argue that gender still dominates spatial experience because women’s experience of home continues to be different from men’s. This chapter draws on feminist theories of postmodernity that call for an inclusion of women’s experience in postmodern thought. When women go to hotels in literature, they celebrate the isolation a hotel room offers. Women are historically (although not always metaphysically) liberated in the hotel even if it is for a brief period of time. This is evident in *Those Women Who Go to Hotels* (1997), by Lucy Frost and Marion Halligan, Margaret Atwood’s *A Handmaid’s Tale* (1985), Michael Cunningham’s *The Hours* (1999) and Anita Brookner’s *Hotel du Lac* (1984). The hotel enables time for contemplation that cannot occur at home. It is the removal of identity, gender and community that is craved by women in the hotel. Women in these texts go to hotels in order to become something beyond a single identity, or beyond any identity at all. The Deleuzian concept of becoming is considered as a way of articulating this desire that is placed onto the hotel.

With so much travelling in postmodernity, home no longer takes the same kind of single spatial form, but is developed through habits, repetition and sameness. Homeliness through repetition leads to a confusion over what constitutes home, and where home is located. This confusion is symptomatic in the texts examined in Chapter Four of this thesis. Titled “The Unheimlich Hotel,” this chapter focuses on

Kazuo Ishiguro's novel, *The Unconsoled* (1995), a postmodern Kafkaesque narrative located in a hotel. The central argument in this chapter is that the postmodern uncanny is not only experienced in the hotel, but the dynamics of the uncanny are built into the psychic and social structure of the hotel. This argument is supported by an examination of two other texts: the film *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961) and Steven Millhauser's 1996 novel *Martin Dressler*.

Chapter Five, "The Unconscious Hotel," looks at narratives that use the hotel as an image of the brain in postmodernity. The hotel in the films *Barton Fink* (1991) and *The Shining* (1980) is privileged in that it is an image of the dynamics of the unconscious brain. There are two problems of postmodernity that the hotel space in these films tries to solve: the problem of story-telling in postmodernity (post-genre), and figuring the unconscious beyond psychoanalysis. Because language is unable to do this, texts use certain characteristics of the hotel to represent the postmodern. Thus the hotel operates as an analogon of postmodernity. In the two films central to this chapter, this is depicted through the camera, in particular through "chorus shots," in which the camera tracks through the long carpeted passageways, with closed, numbered doors on either side.

In Chapter Six, "The Supermodern Hotel," I argue that a search for intimacy and authenticity occurs in supermodern spaces, in what Augé terms non-places. The hotel creates a paradigm for allegories of loneliness and ennui in postmodernity. Whilst Augé's term "non-place" is a useful one, I refute his division between place and non-place, and show how the hotel disrupts this binary. I also assert that there is a literary continuity between modern, postmodern, and "supermodern" narratives in the quest for intimacy and authenticity, and I use the texts *Platform*, a novel by

Michel Houellebecq (2001), and *Lost in Translation* (2003), a film directed by Sofia Coppola, to support this argument.

*

The great paradox of the hotel is that it is able to stand for the unrepresentable in late capitalism. The hotel's inner complexity is an analogon of the complexity of the postmodern world, where homeliness is everywhere and nowhere. The hotel stands for ideas that are not articulated through language but through space, sitting as a narrative and architectural frame over dominant anxieties in postmodernity. Postmodern encounters with the uncanny, the complication of the virtual and the real in the parallel world of the hotel, and the dominance of gender in spatial experience are all symptoms of postmodern anxieties. Finding a way to articulate the contemporary unconscious without Freudian theory is also placed onto the hotel, along with attempts to find intimacy and authenticity in supermodernity. The hotel's dominance in theory, literature and film indicates that homeliness, and its absence, is the central dialectic of our age.

CHAPTER 1: THE THEORETICAL HOTEL

Absence of home and homely space has caused problems with identity in both modernity and postmodernity. This difficulty has been outlined in the Introduction through the Bonaventure hotel: an absence of homely, knowable space induces crises for Jameson and others, leading to a problem with cognitive mapping. The dynamics of body and space have long been entwined in theoretical writings from Walter Benjamin to Sartre to late postmodernist writing. Phenomenology, for example, bases its ideas around self-identity being bound up in space, and locates the origin of all space as the home. The foundations of spatial theory in home space have already been considered in the Introduction, and there I made the claim that the effect of this is a difficulty in finding a theory to speak of anomalous spaces such as the hotel.

Deleuze offers just such a way of speaking of other kinds of spaces, which together can be described as “metastable” space (*Essays Critical and Clinical* xxvii). Deleuze and Guattari’s anti-Oedipal stance — their movement away from Freud as the foundation of Western thinking — enables the intellectual departure from home that I undertake in this thesis. “We need de-oedipalising,” they say, “in order to see what the real problems are” (Buchanan 17). The thesis is not *about* Deleuzian theory, but Deleuzian concepts are used throughout the thesis to illuminate the primary texts, and postmodernity in general. Deleuze describes features of postmodernity when he writes of rhizomic structures, of the contemporary monad, of the nomad, of a body without organs, even though he was not fond of the term “postmodernism.”

The first section of this chapter examines the theories relevant to hotels throughout the thesis. In particular, the concept of the uncanny is considered in detail from its psychoanalytic origins to its current form in postmodern narrative and theory.

The uncanny also draws on ideas about parallel worlds and cognitive mapping. The second part of this chapter outlines some of the broad Deleuzian concepts outlined above that facilitate a rethinking of these significant contemporary ideas through the presence of the hotel.

Unhomely space: The Uncanny, Parallel Worlds and Cognitive Mapping

Whilst I will (following Deleuze) de-Oedipalize the uncanny, I nevertheless need to look at its various forms in theory to gain a sense of how it operates culturally, and how, in postmodernity, the uncanny continues to pervade city space. Freud's uncanny moment occurs when boarding a train (Gelder and Jacobs 180). He notices a scruffy old man getting on the train at the same time he does. Freud is then shocked by the realisation that this old man is actually himself in the glass window's reflection. The pattern of the uncanny locates strangeness, horror and fright inside the familiar. The familiar or secure limits refer to geographical spaces and the self, as Anthony Vidler points out, so the uncanny raises problems of identity and the "relation between psyche, dwelling, body, house, individual and the metropolitan" (4). For Freud, absolute terror is found in the homely or, in his well-known story of being lost in Italy, finding that city spaces are familiar where they should not be.

As Ken Gelder and Jane Jacobs point out, Freud's "story" of the uncanny is about one's psyche, but also about one's place in a realigning, post-war Europe (182). It is the modern era that this form of the uncanny belongs to, as I shall discuss further when outlining the form of the postmodern uncanny in Chapter Four. James Donald argues alongside Georg Simmel that the "dramatic changes to the great nineteenth-century European cities had an impact on what he [Simmel] called mental life" (64-65). New crowds, transport, cityscapes, and, above all, the phantasmagorical

experience of the city provide a dual experience of strangeness and familiarity for modernists such as Baudelaire and Simmel. Finding home in the enigmatic city is an uncanny experience, and Donald claims that “[the] uncanny city defines the architecture of our apparently most secret selves: an already social space, if often a decidedly *uncivil* form of association” (71; original emphasis). Thus city and subjectivity are entwined in the modern form of the uncanny.

The pattern and form that the uncanny takes — that pattern of the unfamiliar in domestic space, or the familiar in unfamiliar spaces — is central to the analysis of hotel space in this thesis. Vidler defines the uncanny as a metaphor for a fundamentally unliveable modern condition. At the end of this chapter I will connect the concept of the uncanny to Deleuze’s concept of the fold and the monad, arguing that it is this pattern of the postmodern uncanny that is emblematised by the hotel.

Writing on the uncanny in *Strangers to Ourselves*, Kristeva points to the origin of the words heimlich and unheimlich, noting that these terms are tied together, serving as etymological proof of the psychological hypothesis that everything is unheimlich that ought to remain secret and hidden (182). This estrangement occurs to everyone, giving rise to Kristeva’s title *Strangers to Ourselves*. Kristeva focuses on the drives behind the uncanny, arguing that the repetition that accompanies the uncanny feeling overrules the pleasure principle. An investigation into the uncanny is an investigation into the anguish generally, and the dynamics of the unconscious.

Artifice neutralises the uncanny, according to Kristeva, and makes the return of the repressed pleasurable, plausible and acceptable. The manners, the sameness and repetition found within the hotel offers the kind of artifice that neutralises the uncanny. The new toilet roll, wrapped soap, clean sheets and empty bins disguise the fact that the same hotel room has been used by so many others, for so many things.

Even the fact that the hotel customers are not called customers but guests means that the hotel needs to persist in that kind of fiction to neutralise the uncanny that pervades it. The uncanny nature of the hotel comes from the way in which it attempts to keep hidden the “reality” of guests’ stay: that hundreds of people have used their bed, toilet, towels many times over, that they are there and are treated well merely because they can pay. Whilst the psychic and social structure of the hotel — the home away from home — in one sense requires the presence of the uncanny, the hotel has to figure out how to balance this. Generally this uncanny is neutralized via the perception of virginity (the spotless room) and good manners (the polite concierge). But films use this very neutralization in the hotel as a narrative device: *The Conversation* for example, depicts the once-clean hotel bathroom suddenly awash with blood when the inspector presses the button to flush the toilet. For Žižek this is like “pushing the wrong button that dissolves the entire universe in science fiction novels” (208). An almost identical image is present in the 2002 film *Dirty, Pretty Things*: an illegal African refugee, working in London as a concierge in a five-star hotel, cleans a blocked toilet in Room 510. He finds a human heart blocking the toilet, and immediately his world, and the narrative, shifts into a completely different realm. These films are symptomatic of the way in which hotels’ cleanliness is perceived to be a veneer over some kind of horrific reality.

Not only do hotels embrace the complex relation between clean and unclean, between artifice and reality, but they also attempt cushion the blow of leaving home. Kristeva writes of the structure of modernity as one built around the tension between union and separation, much like the structure of the uncanny. This refers to both the union and separation of the subject as well as the subject in space. The union of arrival and separation of departure are then the practices that partly define home. So

again it is not so much the physical spaces that make the homely or the unhomely in modernity, but the practice of arrival and departure. Home is always the destination, even when one is leaving home.

J. Hillis Miller in "The Critic as Host" (1977) also deconstructs the etymology of the word uncanny, and here we also find direct hotel associations with the term. One aspect of Miller's article deals with the parasitical relationship between canny and uncanny, heimlich and unheimlich, guest and host. Miller looks at the structural relationship between heimlich and unheimlich, arguing that they exist alongside one another, in parallel. He sees the word 'para' (from parasite, parachute, paradigm, etc) as an

"Uncanny" double antithetical prefix signifying at once proximity and distance, similarity and difference, interiority and exteriority . . . A thing in "para" is, moreover, not only simultaneously on both sides of the boundary line between outside and inside. It is also the boundary itself. (280)

Miller points out that there is no parasite without host: "The host and the somewhat sinister or subversive parasite are fellow guests beside the food, sharing it" (280).

Through a series of linguistic loops, Miller makes the connection between guest and host, arguing that both words come from the original Middle English and Old Norse root:

The relation of household master offering hospitality to a guest and the guest receiving it, of host and parasite in the original sense of "fellow guest," is enclosed within the word "host" itself. A host in the sense of a guest, moreover, is both a friendly visitor in the house and at the same time an alien presence who turns the home into a hotel, a neutral territory . . . The uncanny

antithetical relation exists not only between pairs of words in this system, host and parasite, host and guest, but within each word in itself. (280)

There are several points of Miller's argument that are crucial to my own consideration of the uncanny in hotel texts. Firstly, he claims the presence of a guest in a home turns any home into a hotel, so that it becomes a neutral space. Miller here ignores the cash nexus in the hotel. This comparison between home and hotel is like comparing a one-night stand with employing a prostitute's services. Paying money for a room is what turns a home into a hotel, and with money come certain demands and expectations. Nevertheless, despite ignoring the complication money makes in the guest/host relationship, Miller usefully raises the transformation of homely space through the presence of a guest. Secondly, finding the same root for the terms guest and host, Miller argues for the entwined dependence of guest and host: the parasite is always present in the host, and the enemy is already within the house.

Miller claims that the relation between any two contiguous elements in this guest and host link is that "strange opposition which is that of intimate kinship and enmity. It is not therefore the ordinary logic of polar opposition, nor is it open to dialectical synthesis" (281). Miller offers another example of this through the word "gift," a word in German that means poison, and in social custom binds people to endless reciprocal obligation. In this way, guest and host are tied together in ceaseless obligations. Thus for Miller, the lexicon of the term uncanny automatically ties it to turning home into hotel, turning home into an unhomely place through the presence of a stranger. That the guest is also an "enemy" in Miller's concept indicates the way in which the homely aspect to home is at once clung to and very vulnerable. The structure of Miller's uncanny is crucial to many of the arguments in

my thesis, including the parallel worlds structured in the hotel, and the complication of homeliness in the hotel.

What is perpetuated in recent theoretical analysis of the uncanny, from Kristeva to Hillis Miller, is the emphasis on the doubleness of worlds existing side by side, rather than the depth/surface structure of the uncanny that was present in early versions of the concept. The presence of doubleness already exists in the house, a parasite is always already present in the host, a gift is something joyful, but also binds someone to an endless series of obligations. So the terms un/heimlich or un/canny exist in parallel rather than opposition, and look somewhat like the rooms along a hotel corridor. The spatial and linguistic arrangement of the words un/canny means they sit side by side, in a structure more akin to a Deleuzian rhizome than a Freudian structure characterised by a depth/surface binary. The element of surprise, shock and horror usually discussed in Freudian theories of the uncanny is not present in Miller's linguistic argument. Nevertheless there is a kind of horror in the parasite lying within the host, a sense that doubleness, otherness, exists both within and out of the self, that clear distinctions are impossible. This indistinction between self and other is another element of the uncanny, and it is an absence of distinction between home and elsewhere in postmodernity that makes the uncanny a vital theoretical element for this analysis of hotel space. This is certainly something evidenced in a number of the narratives in this thesis.

Zizek relies on the significance of space in the concept of the uncanny in the final chapters of *Enjoy Your Symptom!* His examination of Hitchcock's *Psycho* concentrates partly on passages that mark movements from one ontological order to another. He argues that the "shocking elevation of the ridiculously lowest (the beyond to where excrement disappears) into the metaphysical sublime is perhaps one

of the mysteries of Hitchcock's art" (209). There are various passageways used as metaphors for the "horrifically sublime 'beyond' of the primordial, preontological chaos into which things disappear" (209). What is significant to my thesis here is the concept of passages in Žižek's theory. Žižek argues that it is the absence of a passageway between Norman Bates' motel and his mother's house that causes Norman's psychosis. Or rather, Norman's tensions would be eased if he didn't have to run between the two places:

If the Bates Motel were to be built by Gehry, combining house and motel, into a new, hybrid entity, there would have been no need for Norman to kill his victims, since he would have been relieved of the unbearable tension that compels him to run between the two places – he would have a place of mediation between the two extremes. (213)

Thus a passage or porthole between the two extreme spaces would enable a smooth transition for Norman Bates. The extreme juxtaposition between the old and new, vertical and horizontal space produce enormous tension for Norman. Žižek calls for passageways to ease tensions between two spaces, and it can be argued that the hotel is a space that ideally provides this kind of passageway — or more appropriately a corridor — between home and elsewhere. The hotel operates as a parallel world, and also as a porthole to other parallel worlds (other cities, other countries). If Norman Bates resided in a hotel, rather than a motel and a home on the hill, then perhaps he would have been relieved of his "unbearable tension" (213).

Žižek claims that the image of parallel worlds is an archetypal postmodern one. The parallel worlds that are seen in the opening shots of Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, where multiple lives are played out in one apartment, find their "natural" correlative in cyberspace hypertext, according to Žižek: "So it is only with the advent

of cyberspace hypertext that we can effectively grasp what Altman and Hitchcock were effectively aiming at” (205). However, parallel worlds do not simply find their “natural” home in science fiction, but instead in the corridors and rooms of the hotel. Rather than use the future or another planet, writers such as Murakami and directors such as Lynch use the space of the hotel — a space at once imaginary and concrete in the narratives — to contain the complexity of subjectivity and space in postmodernity. The worlds accessed via the hotel are parallel worlds, or, more accurately, quasi-parallel worlds. The parallel lines are wavy ones in these dream realities, epitomised by the strange world of floor twelve-and-a-half in the Dolphin Hotel in several of Murakami’s interconnecting novels. This is a world that is not quite real, not quite part of the hotel, yet is entered by the central character. Similarly, the Lost Highway Hotel in Lynch’s *Lost Highway* is entered via the staircase of Dick Laurant’s home, and sits between a real and hallucinatory space. These examples indicate the effective way in which hotels contain postmodern parallel worlds, and counter Zizek’s claim that science fiction is the “natural” home for parallel worlds in postmodernity.

The parallel world of the hotel is not strictly parallel, not always clearly divided into outside and inside, not always separated into rooms, not always successfully negotiated and comprehended. The binary logic that the concept of straight parallel worlds relies on is not found in the hotel. The hotel is a parallel world, but the confusing entry and exit points in postmodern hotels (in literature, film and architecture) mean that outside and inside become complicated. This complication is best understood through the Leibnizian/Deleuzian concept of the fold, which I will consider at the end of this chapter.

The complication of inside/outside space has already been raised in the introduction, where, through Jameson and the Bonaventure, I considered the trope of

cognitive mapping in the hotel and in postmodern space generally. This theory of cognitive mapping is intimately connected to the uncanny. A consideration of the way in which these tropes operate in postmodernity also requires a rethinking of the mirror stage. Several critics have connected the mirror stage to mapping, and to cognitive mapping. Both the mirror stage and cognitive mapping are entwined in de Certeau's writing, and also in Lacan's work. The accomplishment of the mirror stage for Lacan comes from the presence of the uncanny:

This moment in which the mirror stage comes to an end inaugurates, through identification with the image of the counterpart and the drama of primordial jealousy... the dialectic that will henceforth link the *I* to socially elaborated situations. (qtd. in Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, 223)

Thus an experience of the uncanny, the recognition of that moment of surprise and realisation, is also a vital element of the mirror stage. De Certeau makes the connection between cognitive mapping and the mirror stage. He tells us that each experience of mapping is a repetition of the mirror stage, arguing that "to practice place is thus to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood; it is, in a place, to be other and to move towards the other" (110). So the successful negotiation of space and the separation of self from other involves the ability to recognise that other is self, as in the case of Freud on the train. Moving through the uncanny moment is vital in the successful negotiation of space and this is something done time and time again, when new space is mapped and understood.

Not moving through the uncanny means, for Freud, the return to "that particular organization of space where everything is reduced to inside and outside, and where the inside is also on the outside" (Sami-Ali qtd. in Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* 222). This confusion of outside and inside is also what

complicates spatial experience for Jameson in his inability to cognitive map the Bonaventure Hotel, thus confirming a connection between the uncanny, the mirror stage and cognitive mapping. These concepts meet in the hotel.

Deleuzian Theory and the Hotel

Deleuzian concepts put in place a method for thinking without the dominance of psychoanalysis. Broadly, Deleuze and Guattari describe their theories as a “root system” that counters traditional “tree” shaped Western thinking: rather than the Freudian depth/surface model of subjectivity, Deleuzian theory uses the image of the rhizome. Deleuze and Guattari’s ideas in their many books written separately and together form a way not only of considering postmodern experience (despite Deleuze’s loathing of the term), but also enable an articulation of space in literature. Hotel space is particularly akin to many of Deleuze’s ideas about movement, space and subjectivity. Numerous narratives in this thesis see the hotel functioning as a rhizomatic rather than aborescent system.

Deleuze’s concept of the rhizome is considered to be one of the cornerstones of his work. The term ‘cornerstone’ is not however, particularly appropriate, as the concept or image of the rhizome sees an avoidance of hierarchical structures that have a base, centre and top. The tree is such a structure, conforming to the Freudian structure of id, ego, superego, or the binary dynamic of the unconscious and conscious. The root system that lies in the soil, however, is rhizomic. A rhizome is a swarm of ants, burrows, couchgrass. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze outlines the the rhizome as something that continually makes connections: “any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be . . . [It] ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and

circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles” (7). A rhizome follows the principles of multiplicity, asignifying rupture, and movements of de and reterritorialisation (terms that will be explained in a moment). The hotel in culture can be seen as a rhizome as it is part of a chain of hotels where origins and ownership are unknown and indeed unimportant. Hotels connect themselves to countries throughout the world, to loyalty programs and reward schemes that link credit cards to airline brands, to supermarkets, to hotel chains. Thus, whilst the description and model of the rhizome is organic, it also is characteristic of late capitalism.

The structure of both space and subjectivity is often rhizomic in the hotel narratives in this thesis, and it is this kind of space that enables the possibility of becoming-other to occur. Like the rhizome, Deleuze’s concept of becoming-other — or simply “becoming” — is not about mimicry, but about a direct connection, “where the self that contemplates is nothing other than the singularities it perceives” (Colebrook 155). Becoming involves going beyond a singular self and perceiving the world from the point of view of an animal, a man or a woman. It can involve only the slightest change. It can, in the case of the hotel, entail just moving rooms or entering a guest room and reading a book. This is certainly evidenced when women go to hotels in the literature and film used in this thesis. The simple step of moving from home to another space enables becoming. As Elizabeth Grosz points out in *Space, Time and Perversion*, to “become-animal” does not involve imitation, but “involves entering into a relation with a third term, and, with it, to form a machine that enters into relations with a machine composed of ‘animal’ components” (184). Grosz also points out that becoming is inherently unstable and changing (184). Hotels, though, provide the moments to stop: going to a hotel down the street from one’s home, as Laura Brown does in *The Hours*, opening a novel by Virginia Woolf

and perceiving the world from the novel's (multiple) point of view, is an act of becoming.

The related concept of "becoming-woman" has been controversial for many feminist theorists, who see this as something that deletes the possibility of some feminists using Deleuze, or something that has been stepped over in order to use other more acceptable Deleuzian concepts. Recently, however, as Verena Andermatt Conley points out, "feminists have taken a positive turn in the direction of Gilles Deleuze's philosophy" (18), and this includes Deleuze's concept of becoming-woman. Becoming-woman for Deleuze himself is becoming something other than man, becoming an unfixed subject. Literature and film are tied to this notion of becoming; indeed, fictional experiences perpetually deterritorialize the singular life by creating other connections. Buchanan argues that the concept of becoming-woman works because it provokes. It is tied to coming from a man. Braidotti agrees that it provokes, arguing that there is no possibility of "becoming man" in Deleuze's system: "The escape lines or lines of deterritorialization rather point to the becoming woman as a path of liberation" (116). Deleuze does not refer to women here as empirical females, but instead, as Braidotti points out, "as a position and mode of relation to the activity of thinking: woman is the nomadic mode ... [The] nomadic nature of women's thinking is only the key to their becoming-minority" (116). In Chapter 3 of this thesis, which looks specifically at women in hotels, we see women celebrating the absence of singular identity and the absence of the (male) gaze in the hotel room. These women become other, but do not become woman. Rather, we see the presence of another Deleuzian concept, the Body without Organs. This is a body without an image, without divisions, separations and identity. This is a concept more readily

accepted by feminists writing on Deleuze, and is perhaps more appropriate when considering the desire and becoming of an “actual” woman.

The hotel, in its literary forms, and in its architectural structure, offers possibilities for becoming. This is evident in the numerous textual examples provided throughout this thesis. The hotel enables the notion of the subject to be undone, to become something else. Whilst the hotel’s structure enables one to become other, to invade another’s territory, it is a paradoxical structure that points to our connectedness *and* our anonymity and urge for privacy. The construction of the hotel means that lives are placed together side by side, unknown and anonymous.

It is in this sense that the hotel room adheres to another Deleuzian notion, that of the monad. There are many kinds and classifications of monads, but the one focused on by Leibniz and Deleuze (and of course the one that is utterly appropriate for this thesis) is a windowless, lightless room. Leibniz’s description of the Baroque Chapel with imperceptible openings is his dominant image of the monad. The two conditions of Leibniz’s monad are closure and selection (*The Fold*, 137). It must “include an entire world that does not exist outside of them [other monads].” On the other hand,

this world takes for granted a first selection, of convergence, since it is distinguished from other possible but divergent worlds, excluded by the monads in question . . . each monad in question will fashion itself a clear zone of expression in the world that it includes. (137)

The variables for monads have now changed according to Deleuze. Whilst Deleuze does not mention the word “postmodernism,” it is clear that this is the era he refers to in the last pages of his work on Leibniz. In the last paragraph of *The Fold*, Deleuze claims that “Music has stayed at home; what has changed now is the order of the

home and its nature” (137). Deleuze touches on shifts in public and private, inside and outside, on the movement from Leibniz’s monology to nomology, and that is where he ends *The Fold*. Deleuze sees the new model of the monad as that invoked by Tony Smith, “the sealed car speeding down the dark highway” (137). The old and new monads are similar in the sense that they are self-contained capsules, but the contemporary monad has independent movement. The monad “is now unable to contain the entire world as if in a closed circle that can be modified by projection. It now opens on a trajectory or a spiral in expansion that move further and further away from a centre” (137). The monad as speeding car also invokes the camera shot from inside a car travelling down a highway in Lynch’s *Lost Highway*, a repeated image throughout Lynch’s film, where the character and the car’s point of view are intimately connected, black exterior and interior, lit from below; the protagonist (Fred) is a monad, just as the car is a monad. An essential component of the monad is its dark background: “everything is drawn out of it, and nothing goes out or comes in from the outside” (*The Fold* 27). This is precisely where the hotel comes in as an analogon of this shift in homeliness, as the new model of the monad.

The hotel room, rather than the speeding car, is a clear, more obvious image of the postmodern monad. The hotel room sits between the baroque chapel and the sealed car, as it emphasises both enclosed, private space and movement. It is a space that encompasses the old and new versions of the monad. The hotel room both belongs to the centre (that is, belongs to the public nature of the hotel) and is also utterly removed from the rest of the world. Deleuze writes in *The Fold* that “Leibniz makes of the monad a sort of point of view on the city” (24) and this is certainly the case for the hotel room. One is reminded by this quotation of the image from the film *Lost in Translation* of Charlotte staring out over the city of Tokyo from her high

glassy hotel room. The hotel room perpetually responds to and encompasses the world, being subject to shifting interior fashions, as well as hundreds of guests coming from the world and making the space their own for a night or two. The ultimate image of this hotel room is a dark, Lynchian hotel room with red curtains, low lamps, Spartan, film-noir furnishings and a particular number on the door. We see this kind of hotel room in *Twin Peaks* and *Lost Highway*: it is abstracted out in the “Other Place” in *Twin Peaks*, the dream space that exaggerates the red curtains and unknowable corridors of the Great Northern Hotel. This is the postmodern monad that acknowledges its origins in the Baroque chapel.

“We are all still Leibnizian, although accords no longer convey our world or our text” (137) says Deleuze in *The Fold*. What this thesis claims is that the hotel *does* convey our world and our text. The hotel corresponds to the old and new versions of the Leibnizian Baroque. As I have argued in the Introduction, the space of the Bonaventure is a prime example of Baroque space in postmodernity, and the complex effects this space has on subjectivity. Significantly for this examination of hotels, the Baroque has often been associated with capitalism, and linked to a crisis of property, “a crisis that appears at once with the growth of new machines in the social field and the discovery of new living beings in the organism” (*The Fold* 110). What we find time and time again in hotel narratives is the association between unmappable, Baroque hotel space and the mystery of hotel ownership. The monad both looks out on the world and reflects the world. Like the corridor down a hotel floor, the monad is connected to other monads. Indeed, Deleuze likens the monad to private apartments “that are not connected to one another ... that are variants of the same interior decoration” (100). With such statements, Deleuze seems to be touching on the hotel without speaking its name. In the last page of *The Fold*, Deleuze

suggests that nomadology will replace monadology. If the Baroque chapel has indeed been replaced by the enclosed car speeding down a (lost) highway, then we are seeing the image of a portable monad in postmodernity, enabling a nomadic monad. The existence of a contemporary nomad, where life, by necessity, needs to be quickly packed up and moved on, requires the monadic structure of the hotel. The hotel room perhaps replaces the Baroque chapel as the contemporary portable monad in a way that is at once more connected to the chapel space than the car.

The concept of the nomad is central to Deleuze and Guattari's and de Certeau's understandings of the postmodern world. De Certeau uses the image of the nomad as an urban being, and Deleuze and Guattari similarly locate nomads in an urban landscape, where "smooth space and striated space play off one another in a constant dialectical tension" (Cresswell 168). The image of the nomad has been present throughout the modern and postmodern eras, ranging from Benjamin's flaneur, to the negative discussions of the nomad in Henry Mayhew's and T.S. Eliot's writing (where the nomad is a threat to the "good" life, and cultural development depends on a lack of movement) and then to the positive metaphor of the nomad in postmodern thought (Cresswell 170). Rosi Braidotti in *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Thought* describes the nomad as having "a sharpened sense of territory but no possessiveness about it" (35). Augé raises the complications of being a perpetual nomad in supermodernity (this will be considered at length in Chapter Six). Generally, however, the figure of the nomad is a valorised one, in both male-centred and feminist postmodern thought. Hence it is vital to consider the dwelling-spaces of these nomads, particularly the hotel.

Dwelling spaces are not simply material constructs in Deleuzian theory. Home is created by sounds and practices: “But home does not pre-exist: it was necessary to draw a circle around that uncertain and fragile centre, to organize a limited space” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 311). Home is associated with the chorus of a song, with rhythm. It is through sounds and rhythm, and more specifically the refrain, that the Deleuzian concept of territorialisation takes place: “The refrain is rhythm and melody that have been territorialized because they have become expressive — and have become expressive because they are territorializing” (317). Territory, in Deleuzian theory, is “an act that affects milieus and rhythms, that ‘territorializes’ them” (315). Territorialization, the act of creating territory, is marked out by “the becoming-expressive of rhythm or melody, in other words, in the emergence or proper qualities (color, odor, sound, silhouette . . .)” (316). If we are to put the idea of territorialisation into the context of hotels rather than birds, then territorialisation could come from a guest’s noisy demands to a concierge, or from throwing one’s clothes all over the hotel room, making a mess, marking out home. The signs on the door telling hotel staff either “Do not disturb” or “Make up my room now” mark out territory quite literally in Deleuzian terms: “I growl if anyone enters my territory, I put up placards” (320). The territory, Deleuze and Guattari argue, “is first of all the critical distance between two beings of the same species: Mark your distance. What is mine is first of all my distance . . . Don’t anybody touch me . . . It is a question of keeping at a distance the forces of chaos knocking at the door” (320). A good hotel is marked by a respect for guests’ privacy and separation from the world.

But Deleuze and Guattari assert that a crack appears in an individual’s territory. There is a desire to move away from the refrain, to enter another territory, “the element of passage to another assemblage. As in courtly love, a color ceases to

be territorial and enters a 'courtship' assemblage. The territorial assemblage opens onto the courtship assemblage, which is a social assemblage that has gained autonomy" (324). This process is explained by Deleuze as deterritorialization: "Produce a deterritorialized refrain as the final end of music . . . that is more important than building a new system" (350). Someone deterritorializes another's personal space by forcing themselves into another's life, and this is how we see two worlds collide, merging together like the famous wasp and orchid image Deleuze and Guattari draw on in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

Deterritorialization entails the related process of reterritorialization. Ronald Bogue in his essay "Art and Territory" describes the processes of deterritorialization "whereby milieu components are detached and given greater autonomy" (95). Reterritorialization, he explains, is a process "through which these components acquire new functions within the newly created territory" (95). Reterritorialization, Deleuze argues, is the creation of "something that 'has-the-value-of' home" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 326), the process whereby something acquires home value. The idea of "home value" is something central to hotels, and hotels try to offer this possibility in every way they can, constantly emphasising that you must have a "pleasant stay." Deterritorialization cannot occur without reterritorialization, without something acquiring home value. Certain objects then, in narratives, come to stand for this new common value. An example of this occurs in *Barton Fink*: Charlie gives Barton a mysterious box to take care of. This box comes to stand for their new relationship, for Barton's deterritorialized space. For hotel guests more generally, certain aspects of a hotel room take on "home values," such as the bed, one's mess spread everywhere; even the particular room number comes to have the value of home. Home, then, becomes conceived of as a value, a created, demarcated space, or

an object that comes to stand for home value, rather than clear physical bricks-and-mortar structure.

*

To connect the concepts of the monad, Baroque space, the uncanny, cognitive mapping and the mirror stage, we again need to revisit the Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles. Lacan outlines the mirror stage as a time in which external space enables the child to understand that s/he is separate from others and from her/his surrounds. This happens through the space of the mirror. Foucault calls the mirror a “placeless place” (24). Yet the mirror in the Bonaventure hotel is on the outside: it is the “glass skin” that Jameson and Baudrillard are repelled by. It is a mirror that reflects the outside sky and city, not the inside space. If the mirror was on the inside walls of the hotel, would identification, mapping and comprehension be possible? The complication of inside and outside space, even the absence of simple distinction between floors (some are reached by stairs, others by elevators), makes this space both familiar and unfamiliar at the same time, thus adhering to the structure of the uncanny. The monadic structure of the hotel is indicative of the inability to connect with others, yet with monads existing side by side, there is simultaneously a longing or need to exist with others. The hotel contains objects that quickly come to acquire “home value.” But located within it is the presence of the uncanny, as the homely is found in a non-home, thus making it an uncanny space. This is the effect of postmodern space where, as Augé claims, we are “always and never at home.”

CHAPTER 2: THE PARALLEL HOTEL

Mike/Gerard: A large house made of wood surrounded by trees.

The house is filled with many rooms, each alike

But occupied by different souls, night after night.

Dale Cooper: The Great Northern Hotel!

— David Lynch, *Twin Peaks* 1990

If we consider the structure of the hotel — a structure with the communal space of the lobby, then individual rooms connected via walls and a corridor — we are already presented with the framework of parallel worlds. For some time, the idea of the hotel existing as a miniature world or parallel universe in either tension or symmetry with the outside city has been articulated in theory (see Jameson, *Postmodernism*; Brucker; Kracauer) and literature. Through the texts examined in this chapter, I argue that the hotel is the exemplary model for contemporary narratives that require multiple stories. There are two parts to this argument. First, this chapter focuses on texts that use the structure of the hotel's rooms to tell stories of multiple lives. The 'hotelization' of narrative is the way in which multiple stories can be housed within a single, connecting framework. Narratives ranging from the collected stories within *Finbar's Hotel*, edited by Dermot Bolger, to Jim Jarmush's film *Mystery Train* are used as evidence of the way in which the hotel is organising centre of these parallel worlds. Secondly, I focus on slipstream narratives² that use the hotel

² "Slipstream" describes postmodern narratives that use science-fiction ideas and techniques, but locate the stories in "reality" rather than other planets. Non-hotel examples include fiction by Don DeLillo and Thomas Pynchon, and films such as *Donny Darko* (dir. Richard Kelly 2001) and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (dir. Michael Gondry, 2004).

to express postmodern concerns with identity, text, location and subjectivity. The slipstream narratives include film and television by David Lynch (*Twin Peaks* and *Lost Highway*), and novels by Haruki Murakami (particularly *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*). The struggle to navigate the hotel in Lynch's and Murakami's work is emblematic of the struggle to locate the self in postmodernity, where self is not seen as reflection, but via proximity. The variety of postmodern hotel texts in this chapter indicates that both the psychic and social structure of the hotel make it a vital organising centre of multiple, parallel narratives.

Both Lynch and Murakami emphasise space over personalised characterisation. At the same time, space — particularly hotel space — is an allegory of contemporary subjectivity. Space and subjectivity have long been entwined, as I have outlined in my previous chapter. De Certeau argues that each successful negotiation of space is a renegotiation of the mirror stage. But what happens when space is not successfully negotiated? What impact does this have on subjectivity? Postmodern spaces, particularly hotel spaces, I argue, articulate the new form of the mirror stage Vidler writes of in *Warped Space*. No longer, Vidler claims, is the contemporary self,

committed to split identity, not only as between imago and I, but also between two imagos, so to speak, blurred and morphed into a distorted physiognomy that is far from transparent or clear, but rather opaque and translucent. It would be as if this subject were truly lost in space, wandering vaguely in a state of continuous psychasthenia, disguising itself as space in space, ready to be devoured by the very object of its fear. (245)

He argues that Lacan's mirror stage can no longer be taken at face value (my pun intended): the replacement for the Lacanian mirror in contemporaneity is the screen –

the omnipresent flat surface in postmodernity. Thus Vidler argues, “We (are) dealing with a subject whose imago was screened and projected back to it, not as reflection but as scanned image” (245). The split in subjectivity, where the subject sees itself as scanned image, not reflection, does not belong solely to the world of postmodern science fiction such as *The Matrix*. It is present in slipstream narratives, and the hotel, due to its social and architectural structure, is the device in which this new kind of parallel (asymmetrical) subjectivity is contained.

Kracauer in “The Hotel Lobby” raises the image of the hotel as housing parallel worlds when he describes the hotel lobby as a “negative church” in detective fiction. He argues that “togetherness in the hotel lobby has no meaning” (291) because the hotel distances individuals from both “actual life” and from other human beings. The hotel as inversion of the church means that not only are individuals detached from one another, they are coming together not to worship God as in a church, but to serve the self:

This limit case “we” of those who have dispossessed themselves of them— a “we,” realised vicariously in the house of God owing to human limitations — is transformed in the hotel lobby into the isolation of anonymous atoms. (295)

The many unfamiliar faces and disconnected people in the hotel lobby (but united by space) raise the image of the hotel as a space that gathers disconnected souls together. It is a microcosm where an infinite number of individual worlds collide, but Kracauer argues that these worlds remain alienated from each other.

Kracauer’s argument concurs with Augé’s theory of non-places in *Supermodernity*. In his opening vignette, Augé refers to exactly the same convergence of individuals at the airport: “thousands of individual itineraries converged for a moment, unaware of one another . . .” (3). Together, Kracauer and

Augé's theories of disconnected individuals in non-places point towards the idea of individual monads, individual worlds that sit together, and are sometimes forced to connect, like guests dwelling in hotel rooms. Kracauer's reference to anonymous atoms in an inverted church is akin to the Deleuze's idea that "Every monad thus expresses the entire world, but obscurely and dimly because it is finite and the world is infinite" (*The Fold* 86). Augé's "thousands of individual itineraries converged for a moment" description is also homologous with Deleuze's monad. Yet, because of the structure of hotel, the individual itineraries of each monad are frequently forced to open up, to connect with another life or another world (this is explored further in Chapter Six).

The ideas of parallel lives and parallel narratives have certainly existed before postmodernity. The polyphonic novel (Bakhtin's term) has long been a dominant narrative form in both literature and film. As Buchanan points out, the polyphonic novel may have been the inspiration for Deleuze's concept of the assemblage:

The assemblage is a structure, which, like the novel, is able to articulate the slide into oblivion of one model of thought together with the rise to dominance of another without having to explain it in terms of either succession or negation, but can instead stage it as a co-adaption. (Buchanan 118)

The structure of parallel hotel narratives operates in the same way: we see the slide between narratives in *Mystery Train*, for example, operating via place (hotel) and sounds within the hotel.

Raymond Carver's poem "In the Lobby of the Hotel del Mayo" aptly demonstrates the simultaneously collective and singular experience of the hotel, and the way in which a single space embraces parallel lives. It begins with the opening stanza:

The girl in the lobby reading a leather-bound book.

The man in the lobby using a broom.

The boy in the lobby watering plants.

The desk clerk looking at his nails.

The woman in the lobby writing a letter.

The old man in the lobby sleeping in his chair.

The fan in the lobby revolving slowly overhead.

Another hot Sunday afternoon.

.....

It's clear something terrible has happened.

The man is running straight for the hotel

His lips are working themselves into a scream.

Everyone in the lobby will recall their terror.

Everyone will remember this moment for the rest of their lives.

(184)

The Carver poem uses the hotel to collect fragmented, multiple but singular experiences. The lobby houses a congregation of silent individuals. Many individuals exist separately in the one space, reflecting Augé’s argument that people move through non-places without communicating.

David Harvey argues that fragmentation of subjectivity through shifting space is a significant part of postmodern theory and narratives, and many texts in this thesis place these concerns of fragmented subjectivity onto the hotel. Harvey also reminds us of the time-space compression in postmodernity, where the “temporalaral contract in everything . . . then becomes the hallmark of postmodern living” (291). Harvey sees this temporarity affecting everything, “from novel writing and philosophising to the

experience of labouring or making a home . . .” (291). Fragmented thought, anxiety over place-identity, and a compression of space and time mean that the hotel is a principal space in which these complexities and shifts are played out.

The influence of space on narrative construction is also considered by Franco Moretti in *Atlas of the European Novel 1800—1900*. Moretti describes “literary maps” that highlight the “place-bound nature of literary forms: each of them with its particular geometry, its boundaries, its spatial taboos and favourite routes. And then, maps bring to light the internal logic of narrative: the semiotic domain around which a plot coalesces and self-organises” (5). Moretti argues that certain spaces give rise to certain kinds of narratives. A new space encourages paradigm shifts because “it poses new problems — and so asks for new answers” (196). Whilst the hotel is not technically a new space, Moretti’s analysis of the influence of space in narrative concurs with my own argument that hotel narratives are shaped by the hotel, that narratives are “hotelized” by the space.³ Hence parallel lives and parallel narratives are ideally framed by hotels.

Parallel lives have also been depicted in compartmentalised spaces prior to postmodernism. In film, the opening scene of Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* reveals parallel lives in one clear shot: the viewer follows James Stewart’s gaze as he watches the multiple lives of the apartment building next door. We see a dancer, a piano player, a lonely woman, a newly-wed couple, an old couple, all playing out their separate lives, joined by sound and walls, and united through Stewart’s telescope. A postmodern version of this is presented in Murakami’s *Sputnik Sweetheart*. Here, the

³ At the end of *Fear of Flying*, the protagonist Isadora Wing unconsciously comments on the way in which hotels provide endings to twentieth-century narratives. Isadora is lying in the bath, waiting for her estranged husband to return to his hotel room. She ponders on what will happen next: “In nineteenth-century novels, they get married. In twentieth-century novels, they get divorced. Can you have an ending in which they do neither? I laughed at myself for being so literary. ‘Life has no plot’ is one of my favourite lines” (Jong 339). The hotel, rather than marriage or divorce, provides the ending (or a new beginning, in Isadora’s case) for the narrative framework of *Fear of Flying*.

central character (unusually for Murakami this is a woman) is stuck on the top of a ferris wheel for twenty-four hours. She is able to see into her apartment from the ferris wheel, and watches herself having sex with a man she has always been repulsed by. This is not an imagined, but a real experience of hers. From that moment on, she knows that someone else inhabits her. What can be understood from these examples — one late modern and one late postmodern text — is that the concepts that Hitchcock initiated have moved into slipstream fiction. Although it is apartments rather than hotels that represent multiple worlds in *Rear Window* and *Sputnik Sweetheart*, I will argue in this chapter that it is the hotel that provides a privileged location for postmodern slipstream fiction.

As I have outlined in Chapter One, Žižek argues that the “natural progression” of the parallel worlds found in Hitchcock — the individual apartments in the block James Stewart gazes on in *Rear Window* — is towards science fiction narratives like *The Matrix*. This argument is refuted in this chapter. I argue here that the multiple narratives and worlds found in hotel-based texts sit between the Hitchcockian parallel worlds and science fiction. The parallel worlds have moved from Hitchcock’s apartment block to the hotel — this is movement by the smallest margin, but movement nonetheless. Rather than the apartment block, the hotel, with its emphasis on the mobilized and virtual gaze, and its centrality to postmodern everyday life, is the natural home for two kinds of multiple narratives: first, it houses the multiple worlds and lives of the polyphonic novel; secondly it houses multiple subjects and multiple realities. In Lynch’s and Murakami’s stories, the hotel is a space that is at once real and unreal — that is, a space in which the characters are physically present and sometimes disembodied, sometimes someone else entirely. The hotel in these examples is folded space in Deleuze’s and Leibniz’s understanding of the concept. It

is space that is placed onto other spaces, is entered “unnaturally” and is all interior. Importantly, the kinds of parallels that are presented in these hotel worlds are asymmetrical ones. This suggests a more rhizomic understanding of self and other, reality and unreality. But this complication of reality and unreality is clearly framed by the hotel.

Within the parallel world narratives in this chapter are struggles to locate and comprehend the self. This occurs in Murakami’s novels located in hotels and in Lynch’s films that use hotels, and is supported by theoretical concepts from Jameson’s Bonaventure hotel experience, which I have already outlined in the first chapter. These “selves” are masculine ones, and both Lynch and Murakami’s narratives are draped in noir tones and concepts, always with a central male character, an outsider, seeking lost women and/or corporate ownership and corruption. And accompanying the noir and detective styles are existential anxieties.

Death of the Author, Birth of Space

It can be argued that what we are seeing through the dominance of the hotel in narratives is the birth of space. The hotel becomes a character in its own right. This is the case in *Grand Hotel* (1932) “where people come and people go and nothing ever happens.” This film that opens and closes with the revolving door of the Grant Hotel depicts eclectic characters who become entangled via the miniature world of the hotel. Here we see the hotelization of narrative; where the hotel is an increasingly a model for multiple narratives and narratives of parallel identities.

The use of certain spaces to drive narratives also sees the death of the author. This is exemplified in *Finbar’s Hotel*. This novel brings space rather than author to the fore, with the hotel operating as a meeting place for each short story. *Finbar’s*

Hotel, edited by Dermot Bolger, is a collection of seven stories set in the same hotel. Each story is written by a different Irish author (including Anne Enright, Roddy Doyle, Jennifer Johnston, Hugo Hamilton, and Colm Tóibín), and offers the same kind of narrative: parallel stories are located in adjoining rooms of the hotel. Thus the similarities between the novel and the hotel are present: each author is assigned a room/chapter in the hotel/novel, but the reader is left to guess which author belongs to which story. The characters do meet occasionally in the lobby, lounge and bar, so they interconnect in some way. The stories are located in a run-down Irish hotel (which is about to be knocked down and renovated), occur over one night and are interwoven by events in the hotel. The sequel to *Finbar's Hotel*, *Finbar's Hotel – Ladies' Night Out* (edited again by Dermot Bolger) focuses, as the title suggests, on women who go to the newly renovated postmodern hotel, and features work by women authors. This novel follows the same structure of *Finbar's Hotel* and uses the same technique of authorial anonymity for each “room” or story of the hotel.

The same technique of parallel stories operates in the film *Four Rooms*, directed by four different directors. A bellboy on his first night on the job is the link between the four separate stories written and directed by four filmmakers. Each story takes place in a different guest room, as the title suggests. Whilst this film is widely regarded as a failure, it is interesting here as it uses the same device of multiplicity that *Finbar's Hotel* does, and houses this multiplicity in the hotel.

What we are seeing in these narratives is the death of the author (including the film director) as a single authoritative figure, and the birth of space as the central organising figure in narratives about multiplicity. The hotel forces individuals to connect with others, to open up, like monads in Vidler's terms, “prised open . . . rupturing the previous distinction between private and public like a [John] Cage . . .

[musical] performance” (*Warped Space* 233). Hotels then, open up solitary, parallel lives and force them to interact in some way (even if this is just physical). This occurs both in the structure of hotel narratives, as separate stories woven together in space, and in character interaction.

***Mystery Train’s* Parallel Narratives**

A text that clearly illustrates the hotelization of narrative is Jim Jarmusch’s *Mystery Train*, a film located in Memphis, Tennessee. *Mystery Train* is divided into three stories, located in three rooms of a run-down hotel. Each narrative is connected in both space and time by pictures of Elvis in the guest rooms, the sound of the song *Blue Moon* on the radio late at night, and the sound of a gunshot in one of the hotel rooms early the next morning. These noises and images run like a spine through the narrative, like a corridor that connects the disparate stories for the viewer and to some extent the other characters. Each character is like a monad, experiencing disconnection from those closest to them. Knowledge and understanding of others is like the hotel itself, where meaning lies just behind the wall.

The search for connectedness in contemporary culture is present throughout *Mystery Train*, and is simultaneously contained and undone via the hotel. The first strand of *Mystery Train* follows two teenage Japanese tourists travelling to Memphis as Elvis fans. They arrive on the train and slowly make their way to a run-down hotel in the city. Slow, wide shots depict the couple walking the dirty streets of Memphis. Many of the shots are taken up by the wide sky and linear footpaths, emphasising the emptiness of the space, which in turn serves as a contrast to the dark, confined, dingy hotel room the couple eventually reach. They comment on the similarities between Memphis and Yokohama: “You know, Memphis does look like Yokohama. Just more

space. If you took away sixty percent of the buildings in Yokohama, it would look like this.” This statement expresses the urge to find connections between space abroad and at home, regardless of the tenuousness of the link between the two. In the hotel room, the couple find parallels between images of Elvis, Buddah, Madonna and the Statue of Liberty. Again, these searches for connections between vastly disconnected icons highlight the complex relations in postmodernity between the universal and the particular. This tendency towards facialisation, finding faces in abstract or inanimate objects (or in this case, finding the same facial features in icons), is symptomatic of a search for the universal. This takes place in a city that is filmed as alienating, uninteresting, disappointing and fundamentally *disconnecting*. The film uses chronotopic spaces in Bakhtin’s sense (spaces about time), or non-places in Augé’s sense of the term, to concentrate the disconnection and alienation that dominates it. The train opens and closes the film, and the hotel is where the bulk of the narrative is played out. These are spaces that are passed through.

Isolation permeates the three stories in *Mystery Train*, despite the close proximity friends, lovers and strangers find themselves in. Connectedness is sought out through external objects such as the landscape and the iconic images, but there is a vast gulf between the two teenagers in the hotel room, as they lie together after unexciting sex, with the boy asking the girl about hairstyles. At this point, *Blue Moon* is heard on the radio for the first time for the audience. The lyrics of *Blue Moon* are heard three times for the audience, as though the content points directly to the isolation experienced in all the narratives: “You saw me standing alone, without a dream in my heart, without a love of my own.” The smooth tones of Tom Waits as the radio announcer emphasises the paradox of intimacy in postmodernity: his voice is present, tender, directly connecting to the listener, but he is simultaneously

connecting with everyone and no one. This complex, depersonalised relationship that is present between radio announcer and listener is emblematic of the other relationships in the hotel: they are intimate because of proximity, but metaphysically distant.

In the first story Jun takes a picture of the hotel room from several angles.

Mitzuko asks:

Jun, why do you only take pictures of the rooms we stay in and never what we see outside while we travel?

Jun: Those other things are in my memory. The hotel rooms and the airports are the things I'll forget.

Jun's comments here unconsciously refer to Benjamin's early modernist argument that architecture is rendered invisible by everyday usage (Vidler, *Warped Space* 64). The sameness and blandness of the hotel rooms are emphasised as the forgettable moments of travel.

Like the first story, the other two stories in the film emphasise disconnection. In the second story, two women are forced together in a hotel room. An Italian tourist has an overnight stop in Memphis on the way back to Rome with her recently deceased husband. The woman she shares a room with (Dee Dee) is on the run from her husband, Johnny, who is in the next room of the hotel. In this room lies the third story: Johnny, Charlie and Will are drunk, and take the room for the night after accidentally holding up a liquor store, at one point listening to *Blue Moon* on the car radio. Escaping from the police, the men seek refuge in the hotel. It is their gun that is accidentally fired in the hotel room early in the morning, finally solving the mystery in the first two stories of the gunshot. The gunshot wounds one of them, causing them to leave the hotel and flee in their truck. Johnny in the hotel laments his

estrangement from Dee Dee, and as the night progresses, and the men drink more and commit a crime, they alienate themselves from society.

In the final scene of *Mystery Train* we see double articulation of the intersection of the three stories, where they are all interconnected in the one place (again) at the same time: the characters in the third story speed off in a red truck that drives through an underpass, over which the train containing the characters in the first and second stories speeds out of Memphis. A police car, searching for the red truck, sails past, heading in the opposite direction. Thus the road, train and hotel serve as chronotopes, in Bakhtin's sense of the term. The road at the end of the film confirms the way in which the hotel is able to house a polyphonic narrative. For a moment, the road is able to contain all the narratives in one space, but for an entire night, the hotel has done this.

Mystery Train contradicts Jameson's assertion that discontinuous spatial experience characterises the postmodern (qtd in Friedberg 173). Present in Jarmusch's film is a continuous spatial experience, and disconnected characters. The hotel forces all these narratives to intersect, but only at the level of space. There is an absence of intimacy and meaningful relationships in between both the lovers and strangers in this film. Displaced souls are forced at various points to interact (as in the second story), but the only real connection experienced is through space and sound in the hotel.

David Lynch's Asymmetrical Worlds

In 1993, David Lynch experimented with a hotel-based polyphonic narrative similar to *Mystery Train*, with the defunct television series *Hotel Room*. This story focuses on guests in one hotel room, from 1936 to 1993. The hotel staff never age as

various guests come and go. The guests' experiences are divided into three stories. Rather than being connected by space and time, like those in *Mystery Train*, the characters in *Hotel Room* are connected by the room. *Hotel Room* has been widely regarded as a huge failure for Lynch, and did not get television release. It is mentioned here because it confirms Lynch's obsession with hotels that is better articulated in *Twin Peaks* and, to a lesser extent, *Lost Highway*.

Twin Peaks was a groundbreaking television series focusing on the town of Twin Peaks and following the somewhat rhizomic connections of the town that begin with the death of Laura Palmer. FBI agent Dale Cooper comes to town and stays at the Great Northern Hotel. It is the Great Northern Hotel that comes to be the focus of a labyrinthine, polyphonic narrative that operates much like the unmappable hotel. The Great Northern Hotel is also folded out into parallel, unreal worlds in *Twin Peaks*. The hotel in this narrative is the anchor point between real and unreal. The absence of reality in this noir series is seen in many ways, through the space, through the depersonalised characters, and through various methods used to find clues (such as dreams and Tibetan rituals).

The mobilized and virtual gaze that Friedberg claims dominates postmodernity is particularly evident in the way in which Lynch uses the hotel as a slipstream space – a space between the real and the virtual. Lynch never bothers to create a sense of reality in his dream worlds. The fake, *Mary-Poppins*-like robin singing at the end of *Blue Velvet* epitomises this on a micro level. Lynch avoids an attempt at reality through space as well: the external shots of the Great Northern Hotel in no way “match” the inside space. The external shots of the hotel are filmed with a different grade and colour film, and the camera never tracks from outside to inside the hotel. The establishing shots serve as guideposts for the Great Northern Hotel, but its

“reality” lies elsewhere, in the corridors and in its parallel world called the “Other Place” in Dale Cooper’s dreams. Bachelard could have designed the inside of the hotel, with its wood-lined corridors and appearance of a cosy home. However, despite its apparent homeliness, the organic, corrupt underworld of Twin Peaks is condensed, triggered and abstracted out in the hotel. Presented here is the rhizome or root system then, as this is alluded to in the tree-trunk beams, and wood panelling that lines the hotel and other spaces (the log cabin, the log lady, One Eyed Jack’s) in *Twin Peaks*. Whilst it might seem that the trees would indicate an aborescent system, the way in which the trees in the woods and in the hotels have no beginning and end strongly suggests that they belong to a rhizomic system. The system of this assemblage operates via the spatial displacement of the red curtains. Red curtains in the hotel are present in many of the “evil” spaces in the town of Twin Peaks. They map out the movement between reality and virtual and provide the porthole to parallel worlds – the Black Lodge, the Other Place, One Eyed Jack’s. The red curtains together with the hotel provide the organising frame for both the narrative and the structure of parallel worlds in *Twin Peaks*. The disjunction between outside and inside, and real and virtual, emphasises that *Twin Peaks* is a narrative aware of its fictionality, and means that the viewer is unable to map the space and locate it in “reality.”

Just as though Lynch were following instructions for following the construction of Leibniz’s baroque chapel, curtains are never opened in *Twin Peaks*. It is all interior. As a parallel to this, if we consider Leibniz’s idea that the soul is the darkened room, like a monad, then we might ask whether we are seeing the interior of someone’s brain within these closed-off curtains. Is it Dale Cooper’s? Laura Palmer’s? Evil Bob’s? Not everything needs to be reduced to an individual psychology, however; what we have through the connected spaces that stem from the

hotel, coupled with the detective work done via dreams and Tibetan rituals, *is* a presence of a kind of rhizomic mindscape. The parallel worlds entered in this narrative through dreams that all contain the hotel's red curtains confirm this: Dale Cooper on several occasions dreams he is finding answers to Laura Palmer's murder by walking down a corridor shrouded in red curtains. Meaning for Cooper always lies just behind the curtain but is rarely understood. Curtains, rather than doors, provide a folding, multiple reality; they are at once a solid and fluid structure, much like the parallel worlds that co-exist throughout the narrative, and much like the fluid identity that perpetuates this and other Lynch stories.

It is the red curtains throughout the hotel that provide the connection between the various worlds in the town of *Twin Peaks*. Folding curtains in turn are mirrored in other spaces, thus folding the hotel onto other spaces. Curtains act like a tunnel that connects the other spaces to the hotel; it is as if you dug through the hotel you would somehow be connected to the other spaces such as One Eyed Jack's (the casino/brothel) or the Black Lodge. The red curtains provide the connecting clue for Dale Cooper time and time again in *Twin Peaks*. Cooper is told about the red curtains in a dream, and, believing in the power of his dreams, presumes that when he stumbles across the cabin in the woods that his target is reached. But in fact it is Leland Palmer, Laura's father, dancing in front of the red curtain in the hotel who is the "real" Bob. The red curtains not only recall the image of the Leibnizian/Deleuzian Baroque chapel previously outlined (Chapter One), but also provide the porthole to other realities. Wherever there are red curtains in *Twin Peaks*, Laura and corruption have dwelt there. The spiritual evil in the narrative is folded onto the closed hotel curtains, which in turn are folded out into many other "infected" spaces in the town of Twin Peaks.

The Great Northern Hotel always provides the intersection between the real and other worlds in Lynch's television series. As the momentum of *Twin Peaks* progresses through its seemingly endless episodes, space and subjectivity no longer becomes either real or unreal. As Deleuze writes on the film *Last Year At Marianbad*, things are no longer real or unreal because we do not have a place from which to ask that question. Thus the hotel serves as what Deleuze would term a "crystal image." A crystal image is defined as "the uniting of an actual image and a virtual image to the point where they can no longer be distinguished" (*Cinema 2*, Glossary). The hotel then contains both the virtual and actual worlds of *Twin Peaks*.

Lynch's film *Lost Highway* also uses the hotel space (albeit briefly) in its parallel narratives. The hotel again provides the intersection between parallel worlds. *Lost Highway* (like Lynch's subsequent film, *Mulholland Drive*) is divided into two halves, in which identity is multiple. The *Lost Highway* hotel provides the space whereby the two identities of Fred Madison and Pete Dayton, and Alice and Renee come together. But doubles in *Lost Highway* are not quite doubles: Pete becomes Fred but different actors play the characters; Renee and Alice are played by the same actor (Patricia Arquette) but are emphasised (by Alice) as being different women. In classic film noir tradition, one *femme fatale* is white-blonde, the other (Renee, the victim) is brunette. Pete sees a photo of Alice and Renee together, and asks Alice which of the two she is. Alice points clearly to herself (the blonde Arquette) and says "that's me." Thus the two Arquette characters are not one, just as Pete's and Fred's characters are not quite two. Aparallel identities abound in Lynch's work, reinforcing Vidler's argument that the Lacanian mirror stage needs to be revised. Here we are presented with the post-Lacanian, screen-based mirror stage: identity is not located through a mirror image, but is always asymmetrical.

Even the space of the hotel is not clearly a separate space or a real space. In the last half of the film, the hotel is seen only as a single floor, but it is entered via the stairway of someone's home. Thus it is neither a completely separate hotel entity, nor is it a home. The use of space, subjects and narrative technique in *Lost Highway* confirms my reading of *Twin Peaks*: just as one space is folded onto another, so too is subjectivity. Thus the intersection of the real and virtual space of the hotel resonates with the formation of identity in *Lost Highway*. The hallucinatory nature of experience is expressed cinematically via the shaking camera, and the strobe lighting in the hotel corridor. These are clear indicators of another reality and a fractured self.

The effect of this is the presentation of folded space in the film: Pete goes up stairs after murdering Dick Laurant and finds himself in a hotel corridor. At the end of the film Fred goes up the stairs of the Mystery Man's house in the desert and finds himself in the same hotel. Revealed in this hotel, behind the various doors, are the dark aspects of his/their lives. The two forms of space — psychic and social — are joined together, folded onto each other, through the metaphysical and real spaces of hotel and home. The hotel in *Lost Highway* penetrates other spaces and appears as the manifestation of the unspeakable aspects of the mind. The moments of Pete/Fred walking up the stairs to the hotel echo the ideas of Leibniz's Baroque house united by two stories, one material, one spiritual, "joined by a stair of infinite folds" (Deleuze, *The Fold* 60). This is the way in which parallel worlds are presented in contemporary slipstream narrative: through a space — the hotel — that is at once virtual and actual.

The unstable self central to postmodern noir is epitomised by the moment in *Lost Highway* where Fred Madison drives down the road at night. The yellow lines on the road slip under the car as he drives, then his hand begins to shake and his face streaks like Bacon's painting of *Pope Innocent X*. So in a space of utter containment

— the image Deleuze sees as the new monad — in a car travelling down an isolated highway, this character becomes someone else. The blurred close-up shaking camera is again the way in which Lynch conveys this impossible, virtual concept. Is this a postmodern schizophrenia? The same movement towards someone else's identity happens to Dale Cooper at the end of *Twin Peaks* too, where he stares in the mirror and realises that he has become Bob. This kind of narrative, where one becomes someone else (but not entirely, not completely), operates as an exploration of multiple realities in postmodernity, and the hotel becomes the central organising figure for these parallel realities.

In slipstream narratives, characters become depersonalised — the expression of ideas rather than individual subjects. Characters for Lynch are not self-contained subjects. They can easily and illogically become someone else. Two men play one split male character in *Lost Highway*; one woman plays two female characters. Leland in *Twin Peaks* is Bob, but then Dale Cooper also becomes Bob. Sherilyn Fenn plays the dead Laura Palmer, but also plays her cousin who arrives in town. Not only is this depersonalisation present in Lynch's narratives, but also in acting styles in all of Lynch's films. The dialogue is delivered often in a stagy, stilted manner. There are long pauses in conversation, as in daytime soap operas (which, incidentally, are frequently played on televisions in Lynch's films). Rather than wooden acting, this is a deliberate Lynchian style. Personalised character ends and space takes over as the vessel through which the impossibility of negotiating the self is presented. This is slipstream fiction that is not science fiction but more like a dream reality (or rather, a nightmare reality) framed through the hotel.

Haruki Murakami's Slipstream Hotels

Haruki Murakami's novels are characterised by their fracturing, multiple narratives, and by their stories that weave in and out of the same kind of dream reality that is present in Lynch's films. And yet despite this fracturing — or perhaps because of it — each novel has the same kind of protagonist. Generally, the stories revolve around a middle-class thirty-something Japanese man (often a writer), riddled with anomie, searching for a lost woman in a hotel. The central character is also typically searching for ownership of the hotel. Murakami's narratives are slipstream fiction, like Lynch's, where we quickly lose the grounds on which we can ask what is real and not real. The point at which this slipstream reality becomes clear in Murakami's work is in the hotel. The hotel in his novels becomes the meeting point for parallel worlds and parallel identities. Because of the repetitive style and subject-matter of Murakami's work, it is possible to move easily between his novels in the analysis that follows, as each Murakami story is essentially full of the same concerns about subjectivity, reality and identity in late capitalism.

Present throughout Murakami's work are depersonalised subjects, where the character is not so much present for its own sake, but to convey the wider ideas of the slipstream narrative. Like Lynch, Murakami uses depersonalised characters in his work to convey fractured, multiple identity in postmodernity. There is a perpetual awareness by characters that they are not themselves. This is not so much some kind of Freudian or Lacanian anxiety, but is much more literal. We have already seen this present in Lynch's *Lost Highway* through the characters of Renee/Alice and Pete/Fred. There is a sense throughout Murakami's novels when a central character is reflected in a mirror, that the face in the mirror is not really "me." Parallel realities, identities and the intersection between real and unreal worlds all converge onto the

hotel in Murakami's work. The hotel, in these novels, is the place where the real and the virtual, the cinematic, the postmodern spectacle as well as the body are all contained.

Murakami's novels *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, *Dance, Dance, Dance*, and *The Wild Sheep Chase* all use simple, hard-boiled language and a noir mystery. The novels also tackle the nature of late-capitalist society and Japanese culture. In many ways, Murakami's writing sits between that of Chandler and Carver, with his hard-boiled noir detective stories colliding with Carveresque observations of the everyday. Whilst Carver locates many of his worlds in caravans or motels, Murakami's core space in his stories is the hotel. As is often the case in noir narratives, the simple language belies the convoluted labyrinth of plots placed alongside each other in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*. For example, the dominant plot revolves around a contemporary Japanese man searching simultaneously for his missing wife and a purposeful existence in late capitalist Japan. His story sits next to those of Japanese and Russian soldiers in World War Two that are framed through letters from an old soldier. This generic discontinuity, among other things, characterises Murakami's writing as postmodern.

Connecting the stories in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (and indeed in most of Murakami's novels) is the concept of Nothingness and the use of dream realism. The literal connections between the two kinds of stories come from the letters mentioned above, written from an old World War Two soldier to Toru, the novel's protagonist. The letters operate as passageways, as portholes to other realities: as Toru reads the veteran's letter, a whole parallel narrative opens up in the novel. A more literal version of the porthole device is present through a dry well on a vacant block of land.

Toru lowers himself into the dry well and is able to enter a hotel that is at once real and imaginary.

Home becomes problematic early on in the novel. Toru has recently quit his job because it was meaningless, and at the beginning of the novel he is financially supported by his wife who then disappears without a trace. All Toru knows is that someone gave her a new fragrance the day before she left. Tied up in the mystery of his wife's disappearance is his brother-in-law, Noboru Wataya, who is considered the most important person in Japan. He is an academic who is constantly on the television, commenting on Japanese economics and politics. Toru discovers Noboru has an abusive, tortuous past with a mysterious woman who initially calls Toru. Noboru has also abused his sister, Toru's wife. Whilst these searches continue for Toru, his home and routine dominate his life after he quits his job. But home in turn ceases to be homely after his wife leaves him, and after he first experiences the effects of going down the dry well:

From here, the house looked pitch dark and almost seemed to be holding its breath. It retained no sense of warmth or intimacy. It was supposed to be the house where I was carrying on my life day after day, but now it was just an empty building without a trace of humanity. (274)

Toru's home then has all the appearances of home, but it is a home without the affects of home. Entering the hotel, or initially hovering above a hotel room, via the dry well is the way in which Toru comes to realise that home is no longer homely. The unhomeliness of home is present even in spite of the continued habits of Toru. Homeliness, then, requires both habit and affect. Without the latter, space becomes devoid of meaning and sense. Home becomes defamiliarized by Toru's experiences in the hotel, and down the well, and through the loss of his wife.

The mysteries of this and other novels by Murakami centre on the hotel. It is an ideal location for a conspiracy text that considers the location of (masculine) self and capitalist systems precisely because it embraces so much of capitalism: anonymity, mystery, sex and glamour. And the comprehension of totality is always an impossibility: a hotel is almost always unmappable for a guest and one never knows who or what is next door, downstairs, or who was in one's room the night before. Like hotel rooms, the Murakami novels become interchangeable, with the same character, the same anxieties about love and late capitalism, and the same complication of parallel worlds and identities. Again the image of the singular monad connected to many others is dominant here, both in terms of Murakami's concepts and in terms of the repeated spaces and subjects in most of his novels.

When stories located in postmodernity are told by Murakami, they are always housed in hotels, as a way of articulating the inability to cognitively map self and space in contemporary society. We see the narrator perpetually commenting on advanced capitalist society: in *Dance Dance Dance*, for example, he says,

Although I didn't think so at the time, things were a lot simpler in 1969. All you had to do to express yourself was throw rocks at riot police. But with today's sophistication, who's in a position to throw rocks? . . . Everything is rigged, tied into that massive capital web, and beyond this web there's another web. (55)

In *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, Toru's investigation into hotel ownership is part of that attempt to map some kind of knowledge and meaning for himself in a culture that relegates him to its fringes, as symbolised by his old sneakers and absence of employment. Toru appears not to belong in a glamorous hotel, but as Murakami points out in *Dance Dance Dance*, there is no such thing as establishment and anti-

establishment anymore. The hotel operates as a way of enabling disjunctive selves and spaces to hang together.

The hotel's constant presence in all three novels discussed here embodies the mystery and alienation of space in postmodern capitalism. Spatial ownership is unknowable. The mystery of the dry well in *The Wind Up Bird Chronicle* is partially explained through a newspaper article that reports on a property with a ghostly reputation. In the same way that the hotel in Kubrick's *The Shining* causes insanity and murder, so does the property with the well, causing several families to kill themselves. The mystery of who currently owns the property is also cause for concern for the newspaper. These mysteries are some of the dominant themes of the "conspiracy text" and the ghost story that Jameson writes of in *The Cultural Turn*. Jameson calls these narratives nostalgic: the postmodern story demands a narrative "of the very search for a building to haunt in the first place" (188). The longing for space to provide ghosts is, for Jameson, part of the postmodern condition, part of the effect of sanitised space: "so also urban renewal seems everywhere in the process of sanitising the ancient corridors and bedrooms to which alone a ghost might cling" (188). The ghost story, Jameson argues, is "virtually the architectural genre par excellence, wedded to rooms and buildings stained with memories of gruesome events, material structures in which the past literally 'weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living'" (187). The effect of the haunted house in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* is threefold: it is nostalgic, as Jameson asserts; it is also a capitalist ploy to devalue the land; and it is yet another way in which postmodern space is depicted as neither completely virtual or actual, flat or three-dimensional, empty or full. The mysteries of capitalist ownership compound the inability for Toru and the readers to gain any headway in cognitively mapping self and space. We have here a political

work then, constituted (to use Deleuze's terms), by "the intolerable, that is, a lived actuality that at the same time testifies to the impossibility of living in such conditions" (*Essays Critical and Clinical* xliii). When Toru crawls into his dry well, and when he attempts to find answers to the haunted property next door, we are presented with the symbolic expression of the impossibility of him living in conservative, status-driven Japan.

Mappings and meanings of the hotel space are extremely complicated in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, and this is established very clearly from the beginning of the novel, from the moment of entry into the hotel. Just as Jameson observes the confusing entry and exit points of the Bonaventure hotel, there is no established entry for the hotel in Murakami's novel as Toru generally arrives in the hotel corridor via the dry well. He does initially enter the hotel to meet with the mysterious woman who calls him, but subsequent visits to the hotel are virtual ones. The absence of clear entry and exit points in the hotel is a crucial part of the complexities of cognitively mapping postmodern space. This is evoked in the dream reality of the novel, where windows and doors are walked through. Attempting to cognitively map the monadic hotel, and failing to do so, epitomises experience in postmodernity, according to both Jameson and Murakami. The space of the hotel for both of these writers is not flat, but nor is it entirely fitted to the contemporary body. This absence of fitting and finding meaning in the hotel is captured in a letter in another of Murakami's novels, *A Wild Sheep Chase*. In the letter, Rat (the man the protagonist searches for) writes of the disjunction between local and global, but here he is talking about time rather than space:

Time really is one big continuous cloth, no? We habitually cut out pieces of time to fit us, so we tend to fool ourselves into thinking that time is our size,

but it really goes on and on. Here, there is nothing my size. There's nobody around here to make himself sure of everything. (81)

This absence of fitting, coupled with the absence of reality in the mirror, suggests a new sense of subjectivity. I have already noted that de Certeau connects the mirror stage to mapping. What we see throughout Murakami's work is an absence of mirror as reality, and an absence of clearly mapped space.

The hotel in *Wind Up Bird Chronicle* exists as a parallel universe, one reached through Toru entering a dry well and shutting his eyes. We see in these movements between worlds, or kinds of existences, the Deleuzian progression from actual to virtual. There is not, however, a straightforward parallel relationship between the dream world of the hotel and the actual world of the dry well, as the hotel also exists in the "real" world. The hotel is closer then to Deleuze's idea of metastable space. Toru first views the hotel room and passageway from above: "Like a make-believe bird hanging in a make-believe sky, I see the rooms from above. I enlarge the view, pull back, and survey the whole, then zoom in to enlarge the details" (397). Žižek argues that if Norman Bates' mother's house was combined with the motel in *Psycho*, then he would have been relieved of the "unbearable tension that compels him to run between the two extremes" (213). The dry well in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* provides the passageway between Toru's two worlds: his home, then the virtual hotel room. Both the dry well and the hotel passageway operate as spaces between the actual and the virtual. They enable Toru to unfold into the space. The image of fold upon fold is structured through through the well, passageway and hotel room, like curtains in Leibniz's Baroque Chapel.

As Toru watches the room at first from a virtual position, he describes the contents of Room 208 in miniscule detail, down to the level of alcohol in the Cutty

Sark bottle, the lamp with the dead bulb, the ice bucket and tray. And Toru hears miniscule grains of pollen suspended in the air (398). Such detail works like the cinematic gaze, or the mobilized and virtual gaze. Toru watches the room from a virtual position, but gradually comes to be present in Room 208. Murakami describes the progression from virtual to actual in a way that seems to echo the relationship between the singular and the multiple in Deleuzian theory (outlined in Chapter One):

Just as the rubbing together of stones or sticks will eventually produce heat and flame, a connected reality takes shape little by little. It works the same way as the piling up of random sounds goes on to produce a single syllable from the monotonous repetition of what at first glance appears to be meaningless. (398)

Much later, Toru comes through the wall of the two worlds, from the physical space of the dry well into Room 208. He has to wait for the “knock” to come (the three knocks from the whistling waiter). The wall melts for him like jelly and he enters Room 208 not through a floating, out-of-body experience but as a member of another world that is a hotel. He has travelled through the corridor several times before this, and remembers that it was a long corridor, “with many turns and branches along the way” (556). He managed to get there before by following a waiter, “But wandering through the hotel was like venturing into a vast desert without a compass. If I couldn’t find the lobby and then was unable to find my way back to Room 208, I might be sealed up inside this labyrinthine place, unable to return to the real world (556). Evident in these passages is an articulation of both the monadic Baroque chapel and Borges’ story of the labyrinth, where the character is presented with various choices of possible worlds. The inability to find one’s way in *The Wind-Up Bird*

Chronicle also corresponds to Jameson's struggle to cognitively map the Bonaventure, with the effect that postmodern space is perpetually incomprehensible.

The examples used in this chapter and subsequent ones in the thesis together point to a correlation between hotel corridor image (in fiction or film) and disorientation of subjectivity. Just as in contemporary film a long gaze into a mirror usually signifies a change in that character's life direction, the same kind of stock image is going on with hotel corridors. The hotel corridor shot has become the labyrinth, the image of unknowable, confusing space and subjectivity.

Murakami's image of unknowability continues in the mirror. The mirror in Murakami's novels is a device that indicates an absence of the self, rather than its presence. When cleaning the house in the last section of *A Wild Sheep Chase*, the protagonist wipes a very dusty mirror. Rather than directly seeing himself, it is

as if I were the reflection of the mirror and this flat-me-of-an-image were seeing the real me . . . But maybe it was only me copying what the me in the mirror had done. I couldn't be certain I'd wiped my mouth out of my own free will. (269)

The mirror is an uncertain, unstable, unreliable place in Murakami's novels. What Toru needs is another kind of mirror. It is here that we need to revise the relationship between cognitive mapping and the mirror stage that has been touched on in the introduction to this chapter. For de Certeau, as I have said earlier, spatial practice is a repetition of the mirror stage. Jameson's inability to cognitively map the Bonaventure hotel, his inability to comprehend space, is turned into a figure of postmodern understanding (or lack of comprehension of the whole) via the analogon. If combined, de Certeau's argument about mapping and the mirror stage and Jameson's analogous spatial experience suggest that postmodern space does not enable a

reassertion of the mirror stage to take place. If the ability to cognitively map space is a repetition of the mirror stage, if it enables a kind of psychic wholeness to take place, then the postmodern experience of Jameson and Murakami's protagonists indicates wholeness is not possible. Hence in Murakami's novels, both the inability to map space and the inability to see oneself in the mirror are recurring motifs.

Enigmatic self and space is also written on Toru's body, and this confuses his self-perception. In the middle of *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, Malta Cano tells Toru that he needs a mirror to see his changes:

But do be careful, Mr Okada. To know one's own state is not a simple matter.

One cannot look directly at one's own face with one's own eyes, for example.

One has no choice but to look at one's reflection in the mirror. Through

experience, we come to believe that the image is correct, but that is all. (284)

When Toru looks in the mirror he sees a bluish stain — a mark that indicates that his time in the well world has not only been a dream, and is perhaps a kind of punishment for entering the parallel world: "*And every time you look in the mirror now you will be forced to remember it*" (289; original emphasis). When Toru thinks about the stain, he is not just confused, but loses "all sense of direction." He loses his mental map for a moment. All of Murakami's novels seem to perpetually link the central character's internal confusion with an inability to map the hotel's parallel world. In the last few pages of the novel, the stain is cut out in a fight scene with a man in the hotel. The mark disappears from Toru's face without a trace just as he begins a life outside the parallel world of the hotel. He notices this whilst shaving in front of the mirror. The stain then functions like the device of the well in the book — they are both transporters to the hotel, to parallel worlds that exist both inside and outside of Toru. As Toru's face has shifted and changed, so too has his understanding of reality.

It makes Toru's face not entirely his own, his identity unclear as he moves between two kinds of realities. The stain operates as an indicator of another parallel world, a map, perhaps of another incomprehensible space, thus connecting identification and wholeness to spatial comprehension.

Murakami's novels provide passageways to hotels that hover between virtual and actual, spaces that are not able to be completely understood (both in terms of structure and ownership). What governs the quests in those novels is the ability to become something else. Thus de Certeau's assertion that "to practice place is . . . to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood; it is, in a place, to be other and move towards other" (110) is played out in these narratives. In the case of Murakami's novels, identity is understood via proximity rather than reflection. The mirror stage is replaced by ideas of close proximity. Rather than reflection and opposition, we have a compelling image of windowless rooms next to windowless rooms: the monad, as the concept of subjectivity and becoming in postmodernity.

*

An Absent System, An Absent Self

Spatial bewilderment in Lynch's films and Murakami's novels is connected to a search for a lost woman. All the central characters in these slipstream stories operate as detectives (Dale Cooper literally being an FBI agent). Murakami's novels are driven by the search for the central character's wife or girlfriend, or a girl crying somewhere in the hotel. Similarly in Lynch's *Twin Peaks* the search for the last hours of Laura Palmer drives the hours of a story that takes flight in many directions.

Whilst Dale Cooper's search for answers to Laura's death takes him all over the town

of Twin Peaks, it is in the Great Northern Hotel and the Other Place that parallels the interior of the hotel that answers are found. Searching for a lost woman in a hotel conforms to the noir overtones present in all of these narratives. What is also indicated via the lost woman is that masculine hotel experiences often suggest an absence of spatial mastery. Without home or woman (conflated in these narratives), man struggles in space, wandering around the labyrinth like Jameson lost in the Bonaventure.

Lynch, Murakami and Jameson can themselves be viewed as detectives, searching for an articulation of self and space within the hotel. There is a dark mystery for both Jameson and Murakami, some kind of answer about self and space in postmodernity, to be found in the hotel; or, if not an answer, at least a framework for a question. The hotel in these instances works as ideology in Althusser's sense of the term: a "representational structure which allows the individual subject to conceive or imagine his or her lived relationship to realities such as the social structure or the collective logic of history" (Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* 30). Jameson in *Postmodernism* attempts to "systematise something that is resolutely unsystematic and historiciz(e) something that is resolutely ahistorical . . . We have to name the system" (418). This is a debate, Jameson says, of the sixties, and is unexpectedly revived in the postmodernist debate. Murakami's central character also tries to find a system and a framework for his existence and for the workings of capitalism via the hotel. Both Murakami and Jameson, then, are searching for some kind of framework for the articulation of postmodern subjectivity and space, and both hang this investigation around the hotel.

In fictional narratives, the way to express what Jameson argues is an absence of a system, absence of totality, is to present multiple or parallel worlds. These

worlds are not entered in a conventional manner by any means, and the confusion about outside and inside, entry and exit, adds to the bewildering, unsystematic labyrinth of self, space and reality in late capitalism. Kevin Lynch's argument that "urban alienation is directly proportional to the mental unmappability of local cityscapes" (Jameson, *Postmodernism* 415) is evidenced in these narratives set in the microcosmic world of the hotel. The confusion in the hotel narratives in this chapter that occurs for both the readers and characters has to do with the confusion of inside/outside, entry and exit. These uncertainties in turn impact on comprehension of the self – the subject is fractured into several subjectivities, but these are not entirely split or parallel identities. Following de Certeau's idea that every spatial negotiation is a renegotiation of the mirror stage, this unsuccessful negotiation indicates a rethinking of the mirror stage as a movement away from identification as reflection to identification understood through proximity, through something or someone sitting slightly beside oneself.

*

Whether the parallel worlds of the hotel are used to explore many characters' lives or to depict slipstream realities, recurring in the narratives discussed in this chapter is the failed attempt to understand identity. This failure, rather than being articulated by the characters themselves, is placed onto the hotel: comprehension lies in the adjoining room (perhaps). There are also failed attempts to understand others; *Mystery Train* expresses this through hotel rooms with sounds running through the narratives. Strangers remain estranged from each other, despite being forced together

in hotel rooms, supporting both Kracauer's and Augé's theories that the hotel distances individuals from "actual life" and "human beings."

As the hotel space articulates these discontinuities between self and other, characters are depersonalised and become figures through which concepts are expressed, but are not complete, contained characters in their own right. The hotel space in *Lost Highway* is folded onto other spaces — Dick Laurant's home and the house in the desert — much like the folding subjectivity of the characters themselves. Through this slipstream negotiation of space, seen in most of Lynch and Murakami's work, we do not have comprehensive space.

Lynch's red curtains and Murakami's dry well and stain on the face provide portholes to other realities, but beyond these portholes lie other worlds where nothing is particularly clear. The image of Dale Cooper wandering through the red-curtained hallway in the Other Place, opening another curtain to find no more understanding than he already had, is a prime example of this. The hotel in Lynch's and Murakami's narratives is a graspable framework for parallel (or rather, quasi-parallel) worlds that slip between virtual and actual worlds, and presents for us — in a form or space that we can recognise — multiple subjectivity in postmodernity. The hotel, then, confirms Moretti's argument that space shapes narrative. Operating as it does in culture as well as text, the hotel slips between being a real and virtual world, thus it is the slipstream text's privileged vehicle (or space):

The tensionless people in the hotel lobby . . . represent the entire society, but not because transcendence here raises them up to its level; rather this is because the hustle and bustle of immanence is still hidden. Instead of guiding people beyond themselves, the mystery slips between the masks . . .

(Kracauer 296)



CHAPTER 3: A HOTEL ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

By going into a hotel, she sees, you leave the particulars of your own life and enter a neutral zone, a clean white room, where dying does not seem quite so strange.

— Michael Cunningham, *The Hours* (151)

Will I ever be in a hotel room again? How I wasted them, those rooms, that freedom from being seen.

— Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (60)

Gender continues to dominate the way in which men and women experience space in postmodernity. Evidence of this is provided by a recent survey conducted in Novotel hotels. The survey shows that women are fundamentally more competent in hotels than men: seventy-seven percent of those who lock themselves out of their rooms are men, and more than half of the men in these hotels “don’t know how to have a shower or bath without flooding the bathroom” (Mitchell 13). Whilst we have literature of men wandering around the corridors of hotels in many texts in this thesis, we have its “support” in a survey that sees women more capable of handling hotel space than men.

Space and subjectivity are intimately connected, as we have seen throughout this thesis so far. Men since Plato have seen space as inherently feminine, an argument supported by Jardine (88, 89). But what happens when women long for a secret space? This chapter examines texts where women go to hotels as guests to remove themselves from the gaze (implicitly male) of the world, and from their

homes, which are spaces of work. In her hotel room, each woman is able to lose her singular identity and be utterly alone. We see in one narrative a woman covering the hotel room mirror with a scarf, in order to block out self-criticism and get on with her work. Domestic work is left behind when women go to hotels: mess, waste, and general abjectivity are removed. These women go to hotels to be removed from the gaze, removed from domesticity. In the hotel rooms, their “secret places,” these women are able to become other. Thus this chapter sees the psychic and social drawn together through space. If we follow Kristeva’s theory that identifying the abject helps to define the subject, then without any abject (dirt, mess, waste), the self loses clear definition.

The texts examined in this chapter are Lucy Frost and Marion Halligan’s *Those Women Who Go to Hotels*; *The Hours* by Michael Cunningham; and (more briefly) Anita Brookner’s *Hotel du Lac* and Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*. It must be noted at the outset that, with the arguable exception of Atwood’s protagonist, it is white middle-class women who are focused on in this chapter. These women have a certain engagement with the hotel that other women do not: black women and working-class women are viewed in luxury hotels as staff or as women who do not belong as guests (Clifford *Routes* 17). Female prostitutes too are paradoxically frowned on when conspicuous in a hotel, although they are organised and required by the hotel for needy (male) guests.

If men are wandering around lost in a postmodern hotel as Jameson wanders around the Bonaventure, is it a woman that they hope to find? Is this search for topographical mastery also connected somehow to a Freudian quest for Mummy? I ask this rhetorical question because if it is others that are sought in masculine hotel stories, it is no-one and nothing that women crave when they go to hotels. If the hotel

is a site of projection of masculine fears — of mapping, of unhomeliness — it is also a site onto which women project their desires. If we are to take the texts I use in this chapter as evidence (and I do), then the desire women have when they go to hotels is to be utterly alone, utterly removed from anyone's gaze, from home, housework, from personal identity.

The women in this chapter use the hotel to become dislocated from a singular subjectivity and identity. In more abstract, Deleuzian terms, this is a desire to become other. Significantly, the intersection between the feminine narratives in this chapter and Deleuze's theory of becoming occurs through the feminist icon Virginia Woolf. Deleuze frequently discusses the work of Woolf, particularly her ideas of multiplicity, of saturating every atom. Jerry Aline Flieger points out that Woolf is "Deleuze's chosen poet of deterritorialisation, of itinerant moves, of becoming-imperceptible" (61). Some of the protagonists in the texts studied here actually bear a physical resemblance to Woolf (Clarissa in *The Hours* and Edith in *Hotel du Lac*). *The Hours* draws many intertextual links between Woolf's biography and fiction. Like Woolf, all of the women in these hotel narratives crave space of their own, and long to be removed from the heavy burden of the masculine gaze.

The hotel has always had a complex relationship with the gaze, and acts of looking. Wealthy women in hotels in the late nineteenth century were welcomed and important, but were part of the hotel furnishings. Brucken argues that the dominance of mirrors indicate the "merging of gender and display" (220), as I have noted in the Introduction. The male gaze is at work in these early hotel experiences for these middle and upper class women. Laura Mulvey's concept — man as bearer of the look and women as looked upon — has long been an important part of feminist theory. The reversal of this male gaze is experienced for postmodern women who go to

hotels. The hotel provides a room where women are removed entirely from anyone's gaze. Whilst there are mirrors in the hotel room which do invite points of self-reflection in Frost and Halligan's narrative, the whole desire in leaving home, in residing in a hotel room, is that it avoids the perpetual "look" that pervades life in public and semi-private spaces. Friedberg's concept of the mobilized and virtual gaze that dominates postmodern experience (as outlined in my Introduction) then is denied, not wanted, for these women who go to hotels. We see a historical shift from woman as commodity as displayed in the hotel, where she is put on show in the foyer of a nineteenth-century lobby, to woman as absent from anyone's gaze (even her own), in the postmodern experience of hotels.

In light of the dominant argument of this chapter — that it is privacy and the absence of home that is celebrated by women in hotels — it seems to be a paradox that the hotel is used as the new castle in popular culture. In the recent film *Maid In Manhattan* we see the "Cinderella" in the story (played by Jennifer Lopez) falling in love with a wealthy hotel guest, a senatorial candidate played by Ralph Fiennes. Lopez stars as a hotel maid who is mistaken for a glamorous hotel guest when a wealthy senatorial candidate accidentally walks into a room when she is trying on a guest's clothes. Lopez's character in reality is a poor hotel maid and a single mother. The prince falls in love with what he perceives as a contemporary "princess," goes through the process of uncovering the real maid, then uncovers the fact that he loves her for who she is. Like Cinderella, Lopez's character is a natural princess. It is the luxury hotel that enables her to climb the ladder of class and wealth and discover her rightful position in the world — as a guest rather than as a maid. The film *Pretty Woman* works in much the same way: a prostitute (played by Julia Roberts) is taken to a hotel by a wealthy customer (Richard Gere). He falls in love with her and she

stays with him at the luxury hotel for a week, after which he publicly declares his love for her. Clothes, new make-up and falling in love with a rich man reveal the prostitute's true princely qualities. In popular texts, the hotel is the space in which working class women can find their "true" place in the world — contemporary Cinderellas.

In other popular narratives, luxury hotel surroundings are used to dupe unknowing men into believing they are falling for wealthy women. Female characters in films such as *Intolerable Cruelty* (2002) and *Heartbreakers* (2001) use hotel rooms and hotel competence to falsely indicate personal wealth. These films persist with narratives where economic power belongs to men, and the characters in these films are old-fashioned *femmes fatales*, luring men into their webs. Their luring works in the hotel because it escapes the family structure. The *femmes fatales* in these films turn themselves into objects of consumption, as though they are for sale, like something in a lobby shop. They use the lure and libidinal apparatus of the hotel to stimulate businessmen into falling into their web.

The hotel can be seen to function a little like popular fiction itself — it highlights concerns women have about self, home and other spaces, but it does not always solve anything. There is not always a metaphysical or historical "solution" inherent in the hotel, because at some point, the hotel must be left and home must be returned to. Does this mean women are still in the transit-lounge? They do have to leave the hotel in some form, whether this is in a body bag, or just with bags packed, ready to go back home. The hotel only provides a temporary solution and a playing out of various problems with gender in postmodernity. One can either return home to the same spatial-social dynamics, or one keeps moving on. The texts I am using in this chapter explore how hotels function on a metaphysical level — what a stay in a

hotel room is perceived to do for feminine subjectivity. Not all women in hotels do the same thing, but in the novels examined in this chapter see women going to hotels to become something beyond their social self.

Travel, reinforces the power of home, as much as one tries to leave it behind. So in considering women's engagement with spaces other than the home, and women's experience of travel, we are forced to come back to women's relationship with the home. We can consider the Deleuzian proposition that one can travel without moving by dishabiting oneself, but this is something that is much harder to do for women at home. Would changing laundry habits and evening meals really fit in with Deleuze's ideas of dishabiting? There is a wealth of feminist cultural studies dealing with women's contemporary and historical experience of the home that I will examine below. A hotel room, I will argue, is required to dishabituate the feminine self, and to become other. This space is required for transformation or at least contemplation of the self. Even though it is a temporary solution — a transit lounge as it were — it is nonetheless a vital one. Thus women's experiences of hotels in this chapter becomes emblematic of the celebration of moving away from the home, just as the masculine hotel stories serve as analogons of the anxieties of moving away from the refrain. Rather than try to make the hotel into "home," women in these texts celebrate the fact that it is not home.

I have already argued that the difference between masculine and feminine experience of the hotel — the Bonaventure hotel to be precise — crystallizes the differences in gendered spatial experience generally. Griggers, Goldstein and Jameson use the Bonaventure hotel as a way of speaking more broadly about postmodern spatial experience and subjectivity, as I have already outlined in my Introduction. Roslyn Deutsche in "Men in Space" makes the claim that cognitive

mapping is an exclusively masculine problem, as it is due to a “fixed and unitary viewpoint of cognitive mapping (that) excludes female subjectivity” (128). Man lost in hotel space, and woman celebrating the space that is not home, is the simple but precise way to condense the sharp gender division that occurs in hotel experience. This division then unfolds to other spatial experiences and other concepts of gendered subjectivity.

Before drawing on textual examples, it is helpful to examine the dominant debates surrounding women, space and home. I argue through textual representations that women staying in hotels appear to be liberated by this unhomey hotel space. It is precisely the fact that the hotel is not home that is celebrated by women. The hotel room offers women in these texts the time and space to transform themselves, to become something other than their social identities. This idea taken to abstraction leads to Deleuze’s concept of becoming a Body without Organs (BwO) — the ultimate image of an absence of a singular, gazed-upon, gendered subject. This is a concept I deal with towards the end of this chapter. However, as noted above, the transformation women in hotels undergo is in fact merely a temporary and historical liberation, not a sustained or metaphysical solution. Home is always there to return to. This is the nature of the hotel experience. Nonetheless, the isolated, solitary nature of “a room of one’s own” is celebrated in the narratives in this chapter, rather than lamented. As I have previously noted, postmodern spatial experience tends to be characterised by masculine anxiety in labyrinthine space. The female celebration of solitude needs to be acknowledged as a significant postmodern experience, or postmodern trope.

This chapter seeks to place female experience in postmodernity and at the same time highlights the need for a new way to define contemporary experience. In

attempting this, I am building on the work of other feminist critics. My aim in this chapter can be thought of in terms of Alice Jardine's "gynesis," defined in the Introduction. As Judith Butler argues in *Bodies That Matter*, it is possible both to use and to critique the term "woman" as "without this, feminism loses its democratising potential through refusing to engage . . . and become informed by . . . the exclusions which put it into play" (xi). It is with this in mind that I undertake a separate chapter on women in space. I acknowledge that separate chapters perpetuate difference, but there are such sharp, sexed distinctions in hotel literature that gender considerations cannot be ignored.

It is precisely the dominance of gender roles that women in hotels retreat from. The hotel room provides a secret place removed from all the kinds of gazes in postmodernity; from the male gaze (Mulvey) to the mobilized and virtual gaze (Friedberg) to gazing on the self in the mirror. According to psychoanalytic feminist theory discussed by Braidotti in "Teratologies," women caught in the masculine, or phallogocentric gaze "tend to have a negative self-image and dread what they see when they look in the mirror" (167). Braidotti draws on Woolf and Sylvia Plath to support this, as they "saw monsters emerging from the depths of their mirrors" (167). Whilst none of the women in these texts experience these extremes in the mirror, they do seek a private hotel room, without mirrors, without the gaze of the outside world, as a way of becoming Other. Without the presence of anyone's gaze, these women go beyond their social definitions.

The notion of women as somehow entwined with space has been considered by both "mainstream" postmodern theory and feminist French theory: Irigaray's psychoanalytic concept of the chora both refers to an internal, womb-like aspect of the pre-Oedipal subject and to space. The chora has long been connected to the home,

as it is a space that is, for men, connected with woman — wife, mother, womb . . . home. An artistic expression of this idea comes in the form of Vito Acconci's installation art *Adjustable Wall Bra*, a basic form of shelter where one of the bra cups is fixed to the wall and the other leans against the wall (Vidler, *Warped Space* 139). As argued in the Introduction, the male theorists of the postmodern condition operate like film noir detectives, and perceive spaces as feminine, as receptacles (Boyer 100). Christine Boyer sees Edward Soja and Mike Davis as transferring "images of feminine deviance onto spatial uncertainties and dangerous encounters of LA" (100). Postmodern experience, for Soja, Jameson, Davis and others has been emblematised by masculine concerns of cognitive mapping.

This tendency of male theorists to equate space itself with the feminine has meant that women have ironically been denied space for themselves. Gillian Rose argues that place is "understood by human geographers in terms of maternal Woman — nurturing, natural, but forever lost," and quotes Irigaray's remark that "the mother woman remains the place separated from its 'own' place, a place deprived of a place of its own" (62). This concurs with Woolf's belief that on practical and metaphysical levels women need their autonomous spaces. Woolf, in her groundbreaking lecture *A Room of One's Own*, writes that

a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction;
and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of woman
and the true nature of fiction unsolved. (4)

The desire for women to have a place of their own, a place away from the work of home, is met for many women on both a practical and metaphysical level in a hotel room.

As I have previously stated, many of the problems involved in speaking of hotel space comes from the home-basis of spatial theory. Feminist spatial theory has countered this somewhat, by writing of the problematics both of masculine spatial theory that celebrates the home, and problems within the politics of the home itself. In their essay “What’s Home Got To Do With It?” in *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*, Biddy Martin and Chandra Talpade Mohanty use the image of “home” as a way of speaking of the complexities of feminism. They attempt to unsettle the notion of feminism as an all-encompassing home, and also the assumptions that there are discrete, coherent and absolutely separate identities — there are homes within feminism, so to speak, based on absolute divisions between various sexual, racial or ethnic identities. (192)

Martin and Mohanty intend to reclaim the notion of home and community from the Right. Thus their essay on home ranges from concrete, commonly understood notions of home, to the separate distinctive “homes” in feminist thought, as well as certain comfortable mind sets. Martin and Mohanty use Minnie Bruce Pratt’s essay “Identity: Skin Blood Heart,” an essay on self, home and feminism, to demonstrate the way that geography, demographics and architecture indicate the fundamentally relational nature of identity and negations on which assumptions of a singular, fixed and essential self are based. Martin and Mohanty quote Pratt’s early conception of the self which is likened to entrapment or a bounded fortress: “I was shaped by what I didn’t see, or didn’t notice, on those streets . . . who should/shouldn’t be in the jail” (200). Pratt rejects her father’s world view and searches for a new understanding of self and place/space. This results in moments of terror where Pratt is “homesick with nowhere to go” (202). Pratt searches for a “new place,” new forms of community not based on “home,” not places that unconsciously replicate the conditions of home. It

will be seen in the literary examples in this chapter that this quest to find new forms of home, for white middle class women, occurs in hotels.

Feminist theorists such as Janet Wolff rethink the metaphors of movement that are generally masculine ones. Wolff's work on women, theory and travel raises the question, "what is the link between women's exclusion from travel, and uses of notions of travel in cultural theory and analysis? (And then: Will modified metaphors of travel avoid the risk of androcentrism in theory?)" ("On The Road Again." 230). Wolff argues, "just as the practices and ideologies of actual travel operate to exclude or pathologize women, so the use of that vocabulary as metaphor necessarily produces androcentric tendencies in theory" (224). For Wolff, a shift in the theoretical debate can be achieved not by replacing hotel with motel (which is Morris's strategy in her essay "At Henry Parks Motel"), but by reconfiguring images of travel. Man leaving home in search of excitement and adventure is a commonplace modernist travel trope. We find in the literature examined in this chapter a very different trope: a search for a removal of the gaze, the search for a secret place away from home and identity in the hotel room. This is a search not so much about travel as such, but about movement by the smallest of margins. It is the hotel room itself, rather than the country it resides in, that is longed for by women who go to hotels.

Identity Erasure in the Hotel

For the women in the texts examined here, what is desired in the hotel room is to be beyond singular subjectivity, beyond sex (gender and having sex), and beyond the work and expectations of home. This desire could be framed as Deleuze's becoming-woman (a concept outlined in Chapter One), but then the obvious question has to be asked: can a woman become-woman? Becoming-woman is a process one

presumes can only be undertaken by men. However, because the concept refers to the process of becoming Other — becoming something beyond the singular, contained, organised self — it can also encompass becoming-woman for women. As Buchanan points out, the term becoming-woman “would see the end of both categories of Woman and woman, but would do so in the interest of a new society that no longer used or needed such divisions” (113). It is perhaps a term chosen not only for its controversy, but because Deleuze and Guattari are men, and becoming-woman sees movement and change by the smallest margins, hence man to woman (rather than man to animal). Woman does not become-man because man is the standard “version” of what it is to be human, according to Deleuze. The “master subject” is white, bourgeois, heterosexual and masculine (Rose 6). The women who go to hotels in this chapter long to become more than their sex, just as in Deleuze’s theory there is the desire to be more than man.

The term becoming-woman has for some time been a tricky and loaded one in feminist discourse, regardless of Deleuze’s utopian, genderless intentions.⁴ Deleuze and Guattari themselves eventually abandoned the metaphor “becoming-woman” because it was “often taken as, precisely, a model — and especially as a model for women” (Jardine 212). It is much more appropriate here to draw on another of Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts, the Body without Organs. Body without Organs is a body without defined boundaries, without named and separated sections. It is like the body before the mirror stage, before it has been organised and labelled. It is “a body that retains nothing but intensities that make up uncertain zones, that traverse these zones at full speed and confront the powers in them” (*Essays Critical and Clinical*

⁴ Verena Andermatt Conley points out that feminist theorists (including Griggers, Grosz and Patricia Pisters) are now rethinking Deleuze’s concept of becoming-woman. Andermatt Conley finds intersections between becoming-woman and Hélène Cixous’ work on the Newly Born Woman, “who continually engenders herself through passages of the other in herself and of herself in the other” (22).

131). This Deleuzian concept is clearly linked to the broader concept of becoming; indeed, it is where becoming takes place. In the literary analysis below, I indicate how this concept operates as a way of articulating the absence of self and gaze longed for by women in hotels.

The Desire for a Room of One's Own

Longing for space that is not home is central to *Hotel du Lac* by Anita Brookner. The novel centres around Edith, an author who requires a discrete hotel away from home, where she has caused some sort of undisclosed scandal. Appropriately for a space-centred narrative, Edith bears a strong physical resemblance to Woolf. Much of the beginning of the book contemplates the requirements of a good small hotel. It must be discrete, half empty, and one must be referred to it rather than find it through advertising. Whilst it is not directly acknowledged, the hotel is a lot like Edith: discrete, out of style, conservative, and a little empty. Edith lacks passion for her husband (with clear Lacanian plays on the lack in “Lac”), and is having an affair with someone else. She does not continue her affair in the hotel, but goes there instead in order to avoid interaction with others and to write. Edith takes a writerly approach to the other hotel guests, observing rather than interacting with them. She ponders the eating habits of the various guests and their relationships, but mostly spends time alone in her room, either writing or preparing to go out. The hotel initially provides space in which she can write, and also provides the opportunity to evaluate her past. The hotel creates, as Liana Piehler argues, a space of “possibility and fantasy exclusive to Edith Hope” (135). Once the hotel becomes personalised, though, and other guests learn who Edith is, the hotel becomes an impossible place

for her to live. The end of the novel sees Edith going home again with a revised understanding of what “home” means:

When the requisite form had been found, she sat down at a small glass table in the lobby. “Simmonds, Chiltern Street, London W1”, she wrote. “Coming home”. But, after a moment she thought this was not entirely accurate and, crossing out the words “Coming home”, wrote simply “Returning.” (184)

Edith requires the hotel room to find a space removed from the gaze of the world and to retreat from home-life. Edith’s time in the hotel means that home is no longer the same place she left.

The desire for a room of one’s own is also present throughout *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood. This science-fiction novel is saturated with a desire to be alone in an Orwellian society that monitors every move of the central character, Offred. Offred does have an affair in a hotel room, but prior to this she fantasises about being in such a place, a secret place that would see a complete removal of others’ gaze: “Will I ever be in a hotel room again? How I wasted them, those rooms, that freedom from being seen” (60). Whilst the hotel is only briefly mentioned in the novel, it is raised here because it is another narrative that emphasises a longing for privacy, secret space and removal from the gaze of the outside world. The idea of a male gaze is allegorised in *The Handmaid’s Tale* in a science fiction future, where fertile women are simultaneously imprisoned and doted upon in order that they might provide children for the future. Even in Offred’s own room in the compound, she feels she is always watched. The hotel-room fantasy for her is a freedom from the gaze.

Liberation from the omnipresent gazes of self and others is also desired in *Those Women Who Go to Hotels*. This book is a witty, chatty travel story that touches

on the metaphysics of the everyday via hotels. It begins with Frost and Halligan's conversation about how much times have changed for women. In Frost's mother's day, "nice" women did not go to hotels alone. Now, Frost remarks, women use all kinds of hotels for all kinds of things. As this description shows, *Those Women Who Go to Hotels* is not a work of fiction but is partly an autobiographical work and partly a consideration of women travellers in the twentieth century. Frost and Halligan's talk of their own hotel stories also leads to consideration of wider changes for women in the late twentieth century, ranging from work to sex. It is via the hotel as a nomos, as a smooth space between leaving and returning home, that domestic life is stepped away from, and feminist progression is considered. Thus it is precisely a becoming.

Frost and Halligan's book operates as a dialogue between two friends exchanging stories. The point of view seems to sit between first, second and third person. Conversations are not placed in quotation marks, but freely flow between small introductions, for example:

You do get a bit toilet-centred when you're travelling, don't you.

Definitely, Lucy agrees, especially after some revolting experiences – which I don't even want to call to mind, much less describe... (35)

The effect of the style of the memoir means that the experiences of Frost and Halligan run into each other. It does not particularly matter who is speaking, as both are sharing their individual-yet-common middle-class female experiences about travel, home, work and spatial experience. The book is framed through time and space: it is structured around seven days in a Parisian hotel. The hotel then provides the framework for a network of memories and thoughts that would otherwise simply be a collection of conversations.

The concreteness of domestic objects in this text is a catalyst for consideration of the metaphysical. Frost and Halligan quote Rupert Brooke's poem "The Great Lover," in which the poet lists the objects he loves — "White plates and cups, clean-gleaming / Ringed with blue lines . . ." — but he "fails to name the beautiful boys he really loves" (79). Similarly it is the concreteness of the hotel that invites contemplation of much more than space. The kinds of sheets used in a hotel invite Frost and Halligan's thoughts on the body. What they love about the hotel is that it provides freedom from the body:

Luckily I remembered that the whole point of the book is that we are not interested in hotels as places of sexual encounter but as places where we function as career women and are safe from things like sex if we want to be.

In other words, it's the not-sex in hotels that is more interesting. (104)

It is solitude and disconnection that these women crave in hotels, not communion.

The main refrain of the book is, correspondingly, the celebration of the not-home of hotels:

Much of the pleasure I take in hotels, she [Lucy] says, comes from their not belonging to me. Someone else is responsible. I don't have to do a thing.

Can a man who has never run a house understand how delightful this is? (97)

Near the conclusion of their book, Frost and Halligan comment on how quickly their hotel becomes home at the end of their seven-day visit to Paris, providing evidence of the propensity to reterritorialize. Through rituals such as bringing in dinner, washing clothes in the hotel room and other savvy travelling acts, the two women create a new territory around them. The acts of bringing in their own food and wine come to stand for home value in Deleuze's sense of the term (outlined in Chapter One). The hotel is

home without the burdens of home, which for Frost and Halligan comprise housework and responsibility, and the baggage that comes with ownership.

Are we actually seeing in Frost and Halligan's pleasure in hotels, then, simply a construction of a longing for a home that is run by domestic servants? Not exactly, because it is the abandonment of responsibility, of having to care for a certain space, that is the true pleasure Frost and Halligan find in hotels, whether they are not scrubbing their own toilets or not ordering someone else to do it. The home that is created by Frost and Halligan in their hotel room is not the kind of home that requires work and interaction with family and friends; it is a new version of home, one devoid of community, but allowing a space in which to think.

Frost and Halligan also revel in the absence of the gaze in hotels. The subject of mirrors is raised in the book several times. The authors contemplate whether or not to believe flattering mirrors or ugly ones with bad lighting. When Frost is working in her hotel room, she covers the mirror at her desk, not wanting the distraction of her image. The removal of others' gazes in her hotel room is replaced by Frost's own critical analysis of her hair and skin. When Frost covers the mirror with a scarf so she can continue working, she shuts out her definition as a woman of a certain age, in a certain place, at a certain time. Frost is shutting out all gazes and definitions, gesturing towards the concept of a Body without Organs.

With its emphasis on removing the daily and domestic self via hotels, *Those Women Who Go to Hotels* does not contain the same kind of literary, poetic becoming Other that we see in Michael Cunningham's work later in this chapter. But the hotel finds Frost and Halligan at least gesturing towards this. Desired here, in this hotel room devoid of mirrors and other people, is a Body without Organs — a body not broken up into organs, limbs, face. This is an image of someone going further and

further away from the gaze. This seems like a simple idea: one is distracted when working by a mirror image of the self. It has echoes, however, of Woolf's and Plath's fear of confronting the depths of their mirrors. Also contained within Frost's removal of the gaze is the idea of self as monad, someone going further and further into a private self without anyone's gaze upon her, least of all her own. This is what is longed for and achievable in the hotel room, and is taken further in *The Hours*, as we shall see in a moment.

Residing in hotels invites an intersection between singular and multiple experiences, between past and present. Frost and Halligan comment that the better the hotel is, the less evidence there is of previous guests. Much fuss is made by them of clean sheets in hotels too, as though erasure even of one's own previous night is vital to the almost sterile non-home of the hotel. Despite this physical erasure, however, the hotel room invites memories and stories of past hotel experiences. It is as though somehow the un-home of the hotel recreates the previous sensations of exciting, youthful experiences. The effect of this in the text is a kind of "actualisation" of past and present. The present hotel stay serves as a springboard for contemplation of the past, so the two selves in *Those Women Who Go to Hotels* become multiple, intersecting with their past lives and lovers. The subjects in the narrative become the sum of their perceptions. This recalls Deleuze's writing on the fluid subject in Woolf's work: "The resonance between past and present makes possible a virtual perception of the very essence of the sensation: the sensation as it is there to be viewed beyond any personal past or present" (Colebrook 156). It is the hotel room that enables the resonance between past and present, and is thus a perpetual present poised between, but not beyond, the past and the future. It resonates clearly for both Frost and Halligan, and in turn for the readers who are invited to

contemplate past (mis)adventures in hotel rooms. Perhaps this is because the hotel room is already in one sense generic; it is not filled with things that will confuse memory or trigger it in other directions. It has a bed, a table, room service, a bathroom . . . all the elements that past hotel rooms had with past lovers.

Despite — or perhaps because of — the flood of memories of past encounters that the hotel rooms produces, it is a site of isolation. The loneliness that hotel rooms invite because of their isolation is something briefly glossed by Frost and Halligan:

Being alone in a hotel at night can invite depression. The hotel room can stand for the world at large, with ghostly metaphysical consequences. Why ... must I struggle through life as if through an unceasing progress of hotels? ... Why can't I stay still and create a space where I know I belong and can feel "at home"? In the daylight I know that "at home" is a necessary fiction for everyone, but at night in a hotel it can seem a personal matter, a gap yawning only for me. (171)

Frost and Halligan's comment here highlights not only the loneliness of hotel rooms, but also the complexity of the concept of home, that it is a "necessary fiction for everyone." Like Minnie Bruce Pratt, Frost here experiences homesickness in the hotel with nowhere to go. Frost's brief lament about hotels and home highlights the complexity of what constitutes home for a middle-class white feminist who wants little to do with home in its traditional form. This is the only moment, however, at which Frost and Halligan's hotel stay invites anxiety, and it occurs on day six of their seven-day stay. The solitary paragraph this anxiety is given means that this lament is only a gloss. The text focuses instead on the joy of distance from lovers, domesticity and community attained via the hotel, and on fragments of hotel experiences past.

Becoming Other in a Hotel Room

Transformation of the self via space is placed onto the hotel yet again in Michael Cunningham's *The Hours*. This is a novel that intersects with Woolf's modernist novel *Mrs Dalloway* whilst simultaneously creating Woolf as one of the three characters in the novel. In many ways *The Hours* is a metatext — it is a novel about the process and power of reading — but it simultaneously avoids grand narratives. The emphasis in *The Hours* is on tiny moments, and the way in which literature and space slows down these moments. It takes place over just one day in three women's lives. These women span time and space in the twentieth century: Virginia Woolf writes *Mrs Dalloway* whilst living in the English countryside in 1923, Laura Brown is a pregnant housewife in Los Angeles in the 1950s with a small son named Richie, and Clarissa is a gay New York literary editor in the present day. The events of Clarissa's day revolve around the preparation for a party for her gay, dying friend Richard (the adult Richie), who, like Septimus in *Mrs Dalloway*, commits suicide by jumping out of a window. The three women's stories alternate chapter by chapter. All are linked in some way by Woolf, and all the women seek out spaces where they can be truly alone.

The novel is written in the spirit of Woolf's own work, in the sense that women are connected by objects, by the everyday, and by attempts at creativity and perfection either through writing or domesticity. Woolf contemplates puddings and dealing with servants and her insanity whilst writing about Mrs Dalloway putting on a perfect party. Laura spends the morning attempting (with Richie) to make a perfect birthday cake for her husband. Clarissa spends the morning looking for the right flowers with which to fill the house for her dying friend's party. The party is to celebrate both his life and an award for his poetry. Just as we have seen in *Those*

Women Who Go to Hotels, The Hours is full of concrete, singular moments that deal with the profundity and weight of everyday domesticity, of objects and markers of time:

Richard's chair, particularly, is insane, or rather, it is the chair of someone who, if not actually insane, has let things slide so far, has gone such a long way towards the exhausted relinquishment of ordinary care taking — simple hygiene, regular nourishment — that the difference between insanity and hopelessness is difficult to pinpoint. (58)

Richard's chair is an example of the modernist intersection between the material and metaphysical. Yet he sits in it, dying of a disease (AIDS) that is firmly a part of the postmodern era. At the same time, Richard's character is interwoven with Septimus's character in *Mrs Dalloway*. Septimus is a young man who suicides as the result of shell-shock from serving in World War One. Thus modernist and postmodernist concepts are present in both physical and metaphysical features of *The Hours*.

The women in this book are all granted a similar number of pages. The novel clarifies which woman's chapter it is by the headings "Mrs Woolf," "Mrs Dalloway," "Mrs Brown." The effect of using "Mrs" is twofold: first, it reminds the reader of a woman's place in the patriarchal order, that she does not have her own name, but her husband's. Secondly, it disconnects and formalises the characters so that they seem less like specific individuals and more like examples of a broader category. What this means is that the three women share concerns that are common with each other and with women generally. These women are at once single and multiple. They enter a zone of proximity crucial to Deleuze's notion of becoming. Through the term "Mrs," the three women in the novel "find the zone of proximity, indiscernability,

indifferentiation where one can no longer be distinguished from a woman”

(*Literature and Life* 1).

The three women have a conversation with each other, through the work of Woolf. They also connect through the young and old Richie/Richard. Each woman’s “voice” or point of view is constructed through the same techniques. The following lines, for example, describe a simple event of the day: “There are still the flowers to buy. Clarissa feigns exasperation (though she loves doing errands like this), leaves Sally cleaning the bathroom, and runs out, promising to be back in half an hour” (9). The connection between the three characters through a single voice can be seen by comparing these lines to the first lines of the opening chapter for Mrs. Woolf: “Virginia awakens. This might be another way to begin, certainly; with Clarissa [Dalloway] going on an errand on a day in June . . .” (29). Each narrative is written in present tense and third-person personal and each describes the women involved in a similar task. Parallels such as these, like the use of the title “Mrs,” have the effect of depersonalising the characters, making them sound like fragments of one voice. The title “Mrs” is what they would use to introduce themselves to a stranger, say, a desk clerk, at a hotel. It also enhances the parallel narrative strands of the novel: each woman is perpetually connected to the others in ways that are unified by the reader, rather than the characters themselves. Cunningham’s style is formal even at the level of the sentence. Short simple sentences are used, with the effect of creating distance or at least a slight dis-ease for the reader: The thoughts are very intimate yet are distanced by the use of third person, for example: “Laura watches him through the meandering vine of cigarette smoke. She will not go upstairs, and return to her book. She will remain. She will do all that’s required, and more” (48). The wider effect of these similarly constructed sentences in each separate story is again that the three

women sound like fragments of a collective enunciation. As the novel progresses, it becomes clear that these women are enunciating a desire to become other, to go beyond their external subjectivity, and this can only happen through spaces that are not-home.

The characters perpetually feel the weight of other women's lives here, a notion which is conveyed by the intertextual nature of the narratives. Just as Mrs Dalloway feels the weight and layers of the city beneath her in Woolf's novel *Mrs Dalloway*, so Woolf feels this in *The Hours*. But it is the longing to become *disconnected* that paradoxically unites the three women. They all long to escape their domestic world, and finally it is Laura Brown's hotel room in Figueroa Street that comes to embody this. Whilst the other women in *The Hours* do not literally enter the hotel, for all three it is private space beyond the home, which is longed for. Jessica Benjamin argues that woman lacks a desire of her own and a symbol of that desire (78). Benjamin is referring to the absence of a feminine phallic symbol. However, this novel and others in this chapter suggest that what women desire is space to become other.

For the purpose of this discussion, what is most notable about the intertextual nature of the novel is the way it enables the parallel narratives to operate spatially: the parallel and intertextual narratives of *The Hours* are modelled like the very space the women — Virginia, Laura and Clarissa — require; that is, the hotel. Each woman slightly overhears voices and stories from the lives of the other two, but each story, and each life is structured separately, almost as separate rooms. These rooms are called "Mrs Woolf," "Mrs Brown," and "Mrs Dalloway." Thus *The Hours*, like narratives in the previous chapter, emphasises parallel worlds of existence using a style that can be spatially structured as a hotel. These are not straight parallels;

instead they are wavy lines, where the voice and experience of one woman is heard through walls of another room. This occurs philosophically to the character of Laura, who is transported to a parallel world whilst reading *Mrs Dalloway* in her hotel room: “Laura Brown is trying to lose herself. No, that’s not it exactly – she is trying to keep herself by gaining entry into a parallel world. She lays the book face down on her chest . . .” (37).

Transformative possibilities, then, are offered to Laura through reading. Laura’s action supports Tania Modleski’s theory that reading fiction functions as a disappearing act for women: Modleski argues that romance helps female readers transcend the “divided self,” a self that must continually watch herself (37). But for Laura in *The Hours*, reading at home is not enough. It is only in a hotel that Laura can transform herself through reading. This is the only space that allows complete absolution from her social roles as woman, wife, and mother. In a hotel room Laura is free from the “male gaze”:

If she goes to a store or a restaurant, she’ll have to perform — she’ll have to pretend to need or want something that does not, in any way, interest her ... If she parks her car somewhere and sits there, a woman alone, she’ll be vulnerable to criminals and to those who’ll try to protect her from criminals ...

Even a library would be too public, as would a park. (145)

A hotel room is Laura’s only option. It removes her from all social roles, except for the one she must assume when she enters the hotel lobby, books a room and tells the clerk that her husband will be following her shortly. A woman alone at a hotel would seem to strange in Los Angeles in 1949. Laura is instantly transported to a world far from her home but it is simultaneously just down the road from her home. All that is required for becoming, Deleuze says, is movement by the smallest of margins. This

movement down the road to the hotel is an excellent example of this Deleuzian becoming. Laura goes beyond her social roles into the world of Virginia Woolf, in a room entirely of her own.⁵

Thus it is through literature and space that Laura Brown becomes other, in Deleuze's sense of the term. Both offer freedom from the roles of wife and mother that she plays throughout the day: "She is so far away from her life. It was so easy... she could do what she wanted to, anything at all" (149, 150). The hotel room even enables Laura to develop a parallel self:

The decision to check into this hotel, to rise in this elevator, seems to have rescued her the way morphine rescues a cancer patient, not by eradicating the pain, but simply by making the pain cease to matter. It's almost as if she's accompanied by an invisible sister, a perverse woman full of rage and recriminations, a woman humiliated by herself, and it is this woman, this unfortunate sister, and not Laura, who needs comfort and silence. Laura could be a nurse, ministering to the pain of another. (149)

It is both the hotel space and the novel (*Mrs Dalloway*) that enable Laura to leave herself, and place the rage outside her. This could be read as classic Freudian displacement, but could on the other hand be seen as a process of losing singularity, as the hotel space and the novel gives Laura the ability to be and do "anything at all" (150). *Mrs Dalloway* provides not just the opportunity for Laura to experience characterisation, but to experience what it might be like to be the author, to be Virginia Woolf: "It seems, somehow, that she has left her own world and entered the

⁵ The hotel Laura enters in *The Hours* was the site of an actual existing building: the Normandy Hotel was located amongst rapidly rising buildings in Figueroa Street, in downtown Los Angeles. It seems to be, rather poignantly, the hotel that became the Bonaventure hotel (as the location specified is precisely the Bonaventure's address), thus making the connection between modernism and postmodernism more prominent in the novel. This early version of the Bonaventure also links this particular hotel quite uncannily to the heavily theorised postmodern space, emphasising this hotel's significance as the cornerstone for considering contemporary space.

realm of the book . . . She imagines that Virginia Woolf, herself, the drowned woman, the genius, might in death inhabit a place like this one” (150). The hotel room then not only offers privacy, but possibilities for another life or even death.

Laura longs to become something other than herself, and sees the beginnings of this in the hotel room reading *Mrs Dalloway*. She wants to occupy a “twilight zone,” but is trapped by her role as wife: “She must get through this night, and then tomorrow morning . . . in these rooms [her home], with nowhere else to go” (205). Laura begins to think of the entanglement of literature and death: “this is probably how it must feel to be a ghost. It’s a little like reading, isn’t it — the same sensations of knowing people” (215). So, like a ghost, Laura is taken by literature to the twilight zone of not being singular, but, like Ahab becoming Moby Dick, Laura becomes Mrs Dalloway, or becomes the author Virginia Woolf. For these women it is in “real life” that they have to stay in character: when Virginia Woolf tells her cook that “‘A lamb pie sounds lovely,’ she reminds herself that, ‘she must work to stay in character... do not think of the face in the mirror . . .’” (Cunningham 85). In these women’s lives away from their domestic space, they are able to become other. However, as Laura is unable to continue to perform expected roles in her “real life,” the only option apparent to her is to become a ghost, to commit suicide in the hotel room. Laura contemplates this action as she reads of Mrs Dalloway reading something and contemplating suicide, creating a kind of ‘droste’ effect, where the concepts work like a picture of a picture of a picture. This effect points towards Laura becoming multiple, becoming something other than a singular subject.

All three women in *The Hours* want an absence from performing gendered roles. And the desire for becoming other is always spatial. For Mrs Woolf it is to go to the city. For Mrs Brown it is the hotel room, and for Mrs Dalloway it is “another

home . . . where there is only the essence of Clarissa.” The longing for a *nomos*, for a space outside of the home that liberates the singular, gendered self, connects the three women in the novel. This longing then is a kind of collective enunciation for space beyond the home and subjectivity beyond gender. It is only the hotel room, however, that effectively provides the space required to become other. Virginia and Clarissa attempt to do this, but in the end it is something they can only contemplate. Virginia is found at the train station by her husband and is brought back home. Clarissa stands in her kitchen and thinks about becoming other for a moment, then returns to her normal roles. Thus it is only the hotel space that truly enables the kind of becoming, or absence of singularity, that is usually found through writing.

Clarissa does not initially seem to require a change in space to the same degree that her earlier twentieth-century counterparts do. Her house is her own, and her lesbian relationship and her temporal location in the late twentieth century mean that a man is not the head of the household. She has then, as Woolf desired, a room of her own — in fact, a house of her own — and a “new” form of family and community. Even so, at one point, Clarissa is utterly dislocated from her home:

This is not her kitchen at all. This is the kitchen of an acquaintance, pretty enough but not her taste, full of foreign smells. She lives elsewhere. She lives in a room where a tree gently taps against the glass as someone touches a needle to a phonograph record . . . Clarissa recognises these things but stands apart from them. She feels the presence of her own ghost; the part of her at once most indestructibly alive and least distinct; the part that owns nothing, that observes with wonder and detachment, like a tourist in a museum . . . (91-92)

The rest of the passage continues with Clarissa longing for a place out of her life, where “She could simply leave it and return to her other home . . . where there is only the essence of Clarissa . . .” (92). This feeling for Clarissa then “moves on . . . It simply moves on, like a train that stops at a small country station, stands for a while, and then continues out of sight” (92). Thus, despite Clarissa’s surroundings that have been of her own choosing, despite her life not dominated by a husband and domesticity, she too longs for a *nomos*, a space away from home. Her desire to find the essence of herself can only be expressed spatially, as “her other home.” Her distance from others is much like the vast distance Laura Brown feels between herself and her husband and son. Laura needs a space away from home, and thus requires the hotel. It could be said that Clarissa then needs a hotel room too, and that what connects the three women in the novel is the longing to be not at home. It is not then a longing for connections with others that these women desire, it is not deterritorialisation in a Deleuzian sense, where one territory becomes something else. These women long for is *absolute deterritorialisation*, “a liberation from all connection and organization” (Colebrook xxii). As Colebrook points out, “such a process can only be thought or imagined, rather than achieved” (xxii). Hence Clarissa’s thought moves on, and Woolf and Laura Brown attempt suicide. The hotel room for Laura comes to stand for the possibility of being utterly disconnected at least for a few hours, if not permanently.

Proust wrote that delving into a novel is like visiting a hotel room (201). When Laura enters the hotel room and enters the novel *Mrs Dalloway*, the two incidences are written as similar, temporary experiences, and also as transforming ones. Whilst the hotel room is an impermanent solution, there are permanent changes as a result of the act of reading and being alone: the mother (Laura) leaves her

husband and child and begins a new life in a new town with a new job, appropriately as a librarian. The hotel provides the way out for Laura, who (despite her suicide attempt) eventually finds a life outside her marriage. It is the space that provides the bridge between home and other kinds of possibilities. Woolf in the novel also wants to leave home, husband and domesticity just as Laura does. If she had the same option of a hotel room in the 1930s, would the “real” Woolf have survived? Their stories offer the same limited solutions to the agonies of domesticity for middle-class women: die or abandon the family. The hotel, however, offers Laura a porthole to another reality, to transformation, just as reading modernist literature does. Psychic and spatial changes lead her to consider other possibilities. The life Laura chooses after her attempted suicide and subsequent birth of her daughter is a life away from her family, in another town, working as a librarian and living alone. Braidotti describes reading a text as a process of letting go, of a space of pure identity (*Patterns of Dissonance* 110). This indeed is what is longed for and achieved when Laura enters her hotel room with a novel in her bag.

*

Women have been part of the hotel spectacle since the nineteenth century. In popular fiction, the hotel as the new castle transforms working-class American women into Cinderellas. This kind of popular narrative is symptomatic of the belief in the ability of capitalist space and structure to shift the individual to a higher class. In the literary narratives in this chapter, the hotel is also used as a transformative space, but one that enables women to become something beyond social identity. Rather than becoming a spectacle, as in *Maid in Manhattan* or *Pretty Woman*, the

women in the literary examples enter the hotel room to avoid the gaze. Clearly, not all women go to hotels for the same reasons, and this chapter does make the distinction between middle-class women who go to hotels in literary texts, and women who work in hotels and use the space as a vehicle to move from “worker” to “guest.” Uniting the two kinds of female-centred narratives is the belief in the hotel’s ability to change aspects of the self. In popular narratives, the goal is to go up social ranks, whereas in the middle-class fiction, the women long to escape their social identities.

The connection between the psychic and the social, between the material and metaphysical, is evident throughout the literature in this chapter. The hotel as a clean and neutral space is invariably commented on in both *The Hours* and *Those Women Who Go to Hotels*. The hotel rooms have an absence of the abject; they are devoid, not just of dirt and dust typically present in homes, but are clean-as-new. Whilst this seems to be a solely material aspect to the hotel, this removal of abject matter from these women’s lives (albeit temporary) has wider effects on subjectivity. For Laura Brown the removal of dirt, housework and family life means she can think about dying in the “neutral space” of the hotel room. For Frost and Halligan much of the pleasure found in hotels is the absence from housework. If identifying the abject helps to define the subject, then without any abject, the self loses clear definition.

The longing for definition beyond singular and social identity is strengthened by the avoidance of mirrors in the female hotel narratives. Without the defining presence of either the abject or mirrors, these women are able to go beyond their socially constructed identities:

Laura occupies a twilight zone of sorts; a world composed of London in the twenties, of a turquoise hotel room, and of this car, driving down this familiar street. She is herself and not herself. (Cunningham 187)

If in turn the hotel room is sought because of the removal of the (phallogocentric) gaze of self and others, as indeed it is in these texts, then we also see the hotel room stripping these women of their social roles and identity. This retreat to a secret place, to a place where a woman is free from gazing and being gazed upon is found in the hotel. By entering a hotel room, whether in Paris or just down the road from home, these women are able to become other.

CHAPTER 4: THE UNHEIMLICH HOTEL

“It’s all this travelling”, I said. “Hotel room after hotel room. Never seeing anyone you know. It’s been very tiring. And even now, here in this city, there’s so much pressure on me. The people here. Obviously they’re expecting a lot of me. I mean it’s obvious . . .”

— Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Unconsoled* (38)

The central argument in this chapter is that the postmodern uncanny is experienced particularly acutely in the hotel, because the dynamics of the uncanny are built into the psychic and social structure of the hotel space. I argue that the unhomely feeling in the hotel in the novels *The Unconsoled*, by Kazuo Ishiguro, and *Martin Dressler*, by Steven Millhauser, is an analogon of the unhomely feeling in postmodern globalised culture. This argument is supported by a brief analysis of Alain Resnais’s film *Last Year At Marienbad*. None of these three texts is literally set in “supermodernity”: *The Unconsoled* and *Last Year At Marienbad* are contained in run-down or abandoned hotels rather than in “supermodern” spaces. *Martin Dressler* is located in nineteenth-century New York, even though it was written in 1996. These narratives, however, express the same anxieties experienced as those in supermodern space even though they are located in run-down or seemingly dead hotels.

The hotel in these narratives and in postmodernity both exacerbates homeliness and denies it. Homeliness provided through the sameness of chain hotels creates a tension between *feeling* at home and not *being* at home. It is this tension that creates the sense of uncanny both in *The Unconsoled* and *Martin Dressler* and in

postmodern culture generally. Both narratives use the hotel to unfold ideas of short-term memory, homeliness and spatialised subjectivity. The hotel condenses the anxieties of the uncanny because of its perpetuation of both unhomely and homely qualities. The sensations of the uncanny are present in this space more acutely than any other due to the complex relationship the hotel has with the home. This occurs quite literally in the two novels in this chapter, as much of the narratives in both *The Unconsoled* and *Martin Dressler* centre around the fundamental unhomeliness of the hotels in which the protagonists reside.

Modernity, Postmodernity and the Uncanny

It might seem as though the narratives selected here for an analysis of the postmodern uncanny are an odd collection. One is a novel located in a run-down city, another is a novel in nineteenth-century New York, the third is a 1960s French film located in what seems to be suspended time and space. These stories, however, are held together by their central location, the hotel. They are also connected by their central motif, the uncanny. These hotel texts not only complicate what constitutes modern and postmodern narratives, they also highlight the difficulties in distinguishing between the Freudian and postmodern uncanny.

The narratives in this chapter look and sound like modernist ones, rather than ones that are directly, obviously symptomatic of postmodern anxieties. *The Unconsoled* is modernist in tone but is made postmodern through its strange pop cultural references and the decade (1990s) in which it was written. The novel's dream reality and Kafakesque references give it a modernist tone. Ryder never uncovers truth. The novel simply ends with him imagining leaving the hotel. Characters in the town often appear to be familiar, but the truth of Ryder's relationship with them is

never solidified, never uncovered, also contributing to the novel's modernist appearance. However, it is *The Unconsoled*'s evocation of the uncanny that makes it postmodern, as I will explain in a moment. Whilst *Martin Dressler* is located in late nineteenth-century New York, the space Martin creates through the Grand Cosmo is postmodern space that disrupts both spatial expectations and the elements that usually constitute a hotel. It is dazzling, baroque space that is presented towards the end of the narrative, evoking the style of the Bonaventure hotel rather than a late nineteenth-century building. It is this kind of schizophrenic postmodern space that turns Martin mad. *Last Year At Marienbad*, a late modernist text chronologically, speaks of the same kind of impact unhomely space has on memory and subjectivity. Thus, whilst containing elements of older styles of narratives, these texts (rather like postmodern architecture) eclectically present postmodern anxieties about homeliness.

As this chapter finds postmodern anxieties in modernist space, my argument necessitates consideration of the interrelationship of the modern and postmodern uncanny. Whilst some theorists argue that there is no distinction between the modern and postmodern uncanny, I argue here that it is possible to separate the two. The central distinction between the two is the lack of shock that features in the postmodern experience of the uncanny. Rather than the uncanny structured as that which has remained hidden suddenly brought to light (the Freudian uncanny), the postmodern uncanny is characterised by an absence of shock, and an absence of hidden depths rising to the surface. Vidler argues towards the end of *The Architectural Uncanny* that "soft spaces of Koolhaas's surfaces are then the manifestation of an uncanny based on the newly formulated conditions of interiority and exteriority" (225). Thus through the complication of inside/outside, through the absence of a depth/surface understanding of space and subjectivity, we are presented with spaces and characters that appear to be "all surface."

Identity is formed via proximity rather than reflection. As depth and surface are folded together, the uncanny experiences in these hotel narratives encompass what Lukàcs termed the “transcendental homelessness” of the modern world (qtd in Vidler *Warped Space* 65). When we are always and never at home, public and private space becomes folded. Vidler expands on Deleuze’s and Leibniz’s concept of folded space in *Warped Space*, raising the idea of the folded city, the “new baroque” — a space where “above-ground and below ground, private inside and public outside are forced into each other” (233). The postmodern uncanny sees not so much a shock that something hidden has come to the surface, but a faint acknowledgement that it was there all along, that it was hidden in a fold.

The modern and postmodern uncanny do intersect to a degree. Rather than using the terms modernity and postmodernity, Norman Klein uses “Modernity” (as Jardine does). Klein takes this term from Baudelaire, and describes it “at the instant where the eternal and transitory meet, one distracts the other” (313). The postmodern and modern uncanny find a meeting point of this kind in the hotel: it is a space that has always been considered a microcosm of the contemporary world, from Henry James to Fredric Jameson, as though it is some kind of condensed hothouse of the outside world whilst simultaneously removing itself from the outside. It is a space that is at once new for every guest in a new room, and it is familiar with its welcome, its sameness. It provides a home, a refuge for a traveller in any part of the world, and at the same time the hotel acutely reminds the traveller that he or she is not at home. And these aspects of the hotel have been present throughout the twentieth century, characteristically straddling the modern and postmodern.

Similarly, there is an interrelationship between modern and postmodern spatial experience. Jameson separates anxieties into modernist and postmodern ones,

arguing that emotions such as anxiety, terror, and “being-unto-death” characterise modernist emotions (*Postmodernism* 117). Postmodern emotions are characterised in terms of a “bad trip, dispersed existence and existential messiness” (117). Jameson’s argument becomes significant for this chapter when he claims that in postmodernity there is “the bewilderment and loss of spatial orientation in Portman’s hotels, the messiness of an environment in which things and people no longer find their ‘place’” (117). Thus we see the symptoms of architecture and sensations of postmodern space in this older hotel space. Yet whilst Jameson sees this absence of outside and inside as the prime trope of postmodern space, it is exactly the same concept that Benjamin and Siegfried Giedion use to describe modern space through the examples of the houses of Le Corbusier. Benjamin quotes Giedion:

... one should count neither on space nor forms, but uniquely on relation and interpenetration! There is only a single, individual space. The separations between interior and exterior fall. (qtd in Vidler, *Warped Space* 78)

Whilst the interpenetration of modern and postmodern spatial experience is clear, my argument here is that *Last Year at Marienbad* and *The Unconsoled* are best considered as allegories of specifically postmodern subjects in space. *Martin Dressler* is located in New York in the 1890s, but the complexity of the architecture (with the labyrinthine hotel interior) and insanity caused by turning home into hotel is akin to the postmodern uncanny. Confusion about the hotel having homely affects, whilst not being a home, dominates the two novels, but all three narratives in this chapter tap into postmodern spatial and social complexity. The hotel provides the space for disappearance, erasure and absence of memory for the protagonists. The hotels in all three narratives are confusing on an architectural and psychic level, and

the effect of this is that no-one quite knows where they are, but feels they have been here before. What turns this uncanny device into a postmodern one is the quiet acceptance of this complication. The inside and outside are depicted as folding space in the postmodern allegories in this chapter. The hotel is a space where “above-ground and below ground, private inside and public outside are forced into each other” (Vidler 233). The postmodern uncanny is present in the folds, rather than as something that emerges from the depths. The state of being in-between home and not home is the postmodern uncanny that is allegorised in these texts, and this is placed onto a single space – the hotel.

The Uncanny in *Last Year at Marienbad*

Last Year at Marienbad is a French New Wave film (1961) directed by Resnais, and written by Alain Robbe-Grillet. It is a film confined in a hotel that no longer appears to be functioning like a hotel. Whilst the building is called a hotel, it is actually an abandoned eighteenth-century estate. Characters stand around like statues, dressed formally, barely talking. The plot of the film — if it can be called a plot — surrounds three main characters: a woman (A) and two men (X and M).

Jean-Louis Leutrat in his *BFI Classics Guide* outlines their relationship:

M is perhaps her husband and X her lover. X wants to persuade the woman that they’ve already met the year before and that at that time she’d promised to leave with him a year later, that is, ‘now.’ The woman resists this extremely unusual attempt at seduction. All the questions are posited in relation to this schema: is one of the characters telling the truth? Did they really meet? If so, was seduction involved? Or rape? Did she promise? Is she pretending to

have forgotten? Has she really forgotten? Is M her husband? Her brother? Is there incest here? And so on. (28)

Robbe-Grillet's abstract new wave cinema deals with memory, consciousness and mapping in the second half of the twentieth century. *Last Year At Marienbad's* characters experience a struggle to map the hotel's totality, and alongside this, the hotel space is presented as a parallel for consciousness. The tropes of the uncanny, memory, cognitive mapping are strongly present in *Last Year At Marienbad*.

As Leutrat points out, the hotel in the film operates as a place of limbo. It is not quite real. Death pervades the conversations, which feature lines such as "We live like two coffins side by side in the frozen ground of a garden." There are many repeated shots of the hotel garden statues, and the actual actors in the film offer only a little more movement than these statues. Resnais also had shadows painted in the garden. One character tells another at one point, "You're like a shadow."

Just as the space is barely real, the characters are not clearly defined subjects either, even lacking names and insightful memory. There is never consistency or continuity in the film. A character begins a scene with one outfit and ends with different clothes. A room can have a mirror in one shot, and in the next moment have a landscape painting there instead. Rather than emphasising narrative, *Last Year At Marienbad* emphasises space and concepts. The absence of clearly defined characters creates a distance for the viewers: the artifice of film itself cannot be avoided, and the effect of this is a discomforting inability to suspend disbelief. Thus viewing the film becomes an "unhomely" experience. Without the characters' clear understanding of the past in this hotel, and without consistent, concrete hotel space, the uncanny atmosphere is built inside the plot as well as the space. No-one is "at home" in this film.

In this film, the concepts of memory, desubjectivisation and reality come to the fore, and the hotel houses these concepts, just as it does in many of the texts discussed in this thesis. Forgetting and an absence of a “central” self are concepts that sit better in a hotel than in a home, as I have discussed. In the hotel there is an absence of home’s physical objects, home’s logic, and an undertaking instead of a dream logic. The hotel then serves in narratives such as *Last Year At Marienbad* as a space between home and home’s return. The effect of the hotel on the characters and the viewers is an uncanny one: the hotel is a space that should be familiar to the female protagonist, as X tells her, but she is convinced he is mistaking her for someone else.

Rather than single subjectivity or logical narrative, in *Last Year At Marienbad* we are presented with deference to the hotel space as a way of presenting the unrepresentable. The hotel in this film, like Lynch’s hotels in his films, and like Jameson’s experience of the Bonaventure, is labyrinthine, unmappable, unlocatable. The absence of concrete reality in *Last Year At Marienbad* is presented in the many shots through mirrors, through the characters watching a play, through false doors and false perspectives. The characters do very little in the film: they wander around idly and interact occasionally. Experience is perpetually distorted and filtered. The hotel is full of secrets, as the tour guide tells the crowd. (There is a tour group going around the hotel at the same time as the “action” of the film is occurring.) Voices are disembodied. Thus the audience is always removed from the ability to anchor reality somewhere. The only consistency is the repeated shots of the passageway. Deleuze describes the confusion of reality and unreality present in *Last Year At Marienbad* in *Cinema 2*. He sees at work in this film an exploration of “a deeper memory, a memory of the world directly exploring time, reaching in the past that which conceals

itself from memory” (38). The characteristics of the hotel enable the confusion of reality and unreality, the confusion of memory, to take place. Due to the hotel’s perpetual newness yet familiarity via sameness, because of its place between home and return, this space serves as the exemplary space of the uncanny in postmodernity, in what is usually treated as a modernist narrative. The characters are devoid of memory of the past, the audience is stripped of an ability to map the hotel space, and so there is literally no knowledge, no “canny” or familiarity in this hotel at Marienbad. The narrative and style of this film then creates the dominance of the *unheimlich* in this hotel.

The Uncanny in *Martin Dressler*

Martin Dressler revolves around the rise of Martin from a hotel bellboy to an eventual owner of a chain of hotels, the Dressler Hotels. From a young boy working in his father’s cigar store, Martin discovers the importance of window displays, and spectacles to draw customers in, something he builds on when he rises through the ranks of hotels. The rise of Martin’s miniature city in the hotel begins when Martin leases a cigar stand in a hotel lobby. This quickly turns into a collection of lobby shops, and then, in the Dresslers and finally the Grand Cosmo, a condensation of shops and hotels, parks, museums, camping areas, spas, a canyon (the list is endless) all in the one building. Martin is not, however, obsessed with the spectacle of the hotel, but with the hotel as a perfect machine:

No, what seized his innermost attention, what held him there day after day... was the sense of a great, elaborate structure, a system of order, a well-planned machine that drew all these people to itself and carried them up and down in iron cages and arranged them in private rooms. (24)

It is precisely this anthropological analysis of space that becomes Martin's downfall: in creating space that is a "great, elaborate structure" unlike any that has been built before, Martin creates unhomely space; space that no-one feels comfortable with. The novel ends with Martin's financial and psychological collapse, and he sits on a park bench, dreaming of going back to cigars.

Martin Dressler is in many ways the ultimate hotel narrative, as it encompasses almost all of the aspects of both hotel space and postmodernity that are raised in this thesis. The novel perpetually comments on the fusion of old and new space and style that is accommodated in the hotel:

... he was struck again by a contradiction in the architecture of hotels, a contradiction that was nothing but the outward expression of a nation's inner desire. For here the technologically modern and up-to-date clashed with a certain nostalgia of décor... (179)

It is precisely this fusion (and at times *confusion*) of space as something that is at once old and new, modern and postmodern, homely and unhomely, familiar and unfamiliar, fictional and real, that is placed onto the hotel in many narratives throughout this thesis. *Martin Dressler* raises all these ideas.

Particularly though, *Martin Dressler* is an exemplification of the postmodern uncanny. Whilst Martin, the eponymous protagonist, is able to create many hotels, he is unable to find a sense of home in them. Millhauser's novel is dominated by ideas of hotel space and subjectivity. The narrative arc is structured around the rise of the Dressler hotels, and reaches its peak in the opening of the Grand Cosmo, a hotel and an entirely new conception of space that is a condensed universe, and an entirely separate world. Its labyrinthine architecture is the result of an attempt to "abolish the corridor, to interrupt monotony, to overcome the sense of a series of more or less

identical rooms arranged side by side in a rectangle of steel” (266). The Grand Cosmo space is an extravagant, exaggerated version of the world of the Bonaventure. The Grand Cosmo is a world that rivals the world outside, and Martin intends on making the outside world redundant. Whilst the space is entwined with Martin’s psyche (and his body, as I shall discuss later), the Grand Cosmo presents the experience of the postmodern uncanny through the failure of Martin not only to understand the labyrinthine space he creates, but also his failure to find homeliness in his hotel — both for himself and for his guests. Martin’s experience, although located in time in the late nineteenth century, is particularly postmodern: he quietly accepts his fate, and there is never a moment of shock at his and others’ failure to understand the hotel space.

Martin’s final triumph and fall is caused by the Grand Cosmo — a hotel beyond a hotel. The Grand Cosmo is built to disrupt expectations of space. Dressler wants to challenge monotony by abolishing the corridor and by having each floor completely separate from the next, abandoning the simple division between upper and lower floors. It contains entire worlds, consisting of parks, camping grounds, gardens and cinemas, as well as shopping malls and various kinds of residential and hotel living spaces. The parks and forests are built like film sets, with landscapes painted on giant transparencies. The Grand Cosmo thoroughly embraces the mobilized and virtual gaze, and the society of the spectacle, but it (or rather Martin) seems to have forgotten the body entirely.

Dressler’s ideas are not embraced by guests or residents. People are uncomfortable in a space that requires no need to go outside. Dressler eventually hires actors to create an atmosphere around the emptying building, but as there is a decreasing investment in the hotel, it fails. People comment that they don’t know

what kind of space it really is, that it contains a world beneath worlds, that it “produced in the visitor a feeling it could never be fully explored” (274).

The Grand Cosmo fails. Not enough of it is leased, and people are increasingly ill at ease in the spectacular space. As Martin searches for reasons why, as he strides through the floors of the hotel, he wonders,

Was it the sense of the limitless that prevented people from flocking to the Grand Cosmo as they had to the Dressler? In the largest hotels, vast spaces were divided neatly into small, repeated rectangles — could the secret of such places be monotony itself? . . . Did the public, along with its craving for the up-to-date and the brand-new, also crave not simply the familiar, but the repetitive, the reassuring sense of boredom provided by the multiple sameness? (281)

Where the failure occurs in the Grand Cosmo is thus precisely where Jameson finds problems and confusion in the Bonaventure hotel. The same sense of unmappable and uninhabitable space is present in both texts, and in many ways, the Grand Cosmo prefigures the corridorless, utopian world of the postmodern shopping mall. Jameson argues in *Postmodernism* that the Bonaventure should not have so many hidden entry and exit points because it creates a sense that it is separate from the city. The concept of a world beyond the world, a space that provides everything in miniature, that never requires its guests to leave, is met with horror in *Martin Dressler* and in many hotel texts in this thesis. However, Martin and the reader never quite find out explicitly what the ultimate source of this horror is. Women chatting in the lobby about why they could not live at the Cosmo disappear before Martin can hear exactly why they dislike the space. Meaning, like unknowable space, is always hidden around another corner, and is never found.

The Grand Cosmo is dominated by baroque space. Critics have celebrated the baroque as

The dazzling, disorientating, ecstatic surplus of images in ... [the] rejection of the monocular geometricalization of the Cartesian tradition ... The baroque self-consciously revels in the contradictions between surface and depth, disparaging as a result any attempt to reduce the multiplicity of visual spaces into any one coherent essence. (Jay, qtd. in Urry 79)

Martin Dressler sees the hotel visitors rejecting baroque space, finding horror in unmappable space. This in turn is symptomatic of the longing for sameness via the chain hotel in the twenty-first century. Martin Dressler realises that his failure in his new hotel is that it deviates completely from the traditional structure and style of the hotel, and as a result it is too complex and fails.

Martin is driven by the idea of imaginary city spaces. He constantly imagines the city in years to come, envisaging great buildings, trains in the air and underground, and he is excited by scaffolding and building sites. As soon as Martin enters a hotel as a young boy he finds it a fictional, dream-like place. But he is also the ultimate capitalist, always starting one venture and imagining the next. He opens one café and immediately imagines the seventh version of the chain. He is constantly imagining future space, so it is appropriate that the space surrounding him is also partly perceived as imaginary. In Martin's penultimate hotel, he offers Vacation Retreats on the fifth and sixth levels. Here, guests fish in a fake stream, and cook over a fire outside their tents. This provokes comments from one journalist who finds that his "fake" holiday is better than his real one. The destination could be reached immediately, and, "above all, could be temporarily abandoned at night for a sound sleep in the comfort of one's own familiar bed" (237). The dominance of the

simulacrum in Martin's hotel makes the Gand Cosmo a postmodern, rather than a modern space.

The prominence of the unreal in hotels is present from the beginning of the novel: when first starting out in the hotel business, Martin is confused by actors rehearsing in the Vanderlyn Hotel, and later allows actors to rehearse in the Grand Cosmo to fill up the unrented spaces. He then encourages the actors to wander around the lobby and corridors, acting as guests. For Martin, this creates sensations of bustling hotel life. It is also a realisation (though not on Martin's part) that he has fictionalised hotel space. He no longer knows who is a real guest and who is an actor in his hotel.

Martin hires an actor to play him around the hotel after noticing an uncanny resemblance between the actor and himself. This act enhances the already uncanny tone of the hotel. As Martin seems to fade into the hotel he actually enters the outside world of New York in the last few pages. In the outside world, "the world beyond the world, anything was possible. For when the friendly powers let go of your hand, so gently that you were barely aware of it, then you need to hold on to something, or you would surely be lost" (292). Martin's inability to distinguish between himself and the actor playing him signifies the way in which his character dissolves into the realm of the uncanny and slides into insanity. Just as the Grand Cosmo has abolished previous notions of spatial experience, Martin abolishes a clear sense of reality.

Throughout the novel Martin lacks any emotional depth or genuine intimacy, and this characteristic is what eventually causes his downfall when he finally fails to comprehend the fact that people do not desire limitless, unreadable space. All he really cares about is his hotel empire. In fact it could be said that part of the problem with subjectivity and space in this novel is that both are lacking individual

characteristics. Martin lives in the hotel with his elusive wife and her sister, with whom he has an affair, but is really incapable of any connection other than the one he has with his empire of Dressler hotels.

This connection is evident in the way that the bodies of Martin and the hotels are linked throughout the novel. The idea that the hotel is somehow part of Martin and vice-versa permeates the narrative:

He strolled through the parlour of an upper room and walked in the underground park or garden — and then it was as if the structure were his own body, his head piercing the clouds, his feet buried deep in the earth, and in his blood the plunge and rise of elevators. (174)

With the Grand Cosmo, Martin moves from the order he creates in the Dressler hotels — which are technologically advanced but maintain traditional hotel room structure — to disrupted and limitless space, and as a unacknowledged consequence, Martin's psychological order seem to be dissolving too. Throughout the novel, he is connected to hotel space rather than people. This, in the end, sees him losing a sense of his own physical limits in unlimited, unbounded space.

The Grand Cosmo is a schizophrenic nightmare. It provides an artificial version of both home and away, exemplified by the fake vacations offered on the fifth and sixth floors. It has no sense of mappable space, and the real and simulated are blurred. It is not even entirely a hotel. The Grand Cosmo is anything and everything, and as a result, guests are unable to pin any meaning on the space. As a result, the hotel is utterly unhomely and uninhabitable, even for Martin himself. The novel ends with the uncanny image of Martin on a park bench outside his hotel world, knowing that there is someone playing the role of Martin inside the Grand Cosmo.

Postmodern Man with Space Expectations

As in *Martin Dressler*, the male protagonist's existence in a labyrinthine, complex hotel space provides the framework for Ishiguro's novel *The Unconsoled*. This novel can be read as an allegory of postmodern man, busy with schedules and travel. He is someone who stays in hotels but is ultimately devoid of human relationships. Ryder, the central protagonist, arrives to perform a piano concert to raise morale in a desolate city. He is presented to the reader as a classic stranger who comes into town. But it is gradually revealed that Ryder is not a stranger after all: he finds when he arrives in the city in central Europe that it is vaguely familiar, and apparently should be more so. Nevertheless he seems to be a bachelor, who blames problems and delays on external forces and all the travelling he has undertaken:

"It's all this travelling," I said. "Hotel room after hotel room. Never seeing anyone you know. It's been very tiring. And even now, here in this city, there's so much pressure on me. The people here.

Obviously they're expecting a lot of me. I mean it's obvious . . ." (38)

Ryder has no habits, no routine, nothing that allows him to be at home and draw territory around him. He gradually realises that, however impossibly or improbably, this city is in fact his former home. He enters the run-down hotel lobby with its "claustrophobic" atmosphere and is greeted by a porter who recognises him. In his hotel room, Ryder comes to realise that this room is in fact his childhood bedroom from the time he lived with his aunt in Wales. The room is not described as being similar to his Welsh bedroom, but actually is perceived as that childhood space, despite the location of the town somewhere in central Europe:

I went on scrutinising the ceiling for some time, then sat up on the bed and looked around, the sense of recognition growing stronger by the second. The

room I was in now, I realised, was the very room that had served as my bedroom during the two years my parents and I had lived at my aunt's house on the borders of England and Wales... It had recently been replastered and repainted, its dimensions had been enlarged... But it was unmistakably the same ceiling I had so often stared up at from my narrow creaking bed of those days. (16)

The hotel provides the space in which Ryder remembers his past. This occurs not in an indirect way, but directly, so that this room *is* suddenly his old childhood room. Ryder is never surprised that that this hotel is actually his former home, nor is there a shock or sudden realisation that the hotel porter is his father-in-law, that Sophie, the porter's daughter, is his wife, and Boris (a nine-year-old boy) is his son. It is with quiet anxiety that Ryder gradually (rather than suddenly) comes to understand that the hotel is a home that he cannot remember.

What makes this a version of the postmodern uncanny in particular? If one's home is everywhere and nowhere with so much travel in the late twentieth century, then it does not come as a shock that the hotel is also a previous home. Thus it is the hotel that contains the sense of displaced homelessness in postmodernity. Ryder is perpetually displaced in his own hometown as he cannot recognise it or his family, and he cannot comprehend both the space of the hotel and the surrounding city.

Throughout the story Ryder is trying to find time and space to practice for his performance, but he is always distracted by an incident or various commitments he seems to know nothing about. He is always unsure of his schedule but never has the capacity to tell Miss Stratmann (the organiser) that he has not received his schedule. So he constantly misses appointments, and gets lost or distracted in the lead up to the concert for the town. The uncanny is the effect of Ryder's perpetual displacement in

a town that should be familiar as his home. It is the *postmodern* uncanny in this narrative because of the lack of shock that this newly-visited space is also old space, that it is also Ryder's home. Rather than the element of surprise and shock of things rising from the surface, there is the feeling of passive acceptance and resignation each time Ryder discovers that he is connected to this town.

The confusion Ryder experiences is largely spatial, as the labyrinthine hotel has passageways that lead into unexpected places. One passageway leads him to the café where the town's hotel porters perform a special dance with suitcases, from which he is then supposed to be driven to the funeral of the old porter Brodsky's dog. Ryder rarely gets angry as a result of his distractions, but follows people through corridors, doors, cupboards, to get to where they want him to go. The story ends with him missing his concert performance. The final scene is of Ryder going back to the hotel on a tram. One of his fellow travellers tells him not to worry about the missed concert, saying "You've got Helsinki to be thinking about" (his next destination). Ryder is comforted by this and by the large buffet breakfast served on the tram. There is no narrative closure in this novel. Ryder does not even leave the hotel or the city, but is on the tram that will take him back to the hotel. Despite his leaving the hotel, the readers are never sure that he will ever actually get back to the hotel, as transport and pathways have always led him to confusing places throughout the novel.

The absence of narrative closure in *The Unconsoled* is homologous to Kafka's unfinished novel *America*. The passive, confused protagonist and labyrinthine space in Ishiguro's narrative pays homage to Kafka's work. Ishiguro's novel depicts the same forgetful, passive character as Kafka's, and has a similar labyrinthine hotel, with "so many entrances and side doors" (Deleuze on *America* in *Kafka, Towards a Minor Literature* 6). The labyrinthine hotel in Ishiguro's novel acts as Kafka's hotel does,

preventing (in the eyes of Deleuze) the introduction of “the enemy: the signifier, and those attempts to interpret a work that is only open to experimentation” (6). Without signifiers, without recognisable doors and entrances, the unmappable hotel works to prevent Ryder from achieving anything, and from ever truly understanding whether this place is home or a new city.

Ryder’s Kafakesque failure to navigate the hotel, and to understand his personal connection to the space, is due to the nature of hotel space generally. The complications of space in *The Unconsoled* could not just happen anywhere: they are specific to the characteristics of hotels — spaces that offer homeliness in the form of sameness and repetition and warmth, but also spaces that are away from home. The warm welcome Ryder receives when he enters the hotel lobby (when someone finally turns up in the lobby) is confusing because he realises a little while later that the old porter Gustav is his father-in-law. The novel quickly enters Gustav’s point of view and he reveals he is worried about his daughter Sophie and her child Boris. Ryder then vaguely recalls a phone conversation between Sophie and himself, but puts his confusion and exhaustion down to “all this travel” (38). He fails to clearly understand who his wife and child are, when he is to perform, and where his home is. These confusions are facilitated by the hotel’s unmappability and its mysterious relationship with Ryder’s home.

The effect of this confusion of home and hotel, I argue throughout this thesis (as it is present in many narratives), is a sense of the postmodern uncanny, where nothing is entirely new, and where nothing is truly home, and the awareness of this is not accompanied by the shock or surprise present in the Freudian uncanny. *The Unconsoled* takes the effect of the endless “homeliness” in hotels to its extreme. Ishiguro writes an allegory of man (and it is indeed man) in supermodernity, where he

turns up at a new town and is slowly informed that it is his home town, that his wife and son have been waiting for him to return home. But he is not, in the end, particularly shocked by the experience, and the novel concludes with no revelation of homeliness.

The constant slippage into home space means that the hotel in *The Unconsoled* fails to be a functional hotel. To be homely is what hotels do strive to do to a degree, but the novel allegorises the effect of this. Hoffmann, the manager of the hotel, tells Ryder that he (Hoffman) has become obsessed with individual rooms:

“Few things are as dull as a hotel with room after room completed along the same tired concepts. As far as I am concerned, each room must be thought about according to its own unique characteristics.” (121)

Hoffmann is so obsessed with these details that he fails to run the hotel properly. This is evident from the beginning of the novel, where Ryder arrives at the hotel and finds no one at the desk. When Ryder does check in, an elderly porter tries to carry his bags, but is not really able to. There is much talk initially about what a great hotel it is, that Frederick the Great may have once stayed there. Ryder’s first encounter with the hotel manager sees the manager boasting about the hotel’s frequent mattress changes. This obsession with individualising the hotel does not help Ryder effectively recognise this space as his home space. This hotel is at the other end of the scale of global hotels that have sameness everywhere. This sameness should neutralise the anxieties of travelling, yet this individualised hotel in *The Unconsoled* has the same effect as the repetition of global hotels: a sense of half-recognition and near familiarity, and an acceptance that home is everywhere and nowhere.

The hotel also fails through Ryder’s inability to map the space. All Ryder really wants is a clear schedule from Miss Stratmann, but he never receives it, and

isn't able to tell anyone this. One incident sees Ryder leaving Miss Collins' house, going down a street with Sophie and Boris. When many doors appear as the potential way out, Ryder imagines a scene from a movie where the character goes through the wrong door and walks into a cupboard. He then settles for a door with pearl inlays and stone columns, thinking it will lead to somewhere of significance, but of course it opens onto a crowded broom cupboard. Later, Ryder joins people in a corridor and waits to enter a cupboard with a view to the concert hall. Spatial expectation — the only thing Ryder has to cling onto — is not granted to him.

Unlike normal hotel guests, Ryder is given free reign in the hotel. There appears to be no demarcation of where guests are and are not allowed. Thus Ryder receives no schedule, no rules about where he should and should not go. Nothing is successful or resolved for Ryder. Yet he clings onto the hotel that gives him nothing in terms of support. No-one questions why Ryder stays in the hotel and not with his wife Sophie and son Boris. He is not really able to find this home anyway, wandering around the streets for hours with his son, trying to find his apartment, following his wife whom he has lost while turning a corner. Ryder also clings onto the idea that his parents stayed in a wonderful hotel when they were last in town. This occurs at the end of the novel, when he realises his parents are not coming to the town this time after all. Miss Stratmann comforts Ryder by showing him a large poster of the hotel they stayed in, and points to the exact room they had. Ryder lags behind everything, both literally and allegorically. And the effect of an unclear map is that Ryder's subjectivity is dissolved into space.

All this travel inhibits Ryder from not only comprehending the space, but from comprehending himself. Deleuze argues that too much travel inhibits becoming, and this could easily explain Ryder's inability to act, to complete and to comprehend.

However, if we are to follow the procedures for Deleuzian becoming, then it is present in *The Unconsoled*: particularity and generality must be undone, and zones of indistinction are established (Buchanan 95). This is certainly what occurs with the conflation of home and hotel in *The Unconsoled* — it becomes a space of indistinction for Ryder. At the same time, Ryder is not a character who is clearly recognised as himself. Sometimes he is not recognised at all, a device I shall consider in a moment. The process of Deleuzian becoming is echoed in this novel that seems to be hallucinatory, all dreamscape. This is a process that is occurring despite all the travel that is going on in Ryder's life.

An Unhomely Memory and Identity

The primary impact of the labyrinthine spaces in *The Unconsoled* is on memory and subjectivity. Memory and space in this novel operate according to Deleuze's model of the rhizome, and I have already argued that the hotel generally operates rhizomically. Deleuze claims that hierarchy and rhizome are two manifestations of the same structure (Bogue, *Deleuze and Guattari* 155); the rhizome is in fact built into both bureaucracy and large, labyrinthine spaces.⁶ In Kafka's *The Castle*, the two responses to this complex, incomprehensible structure are ostensible acquittal and indefinite postponement. *The Unconsoled* sees Ryder responding to similar space in the same way. What this tells us is that either acquittal and postponement (or both) are inevitable responses to rhizomic architecture in both

⁶ When writing on the two states of architecture in Kafka's work, Deleuze and Guattari perceive the castle (in Kafka's *The Castle*) as a mixture of home and bureaucracy, as it "corresponds to the first state (height tower, hierarchy), but these structures are constantly modified/effaced to profit of the second state (arrangement and contiguity of offices with moving boundaries), and above all else, the inn for gentlemen from the castle brings about the triumph of the second state with its long hallway and its contiguous and dirty rooms where the functionaries work in bed" (*Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* 76). Thus the hotel structurally works in the same way as Kafka's castle, as a mixture of home and bureaucracy.

modern and postmodern narratives. For Ryder, the impossibility of comprehending both bureaucratic structure (even his personal timetable) and hotel structure come from a dissatisfaction and unhomeliness experienced in a home found both everywhere and nowhere.

Indefinite postponement seems to be the only answer to Ryder's current situation in *The Unconsoled*. His lack of assertiveness and the architecture of the place mean that he never achieves anything he sets out to in the few days of his stay. He never gets to practice, he never performs, he never assists those he apparently promised to (he cannot remember having made those commitments). The hotel is a device that enables this kind of amnesia and postponement to occur. Unlike home, the hotel functions as a space without an apparent memory. Hotels should make forgetting easy, relieving the anxiety of amnesia. Similarly, hotels should ease the pain of being away from home. But in this allegorical narrative, the creeping horror (for the reader, not for Ryder) is that home *is* the hotel, that the hotel provides a memory that is utterly illogical for the reader but makes sense to Ryder. It is not completely comprehensive, however, as Ryder never fully recovers his memory, only recalling unconnected fragments.

The rhizomic hotel in this novel, in correspondence with Deleuze's description of the rhizome, has no centre or point of origin. The rhizome also corresponds to forgetting and short-term memory (*A Thousand Plateaus* 16). Deleuze writes of the short-term memory of the "rhizome or diagram type, and long-term memory [which] is aborescent and centralised" (16). Deleuze opposes long- and short-term memory further in this paragraph, arguing that they do not grasp the same thing, memory or idea. The contemporary hotel uses a Deleuzian short-term memory: it is about constant renewal, or deep forgetting, designed to accommodate new guests every

night; and it is a space that perpetually updates its interior. This kind of postmodern travel is unlike “gentlemanly travel” of the past where guests would stay for months at a time. Contemporary travel encompasses leisure or work travel, seasonal travel and travel any time. Thus memory, with all this travel to new, yet familiar places, becomes confused by the hotel.

The effect of so much travel is manifested in *The Unconsoled*, where Ryder is only able to operate with short-term memory. He cannot remember, for example, promising his old school friend Fiona that he would go to her house for afternoon tea to impress her friends. When Ryder accidentally turns up at Fiona’s house, days late, her friends fail to be impressed or even recognise him. It appears as though Ryder, operating without long-term memory and an understanding of his relationship with the town, has ceased to exist. He is unable to see his own history and the history of the town, as though he and the town are all surface, all short-term memory. This is bound up in the uncanniness of the city for Ryder: he knows there are other layers to it, he knows there are things he should know, but he does not see the layers of detail because he is without memory. All he sees is the surface. The idea of “all surface” is a trope of postmodernity. This narrative thus depicts a conflation of a Freudian mind-scape—a desolate small city—and postmodern hyperspace at once in Ryder’s hotel-based journey.

Whilst it is easy to forget in a hotel, it is harder to forget that one is staying in a hotel. Each entry to a hotel can be a new experience, but paradoxically not too new. A hotel room is always recognisable as such. This is the perpetually unconsoling, unnerving aspect of the hotel that gives rise to narratives that explore the quietly horrifying aspects of this contemporary space. As a guest, one is encouraged to wipe the slate clean, to have amnesia because of the perpetually new and changing hotel

interiors. Renting an apartment, by contrast, allows transformation of space — there is time to furnish it with “acts and memories,” — as de Certeau writes in reference to rented apartments (*Practice of Everyday Life* xxi). De Certeau uses this analogy when writing about readers mutating texts, making them habitable. This habitation is inverted in the hotel, where the space does not have time to be furnished with memory. In Ryder’s case, there are traces of memory in the hotel. These are memories of his childhood bedroom in Wales. But as I have previously noted, these are not just reminders of the old room: Ryder actually perceives this to *be* the past space. It is this perpetual complication of home and elsewhere, of familiar and unfamiliar space that the hotel embodies in this novel. The hotel induces a kind of schizophrenic amnesia for Ryder, serving as an allegory for the postmodern uncanny.

What is unhomely about this narrative is an absence of Ryder’s reliable memory. The film *Blade Runner* constructs a similar sensation in a more explicit way: the androids have memory chips rather than actual past experiences. Long-term memory belongs to the “tree” vision of the world, that “inspire[s] a sad image of thought that is forever imitating the multiple on the basis of a centred or segmented higher unity” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 16). Memory in both *The Unconsoled* and *Blade Runner* belong to the rhizomic vision. *The Unconsoled* is a novel about an unhomely, uncanny experience, where Ryder is perpetually on the verge getting somewhere, performing, rehearsing, remembering something, but these things never quite happen. Ryder’s memories, however, do not follow the traditional Freudian dynamic of the uncanny, where something that was once hidden is suddenly and unexpectedly brought to light. His memories are often experienced through other characters, such as the boy Boris. Ryder enters his thoughts and in that way remembers incidents as things that happened to someone else. These “memories” are broken up throughout

the book through different characters, adhering to the way Deleuze's short-term memory operates: "it can act at a distance, come or return after a long time, but always under conditions of discontinuity, rupture, and making multiplicity" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 16). These are exactly the conditions in which Ryder operates throughout the narrative, and identity and memory via proximity are the conditions through which the postmodern uncanny is evoked.

Deleuze writes that childhood memory is Oedipal in that it "prevents desire and blocks it onto a photograph... and cuts off connections" (66). Memory is manufactured by a majoritarian agency that treats childhood memory as conjugal, or colonial memories — a false childhood "caught in the trap of representation" (*Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* 66). Deleuze's idea of a false childhood blocked onto a photograph concurs with the androids' false (and rhizomic) memories in *Blade Runner*. That Ryder's life appears in characters separate from himself, and is not experienced as memory, remains consistent with the anti-Oedipus quest of lines of flight, keeping connections (other than the one to the mother) open. Ryder in fact barely remembers what he was doing a few moments ago.

Whilst he seems to be manifested in the young boy Boris and the young pianist Stephan, Ryder's sliding characterisation does not trigger off many memories of himself at the stages of boyhood and struggling youth. Ryder is able to enter into the minds of these characters, and listen to their anxieties, but these anxieties are not recognised by Ryder as his own. Then again, Ryder is often not recognised or seen at all. It is as though existence and memory are entwined and, like Deckard's false memories via a computer chip and photographs, Ryder's confusing memories lead to questions (on the reader's behalf in *The Unconsoled*) about his existence, or whether the narrative is all a dream.

In a space that has not been furnished with clear memory, in a space that is by its very nature transient, we have a character who does not know his place, or who he is. It is the hotel that provides the possibility for exploring such a subject, and it is the hotel that provides the allegorical framework for the postmodern decentred subject. Ryder is always on the verge of understanding, always on the verge of saying something to change the current stagnant situation. But nothing is ever entirely familiar or resolved in this novel. The hotel and city should be familiar to Ryder, as it is his hometown, yet it is the hotel that exacerbates the feelings of home and denies them at the same time. The parallels between an unmappable hotel and labyrinthine, rhizomic unconscious can easily be drawn from this novel. Ryder's persistent memory problems prevent him from understanding both.

There is a sense throughout *The Unconsoled* that the subjects in the town are abstract, and that Ryder too is not a singular being, an entire, completed, visible self. This is evident in both its formal tone and narrative style. The novel is written mostly in the first person voice through Ryder's perspective, but, as I have noted before, it frequently slips into Boris' point of view (his son who is not his "real" son according to Sophie, although Ryder doesn't remember being told this), so we understand what is troubling him. Similarly the reader is suddenly taken into Gustav's mind (the hotel porter and, apparently, Ryder's father-in-law) as he mentally recalls what led to the trouble with his daughter Sophie (Ryder's estranged wife). The explanation is present in the narrative, but not directly discussed with Ryder, who nonetheless appears to be aware of Gustav's concerns. Thus Ryder understands what Gustav is thinking because he is able to slip into Gustav's thoughts. This ability is not remarked on by Ryder, suggesting some kind of dream or allegorical reality at work in this novel.

Explanations are received via osmosis, pointing to the inability to speak or act in this family, this hotel and this city.

Ryder's absence of singularity, even of concrete existence, pervades the narrative. At various moments in the novel, he is able to listen to conversations about himself without being recognised. It is as though he is a ghostly presence, redundant, or dead. In Part Two, Ryder sits down at a table with a journalist who does not appear to recognise him. He then listens to a conversation about himself, hearing himself described as a "difficult shit," a "touchy bastard" (166), with one character remarking, "God the way he keeps stroking his hands together makes my flesh creep" (180). All Ryder does is begin to mutter, "Do you realise?" Somehow the sentence never got any further" (180). Similarly, his old school friend's acquaintances do not recognise Ryder as the famous pianist when he visits them for afternoon tea. And again he never seems to get around to telling them who he really is. Or rather, Ryder is physically unable to speak in this instance (although his anxiety and panic is quickly passed over):

I made another concerted effort to announce myself, but to my dismay, all I could manage was another grunt, more vigorous than the last, but no more coherent. I took a deep breath, a panic now beginning to seize me, and tried again, only to produce another, this time more prolonged, straining noise.
(239)

Why is Ryder not recognised? Because it is appropriate in a narrative about an unmappable memory and unmappable place that Ryder has a face that is an unreadable map or a black hole. Ryder does not seem to have an organised or limited body either. He instead reproduces the labyrinthian, hazy image the reader forms of the hotel in this book. Ryder is not entirely himself; it could be said that he is

imperceptible. He is both real and unreal to the characters in this town. The effect of being both real and unreal impacts on characterisation: the novel's characterisation loses the important distinction between subject and object, real and imaginary. Like the characters in *Last Year At Marienbad*, we cannot make this distinction because "there is no longer even a place from which to ask" (Deleuze *Cinema 2*, 7). In both narratives, the hotel facilitates this absence and confusion of self. The way in which Ryder is unable to successfully distinguish home from hotel, the way he misrecognises his childhood home in Wales in the hotel room, the fact that only slowly does his wife become vaguely familiar, all mean that he has no home. Without this home he has no sense of self. Ryder barely seems to exist. The effect of this for the reader is a sense of the uncanny pervading the story, supporting Žižek's theory that the living dead dominate postmodern narratives. Whilst Ryder moves in and out of being the "living dead" (as he is only sometimes not seen), he is certainly not a concrete presence, a clear individual.

Consequently we have a character who operates less as a singular subject and more as an allegory of a disconnected self in postmodernity. As an allegorical narrative, in which postmodern concerns are placed onto a Kafkaesque landscape, *The Unconsoled* drives (appropriately) home the ultimate alienation and solitude experienced in the twentieth century. Ryder is alienated from himself, from his work and family. He doesn't even seem to be a real subject. All of this is the exaggerated effect of too much travel. A disconnection between self and other is similarly located in the hotel in *Last Year At Marienbad*. This disconnection happens frequently, not just through dialogue, but through various repeated shots that see characters looking in opposite directions or beyond the frame. Thus the hotel is the place in which dislocation and disconnection is firmly located. But this is not clear disconnection.

Part of the schizophrenia of these narratives and of postmodern anxieties generally is the cross-over between home and elsewhere, where a sense of homeliness is appropriated in spaces that are not home. Hence we have a dispersed, decentered subject in *The Unconsoled*, the allegorical figure of postmodern man in supermodernity, always on the move from place to place where local and global are so connected that they are no longer distinguished from one another. This results in an all-pervading uncanny that is concentrated most clearly in the hotel.

Too Much Travel, No Territory

For Ryder, so much travel means it is not possible to create territory in the hotel. As I have outlined in Chapter One, territorialisation is defined through process or action. A bird sings to mark out the boundaries of a territory. The territorializing factor must be sought “in the becoming-expressive of rhythm or melody . . . in the emergence of proper qualities” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 320). When chaos threatens, Deleuze argues, it is important to draw an “inflatable, portable territory. If need be, I’ll put my territory on my body... tattoos tortoise shell...” (320). So marking out territory (through manner, sound and style) involves making home. It can be argued, as I have done in Chapter One through Deleuze’s concept of territorialisation, that the chain hotel can function as a portable territory, where the familiarity of the hotel room is like a refrain. The repetition of sameness via the chain, as I have said before, provides compensation for the absence of home. Ryder though is never able to mark out his territory. He does not even have a routine he can somehow transfer to this experience. He never quite understands the “truth” of his hotel room, and it is significant that Ryder never gets to perform the concert he was invited to the city to carry out. He does not mark out his territory through rhythm or melody, nor is he

even able to create a clear sense of territory in a room he claims was once his childhood bedroom in Wales. The manager decides halfway through the novel that this room is not right for Ryder, and that he needs to move to Room 343, a room that is, apparently, much closer to Ryder's spirit. This constant movement, from rooms and towns, coupled with Ryder's inability to perform, means that Ryder is unable to find a sense of homeliness in a place that is apparently his hometown.

Mirrors, Mapping and Psychasthenia

The effects of being simultaneously at home and not-at-home impact on Ryder's subjectivity, both for himself and for the way in which others perceive him. When he pauses to eat, he often glances in the mirror at the hotel bar. Rather than peering at his own reflection, he uses the mirror to look back into the room. As Ryder and Sophie walk to the cinema, he recalls his contemplation in front of the bar mirror:

As I had sat watching the misty fountain in the mirror behind the bar, I had even pictured myself in a situation not unlike the one I had encountered at the cinema . . . I had allowed myself to be deflected by other matters, with the result that, during my entire time at the cinema, I had been unable to manage a single noteworthy comment. (115)

As in the final scene in the novel, Ryder pictures himself in a situation, but is not actually present in the moment he describes. The effect of this is a perpetual removal of reality in this novel, a constant creation of distance between characters; for the reader it is as though she/he is experiencing reading through several mirrors. Again, what the reader experiences is an abandonment of the distinction between what is real and imaginary. This is facilitated by the dominance of the hotel, where the dynamic between real and virtual is perpetually confused. Mirrors appear as similar devices in

Last Year At Marienbad, as a way of avoiding identification of self and other in the narrative. Shots take place through two mirrors sometimes, with the effect of removing any sense of reality. When analysing the mirrors in *Last Year At Marienbad* Leutrat quotes Merleau-Ponty's writing on mirrors, which "change things into images, images into things, myself into the other and the other into myself" (47). Lacan's infamous "mirror stage", where a child (mis)recognises itself as a whole, separate subject, never takes place when characters avoid their own gaze in the mirror as there is in Murakami's novels. There is no sense of the doubleness or duality here that one might expect from an uncanny encounter in the mirror. What occurs in these hotel narratives is a kind of postponed or deferred sense of self.

Whilst these mirror encounters could take place elsewhere, in other places, it is highly significant that both texts examined here deal with this deferred reflection in the hotel. Even though we have seen in Chapter Three that hotels as spaces away from home seem to be the ideal spaces in which to contemplate and comprehend the self (the self without social identity and prior to the gaze), this is not the case in these male-centred narratives. This is because of the confusion of home space and other spaces in postmodernity. These narratives take place in the hotel by necessity because of the way in which the hotel confuses what is home and what is not. This confusion leads to an absence of comprehending identity and mapping, of what is real and imaginary, but the bewilderment that comes from the presence of the hotel mirrors is a confusion of the self. No looking in the mirror in the hotel means an understanding of the self is impossible. Psychic wholeness is absent.

Ryder is dispersed through space: he has no fixed body, and the evidence for this lies in the fact that often he is not seen or recognised by others in the town. Nor does he recognise others who should be closest to him: his encounter with his father-

in-law, then his wife and son are obvious examples of this. He does not perceive individual bodies clearly, but finds them vaguely familiar. What is present in Ryder is unacknowledged psychotic behaviour, where he is unable to locate himself in space. The avoidance of the mirrors in the narrative affirms this. This behaviour is perhaps best understood through the work of Roger Caillois, who was writing in the 1930s, goes beyond Freud in his understanding of this spatial schizophrenia. His definition of “legendary psychasthenia” resonates with Deleuze’s idea of becoming. Legendary psychasthenia is described as the state in which “the psychotic or schizophrenic is unable to locate him or herself in a position in space” (Grosz 89). Both concepts — psychasthenia and becoming — function in the same way, in which there is dispersal of singularity. The definition of this kind of psychosis perfectly matches Ryder’s state throughout the novel:

The psychotic is unable to locate himself where he should be; he may look at himself from outside himself, as another might; he may hear the voices of others in his head. He is captivated and replaced by space, blurred with the positions of others: *I know where I am, but do not feel as though I’m at the spot where I find myself.* (qtd. Grosz 90; original emphasis).

This psychosis in *The Unconsoled* is due to being both at home and not at home, an allegory of postmodern man. The hotel causes and condenses this postmodern problem of “all this travel.” Ryder goes beyond his singular body and is dispersed through space, as evidenced through times others do not see him or times when he avoids the mirror. He is devoured, consumed by space.

The uncanny in *The Unconsoled*, *Martin Dressler* and *Last Year At Marienbad* is experienced as proximity rather than reflection, where aspects of the self lie just outside the (uncontained) subject. The subjects are depersonalised, lacking memories that seem impossible to retrieve in a hotel space. Nothing except the painted shadows seems to be fixed and solid in the hotel in *Last Year At Marienbad*. Martin Dressler fails psychologically and financially in his creation of a labyrinthine, unpredictable hotel. Not only is Martin's hotel an unmappable and unpredictable space, but his identity is placed onto another person when he pays an actor to wander around the hotel as himself. Martin is not at home in the hotel or in his own skin. Ryder's experience in *The Unconsoled* is particularly confused because he believes unquestioningly that his hotel room in central Europe is his childhood bedroom in Wales. This provides an "unheimlich" effect for the reader, but not so much for Ryder, who ambles along through the labyrinthian hotel, unable to practice the piano, unable to meet his unknown obligations around the town, unable to perform his concert to lift the spirits of the people. The fact that Ryder is not bothered by the contradictions in his hotel and "home" town adds to the uncanny sensations for the reader and marks this novel as a postmodern text. The three hotel narratives depict the uncanny as something that lies beside oneself, rather than beneath.

The entwinement of modernism and postmodernism is evident throughout the three texts. An absence of long-term memory for Ryder means that he fails to understand the layers of detail in both himself, in others and in the mapping of the hotel and city. This is a modernist kind of despair, in which it is understood that there are layers of memory and history in the self and the city, but they are not quite comprehended. *The Unconsoled*'s modernist, Kafkaesque style peppered with postmodern quirks draws attention to the interconnection between modern and

postmodern concepts and concerns. *Martin Dressler* also works between the two epochs through Martin's analysis of what appears to be postmodern architecture in the 1890s. *Last Year At Marienbad* too is stylistically a late modernist film, but deals with postmodern concerns. It is the hotel that is able to act as an umbrella between these two movements: it is an older building that slips between being an interior and exterior space, enfolding the concerns of both Jameson in 1980s and Benjamin in the 1920s.

Another stylistic commonality between the three hotel narratives in this chapter is the use of dream-logic. There are no grounds to ask what is reality and unreality in *Last Year At Marienbad*. When Martin Dressler enters hotels he slips into a kind of dream; the artifice he creates in the hotel leads to his inability to understand the difference between fiction and reality. Ryder in *The Unconsoled* is in a Carroll-esque dreamscape from which he does not wake up. Indeed, none of these men suddenly wakes, realises where he is, or is shocked by the *unheimlich* conditions of the hotel in any of the narratives. Instead, they seem to dissolve into the hotel space in accordance with Caillois' description of legendary psychasthenia. No one has a clear memory or contemplation of the past. Ryder's story ends with him thinking about his next performance in Helsinki, and Martin Dressler sits on a bench and thinks about cigar stores. These men live in dreams of the future rather than the past.

All of the hotels in the three texts are at once new and nostalgic. In *Last Year At Marienbad* and *The Unconsoled* this is due to the idea that the characters have previously been there, but do not immediately remember the place. Ryder drifts into town without habits, without a schedule and at times seems to disappear altogether. The hotel is unable to provide him with a clear sense of his purpose, as he feels it

should. What makes the hotel the embodiment of the uncanny is the way in which Ryder's memory incorrectly surfaces and he sees his hotel room as his childhood bedroom quite clearly, without simile or metaphor. This work leans more closely to a sense of the postmodern uncanny due to Ryder's unquestioned acceptance of the idea that hotel is home, that this is his hometown, despite the fact that nothing ever becomes clear about this. Ryder never really recognises his wife or son, and he remains in limbo. Martin Dressler's hotels consistently highlight the complexity of the new and nostalgic in capitalism. The quietly accepted anxieties created between the old and new, between what should be either home or hotel in all three narratives, present the reader or viewer with the postmodern uncanny

The uncanny effect that dominates the three texts in this chapter is present without the Freudian shock and surprise that previously accompanied the uncanny. The protagonists in the narratives do not know themselves, and they do not know the hotel space they inhabit. The hotel space demands a certain kind of evocation of the uncanny. Conversely, the postmodern uncanny requires the hotel to contain the complex relation in postmodernity between knowledge and unknowing, between home and the unhomey. The postmodern uncanny is the result of what Lukàcs termed the "transcendental homelessness" of the postmodern world.

CHAPTER 5: THE HOTEL AS BRAIN

“It’s not Daddy talking, it’s the hotel.”

Stephen King, *The Shining* (347)

The two films focused on in this chapter – the Coen brothers’ *Barton Fink* and Stanley Kubrick’s *The Shining* — centre their narratives on writers who go to hotels. Both films avoid verisimilitude, using instead dream or nightmare logic. The dream logic is present in the overly sensational use of sound effects, exaggerated lighting and colour, and fantastical narratives. These dreams take place in the hotel, and *because* of the hotel in both films. Both Barton Fink and Jack Torrance (the protagonist in *The Shining*) are drawn to a hotel, and become enveloped by it, and infected by other guests (past and present). I argue here that as a result of the films’ narrative and cinematic style, and the coupling of self and space, the hotel can be read an allegory of the postmodern (and more particularly Deleuzian) brain. The texts examined here, through the circular filming of the hotel space, present an image of the protagonists’ brains without the depth/surface structure of a haunted house or gothic mansion. Rather, they present an image that is rhizomic, circular and endless. Both Barton and Jack enter their respective hotels, and simultaneously enter a journey into their heads.

The Rhizomic Deleuzian Brain

When Deleuze writes on the brain and cinema of the brain, he refers to both the actual biological brain and conscious/unconsciousness. In *Cinema 2* Deleuze

refers to the structure of the brain with its rhizomic tendrils when he discusses Andrei Bely's novel *Petersburg*: "This masterpiece evolves in a noosphere, where a corridor is hollowed out inside the brain, in order to communicate with a cosmic void" (213). The text is a depiction of consciousness, in the cerebral games Deleuze writes about through Resnais, and also an image of the "ghostly city as world and brain... This is a space which is both topological and probabilistic: Intellectual cinema, or cinema of the brain, deals with the 'lived brain'" (212). Deleuze claims "the new cerebral images are defined by a topological structure of the outside and inside, and a fortuitous character at each stage of the linkages or mediations" (212). Deleuze's city-as-brain idea is expanded on in this chapter, which sees the hotel as an image of the non-Freudian brain.

Deleuze argues that cinema requires its own cognition (hence the chapter on cinema and the brain in *Cinema 2*), and its own logic. Cinema operates using sensation, affect (hence the chapter on cinema and the body), and a mobilized and virtual gaze. Cinema is the organ for perfecting the new reality, which leads Deleuze (following Bergson) to ask, has cinema a role to play in the birth and formation of a new way of thinking? As I have outlined in the introduction, Friedberg takes up this idea of the mobilized and virtual gaze, claiming that it is increasingly central to postmodernity. My own argument, in turn, sees the hotel moving to the centre of Western lives in postmodernity: the hotel, I claim, not only defines home, enables parallel existences and the postmodern uncanny, but also portrays the postmodern unconscious, without the depth/surface model of unconscious/conscious that once dominated Western thought. This contemporary conception of the brain is perfected in a cinematic depiction of the unconscious as an empty hotel.

Barton's Brain

The Coen brothers' film *Barton Fink*, released in 1991, is located almost exclusively in a run-down hotel in 1940s Los Angeles. The plot of *Barton Fink* is a simple one: an idealistic playwright moves from New York to Los Angeles to write films for Hollywood. He stays at a seedy hotel, and it is the hotel's quiet isolation that Barton thinks will help him write. However, the hotel is not so quiet. Whilst it looks empty, the hotel has noisy guests in its rooms, moaning and weeping. Barton develops writer's block, which means that every tiny noise, from a mosquito's hum to murmurs next door, are dwelt on. He eventually meets his noisy neighbour, Charlie Meadows. Charlie tries to give Barton story ideas and inspiration, but it is not until Barton's lover Audrey is murdered that Barton is able to complete his script. The film ends when Meadows (by then revealed as 'Mad Man Munt') sets the hotel on fire and sets Barton free. He picks up a box Meadows has previously asked him to look after, and walks out of the hotel. The last scene takes place in a landscape opposite to the hotel — an open, sunny beach, the same scene Barton has been looking at in a picture above his desk in his hotel room.

The way of making sense of *Barton Fink* is contained within the film itself. It uses cinematic logic to generate some kind of meaning, or at least references and rhythm. It has its own kind of thinking, and this is what Deleuze means when he writes about the cinema as brain. The film itself is a form of cognition. This is what the opening shot of *Barton Fink* indicates, with its slow close-up shot of the beige wallpaper and the big, sensational (in the Hollywood sense of the word) movie music. These shots are indicative of the kind of cinematic logic that is at work in this film. *Barton Fink* is a film about film (writing, constructing, capital, genre), and a film that uses the sensation and cognition possible to cinema only: the mobilized and virtual

gaze from the mosquito's point of view, the quick pan to the abject wallpaper, the slow and sometimes random dissolves to waves crashing on a beach. There are no establishing shots for the Hotel Earle. Rather than establishing shots between scenes to slow down the action and act as a refrain, we have instead the wave shots, the wallpaper shots, the soundtrack of the bell ringing. These shots punctuate the film as establishing shots would, and create the film's own logic. There are clear ending scenes of the film that entail Barton firstly leaving the hotel (now ablaze) and then sitting on a beach watching the "real" version of the picture of girl on his wall. However, these shots do not close the narrative down in any sense, in the way that a three-part narrative structure would. There is no solution to "what's in the box."

Barton Fink is a film that does not emphasise plot (the plot is relatively simple and takes few twists and turns), but instead uses cinematic concepts and hotel architecture to convey something wider about postmodern subjectivity. *Barton Fink* borrows heavily from the look and style of older Hollywood. It is set in early 1940s Los Angeles, it is about the fickle and shallow film industry and writer's block, and the heavy orchestral sounds allude to overtures of films of the 1940s and '50s. Using all of these cinematic concepts as well as hotel architecture, the film becomes an allegory about postmodern unconsciousness.

Through Deleuzian concepts, this chapter considers the question, what does this film do? The short answer is that the film uses the hotel as an image of the unmappable, unknowable brain. In addition, *Barton Fink* explores the way in which parallel lives come together in the hotel to create a new kind of world. This occurs through the central narrative concern of the film — the relationship between Charlie Meadows and Barton Fink. My reading of this film as an allegory of the postmodern brain is due to several stylistic features of *Barton Fink*. These include the hotel space

filmed without an outside, as entirely interior; the depersonalisation of characters; the heavy, hyperbolic sensation that saturates *Barton Fink*; and the division of mind and body between the characters of Barton and Charlie.

Barton Fink is a film that relies on cinematic elements rather than narrative logic to drive the story. The narrative emphasises not knowing: the method of Audrey's murder is not revealed, Barton's film script is never produced, we don't know what happened to Barton's family, Barton never really knows the "common man" he writes about. These unknowns are embodied in the mysterious box that Charlie gives to Barton. The last lines in the film are from Barton: "I don't know." Meaning is not only deferred, but is replaced by repetition of sounds and shots. It is through the repeated sounds of bells and intercut shots of a deserted beach that the film develops an internal logic and rhythm, which I will expand on in a moment. The idea that *Barton Fink* is a film about film and its processes is confirmed here with references not so much to other kinds of stories, but with references to itself, via the repeated (or chorus) shots and sounds. Meaning, or at least connection, is made within the film through these repetitions. The question is, how does Deleuze's ontology of film argument alter the apprehension of this text? It means that we can see the film as allegorical⁷, that the hotel space in the film is "metastable space" and spatialises an unconscious that is no longer Freudian.

From the first shot of the Hotel Earle, the audience is made aware that it is a fictional, virtual space. This comes from the absence of an exterior establishing shot and the immediate contrast to the lively hotel foyer bar in the previous scene, where Barton receives his offer to work in Hollywood. The camera stays on the medium

⁷ I use Jameson's understanding of allegory here, outlined in *Postmodernism*: "For it is by way of so-called nostalgia films that some properly allegorical processing of the past becomes possible: it is because the formal apparatus of nostalgia films has trained us to consume the past in the form of glossy images that new and more complex 'postnostalgia' statements and forms become possible" (287).

wide shot of Barton standing in his brown suit and hat in the hotel's foyer. The light catches dust particles that fill the air, alluding to both hallucinatory space and the image of multiplicity. The hotel's air is still; time seems slowed down. There is an absence of activity coupled with the 'normal' hotel façade presented by the concierge Chet. This image, filmed with slow and sweeping Coen brothers' shots, points to another world — a virtual world — in the Hotel Earle.

Nothing grounds the hotel in Los Angeles. The effect of no establishing shots, coupled with dust flying around the room, and Barton's brown suit matching the brown, tired lobby furniture, all point to the hotel being a manifestation of Barton himself. The effect of this is also to confuse the audience about the mapping of the hotel (and therefore brain). The same complication exists in Kafka's *America*, with Jameson in the Bonaventure Hotel, in Lynch's films and Murakami's novels, where entry and exit points are bewildering.

It is through the stylistic creation of a space which is entirely interior and difficult to map that the image of hotel as Barton's brain becomes clear. The high key lighting behind the windows acts to blind the audience from the outside light, as though there is no exterior space, conforming to Leibniz's thesis of the soul as monad without a door or window. In *Barton Fink*, though, it is the unmappable brain and unconscious that is conveyed through the windowless, monadic hotel. The guest, as well as the audience, lies on the fringe of understanding what is going on in Barton's head, his hotel room, and the noises in the room next door. The absence of an outside in *Barton Fink* is a crucial element in conveying the impossibility of comprehending totality.

Meaning, or at least rhythm, is created through heightened sensation in the film's music, surface textures, and intercuts with shots on a beach. Sensation also

establishes cognition and rhythm in the film. This occurs for the audience through the music of the film: the opening of *Barton Fink* sees a close-up of beige art deco wallpaper with “big” Hollywood orchestral movie music, initially opening with the ringing of a single bell, pulling the strings of the viewer’s movie subconscious. The strings of performance are also revealed in the opening scenes: we view the stage performance of Barton’s play from behind the stage. We see the curtain strings pulling; we hear the sounds of a wooden, pretentious play coming to a meaningful conclusion. The bell that is heard in the overture occurs again when Barton arrives in the hotel. The entire hotel slowly becomes filled with the single bell as footsteps are heard from below. Slowly Chet, the concierge, emerges from below the stairs and stops the bell ringing. Like the interior of the hotel, Chet is covered in dust, yet he is polishing shoes.⁸ Later in the film, after Barton finds Audrey’s dead body in his bed, he rushes to see who is in the hallway. For the first time in the film, someone else is in the passageway, and it is Chet with his shoeshine trolley with a bell ringing. The passageway and the bells in the hotel provide some kind of shape to a seemingly formless narrative, and also create a film that emphasises sensation over story, concepts and images over plot. Hotel bells with their singular ring create meaning in the film, or at least a kind of chorus or continuity between scenes.

Just as sound and sensation create *Barton Fink*’s own cinematic logic, the camera work in the film depicts the easy slide from one kind of existence to another. Rather than a depth/surface depiction of consciousness, we see what lies beside, rather than beneath, various parts of the postmodern brain. Audrey’s murder comes in the middle of the film and is utterly unexpected both to the audience and to Barton,

⁸ Another refrain in the film is shoes lined up in an empty corridor. The shoe-polishing service in the hotel comes up several times in the film: when Barton looks out into the endless corridor he sees shoes lined up outside all the rooms, waiting to be polished. Charlie has an excuse to visit Barton when their shoes are put outside the wrong doors, but only after Barton has had a chance to write whilst literally slipping his feet into Charlie’s massive shoes.

although there is an indication that sex with Audrey will take him to an entirely different world. Audrey arrives at Barton's room after he phones her, pleading with her to help him write the script treatment. Barton gradually realises, as Audrey is explaining the essences of wrestling narratives, that she is the ghostwriter of Bill Mayhew's work. Bill is a famous screenwriter whose characterisation seems to be based on William Faulkner. He is also Audrey's lover. Rather than being outraged at the injustice to Audrey's creativity, Barton feels duped by Bill (a typically egocentric and out-of-touch Barton Fink response). Audrey then begins kissing the uncomfortable, awkward Barton, and they fall on the bed together, the camera closing in on Barton slipping off his shoes. Moans and murmurs are heard as they have sex, but the camera instead pans away from the bodies to the starkly white bathroom. The camera tracks towards the sink, and down the plughole, revealing abject matter at the sides of the plumbing, signifying the dark mindscape Barton is about to enter. As the camera slowly tracks through the pipes we continue to hear sounds of moaning. It is reminiscent of the shot that opens Lynch's *Blue Velvet*. This film begins with a bright 1950s-styled American scene of a man watering his garden, and then collapsing from a heart attack. After a close-up of the man on the ground, the camera tracks to close-ups of blades of grass, dirt and worms beneath. The camera in *Blue Velvet* invokes nature, according to Jameson in *Postmodernism*, as a framework for the events of the film (294). In *Barton Fink*, however, we see not so much what lies beneath, but what lies alongside Barton's "conscious" life. The film depicts a rhizomic assemblage of the unconscious, where one thing slips into another. The camera creates this cognition, through the mobilized and virtual gaze, where we see the movement from one kind of physicality (sex) to another (abject matter down the plughole). Similarly, the wallpaper provides some form of cognition. Rather than a shot with a reference to

Barton's reactions, the camera moves to the wallpaper, watching it slowly peel from the corner. The personification of the hotel through the wallpaper and the plughole, or at least through the close-up, are explanatory shots, which point towards the hotel being a metastable or hallucinatory space. They provide the cognition or the logic of the film.

Using the dripping wallpaper and other sensations in the hotel room, the narrative moves beyond the personal. Depersonalisation — moving beyond the personal, beyond the subjective, beyond the singular subject — is a Deleuzian idea that works particularly effectively when considering both the characterisation of Barton and others, as well as the unreal space in the film. Barton is not so much a character but an allegorical, depersonalised figure. We see this when he enters the hotel that is, as I have argued, his brain: his demeanour and clothing “match” the dusty brown hotel. Barton is vastly out of touch with himself — with his writer's block, his inability to understand others (such as Charlie Meadows), his inability to connect with Audrey — and this finally culminates in his inability to understand what has gone on during the murder of Audrey that probably happened beside him, as he slept. We rarely see an emotional reaction from Barton. As I have described, shots that would usually show an emotional reaction from the protagonist instead defer to gooey, viscous wallpaper glue; or the rise in big orchestral music takes the sensation of the experience or thought elsewhere. Ideas and images go beyond the personal via aspects of the hotel, compounding the idea that Barton is incapable of emotional comprehension and connection with others.

Barton is entirely cerebral. He is wooden and stiff around others, unable to find common ground with anyone, least of all a “common man” like Charlie — the subject of his plays. He is “all brain” whilst his neighbour Charlie is “all body.” He

is not a three-dimensional character, one with verisimilitude, but instead a kind of caricature. Just as we have a virtual or unreal space in the Hotel Earle, we also have an unréal, or depersonalized protagonist in much the same way that we have seen in previous postmodern hotel narratives by Lynch and Murakami. As both the hotel and the character are unreal to a large degree (through the hallucinatory space and depersonalisation), and as the two seem to physically match each other (with a brown, sweaty exterior), we can see the hotel as Barton's spatialised unconscious.

Language is another device used to depersonalise characters in Coen brothers' films. The detectives towards the end of the film play out their roles as those from a Raymond Chandler novel; the thin sharp detective and the chubby slow sidekick throw around anti-Semitic wisecracks to each other. These characters seem to know they are characters from a genre film. The audience is aware of the fiction of the film; we cannot sink ourselves into the reality of the story, but this does not matter. There is a stagy feel to the acting, the kind we see in Lynch's work, with wide pauses between characters' dialogue, emphasising a consciousness of fictionality (without the more standard techniques of face-to-camera narration or postmodern intertextuality). Charlie Meadows' character is doubly false, easily wearing the façade of a simple insurance salesman ("Well Barton, you might say I sell peace of mind") whilst wailing behind the hotel room walls. His character acts like a gentle, honest American insurance salesman, bouncing clichéd Arthur Miller lines to Barton ("Hell I could tell you some stories"). John Goodman's psychotic character works particularly effectively as a depersonalised figure on two levels, as he is a clichéd psychotic playing a clichéd insurance salesman. Depersonalised characters and their language creates an allegorical effect for *Barton Fink*, so that characters are not there

so much for their own sake, but gesture towards wider ideas about subjectivity and space, particularly about the interrelationship between hotel space and the brain.

Barton Fink operates as a space between from several angles: both on the level of plot, and in the way the film is created by the Coen brothers as a space between beginning and ending the writing of *Miller's Crossing*. It is a film that moves towards an unblocking. And it is only through the hotel that this space between can be articulated. Writer's block here and in *The Shining* becomes linked to the unknowable hotel, with shots of an empty corridor to signify this. The characters are depersonalised as the hotel becomes virtually alive: Barton needs Charlie Meadows to become unblocked. So in the end, Barton requires another person, rather than the silence in the hotel, to release his creativity.

Deterritorialising the Brain

The coming together of Charlie and Barton can be read in terms of the brain (Barton) requiring a body (Charlie). Together, Barton and Charlie create new territory in the hotel, in Deleuze's sense of territorialisation (discussed in Chapter One). As he territorialises the hotel through Charlie's friendship, Barton becomes increasingly comfortable in his brain/hotel. His writer's block falls away, and Barton writes "something brilliant" once he has received the mysterious boxed gift from Charlie – something the audience presumes is a severed head.

I have written earlier of the way in which *Barton Fink* replaces meaning and sense with various repetitive shots and sounds, such as the single bell ringing, the corridor shots, and the wallpaper. And in one sense this is also how the film marks out its own territory: it charts an understanding of the self and "the life of the mind" that goes beyond psychoanalysis, and uses the hotel space as a way of mapping

conscious/unconsciousness. In this film there is always the strong sense of meaning generated through the repeated refrains, in the sense that is explained in *A Thousand Plateaus*: “The refrain is rhythm and melody that have been territorialized because they have become expressive — and have become expressive because they are territorialising” (317). When Deleuze and Guattari write of territorialisation it is initially in relation to the way in which animals chart out territory via colours and sounds (315). What is important for this chapter (and indeed for this thesis) is that it is through territorializing functions that home is made. The territory, Deleuze and Guattari write, “is first of all the critical distance between two beings of the same species: Mark your distance. What is mine is first of all my distance; I possess only distances. Don’t anybody touch me” (315). And indeed this is exactly what Barton does on his arrival in his hotel room. He is a being entirely separate from anyone else in his room. The camera closes in on the squeaky bed as Barton slams down his case and tries to open a window. This is followed immediately by another close-up on the Underwood typewriter and the hotel stationary that says “Hotel Earle: A Day or a Lifetime.” Barton’s territory is clearly established through the noisy, dominating typewriter and specific images of Barton’s hotel room.

Barton attempts to create his critical distance from another guest two scenes later, when he is typing (with a repeated close-up shot of the typed words and a slow pan down the walls to a close-up of the wallpaper). He hears a man moaning or laughing or both. Barton looks out of the hallway, and we have another refrain tracking shot of the empty hallway coupled with the hollow wind of the hallway — a kind of breathing of the hotel. Barton’s inability to listen and to connect with those around him continually recurs throughout the narrative. His hotel room, despite being

a space that he longed for previously, is easily invaded by sounds, insects, and the distraction of a moaning guest.

Rather than dealing with the problem himself, Barton does what one is able to do in a hotel rather than a home, and phones reception to deal with the problem. As the phone call is heard next door, the camera tracks the sounds of footsteps in the next room and stops at Barton's door as the neighbour knocks. Barton opens the door to reveal Charlie and immediately we see the process of Barton marking out territory as he opens the door only slightly. We know from the previous scene that it is the quiet isolation of the Hotel Earle that is keeping him there despite the mosquitos, and he resists Charlie's offers of friendship and warmth. Charlie ignores this and insists on "buying" Barton a drink. Charlie thumps down on the springy mattress and the scene uses lots of medium close-ups of Charlie as Barton keeps his distance by leaning against his desk. As discussed elsewhere in this chapter, Charlie is a depersonalised character; when he is first revealed as Barton opens the door, his facial expression borders on anger but there is a long unnatural pause before he first speaks. His cultivated innocence and simplicity drives his questions to Barton about what he does, and he continually offers to help Barton by telling him stories. He says to Barton many times in the conversation "hell, I could tell you some stories . . ." Charlie knows wrestling pictures and wrestling moves intimately. Through wrestling, he tries to invade Barton's territory — his room, his distance as a fellow guest — as effectively as possible.

However, Barton continues to mark out his own territory — not so much spatial territory, but the territory of his knowledge. To Charlie's excited claim "Hell I could tell you some stories," Barton interrupts him with, "And that's just the point Charlie, we all have stories . . ." Barton fills the conversation with ideas about "real

theatre” and “writers doing everything in their power to insulate themselves from the common man,” which of course is exactly what Barton has attempted to do in his initial encounter with Charlie. And what occurs through Charlie is a deterritorialisation through force. He forces himself into Barton’s life regardless of Barton’s body language and self-obsessed rants. He offers alcohol and stories to Barton, he insists they have a friendship and appears to be nothing more than a kind jolly giant. However, the cinematic logic of this film — the depersonalisation and the pauses between Charlie’s speeches, the abject peeling wallpaper that droops yet again when he leaves — points to a much more sinister character beneath Charlie Meadows. Thus the worlds of Charlie Meadows and Barton Fink begin to collide as Charlie forces himself into Barton’s world and room. This is the process of deterritorialization, the opening up and invasion of Barton’s territory, the process of two hotel guests in parallel rooms/worlds coming together.

In order for deterritorialisation to occur, re-territorialisation is needed. The process of reterritorialisation requires, Deleuze says, “something that ‘has-the-value-of’ home” (326). We see this occurring in *Barton Fink* through the various exchanges that take place between Barton and Charlie such as the drinks, the stories and the wrestling manoeuvres that Charlie teaches Barton, and then finally through the handing over of the box after Audrey’s murder. As Charlie and Barton’s relationship becomes more intimate, there are an increasing number of shots of them on the squeaky bed together, mostly medium shots, with their heads together. The body of Charlie and brain of Barton truly come together when Charlie insists on teaching wrestling moves, their brown clothes and sweating bodies merging in a high angle shot that moves to a close-up of their heads together. These fast yet deliberate moves have overtones of Francis Bacon’s wrestling pictures, and we see here a sense of merging

of two worlds through controlled, balletic violence, somewhat like the merging of the wasp and orchid Deleuze writes of. Charlie then feigns anger at what he's done in pinning Barton down, and slaps his head (one of the countless references to heads in the film) saying, "I wouldn't be much of a match with you with mental gymnastics." Thus the process of wrestling becomes a vital component of the subsequent deterritorialisation process of Barton and Charlie. Their wrestling comes to stand for shared, exchanged knowledge, thus creating "home-value" through reterritorialisation.

Barton is liberated by this new "home-value." Two scenes after the wrestling scene, Barton has accidentally been given Charlie's shoes in Chet's mix up with the shoeshine. The medium shot sees Barton slipping into Charlie's oversized shoes, while typing "A large man in tights." The shoes function as another exchange, or reterritorialisation; they enable Barton to become unblocked and he writes freely, albeit formulaically. Charlie knocking at the door quickly interrupts this and they sit on the bed together exchanging shoes. Another exchange takes place in this scene: as Charlie tells Barton he is leaving for a while and heading to New York, Barton gives Charlie the address and number of his family. As Barton does so, the wallpaper peels, in a repeated ominous refrain. Charlie tells Barton he'll be back when it's hot, and this shot comes from the wallpaper's perspective, that is, from a high angle focusing on Barton. He also tells Barton that he hears everything in the hotel, even sex taking place on the other side of Barton's hotel room wall. Even though Charlie seems to have colonised the hotel, Barton finds inspiration and a freedom from his writer's block through his friendship with Charlie.

The dynamic of the relationship is thus that of Charlie invading Barton's territory — both his brain and space (which, in allegorical terms, are the same thing

here). An invitation to his home is something Barton literally gives Charlie when he hands over his family's address. With this in mind, it is the murder of Audrey that is Charlie's ultimate invasion, and contributes to the process of deterritorialisation.

Whilst Barton is unaware that Charlie has murdered Audrey, the murder enables Charlie to give Barton the gift of a solution to his writer's block (even though it is a temporary one). The final gift with the value of home, or what stands for Charlie and Barton's new bond, is the box that Charlie gives Barton, and he asks Barton to mind it while he goes away.

The hotel is therefore privileged in the film because its architectural model enables this territorialisation, this coming together of the parallel worlds of guests. Both depersonalised characters are devoid of home. Cinematic cognition in *Barton Fink* enables this to be conveyed. The fluid that saturates the film is perhaps the glue that connects Charlie and Barton. Their bodies and brains are connected through abject matter. The slow revealing of the blood from the mosquito followed by the seepage of blood from Audrey's body in the hotel bed are given plenty of unhurried, deliberate time in the film. Similarly, Charlie's glued-up ear, the wallpaper glue and the grimy yet damp furniture all provide some kind of viscous glue that sticks the characters together. At the same time, the wallpaper is becoming constantly unstuck, as Barton becomes unhinged himself. As this occurs, Barton becomes bonded to Charlie. Thus the Coen brothers use abject references for the way in which the parallel worlds of the two men come together. Charlie has successfully invaded Barton's mental space, and the wallpaper glue, rather ominously, points towards this deterritorialisation.

The process of deterritorialisation turns on itself at the end of the film: Charlie returns as Mad Man Munt and seems to withdraw the friendship he has given

as Charlie: “You come in to my home, and complain I’m making too much noise? You just don’t listen.” But he does release Barton from the towering inferno, and when Charlie releases Barton from the handcuffs that chain him to the bedpost, the steel balls on the bed head roll across the floor like decapitated heads, and Barton is set free. It is only with the box beside him (presumably containing a decapitated head) that Barton is able to write freely, and, he thinks, brilliantly.

Barton writes a story of intellectual wrestling. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, Barton’s script is rejected by Capitol Pictures, and he is told he is to be held prisoner by the company until he writes a saleable filmscript. Yet what the box also brings Barton is a sense of contentment, as shown in the final scene at the beach, through the fusing of virtual and actual worlds. Barton stares at the body of a woman he first saw in a picture above his desk in the hotel, wanting to connect with her. He does not though, and sits on the hot beach in his brown suit, watching the woman from the same angle that he watched her in the picture. He has moved into a world even more virtual and unreal than the hotel. Or rather, Barton enters a secret place that has already been at the heart of the hotel room. The already hallucinatory world of the hotel/brain finds an even more secretive space into which to crawl.

Jack’s Brain

Jack Torrance, like Barton Fink, is a man who enters a deserted hotel for isolation and silence in order to write the great masterpiece. The empty hotel is “exactly what I’m looking for,” Jack tells the hotel manager when applying for the job. What is evident quite quickly in *The Shining*, though, is that the hotel is haunted. The manager warns him that a caretaker killed his family due to cabin fever one winter, and that the hotel is built on an Indian burial ground, but Jack tells the

manager that he does not believe in ghosts. The overblown orchestral music, coupled with Danny, Jack's child, possessing the ability to "shine," or see the past and the future, indicate immediately that this film is hallucinatory. The line between reality and unreality becomes impossible to draw in the hotel. What comes from Jack's or Danny's brain and what is really present in the hotel is blurred continuously in both the narrative and the editing in *The Shining*.

The way in which *The Shining* is filmed, with the smooth slow camera often moving behind the characters, facilitates the circularity of the film (which is enhanced by circular corridors and circular carpets in the hotel). This circularity, coupled with the horror elements of the story, in turn foreshadows Jack's inevitable self-destruction as he becomes a depersonalised, multiple, spatialised subject in his quest to become the hotel. As this story unfolds in the Overlook Hotel, so too do ideas of the unconscious in postmodernity. The idea of hotel as brain is derived from Deleuze's argument with reference to *The Shining* and *2001* that "Kubrick is renewing the theme of the initiatory journey because every journey in the world is an exploration of the brain" (*Cinema 2* 205). Just as Barton's unconscious is spatialised as the Earle Hotel, Jack's unconscious is quickly allegorised as the Overlook Hotel.

Kubrick uses the expectations of the hotel, including notions of privacy and isolation, manners and formality, to tell the story of someone who longs to leave his family and become someone or something else. Jack, like Barton, longs to disconnect himself from his old life, and attempts to connect with others (Grady and the barman, for example). Jack's longing for freedom from the nuclear family who accompany him to the hotel leads to the overwhelming urge to destroy his wife and son. Like Barton complaining about Charlie's noise, Jack tells Wendy to be quiet and stay away from him because "You break my concentration." Jack wants to join another, utopian

hotel world of casual sex, alcohol and creativity. He fails to do this in one sense (as he dies), but an image of him with his friends in a 1929 photo of a party at the Overlook Hotel suggests that at least part of him is there. Like Barton, Jack moves into the even more virtual world of the photo in the hotel.

Again, like *Barton Fink*, *The Shining* is an allegorical film, saturated with overblown cinema music. From the first shot we understand that *The Shining* uses the skeleton of the horror genre to gesture towards something more allegorical than the good verses evil narrative. An extreme wide helicopter shot captures pastel-tinted mountains and a lake that pays homage to late Romantic sublime paintings. The camera whizzes past pine forests, following a tiny Volkswagen car as it drives up the mountain. Suddenly the helicopter shot breaks away from the car's trail and moves away, as though it is a bird or spirit. The huge orchestral music with deep horns and high human trills, together with the vast landscape, indicate that this is a film about extremes. The shots are saturated with sensation, corresponding to Deleuze's ideas of a cinema of the body that physically affects the audience. Thus we have an immediate sense that *The Shining* through its overblown use of "big" cinematic techniques, is, like *Barton Fink*, a postnostalgia film in Jameson's sense of the term. It is a film that works in an allegorical way, with the circular images pointing towards something else. In both *The Shining* and *Barton Fink*, however, the allegory is not so much of the past, but of the process of the unconscious and of writing in postmodernity. The hotel's architecture spatialises the rhizomic thought processes of Jack and Barton. In the middle of Kubrick's film, when Jack is trying to slaughter his family, it becomes evident that the circular world of the hotel is the brain of Jack.

The initial shots of the film are juxtaposed with the first shot of the hotel, which quickly establishes the narrative as an allegory of the unconscious. Size

matters in this film — grand landscape, tiny dot of a car, grand hotel, tiny figure of Danny cycling around the corridors. Always the image of the journey, and the journey is always a circular one. The first time the hotel is shot it is hard to see, as it is so embedded in the mountain. It looks as though the Overlook Hotel has been carved out of the side of the mountain. Inside, however, it is clearly a modern hotel with warm brown tones and high ceilings. Right from the beginning, a disjunction between outside and inside is established. We never see any characters actually entering and leaving the hotel through the doors (as is the case with many of the films examined in this thesis). This difference between the exterior shots of the hotel and the inside is thus clearly marked. This utterly interior space conveys it as a possible mindscape.

At first glance it is easy to see *The Shining* as a narrative dominated by the Oedipal myth. Put simply, it is the story of defeating the ogre father. The novel is clearly an archetypal horror story, drenched in psychoanalytical motifs and allusions. King points to this directly through the doctor who visits Danny in the novel from which the film is adapted:

“There seems to be some buffer somewhere between the conscious and the subconscious, and one hell of a blue-nose lives in there. This censor only lets through a small amount, and often what does come through is only symbolic. That’s oversimplified Freud, but it does pretty much describe what we know of the mind’s interaction with itself.” (King 139)

The Oedipal story of killing the father is present in plot of *The Shining* as Danny needs to kill Jack to survive. In both the novel and the film, Jack is the hotel, or at least aims to become the hotel, become infected and engulfed by it. The novel tells

this story through a psychoanalytic framework, but the film takes it in other, un-Freudian directions.

Horror, from Poe to Stephen King, typically operates on the Freudian model of the uncanny, where something from the unconscious is suddenly brought to light where and when it should not be. Both versions of *The Shining* — novel and film — follow the basic outline of the classic horror plot: Jack brings his family to be the caretakers of the Overlook hotel for the winter in order to give him the isolation he needs to write. He is warned by the manager of the violence that occurred in the hotel because of one caretaker, Grady, who chopped up his wife and daughters one winter. Danny, Jack's son, has an imaginary/ghostly friend Tony, who warns Danny of the horrors of the Overlook Hotel. Sure enough, as the winter sets in, so does Jack's insanity, violence and distance from his family. The ghost of Grady tells Jack that he needs to kill Wendy and Danny. Jack pursues them, they escape, and Jack is destroyed. In the novel Jack dies when the boiler room/subconscious explodes — a classic depth/surface move whereby Jack's subconscious is spatialised as the boiler room down below.

When *The Shining* comes to the screen through Stanley Kubrick, a reading of the film that looks at the style of the film, not just the narrative, is demanded. And the style suggests that rather than a psychoanalytic brain, with its depth/surface model, it is a rhizomic brain allegorised in the Overlook hotel. Like *Barton Fink*, *The Shining* emphasises the space and camera work over plot, and both films create a mind/body-scape via the hotel. The cinematic logic of the film calls for a consideration of *The Shining* in a light other than psychoanalysis. Much of the difference between the film and novel comes from the film's visual presence of the hotel, and the way in which it is filmed: Kubrick's circular slow tracking camera work, often with the camera

behind the subject, means that the audience is involved closely with the action, tracking the hotel as Danny does, always sweeping around corners, always entering spaces that are usually blocked off to guests. The style and structure of the film, through the rhizomic space and camera work, through its ending in a maze rather than an exploding boiler room, make it a narrative that moves away from Oedipal or Freudian readings of horror. The film lacks the depth/surface structure of horror that belonged to Poe, Hitchcock and others.

The hotel's structure is crucial to Jack's infection by evil or insanity in the novel. The idea that the hotel was built on an Indian burial ground is emphasised in the novel much more than it is in the film, and this is the origin of its haunting in the novel. This is only mentioned in passing at the beginning of the film. The hotel in the novel is described as having a kind of character, but this does not carry the same weight or complexity as the way Kubrick sets up the hotel. There are inherent problems in comparing the book and the film, but such a move is useful here because of the cinematic logic of the film — through the camerawork, and the creation of textural sound, the hotel becomes a postmodern expression of the unconscious. It is not the clear-cut Freudian dynamic set out by the novel, where the boiler room below (the unconscious) builds up to exploding and engulfing Jack. The hotel space in the film is set out in a much more circular fashion, emphasis is placed on vast and luxurious hotel space (for example in the countless shots of the lobby), the symmetry of the interior design and the way the characters in the film never seem to fit the hotel (their dress, their roles [doing nothing]). Thus what cinema offers is a way out of the traditional hierarchy of horror narratives, through circular filming, smooth movement between discontinuous spaces, and an absence of the depth/surface model that is

conveyed in the novel. The effect of this is a reworking of the psyche in postmodernism without Freud.

Without a psychoanalytically-driven plot, and without a clear adherence to genre, Kubrick's film anchors the narrative in space rather than plot or characterisation.⁹ We have seen this too in *Barton Fink* with the sensual, slow details of the hotel, from the backlit shot of Barton entering the lobby, to the close-up of dank wallpaper. Space is the dominant influence on the subject in both films: indeed if, as I argue with Deleuze in *Cinema 2*, the hotel is the brain, then influence is an understatement. The film, I think, is post-genre, using horror combined with Kubrick's auteur signatures: stylish wide spaces that we see in his films from *Barry Lyndon* to *Eyes Wide Shut*, intense symmetry in interior images, and wide, slow tracking shots. Space for Kubrick is about so much more than just a setting for action and dialogue. In *The Shining*, the structure of the hotel points to something that cannot be understood, but is felt on a textural and sensational level. It is Jack's brain. The sensation created through colours, textures, size and sounds in this film gestures towards the hotel being something organic and alive.

The hotel is not understood or enjoyable for members of Jack's family, Danny and Wendy. Homely spaces, on the other hand, offer security and comfort for them both. From the beginning of the film, Kubrick establishes a disjunction between home and the hotel. The early shots have extremely slow dissolves that cut between Jack first entering the hotel and meeting with the Overlook manager, and Wendy and Danny at home. The home is crammed with laundry and books on a crooked shelf. The television is blaring and Wendy smokes while Danny eats his peanut butter sandwich. The sunlight catches the slowly curling cigarette smoke as Wendy and

⁹In *Signatures of the Visible*, Jameson describes the film as "metageneric" (84), which means that certain films can be both many genres in one, and also work on the system of genre, investigating and deconstructing it.

Danny talk at the table, medium close shots emphasising the closeness of the space. It is a space of confined and crowded domesticity, and a space in which both characters are confident.

This home space is heavily contrasted with the hotel, intercutting with the long shots of the lobby, with its wide spaces and oversized furniture that crosses over from faux-medieval to '70s minimalism. It is the same confusion of history in the design that is experienced in the haunted hotel too: guests who have died there never seem to leave. The lobby and the lobby shots dwarf Jack, who is dazzled by it on his arrival. But he does not seem out of place in the hotel, with his brown suit and neat hair. Jameson has pointed out in *Signatures of the Visible* that there is a stark contrast between the 'known' hotel spaces the guests experience, and the tiny office the manager inhabits (86). Disjunctions within the hotel space perpetually occur in this film. Consider for example the red and white '60s bathroom that exists off the Grand Ballroom, with its low ceilings, intense fluorescent lighting and stark colours. Another example of disjunction comes from the low tracking shots of Danny passing through the low-lit plush corridor through to the lobby, and into the stark white kitchen. And yet while these disjunctions are emphasised, intense symmetry is present in many of the chorus shots: the repeated image of blood coming down the elevator sees two elevator doors, two chairs on either side of the hallway, twin girls facing the camera. There is perfect stillness and flatness, with the texture coming from the sounds. The effect of these repeated shots act as a chorus, indicating the truth of the hotel, or the reality of Jack's brain, to Danny. The flat, silent images work as a reminder that it is a psyche we are presented with here; as Deleuze writes, "how can we decide what comes from the inside and what comes from the outside, the extra sensory perceptions or hallucinatory projections?" (*Cinema 2* 206). The absence of

reality, the circular camera work and depersonalised characters point to an allegorical image of the brain without the depth/surface binary we have seen in home-based images of the psyche.

Home (the space in which Jack feels least comfortable) in the hotel comes in the form of peach walls and sloping ceilings. This is the caretaker's quarters at the top of the hotel, which Wendy says is "cosy, just like a real home." However, whilst its proportions fit the body much more closely than, say, the Overlook lobby, it contains none of home's essences that are evident in Wendy and Danny's previous domain — light, clutter, warmth. Indeed, the hotel residence is just like another hotel room but with old furniture. Jack seems to belong neither in the hotel residence nor in their original home. And if Wendy and Danny provide "home value" for Jack, then he rejects them too, even as they begin their journey to the hotel in the car. The car-drive up the mountain is the beginning of Jack's process of removing himself from his family and becoming something else. Jack's mannerisms, his sarcastic smiles and demonic eyebrows are gestures that begin to mark out his territory, away from his family, in the Overlook hotel. His final goal is to become the Overlook hotel. Jack's homely quarters and work/hotel space are intrinsically connected, but rather than trying to conflate the two (the move Zizek claims would ease Norman Bates' tension in *Psycho*) Jack tries to separate himself from his home/family and becomes engulfed by the hotel. The characteristics of hotels mean that they are devices for travelling, for leaving home. It is a journey for Jack that is utterly entwined with an exploration of his brain.

Jack spreads himself out in the hotel quickly (as does Danny on the green machine), working away in the vast lobby, his typing echoing through the vast gothic ceiling, and, in his "breaks" from writing, he throws a ball against the oversized

fireplace. With his sounds, Jack creates a new territory around him, corresponding to the first and second aspects of the Refrain according to Deleuze (*A Thousand Plateaus* 311): the song or sound as the first, and the circular rhythm as the second. Through the sounds of typing, and slamming the ball in the vast lobby, Jack creates both rhythm and sound around him in the largest possible space. He is creating this territory around himself to reterritorialise the hotel to be all his (or all *him*), not his family's. He unconsciously removes himself from his family through his spreading out over the hotel, through his creation of territory. What is also going on in Jack's stay in the hotel is an ultimate hotel experience, where he claims complete privacy and isolation from his family. The space and length of time (five months) allows him freedom to focus entirely on himself. Of course, as his obsession increases, through his false work at the typewriter, his sanity decreases. In trying to claim the hotel as his territory, as his new home, he is defying the contract people make when entering the hotel (that they will leave again).

Repeated images of certain spaces — such as corridor shots — act as refrains that contribute to the logic of the film. At various, unpredictable times, from Danny's point of view we are faced with the soundless, flat image of the double doors with washes of blood coming down the sides. This static shot is intercut with a close-up of Danny screaming silently in front of a black background (indicating a placelessness about this vision). These images do not contribute to a comprehension of the narrative as much as they create their own value, or create the value of the hotel as the dominant aspect of understanding the central character, just as the Coen brothers do with the corridor and wallpaper shots in *Barton Fink*. The images of the abject in the magnificent hotel (the blood saturating the Overlook Hotel) represent the subversion of the promise made by hotels in postmodernity: that they are sterile and carry no

trace of previous guests. Jack also sabotages the pristine promise of the hotel as he moves to become the hotel: he is drawn to the ghosts residing in the Grand Ballroom and bathroom, and the naked young woman/corpse in room 237. These are all elements of the hotel that Jack has free access to, as he shuts down as an individual character and merges with the hotel.

Room 237 is the secret place at the centre of the hotel's horror. Danny senses this from the beginning. Scatman Crother's character, the chef Mr O'Halloran (who tells Danny about what it is to "shine," to read others' thoughts and see the future) warns Danny not to go to Room 237 under any circumstances. Danny's corridor adventures on his bike often see him ending up outside Room 237. Finally, with the key in the door, Danny yields to temptation and enters the room. He comes out in a catatonic state and covered in bruises. Wendy blames Jack, accusing him of beating Danny, as he has done before. Whilst this is not literally the case, in a sense it is true, as Jack *is* the hotel. Room 237 is the secret place, much like the secret place or "intense centre" in the refrain. As Deleuze writes, "Inside or out, the territory is linked to this intense centre, which is like the unknown homeland, terrestrial source of all forces friendly and hostile, where everything is decided" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 321). Whilst the Overlook Hotel may seem to be an intense centre in itself, its psyche is further intensified in Room 237. The images in Room 237 when Jack visits it are classic horror film ones: Jack finds a beautiful young woman in the bath whom he embraces, but whilst looking in the mirror at them together, Jack watches her become a rotting corpse of an old woman.

The problematic nature of reality in this film is highlighted through the frequent use of mirrors. Several scenes are shot via the mirror: when Danny speaks to Tony (whom Danny calls "The little boy who lives inside my mouth") in the

bathroom it is shot in medium close-up in the mirror; the scene where Wendy wakes Jack with breakfast and he shows increasingly distant and aggressive behaviour is also shot entirely through the mirror opposite them. Danny's writing of REDRUM on the door is not understood until it is viewed by Wendy through the mirror and is read as MURDER. These mirror shots are not just stylistically interesting but, like the careful symmetry in the interiors, intensify the idea that this hotel, like Foucault's mirror, is a "placeless place" (24). The hotel is a mindscape, an image of the unconscious, and this is emphasised by the shots in the mirror. The mirror is not used in this film as a device for reflection and confirmation of the self, as it might be expected in a modernist or Freudian text, but rather is just one of the ways in which reality is undefined in this hotel.

The slow and undefined dissolve between reality and unreality is again used in the crucial maze scene near the end of the film: Jack looks down at the model of the maze whilst in the hotel lobby. The high angle shot slowly moves closer to the maze, and as it does so, it becomes apparent that it is now the actual maze, with Wendy and Danny running around in it. The indivisibility of the model and real maze is a crystal image in Deleuze's understanding of it: What the crystal image does in uniting the virtual and the actual is emphasise the impossibility of dividing the two in the hotel, a space in which the line between conscious and unconscious is not so much a closed door, but a free flowing corridor with (ironically) discontinuous space.

The maze shot is followed by a medium close-up of Jack staring out the window, but he is not really staring at anything. His eyes are upturned slightly; his mouth slightly open, his appearance is dishevelled and crazed. The lighting on Jack and the lobby behind him is blue-white; the camera slowly circles around him with high-pitched sounds on the soundtrack. In this frozen gesture we see Jack becoming

less of a singular character and more of the essence of some evil force. It can also be read as becoming impersonal, in the Deleuzian sense that has already been discussed with reference to *Barton Fink*. The entwinement of the actor Jack Nicholson and his character Jack Torrance is renowned, depersonalising the character further as merely an extension of the actor's psychotic repertoire. The two Jacks put on a showy performance only matched by the hotel that he/they become.

The arc of the narrative sees Jack's movement away from his family towards becoming the hotel. The blocks preventing this becoming, as pointed out by Grady, are Danny, "a naughty boy . . . if I may be so bold," "his mother," and the "nigger cook." We see the wild gestures of depersonalisation and dancing as Jack walks towards and enters the Gold Ballroom. The formality of the exchange at the bar enhances Jack's depersonalisation: he speaks with exaggerated expressions and loud clichéd lines to the barman Lloyd: "[I'll have the] hair of the dog that bit me." The hotel formality and the inscrutability of Lloyd not only foil Jack's wildness but also elevate Jack. Jack seems to become drunk as he mimes drinking, again gesturing towards both depersonalisation and becoming one of the ghosts in the hotel.

Becoming a part of the hotel is compounded further the second time Jack enters the ballroom, when Grady spills a drink on him and takes him to the bathroom to clean up. We have a startling Kubrick-esque juxtaposition here, as the low ceiling and intense red and white bathroom is a jarring contrast to the elegantly lit 1920s ballroom beside it. The camera encompasses the bathroom ceiling in a medium-long shot. True to Grady's disguise as a waiter, he does not directly look at Jack until the end of his conversation with him. Grady uses his hotel formality when speaking to Jack, which has the effect of emphasising the psychotic, murderous nature of the Overlook Hotel through the mask of eloquent manners. Through Grady, the third

aspect of the Deleuzian refrain — drawing on an outsider (*A Thousand Plateaus* 311) — is evoked. Through Grady, Jack is able to make his final attempt to become the hotel through “correcting” Danny, Wendy and O’Hallaran. This is the way for Jack to make a new home, just as Barton requires the murderous Charlie in the Hotel Earle. What has “home value” in *The Shining*, what comes to stand for the relationship, is the acknowledged love of the hotel and of murder.

True to the genre, *The Shining* ends with Jack’s destruction. This does not take place in the hotel, nor does anyone directly eliminate him. Rather, Jack dies because he is unable to navigate the maze outside. It does seem that Danny is the one who has a clear understanding of both inside and outside space, of the “reality” of the hotel, even though he tries to remind himself that his visions are just like “pictures in a book.” Danny covers his tracks in the snow as he escapes his father, and from the moment Tony tells Danny they will be moving to the hotel, Danny understands that it is an evil place. Whilst Jack does not manage to eliminate the blocks to his quest to become the hotel, he does manage to become embedded in it, becoming a face in a crowd in a photo of the Gold Ballroom in the 1920s. In many ways, the style and plot of *The Shining* is enfolded with a metanarrative that is anti-Oedipal: Jack moves away from his social destiny of father, husband, and writer. He does not remain Daddy, but becomes a photograph, a memory that never really happened. This story, along with the circular filming of the hotel, and the absence of narrative resolution (to puzzles such as the woman in the bath), mean we do not really understand the secret place of the hotel, Room 237.

The hotel's increased centrality to everyday life is compounded when it becomes the image of the postmodern unconscious, as it does in the two films in this chapter. Like the protagonists in *Barton Fink* and *The Shining*, postmodern hotel-goers experience a departure from the home to a space increasingly important to contemporary Western life. The haunted-house narrative, so soaked in psychoanalysis, epitomises the depth/surface construction of the Freudian unconscious/conscious: the upstairs, conscious house is visited frequently and unexpectedly by "things" in the basement below. An indefinite stay in an empty hotel, however, is like a trip into a dream world, where one is entirely unconscious, entirely asleep. Barton does not wake from his dream, and Jack dies in his nightmare. In an empty hotel, one is free to roam, but the corridors of meaning remain empty. In both films, the empty hotel becomes a kind of hell. This image concurs with Kracauer's image (discussed in Chapter Two) of the hotel as hell, as an inverted church. The promise hotels make — that they are clean and devoid of abject matter — is persistently undermined in these hotel films that are awash with blood that seems to appear from nowhere.

The ruined city that once epitomised the unconscious for Freud is replaced in postmodernity by the hotel. Thus it is not "daddy talking"; it is not an Oedipal horror story told in these films. The deserted, haunted hotels in both *Barton Fink* and *The Shining* operate as allegories of rhizomic brains. Both narratives see the protagonist entering the deserted hotel to write something "brilliant"; both men long to connect with others outside their family but are unable to. Both protagonists become distracted by the hotel, and to a varying degree, possessed by it. And both Barton and Jack end up in pictures within the hotel, indicating in both films that the protagonists' psyche and the hotel space are fused. The two films use a combination of cinematic and hotel

logic to formulate a meaning, or at least a rhythm: rather than refer to a character for a reaction, the films use empty corridors or peeling wallpaper. Neither film consistently follows an established genre, nor has any clear resolution, and the texts use hallucinatory cinematic techniques that suggest an allegorical reading of the text. The final image of Jack in *The Shining* see his dead eyes turned slightly upwards, as though, in a Bataille moment, he is trying to see what was inside his head after all. The final image of Barton is on a beach with a head in a box beside him. His last words are “I don’t know.” The contents of both of these writers’ heads have been mapped onto deserted, ghostly hotels.

CHAPTER 6: THE SUPERMODERN HOTEL

Essentially, tourism, as a search for meaning, with the ludic sociability it favours, the image it generates, is a graduated encoded and untraumatising apprehension of the external, of otherness.

— Rachid Amirou, qtd.in Michel Houellebecq, *Platform* (38)

Hotels, to the extent they function as “non-places” might be considered focal points of loneliness and ennui in late postmodernity, or “supermodernity.” Augé argues in his book *Non-Places: An Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* that non-places make intimate relationships between others and with the environment impossible. Much of Augé’s work on non-places is useful in this chapter; however, his clear delineation between place and non-place, between historical space and new space, is problematised by two “supermodern” hotel narratives: *Platform*, a novel by Michel Houellebecq and *Lost in Translation*, a film written and directed by Sofia Coppola. The hotels in these narratives are non-places according to Augé’s definition, but they also complicate the clear binary Augé establishes between place and non-place. Both narratives, dominated by hotels, use the expectation that hotels are alienating non-places as an opening premise, relegating the protagonists to the role of lonely outsiders. The narratives then invert this idea, showing how intimacy and authenticity are unfolded in the hotel.

Thus this chapter both agrees with Augé’s insistence on the significance of non-places in supermodernity, and disagrees with his argument that non-places are characterised by a complete break from history, and by anonymity and isolation. The

hotel disrupts Augé's binary of place and non-place. Just as traditional and contemporary worlds are found side-by-side in these hotel narratives (refuting Augé's clear division between place and non-place), intimacy and authenticity are found in supermodernity. Relationships formed because and in spite of non-places. Whilst the texts in Chapter Two suggest that the framework of the hotel highlights the *isolation* experienced in postmodernity, the narratives in this chapter indicate that loneliness in the hotel can sometimes be overcome. The contradictory outcomes in these two chapters are part of the complexity of both the hotel space, and postmodern existence: Chapter Two confirms Augé's argument that non-places are alienating ones (assuming the hotel is a non-place), and Chapter Six complicates this idea.

The problem of non-place verses place is raised through the emphasis on the (male) body in the hotel narratives in this chapter. Bob's body in *Lost in Translation* does not seem to fit in his hotel at first, but the time spent in the hotel makes him think about his physical health. Michel in *Platform* uses his times in hotels for endless sex. It is largely physical, not metaphysical, intimacy or authenticity that is craved by the protagonists in these narratives. The body, then, confirms the complexity of non-places in supermodernity. The needs of the body mean that more is demanded from non-places than just the opportunity to pass through the space.

Non-Places in Supermodernity

Supermodernity, according to Augé, refers (among other things) to late postmodern architecture characterised by smooth, functional spaces devoid of obvious history, or at least having a complicated relationship with the past (pastiche, parody, eclectic interiors), and dominated by technology – the kind of postmodern space Jameson refers to when writing on the Bonaventure hotel. A non-place (as explained

in the Introduction) is a space that is designed for passing through. Airports, trains, planes, highways are all examples Augé gives of non-places. Whilst he does not directly refer to the hotel as a non-place, it too clearly fits his criteria, as it is a space for passing through.

Non-places is a brief, eloquent account of a traveller through “non-places.” These spaces, ranging in Augé’s definition from supermarkets to homeless shelters to chain hotels, are ones that people increasingly spend time in. Encounters with machines and other texts instructing the individual where to turn, what button to press or what aisle to find things in mean one spends an increased amount of time in solitude. Augé proposes a need to develop an “ethnography of solitude” and opens his study with a vignette: Pierre Dupont, a businessman, moves through non-places including a motorway, cash-dispenser machine, airport and duty-free shop and finally settles into his business class seat on the aeroplane, reading a business magazine whilst listening to Hayden’s Concerto No.1 in E major. He savours his moments alone on the plane journey. Within these six pages of introduction, it becomes clear that Dupont perceives himself as an outsider, despite his encounters with advertisements that seem to reflect him. When waiting to board the plane (the moment when “thousands of individual itineraries converged for a moment, unaware of one another . . .” [3]), Dupont watches others boarding, “and he observed with a certain amusement the muted, unnecessary jostling of the Xs and Ys around the door to the boarding gangway” (3). Augé here quickly establishes in Dupont someone who is both an observer of and participant in non-places. Dupont is merely a caricature of a person in a non-place, robotically, unemotionally going about his business of moving through non-places without interacting with anyone else.

Augé argues that place confers identity. If this is correct, then the corollary of this is that non-place leads to non-identity, or “non-persons,” like Dupont. Jameson raises the concept of an absence of individuality, or deindividualised characterisation in postmodern narrative in *The Geopolitical Aesthetic* and *The Political Unconscious*. Deleuze also writes of the non-personal in a similar way, as outlined in the first chapter of this thesis. In both supermodern narratives examined here — *Lost in Translation* and *Platform* — there is an absence of the strictly personal in the hotel-based male protagonists’ characters. Non-place houses non-personal characters in supermodernity, thus concurring with Augé’s claim. This concept is illustrated in this chapter through the narratives’ protagonists, who go beyond the traditional notion of personalised, individual characters, demonstrating that, to some extent, non-place and the non-personal are entwined.

The concept of “non-place” (and the corollary, of the “non-person”) is central to this chapter on intimacy and loneliness in supermodernity, despite some problematic aspects of Augé’s work, which I will outline later in this section. Augé is bold enough to put into an anthropological study some genuine Western concerns about contemporary life and space. These concerns revolve around a search for authenticity, for authentic, meaningful life and space full of interaction, history and intimacy. Television recently screened in Australia has been full of these searches: *Sea Change*, *Monarch of the Glen*, *Fireflies* . . . The country offers the utopian promise not possible in the city. Individuals move to the country and find a sense of community; they live in a run-down cottage/castle/tin shed, and at the same time find themselves and usually a lover. These programmes are symptomatic of the same kinds of loss and alienation Augé bemoans, and the connection between television and “real life” is cemented by the rapid rise in real estate prices along the south-east

coast of Australia directly after and during the *Sea Change* series. The longing for a sea change has been directly linked to the television show, and the phenomenon of “sea change” can be understood through Clive Hamilton’s research on “downsizing.” “Downsizing” sees a move away from the goals of capitalism in favour of less money, fewer possessions and more happiness. Hamilton argues that the pursuit of happiness via capitalism “has only brought deeper sources of social unease — manipulation by marketers, obsessive materialism, endemic alienation, and loneliness” (213). A survey conducted by Hamilton in Australia confirms that the move towards “sea change” or downsizing results in increased happiness: 23% of Australians aged between thirty and sixty downsized in the hope of increased personal fulfilment, and the majority of these people were happy with the change (206). Both television fantasy and statistics then confirm Augé’s point: that increased time in and reliance on non-places produce an inauthentic, alienating experience.

There is a sense throughout the work that Augé laments the way non-places such as highways create a new relationship with small cities: cars and buses now bypass the houses, making small towns into tourist spectacles, rather than places involved with passers by:

Before eight o’clock in the morning or after seven at night, the traveller would drive through a desert of blank facades (shutters closed, chinks of light filtering through the slats, but only sometimes, since bedrooms and living-rooms usually faced the back of the house): he was witness to the worthy, contained image the French like to give of themselves. (98)

One wonders whether the houses miss the traffic. The latter comment is not meant to be a trivial one, but questions Augé’s standpoint as a outsider, an anthropologist constantly moving through non-places but never stopping, never actually living

anywhere, though one presumes he lives in Paris. As Augé points out, his is meant to be an anthropology of the here and now, yet he reverts back to the traditional anthropological angle of being an outsider. The traditional anthropological method Augé settles on is problematised by his own claim that non-places are unlike any other spaces that have previously existed, and these spaces provide an entirely different mode of being and interactions with others. It is this complete distinction and disconnection between modern and supermodern space, between history and super/postmodernity that I challenge through the hotel narratives in this chapter.

Augé argues that if place can be defined as “relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place” (78). Non-places in supermodernity, Augé hypothesises, unlike in Baudelarian modernity, “do not integrate the earlier places: instead these are listed, classified, promoted to the status of ‘places of memory’, and assigned to a circumscribed and specific position” (78).

Hotels throughout space and narrative in “supermodernity” contradict Augé’s strict delineation between place and non-place. In Rome, the Hotel Art near the Spanish Steps has an antique interior and Persian rugs on the floor. This style is contrasted with two white, 1960s science-fiction-style resin orbs that look as though they have landed in the hotel from the set of Kubrick’s film *2001*. They function as the reservation desks for the Hotel Art. This hotel lobby design epitomises the interaction between older and supermodern space that we also see occurring at the level of narrative in *Lost in Translation*. A narrative of two lost souls coming together in supermodern Tokyo is in many ways an old fashioned Hollywood story, complete with a *Casablanca*-style ending. However, in *Lost in Translation* (as well as *Platform*), it is the supermodern setting that creates the paradigm for the allegories

of loneliness and isolation, as well as the complication of the body in a space that largely appears to be about images, about flat screens and neon lights. But as we can see from the Hotel Art example, old and new concepts sit together much more smoothly in supermodernity than theories such as Augé's suggest.

When history has problematic political connotations, it is reconstructed. Once again, the hotel provides an example of the way in which this operates. Denis Byrne in "Traces of 65" investigates the way in which the five-star Bali Beach Hotel in Sanur, Bali, has created a false history to erase its real history: a burial site for a massacre against two thousand communists. He argues in this essay, "two thousand communists lay buried beneath the Oberoi, a five star beach-side hotel which had been built by the government in early 1970s and then subsequently privatised." This is common knowledge amongst the Balinese. The stunning hotel is described by Byrne as sitting

Beautifully upon its several hectare site . . . the beautiful trees and tranquil gardens, all had that sense of "fit" that often strikes you in the rural villages of Southeast Asia, the appearance of having grown slowly out of the ground . . . The extensive gardens had been artfully brought to a certain level of "naturalness" and then held there suspended on the brink of a reversion to jungle. (Byrne)

So it is by creating a sense of history that this "non-place" erases a certain past. The sense of past it creates may be a false one, but its appearance is very deceptive and very "real." For the guest it is a space that helps erase a horrific story by relaxing the body, not just the eyes: "We stroll through the gardens of the hotel, this hotel which looks as if it has always been there, and then retire to our rooms where we lie down to sleep just a few metres above the victims of 1965-66." And yet in spite of this

attempt at erasing a massacre, traces of it remain in people's minds, and are whispered to others.

Byrne's account of the hotel in Bali demonstrates the need for spaces in supermodernity to create a history, even if it is a fake one. It is a staging or revision of the past in the present that complicates the idea that supermodernity has made a radical break with history, even if the reinvented history is not the "truth." Augé too disrupts his own boundary between place and non-place at the beginning of *Supermodernity*. Pierre Dupont in the opening vignette reads a (fictional) brochure about some large international hotels belonging to a chain: "the 'Mammounia in Marrakesh, once a palace, now the quintessence of five-star luxury', the Brussels Métropole, 'where the splendours of the nineteenth century remain very much alive'"(4). Thus, whilst Augé divides place and non-place, arguing that non-places "do not integrate the earlier places" (78), he nonetheless indicates the need for people to *create* meaning and history in non-places.

The absence of meaning in non-places also impacts on the home for Augé, as indicated by his claim that "in the world of supermodernity, people are always, and never, at home: the frontier zones or 'marchlands' ... no longer open onto totally foreign worlds" (120). The simulacra of homeliness everywhere deterritorialise the authentic home, making it possible for homely affect to exist everywhere, which conversely means that home is everywhere and nowhere, as Augé asserts. This is supported by Roland Robertson's concept of "glocalisation":

It also involves the "invention" of locality, in the same general sense as the idea of the invention of tradition ... as well as its "imagination"... There is indeed currently something like an "ideology of home" which has in fact come

into being partly in response to the constant repetition and global diffusion of the claim that we now live in a condition of homelessness or rootlessness. (35)

Robertson's concept of glocalisation obviously connects to the idea of non-places, and is something to take further in this chapter, which looks at the textual manifestations of non-places and in supermodernity. In *Platform* by Houellebecq and *Lost in Translation* by Sofia Coppola the anxieties caused by the effects of glocalisation create the paradigm for allegories of loneliness and ennui in postmodernity. Yet the search for authenticity and meaning happens both via and despite of supermodern non-places, specifically, the hotel. Without a clear sense of home, protagonists seek authentic experiences elsewhere.

Does the concept of glocalisation suggest that place and non-place constantly intersect? I argue in this chapter that place and non-place do, and that this intersection impacts both on postmodern narratives and subjectivities. But Augé's work, for the most part, places them clearly as a binary opposition, failing to see any connection between modern and postmodern spaces. Friedberg's *Window Shopping* counters this disconnection, arguing that the visual experience of the nineteenth century anticipates postmodern visual and bodily experiences. Friedberg sees the phantasmagoria and Benjaminesque flâneur continuing in contemporary shopping malls, cinema and home experiences. Similarly I claim through *Lost in Translation* that we are seeing continuity between modern and postmodern narratives through the hotel.

Perhaps the traveller/anthropologist through non-space has more in common with Benjamin's flâneur than Augé would like to think. And perhaps too these spaces are not devoid of history. Augé suggests that a reconciliation with old spaces, a feature Baudelaire believed characterised the modern world, is absent in

supermodernity. Yet he provides no evidence of this – not even an anecdote of a building or space. In fact, Augé provides evidence of a contradictory idea, through the example of the Brussels Métropole (mentioned earlier).

Another problematic aspect of Augé's work is his tendency to use non-place as an umbrella term that covers a vast range of spaces (ranging from refugee camps to luxury hotels). But it is only the corporate non-places that he looks at closely. By throwing all these "non-places" together, claiming that supermodern spaces turn their backs on history (architecturally and socially), and not focussing on specific instances where this happens, Augé makes the mistake of ignoring those spaces in late postmodernity that Massey reminds us of (as James Donald has also noted [180]). As I outlined in the Introduction, Massey urges theorists to remember the people at bus shelters as well as considering business itinerants and those who move money.

The gaze that Augé argues is specific to experiences in non-places has, in fact, been experienced by others prior to supermodernity. The character (whether it is the character Dupont or Augé) moving through non-places in Augé's account of supermodern space is always an outsider, someone passing through the space with little or no interaction with anyone else. According to Augé, the tourist, reading leaflets about his journey, about travelling, experiences a reversal of the gaze, "by offering the would-be traveller advance images of curious or contemplative faces, solitary or in groups" (86). Thus the traveller is constantly seeing his own image reflected in advertising material around him. Yet this tourist gaze has long been used by feminism to describe the daily experience of women, constantly seeing themselves as other. Thus the perception of self as outsider is not something particularly new and specific to supermodernity, as Augé claims it is.

There is, moreover, a connection between the individual postmodern traveller in Augé's work and the modernist travel tropes Caren Kaplan writes of in *Questions of Travel*. The concerns of emptiness, exile, distance, nostalgia and loss are modernist ones that Kaplan points out, and they are also present in Augé's supermodern traveller's experience, moving through non-places, disconnected both from the space travelled through, and those within it. Augé is perhaps not so much in another world after all, but like the cities in writings of Proust, Joyce and others, still has a mental bell tower operating. History resounds in non-place. The point here is that there is a continuity in modern and supermodern anxieties that is absent from Augé's account of non-places.

Similarly, when Augé speaks of airports and supermarkets, ones defined by excess of time, space and ego, he ignores the countless chaotic airports all over the globe. In the epilogue, Augé touches on the complexities of non-places briefly, giving the example of passengers flying over a Muslim country, who cannot be served alcohol. Yet non-places and supermodernity for Augé are defined by distinct separation from the modern, from history. Augé's vignette character Dupont glides through the airport effortlessly, text and practice guiding him. But for Joan Didion in a very different airport in El Salvador, the experience could not be more polarised: "To land at this airport . . . is to plunge directly into a state in which no ground is solid, no depth of field reliable, no perception so definite that it might not dissolve into its reverse" (13). Didion's quote provides a complication of the idea that non-places are all the same, that non-places are not simply smooth easy spaces to pass through. Not all non-places are supermodern.

Augé's conclusion is where the clear departure between his work and my own occurs. He calls for an "ethnology of solitude," stating that "The community of

human destinies is experienced in the anonymity of non-place, and in solitude” (120). Augé argues that non-places such as airports, trains and highways facilitate or work from a position of connectedness. They link people to other spaces, but not to other people. Using *Lost in Translation* and *Platform* as evidence, I counter Augé’s argument that supermodernity solely houses anonymity and isolation. In both narratives we see the possibility of finding intimacy in non-places, specifically the hotel, whilst simultaneously endeavouring to create territory and transform the self within this context.

However, Augé’s writing on non-places cannot simply be dismissed as the ravings of a nostalgic, elderly Parisian. His term non-place is a useful one mostly because of the sense in postmodernity that such spaces are indeed prevalent and problematic, and because Augé recognises the complications of increasingly spending time in places between home and return. Hence I both use Augé’s concept of non-place and counter aspects of his work in my examination of hotels in two supermodern narratives. Meaning and intimacy are both sought for and found in supermodernity, and this is particularly shown through the texts examined here: through the cinematic logic of *Lost in Translation*, and through the observational, sociological narrative of *Platform*.

***Platform* and the Supermodern Utopia**

We do not see Michel, the protagonist, in a hotel at first in *Platform*. His trigger to enter the realm of holidays and hotels occurs through the death of his father. Michel takes leave from his job, located in the Kafakesque world of the Ministry of Culture in Paris (where he specialises in plastic art). On a package holiday in Thailand, Michel meets Valérie, who, at first glance, is uninteresting. But they get

together after the holiday and the dull, unattractive Valérie turns into an all-pleasing sexual partner who is only interested in Michel's pleasure. Valérie works in the tourism business, and Michel offers ideas about how to make travel more appealing and lucrative for Westerners. His intuitive knowledge is transformed into skill, following Valérie's boss Jean-Yves's concern that the Club Med concept is in crisis, that Westerners are bored with current tourist set-ups. As a result of this, Michel, Valérie and Jean-Yves establish a sex hotel through the chain hotel they work for. This is highly successful for a while, with Western tourists able to have sex with each other or the Thai staff. Towards the end of the novel, however, Islamic extremists bomb the hotel, killing many Westerners, including Valérie. When Michel recovers from the blast, he withdraws to the Grace Hotel in Thailand, but cannot cope with it being "full of Arab sex tourists" (349). He moves to a small room, buys reams of A4 paper to write his story down, and prepares to die: "My life was an empty space, and it was better it remained that way" (361). Michel's life does not end in the hotel, but it is both found and lost in the hotel.

The framework of fiction, and the love story between Valérie and Michel, seem to be merely a platform, if you can excuse the pun, for Houellebecq to write about his own concerns about supermodernity that involve intimacy, sex and third-world tourism. These are things Michel tries to find in a hotel resort in Thailand, hence the significance of this book for this chapter. The novel is sometimes sociological, sometimes a radical Right rant about the world, whether this is about late capitalist Western society, Islam or details of running chain hotels. The sense that the novel is a combination of fiction and autobiography is reinforced by the fact that the author and narrating central character deliberately share the same name and the same reputation for being "on the edge." The "factional" element of Houellebecq's work

and life is also confirmed by his 2002 court case in Paris where Houellebecq was charged (and later acquitted) with inciting racism after anti-Islamic comments in a magazine interview.

Houellebecq in *Platform* instantly establishes Michel as an isolated individual: the novel begins with Michel's father's death (he never really knew or cared for his father), and he writes that he has no one in his life. When Michel moves in with Valérie, he realises he hasn't an attachment to a single thing in his apartment:

I felt slightly scared. I had managed, it seemed, to live for forty years without forming the most tenuous of attachments to a single object . . . Nor did I have any photos of myself: I had no memory of what I might have been like when I was fifteen, or twenty, or thirty . . . It is wrong to pretend that human beings are unique, that they carry within them an irreplaceable individuality; as far as I was concerned, at any rate, I could not distinguish any trace of such an individuality. (181)

Like supermodern non-places, characterised by Augé through their sameness and absence of history, Michel too is a non-person, without a unique personality, without objects, attachments or a history. He is not even like the androids in *Blade Runner*, who have at least been granted a sense of their past, even if this is an invented past.

This absence of family is emphasised several times in the novel:

I hadn't grown up sheltered by the cocoon of a family, nor by anything that might have concerned itself with my fate, supported me in times of misery, enthused about my adventures and my success. Nor had I established a unit of that sort: I was single, childless; no one would have thought to come and seek support on my shoulder. Like an animal, I had lived and I would die alone.

For several minutes I wallowed around in gratuitous self-pity. (129)

Without Michel's memory and a clearly defined past, the reader is not granted a sense of his origins. It is as though he has no origins, no starting point. He is a blank slate, with little psychic infrastructure, and seems hard-boiled, like the narrative style of Houellebecq. This narrative style, coupled with Michel's isolation and absence of family and history, has the effect of creating him as a neutral, undefined character, a non-person, sitting on the outside of life in Paris.

The non-personal effect also makes Michel (like Dupont) an excellent anthropologist. Michel is an outsider and even on his organised tour to Thailand he stays on the outside of the group, analysing the behaviour of other tourists. At the same time, Michel officially belongs to the "inside" of the Western world he analyses. He adheres to Augé's call for anthropologists to deal with the "near" and the here and now, but the effect of this in *Platform* is that Michel is in many ways an unhomely character. He lacks a centre, a home. He finds happiness when he meets Valérie and together they try to make the sex hotel their home, their utopia. However, this fails badly and Michel ends up becoming "an empty space" (359). Thus he is the ultimate non-person, and becomes even less of a character by the end of the novel. In many ways, Michel's search and fate resembles that of the central character in Millhouser's *Martin Dressler*. Both Michel in *Platform* and Martin Dressler spiral downwards and become insane as a consequence of seeking home, wealth and community in the hotel. This occurs on the two levels of character and space, with Martin Dressler ending in the strange world at the basement of his hotel just before he leaves the building, and Michel dying in an empty space in a Thai hut. Another significant connection between Michel and Martin is their depiction as outsiders and as cold, non-personal men. This distance from community seems to enable Michel's anthropological commentary to take place.

Through the non-personal narrator come many outbursts about the idea that tourism is a blight on the earth, that through hotels comes the Disneyfication of the world and a flattening of difference. The world for Michel is slowly becoming “glocalised”: “I had an inkling that, more and more, the whole world would come to resemble an airport” (131). Michel’s commentary mirrors almost exactly Augé’s description of supermodernity. Yet, a comment made in *Platform* about the Bangkok airport wedges a crack in the strict binary of place and non-place:

... All in all, airport shops still form part of the national culture; but a part which is a safe, attenuated, one which fully complies with international standards of commerce. For the traveller at the end of his journey it is a halfway house, less interesting and less frightening than the rest of the country. (131)

From Michel’s objective and insightful understanding of the capitalist and global system, coupled with the physical, libidinal knowledge of what is missing from tourism packages, he creates another form of Disneyfication and glocalisation. *Platform* adds blatant sex to the usual mix of sun and poolside relaxation. Sex, Michel claims, is what people unconsciously go on packaged holidays for. Thus the chain hotel comes to satisfy all the tourists’ desires: it offers a safe and familiar surrounding through the tropical holiday resort environment, as well as satisfaction of all physical desires. This kind of “glocalised” holiday culture operates as a utopia. Michel in *Platform* describes this tourism without Augé’s lament about the flattening of difference. Michel’s tone is always that of a cold, detached observer, the ultimate anthropologist. Until he falls in love with the utopian resort he and Valérie create, he does not feel at home anywhere.

Valérie and Michel decide to make the sex resort their home. They have an orgy with other Westerners on the beach, then repeat it back at the hotel. Late, when Michel is sitting beside Valérie on New Year's Eve, a year after they first met, he is overwhelmed by his good fortune: "Strangely, and without in the least deserving it, I had been given a second chance. It is very rare, in life, to have a second chance; it goes against all the rules. I hugged her fiercely to me, overwhelmed by a sudden desire to weep" (317). Together, through the powers of tourism, marketing and sex, Valérie and Michel have created an intimate utopia. Sex is freely exchanged and uncomplicated, the weather is perfect, and for the first time in his life, Michel feels a sense of solidarity with the environment. He and Valérie have found authenticity and meaning in their lives for the first time, so it seems natural for them to turn this hotel into their home. The apparent paradox of authentic and inauthentic life (indeed, supermodern life) is highlighted in Valérie's explanation:

We're happy here; we have everything we need in life. The only thing the Western world has to offer is designer products. If you believe in designer products, then you can stay in the West; otherwise, in Thailand you can get excellent fakes. (328)

The world that produces fakes, and houses tropical hotels, paradoxically provides an authentic and utopian home for Valérie and Michel.

The pleasure gained from the hotel-as-home comes from physical pleasure, from the pleasures of the body. It is globalised, supermodern culture that provides the opportunity for Michel to find plentiful sex in hotels, but it is a primal urge that he satisfies. Whilst Michel can be read as a non-person in a non-place, and seems to lack personal characteristics, it is always physical pleasure that he seeks in hotels. The hotel in *Platform*, then, is a reminder that bodies, not just images, still dominate life in

supermodernity. Hence sex tourism can be considered “authentic” and utopian rather than alienating and fake, in the sense that it relies on immediate bodily pleasure and creates (albeit briefly) a sense of community.

Michel and Valérie’s decision to make the hotel their home occurs just before a bomb blast and massacre in the hotel, part of a plot by a Thai Islamic group. This response to the chain hotel’s attempt to colonise and capitalise Thailand kills Valérie amongst others. The bomb blast manifests the vulnerability of post-colonial territorialisation and “glocalisation” of local culture and international hotel chains. Through the bomb blast, destroying the dreams of Michel and Valérie, we see an image of the end of the Western “party,” an idea that has become strong since September 11, 2001. Hotel vulnerability is an increasingly common sensation, and *Platform*’s bombing has shades of the attack on Westerners in Bali in October 2002. Thus the novel works with the idea that postcolonial capitalist power is not as straightforward as the kind discussed in Said’s groundbreaking work on Orientalism. The impossibility of the endless pursuit of Western money and pleasure and comfort, all located in chain hotels, is articulated in the final pages of the novel: “I know only that every single one of us reeks of selfishness, masochism and death. We have created a system in which it has simply become impossible to live; and what’s more, we continue to export it” (361).

Michel and Valérie’s hotel-resort-as-home plan does not last long in the novel. Just a few pages after they decide to stay there permanently, the hotel is blown up by terrorists. Thus the hotel fails to be home for Michel and Valérie. As Buchanan points out through Deleuzian theory in *Deleuzism*, “the most deeply utopian texts are not those that propose or depict a better society, but those that carry out the most thoroughgoing destruction of the present society” (113). The destruction of the

present society that occurs in *Platform* is twofold: firstly the creation of hotel as home for Michel and Valérie sees a destruction of their old social structure in Paris (it could be said that it is indeed a re-creation of old colonial structure through their reterritorialisation of land and labour in a third world country, but it is nevertheless a destruction of their old relationship to work, time and money). Secondly their society, their new-found utopia, is literally destroyed by the Muslim extremists who bomb the resort. Michel and Valérie's and the extremists' destruction are united through the attempt to destroy current Western society, and both choose the hotel as the primary location for this.

Through sex tourism, Michel and Valérie try to construct a home within the halfway house of a chain resort hotel. That turning hotel into home is a difficult thing to do confirms Augé's argument that home is everywhere and nowhere in supermodernity. Nevertheless, for a few days, this sense of home is found in the hotel. The establishment of sex tourism is unexpectedly bound up with search for authenticity and intimacy and meaning in a world that for Michel is devoid of morality and community.

Intimacy in Supermodernity in *Lost in Translation*

The two protagonists in *Lost in Translation* are, like Michel in *Platform*, Western outsiders in an Asian country. Both Charlotte and Bob are alienated by Tokyo. The city initially invites the kind of isolation and ennui that correlates with Michel's early experience in Thailand in *Platform*. Charlotte is a philosophy graduate in her mid '20s and Bob is a tired tv star in his early '50s/late '40s. Both are reluctant visitors to Tokyo, and as they form a friendship, they analyse their own lives in a kind of non-place, the hotel. But it is only in a hotel that such characters are able to be on

an equal footing, because the hotel does not confer identity. In this way, the hotel deterritorializes Charlotte and Bob, removing them from their homes, the possessions that surround them (particularly relevant to Bob and his material wealth), their families (even though Charlotte's husband is present in Tokyo, the point of the film is that he is emotionally and physically absent), and their standing in their community. The same absence of territory is present in the Tokyo hotel. Both Charlotte and Bob have the neutral but elevated grounding of guest; theirs is an encounter that would be impossible without the neutral space of the hotel.

The plot of *Lost in Translation* is not particularly complex. Rather, the emphasis lies on space and character in this film. The outline of the narrative is simple. Bob arrives in Tokyo to film a whiskey commercial for two million dollars. Charlotte is a young arts graduate staying in the same hotel, killing time while her husband works as a photographer. The distance between Charlotte and her husband, and Bob and his wife (on the phone), is acute throughout the film. Bob and Charlotte meet in the hotel bar, both unable to sleep, and they begin their intimate "affair," their friendship. It is certainly an unusual friendship, just as the film in its quietness and lack of climax, lack of sex and "big" story, is an unusual narrative. This old-fashioned narrative is, however, located in supermodernity. Supermodernity creates the paradigm for an allegory of isolation and loneliness. At the same time, this film located in supermodernity contains sentiments that are in many ways modern rather than supermodern ones. The kind of chance meeting/instant attraction is played with in this film, as are the Benjaminesque moves through phantasmagorical spaces.

It is through Bob and Charlotte's eyes that the audience sees Tokyo: there is a tourist gaze at work in this film, and a sense of Orientalism. It is the story of two Westerners meeting by chance in a Japanese hotel, and in many ways some of the

jokes in the film are racist: the short translations of long discussions in Japanese, the way in which Japanese pronunciations are laughed at, the height differences between Bob and the Japanese men. The opening shots of Bob and the early street shots of Charlotte are shot from a low angle tilting up, gazing at the *Blade Runner* world of supermodern Tokyo.

Bob is already present in the city through the large flat screens advertising his whiskey commercial. He shakes himself awake at this vast image of himself as he quickly passes it by in a taxi. It immediately becomes apparent, though, that Bob is not simply a flat screened image like the ones he is surrounded by. He is not, to use Vidler's phrase, "somewhere in the space between multiple screens" (*Warped Space* 246). Indeed, Bob is alienated by the large presence he already has in the city through the commercial billboard screens. He is in a foreign city where he sees himself everywhere. Screens dominate the city — from the television in Bob's room to the image of a giant dinosaur walking across a screen on the side of a building. Thus in one sense, the city operates — with all its screens — as a giant contemplative mirror, through which Bob and Charlotte sort out their lives.

Vidler's argument in *Warped Space* about the postmodern, posthistorical mirror stage is complicated somewhat by *Lost in Translation*'s emphasis on the Western male body not fitting in space. Bob is not simply a flat image. He is awoken with a jolt the morning after he arrives by the curtains opening automatically. When Bob showers, he finds he doesn't fit under the showerhead. Then, in the elevator, he is head and shoulders above the silent crowd. The size and language jokes lighten the script, but also very simply highlight the old-fashioned sensations of being an outsider in a new city. In the deep rectangular hotel bath Bob tells his wife (on the phone) that he wants to take better care of his body and eat better (Japanese) food. The way in

which Bob has to constantly negotiate a space not designed for his body, coupled with his contemplation of corporeal matters, affirms my argument that bodies, not just screens, are omnipresent in supermodernity. The body is the link between the modern and supermodern, moving as it does in both places and non-places.

The contradictions of bodies, screens, non-places and the non-personal are inherent in supermodernity, and provide possibilities for conflict in contemporary stories. An emphasis on the body in *Platform* and *Lost in Translation* does not mean that these men are completely individualised characters: Michel and Bob confirm the idea that place and identity (or the lack of these) are entwined. In these two stories, non-places house non-personal protagonists. Bob is not an individual character, corresponding to Jameson's argument that the category of individual character is now "outmoded" (*The Geopolitical Aesthetic* 176). The hotel is in a sense, then, a character system assemblage, a single object that is able to articulate an image of a certain kind of characterisation, or rather, an absence of it. The previous chapter discussed the non-personal in the hotel in *Barton Fink* and *The Shining*, and Bill Murray's character in *Lost in Translation* confirms the argument that the hotel is a character system assemblage. This idea is another way of expressing the wider argument of the thesis, that the hotel is an analogon of postmodernity. Both concepts, assemblage and analogon, work as structures that, "articulate the slide into oblivion of one mode of thought together with the rise to dominance of another without having to explain it in terms of either succession or negation, but can instead stage it as coadaptation" (Buchanan 113). The assemblage then, is able to co-adapt the apparent contradictions of the traditional and the modern. The complex hotel space in *Lost in Translation*, with its parallel depiction of old and new, and its depiction of physical

discomfort yet emotional awakening, can be aligned with Bob. Just as Bob is deindividualised, the hotel is personalised.

As a character system assemblage, the hotel space provides the organising arc for a film that does not contain a thrilling, twisting plot. The film embodies Augé's idea of solitude in supermodernity but then turns the hotel, a non-place, into a space that contains the possibility of intimacy between two people who would otherwise not meet. It is the hotel that acts as a chronotope, in Bakhtin's sense of the term. Bakhtin uses the term chronotope when describing the road, as a unity of space and time (250). A meeting chronotope can serve as an opening or as a culmination; it is a motif of a meeting place. Given that Sofia Coppola's narrative is so gentle (exploring partly her own marriage breakdown and partly her obsession with Bill Murray), the hotel is the only aspect of the film that provides shape for the film. It organizes the plot as well as the lives of Bob and Charlotte, much like the hotels that frame the narratives of *Barton Fink* and *The Shining*. In the end, both characters leave the supermodern hotel: Bob is returning to America, and Charlotte is exploring the streets again. Bob sees Charlotte from his taxi and runs to her. They kiss in the crowded street with the sun setting in the background, and then he returns to his taxi. It is an old-fashioned ending to a supermodern tale. Whilst the final scenes of the film do not take place in the hotel, it is the hotel that has provided the framework for the beginning and the end — the arrival and departure — of the narrative.

Cinematic logic often dictates opening a scene with a brief establishing shot. However, the audience is not granted an establishing shot of the hotel at the beginning of the film. An establishing shot would place the hotel firmly and clearly in the city, and would outline the building for the audience. We do not see a clear external shot of the Park Hyatt Tokyo as Bob enters it. Whilst the narrative begins and ends with

his arrival, this arrival is shot much like the arrival of the central character in Godard's *Alphaville*: all we see is the car pull up to the door of the hotel. *Barton Fink* also avoids an external shot of the Hotel Earle. The effect of the absent establishing shot is that it creates the hotel as assemblage. Indeed, the hotel is not even located on the ground floor in *Lost in Translation*. Bob is greeted on both the ground floor of the building and the hotel floor, with gifts and formalities.

There are multiple ways of opening and entering the hotel. This enables rhizomic possibilities and connectedness to the city, which on the surface is alienating, but the characters and camera delight in it, just as they delight in the contradictory and historical Japan that lies around the corner from the hotel. The rhizomatic city adheres to Barthes' description of Tokyo, which "offers this precious paradox: it does possess a centre, but this centre is empty. The entire city turns around a site both forbidden and indifferent" (30). The hotel in *Lost in Translation* becomes much more entwined with the city when not filmed as a separate entity. Like the cityscape outside, the hotel in this film sets itself up (or is set up) to be alienating, but it ends up not being alienating at all. The hotel indeed mimics the parallel worlds of supermodern and traditional Tokyo, beautifully conveyed when Charlotte wanders around the hotel, finding in one room a shallow American actress giving a press conference, and in the other, Japanese women doing traditional flower arranging. Again, the hotel provides the model for parallel worlds and parallel lives through its architecture that is freely moved through, corresponding to the concept of the assemblage, where one mode of existence can slide freely into another.

The way in which Charlotte and Bob roam around Tokyo reflects their becoming nomadic, becoming nomads in Deleuze's sense of the term. Braidotti defines the nomad as having a "sharpened sense of territory but no possessiveness

about it” (*Nomadic Subjects* 36) and this is certainly how Bob and Charlotte experience the city and eventually the hotel. When Bob compares Charlotte’s bathroom to his, he jokingly comments that his bathroom is messier than hers. This is as close as Bob gets to possession and ownership of the hotel room. Bob remains a nomadic figure, similar to the one invoked by the hotel in the 1930s; the figure that was at the “decentralised heart of a 1930’s *zeitgeist*” (Bates 73). Thus the nomad in the hotel continues to be a dominant character in postmodernity.

Before meeting Bob, Charlotte spends a great deal of time in her room, gazing blankly from her hotel window at the city in front of and below her. Nevertheless, it can still be said that the city is never really mapped from above, as this view never seems to work for Charlotte. She has a blank stare as she sits at the window ledge in her underwear, smoking a cigarette, truly in a space other than home. It is as though Charlotte is in a fortress. It is only when she meets Bob and explores the city with him as a nomad that some kind of satisfaction with the city and herself is attained. Similarly for Bob, the hotel before meeting Charlotte is a kind of fort. Bob tells Charlotte that he’s thinking about making a break for it, but first he needs to get out of the bar, “then the hotel then the city, then the country. Are you with me?” Although Bob is joking, both the characters in the film and the cinematic techniques make it appear that getting outside the city is an arduous task.

The idea that the hotel is somehow a fortress is reflected in the film’s lighting: it creates a softer than usual *chiaroscuro* effect, where things are in shadow. The crew of *Lost in Translation* often filmed (illegally) late in the night so the lights are low in the passageways and in rooms. The lighting is similarly dim in the bars and apartments the characters visit, glaringly contrasted with the dazzle in the games parlour. The consequence of so much low lighting is an increased sensation of being

lost, being unable to see clearly. The bright lights of Tokyo city at night counter these dark spaces, so the film is only ever under or over-lit.

However, there is a counter narrative at work in this story located in a non-place, and that is the resolved search for intimacy and authenticity. The kind of random encounters that are the stuff of this film can only happen in the hotel. It provides the possibility of intimacy through a certain amount of time, in a certain kind of postmodern space. The intimacy and encounter between the two characters happens because of postmodern space, not in spite of it. In this sense it is a reversal of Augé's argument that intimacy is difficult in non-places, and a contrast to the texts examined in Chapter Two.

Just as it is possible for intimacy to be housed in supermodernity, its spaces also forge continuity with the past, despite the perpetual presence of postmodern technology and domination of neon lights and giant screens. Indeed, Vidler argues that the intersection between the galactic and prehistoric, between the future and past, has been a continuing preoccupation since the 1960s. It is the same sense of the phantasmagorical that Benjamin wrote of at the end of the nineteenth century that continues to be present at various stages of *Lost in Translation*, particularly when Bob and Charlotte run through the mirrored, over-lit games arcade. There is not an erasure of history in the film through the perpetual presence of the new. Rather the film uses the late nineteenth-century phantasmagorical image of the glass and steel arcade and transplants it into supermodern spaces. History abounds in the film in its narrative too: there is plenty of homage to film noir in all of the shadows in the hotel corridor and in the night-time scenes in Bob's room, just as there is homage to Godard in the bed scenes. The effect of these cinematic references is that they drive home the

continuity in cinematic logic, suggesting that the concerns faced in supermodernity are indeed nothing new, that they have been dealt with before in cinema and space.

The hotel in this and countless other modern and postmodern films flattens the differences that would typically occur between the two protagonists. Two characters that would never normally meet now find themselves running into each other in robes heading to and from the pool, or in the bar, or in the lobby. So the hotel space throws them into intimacy. This is something both Charlotte and Bob find surprising, as their initial encounters with the hotel are alienating, but it is only through this supermodern space that intimacy between the two can occur, through the passageways, bars and rooms. The fascination of this encounter stems from the presumption of solitude in non-places. Whilst destiny is a common Hollywood theme, the intimacy that occurs between Bob and Charlotte is strictly emotional and conversational, and it is a relationship based on a span of ten days. Their surprise at this unusual encounter comes from an occidental Western attitude, where there is little expectation of being in company in a foreign country. Thus there is a reversal of expected alienation in the hotel.

This intimacy is paralleled in scenes located in the games parlour — an overblown supermodern space with dazzling lights and computer games, where teenage couples admire each other playing the machines that are typically seen as solitary and alienating. The way in which Charlotte and Bob run around Tokyo's streets at night is reminiscent of Barthes' claim in *Empire of Signs* that in Japan, "in the street, in a bar, in a shop, in a train, something always *happens*" (79; original emphasis). Similarly the Japanese embrace of karaoke, and the intimacy that creates, is shown in several scenes in this film. It is a moment where Charlotte and Bob really let go, and experience amusement, intimacy and irony through '80s pop music sung

with a television screen in someone's apartment. This is an example of reterritorialisation, that is, finding "home value" in a song. The intimacy found between the two characters contradicts the alienating, moody lighting, and through the pop songs the two create a new territory around them. The dominance of the supermodern, initially alienating hotel contradicts the connotations usually associated with postmodern space. The intimacy via karaoke and computer games and a postmodern hotel occurs because of supermodern space, not despite it.

The protagonists struggle to reterritorialise space and find homeliness in supermodernity. Prior to the encounters and exchanges with Bob, Charlotte has been having a solitary experience in Tokyo. At one point she cries when recounting her day to a friend on the phone because she was unable to feel anything when she saw an ancient Buddhist ceremony being performed. Charlotte cries because she is unable to feel deeply and meaningfully at an apparent "authentic" spiritual moment. Charlotte attempts to create home in her hotel room in Tokyo, thus confirming to some degree Augé's argument that non-places are alienating. She spends a great deal of time in her room; many shots are repeated of Charlotte sitting around the hotel room in her underpants, smoking cigarettes and gazing out of the window at the city beneath her. She is watching it but is not able to participate in it. Early in the film she tries to create territory, to create home in the hotel room through decorating it with plastic pink cherry blossoms, but when her husband comes "home," he does not seem to notice. And rather than create a comfortable space, it just seems to add to the mess in the hotel room. It certainly does not make Charlotte any more comfortable about being in Tokyo. This does not happen through the pink cherry blossom, but through an exchange of sightseeing, drinks and meals with Bob. They reterritorialise Tokyo in this way.

When Bob arrives he has his walls firmly up and he loathes Tokyo, and does not seem interested at first in reterritorialising the hotel space. He loathes home too. This is quickly established through the faxes and phone calls between him and his wife that revolve around her ideas for redecorating his study. Whilst Bob is disappointed by home, he is also initially alienated by Tokyo and the hotel. He is truly in a non-place, or a state of existence where he is not comfortable at home or away. His face gestures towards nostalgia, but for what? For what hasn't been? He poses nostalgically at the camera when filming the whiskey commercial in a dinner suit, saying "For relaxing times, make it Santori times." Bob, however, does not seem nostalgic for much at home, except of course his children, he tells Charlotte.

Bob's physical and emotional alienation is manifested cinematically in his first few hours in the hotel. Initially, nothing sits comfortably for Bob in his hotel room. The television, usually a source of comfort and solace in hotel rooms, usually some marker of sameness (at least Americanness, or CNN), is alienating. The television channels range from an in-house channel of tulips in a field, to a talk show with a crazy host, to repeats of Bob's infamous '70s television show. Bob goes to the hotel bar at 4a.m. as he can't sleep, and is recognised by two drunk businessmen who want to talk to him about his old show. When they ask him what he's doing in Tokyo, Bob tells them he is "visiting friends" — hardly the reality of his overpaid, but apparently humiliating, job of shooting a whiskey commercial. In telling the businessmen he's "visiting friends," Bob is attempting to create a territory around him within Tokyo, within the hotel, but he lacks strength to do so effectively. It is only when he meets a similarly displaced figure, Charlotte, that he is able to draw a territory around himself, and also reterritorialise his space through his relationship with her. They are able to exchange insights and intimacies and they reterritorialise

the hotel rooms and indeed Tokyo by this exchange. This is shown cinematically in the frequent close-ups on the bed. A middle-aged man and young woman (both unhappily married) chat on a hotel-room bed, drink sake and watch television. Bob and Charlotte “make love with their worlds,” exchanging various details about their lives, their ambitions, how Bob feels about his wife and children, how Charlotte feels about her husband and her future. In this way, Bob and Charlotte exchange not only self-knowledge, but their worlds. They exchange not so much gifts, but information. This shared information comes to stand for the home they create together in an alienating city.

Small spaces —particularly the elevator and the bed — operate as miniature versions of the hotel, reinforcing the possibilities of intimacy in supermodernity. It is appropriate that in an encounter located in supermodernity the first glances between Charlotte and Bob happen in the hotel elevator. An elevator is always the ultimate chronotope. It is a space about time (hopefully about just minutes), and it is a space about other spaces. Indeed it is one of the smallest and fastest forms of Bakhtin’s chronotope. It compresses both time and space. The scene where Bob and Charlotte meet also gestures towards the racism happening in this film that I have already mentioned: Bob (being head and shoulders above the others in the elevator) glances over at the only other white person in the elevator and smiles at her. This is a break in the silent starring ahead that usually occurs in elevators. Those in the elevator are like the individual monadic supermodern characters Augé refers to, on the same but silent journeys through non-places. As if to compound the artificiality of supermodern space, the whoosh of the suction of the hydraulic doors is emphasised, sounding like science fiction effects. Bob’s smile to Charlotte is a break in flat, immobile elevator experience. The “profound immobility in the technological world” usually depicted

in science fiction, according to Vidler (*Warped Space* 246), is unexpectedly also depicted here. This immobility and flattening of reality is present for Vidler in air-conditioned, muffled offices, but is also clearly evident in the elevator in *Lost in Translation*. Yet despite the absence of apparent intimacy in the elevator, or perhaps because of it, Bob and Charlotte have their first, brief encounter in this space.

What begins with this encounter continues on the bed. As always in hotel rooms, a primary focus in this film is the bed. Life, reduced to its utmost simplicity and simultaneous luxury, is contained on the bed. The bed takes up the most space in a hotel room and has the most impact on one's stay. In this film, everything happens on hotel-room beds, except for sex. Although Bob does have sex on his bed once in the film, it is the most alienating encounter in the film. Unlike the sex that dominates the narrative in *Platform*, anonymous hotel sex is anything but intimate in *Lost in Translation*. Hotel-room filming forces close-ups because there is hardly any space. So everything is in medium close-up or closer. There is an immediacy and intimacy here that is not possible elsewhere, except perhaps in a tiny Parisian apartment (in, for example, a Godard film).

Echoing Godard's direction, Coppola focuses the camera mostly on the bed. Coppola's film is a postmodern (pastiche) exploration of intimacy, or lack of it in the case of Charlotte's marriage. Charlotte sits around on her bed in her underwear, waiting for her husband's return. When he does return he does not see her pink underpants. Instead he complains about her smoking or asks her why she is hanging around in their room. These intimate moments of a marriage take place outside the home, in a confined close-up of a hotel room. Charlotte's life inside her room reflects her state of being between: like Bob, she does not know what is next for her. She has graduated as a philosophy major but does not know what to do now. She has tried

photography “like every other girl,” has tried writing, “but I’m too mean,” and has no idea what to do. It is appropriate that this conversation, the most intimate part of the film, happens on Bob’s hotel-room bed. This is where we see the two characters come together in a close union: the bed with Charlotte and Bob lying on it is shot from above, looking down. The camera slowly circles around them in a medium shot that moves to a close-up as Bob gently squeezes Charlotte’s foot. In this gesture, in this coming together, they create a kind of utopia in the hotel. This intimacy has not occurred through sex, or gifts, or decorating, but through Bob and Charlotte exchanging their worlds, through ’80s pop songs and long discussions of the difficulties of marriage.

The bed operates as a non-place, and works as the ultimate analogon for the postmodern anxieties experienced in this film. It is a space that belongs to no one particularly, that is used for passing through, just like the motorways and airports Augé describes. The perpetual placement of the characters on the bed deterritorialises the space as one that is usually reserved in hotels for sex and sleep, and it becomes the place which stands simultaneously as the substitute for and representation of the search for intimacy within supermodernity.

Sitting in a non-place such as a bed is emblematic of Charlotte’s life. The hotel is therefore an essential device in the film to house her state between home (past) and the next destination. It is a supermodern non-place that, like the airport in the film *Love Actually*, comes to be a place in which to find intimacy and an authentic relationship: “Whenever I start to feel gloomy about the state of the world, I think about the arrivals gate at Heathrow Airport . . . It seems to me that love is everywhere” (*Love Actually*). Similarly, the non-place in *Lost in Translation* is not the kind of negative, alienating space that defines non-places for Augé, but instead the

path to Charlotte's newly found intimacy. This is not a film about postmodern Tokyo, even though it is firmly located there. Rather, this is a film about tourists in Tokyo searching for meaning and purpose, and they are caught searching for this meaning whilst stuck in Tokyo.

The search for meaning and authenticity is made difficult by the apparent presence of the non-personal in both Bob and Charlotte. When Charlotte is listing all the things she could be, or has tried to be, she sets herself up as a kind of non-person, an "every-girl" who has tried all the things a white middle-class arts-oriented American girl tries. As argued earlier, Bob also has some attributes of a non-person, or at least a person depersonalised. Bob is an "inauthentic" character of the highest degree: he is a once-successful actor whose old tv shows are still big in Japan, and he is now being paid two million dollars to appear as the face of a brand of whiskey. In the photo-shoot the photographer tries to ask him to be James Bond (and they argue over whether it is Sean Connery or Roger Moore) or do a Rat Pack signature face. Bob complies with these requests, with irony unseen by the Japanese photographer but clear to the Western cinemagoer, creating the racist undertone that is present at various moments in the film. At the same time, the doubleness of Bill (a name close to Bob) Murray playing this character is present too. For some time he has been a fading star, and has the face that holds the expression of a weeping clown. He "does" this face too in the photo shoot for the whiskey commercial. Bob, like Michel in *Platform*, can be read as a non-person, confirming the corollary that non-places produce non-people.

The primary way in which Bob functions as a non-person is through the concept that he is already virtual: the character is an actor, and Bill Murray himself is a tired actor playing a tired actor. Michel's character in *Platform* appears to operate in

a similar way: he is a non-person through the absence of physical description, history and memory, interaction with others, and through the hard-boiled narration. He has an absence of Deleuzian singularities. He has no “inter-linked set of perfectly individuated features” (Buchanan 59) and goes to great length to make himself a neutral, ordinary and originless character. The effect of this is that he is simply a vessel for the author to convey controversial opinions within a fictional novel. Bob, however, functions differently: the point of considering Bob as a non-person is that somehow he corresponds to the non-place of the hotel. He is a non-person in a non-place trying to become personalised, and to reterritorialise the space. It is through Charlotte that Bob does this.

The characters move around the city, sometimes with a map, always finding their way. This mirrors the way in which their sense of friendship develops as they both help each other map their futures. It also mirrors the plot, which ambles along, punctuated by a few incidents, but is only clearly mapped or framed by the arrival of and departure from the hotel. Thus the hotel is the central chronotope through which a perception of and movement in nomadic space is articulated. Indeed, through the camera we have the very Deleuzian experience of the creation of space through the mobilized and virtual gaze, both in terms of movement around the hotel and Tokyo, and in Charlotte and Bob’s unusual relationship, which defies the borders (if that is the right term) of gender, sexuality and age. Their relationship, like the camera, moves in unexpected ways.

The sense of unmappable space referred to by Jameson in relation to the Bonaventure Hotel is present in this film. Whilst the hotel lighting and the absence of establishing shots connote in cinematic logic postmodern alienation, there is also the playfulness present in exploring the physical and psychic other spaces in Tokyo.

Ceremony is the breath that holds together old and new Tokyo (e.g. Bob bringing a gift to a crazy television host, the bowing and presents when Bob arrives in Tokyo). It enables the parallel worlds of the old and the supermodern to exist in proximity to each other, manifesting themselves somewhat like the hotel function rooms Charlotte visits. The hotel's parallel structure, where tradition and supermodernity exist side by side, is also seen in the surrounding city: Charlotte watches a Buddhist ceremony around the corner from supermodern, neo-lit sections of Tokyo. The proximity of the ancient and supermodern is articulated in a street shot, where Charlotte is crossing the road and looks up to watch a giant screen with a dinosaur walking on it. Much like the parallel lives of Barton and Charlie in *Barton Fink*, and the parallel worlds in Murakami's hotel novels, we have the same dynamic in this film, the dynamic that is inherent in hotel structure. In this respect, Tokyo, like the hotel, is filmed as an assemblage, in which Charlotte and Bob are able to slide freely between one kind of world and another.

*

The hotels in both narratives considered in this chapter are Western hotels that have been transported and adapted to exotic Asian locations. Thus not only are the hotels operating as spaces between home and elsewhere, but also as spaces between the west and east. In a sense, then, Clifford's claim that hotels are part of "occidental, gentlemanly travel" (discussed in the introduction of the thesis) rings true here. Hotels are a dominant postcolonial power, arriving quietly and with the premise of peaceful business, and generally have not created the same kind of angry local response that other global American organizations (such as McDonald's and

Starbucks) have. As considered earlier, first-world hotels' tentacles in third-world countries are far reaching, with the effect of enabling smooth movement of money and people all over the globe. Or rather, it used to be smooth. *Platform*'s bomb attack on a Thai hotel is symptomatic of (among other things) contemporary vulnerability felt by Westerners. The significance of the hotel in supermodernity thus counters Clifford's claim that the hotel belongs to an earlier era.

Whilst the negative ending of *Platform* seems to contradict the resolved search for intimacy and authenticity achieved in *Lost in Translation*, the difference is that the characters in *Lost in Translation* treat the hotel and Tokyo as a temporary space, as a space in which to work things out and move on. Bob and Charlotte treat the hotel as a chronotope and say to each other, let's never come back here again because it won't be the same. They are aware of the hotel as a space about time, and they are aware of their role as tourists. Michel and Valérie in *Platform* do not do this, wanting to live in the hotel forever, to turn it into their utopia. The confusion of home and hotel is not confined to *Platform*. Previous chapters have noted that complications occur when characters attempt to make the hotel into their home, to turn it into a space about infinite time, rather than a brief stay in the loop between home and back again (*Martin Dressler*, *Barton Fink*, *The Shining*, *Last Year At Marienbad*). The complication of this experience of time in the hotel, and the confusion of homeliness in the hotel, point to postmodern anxieties about time, space and the home that are repeatedly raised by hotel narratives, thus justifying the wider claim of the thesis that the hotel is an analogon of postmodernity.

The opposing outcomes in the two narratives do not contradict the overall argument in this chapter, that there is a deliberate and genuine search for authenticity and intimacy in supermodernity, and these searches take place in contemporary

hotels. These narratives open with a premise much like Augé's: the protagonists in *Platform* and *Lost in Translation* are isolated and alienated by the supermodern hotel space. Eventually, however, they find it a space of intimacy and authenticity, even (temporary) homeliness. Augé's claim that supermodernity increasingly requires non-places is affirmed through *Platform* and *Lost in Translation*. His argument that non-places house isolation, alienation and are devoid of history is, however, refuted by Houellebecq's and Coppola's stories. The protagonists' physical needs (sex in *Platform*, body size and health in *Lost in Translation*) mean that they do not merely exist and identify as flat screens in supermodernity. The body is still dominant in a world also characterised by flat screens, images and globalised culture, and the hotel serves as a perpetual reminder of this fact. In the same way, the hotel sits in supermodern culture between the past and the present, between its country of origin and country that it colonises. The state of being in-between, for both space and subjectivity, provides a paradigm for narratives of loneliness, isolation and then intimacy in supermodernity.

CONCLUSION

The hotel, where people come, and people go, and “nothing ever happens” (as Greta Garbo pronounces in *Grand Hotel*) actually houses multifaceted ideas, characterisation and narrative style in postmodern stories. The anxieties experienced in the hotel stories in this thesis are symptomatic of concerns in contemporary culture. Rather than being part of gentlemanly, modernist travel, as Clifford describes it, the hotel is a space that is central to everyday life in postmodernity. It is an analogon for the complex interaction between subjectivity and space in late capitalism. This is evident in hotel literature, film, architectural style, and the theoretical debates evoked by the hotel.

The heightened sense of these complexities in the hotel is partly due to the space being about time, usually a brief period of time. The chronotopic nature of the hotel space, dictates the structure and style of many hotel narratives. The hotel provides a narratological function, where the events in the story must be worked out between the time of check-in and check-out. *Barton Fink* is an example of this: whilst Barton’s “check-out” is not so smooth, the hotel arrival and departure shape a cerebral film that is really only marked by rhythm and repetition. Frost and Halligan’s novel is also entirely shaped by the hotel. The chapters of *Those Women Who Go To Hotels* are broken up by days spent in the hotel and the book ends with the women’s departure. *Hotel du Lac* ends with Edith writing a telegram to tell her family she is leaving the hotel. *The Unconsoled* suitably ends not with Ryder actually leaving the hotel, but imagining that he will. The relationship formed between Bob and Charlotte in the Japanese hotel in *Lost in Translation* comes to an end when Bob leaves the hotel. One of the mistakes one can make in a hotel is to turn it into home,

and stay for an indefinite time, as Michel and Valerie discover in the Thai resort in *Platform*. Thus leaving the hotel provides a clean ending for postmodern stories that would otherwise lack closure due to, as Lyotard claims, the death of the grand narrative.

I have argued throughout this thesis that we have the “hotelization” of narrative. Franco Moretti concludes his book *Atlas of the European Novel* by arguing that new spaces give rise to new kinds of narratives: “The outcome of a new geographical space, these forms then produced a new fictional space: the European battle of ideas of Russian novels, the planetary non-contemporaneity of magic realism” (197). Whilst the postmodern hotel has a complex relationship with history, as I have outlined in the Introduction, it has given rise to new kinds of narratives and characterisation. The hotel also provides form and shape for postmodern narratives that may otherwise be lacking in structure.

As I argued in Chapter Two, the hotel, as a space that intersects between the virtual and real, gives rise to dream reality, where the division between real and unreal no longer matters. The merging of metaphor and reality in the hotel is part of the “hotel-consciousness” that Bates describes in her article on modernist hotel literature (70). The hotel-consciousness that began in modernism reaches new heights in postmodern narratives. Texts by Kubrick, Murakami, Lynch and others, depict the hotel as a crystal image, where the real and virtual converge. In these hotels, we no longer have a place from which to ask what is real and unreal.

Just as the division between reality and unreality is complicated by the hotel, discontinuity of inside/outside is frequently manifested in a range of hotel encounters. The absence of external hotel shots occurs in many of the films considered in this thesis. We see in *Twin Peaks* a radical disjunction between the stock external shot of

the Great Northern Hotel and the complex interior. In *Lost Highway* there is no external shot of the hotel because it is partly connected to a character's house. There is no external shot of the hotel in *Barton Fink*, and *The Shining* also depicts a disjunction between the outside and inside of the hotel. Even in some hotel novels such as *The Unconsoled*, the relationship between inside and outside is a strange, interconnected labyrinth. Without a clear entry and exit point, the hotel becomes a place that is both everywhere and nowhere. It is an enclosed space existing within a city but is completely separate from it. The confusion of outside and inside also points to the labyrinthine, "other worldly" representation of the hotel. The tropes of parallel worlds, cognitive mapping and the uncanny are all deployed via this disjunction between outside and inside. The hotel then stands as a concrete analogon (literally concrete in the case of the Bonaventure Hotel) for these contemporary tropes and anxieties.

There are a variety of effects generated by the absence of establishing shots, and one of these is making the hotel an allegorical space, and an interior space. In *Barton Fink* and *The Shining* we see the hotel as a brain, providing us with a way of rethinking the contemporary unconscious without Freud. The postmodern unconscious does not have depths and surfaces that we part of the Freudian language of the brain. Instead, the viewer is presented with a rhizomic brain through the hotel.

The hotel is also the site in which feminist theory meets masculine postmodern concepts. When women go to hotels, they long to disappear not only from the gaze of others, but also from their own gaze. The hotel is the place in which these women become other, become (in a Deleuzian sense) a body-without-organs. The hotel offers them a space without the defining chaos of family, housework and social identity. So whilst the hotel seems to disrupt many binaries in literature, film and

culture, it maintains gender divisions. The hotel therefore confirms that the way in which spaces continue to be understood from a gendered perspective.

Whilst women long to shed the confinement of singularity and social identity via the hotel, men, it seems, are dazed and confused by the hotel. The male protagonists in Murakami's novels, *The Unconsoled*, *Barton Fink* and *Martin Dressler* become lost in the hotel space. If de Certeau's argument that each successful mapping of space is a renegotiation of the mirror stage is correct, then what happens to the mirror stage and identification when one fails to successfully negotiate (hotel) space? We are frequently presented with hotel narratives in which the central male characters are unable to understand the hotel system: they cannot comprehend the interior of the space and they do not understand the ownership of the hotel. The failure to understand self and space in postmodernity is placed onto the hotel.

The male protagonists in Murakami's novels are always told to avoid the image in the mirror. When women go to hotels, mirrors are also shunned. Identity in these hotel narratives is not found in the mirror. There is not a sudden revelation that the strange face in the mirror belongs to "me." Instead we are presented with a parallel identities in Murakami's and Lynch's narratives. Ryder in *The Unconsoled* also steps sideways in his identity, appearing to also inhabit the figures of his son and a young pianist. He also avoids mirrors. The characters in the hotel narratives avoid the mirror to construct identity, and instead identity formation or identity loss takes place through space, through hotel space.

Accompanying this shift from the Freudian mirror stage to an a parallel understanding of identity is a shift in the structure and form of the uncanny. Again, it is through the hotel, the space that brands itself as a home away from home, that we are made acutely aware of the postmodern uncanny. The chain hotel is a space that is

repeated all over the world. Familiarity in new places is the paradoxical effect of this sameness in chain hotels. This is an accepted part of postmodern existence, where one expects to find sameness (to a degree) all over the world. Hence the surprise and shock that accompanied the Freudian form of the uncanny is no longer present in postmodernity. Instead of something unfamiliar rising to the surface in a familiar space, or vice versa, the postmodern uncanny is accompanied by a quiet acceptance that familiarity and homeliness are both everywhere and nowhere.

The passivity that accompanies this postmodern uncanny is also part of the characterisation that is present in many of the masculine hotel narratives. The male protagonists in *The Unconsoled*, Murakami's novels, *Barton Fink* and *Lost in Translation* are fairly quiet, passive men. They also display non-personal characteristics. These protagonists lack individuality and correspond to the space in which they are housed: they are non-people in non-places.

Trying to create home in hotels, and trying to find intimacy in them, is not always possible. Nor is it always required, as Chapter Three indicates. The hotel as a non-place provides a paradigm for narratives of ennui and loneliness. This paradigm is sometimes inverted, as *Lost in Translation* and *Platform* attest. But frequently, the parallel worlds of hotel rooms only serve to highlight metaphysical isolation, as exemplified by *Mystery Train*. Whilst Chapter Six examines the way in which intimacy can be found in the "supermodern" hotel, these two seemingly contradictory experiences of postmodernity hang together as paradoxes of postmodernity. The contradictory experiences of postmodernity are contained within a single space, just as failure to comprehend totality and identity is placed onto the hotel.

Uniting both outcomes in the texts in this thesis is the way in which the hotel frames the quest for (if not always the achievement of) intimacy, contemplation and homeliness in postmodern narratives.

The hotel's already controversial role in spatial theory indicates its importance in debates about postmodernism. In literature and life, it seems, it is vitally important to have secure hotel space. The horror and unmappability found there so frequently in fiction is symptomatic of the hotel's importance and the *vulnerability* experienced in travel. Is the loathing of complex hotel space a desire for simplicity away from home, because of the complex relationship between home and elsewhere? With the image of baroque hotel space comes the attempt to present the unrepresentable, to present experience that is at once virtual and actual. The dynamics of virtual actual, real/unreal, body/cinematic gaze are not possible to understand as simple dualisms. What is gained through an unpacking of Deleuzian concepts in this thesis is the sense that our reliance on duality must be reconsidered.

Identity, becoming other, experience of what is both homely and unhomely, sit together via proximity, like rooms in a hotel. Common to masculine and feminine hotel experiences is a search for a secret place. Sometimes this secret place is horrific, sometimes it is longed for. This secret place is both inside and outside the self. Entering a living space away from home makes possible a new identity.

WORKS CITED

- AC/DC. "It's a Long Way to the Top If You Want to Rock and Roll." By Angus Young and Bonn Scott. *TNT*. Sydney: Albert Records, 1975.
- Agrest, Diana, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Kanes Weisman, eds. *The Sex of Architecture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.
- Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. London: Vintage, 1996.
- Augé, Marc. *Non-Places: An Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. Trans. J. Howe. London: Verso, 1995.
- Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Trans. Maria Jolas. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.
- Bakhtin, M.M. [Mikhail Mikhailovich] *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1990.
- Barthes, Roland. *Empire of Signs*. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.
- Bates, Charlotte. "Hotel Histories: Modern Tourists, Modern Nomads and the Culture of Hotel-Consciousness." *Literature and History* 12.2 (2003): 62-75.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *The Illusion of the End*. Trans. Chris Turner. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995.
- Benjamin, Jessica. "A Desire of One's Own: Psychoanalytic Feminism and Intersubjective Space." *Feminism/Postmodernism*. Ed. L. J. Nicholson. London: Routledge, 1990. 78-101.
- Berry, C. J. *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.
- Bogue, Ronald. *Deleuze and Guattari*. London: Routledge, 1989.
- . "Art and Territory." *A Deleuzian Century?* Ed. Ian Buchanan. Durham: Duke UP, 1999. 86-102.
- Bolger, Dermot, ed. *Finbar's Hotel*. London: Picador, 1997.
- Boyer, M. Christine. "Crimes in and out of the City: The *Femme Fatale* as Urban Allegory." Agrest, Conway and Weisman 97-118.
- Braidotti, Rosi. *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Thought*. New York: Colombia UP, 1994.

- . *Patterns of Dissonance: A Study of Women in Contemporary Philosophy*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991.
- . "Teratologies." *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*. Ed. Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2000. 56-172.
- Brookner, Anita. *Hotel du Lac*. London: Penguin, 1993.
- Brucken, Carolyn. "In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel." *Winterthur Portfolio* 31.4 (1996): 203-20.
- Buchanan, Ian. *Deleuzism*. Durham: Duke UP, 2000.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies that Matter*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Byrne, Denis. "Traces of 65." *Australian Humanities Review*. May 1998. Online. Internet. Accessed 10 August 1998. <http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/AHR/>.
- Carver, Raymond. *All Of Us: The Collected Poems*. London: The Harvill Press, 1997.
- Certeau, Michel de. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. S. Rendall. Berkeley: California UP, 1984.
- Clifford, James. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Boston: Harvard UP, 1997.
- . "Travelling Cultures." *Cultural Studies*. Ed. L. Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler. New York: Routledge, 1992. 96-111.
- Colebrook, Claire. *Understanding Deleuze*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2002.
- Colombat, André Pierre. "The Three Powers of Literature and Philosophy: To Demystify, to Experiment, to Create." *A Deleuzian Century?* Ed. Ian Buchanan. Durham: Duke UP, 1999. 199-218.
- Conley, Tom. "From Multiplicities to Folds: On Style and Form in Deleuze." *A Deleuzian Century?* Ed. Ian Buchanan. Durham: Duke UP, 1999. 249-266.
- Conley, Verena Andermatt. "Becoming-Woman Now." *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*. Ed. Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2000. 18-37.
- Cresswell, Tim. "Imagining the Nomad: Mobility and the Postmodern Primitive." *Space and Social Theory: Interpreting Modernity and Postmodernity*. Ed. Georges Benko and Ulf Strohmayer. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997. 167-89.
- Cunningham, Michael. *The Hours*. London: Fourth Estate, 1999.
- Davis, Mike. *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. London: Verso,

1990.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 2, The Time Image*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1989.

---. *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Trans. D.W. Smith and M. Greco. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997.

---. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. Trans. Tom Conley. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2004.

---, and Felix Guattari. *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. Trans. Dana Polan. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986.

---. *A Thousand Plateaus*. Trans. Brian Massumi. London: The Athlone Press, 1988.

---. *What is Philosophy?* Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchill. New York: Columbia UP, 1994.

Deutsche, Rosalyn. "Men in Space." *Gender, Space, Architecture: An Interdisciplinary Introduction*. Ed. Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner and Iain Borden. New York: Routledge, 2000. 128-33.

Didion, Joan. *Salvador*. London: Chatto and Windus and The Hogarth Press, 1983.

Dollimore, Jonathan. *Sexual Dissidence*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992.

Donald, James. *Imagining the Modern City*. London: The Athlone Press, 1999.

Ellin, Nan. "Shelter from the Storm or Form Follows Fear and Vice Versa." *Architecture of Fear*. Ed. Nan Ellin. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997. 13-45.

Flieger, Jerry Anne. "Becoming-Woman: Deleuze, Schreber and Molecular Identification." *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*. Ed. Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2000. 38-63.

Friedberg, Anne. *Window Shopping Cinema and the Postmodern*. Berkeley: California UP, 1993.

Frost, Lucy, and Marion Halligan. *Those Women Who Go To Hotels*. Melbourne: Minerva, 1997.

Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986): 22-27.

Gelder, Ken, and Jane Jacobs. "Postcolonial Ghost Story." *Ghosts: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, History*. Ed. A. Stott and P. Buse. London: Macmillan, 1999. 179-99.

Gilloch, Grahame. *Myth & Metropolis*. London: Polity Press, 1996.

- Goldstein, Judith. "The Female Aesthetic Community." *Poetics Today* 14.1 (1993): 143-63.
- Gregory, Derek. *Geographical Imaginations*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994.
- Griggers, Camilla. *Becoming-woman*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Space, Time and Perversion*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1995.
- Hamilton, Clive. *Growth Fetish*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2003.
- Haraway, Donna J. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Hartley, George. *The Abyss of Representation: Marxism and the Postmodern Sublime*. Durham: Duke UP, 2003.
- Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.
- Hillis-Miller, J. "The Critic As Host." *Modern Criticism and Theory*. Ed. David Lodge. London: Longman, 1988. 278-85.
- Holland, Eugene W. *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: Introduction to Schizoanalysis*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Houellebecq, Michel. *Platform*. Trans. Frank Wynne. London: Vintage, 2003.
- Irving, John. *The Hotel New Hampshire*. London: Corgi, 1993.
- Ishiguro, Kazuo. *The Unconsoled*. London: Faber, 1995.
- Jacobs, Jane M. *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- James, Henry. *The American Scene*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1968.
- Jameson, Fredric. *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983-1997*. London: Verso, 1998.
- . *The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995.
- . *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982.
- . *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London: Verso, 1999.
- . *Signatures of the Visible*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

- Jardine, Alice. *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1985.
- Jong, Erica. *Fear of Flying*. London: Minerva, 1994.
- Kafka, Franz. *America*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967.
- Kaplan, Caren. *Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement*. Durham: Duke UP, 1996.
- Kellner, Douglas, ed. *Postmodernism/Jameson/Critique*. Washington, DC: Maisonneuve Press, 1989.
- Kennedy, Barbara M. *Deleuze and Cinema: The Aesthetics of Sensation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2001.
- King, Stephen. *The Shining*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988.
- Kirby, Kathleen M. *Indifferent Boundaries: Spatial Concepts of Human Subjectivity*. New York: The Guilford Press, 1996.
- Klein, Norman. *The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory*. London: Verso, 2003.
- Koolhaas, Rem. *Delirious New York : A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*. New York: Monacelli Press. 1994.
- Kracauer, Siegfried. "The Hotel Lobby." *Postcolonial Studies* 2.3 (1999): 289-97.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Strangers to Ourselves*. New York: Colombia UP, 1991.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
- Leutrat, Jean-Louis. *L'année Dernière À Marienbad (Last Year At Marienbad)*. Trans. Paul Hammond. London: British Film Institute (BFI) Film Classics, 2000.
- Martin, Biddy, and Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "What's Home Got to Do With It?" *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*. Ed. Teresa de Lauretis. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988. 191-212.
- Massey, Doreen. *Space, Place and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994.
- Massumi, Brian, ed. *The Politics of Everyday Fear*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1993.
- . *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993.

- McCabe, Colin. Preface. Jameson, *The Geopolitical Aesthetic* ix-xvi.
- Millhauser Steven. *Martin Dressler: The Tale of an American Dreamer*. New York: Vintage, 1997.
- Mitchell, Susan. "Locked Out Of Hotel Rooms." *The Australian*. 15 Jan. 2001: 13.
- Modleski, Tania. *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women*. New York: Routledge, 1984.
- Moretti, Franco. *Atlas of the European Novel 1800-1900*. Verso: London, 1999.
- Morris, Meaghan. *The Pirate's Fiancée: Feminism, Reading, Postmodernism*. London: Verso, 1988.
- Murakami, Haruki. *A Wild Sheep Chase*. Trans. Alfred Birnbaum. New York: Plume - Penguin, 1990.
- . *Dance, Dance, Dance*. Trans. Alfred Birnbaum. London: Penguin, 1994.
- . *Sputnik Sweetheart*. London: Vintage, 2001.
- . *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*. Trans. Jay Rubin. London: Harville, 1997.
- Orwell, George. *Down and Out in Paris and London*. London: Penguin, 1966.
- Piehler, Liana F. *Spatial Dynamics and Female Development in Victorian Art and Novels: Creating a Woman's Space*. New York: Peter Lang, 2003.
- Proust, Marcel. *Against Sainte-Beuve and Other Essays*. Trans. John Sturrock. London: Penguin, 1988.
- Rapport, Nigel. "Migrant Selves and Stereotypes: Personal Context in a Postmodern World." *Mapping the Subject: Geographies of Cultural Transformation*. Ed. Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift. London: Routledge, 1995. 264-82.
- Robertson, Roland. "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity." *Global Modernities*. Ed. Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson. London: Sage, 1995. 25-44.
- Rose, Gillian. *Feminism and Geography: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993.
- Stevens, Wallace. *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens*. New York: Knopf, 1978.
- Soja, Edward. *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. London: Blackwell, 1996.
- Thompson, Hunter S. *The Great White Shark Hunt*. London: Picador, 1980.

- Urry, John. "Sensing the City." *The Tourist City*. Ed. Denis R. Judd and Susan Fainstein. New Haven: Yale UP, 1999. 77-91.
- Vidler, Anthony. *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.
- . *Warped Space*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.
- Ward, Joseph A. "'The Amazing Hotel World' of James, Dreiser, and Wharton." *Leon Edel and Literary Art*. Ed. Lyall Harris Powers and Clare Virginia Eby. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1988. 151-60.
- Wolff, Janet. *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women and Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.
- . "On the Road Again: Metaphors of Travel in Cultural Criticism." *Cultural Studies* 7 (1993): 224-39.
- Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*. London: Oxford, 1992.
- Zizek, Slavoj. *Enjoy Your Symptom!* New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Zukin, Sharon. *The Cultures of Cities*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997.

FILMS CITED

- Alphaville*. Dir. Jean-Luc Godard. Prod. André Michelin. Janus Films, 1965.
- Barton Fink*. Dir. Joel Coen. Prod. Ethan Coen. Columbia TriStar Home Video, 1991.
- Blade Runner*. Dir. Ridley Scott. Prod. Michael Deenley. Warner Home Video, 1982.
- The Conversation*. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. Prod. Francis Ford Coppola. Paramount Pictures, 1974.
- Dirty, Pretty Things*. Dir. Stephen Fears. Prod. Julie Goldstein. Bueua Vista International, 2002.
- Four Rooms*. Dir. Alison Anders, Alexandre Rockwell, Robert Rodriguez, Quentin Tarantino. Prod. Lawrence Bender. Miramax Films, 1995.
- The Graduate*. Dir. Mike Nichols. Prod. Lawrence Turman. United Artists, 1967.
- Grand Hotel*. Dir. Edmund Goulding. Prod. Paul Bern. MGM, 1932.

Heart Breakers. Dir. David Mirkin. Prod. John Davis. MGM, 2001.

Intolerable Cruelty. Dir. Joel Coen. Prod. Ethan Coen. United International Pictures, 2003.

Last Year At Marienbad. Dir. Alain Resnais. Prod. Pierre Couran. Fox Lorber, 1961.

Lost Highway. Dir. David Lynch. Prod. Deepak Nayar. REP, 1997.

Lost In Translation. Dir. Sofia Coppola. Prod. Sofia Coppola. Focus Features, 2003.

Love, Actually. Dir. Richard Curtis. Prod. Tim Bevan. Universal Pictures, 2003.

The Matrix. Dir. Andy and Larry Wachowski. Prod. Joel Silver. Roadshow Entertainment, 1999.

Mulholland Drive. Dir. David Lynch. Prod. Neal Edelstein. Roadshow Entertainment, 2001.

Mystery Train. Dir. Jim Jarmusch. Prod. Jim Stark. MGM Home Entertainment, 1989.

One Night Stand. Dir. Mike Figgis. Prod. Mike Figgis. New Line Cinema, 1997.

Pretty Woman. Dir. Garry Marshall. Prod. Arnon Milchan. Warner Brothers 1990.

Psycho. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Prod. Alfred Hitchcock. Universal Pictures, 1960.

Rear Window. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Prod. Alfred Hitchcock. Universal Home Entertainment, 1954.

The Shining. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. Prod. Robert Fryer. Warner Home Video, 1980.

Snake Eyes. Dir. Brian De Palma. Prod. Brian De Palma. Paramount Pictures, 1998.

Touch of Evil. Dir. Orson Welles. Prod. Rick Schnidl. Universal Pictures, 1958.

Twin Peaks. Dir. David Lynch, et al. Prod. Gregg Fienberg. Artisan Entertainment, 1990.