

Filming Disorganised Attachment

Abstract: This paper critically explores the politics of screen media and knowledge in contemporary attachment theory. The article considers the role of film in shaping conceptualisations of attachment, focusing on how the influential ‘disorganised/disoriented attachment’ (D) classification of infant behaviour both emerged as a consequence of film technologies and has subsequently been mummified by the way these media have been interpreted. In this way, the paper will explore how tensions between the readability and unreadability of a child’s gesture on film have conventionally been dealt within attachment theory. It will also demonstrate how film theory can help psychology by offering more productive ways of addressing recordings of infant movement which suggest affective disjuncture or conflict. In the course of this exploration, John Bowlby and Gilles Deleuze/Felix Guattari will be discovered as strange allies in conceptualising primate infants as machines of movement and desire. Deleuzian film theory will be used to interrogate the concept of disorganised/disoriented attachment. It will then be used to reconsider the position of conflict between attachment and fear which has been conventionally situated by psychologists as the cause of disorganised/disoriented attachment behaviour.

Introduction

Over decades, scholars have made film the object of psychological analysis.¹ And psychiatrists and psychologists are pervasive in cinema and television, from Alfred Kinsey to Hannibal Lecter. Early documentary films addressing psychology include *Glub Glub and the Monkeys*, about the research of Robert and Joan Hinde on infant development in primates.² More recent works in this genre have included *The Human Behavior Experiments* about the Milgram and Zimbardo obedience experiments,³ and *The Dark Matter of Love* about the family relationships of adopted children who had previously received care in institutions.⁴ Yet despite these engagements between psychology and film, the vast archive of film footage *produced* by psychological science has been almost exclusively neglected as an object of film studies scholarship. It is true that there has been some commentary on the use of film in science.⁵ And, in terms of psychological science specifically, Emma Wilson has offered a brief but beautiful analysis of Alain Resnais’ use of footage from evolutionary psychology in *Mon oncle d’Amérique*;⁶ and Lisa Cartwright has studied the films made by René Spitz of infants in institutional care and the role played by these films in scaffolding calls for reform in care arrangements for children.⁷ However, with these exceptions, to date psychological footage itself has not been considered using tools from film theory. Similarly no attention has been paid to the rich and intriguing methodological discussions about film within in the psychological literature itself, for instance regarding the

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¹ E.g. LeBeau, V. (1994) *Lost Angels: Psychoanalysis and Cinema*, London: Routledge; Shimamura, A.P. (2013) *Psychocinematics: Exploring Cognition at the Movies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

² dir. Robert Allen, Thames Production, 1975

³ dir. Alex Gibney, Sundance, 2006

⁴ dir. Sarah McCarthy, Double Bounce Films, 2013

⁵ Lebeau, *Childhood and Cinema* is attentive to scientific investments in film. For an important discussion of science films as a neglected object in film studies, see Wahlberg, M. (2006) ‘Wonders of cinematic abstraction’ *Screen* 47(3): 273-289.

⁶ Wilson, E. (2006) *Alain Resnais*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

⁷ Cartwright, L. (2004) ‘Emergencies of Survival’: Moral Spectatorship and the ‘New Vision of the Child’ in Postwar Child Psychoanalysis’ *Journal of Visual Culture* 3(1) 35-49.

advantages of using silent films as stimulus material for assessing children's attributions of beliefs and desires to others, or in neuroimaging research.⁸ This represents a large gap and, in my view, expresses an unwarranted epistemological humility within film studies scholarship; it lies contrary to a growing trend in wider humanities scholarship, which finds critics getting into the nitty-gritty of meaningful dialogue and contention with scientific knowledge, rather than bowing out from contention in compliance with a tacit doctrine of "separate spheres" for the arts and sciences.⁹ From within the discipline of film studies, attention to psychological footage is made particularly relevant and is situated by recent demands to develop explorations of the encounter of object-relations theory and film,¹⁰ and by the tradition of work highlighting the importance of the figure of the child for the politics of filmic representation.¹¹

Attachment theory is among the most influential contemporary developmental paradigms, and will form my focus here. Contemporary attachment researchers have emphasised and discussed how significant film has been to their work, and also called for more attention to the special properties of film media which have facilitated this role.¹² From its very beginning, attachment theory been intimately bound up with screen media. John Bowlby's work with John and Joyce Robertson at the start of the 1950s, filming young children separated from their parents by hospitalisation, led to widespread public recognition of the suffering these separations could cause, and to changes in policy regarding visiting opportunities for the parents of hospitalised children. The psychological significance of the separation appeared visible on the screen to viewers of these films. On reunion with their parents, the children showed signs of disorientation, freezing, alternations of anger and fear of their parent, and inconsolable grief. Commenting at the time, Anna Freud described the film technology used by Bowlby and the Robertsons as remarkable for its capacity to make 'the outward manifestations of the inner processes' available for demonstration and analysis.¹³ Such comments mirror the magnetic interest of the 'Child Pictures' in the late 19th century, which captivated audiences with their capacity to make the authentic and inner animations of a child's feelings visible and mass-reproducible.¹⁴

Bowlby proposed that the primate infant continually monitors the availability of at least one determinate caregiver (their 'attachment figure'), who is anticipated to be able to offer protection and support. When the caregiver appears to be available, the infant can engage in

⁸ See e.g. Devine, R.T. & Hughes, C. (2013) 'Silent Films and Strange Stories: Theory of Mind, Gender, and Social Experiences in Middle Childhood' *Child Development* 84(3): 989–1003; Moser, D., Aue, T., Wang, Z., Rusconi Serpa, S., Favez, N., Peterson, B.S. & Schechter, D.S. (2013) 'Limbic brain responses in mothers with post-traumatic stress disorder and comorbid dissociation to video clips of their children' *Stress* 16(5): 493-502

⁹ Greco, M. (2013) 'Logics of interdisciplinarity: the case of medical humanities' In: Born G, Barry A. eds. *Interdisciplinarity: Reconfigurations of the Social and Natural Sciences*. London: Routledge, pp.226–46; Bates, V. & Goodman, S. (2014) 'Critical conversations' in Bates, V., Bleakley, A. & Goodman, S. eds. *Medicine, Health and the Arts*, London: Routledge, pp.3–13

¹⁰ Kuhn, A. ed. (2013) *Little Madnesses: Winnicott, Transitional Phenomena and Cultural Experience*, NY: I.B.Tauris

¹¹ E.g. Lebeau, V. (1992) 'Daddy's cinema: femininity and mass spectatorship' *Screen* 33(3): 244-258; Eleftheriotis, D. (2005) 'Early cinema as child: historical metaphor and European cinephilia in *Lumiere & Company*' *Screen* 46(3): 315-328 ; Kathryn Bond Stockton (2010) *The Queer Child, or Growing up Sideways in the Twentieth Century*, Durham: Duke University Press.

¹² See e.g. Steele, M., Steele, H., Bate, J., Knafo, H., Kinsey, M., Bonuck, K., Meisner, P. & Murphy, A. (2014) 'Looking from the outside in: the use of video in attachment-based interventions' *Attachment & Human Development*, 16(4): 402-415

¹³ Freud, A. (1953) 'A Two-Year-Old Goes to Hospital—Scientific Film by James Robertson' *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 34: 284-287, p.285. More generally, other psychologists observed at the time that 'videotape recording represents a technological breakthrough with the kind of significance for psychiatry that the microscope has had for biology.' Alger, I. & Hogan, P. (1967) 'The use of videotape recordings in conjoint marital therapy' *American Journal of Psychiatry* 123(11): 1425–1430, p.1425

¹⁴ Lebeau, V. (2008) *Childhood and Cinema*, London: Reaktion Books; Lury, K. (2010) *The Child in Film: Tears, Fears and Fairy Tales*, NY: I.B.Tauris.

activities such as play or sleep; after a while without interaction, but especially when alarmed or anxious, the infant will cease other engagements and seek proximity and the availability of her attachment figure through behaviours such as crying, smiling or crawling. Bowlby termed this process the 'attachment behavioural system', and proposed that it evolved to facilitate the child's survival in the face of dangers such as predation, attack or exposure to the elements. Bowlby ideas were tested and extended by American developmental psychologists, who went on to utilise film to document individual differences in behaviour shown when the attachment system is activated. The most influential such assessment was the Strange Situation Procedure, an observational measure designed by Mary Ainsworth. In this experimental procedure, as the episodes increase the infant's sense of alarm by increments, the observer can attend to individual differences in the infant's movement between behavioural systems: the interplay of exploration of toys and attachment behaviour, in the presence and in the absence of the parent and of a stranger. The procedure lasts for 20 minutes: the reason for this, as Ainsworth recalled in interview, was that this was the amount of time that would fit easily on one reel of 16mm film, the available media at the time.¹⁵ In a letter to Bowlby, Ainsworth enthused about her laboratory's access to an 'excellent... portable videotape apparatus' which could be used to record the Strange Situation from behind a one-way mirror. The capacity to repeatedly review infant and parent gestures on tape, and to watch them in slow-motion, Ainsworth wrote, was simply 'beautiful'.¹⁶

In their 'instructions to camera operators', Ainsworth and her students specified that a wide shot should be used to capture caregiver and child in frame together on their entry and exit from the Strange Situation and at times when they interact and play. For moments when the child is playing alone or experiencing the departure of or reunion with their attachment figure, 'close-ups are essential'.¹⁷ In general, though, 'focusing on details of facial expression and how toys are manipulated is not helpful for scoring. Posture and movements of the arms and legs (e.g. kicking, stiffening, pushing or leaning away) are critically important and will be lost if the camera operator is too fond of close-ups'.¹⁸ As such, throughout the observation the camera generally focuses on the child's body, and attend particularly to their communication with their attachment figure; it is seen as good practice, when filming a Strange Situation, to keep the child's face towards the top of the shot and their torso to the centre, allowing the camera to 'fill the screen with the codable image'.¹⁹ In her published work, Ainsworth herself praised film technology in particular for its capacity to support 'finer-grained' analysis of the different and conflicting motivations that might be read off from the morphology of a child's posture or gestures, allowing the observer to use visible behaviour to infer the interplay between behavioural systems such as exploration and attachment.²⁰ The camera can help make visible, in the movement of knees and lips and fingers, all kinds of half-gestures, mumbled vocalisations, and rapidly fleeting affects, suggestive of emotional dynamism and the complexity of distress

¹⁵ Ainsworth, M. D., & Marvin, R. S. (1995) 'On the shaping of attachment theory and research: An interview with Mary D.S. Ainsworth' *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 60(2-3), 3-21

¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Mary Ainsworth to John Bowlby marked the 30th May 1972, Wellcome Trust Archive, London.

¹⁷ Cassidy, J., Marvin, B. and the MacArthur Network on Attachment in the Preschool Years (1992) *Attachment Organisation in Pre-School Children: Procedures and Coding Manual*, unpublished manuscript, p.20. Ainsworth was a member of the MacArthur Network.

¹⁸ Waters, E. (2002) 'The Video Record' in *Comments on Strange Situation Classification*, <http://johnbowlby.com>

¹⁹ Crittenden, P. (1981) 'Instructions to Camera Operators', appended to *The Pre-School Assessment of Attachment Coding Manual*, Miami: Family Relations Institute, p. 92. These instructions were written by Crittenden under the supervision of Ainsworth.

²⁰ Tracy, R., Lamb, M. & Ainsworth, M.D. (1976) Infant Approach Behavior as Related to Attachment *Child Development*, 47(3): 571-578, p.577

and desire. It allowed attachment theory to be recognised as a form of developmental science, on the basis that the 'analysis of video materials is replicable and it can be checked'.²¹

Beyond academia, films tracking infant attachment are used by clinical and social welfare professionals. They have been drawn upon in risk assessments of child-caregiver relationships. There is also extensive and growing use of filmed observations of children's attachment behaviour in feedback given by professionals to caregivers on their parenting, in circumstances where help has been requested or concerns raised about maltreatment.²² It is felt that 'the effects of the experience of watching oneself on video-film, especially when watching oneself interacting with one's child, can be startling and evocative in ways that promote change. Multiple sensations, emotions, beliefs and representations are aroused, often in unsettling ways, very likely activating the attachment system' in the parent, and making attachment representations available for discussion and change.²³ For instance, courts or child welfare authorities may mandate video-feedback support from professionals after children have been returned to their caregivers after a crisis and a period in foster care for that child. Moss and colleagues, describing how the qualities of film specifically enable such an intervention, state that:

Video-feedback offers an opportunity to provide immediate feedback on caregiver-child experiences which have just occurred during the 10–15 minute filmed interactive period. This is in marked contrast to typical clinical models where events are often discussed after considerable delay. The immediacy of the therapeutic experience and the use of video sequences of the caregiver and child also allows for easier access to self and other cognitive/affective representations for purposes of change. Viewing one's own behavior, while being guided by a sensitive intervenor, may help the parent rework distorted representations, either overly negative or idealized, that maltreating parents often have of themselves or the child... Video-feedback can then be used to identify moments of dyadic discord that go unrepaired such as a period of angry, aggressive behavior from the child following an episode of maternal detachment. Intervenors can then engage caregivers in a discussion of alternative ways of responding to the child. With the maltreating population, it is generally inadvisable to begin focusing on more negative interactive sequences before a solid basis has been established in viewing and reviewing positive sequences, thus enhancing caregivers' feelings of self-efficacy and trust in the intervenor.²⁴

Thousands upon thousands of films tracking the interrelation of infant distress, play and attachment behaviour have been made by psychological researchers and psy-discipline

²¹ Grossmann, K., Grossmann, K. & Huber, F. (1981) German children's behavior towards their mothers at 12 months and their fathers at 18 months in Ainsworth's Strange Situation. *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 4(2): 157-181, p.159

²² E.g. Cohen, P. & Beebe, B. (2002) 'Video Feedback with a Depressed Mother and her Infant' *Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy*, 2(3): 1-55; O'Connor, T. & Byrne, J.G. (2007) 'Attachment measures for research and practice' *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* 12(4): 187–192; Shemmings, D. & Shemmings, Y. (2014) *Assessing Disorganised Attachment Behaviour in Children*, London: JKP.

²³ Steele et al. 'Looking from the outside in', p.412

²⁴ Moss, E. et al. (2014) 'Video-feedback intervention with maltreating parents and their children' *Attachment & Human Development* 16(4): 329-342, pp.333-4; see also Zelenko, M. & Benham, A. (2000) 'Videotaping as a therapeutic tool in psychodynamic infant psychotherapy' *Infant Mental Health*, 21(3), 192–203. Steele and colleagues observe that film adds something irreducible within attachment-based interventions, since 'video enhances the therapeutic alliance, facilitates a reflective stance in the parent, and consolidates clinical gains by focusing the parents' attention on specific attachment related behaviors that they are asked to translate into words, thereby helping to "metabolize" what are often difficult to process thoughts and feelings.' (Steele et al. 'Looking from the outside in', p.409).

professionals. As the equipment for filming becomes increasingly available and inexpensive, this has added impetus to their production. Vikki Lebeau's difficult, incisive question can be levelled at this accumulation of recordings: 'What wishes are at work in the visual archive of the child in pain?'²⁵ Lebeau's question, in its original context, was directed at the role of the image of the child as the privileged exemplar used by early cinema to demonstrate its capacity to capture authenticity in the affects on screen and evoked in viewers. Yet her question has bearing for films of infant attachment, and above all the Strange Situation, since here the filmic image of the suffering child is reinvested as the mark of species-wide abilities, developed in infancy, to regulate affect in ways responsive to the earliest caregiving environment, and anticipated to have developmental consequences for later happiness and relationships in adulthood. Lebeau has explored early cinema's investment in the image of the child as testament to its authenticity in capturing feeling, and Cartwright has considered the moral authority given to psychologists by films of suffering infants. My work here is influenced and scaffolded by theirs. However, focusing on the research psychology context specifically, my goal is to show how viewers of filmed Strange Situations have 'completed' the films they are watching, how they invest in visual technology as an enhanced way of making meaning of continuities and discontinuities in infant gestures and movements. In examining this process, it will be seen how the use and interpretation of screen media has made possible but also contributed to the reification of the 'disorganised/disoriented' (D) attachment classification. The article will then draw on Deleuzian film theory to counter this reification, demonstrating the value of film theory for tracing the meanings of gesture and movement - even on the unfamiliar and perhaps surprising terrain of contemporary psychological science.

'Disorganised/disoriented' attachment as a child of film technology

Three categories were originally proposed by Ainsworth and Wittig in 1969 for coding patterns of infant responses to their Strange Situation Procedure. In films classified as 'avoidant' (Group A), the infants avoid the caregiver with their gaze and posture when reunited. Though they seem poised and unruffled, studies of heart-rate and cortisol show that these infants are actually quite distressed by the separation, and that avoidance on reunion represents a way that the infant can keep their distress from becoming visible to a caregiver expected to be reject expressions of a desire for comfort.²⁶ In films classified as 'secure' (Group B), the infants display more elaborate play, use the caregiver as a safe base from which to explore the toys and a safe haven to which they may return, especially when alarmed or anxious. These infants are visibly distressed at their caregiver's departure - but on the second reunion (and perhaps the first as well) look to the caregiver's face, seek the caregiver upon his or her return, and can be comforted and return to play within three minutes. It was theorised that these infants feel confident that their communications about need can get through to their caregiver and that the attachment figure will be available to protect and support them when called upon. Children classified as 'ambivalent/resistant' (Group C) show distress even before separation and are clingy and difficult to comfort on the caregiver's return. They distrust their caregiver's offer of toys to play with, treating such offers as attempts by the caregiver to distract them from receiving attention and affection. These infants were theorised to be pre-empting their unpredictable caregiver, deploying their distress and anger to get and keep an unpredictable caregiver's attention and therefore their availability. The A, B and C patterns of attachment were conceptualised by Ainsworth as 'organised', using the term in a technical way to mean that the attachment system could recruit and orchestrate a variety of behaviours (e.g. crying, smiling, crawling) to achieve some form of protective proximity with their caregiver.²⁷ The secure (B)

²⁵ Lebeau, V., *Childhood and Cinema*, p.19

²⁶ Sroufe, A. & Waters, E. (1977) 'Attachment as an Organizational Construct' *Child Development*, 48: 1184-1199

²⁷ Ainsworth, M.D. (1972) 'Attachment and Dependency: A Comparison' In Jacob L. Gewirtz (Ed),

pattern is understood to achieve the availability of the caregiver directly; the avoidant (A) and resistant (C) patterns achieve this availability in a 'conditional' way, downplaying their distress or displaying it intensely and without apparent trust in their caregiver's overtures.

The attachment classification the infant received with one parent was found to have no association with their classification with the other parent, implying that the Strange Situation coding protocols do not assess personality differences but rather that infant's expectations about the care they will receive from a particular attachment figure. The infant classifications were found to be quite predictive of all manner of later assessments of mental health and of social and academic competence. Researchers concluded that the Strange Situation assessment and classifications were tapping a foundational aspect in the way that an infant's early caregiving environment influences their development: the direct association of infant attachment classification for later outcomes was not generally found to be high except on a few measures, but the cumulative indirect effect was surprisingly substantial.²⁸ That the same patterns of infant behaviour could be found by researchers time and again across contexts and cultures provided evidence both that human infants have a predisposition to seek their familiar adult when anxious and that this predisposition can be moderated if necessary in two ways: by downplaying distress in an avoidant pattern in order to keep self-control and avoid rebuff, or pre-empting an unpredictable caregiver by using distress and anger as a way of keeping the caregiver's attention. The three Ainsworth attachment patterns were thus understood to be such robust constructs because they were the product of *universal capacities of human emotion-regulation* within early relationships.

The reason that these universalising discourses have been worth describing is that from the 1970s, an archive began to grow of filmed recordings in which children, particularly on reunion with their caregiver, displayed gestures and postures *discrepant* with Ainsworth's coding system. For example, there were films from the research of Ainsworth's doctoral students in which the infant 'appears to be "in a trance"', or in which an infant 'slaps his own face; pulls his ear; digs into his arm with his nails', or displays 'odd vocalisations (he "barks")'.²⁹ Infants were also observed tensely cocking their heads,³⁰ or throwing their hands in front of their faces on reunion with their parent. Many researchers in the 1970s concluded that these gestures and postures were mere 'noise', produced by an inability of the Ainsworth Strange Situation procedure to cleanly draw out the attachment system for filmed observation. Children do weird things. However, the films in which these discrepant behaviours were visible were more common in samples taken from clinical, social services or otherwise at-risk populations. And the potential meaningfulness of this archive of discrepant films was corroborated by observations by child psychoanalysts, such as Selma Fraiberg, who saw in their clinics just such behaviours interrupting the play of infants who had experienced trauma or neglect.³¹ In 1981, Mary Main introduced a new 'unclassifiable' designation for such films, with the hope that the new (non-)classification would both improve the validity of the Ainsworth 'secure' classification by removing children who approached the caregiver on reunion, but did so together with discrepant behaviours suggesting stress or tension. It was also hoped that the identification of these discrepant cases and their consideration together might itself turn out to be fruitful. The indelible debt that this development had to film technology was emphasised by Main and

Attachment and Dependency (pp.97-138), Washington, D.C.: Wiley

²⁸ E.g. Carlson, E. A., Sroufe, L. A., & Egeland, B. (2004). The construction of experience: A longitudinal study of representation and behavior. *Child Development*, 75, 66–83.

²⁹ Main, M. (1977) Analysis of a peculiar form of reunion behaviour seen in some day-care children. In R. Webb (ed.) *Social Development in Childhood* (pp.33-78), Baltimore: John Hopkins, p.69

³⁰ Crittenden, P.M. (1983), Mother and Infant Patterns of Attachment. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Virginia, May 1983

³¹ Fraiberg, S. (1981) 'Pathological Defences in Infancy' *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 51: 612-635

colleagues: 'the distinction between secure and unclassifiable, false-secure infants has been made possible only by the opportunity for close, repeated review of videotape records'.³²

As film theorists such as Hansen and Mulvey have discussed, channelling representations of movement on film through repetition, slow motion and freeze-frame can offer important new possibilities for seeing.³³ In the case of attachment research, film technology facilitated repeated viewing of the same behaviour by a researcher, with attention to what came before and after, and its particular physical morphology and apparent social significance in the dance of interaction between child and parent. For example, in one Strange Situation filmed by Main an infant interrupted her approach to her father on reunion. 'She suddenly stopped and turned her head to the side and – while gazing blankly at the wall – slapped a toy and then her empty hand on the floor', before continuing her approach and reaching to be picked up. The researchers found out afterwards that the child's father had recently attempted suicide and had frequent homicidal fantasies.³⁴ Main and colleagues specifically noted that 'slow-motion review of the tape yielded a strikingly different interpretation' of gestures and postures that were 'too subtle to note in real time'.³⁵ In interview, Main and Hesse recall 'observing a startling asymmetrical smile in the first 3 seconds of reunion with the mother, where one side of the mouth turned up as in a smile, the other down as in a grimace. While the mouth movements vanished almost immediately, they were verified in slow motion. Later, it was learned that the baby had been maltreated.'³⁶ Describing the infant of this film in print, Main and Solomon describe that 'in these microseconds, her eyes widen as she looks at mother [and] the asymmetry makes her appear puzzled, disgusted or fearful. Her face then breaks into an extremely wide smile'.³⁷

However, perhaps the greatest significance of film for research on these discrepant behaviours lay in the fact that it allowed researchers to confer. That films could be shown to and discussed with others meant that behaviours which would otherwise have been tacitly disregarded could be treated as potentially meaningful. Main's laboratory at Berkeley began to collect unclassifiable tapes from other researchers working with high-risk samples such as Mary J. O'Connor, Elizabeth Carlson, Patricia Crittenden and Susan Spieker. A member of the laboratory, Judith Solomon, conducted an intensive review of tapes of unclassifiable behaviour in infant-parent interactions, with a particular focus on 60 tapes which included infants from both low-risk and high-risk samples. Solomon observed a variety of anomalous behaviours, particularly common in the maltreated sample: apparent signs of depression in infants; indications that an infant was attempting to muster an ABC strategy but failing to achieve this; infants initially approaching the caregiver but then veering off; disoriented behaviours (e.g. the child leaves its arm hanging in the air). In their publication suggesting that these anomalous tapes point to the need for a new attachment classification, Main and Solomon reported two overriding themes: 'the most striking theme running through the list of recorded behaviours was that of *disorganization*, or, very briefly, an observed contradiction in movement pattern, corresponding to an inferred contradiction in intention or plan. The term *disorientation* was also needed, because, for example, immobilised behaviour accompanied by a dazed expression is not so much disorganized as seemingly signalling a lack of orientation to the immediate environment'.³⁸ In line with Ainsworth's technical use of the term 'organised', mentioned above, the use of the term 'disorganisation' in Main and Solomon diverged from its use in everyday

³² Main, M. & Weston, D. (1981) The Quality of the Toddler's Relationship to Mother and to Father: Related to Conflict Behavior and the Readiness to Establish New Relationships. *Child Development*, 52(3): 932-940, p.939

³³ Hansen, M.B.N. (2004) 'The Time of Affect, or Bearing Witness to Life', *Critical Inquiry* 30: 584-626; Mulvey, L. (2006) *Death 24x a Second*, London: Reaktion Books

³⁴ Main & Solomon, Procedures for identifying, p.144

³⁵ Main, M. & Stadtman, J. (1981) Infant Response to Rejection of Physical Contact by the Mother. *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry*, 20(2): 292-307, p.297

³⁶ Mary Main and Erik Hesse, personal communication, January 8th 2013.

³⁷ Main & Solomon, Procedures for identifying, p.143

³⁸ Main & Solomon, Procedures for identifying, p.133

language; instead, it was used in a technical sense to mean the absence or disruption of a coherent sequence of (visible) behaviours oriented to achieve proximity with the caregiver, presumed to therefore suggest contradiction or disturbance of the (invisible) attachment system itself.³⁹

Film technology made it possible for the field to come to consensus about the need for a new classification in addition to Ainsworth's three categories of infant reunion behaviour. At a four-day workshop at the University of Washington, Mary Ainsworth sat on the floor to be as close as possible to the screen as Mary Main showed her tapes coded with the new 'D' classification; at the end of the event, Ainsworth wrote to Bowlby that she and 'everyone there was most impressed with the need for adding a new 'D' or disorganised category to the classification system'.⁴⁰ Later research has found that infants who displayed behaviour discrepant with the Ainsworth categories appeared at elevated risk of later problems. For instance, such infants have been found to be more likely to show aggressive and violent behaviour later in life;⁴¹ and a classification of disorganised/disoriented attachment in infancy predicts severity of later PTSD symptoms following a trauma – an association which was found not to be attributable to the many co-occurring risk factors.⁴²

In general, recordings of Strange Situation Procedures assigned the 'disorganised/disoriented' (D) classification are not accessible to the public, in order to preserve the confidentiality of the participants. However, anonymised extracts without sound from two videos of 'attachment disorganization/disorientation' have been made available online by researchers from the SUNY Stony Brook and the New York Attachment Consortium.⁴³ In one of the two extracted videos we see an infant during a separation from his mother. He is in the centre of the frame, holding his finger out to touch a yellow duck which has been presented by the stranger, who is partly off-screen. The stranger appears pleased to be interacting; the infant's face is flat, almost weary. The door opens and his mother enters the room and pauses briefly; the camera captures her feet, neatly together but not directed at the child, as she presumably regards him. Without changing his flat expression, the infant looks up towards his mother's face, but does not otherwise greet her. The camera moves the stranger out of shot, except for the edge of her black shoes. As the mother returns to her seat, the child turns away and moves from a sitting position, pitching forward – as if in genuflection – diagonally away from his mother's movements past him. He lies face down with his cheek against the carpet, facing towards the stranger; his mother cannot see his face from his position. His fingers are splayed on the floor, and his mouth is open and eyes are wide: it is not clear whether this is a look of surprise, pleasure or horror. It could be all three. Then his eyes close towards slits. With his mother now in her chair behind him, the infant uses his arm to right himself, his mouth opening yet wider. Upright and with one leg tucked under his body, the little boy's face is relaxed and he moves expansively to collect a ball which is outside his immediate reach. He holds the ball to his chest and looks up at his mother. His eyes are a little wide and his lower lip is slack – he appears worried. Then, with a slight, friendly smile, he holds the ball out to his mother and looks into her face. He throws the ball towards her, seeming pleased and a little

³⁹ Duschinsky, R. (2015) 'The Emergence of the 'Disorganised/Disoriented (D) Attachment' Classification, 1979-1982' *History of Psychology* 18(1): 32–46

⁴⁰ Mary Ainsworth, unpublished letter to Bowlby dated February 14th 1985, Wellcome Trust Archive, London.

⁴¹ Fearon, P., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M.J., Van IJzendoorn, M.H., Lapsley, A.-M. & Roisman, G. (2010) 'The Significance of Insecure Attachment and Disorganization in the Development of Children's Externalizing Behavior' *Child Development*, 81(2): 435–456

⁴² MacDonald, H. Z., Beeghly, M., Grant-Knight, W., Augustyn, M., Woods, R.W., Cabral, H., et al. (2008) 'Longitudinal association between infant disorganized attachment and childhood posttraumatic stress symptoms' *Development & Psychopathology*, 20: 493–508; Enlow, M.B., Egeland, B, Carlson, E., Blood, E & Wright, R. (2014) 'Mother–infant attachment and the intergenerational transmission of posttraumatic stress disorder' *Development & Psychopathology* 26: 41–65

⁴³

cheeky. The disparity in affect between this apparently happy play, and the genuflection away from mother moments ago on her return to the room, is stark and disconcerting to a viewer familiar with infant behaviour on reunion with their familiar caregiver. Without the capacity of film to intensify our attention to particular scenes of movement and affect, it would be difficult to even identify this fleeting disjuncture and likely impossible to generate any consensus between coders about what it might mean in attachment terms. At a behavioural level, the infant's behaviour sequence could be considered as a kind of avoidance (A) since the infant is attempting to mask his distress from the parent and is directing his attention away from her; it is classed also as 'disorganised/disoriented' (D) because coders can infer a disruption of coherence of the attachment system in the context of countervailing affects.

'Like a video which keeps flickering'

As we have seen, 'disorganisation' was defined by Main and colleagues as an observed contradiction in movement pattern, understood to reflect a parallel disruption of the infant's representations of the caregiver that integrate the attachment system. Main clustered such behaviours into seven indices which could be used by researchers to code 'attachment disorganization/disorientation'. Main and Hesse proposed that these diverse forms of behaviour can all be explained in terms of a contradiction between the attachment system and another behavioural tendency. Reflecting on what tendencies could be sufficiently powerful to disturb the attachment system, which demands that the infant seek protection from the attachment figure when alarmed, her conclusion was that it must be alarm evoked by the attachment figure themselves. That is to say, 'an infant who is frightened by the attachment figure is presented with a paradoxical problem – namely, an attachment figure who is at once the source of and the solution to its alarm'.⁴⁴ A parent who frightens the child with abusive behaviour, or who themselves is frightened when the child seeks comfort because of past trauma, could both be supposed to cause such a paradox for an infant. In their later work Main and Hesse, alongside other researchers such as Solomon and George, emphasised the disorganising role of deferential, helpless or withdrawing behaviour displayed by a parent to their infant. Such behaviours do not proximately frighten the child; however, if an attachment figure withdraws when their infant looks to them for protection and support in regulating their feelings, this may lead to experiences of unassuaged alarm which ultimately becomes frightening for the infant.⁴⁵

Looking back, Main has claimed that that her ideas have been mischaracterised, in a manner 'widespread and dangerous',⁴⁶ and which has contributed to the misuse of the concept of disorganised/disoriented attachment in the psy-disciplines in screening for maltreatment. To take but one example, in their textbook on *Social Development*, Parke and Clarke-Stewart explain that children classed as having 'insecure-disorganised attachment (Type D)... seem to be apprehensive and fearful of their attachment figure'.⁴⁷ Main and Hesse, acknowledging that the emphasis of earlier papers may have misled readers, have subsequently stated that they wish that they had made it clearer that they intended their emphasis on frightened or frightening caregiver behaviour as 'one highly specific and sufficient, but not necessary, pathway to D attachment status'.⁴⁸ They draw attention to their own findings that show that unresolved

⁴⁴ Main, M. & Hesse, E. (1990) Parents' unresolved traumatic experiences are related to infant disorganized attachment status. In M.T. Greenberg, D. Cicchetti & E.M. Cummings eds. *Attachment in the Preschool Years* (pp.161-181), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.163

⁴⁵ Solomon, J. & George, C. (1996) Defining the caregiving systems: Toward a theory of caregiving. *Infant Mental Health Journal* 17, 3-17. See also Lyons-Ruth, K. & Spielman E. (2004) 'Disorganized infant attachment strategies and helpless-fearful profiles of parenting' *Infant Mental Health Journal* 25(4): 318-335.

⁴⁶ Main, M., Hesse, E., & Hesse, S. (2011). Attachment Theory and Research: Overview with Suggested Applications to Child Custody. *Family Court Review* 49(3): 426-463, p.441

⁴⁷ Parke, R.D. & Clarke-Stewart, A. (2011) *Social Development*, NY: John Wiley, p.119

⁴⁸ Hesse, E. & Main, M. (2006) Frightened, threatening, and dissociative parental behaviour, pp.310-1.

bereavement in a parent who is otherwise caring just fine for their child predicts a classification of disorganised/disoriented attachment in the Strange Situation, and to other studies which highlight that a parent's ongoing experience of an anxiety-disorder or multiple forms of social and economic disadvantage have also been found to predict disorganised attachment in the infant – even in the absence of any known maltreatment or neglect.

Looking in retrospect at Main's texts of the 1990s from the vantage of the present, it is clear that mischaracterisations of disorganisation/disorientation were facilitated by the predominant narrative of Main's writings, which gave the impression that she was proposing a unitary maltreatment category within an exhaustive taxonomy of child behaviour, even if qualifications are clearly there in the texts if looked for.⁴⁹ Yet if 'disorganised/disoriented attachment' was a concept erected upon film technologies, it can be suggested that the concept was also in part embalmed by the way film was used and understood. Whether drawing upon hermeneutic phenomenology or psychoanalysis, since the late 1970s film theorists have drawn attention to the role of the spectator in 'completing' the images and sounds they experience to form the meanings of a film.⁵⁰ Main and Solomon precisely and necessarily depended upon this process, since they required viewers to *infer* some form of contradiction or disruption of the (invisible) attachment system from the observation of (visible) infant behaviour which did not appear to the viewer to constitute a coherent strategy for proximity-seeking. The term 'disorganisation/disorientation' was introduced as a best-fit but contingent description of the kinds of gestures and postures from which this contradiction or disruption could most directly be inferred. Coding disorganisation/disorientation requires what Goffman terms a 'frame-break': an ejection of the viewer from his or her expected involvement and the meanings they expected to find in a sequence of filmed behaviour.⁵¹ Indeed, the disruption of the expected behavioural sequence represented by disorganised attachment has been described by Alan Sroufe, in training for researchers in how to code the Strange Situation, as 'like a video which keeps flickering.'⁵² Both the malfunction of film technology and a visible disturbance of the coherence of an infant's behavioural sequence on reunion with their caregiver disrupt our expectations regarding genres of motion as the basis for ready intelligibility. There is an integral logic to Sroufe's analogy, founded on the specific configuration within which screen media relates to expectation and attention. Main and Solomon sought to utilise the distinctive capacity of film to critically throw a viewer back upon his or her assumptions: the coder was expected to watch and re-watch and re-watch, considering and negotiating with their assumptions about what a coherent infant strategy for proximity-seeking on reunion might look like, and look for visible clues (e.g. freezing, or a parabolic approach trajectory to the caregiver on reunion) that the coherence of the attachment behavioural system is being disrupted or contradicted. This is why they urge that 'the observation and recording of D behaviour can only be made in conjunction with repeated, slow-motion study of the film'.⁵³ It is highly indicative that Main and Solomon specify that a stationary camera mounted in one corner of the Strange Situation is sufficient to code a child with an A, B or C Ainsworth classification, but it is *not* adequate for making a D coding: it will miss too many of the clues of disruption or contradiction of the attachment system which may be embedded in 'infant facial expressions and small motor movements'.⁵⁴

However, the immediacy of the vivid and deep representation of reality offered by film supported the impression that the meaning of the behaviours was immediately accessible, that

⁴⁹ See also Padrón, E., Carlson, E.A. & Sroufe, L.A. (2014) 'Frightened Versus Not Frightened Disorganized Infant Attachment' *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 84(2): 201–208

⁵⁰ For surveys see e.g. Mayne, J. (1993) *Cinema and Spectatorship*, London: Routledge; Lapsley, R. (2009) 'Cinema, the impossible, and a psychoanalysis to come' *Screen* 50(1): 14–24.

⁵¹ Goffman, E. (1974) *Frame Analysis*, Boston: Northeastern University Press p.346

⁵² Alan Sroufe, Strange Situation Training at the University of Minnesota, 12th June 2014. Permission was given for this remark to be cited.

⁵³ Main & Solomon, 'Procedures for Identifying', p.147

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

viewers could readily *see* disorganisation itself as an attachment type expressed within the diverse behaviours – what, in Cowie’s terms, might be considered a ‘desire for the real joined together with the science of the visible’ for the film’s viewer.⁵⁵ Following Such desire can be regarded as having been supported by points of ambiguity in the chapters by Main and Solomon introducing the concept, and further fuelled by the more general tendency in psychology to treat behaviours in a group as occurring through a single process.⁵⁶ As a result, many researchers and psy-discipline practitioners took from the work of Main and Solomon the (partially circular) conclusion that all behaviour discrepant with the Ainsworth A, B and C classifications manifest, in an undifferentiated way, a unitary processes of ‘disorganisation/disorientation’ – no matter, for example, in what sequence of behaviours they appear. In their chapter announcing the protocols for coding disorganisation/disorientation, Main and Solomon (1990) themselves warned that treating the items in a group as expressions of an essence tends to offer undue support to beliefs that all phenomena in this group have a single historical cause.⁵⁷ And indeed, perversely following this warning as if it had been a prediction, perceptions of ‘disorganisation/disorientation’ as a unitary process have facilitated the widespread misapprehension that all behaviour in the D indices is necessarily caused by an immediate conflict between attachment and fear. This assumption that the indices of ‘disorganisation/disorientation’ express a single process has contributed to a neglect of *how*, through what proximal processes, the indexed behaviours occur. This is a neglect compounded but not solely caused by the existence of practical difficulties of statistical analyses, such as that the behaviours which index disorganization/disorientation often co-occur in high-risk samples; it would have been possible to circumvent this by coding the Main and Solomon indices using a small number of dimensional scales. As Lyons-Ruth et al. have recently observed, with concern, ‘to date, few hypotheses have been advanced regarding the mechanisms underlying this striking difference among infants who display disorganized behavior’.⁵⁸ The researchers note that this inattention to mechanisms may be masking important differences and potentially limiting the precision of clinical and welfare interventions. For example, Lyons-Ruth et al. report intriguing findings that where disorganised/disoriented behaviour is shown by a infant without any avoidance or resistance then this has a distinct association with suicidal feelings by age 19.

Fluctuatio animi

For decades attachment researchers have published discussions of the ‘notoriously complex origins of attachment disorganization’,⁵⁹ without consideration that some of this complexity may be a product of the mummification of the classification. As Turner has shown, in unduly subsuming causally-important heterogeneity, reification generally ‘causes particular problems for the development of theory regarding the causes and consequences of phenomena grouped together under the label’.⁶⁰ This agrees with Deleuze, who proposes that conceptualisations which appear to exhaustively capture the meaning of phenomena both depend upon and hide a premature closure of the dynamic forces in play: ‘Beneath the actual qualities and extensities, species and parts, there are spatio-temporal dynamisms. There are the actualising,

⁵⁵ Cowie, E. (2011) *Recording Reality, Desiring the Real*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, p.9; see also Silverman, K. (1996) *The Threshold of the Visible World*, London: Routledge; Gunning, T. (2007) ‘Moving Away from the Index: Cinema and the Impression of Reality’ *differences* 18(1): 29-52.

⁵⁶ Burman, E. (2007) *Deconstructing Developmental Psychology*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge

⁵⁷ Main & Solomon, ‘Procedures for Identifying’, p.156

⁵⁸ Lyons-Ruth, K., Bureau, J.-F., Easterbrooks, M., Obsuth, I., Hennighausen, K. & Vulliez-Coady, L. (2013) Parsing the construct of maternal insensitivity: distinct longitudinal pathways associated with early maternal withdrawal, *Attachment & Human Development*, 15:5-6, 562-582

⁵⁹ Meins, E., Fernyhough, C., Arnott, B., Vittorini, L., Turner, M., Leekam, S.R., Parkinson, K. (2011) ‘Individual differences in infants’ joint attention behaviors with mother and a new social partner’ *Infancy* 16(6): 587-610, at p.606.

⁶⁰ Turner, B.S. (1992) *Regulating Bodies: Essays in Medical Sociology*, London: Routledge, p.70

differenciating agencies. They must be surveyed in every domain, even though they are ordinarily hidden by the constituted qualities and extensities.⁶¹ The tendency of psychological research to squeeze the play of forces into categories, he and Guattari argue, is partly impelled by the demands and funding stemming from psy-disciplinary concerns, which cannot police the activities of human subjects without access to stabilised labels which signify 'harmful' and 'abuse'.⁶² It should be noted, however, that within this constellation of power/knowledge, there can lie a variety of forms of psy-discipline practice. These can range from sensitive and critical reflection by psychologists and social workers on the particular situation of families in a manner informed by attachment theory and assessments, through to the blunt application of attachment classifications as a quick formulation of the distinction between normal and pathological.⁶³

Whereas many attachment theorists and professionals in the psy-disciplines have presumed that the only quality that can be ascribed to infant behaviours in the Strange Situation which diverge from the Ainsworth protocols is that they 'lack' organisation, Deleuze and Guattari urge that we view all behaviours as the product of aligned or contradictory machines of movement and desire, and classificatory systems as epiphenomenal overlay. This is the perspective I wish to adopt in thinking about the disorganised/disoriented attachment classification. Bringing Deleuzian film theory together with developmental science may seem an odd and disjunctive synthesis to the reader. In agreement with feminist critiques of psychological discourses,⁶⁴ Deleuze and Guattari are generally hostile to developmental psychology and its role in normalising subjectivities through the policing of families. Yet, curiously, they specifically affirm the validity and significance of attachment phenomena: 'It is not a question of denying the vital importance of parents or the love attachment of children to their mothers and fathers. It is a question of knowing what the place and the function of parents are within desiring-production'.⁶⁵ As Monica Greco, Judith Solomon and I have explored in more detail elsewhere, this vision is fully in agreement with the perspective of Bowlby (and following him, Main and Solomon), for whom the primate infant should be regarded as a 'machine incorporating feedback' about flows of movements and the stop or start implications of a plurality of desires.⁶⁶

For the social theorists and psychological theorists alike, 'everywhere it is machines – real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections. An organ-machine is plugged into an energy-source-machine: the one produces a flow that the other interrupts. The breast is a machine that produces milk, the mouth a machine coupled to it.'⁶⁷ Bowlby fully agrees, specifying the operation of an 'exploratory system' as a machine for dispersive centrifugal movement away from the caregiver across friendly expanses, but which gets cut off after a time

⁶¹ Deleuze, G. ([1968] 2001) *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton, NY: Continuum, p.266

⁶² Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. ([1980] 1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, NY: Continuum, 112, 264.

⁶³ Duschinsky, R., Greco, M. & Solomon, J. (2015) 'The Politics of Attachment: Lines of Flight' *Theory, Culture & Society*, 32(7-8): 173-195; Landini, A., Baim., C., Hart, M. & Landa, S. (2015) *Danger, Development and Adaptation*, Hook, Hampshire: Waterside Press

⁶⁴ E.g. Oakley, A. (1971) *Subject Women*, Oxford: Martin Robertson; Krane, J., Davies, L., Carlton, R., & Mulcahy, M. (2010) 'The clock starts now: Feminism, mothering and attachment theory in child protection practice' In B. Featherstone, C. Hooper, J. Scourfield, & J. Taylor (Eds.) *Gender and Child Welfare in Society* (pp. 149-172). Oxford: Blackwell.

⁶⁵ Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. ([1971] 1984) *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, NY: Continuum; Bringing together Deleuze with developmental psychology is in line with calls to use and develop Deleuze's ideas about childhood: for example Hickey-Moody has urged recognition both that 'Deleuze's writings on children offer possibilities for rethinking the process of growing up', and 'Deleuze's theory of childhood affectivity is inherently conservative to the extent that it romanticizes the childhood state.' See Hickey-Moody, A. (2013) 'Deleuze's children' *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 45(3): 272-286, at p.284, 281.

⁶⁶ Bowlby, J. (1969) *Attachment*, London: Penguin, p.41; Duschinsky, R., Greco, M. & Solomon, J., *The Politics of Attachment*.

⁶⁷ Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. ([1971] 1984) *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, NY: Continuum, p.1

or when the infant is alarmed and the attachment system which impels a centripetal movement back to the caregiver. Where the attachment system can achieve its centrifugal goal directly (B), or indirectly and conditionally (A and C), the film of a Strange Situation can present what Deleuze calls a 'movement-image': a circuit of images in which movement is brought back through a sequence of actions into the arms of an apparently stable and pre-existing order of figures and concepts. A movement-image implies in its resolution that centrifugal movements of exploration are matched by centripetal movements of return, and separation of the child from his or her caregiver is merely the interim between states of being together as sufficiency. Such images of natural sufficiency between mother and infant have been deployed as rhetorical ammunition for conservative political demands which precisely isolate women from the health, social or political resources required for sufficiency.⁶⁸ Deleuze defines the movement-image in film as one in which 'the sensory-motor schema is concretely located in a 'hodological space' (Kurt Lewin), which is defined by a field of forces, oppositions and tensions between these forces, resolutions of these tensions according to the distribution of goals, obstacles, means, detours. The corresponding abstract form is Euclidean space, because this is the setting in which tensions are resolved according to a principle of economy'.⁶⁹ In hodological space, where 'opposing forces are equal in strength, their resultant force = 0'.⁷⁰ Deleuze emphasises that 'anomalies of movement', within this principle of economy, are only recognised as a single undifferentiated cluster: *disordered*, and as such either ephemeral and meaningless, or in need of rectification.⁷¹ Yet for Deleuze, this characterisation of anomalies of movement as undifferentiated disorder is a product of an unwillingness to explore their logic if it takes us off our familiar maps. Glossing Bergson, Deleuze argues that 'the idea of disorder appears when, instead of seeing that there are two or more irreducible orders, we retain only a general idea of order that we confine ourselves to opposing to disorder'.⁷²

Deleuze contrasts the movement-image to the 'time-image', a film in which actions cannot be unified with resolutions. For instance, in the time-image, 'movement can tend to zero, the character, or the shot itself, remain immobile', threatening to turn the transitions and transactions which comprise a film into a still photograph through the frozen state of a body; 'movement may also be exaggerated, be incessant, become a world movement, a Brownian movement, a trampling, a to-and-fro, a multiplicity of movements on different scales. What is important is that the anomalies of movement become the essential point instead of being accidental or contingent.'⁷³ In examining the logic of such anomalous movement within film, Deleuze conceptualises the space of the time-image with the idea of *fluctuatio animi*, taken from Spinoza. Spinoza teaches that *fluctuatio animi* is the counterpart process, in the domain of affect and feelings, of confusion and doubt in the domain of the imagination. For Spinoza, *fluctuationes animi* 'for the most part arise from an object which is the efficient cause of each affect. For the human body is composed of a great many individuals of different natures, and so it can be affected in a great many different ways by one and the same body. And on the other hand, because one and the same thing can be affected in many ways, it will also be able to affect one and the same part of the body in many different ways. From this we can easily conceive that one and the same object can be the cause of many and contrary affects'.⁷⁴ *Fluctuatio animi* thus occurs to the degree that the complexity of dynamic forces within which the subject is situated, and of which she is composed, inhibit the smooth alignment between affect and a behavioural

⁶⁸ Duschinsky, R., Greco, M. & Solomon, J. (2015) 'Wait Up! Attachment & Sovereign Power' *International Journal of Politics, Culture & Society*, 28(3): 223-242

⁶⁹ Deleuze, G. ([1985] 1989) *Cinema II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Robert Galeta, London: Bloomsbury, p.124

⁷⁰ Lewin, K. (1938) *Conceptual Representation and Measurement of Psychological Forces*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, p.188

⁷¹ Deleuze, *Cinema II*, p.124

⁷² Deleuze, G. ([1966] 1988) *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Haberjam, NY: Zone, p.19; parentheses suppressed.

⁷³ Deleuze, *Cinema II*, p.134

⁷⁴ Spinoza, B. ([1677] 1994) *Ethics*, trans. Edwin Curley, London: Penguin, II, 154, S.

sequence.⁷⁵ ‘The *fluctuatio animi*’ of the time-image, Deleuze concludes, ‘is not hesitation between several objects or between several directions, but a mobile covering-up of sets which are incompatible’.⁷⁶ It is an ‘undecidability of the body’ in which ‘the obstacle does not, as in the action-image, allow itself to be determined in relation to goals and means which would unify the set’.⁷⁷ As such, the time-image is not evoked by contradiction in the abstract, but by the concrete possibility of *imperatives for gestures of the body which are incompatible within a behavioural sequence*. This potential incompatibility of behaviour, suggestive of incompatibility at the level of affective experience, allows the film of infant behaviour in the Ainsworth Strange Situation to be regarded as a time-image: it reveals a world in which not everything is ultimately reconcilable with full coherency, with a consequence in behavioural and relational instability.

Main’s emphasis in conceptualising disorganised/disoriented attachment is the role of fear, though – against common misconception – she does not assume that fear in relation to the caregiver is always the proximate cause. Treating disorganisation/disorientation as a time-image raises the question of other proximal causes of *fluctuatio animi*, which has not been explored by attachment theory. As Deleuze emphasises, Spinoza helps us see that disjunctive behavioural sequences or frozen inhibition need not be regarded as a unitary process of collapse into undifferentiatedness; the disorganisation of an affect can be the product of any force – including those of which the affect itself is composed – which can disrupt the coherent efficacy of its power for action.⁷⁸ Working with collaborators within the field of attachment research, I have been involved in the design of studies which have taken inspiration from this Deleuzian account. One dimension of this has been to pursue new statistical tests on existing data from Strange Situations, looking to see whether the behaviour of those children classified as ‘disorganised/disoriented’ is random as has generally been assumed, or whether predictable irreducible orders within infants’ behaviour can be identified as responses to specific forms of caregiving environment.⁷⁹ For instance, a statistical test of which among the different disorganised/disoriented behaviours fall together, drawing on data from a New York community sample, yielded a three-factor model which accounts for 65% of variance in the behaviours.⁸⁰ We are in the process of replicating and extending this analysis on a second sample. These initial findings, though tentative, run counter to conceptualisations of disorganisation as meaningless, undifferentiated breakdown. So far, our findings suggest determinate lines of difference where previously the field has largely seen only the ‘Being’ of the Ainsworth patterns of infant behaviour and the ‘Nothingness’ of disorganisation.

In other publications, I hope to report further the results of these collaborative efforts. Here, however, I want to capitalise on a particular issue raised by Spinoza. Like Mary Main, Spinoza identifies that *fluctuatio animi* is to be expected in the context of an immediate love/fear conflict. And both Spinoza and Main argue that love can be disrupted or dysregulated by hate, and that this is an important process which deserves attention. However, Mary Main’s discussion of this conflict is brief; it also occurs in an interview only published in French, and

⁷⁵ Deleuze, G. ([1968] 1989) *Expressionism in Philosophy*, trans. Martin Joghin, NY: Zone, p.386-7, n.23; Deleuze, G. [1966] 2004) ‘On Gilbert Simondon’, trans. Michael Taormina, NY: Semiotext(e); Cf. Macherey, P. (1996) ‘The Encounter with Spinoza’, in Paul Patton, ed., *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp.139-61

⁷⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema II*, p.135

⁷⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema II*, p.209

⁷⁸ Deleuze, *Difference & Repetition*, p.322

⁷⁹ Only a small number of prior researchers have pursued this question of differentiation within the disorganised/disoriented category. The three primary studies to date are: Padrón et al. ‘Frightened Versus Not Frightened’; Crittenden, P.M. (1988) ‘Families and dyadic patterns of functioning in maltreating families’ in *Early Prediction and Prevention of Child Abuse*, ed. Kevin Browne, Cliff Davies and Peter Stratton, NY: Wiley, 161-189; Lyons-Ruth et al. ‘Parsing the construct of maternal insensitivity’.

⁸⁰ Solomon, J. & Duschinsky, R. (2015) ‘Potential sub-types of infant disorganization: A study of the behavioral indices of disorganized attachment’ presented on the 7th August 2015 at the *International Attachment Conference*, New School of Social Research, New York.

never to date apparently noticed or cited by the wider field of (largely Anglophone) attachment research.⁸¹ By contrast, Spinoza gives the matter substantial consideration. He specifies that hate is predictable, in a child or in an adult, as a response to an object which chronically raises and frustrates our hopes and desires.⁸² *Fluctuatio animi* can thus be caused by both loving someone and being brought to hate them by how they have behaved. This account is well aligned with ideas put forward by Bowlby and Ainsworth. Before the disorganised/disoriented classification was introduced, became reified and such issues consequently faded out of view for the field of attachment research, they both had discussed this matter specifically. Bowlby and Ainsworth argued that the anger evoked by the frustration of a behavioural system can prove dysfunctional where its intensity overwhelms the capacity of the attachment system to orchestrate behaviour seeking comfort in a coordinated way from the caregiver.⁸³

Such a perspective can turn our attention to behaviours which are identified in the indices of disorganised/disoriented attachment, which do not suggest an immediate conflict between attachment and fear as their proximal cause. Some indicate a child who is flooded by distress. Others suggest anxiety and tension. However, yet others readily appear the result of a conflict between attachment and anger. For instance, in the Main and Solomon coding protocols, Index II directs attention to occasions when 'the infant displays anger simultaneously with proximity seeking or contact maintaining'; and Index III suggests that disorganisation is coded when an 'infant interrupts approach to parent on reunion with a bout of angry behaviour, directed away from the parent, then continues approach'.⁸⁴ *Fluctuatio animi* appearing to be caused by an immediate conflict between attachment and fear might have different precursors and sequelae than behaviour resulting from an apparent conflict between attachment and anger or frustration. However, to date, researchers have neither discussed nor looked at how anger and the behaviours identified by Main and Solomon may co-vary, though hundreds of studies of infant attachment in the Strange Situation will have had this data available to them since every child must be assessed for anger on a 1-7 scale according to Ainsworth's basic coding protocols. In this vacuum of inquiry and thought, some researchers have simply treated all anger as if it were disorganisation or all behaviours in the Main and Solomon indices as if they must really all mean anger.⁸⁵ This absence of attention to the anger-disorganisation intersection is particularly relevant given that many of the children who show the behaviours identified in the Main and Solomon indices in infancy have been found to display controlling-and-aggressive or controlling-and-caregiving/compliant behaviour towards their parent by middle childhood, and the former group have more difficulties at school and in their relationships in subsequent years.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Main, M. (1993) 'Les bébés et leurs colères' In M. C. Busnel (Ed.), *Le Langage des Bébes*, Paris: Jacques Grancher, pp.17-31.

⁸² See e.g. *Ethics*, II, 155, S2; II, 194, XV.

⁸³ E.g. Bowlby, J. (1973) 'Problems of terminology' Appendix III to Separation, London: Penguin; Bowlby, J. ([1938] 1950) 'An Examination of the Psychological and Anthropological Evidence' in *Personal Aggressiveness and War*, E.F.M. Durbin & John Bowlby, NY: Columbia University Press, pp.51-150; Ainsworth, M. (1972). Attachment and dependency: a comparison. In J. Gewirtz. (Ed.) *Attachment and Dependency*, (pp. 97-137) Washington, D.C.: Winston

⁸⁴ Main & Solomon, 'Procedures for Identifying', p.136

⁸⁵ See e.g. Fraley, R.C. Roisman, G.I., Booth-LaForce, C., Owen, M.T. & Holland, A.S. (2013) 'Interpersonal and genetic origins of adult attachment styles: A longitudinal study from infancy to early adulthood' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 104(5): 817-838, web-based supplement, Part C: 'The second dimension, *Angry and resistant strategies*, represents variability in the amount of overt conflict and anger the child expressed toward the caregiver during the strange situation, and was computed as the average of the ratings for the following interactive coding scales: Resistance Episode 5, Resistance Episode 8, and Disorganization'

⁸⁶ E.g. Crittenden, P. (1981) *The Pre-School Assessment of Attachment Coding Manual*, Miami: Family Relations Institute; Main, M. & Cassidy, J. (1988) Categories of response to reunion with the parent at age 6. *Developmental Psychology* 24(3): 415-426; Moss, E., Cyr, C. & Dubois-Comtois, K. (2004) 'Attachment at early school age and developmental risk: examining family contexts and behavior problems of controlling-caregiving, controlling-punitive, and behaviorally disorganized children' *Developmental Psychology* 40(4): 519-532.

Considering disorganised/disoriented attachment as a time-image thus helps us attend to the potential logic of this classification, by keeping track of the spatio-temporal dynamisms of intensity and affect which classificatory systems both hide and partially capture. Such attention, in turn, can be plugged back into psychological theory and research regarding anger and regulatory control of affect during infancy. Further attention to the relationship between anger and infant disorganisation/disorientation, though understudied, is of particular significance for psychology given robust associations between a D classification in infancy and measures of aggression and violence in later life.⁸⁷ It is notable that Steele and colleagues observed that infants in their sample who showed disorganisation/disorientation as infants in the Strange Situation, would later have trouble regulating fear, or regulating anger, or both, when interviewed about their lives as teenagers.⁸⁸ In light the Deleuzo-Spinozist account of *fluctuatio animi*, and supported by such findings, an attachment-anger conflict can be conceptualised as a process through which at least some forms of disorganised/disoriented attachment behaviour may be potentiated. Like the familiar Main and Hesse attachment-fear conflict, an attachment-anger conflict can also be considered to result in an escalating problem without solution, in which the attachment figure to whom the infant is impelled to go is also the source of such intense feelings of frustration that the non-satisfaction of each motivational disposition intensifies the other, to the point that the smooth functioning of the attachment system is disrupted. The more frustrated the infant feels, the more he or she is impelled to seek their caregiver for resolution to their discomfort; however, the closer they approach their caregiver, the more they must attend to past experience of this caregiver as frustrating.

Conclusion

The article has considered how the influential 'disorganised/disoriented' (D) attachment classification both emerged as a consequence of film technologies and has subsequently been reified and limited by the way these media have been interpreted. After examining the relationship between screen media and the development of the attachment classification, ideas from Deleuze's theory of cinema were drawn upon in interrogating the concept of attachment disorganisation/disorientation. Where disorganisation/disorientation is conceptualised within the hodological space of the movement-image, it appears merely as chaos and disorder since in hodological space, where 'opposing forces are equal in strength, their resultant force = 0'.⁸⁹ In infant behaviour in the Strange Situation, considered as a movement-image, reality is simplified down to a stark and false opposition: either there is smoothly coordinated movement towards the telos of the attachment system in the full (B) or conditional (A or C) availability of the caregiver, or there is nothingness and/or undifferentiated pathology. Yet, considering disorganised/disoriented attachment as a time-image draws attention to its logic as *fluctuatio animi*, a physical irreconcilability of intense affect, within infant behaviour on reunion with a caregiver. Such an account does not quickly dismiss disorganised/disoriented attachment. It does, however, countermand tendencies towards its ossification and misapplication. It also opens new avenue for thought and for empirical study in developmental psychology. Deleuze's film theory was used to suggest, for example, that conflict between attachment and anger may warrant further scrutiny from researchers.

In his early work on the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault makes the observation that 'a discursive formation does not occupy... all the possible volume that is opened up to it by right of the systems of formation of its objects, its enunciations, and its concepts; it is essentially incomplete, owing to the system of formation of its strategic choices. Hence the fact that, taken

⁸⁷ Fearon et al., The Significance of Insecure Attachment and Disorganization in the Development of Children's Externalizing Behavior; Kochanska, G. (2001) 'Emotional development in children with different attachment histories: The first three years' *Child Development*, 72: 474 – 490.

⁸⁸ Steele, H., Steele, M., and Kriss, A. (2009) *Friends and Family Interview Scoring System*, NY: Center for Attachment Research, New School for Social Research

⁸⁹ Lewin, K., 'Conceptual Representation and Measurement of Psychological Forces', p.188

up again, placed, and interpreted in a new constellation, a given discursive formation may reveal new possibilities'.⁹⁰ My intention here has been at once to place film theory in a new constellation, in demonstrating its value for thinking about filmed psychological assessment as a different kind of object – and to place contemporary research and assessments of disorganised/disoriented attachment in a new constellation, in considering the emergence and movement of this psychological construct as a product of film technologies. In doing so, I have sought to highlight and specify, beneath the constituted classifications of attachment theory which also need to be accounted for, the spatio-temporal dynamism of living motion and affective intensity in films of an infant's separation and reunion with their attachment figure in a laboratory setting.

⁹⁰ Foucault, M. ([1969] 1972) *Archaeology of Knowledge*, London: Routledge, p.75, translation amended.